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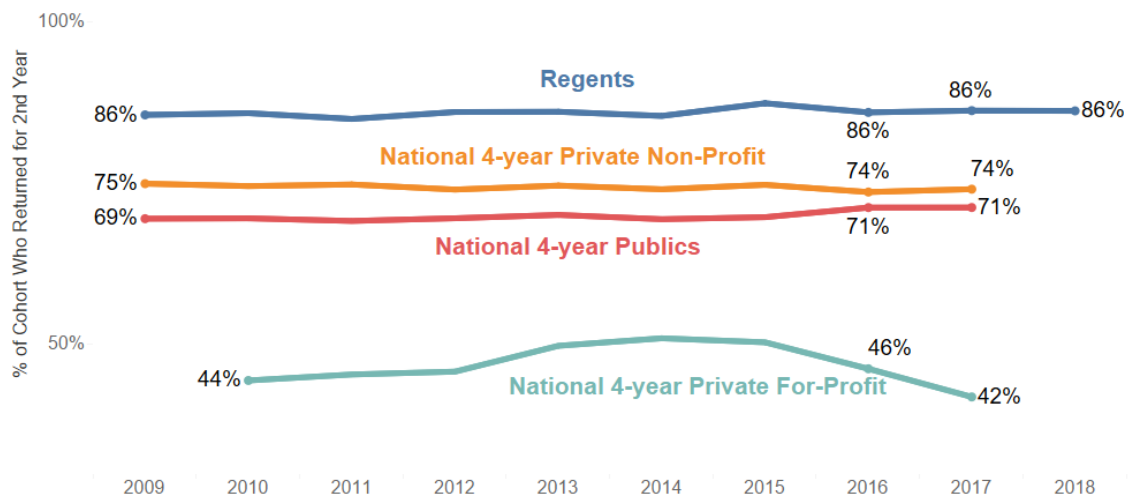
FALL 2019 GRADUATION AND RETENTION REPORT

Action Requested: Receive the Fall 2019 Graduation & Retention Report.

Executive Summary: The Regent university overall retention rates and six-year graduation rates are largely unchanged from last year while the universities continue to show steady improvement in four-year graduation rates and time to degree. Despite these positive outcomes, six-year graduation rates for students who identify as a racial/ethnic minority have declined for the past two years.

Retention rates. One year undergraduate retention rates at the Regent universities have remained consistent over the past 10 years. Eighty-six percent of the entering class of 2018 returned for their second year. This rate compares favorably to national one year retention rates at both 4-year public and 4-year private colleges and universities (see graph below).

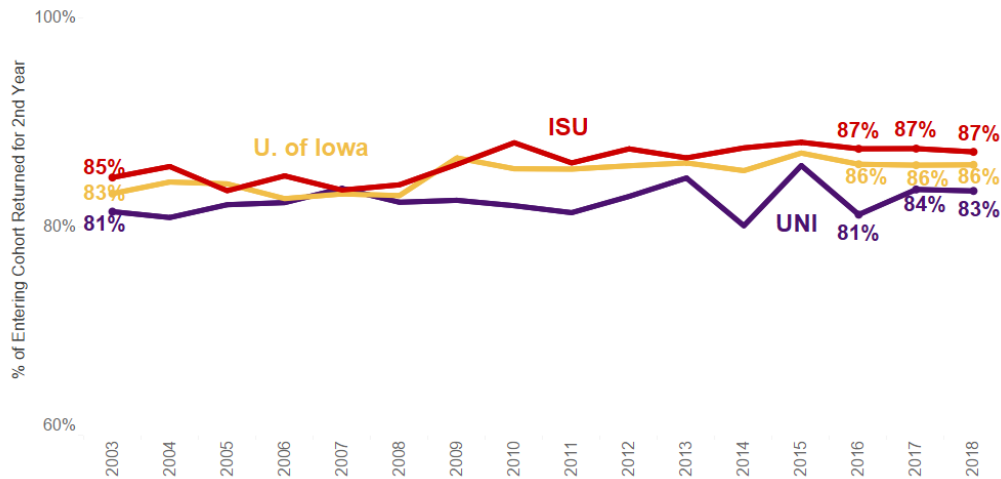
Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year at Same College
by Institutional Type



Sources: Iowa Board of Regents & National Student Clearinghouse Research Center "Persistence & Retention - 2018" Report

The number of students returning for a second year can fluctuate annually by cohort and differs by university. Iowa State University retention remained at 87% for the third straight year, the University of Iowa remained at 86%, and the University of Northern Iowa was down one percentage point to 83% (see “Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year” below).

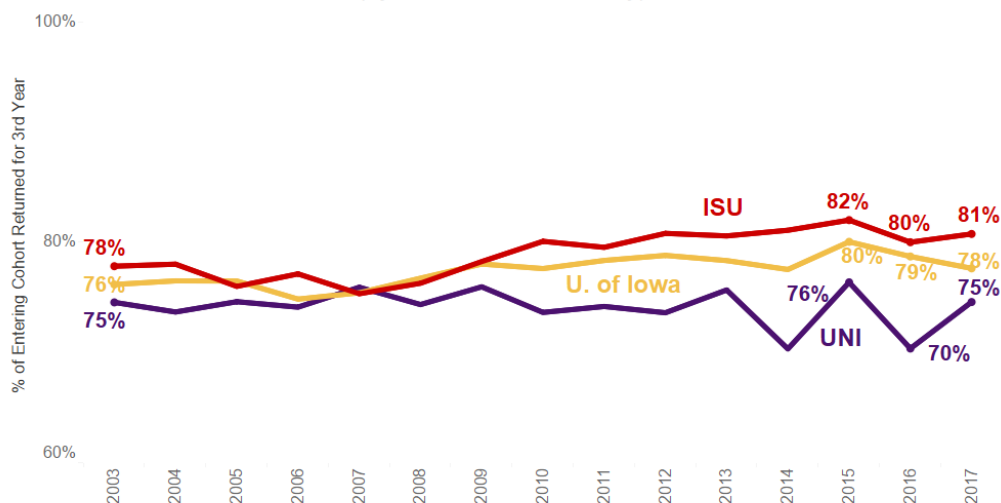
Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year
(by Iowa Public University)



