



# WASC's Review of Retention, Graduation, and Time to Degree

California Association of Institutional Research  
Anaheim, California  
November 7, 2012

# Panelists

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# WHY IS WASC DOING THIS?

CAIR Panel Discussion, Part 1

“Transparency”  
and  
“Accountability”

2008: Table 2B

...was not an  
overwhelming  
success

```
graph TD; A[Task Force on Retention and Graduation] --> B[WASC/CAIR Working Group]; B --> C["Numbers and Narratives"]; D[ ] --> A;
```

Task Force on  
Retention and  
Graduation

WASC/CAIR  
Working Group

“Numbers and  
Narratives”

# Numbers and Narratives

**Numbers** are presented in Summary Report templates of retention rates, graduation rates, and time to degree for institutional cohorts.

**Narratives** are presented in a five-page essay submitted by the institution to interpret the Summary Reports in the context of the institution's mission, distinctive characteristics, and populations served. Narratives must also include comparisons with peer institutions.

# Objective

**The “numbers and narratives” will give the WASC Retention and Graduation Rate Review Committee**

- a common set of information
- in a consistent format
- in the context of the school’s mission and demographics

**so committee members can assess whether an appropriate number of students are completing their degrees in an appropriate amount of time.**



Western Association of Schools and Colleges  
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities

 

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## Redesigning WASC

### Regional Forums Fall 2012

Aug 20, 2012

President Ralph Wolff and members of the Accreditation Redesign Steering Committee presented on the status of the accreditation redesign particularly related to the draft *2013 Handbook of Accreditation*.

### WASC Sets Example of Accountability, Transparency in Higher Education

Jul 09, 2012

As part of its ongoing work to help make accreditation and higher education more transparent and more accountable, the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of

### Graduate Retention and Graduation Documents

Jul 02, 2012

At its June 2012 meeting, the Commission approved sending the graduate level instructions, glossary, narrative questions, and templates out to the WASC region for comment.

### Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Documents

Jul 02, 2012

At the June 2012 Commission meeting the undergraduate instructions, narrative questions, glossary, and templates were approved for use by the WASC region.





## Undergraduate

- Documenting Undergraduate Student Success
- Glossary for Undergraduate Student Success
- Instructions for Completing WASC Undergraduate Retention-Graduation Rate Templates
- Templates for Retention, Graduation, Time to Degree
- Populated Example Template

## Graduate

- Documenting Graduate Student Success, with Glossary
- Instructions for Completing WASC Graduate Graduation Rate and Time to Degree Templates
- Templates for Graduation Rate and Time to Degree
- Populated Example Template

# Glossaries

## Undergraduate

- Comparable Institution
- Cohort Type
- Enrollment Status
- Entering Student Type
- Gender
- Graduation Rate
- Pell Grant Recipient
- Race/Ethnicity
- Graduation Rate
- Time to Degree

## Graduate

- Cohort Type
- Gender
- Graduate Degree
- Graduation Rate
- Race/Ethnicity
- Time to Degree

# “Numbers” Are Based on Cohorts

- **Undergrad cohorts by level:**
  - Associate Degree Students
  - Full-Time Freshman Students
  - Part-Time Freshman Students
  - Lower-Division Transfer Students
  - Upper-Division Transfer Students
  - Students in Nontraditional Programs
- **Graduate cohorts by degree (not program):**
  - Master’s degrees (e.g., MA, MS, MBA, MFA, MSN)
  - Professional doctorates (e.g., JD, MD, DNP)
  - Research doctorates (e.g., PhD, ThD)

Undergraduate cohorts contain at least 25 students. Graduate cohorts contain at least 10.

# Defining Entering Cohorts

- Entering cohorts are used to calculate retention and graduation rates. IPEDS defines two types:
  - Fall cohort – established at the school's fall census
  - Annual cohort – entrants between August 1 – July 31
- May use either or both for undergraduates—e.g.,
  - Fall cohort for freshmen
  - Annual cohort for transfers
- Must use annual cohorts for graduate students
  - July 1 – June 30
- **The choice of selecting cohort types rests with the institution.**

# Calculating Undergraduate Rates

- Retention rate – for entering students who are enrolled in the second year.
- Graduation rates – based on normal time to degree.

