

Idaho State University Enrollment Trends since fall 2010

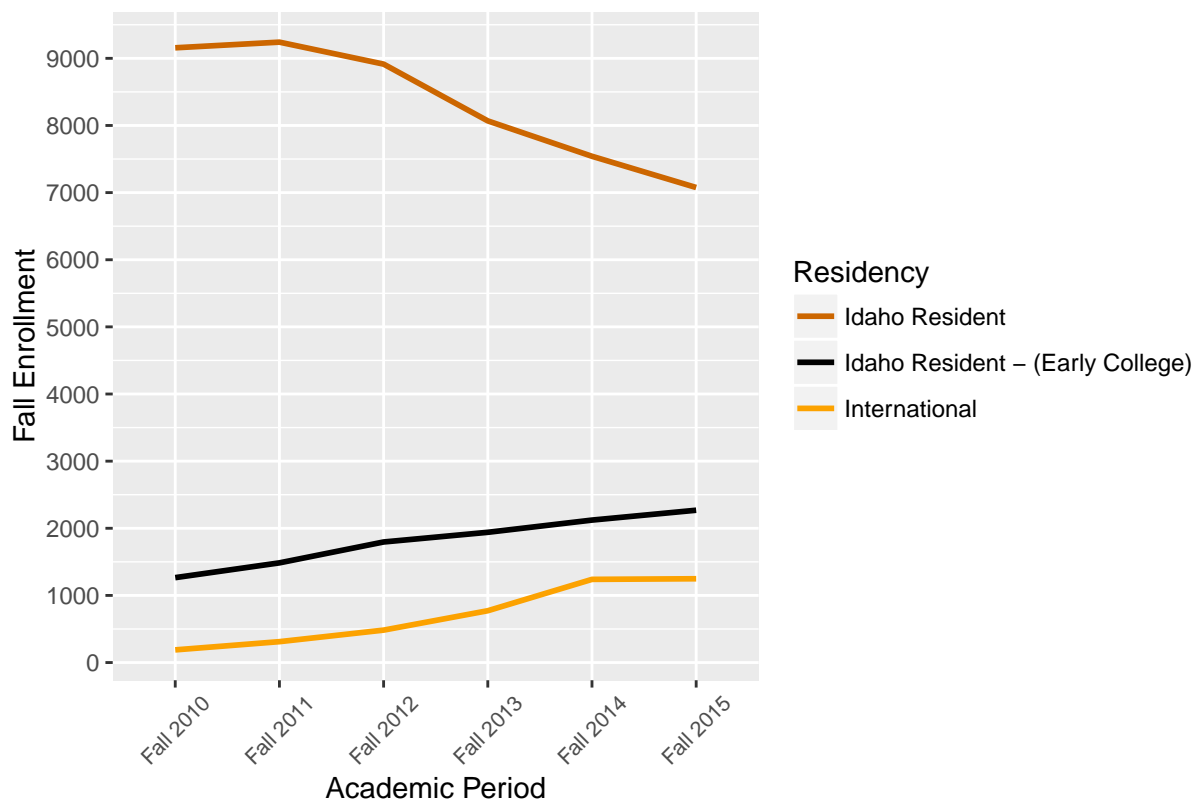
ISU Office of Institutional Research

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Summary

In the fall of 2013 ISU began to experience a steady drop in the enrollment of Idaho resident, degree seeking students. Prior to 2013, headcounts for this group were holding steady around 9000. Following a peak of 9241 in fall of 2011 (and slightly lower in fall 2012 at 8914) enrollment suddenly dropped to 8068 in fall of 2013 (-9.49%). This rate of decline continued into the fall of 2015 with Idaho resident enrollment reaching a low of 7076. The fall of 2015 enrollment dropped -6.17% to 7076 from 7541 in the fall of 2014 and is now 23.43% lower than in the fall of 2011. This enrollment drop includes 7820 individual students that left ISU without graduating.^{1,2} The enrollment headcounts of two subgroups were masking this trend up until the fall of 2015. In the fall of 2013, international enrollment (almost entirely from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) began a dramatic increase that continued for two years, while at the same time, Idaho resident, Early College enrollment was also increasing. When the enrollment headcount of international students leveled off in the fall of 2015 the alarming decline of Idaho resident, degree seeking student enrollment became apparent.

