

Changes in Retention to the Second Year from the Fall 2000 Cohort To the Fall 2008 Cohort for UMass Boston and Selected Peers

UMass Boston has participated in the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) for several years. CSRDE collects retention, persistence, and degree attainment data on first-time, full-time students from participating members. It currently tracks students out to graduating in the ninth year or continuing to the tenth year at the same school. The information it provides is for the cohort as a whole, by gender, and by race/ethnicity. CSRDE is currently reporting on cohorts from fall 2000 to fall 2008.

Recently CSRDE has given members the ability to create a peer group of up to 20 participants online and to receive the same level of detail on these peers as the school supplies data on its own students. However, the data for each school is confidential and cannot be reported in an identifiable way. The exception is for retention and 6-year graduation rates for the total cohorts which are available to anyone through the federal Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS). This year, a total of 408 institutions participated in the CSRDE including 138 public Doctoral/Research Extensive and Doctoral/Research Intensive institutions (using the 2000 Carnegie classifications).

We selected our 20 CSRDE peers based on several criteria. First, all were public institutions. Then we selected all current peers and all of the Provost's aspirational peers who had participated in the 2010 CSRDE. Current peers who participated included Cleveland State University, the University of Illinois-Chicago, the University of Louisville, the University of Memphis, the University of Missouri - Kansas City, and the University of Nevada-Reno. Provost's aspirational peers who participated included George Mason University, Georgia State University, Temple University, the University of Houston, and the University of Memphis.

We also selected members of the Urban 13/21 and of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU). UMass Boston is a founding member of both of these groups. Their commonality is based on the idea of having an urban mission and being of service to and fully integrated within the urban communities in which they reside. We gave priority to the several institutions that, like UMass Boston, belonged to both groups. Then we selected from those who belonged to only one of the groups. The decision regarding those members was based primarily on the student mix looking at the percentage of under-served minority students and the percentage of students receiving federal grant aid.

UMass Boston's Improvement in Retention to the Second Year

UMass Boston has maintained a focus on improving retention, persistence, and graduation rates since at least 2001. There is progress to report. For the earliest cohort for which data is available, fall 2000, UMass Boston ranked 17th among the 21 institutions making up the peer group for retention to the second year, but for the most recent cohort reported, fall 2008, UMass Boston improved its rank to 9th. This was the largest improvement of any institution. Details are presented in Table 1, on the following page.

Table 1: Change in Retention to the Second Year Ranking from the Fall 2000 To the Fall 2008 Cohorts, UMass Boston and Selected Peers

Institution	2000 Cohort	Rank	Institution	2008 Cohort
Rutgers, State U of NJ-Newark	83.5%	1	Temple U	87.8%
Georgia State U	79.7%	2	George Mason U	84.7%
Temple U	79.0%	3	Rutgers, State U of NJ-Newark	83.9%
George Mason U	78.7%	4	Georgia State U	83.0%
U of Houston	78.5%	5	U of Alabama-Birmingham	81.6%
U of Illinois-Chicago	77.3%	6	U of Illinois-Chicago	80.6%
U of Nevada-Reno	76.7%	7	U of Houston	79.3%
U of North Carolina-Greensboro	74.9%	8	U of Louisville	78.5%
U of Louisville	72.1%	9	UMass Boston	77.3%
U of Memphis	72.0%	10	U of North Carolina-Greensboro	76.6%
U of Alabama-Birmingham	71.6%	11	U of Memphis	76.0%
U of Nevada-Las Vegas	71.5%	12	U of Nevada-Reno	75.5%
U of Arkansas-Little Rock	70.9%	13	U of Missouri-Kansas City	74.0%
U of Missouri-Kansas City	70.6%	14	U of Nevada-Las Vegas	73.2%
Wright State U	70.5%	15	Indiana U-Purdue U-Indianapolis	71.9%
Portland State U	69.2%	16	Wright State U	69.9%
UMass Boston	69.1%	17	U of Colorado Denver	69.6%
U of Colorado Denver	68.4%	18	Portland State U	68.9%
U of Missouri-Saint Louis	66.7%	19	U of Missouri-Saint Louis	68.5%
Cleveland State U	66.2%	20	Cleveland State U	66.0%
Indiana U-Purdue U-Indianapolis	61.5%	21	U of Arkansas-Little Rock	62.1%

Sixteen of the 21 institutions had improved retention rates from the 2000 to the 2008 cohorts with two, Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis and the University of Alabama, Birmingham, having improvements of more than 10%.

