

CORRELATES OF SUCCESS: STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

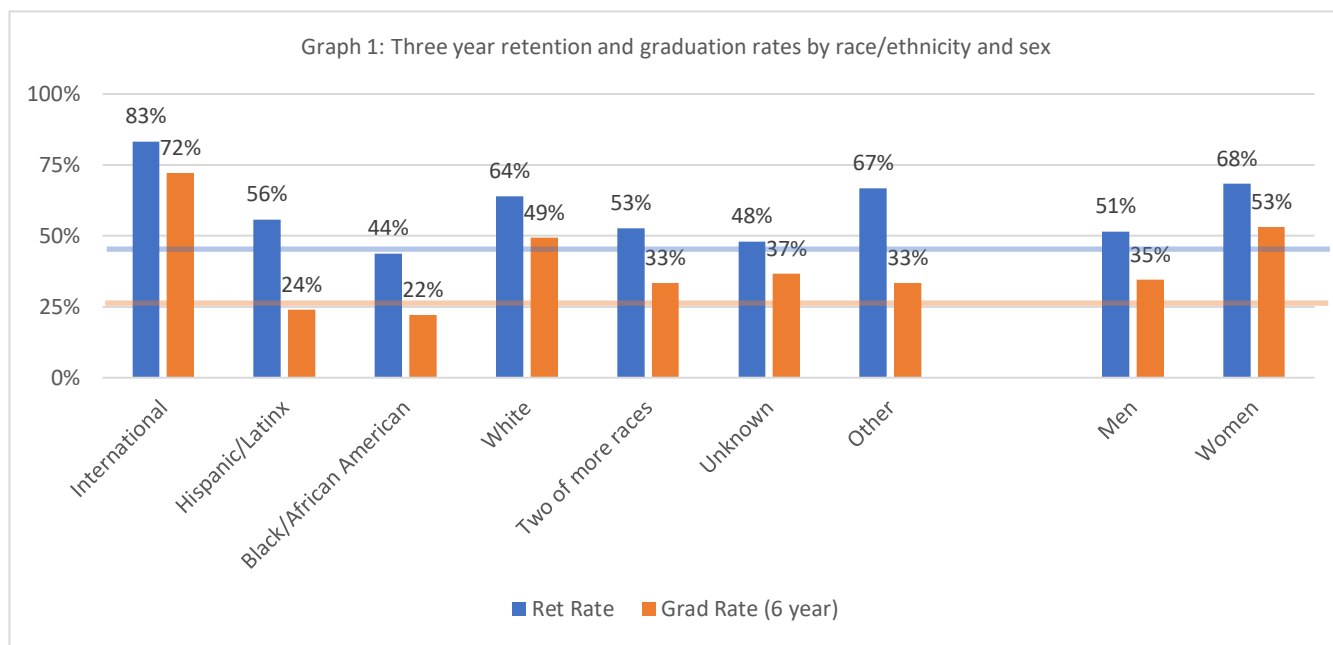
Collection and analysis of data on student retention, persistence and graduation is an important part of the Moving the Needle (MTN) project because it is used to inform how modules are developed and implemented. The data collection begins in year 1 of the process, during which schools report analysis on key variables that are commonly associated with student success. This research brief examines the relationship between racial/ethnic identification, sex, and student retention and graduation rates at MTN schools to help schools identify environmental barriers that potentially limit student success and strategies to overcome them.

Data Analysis

Data for this brief have been gathered from three schools starting MTN in spring and fall 2020. Each of the schools provided historical request on first-year retention and six-year graduation rates by demographic, engagement, and academic variables. Combining the three most recent years¹ for the schools allowed for examination of broader patterns in the data. Data were further reviewed to ensure that emerging patterns aligned with each individual institution.

