

Arkansas Division of Higher Education

Annual Report of Retention and Graduation Rates at Arkansas Institutions of Higher Education

2018-19



Research & Analytics

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Arkansas Division of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Little Rock, AR 72201

ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT RETENTION AND GRADUATION

Statewide student retention and graduation rates for students entering Arkansas higher education institutions are presented in this report for both public 4-Year and 2-Year institutions, and private/independent institutions. The Arkansas Higher Education Information System (AHEIS) enables multi-year student retention and graduation tracking in compliance with Student-Right-to-Know legislation and Act 267 of 1989.

Statewide Retention

The retention calculations are based on fall-to-fall comparisons of students in the IPEDS cohort of first-time entering, full-time, and credential-seeking students from the fall term only for all institution types. The following represents the percentage of each cohort who returned in the next fall term for the five most recent cohorts for all Arkansas Higher Education Sectors. Both public sectors reported the same retention rate for the Fall 2018 cohort as was reported for the Fall 2017 cohort. The private institutions experienced a 9% decline, but private institution rates tend to fluctuate more than retention rates of public institutions.

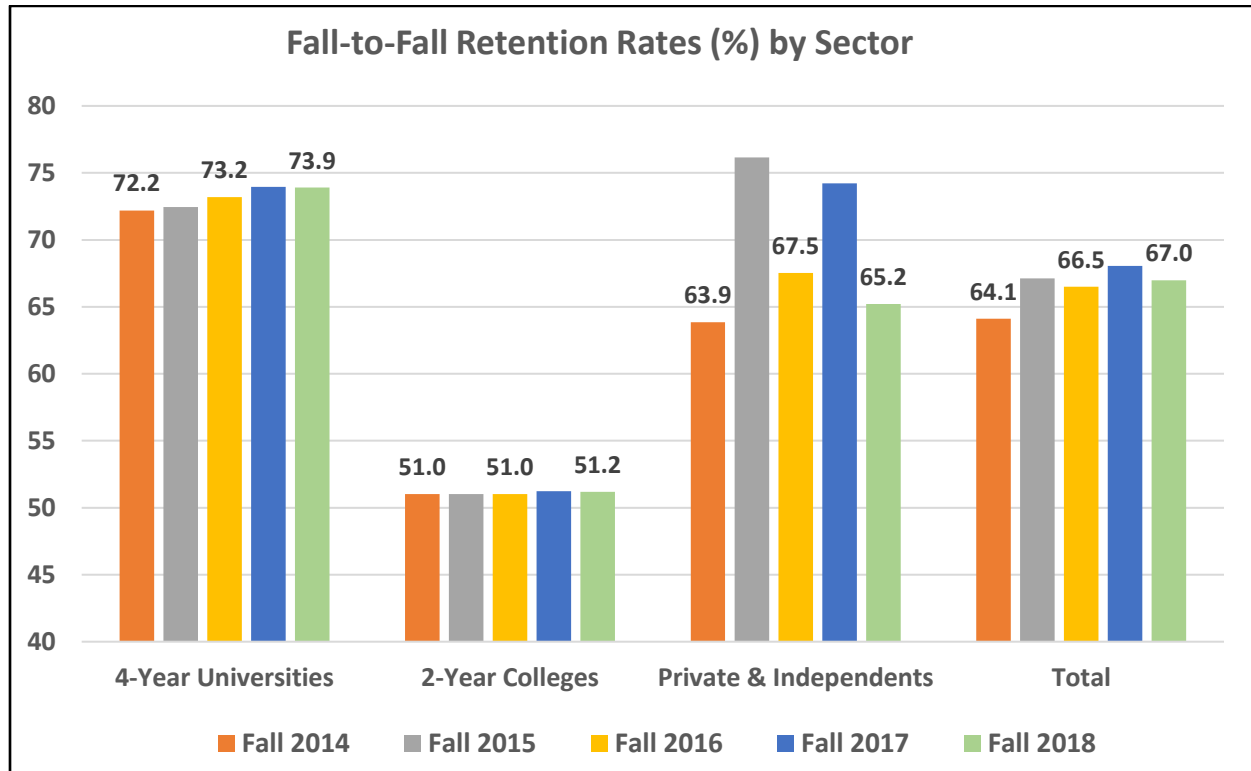


Chart 4.1: Student Retention Rates by Sector

When looking at all sectors together, the state’s fall-to-fall retention rate of 67.0% for the Fall 2018 cohort has increased 2.9% over the Fall 2014 retention rate of 64.1%. The 4-Year public institutions have consistently reported a slight increase in the fall-to-fall retention rate for the last five cohorts. Most recently, 73.9% of the Fall 2018 first-time in college cohort returned for their second year in Fall 2019.

The 2-Year college fall-to-fall retention rates remain consistent at around 50% - 51% for each cohort. The Private/Independent institutions retention rates vary more than those of the public institutions. The private institution Fall 2015 cohort produced a 76.1% retention rate, which is the highest fall-to-fall retention rate on record. Private institutions reported a Fall 2018 cohort retention rate of 65.2%, which is slightly lower than the state rate of 67.0%.

Female students return for their second year at a higher retention rate than male students in both public sectors. Female student retention has shown modest improvements for the past three cohorts in both public sectors, but male student retention has shown slight declines. Fall 2018 retention rates for both male and female students declined for our Private/Independent institutions compared to the Fall 2017 retention rate.

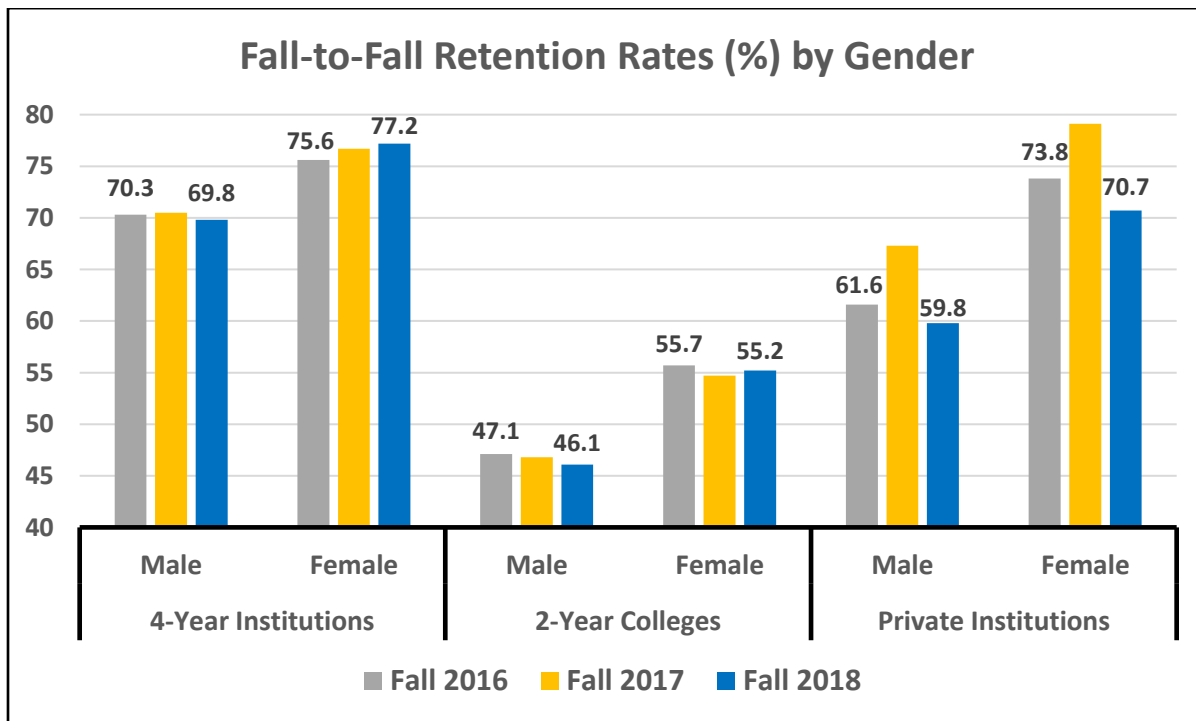


Chart 4.2: Student Retention Rates by Gender

For the 2-Year college cohorts, the male students’ retention rate has decreased 1% when comparing the Fall 2016 cohort to the Fall 2018 cohort. Females also showed a decline, but it was less than 1%. Female students at our private institutions have a retention rate of 70.7% for the Fall 2018 cohort. The Fall 2017 male student cohort rate was 67.3%, but the Fall 2018 rate fell to 59.8%.

Chart 4.3 below provides fall-to-fall retention rates for the four race/ethnicity categories with the largest student cohorts. The Hispanic, Asian, and Black student cohorts reported an increased retention rate for the 2-year colleges comparing the Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 cohorts.

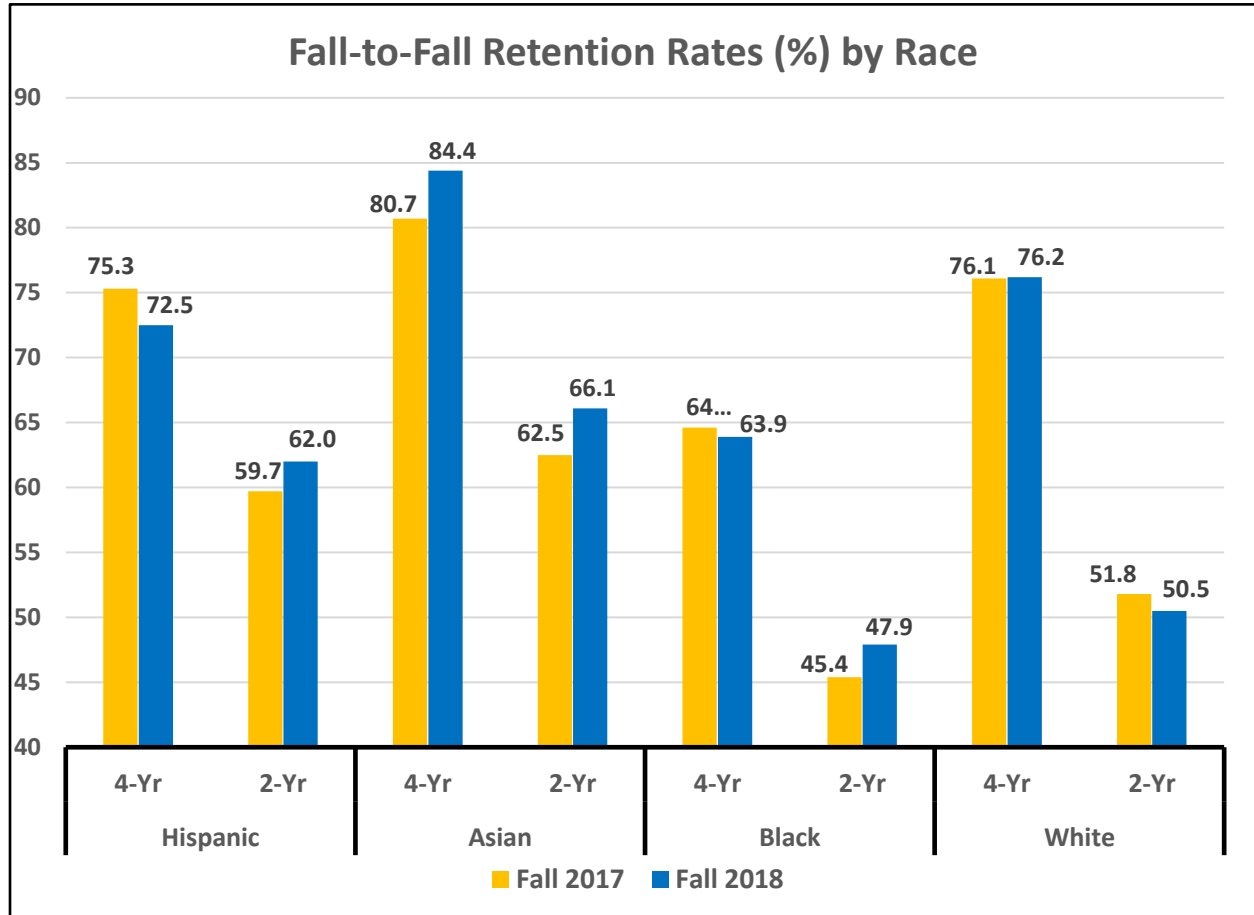


Chart 4.3: Student Retention Rates by Race/Ethnicity

The 4-Year institutions reported an improvement in fall-to-fall retention rates for Asian students when comparing Fall 2017 to Fall 2018. The Fall 2018 cohort returned for their second year at 84.4%, which is more than 3% higher than the Fall 2017 fall-to-fall retention rate of 80.7% for the Asian student cohort.

