

CHAPTER 3 – UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE RETENTION

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3.0 Background

This chapter presents data showing retention and graduation rates of full-time students in credit programs at Manitoba's universities and colleges.

Universities and colleges do not have the capacity to track students who leave to attend another post-secondary institution. University data have been adjusted based on surveys to provide an estimate of the number of students transferring to another post-secondary institution. This analysis helps to report the most complete information regarding the success of students in the post-secondary system in Manitoba.

Universities' graduation and retention data included in the 2005 Compendium have been revised to reflect corrections in data received by universities, as well as to account for students changing program, and going from full- to part-time studies and vice versa. Readers of the 2005 Compendium who refer back to the 2004 edition will notice slight differences in the percentages reported in the universities tables.

3.1 University Retention

Table 3.1a shows graduation and retention rates for students who enter university as full-time students in programs that do not require previous post-secondary studies ("First Entry Programs").

The percent of students graduating from First Entry Programs after five years remained stable, staying between 51.6% and 51.8% for the three cohorts shown. Attrition has increased slightly at the five-year mark, rising from 24.5% for the 1998 cohort to 26.7% for the 2000 cohort.¹ This appears to be the result of a greater percentage of students choosing the leave university rather than continue their studies.

Table 3.1b shows graduation and retention rates for students who enter a program that requires previous post-secondary study ("Second Entry Programs").

In contrast to First Entry Programs, the percentage of students graduating from Second Entry Programs after five years increased from 86.4% for the 1998 cohort to 94.1% for the 2000 cohort. The percentage of students withdrawing from Second Entry Programs over the three years has decreased from 10.6% for the 1998 cohort to 4.4% for the 2000 cohort.

¹ A 'cohort' refers to those students who entered a program in a particular year. Thus, the 1998 cohort refers to those students who entered their program in 1998. Rates are calculated after the end of the first year, fifth year and seventh year of studies after entry into the program. Thus, the 1998 cohort is assessed in 1999 (end of first year), 2003 (end of fifth year), and 2005 (end of seventh year).

Table 3.1c shows graduation and retention rates for students in co-operative education programs. Co-operative education programs are tracked differently from First and Second Entry Programs, recognizing the fact that work placements require periods away from formal study, lengthening the duration of the program.

The percentage of students graduating from Co-operative Education Programs after six years increased from 92.4% for the 1998 cohort to 94.5% for the 1999 cohort. The percentage of students withdrawing from Co-operative Education Programs over the two years remained stable at between 2.5% and 2.7%.

When First and Second Entry programs are assessed together, the graduation rate for Manitoba universities has increased from 61.8% for the 1998 cohort, to 63.1% for the 1999 cohort, and 64.8% for the 2000 cohort.

Manitoba compares well to graduation rates elsewhere in Canada. Other research notes that overall, 58% of Canadian students graduated five years after entering their program. In the United States, however, only 50% of students graduate five years after starting university.²

² Gilbert, Sid. *Research Report # 1: Attrition in Canadian Universities*. Ottawa: Commission of Inquiry on Canadian University Education, 1991.

3.1a Undergraduate First Entry Program – All Universities*

Cohort Year No. Years of Study (calendar year)	Students Entering in 1998			Students Entering in 1999			Students Entering in 2000		
	After 1 Year (1999)	After 5 Years (2003)	After 7 Years (2005)	After 1 Year (2000)	After 5 Years (2004)	After 7 Years (2006)	After 1 Year (2001)	After 5 Years (2005)	After 7 Years (2007)
% Graduated	0.0%	51.8%	61.5%	0.1%	51.6%	-	0.1%	51.6%	-
% Continuing	77.5%	12.0%	2.9%	75.9%	11.1%	-	75.8%	10.9%	-
% Transferred	5.4%	9.9%	10.0%	6.1%	9.9%	-	6.1%	10.3%	-
Success Rate	83.0%	73.6%	74.4%	82.0%	72.6%	-	82.0%	72.7%	-
% Attrition	16.1%	24.5%	23.9%	17.3%	25.3%	-	17.4%	26.7%	-
% Ineligible to Proceed	0.9%	1.9%	1.7%	0.7%	2.0%	-	0.6%	0.6%	-
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	-	100.0%	100.0%	-

* This table does not include students who switched from a first entry program (like University 1) to a "second entry program" such as medicine.

3.1b Undergraduate Second Entry Program – All Universities*

Cohort Year No. Years of Study (calendar year)	Students Entering in 1998			Students Entering in 1999			Students Entering in 2000		
	After 1 Year (1999)	After 5 Years (2003)	After 7 Years (2005)	After 1 Year (2000)	After 5 Years (2004)	After 7 Years (2006)	After 1 Year (2001)	After 5 Years (2005)	After 7 Years (2007)
% Graduated	0.0%	86.4%	89.9%	0.1%	92.8%	-	0.0%	94.1%	-
% Continuing	84.8%	0.6%	0.1%	91.1%	0.5%	-	92.0%	0.5%	-
% Transferred	2.9%	2.4%	2.2%	1.8%	1.4%	-	1.6%	1.1%	-
Success Rate	87.7%	89.4%	90.3%	92.9%	94.7%	-	93.6%	95.6%	-
% Attrition	12.3%	10.6%	9.7%	7.0%	5.3%	-	6.4%	4.4%	-
% Ineligible to Proceed	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	-	0.0%	0.0%	-
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	-	100.0%	100.0%	-

- This table includes students entering a second program with a degree, or transferring in from another program within the same university to a program requiring prerequisite university studies. Students in co-operative education programs are not included.

3.1c Co-operative Education Programs –University of Manitoba*

Cohort Year No. Years of Study (calendar year)**	Entering in 1998			Entering in 1999		
	After 1 Year (1999)	After 6 Years (2004)	After 8 Years (2006)	After 1 Year (2000)	After 6 Years (2005)	After 8 Years (2007)
% Graduated	0.0%	92.4%	-	0.0%	94.5%	-
% Continuing	98.6%	5.1%	-	100.0%	2.7%	-
% Transferred	0.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	-
Success Rate	98.6%	97.5%	-	100.0%	97.2%	-
% Attrition	1.4%	2.5%	-	0.0%	2.7%	-
% Ineligible to Proceed	0.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	-
Total***	100.0%	100.0%	-	100.0%	100.0%	-

* Only the University of Manitoba reports data for co-operative education programs.

** In recognition that co-operative education programs by definition require students to leave formal study for periods of work-placements, co-op students are tracked after 1 year, 6 years, and 8 years, as opposed to 1, 5, and 7 years after program entry for First and Second Entry Programs.

*** May not add due to rounding.

3.2 Colleges Graduation and Retention Rates

Table 3.2a shows that 64.1% of certificate students first entering college as full-time students in 2000 completed their program within two years. Only 0.5% of the original cohort was continuing a certificate program after four years.

Table 3.2b shows that 47.8% of full-time diploma students entering a program in 2000 completed their program within three years. After four years, 50.6% of students had graduated from their diploma program.

Manitoba college students entering their program in 2000 had a 68.2% success rate for certificate programs after two years and a 53.0% success rate for diploma program after three years.

When certificate and diploma programs are looked at together for the 2000 cohort, colleges in Manitoba enjoyed a 58.4% success rate after four years of study, with just over one-third (35.9%) of students leaving the program before graduation.

3.2a Certificate Programs – All Colleges

Cohort Year	1999*				2000			
	After 1 Year (2000)	After 2 Years (2001)	After 3 Years (2002)	After 4 Years (2003)	After 1 Year (2001)	After 2 Years (2002)	After 3 Years (2003)	After 4 Years (2004)
% Graduated	39.8%	68.2%	68.4%	68.9%	42.5%	64.1%	66.2%	66.9%
% Continuing	40.8%	0.7%	0.4%	0.0%	34.3%	4.1%	1.5%	0.5%
Success Rate	80.5%	63.8%	61.3%	68.9%	76.8%	68.2%	67.8%	67.4%
% Attrition	13.0%	16.8%	16.8%	16.8%	17.1%	25.2%	25.6%	26.0%
% Other	12.5%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	5.9%	6.6%	6.6%	6.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* ACC could not report data for 1999.

3.2b Diploma Programs – All Colleges

Cohort Year	2000*			
	After 1 Year (2001)	After 2 Years (2002)	After 3 Years (2003)	After 4 Years (2004)
% Graduated	4.6%**	28.4%	47.8%	50.6%
% Continuing	65.2%	28.0%	5.2%	2.0%
Success Rate	69.8%	56.4%	53.0%	52.6%
% Attrition	28.8%	39.6%	42.1%	42.3%
% Other	1.4%	4.0%	4.9%	5.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* ETP could not report data for 2000

** Includes one-year diplomas and advanced diplomas