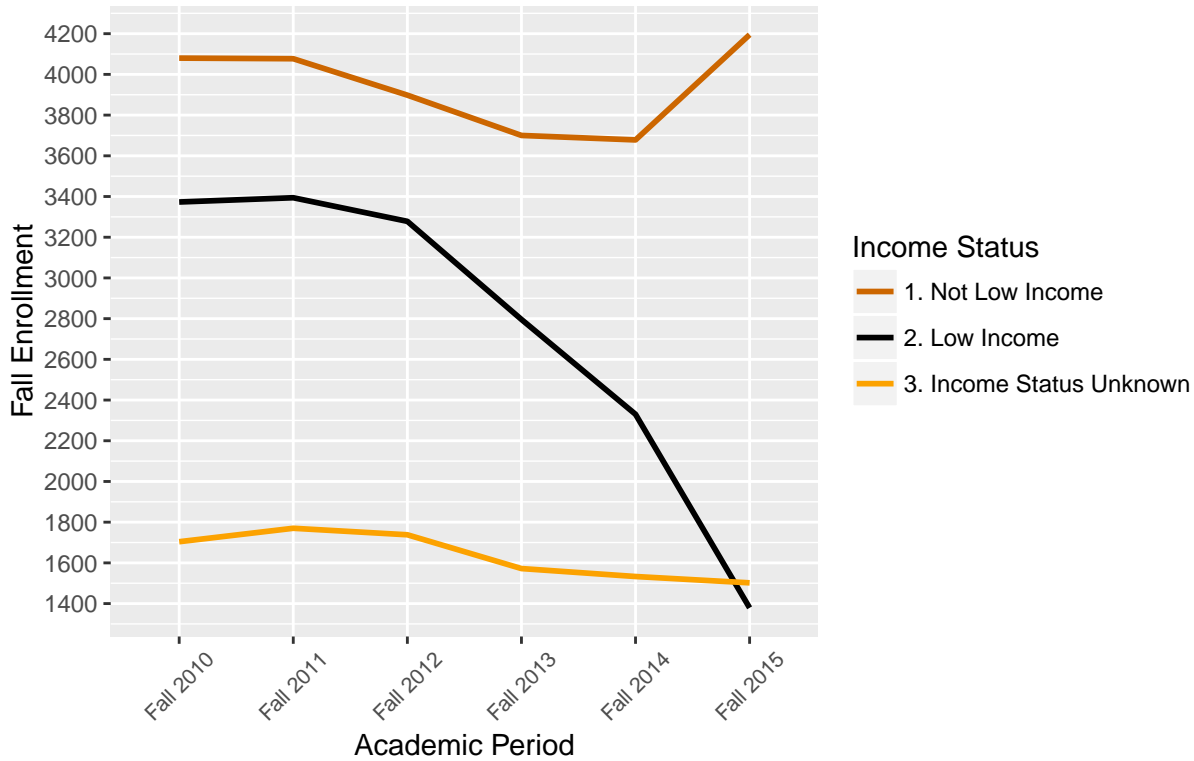
Idaho Resident vs International Enrollment Trends



¹Two different totals of students lost to ISU are found in this paper. The original value, 7820, represents the total number of students lost as of Feb 3, 2016, the first time this paper was generated and includes all those students whose names were submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse requesting information on follow-up enrollment. The second value, 7689, is the current value and is slightly lower than the first because some of the students have since returned.

²This document is regenerated using current enrollment values based on the date of the document. This may cause some values to change in later versions as noted in the previous footnote.

Idaho Resident, Undergraduate Income Status Enrollment Trends (Early College excluded)



