

Contact: Jason Pontius

ANNUAL GRADUATION AND RETENTION REPORT

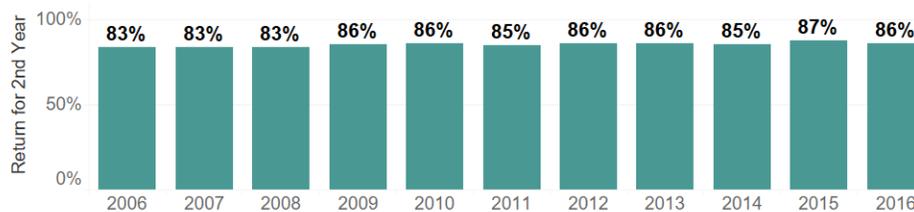
Action Requested: Receive the Annual Graduation & Retention Report for Fall 2017

Executive Summary: The annual Graduation and Retention Report includes two parts. Part A covers both first-time, full-time freshman undergraduates and transfer students. Part B includes the annual update of graduation of women and minorities from STEM programs at the Regent universities. The metrics used in this report include the following:

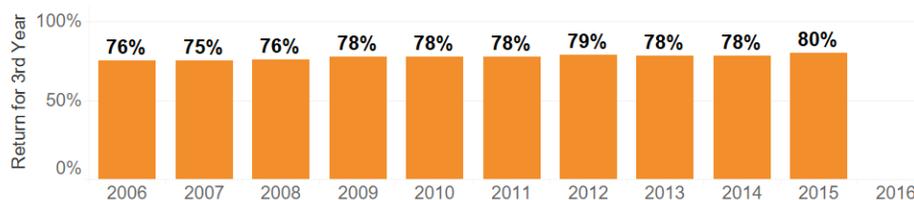
- The percent of students who returned to a Regent university for their second year and their third year (i.e., first-year retention and second-year retention, respectively). These rates do not include students who transferred to another college or university.
- The percent of students who earned a degree within four years, five years, and six years of first enrolling at a Regent university. These rates do not include students who transferred to another college or university.

Retention rates. From Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, 86% of Regent university students returned for their second year at the university. This percentage is down slightly from the record high of 87% last year. From Fall 2015 to Fall 2016, 80% of students returned for their third year. This represents an increase of two percentage points from the prior year (see “Regent University Retention Trends” below).

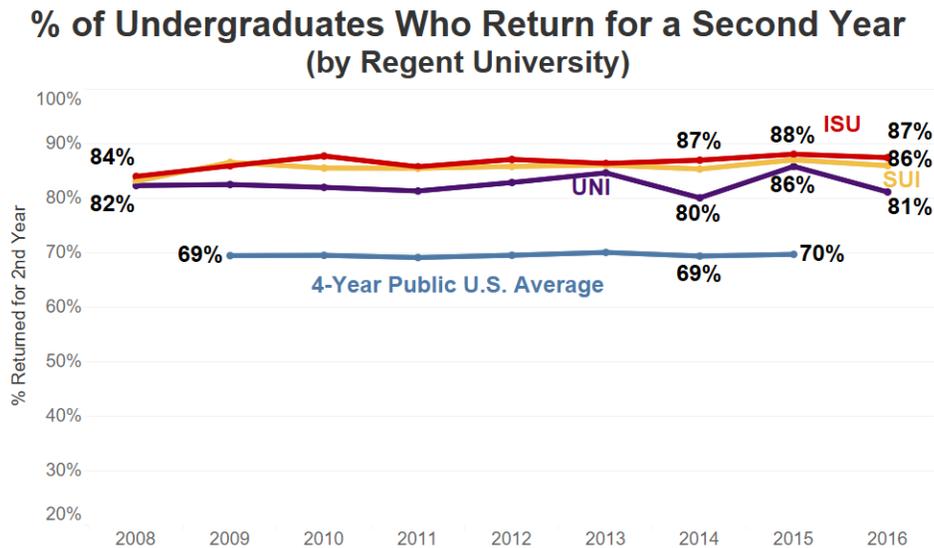
Regent University Retention Trends
% Return for Second Year



