

Year-to-Year Persistence of First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking, First-Year Students at Ohio's State-Supported Colleges and Universities

Question: What is the rate at which full-time, degree-seeking, first-year students return to higher education (or persist) the following year? Does this rate vary by type of college or by institution?

Why look at year-to-year persistence? Many factors determine whether a first-year student persists from one year to the next. Full-time, degree-seeking students may:

- “Stop out” of higher education due to economic reasons or family circumstances with the intention of returning later;
- Decide that their career interests are best met outside of higher education (this is a “drop out”); or
- Transfer to another institution.

There are instances, however, when a student stops out, drops out, or transfers out of college for reasons that may have been within the control of the college. The first-year experience is, in part, a function of the services that a college or university is able to provide to students to help them succeed. Such services might include: tutoring services, mentoring services, assistance in scheduling classes, or a variety of other services. In the case of a transfer, families may be quite comfortable with a decision to transfer to another institution, as long as the student is still pursuing a degree in higher education. Prospective students and their families may view year-to-year persistence of first-year students (either at the same institution or at any institution) as a measure of the likelihood of completing college in a timely and successful manner.

A cautionary note on persistence rates: Several qualifications about persistence rates must be noted. Traditionally defined "Institution Persistence" is the percentage of an entering class (full-time, degree-seekers) who are enrolled the next year. As noted in [Chapter 11](#), almost 60% of students receiving baccalaureate degrees in the 1990's attended more than one school in pursuit of that degree. In Ohio, many students enter two-year colleges seeking associate degrees but transfer to four-year colleges to complete their baccalaureate degrees before they complete their associate degrees. State policies even encourage such mobility. When students do transfer after the first term of enrollment, this has a negative effect on an institution's persistence rates even though many of these students are enrolled in college in their second year and their transfers are greatly facilitated by cooperative planning and scheduling between sending and receiving institutions. Due to this limitation, the Board of Regents advocates use of a "statewide persistence rate" which holds a sending institution harmless from such transfers.

Additionally, many students enter college without the declared intention of seeking a college degree. Some of these students are still enrolled a second year at the same or a different institution. These students' return to college is not reflected in any persistence rate. Ohio's two-year colleges collect data on the academic intention of entering students. At these institutions only 36% of fall 2001 beginning first-time, first-year students expressed the intention of obtaining an associate degree to be used for employment purposes. An additional 18% expressed the intention of obtaining an associate degree for transfer to a four-year institution, although many of these might decide at a later date to transfer before completion of the degree.

**Academic Intention of Beginning First-Time, First-Year Students – Two-Year Colleges, Fall 2001
Data Gathered During Students' First Term of Study**

Academic Intention	Students	%
To obtain knowledge for personal interest	2,251	7%
To upgrade skills for current job by taking only selected courses	1,845	6%
To train for a new career by taking only selected courses	1,441	4%
To transfer before completing a degree or certificate	3,356	10%
To obtain a certificate	1,716	5%
To obtain an associate degree for transfer	5,822	18%
To obtain an associate degree for the job market	11,462	36%
Unknown	4,300	13%
Total	32,193	100%

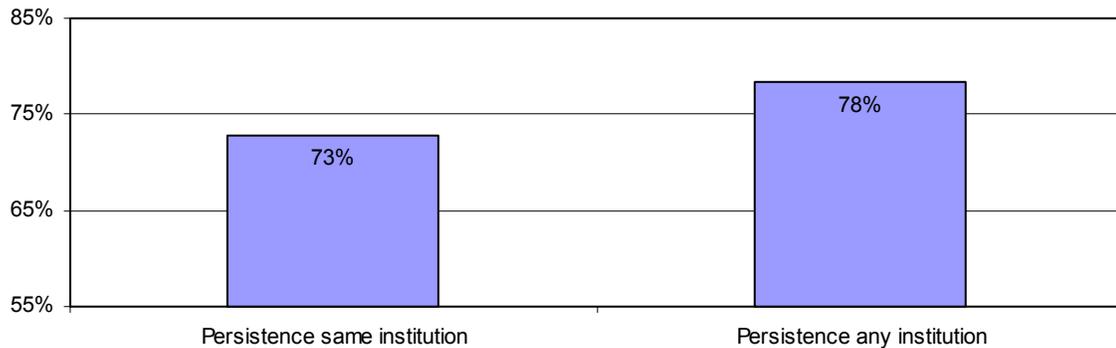
Finally, as noted in many other chapters of this report, colleges and universities vary greatly in their admissions practices. All of Ohio's two-year institutions and many universities are open admissions, meaning that any student with a high school degree is eligible to enter. This report shows that campuses with the most selective admissions practices have students with better academic preparation, which might result in higher reported persistence rates. Many campus personnel believe that persistence rates are most relevant for selective four-year universities.

