

**Institution:** Eastern Michigan University  
**Chief Executive Officer:** Dr. James M. Smith, President  
**Date:** 11/30/2018

**Action:** Interim report on student retention, persistence and completion goals

**Core Component:** 4C

**Area Focus:** The institution has one year to identify specific, projected, short-term and long-term (6 years into the future) performance goals (e.g. target percentages/ numbers) and benchmarks for retention, persistence and completion. Due December 3, 2018.

This report responds to the required interim report on Eastern Michigan University's (EMU) student retention, persistence, and completion goals by the Higher Learning Commission. The report establishes specific student success goals based on historical context about EMU's efforts on improving student success and analytical approaches.

## **Historical Context**

Improving student success has been a consistent priority of EMU. In its 2013 strategic plan (see Appendix A), EMU put student engagement and success as the number one strategic theme. In 2014, EMU launched a comprehensive degree completion plan (see Appendix B). The Provost's Office was charged to lead the implementation of the plan by taking a holistic approach. At EMU, student success data, such as retention and completion rates, are monitored closely, published, and updated regularly to the Board of Regents. The office of Institutional Research and Information Management (IRIM) works with other key offices and departments, and conducts ongoing analytical studies on student success.

In March 2018, a Retention and Completion team was formed to look into actions that EMU may take in order to further increase student persistence. Members of the team include: Vice President of Enrollment Management, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Services, and Administration, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Assistant Vice President of IRIM, and Assistant Vice President of Academic Services. The team first looked into data related to FTIAC student persistence, and based on detailed analysis and institutional focus, the team established attainable goals in student retention and completion. In September 2018, the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Research joined the team and goals for graduate student success were incorporated into this report.

## **Data Analysis**

Historically, among peer institutions, EMU maintains a respectable first-year retention rate for its first-time freshman cohort (FTIAC) varying between 71% and 76%. Four-, five- and six-year completion rates are comparatively lower, but are on the rise in all three categories during recent years. In Fall 2018, all three measures of graduation rates, 4-, 5-, and 6-year, reached record highs for the recent fifteen years since EMU started capturing the data in its Banner system in 2003 (see Tables 1, 2, and Appendix C). Six-year graduation rate jumped to 45.1% from 40.4% in prior fall term, which is very close to the average level of all Carnegie R3 public universities (i.e., 45.4% at present).

Table 1. Trends of FTIAC 1<sup>st</sup>-Year Retention Rate (in %)

Cohort Start Term	Cohort Size	1 <sup>st</sup> -Year Retention Rate
Fall 2010	1,955	76.1
Fall 2011	2,119	75.3
Fall 2012	2,612	73.8
Fall 2013	2,848	72.5
Fall 2014	2,588	74.7
Fall 2015	2,846	74.6
Fall 2016	2,785	71.7
Fall 2017	2,783	71.6

Table 2. Trends of FTIAC 4-, 5-, 6-Year Completion Rate (in %)

Cohort Start Term	Cohort Size	4-Year	5-Year	6-Year
Fall 2008	2,167	12.9	27.0	36.6
Fall 2009	2,196	13.1	30.9	40.1
Fall 2010	1,955	13.0	32.3	40.7
Fall 2011	2,119	14.1	31.7	40.4
Fall 2012	2,612	16.6	36.8	45.1
Fall 2013	2,848	19.1	38.9	
Fall 2014	2,588	19.9		

EMU's Retention and Completion team reviewed a broad range of student persistence data, from overall retention and completion data to specific success data at very granular levels (see examples in Appendix D). The team also reviewed the mission, student population, and, among peer institutions, available resources relevant goal setting and benchmarking. Some highlights from data analysis are:

- Both retention and graduation rates for first-generation students are constantly lower by six to eight percentage points than it for non-first-generation students (Table 3 & 4)

Table 3. Table 4. Retention Rate (in %) Comparisons between 1<sup>st</sup>-Gen and Non-1<sup>st</sup>-Gen Students

Cohort Start Term	1st-Gen		Non-1st-Gen	
	Cohort Size	Retention Rate	Cohort Size	Retention Rate
Fall 2013	921	69.2	1,927	74.1
Fall 2014	796	72.0	1,792	75.8
Fall 2015	810	74.0	2,036	74.9
Fall 2016	745	65.8	2,040	73.8
Fall 2017	720	66.0	2,063	73.5

Table 4. Graduation Rate (in %) Comparisons between 1<sup>st</sup>-Gen and Non-1<sup>st</sup>-Gen Students

First Generation Students				
Cohort Start Term	Cohort Size	4-Year	5-Year	6-Year
Fall 2009	737	10.3	24.4	34.3
Fall 2010	648	9.6	24.7	32.6
Fall 2011	745	10.2	24.3	34.6
Fall 2012	904	12.8	31.1	39.9
Fall 2013	921	15.3	33.1	
Fall 2014	796	15.5		
Non-First-Generation Students				
Cohort Start Term	Cohort Size	4-Year	5-Year	6-Year
Fall 2009	1,459	14.5	34.2	43.0
Fall 2010	1,307	14.7	36.0	44.8
Fall 2011	1,374	16.2	35.7	43.5
Fall 2012	1,708	18.6	39.8	47.8
Fall 2013	1,927	20.9	41.6	
Fall 2014	1,792	21.8		

- Both retention and graduation rates for underrepresented ethnic minority students are five to ten percentage lower than it for White and Asian students (See Appendix E)
- The attrition rate between the beginnings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year is 12%.
- The African American EDGE group (special admission) has low first-year retention rate (56.7%), while the same group has an attrition rate of 16% between the beginnings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
- African American students present low completion rates, both in overall population and in certain subgroups (e.g., male, male+Pell, EDGE).
- First-generation students show a slightly lower retention rate in both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years.
- First-generation students who received Pell have a significantly lower 6-year graduation rate (27.6%) than the university average (39.2%).

### Proposed Student Success Goals

Based on EMU's institutional mission and strategic plan, recent improvements in student degree completion, and a comprehensive review of data and historical trends, the following goals for student success at EMU are proposed:

1. FTIAC Retention Rate Goals
  - a. Baseline Goal: Recover the overall 1<sup>st</sup>-year retention rate to 75% by 2021 (for fall 2020 cohort), and then maintain it at a 75% range.

- b. Aspirational Goal: Increase the overall 1<sup>st</sup>-year retention rate to the top 20% level of all Carnegie R3 public universities by 2025 (that is: 80% at present).
- c. Reduce the performance gap for first-generation and underrepresented groups; specifically, to increase the 1<sup>st</sup>-year retention rate by 3% for (1) first-generation students and (2) ethnically underrepresented groups.

Definitions: (1) first-generation students are identified through FAFSA application data, and (2) ethnically underrepresented groups are defined based on IPEDS categories, except White, Asian, and Non-Resident Alien are excluded.