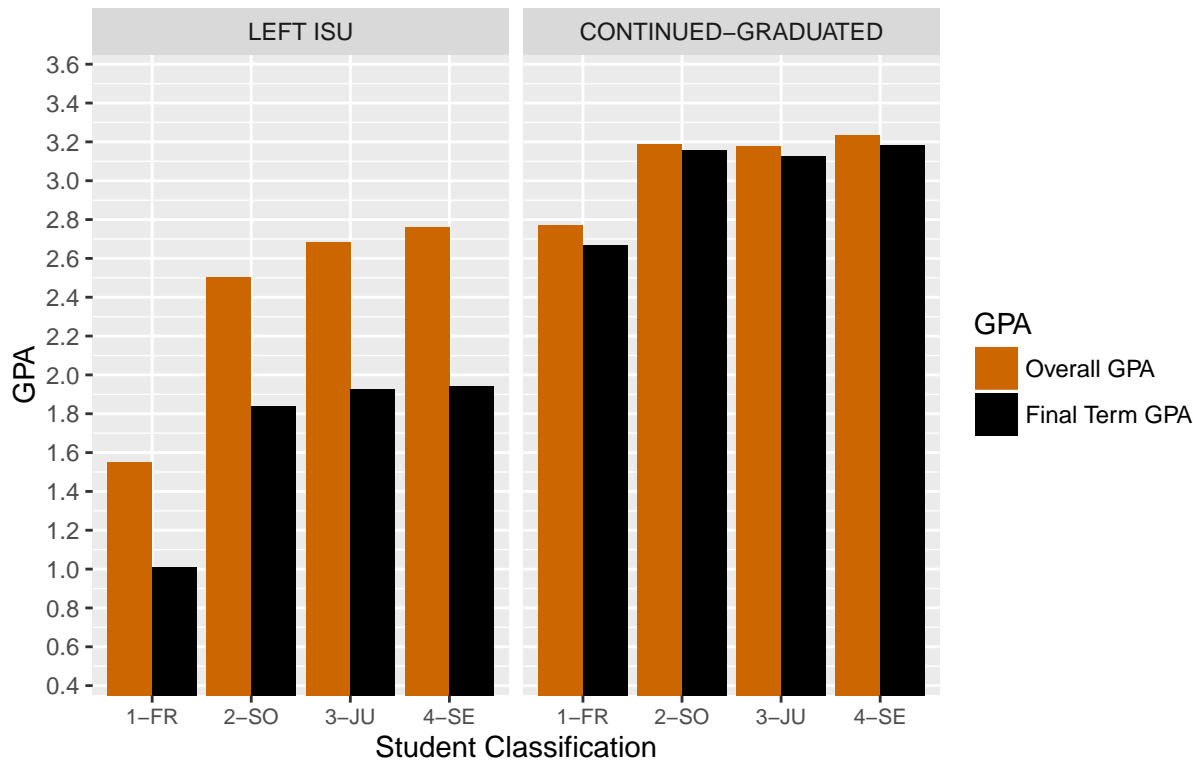
This analysis seeks to identify factors common among Idaho resident, degree seeking undergraduate students that attend ISU yet do not complete or graduate. While some of the factors (objective factors available in the Banner data) may be common with other demographic groups, the actual analysis is limited to Idaho degree seeking students (except when comparing to other groups.)

Findings

1. Average Overall and Final Term GPA

On average, students that leave begin their final term with lower overall GPAs than those that continue and then experience a dramatic drop in average GPA during that final term. The overall GPA difference between those that leave and those that continue is so distinct that ranges of GPA (by student classification) may be used to segregate students into categories that can be used to trigger intervention processes.

Avg Overall and final Term GPA
(term previous to latest term for those that continue)



2. Remedial/General Education Failure rates

Failure rates in early math and English courses (remedial and general education course type) are very high among those that leave and disturbingly high overall.

Table 1: All students that took course

Subject	Course	Number	Enrolled	Failed or Withdrew	Percent
Mathematics	Arithmetic Pre-algebra	0015	2327	987	42.42 %
Mathematics	Elementary Algebra	0025	5588	2652	47.46 %
Mathematics	Intermediate Algebra	1108	6920	2787	40.27 %
Mathematics	College Algebra	1143	3949	1620	41.02 %
English	Basic Writing	0090	1943	549	28.26 %
English	English Composition	1101	7604	1874	24.64 %
English	Critical Reading and Writing	1102	9785	2197	22.45 %

Table 2: Course taken by students that left university

Subject	Course	Number	Enrolled	Failed or Withdrew	Percent
Mathematics	Arithmetic Pre-algebra	0015	1129	629	55.71 %
Mathematics	Elementary Algebra	0025	2342	1455	62.13 %
Mathematics	Intermediate Algebra	1108	2194	1248	56.88 %
Mathematics	College Algebra	1143	925	538	58.16 %
English	Basic Writing	0090	1042	416	39.92 %
English	English Composition	1101	2886	1063	36.83 %
English	Critical Reading and Writing	1102	2755	1007	36.55 %

Table 3: Course taken by students that left university (when course taken during student's final term)

