

Preparing for the New WASC Graduation and Retention Rate Templates & Essays: Lessons Learned from a Pilot Institution

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8 Pilot Institutions

- Academy of Art University
- **Chapman University**
- Claremont School of Theology
- Concordia University Irvine
- Mount St. Mary's College
- University of California Davis
- University of Hawaii/Maui College
- University of Redlands



New Process

- WASC now asking for a specific set of disaggregated data and a more structured analysis
- Focus on retention rates, graduation rates and median elapsed time to degree
- Designed to identify unsatisfactory rates/gaps and to assess the adequacy of plans to address them
- The report is composed of UG and GR data templates and narrative(s) which provide context
- Reviewed by a newly formed WASC Retention and Graduation Rate Committee

Chapman's Institutional DataMart

Institutional DataMart

Retention Rates

Graduation Rates

Degrees Awarded & Time to Degree

New Undergraduate Student Profile

Student Headcount

Faculty Headcount

Staff Headcount

Finances & Financial Aid

» Institutional DataMart

The Institutional DataMart is a repository of data gathered from various institutional sources. The Institutional DataMart is intended to provide users with quick and easy access to a multitude of institutional data. The primary audience of the Institutional DataMart is the Chapman University community and it is meant to be used as a resource or a reference for on-campus users who are in need of uniform institutional data for planning and decision making. However, this resource is also intended to be used by members of the public who wish to know more about student success and institutional achievement at Chapman University. If you would like to know more about learning outcomes please visit Learning at Chapman.

Data provided in the Institutional DataMart are a "snapshot" of the official Fall census date and reflect many of the common data definitions put forward by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Survey (IPEDS). Five year trends are provided for all data elements. Please select one of the reports on the left to view the data you are interested in.

UG Template Example

WASC RETENTION, GRADUATION, TIME-TO-DEGREE SUMMARY REPORT

INSTITUTION: Saint Mary's College of California Sample Institution Cohort Entry: FALL REPORT YEAR: 2011
 STUDENT TYPE: FULL-TIME FRESHMAN Template Revision: 5-29-12

GROUP	One Year Retention Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2010	FALL 2009	FALL 2008
	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain			
ALL	86%	1,795	1,538	87%	87%	84%
Female	88%	1,107	973	89%	88%	86%
Male	82%	688	565	83%	85%	79%
African American	88%	112	99	91%	79%	95%
American Indian	87%	23	20	Small N	89%	90%
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	84%	192	161	79%	84%	88%
Hawaiian/Pac Isle.*	Small N	Small N	Small N	Small N	Not Applicable	
Hispanic/Latino	88%	452	399	89%	92%	84%
White	86%	835	722	88%	88%	84%
Two or More Races	84%	38	32	84%	Not Applicable	
Nonresident Alien	70%	47	33	75%	81%	58%
Pell Recipient	89%	567	504	89%	89%	88%

*NOTE: Pacific Islanders are included with Asians prior to 2010 and included with Hawaiians from 2010 onward

GROUP	Four Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2007	FALL 2006	FALL 2005
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
ALL	49%	1,780	881	48%	49%	52%
Female	52%	1,084	567	52%	48%	57%
Male	45%	696	314	42%	49%	44%
African American	28%	99	28	22%	33%	26%
American Indian	50%	16	8	43%	57%	Small N
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	49%	198	97	46%	45%	56%
Hawaiian/Pac Isle.*	Not Applicable					
Hispanic/Latino	47%	388	182	44%	47%	49%
White	53%	962	511	52%	53%	54%
Two or More Races	Not Applicable					
Nonresident Alien	44%	27	12	40%	50%	45%
Pell Recipient	43%	399	172	46%	41%	42%

GROUP	Six Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2005	FALL 2004	FALL 2003
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
ALL	62%	1,784	1,109	61%	64%	62%
Female	65%	1,076	703	64%	65%	67%
Male	57%	708	406	56%	61%	55%
African American	45%	110	50	41%	48%	46%
American Indian	50%	10	5	Small N	Small N	Small N
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	59%	175	103	59%	54%	63%
Hispanic/Latino	62%	394	246	62%	62%	64%
White	66%	938	620	63%	70%	66%
Nonresident Alien	35%	51	18	45%	47%	22%
Pell Recipient	58%	444	259	55%	62%	57%

*NOTE: Pacific Islanders are included with Asians prior to 2010 and included with Hawaiians from 2010 onward

GROUP	Eight Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2003	FALL 2002	FALL 2001
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
ALL	68%	1,780	1,207	63%	70%	70%
Female	71%	1,072	758	69%	71%	72%
Male	63%	708	449	56%	68%	67%
African American	56%	126	70	49%	53%	64%
American Indian	50%	18	9	Small N	56%	Small N
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	67%	184	124	63%	73%	63%
Hispanic/Latino	68%	351	238	67%	67%	70%
White	72%	982	706	67%	73%	75%
Two or More Races	34%	50	17	22%	50%	40%
Nonresident Alien	66%	476	312	60%	67%	70%

