PATHWAY TO THE STARS … A SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM ON THE RETENTION OF STEM STUDENTS

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Pathway to the STARS … A Summer Bridge Program to Retain STEM Students

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Abstract – The College of Science, Engineering, and Technology (CSET) at Norfolk State University (NSU) provides a series of services to students and faculty in an effort to enhance academic success, specifically the retention of students in STEM degree programs. The retention rate we are addressing is the freshmen to sophomore retention rate (the number of first-time full-time freshmen students who enroll at NSU during the fall semester and return to NSU the following fall semester). A math-focused Summer Bridge Program (Pathway to the STARS) is one of the services provided to incoming freshmen students to aid in increasing this retention rate. This paper will present findings for the cohorts of students participating in the Summer Bridge Program from 2007 – 2012. Information provided will include the summer schedules and activities of the program, mathematics placement tests results, student performance in their fall math classes, the retention rates for the cohort of students, and the overall retention rate for the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology from 2007-2012.