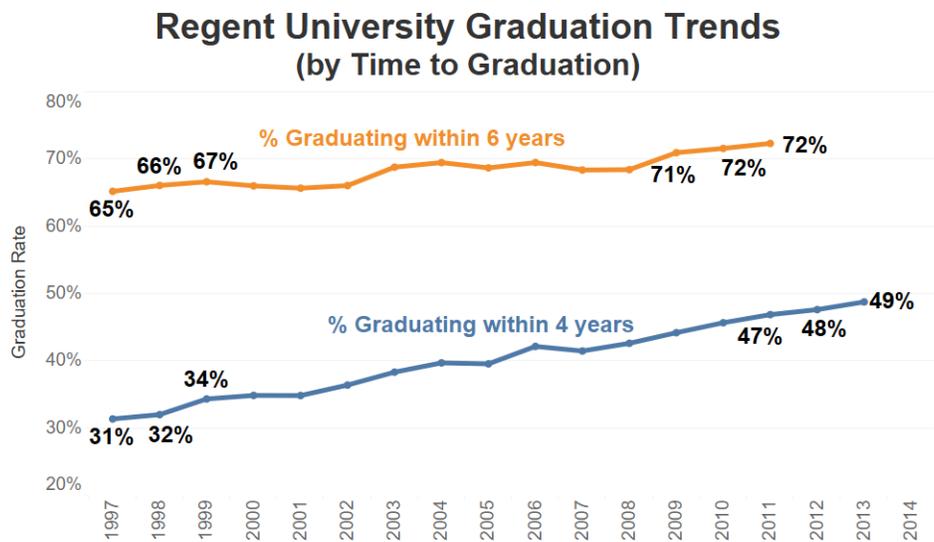
% Return for Third Year



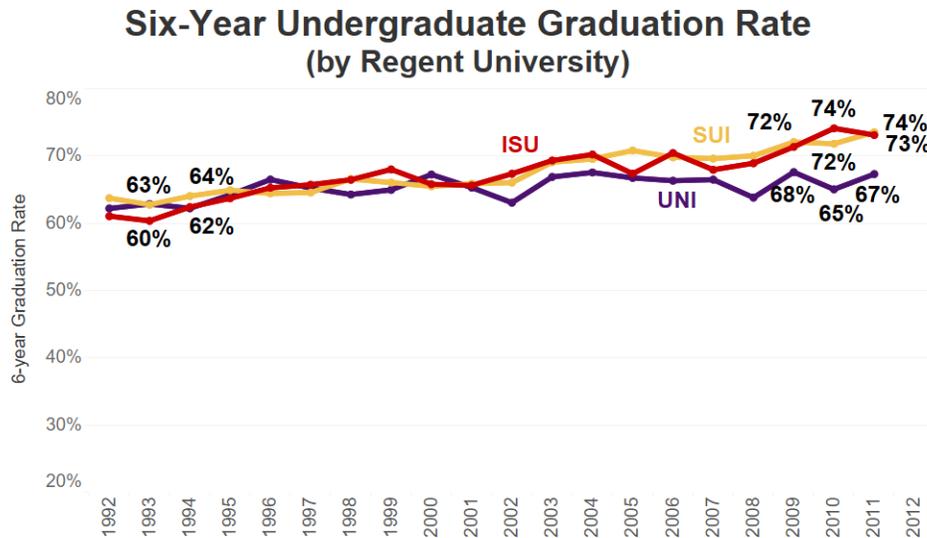
The percentage of students returning from their second year fluctuates annually by cohort and differed slightly by university. Iowa State University retention was 87%, down one percentage point; the University of Iowa was 86%, down one percentage point; and the University of Northern Iowa was 81%, down five percentage points. Regent retention rates are significantly above the national average for 4-year public universities in the United States (see “% of Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year” below).



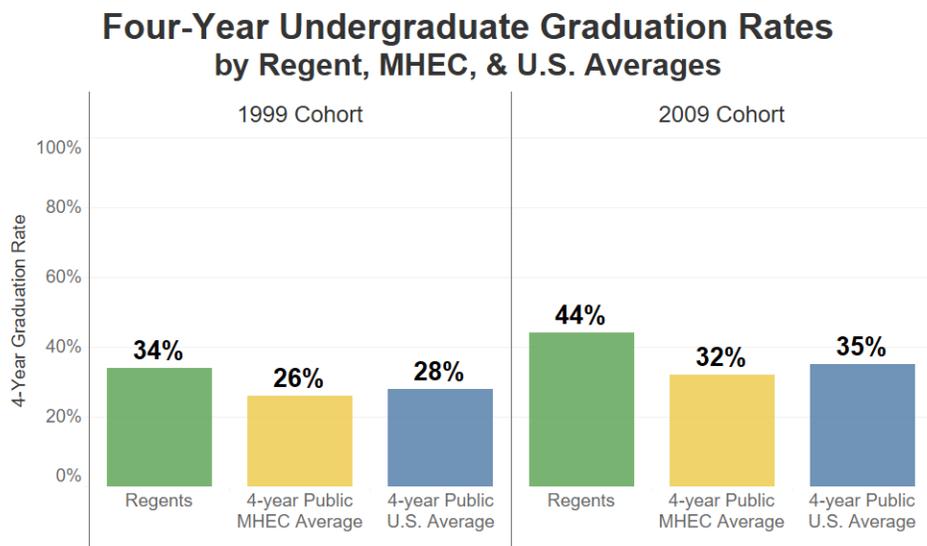
Graduation rates. Graduation rates four and six years after enrolling at a Regent universities continued their upward trend over time (see “Regent University Graduation Trends” below). The 2011 entry cohort had a six-year graduation rate of 72% for all Regent universities. The 2013 entry cohort had 49% of its students graduate within four years.



Six-year graduation rates increase at both the University of Iowa (from 72% for the 2010 cohort to 74% for the 2011 cohort) and the University of Northern Iowa (from 65% for the 2010 cohort to 67% for the 2011 cohort). The six-year graduation rate at Iowa State University was down slightly from 74% to 73% (see “Six-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate” below).

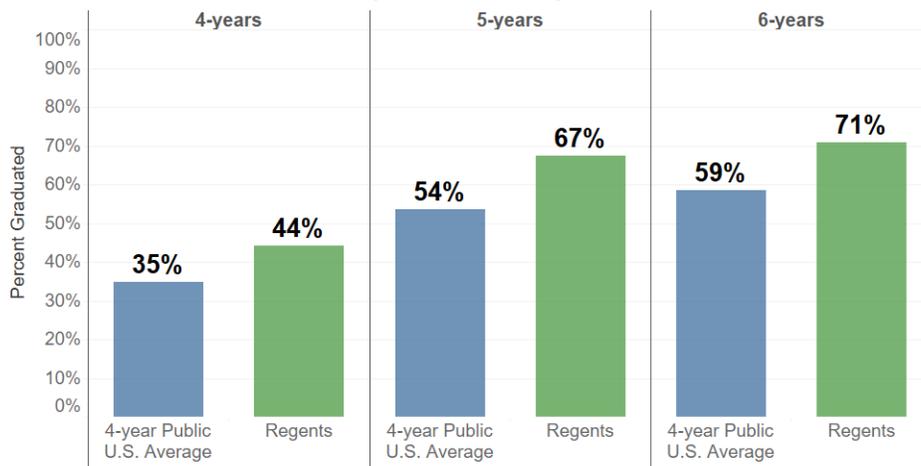


Regent university four-year graduation rates compare favorably to other 4-year public universities both nationally and among nearby MHEC (Midwestern Higher Education Compact) states. MHEC states include Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin (see “Four-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rates” below).



