University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dashboard Indicators

Enrollments, Graduation and Retention Rates, Degrees Awarded, and Graduate Education Updates by:
University Office for Planning and Budgeting
October 12, 2015

Presented by:
Interim Chancellor Barbara Wilson
November 12, 2015
# Peer Groups

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* No medical center.
** Medical center affiliated with the university, but owned by the state.
*** An affiliated medical center is under construction and will begin operations in 2017.
Enrollments at the Urbana campus are large – among the largest in our peer group. But this large enrollment has not been achieved at the expense of quality. We offer high-quality education on a very large scale.

Graduate and Professional enrollments are steady and reflect a similar tendency among our peer institutions which have also maintained stable enrollment over the past five years.

We are actively promoting the development of new coursework-based “professional” masters degrees to expand our educational mission to a broader cross section of the population and to address needs in a skilled workforce.
This fall we had 7,565 new freshmen, up 9.1% from last year and the second-largest freshman class ever. That group included 5,528 Illinois residents, up 11% from last year and the largest number since 2009.

We regularly have one of the largest freshman classes among our peers.
We continue to make gains in this area. This fall’s freshman class included 812 Hispanic freshmen, up 13% from last year, and 475 African American freshmen, up 33% from last year. This is the largest number of African American freshmen since the federal definitions of race/ethnicity changed in 2010. The number of students reporting two or more races continues to grow, and a total of 564 freshmen reported African American as some part of their race/ethnicity.
In absolute numbers of underrepresented students we are doing very well. In terms of African American undergraduates we are first in this group. The two schools ahead of us on this chart enrolled more Hispanic undergraduates, and are in states with large Hispanic populations.

The Urbana campus frequently ranks second among four-year schools in enrolling graduates of the Chicago Public Schools, and we enrolled 764 CPS graduates in this fall’s freshman class, a gain of 19% over the previous year. Among four-year schools, only our sister campus in Chicago regularly enrolls more CPS graduates.

While we will absolutely continue to press forward on student diversity, there is much here to be proud of.
We are working hard to attract and retain underrepresented students in our graduate and professional programs.

We offer a variety of Educational Equity Programs to facilitate the recruitment, retention, and success of underrepresented students.

Last month, 67 prospective underrepresented graduate students visited campus as part of fall recruitment event and early admission program called Aspire, whose goal is to bring underrepresented undergraduates to campus early in their senior year and encourage them to apply for graduate school at Illinois. There is a special early admission decision and a fellowship competition specifically for students who come to Aspire.

We also offer a summer programs and year round recruitment events to help to recruit underrepresented students.

Our ability to attract underrepresented students is closely linked to the number and size of graduate fellowships we are able to offer.
This chart combines data from the previous undergraduate and graduate charts.
Graduation and Retention Rates
We are doing well overall in freshman-to-sophomore retention rates, sitting very close to our peer-group rates, which are among the best in the country. We continue to work on identifying students who are at the greatest risk academically and targeting them for support services.
Our four-year graduate rate is around the median of our peers, and continues to rise.

Among 261 public universities in the nation with 10,000 or more students, we rank 7th on four-year graduation.
Four-year graduation rates for underrepresented students are also good compared to our peers, and the overall trend is upward.

Note that this chart labels each bar by the year that the student cohort entered the university.
Our campus six-year graduation rate has ticked up to 85%. This is just below the peer median, though well above the Big Ten average of 79%.

In six-year graduation rate we are 10th in the nation among 261 large public universities.
We are particularly proud of our students from underrepresented groups, who have been graduating at increasingly higher rates. The gap between their graduation rate and the overall rate has closed from 12 percentage points for the 2005 cohort to 7 percentage points for the 2009 cohort. We want this gap to be zero, and we will continue to work toward that goal.

We are also proud of our students from Chicago Public Schools. Over the same period, the graduation gap closed from 12 points for the 2005 cohort to only 4 percentage points for the 2009 cohort.
Degrees Awarded
This number just keeps increasing. We have very strong STEM programs that continue to attract students to our campus. We will continue to monitor students/faculty ratios and teaching facilities capacities in these popular STEM areas to ensure we maintain the high academic quality that is the hallmark of these programs.
We continue to make substantial progress in recruiting graduate students in STEM fields. We are well above the median of our peers.

This Fall we initiated a three-year grant from the Sloan Foundation in which we partner to provide funding and resources to recruit underrepresented doctoral students in STEM related fields.

For example, Chemistry has consistently recruited greater numbers of underrepresented students, and saw record increases this year. Our pilot year includes students from Chemistry, Mathematics, and Statistics. Our goal is to recruit 50 underrepresented additional students in STEM fields.
This chart combines the data from the two previous slides.
With our large class size and high graduation rate, we award a large number of bachelor’s degrees. Transfer students are also included in these data. It was exciting to see the entire class of 2015 together at the stadium last May.
This trend continues to be upward with our campus granting more graduate and professional degrees than the peer median.

New graduate programs including the professional masters degrees (PSM, MEng), and the online MBA are broadening our educational mission in order to help meet the nation’s skilled labor needs.
This is the combined data from the two previous slides.

In total, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign grants more degrees than its peer median.

Note: Only includes bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees; excludes associate degrees and certificates. Degrees awarded from July 1 to June 30 of each fiscal year.
With numbers of underrepresented students and their graduation rates rising, these numbers will increase in the coming years. We continue to explore ways to recruit more students from underrepresented groups and to support their academic success. More details on these campus efforts appear later in this presentation (see page 38).
Because of our large size and high graduation rates, the Urbana campus is a leader in bachelor’s degrees earned by students from underrepresented groups.

In fact, we graduate more underrepresented students who start as freshmen than any other Big Ten university.

We also award more bachelor’s degrees to graduates of the Chicago Public Schools than any other college or university.
The percentage of graduate and professional degrees granted to underrepresented students has held steady.

However, we remain behind many of our peers in terms of the percentage of degrees awarded to underrepresented students.

Further improvement in this will tie closely to our efforts to recruit and support more students.
Five year data show a steady increase in numbers of degrees awarded. As part of our review of graduate programs, we regularly monitor the recruitment, experiences and outcomes for underrepresented minority students.

We rank third amongst our peers with regard to the absolute number of graduate and professional degrees awarded to students from underrepresented groups.

Because our campus has large enrollments we frequently rank highly in absolute numbers of students, degrees, etc., even when our percentage values are not the highest in our peer group. While we continue to strive to improve both percentages and absolute numbers, graduating large numbers of underrepresented students does mean that we are making a significant impact on the state and the nation.
Here you see combined graduate and undergraduate data in terms of percentage.
This is the combined data in terms of numbers of degrees.
As a comprehensive research university, we offer 88 doctoral programs. We now review all doctoral programs on a five-year cycle, monitoring and fostering improvements in program quality, effectiveness and student satisfaction. We have closed five programs as a result of these reviews.
Median time to degree among doctoral students is relatively consistent and in keeping with our peers. We now examine time-to-degree as part of the ongoing doctoral program reviews, and we encourage programs with extended time-to-degree to move students through program hurdles more efficiently. Median elapsed time to degree for a master’s student is 1.7 years.
Across the country and including our peers, the economy is likely contributing to the decreases evident in the graph. We are performing better than our peers on this metric.

Our graduate programs tend to be top-ranked, and most graduates find employment in their fields.
We are doing better than our peers at graduating students without debt -- and far better than national averages.
The Urbana campus provides high-quality education at a large scale. Our retention and graduation rates are high, we produce a large number of graduates with STEM degrees, and we are a leader in graduating underrepresented students. Our graduate programs are very much in demand, and our students are graduating with lower-than-average levels of debt.

In the area of traditional online programs we have just launched a Master’s in Human Resources and Industrial Relations, a Certificate of Professional Development in Urban Agriculture, and a Certificate of Professional Development in Information Accessibility Design and Policy. Additional programs are queued up to launch this spring and next fall.

We are also innovators in non-traditional online learning. More than two million learners have taken one of our MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) on Coursera, and this has led to revenue-generating “course specializations” in Data Mining, Cloud Computing, Improving Business Finances and Operations, and Digital Marketing, with more to come. Our College of Business this spring announced its revolutionary online iMBA, which will provide a fully-accredited Master’s in Business Administration for a fraction of the traditional cost. Students are already taking iMBA courses for credit, and the first cohort of students will officially start in January.
This year we increased the number of Illinois resident freshmen substantially, and we also increased the number of underrepresented freshmen.

We further reduced the graduation gap for underrepresented students, and we will continue to drive that gap towards zero.

Our pilot Winter Session allowed 750 students to complete a course online, between the end of fall exams and the start of the spring semester. This helped these students stay on track for a timely graduation by fulfilling an general education requirement, creating a manageable course load for their last semester, or allowing them to take a hard-to-get course to complete a minor. We will offer even more courses for Winter Session this year.

A thorough review of graduate programs is improving the effectiveness of those programs, and also resulted in pruning five doctoral programs from our list.

Our Graduate College External Fellowships Office is helping students compete for the most prestigious national and international fellowships, and we now have a record number of National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellows on our campus: 99 fellows this year, up from 25 fellows five years ago.
Admissions yield (the percent of admitted students who enroll) has been declining steadily over the last ten years, in large part because affordability has become important for students and their parents. This year we achieved a small increase in yield, which is a welcome change from a steady decline. We will continue to work on this.

While we have had some notable success with underrepresented students, we want to continue to increase their numbers, both undergraduate and graduate, in our student body.

And, while we retain and graduate students at a high rate, we want to these rates to rise even more, to ensure that every student derives the maximum benefit from studying on our campus.
Last year we made new investments in recruiting, such as a campus telecounseling center where current students can call prospective students, and adding a staff member to our Chicago satellite recruiting office. These changes contributed to a great recruiting year, and they are important to sustain, even as we grapple with reduced state funding.

Similarly, we offered a new access-oriented scholarship program for freshmen admitted this fall, the Chancellor’s Access Grant, targeting the gap between the high-achieving President’s Award Program students and the Illinois Promise program, which supports students from families with income below the federal poverty level. 200 freshmen are receiving this grant, and we want to continue those scholarships and be able to offer a new round of awards for next fall.

A key step for increasing retention and graduation rates (which are already excellent) will be to better coordinate the various programs in colleges and campus units that support academic success, and catch any students that might be falling between the cracks.

On the graduate side, we offer a suite of recruiting programs including a campus visit program for underrepresented graduate students.

Our Graduate College has multiple partnerships with minority-serving institutions, to help recruit more underrepresented students into our graduate and professional programs.

Also, our assessments of doctoral degree programs on campus look carefully at the experience of students in those programs, to ensure the best possible educational climate.

The Sloan Foundation selected Illinois for the establishment of a University Center of Exemplary Mentoring that provides support for underrepresented minority doctoral students in STEM disciplines.
Admissions yield, enrollments, and graduation rates are closely tied to affordability. Students admitted to our campus sometimes chose to attend other schools that have lower tuition or offer more financial aid, and our enrolled students may struggle to complete their degrees when they have financial difficulties. The Board policy of controlling tuition growth, and efforts to provide more financial aid for our students, are helping. We continue to watch this area carefully, and to look for new ways to make our campus more affordable.

The lack of a state appropriation for MAP grants, the Monetary Assistance Program that supports Illinois residents from lower-income families, is very troubling. We awarded $13M in MAP grants for the Fall semester, expecting that the state would have a budget by now, and we will soon have to make a decision about the spring semester. Any reduction in funding would hit MAP students hard. These students and their families are already stretched to the limit to pay for college, and many students might simply not be able to return to campus for Spring. Also, 44% of our African American students and 45% of our Hispanic students hold a MAP grant, so they will be affected in high proportion. We are studying what the campus can do to support these students.

The state budget impasse is also threatening funding for graduate fellowships and recruiting programs, particularly those that support underrepresented students. Absent a state budget, we may have to cancel or severely curtail many of these programs in the coming months. It is essential that everything possible be done to continue to support access for a diverse range of graduate and undergraduate students.
Questions?