The 4-Year and 2-Year public institutions' white student cohorts were retained at consistent rates for both the Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 cohorts. The 4-Year rate averages 76%, while the 2-Year rate averages 50-52%.

The Fall 2018 retention rate declined for all race/ethnicity categories for our Private and Independent colleges and universities when compared to the Fall 2017 retention rate.

The graph below provides fall-to-fall retention rates for students' age 25 to 54 years old, which qualifies them to receive additional weighting in the Productivity Funding Model. The 4-Year institutions have experienced a decline in the retention rate for the last three cohorts, dropping from a 61.0% rate for the Fall 2015 cohort to 48.6% rate for the most recent Fall 2018 cohort. 2-Year college students in this 25-54 age group cohort show a consistent fall-to-fall retention rate between 47% and 50%.

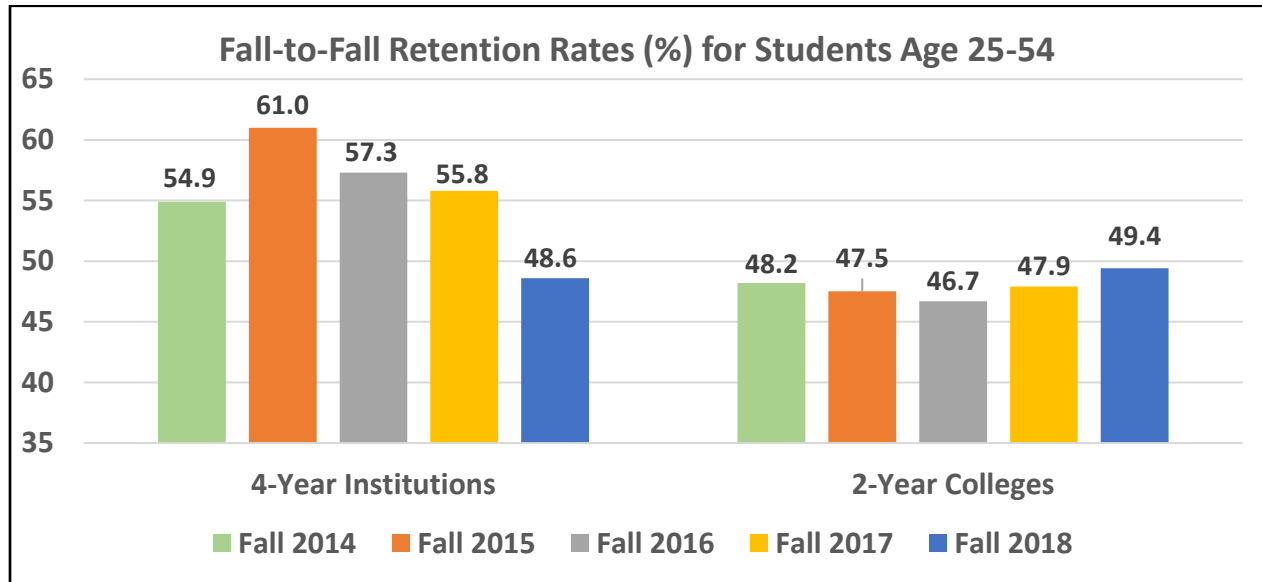


Chart 4.4: Student Retention Rates by Productivity Adult Age Range

Chart 4.5 provides fall-to-fall retention rates for students enrolled in remediation.

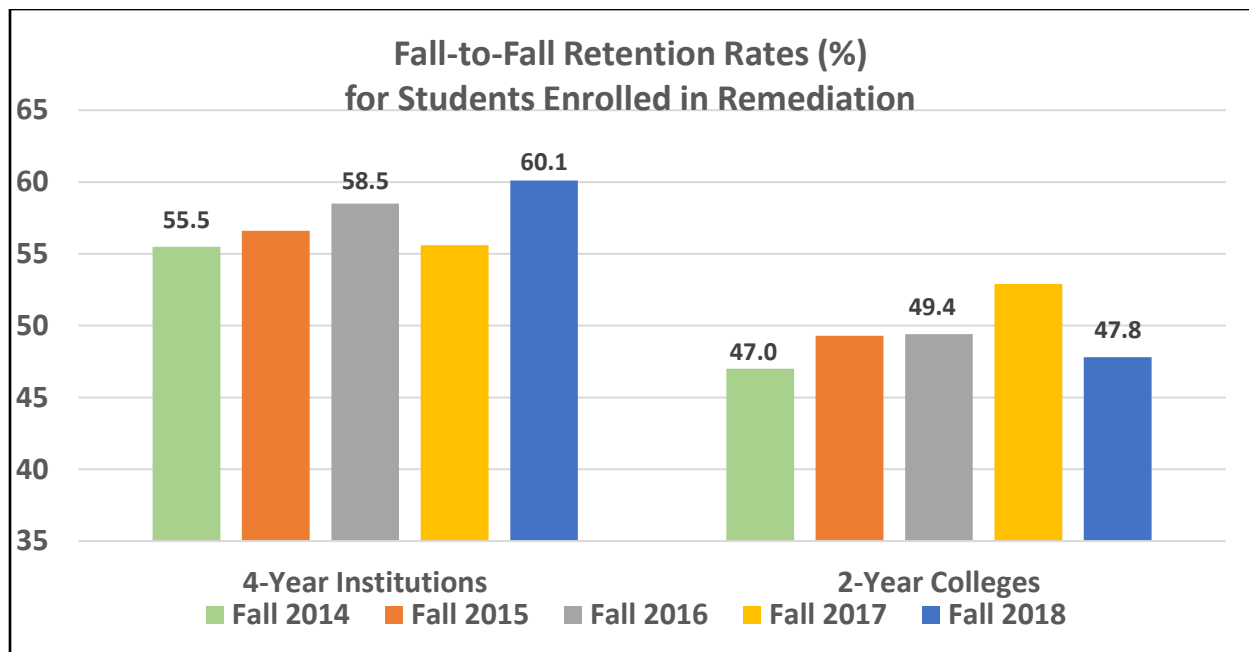


Chart 4.5: Student Retention Rates by Remediated Students

Retention Rates by Institution

In order to create charts that are readable and easier to understand, the fall-to-fall retention rates by institution are presented in several separate charts. The next several pages provide fall-to-fall retention rate information for each public and private college and university in the state.

Three 4-year universities reported an increase in the fall-to-fall retention rate when comparing the Fall 2014 cohort to the Fall 2018 cohort. HSU, SAUM and UCA experienced improved retention rates between 2.3% and 4.8%. ASUJ and ATU reported decreases in their retention rates of 1.1% and 2.0% respectively, when comparing their Fall 2014 cohort to their Fall 2018 cohort.

When comparing the most recent Fall 2018 cohort to the Fall 2017 cohort, SAUM had the largest retention rate increase, from 65.3% to 66.9%, which is a 1.6% improvement. UCA also reported a 0.6% growth for the Fall 2018 cohort retention rate of 74.7%, compared to their Fall 2017 cohort retention rate of 74.1%.

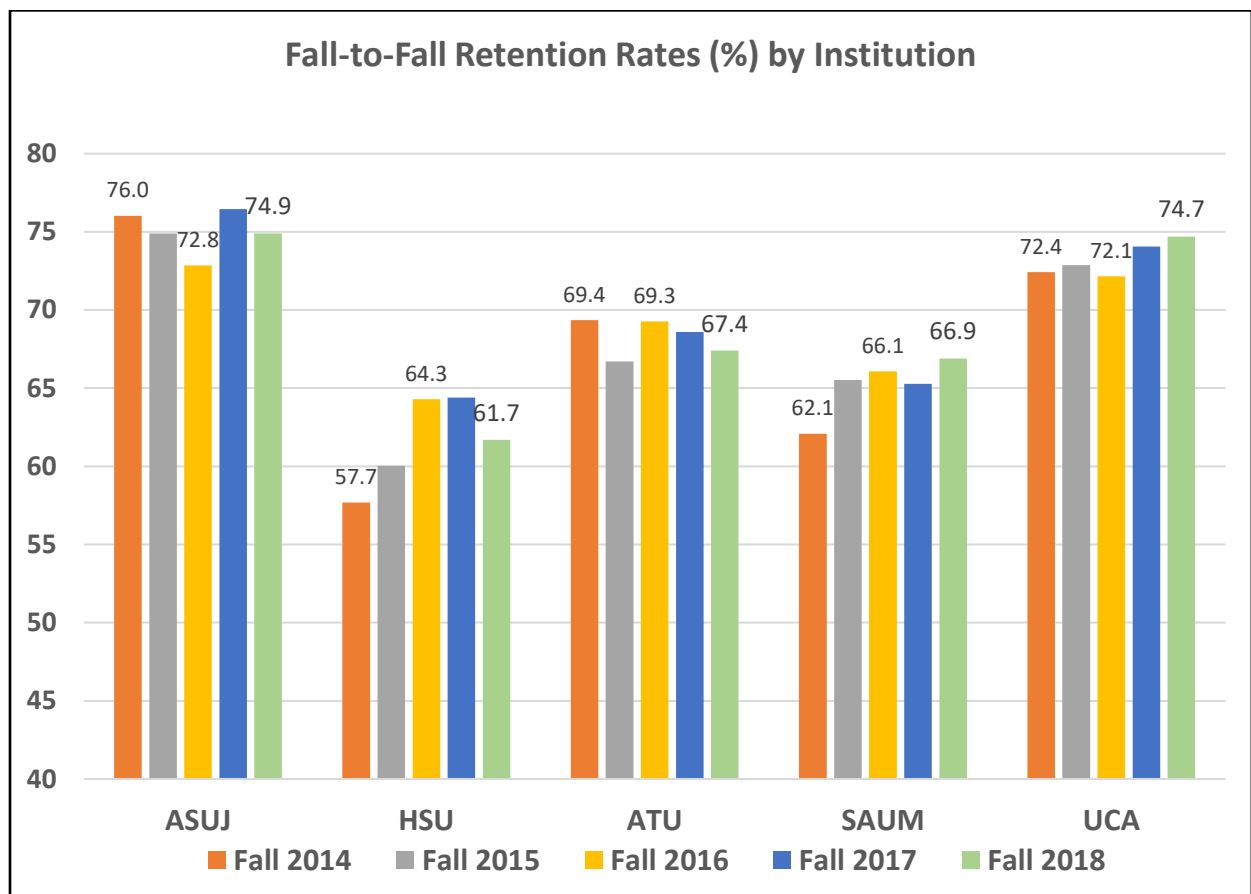


Chart 4.6: Student Retention Rates by Institution

Chart 4.7 provides fall-to-fall retention rate data for the University of Arkansas System institutions. UAM showed a 13.8% increase in their Fall 2018 fall-to-fall retention rate when compared to their Fall 2014 cohort rate of 43.4%.