Results

Graph 1 illustrates First Time, Full Time (FTFT) student retention to the second year (blue) and six-year graduation rate (orange) of MTN institutions' students by race/ethnicity and by sex². The data show that international, white, and other³ students retain above the overall average of 57%, whereas



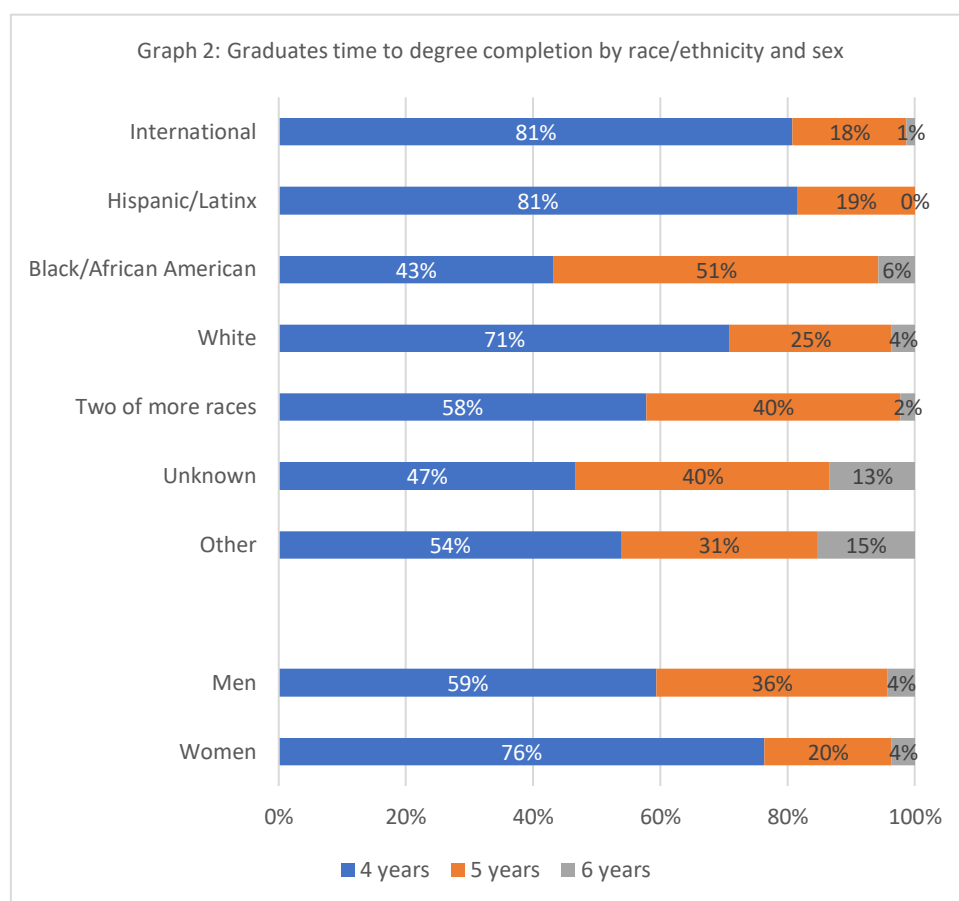
¹ Fall 2017, 2018, and 2019 cohorts for retention; Fall 2011, 2012, and 2013 for graduation rates.

² Overall average of retention (57%) is shown with the blue line and graduate (42%) is shown with the orange line.

³ Other includes Asian, American Indian/Native American, and Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander which have too few students to represent separately.

Black/African, multiracial, and unknown students retain below the average. Hispanic/Latinx students retain at nearly the average. Except for Hispanic/Latinx and other students, graduate rates parallel retention. Hispanic/Latinx students, who retain at the average rate graduated 18% points below the average and other students who retain 10% above the average graduate 9% below it. Also of note, the gap for Black/African American students, who retain 13% below the average, grows by graduation to 20%. Men consistently lag woman in both retention and graduation rates by about 17-18%.

Graph 2 shows the percentage of graduates who completed their degree in 4, 5, and 6 years⁴. International and Hispanic/Latinx students are most likely to complete their degree in four years. At the same time, Black/African American, multiracial, other, and students with an unknown race are more likely to take the fifth and sixth year to graduate. About 17% more female students complete their degree in the traditional four years than male students, for whom over one third take the fifth year.



Implications

- International students are the most likely to graduate and to graduate within four years.
- Hispanic/Latinx students, while retaining to the second year at a reasonable rate, tend to drop out later in their educational experience. On the upside, for these students who do complete their program, it is typically done in the traditional four years.
- Black/African American students are less likely to retain to the second year, less likely to ever graduate, and when they do graduate it typically takes them longer.
- Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander students retain to year two at a high level but are less likely to complete their degree.
- Males are less likely retain, graduate, and graduate on time than females.

⁴ Data only include students who graduated within 150% (6 years) of the normal time to complete their degree.