

# Why Do Students Temporarily Leave Southeastern?

---

Policy Brief #8

Fall 1999

---

To answer the question of what factors cause a student to "stop-out" of their educational experience at Southeastern, a survey was conducted of undergraduate students who were enrolled in Fall 1996 but who were not enrolled in the Spring or Summer 1997. In the survey, 221 students indicated they did intend to return to Southeastern in the future. Based on the information gathered from the survey, the decision to temporarily stop attending Southeastern was made for a variety of reasons.

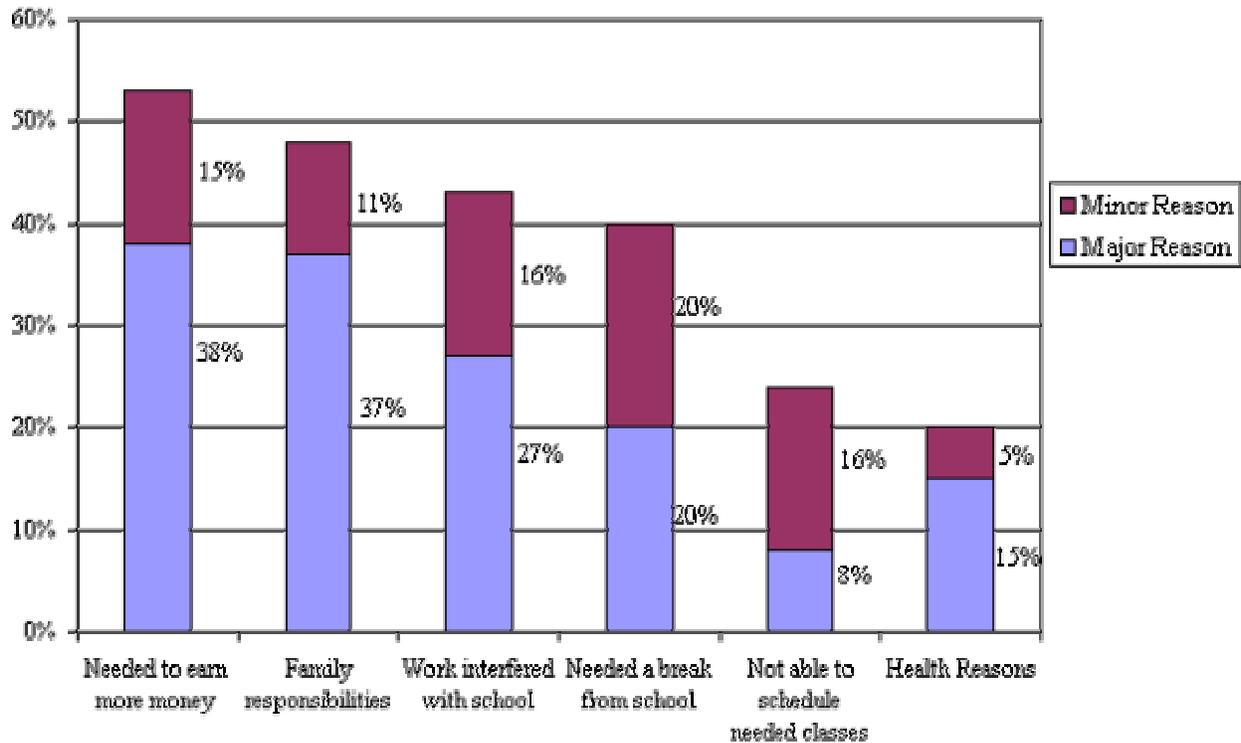
## When do you plan to return to SLU?

The 221 undergraduates surveyed were asked when did they plan to return to Southeastern. Forty-seven percent (n=103) of the respondents indicated they planned to return to SLU the next semester. Thirty-one percent (n=68) indicated they planned to return within the next year. Fifteen percent (n=32) indicated they were not sure at this time when they would return. Six percent (n=14) indicated they would return within the next two years and 2% (n=4) indicated they would return within the next five years.

## What were the reason(s) why you decided to stop attending SLU for a while?

When asked what factors contributed to their decision to stop attending Southeastern for a while, the surveyed students indicated a variety of reasons.

## Reasons for Stopping Out



- Needing to earn more money was the most frequent response with 83 respondents (38%) indicating it as a major reason and 32 respondents (15%) indicating it as a minor reason.
- Family responsibilities that needed to be taken care of was another reason with 82 respondents (37%) indicating it as a major reason and 24 respondents (11%) indicating it as a minor reason.
- Sixty respondents (27%) indicated that work interfered with school in a major way and 36 respondents (16%) indicated it a minor reason.
- Forty-three respondents (20%) indicated that a major reason was they just needed a break from school and 44 respondents (20%) indicated a needed break was a minor reason.
- Health reasons were cited as a major reason by 33 respondents (15%) and a minor reason for 12 respondents (5%)
- Not being able to schedule the classes they needed was cited as a major reason by 18 respondents (8%) with 36 respondents (16%) indicating it was a minor reason.
- Military and religious obligations were indicated as "not a reason" to stop-out by 93% of the respondents (n=205 and n=206 respectively).
- Academic problems were cited as "not a reason" to stop-out by 81% of the respondents (179).

This Policy Brief presents issues addressed in Goal 7 of the University's Strategic Plan: *To increase the proportion of students graduating in four years.* For more information about Southeastern Louisiana University, check the web site of the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment at <http://www.selu.edu/Administration/Inst-Research/>.