



CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Annual Report

February 3, 2014

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CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP REPORT 2013-14

I. Institutional Definition

UB's institutional definition for Closing the Achievement Gap reports, consistent with USM requirements, is first-time, full-time freshman in three groups—African American, Hispanic, and Pell-eligible. As noted in prior reports, UB did not admit freshmen until Fall 2007; therefore, this report presents the first six-year graduation rate for our freshmen cohort. Because the largest number of undergraduate students matriculates at UB as transfer students, we include transfer students in our gap analyses. Fall 2004 is UB's designated base year, consistent with implementation of the University's current student information system. The relative proportions of undergraduate degree-seeking students in each target classification in the initial year of *Closing the Achievement Gap* are as follows¹:

Target Subgroups Percentages of Various Student Populations

Sub-group/Population	Undergraduate (Fall 2004)	New Full Time Transfers (Fall 2004)	Full-Time Freshmen (Fall 2007)
African-American	33%	26%	36%
Hispanic	2%	1%	3%
Pell-eligible	29%	33%	29%

African-American students comprised slightly more than a quarter of transfer students in Fall 2004, a proportion smaller than that of all undergraduates that year (and less than freshman in 2007, the first year in which freshman were admitted to UB). Hispanic enrollment did not comprise a significant portion of the new transfer students in Fall 2004, and numbers are sufficiently small that ratios and statistics show considerable variation. The proportion of Pell-eligible students constitutes the largest of these three target groups, at over one-third of the students. Pell-eligibility is used as a proxy for socio-economic status, and overlap of the three groups is very likely, something UB identified in its earliest *Closing the Achievement Gap* reports, and something of great relevance to student retention and graduation.

II. Table showing institutional trend data for student subgroups identified as having a gap, arranged by cohort entry year, cohort size, six-year graduation rate, and gap.

While Table 1 (page 10) provides the big picture of student success measures, the representations of data below allow for insight into the Achievement Gap issues UB is experiencing.

First Time Undergraduate Students

Table 1A shows that the first to second year transition is the only area in which there is an achievement gap between all UB first time undergraduates and African American first time undergraduates, and that gap is quite small (-1%). For all other transition points, there is either no gap, or African American students fare better. We have determined that the primary explanation for this scenario is that African American students comprise nearly 40% of the freshman class; therefore, trends for this cohort drive in large part trends for the whole. We believe that the primary reason for

¹ Prior to this report, the population group consisted of all new transfer students. Consistent with graduation and retention statistics for freshmen, in this year's report this group has been limited to the degree-seeking, full-time students. In addition to complying with standard governmental reporting practices, it also recognizes that non-degree students and part-time students represent a different population for which the six-year graduation rates are not well suited.

the gap from the second to the third year centers on the transition of students from our highly supported advising system for pre-majors² to advising in the majors.

Retention	ALL UB	African American	Gap	Pell eligible	Gap
2nd year	77	77	0	80	3
3rd year	55	54	-1	56	1
4th year	48	48	0	46	-2
5th year	35	38	3	36	1

Since a very large majority of our African American freshman require at least two developmental courses (and since the pass rates for our developmental courses have dropped since 2010), it takes this cohort longer to declare a major. Thus, the transition to more independence with course selection and less oversight through the early alert system is likely to cause some of the more fragile students to make departure decisions or to be involuntarily separated from the University. Pell-Eligible students actually fare better during early transitional years, but their gap occurs in the third to fourth year transition. We believe that these students are also affected by heavy developmental placements and the consequences of not passing those courses the first time. That is, if their financial aid is expended on taking courses that don't count toward degree completion (especially if they need to take them more than once), then students face financial barriers later in their academic careers. We believe that many of these students first make the choice to go from full-time to part-time (enrollment intensity) or to work more hours than their skill level can manage. Then, more isolated from the support systems that have helped them to get this far in their degree programs, they stop out (often with the intention to return). Because it is important to test these assumptions, UB created a "Pathways to Persistence" model that tracks student success in a cohort model. By next year, we will have evidence concerning the validity of these assumptions and descriptions of related support services.

It is worthwhile to note, however, that another reason for the narrow gap between all students in the 2009 cohort and the two at risk populations is that the success markers for the majority population experienced a drop, while the markers for African American students improved, as shown in Table 1B.

	All UB 1st Time Undergraduates			African American 1st Time UG		
	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	Difference	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	Difference
2nd year	82	77	-5	74	77	3
3rd year	64	55	-9	47	54	7
4th year	56	48	-8	45	48	3
5th year	37	35	-2	35	38	3

Our students who are at risk for a graduation gap³ actually do much better in their first-to-second year retention. This means to us that while there may be a gap in time-to-graduation, the eventual degree attainment gap will be quite narrow: the students are staying at UB but taking longer to finish (quite likely to the drop in enrollment intensity described above), as shown in Table 1C on the next page.

