

Tennessee Board of Regents Summary of Persistence

Description:

The summary of persistence examines the ability of Tennessee Board of Regents institutions to successfully move students through college and towards degree attainment. The summary examines historical trends in retention and graduation rates for the institutions and takes a more detailed look at the 2001 cohort of freshmen in the attrition study at departure points.

Standard reports on student persistence through college generally report one-year retention rates of enrollment in the next fall and six-year graduation rates for bachelor degree students. While these reports provide differences by race, gender, etc., they do not address who departs and when. More specifically, the reports do not address the difference between the high number of students retained in the first-year compared with the lower number of students graduating in six-years.

The study of attrition at student departure points follows continuously enrolled first-time full-time freshmen departure for six-years in an attempt to address the problem above. Each year the study measures the decision to depart or stay by demographics, entering ability, and college success. The decision to stay continuously enrolled is measured by either enrolling or graduating.

Definitions:

- Persistence: Persistence is used as an overarching term that encompasses both retention and graduation rates. While retention typically looks at just the first year, persistence looks at a student's entire undergraduate experience through graduation.
- Attrition: Attrition is a term used for students who drop-out, or do not persist.
- Fall-to-Fall Retention: Fall-to-Fall retention rates calculate the number of full-time, first-time freshmen in a given year that return to the institution in the next fall.
- Six-year Graduation: The six-year graduation rate is the number of full-time, first-time freshmen from a given year that graduate in six years. This is a conventional measure because it is considered 1.5 times the "normal" graduation time for a Bachelors degree.

Attrition Study Findings:

- Departure rates for men are slightly higher than departure rates for women with 25 percent of men leaving in the first year and 18 percent leaving in the second year compared to 21 percent of women leaving in the first-year and 17 percent of women leaving in the second year. Departure rates for men continue to be higher in the subsequent years three through six.
- Departure rates for Blacks mirror departure rates for Whites in years one to three with departure rates for Blacks being 23, 18, and 14 in the first three years and departure rates for Whites being 22, 17, and 14. However, departure rates for Blacks in the last three years are higher with departure rates for Blacks being 18, 13, and 8 in years four to six and departure rates for Whites being 15, 10, and 5.
- Differing from the departure rates of Blacks, departure rates for Hispanics mirror departure rates for Whites in years three to six, while departure rates are much higher in years one to three. Departure rates for Hispanics are 28, 26, and 21 in the first three years compared with departure rates for Whites at 22, 17, and 14.
- Departure rates of older students are nearly twice as large as those of recent high school graduates for four of the six departure points. In the first-year, the departure rate for those who are not recent high school graduates is 45 percent, while the departure rate for those who are recent high

school graduates is 20 percent. Subsequent years follow this pattern with older students departing at rates of 35 and 26 percent in years two and three, while recent high school graduates depart at rates of 16 and 14 in these same years.

- There is a measurable but small difference between the high school grade point averages of those who depart and those who stay. In general, departing students have a average high school GPAs of about 2.9 while those remaining enrolled or graduating (staying) have a high school grade point average of about 3.1.
- Likewise there is a measurable but small difference in ACT entrance exam scores with the average ACT score being about 21 for those who depart and 22 for those who stay.
- There is a larger difference between the college GPAs for those who depart and those who stay. While college GPAs rise for both those departing and those staying, the college GPAs for those departing are consistently more than a half point lower than those staying, and in the first-year it is almost full-point lower with those departing having a 1.8 average college GPA and those staying having a 2.7 college GPA.
- Each year, students who depart year complete fewer classes than those who stay. This difference most obvious in the first four years where those departing complete average hours of 15, 31, 49, and 80 compared to those staying who complete 25, 50, 75, and 101.
- Out-of-state students depart a slightly higher rates in the first two years.