Source: Iowa Board of Regents

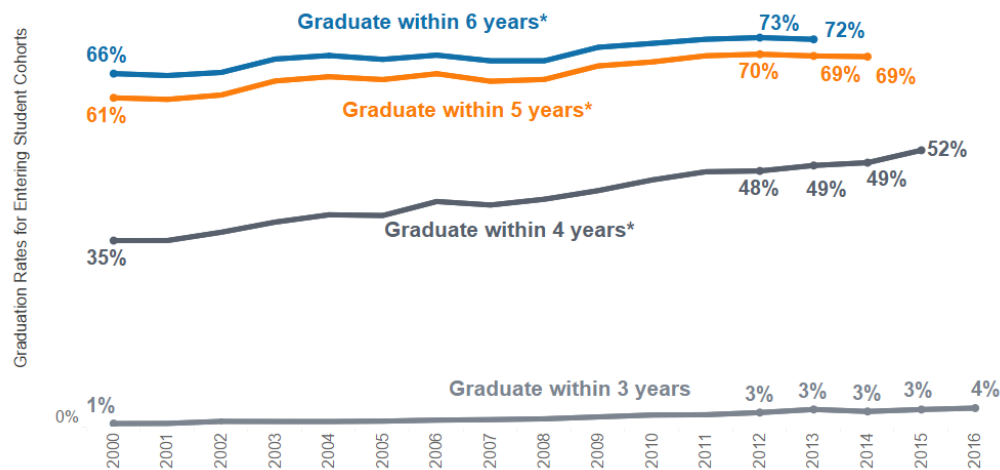
The number of students who choose to return to their university for a third year was up one percentage point at Iowa State University (81%), down one percentage point at the University of Iowa (78%), and up five percentage points at the University of Northern Iowa (75%). See “Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Third Year” below.

Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Third Year
(by Iowa Public University)



Graduation rates. The overall Regent university five-year (69%) and six-year graduation rates (72%) remained largely unchanged. However, there was growth in both the three-year (4%) and four-year graduation rates (52%). The 2013 entry cohort had an average six-year graduation rate of 72% for all Regent universities. The average Regent four-year graduation rate has shown steady growth over the past 15 years (see “Iowa Public University Graduation Trends” below).

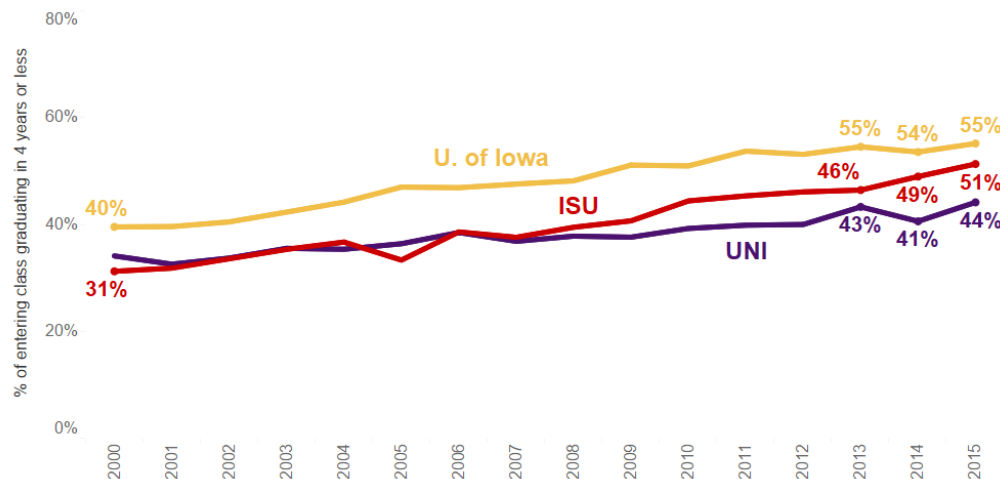
Iowa Public University Graduation Rates



Sources: Iowa Board of Regents

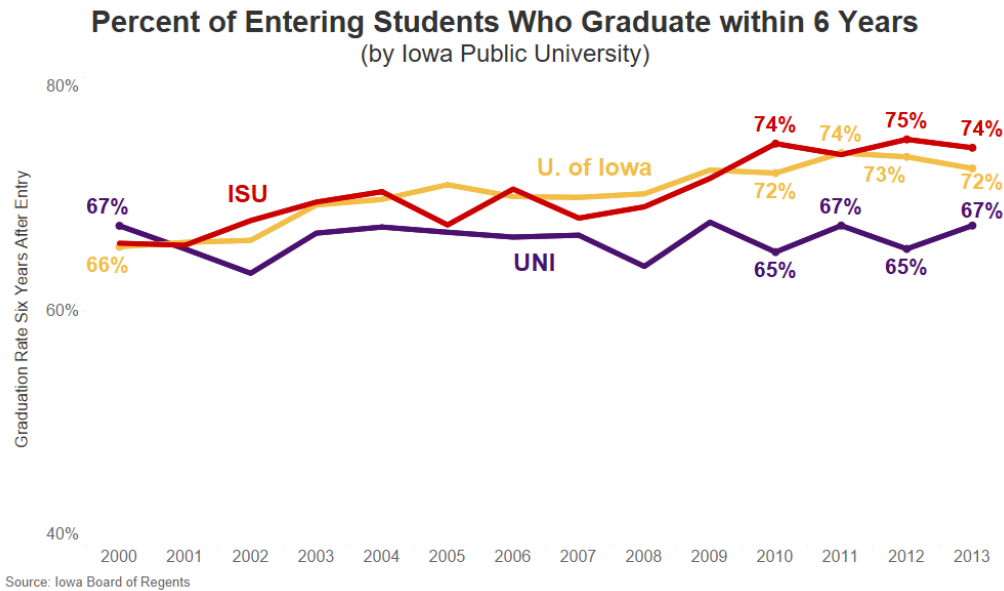
The University of Iowa, with the highest four-year rate among Regent universities (55%), was up one percentage point from last year. Iowa State University improved two percentage points to 51%, and the University of Northern Iowa gained three percentage points to 44%. See “Iowa Public University Graduation Trends” below.

