

Achievement Gap Analysis Report 1

Course Completion by Enrollment Status

(Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts)

Research Report No. 08-16

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Initiatives

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NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Initiatives is to conduct analytical studies and provide information in support of institutional planning, policy formulation, and decision making. In addition, the office provides leadership and support in research related activities to members of the NOVA community engaged in planning and evaluating the institution's success in accomplishing its mission.

When citing data from this report, the Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Initiatives must be cited as the source.

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Successful Course Completion in First Semester by Enrollment and Demographics: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014

Introduction

NOVA's commitment to student success is supported by the College's participation in the Achieving the Dream (ATD) National Reform Network. ATD is a comprehensive nationwide, non-governmental reform movement for student success in which NOVA has been a member since 2007 and a Leader College since 2010.¹ NOVA's participation in ATD encourages continuous monitoring of student outcomes in order to identify areas for improvement and pursue research-based methods of increasing student success and closing achievement gaps. To support this endeavor, this Report is part of a series examining recent trends among first-time to NOVA students across the following indicators of student success:

- Four-Year Graduation Rates
- Fall-to-Fall and Fall-to-Spring Retention
- Success in Developmental Education Courses
- Developmental Student Success in College-Level Courses
- Success in Gatekeeper Courses
- Successful Course Completion (All Courses)

This Report examines data on successful course completion. Successful course completion measures the number of courses successfully completed relative to the total number of courses attempted in a given semester. Successful completion of a course is defined as a student earning either an A, B, C, P or S.² This Report examines the rates at which three cohorts of first-time to NOVA students, Fall 2012 through Fall 2014, successfully completed courses in their first semester at NOVA.

In consideration of the College's commitment to closing achievement gaps, the data are disaggregated and analyzed by student demographics: enrollment status (full-time or part-time), gender, age, race/ethnicity, and program placement.³

¹ Leader Colleges have demonstrated commitment to and progress on the five principles of Achieving the Dream and have shown at least three years of improvement on at least one of the Achieving the Dream measures of student success. For more information see <http://achievingthedream.org>

² P (Pass) and S (Satisfactory) are designations used to indicate satisfactory completion of developmental courses. These grades are not included in grade point average calculations.

³ All demographics are as of the student's first term.

Executive Summary

This Report examines successful course completion by first-time to NOVA students. Successful course completion measures the number of courses successfully completed relative to the total number of courses attempted in a given semester. Successful completion of a course is defined as a student earning either an A, B, C, P or S. The following points represent the main findings in this report.

- Overall, rates of successful course completion in the first semester ranged from 68 to 69 percent across cohorts from Fall 2012 through Fall 2014.

Enrollment Status

- Full-time students consistently completed 69 percent of their courses in their first semester, while rates for part-time students fluctuated between 65 and 69 percent.

Gender

- Female students had higher rates of successful course completion than male students regardless of enrollment status, though the gap in completion rates was generally larger between part-time male and female students.

Age

- More than 80 percent of each cohort of full-time students were ages 18 to 21. Course completion rates among these students remained stable at 68 percent for each cohort and were consistently lower than those of other age groups.
- Students ages 18 to 21 comprised 50 to 54 percent of each cohort of part-time students. Successful course completion rates for these students remained relatively stable at 59 percent in the Fall 2012 and Fall 2014 cohorts, and were as many as 10 percentage points below the overall part-time rate in each cohort.

Race/Ethnicity

- Asian students had the highest course completion rates (71 to 78 percent), while Black students had the lowest (58 to 64 percent), regardless of enrollment status.

Program Placement

- Not Placed part-time students had higher course completion rates, ranging from 77 to 87 percent, than both full- and part-time program placed students.

Successful Course Completion in First Semester

Course Completion by Enrollment Status (Table 1)

- The course completion rate of full-time students remained at 69 percent for each of the three cohorts.
- Course completion rates for part-time students fluctuated between 65 and 69 percent.