Trend Data Findings:

- Retention rates at TBR universities and community colleges have dropped, but only slightly, since 2004. Retention rates are highly varied by campus. In 2008, Tennessee Tech had the highest retention rate of universities (81.9%) while Tennessee State had the lowest (68.7%). Pellissippi State had the highest retention rate for community colleges.
- Graduation rates have increased almost 3% for universities since 2004, while also growing significantly for community colleges. Middle Tennessee State has the highest graduation rate for universities, while Roane State has the highest graduation rate for community colleges.

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- Figure 2 – TBR Six-year Graduation Rates: 2004 to 2008
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Sources:

- Tennessee Board of Regents
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Table 1
Tennessee Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates: 2004 to 2008

Institution	Abbrev.	Fall 2003 to 2004	Fall 2004 to 2005	Fall 2005 to 2006	Fall 2006 to 2007	Fall 2007 to 2008
Austin Peay State University	APSU	68.1%	69.5%	72.7%	72.6%	72.3%
East Tennessee State University	ETSU	78.7%	78.6%	79.5%	79.6%	77.6%
Middle Tennessee State University	MTSU	81.3%	81.7%	80.8%	78.7%	80.0%
Tennessee State University	TSU	77.9%	77.0%	75.8%	76.8%	68.7%
Tennessee Technological University	TTU	80.3%	82.5%	83.2%	82.5%	81.9%
University of Memphis	UoM	79.5%	77.9%	78.6%	79.4%	81.4%
University Total		78.7%	78.7%	78.9%	78.5%	78.1%
Chattanooga State Technical Community College	CSTCC	60.9%	55.7%	57.0%	60.4%	57.1%
Cleveland State Community College	CISCC	60.9%	62.8%	59.6%	61.8%	60.9%
Columbia State Community College	CoSCC	66.4%	67.9%	66.7%	64.4%	63.6%
Dyersburg State Community College	DSCC	54.3%	51.3%	57.3%	54.1%	55.3%
Jackson State Community College	JSCC	60.5%	56.0%	56.7%	54.8%	54.9%
Motlow State Community College	MSCC	62.8%	57.8%	59.3%	60.0%	60.5%
Nashville State Technical Community College	NSCC	57.6%	58.8%	56.7%	56.0%	60.3%
Northeast State Technical Community College	NSTCC	60.5%	57.7%	62.5%	62.2%	61.2%
Pellissippi State Technical Community College	PSTCC	62.8%	60.0%	63.7%	66.0%	64.9%
Roane State Community College	RSCC	65.1%	61.4%	61.8%	63.1%	63.3%
Southwest Tennessee Community College	STCC	54.7%	52.2%	52.4%	49.7%	55.5%
Volunteer State Community College	VSCC	62.1%	57.5%	59.5%	58.1%	57.6%
Walters State Community College	WSCC	66.9%	60.3%	60.6%	62.5%	62.8%
Community College Total		61.2%	58.1%	59.2%	59.2%	59.9%
University of Tennessee - Chattanooga	UTC	82.7%	83.5%	81.4%	83.2%	80.8%
University of Tennessee - Knoxville	UTK	86.0%	88.6%	89.9%	92.3%	92.1%
University of Tennessee - Martin	UTM	80.2%	81.2%	80.9%	81.4%	80.7%
University of Tennessee Total		84.3%	86.3%	86.5%	88.3%	87.3%

Figure 1
TBR Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates: 2004 to 2008

