



## AREA I: STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

### **Goal 1. Improve undergraduate student success, retention and degree completion.**

- The first-to-second year retention rate for undergraduate students in fall 2020 was 78.5%, an increase of 2.1% over fall 2019 and the highest retention rate on record for The University of Toledo over the last 21 years.
- The preliminary six-year graduation rate increased to 55.8% for the 2015 cohort of students (as of June 8, 2021), an increase of 2.3% over last year (the 2014 cohort of students graduating in 2020) and the highest six-year graduation rate on record. We have made continuous progress on this goal, exceeding our 2022 strategic plan target goal by 5.8% with one year remaining in the five-year strategic plan (2016-22).
- The first-to-second year retention gap between underrepresented minority students and majority students in fall 2020 decreased by 1.9% over fall 2019, thus meeting the goal of reducing the retention gap annually by 1.98% or more.
- The six-year graduation gap between underrepresented minority students and majority students decreased by 6.8% for the 2015 cohort of students, as compared to last year (2014 cohort).
- In the spring of 2021, the Office of the Provost launched a Recruit-Back Campaign to reach out to the 2,400 undergraduate students who dropped out or stopped out since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Student success coaches and academic advisors in the colleges are working together to engage in personalized outreach to these students and linking them with campus resources they will need in order to re-enroll. To date, approximately 291 students have re-enrolled for summer 2021 or fall 2021.
- In spring 2021, the Office of the Provost, in partnership with the Division of Enrollment Management, established a Student Transfer Center in order to enhance the support provided to students who transfer to UToledo. The Center for Transfer Students will serve as a critical resource to support students in their transition from community college to UToledo, with the goal of increasing transfer student success and degree completion. The Center's services include recruitment, admission assistance, financial aid and scholarship assistance, transfer credit evaluation, and the development of articulation agreements with community college partners.
- UToledo continues to be an active participant in a national initiative, the "Student Experience Project" of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), which is designed to improve student success among underrepresented minority students in STEM programs. The University received \$250,000 in grant funding over three years for this initiative. As part of the Student Experience Project, this spring a new initiative was launched to improve outcomes for underrepresented minority students, with 25 instructors from six colleges participating as Equity Champions. These faculty created resources that are designed to enhance the success of underrepresented minority students, and these resources will be shared with the entire campus.
- The University also continues to participate in an additional national initiative of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), which is designed to increase college access, close the achievement gap and increase the number of degrees awarded nationally by 2025. This national initiative, known as "Powered by Publics: Scaling Student Success," consists of 100 selected universities across the country working together in regional clusters to implement innovative and effective practices that advance student success on their campuses. The APLU cluster to which UToledo belongs initially identified "Financial Barriers to Student Success" as the area of focus for their work, and a University-wide team worked together to address financial issues that impact student success, including processes and procedures. Currently, the Powered by Publics program of the APLU is focusing on the development of campus initiatives and resources that support and facilitate students' experiences of belonging.
- The University of Toledo also continues to participate in a statewide initiative called the "Strong Start to Finish" program that is designed to enhance student success and address attainment gaps for underrepresented minority students.

