

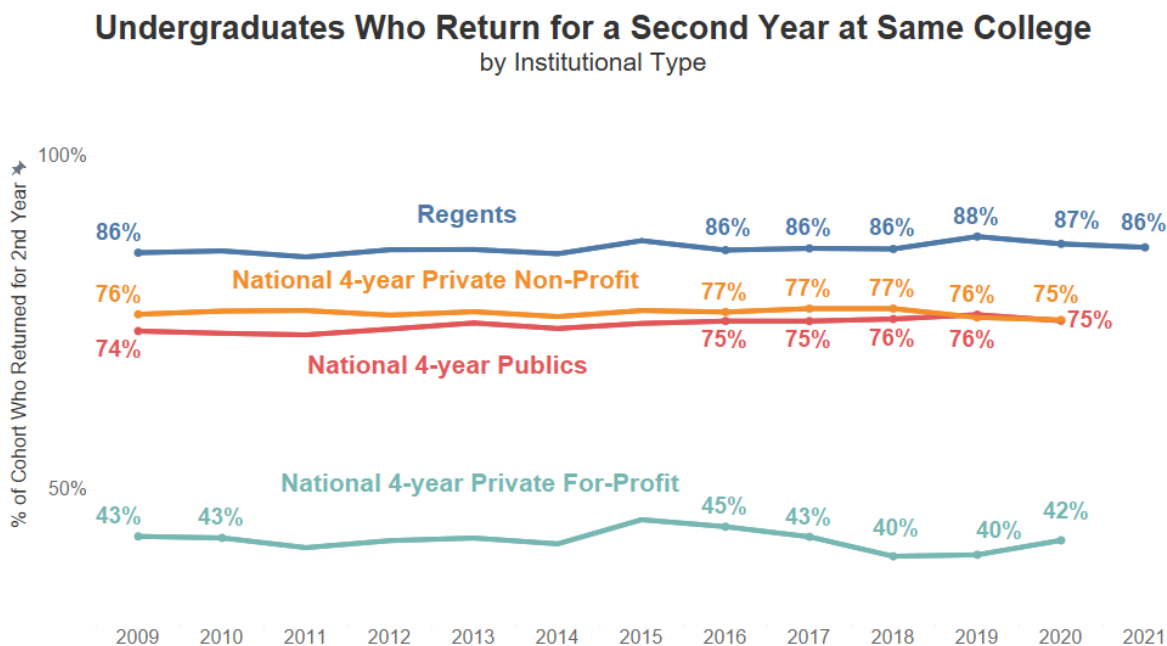
Contact: Jason Pontius

## FALL 2022 GRADUATION AND RETENTION REPORT

**Action Requested:** Receive the Fall 2022 Graduation & Retention Report.

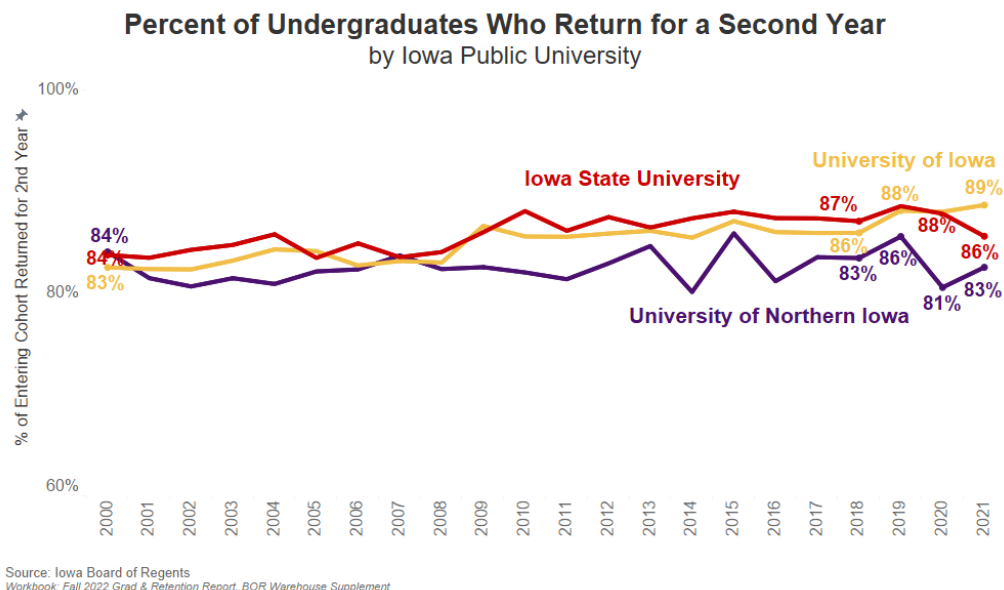
**Executive Summary:** The Regent university overall retention rates are down one percentage point and the percentage of students who graduate in four years is up two percentage points since last year. Both metrics are well above national averages. Time to degree continues to show steady improvement but gaps in graduation rates by race/ethnicity persist.

**Retention rates.** The percent of undergraduates who returned for a second year peaked at 88% in 2019 prior to the pandemic. Over the past two years, that retention rate has fallen slightly to 86%. Concerns that during the pandemic large numbers of students would leave college or transfer to colleges closer to home did not materialize. Overall retention rates for the Regent enterprise continue to far exceed the national averages of both public and private 4-year colleges and universities.

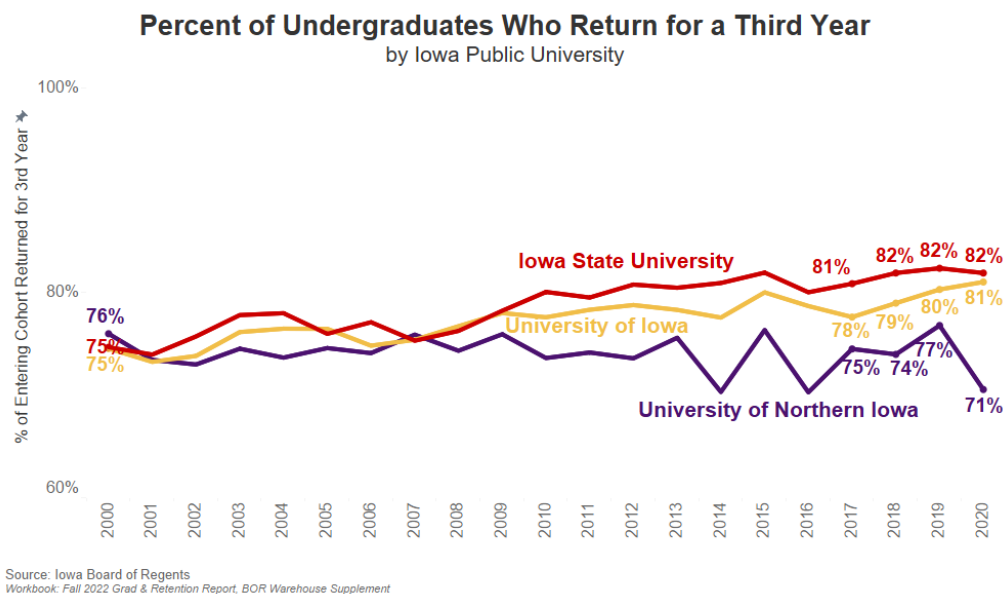


Sources: Iowa Board of Regents & National Student Clearinghouse Research Center *Persistence & Retention - 2022 Report*  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