² UB freshman enter as pre-majors until they have completed all developmental requirements, passed freshman seminar with a C or better, and earned a 2.0 GPA after completing 24 credits.

³ The gap in six year graduation rates between "All UB" students and African American students for the 2007 cohort was -18%, and for Pell-Eligible students, which was -21%.

The likely case is that the 2008 Cohort was an anomaly. As Table 1C shows, the 2008 cohort is the highest performing group for all of the transition junctures for all UB freshmen, with lower subsequent performance for our risk groups. In other words, the “All UB” student success rates had an anomalous “peak” for the 2008 cohort, but the risk cohorts have been more stable, at least up to the 2012 cohort.

Table 1C: First to Second Year Retention for 1st time Undergraduates						
	<i>2007 Cohort</i>	<i>2008 Cohort</i>	<i>2009 Cohort</i>	<i>2010 Cohort</i>	<i>2011 Cohort</i>	<i>2012 Cohort</i>
All UB	69	82	77	78	73	67
African American	77	74	77	79	75	71
Pell Eligible	89	78	80	82	70	68

The early first-to-second year performance of the 2012 cohort is of particular concern:

- For all UB freshmen, the rate had a 6% drop, to 67%, the lowest rate we have had.
- For African American freshmen, the rate had a 4% drop to 71%, the lowest rate we have had.
- For Hispanic freshmen, the rate had a 12% drop to 63%, the lowest rate we have had.
- For Pell-Eligible students, the rate had a 2% drop to 68%, lowest rate we have had.

Our response has been swift. In Fall 2013, the President appointed a special assistant to focus on student success issues and to collaborate with the deans and faculty to build new approaches to student success. In concert, the Provost’s Office mapped a “Pathways to Persistence” for all of the student cohorts (freshmen, freshman and sophomore transfer students, and upper division transfer students) to determine where the barriers to persistence might lie and to determine how to better prepare students to overcome those barriers and when those barriers might be eliminated while retaining high academic standards. The campus undertook an analysis of courses with high failure rates to determine ways to help students to be more successful. Finally, we piloted an expansion of our mid-term grade reporting strategies to make mid-term feedback available to students in all undergraduate courses, not just the freshman courses.

New Transfers

Table 2 (page 9) provides a multi-year overview of the success markers for UB new transfer students, and the discussion below provides more in-depth insight into graduation, retention, and trends. Table 2A below shows a widening gap between graduation rates of all UB new transfer students and African American transfer students, a widely varying gap with Hispanic students, and a steady and narrower gap with our Pell-Eligible students.

Table 2A: Graduation Rate Gaps: 2003-2007				
	All UB	African American	Hispanic	Pell-Eligible
2003	66	53 (-13)	57 (-9)	58 (-8)
2004	62	47 (-15)	100 (+38)	57 (-5)
2005	63	49 (-14)	33 (-30)	54 (-9)
2006	66	52 (-14)	60 (-6)	57 (-9)
2007	64	46 (-18)	88 (+24)	55 (-9)

However, as will the new freshmen populations, we cannot equate lower 6-year graduation rates with much higher attrition rates. Our year to year retention rates provide a clearer picture of the situation. As shown in Table 2B, our at-risk populations tend to fare better in year to year retention than the rates for all UB transfer students. African American transfer students have a gap after the first, and to a lesser extent after the second, year of enrollment, but then their retention is quite strong; Pell-

Eligible students fare better than the rates for all UB transfer students at each juncture. This tells us that the graduation rate gap is more likely a result of lower enrollment intensity in the at-risk population than that for whole population. Indeed our demographic analyses have shown that UB's African American transfer students tend to be older and more part-time (even if they start as full-time students), and it is likely the completion risks associated with being a part-time student that is driving the graduation rate gap.

Table 2B: Year to Year Retention: 2009 Cohort of New Transfer Students

Retention	ALL UB	African American	Gap	Pell Eligible	Gap
2nd year	78	73	-5	81	3
3rd year	49	48	-1	54	5
4th year	22	28	6	26	4
5th year	11	14	3	12	1

Similar to the patterns for first time undergraduates, for new transfer students there was a drop between the 2008 and 2009 cohorts, as shown in Table 2C.

Table 2C: One Year Change, 2008 to 2009 cohorts

	All UB New Transfer Students			African American Transfer Students		
	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	Difference	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	Difference
2nd year	81	78	-3	71	73	2
3rd year	54	49	-5	64	48	-16
4th year	20	22	2	29	28	-1
5th year	10	11	1	14	14	0

However, for transfer students, the rates for African American students fell to a much greater degree, especially in the second to third year transition. Because the drops are greater earlier in the students' academic career, likely causes are access issues (scheduling, balancing work and life responsibilities, etc.) and fit issues (forming connections with the University community outside the classroom, developing a commitment to the major, forming a solid commitment to degree completion).

