

Arkansas Division of Higher Education

**Annual Report of Retention
and Graduation Rates of Student-Athletes**



Reporting and Analytics

December 2022

Arkansas Division of Higher Education
101 E. Capitol Ave, Suite 300 Little Rock, AR 72201

ANNUAL REPORT ON PARTICIPATION, RETENTION AND GRADUATION OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

This report complies with Act 267 of 1989 that requires reporting of retention and graduation rates for first-time in college students who participate in Arkansas intercollegiate athletics. This information is collected through institutional data submissions to the Arkansas Higher Education Information System (AHEIS) from all public colleges and universities with athletic programs. In addition to retention and graduation rates, this report provides data on all athletic participation by sport and scholarship status.

Methodology

The methodology used in this report closely follows the methodology used in the Annual Report on Student Retention and Graduation. The retention calculations are based on fall-to-fall comparisons of the student-athletes in the cohort of first-time in college, full-time, and credential-seeking students from the fall term only. A student is considered retained if they returned to the same institution in the fall term of the next academic year.

Graduation rate calculations use the same cohort of first-time in college, full-time, credential-seeking students from the fall term. The graduation rates presented here include a 100% rate representing those graduating with a Bachelor's degree in four years, which is considered graduating 'on time', and a 150% graduation rate representing student-athletes graduating with a Bachelor's degree in six years.

The methodology used herein is not meant to and does not correspond with the NCAA GSR (Graduation Success Rate) methodology each institution is required to report to the NCAA.

Participation Overview

In Academic Year 2020-21, 3,889 students participated in athletics at ten universities and seven 2-year colleges. This is the most student-athletes ever reported for an academic year. This is an increase of 313 student-athletes over the 2019-20 academic year, including 440 student-athletes reported by two 2-year colleges.

Sports included in student-athlete reporting are Football, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Baseball, Track/Cross Country, Golf, Swimming, Tennis, Volleyball, Soccer, Softball and an Other Sports category that includes student-athletes from all other sports.

