

Undeclared No More: Effects on Admission, GPA and Retention

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Overview

- Overview of UMass Amherst
- The Exploratory Track Program and how admissions works
- The first year entering class
- Longitudinal Student Database
- One year outcomes
- Case studies on major declaration
- Conclusion/Wrap-up

UMass Amherst Facts

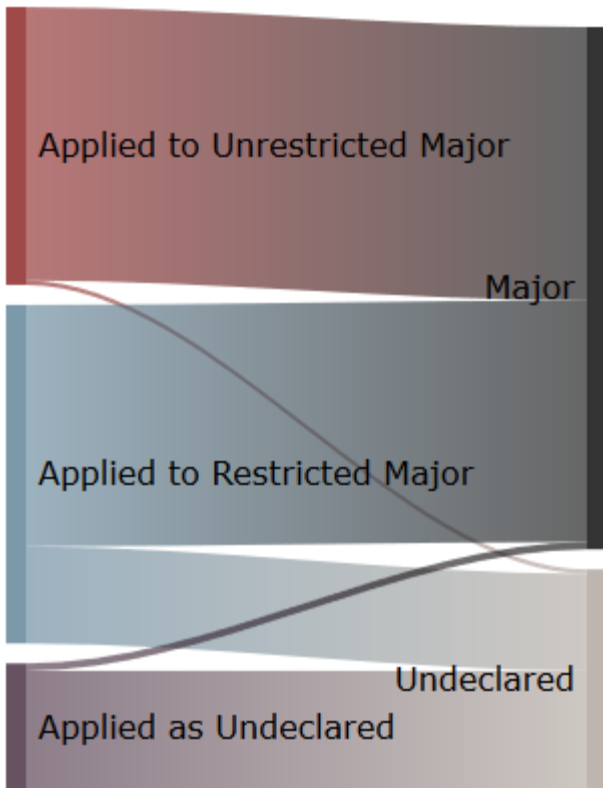
- The flagship campus of the UMass system, the only public Carnegie very high research university in the state
- Enrollment: over 30,000 students (Fall 2016)
 - 78% undergraduate, 22% graduate students
 - Entering class of 4,643 students
- Over 50 academic departments
 - Over 100 undergraduate majors
- Research and development expenditures over \$200 million

The Exploratory Track Program

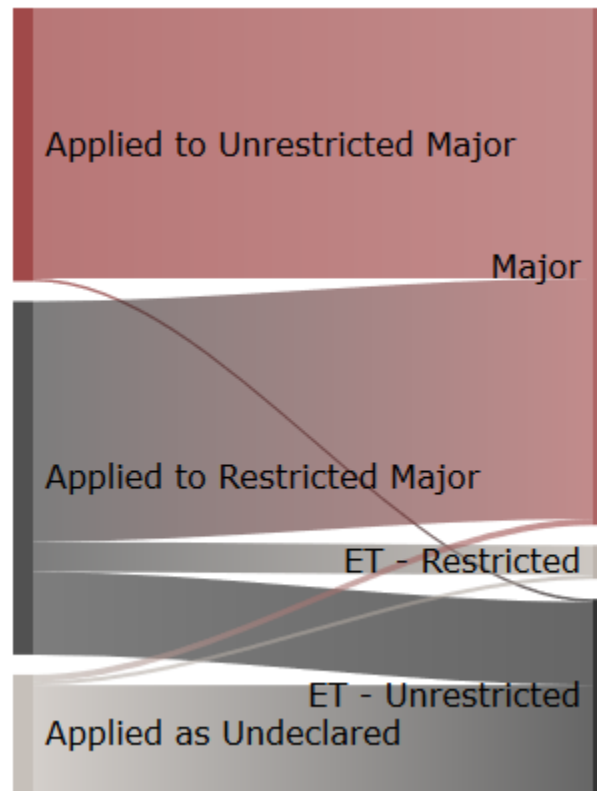
- Late 2014/early 2015: decision to no longer allow students to enter without a major
- Exploratory Track Programs within each School or College
 - 5 programs with open enrollment
 - 3 restricted programs
- Intent:
 - Students will benefit from working closely with academic advisors to explore potential majors within their collegiate unit and across campus
 - Students will also participate in academic programming embedded within their School or College