**Table 1. Successful Course Completion by Enrollment Status:
Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts**

Status	Fall 2012 Cohort			Fall 2013 Cohort			Fall 2014 Cohort		
	N	Successful		N	Successful		N	Successful	
		#	%		#	%		#	%
Full-Time	27,137	18,729	69.0	28,916	19,877	68.7	29,037	20,060	69.1
Part-Time	13,857	9,450	68.2	12,881	8,369	65.0	15,419	10,628	68.9
Total	40,994	28,179	68.7	41,797	28,246	67.6	44,456	30,688	69.0

Course Completion by Gender (Figures 1 and 2)

- Regardless of enrollment status, female students successfully completed between 71 and 74 percent of their courses and showed higher course completion rates than male students in each cohort.
- The gap between male and female students was generally larger for part-time students than full-time students, with part-time male students' course completion rates approximately 8 to 10 percentage points lower than those of part-time female students.

**Figure 1. Successful Course Completion Rates of Full-Time Students by Gender:
Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts**

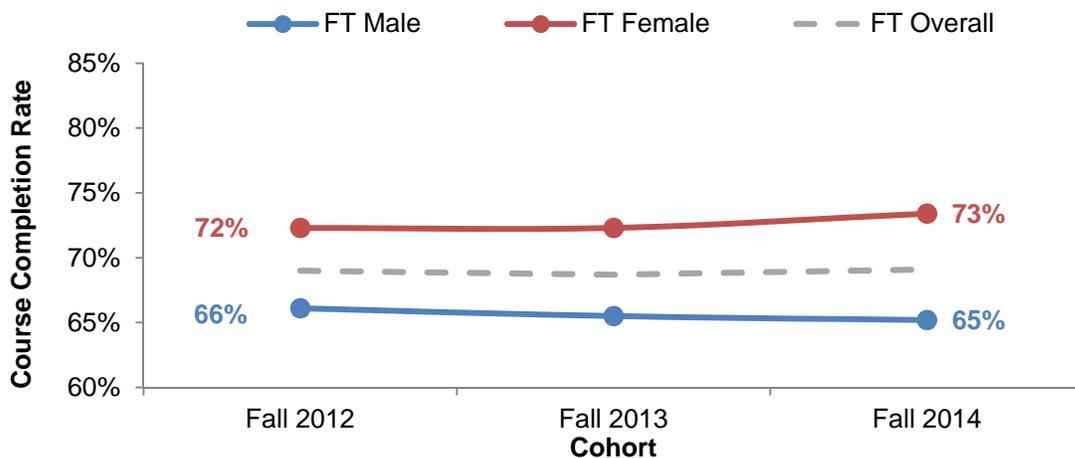
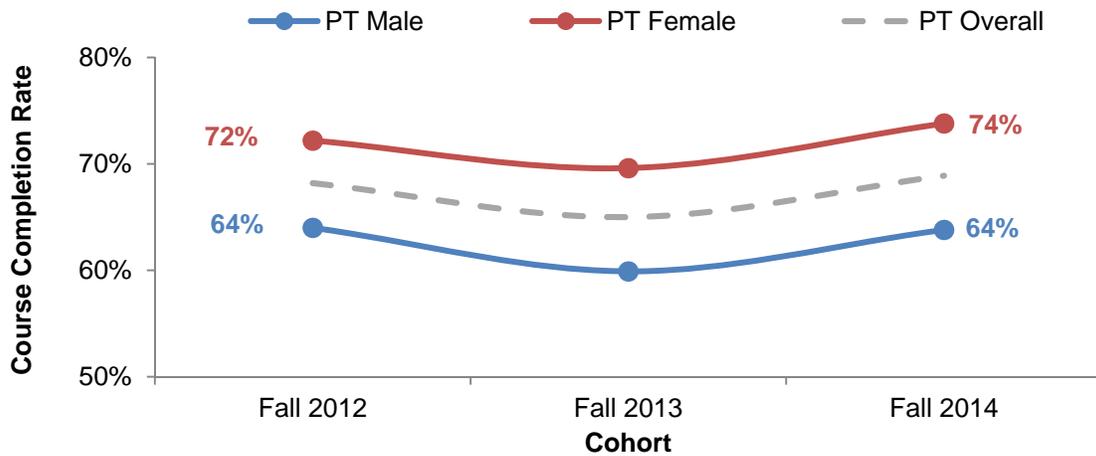


