

Student Achievement Data

Great Falls College MSU's 8-Week Advantage was introduced in fall 2018 to help students stay in school, graduate on time, and complete more credits in less time. Most general education, business, technology, and trades courses follow the eight-week schedule. Health Science programs requiring students to apply competitively remain in the traditional 16-week format.

Retention

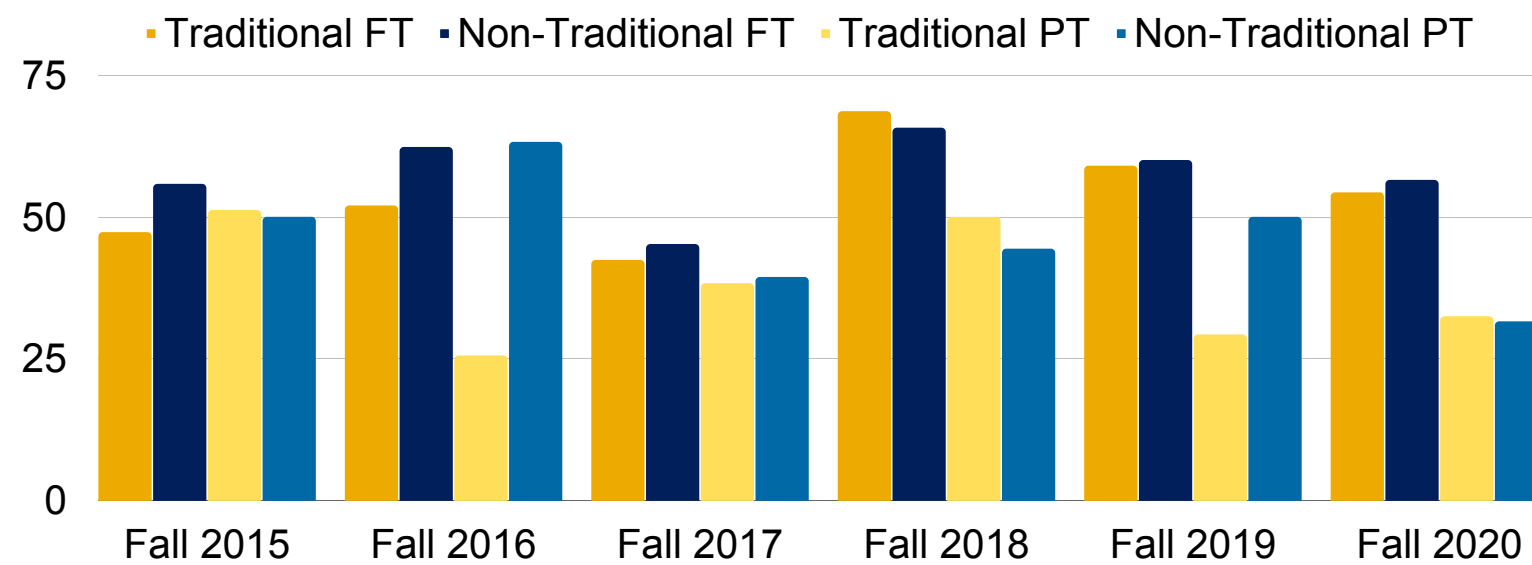
Retention (helping students stay in school) is measured by reviewing the proportion of students who came back the next term or year. One-year retention focuses on the group of students new to college who started in the summer or fall semester and either came back to school the next fall or completed a degree or certificate by the next fall.

One-Year Retention Rates

To understand whether the 8-Week Advantage helped students stay in school, we compared the retention of first-time, full-time, and first-time, part-time students who started college in the fall of 2018-2020 to previous years.

Traditional Age vs Non-Traditional Age

Non-traditional-age students (age 24+) tend to stay in school at higher rates than traditional-age (age 23 and below) students. There were more non-traditional age students pre-2018, so this may explain the higher retention rates of some of the pre-2018 groups than post-2018.

