

AY 17/18 SDSU ENROLLMENT, RETENTION, AND GRADUATION REPORT

Jointly Produced and Approved by the Academic Policy and Planning Committee
and Undergraduate Council

The comprehensive Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation (ERG) Compendium has been updated by Analytical Studies and Institutional Research and made available to the University Senate, according to a practice established in Academic Year 2014-2015. This brief report, in concert with the compendium, serves to fulfill the charges from the Policy File to the Undergraduate Council to “annually review the previous year’s outcomes as well as any enrollment management changes proposed by the administration” and the Academic Policy and Planning Committee (AP&P) to “produce an annual report on retention and graduation during the fall semester.”

Highlights from the AY 17/18 ERG Compendium

Below, we highlight some key patterns and observations with parenthetical reference to the corresponding page or pages in the Compendium on which relevant data appear. Unless stated otherwise, these data reflect student information for the San Diego Campus.

Total Applications

Many of the trends noted in this year’s compendium reflect a positive continuation of those of the past several years, as noted in the bullets below, with increase in numbers and quality. Most of the bullets use the starting point of 2014 as a somewhat arbitrary beginning point of 4 years’ time period (although this time period can also reflect the time period of the aspirational time to graduation). It reflects the ongoing rates as seen in the compendium from a slightly longer time period as well. The question to be resolved currently is: Where do we begin to hit the point of diminishing returns? In other words, when is it important to slow growth or even consider a steady state? A better discussion might be for us to focus on what is the ideal class size for the university at this time.

- The number of freshmen applications has risen from 56,759 in 2014 to 68,228 for 2018 (2018 is not on the graph because this application period just ended). (3)

- The number of transfer applications has risen from 22,376 in 2014 to 24,931 for 2018 (2018 is not on the graph because this application period just ended). (3)
- The number of out-of-state freshmen applications has risen from 3,410 in 2014 to 5,186 for 2018 (2018 is not on the graph because this application period just ended); although given the increase in overall applications this actually represents a decrease in the percentage of out-of-state applicants relative to in-state. (4)
- The number of international freshmen applications has risen from 1,274 in 2014 to 1,438 in 2017 (2018 numbers are not yet complete). (4)

Undergraduate Applications

- Total undergraduate applications for the SD and IV campuses have risen from 79,715 in 2014 to over 93,000 for 2018. (7)
- Out of State undergraduate applications, CSU-eligible applications, admits, and enrollees have all increased. Enrollees have increased from 625 in 2014 to 847 in Fall 2017. (9)
- International undergraduate applications, CSU-eligible applications, admits, and enrollees have all increased. Enrollees have increased from 395 in 2014 to 437 in 2017. (10)
- CSU-eligible admission applications for freshmen by local and non-local has stayed steady between 13.8 and 13.1% since 2014; however, it should be noted that in 2010 local applications were 18.9%. (Also note that the graph is in raw numbers which have been converted to percentages for comparative purposes in this summary here and elsewhere.) (12)
- Relative to All Others, local freshmen Students of Color show at a higher rate of applications, while non-local Students of Color show at a lower rate. (13)

Undergraduate Enrollment

Of note in this section is that we have reached an important marker, with the average unit load of our new freshmen students now at 15 units. This has implications for their abilities to be successful throughout their undergraduate careers.

A note about terminology: **Local** for Full Time Freshmen is any student graduating from a high school in San Diego or Imperial County south of Hwy 56. **Local** for transfers is (1) a student

who attended the majority of his/her transfer work at our local community colleges or (2) a student who earned his/her Associate Degree for Transfer from a local community college. Local community colleges are: San Diego City, Grossmont, Cuyamaca, Imperial Valley, Mesa, Miramar, and Southwestern. Mira Costa and Palomar students technically belong to CSU San Marcos but are considered local by us if their degree is not offered by CSU San Marcos.

- Average unit load for freshmen has risen from 14.8 in 2014 to 15.0 in 2017. (19)
- Unit loads at all student levels has risen from 2014 to 2017. (20)
- Average high school GPA and test scores for new freshmen have increased from 3.69 in 2014 to 3.71 in 2017. SAT scores have increased from 1115 in 2014 to 1195 in 2017. (23)

First-Time Freshmen Enrollment

- The percent of local v. non-local freshmen decreased from 32.1% in 2014 to 30.5% in 2017. (25)
- The percent of male freshmen increased slightly from 43.5% in 2014 to 44.4% in 2017. (25)
- Non-local freshmen GPAs and test scores are higher than those of local freshmen. (26)
- In 2017, average freshmen unit loads are higher for non-local than local, for residents than non-residents, and for Students of Color than All Others. Unit loads are the same for men and women and lower for Pell eligible than non-Pell eligible. These values vary between 14.7 and 15.2, with the exception of non-resident international students (13.4). (30)
- Pell-eligible enrollment is decreasing overall regardless of admission area, gender, and ethnicity. (34-37)
- The proficiency status of first-time freshmen at high school graduation or fall entry, be they local or non-local (38, 39), male or female (40, 41), Students of Color or All Others (42, 43), has remained stable or increased slightly since 2014.

First-Time Freshmen Outcomes

Because this section refers to outcomes, the charts referenced only provide data to 2016 (compared to the previous data set, which goes to 2017).