UAFS experienced a 1.5% decrease when comparing their Fall 2017 retention cohort to their Fall 2018 cohort. UAFS and UALR reported declines in retention rate when looking at Fall 2014 and Fall 2018 cohorts. UAF retention rates have improved each of the last three retention cohorts, and UAPB rates have remained constant for the last four years, reporting rates around 70-72%.

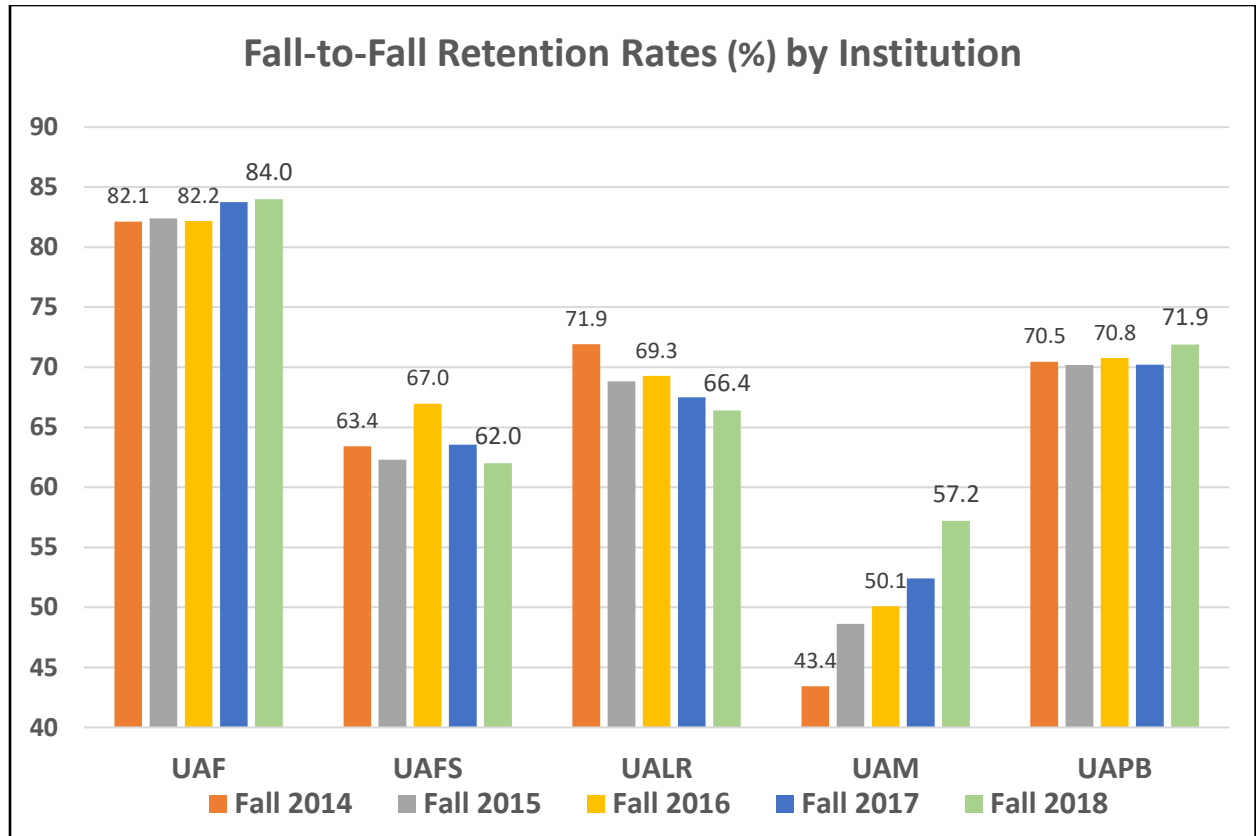


Chart 4.7: Student Retention Rates by Institution – UA System

Retention rate calculations for 2-Year colleges are challenging since the IPEDS cohort includes all credential-seeking students. Students who completed a certificate program may not continue past their first year of attendance, but are included in the cohort.

NWACC reports a fairly consistent fall-to-fall retention rate, ranging from 55.5% for the Fall 2014 cohort and 60.4% for their Fall 2016 cohort. SEAC has shown improved retention rates for the last four cohorts.

NAC reported a 2.9% fall-to-fall retention rate decrease for the Fall 2018 cohort compared to their Fall 2017 cohort. ANC’s Fall 2018 retention rate fell at 46.5%.

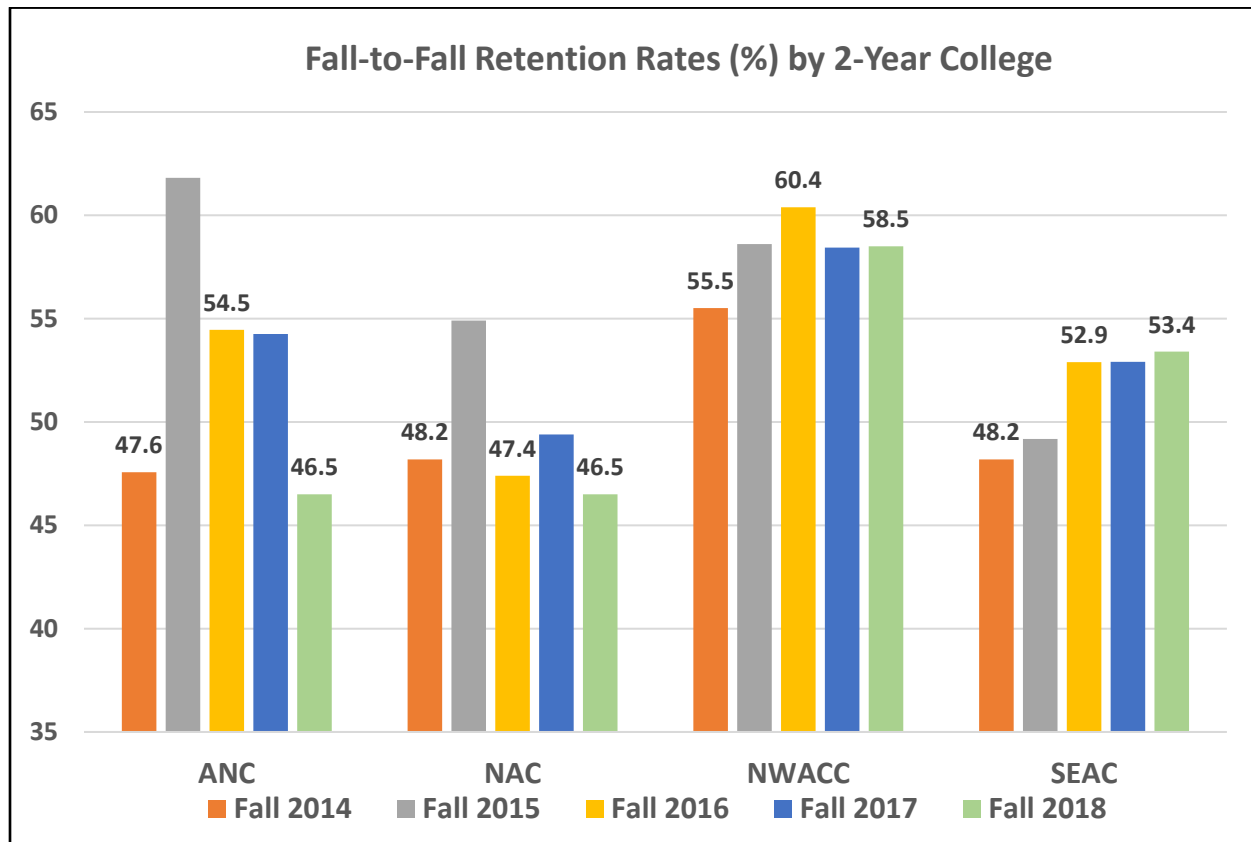


Chart 4.8: Student Retention Rates by Institution – 2-Year Colleges

Fall-to-Fall retention rates for the following 2-Year colleges show some rate variance between the cohorts. The Fall 2015 cohort for BRTC reported their highest retention rate of 51.4%, while their Fall 2018 cohort reported a much lower rate of 36.4%. EACC’s Fall 2018 cohort posted their highest retention rate of 54.2%.

NPC’s Fall 2014 retention rate was 47.9%, but later cohorts retention rates ranged between 44% and 51%. OZC’s Fall 2018 cohort showed a 5.3% improvement over the Fall 2017 cohort rate of 46.3%.

SACC experienced an increase in retention rate for the Fall 2018 cohort, up to 54% from the 42.5% rate of the Fall 2017 cohort. SAUT also experienced an increase for their Fall 2018 cohort rate of 45.3%, when compared to their Fall 2017 cohort rate of 38.7%.