Our gap in time to graduation is widening, likely due the influx of transfer freshmen and sophomores who started to enroll in Fall 2008. It is likely that these students will take longer to graduate if they tend to drop from full-time to part-time, as does our whole transfer student population. However, it is worth noting that our graduation rates exceed those for the entire USM system:

Table 3A: Comparison of USM and UB Graduation Rates for Transfer Students

	All USM	All UB	Difference
2003 cohort	62	66	4
2004 cohort	62	62	0
2005 cohort	59	63	4
2006 cohort	60	66	6
2007 cohort	62	64	2

Moreover, our at-risk populations also succeed at higher rates than do those all-USM rates:

	African American Students			Pell-eligible Students		
	USM	UB	Difference	USM	UB	Difference
2003 cohort	39	53	14	46	58	12
2004 cohort	40	47	7	46	57	11
2005 cohort	41	49	8	43	54	11
2006 cohort	43	52	9	47	57	10
2007 cohort	43	46	3	47	55	8

To summarize, we believe that the primary challenges with transfer students are associated with balancing responsibilities and commitment issues. By addressing access (course availability, scheduling, and financial aid for part-time students) and institutional commitment (clear connections between the degree and career goals, timely and consistent feedback on progress, and perceptions of the value of the degree at UB), we believe that the retention gaps will narrow. However, because life situations are often key to decisions concerning enrollment intensity, gaps in time to graduation will likely persist, with our at-risk students remaining at-risk for lower enrollment intensity rates, and thus longer time to degree completion.

III. Summary of Initiatives

Initiatives Related to Freshman Risk Factors: developmental placements that reduce credits completed in first year, support during transition from freshman support systems to advising in the majors, college readiness of conditionally-admitted students and subsequent impact on GPA.

- Substantial review and restructuring of foundational courses, including major changes in placement processes and learning support. (2010-Present).
- Sophomore seminar (2012-Present). Since Summer 2012, UB faculty members have been restructuring the General Education Program. In Fall 2014, we will offer a companion experience to the native freshmen and a structured entrée into General Education.
- Summer bridge for conditionally-admitted students (initiated in Summer 2012) with follow up advising and support processes (initiated in 2014).
- Expansion of mid-term grade reporting as a form of early alert to encompass all undergraduate courses (initiated in 2013).
- Follow-up institutional research on the correlation between first semester GPA and credit completion rates and attrition and enrollment intensity outcomes (initiated in 2013 with a focus on the bridge students, but to expand to 2014).
- Special assistant to the President on Student Success Initiatives, with a charge to work with the deans and faculty on course-centered strategies to improve student success.

Initiatives Related to Transfer Student Risk Factors: access issues, including course availability to accommodate work and personal commitments and availability of financial aid for part-time students; commitment to completion (strengthened by more frequent feedback on progress, clearer college to career connections, and more flexible engagement opportunities).

- Expansion of mid-term grade reporting as a form of early alert to encompass all undergraduate courses (initiated in 2013).
- Special assistant to the President on Student Success Initiatives, with a charge to work with the Deans and faculty on course-centered strategies to improve student success.

- Creation of the Enrollment Collaboration and Implementation Team, a cross-functional workgroup centered on overcoming barriers to student persistence (initiated in 2013).
- Course redesign projects:
- Ethical Issues in Business and Society, an upper division general education course (2011-Present);
- Arts and Ideas, an upper division general education course (2012-Present);
- Accounting sequence, 200-300 level courses (initiated in 2014);
- Senior Capstone Projects (initiated in 2013).

