



IRIM RESEARCH EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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FTIAC Retention/Attrition Patterns: A Comparative Analysis Research Executive Summary

This study analyzed EMU's FTIAC retention and attrition patterns through two different perspectives. The first approach looked at the persistence picture after the first year by using multiple FTIAC cohorts (2012-2014); then, by using the Fall 2013 cohort, the study presented the persistence patterns throughout the first four years.

First-Year Retention Breakdown

Overall, first-year retention rates were stable across the three cohorts, ranging from 72%-74%. For students that did not return after their first year, the reasons for their departure were analyzed. Overall, across the three cohorts 17%-18% of students were not in good academic standing at the end of their first year. (This percentage is distributed across all categories of students, as shown in Table 1 below.) An additional 4%-8% of students were dismissed from the University for academic reasons. Around 4%-5% of students transferred to a 2-year institution at the end of their first year, and another 3%-4% of students transferred to another 4-year institution. After accounting for the students mentioned above, another 10%-14% of students that left EMU after their first year due to reasons other than dismissal or transfer.

Table 1. FTIAC 1st-Year Retention/Attrition Patterns (FA12-FA14 Cohorts)

	Fall 2012 Cohort	Fall 2013 Cohort	Fall 2014 Cohort
1 st -Year Retention Rate	1,898 (73%)	2,060 (72%)	1,878 (74%)
Students that Left			
Dismissal	210 (8%)	200 (7%)	113 (4%)
Transfer to 2-Yr Institution	106 (4%)	135 (5%)	131 (5%)
Transfer to 4-Yr Institution	107 (4%)	128 (4%)	69 (3%)
Other	264 (10%)	331 (12%)	361 (14%)
Total Enrollment	2,585 (100%)	2,854 (100%)	2,552 (100%)

Fall 2013 Cohort Trends

Next, we analyzed the yearly persistence patterns using the Fall 2013 cohort as the case study. As shown in the table below (Table 2), the majority of student attrition occurred at the end of the first year of enrollment, as well as the majority of student dismissals across the four years. Transfer rates to both 2- and 4-year institutions were highest after the first year and steadily declined across four years. While attrition for reasons other than dismissal or transfer were also highest after the first year, this trend does not match those of dismissal and transfer. While the other attrition category does decline over the first three years, there is a notable jump from the end of year 3 to the end of year 4, from 81 to 146.

Table 2. Four-Year Persistence Patterns for Fall 2013 FTIAC Cohort

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Students that Stayed				
Retention Rate	2,060	1,725	1,564	894
Graduation Rate	-	5	30	500
Students that Left				
Dismissal	200	24	10	8
Transfer to 2-Yr Institution	135	65	23	8
Transfer to 4-Yr Institution	128	39	17	8
Other	331	202	81	146
Total Enrollment	2,854	2,060	1,725	1,564

Overall 4-Year Trends

Looking at the 4-year trends for student outcomes and attrition across the three cohorts, most of the rates remained fairly constant. By the end of their fourth year, between 50%-52% of students in a given cohort were either still enrolled at EMU or were graduated. The other 48%-50% of students were lost to some source of attrition. Roughly 7%-9% of students did transfer to a 2-year institution, and roughly 6%-7% of students transferred to another 4-year institution, with a combined total of roughly 14%-15% of students transferring out of EMU by the end of their fourth year. After accounting for those students lost to dismissal or transfer, another 24%-27% of students left EMU for other reasons by the end of their fourth year (Table 3 next page).

There have been two notable trends of change across these three cohorts. There has been a notable increase in the 4-year graduation rate, from 16% for the Fall 2012 cohort to 20% for the Fall 2014 cohort, which is a promising trend for student outcomes. There

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has also been a notable decrease in the 4-year dismissal rates across the three cohorts, from 11% in the Fall 2012 cohort to 6% for the Fall 2014 cohort. Taken in conjunction with the increasing graduation rate, this is also a promising trend. Full representations of the student outcomes and attrition trends across these three cohorts are shown in the table and figure below.

Table 3. Rates of Persistence Categories – Four Year Totals

	Fall 2012 Cohort	Fall 2013 Cohort	Fall 2014 Cohort
Students that Stayed			
4-Year Graduation Rate	423 (16%)	535 (19%)	504 (20%)
Still Enrolled after 4 Years	890 (34%)	894 (31%)	816 (32%)
Students that Left			
Dismissal Rate	279 (11%)	242 (8%)	155 (6%)
Transfer to 2-Yr Institution Rate	177 (7%)	231 (8%)	226 (9%)
Transfer to 4-Yr Institution Rate	185 (7%)	192 (7%)	158 (6%)
Other Attrition Rate	631 (24%)	760 (27%)	693 (27%)
Total Enrollment	2,585 (100%)	2,854 (100%)	2,552 (100%)

Figure 1. Distribution of % Rates by Persistence Categories – Four Year Totals