While the overall retention of the Regent enterprise has largely remained flat, retention rates can fluctuate by entry cohort and by university. Iowa State University dropped two percentage points from 88% retention for the 2020 entry cohort to 86% for the 2021 entry cohort. The University of Iowa improved one percentage point, retaining 89% of the 2021 entry cohort, and the University of Northern Iowa improved two percentage point from 81% to 83%. (see graph below)

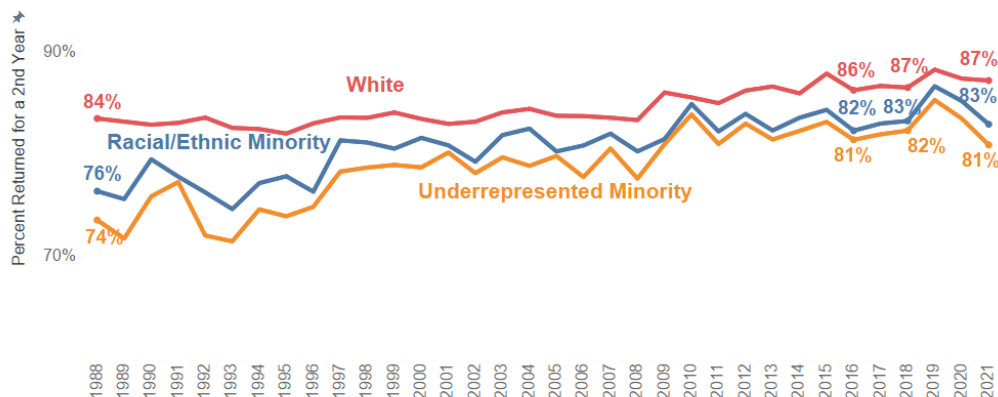


Looking at the rate of students returning for their third year of college, or second-year retention, it shows flat or slightly improved retention at ISU and the University of Iowa from the 2019 entry cohort to the 2020 entry cohort (see below). The dip in second-year retention seen below for the UNI 2020 cohort is carryover from the dip in first-year retention seen in that same UNI cohort (see Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year above)



The graph below shows the percent of undergraduates who return for a second year by race/ethnicity. While the gap had narrowed to one or two percentage points for the 2019 entry cohort, that gap has widened to a four to six percentage points during the pandemic.

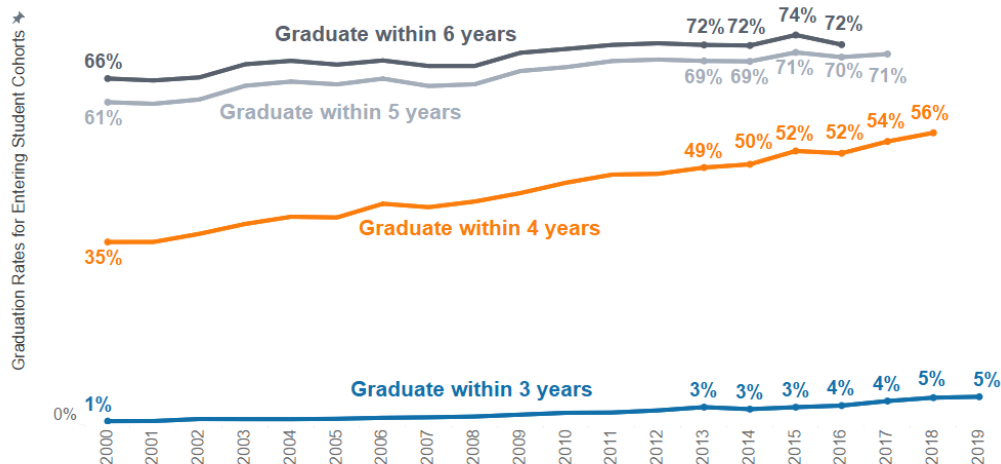
**Percent of Undergraduates Who Return for a Second Year**  
by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Iowa Board of Regents. Racial/Ethnic Minority includes Asian American students while Underrepresented Minority does not. International students are not included.  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

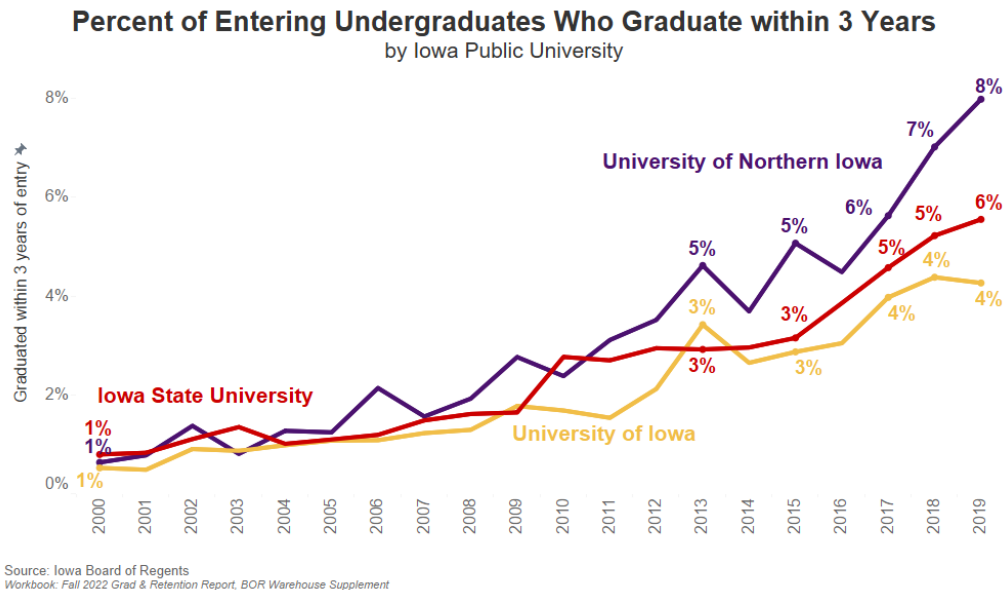
Graduation rates. The average four-year graduation rate across the three Regent universities (56%) is the highest on record and has steadily improved over the last 20 years. The percent of students in the 2016 entry cohort who graduated in six years or less (72%) was two percentage points lower than that of the 2015 entry cohort which was the highest ever at 74%.

