

Institutional Achievement Gap Report 2013-2014: Towson University
February 3, 2014

Definition of Achievement Gap

USM operationalizes an achievement gap as the difference(s) between 2nd year retention and 6-year graduation rates of: (a) African-American, (b) Hispanic, and (c) Low-Income (defined as Pell grant recipient) students versus all TU students and/or all USM students. An achievement gap equal to, or less than, zero (a negative number) is good.

Retention Rates:

Fall 2012 Cohort	African-American	Hispanic	Low-Income (Pell Recipient)
Towson University 2nd Year Retention Rate for Cohort	92%	83%	86%
Towson University 2nd Year Retention Rate benchmark	86%	86%	86%
USM 2nd Year Retention Rate benchmark	84%	84%	84%
Achievement Gap (Benchmarked Against TU)	-6%	3%	0%
Achievement Gap (Benchmarked Against USM)	-8%	1%	-2%

Graduation Rates:

Fall 2007 Cohort	African-American	Hispanic	Low-Income (Pell Recipient)
Towson University 6-Year Graduation Rate for Cohort	60%	69%	54%
Towson University 6-Year Graduation Rate benchmark	65%	65%	65%
USM 6-Year Graduation Rate benchmark	62%	62%	62%
Achievement Gap (Benchmarked Against TU)	5%	-4%	11%
Achievement Gap (Benchmarked Against USM)	2%	-7%	8%

TU benchmark.

The **2nd year retention rates** of the African-American cohort exceeded the TU benchmark, and the 2nd year retention rate of the Low-Income cohort equaled the TU benchmark. The 2nd year retention rate of the Hispanic cohort did not meet the TU benchmark.

The **6-year graduation rate** of the Hispanic cohort exceeded the TU benchmark whereas the 6-year graduation rates of the African-American and Low-Income cohorts did not meet the TU benchmark.

USM benchmark.

The **2nd year retention rates** of the African-American and Low-Income cohorts exceeded the USM benchmark, whereas the 2nd year retention rate of the Hispanic cohort just barely failed to meet the USM benchmark.

The **6-year graduation rate** of the Hispanic cohort exceeded the USM benchmark whereas the 6-year graduation rate for the African-American and Low-Income cohorts did not meet the USM benchmark.

Table: Institutional Retention and Graduation Rate Data: Towson University

Towson University	Six-year Graduation and Retention Rates at Institutions of First-Entry												
	Fall Cohort First-Time Full Time	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	FY Graduation Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Towson University's Overall First-Time / Full-Time Cohort	6-Year Graduation Rate	66%	73%	68%	63%	65%	65%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2nd Year Retention	84%	86%	83%	80%	82%	82%	83%	85%	84%	85%	86%	n/a
	3rd Year Retention	76%	81%	77%	73%	75%	74%	77%	78%	78%	79%	n/a	n/a
	4th Year Retention	72%	78%	73%	69%	71%	71%	74%	75%	74%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	5th Year Retention	31%	29%	31%	28%	29%	29%	29%	28%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	5th Year Retention / Graduation*	71%	75%	71%	67%	68%	69%	71%	73%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Towson University's African American First-Time / Full-Time Cohort	6-Year Graduation Rate	69%	73%	73%	55%	59%	60%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	The Gap	-2%	-1%	-5%	9%	6%	5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2nd Year Retention	92%	90%	90%	85%	85%	85%	88%	84%	85%	91%	92%	n/a
	3rd Year Retention	81%	88%	83%	74%	77%	75%	82%	79%	79%	70%	n/a	n/a
	4th Year Retention	77%	85%	82%	68%	69%	69%	79%	75%	73%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	5th Year Retention	37%	43%	41%	40%	40%	37%	39%	38%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Towson University's Hispanic First-Time / Full-Time Cohort	6-Year Graduation Rate	61%	59%	67%	51%	55%	69%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	The Gap	5%	13%	1%	12%	11%	-4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2nd Year Retention	84%	86%	82%	74%	77%	82%	81%	88%	79%	88%	83%	n/a
	3rd Year Retention	77%	73%	79%	66%	73%	78%	74%	81%	71%	81%	n/a	n/a
	4th Year Retention	77%	73%	72%	57%	69%	76%	75%	79%	69%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	5th Year Retention	42%	23%	38%	19%	35%	35%	32%	31%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Towson University's Low-income (Pell) First-Time / Full-Time Cohort	6-Year Graduation Rate	61%	66%	64%	52%	56%	54%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	The Gap	5%	6%	4%	11%	9%	11%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2nd Year Retention	86%	84%	84%	81%	81%	81%	86%	84%	86%	85%	86%	n/a
	3rd Year Retention	76%	78%	76%	69%	71%	69%	79%	77%	77%	79%	n/a	n/a
	4th Year Retention	72%	75%	73%	62%	64%	64%	73%	72%	73%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	5th Year Retention	34%	39%	42%	34%	35%	35%	34%	37%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	5th Year Retention / Graduation*	68%	73%	70%	59%	61%	63%	69%	71%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*Includes students who were enrolled in the fall term of their fifth academic year and students who completed their degree(s) in earlier terms.