## 2. FTIAC Graduation Rate Goals

- a. Baseline Goal: Increase the overall 6-year graduation rate to 48% by 2021 (fall 2015 start cohort), and then maintain it at a 48% range.
- b. Mid-Range Target: Increase the overall 6-year graduation rate to 50% by 2023 (fall 2017 start cohort) and sustain rate at that level.
- c. Aspirational Goal: Increase the overall 6-year graduation rate to the top 20% level of all Carnegie R3 public universities by 2025 (that is: 53.4% at present).
- d. Reduce the performance gap for first-generation and underrepresented groups; specifically, to increase the 6-year completion rate by 3% for (1) first-generation students and (2) ethnically underrepresented groups.

## Plan of Action

As mentioned in previous sections of the report, EMU has taken a holistic approach and implemented strategic actions to improve student retention and completion. Examples of those high-level and high-impact actions the University has implemented include:

- Continued systematic improvement of student advising structure and student support services. In an effort to improve retention and degree completion Eastern Michigan University has established five academic college advising offices across campus, and the University Advising and Career Development Center. All new students entering EMU are required to attend an academic advising session during the fall semester before registering for the winter semester. The University Advising and Career Development Center works with all students who are undeclared/undecided. Advisors, along with career coaches, work with this student population to help guide students toward the declaration of major in a timely manner.
- Optimized the institutional scholarship award algorithm to recruit better prepared students. In Fall 2012, EMU implemented a new Emerald scholarship program offering higher scholarship awards to attract larger quantity and quality of students. Table One shows the positive impact of that program on enrollment growth. Table two shows the

first entering class (Fall 2012) from the new scholarship model has produced a 4.7% increase in the six year graduation rate.

Emerald Scholarships have three award ranges; high (\$4,500), medium (\$3,500), low (\$2,500). The high award has a one-year retention rate of 86.6%, medium is 72.4%, and low is 66.4%. Students with no academic scholarship had a 56.5% retention rate. The four year graduation rate for the high award is 30.8%, medium is 11.7%, and low is 7.6%.

- Continuous investment of institutional resources on student financial aid to improve access and affordability. The expenditure budget for fiscal year 2018/19 includes \$53.8 million in University-sponsored financial aid. Over the last 11 years, the University has increased financial aid by more than 150 percent from the \$21.4 million in aid provided in 2007-2008. A new need/merit based program called Education First Opportunity Scholarship was created to target high need, first generation, academically prepared students. Students must be Pell eligible, minimum 3.00 HS GPA and minimum 20 ACT Composite. EMU will apply the Pell toward 30 credits of tuition and scholarship the tuition difference. First year retention rate is 80.3%. Four year graduation rate is 23.5%.

For Fall 2019, EMU is introducing a new scholarship option (4WARD Graduation Scholarship) that incentivizes graduation in four years. Students live on campus all four years with a “locked in” room and board charge. Tuition for year one is the standard 30 credit hour rate. Tuition for year two is the same locked in 30 hour rate from year one. Tuition for year three is zero, tuition for year four is zero. Student must attempt 30 credits each year, and graduate in four years.

- Launched a number of key initiatives including the Starfish Early Alert System (creates opportunities for undergraduate students to be alerted regarding their academic progress in courses during the semester), the Gateways to Completion project (a national initiative that has resulted in measureable declines in DWFI grades in several STEM gateway courses involved in the project), and the Mentor Collective ( a peer mentoring pilot initiative connecting new, first generation students with junior/senior peer mentors for academic and social support).
- In addition to ongoing analyses and reports on student retention and completion through multifaceted approaches, the Office of Institutional Research and Information Management has published a regular IRIM Research Primer series, focusing on student success related analyses (See example in Appendix F). These research primers have been shared among key academic leaders to help them make data-driven decisions.
- For master’s students, implemented new time limit for degree completion and consistently monitor time-to-degree patterns at the program levels, which has further reduced the number of conditional admissions.

To achieve these goals, we will further take a variety of actions based on results from data analysis, some of which are new approaches and some of which are continuations of what has previously been initiated. Principles for future actions include:

1. Continue to move the student success agenda based on a system-wide and holistic approach in a manner consistent with the institution's mission and strategic plan.
2. Continue to implement and further revamp the degree completion plan developed in 2014. EMU has registered and will participate in HLC's Student Success Academy. As a result of the commitment, EMU's team (along with faculty, staff and students) will propose revisions to the degree completion plan.
3. Share the responsibility and accountability for helping students succeed by establishing college level student persistence teams and further conduct program level analyses (including program maps and improved scheduling) based data review and intervention.
4. Consistently measure and monitor outcomes of all student success indicators such as retention, course passing rates, program progression, and completion data at various levels. EMU's IRIM has developed multiple reporting and analytical tools based on a variety of platforms (e.g., websites on inter- and intranet, Tableau reports) that both keep academic leaders informed and provide some levels of user-based analytical capacity.

## **Summary**

EMU is committed to student success and has made continuous efforts to improve student retention and completion (see Table 2 in the beginning section). During the All Administrative Professional meeting in October, President Smith announced the kickoff of EMU's 2013 Strategic Plan revision, with the top priority continuing to be improving student success. The quantifiable measures presented in this report will help EMU establish goals and benchmarks, and further advance its student success agenda during the next several years.

## APPENDICES



## Appendix A: 2013 EMU Strategic Plan

### Student Engagement and Success

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 1:</b> Create and expand purposeful learning opportunities inside and outside classrooms, in the community and globally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>1.1:</b> Document, review and continue to expand field experiences (internships, practicum, co-op activities), leadership trainings, academic service learning, community engagement, and other learning opportunities across the university and beyond.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.2:</b> Continue to strengthen and cultivate distinctive and compelling experiences through undergraduate research programs and interactions with faculty.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 2:</b> Develop a comprehensive and systematic approach to improve services and processes that enhance student persistence and graduation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>2.1:</b> Identify, design and implement seamless connections among academic/non-academic programs and services that facilitate student persistence and graduation.</li> <li>➤ <b>2.2:</b> Connect students through existing structures to resources that will support student well-being across the university (e.g., academic, social, physical, emotional, financial).</li> <li>➤ <b>2.3:</b> Use technology to optimize the delivery of student services.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 3:</b> Prepare students to successfully and meaningfully interact with people from diverse backgrounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>3.1:</b> Support students in becoming actively engaged global citizens with strong cultural awareness.</li> <li>➤ <b>3.2:</b> Build a university culture in which respect, responsibility, pride and diversity are valued, encouraged and celebrated.</li> </ul>