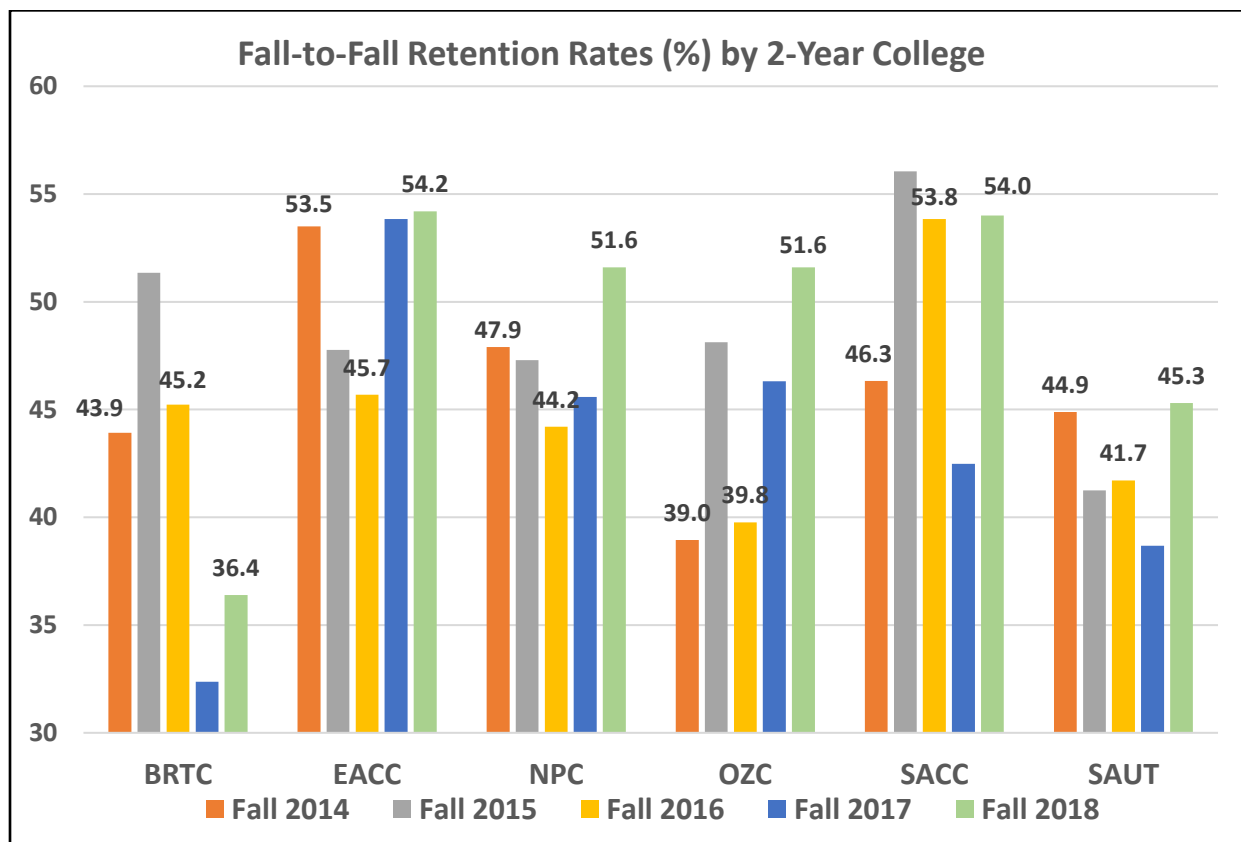


Chart 4.9: Student Retention Rates by Institution – 2-Year Colleges

The ASU System had two colleges report an increase in their fall-to-fall retention rates. ASUMH’s Fall 2018 cohort showed a 1.5% improvement over their Fall 2017 cohort. ASUB’s Fall 2018 cohort indicated a slight 0.5% increase over the Fall 2017 cohort. ASUN reported a decline of about 3.4% for the Fall 2018 cohort compared to the Fall 2017 cohort, ASUMS reported a 3.2% decline in retention for the Fall 2018 cohort over the Fall 2017 cohort, and ASUTR reported a 9.5% decline.

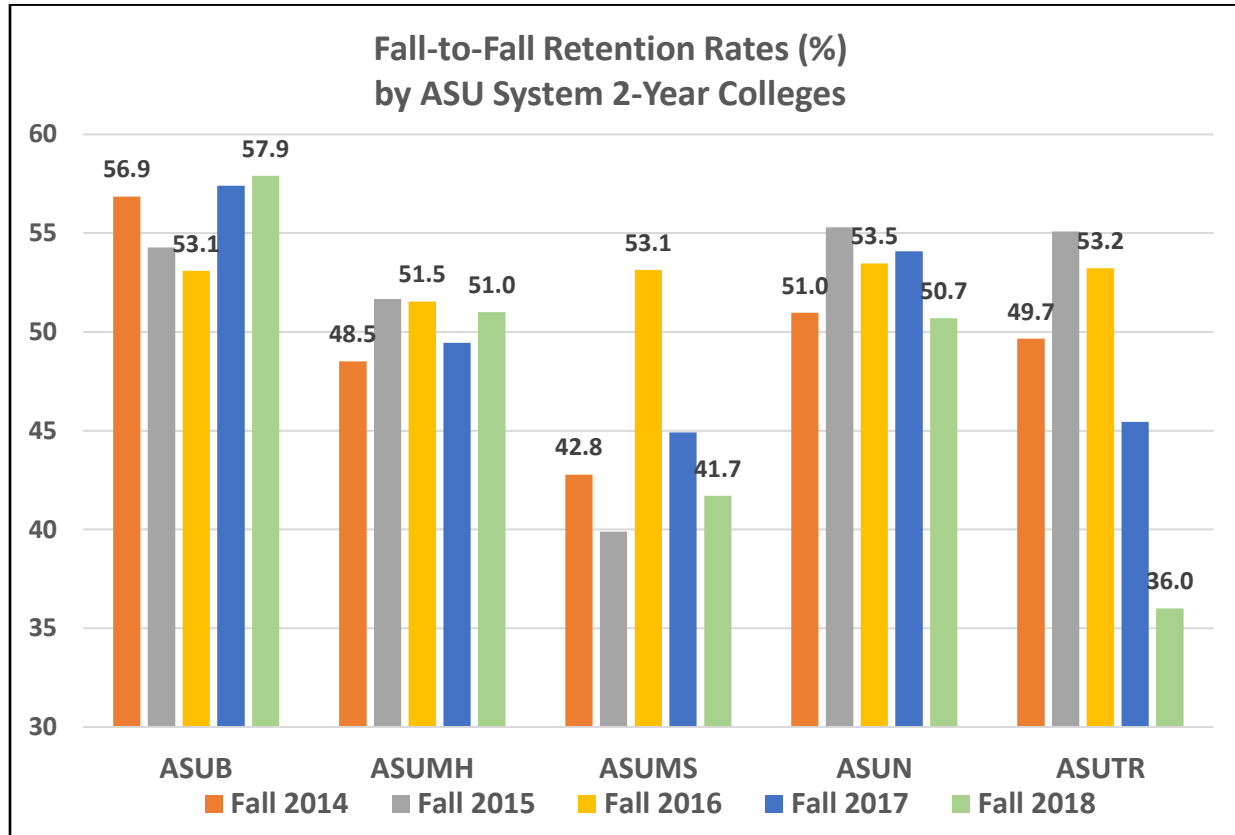


Chart 4.10: Student Retention Rates by Institution – ASU System 2-Year Colleges

The UA System had three colleges report an increase in their fall-to-fall retention rates. CCCUA and UACCB both showed about a 1% improvement for their Fall 2018 cohort over their Fall 2017 cohort. UACCRM showed an 8.0% improvement.

PCCUA, UACCHT, UACCM, and UAPTC all reported declines for their Fall 2018 cohort over the Fall 2017 cohort. UACCM reported 50.0% retention rate for the Fall 2018 cohort, which is a decline of 4.1% from their Fall 2017 cohort rate.

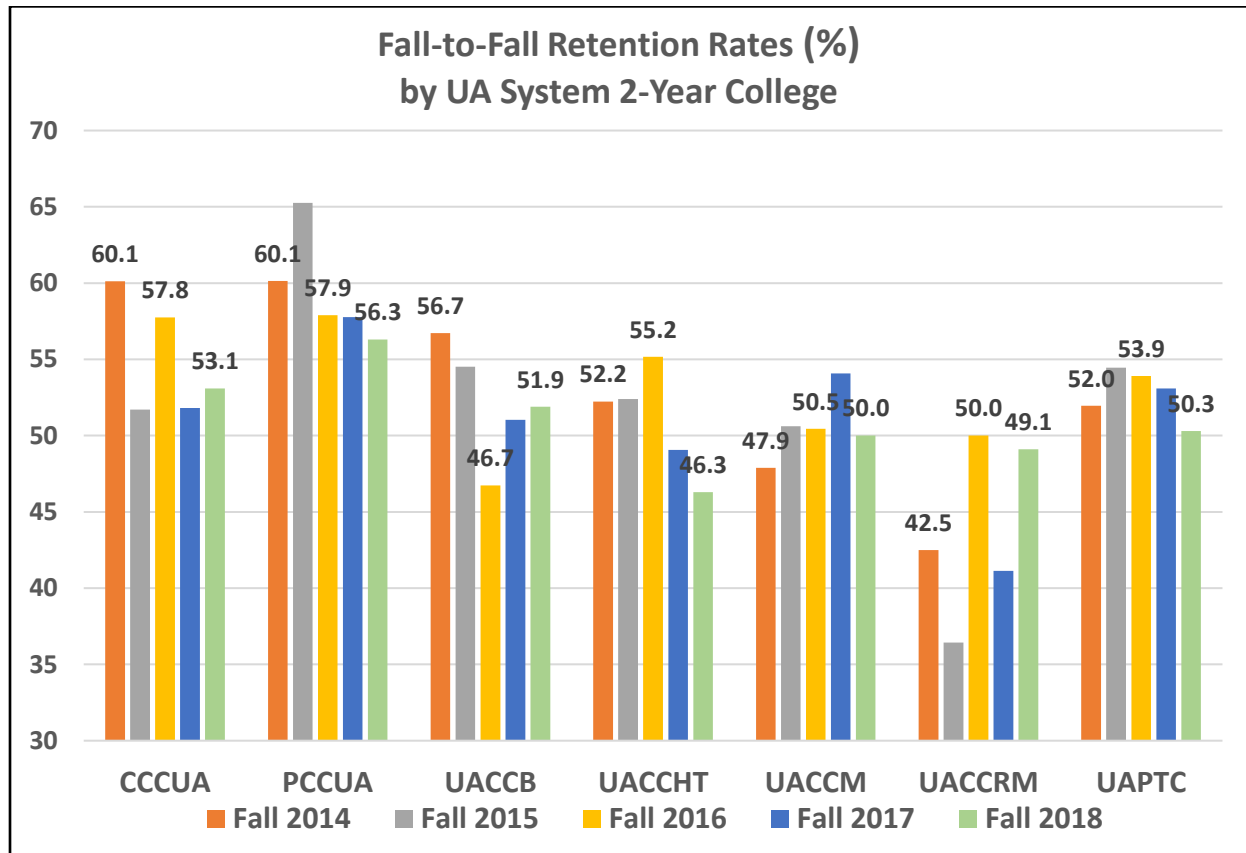


Chart 4.11: Student Retention Rates by Institution – UA System 2-Year Colleges

For our private/independent institutions, Harding University reported the highest Fall 2018 fall-to-fall retention rate of 80.4%, followed by John Brown University at 77.4% and Lyon College at 66.7%.

Central Baptist College reported a 5.4% improvement in retention rate for their Fall 2018 cohort rate of 60.2% over their Fall 2017 cohort rate of 54.8%.

University of the Ozarks reported the most significant decrease of almost 12% for the Fall 2018 cohort rate of 60.4% over the Fall 2017 cohort rate of 72.4%.

Williams Baptist College retention rates stayed fairly consistent. Fall 2017 cohort reported a retention rate of 52.1%, while the most recent Fall 2018 cohort retention rate was 53.0%.