Admissions – How it Works

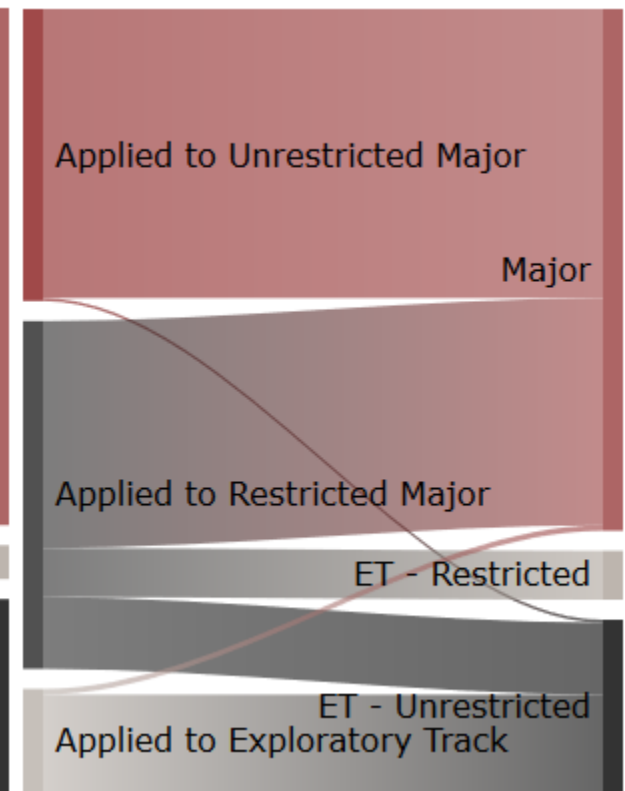
Fall 2014 & before



Fall 2015



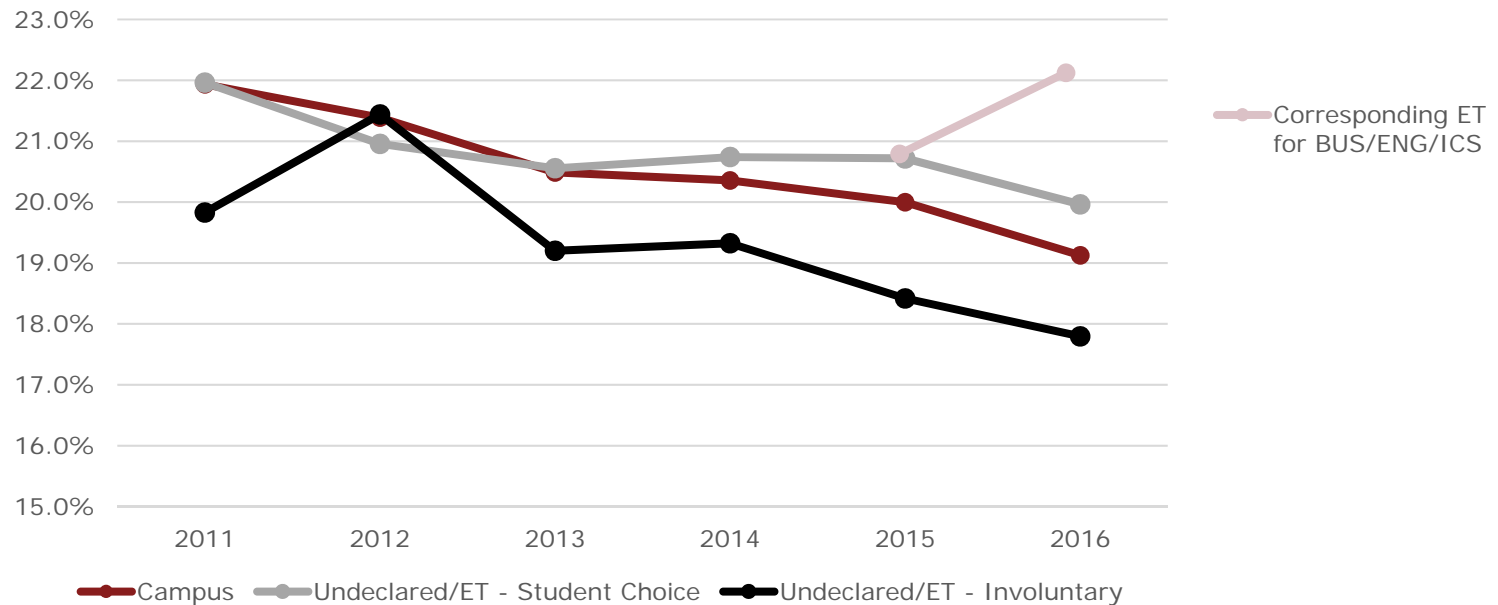
Fall 2016 & future



Sankey diagrams generated by Google Charts: <https://developers.google.com/chart/interactive/docs/gallery/sankey>

Admissions - Yield

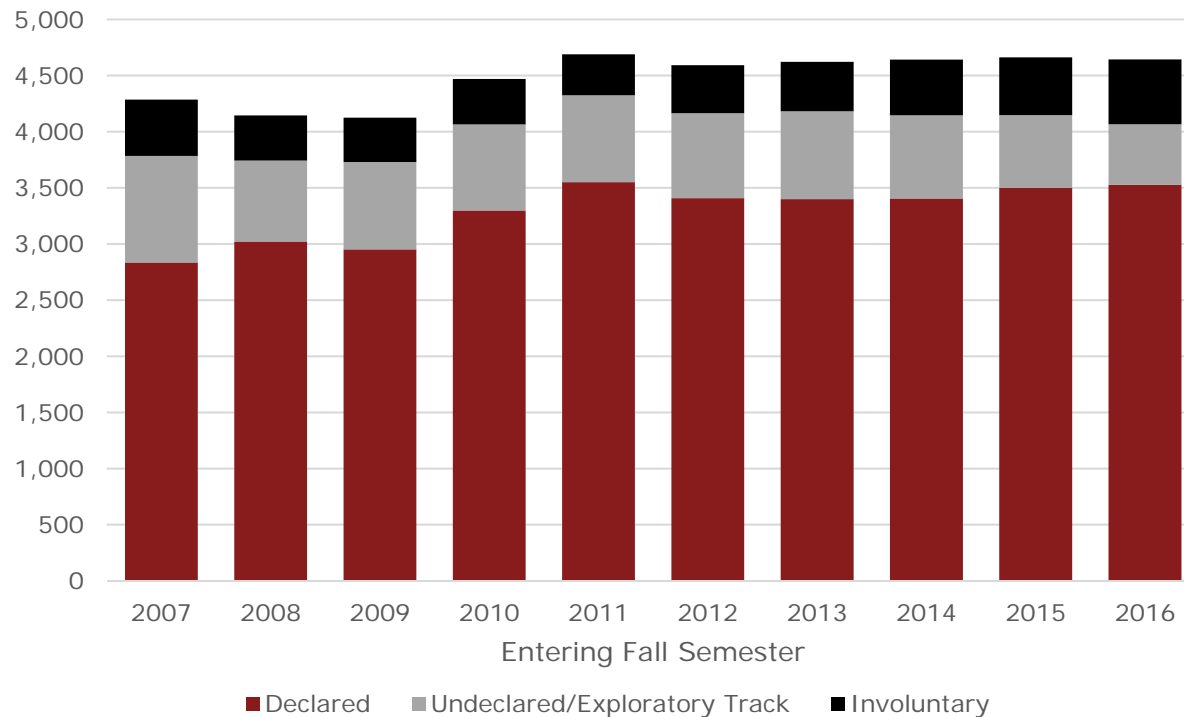
- Yield has been decreasing slightly



- Exploratory Track program did not have negative impact overall

The First-Year Entering Class (Size)

