

UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2022

Our most important job is to help our students succeed!

UT Martin – Enrollment, Retention, Progression, and Graduation Data

Last week, the UT Board of Trustees met on our campus. During the meeting of the Education, Research, and Service Committee, Dr. Bernie Savarese, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, presented system-wide enrollment snapshots and enrollment snapshots for each of the campuses in the UT System. You can read the full report here:

<https://trustees.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/10/ERS-Committee-October-28-2022-Primary.pdf>, but in this newsletter we are sharing some highlights.

This year, UT Martin has a total enrollment of 6,868, of which 6,165 are undergraduates and 703 are graduate students. Of these students:

- 91.1% have in-state residency
- 33.4% are Pell recipients
- 63% are female and 37% are male
- 23.5% are enrolled only in online courses.

The Board looked at changes over 1 year and over 5 years. UT Martin has experienced:

- A 2.3% increase in total enrollment over last year, but a 2.6 decrease in enrollment as compared to 2018 numbers.
- An 8% increase in new students over last year and a 0.1% increase as compared to 2018.
- The number of bachelor's degrees awarded has decreased by 9.8% when compared to 2018, but
- The number of graduate degrees has increased by 186.4% over the same time period.

- A 1% increase in first-year retention rates compared to last year, but a 2.7% decrease in retention rates compared to 2018.
- A 1.9% increase in 4-year graduation rates and a 4.9% increase in 6-year graduation rates compared to 2018.

To expand on some of these numbers, **Brad Baumgardner**, our Director of Retention, provided some additional positive information regarding retention from one year to the next and progression towards our 30-credit hour, 60-credit-hour, 90-credit-hour, and graduation benchmarks for undergraduates:

- First-time, full-time freshmen retention is up just over 1 percentage point and all freshmen retention is up 1.6 percentage points.
- Overall progression (those progressing to the next “class” via credit hours designation 30, 60, 90 or graduation) is up for all undergraduates by 1.49 percentage points.
- Retention for all Pell Eligible freshmen is up by 5.03 percentage points, and overall progression for this cohort is up by 3.18 percentage points.

For non-traditional students:

- Retention for freshmen over the age of 25 is up by **27.77** percentage points, and overall progression for this cohort is up by **24.9** percentage points compared to this time last year. For comparison, the retention for this cohort is at 8.5 percentage points higher than the next best year (2018), and progression with this group is 6.6 points higher than our previous 5 year best (2017).
- Our gains with non-traditional students are also represented within all undergraduate cohorts – we are

currently 3.63 percentage points ahead of last year in retention, and 4.72 points ahead of last year's progression rate.

Within specific departments and colleges:

- **The College of Humanities and Fine Arts** had the highest overall freshman retention and progression rates at 72.83% and 65.22% respectively.
- The two programs with the highest overall freshmen retention rates are **English** (84.62%) and **Finance** (78.57%).
- The overall highest undergraduate retention rates by major or program are: **Music (BM)** (90.2%), **Visual and Theatre Arts** (87.5%), and **Finance** (87.5%).
- The program with the highest overall undergraduate progression rate in AY 21 is **Political Science** at (83.05%).

Note that programs with cohort sizes of fewer than 10 students were not included in this analysis due to sample size.

While some of these numbers are very impressive, we still have a lot of work to do if we want all of our students to be successful.

Connections with the QEP

Remember that our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is focusing on improving retention and progression rates using targeted strategies. We're using the Strategic Plan Refresh, the Foundations of Excellence project, and institutional data to set goals and objectives for improving these rates. At this point, we are forming four Task Forces of faculty and staff to examine, recommend, and facilitate the implementation of strategies addressing four areas. Each Task Force is being led by a team of two people and will ultimately have approximately 10-12 faculty and staff as members. Once those Task Forces have been completely filled, we will share with you the

names of those individuals who have graciously agreed to serve. For now, we are thankful for the 8 individuals who have agreed to lead our Task Forces:

- **Eric Pelren and Janet Wilbert** will be leading the Task Force that will examine all aspects of our GENS 101 course;
- **Jeffrey Longacre and Christy Blount** will be leading the Task Force that will be examining all things related to academic advising;
- **Gina McClure and John Abel** will be looking at ways to support and reinforce our students' sense of belonging; and
- **Margaret Lewis and Joe Ostenson** will be examining courses with high enrollments and high DFWI rates.

The right changes to any one of these areas would have major impacts on our retention and progression numbers. Combining the right changes to all four of these areas should have profound impacts on our students' retention and progression.

These changes cannot occur without the work of the entire campus. We will all have a role in implementing the changes these Task Forces are recommending and implementing.

The QEP project is being led by **Brad Baumgardner**, who is serving as the Director, and by three co-directors: **Jamie Mantooth**, **Anderson Starling**, and **Stephanie Kolitsch**. Patty Flowers will be providing assessment and data support as the QEP matures.

We will be providing campus updates as our work progresses. We anticipate finishing our QEP document for the SACSCOC Site Visit by the end of December; if you would like an electronic copy of the report once it is completed, please let Stephanie know (skolitsc@utm.edu).

We are looking forward to working with everyone on campus as we implement our QEP project. And –we are excited to see the changes to UT Martin as we work through our QEP and implement these changes.