

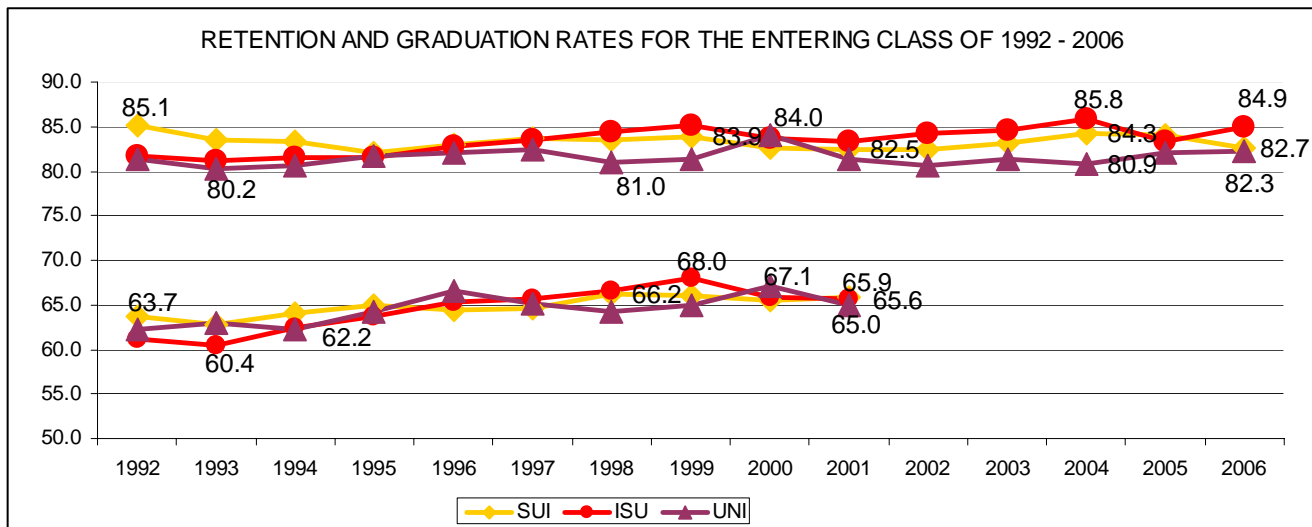
Contact: Diana Gonzalez

ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

Action Requested: Receive the Annual Report on Student Retention and Graduation Rates for Fall 2007.

Executive Summary: The graduation and retention rates report describes two groups of students: (1) first-time, full-time freshmen and (2) transfer students. Data for the first-time, full-time freshmen group include first- and second-year retention rates as well as four- and six-year graduation rates. Data for the transfer student group include first-year retention rates and four-year graduation rates. The Fall 2007 Report includes the following trends/changes:

- 📖 An average of more than 81% of the past five entering classes at the Regent universities returned for the second year of studies.
- 📖 An average of more than 65% of the past five entering classes at the Regent universities graduated within six years.
- 📖 During the period 1992-2006, the one-year retention rates at the Regent universities have fluctuated from a low of 80.2% at UNI for the entering class of 1993 to a high of 85.8% at ISU for the entering class of 2004. The six-year graduation rates have fluctuated from a low of 60.4% at ISU for the entering class of 1993 to a high of 68.0% at ISU for the entering class of 1999.



- 📖 One-year retention rates and six-year graduation rates have consistently exceeded the national averages during the past five years.
- 📖 The average number of years to complete a degree by Regent university students who graduated within six years decreased from 4.61 for the entering classes of 1995 to 4.53 for the entering classes of 2001.

- 📖 Retention and graduation rates for racial/ethnic minority students have continued to be lower than for non-minority students.
 - ☑ For the entering class of 2006, the one-year retention rates for racial/ethnic minority students ranged from 73.3% to 82.7% while the one-year retention rates for non-minority students ranged from 82.8% to 85.2%.
 - ☑ For the entering class of 2001, the six-year graduation rates for racial/ethnic minority students ranged from 39.3% to 56.9% while the six-year graduation rates for non-minority students ranged from 66.5% to 67.3%.

The Graduation and Retention Rates Report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan strategies (1.1.2) to “continue to improve efforts to recruit, enroll, and retain a qualified and diverse student population” and (1.3.1) to “determine levels of student program completion and promote degree attainment.”

Background:

- 📖 Definition of Retention Rates. Retention is the rate at which members of an entering class return to that same institution in successive years until the completion of a degree. Research shows that the majority of students who withdraw, transfer, or otherwise leave an institution do so during the first two years of college¹.
- 📖 Retention Factors. Previous national and state studies, as well as the Regent universities’ experience, have demonstrated that the following factors contribute significantly to the retention rate – (1) student input; (2) institutional environment; and (3) academic standards².
- 📖 Best Practices in Retention. Retention practices responsible for the greatest contribution to retention include first-year programs, academic advising, and learning support². The Regent universities have established a variety of initiatives, programs, and services (such as tutoring labs, academic advising, career development services, and learning communities) to help students make a successful transition to the rigors of postsecondary learning and to the challenges of independence and adulthood³.