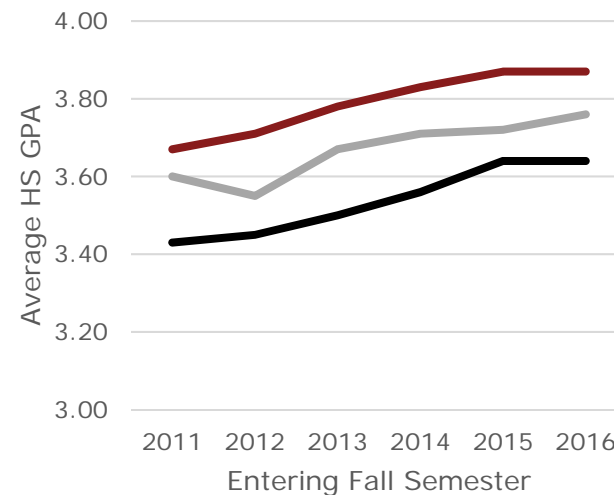
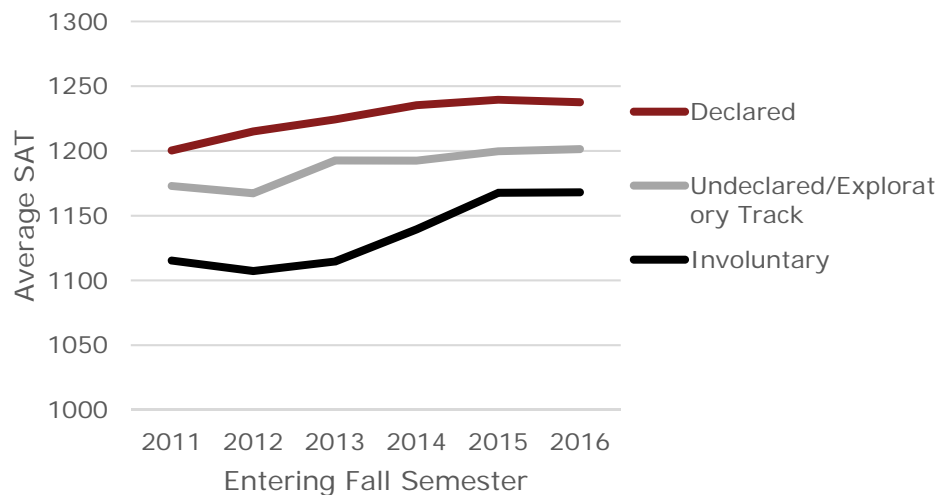
- Size has increased in last 10 years



- Proportion with declared major increased, as did proportion of involuntary.

The First-Year Entering Class (Academic Profile)

- Academic profile has improved in last 10 years



- Profile has always lagged for the Undeclared, now Exploratory Track students, especially the involuntary group.

Longitudinal Student Database (LSDB)

- Tracks cohorts of students semester over semester
- Started with 1989 entering cohort
- Use student census file as base
 - Add data from admissions, academic standing, financial aid, end of term grades, degrees
 - Track certain data points for every semester (enrolled/graduation status, major, honors, STEM, GPA, credits taken)
 - Derive outcome variables
- Future plan is to get this in Tableau with swanky vizzes