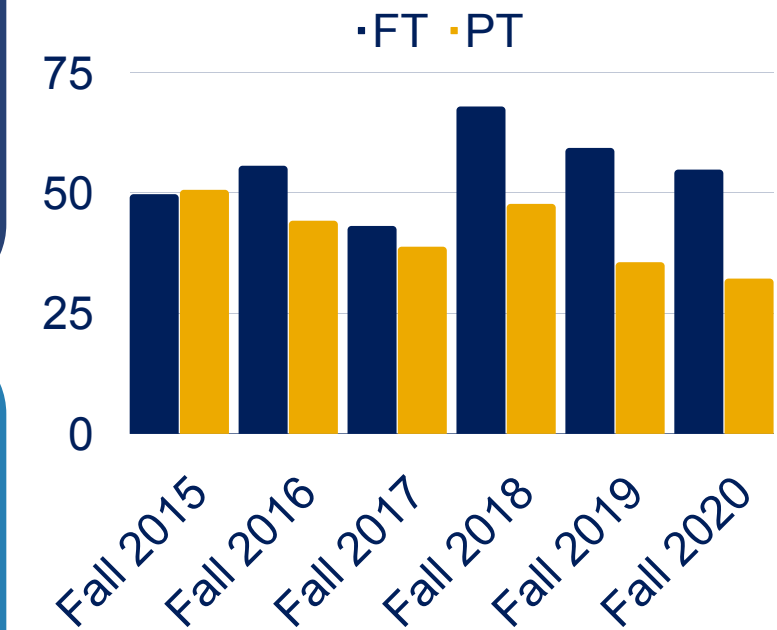


First-time, full-time

The fall 2018 group showed a 25% increase in retention compared to the fall 2017 group. Fall 2019 and 2020 showed small decreases but remained higher than 2015 and 2017.

First-time, part-time

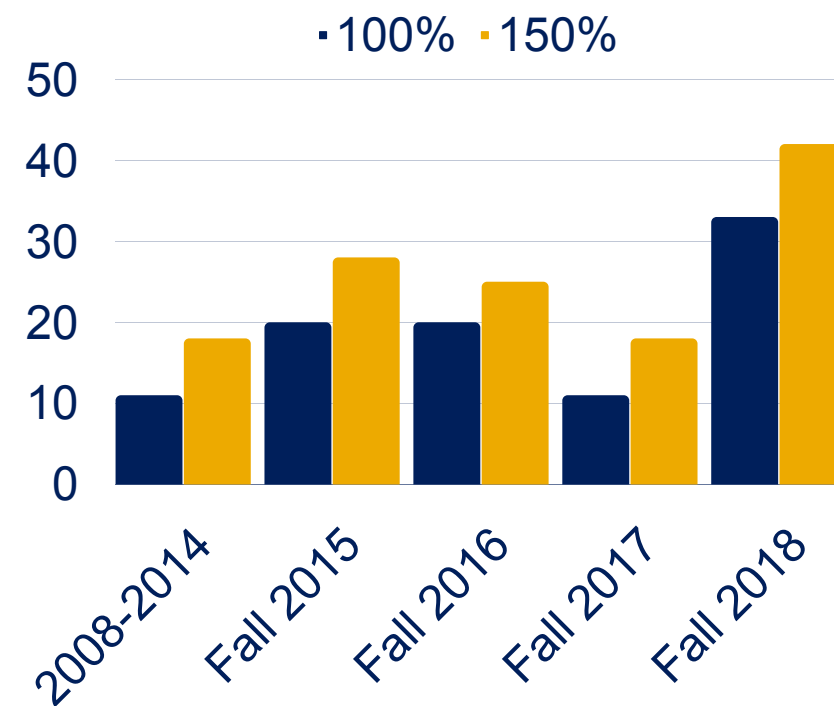
The fall 2018 group showed an increase in retention, but the fall 2019 and 2020 groups showed a decrease from pre-8-Week Advantage numbers.



Time to Graduation

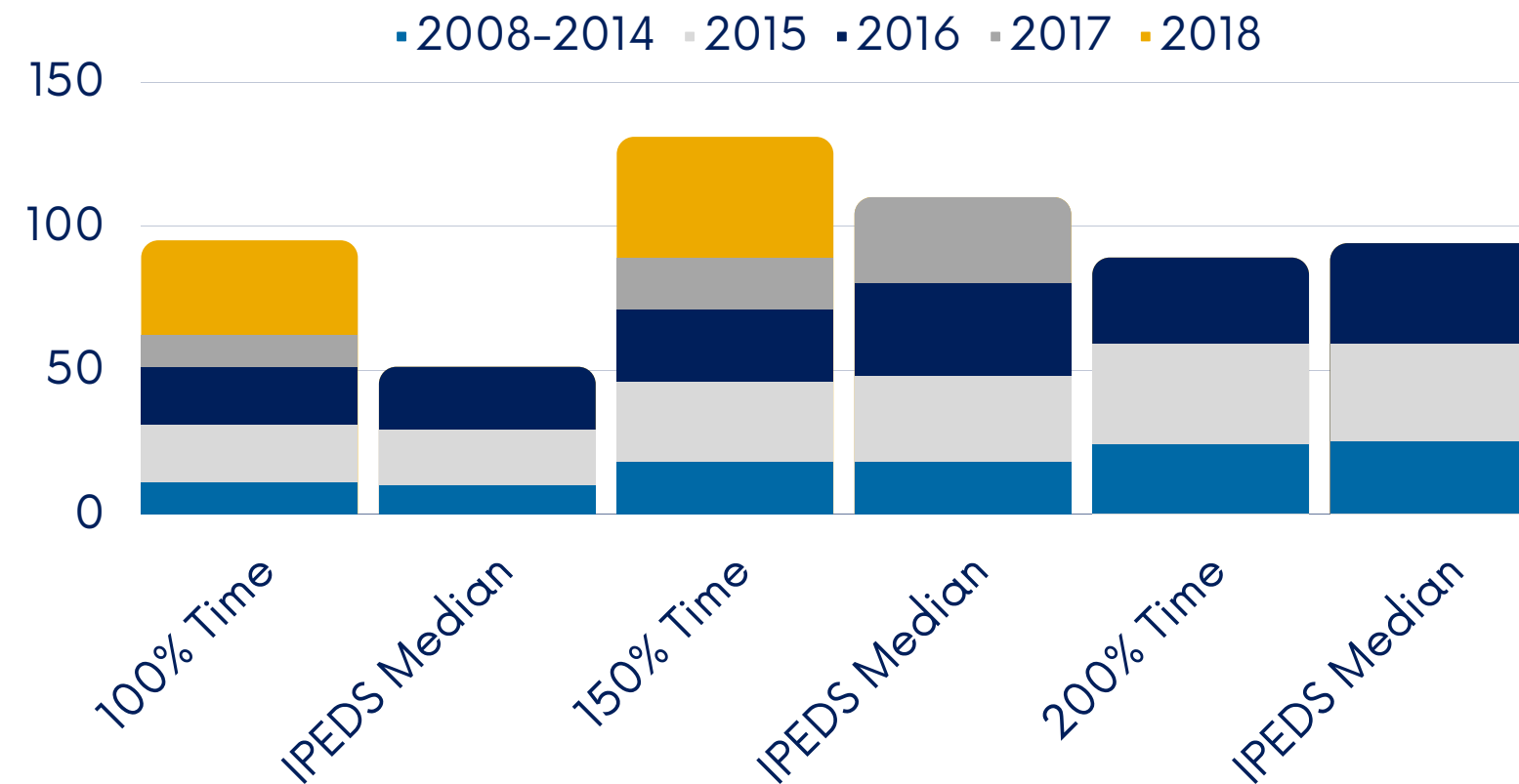
Graduation rate (how long it takes a student to earn their degree) is measured by the total number of credits required for the degree and the time it takes students to complete. This measure is important for students for many reasons and affects financial aid. For example, 100% time for a 2-and-a-half-year program would be two-and-a-half years, 150% would be three-and-a-half years, and 200% would be five years. Graduation rates at 100%, 150%, and 200% are reported annually to IPEDS.

Graduation Rates



Overall, students in the pre-8-Week Advantage cohorts (2008-2017) had lower average 100% and 150% graduation rates than the 2018 8-Week Advantage cohort.

The IPEDS median graduation rates show how our first-time, full-time, degree-seeking student graduation rates compare to similar institutions. From 2008-2016, our average graduation rate was similar to the median for 100%, 150%, and 200% time. The post-8-Week Advantage cohort (2018) shows an increase in the percentage of students graduating at 100% and 150% time.



The fall 2018 cohort is the only post-8-Week Advantage group for which 100% and 150% graduation rates are available. 200% rates are not yet available.