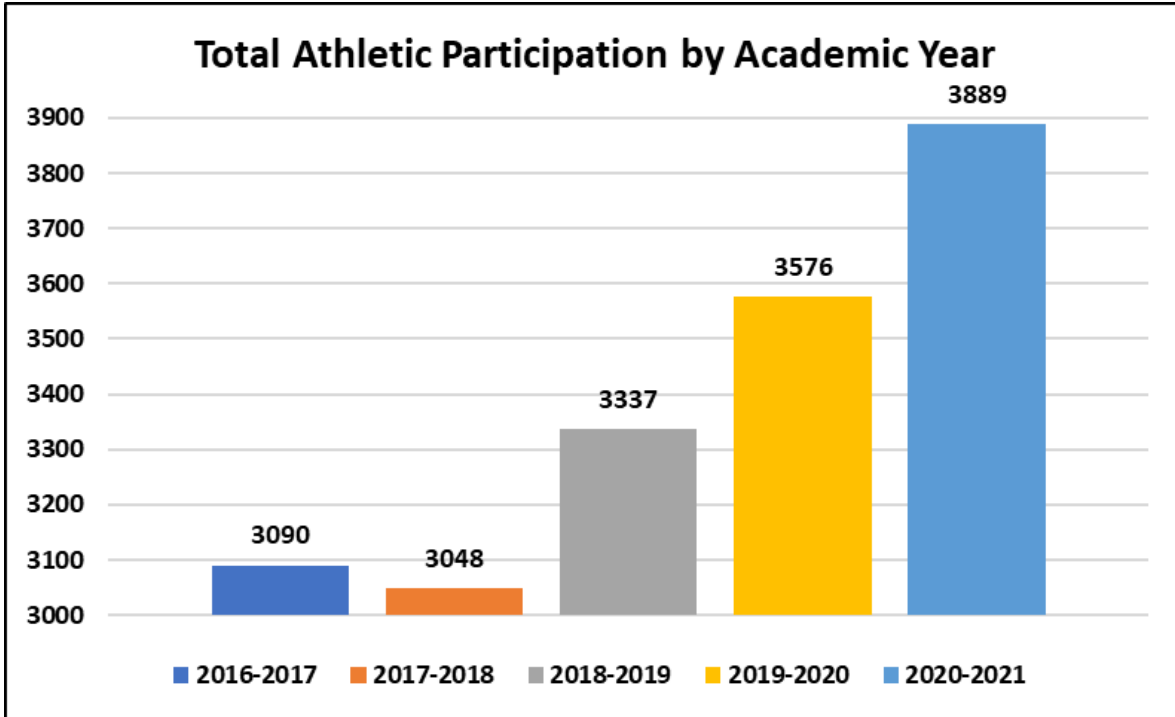


Chart 7.1: Athletic Participation by Academic Year

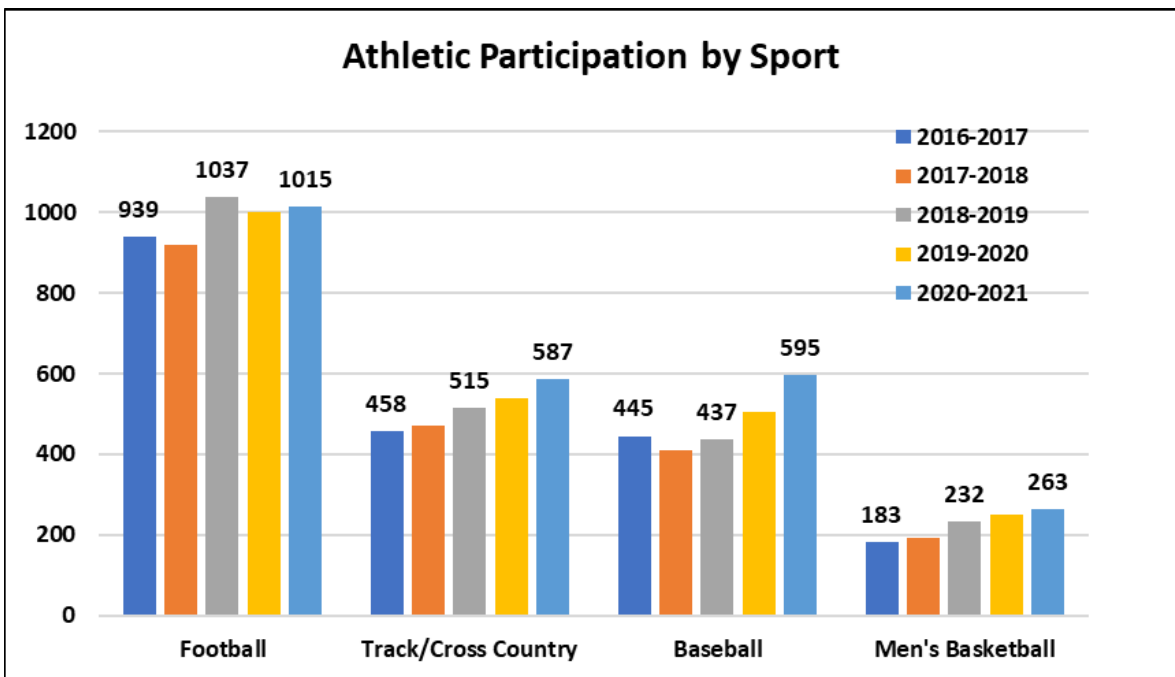


Chart 7.2: Athletes by Sport – Detailed

The number of student-athletes participating in football leads the way with 1,015 reported for the 2020-21 academic year. Baseball had the largest increase in participation when compared to the 2019-2020 academic year.

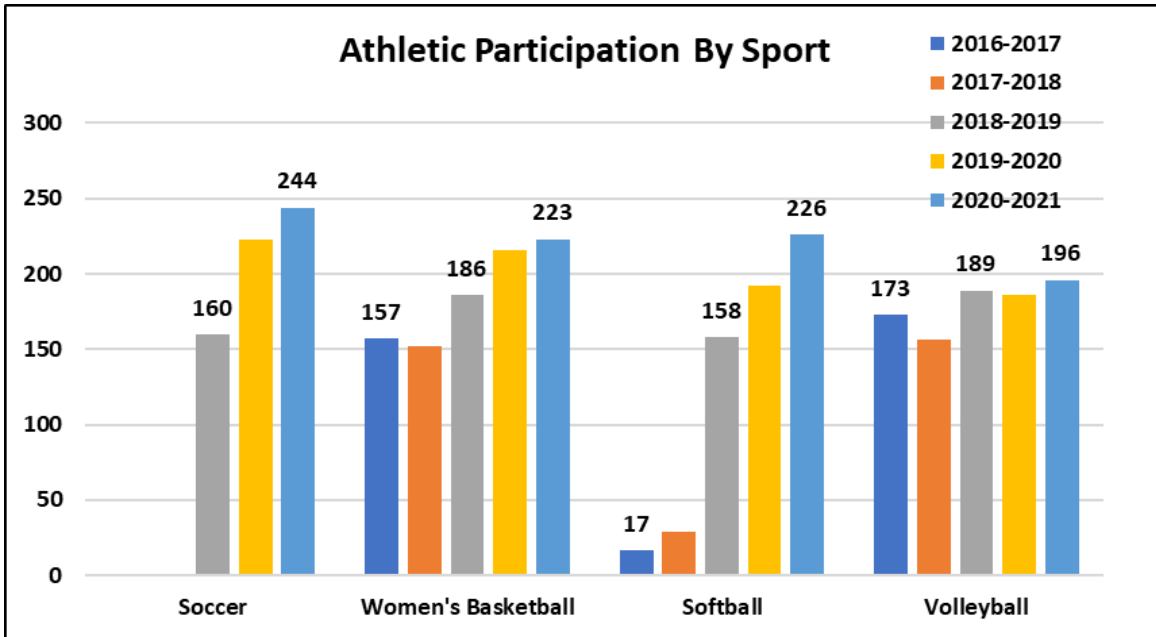


Chart 7.3: Athletes by Sport – Detailed

From academic year 2016-2017 to academic year 2020-2021, the Other Sports category participation ranged between 62 and 403 student-athletes. The addition of categories for Soccer and Softball resulted in a big shift in the number of student-athletes reported in the Other Sports category.