National Answers: National freshmen-to-sophomore persistence rates vary greatly by type of institution and by the admissions criteria used by institutions.

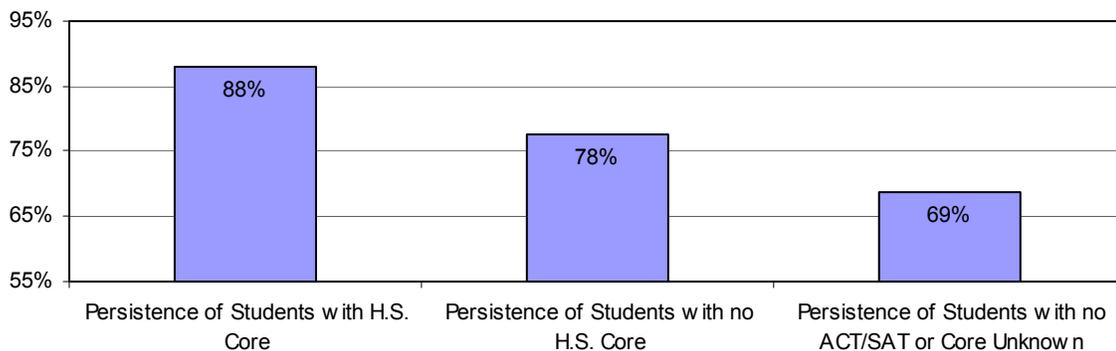
- The national freshmen-to-sophomore persistence rate, as reported to ACT for 2000-2001 was:
 - 51.8% for two-year public institutions;
 - 78.2% - 80.4% for selective four-year public institutions;
 - 54.9% - 64% for open admissions four-year public institutions;
 - 81.8% - 85.1% for selective four-year private institutions; and
 - 63.5% for open admissions four-year private institutions.

Statewide Answers: First-time, full-time, degree-seeking students persisted to a second-year of study at rates approximating the national average. The statewide persistence rate from 2000 to 2001 was 73% at the same institution and 78% at any institution. At state-supported two-year institutions, the first- to second-year persistence rate was approximately 66%. At open admissions four-year institutions and selective admissions four-year institutions the first- to second-year persistence rates of 70% and 80% respectively both exceeded the national average. At independent colleges and universities, the first- to second-year persistence rate was 80%. First-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who completed a core curriculum in high school persisted at a higher rate across all public campus types (77%-92%). The lowest persistence rates were recorded for students who failed to take a college entrance exam, or for whom the Board of Regents does not have valid core data.

Statewide Persistence Rates of First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Students Persisting from Fall 2000 to Fall 2001



Statewide Persistence Rates of Young, First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Students Persisting from Fall 2000 to Fall 2001



- Seventy three percent of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who began their study in fall 2000 were still enrolled at the same institution the following fall.
- Seventy-eight percent first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who began their study at a public campus in fall 2000 were enrolled at either the same institution or another state-supported college or university or independent college or university the following fall.
 - **Note:** From a statewide perspective this 78% persistence rate is noteworthy as it reflects the fact that Ohio's state-supported campuses have been successful in their efforts to ensure that students wishing to transfer are able to do so with ease.
- Eighty-eight percent of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students on public campuses who completed a high school core curriculum persisted from fall 2000 to fall 2001, compared to 78% for similar students who did not complete a high school core curriculum and 69% for students who did not take a college entrance exam.
- Many first-year students do not enroll full-time (twelve or more hours) or are not defined by colleges or universities as degree-seeking. Sixty-six percent of first-time freshmen enrolled in state-supported institutions in fall 2000 were full-time degree-seekers.