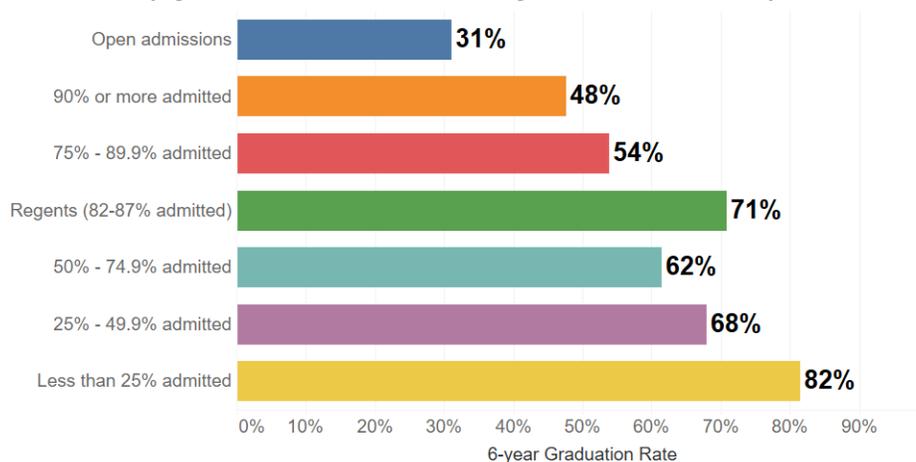
Regent university graduation rates exceed the national average for 4-year public universities at four, five, and six years after entry (see “Years to Graduation at 4-Year Public Universities” below). The graphic below used the 2009 cohort for comparison to federal data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

**Years to Graduation at 4-Year Public Universities
(2009 Cohort)**



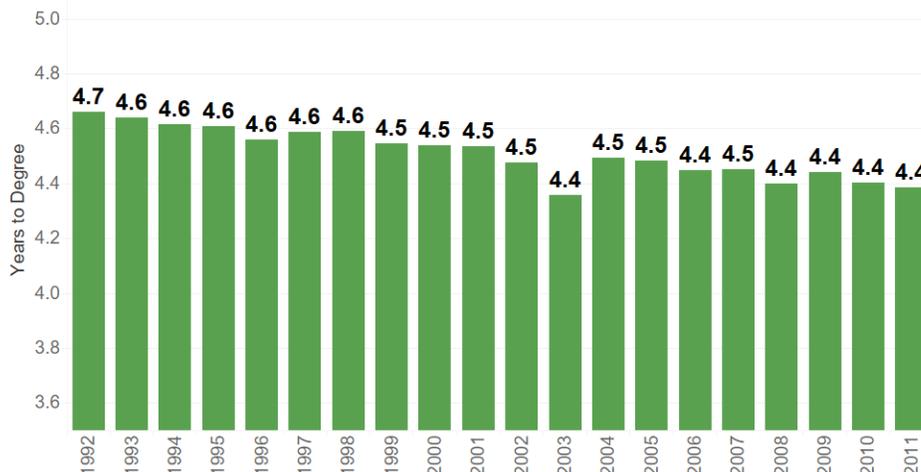
One factor that affects retention and graduation rates is institutional selectivity. Institutions that are more selective tend to admit students with higher test scores and high school grades. These students, on average, have higher retention and graduation rates. Federal reporting through IPEDS provides graduation rates based on the percent of applicants who were accepted for admission. The College Board states that the percentage of students admitted to the Regent universities ranges from 82% to 87%. As shown below (see “Six-Year Graduate Rate at Public 4-year Universities”), the Regent universities out-perform the 4-year public national average, and have higher average graduation rates than more selective public 4-year institutions.

**Six-Year Graduation Rate at Public 4-year Universities
(by Institutional Selectivity for 2009 Cohort)**



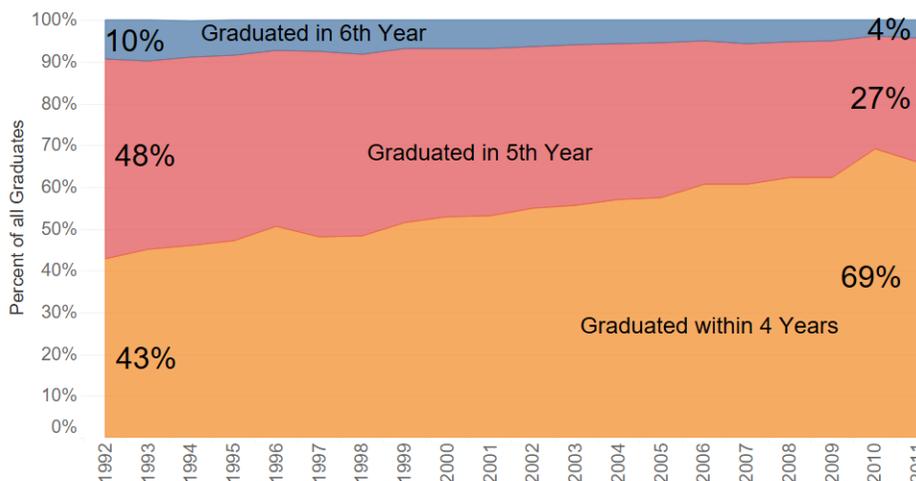
Time to degree. The federal government established the six-year graduation rate (150%) as the standard for 4-year colleges and universities. This standard can mistakenly imply that many or most students need six years to complete a degree. The graph below shows the amount of time in elapsed years that the average student at a Regent university takes to earn a bachelor's degree. As this is a measure of elapsed time from start to finish, it includes any time away from the classroom that a student may have taken. Time to degree has been slowly but steadily declining over the past 20 years.