**Iowa Public University Undergraduate Graduation Rates**

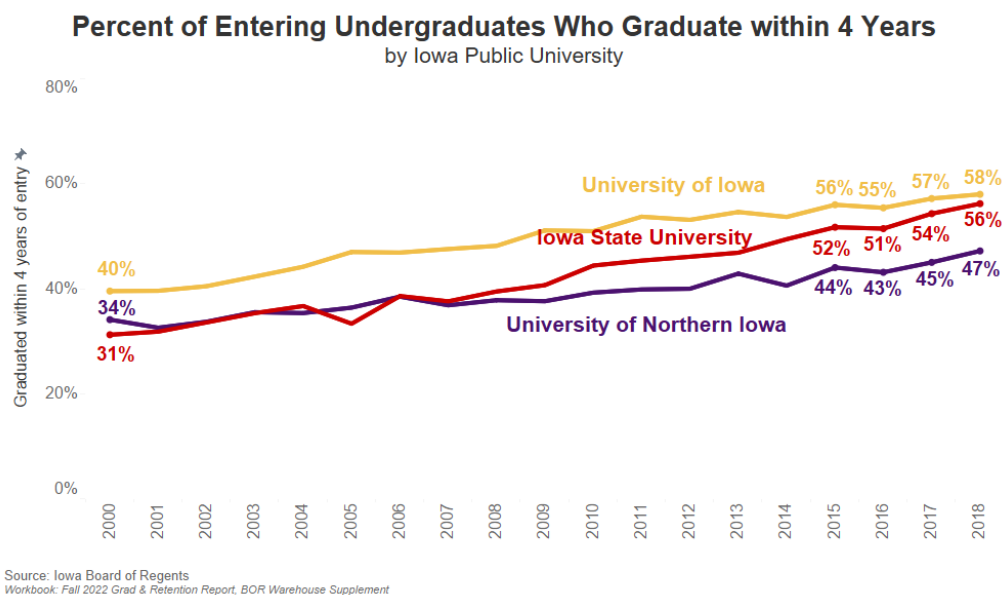


Source: Iowa Board of Regents  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

The Regent universities continue to show steady growth in the percentage of students who graduate within three years. This growth has been particularly strong at the University of Northern Iowa. (see graph below)

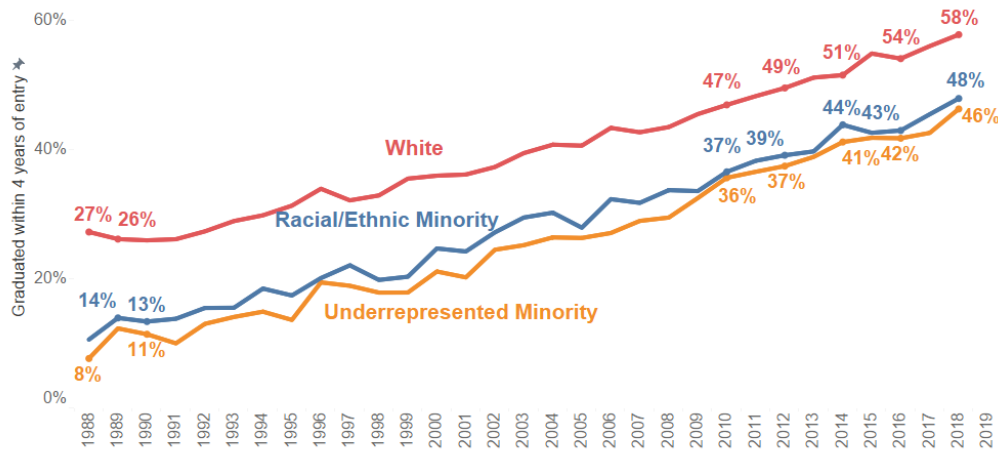


All three universities also had one to two percentage point improvements in the percentage of students who graduate within four years. (see graph below)



While the percent of students who graduate in four years has improved over time, the four-year degree attainment gap by race/ethnicity has remained largely unchanged for 20 years. (see graph below)

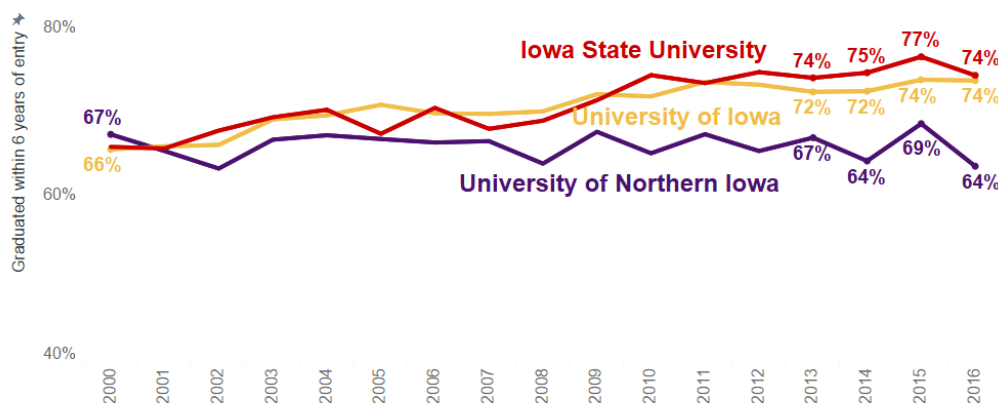
### Regent Undergraduates Earning a Bachelor's Degree within Four Years by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Iowa Board of Regents. Racial/Ethnic Minority includes Asian American students while Underrepresented Minority does not. International students are not included.  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

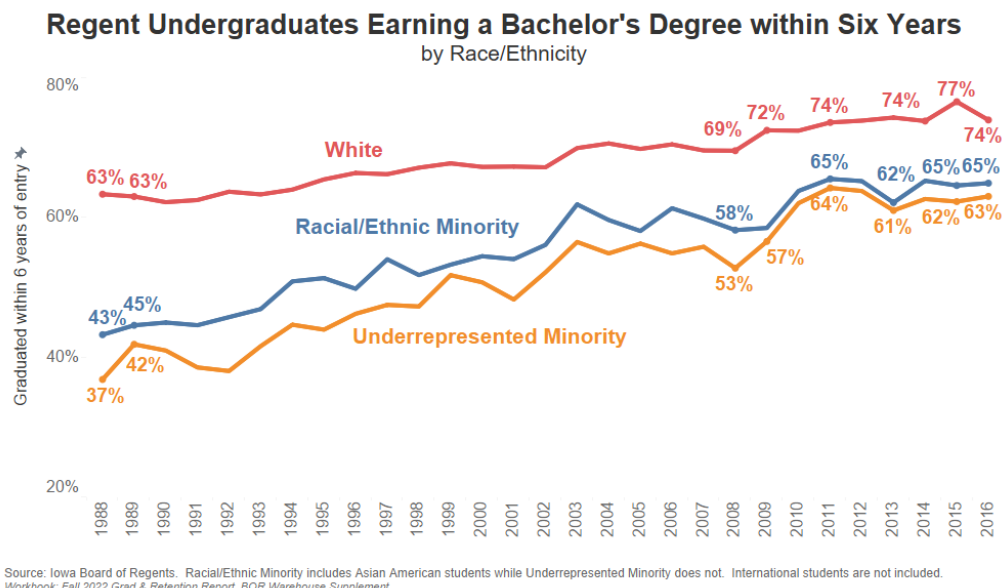
Six-year graduation rates for the 2016 entry cohort were three to five percentage points lower than the prior cohort at both Iowa State and UNI. This decline runs contrary to recent growth in six-year graduation rates and may be due to impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most students in the 2016 entry cohort would have graduated between the Spring of 2020 and the Spring of 2022.