Sector Answers: Persistence rates for first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students vary greatly by type of college in Ohio, just as they do nationally.

- The statewide persistence rate was highest for students enrolled at selective university main campuses (88%).
- The statewide persistence rate at university branch campuses was 70%. The statewide persistence rate at community colleges, state community colleges, and technical colleges was approximately 62%.
- The persistence rate at independent campuses was 80%. Note that a statewide persistence rate for independent campuses is not calculated.
- Across all public sectors, students who completed a core curriculum in high school persisted at a higher rate than students who either failed to complete a core curriculum or failed to take a college entrance exam (ACT or SAT).
- First-time, full-time, degree-seeking students are a small proportion of all freshmen served by the community colleges (32%), state community colleges (29%), and technical colleges (44%).
- First-time, full-time, degree-seeking students represent a majority of first-year students on the university main campuses (approximately 93%).

2000 to 2001 Persistence Rates of First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Students

Admissions Policy	Type of College	# of First-Year Students	# FTFTDSFR*	% FTFTDSFR*	Persistence Rates		Persistence Rates at Any** Institution for Young Students (under age 20) With:		
					Same Institution	Any** Institution	H.S. Core***	No H.S. Core	No ACT/SAT or H.S. Core Unknown
Open	Community Colleges	13,313	4,234	32%	56%	62%	77%	72%	56%
	State Community Colleges	13,210	3,875	29%	54%	61%	79%	71%	55%
	Technical Colleges	5,418	2,404	44%	57%	63%	78%	73%	55%
	University Branches	9,585	6,935	72%	61%	70%	80%	72%	59%
Open	University Main Campuses	12,642	11,040	87%	70%	79%	86%	77%	68%
Selective	University Main Campuses	23,088	22,210	96%	80%	88%	92%	86%	81%
Open & Selective	Independent	N/A	18,507	N/A	80%	N/A			
Statewide Totals		77,256	69,190	66%	73%	78%	88%	78%	69%

* First-time, full-time, degree-seeking first-year students

** Persisting at any Ohio public institution or persisting as a full-time Ohio resident student at an Ohio private, not-for-profit institution (Choice Grant recipient) or as a Workforce Development grant recipient at an Ohio proprietary institution.

*** Such a curriculum would include 4 years of English, and 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies

Campus Answers: Persistence rates for first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students varied greatly by campus.

- Persistence rates of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students at community colleges, state community colleges, and technical colleges ranged from 43% to 74%.
- Persistence rates of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students at university branch campuses ranged from 54% to 85%.
- Persistence rates of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students at university main campuses ranged from 64% to 94%.
- Persistence rates at independent campuses ranged from 37% to 92%.
- Across virtually all campuses, students who completed a core curriculum in high school persisted at a higher rate than their peers who did not complete a core curriculum.

2000 to 2001 Persistence Rates of First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Students

Community Colleges

Admissions Policy	Campus	% FTFTDSFR*	Persistence Rates		Persistence Rates at Any** Institution for Young Students (under age 20) With:		
			Same Institution	Any** Institution	H.S. Core***	No H.S. Core	No ACT/SAT or H.S. Core Unknown
Open Admissions	Cuyahoga Community College, Eastern Campus	17%	48%	52%	68%	59%	46%
	Cuyahoga Community College, Metro Campus	31%	40%	43%	59%	66%	34%
	Cuyahoga Community College, Western Campus	23%	59%	65%	77%	77%	57%
	Jefferson Community College	48%	62%	66%	79%	72%	58%
	Lakeland Community College	37%	59%	70%	82%	74%	64%
	Lorain County Community College	40%	58%	64%	83%	63%	58%
	Rio Grande Community College****	69%	64%	74%	85%	74%	66%
Sinclair Community College	34%	58%	61%	73%	72%	58%	