**Percent of Entering Students Who Graduate within 4 Years
(by Iowa Public University)**



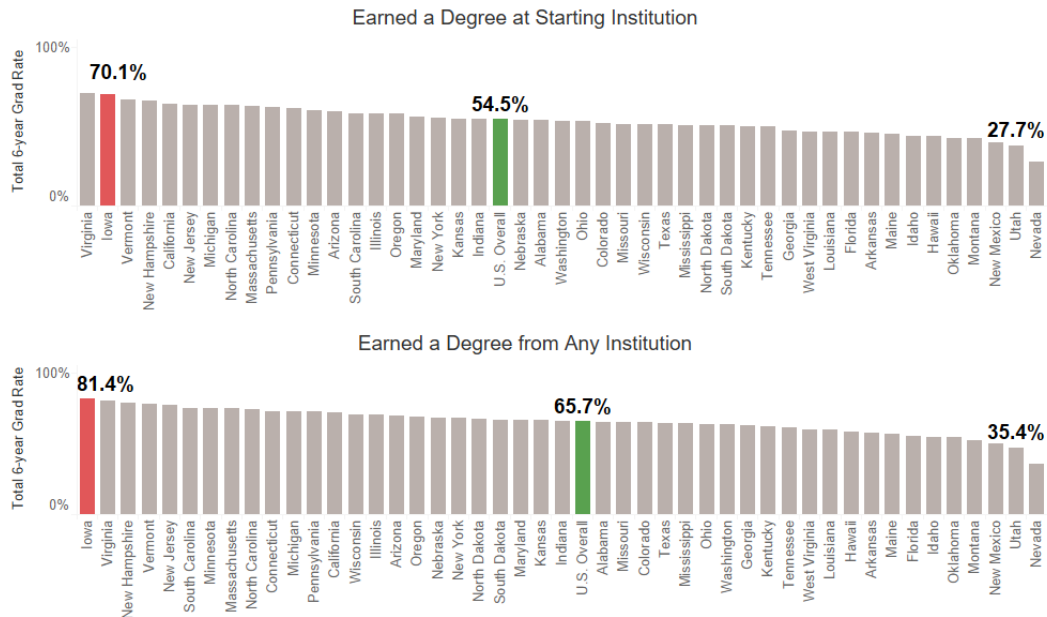
Source: Iowa Board of Regents

Six-year graduation rates decreased one percentage point from the previous year at both Iowa State University (74%) and the University of Iowa (72%). The six-year graduation rate at the University of Northern Iowa was up two percentage points to 67%.



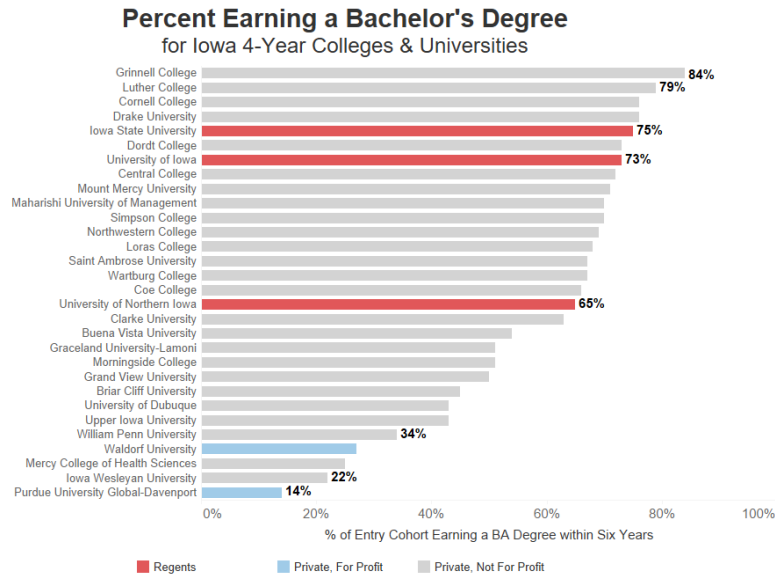
Students attending a four-year public university in Iowa continue to perform well compared to their peers in other states. The percent of students starting at four-year public university in Iowa who graduated within six years from that same university increased from 69.8% for the 2011 cohort to 70.1% for the 2012 cohort. Students who start college at an Iowa 4-year public university have the highest total degree attainment rate (81.4%) of similar students nationally.

Graduation Rates from 4-Year Public Universities 2012 Entry Class



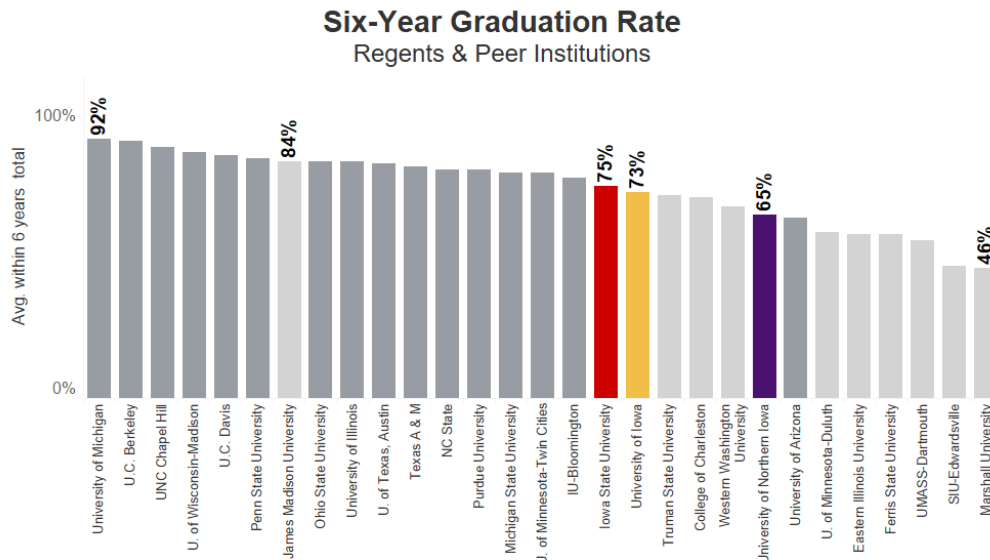
Source: NSC 2019 Postsecondary Completions Signature Report. Graduation rates determined six years after entry to first college attended.

Regent university graduation rates generally perform well compared to other Iowa colleges and universities (see “Percent Earning a Bachelor’s Degree” below).



Source: U.S. Dept. of Education Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Rates represent the percent of the 2012 entry cohort who earned a BA within 6 years.

