

Arkansas Division of Higher Education

Annual Report of Retention and Graduation Rates



Reporting and Analytics

December 2021

Arkansas Division of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400 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 students in the fall term cohort of first-time entering, full-time, and credential-seeking students who returned the fall term of the next academic year. The methodology used for this report has been modified beginning this year to more closely align with IPEDS methodology. For 4-Year universities, only those students seeking a Bachelor's degree are included. For 2-Year colleges, students who completed a credential by the next fall are included as part of the retention rate.

The following represents the overall retention rate of each cohort for the five most recent cohorts for both Arkansas Public Higher Education Sectors. When looking at both public sectors together, the state's fall-to-fall retention rate of 70.6% for the Fall 2019 cohort has increased 2.1% over the Fall 2015 retention rate of 68.5%, due to the increased retention rate of our 4-Year institutions. The 2-Year college retention rate comes in around 58% for each of the reported cohorts.

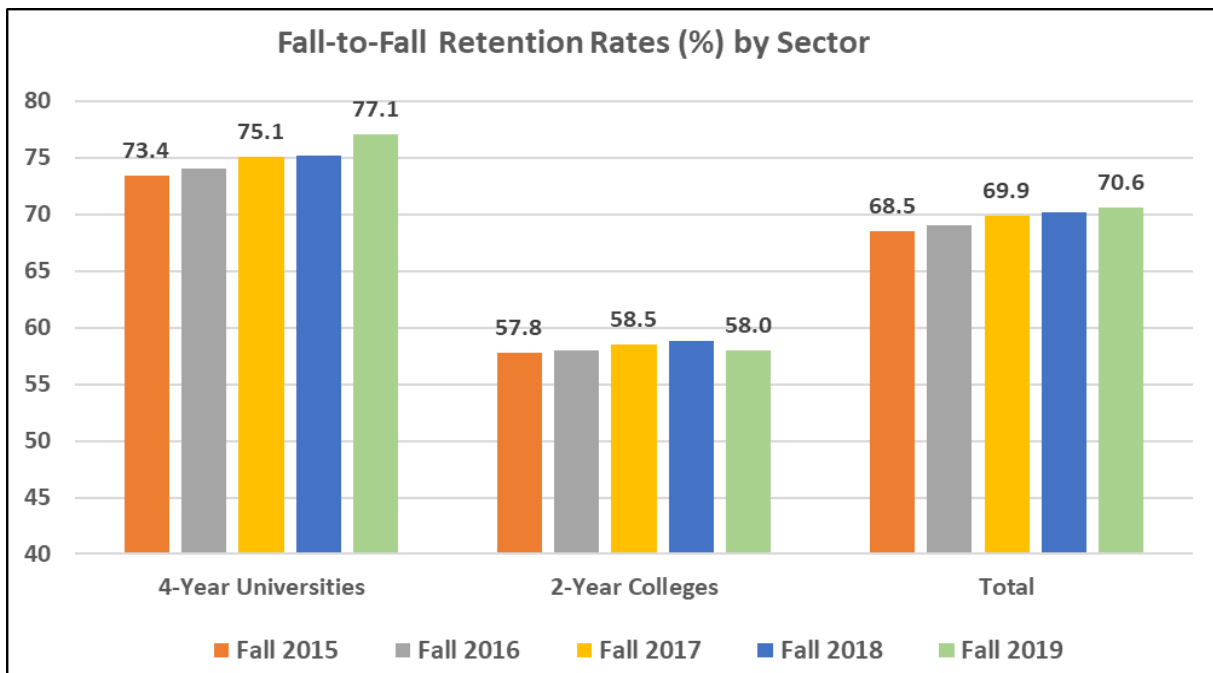


Chart 3.1: Student Retention Rates by Sector

Both male and female cohorts reported slight increases in their retention rates for our 4-year public institutions. For the 2-Year college cohorts, the male students' retention rate has increased only 0.7% when comparing the Fall 2017 cohort to the Fall 2019 cohort, and females showed a retention rate decline of 1.5%.

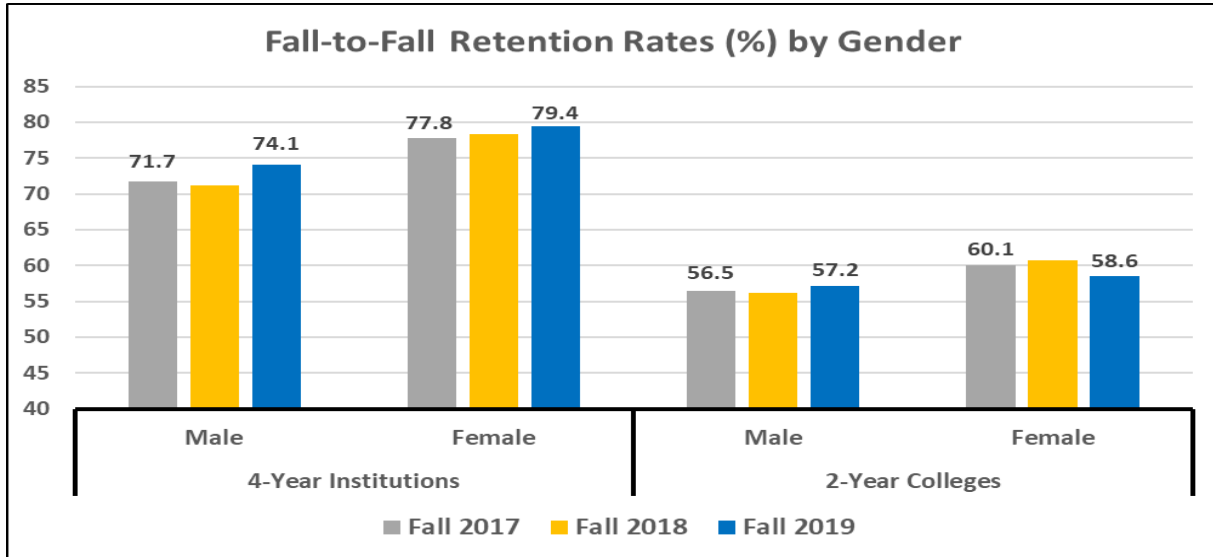


Chart 3.2: Student Retention Rates by Gender

Chart 3.3 below provides fall-to-fall retention rates for the four race/ethnicity categories with the largest student cohorts. The Hispanic, Black, and White student cohorts reported an increased retention rate for the 4-year institutions comparing the Fall 2018 and Fall 2019 cohorts. For the 2-year colleges, retention rates declined for all race categories.

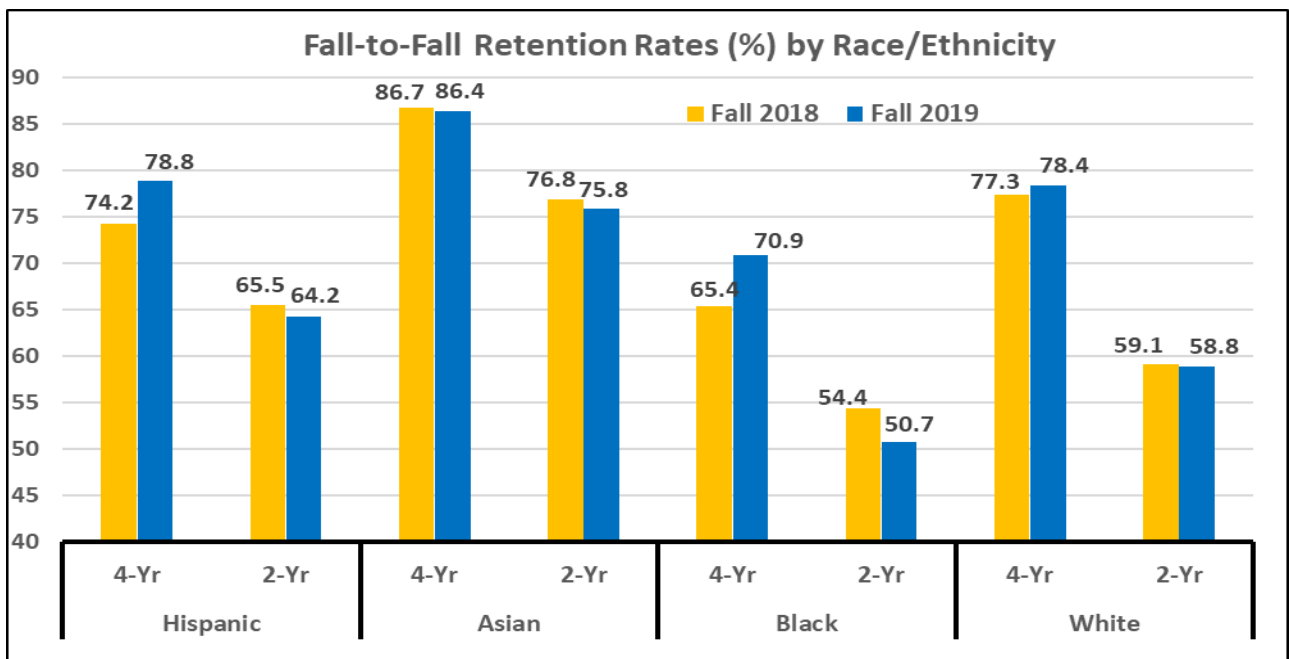


Chart 3.3: Student Retention Rates by Race/Ethnicity

The graph below provides fall-to-fall retention rates for students who are between 25 and 54 years old, which qualifies them to receive additional weighting in the Productivity Funding Model. The 4-Year institutions experienced an increase in the Fall 2019 cohort when comparing to the Fall 2018 cohort. 2-Year colleges experienced a decline in the Fall 2019 cohort at 58.9% when comparing to the Fall 2018 cohort at 63.9%.