### Percent of Entering Undergraduates Who Graduate within 6 Years by Iowa Public University

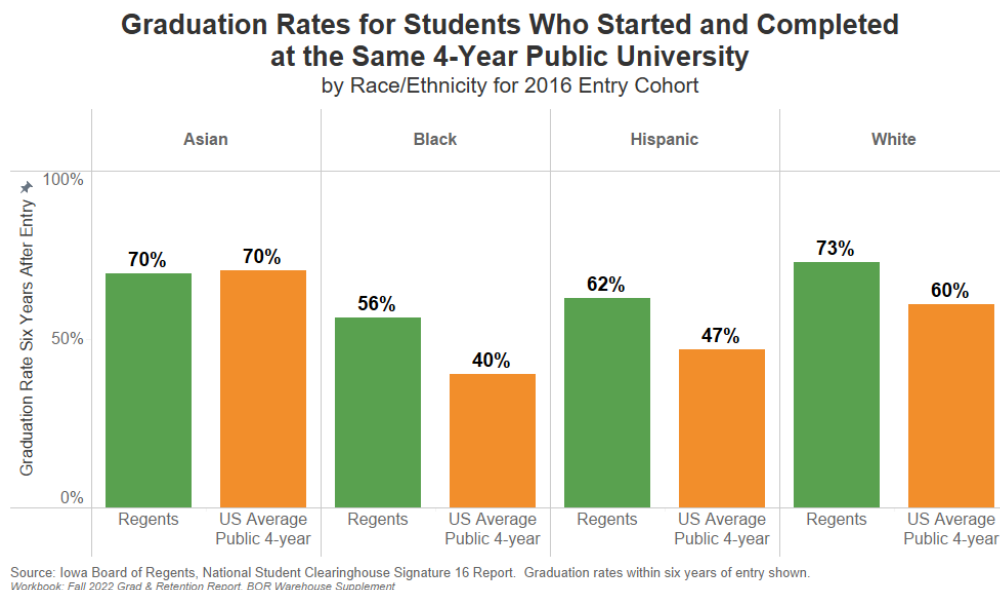


Source: Iowa Board of Regents  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

The six-year graduation rate gap by race/ethnicity has shown more improvement over time than the four-year graduation rate. The gap for the 2016 entry cohort is one of the narrowest on record (9-11 percentage points) but is due largely to a drop in graduation rates among White students. (see graph below).



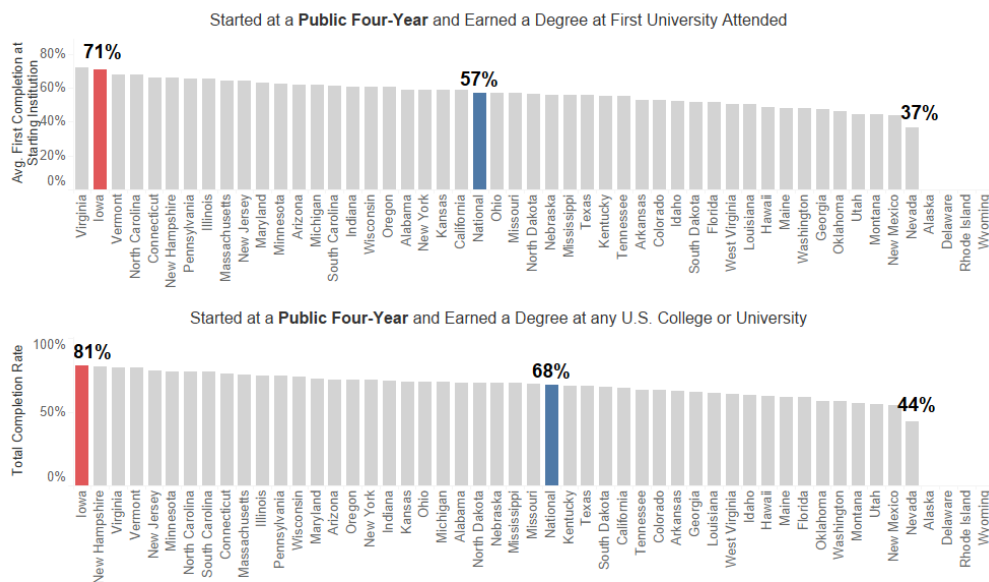
National & state benchmarking. While gaps remain in Regent university graduation rates by race/ethnicity, the Regents continue to outperform four-year public university national averages in all categories except among students who identify as Asian. The graph below shows six-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity.



Students attending a four-year public university in Iowa continue to outperform, on average, students attending four-year public universities in most states. The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) found that for the 2016 entry cohort, 71% of students who start at a Regent university graduate from that same university within six years. Iowa has the highest four-year

public total degree attainment rate (81%) of any state in the U.S. The total attainment rate includes earned degrees at any U.S. college or university.

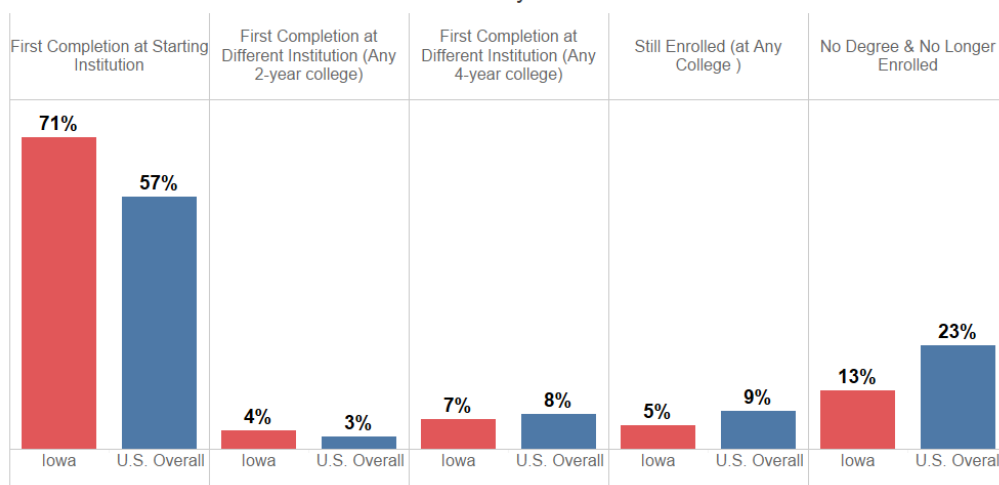
**Graduation Rates from 4-Year Public Universities**  
2016 Entry Cohort by State



Source: NSC 2022 Completing College National and State Reports. 2016 entry cohort shown. Graduation rates determined six years after entry to first college attended.  
Workbook: NSC 6-year Graduation Rates by State 2008-2016 Cohorts