Time to Degree in Elapsed Years



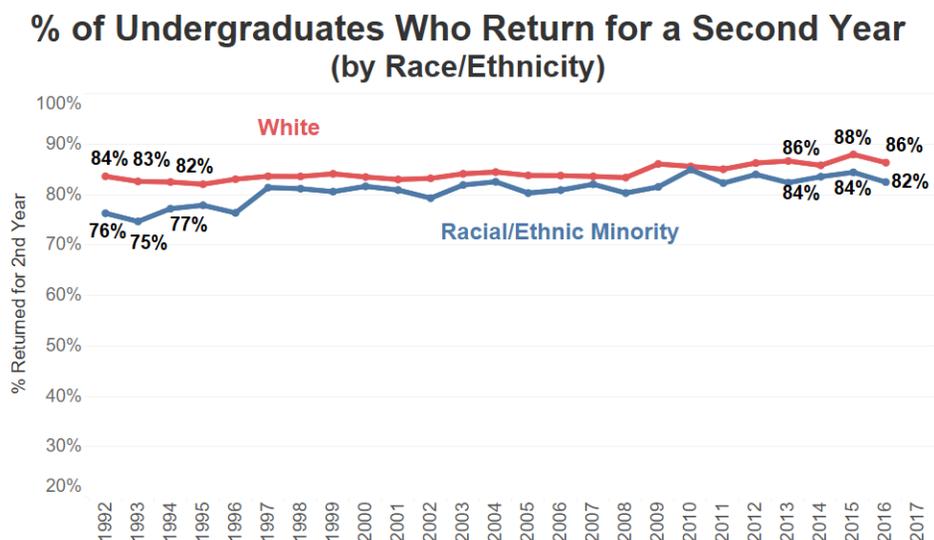
When looking at all graduates, the percent earning a degree in four years has increased significantly over the past 20 years. Of the 2011 cohort, 69% of degree earners graduated in four years compared to 43% of the 1992 cohort. Only four percent of degree recipients in the 2011 cohort needed a sixth year to finish.

When Undergraduates Earned their Degree

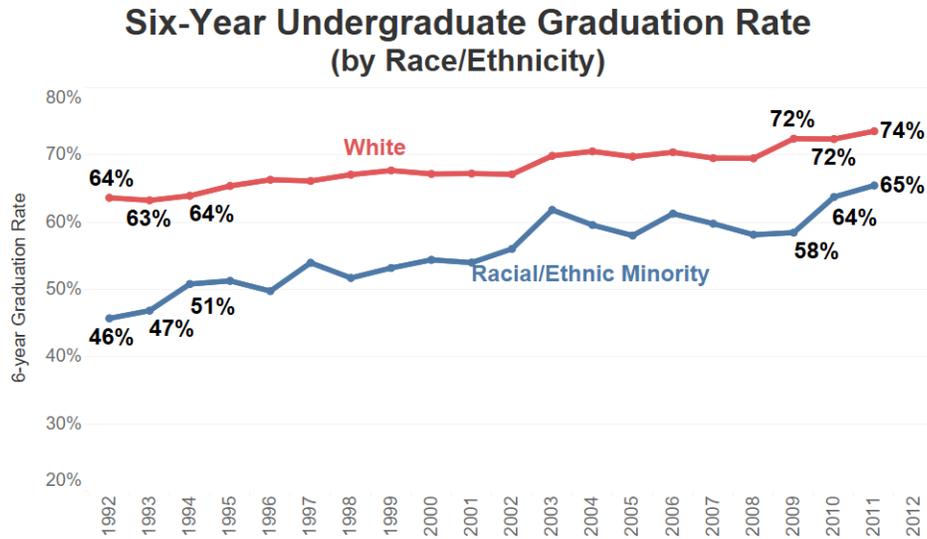


Race and ethnicity. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) report “Knocking at the College Door”, projects relatively stable numbers of high school graduates in Iowa over the next 17 years. However, an increasing proportion of these graduates will come from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. The ability of the Regent universities to attract, retain, and graduate racial or ethnic minority students is important now and will become increasingly critical in the future. Toward that end, the next three graphs illustrate the “achievement gap” between White students and racial or ethnic minority students at the Regents. These graphs show laudable, but not sufficient, improvement over time.