Narrative Essay

UG	GR
<p><u>Retention, Graduation, and Time-to-Degree in Context:</u> Please review and put into context your institution's retention, graduation, and time-to-degree data as calculated in the Summary Report. Reflect upon how the rates align with your institution's mission/role in higher education and how the rates have changed over time. Provide context for changes in rates. Do you have rates you consider to be unacceptably low, either overall or disaggregated by gender or race/ethnicity? How do your rates overall and for subpopulations compare with three other institutions that you consider peers? Are your rates what would be expected at similar institutions?</p>	<p><u>Graduation and Time-to-Degree in Context:</u> With respect to your institution's mission, are your graduation rates and median elapsed time-to-degree figures appropriate for your degree cohorts and similar institutions? Why or why not? How do you know? With respect to your institution's size and student body composition, do you compare your data with other schools? If so, which ones, and how do you select these comparison institutions? How do your rates compare with theirs?</p>
<p><u>Institutional Capacity for Monitoring and Understanding Retention, Graduation, and Time-to-Degree:</u> Please describe your institution's ability to (a) generate institutional retention, graduation, and time-to-degree data, and (b) understand and evaluate your institution's retention and graduation rates using these data. Please comment on any challenges you face in generating the data and how you will meet these challenges.</p>	<p><u>Institutional Capacity for Monitoring and Understanding Graduation and Time-to-Degree:</u> Does your institution have an established mechanism for reviewing graduation rates and elapsed time-to-degree for all degree cohorts? If so, please describe it. Please comment on any challenges you face in generating the data and how you will meet these challenges.</p>

Narrative Essay (Cont.)

UG	GR
<p><u>Retention, Graduation, and Time-to-Degree Challenges:</u> Please describe any significant challenges your institution faces in improving retention, graduation, and time-to-degree. What challenges relate to retention and graduation rates or time-to-degree, overall and for various subpopulations? To the extent possible, identify factors at your institution that affect persistence. What are your crucial retention points (i.e., when does your attrition occur)?</p>	<p><u>Graduation and Time-to-Degree Challenges:</u> Are there trends or patterns across disaggregated groups that diverge from the overall figures for a degree cohort? If so, can you explain why the divergences exist and how the leadership of the institution plans to address them?</p>
<p><u>Institutional Initiatives to Ensure or Improve Student Success:</u> Please identify your institution's special efforts, initiatives, and programs to ensure acceptable retention and completion rates. In an appendix, provide detailed plans (metrics, timelines, etc.) for how unacceptable rates, including achievement gaps, will be addressed and improved.</p>	<p><u>Institutional Initiatives to Ensure or Improve Student Success:</u> Please identify your institution's special efforts, initiatives, and programs to ensure acceptable retention and completion rates. In an appendix, provide detailed plans (metrics, timelines, etc.) for how unacceptable rates, including achievement gaps, will be addressed and improved. <i>(ADDED LAST MINUTE)</i></p>
<p><u>Exclusions from Calculations:</u> Report the number of students you have removed from their cohorts, and describe any cohorts you have excluded. Explain your reasons for these exclusions.</p>	<p><u>Exclusions from Calculations:</u> Report the number of students you have excluded from their cohorts, and describe any cohorts you have excluded. Explain your reasons these decisions.</p>



Initial Questions

- Are these data easily accessible? And are we able to disaggregate the data being requested?
- Which offices/stakeholders should be involved in preparing the narrative reports?
- Should we do one combined UG and GR report or two separate reports?
- How will we divide the GR into categories?
- Where are we going to get peer comparison data?



Challenges/Concerns: Data and Analysis

- Graduate admission protocol and coding were not designed with this type of analysis in mind
- Establishing graduate cohorts is difficult and time-consuming
 - exclusions and revisions largely require manual review
 - first-year program changes, later program changes, entry into interweaved degrees, IPEDS-defined exclusions, and completion of compensatory degrees are all excludable factors
 - students pursue multiple programs
- New GR programs were included in the retention and time to degree data but not in the 5 year grad rates
- MAT/credential students needed to be separated
- Peer comparative data for GR and transfer students difficult to obtain



Challenges/Concerns: Narrative

- Organizing key players
- Deciding on how to report
- How do we define student success
- Obligated to say something even though rates are good.
- Having enough time to share report and get feedback from the campus community
- Sticking to 5 pages for each report with the level of depth requested
- Uncertainty about Process: “We are learning as we go. We are just a pilot.”

Retention & Graduation Committee Report

Report Content:

- Background
- Findings
- Recommendations

RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL TEMPLATES AND NARRATIVE

INITIAL	EMERGING	DEVELOPED	HIGHLY DEVELOPED
Partially completed templates or did not complete them for all groups. Explanations in narrative may be Spartan or do not adequately assess the data in the templates.	Completed templates properly for all groups but narrative does not fully explain or examine the trends in the data.	Completed templates properly and narrative provides an adequate, though “basic” understanding and interpretation of the data therein.	Completed templates properly. Analyses and contextualization in narrative thoroughly explain the trends in the data. Additional statistics may be brought to bear to buttress arguments made in the narrative. Institution is thoroughly committed to understanding its retention, graduation rates, and time-to-degree at all levels.