Highlights:






- 📖 One-Year Retention Rates. During the past ten years, the average one-year retention rate at SUI has been 83.3%; at ISU, it has been 84.3%; and at UNI, it has been 81.8%. The Fall 2007 one-year retention rate at SUI is 82.7%; at ISU, it is 84.9%; and at UNI, it is 82.3%. In 2006, the national average one-year retention rate for public four-year institutions was 73.0%⁴.
- 📖 One-Year Retention Rates by High School Rank. There is a difference in retention rates when high school rank is considered. The average one-year retention rate for Regent university students who graduated from high school in the 90th-99th percentile was 91.8% while the average one-year retention rate for students who graduated in the 50th-59th percentile was 76.6%.

¹ Source: National Center for Education Statistics.

² Source: ACT – What Works in Student Retention?

³ Attachments A-C (pgs. 4-6) describe some of the retention initiatives implemented by the Regent universities.

⁴ Source: ACT 2007, traditional admission selectivity, offering bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral programs.

-  One-Year Retention Rates by ACT Score. There is also a difference in retention rates when ACT score is considered. In Fall 2007, the average one-year retention rate for Regent university students with an ACT score of 32-36 was 89.8% while the average one-year retention rate for students with an ACT score of 19-21 was 79.8%.
-  Six-Year Graduation Rates. During the past ten years, the average six-year graduation rate at SUI has been 64.8%; at ISU, it has been 64.5%; and at UNI, it has been 64.5%. The Fall 2007 six-year graduation rate at SUI is 65.9%; at ISU, it is 65.6%; and at UNI, it is 65.0%. In 2007, the national average six-year graduation rate for public four-year institutions was 41.0%⁵. Six-year graduation rates for the Regent universities and peer institutions are included in Appendix D.
-  Six-Year Graduation Rates by First-Term GPA. There is clearly a difference in graduation rates when first-term GPA is considered. In Fall 2007, the average six-year graduation rate for students with a first-term GPA of 3.50-4.00 was 86.6% while the average six-year graduation rate for students with a first-term GPA of 2.25-2.49 was 61.7%.
-  Average Time to Degree. The average number of years to complete an undergraduate degree by students in the entering classes of 2001 at the Regent universities who graduated within six years was 4.50 years. The time beyond four years typically reflects students' participation in additional activities, such as study abroad programs, internships, and double majors. It also reflects students' degree major changes⁶. The national average time to completion for first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees in 1999-2000 was 4.60 years for students who graduated within six years⁷.
-  Diversity. Ethnic and racial minority students generally have lower retention and graduation rates than non-minority students. Significant variation can occur in the retention and graduation rates of racial and ethnic minority cohorts as a result of small cohort sizes. Resident racial and ethnic minority students have higher one-year retention rates at ISU and UNI than non-resident minority students. All resident minority students have higher six-year graduation rates than non-resident minority students. Men typically have lower retention and graduation rates than women. According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau data (January 2008), "greater proportions of young women than young men earning bachelor's degrees."

**ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, RESIDENCE, AND GENDER
ENTERING CLASS OF 2006**

	Non-Minority			Minority			Male	Female
	Res	NonRes	Total	Res	NonRes	Total		
SUI	81.5%	84.7%	82.8%	79.4%	82.8%	80.9%	82.6%	82.8%
ISU	86.4%	81.7%	85.2%	86.1%	79.1%	82.7%	83.9%	86.1%
UNI	83.2%	79.6%	83.0%	76.3%	64.0%	73.3%	79.1%	84.5%

⁵ Source: ACT 2007, traditional admission selectivity, offering bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs.

⁶ According to the National Center for Education Statistics, more than 20% of college students change their degree major.

⁷ Source: NCES.

SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, RESIDENCE, AND GENDER
ENTERING CLASS OF 2001

	Non-Minority			Minority			Male	Female
	Res	NonRes	Total	Res	NonRes	Total		
SUI	68.2%	64.8%	66.9%	59.5%	54.3%	56.9%	63.6%	67.6%
ISU	68.0%	65.1%	67.3%	61.7%	49.2%	55.6%	62.6%	69.2%
UNI	67.2%	42.6%	66.5%	51.6%	24.5%	39.3%	60.2%	67.8%

- ☑ At the University of Iowa, the one-year retention rate for racial/ethnic minorities was 1.9 percentage points lower than for non-minorities. The six-year graduation rate for racial/ethnic minorities was 10 percentage points lower than for non-minorities. The one-year retention rate for women was essentially the same as for men while the six-year graduation rate for men was four percentage points lower than for women.
- ☑ At Iowa State University, the one-year retention rate for racial/ethnic minorities was 2.5 percentage points lower than for non-minorities. The six-year graduation rate for racial/ethnic minorities was 11.7 percentage points lower than for non-minorities. The one-year retention for men was 2.2 percentage points lower than for women; the six-year graduation rate for men was 6.6 percentage points lower than for women.
- ☑ At the University of Northern Iowa, the one-year retention rate for racial/ethnic minorities was 9.7 percentage points lower than for non-minorities. The six-year graduation rate for racial/ethnic minorities was 27.2 percentage points lower than for non-minorities. The one-year retention rate for men was 5.4 percentage points lower than for women; the six-year graduation rate for men was 7.6 percentage points lower than for women.

📖 Transfer Students. Completion of an associate degree and attainment of a high transfer GPA reflect higher retention and graduation rates at the Regent universities.

- ☑ Students who transferred from Iowa community colleges after they completed an associate of arts (AA) degree had a higher one-year retention rate (85.7%) than transfer students who completed another associate degree (84.61%) or who had not completed any associate degree (76.7%). Students who transferred from Iowa community colleges after they completed an associate of arts (AA) degree had a higher four-year graduation rate (66.8%) than students who had not completed any associate degree (53.3%).
- ☑ Students with a transfer GPA of 3.00-3.24 had a significantly higher average one-year retention rate (84.1%) than students with a transfer GPA of 2.00-2.24 (66.3%), and higher average four-year graduation rates (66.0% and 38.2%, respectively).






📖 Non-Persisters⁸. Using data from the National Student Clearinghouse, the Regent universities were able to “track” students who did not return for their second year. Approximately, 23% of the entering class of 2001 who did not persist at a Regent university transferred elsewhere; of those who transferred, more than 33% graduated. Almost 8% of the entering class of 2001 graduated from another institution; when those numbers are factored into the total graduation rates, the six-year graduation rates increase from 65.0 % - 65.9% to 72.8% - 74.4%.

The data tables for the Annual Report on Graduation and Retention Rates are available on the Board of Regents website.

⁸ Lack of completion of a degree from the matriculating institution does not necessarily reflect failure on the part of the institution or the student. Many legitimate, unexpected, or uncontrollable factors can lead to this result.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS
Fall 2007

The University has implemented a number of retention and graduation efforts.

-  At SUI, both six-year and four-year graduation rates exceed the university's average for the past five years, and are up from those reported in 2006-2007. The one-year retention rate is down slightly from the five-year average.
-  The four-year graduation plan assures that course availability issues will not impede students who meet the guidelines of the plan. Approximately three-quarters of SUI first-year students sign up for the plan each year, which was instituted in 1995.
-  College Transitions, first offered in 2002, is a two-semester hour course designed to help new students make the adjustment to the demands of college life by providing instruction in time management, personal responsibility, career planning, library usage and other areas. This course continues to be very popular among first-year students.
-  First-year students have the opportunity to join one of 12 (for Fall 2007) living-learning communities where they can live with other students sharing an academic interest and participate in related programming. Approximately 975 students are members of these learning communities. A faculty, staff, and student task force will soon be delivering a report suggesting strategies and structures to extend these opportunities to a much larger number of students.
-  The Student Success Team (SST), consisting of over one hundred faculty, staff and students, held its first annual retreat in July 2006. Based on work at that retreat, the SST executive committee created action committees to address the following issues:
 - Defining the institutional message about expectations of students.
 - Cataloging and making available to students and others the full range of opportunities for involvement in educationally-purposeful activities.
 - Encouraging students to make a commitment to involvement early in their time at the University of Iowa.
 - Designing an expanded "One Community, One Book" program to better involve undergraduate students.
 - Identifying institutional barriers to success.
 - Developing an early intervention strategy for students at risk of non-persistence.
 - Expanding the use of peer educators.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS
Fall 2007

The University has implemented a number of retention and graduation efforts.

