

College Persistence Questionnaire: Components and Sample Items

The *College Persistence Questionnaire (CPQ)* is composed of three components: the Student Information Form, the Student Experiences Form, and the Institution Specific Form. This page provides a brief description of each form as well as illustrative sample items. A more comprehensive presentation of the *CPQ* is available upon request: email bill.davidson@angleo.edu

Student Information Form

This section of the questionnaire collects pre-matriculation information about students that can be helpful in understanding them individually as well as in analyzing aggregate trends across various subgroups. Responses to these questions may be particularly useful in determining an institution's most effective recruitment strategy. The questions tap the characteristics listed below.

sex, ethnicity, marital status, residential status, parents' education level, educational goal, financial aid and other monetary resources, reasons for selecting the particular school

Student Experiences Form

This form assesses students' reactions to your college or university's academic and social environments. It is a robust predictor of retention and therefore the most important component of the *CPQ*. The Student Experience Form consists of 69 questions, partitioned into ten psychometrically validated scales. The ten scales or themes and representative items are listed below. All of the questions are answered on a five-point Likert scale. The response choices vary for different items depending on the wording of the question.

Institutional Commitment

How confident are you that this is the right college or university for you?

How much thought have you given to stopping your education here (perhaps transferring to another college, going to work, or leaving for other reasons)?

Degree Commitment

At this moment in time, how strong would you say your commitment is to earning a college degree, here or elsewhere?

There are so many things that can interfere with students making progress toward a degree, feelings of uncertainty about finishing are likely to occur along the way. At this moment in time, how certain are you that you will earn a college degree?

Academic Integration

In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of instruction you are receiving here?

How much of a connection do you see between what you are learning here and your future career possibilities?

Social Integration

How strong is your sense of connectedness with others (faculty, students, staff) on this campus?

How much do you think you have in common with other students here?

Advising Effectiveness

How easy is it to get answers to your questions about things related to your education here?

How satisfied are you with the academic advising you receive here?

Collegiate Stress

Students differ quite a lot in how distressed they get over the various aspects of college life. Overall, how much stress would you say that experience while attending this institution?

How much pressure do you feel when trying to meet deadlines for course assignments?

Financial Strain

How often do you worry about having enough money to meet your needs?

When considering the financial costs of being in college, how often do you feel unable to do things that other students here can afford to do?

Scholastic Conscientiousness

How often do you turn in assignments past the due date?

How often do you miss class for reasons other than illness or participation in school-related activities?

Academic Efficacy

How confident are you that you can get the grades you want?

When you consider the techniques you use to study, how effective do you think your study skills are?

Academic Motivation

Some courses seem to take a lot more time than others. How much extra time are you willing to devote to your studies in those courses?

How often do you encounter course assignments that are actually enjoyable to do?

Institution Specific Form

Every school we work with is unique with strengths and challenges that are not typical of other colleges and universities. For instance, one of our institutions has a high percentage of scholarship athletes; a second institution has a large number of military cadets. The Institution Specific Form allows policy makers, advisors, and faculty to compose questions that deal with issues that are particularly important to their schools.