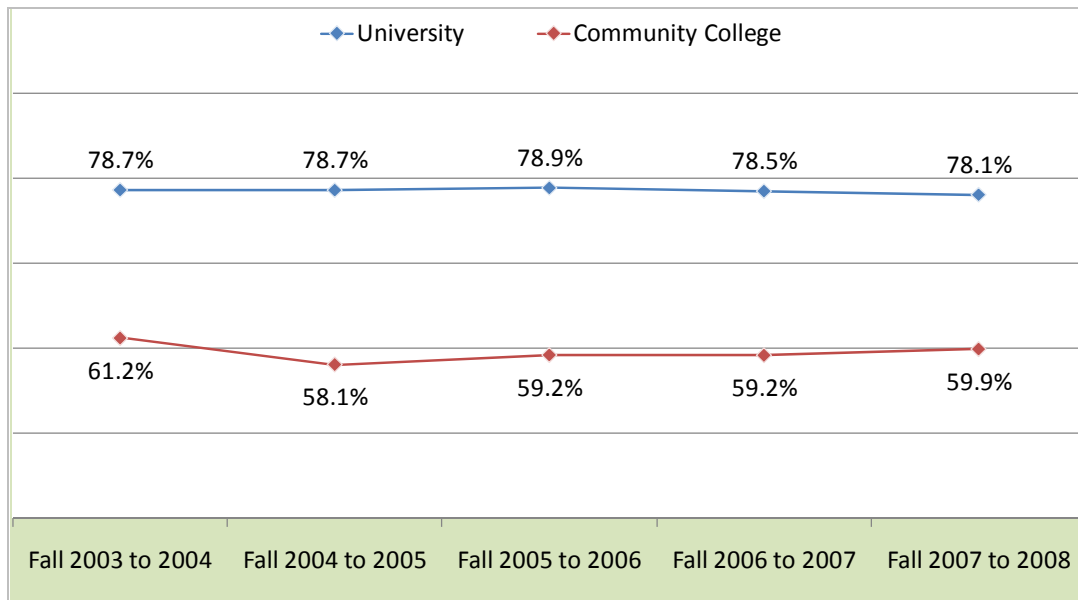


Table 2
Tennessee Six-year Graduation Rates: 2004 to 2008

Institution	Abbrev.	Fall 1998 to 2004	Fall 1999 to 2005	Fall 2000 to 2006	Fall 2001 to 2007	Fall 2002 to 2008
Austin Peay State University	APSU	35.0%	35.8%	37.4%	33.0%	37.0%
East Tennessee State University	ETSU	42.4%	43.5%	46.5%	43.2%	47.5%
Middle Tennessee State University	MTSU	43.6%	45.5%	46.8%	48.4%	50.5%
Tennessee State University	TSU	46.4%	45.4%	42.0%	42.0%	38.6%
Tennessee Technological University	TTU	50.1%	50.0%	50.4%	48.3%	49.2%
University of Memphis	UoM	38.6%	37.3%	37.2%	38.9%	41.9%
University Total		42.8%	43.4%	43.8%	43.3%	45.4%
Chattanooga State Technical Community College	CSTCC	22.5%	24.5%	24.1%	27.6%	23.6%
Cleveland State Community College	CISCC	29.9%	30.0%	32.5%	28.6%	32.7%
Columbia State Community College	CoSCC	31.6%	38.9%	42.8%	41.4%	38.7%
Dyersburg State Community College	DSCC	27.1%	31.0%	30.1%	29.3%	27.9%
Jackson State Community College	JSCC	29.7%	31.6%	33.2%	30.7%	32.3%
Motlow State Community College	MSCC	28.9%	45.7%	39.7%	42.0%	38.9%
Nashville State Technical Community College	NSCC	18.0%	20.9%	20.1%	23.2%	23.5%
Northeast State Technical Community College	NSTCC	28.2%	32.8%	31.9%	35.2%	34.7%
Pellissippi State Technical Community College	PSTCC	25.0%	30.0%	32.8%	35.2%	33.3%
Roane State Community College	RSCC	29.7%	36.3%	39.0%	37.3%	42.0%
Southwest Tennessee Community College	STCC	15.3%	14.7%	15.5%	15.4%	18.3%
Volunteer State Community College	VSCC	22.1%	35.0%	29.8%	27.4%	27.8%
Walters State Community College	WSCC	28.0%	32.8%	36.4%	38.5%	34.9%
Community College Total		25.1%	30.5%	31.0%	31.2%	31.0%
University of Tennessee - Chattanooga	UTC	53.8%	51.8%	52.8%	50.1%	47.1%
University of Tennessee - Knoxville	UTK	63.2%	64.0%	66.7%	63.9%	64.1%
University of Tennessee - Martin	UTM	47.7%	47.2%	48.5%	48.2%	53.1%
University of Tennessee Total		58.4%	59.2%	60.8%	58.7%	58.7%