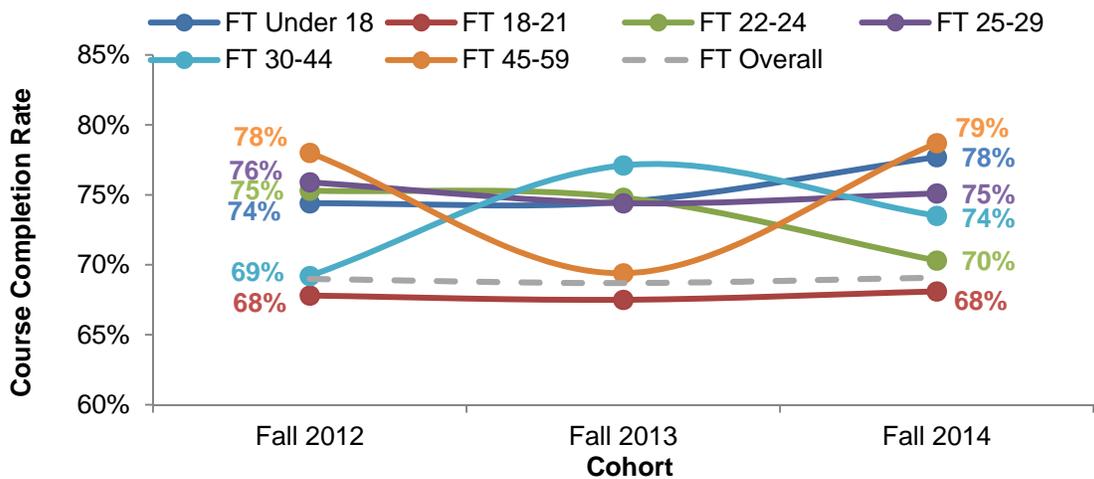
Figure 2. Successful Course Completion Rates of Part-Time Students by Gender: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Course Completion by Age (Figures 3 and 4)

- More than 80 percent of each cohort of full-time students were ages 18 to 21. Course completion rates among these students remained stable at 68 percent for each cohort and were consistently lower than those of other age groups.
- Students ages 18 to 21 comprised 50 to 54 percent of each cohort of part-time students. Successful course completion rates for these students remained relatively stable at 59 percent in the Fall 2012 and Fall 2014 cohorts, and were as many as 10 percentage points below the overall part-time rate in each cohort.
- Part-time students under the age of 18 tended to have the highest course completion rates (91 and 93 percent for the Fall 2012 and Fall 2014 cohorts, respectively).⁴

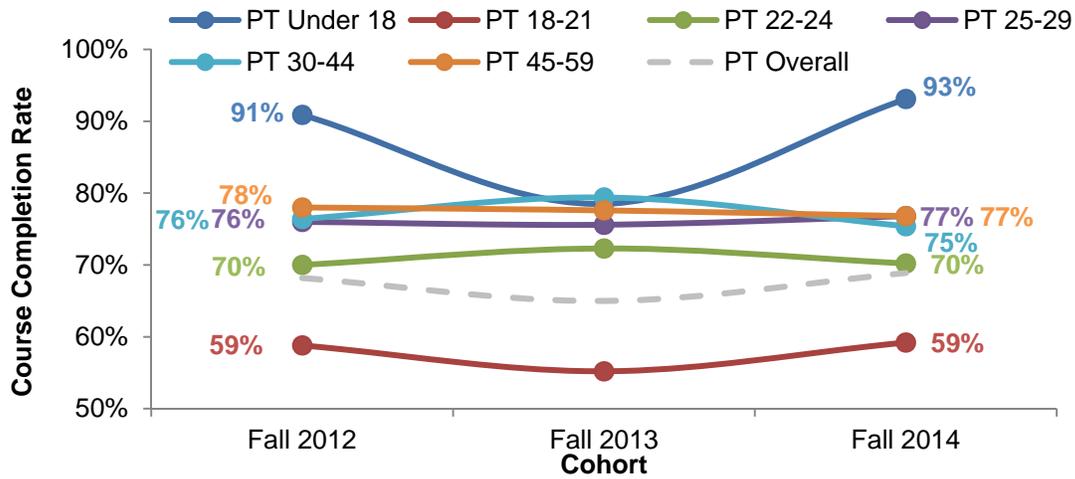
Figure 3. Successful Course Completion Rates of Full-Time Students by Age: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Note: The figure excludes sub-groups of small size. Data for all sub-groups can be found in the appendix.

⁴ Dual enrollment students comprised 93 to 97 percent of part-time students under the age of 18.