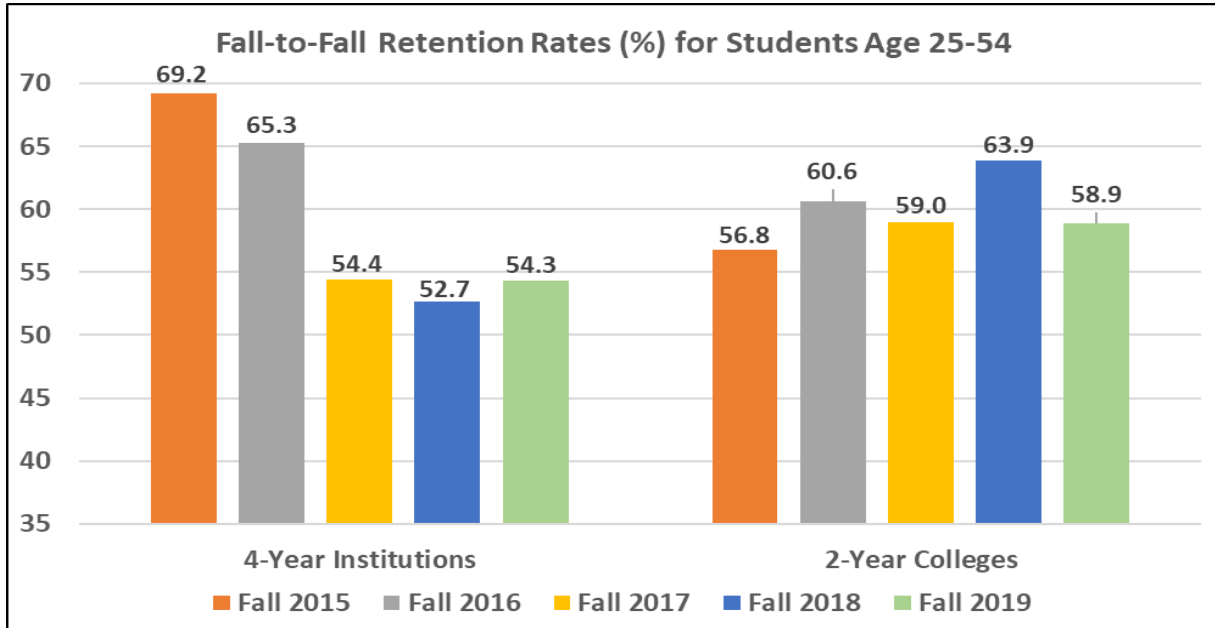


Chart 3.4: Student Retention Rates by Productivity Adult Age Range

Chart 3.5 provides fall-to-fall retention rates for students enrolled in remediation.

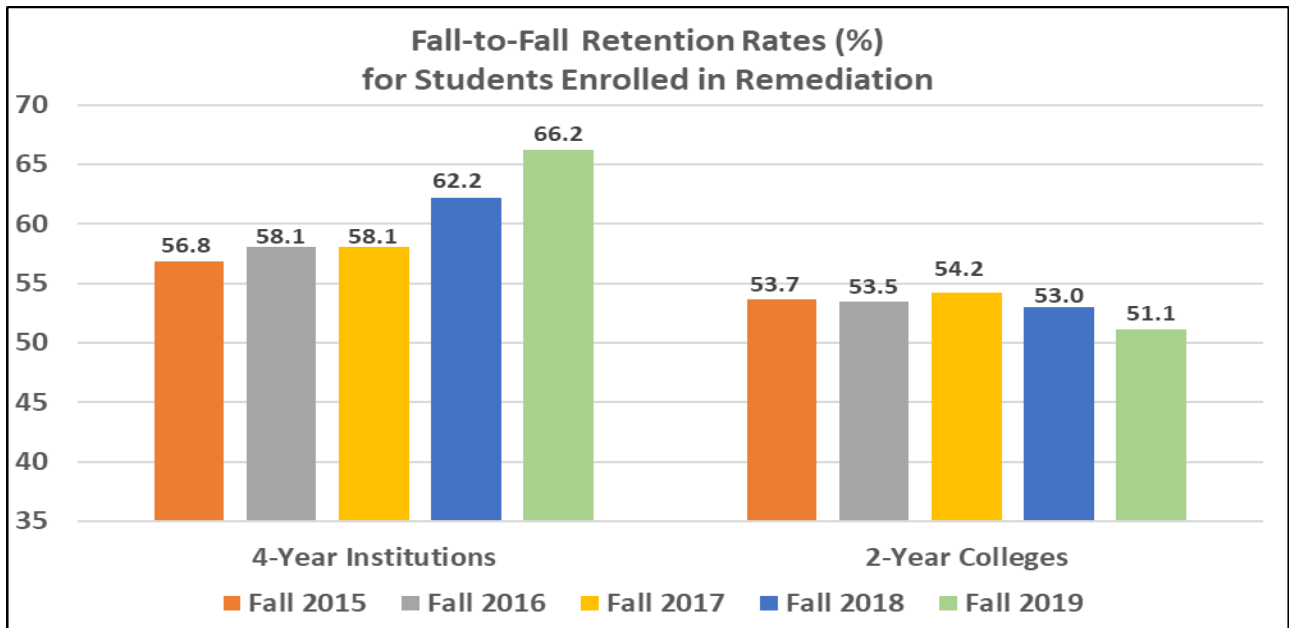


Chart 3.5: Student Retention Rates by Remediated Students

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.

Eight 4-year universities reported an increase in the fall-to-fall retention rate when comparing the Fall 2015 cohort to the Fall 2019 cohort. ASUJ, UCA, SAUM, UAF, UAM, UAPB, UALR, and UAFS experienced improved retention rates from 2.3% to 22.6%.

Chart 3.6 shows SAUM reported a 71.5% retention rate for the Fall 2019 cohort, which is a 4.6% improvement over the Fall 2018 retention rate of 66.9%. ASUJ reported 3.8% growth for the Fall 2019 cohort retention rate of 79.0%, compared to their Fall 2018 cohort retention rate of 75.2%. UCA’s Fall 2019 cohort produced a 78.8% retention rate, which is more than a 4% improvement over the Fall 2018 retention rate of 74.7%.

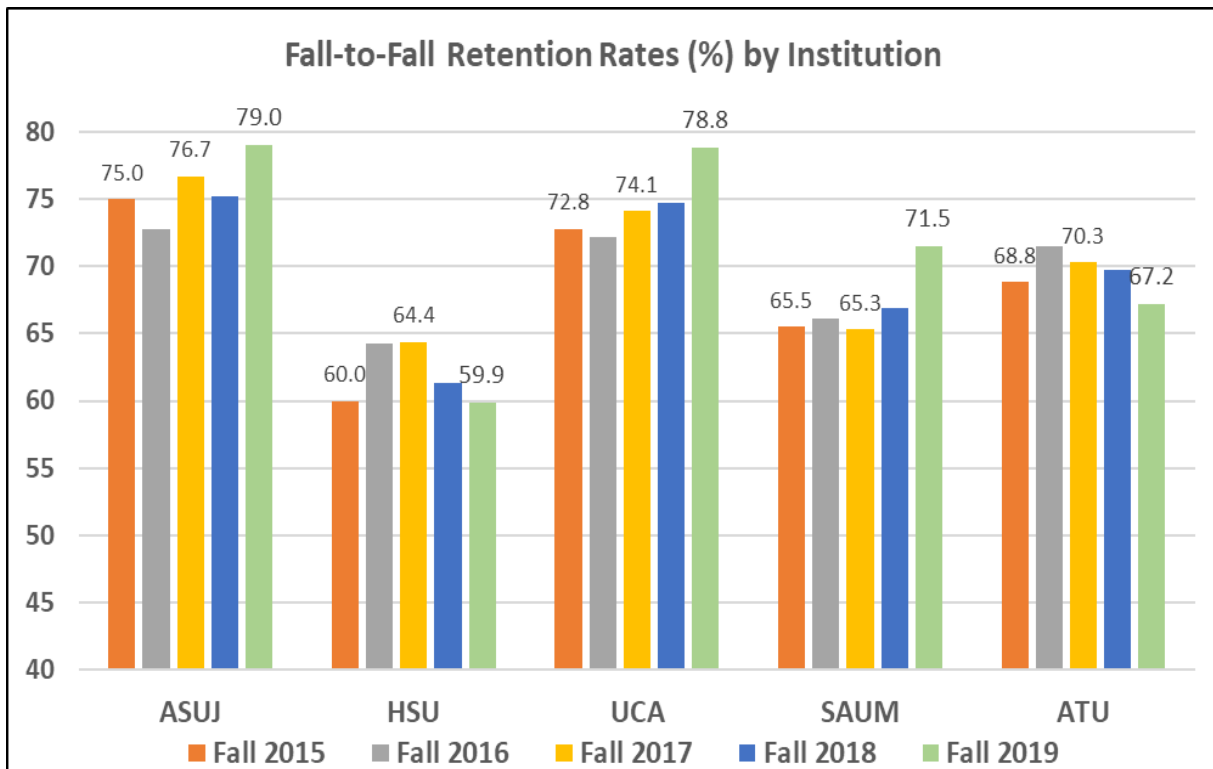


Chart 3.6: Student Retention Rates by Institution

Chart 3.7 provides fall-to-fall retention rate data for the University of Arkansas System institutions. UAM showed a 22.6% increase in their Fall 2019 fall-to-fall retention rate when compared to their Fall 2015 cohort rate of 52.2%.