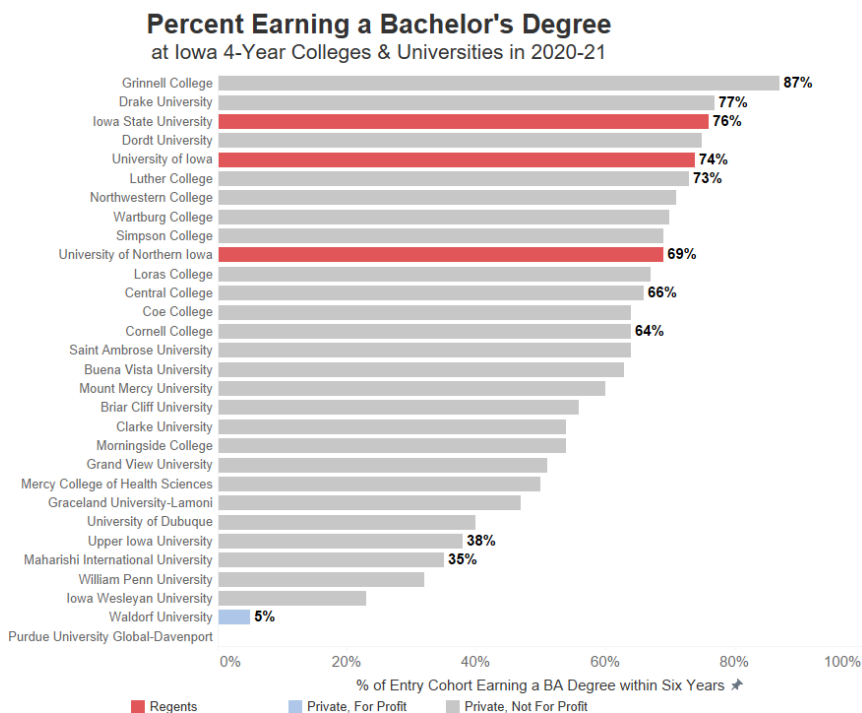
Looking at the NSC data in more detail, only 13% of students who start at a Regent university leave higher education without a degree, well below the national average of 23% (see below).

**Six Years After Enrolling at an Iowa Regent University**  
2016 Entry Cohort

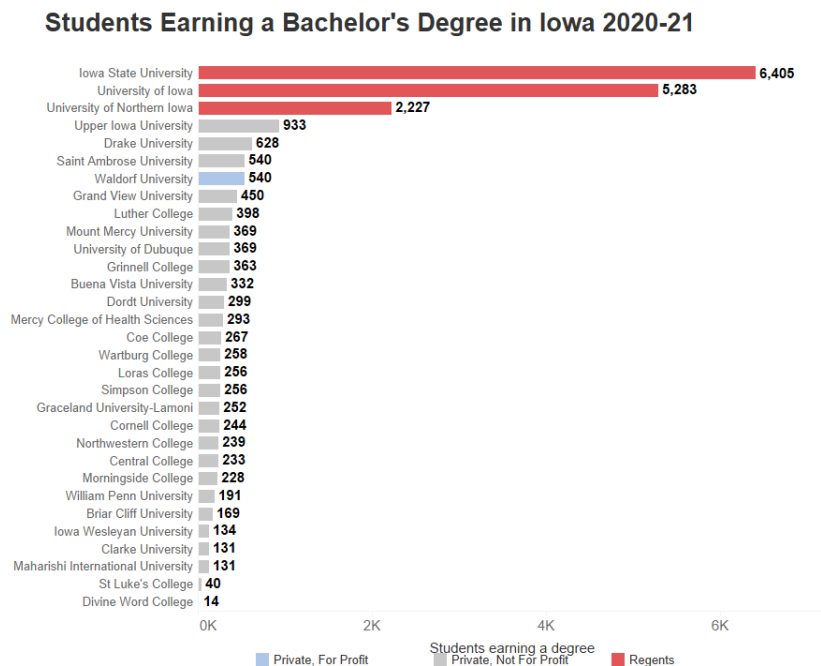


Source: NSC 2022 Completing College National and State Reports. 2016 entry cohort shown. Graduation rates determined six years after entry to first college attended.  
Workbook: NSC 6-year Graduation Rates by State 2008-2016 Cohorts

Regent university graduation rates perform well relative to other Iowa colleges and universities. (see graph below)



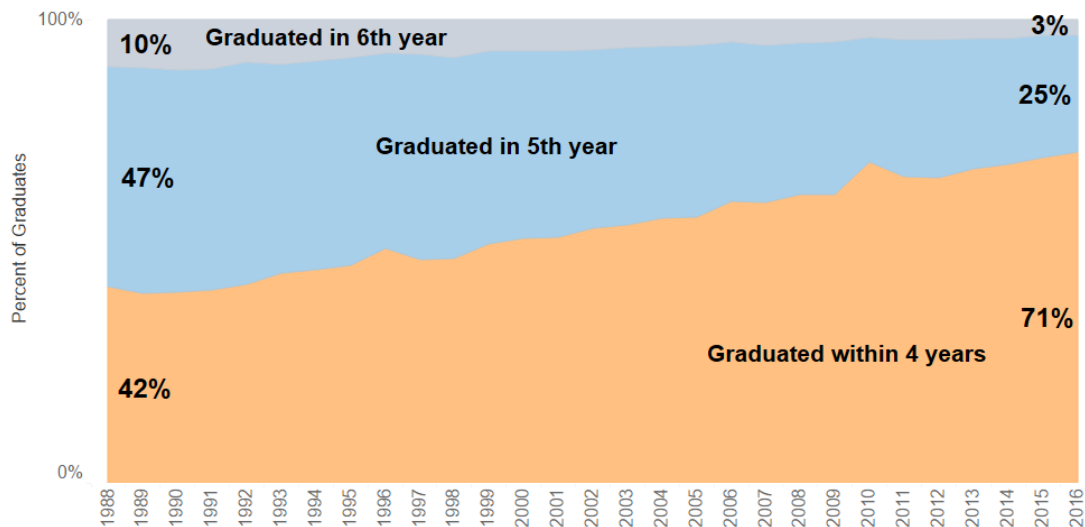
The Regent universities are also the top three producers of bachelor's degrees in the state of Iowa awarding sixty-two percent of all bachelor's degrees awarded in 2020-21 (see graph below).



Time to degree. Regent university time to degree has steadily declined over time. This metric measures elapsed time from start to finish, and includes time away from the classroom. Only

42% of Regent graduates who entered in 1988 finished their degree within four years. That has improved to 71% for the 2016 graduate cohort. Meanwhile, only three percent of degree recipients in the 2016 cohort needed a sixth year to complete their degree.

### Time to Earned Bachelor's Degree

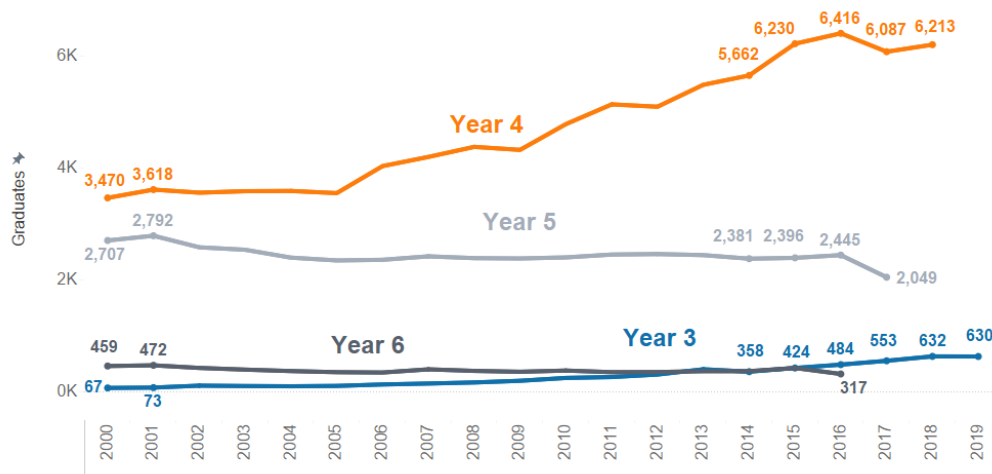


Source: Iowa Board of Regents for first-time full-time bachelor's degree graduates looking six years after entry.  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

Another way to look at the same data is to examine the number of graduates by time to degree year (see below). There has been growth in three and four year graduates and a decline in the number of students needing five or six years to graduate.