### High Performing Academic Programs and Quality Research

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 1:</b> Provide students with high-quality instruction and learning experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>1.1:</b> Recruit and retain talented faculty.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.2:</b> Ensure the General Education program meets the needs of students to thrive in society.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.3:</b> Ensure faculty and instructors are supported to keep up with pedagogical and technological advances in the classroom and online.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.4:</b> Create and support innovative academic programs and pedagogy.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.5:</b> Ensure classrooms are equipped with appropriate equipment and resources.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 2:</b> Increase research to attract external funding and improve student education, with a focus on graduate education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>2.1:</b> Increase research and creative activities.</li> <li>➤ <b>2.2:</b> Increase sponsorship of academic research and creative activities (grants, endowments, etc.).</li> <li>➤ <b>2.3:</b> Systematically address staffing and infrastructure costs of scholarship (lab equipment, data curation, library costs).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 3:</b> Ensure there are systematic processes in place to create, maintain or expand programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>3.1:</b> Develop a process for identifying programs to be created, expanded or maintained.</li> <li>➤ <b>3.2:</b> Encourage growth of successful existing programs and reallocate resources from programs that have outlived their usefulness or can be right-sized.</li> <li>➤ <b>3.3:</b> Create a framework for the development of new academic programs that meet community/regional and market needs.</li> </ul>

### Institutional Effectiveness

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 1:</b> Foster a diverse, ethical, and respectful workplace that supports the university's mission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>1.1:</b> Develop and recruit leadership that reflects the diversity of the student body.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.2:</b> Encourage leaders to model ethical behavior.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.3:</b> Support employees in becoming actively engaged citizens with strong cultural awareness.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.4:</b> Facilitate effective, timely and transparent communication among university stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 2:</b> Improve our processes and resource allocation to enhance operational effectiveness and fiscal stewardship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>2.1:</b> Examine university processes for improvement and functional realignment, and implement resource allocation to improve performance.</li> <li>➤ <b>2.2:</b> Invest in professional development and formulate an institutional knowledge management program to support succession planning.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 3:</b> Establish a culture of innovation by recognizing and rewarding new or creative processes and initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>3.1:</b> Establish mechanisms to encourage and support effective innovation.</li> <li>➤ <b>3.2:</b> Establish division/departments goals and incentives for innovative revenue generation and cost reduction.</li> </ul>

### Service and Engagement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 1:</b> Enhance community partnerships with EMU.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>1.1:</b> Enhance and disseminate Academic Service – Learning opportunities.</li> <li>➤ <b>1.2:</b> Create institutional infrastructure and leverage EMU resources and talent to serve the community and Michigan as a whole.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Goal 2:</b> Improve community perceptions of EMU.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>2.1:</b> Effectively utilize university activities (including athletic and arts related activities, etc.) as vehicles toward engaging the community and improving perceptions of EMU.</li> <li>➤ <b>2.2:</b> Institute activities and procedures to ensure environmental sustainability and awareness at EMU.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

### **Four Year Retention and Degree Completion Improvement Plan (Summary) Eastern Michigan University 2013-2014**

The Eastern Michigan University (EMU) Degree Completion and Retention (DCR) Plan has been developed to address both retention and graduation rates in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. At just under 40%, EMU's reported six-year "first time in any college" (FTIAC) student graduation rate is the second lowest among higher education institutions in the state of Michigan. The DCR plan focuses on five areas of practice, process, and policy that both scholarly and practitioner research find have great impact on degree completion and retention. The five areas are: Academic & Student Preparedness, Enrollment Policies, Financial Aid Policies and Incentives, Advising & Student Support and Curriculum Structure & Delivery. In addition, the plan includes targeted initiatives aimed at two demographic segments of the student population: Men of Color and Single Parents.

The targeted initiatives for the two demographic segments, Men of Color and Single Parents, are targeted for three main reasons. First, Eastern's, as well as national, statistics indicate that these two segments experience six-year degree completion rates in the 11-17% range, significantly lower than the general population. Second, research has shown that targeted programmatic efforts addressing the unique circumstances/attributes of these two segments can realize extraordinary results. Lastly, many on EMU's campus already have a strong interest/commitment to the two segments and continue to champion university efforts aimed at enhancing their success. We want to build on those efforts. Other groups may be targeted over time for focused programming as the plan is implemented and evaluated.

The final plan results from a two semester long process involving a number of drafts and dialogues. Initial draft proposals were prepared by 7 teams staffed primarily of university staff and administrators working in student service and support areas. Those initial proposals were circulated to campus for review and enhancement. Feedback was received from focus groups comprised of students, faculty, staff and administrators. Additional open forums were held to widen participation opportunities. Drafts were updated and integrated into a single plan based on that feedback. This second draft plan was provided to Faculty Senate who provided input to the Provost's Office about suggested improvements and enhancements to the plan. It was also discussed with Student Government and the Student Leadership Group. The draft plan was also brought to administrative and staff groups for their feedback.

Each of the following sections includes a brief introduction to one of seven areas of the plan, followed by key strategies the University will pursue going forward. These strategies are not intended to be an all-inclusive long term strategic vision – they are instead key 'next steps' that Eastern Michigan University will undertake in an effort to increase retention and graduation rates in support of the university's overall strategic vision and plan.

#### ***Factor 1: Academic and Student Preparedness***

Students who successfully navigate the transition from high school to college tend to be those who are prepared academically and socially for the new environment. They adopt successful strategies of self-assessment and behaviors that support success and satisfaction. Examples include finding ways to add structure to their day-to-day life. This may be in the form of an on-campus job or participation in intramurals in addition to their full-time course load. They learn to budget their time carefully. Going from high school where much of the day was utilized for classes, extracurricular activities or homework and into college where they have only 15-16 hours/week clearly defined classroom time can be a difficult transition for many students. Failure to successfully navigate this transition can result in a significant increase in time to graduation, academic probation, or even drop out. Institutions can provide academic support programs to assess and support academic preparedness as well as curricular and/or co-curricular experiences for their first-year students focused on assisting them with this transition.

***Recommended Key Actions:***

1. *Create a comprehensive faculty mentor program.* Key goals of the mentorship program include:
  - a. Fostering vital mentoring connections between faculty and students. These relationships have been shown to impact academic transition, success and degree completion, particularly among students at the highest levels of risk in these areas.
  - b. Promoting student persistence and academic success by demonstrating the level of commitment from key members of the university community.
  - c. Helping students develop attitudes, behaviors, support strategies correlated with academic success and satisfaction.
  - d. Identifying core group of faculty and staff willing to serve as key role models, mentors in a variety of areas of need.
  - e. Build a clearing house of faculty member resources available to students.
2. *Conduct a comprehensive assessment of 'first year' courses offered at EMU as well as courses frequented at high rates by first year students in the past.* Project would be designed with the goal of identifying successful models of instruction, structuring and scheduling and other best practices in support of student retention at EMU. Long term goals include enhancing existing courses, broadening the scope of effective practices and composing a plan for broader implementation across student groups.
3. *Support Student Development of Four Year Graduation and Career Readiness Plans with appropriate staff and systems support.* This includes creation of orientation, advising and career development programs that promote and support these plans. It also includes acquisition of systems and software tools that support the creation, implementation and monitoring of the plans, both at the student level and across relevant campus departments and offices.