State Community Colleges

Open Admissions	Cincinnati State Technical & Community College	11%	49%	56%	77%	58%	57%
	Clark State Community College	45%	50%	61%	74%	71%	62%
	Columbus State Community College	40%	52%	58%	75%	66%	50%
	Edison State Community College	32%	58%	67%	82%	72%	59%
	Northwest State Community College	49%	58%	66%	82%	78%	53%
	Owens State Community College, Findlay Campus	26%	56%	59%	74%	69%	59%
	Owens State Community College, Toledo Campus	21%	58%	62%	79%	79%	60%
	Southern State Community College, Central Campus	31%	59%	67%	90%	78%	40%
	Southern State Community College, North Campus	35%	53%	61%	75%	56%	63%
	Southern State Community College, South Campus	37%	61%	67%	87%	62%	86%
	Terra State Community College	31%	51%	56%	90%	61%	49%
	Washington State Community College	35%	65%	68%	87%	80%	67%

Technical Colleges

Open Admissions	Belmont Technical College	42%	54%	60%	88%	69%	51%
	Central Ohio Technical College	43%	56%	64%	58%	70%	55%
	Hocking Technical College	55%	55%	60%	76%	73%	54%
	Marion Technical College	37%	50%	58%	62%	70%	60%
	Muskingum Area Technical College	49%	63%	67%	86%	71%	52%
	North Central State College	29%	56%	61%	65%	69%	61%
	James A. Rhodes State College	46%	69%	73%	86%	77%	63%
	Stark State College of Technology	35%	61%	66%	78%	75%	55%

* First-time, full-time, degree-seeking, first-year students

** Persisting at any Ohio public institution or persisting as a full-time Ohio resident student at an Ohio private, not-for-profit institution (Choice Grant recipient)

*** Such a curriculum would include 4 years of English, and 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies

**** Rio Grande is a Community College at the lower division level and an independent university for upper division students

2000 to 2001 Persistence Rates of First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Students (Continued)

University Branch Campuses

Admissions Policy	Campus	% FTFTDSFR*	Persistence Rates		Persistence Rates at Any** Institution for Young Students (under age 20) With:		
			Same Institution	Any** Institution	H.S. Core***	No H.S. Core	No ACT/SAT or H.S. Core Unknown
Open Admissions	Bowling Green State University, Firelands Campus	70%	63%	72%	83%	75%	46%
	Kent State University, Ashtabula Campus	62%	61%	68%	75%	66%	65%
	Kent State University, East Liverpool Campus	79%	54%	62%	67%	67%	50%
	Kent State University, Geauga Campus	61%	71%	79%	89%	73%	71%
	Kent State University, Salem Campus	78%	55%	63%	69%	62%	47%
	Kent State University, Stark Campus	79%	60%	71%	80%	72%	51%
	Kent State University, Trumbull Campus	63%	64%	71%	82%	77%	72%
	Kent State University, Tuscarawas Campus	80%	63%	68%	81%	70%	38%
	Miami University, Hamilton Campus	79%	62%	67%	77%	62%	58%
	Miami University, Middletown Campus	80%	65%	73%	81%	74%	60%
	Ohio State University, Agricultural Technical Institute	98%	65%	72%	81%	73%	67%
	Ohio State University, Lima Campus	93%	61%	79%	89%	77%	62%
	Ohio State University, Mansfield Campus	89%	59%	77%	84%	72%	68%
	Ohio State University, Marion Campus	93%	68%	74%	84%	70%	72%
	Ohio State University, Newark Campus	92%	62%	77%	85%	78%	64%
	Ohio University, Chillicothe Campus	51%	51%	57%	77%	63%	43%
	Ohio University, Eastern Campus	76%	71%	82%	89%	78%	83%
	Ohio University, Lancaster Campus	77%	65%	75%	79%	81%	65%
	Ohio University, Southern Campus	49%	51%	54%	72%	72%	44%
	Ohio University, Zanesville Campus	74%	55%	69%	77%	64%	56%
University of Akron, Wayne Campus	48%	64%	67%	71%	65%	68%	
University of Cincinnati, Clermont Campus	55%	59%	61%	68%	70%	60%	
University of Cincinnati, Raymond Walters Campus	51%	59%	62%	73%	68%	58%	
Wright State University, Lake Campus	85%	76%	85%	89%	86%	67%	