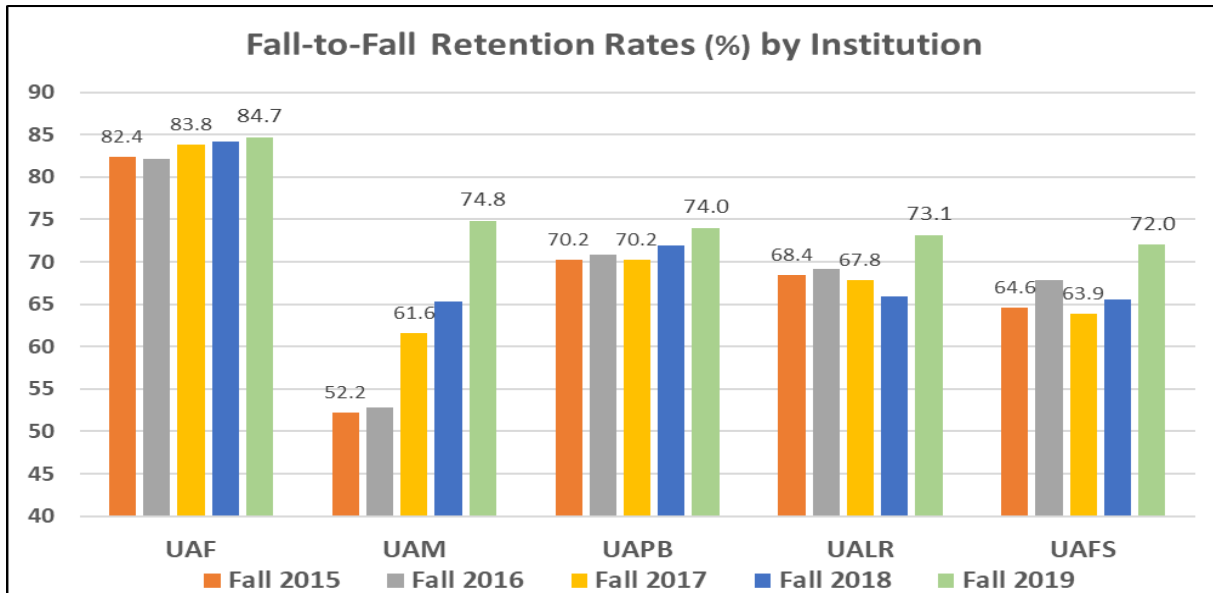


Chart 3.7: Student Retention Rates by Institution – UA System

SAUT reports the highest retention rate for the 2-Year colleges for Fall 2019 at 70.5%. EACC and OZC reported retention rate decreases for the Fall 2019 cohort compared to their Fall 2018 cohort. ANC's Fall 2019 retention rate increased to 60.8%.

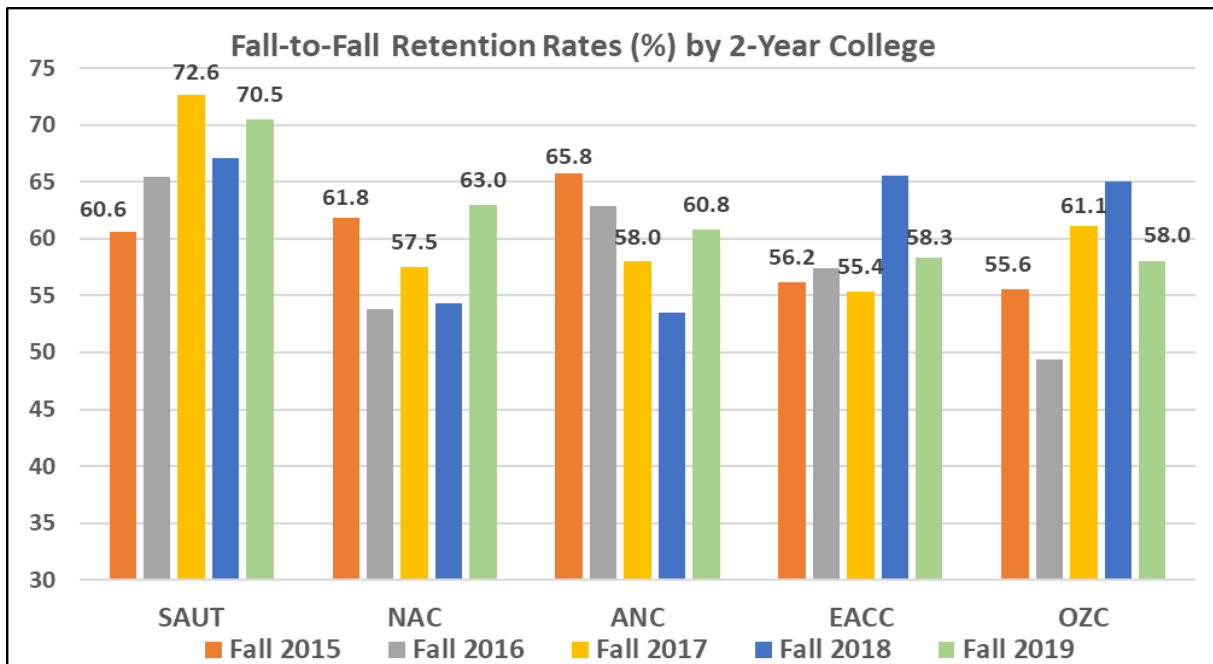


Chart 3.8: Student Retention Rates by Institution – 2-Year Colleges

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 63.3%, while their Fall 2019 cohort reported a much lower rate of 51.7%. SEAC’s Fall 2019 cohort posted their lowest retention rate of 41.2%.

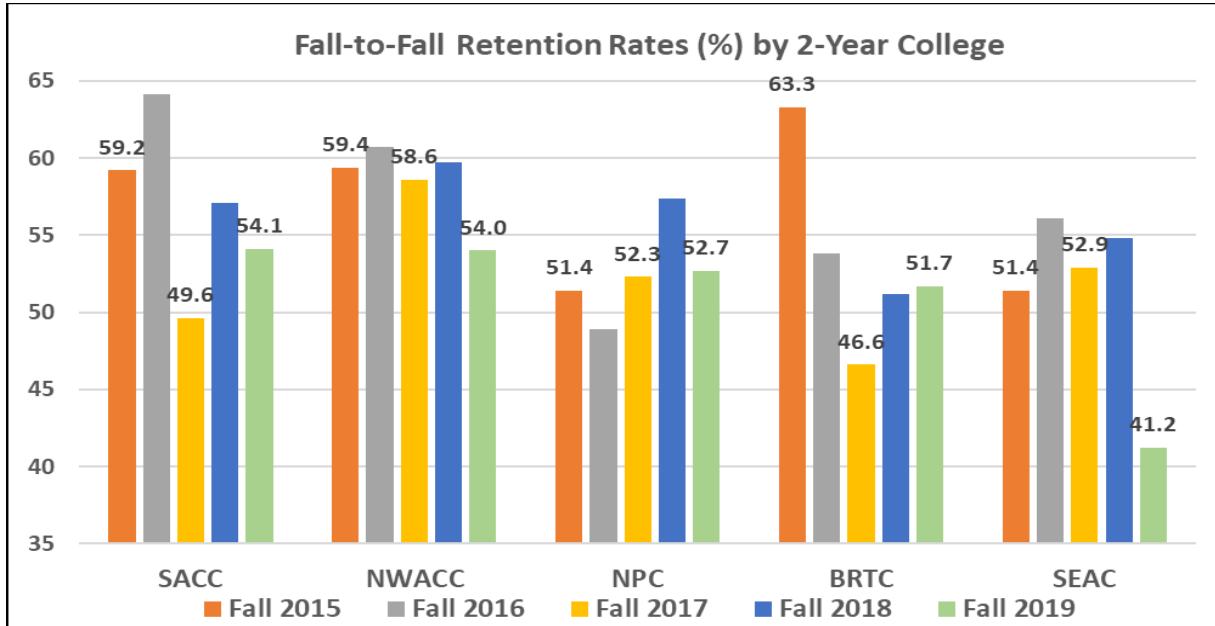


Chart 3.9: Student Retention Rates by Institution – 2-Year Colleges

The ASU System had two colleges report an increase in their fall-to-fall retention rates. ASUMS’s Fall 2019 cohort showed a 9.1% improvement over their Fall 2018 cohort while ASUTR reported a 9.2% increase in retention for the Fall 2019 cohort.

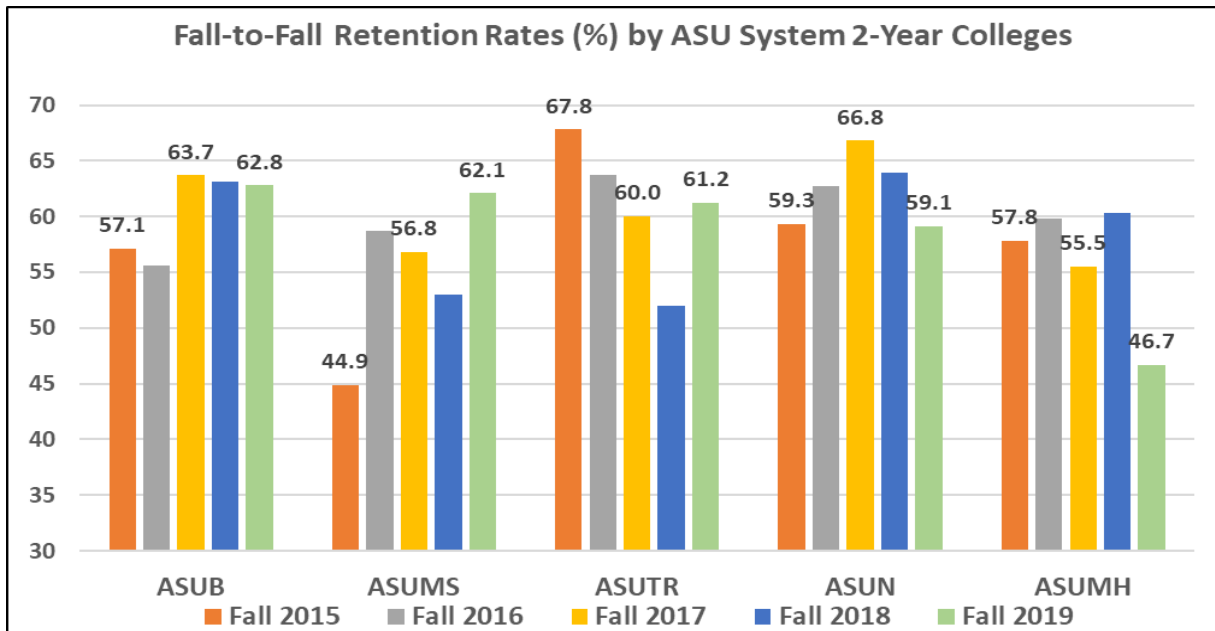


Chart 3.10: Student Retention Rates by Institution – ASU System 2-Year Colleges

The UA System had five colleges report an increase in their fall-to-fall retention rates. CCCUA showed a 14.2% improvement while UACCHT and UACCM reported increases of around 4%.