Figure 4. Successful Course Completion Rates of Part-Time Students by Age: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

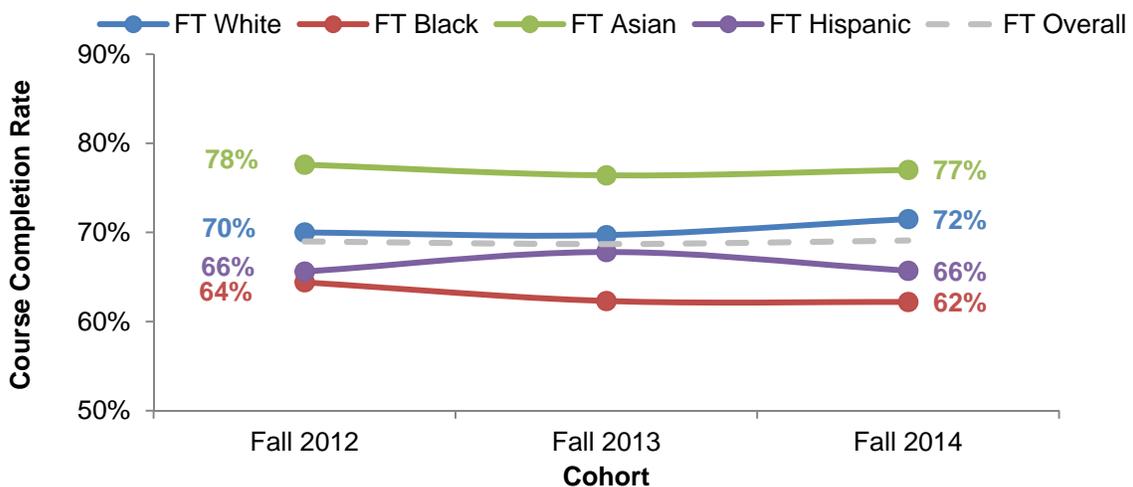


Note: The figure excludes sub-groups of small size. Data for all sub-groups can be found in the appendix.

Course Completion by Race/Ethnicity (Figures 5 and 6)

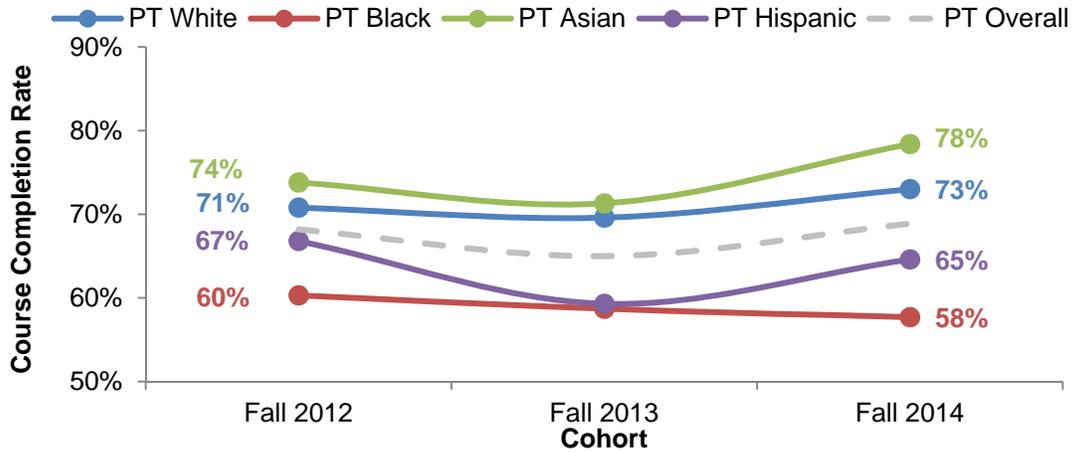
- Asian students had the highest course completion rates (74 to 78 percent), while Black students had the lowest (58 to 64 percent), regardless of enrollment status.
- For both full- and part-time Black students, completion rates decreased by 2 percentage points from the Fall 2012 cohort to the Fall 2014 cohort.
- White students had course completion rates at or above the overall rates, ranging from 70 to 73 percent.
- Hispanic students had course completion rates at or below the overall rates, ranging from 59 to 68 percent.

Figure 5. Successful Course Completion Rates of Full-Time Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Note: The figure excludes sub-groups of small size. Data for all sub-groups can be found in the appendix.