- In fall 2019, the University launched “Rocket to Rocket Emergency Aid,” a new financial intervention program to assist students facing financial challenges. More than \$200,459 has been awarded to 302 students since March 2020 in response to needs related to emergency financial assistance.
- In fall 2020, approximately 7,780 students collectively saved \$1.2 million by participating in the University’s digital textbook program. Faculty in 40 courses (with 160 sections) voluntarily participated in this initiative and used digital textbooks. During the spring 2021 semester, 50 courses and 174 sections resulted in more than 7,100 students collectively saving approximately \$1.3 million. These efforts by faculty to help reduce textbook costs have resulted in significant savings for our students.
- UToledo continues to participate in the state of Ohio’s “Choose Ohio First” scholarship program, which is designed to increase the number of STEM graduates in Ohio. In spring 2021, The University of Toledo received approximately \$3.5 million in grant funding to recruit and support new STEM students beginning in the fall of 2021 for five years and support previously recruited and enrolled Choose Ohio First scholars to complete their degree. Students who participate in this program receive Choose Ohio First scholarships and work closely with faculty mentors in STEM fields. UToledo currently has 167 students who are designated as Choose Ohio First scholars. (Note that STEM fields include science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine.)
- In fall 2019, a First Year Experience coordinating committee was established and charged with improving the first-year experience at UToledo and providing holistic support for students during the critical first year of college, when students are most at-risk of dropping out and not being retained through to the second semester or second year. The new first-year experience program was piloted in fall 2020, and the new “First Year Toledo” includes pre-orientation modules and Rocket Launch, Online Summer Modules, Rocket Welcome Weekend, Welcome Weeks and a First Year Experience Course.
- Beginning in fall 2019, faculty teaching 1000- and 2000-level courses were required to submit Mid-Term Grade Reports each semester. These grade reports are provided to students, academic advisors and success coaches in order to enhance our ability to identify at-risk students at an early stage in the semester and undertake appropriate interventions, if needed. In spring 2021, we achieved the highest reporting rates on record, with 89.3% of faculty teaching lower-division courses, and 62% of faculty teaching upper-division courses, submitting Midterm Grades for the spring semester.
- The University’s Starfish early-alert, student success technology platform allows faculty to enter early alerts regarding student performance and to acknowledge and celebrate students’ successes. The Starfish system helps to identify students who may be at risk in their courses and also provides an opportunity for faculty to provide encouraging messages to students as they make progress in their classes. For spring 2021, the University achieved a record reporting rate of 78% for all undergraduate course sections, and student feedback indicates that these reports play a significant role in keeping them on track toward graduation.
- In fall 2020 and spring 2021, the University continued to implement early registration campaigns for current students for next semester classes, with the goal of registering current students prior to their departure from campus for winter and summer breaks. The goal of the “Get Ahead – Early Registration Campaign” is to register as many students as possible for their next semester courses before they leave for winter break or the summer, which is a best practice related to student retention.
- Over the last four years, degree requirements for 80% of the University’s 101 undergraduate academic programs have been revised or developed to require 120 credit hours for graduation, while not jeopardizing accreditation or licensure requirements. The 20% of undergraduate degree programs that require more than 120 credit hours for graduation include programs that are not able to reduce credit hour requirements for completion due to accreditation and/or licensure requirements.

- The University's Student Food Pantries, now known as "Rocket Fuel," are averaging 100 students per week on the Main Campus and 50 students per week on the Health Science Campus. Approximately 1,600 students have used one of the University's food pantries during the 2020-21 academic year. Food insecurity is a risk factor for student retention at colleges and universities across the nation and increased dramatically during the pandemic. UToledo data shows that 43% of students who used the University food pantries in fall 2020 returned for classes in the spring of 2021.
  - In fall 2020, The University of Toledo was selected to participate in Ohio's new "College2Careers" program that is designed to close gaps in services to students with disabilities during college, including after graduation. The goal of the statewide College2Careers program is to empower disabled students as they successfully transition from college life to full-time careers.
  - In fall 2020, The University of Toledo was one of 40 employers in Ohio recognized with the Department of Defense's "Above and Beyond" award for its support of National Guard and Reserve Forces. UToledo was the only institution of higher learning to receive this award.
  - In fall 2020, the University received a \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support the TRIO Student Support Services program over five years. The TRIO program is a federally-funded program that is designed to support students from low-income backgrounds by providing comprehensive advising and support services, including tutoring, mentoring, career counseling, financial literacy and post-graduate preparation. Approximately 160 students participate in UToledo's TRIO program each year. Last year, 88% of TRIO students returned to class or graduated; 71% of these students were first-generation college students.
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## **Goal 2. Improve graduation and professional student success through timely degree completion.**

- The two-year graduation rate for full-time master's degree students increased from 80.4% in 2016 to 82.7% in 2020, achieving the target metric of 82% established in the University's strategic plan.
- The median LSAT for the 2020 entering cohort in the College of Law was 152, on par with target metrics and matching the 2019 results.
- The mean MCAT score for students entering the College of Medicine and Life Sciences in fall 2020 was 507.9, slightly lower than the baseline metric of 508 established in the University's strategic plan in 2016.
- The 2020 licensure and board pass rates for graduates of the University's College of Nursing is 84.86% for BSN pre-licensure students and 82.86% for MSN/CNL students. Note that the 2020 national average was 86.58%. The 2020 rates remain within the 95th percentile (which is 82.25%).
- The 2020 pass rate for students in the University's College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPPS) on the NAPLEX (North America Pharmacist Licensure Exam) was 89.9%, exceeding the national average of 88.43%. In addition, CPPS graduates passed the pharmacy law exam with a 90.91% pass rate on the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam, exceeding the national average of 84.59%.
- The 2020 pass rate for graduates of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences for the USMLE Step 1 exams (United States Medical Licensing Exam) is 100%, with a national average of 97% on first attempt.
- The 2020 pass rate for first-time takers/graduates of the College of Law (delayed until October of 2020) was 84%, which is slightly below the state first-time average of 85%. The overall pass rate of 78% was above the state average of 77.4%.