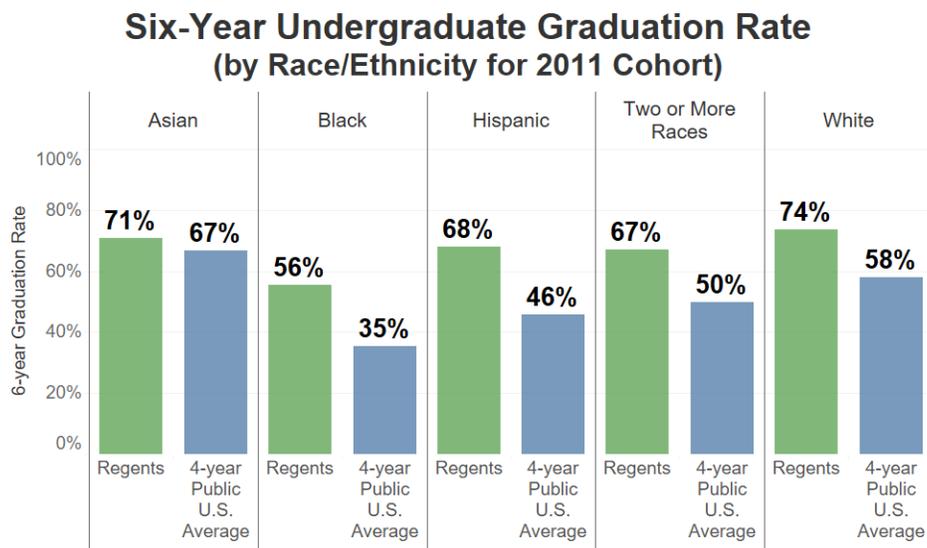
Looking at the percent of undergraduates who return for a second year (i.e., first-year retention) over the past 25 years, the retention gap has narrowed over time from eight percentage points in the 1992 cohort to four percentage points in 2016. This gap has increased slightly since 2014, when the gap had narrowed to two percentage points.



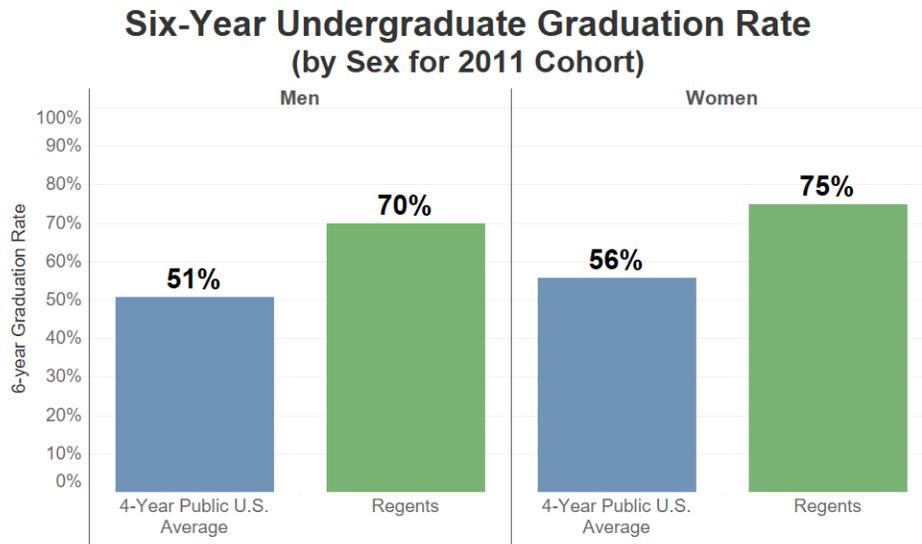
Over time, the universities cut the graduation achievement gap in half. In 1992, the graduation rate gap between White students and racial or ethnic minority students was 18 percentage points. That gap has narrowed to nine percentage points for members of the 2011 cohort (eight in 2010) while graduation rates for both groups have continued to increase over time (see “Six-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity” below).



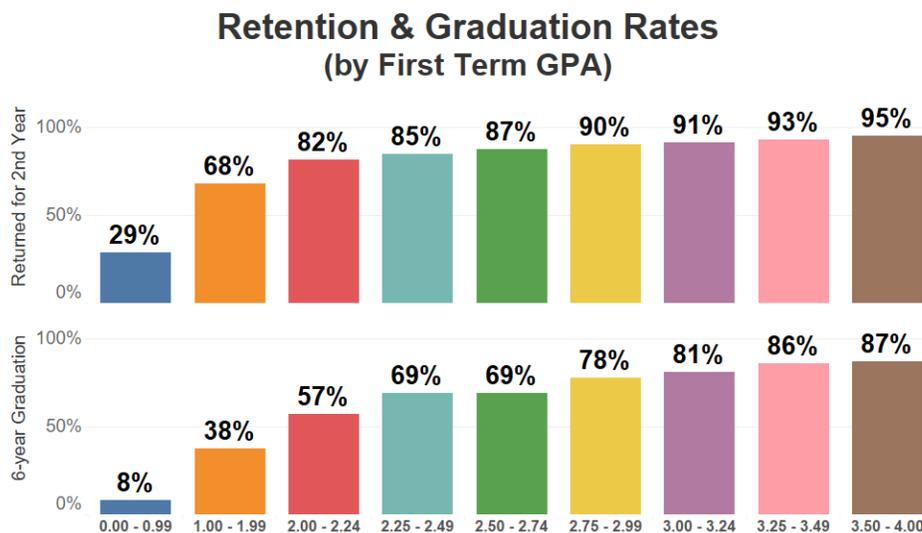
As seen in the graph below, while the Regent universities have significantly higher six-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity than the 4-year public national average, there are still significant gaps in graduation rates between different racial/ethnic categories within the Regent 2011 cohort.



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 men.