Figure 6. Successful Course Completion Rates of Part-Time Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

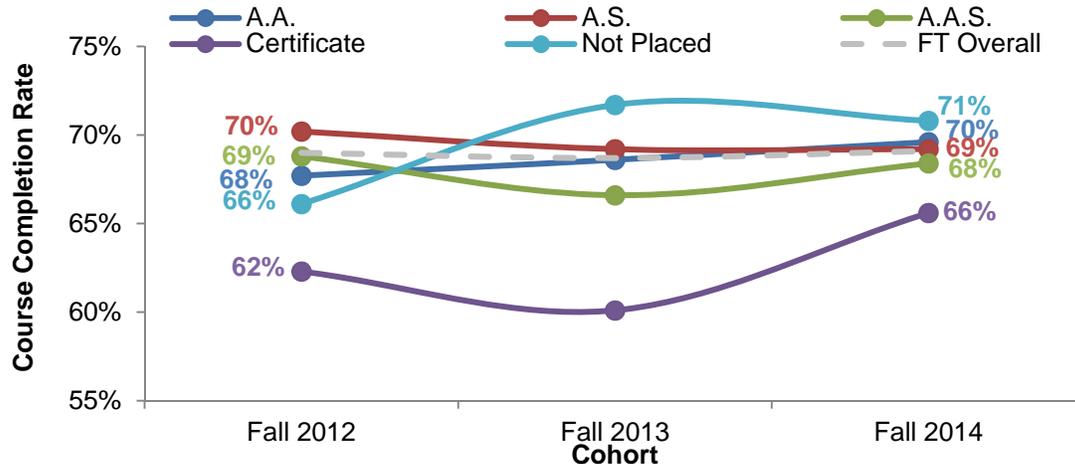


Note: The figure excludes sub-groups of small size. Data for all sub-groups can be found in the appendix.

Course Completion by Program Placement (Figures 7 and 8)

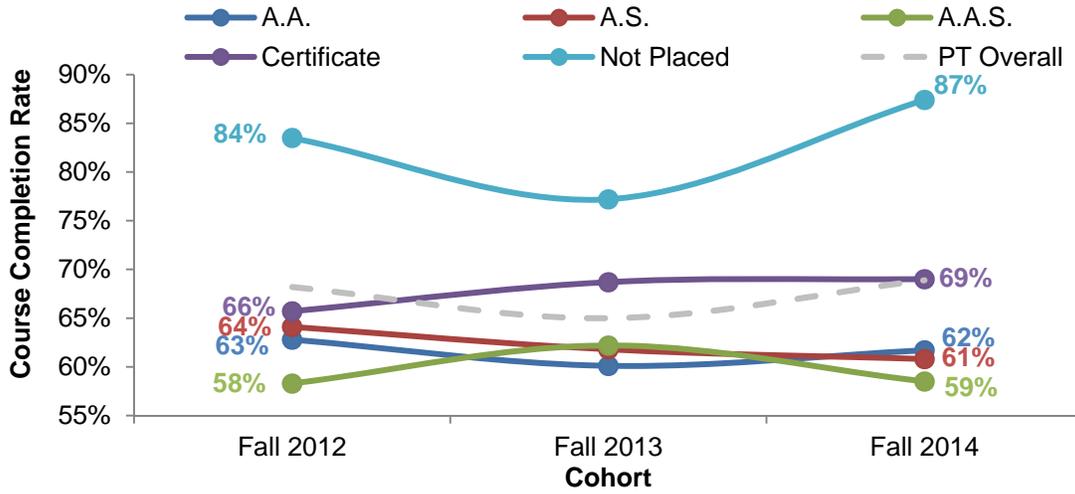
- A.S. degree students comprised the majority of full-time students and had course completion rates at or above the overall full-time rate in each cohort. These students' completion rates remained relatively stable across cohorts, ranging from 69 to 70 percent.
- Not Placed part-time students – students who were not enrolled in a degree or certificate program – had the highest course completion rates in each part-time cohort, increasing from 84 percent in Fall 2012 to 87 percent in the Fall 2014 cohort.
- Part-time students enrolled in the A.A., A.A.S., and A.S. degree programs had course completion rates below the overall part-time rate.

Figure 7. Successful Course Completion Rates of Full-Time Students by Program Placement: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Note: The figure excludes sub-groups of small size. Data for all sub-groups can be found in the appendix.

Figure 8. Successful Course Completion Rates of Part-Time Students by Program Placement: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Note: The figure excludes sub-groups of small size. Data for all sub-groups can be found in the appendix.

Appendix: Data Tables

Table A.1. Successful Course Completion by Enrollment Status and Gender: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Status	Gender	Fall 2012 Cohort			Fall 2013 Cohort			Fall 2014 Cohort		
		N	Successful		N	Successful		N	Successful	
			#	%		#	%		#	%
Full-Time	Male	14,334	9,471	66.1	15,109	9,892	65.5	15,181	9,894	65.2
	Female	12,803	9,258	72.3	13,807	9,985	72.3	13,856	10,166	73.4
	Subtotal	27,137	18,729	69.0	28,916	19,877	68.7	29,037	20,060	69.1
Part-Time	Male	6,735	4,308	64.0	6,160	3,688	59.9	7,518	4,799	63.8
	Female	7,122	5,142	72.2	6,721	4,681	69.6	7,901	5,829	73.8
	Subtotal	13,857	9,450	68.2	12,881	8,369	65.0	15,419	10,628	68.9
Total		40,994	28,179	68.7	41,797	28,246	67.6	44,456	30,688	69.0

Table A.2. Successful Course Completion by Enrollment Status and Age: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Status	Age	Fall 2012 Cohort			Fall 2013 Cohort			Fall 2014 Cohort		
		N	Successful		N	Successful		N	Successful	
			#	%		#	%		#	%
Full-Time	Under 18	418	311	74.4	416	310	74.5	497	386	77.7
	18-21	21,863	14,817	67.8	23,934	16,146	67.5	24,060	16,393	68.1
	22-24	1,840	1,386	75.3	1,659	1,241	74.8	1,584	1,114	70.3
	25-29	1,448	1,099	75.9	1,342	999	74.4	1,411	1,059	75.1
	30-44	1,242	860	69.2	1,290	994	77.1	1,191	875	73.5
	45-59	313	244	78.0	242	168	69.4	268	211	78.7
	60 & Over	13	12	92.3	33	19	57.6	26	22	84.6
	Subtotal	27,137	18,729	69.0	28,916	19,877	68.7	29,037	20,060	69.1
Part-Time	Under 18	1,178	1,071	90.9	442	347	78.5	2,159	2,010	93.1
	18-21	6,899	4,056	58.8	6,954	3,839	55.2	8,226	4,873	59.2
	22-24	1,448	1,013	70.0	1,381	999	72.3	1,397	980	70.2
	25-29	1,600	1,216	76.0	1,485	1,123	75.6	1,454	1,116	76.8
	30-44	1,971	1,505	76.4	1,871	1,485	79.4	1,652	1,245	75.4
	45-59	682	534	78.3	682	529	77.6	487	374	76.8
	60 & Over	79	55	69.6	66	47	71.2	44	30	68.2
	Subtotal	13,857	9,450	68.2	12,881	8,369	65.0	15,419	10,628	68.9
Total		40,994	28,179	68.7	41,797	28,246	67.6	44,456	30,688	69.0

Table A.3. Successful Course Completion by Enrollment Status and Race: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Status	Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2012 Cohort			Fall 2013 Cohort			Fall 2014 Cohort		
		N	Successful		N	Successful		N	Successful	
			#	%		#	%		#	%
Full-Time	White	10,445	7,309	70.0	10,398	7,242	69.7	9,741	6,969	71.5
	Black	4,698	3,026	64.4	4,951	3,082	62.3	4,979	3,097	62.2
	Asian	4,439	3,443	77.6	4,701	3,592	76.4	4,890	3,764	77.0
	Hispanic	5,818	3,818	65.6	6,722	4,556	67.8	7,422	4,878	65.7
	American Indian	41	19	46.3	52	34	65.4	61	49	80.3
	Native Hawaiian	152	107	70.4	125	68	54.4	149	92	61.7
	Two or More Races	1,145	748	65.3	1,526	967	63.4	1,369	897	65.5
	Not Specified	28	14	50.0	28	17	60.7	12	5	41.7
	Unknown	371	245	66.0	413	319	77.2	414	309	74.6
	Subtotal	27,137	18,729	69.0	28,916	19,877	68.7	29,037	20,060	69.1
Part-Time	White	6,445	4,564	70.8	5,555	3,866	69.6	6,599	4,819	73.0
	Black	2,635	1,590	60.3	2,482	1,457	58.7	2,740	1,581	57.7
	Asian	1,460	1,077	73.8	1,344	958	71.3	1,713	1,343	78.4
	Hispanic	2,431	1,623	66.8	2,525	1,498	59.3	3,217	2,077	64.6
	American Indian	36	25	69.4	37	15	40.5	35	28	80.0
	Native Hawaiian	64	42	65.6	73	43	58.9	74	63	85.1
	Two or More Races	581	373	64.2	577	310	53.7	774	502	64.9
	Not Specified	16	14	87.5	19	16	84.2	13	11	84.6
	Unknown	189	142	75.1	269	206	76.6	254	204	80.3
	Subtotal	13,857	9,450	68.2	12,881	8,369	65.0	15,419	10,628	68.9
Total	40,994	28,179	68.7	41,797	28,246	67.6	44,456	30,688	69.0	

Table A.4. Successful Course Completion by Enrollment Status and Program Placement: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Status	Age	Fall 2012 Cohort			Fall 2013 Cohort			Fall 2014 Cohort		
		N	Successful		N	Successful		N	Successful	
			#	%		#	%		#	%
Full-Time	A.A.	3,468	2,347	67.7	3,173	2,177	68.6	3,308	2,302	69.6
	A.A.A.	181	86	47.5	109	90	82.6	68	40	58.8
	A.A.S.	4,256	2,930	68.8	3,347	2,228	66.6	3,356	2,294	68.4
	A.S.	16,984	11,916	70.2	20,554	14,229	69.2	20,875	14,445	69.2
	Certificate	933	581	62.3	772	464	60.1	636	417	65.6
	Not Placed	1,315	869	66.1	961	689	71.7	794	562	70.8
	Subtotal	27,137	18,729	69.0	28,916	19,877	68.7	29,037	20,060	69.1
Part-Time	A.A.	1,150	722	62.8	1,149	690	60.1	1,103	680	61.7
	A.A.A.	90	54	60.0	63	32	50.8	45	39	86.7
	A.A.S.	2,169	1,264	58.3	1,983	1,233	62.2	1,619	947	58.5
	A.S.	6,078	3,893	64.1	6,537	4,042	61.8	7,435	4,522	60.8
	Certificate	741	487	65.7	690	474	68.7	655	452	69.0
	Not Placed	3,629	3,030	83.5	2,459	1,898	77.2	4,562	3,988	87.4
	Subtotal	13,857	9,450	68.2	12,881	8,369	65.0	15,419	10,628	68.9
Total	40,994	28,179	68.7	41,797	28,246	67.6	44,456	30,688	69.0	

NOVA Mission and Strategic Goals

Mission

With commitment to the values of access, opportunity, student success, and excellence, the mission of Northern Virginia Community College is to deliver world-class in-person and online post-secondary teaching, learning, and workforce development to ensure our region and the Commonwealth of Virginia have an educated population and globally competitive workforce.

Strategic Goals

- I. **STUDENT SUCCESS** – Northern Virginia Community College will move into the top tier of community colleges with respect to the college readiness, developmental course completion, retention, graduation, transfer, and career placement of its students.
- II. **ACCESS** – Northern Virginia Community College will increase the number and diversity of students being served to mirror the population growth of the region.
- III. **TEACHING AND LEARNING** – Northern Virginia Community College will focus on student success by creating an environment of world-class teaching and learning.
- IV. **EXCELLENCE** – Northern Virginia Community College will develop ten focal points of excellence in its educational programs and services that will be benchmarked to the best in the nation and strategic to building the College's overall reputation for quality.
- V. **LEADERSHIP** – Northern Virginia Community College will serve as a catalyst and a leader in developing educational and economic opportunities for all Northern Virginians and in maintaining the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the region.
- VI. **PARTNERSHIPS** – Northern Virginia Community College will develop strategic partnerships to create gateways of opportunity and an integrated educational system for Northern Virginians who are pursuing the American Dream.
- VII. **RESOURCES** – Northern Virginia Community College will increase its annual funding by \$100 million and expand its physical facilities by more than one million square feet in new and renovated space. This includes the establishment of two additional campuses at epicenters of the region's population growth, as well as additional education and training facilities in or near established population centers.
- VIII. **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS** – Northern Virginia Community College will be recognized as a leader among institutions of higher education in Virginia for its development and testing of emergency response and continuity of operation plans.

NOVA

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