

Measure #2: Second Year Persistence

Value: Stimulating Intellectual Growth
Standard: Effectiveness
Sources: Fall student data files (freeze submissions)

Sub-Measures:

Students Persisting – Overall
Retention Rate – Overall
Students Persisting – Black
Retention Rate – Black
Students Persisting – White (Cheyney only)
Retention Rate – White (Cheyney only)
Students Persisting – Hispanic
Retention Rate – Hispanic

Description of

Sub-Measures: Number and percent of first-time freshmen who returned for their second year (fall semester). The sub-measures are the number of students persisting as follows: overall, Black, and Hispanic; and retention rate as follows: overall, Black, and Hispanic. For Cheyney University, White is used instead of Black. Non-resident aliens and students who have an unknown or multi-racial ethnicity are excluded from ethnicity sub-measures.

Notes: This includes all first-time, full-time (12 credits or more), baccalaureate degree-seeking freshmen in the cohort. Transfers are excluded. First enrollment must be either the previous summer or the current fall. High school students who take college courses are still considered first-time when they enroll following high school graduation. Black and Hispanic ethnic categories are in accordance with federal data reporting guidelines. Changes in ethnicity are explained in the definitions section below. Students who stop out after the fall freeze date but return the following fall are counted as persisters. Full-time students who become part-time the following fall are also counted. Exclusions are also described in the definitions section below.

Benchmark: National Cluster (Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange) by SAT selectivity, based on fall 2010 average SAT score, and Carnegie classification

Benchmark Source: Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange

Desired Direction: For this measure, values above the baseline, benchmark, and System performance target are the desired outcome.

Definitions:

Cohort Year: The year full-time students enter college for the first time. For the State System, students who attend university summer sessions as first-time students or who enter with advanced standing are counted as first-time freshmen on fall reports.

Degree-seeking Students: Students enrolled in courses for credit that are recognized by the institution as seeking a degree or formal award. For this measure, only students who are seeking a bachelor's degree are included.

Ethnic/Racial Categories: Categories used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. A person may be counted in only one racial/ethnic group. The groups used to categorize U.S. citizens, resident aliens, and other non-citizens are: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Non-resident alien, Multi-racial and Unknown.

Ethnicity Changes: Because an increasing number of students are refusing to indicate an ethnicity when they apply to college, or select more than one ethnicity, statistics of students by race now include unknown and multi-racial categories. Some of these students will inform the university of their actual race once they have enrolled; others will change their racial designation later in college. In order to maximize the accuracy of ethnicity data, universities have the option of updating student ethnicity. Original files submitted will not be changed to reflect these ethnicity changes. Retention rates are calculated using the ethnicity reported in the year of persistence. Students who do not persist do not have their ethnicity updated; those who do persist are classified in both the cohort and persisting group under their ethnicity at the time of persistence.

Exclusions from the Cohort: Students who are deceased, serving in the armed forces, foreign aid, on official church missions or are permanently disabled, may be excluded from the graduation cohort by universities if they supply evidence of one of these conditions (e.g., death certificate, military order, letter). Exclusions were first used for State System universities starting with the 1997 cohort for six year graduation rates, the 1999 cohort for four year graduation rates, and the 2003 cohort for second year retention rates. Once a student is excluded from the cohort, they are permanently removed from cohort calculations from that point forward, even if they return from their time of service.

First-time Freshman: An entering freshman who has never attended any postsecondary educational institution. This includes students enrolled in the fall term who entered the institution in the prior summer term as well as students who took college classes prior to high school graduation. The definition also includes students who entered with advanced standing.

Official Enrollment Reporting Date: End of 15th day of class.

Retention Rate: The number of cohort students still enrolled at the institution at the beginning of each subsequent fall semester divided by the number in the cohort group.

Persisting Student: Cohort student still enrolled in the institution during the term in which student advancement is calculated and reported.

Program Level: A structure that organizes academic programs according to degree level. For second-year persistence, only baccalaureate (level H) students are included.