IV. Initiatives, Assessments and Actions taken since last report

- UB has engaged in a number of projects to explore applications of Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and other new learning platforms.
 - Working with renowned historian Taylor Branch to create a highly interactive MOOC on America during the Civil Rights Movement.
 - Received three competitive grants to design academic innovations that incorporate MOOCs into traditional learning experiences. Our design to embed a MOOC into a freshman learning community was recognized by the Gates Foundation as a successful strategy to help students who are at risk for attrition to better benefit from online learning experiences.
 - The integrated learning platform project embedded Pearson’s My Foundation Lab into our Bridge program and improved pass rates from 51% in 2012 to 81% in 2013 (see more on the bridge program, below).
- Through a competitive USM Course Redesign grant, UB transformed an upper division general education course. This innovative design (a “tri-brid” format that incorporates classroom, online, and experiential learning) promotes higher pass rates, higher student satisfaction, and savings in instructional and space costs.
- In summer 2012, UB concluded its implementation of the work supported by an MHEC College Completion grant. The project, entitled “Integrated Retention and Persistence Support for Transfer Sophomores”, provided improvements to sophomore advising, professional development for faculty, and stronger learning experiences to connect college and career goals.
- From 2012 to the present, UB has engaged in a substantial restructuring of our summer program. Using data analytics to target courses for redesign, we selected courses to transform into 5-week courses, online courses, or both. Assessed student satisfaction has been very positive, and summer enrollments grew.
- In Spring 2013, the University community approved a new competencies model for General Education. Highlights include capstone courses, new first year learning community models, and a sophomore seminar.
- In Fall 2013, UB established an office for academic innovation, charged with engaging faculty in leading edge teaching and learning strategies that improve learning and conserve resources.

Because last year’s report introduced our Summer Bridge program as a major initiative for closing the six-year achievement gap, we provide Table 4.

Table 4: Summer Bridge Outcomes			
	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Registered	37	83	
Passed	23	70	
Pass rate	62.16%	84.30%	+22.14%
<u>Placements:</u>			
Credit writing and credit math	0	1%	+1%
Developmental math/Credit Writing	3%	24%	+21%
Developmental writing/credit math	0%	16%	+16%
Both developmental math and writing	97%	59%	-38%

We achieved success through improvements in the curriculum and academic supports for the students. The Summer Bridge is an important *Closing the Achievement Gap* issue because more than 95% of the participants falls into one or more of the at-risk cohort groups. By substantially reducing the incidence of developmental placement, this work has the potential to decrease time to graduation, and thus close the six- year graduation rate gap.

V. Statement of Intermediate Goals and Glide Path (Pages 10-13)

The University remains committed to closing the achievement gap targets set in 2010:

- For new transfer students, the target graduation rate for African American transfer students by 2020 is 62%. The most recent rate is 46%. Therefore, the goal is to support a glide path that will close the -18% the gap by 2020.
 - For the 2008 cohort of African American students, the graduation rate goal is 49% (predicted rate).
 - For the 2009 cohort, the graduation rate goal is to maintain 49% (based on flat in 5th year retention rates).
 - For the 2010 cohort, the graduation rate goal 53% (based on predicted outcomes from intervention efforts).
 - For the 2011 cohort, the graduation rate goal is 56% (based on predicted outcomes from intervention efforts).
 - For the 2012 cohort, the graduation rate goal is 59% (based on predicted outcomes from intervention efforts).
 - For the 2013 cohort, the graduation rate goal is 62% (based on predicted outcomes from intervention efforts).
- For new first time undergraduates, the baseline gap is -31% in on-time graduation. Because year-to-year persistence rates are strong for our at-risk populations, the goal is to close the gap by shortening the time to graduation for our African American and Pell-Eligible students. UB has only one year of graduation rates; therefore, we will need at least two additional years of data to determine the intermediate goals for the glide path.

**Table 1: First-Time Undergraduates
University of Baltimore**

Institution's Name	Six-year Graduation and Retention Rates at Institutions of First-Entry												
University of Baltimore	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
USM or INSTITUTION Total (Depends on whether an institution is at or above the USM average.)	6-Year Graduation Rate						37						
	2 nd Year						69	82	77	78	73	67	
	3 rd Year						55	64	55	55	55		
	4 th Year						50	56	48	55			
	5 th Year						20	37	35				
Institution's African American	6-Year Graduation Rate						31						
	The Gap						-31						
	2 nd Year						77	74	77	79	75	71	
	3 rd Year						65	47	54	57	53		
	4 th Year						54	45	48	56			
5 th Year						27	35	38					
Institution's Hispanic	6-Year Graduation Rate						25						
	The Gap						-37						
	2 nd Year						25	67	100	80	75	63	
	3 rd Year						25	50	75	40	75		
	4 th Year						25	50	75	40			
5 th Year						0	17	50					
Institution's Low- income (Pell)	6-Year Graduation Rate						41						
	The Gap						-21						
	2 nd Year						89	78	80	82	70	68	
	3 rd Year						70	57	56	58	58		
	4 th Year						57	54	46	57			
5 th Year						24	37	36					