One Year Outcomes: Retention & GPA

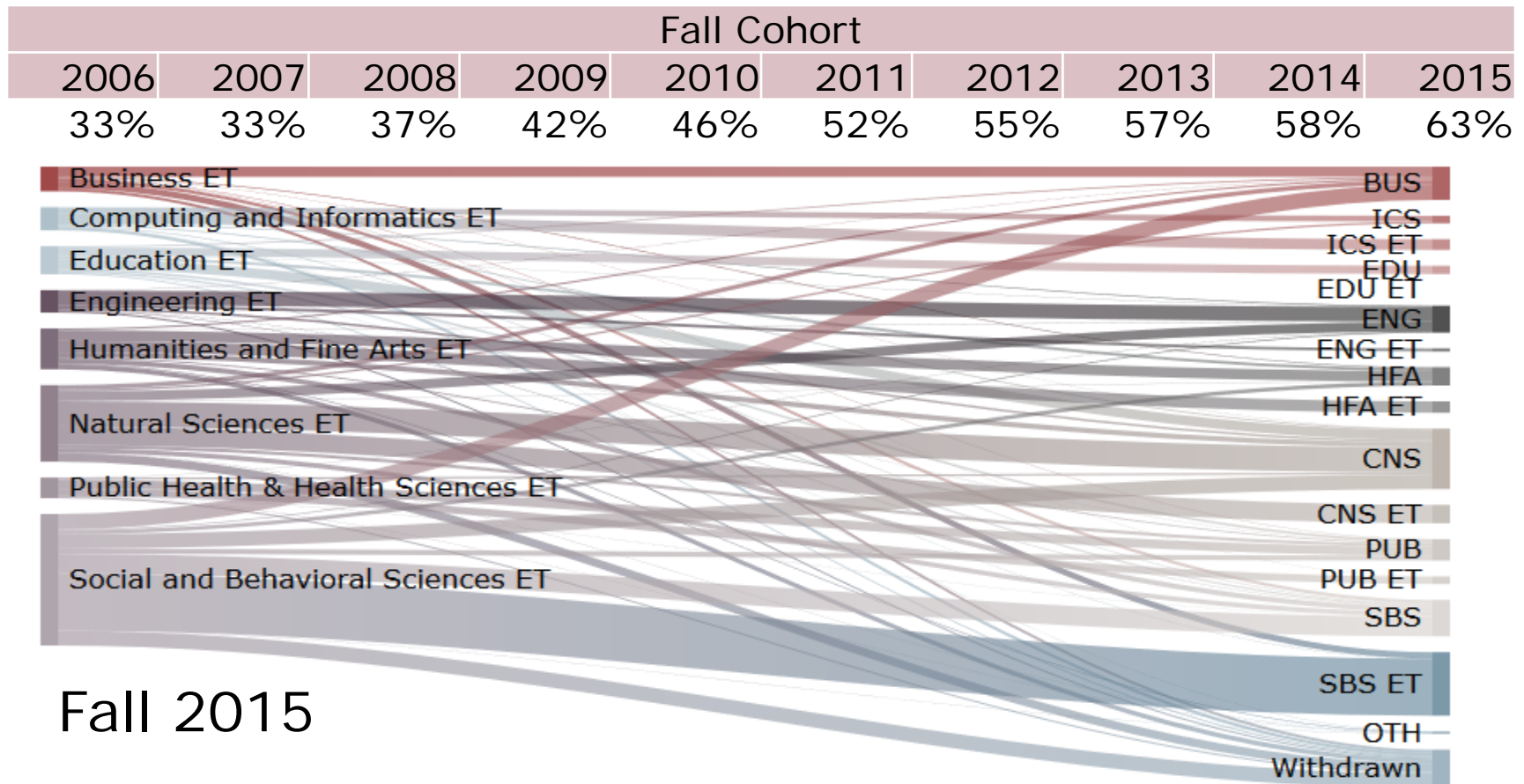
- 1-year retention is improving – up nearly 5% in last 10 years (86.5% to 91.3%)
- No negative impact from Exploratory Program, increase is larger for those in ET (0.3%) than those with declared majors (0.1%)

Fall 2015 Cohort	Declared	ET Student Choice	ET Invol	ET Inv CS	ET Inv ENG	ET Inv BUS
Overall	91.8%	90.6%	88.7%	85.5%	88.1%	89.7%
Corresponding ET				85.3%	92.1%	89.1%
Other ET				85.7%	85.0%	89.9%