UACCB and PCCUA both reported declines for their Fall 2019 cohort over the Fall 2018 cohort. UACCB reported a 65.2% retention rate for the Fall 2019 cohort, which is a decline of 2.7% from their Fall 2018 cohort rate while PCCUA fell 4.4% to 63.4%

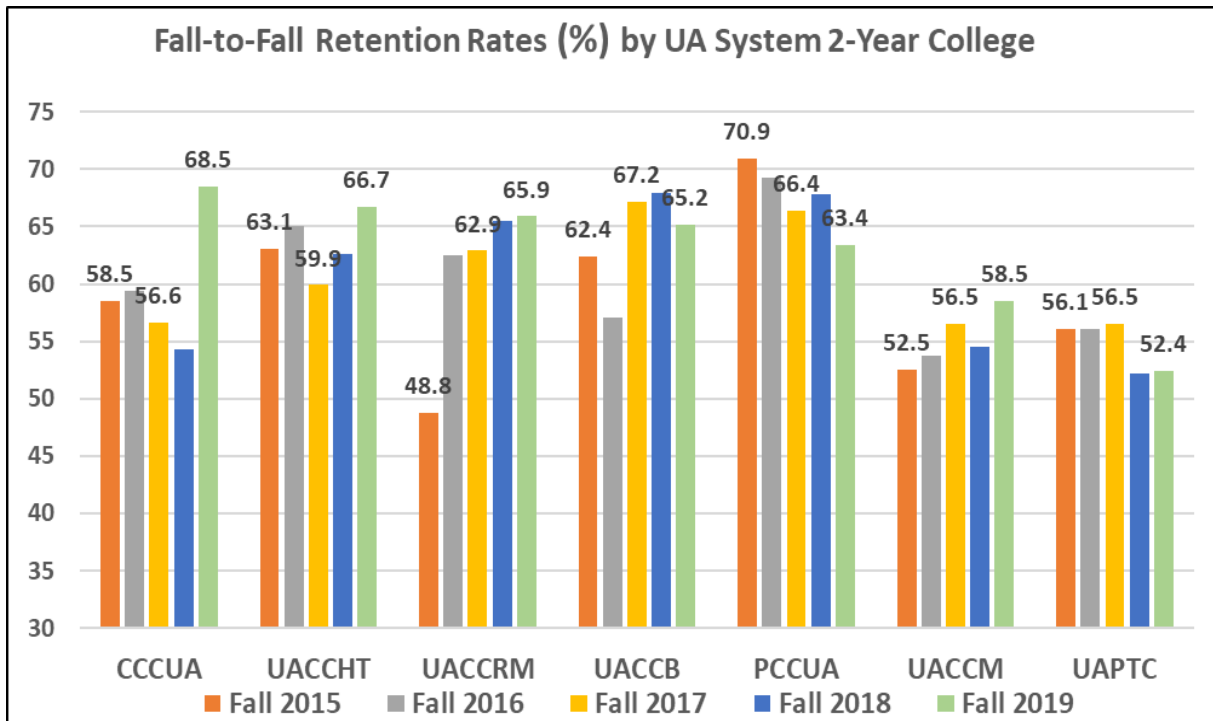


Chart 3.11: Student Retention Rates by Institution – UA System 2-Year Colleges

For our private/independent institutions, Harding University reported the highest Fall 2019 fall-to-fall retention rate of 85.9%, followed by John Brown University at 82.7% and Hendrix College at 81.7%.

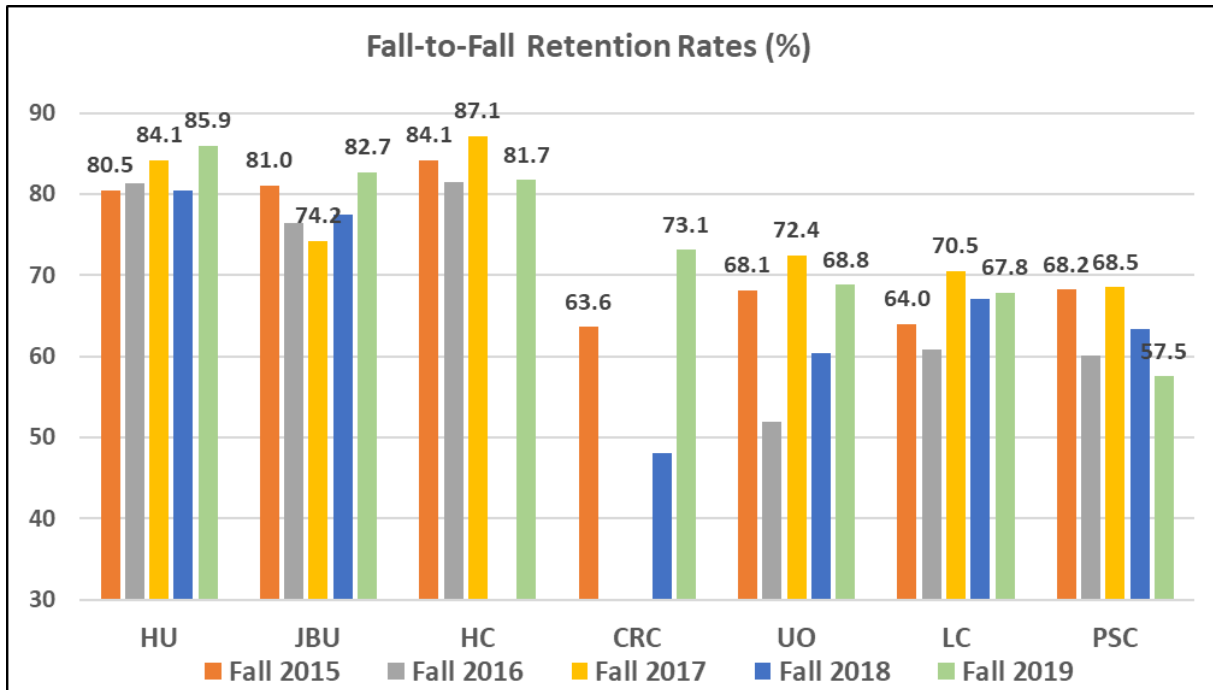


Chart 3.12: Student Retention Rates by Institution – Private Institutions

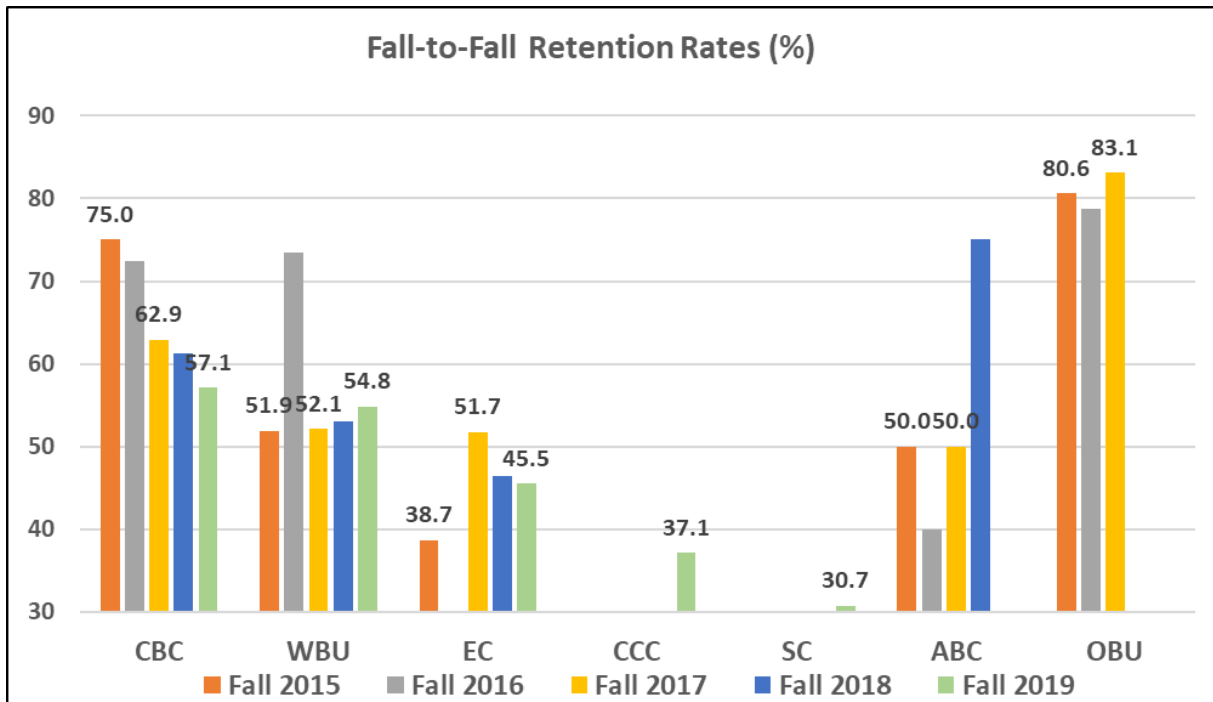


Chart 3.13: Student Retention Rates by Institution – Private Institutions

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 3.14 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 have 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 2016, reported an on time graduation rate of 38.6%. Students graduating in six years have also shown small but steady increases. The most recent six-year cohort, Fall 2014, reported a 50.7% graduation rate.