- In Fall 2016, first-time freshmen one-year continuation rates are similar by admission area (54) and by gender (i.e. 86.9% to 89.5%) (55), but more disparate for resident, non-resident OOS, and non-resident international (i.e., 90.3%, 79.4%, and 83.4%, respectively). (56) All populations show generally stable values with the exception of non-resident international students, who continue to decline from a high of 95.7% in 2011.
- Freshmen one-year continuation rates by ethnicity show some differences by ethnicity, but overall Students of Color and All Others are similar (i.e., 88.4% and 88.2%). (57)
- Pell eligible freshmen have a slightly lower one-year continuation rate (85.9% v. 89.2%). (58)
- First-time academic probation rates after Year 1 are higher for local than non-local, for men than women, for non-residents than residents, and for Students of Color than All Others, with variations ranging from less than 1% to over 4%. (62)
- Six-year graduation rates are higher for non-local (78.2%) than local (75.3%). (63)
- Six-year graduation rates are higher for women (77.7%) than men (76.1%). (64)
- Six-year graduation rates are higher for All Others (78.4%) v. Students of Color (75.9%). (65)
- Six-year graduation rates are higher for residents (76.3%) than non-residents (65.0%). (66)

Graduate Applications, Enrollment, and Outcomes

- The number of Fall 2017 graduate applications are almost identical to 2012 and 2013. (102)
- The rise and fall in the number of graduate applications from 2013 to 2017 was largely driven by volatility of international applications. (102)
- Graduate admits and new enrollments have been much more stable than applications (103)

- Out of state graduate students (tuition paying) are down from highs during 2002 – 2005. The Non-resident Tuition Waiver (NRTW) program began in 2006; recipients are not counted. (104)
- Volatility of international graduate applications is severe; 2017 was the fourth year of declining international enrollments. (105)
- Over the past decade, applications to HHS and SCI graduate programs rose sharply. Applications to Education programs also increased. (106)
- A&L and PSFA saw gains in graduate applications in the first half of the decade, but sharp declines in the second half. (106)
- SDSU graduate programs serve a diverse population. In Fall 2017, Students of Color represented 43.2% of new graduate degree seeking students and 44.8% of new post-baccalaureate (credential and certificate) students. (107)
- Enrollment in doctoral programs continues to grow, up from 606 in 2016 to 620 in 2017. (108)
- There are currently more doctoral students enrolled than post-baccalaureate (credential and certificate) students. (108)
- Average time to degree for master’s degrees has shortened by 0.35 semesters for men and 0.61 semesters for women over the past decade. (110)

Opportunities for Improving Student Retention, Graduation, and Achievement

The annual review of the ERG Compendium allows the Undergraduate Council and AP&P to discuss the standing of our institution in regard to the academic progress of our students. The committees review these data to assess any changes in the patterns of who is attending the university or being selected to attend. The questions that were posed in the review of these data began with a discussion of “What is the ideal balance between out of state students (i.e. non-resident) and California students?” There is a complexity to this question in that it not only addresses a particular element of diversity in our population but also has significant budgetary implications. One of the concerns is that it may be having an unintended consequence on the percentage of our students who are Pell-eligible, which in turn is having an impact on our current status as an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). This impact is seen on pages 34 and 35. Within

our transfer student population, as seen on pages 51 and 52, the number of Pell-eligible students is currently rising.

Our first- to second-year retention figures remain impressive. The first-time freshmen continuation rates detailed on page 54 indicate that 87.7% of our local students and 88.6% of our non-local students are continuing to the second year. To contextualize this information, in the fall of 2013, the average rate of persistence in the CSU was 65.7%.

The committees also spent significant time discussing the implications of the tables on pages 61–2 as they relate to the graduation rates on page 63 and, by extension, Graduation 2025, the initiative, based out of the Chancellor’s office, aimed at improving graduation rates across the CSU campuses. It is clear that we are making strides at all levels with student achievement. Nonetheless, the degree to which our increasing efforts in first-year packages, advising, and mentoring are being effective at both the group and individual level should be a focus of our university evaluation and assessment efforts. It is also clear that a large array of factors impacts the differential success of our local students, and those students need continued interventions. Perhaps a rethinking of some of our current programming is warranted to ensure that we are addressing their critical needs.

While overall graduate enrollment in SDSU has been remarkably stable for two decades, there is an imperative to manage the effect of dramatic recent volatility in international applications, as well as longer term trends in demand for our graduate programs. Applications to graduate programs in the Colleges of Sciences, Health and Human Services, and Education have increased since 2007, with many of those programs now highly selective; in contrast, applications are down sharply in two colleges over the same period, presenting recruiting challenges. Doctoral enrollments have increased steadily over 15 years, and doctoral students now outnumber post-baccalaureate (credential and certificate) students at SDSU. The graduate student population is diverse and increasingly so: Students of Color represented 43.2% of incoming graduate students in 2017, up from 38.6% in 2016. Another 14% of new graduate students in 2017 are international (down from 16.7% in 2016). Finally, data presented in the report indicate average time to earn a

master's degree has been shortened by approximately a third of a semester for men and a little over half a semester for women across the past decade.