Chapman Report: Background

WASC DRAFT – 9-11-12

Retention and Graduation Committee
Report

Background

Institution: ____ Chapman University _____

Organizational Type: Public __ Private, non-profit **X** For-profit __

Accreditation status/date:

Eligible granted _____

Candidacy granted _____

Last accredited/reaccredited **6/20/2007** _____

Notice of Concern __

Sanction: Warning __ Probation __ Show Cause __

Date of next WASC interaction:

Interim Report _____

Special Visit _____

Off-site Review **April 20, 2013** _____

Reaccreditation Visit **Fall 2013** _____

Institutions used for comparison (list):

Undergraduate: Loyola Marymount University, Pepperdine University, Santa Clara University, Seattle University, University of San Diego, University of San Francisco, University of the Pacific

Graduate: NONE provided

Chapman Report: Findings

Findings:

___Template(s) Completed properly? - **Yes** ___No

IF NOT: Please explain why not: _____

___Narrative is responsive to WASC requirements? - **Yes** ___No

IF NOT: Please explain why not: _____

___Appropriate Comparison campuses? - **Yes for undergraduates** ___No for graduate

IF NOT: Please explain why not:

Appropriate peers selected for undergraduate, but there are no comparisons made with these peer schools for “transfer” students.

At the graduate level, no peers institutions are provided. Though it is a difficult task to obtain peer institutions at this level, some peer institutions might have been found for the JD degree.

Retention and graduation and analysis are within acceptable ranges.

For the whole **Yes** ___No

Please comment if “No”:

- **Chapman did a good job of identifying challenges and specific solutions for addressing each challenge.**
- **However, the reason for lower than average graduation rates for MA Tch degree recipients is not identified. Many of these students receive their teaching credentials but don’t complete the Master’s degree itself.**

within specific subpopulations? ___ **Yes** ___No

Please comment if “No”:

- **Lower rates for freshman Pell recipients are noted, but addressed by institution in their review.**
- **Analysis was better developed for undergraduate data than graduate**

Other concerns arose in the review ? ___ Yes ___ **No**

Chapman Report: Recommendations

Recommendation(s):

- Review in three years
- Review in six years
- Refer to next interaction with WASC as noted at the top of the previous page
 - Request to be included in next Interim Report**
 - Request Special Visit
 - Request next re-accreditation cycle

Areas of concern for next peer review:

- **Double check that efforts to close the gap for freshman Pell recipients are working**
- **Need to identify obtain Peer comparisons for transfer retention rates, graduation rates and time-to-degree. Peers have been identified but comparison statistics were not obtained.**



Lessons Learned/Tips

- Start early—you need time to get peer data and share draft with the campus community.
- In addition to Assessment and IR, consider including Student Affairs, Enrollment Services, and Graduate Studies in the discussion and development of the templates and essays.
- Review the directions for defining cohorts carefully and discuss before beginning the review of data. The decisions made very much frame the process going forward.

Lessons Learned/Tips (Cont.)

- Define student success early
- Keep in mind that the Retention/Graduation Report will be linked to Institutional Reaccreditation Report Essay #3: Defining and promoting “student success”.
- Put substantial thought into the peer group(s) you select for comparison.
- Build consortium with other like schools for comparison data for GR and transfer students.
- Interim report will be required if comparison data is not provided.
- Understand the evaluation process in advance
- Participate in WASC webinars if available

Questions?



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Retention and Graduation

Peer reviewers with expertise in retention and graduation (R & G) will review data submitted triennially by the institution. A common template for this data ensures standardized parameters for collection and analysis. The institution also submits a brief narrative describing institutional mission and demographics; the narrative provides a context for interpreting the retention and graduation data, which are presented in both aggregated and disaggregated form. The narrative also includes comparison data from peer institutions (benchmarks), and it describes the process by which the peers were identified. The narrative includes the institution's analysis of the implications of the data and plans for addressing any issues that arise. The R & G team prepares a report to the institution, with a copy to WASC, that may either remove R & G as a concern or suggest specific issues to be addressed at the off-site review.

To view the **undergraduate** retention and graduation narrative questions, numbers templates, and associated documents [click here](#).

To view the **graduate** retention and graduation narrative questions, numbers templates, and associated documents [click here](#).

Contact Jill Ferguson at jferguson@wascsenior.org with questions and comments.

Redesigning WASC

[Draft 2013 Handbook](#)

[Redesigning WASC](#)

• [Regional Forums Fall 2012](#)

[Accreditation: 2010-2020](#)

[Steering Committee](#)

[Concept Papers](#)

[Resources](#)

[Commission Decisions](#)

[Retention and Graduation](#)

• [Under Grad Retention and Graduation Docs](#)

• [Grad Retention and Graduation Docs](#)

[DQP Pilot](#)