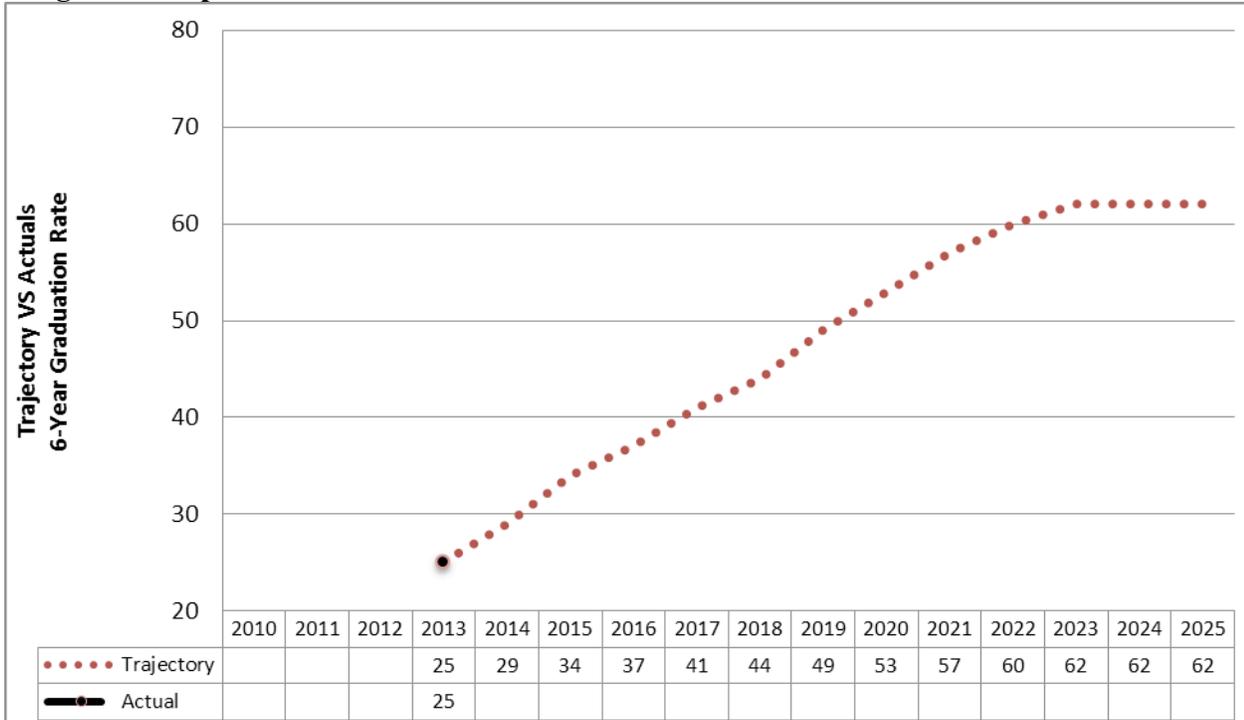
**Table 2: New Transfers
University of Baltimore**

Institution's Name	Six-year Graduation and Retention Rates at Institutions of First-Entry												
University of Baltimore	Fall Cohort New-Transfer 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
USM or INSTITUTION Total (Depends on whether an institution is at or above the USM average.)	6-Year Graduation Rate		66	62	63	66	64						
	2 nd Year		82	76	75	82	81	81	78	80	82	77	
	3 rd Year		38	41	36	44	46	54	49	51	52		
	4 th Year		11	13	10	15	15	20	22	19			
	5 th Year		4	6	5	9	7	10	11				
Institution's African American	6-Year Graduation Rate		53	47	49	52	46						
	The Gap		-13	-15	-14	-14	-18						
	2 nd Year		79	72	65	81	73	76	73	77	77	74	
	3 rd Year		43	42	43	46	45	57	48	53	58		
	4 th Year		19	17	11	16	17	26	28	25			
5 th Year		6	7	6	9	8	15	14					
Institution's Hispanic	6-Year Graduation Rate		57	100	33	60	88						
	The Gap		-9	+38	-30	-6	+24						
	2 nd Year		71	100	83	80	88	71	82	94	80	72	
	3 rd Year		29	67	33	0	63	64	36	71	50		
	4 th Year		0	0	17	0	38	29	9	29			
5 th Year		0	0	17	0	25	14	9	0				
Institution's Low- income (Pell)	6-Year Graduation Rate		58	57	54	57	55						
	The Gap		-8	-5	-9	-9	-9						
	2 nd Year		81	76	72	84	80	78	81	82	81	73	
	3 rd Year		41	55	37	43	52	51	54	56	50		
	4 th Year		14	18	9	20	16	22	26	22			
5 th Year		4	6	5	11	7	12	12					