- No change in GPA in 1st semester and end of 1st year

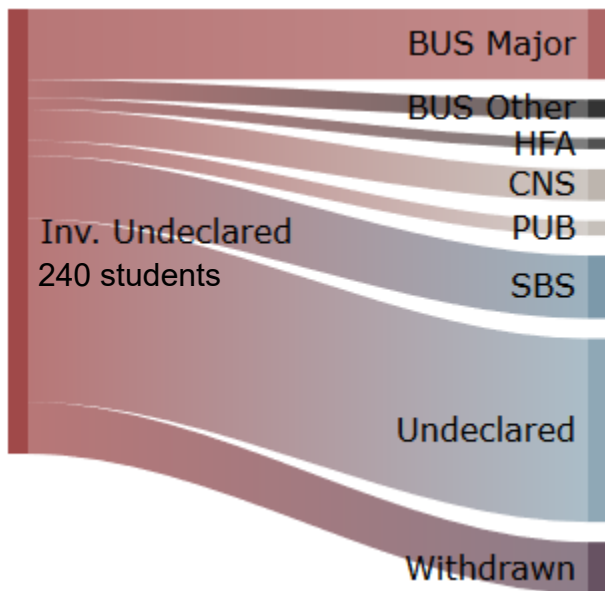
One Year Outcomes: Major Declaration

- More students declare major after 1 year



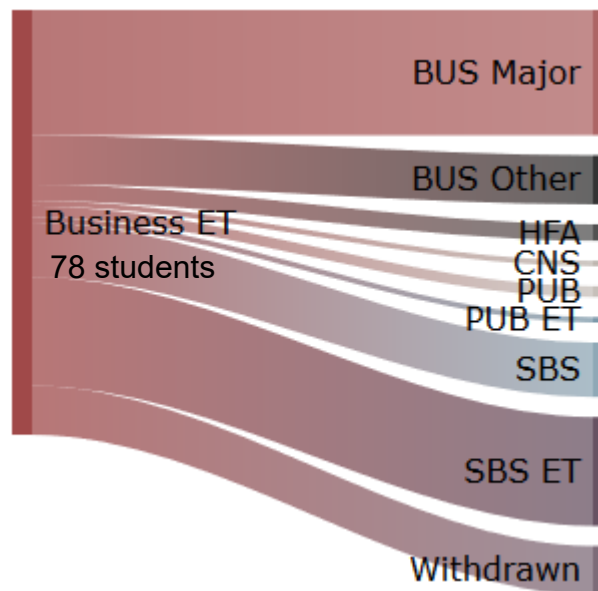
Case Study (Major Declaration): Business

Fall 2014



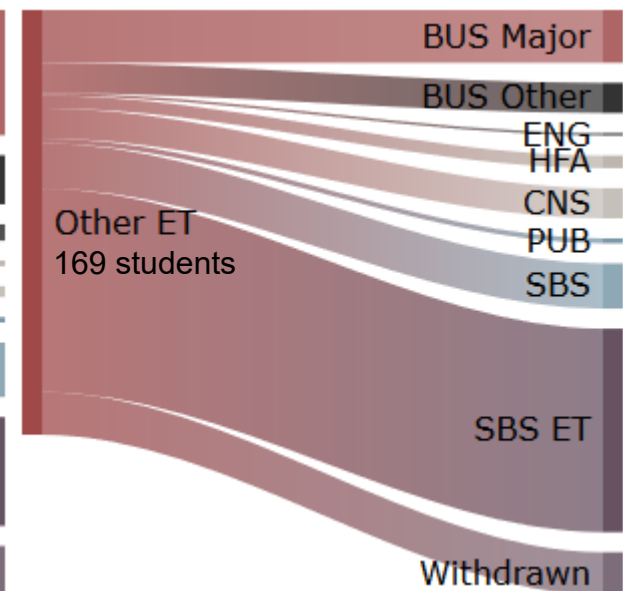
Retention: 88.3%
 Desired Major: 18%
 Other Major: 35%
 Undeclared: 47%