The Fall 2014 bachelor-seeking cohort graduated 35.5% in four years (100% rate), but after the two additional years of study, 50.7% of this cohort had graduated with a bachelor's degree in six years.

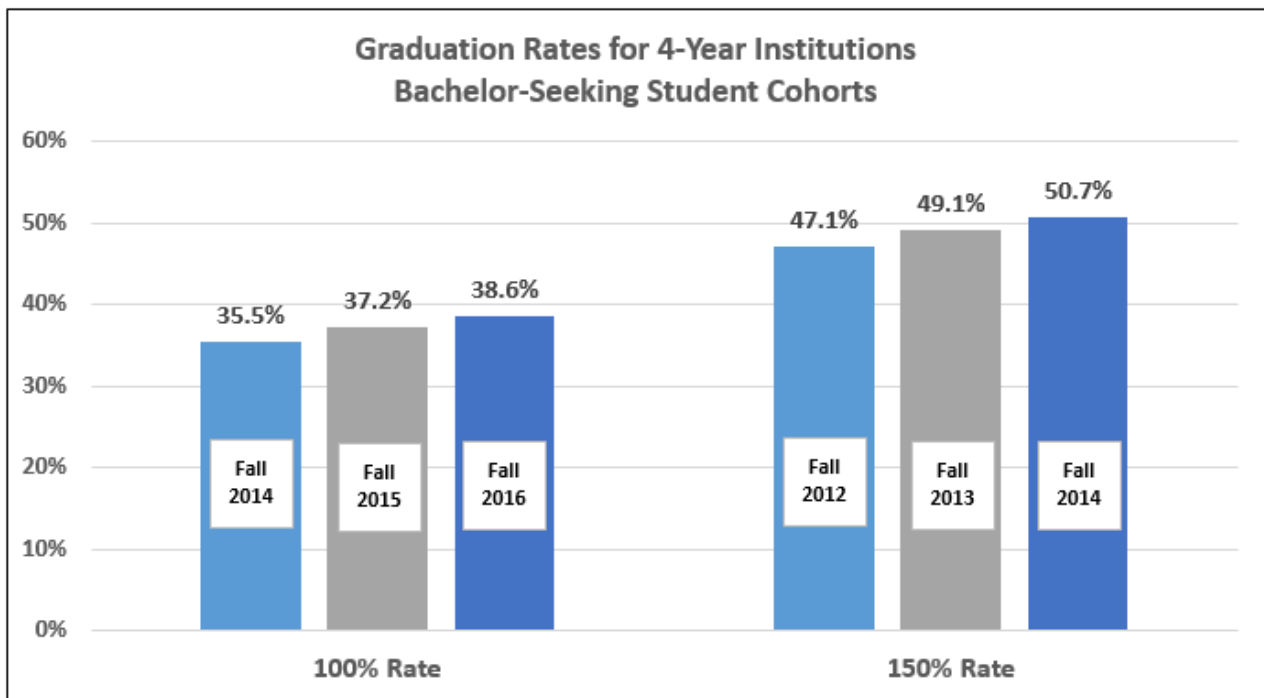


Chart 3.14: Graduation Rates - 4-Year Institution Trend

Charts 3.15 and 3.16 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 reporting a 53.3% on time graduation rate for the most recent Fall 2016 cohort. Arkansas State University and the University of Central Arkansas report graduation rates of 36.3% and 35.6% respectively for the Fall 2016 cohort.

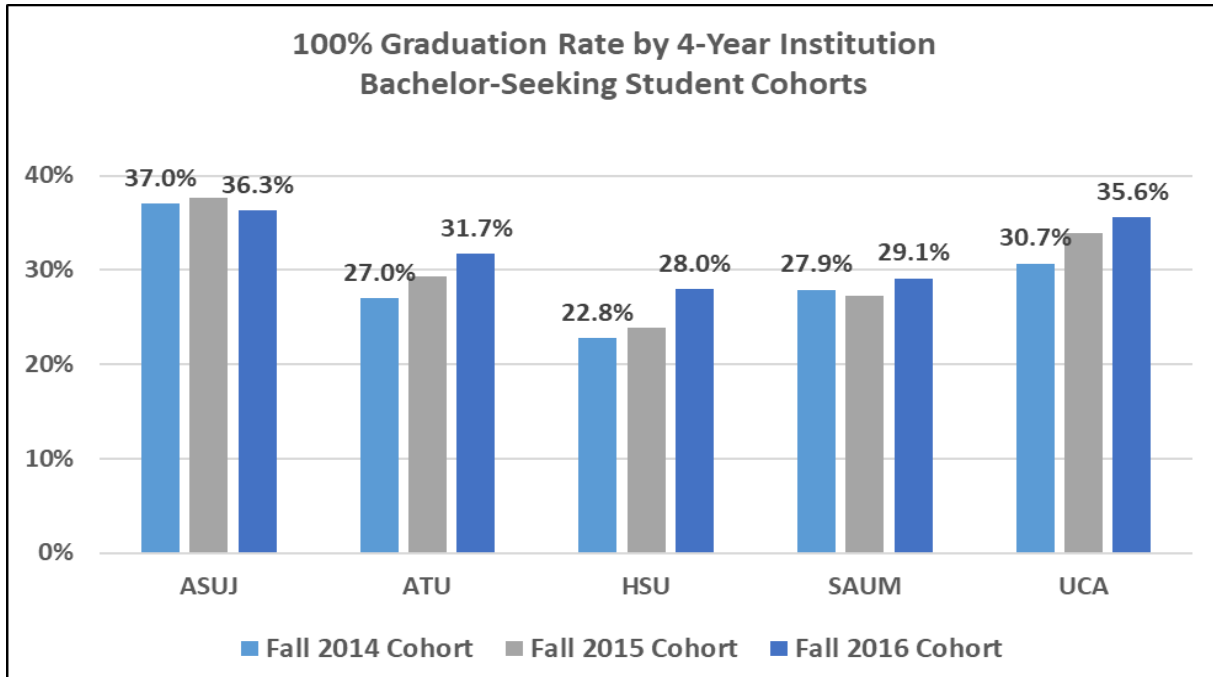


Chart 3.15: 100% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-1

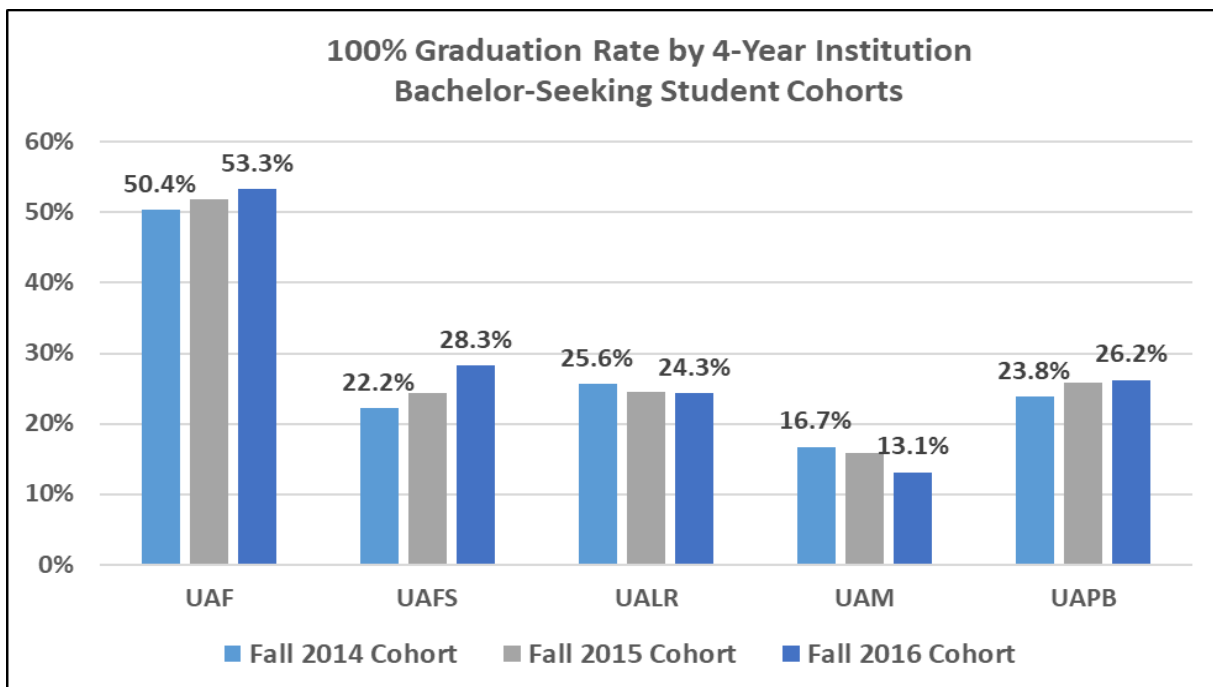


Chart 3.16: 100% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-2

Charts 3.17 and 3.18 below provides trend data for the six-year graduation rate (150%) for the public 4-year universities. Six 4-year universities reported an increase for the Fall 2014 cohort when compared to the Fall 2013 cohort.