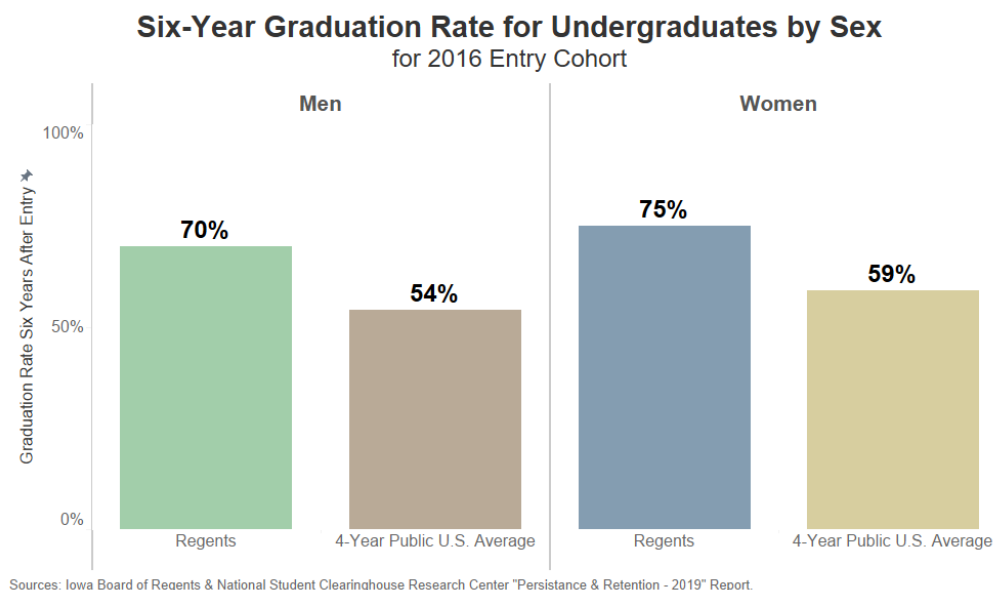
### Number of Graduates by Time to Degree

Iowa Public Universities

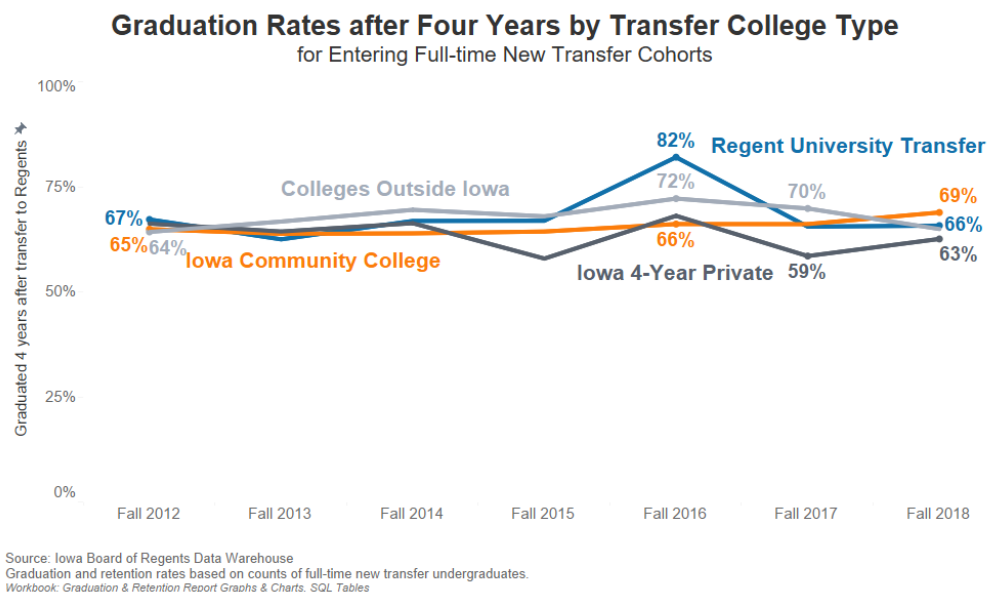


Sources: Iowa Board of Regents  
Workbook: Fall 2022 Grad & Retention Report, BOR Warehouse Supplement

Sex. While there is a gap in graduation rates by sex, both men and women at the Regent universities continue to outperform four-year public university national averages.



Transfer. The graph below shows graduation rates for students who have transferred into a Regent university from another college or university. Most students who transfer to the Regents have graduation outcomes that are similar to students who entered out of high school. These rates can change from year to year based on the number of transfers and the amount of credit hours transferred in by these students.



THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
FALL 2022 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS

The University of Iowa's six-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2016 is 73.7% (matching last year's number), while the four-year graduation rate for the entering class of 2018 is 58% (up from 57% for the entering class of 2017). The university's 2021 first- to second-year retention rate is 88.6% (up from 88.0% for the fall 2020 cohort).

The University of Iowa is committed to student success and has many efforts in place to facilitate retention and timely graduation, with a focus on decreasing gaps in retention and graduation rates of first-generation, underrepresented minority, and Pell eligible students. Examples of recent initiatives include:

- **Introductory Course Success:** As part of a university-funded initiative, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Office of Teaching, Learning and Technology, and Academic Support and Retention worked closely with departmental instructors in five key STEM areas (computer science, chemistry, mathematics, statistics and actuarial science, and health and human physiology) to increase awareness of student success practices, student demographics, and student experiences in introductory courses. The longer-term goal of the initiative is to improve overall student success in key introductory courses and improve the retention and graduation rates of all students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds interested in pursuing careers in STEM disciplines. As part of the project, faculty in the Department of Chemistry redesigned select high enrollment courses, leading to a decrease in the rates of students receiving a grade of D or F, or withdrawing from the course (DFW rate). For example, in Principles of Chemistry I, the DFW rate decreased by over 10% between fall 2019 to fall 2022. During that same time-period, the first-generation student DFW rate decreased by more than 15%.
- **Supplemental Instruction (SI)** is peer-facilitated group study sessions based on active and collaborative learning. SI continues to expand its impact on student learning and breadth of offerings. In 2021-2022, SI added six additional courses, including Physics II, Engineering Fundamentals I: Statics, Public Health Science, and select computer science courses. SI is now offered for approximately 25 high enrollment courses each semester, and the average gain in final grade for attending an SI session once per week is 0.5. Recent published research with UI faculty illustrate that SI also has a positive effect on student retention and graduation.
- **Learning Assistants (LAs)** is an academic support program that provides training and support to students who are embedded into high enrollment lecture courses to help facilitate learning. In the academic year 2021-2022, over 130 LAs were embedded in three chemistry courses (General Chemistry I, Principles of Chemistry I, and Principles of Chemistry II) and College Algebra, providing learning support for thousands of their peers. LAs provide an avenue for students to ask questions and seek support from peers who are trained to assist. The University of Iowa plans to expand the LA program to include additional courses.