Figure 2
TBR Six-year Graduation Rates: 2004 to 2008

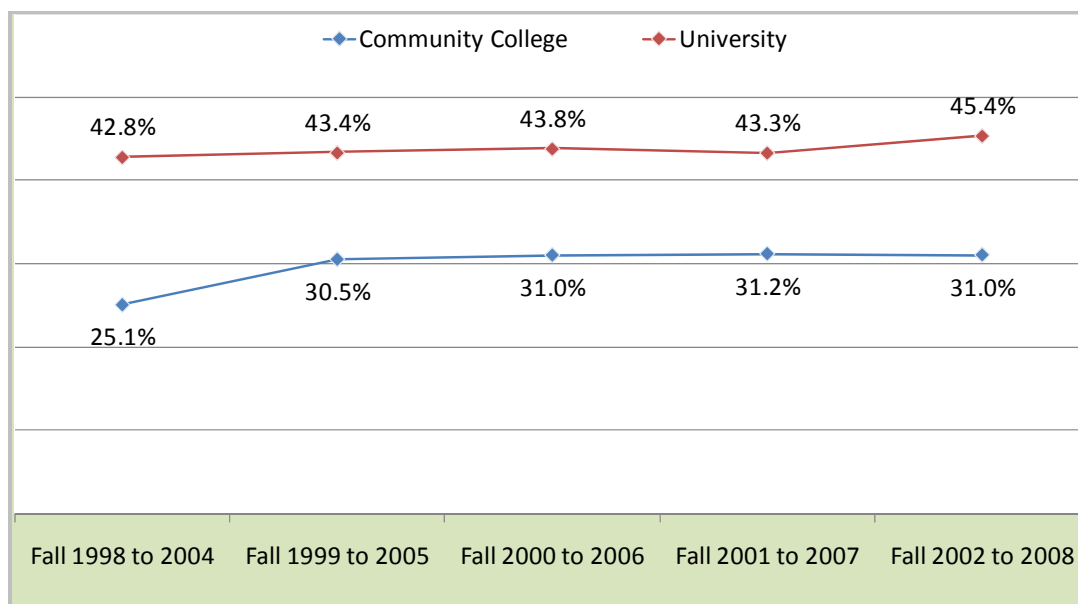


Table 3a

Statewide retention, graduation and progression rates for community colleges: 1997 Cohort

Year Out	Cohort	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Target Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Enrolled Count	9,658	5,719	3,992	2,594	1,912	1,321	922	684	524	430	346
Retention Rate		59.2%	41.3%	26.9%	19.8%	13.7%	9.5%	7.1%	5.4%	4.5%	3.6%
Graduate Count		21	288	1,019	1,556	1,993	2,347	2,597	2,759	2,874	2,954
Graduation Rate		0.2%	3.0%	10.6%	16.1%	20.6%	24.3%	26.9%	28.6%	29.8%	30.6%
Total Enro & Grad		5,740	4,280	3,613	3,468	3,314	3,269	3,281	3,283	3,304	3,300
Progression Rate		59.4%	44.3%	37.4%	35.9%	34.3%	33.8%	34.0%	34.0%	34.2%	34.2%

Notes:

1. Graduation rates are calculated as of the spring of the year measured.
2. Retention Rates are calculated as of the fall of the year measured.
3. Progression rates add the Graduation Rate and the Retention Rate.
- 4: State-wide rates include enrollment or graduation at all TN public universities and community colleges.