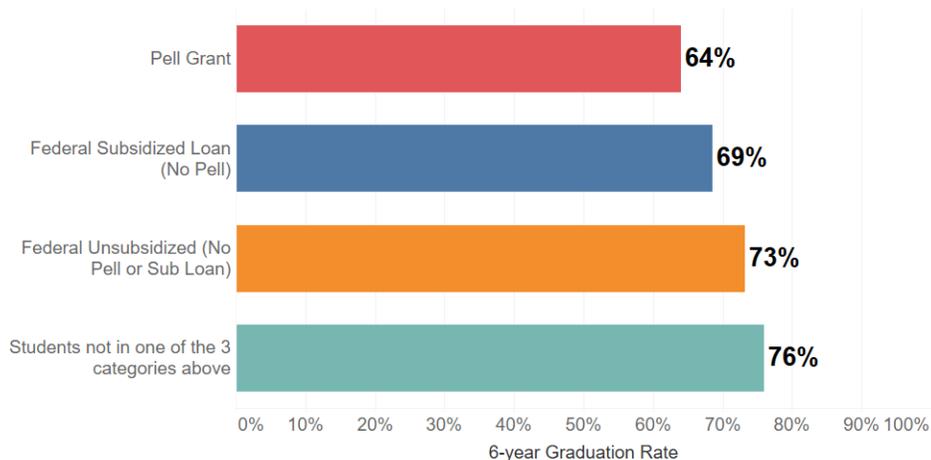


First term GPA. Prior to starting college or university, the best predictor of retention and graduation at a Regent university is high school Grade Point Average (GPA). After a student enrolls, the best predictor of both retention and graduation is the GPA a student earns in their first term.



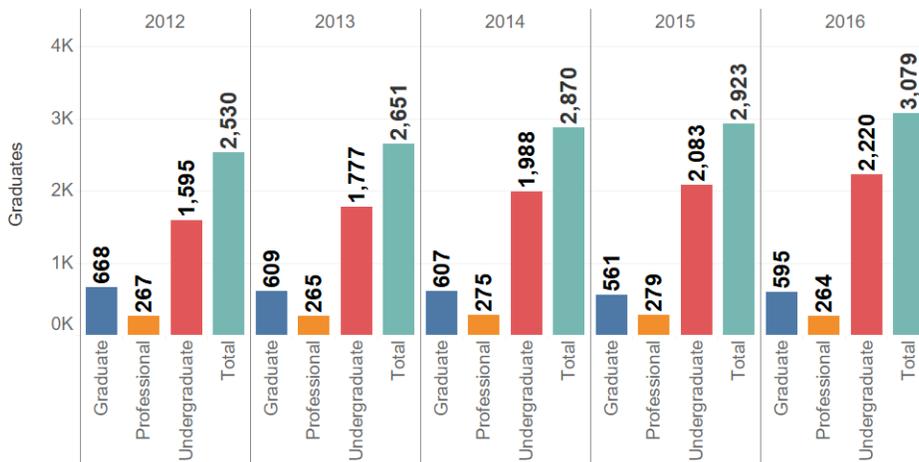
Financial aid. Graduation rates also differ by types of federal financial aid received. Receipt of a Pell Grants often serves as an approximate measure of low-income status for students. According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, about 73% of Pell Grant recipients have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

**Six-Year Undergraduate Graduation Rate
(by Financial Aid for 2011 Cohort)**



STEM graduates. The total number of STEM graduates increased from 6,907 in 2015 to 7,195 in 2016, an increase of +4.2%. The number of women graduating with STEM degrees has also continued to grow, with most of the growth at the undergraduate level.

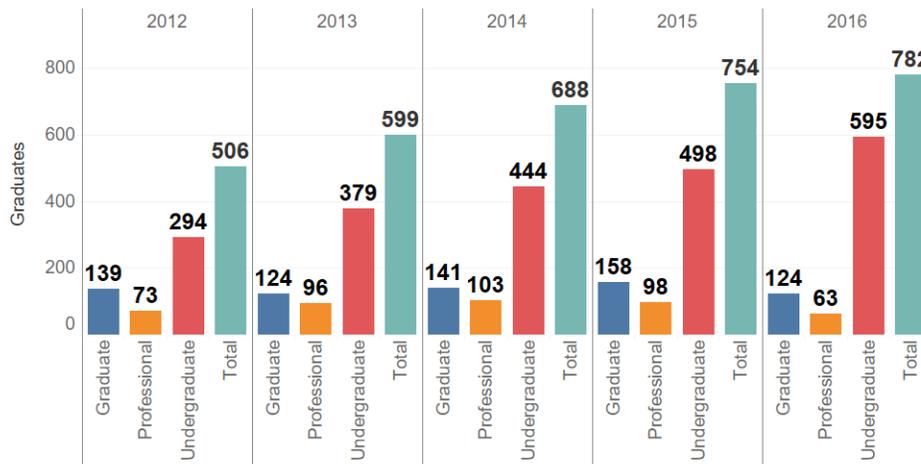
**Women Graduates from STEM Fields
Regent Total: 2012 - 2016**



The number of racial and ethnic minorities graduating with STEM degrees has also continued an upward trend with growth coming from the undergraduate level.

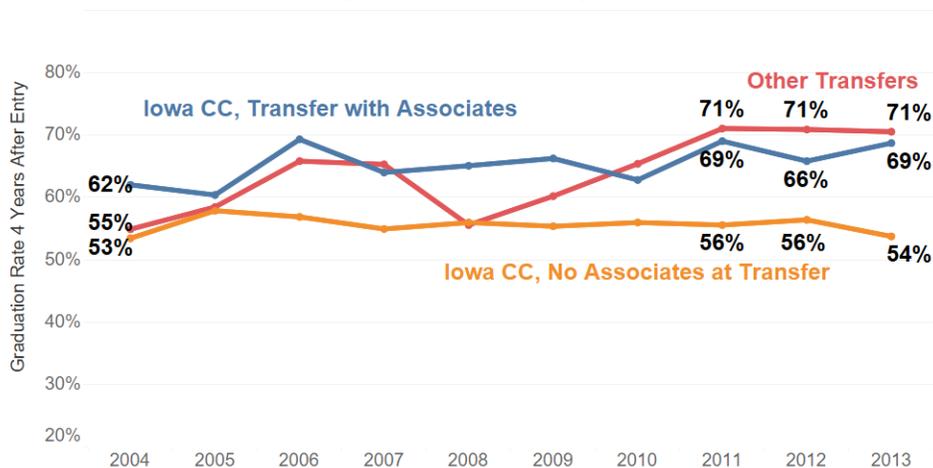
Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduates from STEM Fields