- **The First Gen Hawks (FGH)** program provides first-generation students ways to engage in activities that enhance the college experience within and beyond the classroom, such as experiential learning in leadership, undergraduate research, and mentored campus employment. The program bundles seminar courses, peer mentoring, community events, and personalized academic coaching that provides each student holistic support. The program has grown since its inception from around 60 student participants in fall 2020 to over 150 in fall 2022. Overall, FGH students trended toward higher retention rates than other first-year students. These differences were consistent across multiple statistical approaches that accounted for students' precollege characteristics and academic preparation and were observed for both spring of students' first year (nearly four percentage points) and fall of their second year (nearly 10 percentage points).
- **Excelling@Iowa** is a campus-wide student success platform that provides staff and faculty with actionable data about the student experience to improve programs and provide individualized student support. The system uses predictive analytics to help identify students who may be struggling, and alerts faculty and staff who are connected to these students so they can provide support and connect students to resources. Excelling@Iowa is integrated into other campus technology systems to better help faculty and staff provide individualized support. This has resulted in increased referrals to students' support teams and strengthened students' network of support. Additionally, the system continues to build on opportunities for various departments—such as Orientation Services and Iowa Veteran Education, Transition, and Support—to better connect with students during virtual and in-person interactions.
- **Learning@Iowa Framework to Increase Students' Academic Success:** Most students starting college have not received guidance on how to successfully approach learning in collegiate settings. This university-funded initiative is implementing the Learning@Iowa framework to transform the culture of learning throughout campus, spanning a variety of academic courses, residence hall settings, academic advising sessions, and more. The project uses empirically proven learning methods from cognitive science that have been demonstrated to have positive effects on student learning and progress toward degree.
- **Hawkeye Experience Grants** award stipends in variable amounts to undergraduate students who are involved in applied learning experiences outside of the classroom. This allows students with a financial need to gain hands-on experience that they would not otherwise have the resources to do so. This not only includes internships, but also expands to study abroad, undergraduate research, community engagement, and more. In the 2021-2022 academic year, \$50,000 in grants were awarded to 21 students. Students concurrently enroll in a 0-credit hour course to support goal setting, reflection on applicability to career preparation, and teamwork building skills.
- **Student well-being support:** To illustrate the University of Iowa's growing commitment to student well-being, multiple initiatives have been implemented or further developed over the past few years. Examples of successful initiatives include emergency funds, Hawkeye Meal Share, the Food Pantry and Clothing Closet, and growth of personalized wellness coaching and

mindfulness curriculum. Food insecurity is an increasing concern among college students and presents barriers to success. The Food Pantry at Iowa aims to provide resources for food insecure college students, faculty, and staff and also raises awareness about the important issue of food insecurity. In the 2021-2022 academic year, there were over 4,500 visits to the Food Pantry, 98,916 pounds of food distributed, and over 50 volunteers. Additionally, the Food Pantry expanded east and west campus pantry hours to increase accessibility, received over 16,450 pounds of food from community donations, and established new partnerships with community donors.

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA  
FALL 2022 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS**

Graduation rates for UNI students are at all-time high levels for the second year in a row and remain well above the average of our peer institutions. These continued increases in timely graduation are contributing to declines in the average student loan debt for UNI students as they enter Iowa's workforce.

- The four-year graduation rate for the fall 2018 cohort (47.3%) increased by 2.3 percentage points as compared to the prior year's cohort, and by four percentage points over the previous five-year average. UNI's four-year graduation rate is 5.3 percentage points above our Board-approved institutional peers, and 19.3 percentage points above our Carnegie peers.
- The five-year graduation rate for the fall 2017 cohort is 64.8%, an increase of 3.8 percentage points above the prior cohort's graduation rate (61.0%) and an increase of 2.2 percentage points over the previous five-year average (62.6%).
- One in 12 UNI students graduate in three years, a larger proportion than at any previous point in our history.
- The first-to-second year retention rate for the entering class of 2021 is 82.5%, a two percentage point increase over the previous cohort. This retention rate is significantly higher than that of our Board-approved peer institutions (78%) and our Carnegie peers (71%).

The Retention and Completion Council guides campus-wide work to improve systems and develop interventions that contribute to continuous improvement in student success rates. A few of the collaborative initiatives that are advancing retention, completion, and student success include the following:

**Orientation and Panther Welcome** prepare students for a successful university experience, and include one-to-one meetings with academic advisors, one-to-one consultations with financial aid counselors, social activities designed to help students connect with their peers, introduction to campus and community resources, engagement with faculty and staff, and guidance from student leaders.

The **Course-Embedded Peer Mentor Program** ensures that new students have ready access to peer mentoring within their first-year courses. In this program, UNI faculty prepare sections of general education courses specifically for first-year students, with a focus on supporting students' successful transition to college while teaching content knowledge. Peer mentors are embedded within each course to assist with study skills, community building, role modeling, and connection to campus resources.

**The Panther Completion Grant and the Student Emergency Fund** are donor-supported funds that provide assistance to students facing short-term financial barriers to persistence, allowing students to continue moving forward toward graduation rather than stopping out.

The **UNI Plus Program** provides course-embedded academic assistance to students in traditionally challenging courses, working closely with faculty to offer supplemental study sessions outside of regular class times and additional tutoring and office hours in Rod Library.

The **UNI Early Intervention System** harnesses robust student data from a variety of sources to inform proactive outreach to students based on individual needs. UNI faculty and staff learn quickly of students who may be struggling based on predictive retention model data, student responses to the Connection Survey (four weeks after the start of each semester), registration progress information, course activity, and various additional data sources. This facilitates timely outreach from UNI academic advisors, faculty, and staff that helps students get the assistance they need to achieve their educational goals.

**PACE (Panther Access, Connection, and Engagement)** is an advising program designed to increase the retention of students who face barriers to persistence, including low-income students, first-generation students, and students who indicate a need for supplemental academic support. PACE participants benefit from holistic advising services, financial literacy assistance, interactive educational workshops, and academic skill building opportunities.

**Student Success Specialists** located on the campuses of DMACC, Western Iowa Tech Community College, Iowa Western Community College, and planned for Indian Hills Community College, provide personalized support to students in online and distance programs as they progress toward degree completion. These staff members work closely with place-bound students who are often balancing work and family commitments while pursuing their degrees, ensuring ready access to support and guidance whenever and wherever it is needed.

The new and innovative **UNIFI General Education Program** aligns with the top skills Iowa's employers are seeking and includes an embedded certificate that provides students another credential to pair with their degree. UNIFI is a streamlined program with fewer required credit hours than the previous general education program, and smooth transfer for students with any community college AA or AS degree. Because of the reduction of credit hours and attention to streamlined transfer pathways, this new approach to general education is contributing to the decrease in students' time to degree.

The Retention and Completion Council will continue using data-informed approaches to identify students in need of assistance and find additional ways to remove barriers to student degree completion. In 2022-2023, the Council is focusing on expanding and enhancing our campus-wide system of student outreach, identifying new and increasingly effective ways to identify and assist students at risk of struggling academically as early as possible, and addressing inequities in persistence rates for underrepresented students.