Table 3b

Statewide retention, graduation and progression rates for universities: 1997 Cohort

Year Out	Cohort	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Target Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Enrolled Count	8,715	6,786	5,984	5,347	3,968	2,068	1,168	694	475	381	263
Retention Rate		77.9%	68.7%	61.4%	45.5%	23.7%	13.4%	8.0%	5.5%	4.4%	3.0%
Graduate Count		-	10	71	1,060	2,791	3,734	4,172	4,417	4,562	4,671
Graduation Rate		0.0%	0.1%	0.8%	12.2%	32.0%	42.8%	47.9%	50.7%	52.3%	53.6%
Total Enro & Grad		6,786	5,994	5,418	5,028	4,859	4,902	4,866	4,892	4,943	4,934
Progression Rate		77.9%	68.8%	62.2%	57.7%	55.8%	56.2%	55.8%	56.1%	56.7%	56.6%

Notes:

1. Graduation rates are calculated as of the spring of the year measured.
2. Retention Rates are calculated as of the fall of the year measured.
3. Progression rates add the Graduation Rate and the Retention Rate.
- 4: State-wide rates include enrollment or graduation at all TN public universities and community colleges.

Tennessee Board of Regents
Study of Attrition at Departure Points
2001 Cohort

Tennessee Board of Regents Universities
Attrition Study at Departure Points - All Majors
2001 First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Cohort

Departure Point	All			Male			Female		
	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct
1st Year	9,483	2,151	23%	4,212	1,044	25%	5,271	1,107	21%
2nd Year	7,332	1,289	18%	3,168	571	18%	4,164	718	17%
3rd Year	6,043	859	14%	2,597	412	16%	3,446	447	13%
4th Year	5,184	800	15%	2,185	353	16%	2,999	447	15%
5th Year	4,384	462	11%	1,832	225	12%	2,552	237	9%
6th Year	3,922	221	6%	1,607	111	7%	2,315	110	5%

Departure Point	All			Black			White			Hispanic			Other Race		
	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct
1st Year	9,483	2,151	23%	2,336	543	23%	6,714	1,485	22%	133	37	28%	300	86	29%
2nd Year	7,332	1,289	18%	1,793	321	18%	5,229	895	17%	96	25	26%	214	48	22%
3rd Year	6,043	859	14%	1,472	205	14%	4,334	607	14%	71	15	21%	166	32	19%
4th Year	5,184	800	15%	1,267	223	18%	3,727	552	15%	56	9	16%	134	16	12%
5th Year	4,384	462	11%	1,044	135	13%	3,175	316	10%	47	4	9%	118	7	6%
6th Year	3,922	221	6%	909	73	8%	2,859	136	5%	43	3	7%	111	9	8%

Departure Point	All			Recent HS Grad			Not Recent HS Grad			In-State			Out-of-State		
	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct
1st Year	9,483	2,151	23%	8,589	1,749	20%	894	402	45%	8,274	1,799	22%	1,209	352	29%
2nd Year	7,332	1,289	18%	6,840	1,118	16%	492	171	35%	6,475	1,107	17%	857	182	21%
3rd Year	6,043	859	14%	5,722	774	14%	321	85	26%	5,368	775	14%	675	84	12%
4th Year	5,184	800	15%	4,948	750	15%	236	50	21%	4,593	700	15%	591	100	17%
5th Year	4,384	462	11%	4,198	427	10%	186	35	19%	3,893	411	11%	491	51	10%
6th Year	3,922	221	6%	3,771	210	6%	151	11	7%	3,482	203	6%	440	18	4%

Tennessee Board of Regents Universities
Attrition Study at Departure Points - All Majors
2001 First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Cohort

Departure Point	Counts			Avg HS GPA		Avg ACT		Avg Rem Courses	
	Last Yr	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay
1st Year	9,483	2,151	7,332	2.86	3.14	20.74	21.47	1.09	0.82
2nd Year	7,332	1,289	6,043	2.94	3.18	20.83	21.60	0.99	0.79
3rd Year	6,043	859	5,184	2.94	3.22	20.61	21.76	1.07	0.74
4th Year	5,184	800	4,384	3.08	3.24	21.06	21.88	0.90	0.71
5th Year	4,384	462	3,922	2.97	3.27	20.50	22.04	1.02	0.68
6th Year	3,922	221	3,701	2.93	3.29	20.33	22.14	1.16	0.65

