Why use software?
UNA currently has no easy mechanism for collecting, analyzing, and redistributing timely data pertaining to student success. Currently, we primarily collect
- two-week attendance data for financial services and
- mid-term grades.
A retention software program will provide a useful tool for departments, faculty, advisors, support offices, and other offices, such as Athletics and the Office of International Affairs, to understand specific student needs sooner and to engage in timely interventions that encourage student success, retention, and persistence.

Many institutions across the country use retention software of some kind, and other institutions that have used some of the software we are considering have shown significant retention increases. For example, Central Michigan University recorded a 4% increase in retention in the first year of MapWorks software. Jacksonville State University reported a 5% increase in student–athlete retention in the first year of GradesFirst software.

What should the software do?
The software should enable faculty, advisors, and support offices to easily and quickly provide data on grades, attendance, behaviors, etc., so that reports can be run quickly, efficiently, and regularly. These reports will be provided to faculty members, advisors, and support offices for timely intervention.

Who should contribute?
Faculty, advisors, and staff, especially in General Education and the First-Year Experience (FYE) Program, will need to share attendance records, grades, and perhaps other observations. We expect that the software will be fast and easy to use. Depending on the software selected, students may be invited and encouraged to develop their own profiles as well. Incentives to achieve high levels of student participation can and will be offered.

Who will receive reports and data from this software?
Any department, advisor, faculty member, support office, or other university office involved in student success can be provided information if they have a legal need to know or direct bearing on the case or situation at hand.

Will software affect everyone?
Eventually, we hope to roll the entire undergraduate population into the system by Fall 2017.

Who administers the software?
The FYE Director will administer the software, assisted by the USC Director. While the FYE director will provide retention reports for the first year, in subsequent years involving upper level student persistence, the USC Director will provide reports.

Who is choosing this software?
The University Success Center Advisory Committee, a body of faculty and staff from across the institution, will be making the selection based on your input from presentations. The Advisory Committee will be specifically looking at a number of key considerations:
- Does it work with Banner? Angel? What does that mean in specific?
- What training is involved? Who provides? How? What cost?
- What is the cost, both immediately and in the long term?
- What support / maintenance is offered both in the short and long term?
- What other schools use it? What success (satisfaction / retention) rates do they have?
- What is the length of the contract? What trial period is included?
- How does the software meet FERPA guidelines while still allowing intervention?
- In software that involves student input, how are students (and also faculty and staff) educated or advised so that they know what their data will be used for, and who will be using it?
- Will the software be web-based (accessible from any computer) or machine based (access only on computers with a licensed copy)?