**Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates Analyses: Cohort Definitions**

**New Students**

When performing retention and graduation rate analyses for new students, UC Denver uses the standard Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) / Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) definition.

Students reported in the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (GRS) and CDHE’s Quality Indicator System cohorts must meet three criteria: be reported as first-time in fall, full-time in fall and a degree-seeking undergraduate in fall.

- First-time is based on the CDHE Registration Status Field. That field includes values for first-time, transfer, continuing/readmit, high school concurrent, summer only and study abroad. To qualify for this population a student must have a value of 1 (first-time).

  **First-time:** A student attending post-secondary education for the first time after high school at the undergraduate level. To conform to IPEDS reporting definitions, this includes students enrolled in the fall term who entered the institution as first-time at the same level in the prior summer term.

- Full-time classification is derived from the sum of three CDHE credit hour fields (Resident Instruction (RI) + Extended Studies Program (ESP) + other. The total must be at least 12 credit hours. Vocational hours are included in RI or other credit hours.

- The degree-seeking undergraduate criterion is based on the Student Level field. That field identifies the level at which a student is classified during the term that is being reported, based on total credits obtained toward completion of a degree/certificate program. Degree-seeking undergraduate codes include 11 (first year), 12 (second year), 13 (third year), 14 (fourth year and beyond), 15 (unclassified). Undergraduate codes 19 and 20 are for non-degree students. Only students with codes 11, 12, 13, 14, or 15 are included in this population.

- In our current process deceased students are removed from their cohorts. One of our current objectives is to revise the process to retain them if they received a degree from UC Denver.
Transfer Students

In the absence of official IPEDS/CDHE definitions for reporting retention and graduation rates for transfer students, UC Denver has adapted the standard IPEDS/CDHE new-student definitions and added relevant criteria as needed.

Students included in the transfer cohorts must meet four criteria: be a fall (1) first-time (2) transfer, (3) full-time, (4) degree-seeking student with state-reportable hours.

- First-time transfer is based on the Registration Status Field. Only students with value of 3 (transfer) are included in this population and they are included only if this is their first time to transfer into UCD as an undergraduate.

  First-time: First time a student transfers at the undergraduate level. To conform to IPEDS reporting definitions, this includes students enrolled in the fall term who transferred to the institution for the first-time at the same level in the prior summer term.

- Full-time classification is derived from the sum of three credit hour fields (RI + ESP + other). The total must be at least 12 credit hours. Vocational hours are included in RI or other credit hours.

- The degree-seeking undergraduate criterion is based on the Student Level field. Only students with codes 11, 12, 13, 14, or 15 are included in this population.

- In our current process deceased students are removed from their cohorts. One of our current objectives is to revise the process to retain them if they received a degree from UC Denver.

- The remaining criteria are specific to UC Denver and this transfer population:

  We do not include students in cohorts that have already received an undergraduate degree.

  Students can (and do) transfer into UC Denver more than once. Cohorts include only the first time the student transfers into UC Denver.

Calculation Notes

Retention rates are calculated per IPEDS standards which are Fall to Fall. To be counted after their cohort year, a student must be enrolled in a subsequent fall term. Enrollments at all UC Denver campuses and both full-time and part-time enrollments are included but each student is counted only once per fall.

When calculating graduation rates, degrees from all UC Denver campuses are included but only the first degree for each student is counted.