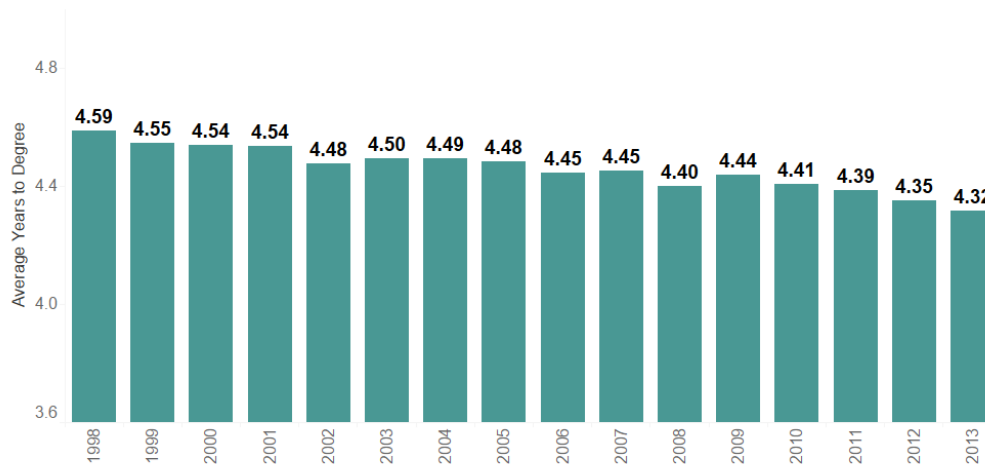
Regent university graduation rates compare less favorably to their institutional peers. As seen in the graph “Six-Year Graduation Rate, Regents & Peer Institutions” below, the University of Iowa and Iowa State University both perform near the bottom of their peer group, while the University of Northern Iowa performs near the middle of its peer group. Much of the differences in graduation rates can be attributed to differences in admissions policies. Colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates tend to be the most selective in admitting students.



Source: U.S. Department of Education Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS) 2018

Time to degree. The federal six-year graduation rate standard can mistakenly imply that many or most students need six years to complete a degree. The graph below shows the amount of time in elapsed years that the average student at a Regent university takes to earn a bachelor's degree. This metric measures elapsed time from start to finish, and includes any time away from the classroom. Regent university time to degree has steadily declined, driven by increases in three-year and four-year graduation rates.

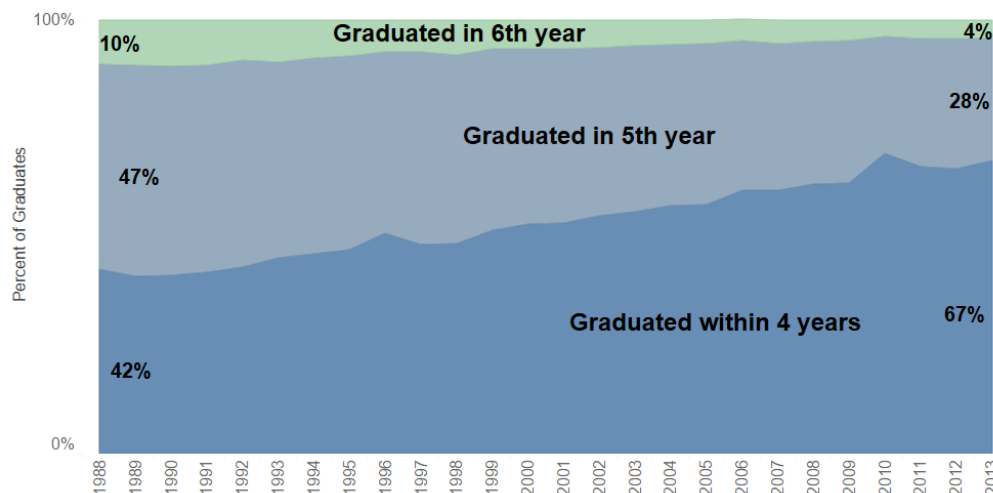
Time to Degree in Elapsed Years
Iowa Public Universities



Source: Iowa Board of Regents
 Time to degree = (# graduating within 3 years x 3) + (# 3-4 years grads x 4) + (# 4-5 year grads x 5) + (# 5-6 year grads x 6) / # grads within 6 years of entry

When looking at all graduates, the percent earning a degree in four years has increased significantly over the past 25 years. Of the 2013 cohort, 67% of degree earners graduated in four years compared to 42% of the 1988 cohort. Only four percent of degree recipients in the 2013 cohort needed a sixth year to finish.

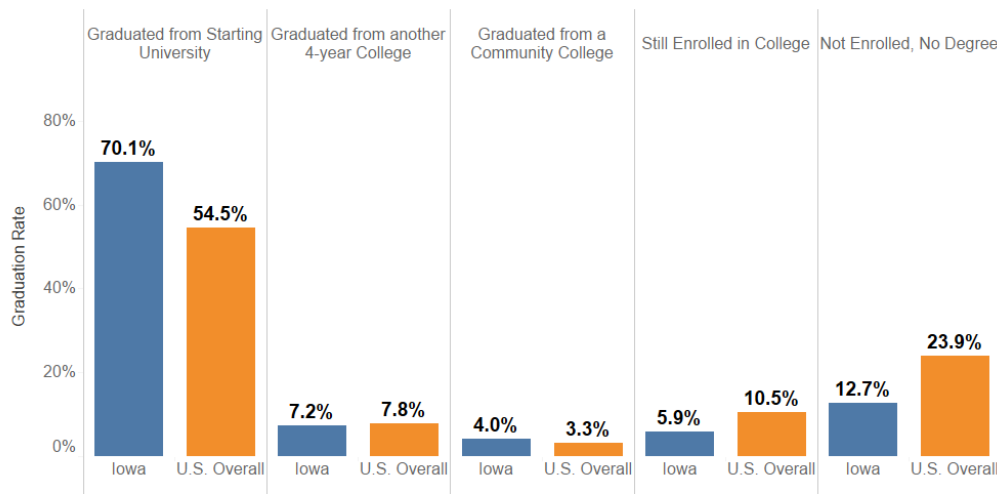
Time to Earned Degree



Source: Iowa Board of Regents for first-time full-time undergraduate students

The federal graduation rates can be misleading because they treat students who leave an institution as “dropouts”. Using data from the National Student Clearinghouse, we can see six-year outcomes regardless of institution. For example, 7.2% of students starting at a Regent university left but graduated from a different 4-year institution. Another 4.0% left but graduated from a community college. Only 12.7% of Regent students left higher education without a degree.