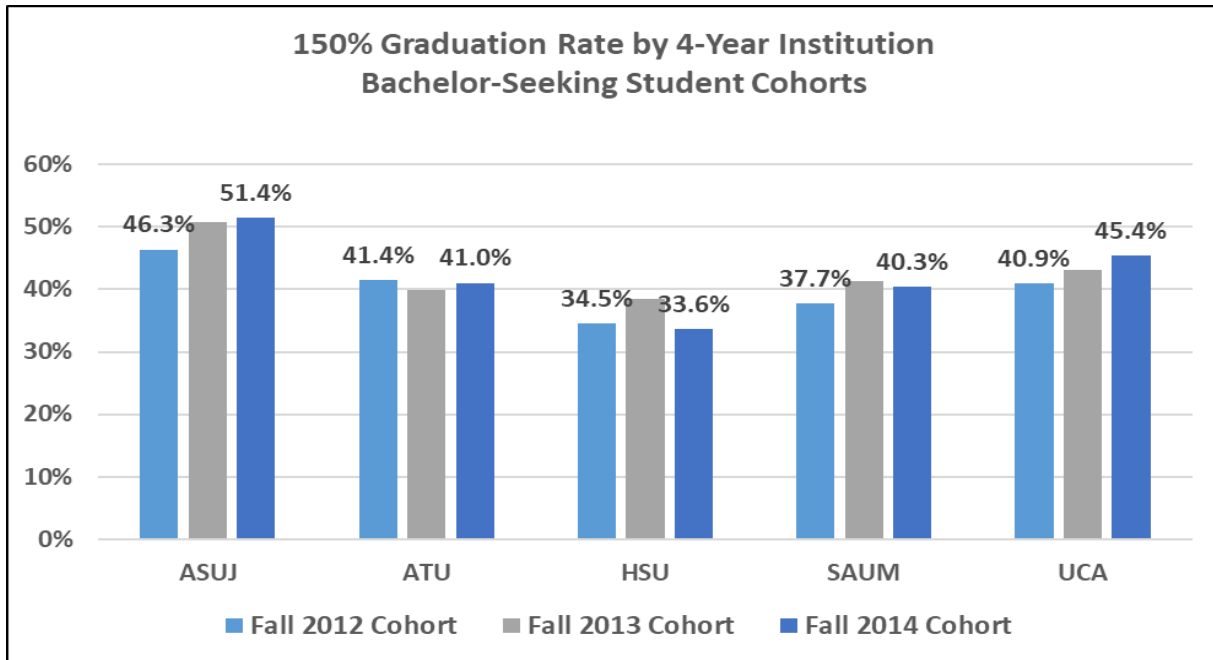


Chart 3.17: 150% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-1

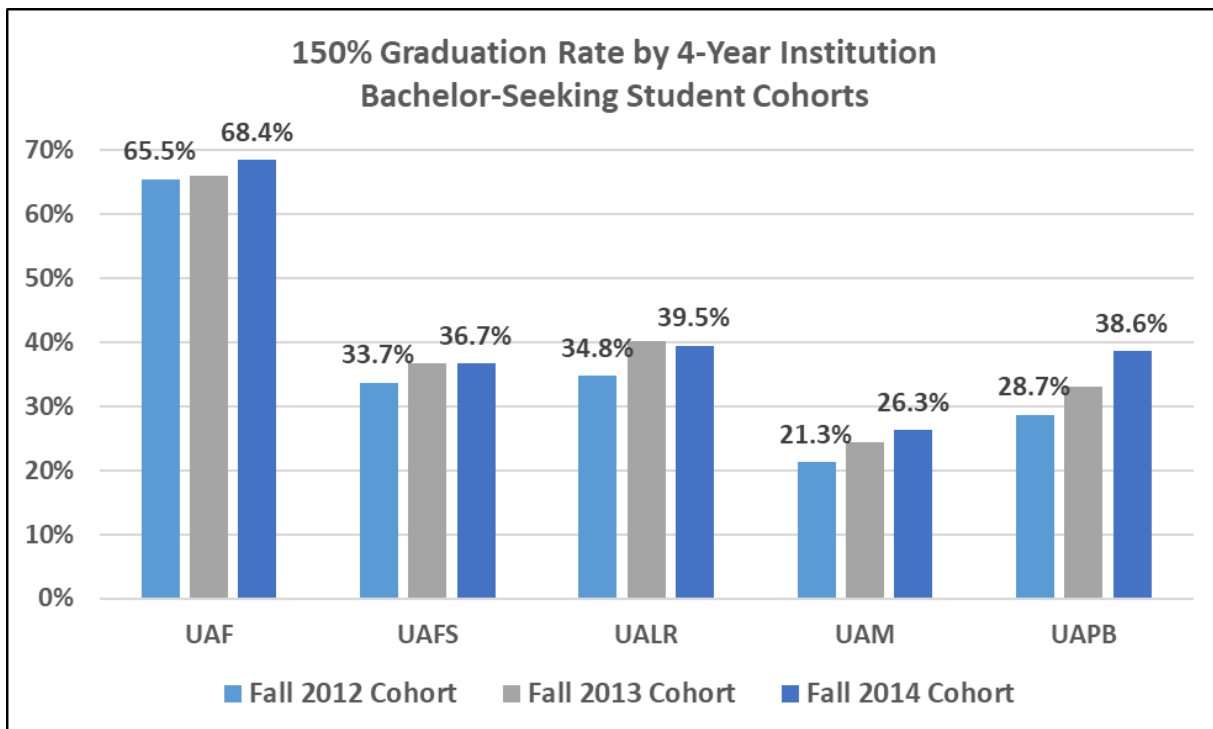


Chart 3.18: 150% Graduation Rates 4-Year institutions-2

Both male and female cohorts showed an improved six-year graduation rate. The Fall 2014 male cohort reported a 46.1% graduation rate, while the Fall 2014 female cohort reported 54.4% graduation rate.

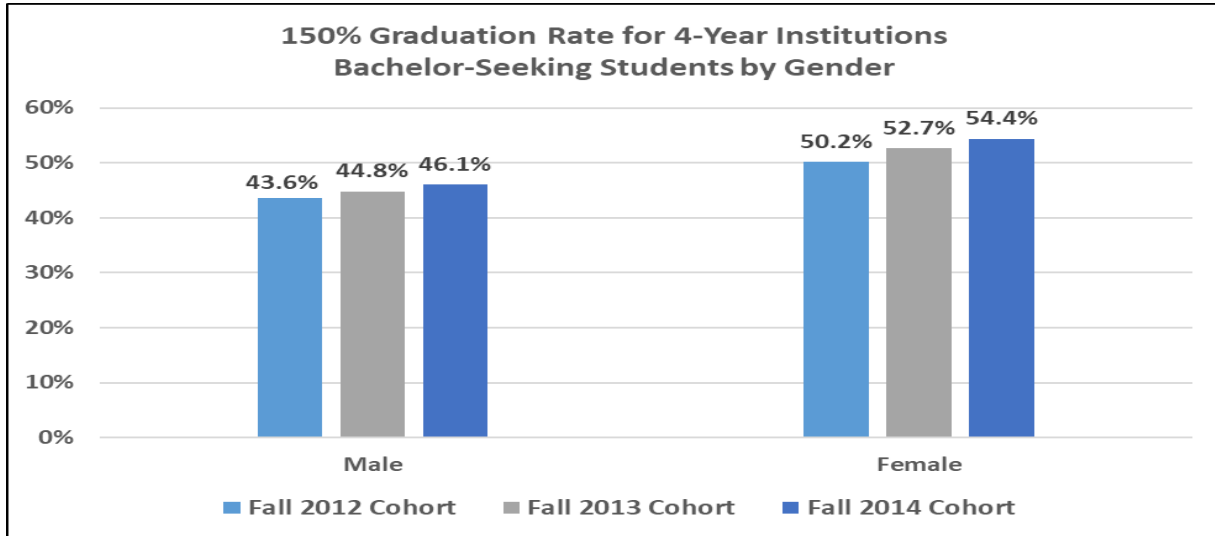


Chart 3.19: 150% Graduation Rates by Gender

Asian, Black, and White students showed six-year graduation rate improvements. Hispanic and White students both reported a graduation rate above 50% for the Fall 2014 Cohort, and Asian students reported a graduation rate above 60% for the Fall 2014 Cohort.

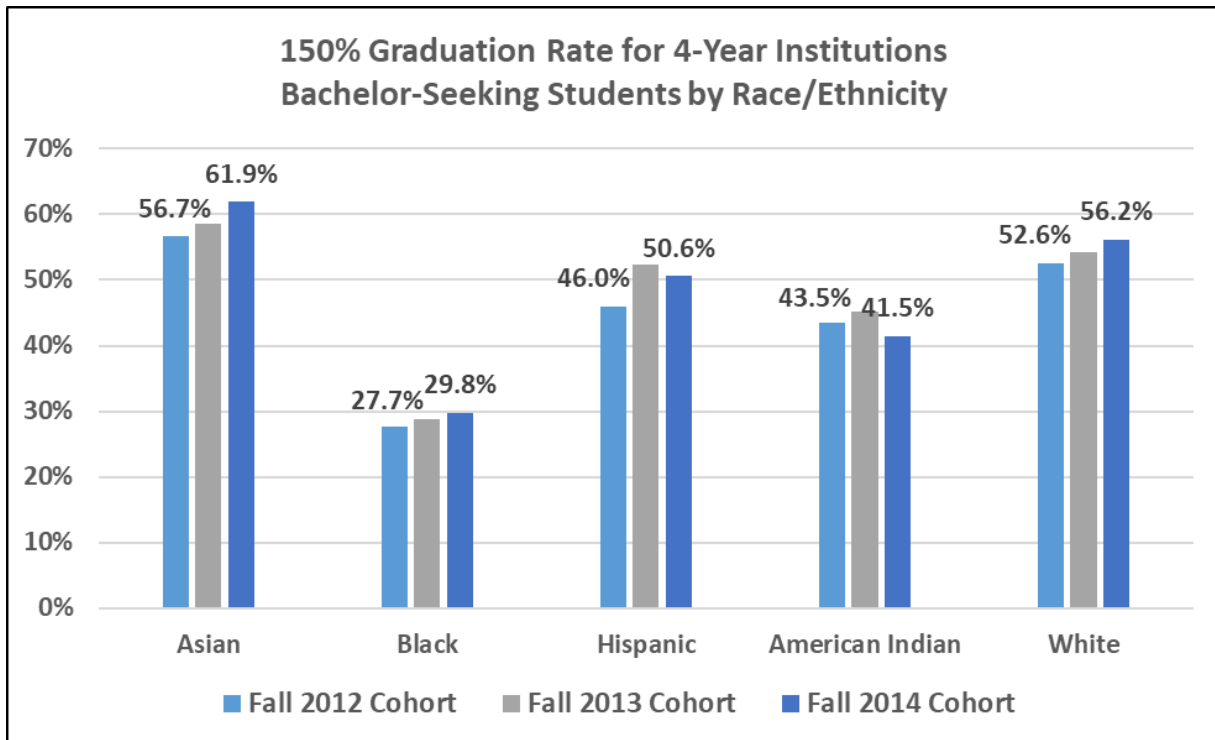


Chart 3.20: 150% Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity

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%). Twelve 2-year colleges reported a higher three-year graduation rate.

