

# K. BRANDON STOKES

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## CONSULTING TOPICS

- Retention data collection and organization
- Creating a retention data warehouse in Google Sheets
- Using retention data warehouse for interactive and visual reports
- Predicting retention using both advanced and simple methods
- Using Google Sheets for university-wide registration reporting and analyzing
- Using academic probation/suspension policies to enhance student success
- Deregistration process and relationship with accounting holds
- Enrolling first-year students
- Minimizing retention expenses (in-house vs third-party)
- Student survey development and incentives
- Using withdrawal policies to enhance student success
- Boosting summer school enrollment using Pell Grant

## EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

**SAS® Academy for Data Science** 2018 Cary, NC  
*SAS Certified Data Scientist Using SAS 9*  
*SAS Certified Analytics Professional Using SAS 9*  
*SAS Certified Big Data Professional Using SAS 9*  
*SAS Certified Predictive Modeler Using SAS Enterprise Miner 14*

**North Carolina State University** 2017 Raleigh, NC  
*ST 511, Experimental Statistics in Biological Sciences I*  
*ST 512, Experimental Statistics in Biological Sciences II*

**Meredith College** 2017 Raleigh, NC  
*MAT 220, Linear Algebra*

**North Carolina State University** 2011 Raleigh, NC  
*Master of Education in Higher Education Administration*  
*Specialization: Student Affairs*

**North Carolina State University** 2009 Raleigh, NC  
*Bachelor of Science in Sport Management*

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Meredith College: Retention & Student Success** Raleigh, NC July 2014 – Present

*Director of Retention and Student Success*

- Created in 2014, lead the college's new Office of Retention and Student Success and oversee all retention initiatives in order to maximize fall-to-fall retention among first-year students as well as, ultimately, four and six-year graduation rates.
- Achieved significant growth in retention (low 70s to nearly 80% for four of the past five years), reaching highs not seen this century. As a result, four-year graduation rates are now at their highest since 1992-93.
- Develop proactive and reactive retention strategies, including, but not limited to, survey administration, financial aid management, intervention and relationship management, tracking and data management, policy-shaping, predictive analytics/machine learning, collaboration among faculty, staff, and administrators, and more.
- Build a campus culture of collaboration and effective intervention for students at risk of performing poorly and/or not continuing to graduation
- Develop communication and marketing plans in order to promote positive trends, statistics, and student experiences at developmentally-appropriate stages in the student cycle
- Write articles and consult for and both internal and external audiences based on student development theory, best practices, and responsible administration of retention and higher education policies/practices

**Meredith College: Academic & Career Planning** Raleigh, NC September 2012 – June 2014

*Assistant Director, Academic Advising*

- Advised students of all academic abilities and led workshops on academic and life planning, including major selection/declaration, academic difficulty, goal-setting, four-year planning, time management, study skills, resume and cover letter building, and more
- Led and coordinated the selection, advisee assignment, training, and evaluation of freshman faculty advisers
- Oversaw planning, implementation, and evaluation of the campus-wide summer enrollment events for all incoming freshmen
- Coordinated the Early Warning system for students in academic distress, responding to referrals from faculty and staff and personally following up with students to determine the best route going forward
- Directed the transition of placement testing for new students from in-person and on-campus to remote and online, saving valuable time for faculty and staff and improving the student experience at their summer advising and registration event
- Created a new six-page academic probation action plan to replace former worksheet in order to enhance students' understanding of the process, self-reflection, goal-setting, and interactions with their professional and faculty advisers

**Meredith College: Office of Institutional Advancement** Raleigh, NC July 2010 – September 2012

*Meredith Fund Program Coordinator*

- Oversaw the student Phonathon with the primary responsibility of raising unrestricted annual funds for The Meredith Fund
- Continuously surpassed annual fundraising goals and developed an internal assessment model that was used for both aggregate planning and assessment as well as individual performance evaluations and goal-setting
- Recruited, directed, and trained a roster of up to three dozen student callers and supervisors
- Led both the renovation of the call center and the development of an internal, budget-neutral software program used to manage calls responses, funds raised, and provide data sets for assessment

**North Carolina State University Athletics: Game Operations** Raleigh, NC January 2009 – July 2010

*Graduate Assistant*

- Served as the assistant game day manager for men's and women's basketball and football; served as the game day manager for seven other varsity sports by supervising event staff, police officers, fire marshals, paramedics, and scorers/clock operators
- Prioritized issues as they arose during events without delay or panic in order to maximize fan experience
- Participated on the following committees: Athletics Safety Committee, Athletics Minority and Equity Issues Advisory Committee, Disability Compliance Advisory Team, and the volleyball head coach search committee
- Edited the Athletics Department Administration and Operations Manual Version 2.0, NC State Athletics football fan guide, Olympic sports' visiting team guide, and football visiting team guide

## NOTABLE PROJECTS AND SUCCESS STRATEGIES

Achieved **significant growth and stability in fall-to-fall freshman retention rates**, reaching highs not seen this century. Four-year graduation rates are, subsequently, now at their highest since 1992-93.

Working closely with the registrar, academic deans, dean of students, financial assistance, faculty, and other support staff, **led the overhaul the college's academic standing policy**. Result was a new comprehensive policy **that better identified students in academic difficulty, virtually eliminated the issue of students falling through the cracks, and increased our academic standards**.

**Published three articles:** "What college freshman retention rates miss when measuring student success" (<https://www.universitybusiness.com/article/what-freshman-retention-rates-miss-when-measuring-student-success>), "How to Assess Your Fit for a College" (<https://www.meredith.edu/admissions-blog/how-to-assess-your-fit-for-a-college>), and "Three Ways to Stretch Your Retention and Analytics Budget Further" (<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/three-ways-stretch-your-retention-analytics-budgets-further-stokes/>).

Working closely with directors of admissions and financial assistance, **developed a new scholarship opportunity**, The Meredith Promise Scholarship, specifically designed to retain deserving students and provide financial support from their second year through graduation. Results are **higher retention of high-need+high-achieving students** which will have a positive impact on upcoming graduation rates.

**Presented at the 2018 National Symposium on Student Retention** in Salt Lake City, UT on the topic, "Exploring the Effects of Academic Policies on Student Behavior." **Will be presenting at the 2019 National Symposium on Student Retention** in New Orleans, LA on the topic, "How One Google Sheet Can Change the (Retention Director's) World."

Working closely with faculty, department heads, deans, support staff, IT, and the provost, **led overhaul of freshman course advising and registration process**. Results were a **greatly improved event experience, higher schedule satisfaction and customization, lower course withdrawal rates, and greater likelihood of students being successful in their first semester**.

Working closely with faculty, IT, and support staff, **led digitization of the college's placement testing process in order to enhance significantly the summer registration event experience for new students**. Results were online tests within our Learning Management System that students took before attending the summer advising and registration event... thus, improving the event experience.

**Greatly enhanced culture and morale of student Phonathon** by renovating the space, changing hiring and management practices, and instituting transparency in evaluation process. Result was a happier, open, and more productive work environment.

Working closely with IT, **led digitization of Phonathon program by co-creating and administering a unique in-house CRM** that became the envy of peer institutions. Program costs the college zero dollars while maximizes potential revenue in fundraising phone calls through more efficient calling and student-worker management.