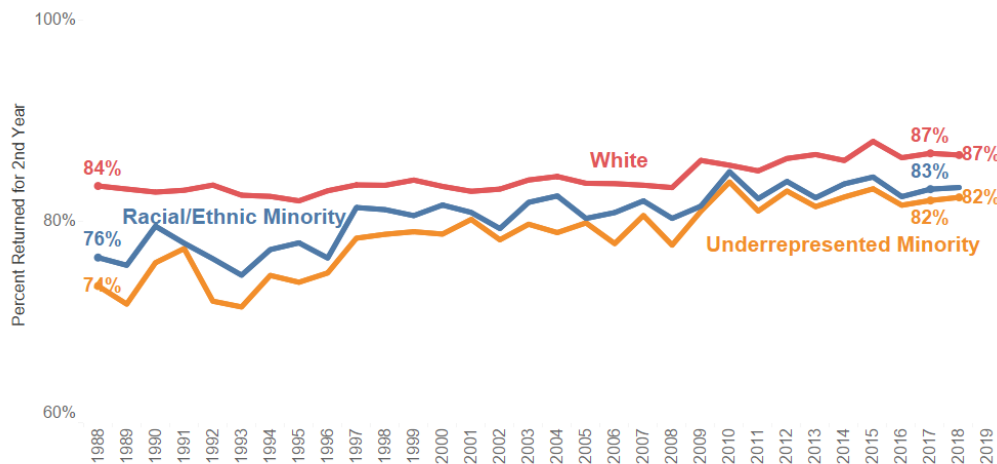
**Six Years After Enrolling at a Public 4-Year College
All Students 2012 Entry Cohort**



Source: NSC 2019 Postsecondary Completions Signature Report. Graduation rates determined six years after entry to first college attended.

Race and ethnicity. The next three graphs illustrate the “achievement gap” between White students and students who identify as either a racial/ethnic minority or underrepresented minority. The difference between the two categories is that Asian Americans are included in the former but not the later. The first graph shows the percent of undergraduates who return for a second year by race/ethnicity. Retention rates have improved over time, but a persistent gap remains.

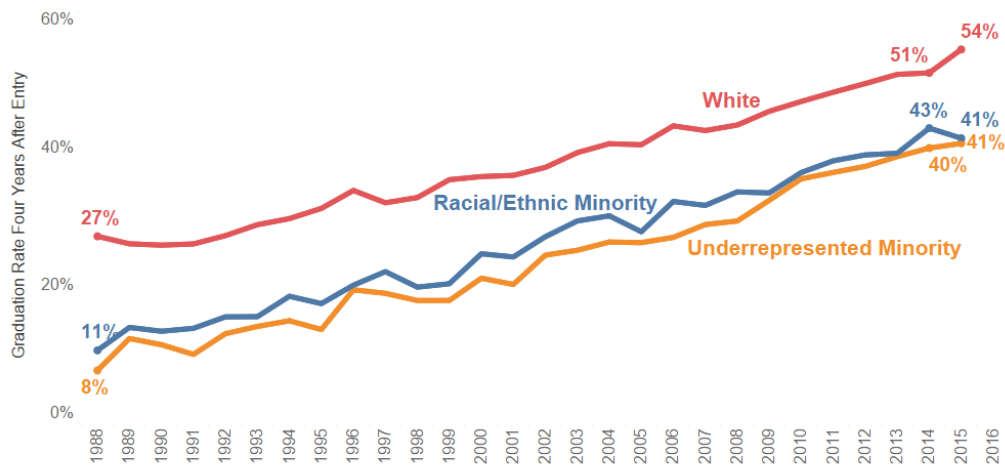
**Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year
by Race/Ethnicity**



Source: Iowa Board of Regents. Racial/Ethnic Minority includes Asian American students while Underrepresented Minority does not. International students are not included in reports by race/ethnicity.

The graduation achievement gap has improved somewhat over time. While overall graduation rates have improved steadily, the four-year graduation rate gap has only narrowed from 16 percentage points for the 1988 entry cohort to 13 percentage points for the 2015 entry cohort (see “Four-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity” below).

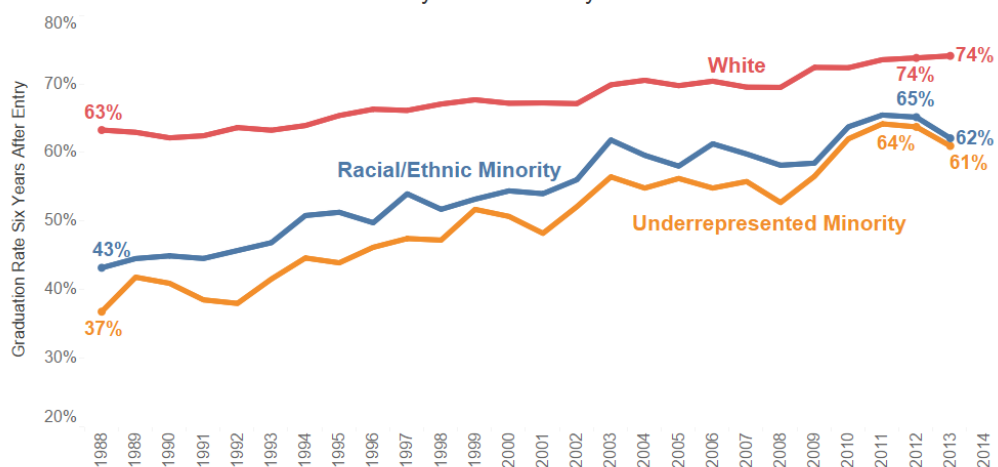
**Four-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate
by Race/Ethnicity**



Source: Iowa Board of Regents. Racial/Ethnic Minority includes Asian American students while Underrepresented Minority does not. International students are not included in reports by race/ethnicity.

The six-year graduation rate gap by race/ethnicity has narrowed more dramatically over time. The 1988 entry cohort had a 20-26 percentage point gap which narrowed to a 9-10 percentage point gap for the 2012 entry cohort. However that gap has widened to a 12-13 point gap in one year (see “Six-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity” below).