Subject	Course	Number	Enrolled	Failed or Withdrew	Percent
Mathematics	Arithmetic Pre-algebra	0015	414	330	79.71 %
Mathematics	Elementary Algebra	0025	879	690	78.5 %
Mathematics	Intermediate Algebra	1108	787	547	69.5 %
Mathematics	College Algebra	1143	326	233	71.47 %
English	Basic Writing	0090	407	268	65.85 %
English	English Composition	1101	1115	669	60 %
English	Critical Reading and Writing	1102	1053	587	55.75 %

Although students requiring remedial coursework is outside the control of the university (other than possibly raising admission standards), addressing success rates in remedial and general education courses is within university control. Overall freshmen remedial enrollment of Idaho residents is deceptively low (~15%) because 50% of freshmen are now early college/high school students (2123 degree seeking, 2107 high school in the fall of 2014) who generally do not enroll in remedial courses. Degree seeking freshman students (non high school) enrolling in remedial courses is actually at 30%..

3. Early College Enrollment

While a growing Early College program at ISU is encouraging, only 30% of these students are eventually enrolling at ISU to seek a degree (based on feedback from the Nation Student Clearinghouse.) The fall 2011 ISU Early College cohort (1431 students) was tracked to determine subsequent college enrollment. Of the names sent to the Clearinghouse, only (29.21%) later enrolled at ISU, 869 (60.7%) enrolled elsewhere, and (10.06%) did not enroll at any of the institutions that provide data to the Clearinghouse. In fact only 872 (60.9%) attended ANY college in Idaho, public or private.

Table 4: Top 10 enrollment choices of the Fall 2011 ISU Early College cohort

COLLEGE_NAME	ENROLLMENT	PCT
Idaho State University	418	29.21%
Brigham Young University - Idaho	209	14.61%
Utah State University	161	11.25%
Not Found By Clearinghouse	144	10.06%
Boise State University	103	7.20%
Brigham Young University	81	5.66%
College Of Southern Idaho	58	4.05%
University Of Idaho	48	3.35%
University Of Utah	19	1.33%
The College Of Idaho	14	0.98%

3. Undecided Majors

A significant percent (16.44%) of students that leave are undeclared majors. Even though the majority of undecided majors that leave are freshmen, 782 (38.13%) had progressed to sophomore or later. Any new retention initiatives should dedicate resources to help undecided students determine a course of study.

4. Subsequent enrollment of students that leave

The vast majority of students that have left ISU since fall of 2010 (7820) simply quit and did not continue on somewhere else. Of those that did continue somewhere else, enrollment (top 10) was tracked to the following institutions:

Table 5: Top 10 Subsequent Enrollment Choices

COLLEGE_NAME	ENROLLMENT	PCT
Did Not Return To College	4908	62.76%
Various Online Universities	391	5%
College Of Southern Idaho	375	4.8%
Boise State University	371	4.74%
Brigham Young University - Idaho	314	4.02%
Eastern Idaho Technical College	203	2.6%
College Of Western Idaho	164	2.1%
University Of Idaho	146	1.87%
Utah State University	84	1.07%
Utah Valley University	42	.54%
Salt Lake Community College	41	.52%

Survey results of students that left ISU

In late September 2015, a survey was conducted targeted to the students that attended ISU between fall 2010 and summer 2014 and had not re-enrolled by fall of 2015. Among those that responded, the primary issues were those that related to tuition and funding resources (32.20%). The remaining issues are outlined in the table below. Not categorized, yet noted in the responses, was the high frequency of negative replies. Feedback from several students suggested that ISU stands for “I Screwed Up”. This acronym appeared more than once (and has been mentioned in meetings with faculty as well) suggesting that issues with staff and faculty may also be a problem. Since the survey was targeted to students that have left ISU for any reason, responses should not be considered representative of the feelings of all students that have attended the institution, but it does suggest that the university may benefit by focusing on how students are treated and respected once here.

An important side note related to this survey is the disturbing, poor quality of student contact data. While contact data might be expected to become stale for the students that leave, Banner contact data for current students is also low quality in many cases.

