

FROM: John Milton
TO: Interested Parties
RE: Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rate – F22 to F23

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One of the important data points that we report each year is our freshman-to-sophomore retention rate. This figure represents the percentage of “first time freshmen” from a particular fall semester who persisted at the school and were enrolled the following fall, i.e., one year later. This figure is taken to reflect elements like educational quality, student satisfaction, and financial value. A strong rate contributes financial stability to a university. Additionally, freshman-to-sophomore retention rates factor heavily into most college ranking formulas.

It is important to understand that this figure does not represent an overall retention rate for our entire new student class, nor does it reflect the entire undergraduate population. Instead, this figure only considers “first time freshman” (FTF) as per the IPEDS definition (nces.ed.gov/IPEDS/glossary). Basically, these are degree-seeking students who come to TMU without matriculating at another college after high school. They may have college credit obtained during high school, but they are still considered first time freshmen according to the IPEDS definition. Freshmen in our spring semester (January) intakes are not included in FTF cohorts.

Even with these restrictions, though, our freshman-to-sophomore retention rates are meaningful for both internal and external evaluations and remain a “yardstick” in key college indicators. The table below shows TMU’s historical FTF freshman-to-sophomore retention rates, including our latest, TMU’s Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 freshman-to-sophomore retention rate.

Our retention rate for 2022-23 is **85%**. This number will be reported via IPEDS and will be our official number for this cycle.

TMU Trad FTF Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rates	
<i>Fall 2017 - Fall 2018</i>	82%
<i>Fall 2018- Fall 2019</i>	86%
<i>Fall 2019- Fall 2020</i>	82%
<i>Fall 2020- Fall 2021</i>	84%
<i>Fall 2021- Fall 2022</i>	86%
<i>Fall 2022- Fall 2023</i>	85%
6 Yr. Average Rate	84%

This remains good news. *Our retention rate at 85% remains strong* and is higher than our peer group average* of 75%. It is also stronger than the national average for all four-year institutions of higher learning of 81% (NCES).

*Peer group is comprised of California Baptist University, Biola University, Azusa Pacific University, Vanguard University, Point Loma University, and Cedarville University. (BJU data not available)