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
FALL 2022 GRADUATION AND RETENTION HIGHLIGHTS**

Iowa State University of Science and Technology continues to grow its four-year graduation rate, which is at a record-high 56.3% for the entering class of 2018, and up more than 2% from last year's previous record. The university's six-year graduation rate (entering class of 2016) is 74.4%. Iowa State's four- and six-year graduation rates continue to exceed the national average for four-year public colleges and universities. Additionally, over 85% of the university's entering class of 2021 returned for their second year, which compares favorably to the national one-year retention rates of other four-year public colleges and universities.

Iowa State continually strives to foster collaboration across the university to positively influence the persistence of students to degree completion. A few examples of the high-impact practices that occurred this past year are outlined below.

**EAB Navigate Student Success and Retention Efforts**

The Fall 2022 Navigate Re-Enrollment campaign supported over 2,600 students completing the course registration process after the close of the normal advisor supported registration period. The majority were experiencing barriers including financial or personal challenges that delayed their ability to register. Staff completed outreach including polling, personalized text messaging, e-mail communication, and case management to understand challenges, set goals, identify a plan to move forward, and connect students to campus resources. During the final four weeks leading up to the start of Fall 2022 semester, staff were able to help over 400 students enroll.

The features of the Navigate system help identify challenges allowing for quick, personalized intervention. Staff capitalized on the alerts and case management function within Navigate to activate staff and faculty across campus when students needed them the most. The alerts provided opportunities for staff and faculty who had relationships with the students to reach out to offer support and resources to help them overcome challenges including ranging from academic and/or financial to personal health and well-being. Total alerts increased by 64% from the previous fall; this increase highlights Iowa State's commitment to identifying students in need and activating coordinated care to support their success.

A total of 60,797 appointments were created using Navigate during Fall 2022. Students can self-schedule appointments using the mobile app making connecting with staff, faculty, and campus resources easier than ever. Students can use Navigate to schedule with their academic advisor, meet with the Academic Success Center, connect with Student Accessibility Services, engage with Student Wellness, meet with residence life staff, connect with financial aid, learn how to get involved in clubs and organizations, and much more. The tool helps students connect with the Iowa State experience and helps them feel confident in their ability to get the help they need to succeed.

**Supporting Underrepresented Students**

Iowa State University has several programs that positively impact student success and strive to decrease the achievement gap for students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students. Noteworthy programs include the Multicultural Vision Program (MVP), the George Washington Carver (GWC) program, and the Academic Program for Excellence (APEX), each of which serve students of color. The three programs see strong first- to second-year retention and graduation rates when comparing program participants to eligible non-participating students. Of

the 2021 cohorts of MVP scholars, GWC scholars, and APEX scholars, 79.6%, 96.9%, and 90.2%, respectively, returned to Iowa State for a second year compared to 76.1% of students of color not in scholarship programs. Six-year graduation rates reached as high as 86.7% for APEX, MVP, and GWC participants compared to 59.9% of non-scholarship program students of color.

Additionally, the Hixson Opportunity Awards Program and the federally-funded TRiO Student Success Services Program (SSSP) also serve underrepresented students with positive outcomes. Students in the Hixson Opportunity Awards Program, which serves one low-income student from each county in the State of Iowa each year, also exhibit higher retention and graduation rates than their non-participating peers. For the 2021 cohort of Hixson Scholars, 92.5% persisted into their second year, as compared to 76.1% of Pell-eligible resident students. The 2016 cohort of Hixson Scholars graduated 82.8% within six years as compared to 61.9% of non-participating Pell-eligible resident students.

The TRiO Student Support Services Program is a comprehensive academic support program designed to increase the retention and graduation rates for students who are low-income, first-generation, and/or identify as having a disability. Students involved in SSSP develop academic, social, and professional skills that contribute to a holistic educational experience and remain transferrable beyond graduation. Every SSSP participant in the 2021 cohort returned for a second year of study (i.e., a 100% retention rate), and participants in the 2016 cohort achieved a six-year graduation rate of 75.3%.

### **OnCyte Orientation returns**

4,761 first-year students, 627 transfer students and 7,601 guests experienced a high-impact, supportive transition experience when traditional on-campus new student orientation returned in 2022. For many new students, the combination of in-person advising, exploring campus, engagement with peers, and opportunities to connect with a variety of campus resources guided new students to success in their first six weeks at Iowa State. For students who were not able to attend campus orientation, online orientation and virtual academic advising served as a successful alternative for 1,508 students, particularly those students making plans to attend Iowa State from all over the country and world.

### **Student Health and Wellness**

The Student Health and Wellness unit at Iowa State University consists of Recreation Services, Student Wellness, Student Counseling Services, and the Thielen Student Health Center. Iowa State understands student wellbeing is inextricably linked to academic success, retention, and persistence to graduation, and Student Health and Wellness provides opportunities for connection, services, and programming to every student. During the 2021-2022 academic year:

- Recreation Services had more than 745,000 facility visits, and supported students through fitness classes, intramural sports, outdoor recreation, and sport clubs. The SE Fields Complex officially opened, expanding access to outdoor activities including 7,497 students who participated in intramurals.
- Student Wellness provided health promotion leadership in power-based personal violence (Green Dot), peer to peer programs, substance use and collegiate recovery support, mental health and suicide prevention, dietician services, sexual health, and basic need security.
- Student Counseling Services continues to provide a range of mental health services including workshops, individual and group counseling, crisis support, and trainings. The team provided 10,230 total visits and supported more than 260 crisis sessions.

- Thielen Student Health Center provides a broad range of services including primary care, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, allergy and travel, and numerous supportive services. The clinic provided 40,487 patient visits, 45,000 phone calls, 210,000 lab tests, 1,600 radiology exams, and filled more than 31,000 prescriptions.

### **Students Helping Our Peers (SHOP) Food Pantry**

Over the past year, the food pantry served 7,063 visitors, and a total of 94,713 pounds of food was distributed. During August and September 2022, the food pantry experienced a significant increase. In August, there were 675 visits and with 8,886 pounds of food distributed; in September, there were 1,020 visits and 14,582 pounds of food distributed. Understanding food insecurity is a national and local collegiate health issue, SHOP increased collaboration efforts with the following: *Good Earth* student org donated produce each week; *Reiman Gardens Plant* donated produce each week; *Farm Story Meats* donated many pounds of frozen meat; and *Barilla* donated pasta on a monthly basis.

### **Learning Communities**

Iowa State University's Learning Communities, a collaborative partnership between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, is one of Iowa State's most successful retention initiatives. In Fall 2022, 84 learning communities were offered, serving 6,480 students, and 93.4% of all first-year, full-time (FYFT) students. Participation among under-represented and underserved FYFT student populations is robust, with 93.2% multicultural students, 91.1% first-generation students, and 91.3% Pell-eligible students participating in a Fall 2022 Learning Community. Retention and graduation rates for students participating in learning communities continue to surpass those of non-learning community participants; on average, the one-year retention rate for learning community students is seven percentage points higher than for non-learning community students, and the six-year graduation rate is 10 percentage points higher (averages calculated from data 1998-to-fall 2021). Since inception in 1995, learning communities have helped over 105,500 students reach their academic goals.