

**Cal Poly
Preliminary Report
Retention and Graduation of Full-time Undergraduates 1990 to 2001**

Institutional Planning and Analysis (IP&A) has updated the student cohort database to include the Fall 2001 first-time freshmen and transfer cohorts. This report presents preliminary analysis of those data, with graduation rates now available for the 1995 first-time freshmen cohort and the 1997 upper division transfer cohort. The complete "Retention and Graduation of Full-time Undergraduates, Cal Poly Cohorts Entering Summer/Fall 1990 to 2001" will be available early in Fall 2002.

The cohort database developed by IP&A uses a set of criteria to define a consistent method to measure retention and graduation rates. Data are derived from the files that have been validated and reported quarterly to the Chancellor's Office. Criteria mirror the indicators used by the NCAA, Student Right to Know federal legislation, and the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Documentation of the study scope and criteria is available upon request from IP&A.

I. Overview

The following table displays the status of the first-time freshmen (FTF) cohort after the sixth year. The graduation rate increased from 64.6 percent for the 1994 cohort to 66.0 percent for the 1995 FTF cohort. This is almost an 8 percent increase over the six-year graduation rate for the 1990 FTF cohort. In addition, the number of students still enrolled after six years has decreased by over three percent since the 1990 cohort, and the percent not currently retained (not enrolled at or graduated from Cal Poly) has dropped by over 4 percent.

It should also be noted that while these tables show trend data collected from the Student Information System, additional research would be required to determine explanations for these trends.

Freshmen Cohort

<i>Of those who started at Cal Poly in the Summer/Fall Freshmen Cohort</i>	1990	1993	1994	1995
Cohort Headcount	1,817	1,676	2,098	3,389
<i>Status After the Sixth Year</i>				
Currently Enrolled	6.9%	4.0%	3.3%	3.5%
Graduated	58.2%	64.5%	64.6%	66.0%
Not Currently Retained	34.9%	31.5%	32.1%	30.5%

The 1997 upper division transfer (UDT) student cohort showed improvement in graduation rates as well. The percentage of UDT students graduating after four years rose from 57.3 percent for the 1990 cohort to 68.7 percent for the 1997 cohort. The percent of students still enrolled after four years dropped by 6 percent and the percent of students not currently retained dropped by over 4 percent.

Upper Division Transfer Cohort

<i>Of those who started at Cal Poly in the Summer/Fall Upper Div Transfer Cohort</i>	1990	1995	1996	1997
Cohort Headcount	1,106	1,367	1,316	1,056
<i>Status After the Fourth Year</i>				
Currently Enrolled	12.5%	9.5%	6.6%	6.5%
Graduated	57.3%	63.1%	66.4%	68.7%
Not Currently Retained	30.3%	27.4%	26.9%	24.8%

II. Retention First to Second Fall

The following tables display the retention and attrition of first-time freshmen and upper division transfer students from their first to their second fall at Cal Poly. "Percent not retained second Fall" refers to students not re-enrolling in that particular Fall. It does not preclude subsequent Cal Poly enrollment. If a student re-enrolls s/he is included in the original cohort count for subsequent Fall terms.

The first to second year retention rate for first-time freshmen has been consistent over the past three years at about 89 percent. Transfer student retention improved from 2000 to 2001 increasing about 2 percentage points to over 92 percent.

Freshmen Cohort

<i>Of those who started at Cal Poly in the Summer/Fall Freshmen Cohort</i>	1998	1999	2000	3 Year Average
<i>Retained from first to second Fall</i>	98-99	99-00	00-01	
Cohort Headcount	2466	2850	3253	2856
Percent Enrolled Second Fall	89.0%	88.6%	88.6%	88.7%
Percent Not Retained Second Fall	11.0%	11.4%	11.4%	11.2%

Upper Division Transfer Cohort

<i>Of those who started at Cal Poly in the Summer/Fall Upper Div Transfer Cohort</i>	1998	1999	2000	3 Year Average
<i>Retained from first to second Fall</i>	98-99	99-00	00-01	
Cohort Headcount	891	1033	931	952
Percent Enrolled Second Fall	90.5%	90.4%	92.4%	91.1%
Percent Graduated by Second Fall	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Percent Not Retained Second Fall	9.2%	9.4%	7.5%	8.7%

III. Change of Major

Data show that, at the end of six years, almost 26 percent of students in the 1995 first-time freshmen cohort had changed their major at least one time. Upper division transfer students change majors less frequently with 11 percent of the students in the 1997 cohort changing major by the end of four years.

Freshmen Cohort

<i>Of those who started at Cal Poly in the Summer/Fall Freshmen Cohort</i>	1990	1993	1994	1995
Cohort Headcount	1,817	1,676	2,098	2,507
<i>Status after the Sixth Year</i>				
% Still Enrolled or Graduated Same Degree Program	37.9%	42.4%	40.7%	43.7%
% Still Enrolled or Graduated Different Degree Program	27.2%	26.1%	27.2%	25.8%
% Not Currently Retained	34.9%	31.5%	32.1%	30.5%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

Upper Division Transfer Cohort

<i>Of those who started at Cal Poly in the Summer/Fall Upper Division Transfer Cohort</i>	1990	1995	1996	1997
Cohort Headcount	1,106	1,367	1,316	1,056
<i>Status after the Fourth Year</i>				
% Still Enrolled or Graduated Same Degree Program	56.6%	61.3%	61.3%	64.2%
% Still Enrolled or Graduated Different Degree Program	13.2%	11.3%	11.5%	11.0%
% Not Currently Retained	30.3%	27.4%	27.3%	24.8%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

IV. Six-Year Graduation Rate by College

Although the percentage of first-time freshmen who change their major to a different college has been relatively stable for the University, patterns vary by college. Three colleges show an improvement in the proportion of freshmen who start and graduate in the same college: Agriculture, Business and Liberal Arts. In contrast, the percentage of freshmen who started in Architecture and Environmental Design or in Engineering but graduated in another college has increased since the 1990 cohort. Variations in Science and Math suggest no clear trend.

First-time Freshmen Cohort Graduation in Six Years

Summer/Fall Freshmen Cohort	1990	1993	1994	1995
College of Agriculture Cohort Headcount	536	391	456	487
% Started and Graduated this college	38.8%	48.1%	44.6%	51.3%
% Started this college/Graduated other college	17.9%	12.0%	14.7%	16.2%
College of Arch. & Env. Design Cohort Headcount	156	149	156	186
% Started and Graduated this college	48.1%	40.3%	42.3%	42.0%
% Started this college/Graduated other college	12.8%	18.8%	14.7%	21.0%
College of Business Cohort Headcount	156	196	304	407
% Started and Graduated this college	62.8%	62.8%	70.1%	68.8%
% Started this college/Graduated other college	7.7%	11.2%	9.5%	6.4%
College of Engineering Cohort Headcount	606	540	643	792
% Started and Graduated this college	40.9%	48.2%	44.0%	44.3%
% Started this college/Graduated other college	12.6%	14.3%	15.9%	16.9%
College of Liberal Arts Cohort Headcount	178	253	315	313
% Started and Graduated this college	56.1%	60.9%	64.1%	63.0%
% Started this college/Graduated other college	4.5%	9.5%	7.3%	6.1%
College of Science & Math Cohort Headcount	185	147	224	322
% Started and Graduated this college	44.9%	50.4%	39.8%	45.0%
% Started this college/Graduated other college	17.8%	15.6%	24.1%	17.7%

V. Six-Year Graduation Rate by Ethnic Origin and Gender

In the table that follows, the cumulative six-year graduation rate for first-time freshmen is displayed by ethnic origin. The 1990 rate can be compared to rates for the last three available cohorts; 1993, 1994 and 1995. Again, as with the college graduation rates, it can be seen that as the graduation rate for the total university improved from 58.2 percent for the 1990 FTF cohort to 66.0 percent for the 1995 cohort, most of the groups noted below saw similar improvements.

Note: Several of these groups contain a small number of students in each cohort so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

Six-Year Graduation Rate by Ethnic Origin

First-time Freshmen Cohort

<i>Cohort Year</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1995</i>
African American				
Cohort Headcount	59	25	33	42
Graduation Rate	34%	36%	48%	43%
Asian				
Cohort Headcount	286	233	199	190
Graduation Rate	64%	65%	83%	63%
Hispanic				
Cohort Headcount	299	254	230	162
Graduation Rate	42%	46%	52%	48%
Native American				
Cohort Headcount	23	24	34	32
Graduation Rate	48%	42%	35%	65%
Other Non-White				
Cohort Headcount	34	40	43	49
Graduation Rate	62%	63%	74%	63%
White				
Cohort Headcount	1040	1002	1369	1103
Graduation Rate	63%	69%	69%	71%
No Response				
Cohort Headcount	69	97	105	98
Graduation Rate	52%	76%	58%	72%

Note: Student ethnic origin is self-reported.

The graduation rates for women in the FTF cohorts continue to be higher than for men in the same cohorts, and continue to improve over the time period from 1990 to 1995. Graduation rates for men have been steady for the last three cohorts.

Six-Year Graduation Rate by Gender

First-time Freshmen Cohort

<i>Cohort Year</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1995</i>
Female				
Cohort Headcount	814	745	957	1135
Graduation Rate	62%	70%	72%	74%
Male				
Cohort Headcount	1003	931	1141	1372
Graduation Rate	55%	60%	59%	59%