Table 6: Survey

Category	Respondents	PCT
Inadequate financial resources (high tuition)	285	32.20%
Personal	113	12.80%
Moved or joined military	102	11.50%
Transferred to a different college/university	60	6.80%
Health issues	45	5.10%
Desired program not available	29	3.30%
Academic issues	29	3.30%
Work/job constraints	27	3.10%
Issues with faculty	23	2.60%
Had a child	23	2.60%
Undecided about career choice	20	2.30%
Employment opportunity before graduation	16	1.80%
Course scheduling issues	15	1.70%
Changed to online university	14	1.60%
Registration or billing dispute	12	1.40%
Did not like Pocatello/Idaho	10	1.10%
Poor advising quality	10	1.10%
Distance to school	8	0.90%
Online programs limited	6	0.70%
Program courses not applicable	6	0.70%
Difficulty with Math courses	6	0.70%
Transfer credit issues	5	0.60%
Not accepted into program	4	0.50%
LDS Mission	4	0.50%
Trouble between faculty and administration	3	0.30%
Campus facilities/resources inferior/limited	3	0.30%

Category	Respondents	PCT
Meridian Campus facilities/resources inferior/limited	2	0.20%
Idaho Falls Campus facilities/resources inferior/limited	2	0.20%
Foreign students	1	0.10%
Parking	1	0.10%
Housing issues	1	0.10%
Grand Total	885	100.00%

Alternatives

1. GPA related initiatives

Both overall and term GPA values are recorded and easily retrieved from Banner. The graphs in finding 1 are worst case and illustrate the significant drop that occurs when a student finally decides to quit. However in many cases greater than average drops in GPA will begin to occur in semesters prior to a student's final term. Ranges of overall GPA (as well as trends) exist that may indicate when a student's progress needs to be monitored more closely. Other term progression variables available from sources such as Moodle, faculty assessments, etc. should be monitored and used where necessary to trigger defined intervention processes that provide support to help students successfully complete the term.

2. Improvement of early math and English success rates

Remedial and/or early math/English coursework success is essential to providing the foundation toward the completion of a degree. This study does not provide any background as to how improving success should be accomplished but it does help us understand the significance of the problem at ISU.

3. Early College student recruitment

Without any modifications to the remedial and early math/English programs, recruitment of students ready for college will improve success rates by default. Early College students should be a high priority recruitment target among Idaho residents. Even though ISU may never be the first choice of some of these students, most of the competitors in the top 10 list above have no more to offer and in many cases are less attractive depending on the student's program choice. Improving percent enrollment of the currently enrolled early college students to 50% (from 30%) could add nearly 400 students (20% of ~2000) per year to ISU enrollment headcounts, decrease remedial course requirements, and improve retention rates all at the same time. With this group experiencing increasing enrollment, nearly doubling in four years (to 2107 in fall of 2014 from 1264 in fall of 2010), they offer a rich and growing target for recruitment. In addition to college readiness, these students offer other recruitment advantages as well. Because they are already enrolled and admitted, all recruitment information is available and on file and their motivation to continue to college is already apparent.

4. Early/aggressive counseling/support of Undecided majors

Students beyond their second term at ISU and still undecided deserve attention. This group of students most likely lack engagement with peers, faculty, and departments all of whom help provide support and motivation to continue and succeed.

5. Improved quality of student contact data

Tracking and contacting students requires a robust, current contact database. Acquiring and recording current phone numbers, addresses (both while enrolled and permanent), social media personalities, and any other stable emergency/other contact info that might be available is important as well as imperative. In addition to supporting intervention contacts, new federal gainful employment requirements require that we have the resources in place to contact students after they leave the university.

6. Establish defined intervention process

The previous issues recognize some of the variables that may be useful to trigger intervention processes but it is also important that a robust intervention process be developed and broadly implemented. The triggering criteria for this process need to be clearly defined and coordinated among all groups currently tasked with student retention and progression. Ideally, this system would provide comprehensive access to the defined progression criteria and provide alerts to the responsible stakeholders as early as possible. Early intervention within a term is necessary so that support can be triggered before the student is overwhelmed. Intervention responses should also be tailored to fit categories where students are ranked according to risk before classes start. Latest term GPA, high school GPA, GPA trend, student classification, age, and major are only a sampling of possible variables that might be tracked.

Conclusion

ISU is experiencing an alarming decline in the enrollment of Idaho resident, degree seeking students, a trend that will likely continue as costs continue to climb. In addition to cost, online competition (in multiple formats) is a growing threat likely to pull even more resident students away from the need to be physically present in the classroom to complete a degree. In light of these threats, it is incumbent on the university to find its “competitive” niche and continue to be a desirable option for residents that choose to continue their education. All the suggestions and alternatives above require either reaching out to students directly or indirectly implementing programs that support their progression. Implicit in these suggestions is the need to improve the customer service to our students. Recruitment improvements offer little value if not matched by programs that improve retention.

Establishing a reputation (or brand) as THE student oriented institution in the state is an available and achievable niche that would provide a foundation for all of the suggested initiatives.

Focusing on students that need help and intervening to provide support is an important step in achieving a student oriented image. All stakeholders already tasked with supporting student progress should be provided access to a dedicated system designed to gather any data related to student progression. Information sources should include Banner, Moodle, and the performance improvement system currently under consideration from EAB. EAB predictive analytics and collaborative capabilities would provide extensive and robust support of student progression, retention, and intervention programs. A vendor product like EAB provide experience, proven methods, and guidance that would help ISU establish an effective intervention process as quickly as possible.

Appendix

Table 7: Lost Students by Student Classification

Student Classification	Headcount	Percent
1-FR	3397	44.18%
2-SO	2125	27.64%
3-JU	1198	15.58%
4-SE	969	12.6%

Table 8: Lost Students by Age Category

Age Category	Headcount	Percent of Total
2 - 18 to 24	4284	55.72%
3 - 25 to 30	1644	21.38%
4 - 31 to 40	1175	15.28%
5 - 41 to 50	392	5.10%
6 - 51+	167	2.17%
1 - Under 18	27	0.35%

Table 9: Lost Students by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Headcount	Percent of Total
Caucasian	5782	75.20%
Race and Ethnicity Unknown	832	10.82%
HISPANIC	554	7.21%
American Indian	161	2.09%
Hispanic of Any Race	109	1.42%
MULTIPLE REPORTED	103	1.34%
African American	68	0.88%
Asian	64	0.83%
Pacific Islander	10	0.13%
Native Hawaiian	3	0.04%
Other Pacific Islander	2	0.03%
Alaska Native	1	0.01%

Table 10: Lost Students by Gender

Gender	Headcount	Percent of Total
F	3940	51.24%
M	3749	48.76%

Table 11: Lost Students by First Generation Status

First Generation	Headcount	Percent of Total
N	3857	50.16%
U	272	3.54%
Y	2495	32.45%
NA	1065	13.85%

Table 12: Lost Students by Idaho County

County	Headcount	Percent of Total
Bannock	2713	35.57%
Bonneville	1407	18.45%
NA	1306	17.12%
Bingham	691	9.06%
Jefferson	254	3.33%
Ada	229	3.00%
Twin Falls	119	1.56%
Power	117	1.53%
Canyon	100	1.31%
Madison	99	1.30%
Fremont	65	0.85%
Caribou	60	0.79%
Cassia	55	0.72%
Franklin	49	0.64%
Minidoka	43	0.56%
Bear Lake	37	0.49%
Oneida	28	0.37%
Jerome	24	0.31%
Elmore	23	0.30%
Blaine	21	0.28%
Kootenai	21	0.28%
Custer	20	0.26%
Teton	20	0.26%
Lemhi	18	0.24%
Butte	17	0.22%
Payette	14	0.18%
Lincoln	11	0.14%
Owyhee	11	0.14%
Gem	8	0.10%
Gooding	8	0.10%
Idaho	7	0.09%
Latah	5	0.07%
Shoshone	5	0.07%
Nez Perce	4	0.05%
Valley	4	0.05%
Washington	3	0.04%
Bonner	2	0.03%
Clark	2	0.03%
Clearwater	2	0.03%
Adams	1	0.01%
Benewah	1	0.01%
Boise	1	0.01%
Boundary	1	0.01%
Lewis	1	0.01%

Table 13: Lost Students by High School

Highschool	Highschool City	Highschool State	Headcount	Percent of Total
Highland High School	Pocatello	ID	500	8.61%
Pocatello High School	Pocatello	ID	449	7.73%
Century High School	Pocatello	ID	331	5.70%
Blackfoot High School	Blackfoot	ID	319	5.49%
Idaho Falls High School	Idaho Falls	ID	303	5.22%
Skyline High School	Idaho Falls	ID	299	5.15%
Home School Clearing House	New York	NY	261	4.49%
GED (outside of Idaho)	Orlando	FL	251	4.32%
Bonneville High School	Idaho Falls	ID	227	3.91%
Rigby High School	Rigby	ID	226	3.89%
Hillcrest High School	Ammon	ID	216	3.72%
Snake River High School	Blackfoot	ID	155	2.67%
Marsh Valley High School	Arimo	ID	143	2.46%
American Falls High School	American Falls	ID	131	2.26%
Shelley High School	Shelley	ID	113	1.95%
Madison Senior High School	Rexburg	ID	95	1.64%
Minico Senior High School	Rupert	ID	79	1.36%
South Fremont High School	Saint Anthony	ID	69	1.19%
Soda Springs High School	Soda Springs	ID	63	1.08%
Aberdeen High School	Aberdeen	ID	59	1.02%
Burley High School	Burley	ID	59	1.02%
New Horizon High School	Pocatello	ID	57	0.98%
Lincoln High School	Idaho Falls	ID	55	0.95%
Bear Lake High School	Montpelier	ID	53	0.91%
Preston High School	Preston	ID	53	0.91%
Twin Falls High School	Twin Falls	ID	49	0.84%
Firth Senior High School	Firth	ID	47	0.81%
Independence Alt High School	Blackfoot	ID	47	0.81%
Malad High School	Malad City	ID	46	0.79%
Ririe High School	Ririe	ID	41	0.71%
Sugar-Salem High School	Sugar City	ID	39	0.67%
Kuna High School	Kuna	ID	38	0.65%
Centennial High School	Boise	ID	37	0.64%
Meridian High School	Meridian	ID	36	0.62%
Capital High School	Boise	ID	35	0.60%
Teton High School	Driggs	ID	33	0.57%
Borah High School	Boise	ID	31	0.53%
Mountain View High School	Meridian	ID	30	0.52%
Butte High School	Arco	ID	29	0.50%
Mountain Home High School	Mountain Home	ID	29	0.50%
Salmon High School	Salmon	ID	29	0.50%
Eagle High School	Eagle	ID	26	0.45%
West Jefferson High School	Terreton	ID	26	0.45%
Central High School	Rexburg	ID	25	0.43%
Jerome High School	Jerome	ID	24	0.41%
Timberline High School	Boise	ID	24	0.41%
Emerson High School	Idaho Falls	ID	22	0.38%
North Fremont High School	Ashton	ID	22	0.38%
Caldwell Senior High School	Caldwell	ID	21	0.36%
Declo High School	Declo	ID	21	0.36%
Emmett High School	Emmett	ID	21	0.36%
West Side High School	Dayton	ID	21	0.36%
Grace High School	Grace	ID	20	0.34%
Boise High School	Boise	ID	19	0.33%
Challis High School	Challis	ID	19	0.33%

Highschool	Highschool City	Highschool State	Headcount	Percent of Total
Wood River High School	Hailey	ID	19	0.33%
Kimberly High School	Kimberly	ID	18	0.31%
Shoshone Bannock High School	Fort Hall	ID	18	0.31%
Middleton Senior High School	Middleton	ID	17	0.29%
Nampa High School	Nampa	ID	17	0.29%
American Falls Academy	American Falls	ID	16	0.28%
Skyview High School	Nampa	ID	16	0.28%
North Gem High School	Bancroft	ID	15	0.26%
Rocky Mountain High School	Meridian	ID	15	0.26%
Vallivue Senior High School	Caldwell	ID	15	0.26%
Columbia High School	Nampa	ID	14	0.24%
Fruitland High School	Fruitland	ID	13	0.22%
Filer High School	Filer	ID	12	0.21%
Jefferson High School	Rigby	ID	12	0.21%
Mackay Jr/Sr High School	Mackay	ID	12	0.21%
Carey High School	Carey	ID	11	0.19%
Clark County Jr-Sr High School	Dubois	ID	11	0.19%
Parma High School	Parma	ID	11	0.19%
Rockland Jr-Sr High School	Rockland	ID	11	0.19%
Star Valley High School	Afton	WY	11	0.19%
Bishop Kelly High School	Boise	ID	10	0.17%
Canyon Ridge High School	Twin Falls	ID	10	0.17%
Coeur D Alene Sr High School	Coeur D Alene	ID	10	0.17%
Valley High School	Hazelton	ID	10	0.17%
Wendell High School	Wendell	ID	10	0.17%

Table 14: Average debt

StudentClass	AverageLoanDebt	Headcount
1-FR	6186	2536
2-SO	10408	1565
3-JU	13175	892
4-SE	15271	722

Average Loan Debt of Students that left ISU w/o graduating

