

Student Retention and Graduation Rates

Colleges pay lots of attention to the percentage of their new freshmen who return for their sophomore year as well as the percentage of each freshman cohort who eventually graduate. These two metrics are reported to regulatory agencies as well to publishers of college guidebooks and college choice websites. These two percentages are widely regarded as proxies for student satisfaction and achievement.

Retention and graduation rates can and do vary significantly between different colleges and even from year to year at one college depending upon many variables. Incoming student quality indices such as SAT scores are highly correlated with retention rates; better students tend to stay with their studies and their original college. Based upon analysis of benchmark data from peer colleges, RMU believes that it has retention and graduation rates that are very comparable with colleges of similar academic quality.

RMU actively tries to boost its retention and graduation rates. The Center for Student Success and the Department of Athletics offer extensive tutoring and counseling services to students who need academic or personal help with various aspects of their college life. RMU also employs advanced technology via the EAB Navigate system to provide guidance to students as well as to issue alerts of indicators of potential distress. Those alerts give RMU advisors the chance to proactively reach out to students to help address their academic or social difficulties.

Here is some recent retention and graduation rate data for RMU:

Freshman to Sophomore Retention - First Time, Full Time Freshmen

Reported in	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Cohort Beginning One Year Retention Rate	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
	81%	81%	83%	81%	79%

Six Year Graduation Rate - First Time, Full Time Freshmen

Reported in	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Cohort Beginning Six Year Graduation Rate	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
	61%	64%	65%	69%	65%

Transfer Out Rate - First Time, Full Time Freshman

Reported in	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Cohort Beginning Original Cohort Number Transferred Out Transfer Out Rate	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
	781	844	981	858	865
	129	188	228	162	TBD
	17%	22%	23%	19%	TBD

RMU has made significant improvement in all three of these metrics over the past decade. The 69% six year graduation rate reported for fall 2020 was the highest in RMU's history.