Student Achievement

Norfolk State University evaluates student achievement and the success of students in achieving those goals relative to its mission to “transform lives and communities by empowering individuals to maximize their potential, creating life-long learners equipped to be engaged leaders and productive global citizens.” The 2012 – 2018 Strategic Plan: Building a Legacy of Excellence articulates the University's institutional commitment to student success and outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies that reflect and support the University's accomplishment of those goals.

NSU closely monitors student achievement and performance through a variety of measures including:

- Course completion,
- Retention rates,
- Graduation rates,
- Performance on licensure exams, and
- Graduate and professional school acceptances and completions.

Course Completion

NSU assesses the educational attainment of its students by monitoring students’ successful course completion. The University utilizes two measures to evaluate student success in relation to course completion: (1) the percentage of students completing all courses for which they are registered (those who drop or earn incompletes are regarded as unsuccessful) and (2) the percentage of students completing courses for which they are registered (does not include those who dropped or received an incomplete).

The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (IRAP) maintains and analyzes course completion data. IRAP data demonstrate that the majority of NSU students complete the courses for which they register.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Completion Rate 1</th>
<th>Completion Rate 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retention and Graduation Rates

NSU uses student retention and graduation data as indicators of student achievement. Norfolk State University’s retention and graduation rates for its first-time, full-time bachelor’s degree seeking students are reported to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and are publically available on the College Navigator. The University’s Fact Book Archive presents detailed retention and graduation data from 2000 – 2014.
Retention Rates

The University is dedicated to improving student retention and decreasing student attrition as illustrated by Objective 1.1.1: Increase retention rate from 73% to 80% by Fall 2018 of the University’s 2012 – 2018 Strategic Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Fall 2009</th>
<th>Fall 2010</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retained</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Rate(^1)</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduation Rates

Graduation rates are also used as an indicator of student achievement. The University is dedicated to increasing the six-year graduation rate as illustrated by Objective 1.1.2 Increase six-year graduation rate from 34% to 43% by 2018 of the University’s 2012 – 2018 Strategic Plan.

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\(^1\) Retention rate is calculated as the number of first-time, full-time students (classified, degree-seeking undergraduates: freshmen, sophomores, and juniors) who enrolled in the fall and returned the following fall.
Bachelor's degree graduation rates measure the percentage of entering students beginning their studies full-time and planning to get a bachelor's degree and who complete their degree program within a specified amount of time. The data below provide graduation rates for first-time students who began in Fall 2005 or Fall 2007. The six-year graduation rate increased from 33% for the Fall 2005 cohort (graduating in 2011) to 37% for the Fall 2007 cohort (graduating in 2013). The four-year graduation rate for those cohorts increased by 7%.

NSU also tracks six-year graduation rates by gender and race/ethnicity for students pursuing bachelor’s degrees. The data below indicate the percentage of full-time, first-time students who began their studies in Fall 2007 and received a degree within 150% of normal time to completion for their program.
Performance on Licensure/Certification Examinations

Several degree programs at NSU use state and/or national exams for entry into the major or for licensure after graduation. These exams are used in many programs as direct measures of success in achieving student learning outcomes. Licensure/certification examinations are required for students in six degree programs: dietetics, kinesiotherapy, medical technology, nursing, social work, and teacher education.

Dietetics

The Food Science and Nutrition (Dietetics) Program, a concentration in the Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry, Exercise Science, or Interdisciplinary Studies, prepares students to be dietitians (management and clinical) or nutrition educators. Graduates receive the Bachelor of Science degree and are prepared to take the Registration
Examination of Dietitians. The five-year (2008-2012) examination reports indicate a 100% pass rate and a program percentile rank of 95.

Kinesiotherapy

The Department of Health, Physical Education, and Exercise Science offers the Bachelor of Science degree with an emphasis in Kinesiotherapy. The certified kinesiotherapist is a healthcare professional who under the direction of a physician treats the effects of disease, injury, and congenital disorders through the use of therapeutic exercise and education. The program maintains a 78.5% pass rate on the national registration examination, which exceeds the national pass rate of 75.8%

Medical Technology

The Medical Technology program is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences and awards the Bachelor of Science degree. The program prepares skilled graduates who apply biological and chemical knowledge that aids physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The program maintains a 66.67% passage rate as compared to an 82.31% passage rate for its first time test takers. It should be noted that students usually repeat the exam and are successful on the retake of the Board of Registry national certification examination for Medical Laboratory Scientist/Medical Technologist.

Nursing

The Department of Nursing and Allied Health offers the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, which meets expected program outcomes (i.e., graduation rates, job placements, program satisfaction as perceived by students and employers, and licensure pass rates). BSN program graduates routinely exceed the average Virginia Board of Nursing NCLEX-RN pass rate of 80%.

Social Work

The Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and provides social work education through its Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) program, Master of Social Work program (MSW), and doctoral (Ph.D.) program. Although licensure is not required to practice social work and is not related to accreditation of the School of Social Work, in Virginia, graduates of accredited CSWE MSW programs who wish to work in certain clinical practice agencies may pursue licensure as Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW). 2000 – 2012 data indicate that MSW program graduates have first-time pass rates that range from 43% to 84%.

Teacher Education

The School of Education offers degrees that lead to professional teacher certification and prepares teacher candidates to teach in public and private school settings. To obtain initial teacher licensure in Virginia, students must obtain passing scores on the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) and the Praxis II.
The Praxis Series tests evaluate the knowledge and skills of teacher candidates. Students must pass the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination to obtain full admission into the teacher education program. Additionally, teacher education majors must pass the Praxis II, which measures subject-specific content knowledge and subject-specific teaching skills.

From Fall 2008 to Spring 2013, 117 students passed the teacher licensure examinations (Praxis I, Praxis II, VCLA, and/or VRE, as required). From Fall 2008 to Spring 2013, 17 students passed the required School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) Examination for Principal Licensure. The School of Education maintains a 100% passage rate for state licensure examinations.

Graduate and Professional School Acceptances and Completions

NSU graduates seek and receive admission into graduate and professional programs. One successful initiative is the Dozoretz National Institute for Mathematics and Applied Sciences (DNIMAS), established in 1985 to address the severe shortage of minority scientists by producing graduates who are capable of successfully completing graduate studies in the basic and applied sciences. Successful completion of the DNIMAS program results in degrees in biology, chemistry, computer science, electronics engineering, mathematics, optical engineering or physics. The program has had 370 graduates since 1990, and nearly 60% of graduates have earned advanced degrees.