The Retention & Graduation Task Force

2017/18 Annual Report to the University Senate

Monday, April 30, 2018

Wayne Locust, Vice-President
Division of Enrollment Planning & Management
Retention & Graduation Task Force
2017-2018

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Mary Skarkowicz, Undergraduate Student Representative, Registration Services
Ellen Tripp, Associate Athletic Director for the Counseling Program for Intercollegiate Athletes
John Volin, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Anthonia Wray, Undergraduate Student Representative, Student Support Services
I. Introduction

This annual report provides updated trend data and information regarding admissions, retention and graduation of undergraduates at Storrs and the regional campuses. UConn’s record of success on these important outcomes starts with our excellent academic programs. These are complemented by an array of academic enrichment/support opportunities, as well as many student life activities. The sum is a robust environment geared toward students’ academic, career, personal and social growth.

The University of Connecticut’s retention and graduation rates continue to be among the best for public research universities, nationally. Our four-year graduation rate, consistently among the top ten recently, reached 73% for the second year in a row. Our average time-to-graduation, at 4.2 years is particularly strong, ranking us near the very top among 58 peer institutions. This is significant because the value of timely graduation cannot be overstated. These graduates can move on to the next phase of their lives, whether that involves advanced education or employment, and they can avoid paying tuition and fees for additional courses, semesters or years pursuing their bachelor’s degree. And, by finishing in four years, those dependent on student loans can avoid incurring more debt. It should be noted, UConn’s student loan default rate is well below the 11.3% national average according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Our Retention & Graduation Task Force members, from across the University, are listed on page 2. As we continue to focus on challenges and opportunities, this past year, we turned our attention to: lower retention and graduation rates for out-of-state students vs. those from in-state. We decided to start by addressing domestic out-of-state students because, unlike international students, they do not have a number of support and enrichment programs devoted to them and their needs.

II. Admissions Trends: Storrs Freshmen

Guided by University and Division policy regarding admissions criteria and enrollment targets, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions strategically identifies prospects who meet institutional qualifications so we can build applicant pools of academic quality, size and diversity. The number of admissions applications for Storrs continues to climb.

The academic profile, as measured by academic quality of our entering class, includes SAT scores, standing in graduating high school class, along with academic record and accomplishments, and other factors. More than half of our freshmen are from the Top 10% of their high school class, and the number entering our Honors Program has grown. The Fall 2017 mean SAT, which is the first year of the redesigned examination, is a 1294. Maintaining the academic quality of our student body is essential to attracting and recruiting great students and faculty. This is critical to maintaining our position or moving up in national rankings, attracting potential investment in UConn by private industry, garnering research grant funds, and drawing private philanthropic gifts. By nearly every measure, we are able to become a better, stronger institution as long as we are able to maintain and build on academic quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications</td>
<td>27,479</td>
<td>31,280</td>
<td>34,978</td>
<td>35,979</td>
<td>34,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admits</td>
<td>14,745</td>
<td>15,629</td>
<td>18,598</td>
<td>17,552</td>
<td>16,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>3,755</td>
<td>3,588</td>
<td>3,774</td>
<td>3,822</td>
<td>3,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean SAT</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>1294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 10% HS Class</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-State</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Program</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Undergraduate Admissions and OIRE  Shaded cells indicate Old SAT Score Averages

III. Regional Campus Freshman Profile

Over the past five classes, first year enrollment at our regional campuses has grown, and the portion of first year minority students has reached an all-time high at 55%, now more than half of the incoming freshman class. The most recent average New SAT of our entering Fall 2017 cohort was 1093.

2. Regional Campuses: Incoming Freshman Cohort Profile (Fall 2013-2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>1,104</td>
<td>1,406</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>1,297</td>
<td>1,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean SAT</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>1042</td>
<td>1022</td>
<td>1093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Undergraduate Admissions and OIRE  Shaded cells indicate Old SAT Score Averages

IV. Total Undergraduate Enrollment

As we have now slowed the growth of the freshmen class at Storrs, overall enrollment at the main campus has also plateaued. This is the result of deliberate enrollment planning. Enrollment at our regional campuses has experienced an upturn, which resulted from the addition of housing at Stamford and the Hartford campus relocation.

3. Total Undergraduate Enrollment (Fall 2013-2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Storrs</td>
<td>18,032</td>
<td>18,395</td>
<td>18,826</td>
<td>19,324</td>
<td>19,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regionals</td>
<td>4,563</td>
<td>4,578</td>
<td>4,581</td>
<td>4,306</td>
<td>4,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>22,595</td>
<td>22,973</td>
<td>23,407</td>
<td>23,630</td>
<td>23,845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OIRE
V. **Financial Aid**

Financial aid plays a crucial role in retention and graduation by reducing financial barriers that limit access to enrolling at UConn and by rewarding prior academic achievement. In Fall 2017, there were 11,602 recipients of gift aid, of which 81% received need-based and 19% receive merit-based only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Gift Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Need-Based Recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Merit-Only Recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Gift $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit-Based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total Gift $ represents need-based and merit-based gift aid allocated for new and continuing students. They don’t add up to the amount awarded as these figures represent fall census date data that changes during the academic year based on award strategies. By year-end nearly all, or all, allocated funds are spent.*

Source: Office of Student Financial Aid Services

VI. **Fall 2017 Retention and Graduation Highlights**

- The Fall 2016 Storrs cohort has achieved a 94% one-year retention rate, only the second cohort to reach this rate – the first cohort being Fall 2012.
- The Fall 2012 Storrs cohort continues to have exceptional retention and graduation rates, being the first cohort to have a five-year graduation rate of 84%. No Storrs cohort has ever achieved a four, five, or six-year rate of 84%.
- The Fall 2011 Storrs cohort has a six-year graduation rate of 83%, improved from the previous cohort (82%).
- The Fall 2013 Storrs minority cohort has the highest four-year graduation rate (66%) of any minority cohort.
- The total Fall 2011 minority cohort holds steady at a six-year graduation rate of 77%.
- Storrs Campus six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2011 male Hispanic American cohort has improved to 73% compared to the Fall 2010 cohort (66%), and the total Hispanic six-year rate has improved to 78% for the Fall 2011 cohort compared to the Fall 2010 cohort (72%).
- Storrs Campus African American male six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2011 cohort has dropped significantly to 64% compared to the Fall 2010 cohort (72%).
- The one-year retention rate for the Regional Campuses has dropped slightly to 84% for the Fall 2016 cohort compared to 85% for the two previous cohorts.
- The six-year graduation rate for the Regional Campuses has improved to 61% for the Fall 2011 cohort, with Hartford, Stamford, and Waterbury campuses leading the way.
- UConn Storrs Campus ranks 20 out of 58 public research universities in graduation rate for all freshmen and 22 out of 58 public research universities for minority freshmen.
- UConn Storrs Campus average time to graduate is 4.2 years among those who graduate within 6 years, and ranks 4 out of 58 public research universities.
- UConn Storrs Campus ranks 17 out of 58 public research universities in average freshmen to sophomore retention rates.

Source: OIRE