UMass Boston's improvement of 8.2% was the 4th largest improvement among the 21 institutions. Details are presented in Table 2 on the following page.

Table 2: Improvement in Retention to the Second Year for the Fall 2000 to Fall 2008 Cohorts, UMass Boston and Selected Peers

Rank	Institution	2000 Cohort	2008 Cohort	Change
1	Indiana U-Purdue U-Indianapolis	61.5%	71.9%	10.4%
2	U of Alabama-Birmingham	71.6%	81.6%	10.0%
3	Temple U	79.0%	87.8%	8.8%
4	UMass Boston	69.1%	77.3%	8.2%
5	U of Louisville	72.1%	78.5%	6.4%
6	George Mason U	78.7%	84.7%	6.0%
7	U of Memphis	72.0%	76.0%	4.0%
8	U of Missouri-Kansas City	70.6%	74.0%	3.4%
9	U of Illinois-Chicago	77.3%	80.6%	3.3%
10	Georgia State U	79.7%	83.0%	3.2%
11	U of Missouri-Saint Louis	66.7%	68.5%	1.8%
12	U of Nevada-Las Vegas	71.5%	73.2%	1.8%
13	U of North Carolina-Greensboro	74.9%	76.6%	1.7%
14	U of Colorado Denver	68.4%	69.6%	1.3%
15	U of Houston	78.5%	79.3%	0.8%
16	Rutgers, State U of NJ-Newark	83.5%	83.9%	0.4%
17	Cleveland State U	66.2%	66.0%	-0.2%
18	Portland State U	69.2%	68.9%	-0.3%
19	Wright State U	70.5%	69.9%	-0.6%
20	U of Nevada-Reno	76.7%	75.5%	-1.2%
21	U of Arkansas-Little Rock	70.9%	62.1%	-8.8%

Changes in Retention by Gender and by Race/Ethnicity

IPEDS does not report retention to the second year by gender or by race/ethnicity. Therefore we cannot identify the retention rates for the peer institutions by gender or by race/ethnicity. However, in Table 3 on the following page we report our own retention rates for the different groups for fall 2000 and fall 2008 and how those rates ranked among the 21 institutions. We also report the change in our retention rate from the 2000 to the 2008 cohorts and how that change ranked among the peer institutions.

Most of the subgroups improved over the period. The sole exception was the Asian P/I group where the retention rate dropped from 83.2% to 81.7% and the ranking dropped from 13th to 16th. UMass Boston women were ranked 12th in both years, but improved their retention rate by 3.3% over that period. Every other group improved on both its retention rate and its relative ranking within the group.

Table 3: UMass Boston Changes in Retention by Gender and by Race/Ethnicity With Comparisons to the Overall Group

Cohort	2000 Retention	2000 Retention Rank	2008 Retention	2008 Retention Rank	Retention Difference	Change in Retention Rate Rank
Women	73.0%	12	76.3%	12	3.3%	7
Men	64.3%	19	78.5%	7	14.2%	1
Asian P/I	83.2%	13	81.7%	16	-1.5%	17
Black non-Hispanic	77.3%	8	87.6%	2	10.3%	3
Hispanic	64.3%	15	76.0%	10	11.7%	6
International Student	73.3%	13	90.2%	3	16.9%	5
Unknown Race/Ethnicity	71.6%	7 of 14	84.6%	2 of 16	13.0%	1 of 14
White non-Hispanic	61.8%	21	70.5%	14	8.7%	4
Total	69.1%	17	77.3%	9	8.2%	4

The improvement in the overall UMass Boston retention rate was primarily driven by the improvement in the retention of men. Their retention improved from 64.3% to 78.5%. The 14.2% change was the largest improvement in men's retention among the 21 institutions. Their retention rank among the 21 institutions improved from 19th to 7th.

Black non-Hispanic retention improved by over 10% and the retention rate for the 2008 cohort was 2nd among the 21 institutions. Hispanic retention also improved by more than 10% to move into the top half of the 21 institutions. International student retention improved by almost 17%, and their ranking improved from 13th to 3rd among the institutions.

Among the racial/ethnic groups at UMass Boston, White non-Hispanics were the least likely to return for the second year in both cohorts. However, their rate improved by over 8% which was the 4th highest improvement among the 21 institutions, and their rank improved from last in 2000 to 14th in 2008.

Retention to the second year is only the first step towards the degree. Other reports will be forthcoming that will look at persistence and degree attainment rates. However, this report demonstrates that at UMass Boston, the first step towards the degree has become considerably more successful.