4. *Evaluate the cost and benefits of creating co-curricular transcripts.* Evaluation team should include members from all parts of the university that might provide programming that would be noted on these transcripts.
5. *Conduct review of existing developmental math, reading and writing programs (both curricular and support).* Evaluate these programs against national benchmarks and best practices.
6. *Adopt consistent university-wide messages around attracting and orienting new students for success.* Messages should support and be consistent with messaging around student success

## **Factor 2: Enrollment Policies**

Enrollment policies play a critical role in retention and degree completion as they set the tone in how easy or difficult the student will find navigating the system in working toward their degree. Communication about policies and key graduation requirements is absolutely essential for students to seamlessly progress toward graduation. In addition, who we recruit and how we support those students also play critical roles in retention and degree completion. It is essential we have policies which maintain standards, yet don't unnecessarily burden students in order to positively impact our retention and degree completion rates.

### **Recommended Key Actions:**

1. *Evaluate Current Recruiting Strategies: The committee recommends doing an evaluation of current recruiting practices. Review should include:*
  - o *Possible increases in the recruitment/enrollment of international students as they tend to have higher (and more timely) graduation rates, and also tend to live on campus.*
  - o *Consider removing the second year requirement from this campus residency policy and keeping only the first year requirement. This is a policy which hasn't been enforced for many years and may be deterring the interest of potential students/parents.*
  - o *Increasing services for students with transfer credit as they apply/enroll at EMU, possibly through creation of a transfer center. Have Transfer Center take the lead on providing clear information about transfer equivalencies (including those scheduled to occur) and ensure we clearly identify those transfer courses which meet general education requirements or are direct equivalents to EMU courses. In addition, this center could assist with the consolidation of international and domestic tabulation of credit.*
  - o *Explore ways to enhance relationships with key community colleges by allowing shared access to online portals to expedite the admission and advising processes.*

2. *Develop a comprehensive institutional approach to advising students returning to EMU after dismissals.*
  - o Currently students may return an unlimited number of times (by policy). EMU should study the possibility of placing a limit on the number of returns students may make following dismissal for academic reasons.
  - o Develop a range of plans students must follow if they reach academic probation status in order to return to good standing.
3. *Conduct a comprehensive review of advising policies with specific consideration given to implementation of additional policies consistent with best practices.*
  - o Full time student earns less than 24 hours in a year.
  - o Student is on academic probation (before registering for the next semester).
  - o Students who have earned more than 150 credits do not have a degree (before registering for the next semester)
  - o Students who change their major two or more times in a single semester (either with an academic advisor or career coach – before the change of major form is processed)
4. *Clarifying graduation clearance process for students with goal of encouraging increased contact with advisors.* Students should only receive graduation clearance from Records and Registration after registering for their last course(s). Clearance/audit processes are not substitutes for advising which is more focused on individual needs and problem solving.
5. *Require students declare a major by the beginning of junior year.* EMU should evaluate the adoption of a policy requiring students to declare a major by the beginning of their third year of full time attendance (or equivalent credit hour total). Advising and other support services are most effective when targeted more precisely in this regard.
6. *Conduct a curricular review to ensure that all programs are offered in a way that allows for 4-year graduation.*

### ***Factor 3: Financial Aid Policies and Incentives***

Students routinely cite financial issues and related demands as reasons they leave EMU. National data also supports a lack of financial resources as one of the primary reasons students depart from college or do not perform at their highest academic levels. A substantial proportion of EMU students are eligible for Pell Grants (a needs-based form of financial aid) and other incentives.

#### ***Recommended Key Actions:***

1. *Conduct a strategic assessment of student enrollment patterns and attitudes with the goal of better understanding why students stop-out and depart from EMU.*

Students often point to financial reasons for departing school. The university needs a comprehensive data driven understanding of why students stay at EMU and why students leave temporary or permanently. Aid packages will only be successful to the degree they are tailored to the real needs of students, especially those most at risk. It is critical that this be reviewed with Faculty Senate and their recommendations sought for how to address the data gathered.

2. *Restructure Gift Aid to Scholarships in order to incentivize academic success and progress to degree.* Awards would still have a need based element to them, but students would also be expected to meet academic criteria to maintain or earn back aid eligibility.
3. *Evaluate, streamline and improve the aid appeal process - Communication planning, analysis and possible expansion of "earn back" opportunities.*
4. *Investigate Graduation and Academic Incentives:* EMU should investigate and evaluate the effectiveness of programs that provide students financial incentives to finish their degrees in a timely and academically challenging fashion. These programs should include block tuition models (rather than straight per credit hour charges for tuition and fees), differential program tuition based on cost and market demand for program, reward payments for timely degree completion, unique study abroad support models and institutional loan or savings programs that allow parents and students to pre-pay or re-structure payments over differing time periods.
5. *Expand and publicize the CAP Program:* EMU should consider expanding this program that allows students to work at the University in exchange for free room and board.
6. *Enhance facilities and technology in order to deliver information and services to students in an effective and accessible manner:* Many offices on campus currently provide a good deal of material online for student review and use including forms, explanatory materials and video clips and contact information. These resources need to be enhanced to allow for a new, more comprehensive and individualized level of service to students. These enhancements should include the ability to easily target communications to particular groups of students at times and through means most likely to communicate messages effectively. They should include easy access to social media tools and recognize the evolving nature of modern technology and preferred modes of student communication (e.g. texting, mobile devices, real time video chats, etc.).

#### ***Factor 4: Advising and Student Support Services***

Current students and alumni have cited the need for improved academic advising and support services throughout the institution as needed enhancements. These services improve student matriculation towards graduation in a timely manner. There is also a



greater need in the state of Michigan for higher education institutions to graduate more students prepared for the workforce.

#### **Recommended Key Actions:**

1. *Create a University College to support and serve students who have not made a final program selection at the University.* Eastern Michigan University needs to put in place proactive and comprehensive strategies to ensure undecided students are supported throughout the major selection process. The University College provides a structure and home to students without a major in order to ensure that they are:
  - a. Linked with the faculty mentoring program cited earlier in the plan.
  - b. Have the same access to information and resources as declared majors.
  - c. Be encouraged to focus on tools designed to identify aptitudes, interests and potential careers and their related majors.
  - d. Provide ways to engage undeclared students in academic and outside the classroom activities. These foster persistence and completion.
  - e. Assigned an academic advisor as well as a career coach, both familiar with best practices for supporting student decision making and progression to degree.
  - f. Provided advice, referral and access to tutors, study tables, mentors and job shadowing opportunities.
2. *Fully Implement Online Degree Tracking and Audit System including transfer and planning modules.* EMU currently has implemented the first of three modules of a fully online degree tracking and audit system (Red Lantern). That module allows students to track their progress against a self selected program of study. The two remaining modules would allow the import of electronic transfer equivalency information directly into the system without course level tabulation process and import course scheduling data and plans in order to allow students to compose semester by semester completion plans.
3. *Conduct a project to enhance advising quality through the development and use of appropriate metrics.* The University has selected this area as its Quality Improvement (QI project) for its institutional accreditation process. It focuses on selecting and testing appropriate measures of advising quality and developing a process for monitoring and effectively using the collection of data via these metrics over time.
4. *Undertake a strategic assessment of ways in which to enhance communications with students and provide consistent messages about the need for advising support and career preparation.* Focus would be on the timing and content of messages students should receive throughout their academic program about inside and outside the classroom issues related to their success and matriculation.