### **Goal 3. Prepare students for advanced academic studies and career success.**

- UToledo Online continues to increase the percentage of online courses that are Quality Matters (QM) certified or meet Quality Matters standards. As of April 30, 2021, UToledo has had 120 officially certified Quality Matters courses, with 109 of the certifications still current. UToledo ranks first in Ohio out of 28 institutions with at least one currently certified course, and 9th nationally out of 347 institutions with at least one currently certified course. (Note that official Quality Matters certification expires after five years.)
- Academic programs continue to revise their assessment plans to align program student learning outcomes (SLOs) with the University-wide Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) that were developed in the spring of 2017. By spring 2021, 255 of 277 academic programs and service units (92%) have aligned their program-level student learning outcomes with the University-level student learning outcomes (ISLOs). Four percent (4%) of the academic programs that do not yet have student learning outcomes that are aligned with the ISLOs are newly established academic programs and are in the process of developing their assessment plans and alignments with the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes. The Chair of the University Assessment Committee, Director of University Assessment, and the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs have met with the dean of each college and leaders responsible for each co-curricular service unit to discuss their assessment plans and practices, with the goal of having all academic programs and service units on track to complete their alignments.
- During the 2019-20 academic year, the University launched a new pilot initiative to support efforts to integrate academic curricular experiences with co-curricular and extracurricular experiences related to career pathways in a student's major. Faculty in more than 30 academic programs volunteered to develop "Experiential Major Maps" as part of this pilot project, which will help current and prospective students explore majors and career options and create a year-by-year plan to integrate curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular experiences. The Experiential Major Maps will be available in print and on the web from a diverse array of majors across colleges and disciplines. As of spring 2021, approximately 30% of the University's academic programs have indicated an interest in being early adopters of this initiative, and the Office of the Provost continues to work with colleges and departments to develop the maps.
- During the 2018-19 academic year, the College of Graduate Studies developed guidelines for the development of undergraduate-to-graduate pipeline programs that are consistent with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation guidelines and Ohio Department of Higher Education guidelines on credit hour limitations, registration and financial aid considerations. As of September 2020, four new undergraduate-to-graduate pipeline programs have been established, including a Bachelor of Science in Engineering to Master of Science in Engineering; a Bachelor of Business Management to Master of Science in Accountancy; and a Bachelor of Arts to Master of Public Administration. With the addition of these programs, the strategic plan target metric of implementing a total of 10 undergraduate-to-graduate pipeline programs by 2022 has been achieved (baseline 2016 metric is six pipeline programs and target metric for 2022 is 10 pipeline programs).
- In 2019, the Office of Career Services launched a new initiative called "Rocket Ready" for students in programs that do not have a required internship or cooperative learning (co-op) component. The Rocket Ready program provides students with the opportunity to identify possible career paths and find an internship or experiential learning opportunity in their chosen field. The Office of Career Services continues to promote this initiative with targeted programs across the University and provides assistance to students and/or their academic programs in order to identify appropriate internship sites for consideration.
- According to the University's "First Destination Survey" administered to graduating seniors in spring 2021, 64% of students reported that they participated in experiential learning during their studies as undergraduates at UToledo.

- Results of the University’s “First Destination Survey” for the graduating class of 2021 shows that 77% of graduating students who responded to the survey were employed in a field related to their major, were pursuing additional education or pursuing other opportunities. This survey is conducted twice a year prior to graduation and is administered by the University’s Office of Career Services.
- During the spring 2021 semester, the Office of Career Services co-hosted four virtual job fairs (virtual due to the pandemic) in collaboration with multiple academic partners, including a Government and Public Service Fair in February 2021 with 85 student attendees; a Diversity Opportunities Fair in March 2021 with 70 student attendees; a Healthcare Career Fair in March 2021 with 287 student attendees; and a UTeach Job Fair in April with approximately 100 students registered. In addition, 166 students participated in one-on-one appointments with professional staff in the Office of Career Services, and approximately 530 students participated in classroom presentations. Additionally, 273 employers participated in various employment-related events during the spring 2021 semester.