Fall 2015
Business ET



Retention: 88.5%
 Desired Major: 33%
 Other Major: 37%
 Other ET: 30%

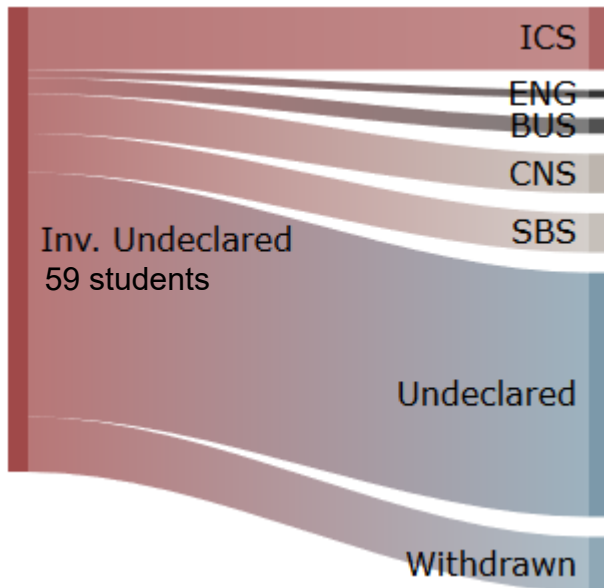
Fall 2015
Other ET



Retention: 88.9%
 Desired Major: 14%
 Other Major: 33%
 Other ET: 53%

Case Study (Major Declaration): Computer Science

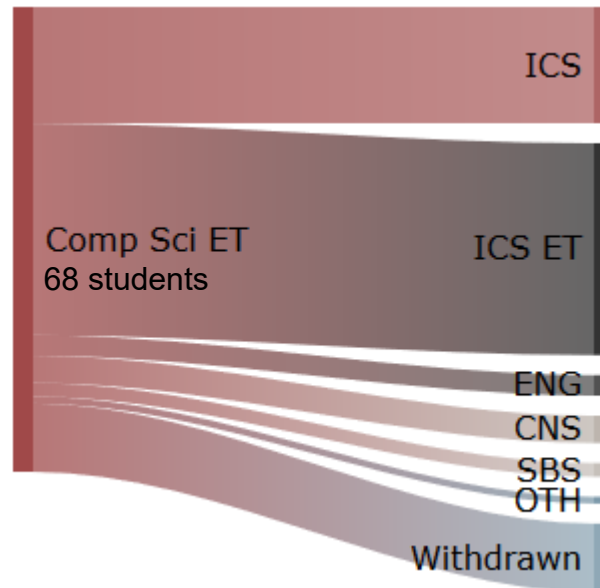
Fall 2014



Retention: 88.1%
 Desired Major: 15%
 Other Major: 25%
 Undeclared: 60%

Fall 2015

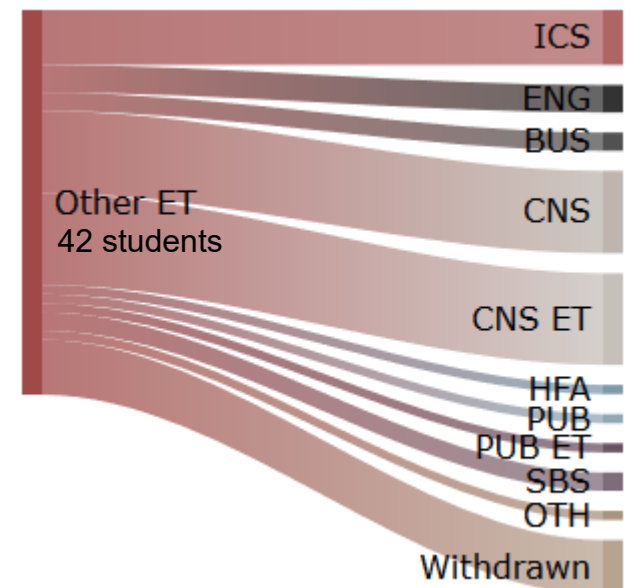
Computer Science ET



Retention: 85.3%
 Desired Major: 29%
 Comp Sci ET: 53%
 Other Major: 18%

Fall 2015

Other ET



Retention: 85.7%
 Desired Major: 17%
 Other Major: 52%
 Other ET: 31%

Conclusion/Wrap-up

- The Exploratory Program seems to be working so far:
 - Retention has increased slightly.
 - More students are declaring a major.
- Still too early to tell true impact since this fall is the first year of true implementation (with caveats)

Questions?

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