#### **Factor 5: Curriculum Structure and Delivery**

Availability and delivery of courses as well as structure of our curriculum are major factors influencing the time required for EMU students to complete their degrees. Students often have difficulty scheduling needed courses (particularly prerequisites for higher-level courses) thus making it challenging to sustain progress and momentum toward their intended degree. The structure of our curriculum also plays a role in terms of how much flexibility we allow in providing alternative courses to satisfy degree requirements as well as in course sequences. A lack of flexibility in either area can cause unintended delays in students attaining their degrees.

#### **Recommended Key Actions:**

1. *Create a General Studies completion degree:* In fall 2012, nearly 22% of undergraduates were 'intent' majors for 2<sup>nd</sup> admit programs. Of these students (3,814), 45% were juniors and seniors (completed more than 60 credit hours) who may not have gained admission into their program of choice and are now in a position of having many credits and no clear career path. Some students may need alternative routes to graduation, but this should be studied carefully and delineated from traditional bachelors degrees in some fashion.
2. *Conduct a targeted review of programs with the goal of streamlining curriculum and/or effectively scheduling courses in support of timely graduation.* In the past ten years the average number of years it takes a student, who started EMU as a freshman (FTIAC), to complete their degree has increased by two semesters. In 2003 the average time to degree was 4.77 years while in 2012 that number had grown (consistently) to 5.25 years. This may be related in part to the structure of curricular offerings. No conclusion can be confidently reached without a review and understanding of these issues. This is a needed first step before developing plans of study.
3. *Maximize student enrollment in courses that employ "High Impact Educational Practices" (HIPs) by supporting the development and implementation of these practices by interested faculty members.* Examples of HIPs include first-year seminars, learning communities, writing intensive courses, common intellectual experiences, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, community-based learning, internships and capstone courses and projects. Overall goal would be to offer more of these opportunities to students, support faculty development efforts around these practices and increase the total number of courses from these models included in every student's program of study.
4. *Create a professional development institute for students with the goal of more comprehensively preparing students for transition to the work force.* The institute would be linked to the University's multi-tiered advising system with information and expertise provided at the university, college and departmental levels. Offerings should be balanced as appropriate by discipline. This approach builds upon the critical link between multi-layered advising and career development and is focused on the critical



relationship on the need students express for a clear path to degree completion linked to career goals.

5. *Undertake an evaluation of ways in which EMU can streamline the Math Placement Process. Reconcile options available to transfer and FTIAC entering students.*

### **Factor 6: Men of Color**

Eastern Michigan University is recognized as one of the most culturally diverse institutions in the Midwest. In the past 20 years, the cultural demographics of our student population have changed dramatically, especially among Black and Latino students. From 1992 to 2012, the number of Hispanic/Latino students increased almost 126% from 320 to 723. Black/African-American students have increased almost 159% from 1,822 to 4,717. Unfortunately, despite this increase, we have not learned how to ensure that these students earn degrees at the same rate as their White/Caucasian counterparts. In fact, our retention and graduation rates provide evidence that disparities still persist across student groups.

On average, males of color persist and complete college at much lower rates than the national average. At EMU, first year retention rates for all students have decreased from 76.46% to 75.27% since Fall 2009. During that time, retention rates for White/Caucasian students overall and White males specifically have increased slightly from 76.66% to 77.94% and from 75.37% to 76.73% respectively. On the contrary, first year retention rates tell a different story for students of color at EMU. By far, first year retention rates are the lowest for Native American students, but since their cohort numbers are so low, this report will focus primarily on Hispanic/Latino and Black/African-American students. Hispanic/Latino students have an overall first year retention rate of 72.1% since Fall 2009. Although rates for Hispanic/Latino males increased by 13% (56% to 69%), they remain too low. Rates for all Black/African-American students have decreased by 6% from 77% to 71% since 2009. Likewise, Black male first year retention has decreased by 4% from 74% to 70% during the same period. The concern is magnified by the steadily increasing proportion of Black freshmen among incoming students.

According to Cuyjet (2006), Harper (2006a) and Strayhorn (2010), Black male completion rates are the lowest among both sexes and all racial and ethnic groups in U.S. higher education at 33.3% in 6 years. Based on EMU IRIM data for the incoming classes of Fall 2004 - 2006, the 6-year graduation rate for Black males is even lower (average 18.65%). In comparison, average rates for all males and White males over that period of time are 33.23% and 38.16% respectively.

### **Recommended Key Actions:**

1. *Appoint a person to lead the assessment of academic, personal development, and social needs of students of color.* The person should also lead efforts to address these needs both through the identification of internal resources and obtaining outside contributions and support. This person would also spur efforts to more effectively collect, examine

and utilize data to drive program creation, implementation and maximization of resources (disaggregate data).

2. *Attention should be given (but not limited to) the following services designed to support men of color:* Summer Transition Programs, New Student Orientation sessions, Freshman Seminar Course, Living Learning Residential Community, Block Courses and Curriculums, Early Alert Warning System and Referral Service, Academic Support Services, Tiered mentoring program, Graduation Ceremony, developmental and mentoring program for males of color.
3. *Explore ways to connect and possibly grow current programs across the university that serve this population of students.* Current programs encompass a wide variety of classroom based efforts from faculty, Student Affairs and departmental programming, student groups, and other efforts. EMU should find a way to list and advertise these programs in a coordinated fashion and expand into areas where new programs might succeed.
4. *Conduct a comprehensive needs analysis for programs and support services for men of color on campus.* The analysis would evaluate the current programmatic focus of the Center for Multicultural Affairs, evaluate opportunities to expand current efforts for transfer students who are males of color, provide more on-campus work opportunities for males of color, assess the effectiveness of current programs and services in helping males of color persist and graduate and graduating males of color, examine the staffing and resources of current offices and programs that serve males of color, gather data from males of color about their perception of the university and its campus climate.
5. *Construct an academic profile of men of color who succeed and do not succeed in completing their education at EMU.* The profile would include an analysis of the point at which males of color tend to leave and identifying any early indicators of when males of color begin to disengage from the academic challenge.

### **Factor 7: Parent Support Services**

An inclusive campus enhances the educational experiences of all members of the EMU community. To that end, EMU recognizes that becoming a Michigan school of choice for non-traditional students, particularly for ethnically diverse low-income single parents who struggle to pursue postsecondary education, is a commitment worth pursuing. EMU understands that becoming a successful college student can be a stressful and difficult transition. The transition for single parents is even more difficult. They are a special population of students who need to be supported differently from traditional students to insure timely progress to degree completion. Too many single parent students have been forced to limit course loads, drop classes, miss classes or assignments, and leave school before completion due to issues directly related to being a single parent.

In May 2012, the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) published these findings:

- Twelve percent of students enrolled in post-secondary academic programs are single parents (with one or more children depending on their income for survival). These parents have less money to pay for their own educational development, have greater needs to meet when financial aid does not cover the cost of living, and they accumulate more debt than students without children
- Single parents have ten times more debt after graduating than their childless classmates.

The 2012 U.S. Census Bureau statistics indicated that 84.1% of single parent families included mother only with child(ren) under 18 and 15.9% represented father only with child(ren) under 18. Additionally, the Single Mother Guide statistics showed that single mothers often spend over half of their income on housing expenses and a third on child care, leaving them with less money for educational expenses. Nearly two-thirds (62%) have an expected family contribution (EFC) of zero compared to 20% of postsecondary students without children and 18% of married student parents.

Eastern Michigan University has a high proportion of non-traditional students, many of whom are single parents raising children alone. While Eastern has not formally collected data to determine the number of students who are parents, especially single parents, two surveys conducted in 2002 provided some insight into the status of single parent students. In a phone registration survey conducted in winter 2002, over one-third of the 7,000 respondents had children, with 1225 having children under 5 years of age. In the EMU Child Care Needs Survey (February 2002), findings from the 479 respondents pointed to child care as a major barrier:

- 55% were hindered from completing their degrees
- 18% were forced to drop out of school for periods of time
- 15% had failed at least one class

Many of these students cited cost of child care to be their largest hurdle, an understandable fact when one considers that 43% of the respondents had monthly incomes of under \$1,100.

### **Challenges Single Parents Face in Pursuit of Education**

In general, nontraditional students are more likely to have at-risk factors that make their path to graduation more complicated. To invest in the retention of this diverse, predominantly female, non-traditional student constituency, EMU must address the barriers/challenges to academic progress and degree completion. These challenges can be broken down into three major areas: financial constraints (especially child care expenses), time management, and social pressures.

### **Recommended Key Actions:**

Student support and services need to be focused and specifically geared toward the single parent student, not folded into what is already provided to our traditional student. To that end, there are four key actions recommended:

1. *Child Care Grants and Financial Assistance Programs*
  - a. Study best practices for how to establish child care grants funded by EMU with maximum annual amounts or hours of care. The study should also include consideration for an incentivized program grant renewal and subsidies to families.
  - b. Investigate a school-age drop-in program for after-school and early evening support (as unique from services provided by the current Children's Institute located on campus).
  - c. Explore how the University might provide single parent on-campus housing opportunity with possible sliding scale rate structure.
  - d. Collaborate with the EMU Foundation on a campaign to establish a single student parent child care scholarship.
2. *Wrap Around Support Services (academic and personal)*
  - a. *Create a Family Resource Center (FRC) on the EMU campus.* Ideally, the University would also locate a space for the FRC that could accommodate a meeting room, activity room and child care/play space. The Center will focus on helping students engage in effective problem solving, ensuring proper access to care, academic assistance and other mechanisms of support. Studies have shown that student retention typically increases if there are more support resources for student parents in place on the campus.
  - b. *Create a coordinator position to lead and foster support programs for student parents.* The coordinator might potentially oversee the FRC as well as assist students overcome obstacles they encounter as single parents on campus. *Special Academic Advising and Course Registration Assistance* - Academic advisors play a critical role in helping single parent students manage school in addition to their other responsibilities. Training advisors to understand and support the unique needs of single parents is essential. Advisors should recognize diversity within the single-parent group. Some of these differences include degree of family emotional support, degree of financial support from outside sources, the age of the student's children, the student's age, and whether the student has been married or divorced. Encouraging students to develop relationships with faculty, as well as making students aware of appropriate campus resources are important ways for academic advisors to support single parents, along with asking students what services may be lacking for single student parents and then advocating for those services.

- c. Have the FRC and EMU Children's Institute collaborate to *offer workshops provided by campus and community leaders with focus on family development, life skills training and academic success strategies.*
  - d. *Link a Single Parent Student Organization to the FRC.* Leadership from the Family Resource Center and EMU Children's Institute could assist in the development of a parenting organization and website that will focus on advocacy and program development for student parents.
3. *Mentoring/Coaching/Peer Support Program.* The University will create comprehensive support program that includes mentoring, coaching and peer support elements. The program should explore the use of possible sponsors from the community and partnering with academic departments, such as Social Work, to create internships through the Family Resource Center and provide interested students with a 'success' coach. Framed on the Keys to Degrees coach concept, coaches would be available to aid and motivate single parents in their quest to balance school, work, child-rearing, and personal growth.

## Appendix C: Fall 16 Reported 1st-Year Retention Rate for R3 Public Universities

	FA15 Cohort	FA16 Retention Rate (in %)
California State University-Fullerton	4,287	89
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry	318	88
Rowan University	2,222	85
Arizona State University-Downtown Phoenix	1,226	84
Montclair State University	3,098	83
Georgia Southern University	3,463	81
Louisiana Tech University	1,933	81
San Francisco State University	4,079	80
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	3,778	80
California State University-Fresno	3,537	79
Tennessee Technological University	1,577	79
Texas Woman's University	1,132	79
Boise State University	2,155	78
Sam Houston State University	2,514	77
University of Nebraska at Omaha	1,602	77
Eastern Michigan University	2,837	75
Indiana University of Pennsylvania-Main Campus	2,474	75
Middle Tennessee State University	2,793	75
Oakland University	2,588	75
The University of West Florida	1,317	74
University of Louisiana at Monroe	1,376	74
University of West Georgia	2,343	72
East Tennessee State University	1,976	71
Texas A & M University-Kingsville	1,263	71
Valdosta State University	1,394	71
Morgan State University	1,159	70
Prairie View A & M University	1,608	69
Arizona State University-SkySong	1,250	68
Idaho State University	1,419	68
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	792	68
Wright State University-Main Campus	2,325	66
Indiana State University	2,771	64
Lamar University	1,430	63
Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi	2,228	58
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	1,011	58
Tennessee State University	1,383	56
Texas Southern University	1,391	50
<b>Average</b>		<b>73</b>
<b>Median</b>		<b>75</b>
Top 20%		
EMU		

## Fall 16 Reported 6-Year Graduation Rate for R3 Public Universities

	Total Cohort	Total Completion	6-Yr Completion Rate
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry	256	191	74.6%
Rowan University	1,485	1,054	71.0%
Arizona State University-Downtown Phoenix	729	490	67.2%
Montclair State University	2,169	1,415	65.2%
California State University-Fullerton	3,749	2,334	62.3%
California State University-Fresno	2,582	1,459	56.5%
Indiana University of Pennsylvania-Main Campus	2,984	1,611	54.0%
San Francisco State University	3,609	1,920	53.2%
Louisiana Tech University	1,530	794	51.9%
Georgia Southern University	3,597	1,848	51.4%
Tennessee Technological University	1,898	970	51.1%
Sam Houston State University	2,211	1,119	50.6%
The University of West Florida	1,211	591	48.8%
Oakland University	2,221	1,040	46.8%
University of Nebraska at Omaha	1,703	765	44.9%
University of Louisiana at Monroe	1,093	475	43.5%
Middle Tennessee State University	3,793	1,614	42.6%
University of West Georgia	1,844	760	41.2%
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	2,721	1,121	41.2%
Eastern Michigan University	1,955	796	40.7%
East Tennessee State University	2,052	815	39.7%
Boise State University	2,297	904	39.4%
Texas Woman's University	946	364	38.5%
Indiana State University	2,687	988	36.8%
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	944	344	36.4%
Valdosta State University	2,528	919	36.4%
Wright State University-Main Campus	2,739	976	35.6%
Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi	1,399	483	34.5%
Tennessee State University	1,337	458	34.3%
Lamar University	1,501	491	32.7%
Morgan State University	1,208	390	32.3%
Prairie View A & M University	1,731	545	31.5%
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	683	208	30.5%
Texas A & M University-Kingsville	1,287	375	29.1%
Idaho State University	1,432	409	28.6%
Texas Southern University	1,121	194	17.3%
<b>Average</b>			<b>44.2%</b>
<b>Median</b>			<b>41.2%</b>
Top 20%			
EMU			

**Appendix D. Highlights of Student Success Data Analysis**  
**(All data are based on a 5-year average)**

■ University Overall

○ Retention Rate

1 <sup>st</sup> -year	73.5%
2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	61.7%

○ Graduation Rate

4-year	15.2%
5-year	31.7%
6-year	39.2%
7-year	42.4%
8-year	44.4%

■ Data in Specific Areas/Opportunities for Improvements

○ Retention Rate

	African American	African American (Male)	African American (Male + Pell)	African American (Edge)
1 <sup>st</sup> -year	67.7%	66.3%	64.7%	56.7%
2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	51.7%	48.8%	45.8%	40.2%

○ Graduation Rate

	African American	African American (Male)	African American (Male + Pell)	African American (Edge)
4-year	5.8%	4.9%	4.3%	1.9%
5-year	15.6%	12.4%	10.2%	7.9%
6-year	22.9%	18.8%	15.8%	17.4%
7-year	26.1%	21.8%	18.2%	19.9%
8-year	30.0%	25.9%	21.5%	21.4%

○ Retention Rate

	1 <sup>st</sup> Generation	1 <sup>st</sup> Generation + Pell
1 <sup>st</sup> -year	71.0%	68.5%
2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	59.0%	55.9%

○ Graduation Rate

	1 <sup>st</sup> Generation	1 <sup>st</sup> Generation + Pell
4-year	11.6%	8.9%
5-year	25.2%	20.6%
6-year	32.6%	27.6%
7-year	36.6%	31.1%
8-year	39.8%	33.5%



## Appendix E: EMU FITAC Retention Rate by Ethnicity Groups

Total FTIAC Retention Rate (in %)		
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	FA#2
Fall 2010	1,955	76.1
Fall 2011	2,119	75.3
Fall 2012	2,612	73.8
Fall 2013	2,848	72.5
Fall 2014	2,588	74.7
Fall 2015	2,846	74.6
Fall 2016	2,785	71.7
Fall 2017	2,783	71.6

Hispanic Retention Rate (in %)		
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	FA#2
Fall 2010	52	76.9
Fall 2011	75	66.7
Fall 2012	129	70.5
Fall 2013	136	70.6
Fall 2014	133	75.9
Fall 2015	179	68.2
Fall 2016	166	69.3
Fall 2017	153	61.4

African American Retention Rate (in %)		
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	FA#2
Fall 2010	598	74.6
Fall 2011	639	70.6
Fall 2012	765	67.6
Fall 2013	649	64.3
Fall 2014	536	68.3
Fall 2015	659	71.6
Fall 2016	663	66.5
Fall 2017	541	66.4

White Retention Rate (in %)		
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	FA#2
Fall 2010	1,080	77.3
Fall 2011	1,156	77.9
Fall 2012	1,459	76.8
Fall 2013	1,805	75.9
Fall 2014	1,685	76.9
Fall 2015	1,738	76.7
Fall 2016	1,588	74.8
Fall 2017	1,588	75.3

Asian Degree Completion Rate (in %)		
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	FA#2
Fall 2010	43	76.7
Fall 2011	40	80.0
Fall 2012	50	82.0
Fall 2013	49	75.5
Fall 2014	47	83.0
Fall 2015	64	82.8
Fall 2016	56	85.7
Fall 2017	53	73.6

Total FTIAC Degree Completion Rate (in %)				
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	YR#4	YR#5	YR#6
Fall 2003	2,479	11.9	29.9	39.7
Fall 2004	2,281	12.3	28.9	37.7
Fall 2005	2,301	12.9	30.1	39.6
Fall 2006	2,272	12.2	28.7	37.2
Fall 2007	2,366	12.4	29.6	38.4
Fall 2008	2,167	12.9	27.0	36.6
Fall 2009	2,196	13.1	30.9	40.1
Fall 2010	1,955	13.0	32.3	40.7
Fall 2011	2,119	14.1	31.7	40.4
Fall 2012	2,612	16.6	36.8	45.1
Fall 2013	2,848	19.1	38.9	
Fall 2014	2,588	19.9		

Hispanic Degree Completion Rate (in %)				
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	YR#4	YR#5	YR#6
Fall 2003	52	9.6	17.3	28.9
Fall 2004	57	10.5	33.3	42.1
Fall 2005	58	6.9	22.4	27.6
Fall 2006	62	12.9	25.8	38.7
Fall 2007	70	11.4	22.9	34.3
Fall 2008	55	10.9	32.7	36.4
Fall 2009	58	17.2	31.0	39.7
Fall 2010	52	9.6	28.9	42.3
Fall 2011	75	8.0	29.3	37.3
Fall 2012	129	14.0	31.0	35.7
Fall 2013	136	19.1	34.6	
Fall 2014	133	18.8		

African American Degree Completion Rate (in %)				
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	YR#4	YR#5	YR#6
Fall 2003	537	5.0	15.8	25.1
Fall 2004	524	4.6	13.7	21.6
Fall 2005	511	4.7	16.2	26.2
Fall 2006	559	2.7	12.7	18.4
Fall 2007	636	3.9	15.9	23.6
Fall 2008	705	4.4	12.2	20.9
Fall 2009	637	5.2	17.3	27.9
Fall 2010	598	4.2	13.4	20.4
Fall 2011	639	4.5	14.4	21.9
Fall 2012	765	6.3	20.5	28.5
Fall 2013	649	8.6	23.1	
Fall 2014	536	9.1		

White Degree Completion Rate (in %)				
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	YR#4	YR#5	YR#6
Fall 2003	1,676	14.3	35.0	45.2
Fall 2004	1,508	14.3	33.6	42.6
Fall 2005	1,544	15.5	34.3	43.9
Fall 2006	1,463	15.1	34.4	43.8
Fall 2007	1,437	16.1	36.3	45.6
Fall 2008	1,182	17.6	34.9	45.3
Fall 2009	1,298	16.6	37.1	46.0
Fall 2010	1,080	16.5	41.2	49.3
Fall 2011	1,156	19.3	40.7	49.9
Fall 2012	1,459	21.7	44.8	53.5
Fall 2013	1,805	23.1	45.2	
Fall 2014	1,685	23.7		

Asian Degree Completion Rate (in %)				
Start Cohort	Cohort Size	YR#4	YR#5	YR#6
Fall 2003	42	14.3	28.6	35.7
Fall 2004	38	15.8	39.5	55.3
Fall 2005	45	8.9	33.3	46.7
Fall 2006	40	15.0	30.0	37.5
Fall 2007	44	11.4	27.3	36.4
Fall 2008	64	15.6	29.7	46.9
Fall 2009	41	24.4	36.6	43.9
Fall 2010	43	14.0	41.9	65.1
Fall 2011	40	12.5	37.5	55.0
Fall 2012	50	26.0	48.0	58.0
Fall 2013	49	18.4	53.1	
Fall 2014	47	19.2		

## Tracking FTIAC Student Attrition Patterns by Using National Student Clearinghouse Research Executive Summary

Understanding students' attrition pattern is an important aspect of improving student success. At Eastern Michigan University (EMU), typically by the end of the first year, we lose 25% of the students from the new FTIAC class, and another 12% or so by the end of the second year. Literature indicates retaining a student through the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year is a key factor to ensuring the student will complete a degree at the same institution. The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) provides enrollment status tracking services with an accuracy level of 98%, which is a powerful tool that we can use to identify the attrition patterns.

This study tracks and analyzes FTIAC students who left the University during their first and second year at EMU. Analysis of this study was based on data drawn from three FTIAC cohorts who started their enrollment in fall terms of 2012, 2013 and 2014, respectively. Table 1 shows our general retention picture after the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years, as well as the number of students who transferred to other institutions after each year.

Table 1. FTIAC 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Retention Rates; Number of Students Who Left EMU after 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Years

Academic Term	Cohort	1 <sup>st</sup> Year Retention Rate	Attrition Count (after 1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	Enrolled in Other Institutions (NSC Data; after 1 <sup>st</sup> Year)
Fall 2012	2,612	73.8%	684	545
Fall 2013	2,848	72.5%	783	579
Fall 2014	2,588	74.7%	655	447
		End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Retention Rate	Attrition Count (after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)	Enrolled in Other Institutions (NSC Data; after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)
		61.3%	327	262
		61.0%	328	258
		61.8%	334	234

Next, we looked at institutions that students transferred to after their study at EMU. Table 2 (next page) presents those institutions that received reverse transfer students from EMU after the first year. Community colleges are overwhelmingly at the top of the list. Table 3 (also next page) show the same information but for the reverse transfer after the second year. The pattern changed to a certain extent because more four-year institutions emerged and moved to the front on the list, including University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

## Research Executive Summary (continued)

Table 2. Reverse Transfer Institutions of EMU FTIAC Students after 1<sup>st</sup> Year

Institution Transferred to after 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Number of Students	% of Students
Washtenaw Community College	247	16.6%
Wayne County Community College	95	6.4%
Henry Ford College	82	5.5%
Schoolcraft College	73	4.9%
Oakland Community College	61	4.1%
Michigan State University	43	2.9%
Macomb Community College	42	2.8%
Cuyahoga Community College	33	2.2%
Lansing Community College	31	2.1%
University of Toledo	31	2.1%
Mott Community College	28	1.9%
Jackson College	27	1.8%
Western Michigan University	25	1.7%
Grand Valley State University	24	1.6%
Baker College - Flint	23	1.6%
Wayne State University	22	1.5%
Monroe County Community College	16	1.1%
Owens Community College	16	1.1%
Oakland University	11	0.7%
Central Michigan University	10	0.7%

Table 3. Reverse Transfer Institutions of EMU FTIAC Students after 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

Institution Transferred to after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Number of Students	% of Students
Washtenaw Community College	152	22.7%
Schoolcraft College	38	5.7%
Wayne County Community College	34	5.1%
Henry Ford College	26	3.9%
University of Michigan	25	3.7%
Michigan State University	23	3.4%
Oakland Community College	21	3.1%
Baker College - Flint	19	2.8%
Western Michigan University	14	2.1%
Macomb Community College	12	1.8%
University of Toledo	12	1.8%
Monroe County Community College	10	1.5%

## Research Executive Summary (continued)

We then continued and examined the GPA patterns using the GPA at the time when a student left EMU by combining all three cohorts. Table 4 shows most of those reverse transfer students had a low GPA after their first year. Nevertheless, students who left EMU during their second year had a more balanced distribution across all GPA levels.

Table 4. GPA Distribution of Reverse Transfer Students

Accumulated Institution GPA	Headcount (after 1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	Headcount (after 2 <sup>nd</sup> year)
<=2	1,149	347
2-3	499	407
3-4	471	314
>=4	13	5
Grand Total	2,132	1,073

Our last phase of analysis was focused on the EMU GPA of those students by corresponding reverse transfer institutions. Table 5 shows the relatively low GPA for those students who transferred to another institution after the first year. Table 6 shows for those who transferred out from EMU had a much high GPA at the time of departure.

Table 5. EMU GPA after the 1<sup>st</sup> Year for Those Who Transferred Away

Institution Transferred to after 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Average EMU Accumulated GPA
Oakland Community College	1.76
Schoolcraft College	1.76
Washtenaw Community College	1.73
Henry Ford College	1.58
Wayne County Community College	1.54

Table 6. EMU GPA after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year for Those Who Transferred Away

Institution Transferred to after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Average EMU Accumulated GPA
University of Michigan	3.66
Schoolcraft College	2.39
Henry Ford College	2.34
Washtenaw Community College	2.21
Wayne County Community College	1.98