Summary of Initiatives

Specific initiatives at Towson University aimed at facilitating retention and graduation rates of *all* students (embracing African-American, Hispanic, and/or low-income students) include:

- * First Year Experience (FYE) Advising Program
- * Strategies for Student Success Program (S3) Course
- * Community Enrichment and Enhancement Partnership (CEEP)
- * Students Achieve Goals through Education (SAGE) Program
- * Towson Opportunities in STEM (TOPS) Program

First Year Experience (FYE) Advising Program

TU's First Year Experience (FYE) Advising Program provides academic support to first-time freshmen for a successful transition to Towson University, and is administered by both TU's Academic Advising Center (division of academic affairs) and New Student Programs (division of student affairs). All first-time freshmen participate in the FYE Program.

FYE Advising Program components include: (a) an academic orientation, (b) sessions emphasizing the impact of personal decision making on academic progress, (c) meetings during the academic year to prepare for course selection and registration, and (d) one on one advising meetings focusing on adjustment to college, choosing an academic major, use of key resources, and course selection. Professional advisors provide increased office hours to first-time freshmen identified with academic need (indicated by placement into one or more developmental courses).

Strategies for Student Success (S3) Course

The Strategies for Student Success (S3) Course (also called Orientation 50) is TU's primary intervention with low-income students, and first-generation students. Students are assigned to the S3 course based on a risk assessment.

Retention and graduate rate data for students participating in this initiative are as follows:

S3 Course	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
cohort size (n=)	n/a	111	131	76	46	104	29	70
fall to fall retention rate	n/a	78%	88%	76%	91%	86%	86%	n/a
6-year graduation rate	n/a	48%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Community Enrichment and Enhancement Partnership (CEEP) Award

TU's Community Enrichment and Enhancement Partnership (CEEP) Award is a scholarship for retaining diverse and traditionally under-represented undergraduates, including African-American, Hispanic, and low-income students. CEEP Award recipients must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50.

CEEP Award recipients: (a) receive academic support resources, (b) explore career development as well as graduate and professional school options, (c) participate in community service and leadership development activities, (d) develop relationships with faculty, and (e) participate in field placements and internships.

Retention and graduate rate data for students participating in this initiative are as follows:

CEEP Award	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
cohort size (n=)	46	56	45	25	24	33	6	25
fall to fall retention rate	98%	91%	93%	88%	92%	91%	100%	n/a
6-year graduation rate	65%	72%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Students Achieve Goals through Education (SAGE) Program

TU's SAGE Program focuses on increasing retention and graduation rates of first-year undergraduates from diverse backgrounds, including African-American, Hispanic, and low-income students.

The SAGE Program pairs students with peer mentors who promote academic achievement, personal development, and campus-wide involvement. Peer mentors maintain weekly contact with students,

encourage focus on academic goals, assist in resolving academic issues, as well as help students identify organizations and activities of personal and professional interests.

SAGE Program participants attend weekly, hour-long meetings / workshops throughout the academic year addressing topics such as academic success strategies, personal and professional development issues, diversity issues, and opportunities to network with peers, faculty, and staff.

Retention and graduate rate data for students participating in this initiative are as follows:

SAGE Program	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
cohort size (n=)	not available	not available	not available	not available	154	201	237	230
fall to fall retention rate	not available	not available	not available	not available	89%	89%	90%	n/a
6-year graduation rate	not available	not available	not available	not available	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Towson Opportunities in STEM (TOPS) Program (www.towson.edu/tops/)

TU's TOPS Program is a unique opportunity available to incoming freshmen majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) at TU. The TOPS program currently targets students from underserved high schools in the Baltimore Metropolitan area with an interest in completing a TU STEM degree. TOPS was funded by the National Science Foundation from 2007 through 2013, but will become wholly TU funded beginning next year. The program provides students with the critical support, including financial, social, mentoring, academic, life-skill development, etc., they need to succeed as well as opportunities to explore various career options through professional meetings, research experiences, guest speakers, etc. The TU TOPS students begin their academic program with an intensive one-week summer experience that boosts their readiness for their first year; this is followed by intrusive advising, cohort registration, peer tutoring and continuous community support though out their time here.

Retention and graduate rate data for students participating in this initiative are as follows:

TOPS Program	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
cohort size (n=)	n/a	n/a	16	22	20	21	18	21
fall to fall retention rate	n/a	n/a	100%	86%	100%	100%	94%	n/a
6-year graduation rate	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Intermediate Achievement Gap Goals

Intermediate goals include:

- Increasing the number and percentage of undergraduates participating in and benefit from our initiatives.
- Continuing assessment of student risk factors related to retention, progression and graduation, and seeking to improve support services to at-risk students.
- Conducting advanced statistical analyses to examine the effectiveness of our initiatives, to quantify the impact of our initiatives and to more efficiently target populations who can benefit most from such initiatives.

Target Group 2: First Time / Full-Time Low-Income Students (Pell) Institution: Towson University