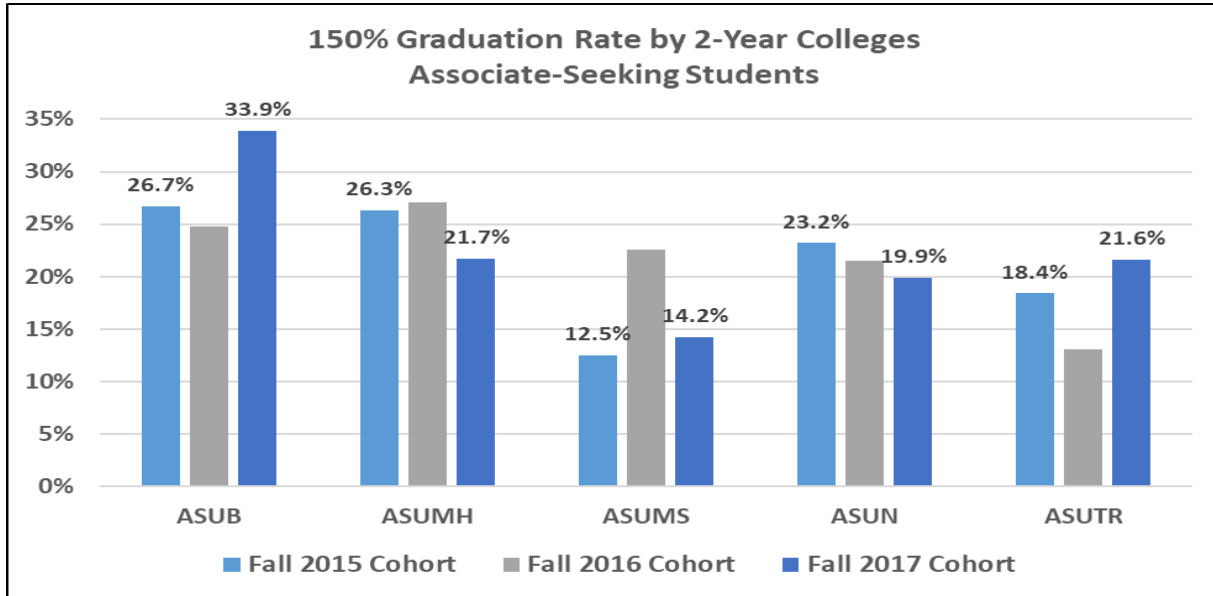


Chart 3.21 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-1

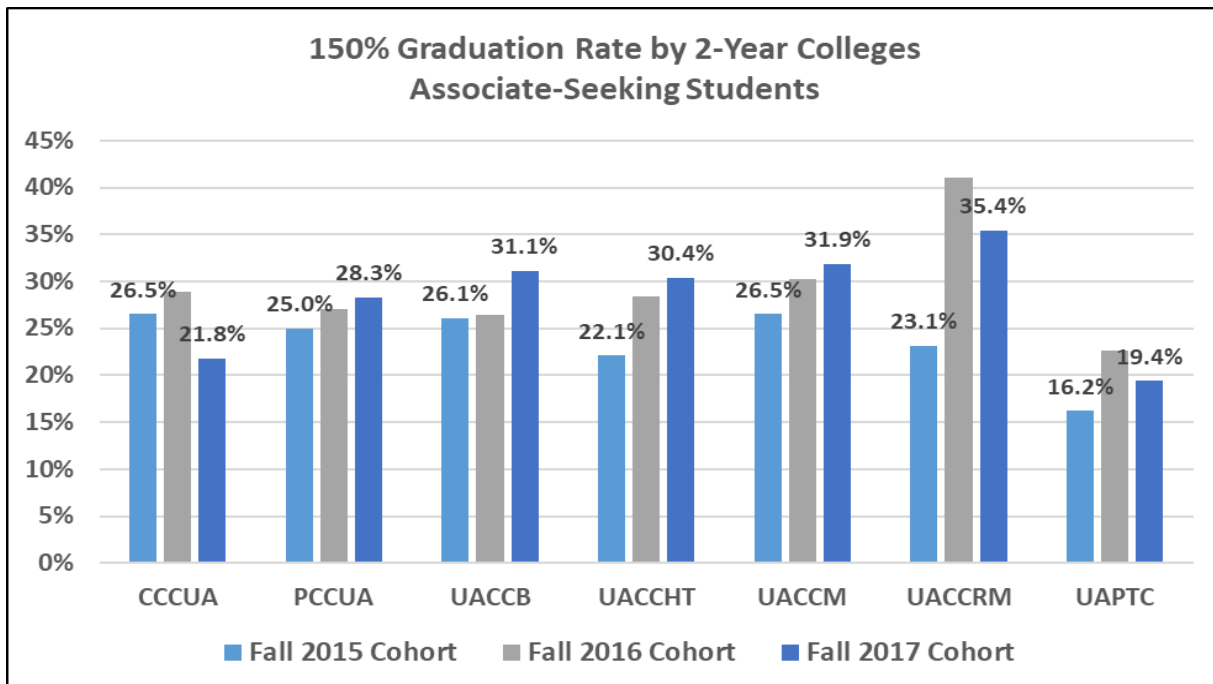


Chart 3.22 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-2

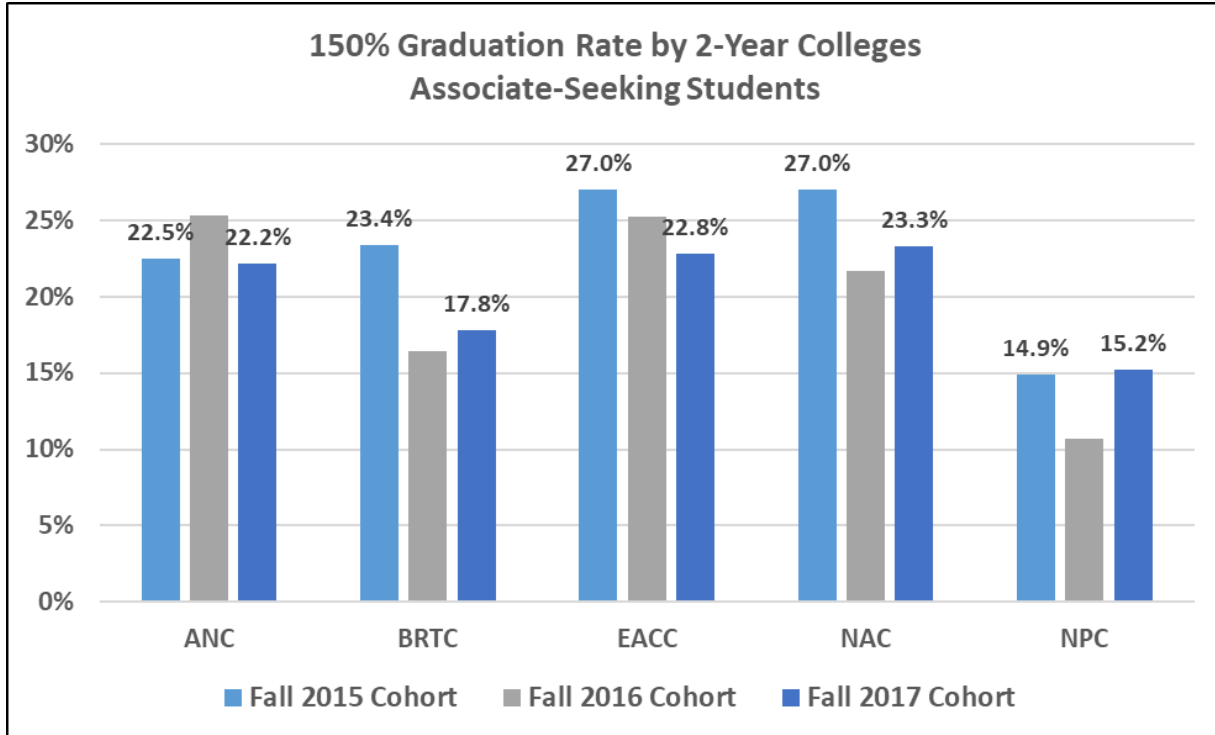


Chart 3.23 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-3

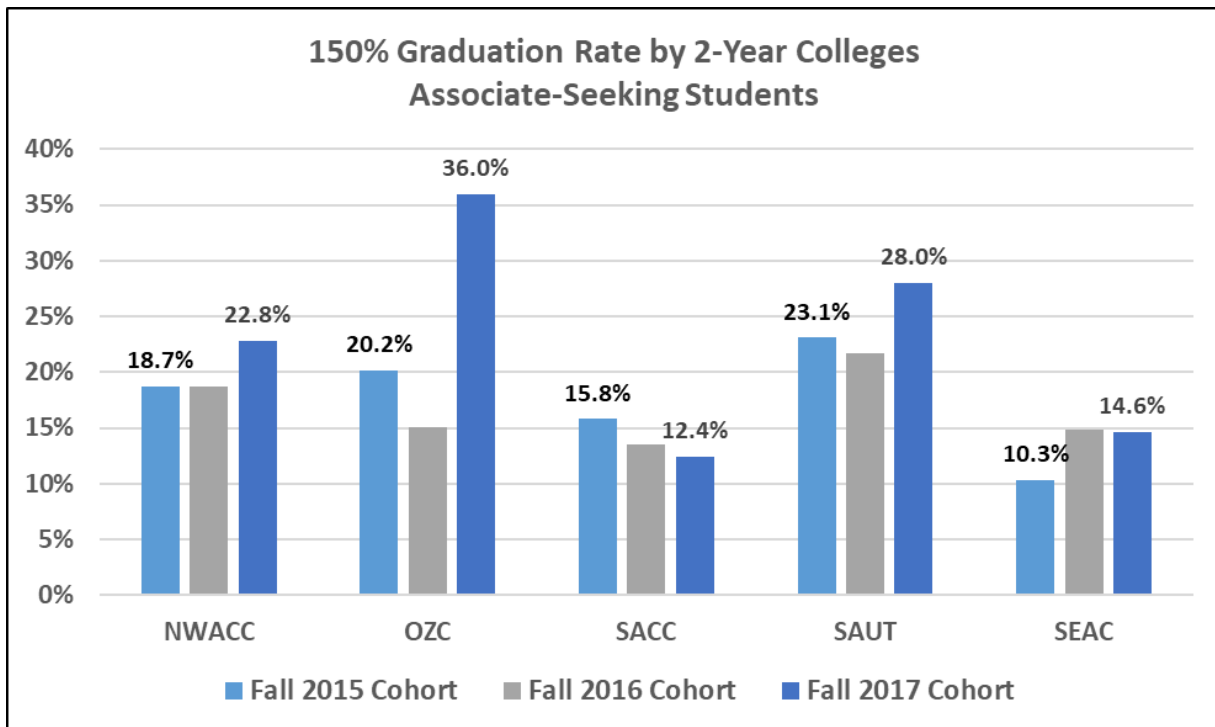


Chart 3.24 Graduation Rates 2-Year Associate Cohorts-4

The Fall 2017 male cohort reported a higher three-year graduation rate at 22.7% when compared to the Fall 2016 cohort's graduation rate of 19.7%. Female students reported a graduation rate of 25.5%.