- 📖 The current report presents results that are similar to prior years, with significant improvements noted in the four-year and five-year graduation rates as well as a continued decline in time to graduation. The six-year graduation rate dropped slightly to 65.5% for the entering class of 2001, a rate that approximates the average for recent years.
- 📖 The University continues to focus on programs designed to promote student academic success through the Retention Task Force and other initiatives. Participation in freshman learning communities in Fall 2007 rose to a record high of 2,383 students which represents 55.2% of first-time, full-time freshmen. Currently, ISU offers 75 learning community opportunities, with more than 60 available for new freshmen. Graduation rates for students who participate in learning communities are significantly higher than for non-learning community students. Furthermore 72.7% of learning community participants graduate within six years.
- 📖 Changes in academic standards were implemented in Fall 2006 with the goal of improving student retention through earlier warning and interventions. Students who earn less than a 2.0 GPA for a given semester are placed on either academic warning or academic probation status, depending on the GPA for that term and the students' prior academic status. There are indications that the interventions are helping to improve student academic performance and retention to graduation.
- 📖 Transfer student retention and graduation continue to be strong. More than 43% of transfer students graduate within three years following enrollment at ISU; 59% graduate within four years; and 65% graduate within six years. The Admissions Partnership Program (APP) with Iowa community colleges was designed for transfer students to provide benefits to current and future students planning to earn a bachelor's degree at Iowa State University. To date, APP agreements have been signed with more than half of Iowa community colleges. Agreements with all remaining Iowa community colleges are scheduled to be signed in Spring 2008.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS
Fall 2007

The University has implemented a number of retention and graduation efforts.

- 📖 The four-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2003 at 35.2% is the highest rate since 1988.
- 📖 The six-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2001 at 65.0% is 15 percentage points above the median of peer institutions.
- 📖 The persistence rate to the second year for the entering class of 2006 at 82.3% is at the highest level of the previous 5 years of this study.
- 📖 The persistence rate to the third year at 74.6% is the second highest level in the last 6 years of comparable rates.
- 📖 Multi-cultural graduation rates, except for Asian-Americans, continue to lag significantly behind the rate of majority students.
- 📖 The average time to degree for those students who graduated continues to be at the 4.5 years level.
- 📖 The University continues to foster a first-year retention programming focus in the residence halls.
- 📖 The President's Council on Enrollment Management continues to have a major focus on retention efforts.
- 📖 The new Regent Transfer Articulation Website should expand upon the UNI Transfer Plan-it system, thus facilitating more efficient advising and transition efforts for transfer students.
- 📖 Academic Affairs and Educational/Student Services are planning to participate in "Foundations of Excellence," a program of the Policy Center on the First Year of College that will result in an in-depth assessment of the first-year experience of students and the formulation of a strategic plan for improvement. Retention will be a primary measure of improvement.

NCAA SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATES AT REGENT UNIVERSITIES AND PEER INSTITUTIONS

	Reported Six-Year Graduation Rates for Entering Classes of:				
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA	64%	65%	66%	66%	65%
University of Arizona	55%	55%	57%	59%	57%
University of California - Los Angeles	85%	87%	87%	87%	89%
University of Ill., Champaign-Urbana	80%	81%	80%	83%	82%
Indiana University - Bloomington	69%	72%	71%	72%	72%
University of Michigan	84%	85%	87%	87%	87%
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities	54%	54%	56%	61%	61%
University of NC - Chapel Hill	80%	83%	81%	84%	84%
Ohio State University	59%	62%	62%	68%	71%
University of Texas - Austin	71%	71%	74%	75%	77%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	75%	76%	76%	77%	78%
Median (excluding SUI)	73%	73%	75%	76%	78%
Mean (excluding SUI)	71%	73%	73%	75%	76%
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY	65%	66%	66%	68%	66%
University of Arizona	55%	55%	57%	59%	57%
University of California - Davis	78%	81%	81%	80%	81%
University of Ill., Champaign-Urbana	80%	81%	80%	83%	82%
Michigan State University	69%	69%	71%	74%	74%
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities	54%	54%	56%	61%	61%
North Carolina State University	64%	63%	67%	71%	70%
Ohio State University	59%	62%	62%	68%	71%
Purdue University	64%	66%	64%	66%	70%
Texas A & M University	75%	75%	76%	77%	77%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	75%	76%	76%	77%	78%
Median (excluding ISU)	64%	68%	69%	73%	73%
Mean (excluding ISU)	66%	68%	69%	72%	72%
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA	67%	65%	64%	65%	67%
California State University - Fresno	43%	46%	46%	46%	46%
Central Michigan University	47%	49%	55%	55%	57%
Illinois State University	57%	59%	62%	63%	64%
Indiana State University	37%	39%	40%	39%	41%
Northern Arizona University	46%	52%	50%	48%	47%
Ohio University - Athens	70%	70%	70%	71%	71%
University of Minnesota - Duluth	44%	47%	46%	48%	51%
Univ. of North Carolina - Greensboro	48%	50%	50%	51%	52%
University of North Texas	38%	39%	40%	43%	45%
University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire	54%	56%	57%	59%	59%
Median (excluding UNI)	47%	51%	50%	50%	52%
Mean (excluding UNI)	48%	51%	52%	52%	53%

Source: 2007 NCAA Division I Graduation Rates Annual Report for all full-time degree seeking students.