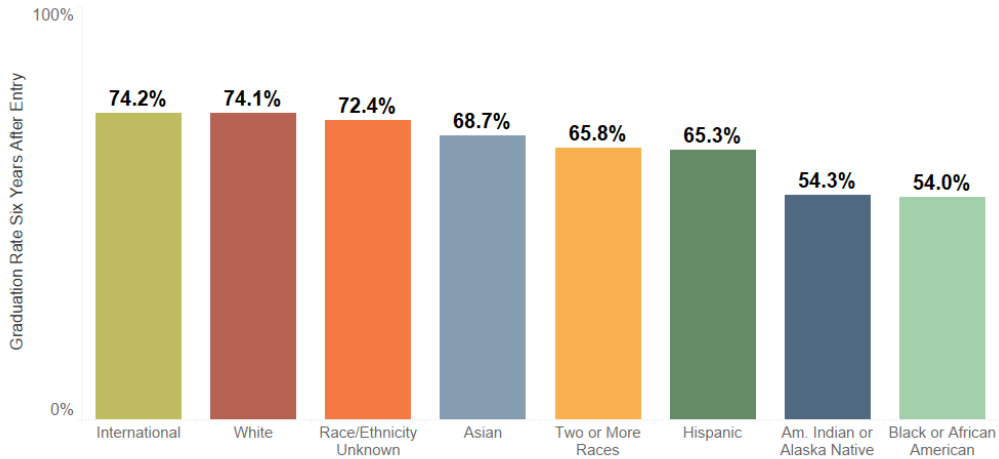
**Six-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate
by Race/Ethnicity**



Source: Iowa Board of Regents. Racial/Ethnic Minority includes Asian American students while Underrepresented Minority does not. International students are not included in reports by race/ethnicity.

As seen in the graph below, there are significant gaps in graduation rates between racial/ethnic categories within the Regent 2013 entry cohort.

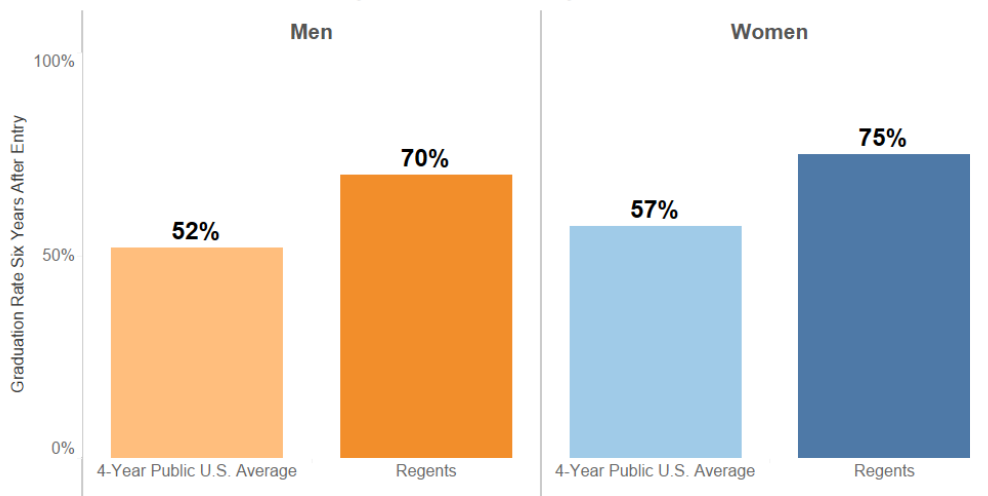
Regent University Six-Year Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity
2013 Entry Cohort



Source: Iowa Board of Regents

Sex. An achievement gap also exists by sex. Both at the Regent universities and nationally, women graduate from college at a rate five percentage points higher than that of men.

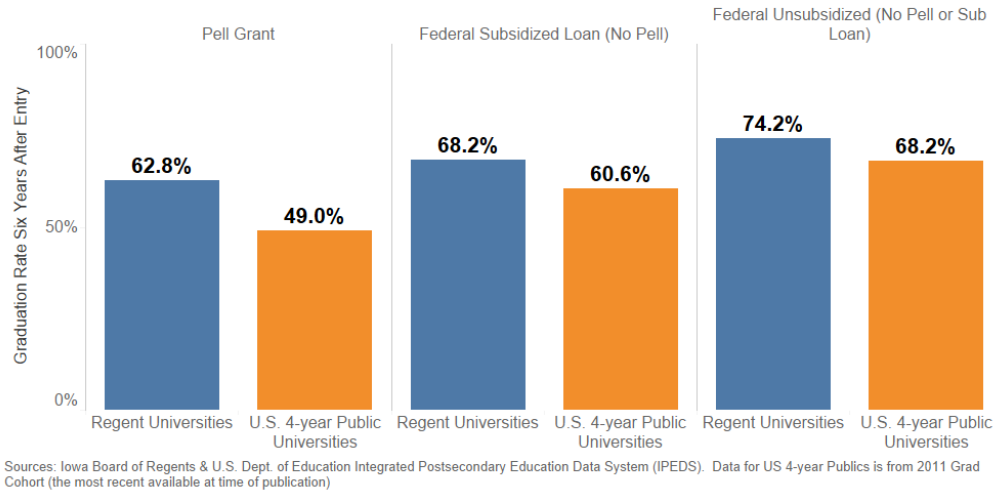
Six-Year Graduation Rate for Undergraduates
by Sex for 2013 Entry Cohort



Sources: Iowa Board of Regents & National Student Clearinghouse Research Center "Persistence & Retention - 2018" Report