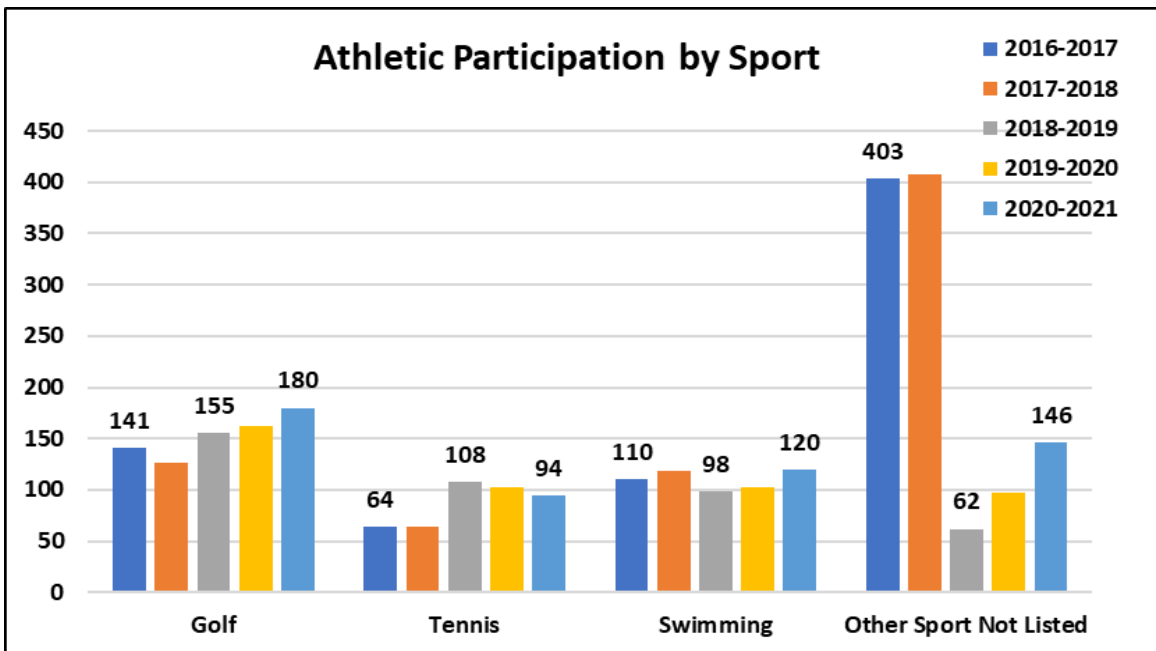


Chart 7.4: Athletes by Sport – Detailed

Many students receive scholarships to participate in athletics. The following graph illustrates the majority of students receive a partial scholarship, 2,185 of 3,889 student-athletes (56.2%), while only 558 (14.3%) receive a full scholarship.

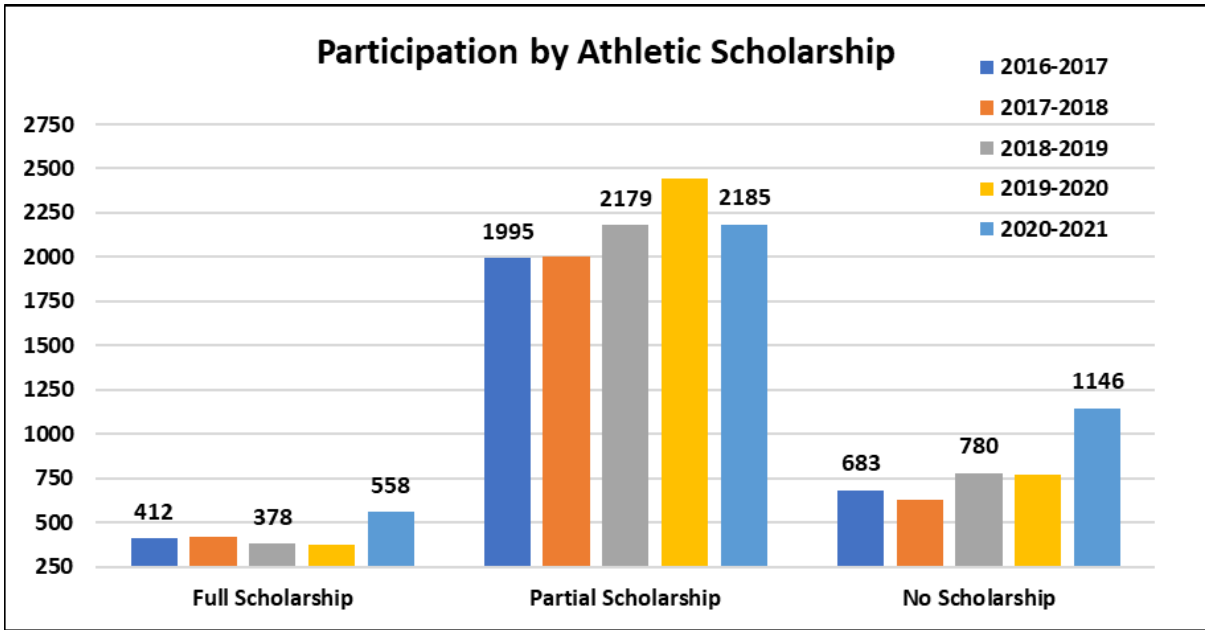


Chart 7.5: Athletes by Scholarship

The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville reported the most student-athletes with the University of Central Arkansas reporting the second largest number of athletes for the 2020-21 academic year.

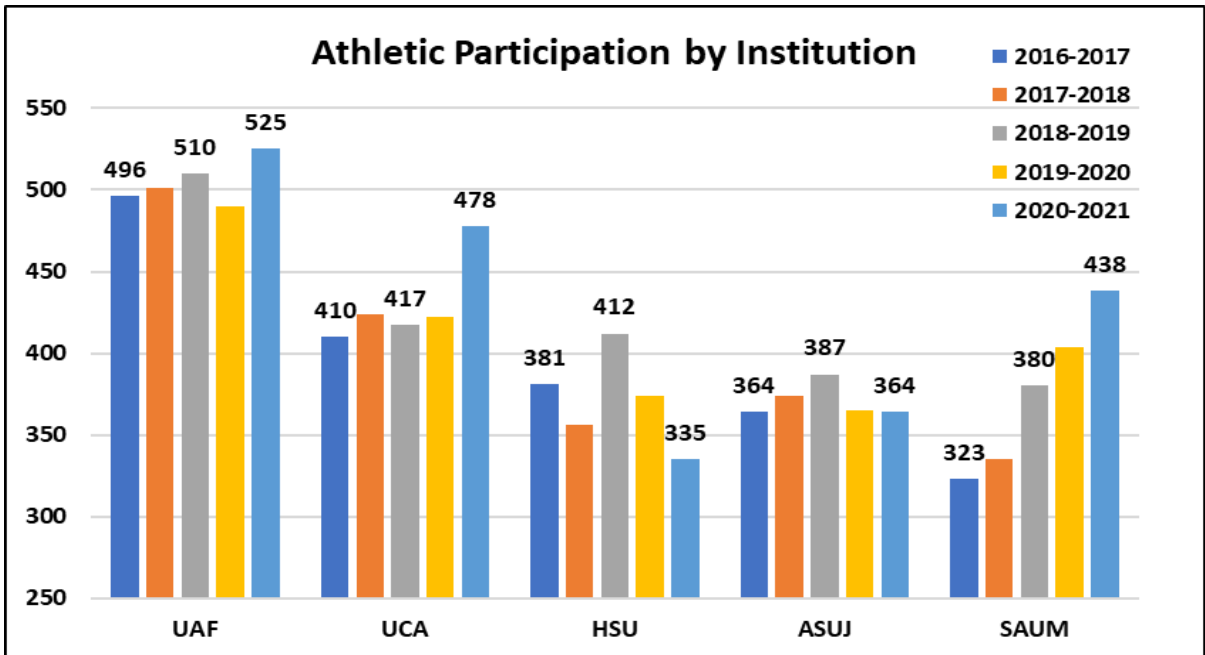


Chart 7.6: Athletes by Institution

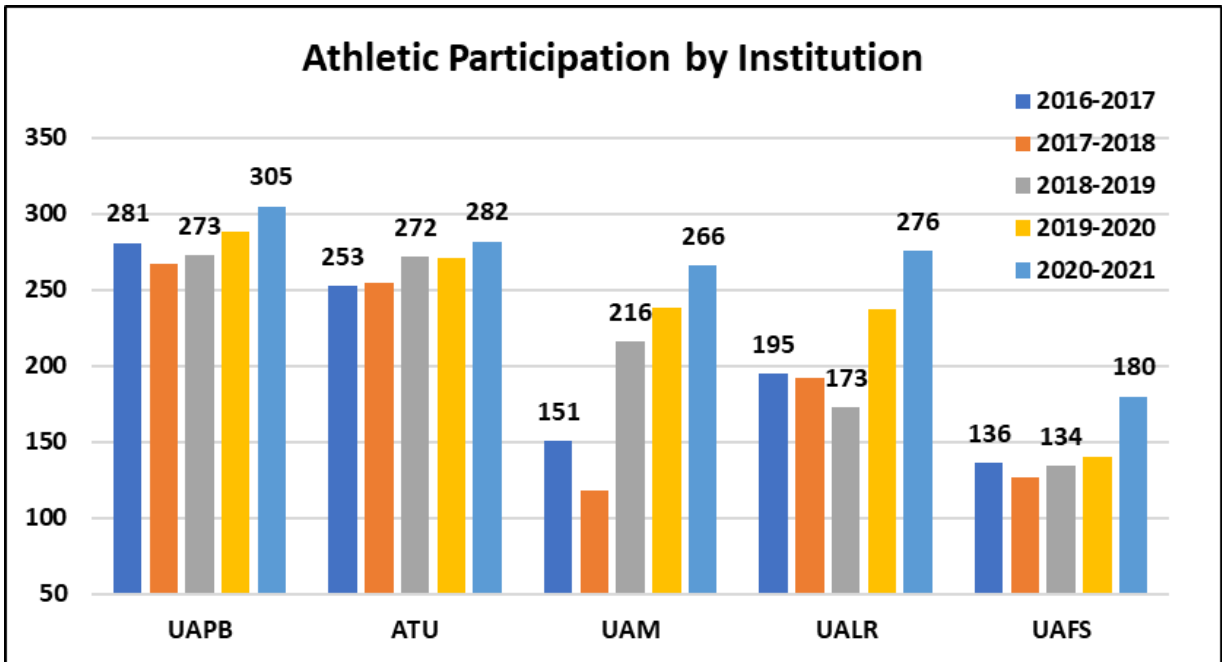


Chart 7.7: Athletes by Institution

STUDENT-ATHLETE FALL-TO-FALL RETENTION

Athletes are retained at higher rates than non-athlete students due to the commitment to and interest in participating in college athletics; also, a correlation may be made between participation and the impact of support services many institutions provide. ATU returned 84.9% of their Fall 2020 student-athlete cohort in Fall 2021.

