

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 2006 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 2006 Compendium who refer back to the 2005 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 has increased from 51.6% for the 1999 cohort to 53.8% for the 2001 cohort. Attrition has decreased slightly at the five-year mark, declining from 25.3% for the 1999 cohort to 24.1% for the 2001 cohort.¹ This appears to be the result of a greater percentage of students choosing to continue their studies rather than leave university.

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 92.8% for the 1999 cohort to 94.3% for the 2001 cohort. The percentage of students withdrawing from Second Entry Programs over the three years has decreased from 5.3% for the 1999 cohort to 4.0% for the 2001 cohort.

¹ A 'cohort' refers to those students who entered a program in a particular year. Thus, the 1999 cohort refers to those students who entered their program in 1999. Rates are calculated after the end of the first year, fifth year and seventh year of studies after entry into the program. Thus, the 1999 cohort is assessed in 2000 (end of first year), 2004 (end of fifth year), and 2006 (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 97.4% for the 1999 cohort. The percentage of students withdrawing from Co-operative Education Programs has decreased from 2.5% for the 1998 cohort to zero withdrawals for the 1999 cohort.

When First and Second Entry programs are assessed together, the graduation rate for Manitoba universities has increased from 63.1% for the 1999 cohort, to 64.8% for the 2000 cohort, and 66.1% for the 2001 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 1999 | | | Students Entering in 2000 | | | Students Entering in 2001 | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | After 1 Year (2000) | After 5 Years (2004) | After 7 Years (2006) | After 1 Year (2001) | After 5 Years (2005) | After 7 Years (2007) | After 1 Year (2002) | After 5 Years (2006) | After 7 Years (2008) |
| % Graduated | 0.1% | 51.6% | 63.1% | 0.1% | 51.6% | - | 0.0% | 53.8% | - |
| % Continuing | 75.9% | 11.1% | 2.2% | 75.8% | 10.9% | - | 76.2% | 10.2% | - |
| % Transferred | 6.1% | 9.9% | 8.9% | 6.1% | 10.3% | - | 6.4% | 10.0% | - |
| Success Rate | 82.0% | 72.6% | 74.2% | 82.0% | 72.8% | - | 82.7% | 74.0% | - |
| % Attrition | 17.3% | 25.3% | 24.1% | 17.4% | 26.7% | - | 16.0% | 24.1% | - |
| % Ineligible to Proceed | 0.7% | 2.0% | 1.7% | 0.6% | 0.6% | - | 1.3% | 1.9% | - |
| 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 1999 | | | Students Entering in 2000 | | | Students Entering in 2001 | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | After 1 Year (2000) | After 5 Years (2004) | After 7 Years (2006) | After 1 Year (2001) | After 5 Years (2005) | After 7 Years (2007) | After 1 Year (2002) | After 5 Years (2006) | After 7 Years (2008) |
| % Graduated | 0.1% | 92.8% | 94.0% | 0.0% | 94.1% | - | 0.0% | 94.3% | - |
| % Continuing | 91.1% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 92.0% | 0.5% | - | 93.5% | 0.6% | - |
| % Transferred | 1.8% | 1.4% | 1.1% | 1.6% | 1.1% | - | 1.3% | 1.0% | - |
| Success Rate | 92.9% | 94.7% | 95.3% | 93.6% | 95.6% | - | 94.8% | 95.9% | - |
| % Attrition | 7.0% | 5.3% | 4.7% | 6.4% | 4.4% | - | 5.1% | 4.0% | - |
| % Ineligible to Proceed | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | - | 0.1% | 0.1% | - |
| 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% | 98.8% | 0.0% | 97.4% | - |
| % Continuing | 98.6% | 5.1% | 1.2% | 100.0% | 2.6% | - |
| % Transferred | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | - |
| Success Rate | 98.6% | 97.5% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | - |
| % Attrition | 1.4% | 2.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | - |
| % Ineligible to Proceed | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | - |
| Total*** | 100.0% | 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 61.9% of certificate students first entering college as full-time students in 2001 completed their program within two years. Only 1.2% of the original cohort was continuing a certificate program after four years.

Table 3.2b shows that 49.6% of full-time diploma students entering a program in 2001 completed their program within three years. After four years, 52.2% of students had graduated from their diploma program.

Manitoba college students entering their program in 2001 had a 66.0% success rate for certificate programs after two years and a 55.6% success rate for diploma program after three years.

When certificate and diploma programs are looked at together for the 2001 cohort, colleges in Manitoba enjoyed a 58.7% success rate after four years of study, with just over one-third (35.1%) of students leaving the program before graduation.

3.2a Certificate Programs – All Colleges

| Cohort Year | 2000 | | | | 2001 | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | After 1 Year (2001) | After 2 Years (2002) | After 3 Years (2003) | After 4 Years (2004) | After 1 Year (2002) | After 2 Years (2003) | After 3 Years (2004) | After 4 Years (2005) |
| % Graduated | 42.5% | 64.1% | 66.2% | 66.8% | 39.6% | 61.9% | 63.2% | 63.8% |
| % Continuing | 34.3% | 4.1% | 1.5% | 0.5% | 36.9% | 4.1% | 2.1% | 1.2% |
| Success Rate | 76.8% | 68.2% | 67.8% | 67.3% | 76.5% | 66.0% | 65.3% | 65.0% |
| % Attrition | 17.1% | 25.2% | 25.6% | 26.0% | 16.7% | 26.0% | 26.6% | 26.9% |
| % Other | 5.9% | 6.6% | 6.6% | 6.7% | 6.8% | 7.9% | 8.0% | 8.0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

3.2b Diploma Programs – All Colleges

| Cohort Year | 2001 | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | After 1 Year (2002) | After 2 Years (2003) | After 3 Years (2004) | After 4 Years (2005) |
| % Graduated | 4.6%* | 31.0% | 49.6% | 52.2% |
| % Continuing | 69.4% | 27.8% | 6.0% | 1.8% |
| Success Rate | 74.0% | 57.8% | 55.6% | 54.0% |
| % Attrition | 25.6% | 38.3% | 40.3% | 41.1% |
| % Other | 0.4% | 2.9% | 4.1% | 4.9% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

* Includes one-year diplomas and advanced diplomas