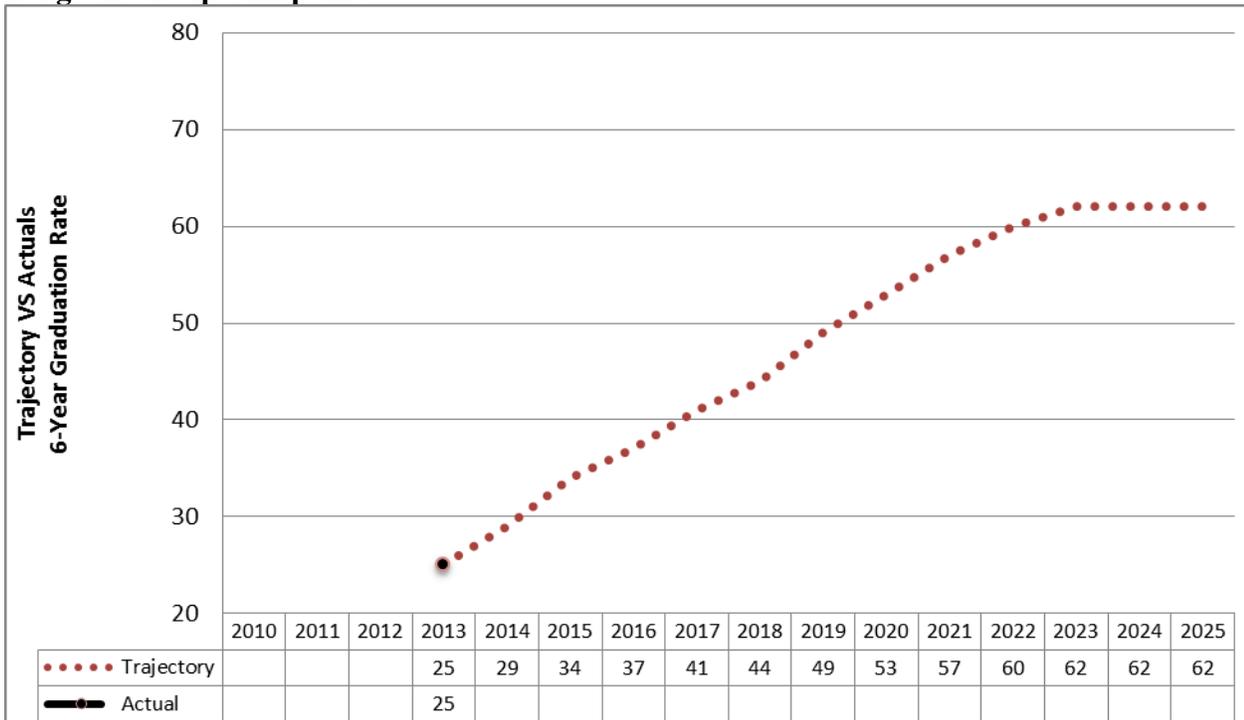
Figure 1-6: Proposed Glide Path [2010-2011 CAG Report]

Figures 1-3: Proposed Glide Path: First Time Full-time Freshmen

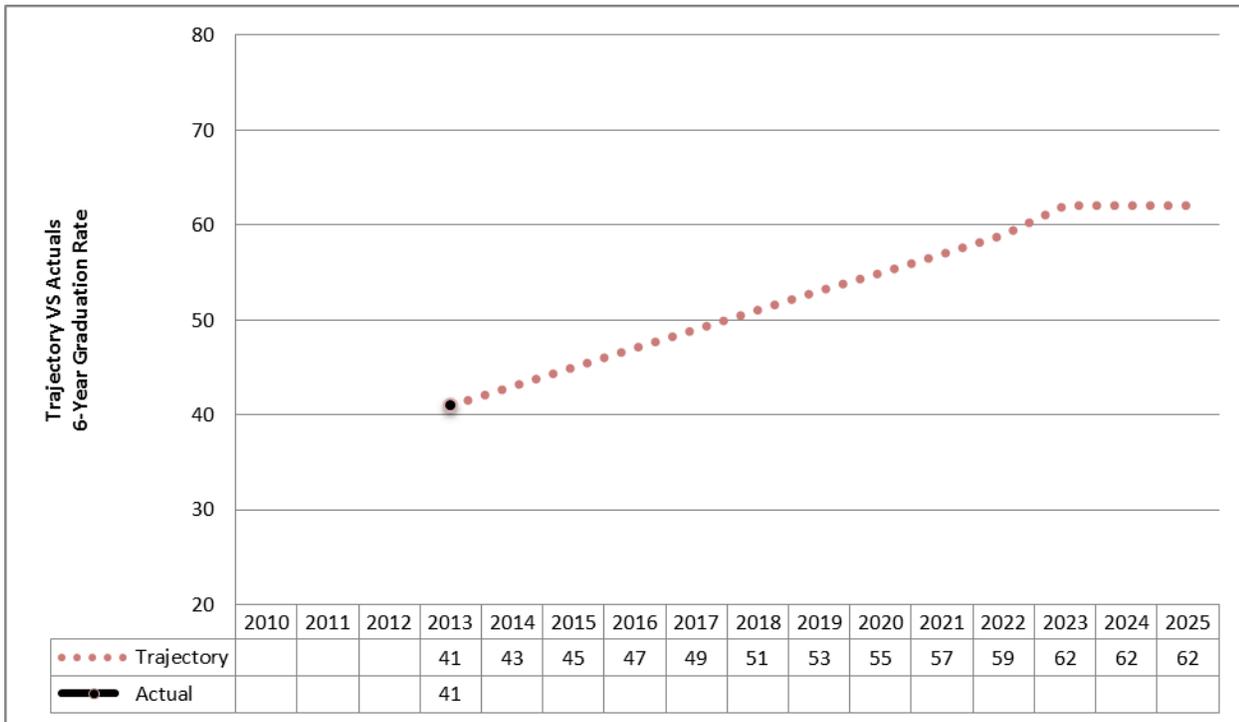
Target 1 Group: African-American



Target 2 Group: Hispanic

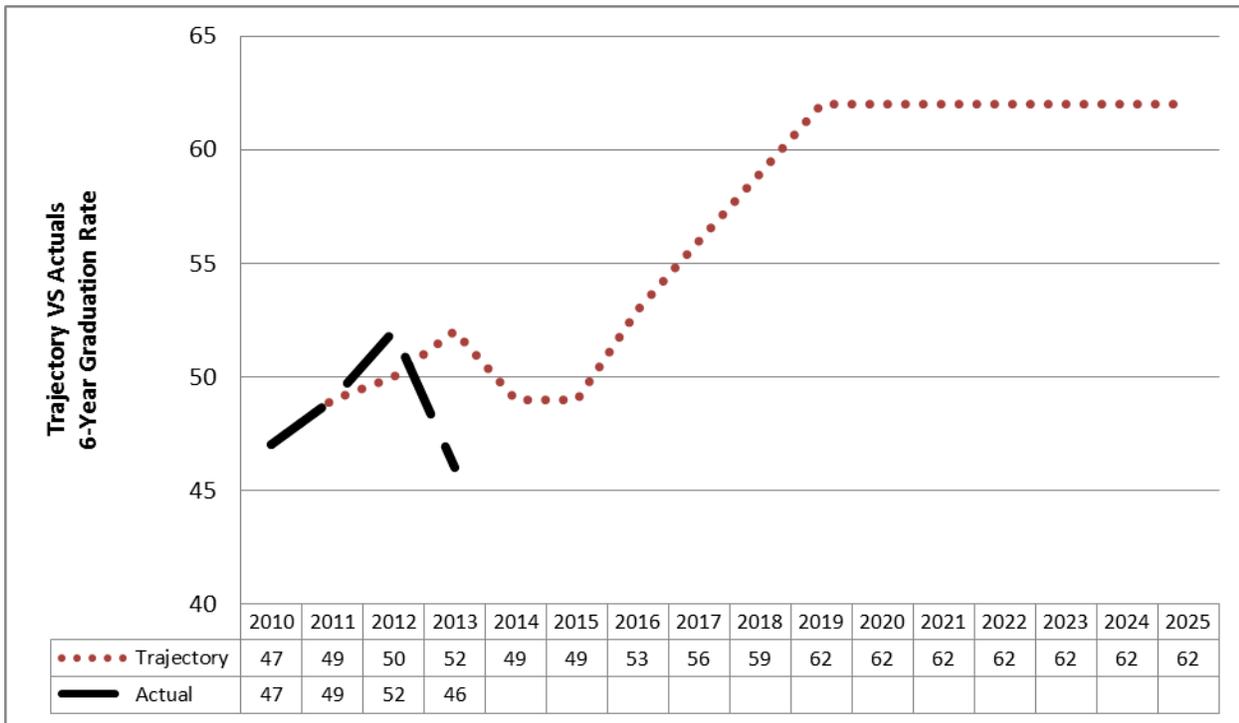


Target 3 Group: Low-income students (Pell-eligibility in first-academic year of enrollment)