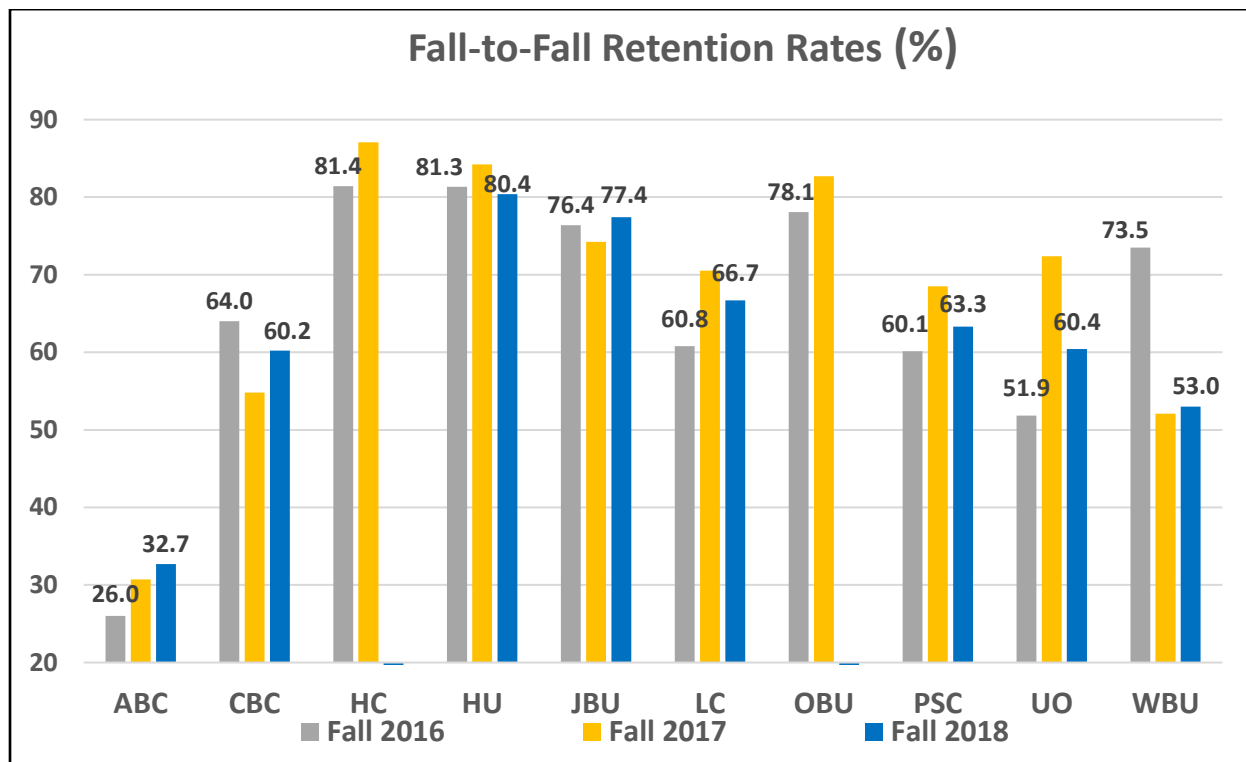


Chart 4.12: Student Retention Rates by Institution – Private Institutions

Statewide Graduation

Graduation rates for our 4-year public universities presented here are based on bachelor-seeking students who are first-time in college for the fall term of each cohort and attending full-time. Chart 4.13 below provides a three year trend of graduation rates for both students graduating in four years which is considered on time (100% rate) and those graduating in six years (150% rate).

There has been small but steady increases in the 100% graduation rate for our bachelor-seeking students the past several years. The most recent cohort, students who entered in the Fall 2015, reported an on time graduation rate of 33.8%. Students graduating in six years have also shown small but steady increases. The most recent six year cohort, Fall 2013, reported a 48.8% graduation rate.

The Fall 2013 bachelor-seeking cohort graduated 30.5% in four years (100% rate), but after the two additional years of study, 48.8% of this cohort had graduated with a bachelor's degree in six years.

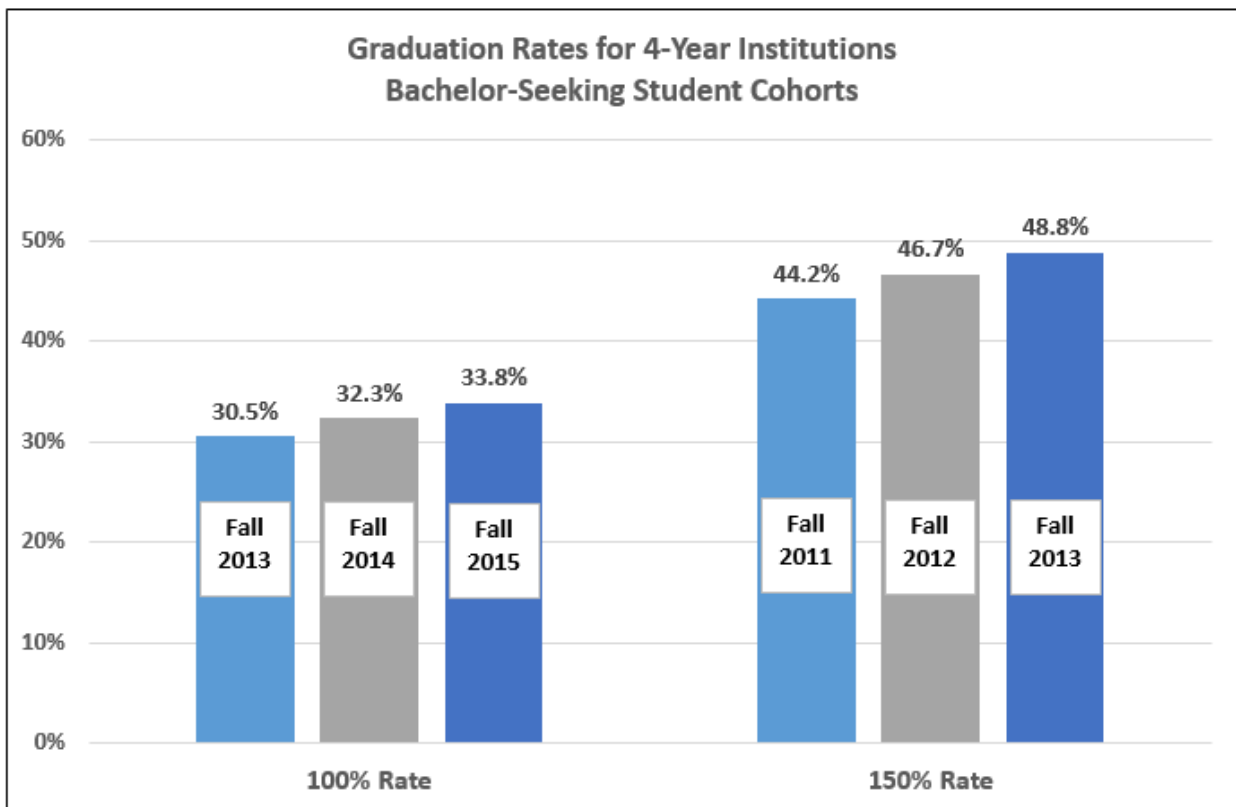
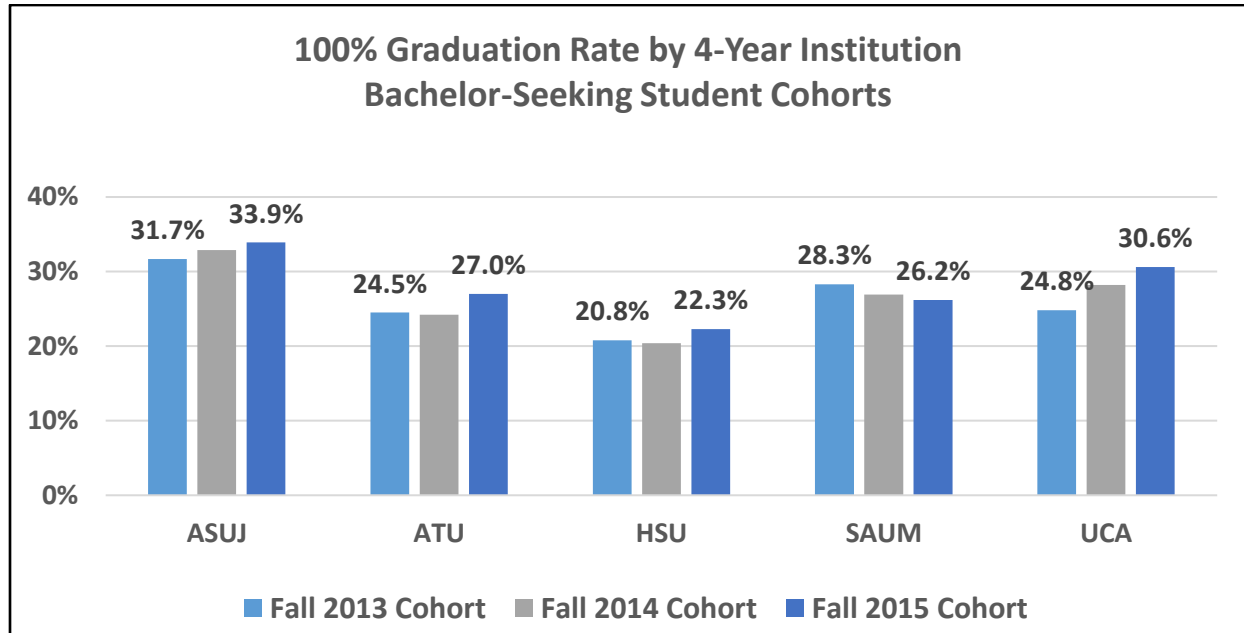


Chart 4.13: Graduation Rates - 4-Year Institution Trend

Charts 4.14 and 4.15 outline the on time (100%) graduation rate for all of our public 4-year universities. The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville consistently reports the highest on time graduation rates with the most recent cohort, Fall 2015 reporting a 46.3% on time graduation rate. Arkansas State University and the University of Central Arkansas report graduation rates of 33.9% and 30.6% respectively for the Fall 2015 cohort.



Charts 4.14: 100% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-1

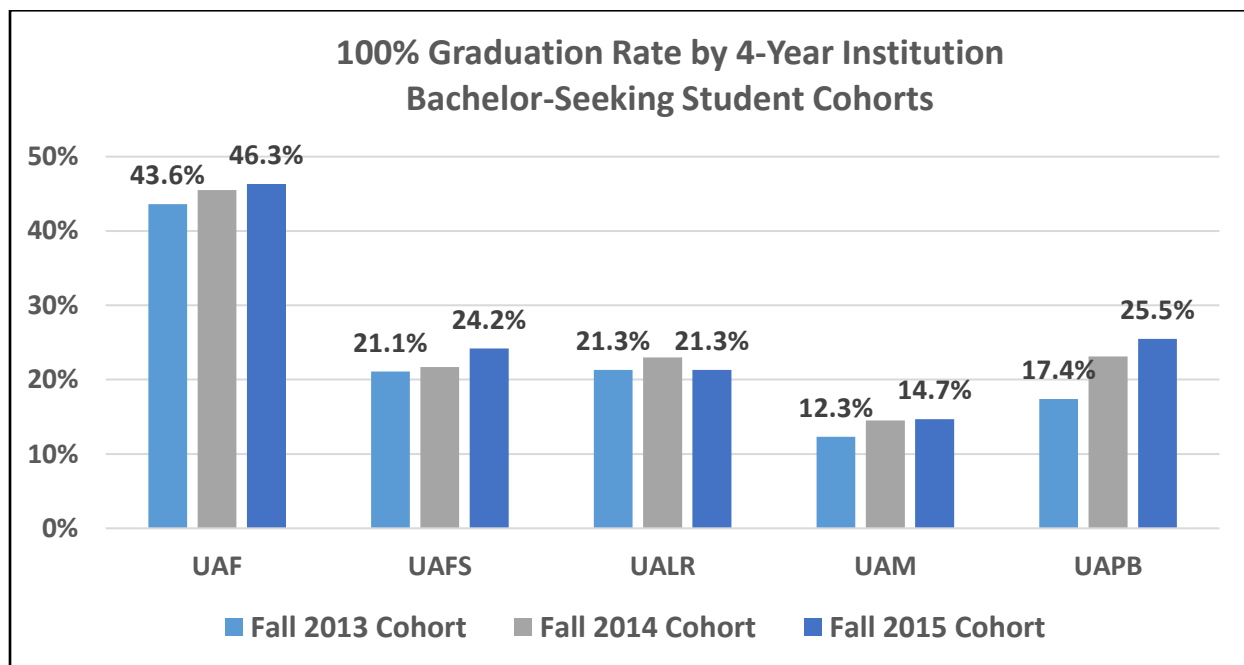


Chart 4.15: 100% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-2

Charts 4.16 and 4.17 below provides trend data for the six year graduation rate (150%) for the public 4-year universities. All but one 4-year university reported an increase for the Fall 2013 cohort when compared to the Fall 2012 cohort.

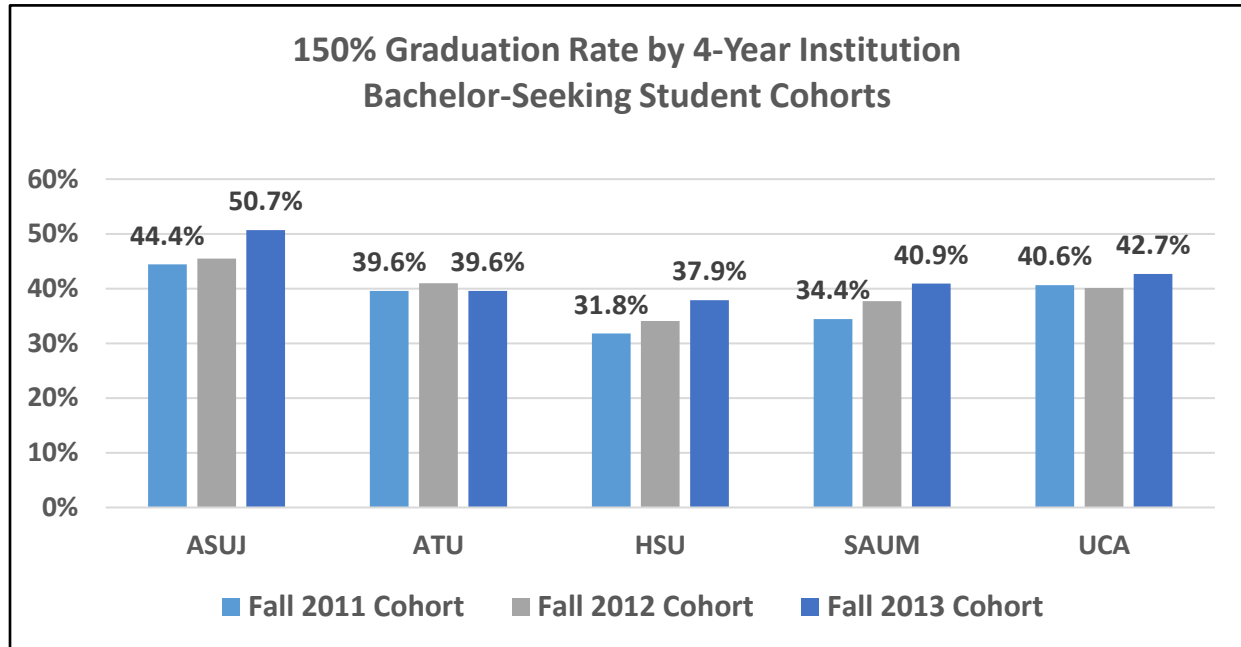


Chart 4.16: 150% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-1

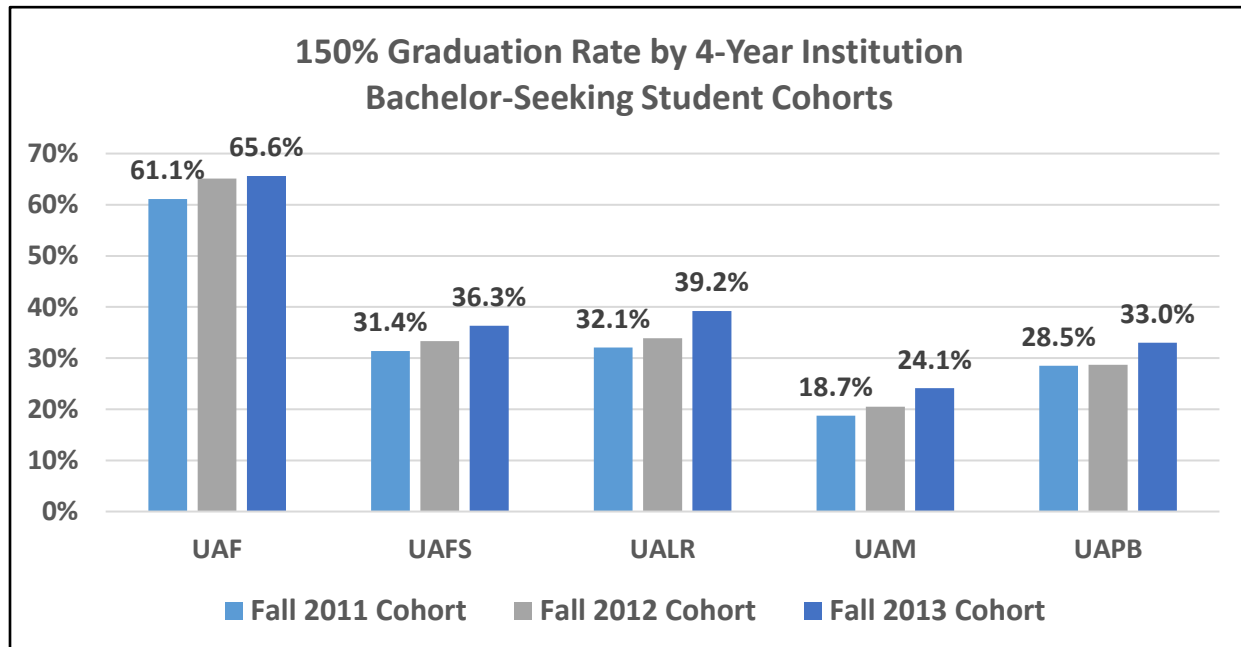


Chart 4.17: 150% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-2

Both male and female cohorts showed an improved six year graduation rate. The Fall 2013 male cohort reported a 44.4% graduation rate, while the Fall 2013 female cohort reported 52.4% graduation rate.

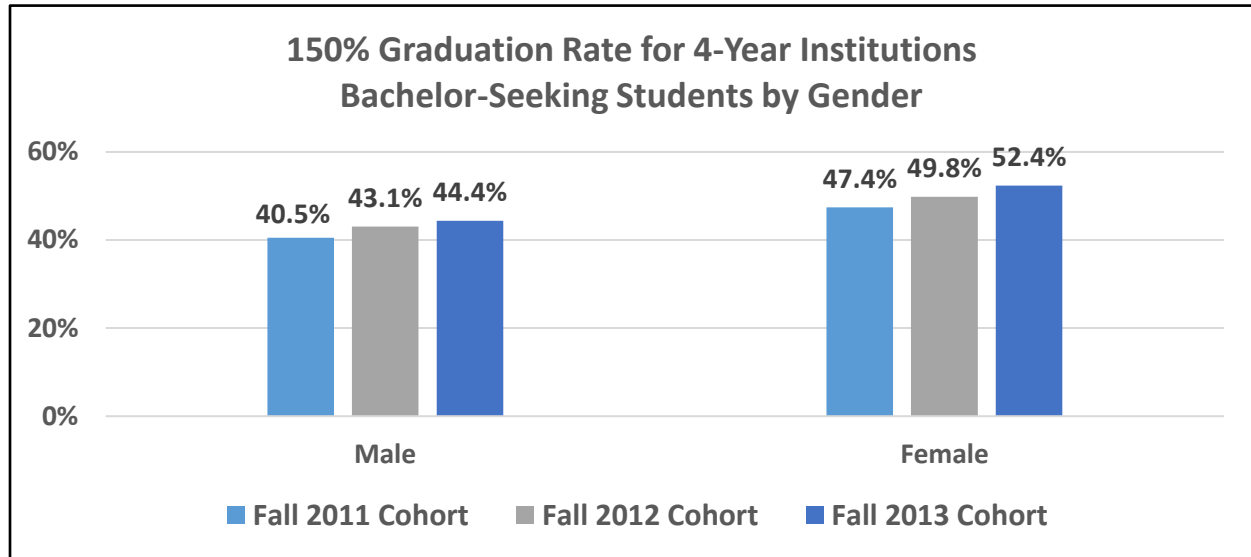


Chart 4.18: 150% Graduation Rates by Gender

All race/ethnicity categories showed six year graduation rate improvements with Asian and White students both reporting a graduation rate above 50% for the Fall 2013 Cohort.

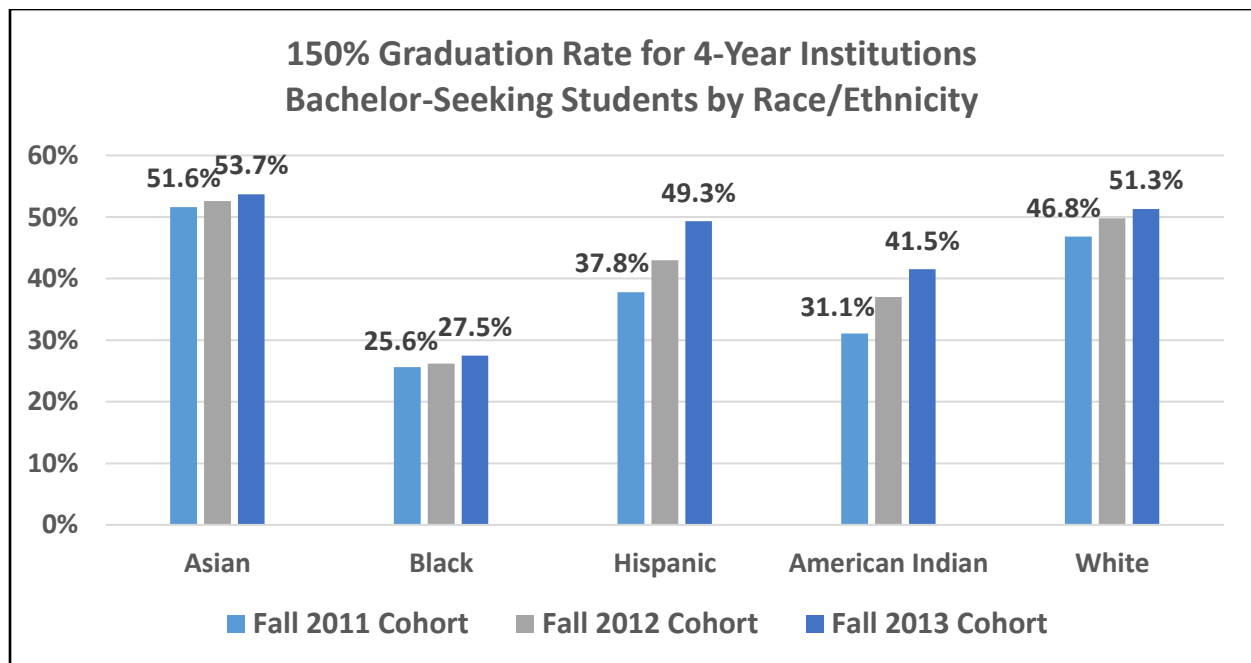


Chart 4.19: 150% Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity

2-Year College Graduation Rates

In order to provide a more consistent graduation rate for the 2-year colleges, calculations were made to Associate-seeking students only for three years (150%). Half of the 2-year colleges reported a higher three year graduation rate.

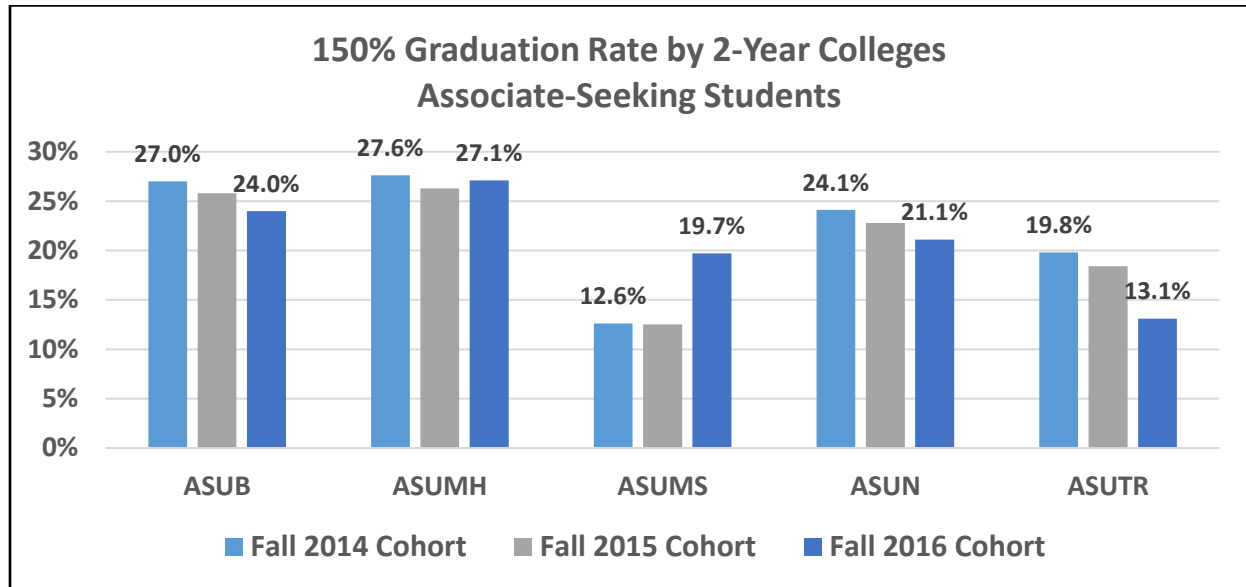


Chart 4.20 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-1

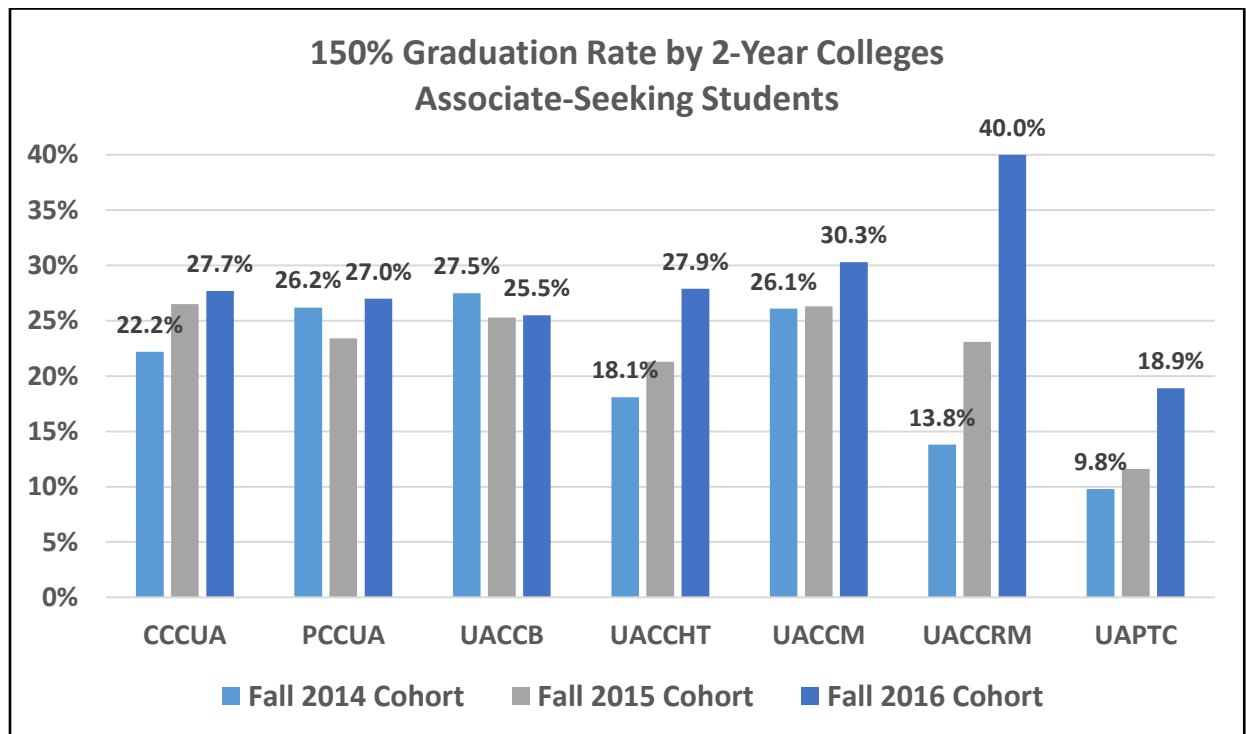


Chart 4.21 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-2

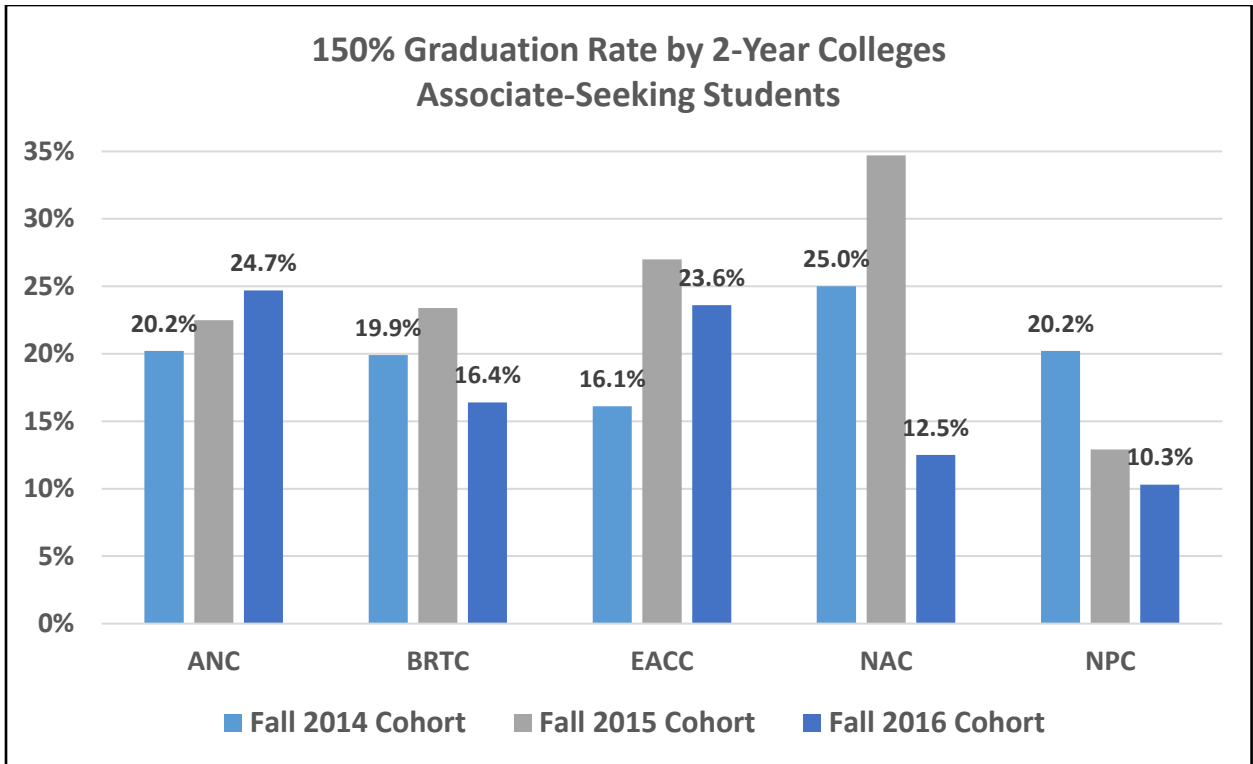


Chart 4.22 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-3

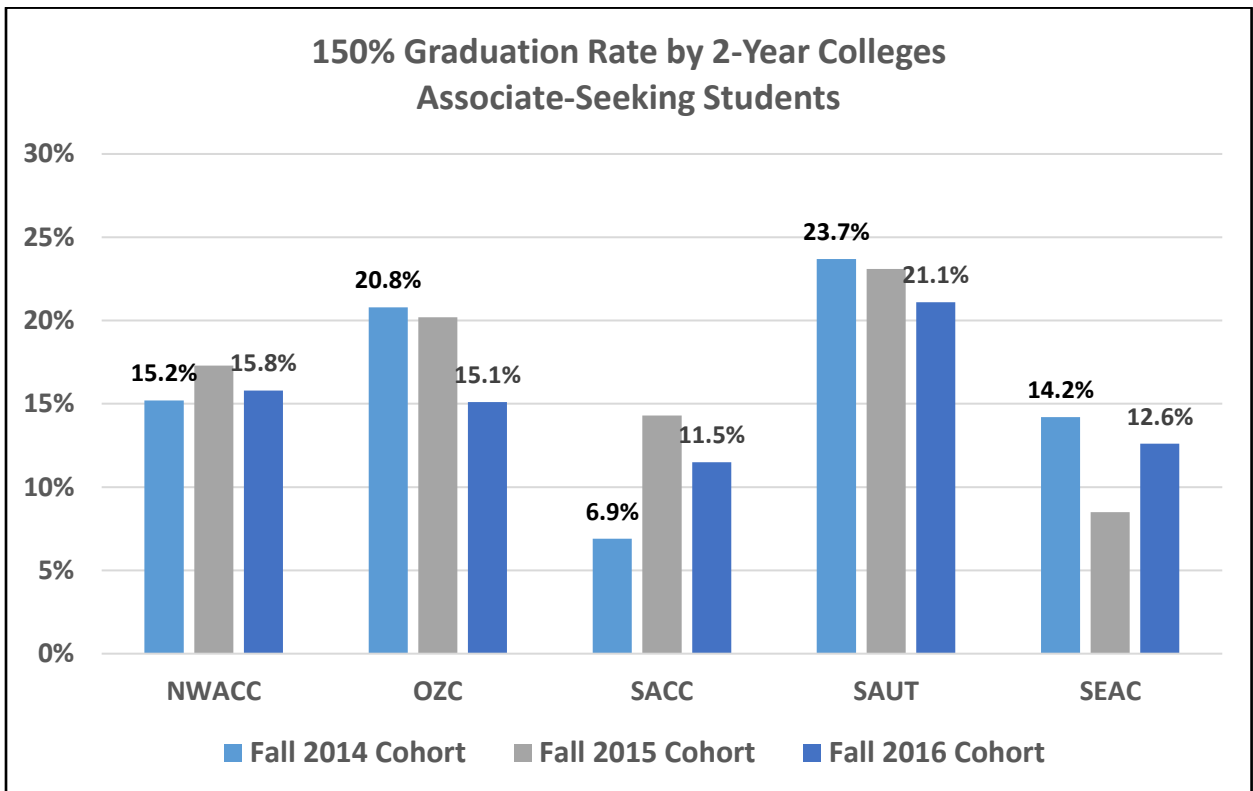


Chart 4.23 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-4

The Fall 2016 male cohort reported a lower three year graduation rate and dropped to 19.1% when compared to the Fall 2015 cohort's graduation rate of 20.6%. Female students reported a graduation rate of 22.6%.

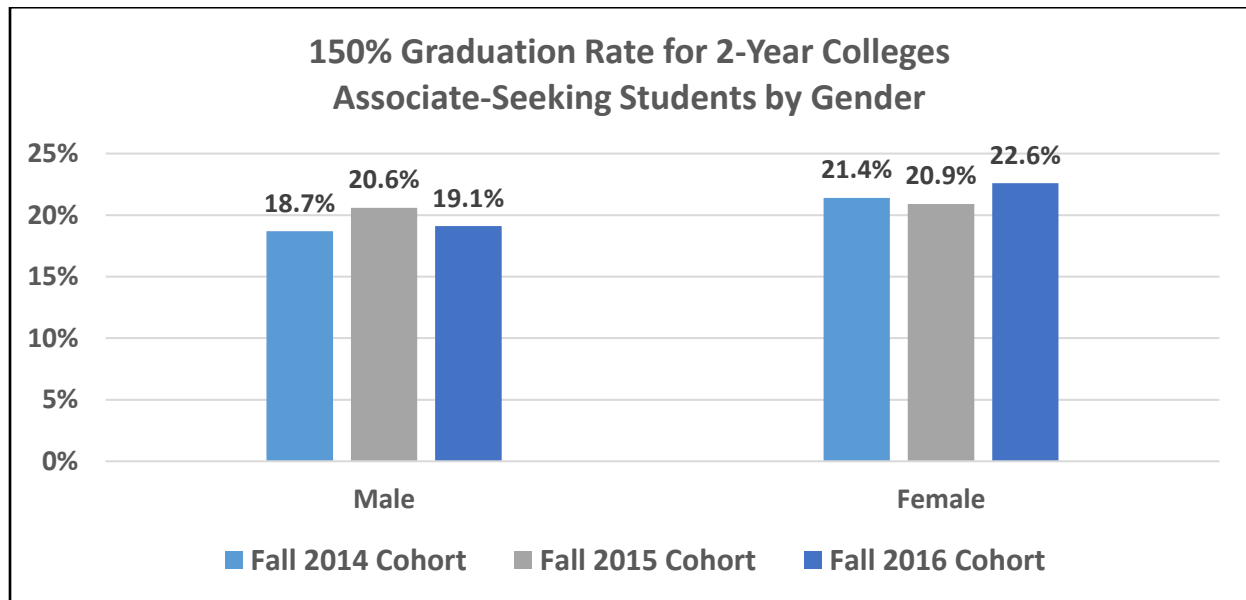


Chart 4.24: Graduation Rates 2-Year Colleges by Gender

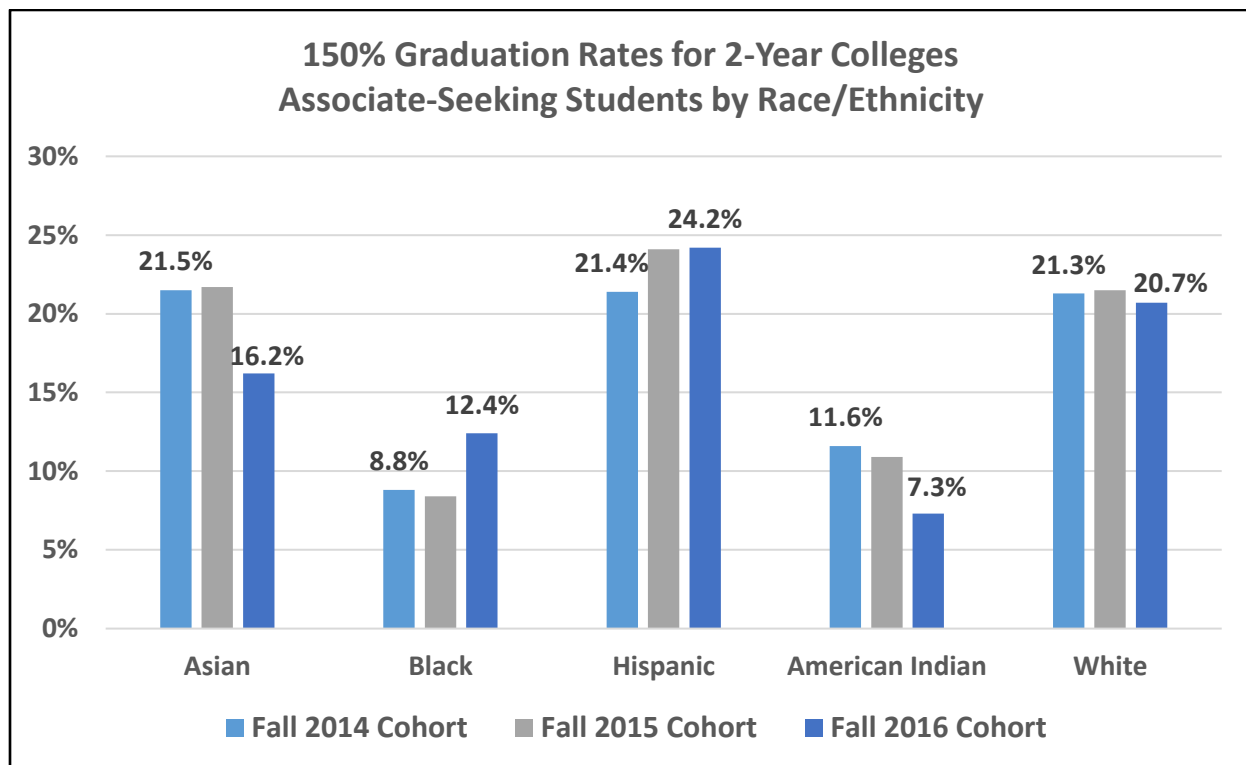


Chart 4.25: Graduation Rates 2-Year Colleges by Race/Ethnicity

Private/Independent Institutions

The Fall 2015 bachelor-seeking cohort for the private institutions reported an on time graduation rate (100%) of 43.5%, which was a 4.5% increase over the graduation rate reported for the Fall 2014 cohort.

The Fall 2013 bachelor-seeking cohort reported a 42.6% on time graduation rate (100%) and with two additional years of study another 12.2% of them graduated in six years (150%).

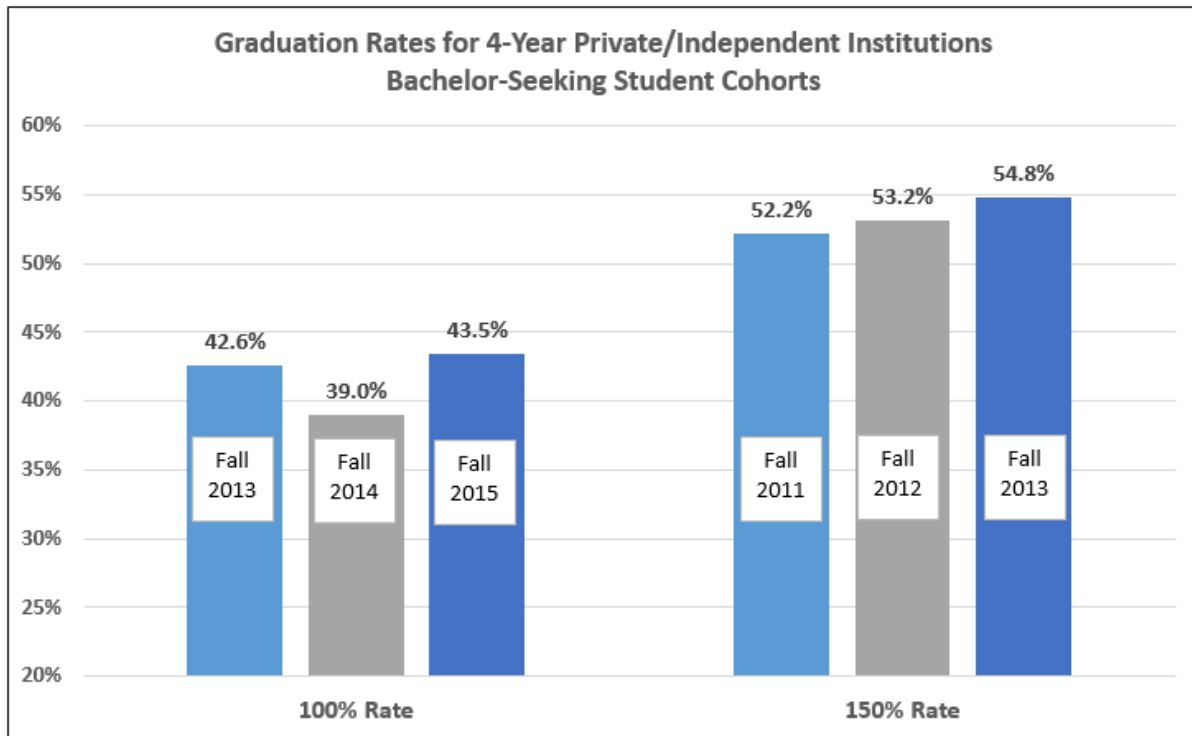


Chart 4.26: Graduation Rates Private Institutions