University Main Campuses

Selective Admissions	Bowling Green State University	95%	77%	90%	92%	89%	81%
	Kent State University	97%	72%	82%	87%	79%	73%
	Miami University	99%	90%	94%	97%	92%	88%
	Ohio State University	99%	86%	92%	94%	91%	85%
	Ohio University	99%	85%	93%	96%	91%	83%
	University of Cincinnati	88%	69%	77%	83%	77%	70%
Open Admissions	Central State University	99%	59%	67%	77%	79%	46%
	Cleveland State University	70%	65%	76%	82%	78%	69%
	Shawnee State University	91%	57%	64%	81%	65%	53%
	University of Akron	86%	68%	76%	85%	74%	68%
	University of Toledo	85%	75%	85%	90%	83%	73%
	Wright State University	97%	71%	84%	87%	81%	73%
Youngstown State University	93%	71%	76%	83%	76%	68%	

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*** Such a curriculum would include 4 years of English, and 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies

Fall 2000 to Fall 2001 Persistence Rates of First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Students Independent Colleges and Universities***

Campus	FTFTDSFR*	Persistence Rate Same Institution	Data Source**
Antioch University	124	72%	AICUO
Art Academy of Cincinnati	58	60%	AICUO
Ashland University	448	78%	AICUO
Baldwin-Wallace College	753	84%	AICUO
Bluffton College	227	78%	AICUO
Capital University	558	78%	AICUO
Case Western Reserve University	835	90%	AICUO
Cedarville University	729	86%	AICUO
Cincinnati Bible College	71	56%	Choice
Circleville Bible College	57	70%	Choice
Cleveland Institute of Art	66	74%	Choice
College of Mount Saint Joseph	348	80%	AICUO
College of Wooster	501	88%	AICUO
Columbus College of Art and Design	374	69%	AICUO
David N. Myers University	89	53%	AICUO
Defiance College	168	72%	AICUO
Denison University	648	87%	AICUO
Franciscan University of Steubenville	321	82%	AICUO
Franklin University	113	38%	AICUO
God's Bible School and College	17	59%	Choice
Heidelberg College	245	75%	Choice
Hiram College	246	76%	AICUO
John Carroll University	825	86%	AICUO
Kenyon College	436	92%	AICUO
Lake Erie College	86	60%	AICUO
Lourdes College	27	56%	AICUO
Malone College	388	74%	AICUO
Marietta College	301	76%	AICUO
Mercy College of Northwest Ohio	57	67%	AICUO
Mount Carmel College of Nursing	45	80%	AICUO
Mount Union College	557	75%	AICUO
Mount Vernon Nazarene University	369	76%	AICUO
Muskingum College	408	78%	AICUO
Notre Dame College of Ohio	50	72%	AICUO
Oberlin College	773	90%	AICUO
Ohio Dominican University	180	62%	AICUO
Ohio Northern University	575	81%	AICUO
Ohio Wesleyan University	532	79%	AICUO
Otterbein College	542	83%	AICUO
Pontifical College Josephinum	5	40%	Choice
Temple Baptist College	35	37%	Choice
Tiffin University	242	62%	AICUO
Union Institute & University	20	65%	AICUO
University of Dayton	1,744	89%	AICUO
University of Findlay	776	72%	AICUO
University of Northwestern Ohio	32	72%	Choice
Urbana University	176	55%	AICUO
Ursuline College	66	64%	AICUO
Walsh University	308	67%	AICUO
Wilberforce University	202	50%	AICUO
Wilmington College	321	73%	AICUO
Wittenberg University	649	82%	AICUO
Xavier University	776	89%	AICUO

* First-time, full-time, degree-seeking, first-year students

** Persistence rates obtained from AICUO (Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio) include all full-time, first-time first-year undergraduates returning to the same campus the next year, regardless of their state of residence or full- or part-time status. Other persistence rates were estimated from Student Choice Grant data in HEI, including full-time Ohio residents who returned the next year as full-time students.

*** Institutions with fewer than 5 first-time, full-time, degree-seeking freshmen have been excluded from this list