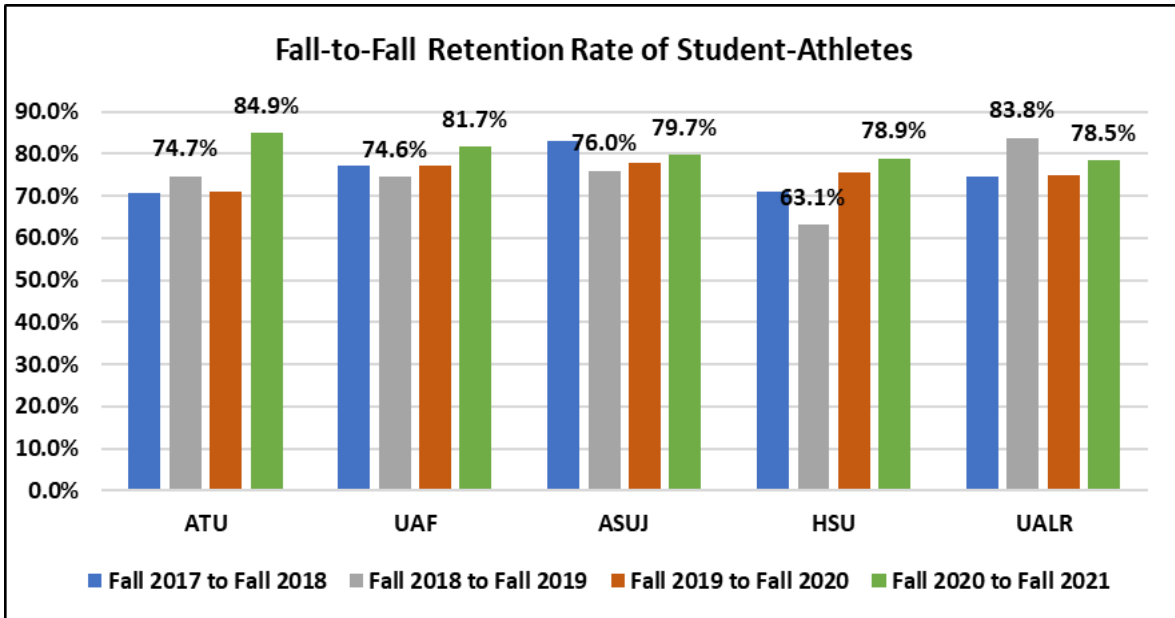


Chart 7.8: Retention Rate of Athletes by Institution

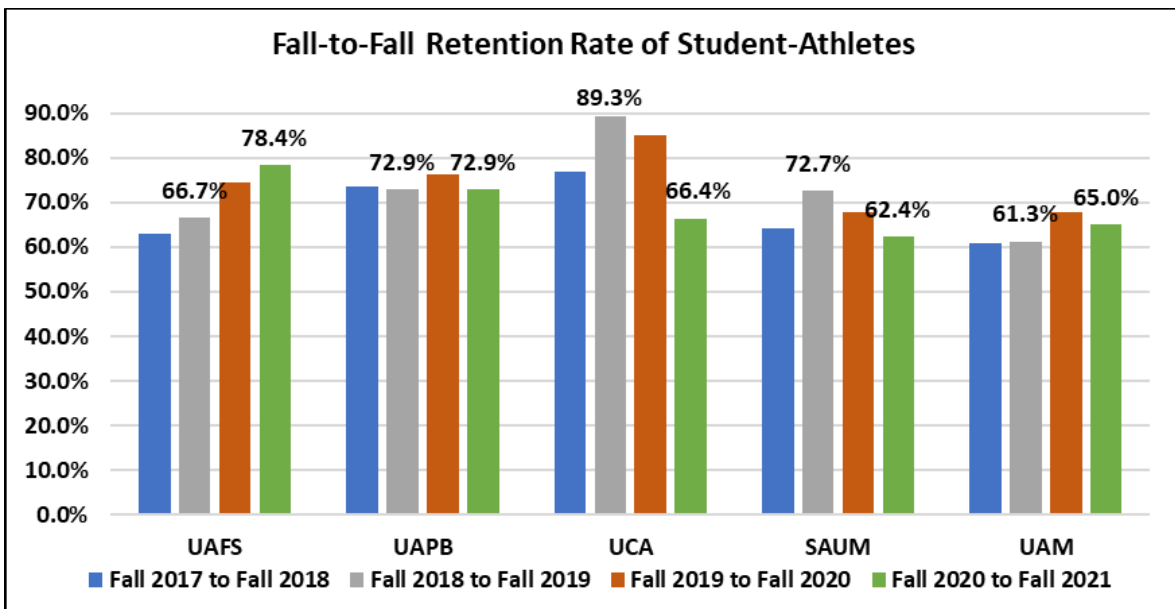


Chart 7.9: Retention Rate of Athletes by Institution

For our 2-year colleges, SAUT had the highest student-athlete retention rate of 84.6% of their Fall 2020 cohort to Fall 2021.

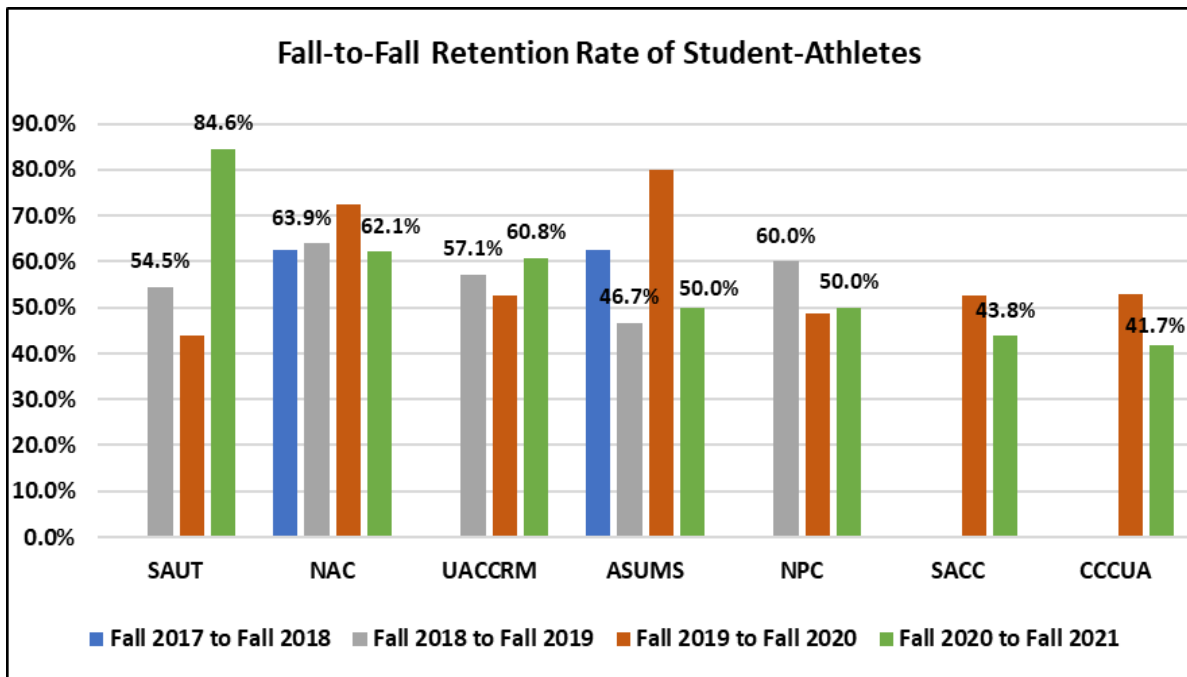


Chart 7.10: Retention Rate of Athletes by Institution

STUDENT-ATHLETE GRADUATION RATES

The graduation rate calculations for student-athletes are based on the same methodology as the other graduation report. First-time in college, student-athletes enrolled for the first time define the cohorts. The chart below shows the graduation rate progression for three cohorts for the 4-year universities. Due to the varying sizes of the entering student-athlete cohorts each year, graduation rates for athletes tend to fluctuate more than rates of non-athletes.

Graduating in four years is considered graduating on time for a Bachelor’s degree. UAF was the only 4-year institution with a rate above 50% for on-time graduation. ASUJ reported a 47.9% graduation rate for the most recent cohort, Fall 2017, while UAPB reported a 38.8% on-time graduation rate for the Fall 2017 entering cohort.

Four other 4-year institutions reported a student-athlete 4-year 100% graduation rate of 30% or higher including UAM, UCA, UALR and UAFS.

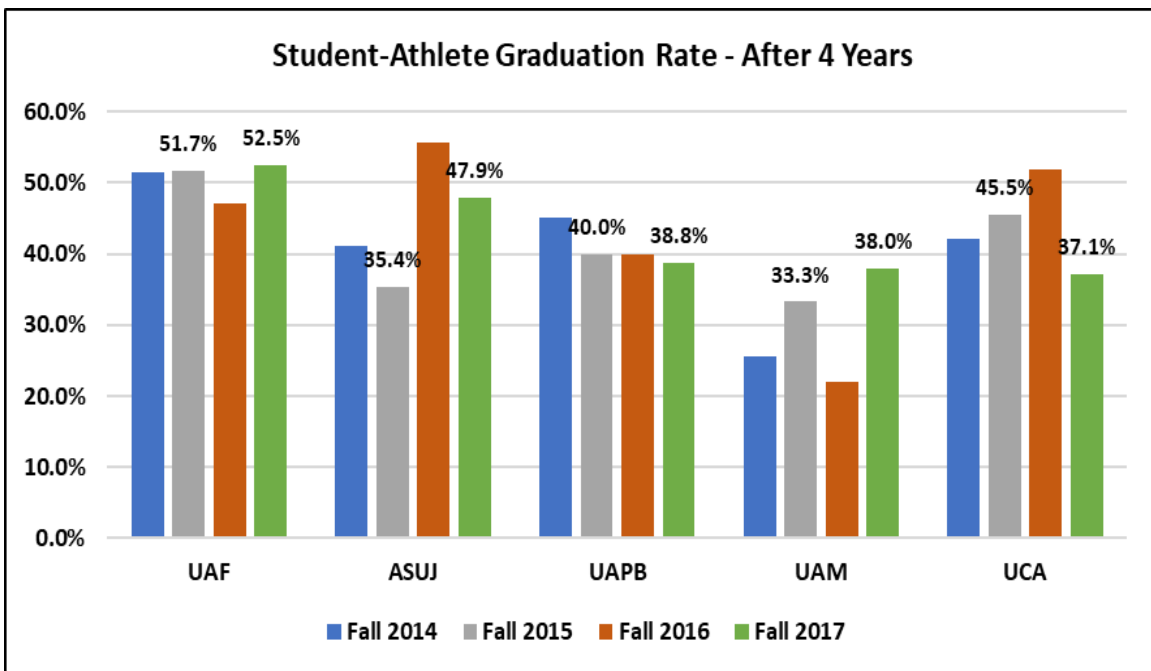


Chart 7.11: 100% Graduation Rates of Athletes by Institution-1

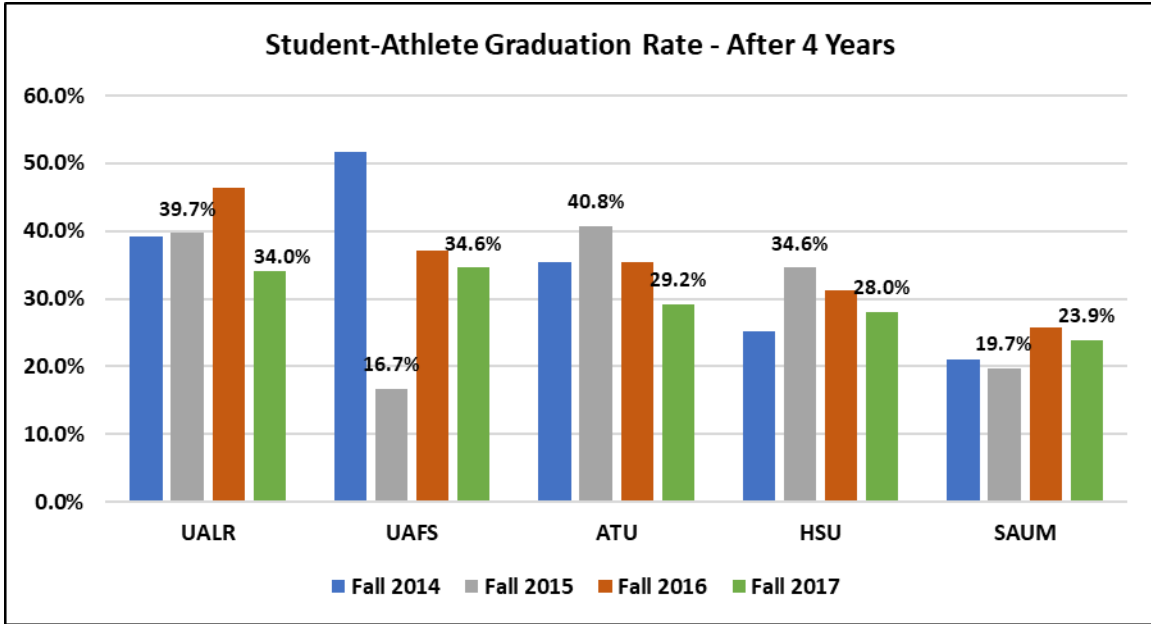


Chart 7.12: 100% Graduation Rates of Athletes by Institution-2

UAF reported a six-year graduation rate of 66.9%. UCA, ATU, ASUJ and UAPB reported a six-year graduation rate above 50% as seen in Chart 7.13.

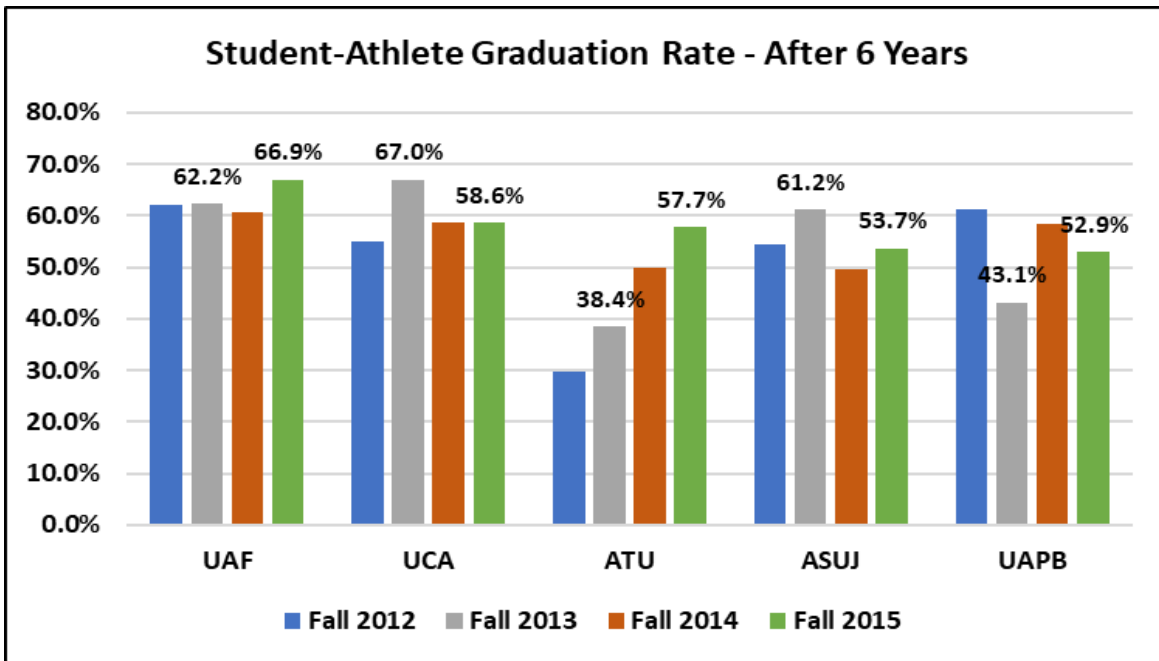


Chart 7.13: 150% Graduation Rates of Athletes by Institution-1

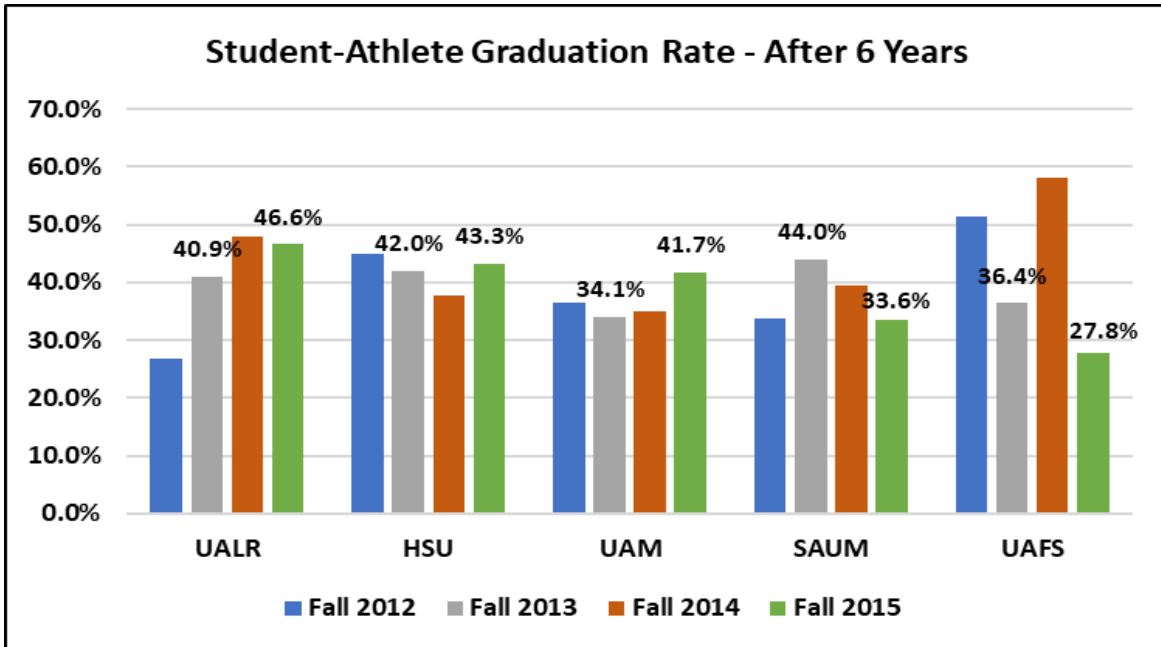


Chart 7.14: 150% Graduation Rates of Athletes by Institution-2