Entering Student Type	Graduation	Still enrolled
Freshmen	4, 6, 8 years	9th year
Lower division transfers	4, 6, 8 years	9th year
Upper division transfers	2, 4, 6 years	7th year
Associate degree students	2, 3, 4 years	5th year
Nontraditional degree students	4, 6, 8 years	9th year

- Rates are calculated for three consecutive cohorts, if available, plus the three-year average.

# Calculating Graduate Rates

- Five-year graduation rates are calculated for master's degrees.
- Ten-year graduation rates are calculated for research doctorates.
- The institution may select either five or ten years for professional doctorates.
- Rates are calculated for three consecutive cohorts, if available, plus the three-year average.

The graduate guidelines are still being reviewed by the Commission.

# Defining Exiting Cohorts

- Exiting cohorts are used to calculate median elapsed calendar time to degree.
- Exiting cohorts are defined by the IPEDS Completions report as students who graduated between July 1 – June 30.
- You should have an exiting cohort for every entering cohort (except for new programs).
- Cohorts based on IPEDS Completions are used for both undergraduate and graduate students.

# Calculating Time to Degree

- Time to degree – the median calendar time elapsed between matriculation date and posted graduation date.
- Calculated in the same way for all undergraduate and graduate cohorts.
- Time to degree is calculated to the nearest decimal in years—and may not match graduation rate.
- Time to degree is calculated for three consecutive cohorts, if available.



# Disaggregating Rates

## By Gender:

- Male
- Female

## By Race/Ethnicity:

- African American
- American Indian
- Asian (Pac. Isle.)
- Hawaiian/Pac. Isle.
- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Two or More Races
- Nonresident Alien

Pell Grant Recipients (undergraduate cohorts only)

# PREPARING THE DATA TEMPLATES

CAIR Panel Discussion, Part 2

# Two Templates

Calculation/Data  
Entry Template

For institutional data entry

calculations happen...

Summary  
Report

For WASC review

# Undergraduate CALCULATION/DATA ENTRY Template

(Data entered in "YELLOW" cells are automatically transferred to Summary Reports)

## Data Entry-Calculation Template - WASC RETENTION-GRADUATION RATE-TIME-TO-DEGREE (UNDERGRADUATE)

Prepared by Office of Institutional Research, Saint Mary's College of California - Template Revision: 5-29-12

YOUR INSTITUTION:

**Saint Mary's College of California**

Cohort

Entry:

**FALL**

WASC Report Year:

**2011**

### ONE YEAR RETENTION RATES (FULL-TIME FRESHMAN)

GROUP	Three Year Average			FALL 2010			FALL 2009			FALL 2008		
	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain
<b>ALL</b>	<b>86%</b>	1,795	1,538	86.8%	636	552	86.8%	532	462	83.6%	627	524
Female	88%	1,107	973	89.5%	371	332	88.2%	330	291	86.2%	406	350
Male	82%	688	565	83.0%	265	220	84.7%	202	171	78.7%	221	174
African American	88%	112	99	91.2%	34	31	78.9%	38	30	95.0%	40	38
American Indian	87%	23	20	75.0%	4	3	88.9%	9	8	90.0%	10	9
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	84%	192	161	78.9%	57	45	83.9%	62	52	87.7%	73	64
Hawaiian/Pac Isle.*	100%	4	4	100.0%	4	4	N=0	0	0	N=0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	88%	452	399	88.8%	178	158	92.2%	129	119	84.1%	145	122
White	86%	835	722	88.3%	282	249	88.0%	242	213	83.6%	311	260
Two or More Races	84%	38	32	84.2%	38	32	N=0	0	0	N=0	0	0
Nonresident Alien	70%	47	33	75.0%	12	9	81.2%	16	13	57.9%	19	11
Pell Recipient	89%	567	504	88.9%	225	200	89.4%	179	160	88.3%	163	144