Departure Point	Counts			Avg Cum Cred Hrs		Avg Coll GPA	
	Last Yr	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay
1st Year	9,483	2,151	7,332	15	25	1.79	2.72
2nd Year	7,332	1,289	6,043	31	50	2.09	2.76
3rd Year	6,043	859	5,184	49	75	2.19	2.87
4th Year	5,184	800	4,384	80	101	2.51	2.96
5th Year	4,384	462	3,922	84	94	2.50	3.02
6th Year	3,922	221	3,701	97	108	2.37	3.06

Note: Students staying include those enrolled in the next fall and those who have graduated.

Tennessee Board of Regents Universities
Attrition Study at Departure Points - Physical Science Majors
2001 First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Cohort

Departure Point	All			Male			Female		
	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct
1st Year	105	24	23%	38	7	18%	67	17	25%
2nd Year	81	16	20%	31	6	19%	50	10	20%
3rd Year	65	11	17%	25	6	24%	40	5	13%
4th Year	54	4	7%	19	1	5%	35	3	9%
5th Year	50	8	16%	18	1	6%	32	7	22%
6th Year	42	2	5%	17	-	0%	25	2	8%

Departure Point	All			Black			White			Hispanic			Other Race		
	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct
1st Year	105	24	23%	34	9	26%	63	14	22%	1	-	0%	7	1	14%
2nd Year	81	16	20%	25	6	24%	49	8	16%	1	-	0%	6	2	33%
3rd Year	65	11	17%	19	2	11%	41	6	15%	1	-	0%	4	3	75%
4th Year	54	4	7%	17	1	6%	35	3	9%	1	-	0%	1	-	0%
5th Year	50	8	16%	16	2	13%	32	6	19%	1	-	0%	1	-	0%
6th Year	42	2	5%	14	1	7%	26	1	4%	1	-	0%	1	-	0%

Departure Point	All			Recent HS Grad			Not Recent HS Grad			In-State			Out-of-State		
	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct	Last Yr	Depart	Pct
1st Year	105	24	23%	97	22	23%	8	2	25%	89	17	19%	16	7	44%
2nd Year	81	16	20%	75	14	19%	6	2	33%	72	13	18%	9	3	33%
3rd Year	65	11	17%	61	9	15%	4	2	50%	59	9	15%	6	2	33%
4th Year	54	4	7%	52	4	8%	2	-	0%	50	4	8%	4	-	0%
5th Year	50	8	16%	48	7	15%	2	1	50%	46	7	15%	4	1	25%
6th Year	42	2	5%	41	2	5%	1	-	0%	39	2	5%	3	-	0%

Tennessee Board of Regents Universities
 Attrition Study at Departure Points - Physical Science Majors
 2001 First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Cohort

Departure Point	Counts			Avg HS GPA		Avg ACT		Avg Rem Courses	
	Last Yr	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay
1st Year	105	24	81	3.21	3.35	21.74	21.71	0.79	0.79
2nd Year	81	16	65	3.23	3.38	21.38	21.79	0.75	0.80
3rd Year	65	11	54	3.28	3.40	21.30	21.88	0.45	0.87
4th Year	54	4	50	3.46	3.40	22.00	21.88	1.00	0.86
5th Year	50	8	42	3.31	3.42	20.14	22.17	1.25	0.79
6th Year	42	2	40	3.05	3.43	19.50	22.31	3.00	0.68

Departure Point	Counts			Avg Cum Cred Hrs		Avg Coll GPA	
	Last Yr	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay	Depart	Stay
1st Year	105	24	81	17	25	1.95	2.73
2nd Year	81	16	65	35	51	2.17	2.83
3rd Year	65	11	54	48	77	2.27	2.92
4th Year	54	4	50	59	101	2.22	2.99
5th Year	50	8	42	71	94	2.31	3.17
6th Year	42	2	40	110	118	2.30	3.19

Note: Students staying include those enrolled in the next fall and those who have graduated.