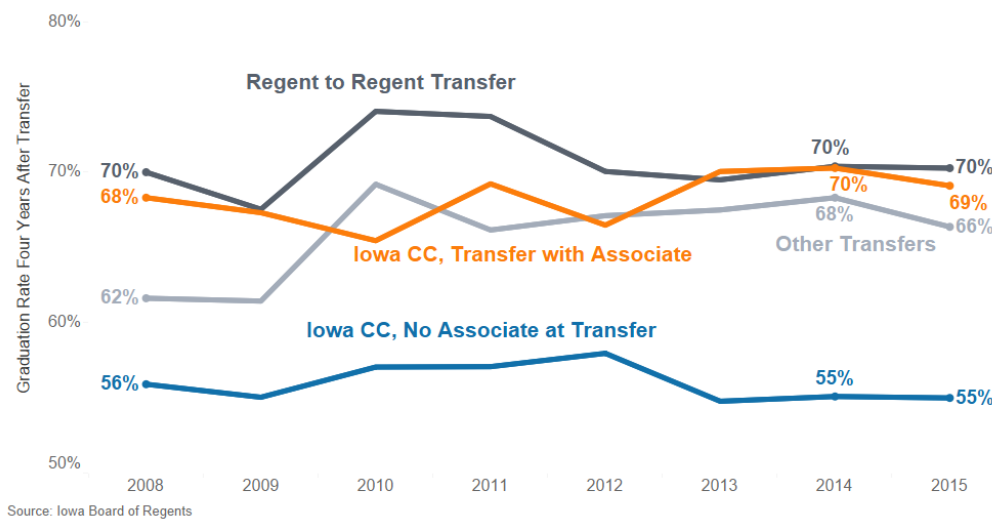
Financial aid. Graduation rates also differ by types of financial aid received. Receipt of a Pell Grant often serves as a proxy for low-income status. According to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, about 73% of Pell Grant recipients have an annual family income of \$30,000 or less (see “Six-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate by Financial Aid” below).

**Six-Year Graduation Rate for Undergraduates
by Financial Aid for 2013 Entry Cohort**



Transfer. The graph below shows graduation rates for students who have transferred into a Regent university from another college or university. Most students who transfer to the Regents have graduation outcomes that are similar to students who entered out of high school. The one exception is students transferring to the Regents without having first earned an associate degree.

**Four-Year Graduation Rate for Transfers to Iowa Public Universities
by Transfer College**



THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
FALL 2019 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS

The University of Iowa's six-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2013 is 72.2%, while the four-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2015 is 55.1%. The university's 2018 first-to second-year retention rate is 85.9%.

The University of Iowa has a number of efforts in place to facilitate retention and timely graduation. Additionally, the university remains committed to decreasing gaps in retention and graduation rates of first-generation, underrepresented minority, and Pell eligible students. Examples of efforts to increase retention and timely graduation include:

- All entering first-year and transfer students are required to complete the **Success@Iowa** online course. Success@Iowa covers topics such as campus resources, alcohol education, suicide prevention training, safety, inclusion, financial literacy, and academic integrity.
- **Excelling@Iowa** is a campus-wide student success platform used by staff and faculty to help students succeed. The purpose of Excelling@Iowa is to provide staff and faculty a way to engage with actionable data narratives about the student experience in ways that yield improvements in both program and individualized student support. The system uses predictive analytics to help identify students who may be struggling or students considered at risk, and then lets faculty and staff who are connected to these students know so they can provide support and connect them to resources. In 2018-19 there were 17,633 logged notes/contacts by 521 faculty and staff with 659 referrals sent to students' support teams and campus resources. In fall 2019, Excelling@Iowa was expanded from monitoring first-year students' success to all undergraduates.
- **Supplemental Instruction (SI)** is a non-remedial academic support program that targets historically difficult courses, in addition to "gateway" courses. SI is a free, course-specific, peer facilitated group study session designed to not only help students learn the material being covered in class, but also how to learn. In 2018-19 there were 41 SI courses and more than 22,000 student visits to SI. Students who attended once per week, on average, had a 1/3 letter grade increase. Students who attended SI were also 6% more likely to be retained the following fall compared to their peers, after controlling for ACT, high school GPA and first-generation status.
- The University of Iowa Student Government, the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of the Dean of Students, and Academic Support and Retention worked together to develop the **Hawkeye Completion Grant**, a new program that helps students with positive academic progress, good non-academic conduct, and demonstrated financial need, to pay their university bills, to support their retention and graduation at the University of Iowa.
- The university was chosen to participate in the 2019–2020 inaugural **First Forward** cohort by the Center for First-generation Student Success, an initiative of NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Suder Foundation. The First Forward designation recognizes institutions of higher education that have demonstrated improving experiences and advancing outcomes for first-generation college students. Benefits of this designation will provide a framework to advance the UI's 1stGen@Iowa initiative and assist with the development of other efforts to support and celebrate first-generation students.
- In fall 2020, the university will pilot the **Hawkeye First-Generation Initiative**. The pilot will integrate several evidence-based practices including an engagement opportunity

(mentored campus employment, undergraduate research or service learning), faculty and peer mentoring, and weekly student monitoring and support from staff affiliated with each student. Program evaluation and assessment of outcomes will also be key components of the pilot.

- The **Schedule Builder** tool allows students to both plan their course schedule, up to three semesters in advance, and register for courses in one streamlined online system. With access to students' anticipated future course schedules, academic departments can better predict enrollment demands, manage course enrollment, and adjust course offerings appropriately. In fall 2018, the university implemented two additional tools to help students schedule their path to graduation: **Sample Plans of Study** are a centralized repository of recommended coursework for various majors and **MyPlan** is a student's individualized plan of study.
- The **four-year graduation plan** ensures that course availability issues will not affect a student's time to graduation, provided the student makes a good faith effort to work with their academic advisor to graduate in four years.
- **Statewide articulation efforts** between the university and community college partners ensure that students can effectively transfer to the university from Iowa community colleges.
- The University's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan supports expanded investment in student **high-impact practices** (HIP), which have been shown to be positively related to timely graduation. These practices include study abroad, research opportunities with faculty members, on-campus student employment, internships, and experiential-learning courses.
- The **College Transition** program targets first-year students entering the university with high school GPAs and ACT scores below the first-year class averages. In their first semester, students register for a College Transition Seminar, a General Education (GE) course, and a College Transition Workshop, which is led by an undergraduate Study Group Leader who previously earned an A in the course. Enrollment in these three courses allows students to develop a sense of community while learning study strategies.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2019 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS

1. During Fall 2019, Iowa State University saw a record high four-year graduation rate of 51.3% (entering class of 2015). The Hispanic (39.1%), Black or African American (33.8%), Native American (37.5%), Two or More Races (41.3%), and Race or Ethnicity Unknown (49.6%) populations all saw record four-year graduation rates. Iowa State's six-year graduation rate of 74% (entering class of 2013) is among the highest on record, and the American Indian/Alaska Native (76.9%), Black or African American (55.3%), and Native Hawaiian (66.7%) populations all saw record or tied for record six-year graduation rates. These records speak directly to the work the university has been doing to address the attainment gap between our multicultural and white populations.
2. Among the transfer student population, Iowa State University saw a record two-year graduation rate of 19.3% (entering class of 2017), three-year graduation rate of 53% (entering class of 2016), and four-year graduation rate of 67.8% (entering class of 2015). These records speak directly to the focus Iowa State has been giving to reviewing transfer courses and identifying which ones can be used as substitutions and which ones are identified as direct equivalents for a student's degree requirements, thus positively affecting time to degree.
3. Iowa State University's one-year retention rate of 87.2% (entering class of 2018) exceeds the ten-year average of 87.1%. The American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander one-year retention rates of 100% tied for record one-year retention rates, and the Black or African American one-year retention rate of 79.3% and the Hispanic one-year retention rate of 83.6% exceeds the ten-year average of 78.3% and 83.5% for those populations, respectively.
4. **Learning Community (LC)** participation is at an all-time high, with 87.4% of our first year, full time students engaged in one or more learning community experiences during fall 2019. LC participant retention and graduation rates continue to exceed those of non-LC participants.
5. During AY 2018-2019, the **Student Success Council (SSC)** focused its efforts on a number of projects including:
 - a. Facilitating a review of courses with high DFW rates and supporting efforts to decrease the DFW rates.
 - b. Creating an understanding of our leavers using data, identifying strategies for retaining students who are at-risk of leaving, and looking for opportunities to re-enroll students who have left prior to graduation.
 - c. Providing improved structural support for at-risk students.
 - d. Improving training and mentoring for advisers and staff who interact with students in at-risk groups (e.g., EAB Campaigns, Financial Aid Completion and Student Success Grants, etc.).
 - e. Creating and implementing of a plan to develop partnerships between Student Financial Aid and Colleges to better leverage financial resources and improving related communications to students and advisers.

- f. Establishing a university-wide process for the evaluation and consistent review of transfer courses and supporting efforts toward increasing direct course articulations in order to deliver a more robust degree audit that best informs prospective, continuing, and returning students on their progress toward degree.
6. The **Smart Start Program**, a first year early academic intervention program, began with the fall 2019 entering class. This two-year pilot program is for all U.S. freshmen who entered Iowa State with less than a 245 RAI score – the minimum score required for “automatic” admission – and who do not belong to a sub-population which already receives structured academic support (e.g., student-athletes, Science Bound, APEX, Hixson, etc.). The ultimate goal for the Smart Start Program is to increase the persistence and completion for this population of students. A total of 205 students were required to participate in the program at the start of fall 2019; initial review of records indicates that 177 of those students returned for spring 2019, but the official persistence count will not be taken until January 27, 2020 (10th day).
7. Several initiatives are underway to increase efforts and support to academically at-risk students by requiring more accountability and follow-up to make sure students follow through with key tasks such as completing the academic self-assessment and goal setting. Some efforts include:
 - a. **College of Human Sciences | Gold Initiative for 2.0 list of Academically At-Risk Students.** The college first piloted their CHS Gold Initiative during fall 2018, which is an intrusive advising program for newly admitted students who are academically at-risk. Helping students develop a growth mindset is central to this program. Other elements of the program include: targeted encouragement to enroll in PSYCH 131, in learning communities, and to join a club or campus organization; scheduled appointments with advisers during Weeks 2-3 and 8-9; one free group tutor for fall; and referrals to Academic Success Center resources. The College of Human Sciences is continuing the program in fall 2019 and actively monitoring students’ progress in order to assess the effectiveness of the program.
 - b. **College of Agriculture and Life Sciences | Smart Steps Program.** The college first implemented their Smart Steps Program during spring 2019, with the intention of providing academic assistance to students that were on the Dismissal list. During fall 2019, the program is mandatory for reinstated students and for students who would otherwise have been dismissed. The program has expanded as an option for students on Academic Warning or Academic Probation, new incoming students identified as academically at risk, and for students referred to the program. Academic Coaches, primarily advisers and graduate students who received additional training, implement the program. Some students who went through the program during spring 2019 are involved and offering peer support during fall 2019. The program collaborates with the Academic Success Center to provide academic coaching training for staff and tutoring for students.

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
FALL 2019 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS**

University of Northern Iowa students persist and graduate at rates that exceed our peer institutions and similar Carnegie classified universities. The Retention and Completion Council guides campus-wide work on improving systems and developing interventions to continuously increase student success rates.

Retention and Graduation Rate Highlights:

- The four-year graduation rate for the fall 2015 cohort stands at 44.13%, the highest in institutional history and well above the levels of our institutional peers. The most recent comparable rate for our peer institutions is 38.3%, and for our Carnegie peers is 24.9% (IPEDS Data Center).
- Our first-to-second year retention rate for the entering class of 2018 is 83.4%, very similar to the retention rate for the previous cohort (83.6%). The most recent comparable rate for our peer institutions is 78.5%, and for our Carnegie peers is 74.6% (IPEDS Data Center).
- Retention and graduation rates for minority students in the most recent cohort are positive indicators of University of Northern Iowa progress toward diversity and inclusion goals within the current strategic plan.
 - The six-year graduation rate for minority students in the fall 2013 cohort is 59.29%, a rate 4.68 percentage points higher than the previous minority student cohort, and more than five percentage points above the previous five-year rolling average (53.9%).
 - The first-to-second year retention rate for minority students in the fall 2018 cohort was 78.6%, a rate more than two percentage points higher than the previous cohort.
- The four-year graduation rate for low-income students receiving the Pell Grant in the fall 2015 is 40.6%, over six percentage points higher than the previous cohort (34.5%).
- The first-to-second year retention rate for military and veteran students in the fall 2018 cohort is 85.7%, a rate 13.5 percentage points higher than the previous five-year average and above the overall institutional retention rate.
- Retention and Completion Council members worked throughout the 2018-2019 academic year to develop a multicultural retention plan, which has resulted in expanded mentoring support, supplemental academic advising, a new residential community, and enhanced orientation programming for minority students. This plan was implemented in fall 2019 and will work to continue reducing disparities in retention and completion outcomes.