Regent Total: 2012 - 2016



Transfer college. The graph below shows graduation rates for students who have transferred into a Regent university from another college or university. The three categories shown are Iowa community college students who transferred after earning an associate’s degree, Iowa community college students who transferred without an associate’s degree, and other transfers. The category of other transfers includes students transferring from one Regent university to another, those transferring from private or out-of-state public colleges and universities. Other transfers graduated at a higher rate (71%) than Iowa community college students with an associate’s degree (69%) and those without an associate’s degree (54%).

**Graduation Rate Four Years After Transfer to Regents
(by Transfer College)**



Non-persistence. Lack of completion of a degree from the university where a student first enrolled does not necessarily reflect failure on the part of the student or the institution. Many factors can lead to a student transferring to another institution or leaving higher education. The National Student Clearinghouse is able to follow students across multiple colleges and universities to determine whether or not they earn a degree. NSC data show that for the 2010 cohort, 69% of Regent university students stayed and earned a degree. When looking at NSC data, we find that an additional 12% of the entering class earned a degree at another U.S. college or university (for a total success rate of 81%).

**THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
FALL 2017 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS**

The University of Iowa's six-year graduation rate (73.5%) for the entering class of 2011 is a significant increase compared to that of the 2010 class (71.8%), while the four-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2013 (54.4%) likewise is a significant increase compared to that of the 2012 class (52.7%). The university's 2016 first-year retention rate (86%) is down relative to the previous year's rate (87.1%), but is consistent with the university's average first-year retention rate during the past five years (86%). The University of Iowa has a number of efforts in place to encourage retention and timely graduation, including:

- 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, safety, inclusion, financial literacy, and academic integrity.
- The university has implemented Excelling@Iowa, an early-warning tool used by over 400 faculty and staff to assist students at risk of attrition.
- The four-year graduation plan ensures that course availability issues will not affect time to graduation, provided the student makes a good faith effort to work with an academic advisor to graduate in four years.
- 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 Honors student who has previously taken the GE course. Enrollment in these three courses allows students to develop a sense of community while learning study strategies.
- College Success Seminar is a course offered to first-year students who are struggling academically after their first semester. The course provides students with the opportunity to work on the skills necessary for college success. Strategies for Academic Success is a similar course designed for second-year students on academic probation.
- Courses in Common allows entering first-year students to take a combination of courses with 20 other first-year students, helping them to get to know their first-year classmates, engage in class discussions, form study groups, and ease their transition to the university.
- The new 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, faculty and academic departments can better predict enrollment demands, manage course enrollment, and adjust course offerings appropriately.
- Three-year plans of study for several majors have been implemented to support students who are committed to graduating in less than four years.

- Several colleges have increased the number of professional advising staff to expand access to academic advising throughout a student's time at the university. First- and second-year advising generally helps students transition to college, identify appropriate majors, and plan academic paths to achieve their goals. Departmental advising in the third- and fourth-years helps students maximize their experience in a major through course work, assistance in finding research and internship opportunities, and faculty mentorship to plan for post-graduate course work or employment.
- The first-year seminar program, which provides first-year students with the chance to have a first-semester course with a faculty member in a small class setting (15 to 20 students), continues to grow.
- Visits to Supplemental Instruction (SI) increased from 7,000 in 2014-15 to over 20,000 in 2016-17. SI is a free-of-charge, peer-facilitated academic support program offered for 20 high-enrollment, historically difficult courses. Students who attend SI an average of once per week, earn a letter grade increment higher in the course and have a 6% higher retention rate compared to students in the course who do not take advantage of SI.
- Peer Led Undergraduate Study (PLUS) helps students who are enrolled in both General Chemistry I and College Algebra, and students enrolled in PLUS have a 0.5 letter grade higher in Chemistry compared to their peers.
- Iowa GROW® (Guided Reflection on Work) is a nationally recognized, high-impact intervention program providing undergraduate student employees with brief, structured conversations that strengthen work and academic connections. Students who engage in the conversations with their supervisors are retained at higher rates than those who do not. Current efforts are underway to expand GROW to all students employed on campus.
- The fall OnIowa! orientation program continues to introduce students to the higher expectations of collegiate academic work, teach students new decision-making skills, and engage students in the university's traditions and history.
- 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 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.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2017 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Fall 2017 Iowa State has a record high four-year graduation rate of 46.4% (entering class of 2013); the six-year graduation rate of 73.4% (entering class of 2011) is the second highest on record. The one-year retention rate of 87.5% (entering class of fall 2016) exceeds the ten year average of 86.4%. The two-year retention rate (entering class of 2015) is also the highest on record.
- Over the last five years the mathematics department has substantially improved student learning and success in pre-calculus and calculus classes. Results include:
 - Five years ago DFW rates were approximately 65% in pre-calculus.
 - Current DFW rates in pre-calculus are approximately 17.41% (based on spring 2017).
 - Five years ago approximately 60% of calculus students regularly attended class. Currently approximately 90% of calculus students in team-based learning sections attend class.
 - In 2017-18, the Mathematics Department is focusing on the business math sequence, Math 150 & 151.
- The Student Success Council (SSC), a long term collaborative effort of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, continues its commitment to student success and renewed focus on increasing the overall retention and graduation rates as well as closing the retention and graduation achievement gap for specific student sub-populations. The SSC has moved to a project team approach, with the goal of making greater progress on new or continuing student success initiatives. Some of the project teams include closing the achievement gap, developing a first year early academic intervention program, optimizing the use of predictive modeling to inform student success and academic advising efforts, reviewing/revising communication to students in academic difficulty, and investigating current registration hold policies and identifying potential modifications that will enhance student retention.
- The following initiatives are underway in connection with ISU's collaboration in the University Innovation Alliance (UIA). Each of these initiatives also have a project team reporting to the Student Success Council.
 - Iowa State has implemented the EAB (Educational Advisory Board) student success and predictive data analytics software, which includes the academic advising platform and the appointment scheduling functionality. Utilization of this system is expanding in 2017-18 to include Student Affairs departments.
 - An NSF funded *First in the World* Grant to the UIA is enabling a pilot program at Iowa State that employs three student success coaches focused on helping a