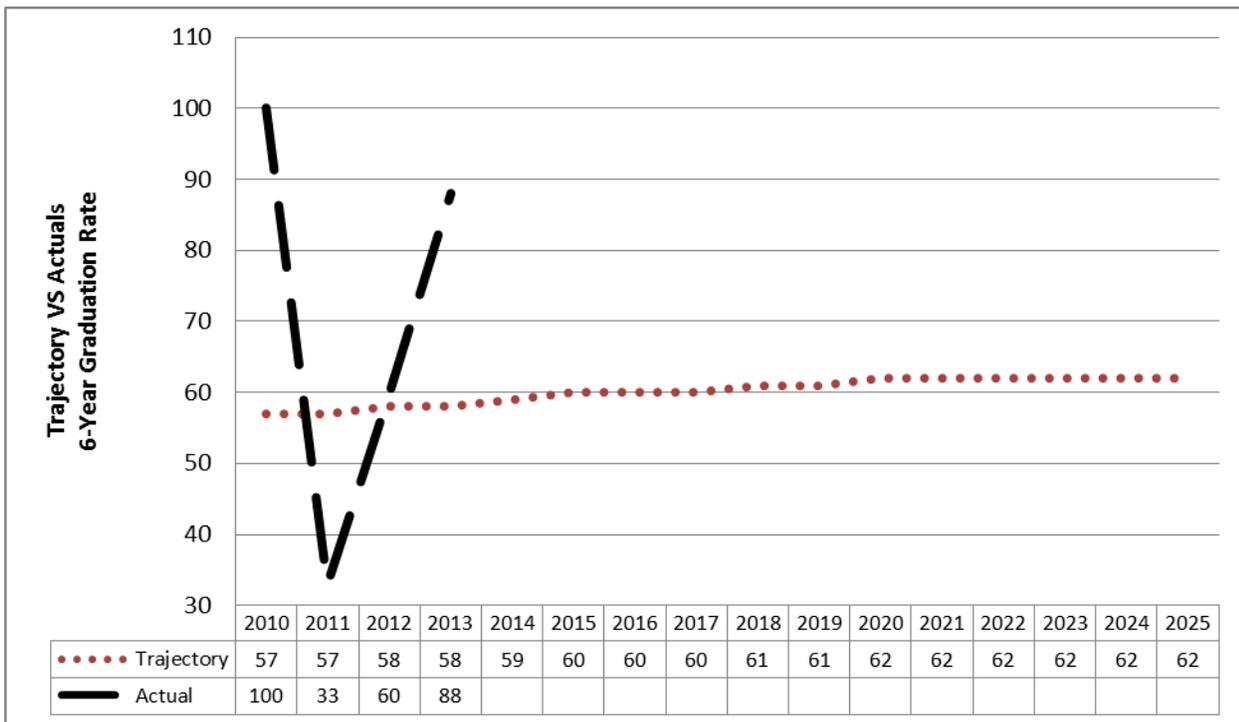


Figures 4-6: Proposed Glide Path: Full-time Transfer Students

Target 1 Group: African-American

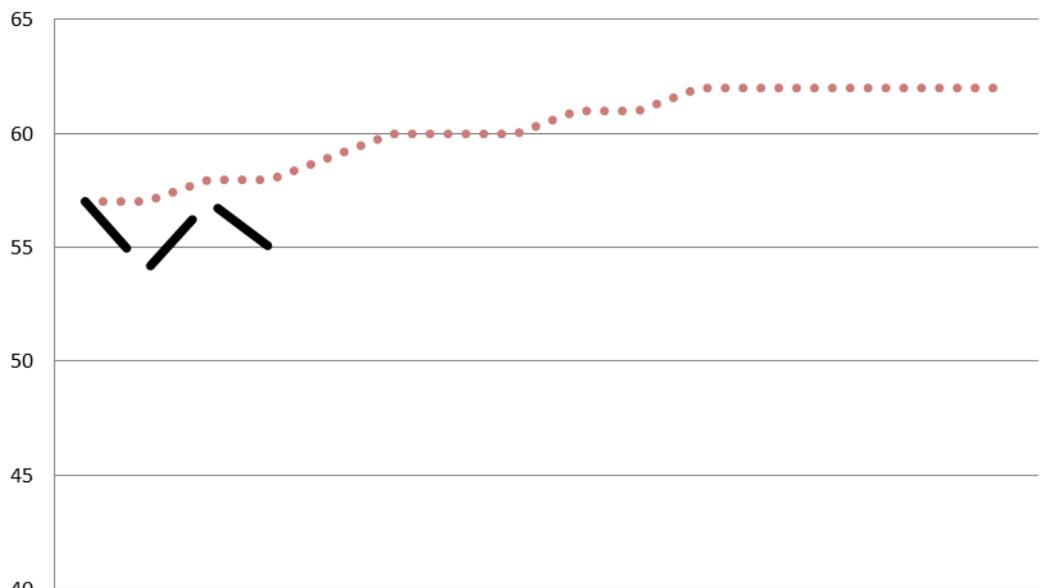


Target 2 Group: Hispanic



Target 3 Group: Low-income students (Pell-eligibility in first-academic year of enrollment)

Trajectory VS Actuals
6-Year Graduation Rate



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
••••• Trajectory	57	57	58	58	59	60	60	60	61	61	62	62	62	62	62	62
— Actual	57	54	57	55												