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

### FOUR YEAR GRADUATION RATES (FULL-TIME FRESHMAN)

GROUP	Three Year Average			FALL 2007			FALL 2006			FALL 2005		
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate
<b>ALL</b>	<b>49%</b>	1,780	881	47.9%	566	271	48.5%	585	284	51.8%	629	326
Female	52%	1,084	567	51.6%	337	174	48.4%	372	180	56.8%	375	213
Male	45%	696	314	42.4%	229	97	48.8%	213	104	44.5%	254	113

# Undergraduate SUMMARY Report

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

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

GROUP	One Year Retention Rate						Four Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2010	FALL 2009	FALL 2008	Three Year Average			FALL 2007	FALL 2006	FALL 2005
	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain				Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
<b>ALL</b>	<b>86%</b>	1,795	1,538	87%	87%	84%	<b>49%</b>	1,780	881	48%	49%	52%
Female	88%	1,107	973	89%	88%	86%	52%	1,084	567	52%	48%	57%
Male	82%	688	565	83%	85%	79%	45%	696	314	42%	49%	44%
African American	88%	112	99	91%	79%	95%	28%	99	28	22%	33%	26%
American Indian	87%	23	20	Small N	89%	90%	50%	16	8	43%	57%	Small N
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	84%	192	161	79%	84%	88%	49%	198	97	46%	45%	56%
Hawaiian/Pac Isle.*	Small N	Small N	Small N	Small N	Not Applicable		Not Applicable					
Hispanic/Latino	88%	452	399	89%	92%	84%	47%	388	182	44%	47%	49%
White	86%	835	722	88%	88%	84%	53%	962	511	52%	53%	54%
Two or More Races	84%	38	32	84%	Not Applicable		Not Applicable					
Nonresident Alien	70%	47	33	75%	81%	58%	44%	27	12	40%	50%	45%
Pell Recipient	89%	567	504	89%	89%	88%	43%	399	172	46%	41%	42%

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

GROUP	Six Year Graduation Rate						Eight Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2005	FALL 2004	FALL 2003	Three Year Average			FALL 2003	FALL 2002	FALL 2001
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate				Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
<b>ALL</b>	<b>62%</b>	1,784	1,109	61%	64%	62%	<b>68%</b>	1,780	1,207	63%	70%	70%
Female	65%	1,076	703	64%	65%	67%	71%	1,072	758	69%	71%	72%
Male	57%	708	406	56%	61%	55%	63%	708	449	56%	68%	67%

# Entering Undergraduate Data

Now we jump to a quick demonstration of entering data into the undergraduate templates in Excel, located on WASC's web site:

<http://www.wascsenior.org/redesign/ugretentionandgraduation>

# Why this Type of Summary? – Fits More Detail in 1-Page

WASC RETENTION, GRADUATION, TIME-TO-DEGREE SUMMARY REPORT											
INSTITUTION: <b>Saint Mary's College of California</b>				Cohort Entry: <b>FALL</b>		REPORT YEAR: <b>2011</b>					
STUDENT TYPE: <b>FULL-TIME FRESHMAN</b>				Template Revision: 5-29-12							

GROUP	One Year Retention Rate						Four Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2010	FALL 2009	FALL 2008	Three Year Average			FALL 2007	FALL 2006	FALL 2005
	Percent Retain	Number in Cohort	Number Retain				Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
<b>ALL</b>	<b>86%</b>	1,795	1,538	87%	87%	84%	<b>49%</b>	1,780	881	48%	49%	52%
Female	88%	1,107	973	89%	88%	86%	52%	1,084	567	52%	48%	57%
Male	82%	688	565	83%	85%	79%	45%	696	314	42%	49%	44%
African American	88%	112	99	91%	79%	95%	28%	99	28	22%	33%	26%
American Indian	87%	23	20	Small N	89%	90%	50%	16	8	43%	57%	Small N
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	84%	192	161	79%	84%	88%	49%	198	97	46%	45%	56%
Hawaiian/Pac Isle.*	Small N	Small N	Small N	Small N	Not Applicable			Not Applicable				
Hispanic/Latino	88%	452	399	89%	92%	84%	47%	388	182	44%	47%	49%
White	86%	835	722	88%	88%	84%	53%	962	511	52%	53%	54%
Two or More Races	84%	38	32	84%	Not Applicable			Not Applicable				
Nonresident Alien	70%	47	33	75%	81%	58%	44%	27	12	40%	50%	45%
Pell Recipient	89%	567	504	89%	89%	88%	43%	399	172	46%	41%	42%