cohort of low income and first generation students successfully transition to Iowa State and complete a degree.

- A second grant to the UIA is allowing ISU to provide modest financial completion grants to students with unmet need so they can complete their degrees. This program was developed by UIA schools during the 2016-17 academic year, and has been implemented for spring 2018. It will continue through FY 2022.
- The New Student Onboarding Task Force is making progress with restructuring all new student onboarding processes with a primary goal of enhancing student transition to ISU and subsequent success. The task force completed an inventory, initial assessment, detailed process mapping for the current state of onboarding activities, and campus-wide open forums to glean input which will guide project development. Project teams have been formed to develop recommendations on communication, curriculum and a digital repository for a new and improved onboarding experience for all students new to ISU.
- The Office of Student Financial Aid through the Student Loan Education Office provided individualized counseling sessions or classroom lectures on utilization of financial aid, budgeting, and debt management.
- Student Wellness, a department new to the Division of Student Affairs in the 2016-17 academic year, developed and delivered programs and resources aimed at reducing student stress. These programs were piloted during the 2016-17 academic year, and were fully launched fall 2017. Additionally, a taskforce has been developed to identify ways of reducing student suicidality by creating a culture of care, connectedness, and belonging to the university, including additional outreach to underrepresented and/or marginalized student populations.
- Learning Communities continue to expand their offerings to students, serving a record 77.5% of the incoming first-year class during fall 2016. The one-year retention rate and six-year graduation rate for LC students continues to be higher than non-LC participants by 6.2% and 9.6% respectively.
- The new Veterans Academic Recovery Program is showing promising results, with student participants receiving no or fewer midterm D or F grades. Students are connected with tutoring, academic coaching, or other support services.

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
FALL 2017 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS**

Students at the University of Northern Iowa continue to persist towards their degrees and graduate at rates that exceed our peer institutions and similar Carnegie classified institutions. Our recently developed Strategic Enrollment Master Plan is now guiding the development of student support programs and interventions as well as systematic improvements that streamline the path to graduation.

Persistence and Graduation Rates:

- Our four-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2013 is 43.2%, the highest since this metric has been recorded at UNI.
- The six-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2011 is 67.3%, well above our previous five-year average of 65.8%. The six-year graduation rate for our Carnegie peer institutions is 49.8% (IPEDS).
- The six-year graduation rate for minority students in the entering class of 2011 has increased to 65%, the highest since this metric has been recorded at UNI. in institutional history and significantly above the previous five-year average of 44.6%.
- Our first- to second-year retention rate for the entering class of 2016 is 81.2%. The most recent comparable rate for all 4-year public universities is 69.7% (National Student Clearinghouse, 2015).
- The Retention and Completion Council was re-configured starting with the 2017-2018 academic year in order to shift from a primary focus on the first year experience to a broader focus on student persistence through graduation. A cross-divisional team of faculty, staff, administrators and students are working to eliminate systematic barriers to persistence, and developing new initiatives to support student success.
- The Success Coaching program offers one-to-one mentoring to students on academic alert and probation. Spring 2017 analysis indicated that probationary students who met with a success coach at least one time were retained at a rate of 78.5% into the following fall semester, 14.3 percentage points higher than probationary students who did not meet with a coach. Students who met with their coach three or more times were retained at a rate of 85.7%, 23.3 percentage points higher than other probationary students. Current efforts focus on expanding the number of students served by Success Coaching and maximizing the number of times students meet with their coaches.
- In Fall 2017, Business Operations and Student Success and Retention collaborated on supplemental outreach to all undergraduate students with past due u-bills in advance of the registration period. Through a combination of emails, phone calls, and individual meetings, staff members were able to help students identify solutions to financial challenges and avoid delays in registration due to u-bill holds.

- Student Success and Retention staff have implemented individual outreach phone calls to all first-year students who have not yet registered for classes at the end of advance registration period. These individual phone calls focus on helping students navigate registration holds, work through challenges that are preventing student progress, and offering support and encouragement to students. Plans for 2018 include expanding this individual outreach to additional cohorts of students, including second-year and transfer students.
- UNI began an initiative called the Potential Completers project in 2015-16. During Phase I we reached out to 95 former students who had left UNI late in their academic career (with 100 or more credit hours earned) without graduating. Of those 95, 45 (47%) had graduated by the end of the Summer 2017 semester. We began Phase II in the summer of 2017 by reaching out to a second group of Potential Completers who left late in their career (100 or more credit hours). As [AM1] part of Phase II we also contacted a new group who left UNI after earning 60-99 credit hours; we are referring to this group as Potential Returners. In addition to inviting them back to continue their degree on campus, we also let them know about the online option available with the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree.