

RESEARCH BRIEF

No. 91-15

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Students Dropped for Non-Payment Survey Results: Fall 2015

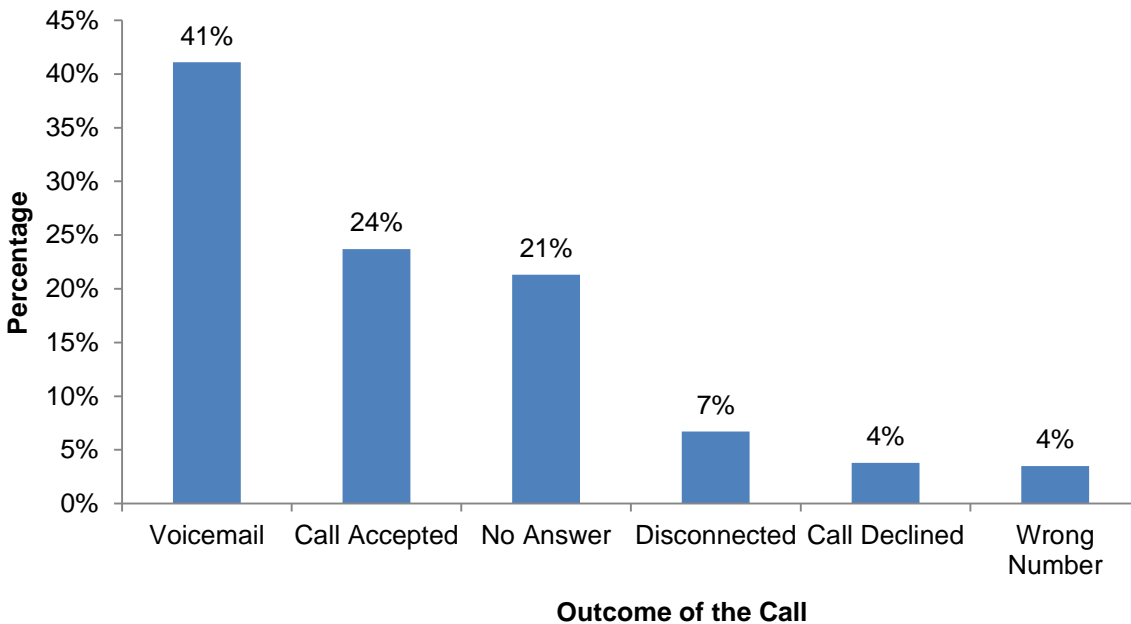
This Research Brief presents results from a Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Call Center survey conducted to better understand the reasons students were dropped for non-payment in Fall 2015. The survey was conducted prior to the start of the second 8-week session and thus does not encompass the entire population of dropped students in Fall 2015.

The NOVA Call Center initially attempted to contact a list of 4,769 students who had been dropped for non-payment. Only 1,128 (24 percent) of these students participated in the survey (see Table 1 and Figure 1 next page). There were 180 students who were contacted but did not wish to participate in the survey (4 percent), and the remaining 3,461 (73 percent) were not able to be reached.

Table 1. Call Outcomes from the Survey of Students Dropped for Non-Payment: Fall 2015

Call Outcome	#	%
Voicemail message left for student	1,961	41.1%
Student accepted the call	1,128	23.7%
No answer, no voicemail option	1,014	21.3%
Phone number disconnected or not in service	321	6.7%
Student declined the call	180	3.8%
Wrong number	165	3.5%
Total	4,769	100.0%

**Figure 1. Call Outcomes from the Survey of Students Dropped for Non-Payment:
Fall 2015**



As shown in Table 2 and Figure 2 (both next page), among the 1,128 students who participated in the survey, the most commonly cited reason for not paying tuition on time was financial aid (319 students, 28 percent). These students indicated the following issues regarding financial aid:

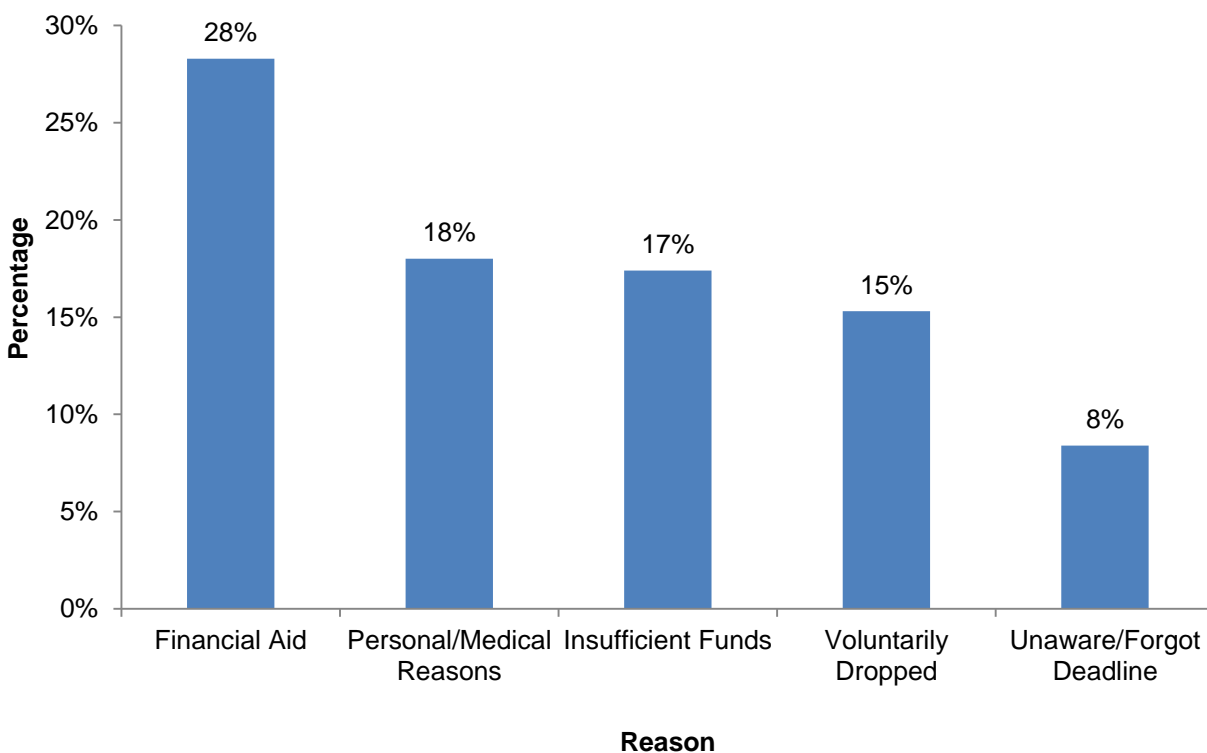
- The financial aid process took too long.
- The student had difficulty understanding the process.
- The financial aid To-Do List items were confusing and required more clarification.
- The student received conflicting or incorrect information regarding the process and To-Do List items.
- The student was not aware of the minimum required enrollment (6 credits) to qualify.
- The Financial Aid Office asked for the same documents even after previous submissions.
- The student experienced issues regarding Satisfactory Academic Progress/financial aid eligibility.
- The financial aid award was less than expected.

The next most commonly cited reasons were personal or medical events (203 students, 18 percent), insufficient funds (196 students, 17 percent), and a voluntary decision to let the class drop (173 students, 15 percent).

Table 2. Students Dropped for Non-Payment Survey Results — Reasons that Prevented Students from Making Their Tuition Payment on Time: Fall 2015

Reason	Responses	
	#	%
Financial aid	319	28.3%
Personal/medical (sick, life changing event)	203	18.0%
Insufficient funds	196	17.4%
Voluntarily let class drop	173	15.3%
Unaware/forgot deadline	95	8.4%
Transferred to another college	50	4.4%
Payment plan – too expensive, missed enrollment	29	2.6%
Military – deployed	20	1.8%
Third party payment paperwork not timely	18	1.6%
Class cancelled	8	0.7%
Never enrolled or class never dropped	7	0.6%
Failed to submit senior citizen tuition waiver	5	0.4%
Difficulty submitting payment on QuikPay	4	0.4%
No reason provided	1	0.1%
Total	1,128	100.0%

Figure 2. Students Dropped for Non-Payment Survey Results — Top Five Reasons that Prevented Students from Making Their Tuition Payment on Time: Fall 2015

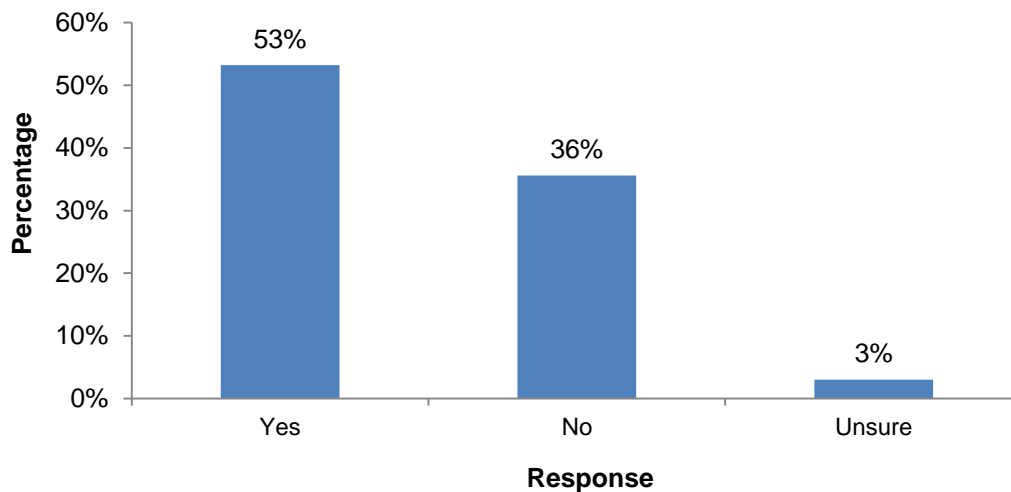


Students were asked if they would have continued their course(s) at NOVA had they not been dropped (see Table 3 and Figure 3). The majority of respondents (600 students, 53 percent) indicated that they would have continued their courses; while 402 students (36 percent) said they would not have continued even if they had not been dropped.

Table 3. Students Dropped for Non-Payment Survey Question: “If You Were Not Dropped for Non-payment, Would You Have Continued in Your Course(s) at NOVA?”

Response	#	%
Yes	600	53.2%
No	402	35.6%
Unsure	28	2.5%
No Response	98	8.7%
Total	1,128	100.0%

Figure 3. Students Dropped for Non-Payment Survey Question: “If You Were Not Dropped for Non-payment, Would You Have Continued in Your Course(s) at NOVA?”



Students were also asked what NOVA could have done to help them remain enrolled. The top responses, ordered from highest to lowest, were as follows:

1. Extend tuition payment deadline.
2. Extend payment plan and improve terms.
3. Notify students before dropping.
 - *Text message notification was suggested*
4. Streamline the financial aid process.
 - *Improve how financial aid communicates with students*
 - *Students reported having difficulty understanding the financial aid process*