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

GROUP	Six Year Graduation Rate						Eight Year Graduation Rate					
	Three Year Average			FALL 2005	FALL 2004	FALL 2003	Three Year Average			FALL 2003	FALL 2002	FALL 2001
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate				Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate			
<b>ALL</b>	<b>62%</b>	1,784	1,109	61%	64%	62%	<b>68%</b>	1,780	1,207	63%	70%	70%
Female	65%	1,076	703	64%	65%	67%	71%	1,072	758	69%	71%	2372%
Male	57%	708	406	56%	61%	55%	63%	708	449	56%	68%	67%

# Graduate Templates

- Draft templates have been released to WASC region for comment
- “Draft” —but still being evaluated by WASC reviewers!
- Single template for different degrees (MA, MBA, PhD, etc.)
- Report only one Graduation Rate and Time-to-Degree for each graduate degree (MA, MBA, PhD, etc.)
- No reporting of post-baccalaureate credentials and certificates
- No reporting by graduate disciplines – but this is currently under discussion



# Graduate Statistics Reported

For each degree (e.g., MA, MBA, MFA, PhD, JD):

- 5-year graduation rate for each master's degree, or 10-year graduation rate for each doctoral degree, or 5-year or 10-year graduation rate for professional doctorates (institution's choice)
- Students still enrolled after 5 years or 10 years
- Median elapsed time-to-degree for 3 most recent exiting cohorts
- Number – or range – of credits needed to complete degree

# Graduate CALCULATION/DATA ENTRY Template

(Data entered in "YELLOW" cells are automatically transferred to Summary Templates)

<b>DATA ENTRY-CALCULATION TEMPLATE: WASC GRADUATION RATE AND TIME-TO-DEGREE FOR WASC (GRADUATE DEGREES ONLY) *DRAFT 5-29-12*</b>																		
Prepared by Office of Institutional Research, Saint Mary's College of California														WASC REPORTING YEAR: <b>2011</b>				
Your Institution: <b>Saint Mary's College of California</b>																		
Degree: <b>MA</b>		Credits: <b>30 - 56</b>		Years: <b>5</b>		<b>GRADUATION RATES (Entering Cohort)</b>						<b>MA ELAPSED TIME-TO-DEGREE (Exiting Cohort)</b>						
GROUP	THREE YEAR TOTAL			2006 -2007			2005 -2006			2004 -2005			2010 -2011		2009 -2010		2008 -2009	
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Median Time (Years)	Number Graduating	Median Time (Years)	Number Graduating	Median Time (Years)	Number Graduating
<b>ALL</b>	<b>61%</b>	648	394	66.5%	206	137	59.6%	277	165	55.8%	165	92	2.00	199	2.50	173	2.00	171
Female	58%	466	269	65.2%	164	107	57.6%	203	117	45.5%	99	45	2.00	153	2.50	136	2.00	146
Male	68%	146	100	73.7%	38	28	59.2%	49	29	72.9%	59	43	2.00	46	2.00	37	2.50	25
African American	51%	51	26	50.0%	18	9	59.1%	22	13	36.4%	11	4	3.00	14	2.00	14	2.00	11
American Indian	0%	3	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	1	0		0	6.00	1		0
Asian (Pac. Isle.)*	66%	38	25	61.1%	18	11	66.7%	12	8	75.0%	8	6	3.00	7	2.25	10	2.50	11
Hawaiian/Pac. Isle.*	N = 0	0	0	N = 0	0	0	N = 0	0	0	N = 0	0	0		0		0		0
Hispanic/Latino	54%	56	30	60.0%	15	9	55.2%	29	16	41.7%	12	5	2.00	24	3.00	11	2.50	14
White	62%	320	198	70.3%	101	71	56.0%	125	70	60.6%	94	57	2.00	101	2.25	94	2.00	99
Nonresident Alien	17%	6	1	33.3%	3	1	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	2	0	4.25	2	3.00	1	3.00	1
Two or More Races	N = 0	0	0	N = 0	0	0	N = 0	0	0	N = 0	0	0	1.00	2		0		0
STILL ENROLLED-ALL	2%	13		1.5%	3		2.2%	6		2.4%	4							
NOTES: MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) Degree is Combined with MA Degree														NOTES: MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) Degree Combined with MA Degree				
IMPORTANT NOTE: Do <b>**NOT**</b> report UNKNOWN Gender nor UNKNOWN Ethnicity. <b>*Note: Pacific Islanders are included with Asians prior to 2010 and included with Hawaiians from 2010 onward.</b>																		
Degree: <b>MBA</b>		Credits: <b>36 - 54</b>		Years: <b>5</b>		<b>GRADUATION RATES (Entering Cohort)</b>						<b>MBA ELAPSED TIME-TO-DEGREE (Exiting Cohort)</b>						
GROUP	THREE YEAR TOTAL			2006 -2007			2005 -2006			2004 -2005			2010 -2011		2009 -2010		2008 -2009	
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort	Number Graduate	Median Time (Years)	Number Graduating	Median Time (Years)	Number Graduating	Median Time (Years)	Number Graduating
<b>ALL</b>	<b>83%</b>	427	353	81.6%	158	129	81.9%	127	104	84.5%	142	120	1.50	155	1.50	176	1.50	174
Female	82%	147	121	80.7%	57	46	77.1%	48	37	90.5%	42	38	1.50	63	1.50	66	1.50	65
Male	83%	274	227	81.6%	98	80	85.5%	76	65	82.0%	100	82	1.50	92	1.50	110	1.50	109

# Graduate SUMMARY Report

## WASC GRADUATION AND TIME-TO-DEGREE SUMMARY REPORT **\*\*Draft 5-29-12\*\***

INSTITUTION: **Saint Mary's College of California**

REPORTING YEAR: **2011**

STUDENT TYPE: **GRADUATE**

<b>MA</b> <b>30 - 56 credits</b>	5 Year Graduation Rates (For Entering Cohorts)						Elapsed Time to Degree (For Exiting Cohorts)					
	THREE YEAR TOTAL			2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2010-2011		2009-2010		2008-2009	
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort*	Number Graduate				Median Years	N	Median Years	N	Median Years	N
<b>ALL</b>	<b>61%</b>	648	394	67%	60%	56%	<b>2.0</b>	199	<b>2.5</b>	173	<b>2.0</b>	171
Female	58%	466	269	65%	58%	45%	2.0	153	2.5	136	2.0	146
Male	68%	146	100	74%	59%	73%	2.0	46	2.0	37	2.5	25
African American	51%	51	26	50%	59%	36%	3.0	14	2.0	14	2.0	11
American Indian	Small N	Small N	Small N	Sm N	Sm N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N
Asian (Pac. Isle.)	66%	38	25	61%	67%	75%	3.0	7	2.3	10	2.5	11
Hawaiian/Pac. Isle.	Small N	Small N	Small N	Sm N	Sm N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N
Hispanic/Latino	54%	56	30	60%	55%	42%	2.0	24	3.0	11	2.5	14
White	62%	320	198	70%	56%	61%	2.0	101	2.3	94	2.0	99
Nonresident Alien	17%	6	1	Sm N	Sm N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N
Two or More Races	Small N	Small N	Small N	Sm N	Sm N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N	Small N	Sm N
<b>STILL ENROLLED-ALL</b>	<b>2%</b>	13		Sm N	2%	Sm N						

\*Institution's Notes: **MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) Degree is Combined with MA Degree**

\*Notes: **MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) Degree Combined with MA Degree**

IMPORTANT NOTE: The total of Female + Male and/or the total of the ethnic groups may not sum to "ALL" as a consequence of "unknown" genders and ethnic groups.

<b>MBA</b> <b>36 - 54 credits</b>	5 Year Graduation Rates (For Entering Cohorts)						Elapsed Time to Degree (For Exiting Cohorts)					
	THREE YEAR TOTAL			2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2010-2011		2009-2010		2008-2009	
	Percent Graduate	Number in Cohort*	Number Graduate				Median Years	N	Median Years	N	Median Years	N
<b>ALL</b>	<b>83%</b>	427	353	82%	82%	85%	<b>1.5</b>	155	<b>1.5</b>	176	<b>1.5</b>	174
Female	82%	147	121	81%	77%	90%	1.5	63	1.5	66	1.5	275
Male	83%	274	227	82%	86%	82%	1.5	92	1.5	110	1.5	109

# Entering Graduate Data

Now we jump to a quick demonstration of entering data into the undergraduate templates in Excel, located on WASC's web site:

<http://www.wascsenior.org/redesign/gradretentionandgraduation>

# THE INSTITUTIONAL NARRATIVE

CAIR Panel Discussion, Part 3

# “Narratives” Reflect the School

- This is the most important part of your report—a five-page opportunity to explain your results in the context of your school’s mission, distinctive characteristics, and student populations served.
- Study your Summary Reports carefully, looking for trends and patterns.
- Reflect thoughtfully about the story that the Summary Reports tell about your institution.
- Narrative questions are intended to be the same for interpreting undergraduate and graduate Summary Reports.

# Narrative Question 1

## Retention, Graduation, and Time-to-Degree in Context:

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?

## Narrative Question 2

### Institutional Capacity for Monitoring and Understanding Retention, Graduation, and Time-to-Degree:

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.



# Narrative Question 3

## Retention, Graduation, and Time-to-Degree Challenges:

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)?

# Narrative Question 4

## Institutional Initiatives to Ensure or Improve Student Success:

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.

# Narrative Question 5

## Exclusions from Calculations:

Report the number of students you have removed from their cohorts, and describe any cohorts you have excluded. Explain your reasons for these exclusions.

# Tentative Review Schedule

**Pilot Phase 1**  
**September 2012**  
**9 schools**

**Pilot Phase 2**  
**February/March 2013**  
**7 schools**

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**May 2013**  
**estimated**  
**44 schools**

**2014**  
**estimated**  
**60 - 65 schools**

**2015**  
**estimated**  
**60 - 65 schools**

# **BUILDING THE NARRATIVE FOR EXTERNAL READERS + INSIGHT INTO THE REVIEW PROCESS**

CAIR Panel Discussion, Part 4

# Perspective from two sides



**Creating the Report ..... Reviewing the Reports**



# CREATING THE REPORTS

# Process at a Glance

6. Project planning
5. Crunching the data and populating the templates
4. Deeper/special analyses
3. Narrative
2. Campus review, revisions
1. Send off!



# Project Planning

Put together a comprehensive list/framework of what the task will entail at your institution

- Identify how many degree programs and templates will be relevant at your institution
- Which ones are not relevant and why
- Decide how you'll approach the reporting of any nontraditional degree programs
- Identify appropriate peers at each level

# Example

**At Mount St. Mary's College:**

- **5 UG degrees + 5 GR degrees**
- **6 templates were relevant, including the nontraditional template, 3 different ways**
- **92 cohorts to establish and track**

# Project Planning

- What is the state of your data within the context of the extended timeframe?
- Major changes to ERP, census files, or reporting tools?
- Major program changes during reporting window?
- Beware new researchers and remote programmers
- Strategy: ask others to affirm cohorts

# Crunching the Data

- Likely the most time-intensive portion of project
- Establish cohorts
- Track forwards: retention & graduation
- Track backwards: time to degree
- Strategy: start with easy degree cohort and gradually move on to more complex ones

# Deeper or Special Analyses

- In response to unique aspects of your institution (mission, programs, students...)
- To shed light on significant patterns
  - Sudden changes in student outcomes overall
  - Gaps between subgroups

# Narrative

Use WASC Guiding Questions to place the data in context for WASC reviewers

- **Mission, students, programs**
- **Comparison institutions**
  - Likely different peer institutions for different degrees/cohorts
  - Provide clear rationale for selection
  - Somewhat challenging to find comparison data beyond IPEDS data. Share. Should improve.

# Narrative

- **Concise page limit:**
  - 5 pages: traditional undergrad
  - 5 pages: graduate
- **Appendices:**
  - Student Success Action Plan
  - Details behind special analyses

# Final Stages

- **Campus Review**
  - Co-opt knowledgeable contributors, reviewers, editors
  - Sharing draft for information and input
  - No new questions for research!
  - Final edits
  - Final approval
- **Send off!**





# Surface!



# Sharing Report

- Faculty
- Deans
- Retention/Student Success Committee(s)
- Board of Trustees
- Grants / Planned Giving Offices
- Web and/or portal sites



## REVIEWING THE REPORTS

# WASC Retention and Graduation Review Committee

- Jill Ferguson (WASC) + 6 members across UC, CSU and independents
- Institutional Research, Provosts, Deans, Student Affairs
- 3-year commitment to serve
- Committee to expand as cycle expands

# Reviewers

- Receive reports from WASC for all assigned institutions at least two weeks in advance
- Read reports and review template/rubric independently
- Committee meets at WASC Offices
- Training, calibrating, norming session
- Small teams discuss reports, reach consensus, and complete template

# WASC Retention & Graduation Review Committee Report Template

## *Background*

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: Public \_\_ Private, non-profit \_\_ For-profit \_\_

## Accreditation status/date:

Eligibility granted \_\_\_\_\_

Candidacy granted \_\_\_\_\_

Last accredited/reaccredited \_\_\_\_\_

Notice of Concern \_\_

Sanction: Warning \_\_ Probation\_\_ Show Cause\_\_

## Date of next WASC interaction:

Interim Report \_\_\_\_\_

Special Visit \_\_\_\_\_

Off-site Review \_\_\_\_\_

Reaccreditation Visit \_\_\_\_\_

## Institutions used for comparison (list):

# WASC Retention & Graduation Review Committee Report Template

## *Findings and Recommendations*

### Findings:

Template(s) completed properly? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

### Comments:

	Yes	No
Narrative is responsive to WASC requirements?		
Did the report put the retention, graduation, and time-to-degree in context?		
Were challenges and factors that affect persistence discussed?		
Were any special efforts identified to help ensure acceptable retention and completion rates?		
Did the institution discuss any exclusions?		

**Comments to any of the above questions:**

# WASC Retention & Graduation Review Committee Report Template

Appropriate comparison campuses?

Yes    No

Comments:



# WASC 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.

# WASC Retention & Graduation Committee Report Template

Retention and graduation rates are within acceptable ranges.

For the whole \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Comments:

Within specific subpopulations? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Comments:

Other concerns arose in the review ? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Comments:

# Reviewers' Recommendations

- \_\_\_ Review in three years
- \_\_\_ Review in six years
- \_\_\_ Refer to next interaction with WASC
- \_\_\_ Request to be included in next Interim Report
- \_\_\_ Request Special Visit
- \_\_\_ Request next re-accreditation cycle

Areas of concern for next peer review:

# Next Steps in the Process



# Tips

- × **DON'T submit late**
- × **DON'T try to bury your readers with appendices that are not clearly relevant**
- × **DON'T skip responding to important points such as rationale for choosing comparisons schools, comparison schools for graduate programs, achievement gaps**

## Tips

- ✓ DO provide context - brief description of your institution (mission, programs, students)
- ✓ DO establish a realistic timeline, based on the number and complexity of degree offerings
- ✓ DO answer ALL questions posed in the narrative
- ✓ DO establish clear rationale for peer institutions
- ✓ DO provide relevant appendices
  - ✓ Retention/Success Action Plan
  - ✓ connect logically to broader narrative and vice versa

# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION