Chapter 4  Undergraduate Student Success

Goals
The University of Michigan prepares its students to become leaders in the 21st century. The U-M's academic and extra-curricular programs have been developed and implemented to make sure each student completes a meaningful degree program in a reasonable time frame so as to advance his or her career and personal goals.

Overview
The University takes a number of steps to facilitate students’ timely progression to degree completion. This includes providing sufficient course offerings, excellent advising and mentoring, as well as ensuring that in-state students who demonstrate financial need receive sufficient financial aid. Out-of-state students also benefit from these resources, including access to financial assistance.

Each U-M undergraduate school or college has developed initiatives to help students who face impediments to their success that jeopardize their retention and degree completion. The academic units monitor student performance in key courses and require additional academic advising for students in poor academic standing. In addition, all students may take advantage of academic support services and programs, such as departmental tutoring, study skills workshops, mentoring, and programs offered by the Sweetland Writing Center and the Science Learning Center.

In this chapter, we present data on graduation rates for freshmen and transfer cohorts, data on U-M undergraduates who subsequently enroll in a graduate program, and indicators of senior student satisfaction with the University.

More than two-thirds of Michigan undergraduate students complete their first degree within four years of enrolling as freshmen. After six years, that figure is nearly 90 percent. University of Michigan students' completion rates are 20 percentage points higher than the average of public Association of American Universities (AAU) member institutions. The average graduation rates four years after enrollment at private AAU member schools is 5 to 10 percentage points higher than for U-M undergraduates, but by six years after enrollment U-M graduation rates are nearly equal to the AAU privates.

Undergraduates who transfer to the U-M complete their degree programs at high rates as well. Between 85 and 90 percent of transfer students graduate within four to six years after enrollment.

U-M undergraduates are surveyed during their senior year and report very positive opinions of the University as a whole and of their individual academic programs. Ninety percent of seniors surveyed say that if they had it to do over, they would attend the University of Michigan again.

Lastly, nearly half of all undergraduates continue their academic careers by enrolling in graduate or professional school within four years of completing a degree at the U-M.

In addition to graduate school or employment, University of Michigan students are increasingly interested in becoming entrepreneurs. In fact, recent experience indicates that a number of students launch business ventures before graduation. Doug Neal, managing director of the Center for Entrepreneurship in the College of Engineering, has observed that entrepreneurial activity has been growing for years. “But we appear to be approaching a tipping point where entrepreneurship is starting to become part of the fabric of the University of Michigan.”

For more information
Additional data on undergraduate demographics can be found in Chapter 2 on admissions and enrollment and in Chapter 7 on diversity. Information about undergraduate costs and financial aid is in Chapter 3.

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No charts updated since previous edition.

Charts in Chapter 4

4.2  Proportion of U-M Baccalaureate Recipients Enrolled in a Graduate or Professional Degree Program within Four Years, Class of 2005-06.
4.3.1 Responses of U-M Seniors to Survey Questions about Satisfaction with their Educations.
4.3.2 Responses of U-M Seniors to Survey Questions about Satisfaction with Academics, Course Availability and Advising.
U-M graduation rates are far higher than the average rates for AAU public universities and equal to the rates for AAU private universities.


This chart shows the fractions of new freshmen cohorts that have graduated with a bachelor’s degree in four, five and six years. The bottom axis represents the year each freshmen cohort started college. Comparative data from Association of American Universities (AAU) institutions¹ is displayed for 1996 through 2003 cohorts; additional U-M data is displayed for 2004 to 2007.

Graduation rates for U-M undergraduate students have increased steadily over the time period shown.

¹ A list of public and private Association of American Universities (AAU) member institutions is found in Appendix A.
Nearly half of U-M students who received a bachelor's degree enrolled in a graduate or professional school within four years of graduation.

4.2 Proportion of U-M Baccalaureate Recipients Enrolled in a Graduate or Professional Degree Program within Four Years, Class of 2005-06.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse.

Many U-M students who graduate with baccalaureate degrees continue their educations in graduate or professional school programs, including more than half of the graduates of the College of Literature, Science & the Arts.
Seniors have expressed a high level of satisfaction with their U-M education on several measures.

4.3.1 Responses of U-M Seniors to Survey Questions about Satisfaction with their Education.

A: If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution?

- 2009: 90%
- 2006: 88%
- 2003: 89%

B: How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at the U-M?

- 2009: 92%
- 2006: 90%
- 2003: 90%

C: How would you rate the academic quality of the U-M in general?

- 2009: 95%
- 2006: 94%
- 2003: 93%

D: How would you rate the academic quality of your major program?

- 2009: 88%
- 2006: 88%
- 2003: 85%

SOURCE: National Survey of Student Engagement.

The National Survey of Student Engagement is one of several higher education surveys administered by the Center for Postsecondary Research in the Indiana University School of Education. Although the survey is administered annually, the U-M only participates in selected years.
Senior seniors have expressed a high level of satisfaction with their U-M academic experience on several measures.

4.3.2 Responses of U-M Seniors to Survey Questions about Satisfaction with Academics, Course Availability and Advising.

SOURCE: University of Michigan Asks You (UMAY) undergraduate survey.

UMAY (University of Michigan Asks You) is a survey administered to all undergraduates at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. The survey is used to learn about undergraduate student experiences, from satisfaction with the academic and extra-curricular activities, to the students’ assessment of the campus climate. UMAY is the U-M designation for the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey, managed by a set of AAU institutions and located at the Center for Studies in Higher Education, University of California–Berkeley.