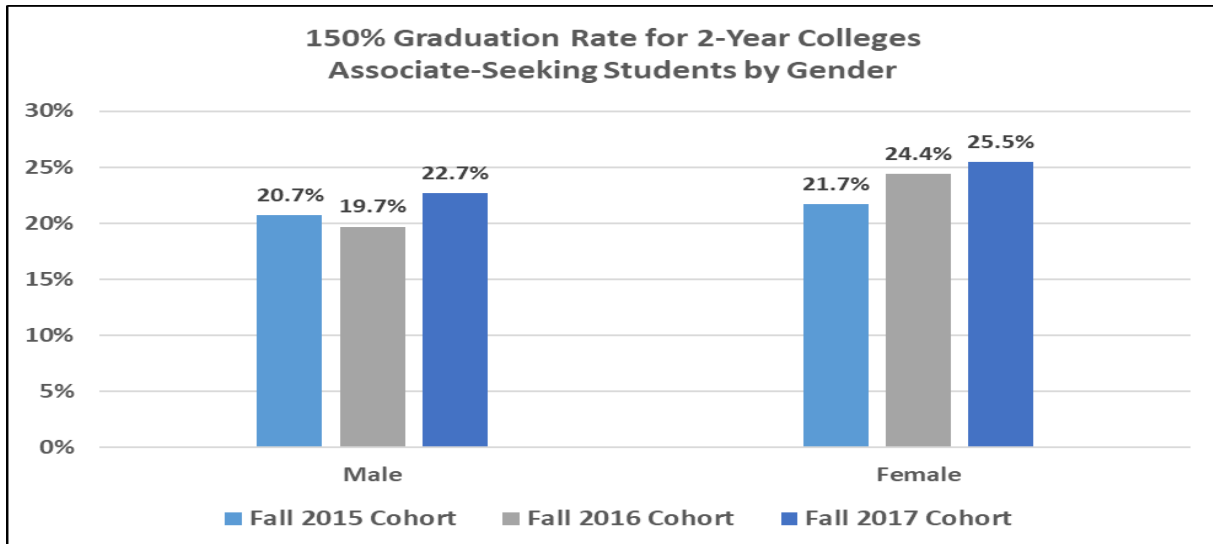


Chart 3.25: Graduation Rates 2-Year Colleges by Gender

The Asian cohort reported an impressive 12% increase in graduation rate for our 2-year colleges for the Fall 2017 cohort when compared to the Fall 2016 cohort.

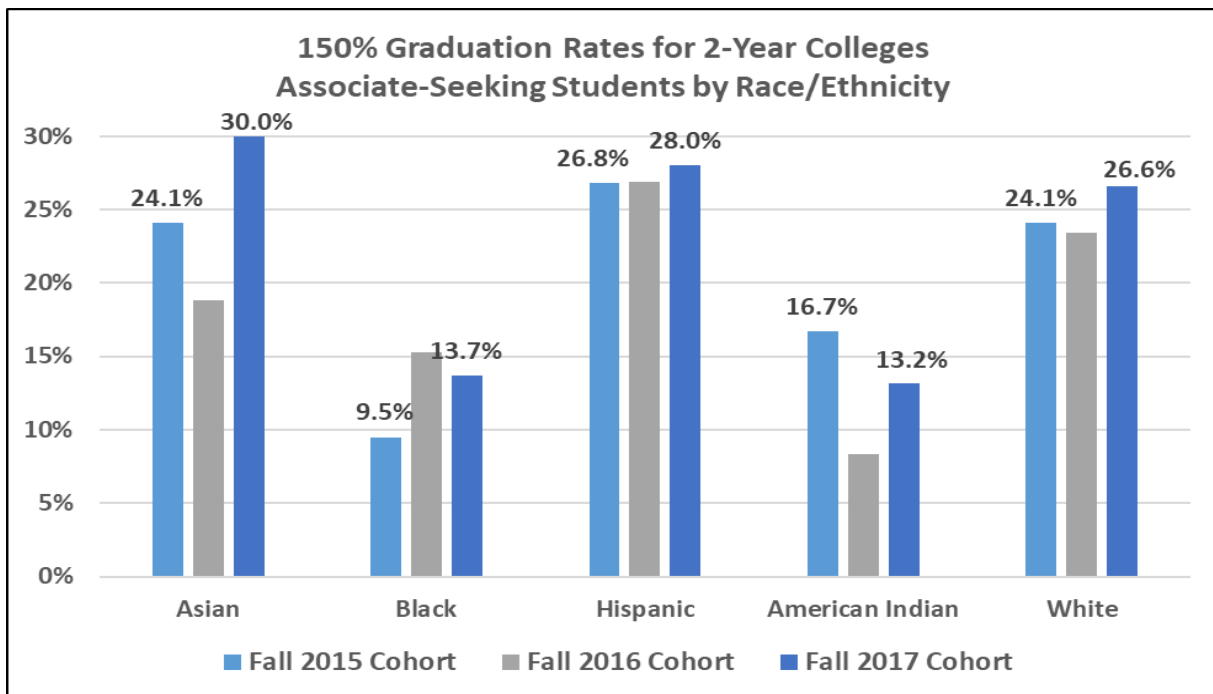


Chart 3.26: Graduation Rates 2-Year Colleges by Race/Ethnicity

Private/Independent Institutions

Graduation rates for our private/independent institutions are very consistent for the three most recent cohorts for both the 100% rate and the 150% rate.

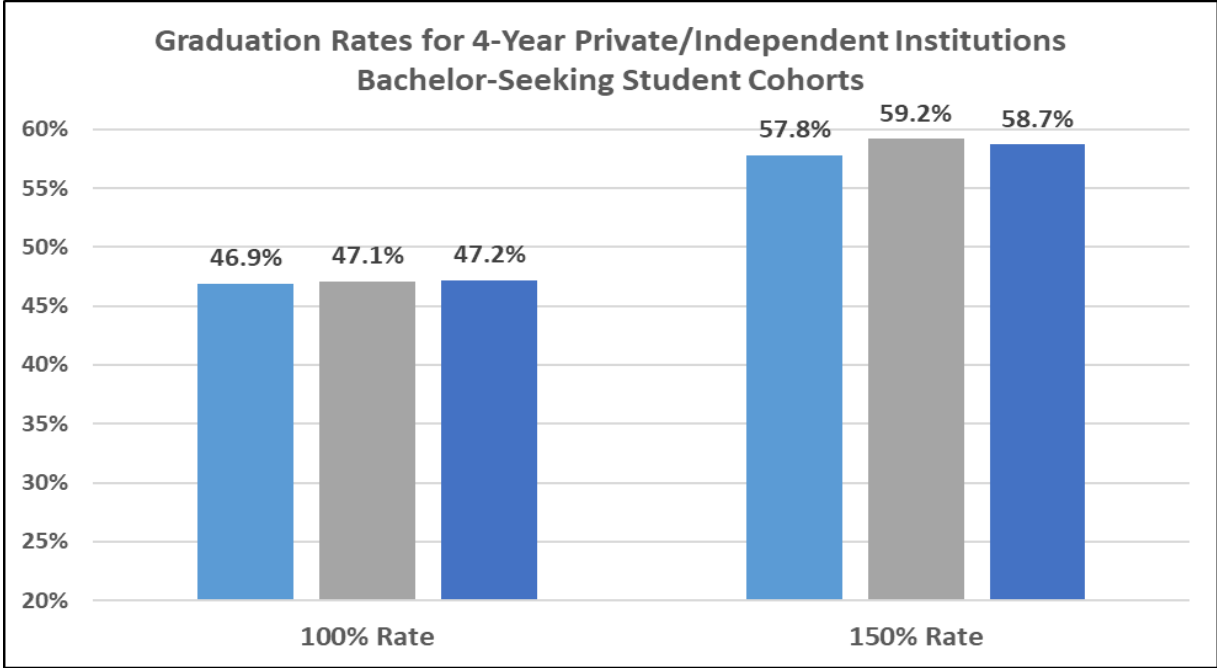


Chart 3.27: Graduation Rates Private Institutions