

# Start Strong Policy Compliance and Student Success Outcomes: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts

Research Report No. 14-18

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success  
MARCH 2018

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS**

The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success 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 must be cited as the source.

4001 Wakefield Chapel Road  
Annandale, VA 22003-3796  
(703) 323-3129  
**[www.nvcc.edu/oir](http://www.nvcc.edu/oir)**

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction .....	1
Key Findings .....	2
Data Analysis and Data Notes .....	3
Section 1. Compliance with Start Strong Policies .....	5
Section 2. Impact of Start Strong Policies on Student Success Outcomes .....	10
Appendix: Data Tables.....	14

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Overall Average Compliance Rate: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	5
Figure 2. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Comparing Compliance Rates by Policy: Fall 2016 Cohort .....	5
Figure 3. Start Strong Policy Compliance – On-Time Registration Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	6
Figure 4. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in SDV Course Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	6
Figure 5. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Attendance at Orientation and Participation in Advising Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	7
Figure 6. Start Strong Policy Compliance – English Placement Testing Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	7
Figure 7. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Math Placement Testing Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	8
Figure 8. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental English Policy (For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	8
Figure 9. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental Math Policy (For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	9
Figure 10. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Compliance Percentage of the Start Strong Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	9
Figure 11. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Spring Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	10
Figure 12. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Fall Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	11
Figure 13. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort.....	11
Figure 14. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2015 Cohort.....	12
Figure 15. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2016 Cohort.....	12
Figure 16. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Mean First Semester GPA by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	12
Figure 17. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year NOVA Graduation Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort.....	13
Figure 18. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year Transfer Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort.....	13

## Appendix Tables

Table A1. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Overall Average Compliance Rate: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	14
Table A2. Start Strong Policy Compliance – On-Time Registration Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	14
Table A3. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in SDV Course Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	14
Table A4. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Attendance at Orientation and Participation in Advising Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	14
Table A5. Start Strong Policy Compliance – English Placement Testing Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	14
Table A6. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Math Placement Testing Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	15
Table A7. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental English Policy (For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	15
Table A8. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental Math Policy (For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	15
Table A9. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Percentage of the Six Policies Complied with: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	15
Table A10. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Spring Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	16
Table A11. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Fall Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts.....	16
Table A12. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort.....	16
Table A13. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2015 Cohort.....	16
Table A14. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2016 Cohort.....	17
Table A15. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Mean First Semester GPA by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts .....	17
Table A16. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year NOVA Graduation Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort.....	17
Table A17. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year Transfer Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort.....	17

## Introduction

In Fall 2014, as part of efforts to improve student success, NOVA enacted six policy changes based on recommendations by NOVA's Achieving the Dream Core Team. Five of these policies apply only to students in NOVA's *GPS for Success* population: first-time to college students between the ages of 17 and 24.<sup>1</sup> The sixth policy is for all NOVA students.

*GPS for Success: Teaching and Learning through Advising* focuses on the Goals, Plans, and Strategies that students must develop in order to attain their academic objectives. GPS promotes early engagement, class readiness, student preparedness, and goal attainment. By specifically targeting the GPS population of NOVA students, the first five Start Strong policies are designed to foster a strong academic start for first-time to college students at NOVA.

### Start Strong Policy Changes: Implemented in Fall 2014

Students in the *GPS for Success* group must:

1. Take placement tests before registration.
2. Attend Student Orientation before registration.
3. Meet with their advisor before registration.
4. Enroll in developmental courses during the first semester, if placed.
5. Complete a Student Development (SDV) course within the first 15 credits at NOVA.

All NOVA students must:

6. Register before 11:59 p.m. the day before the session begins.

## This Report

This report presents rates of compliance with each of the Start Strong policies for three cohorts of *GPS for Success* students: Fall 2014, Fall 2015, and Fall 2016. This report also shows success outcomes—including retention, first semester GPA, graduation rates, and transfer rates—by level of compliance with the Start Strong policies.

The **Compliance Rate**, or percentage of policies with which a student complied, is calculated individually for each student based on the number of policies required for that student.

For example, a student who was only required to comply with five policies and met the requirements for four of them has an overall compliance rate of 80 percent. Student success outcomes by policy compliance rate fall into the following three ranges: 0 to 49 percent compliant, 50 to 74 percent compliant, and 75 to 100 percent compliant.

---

<sup>1</sup> *GPS for Success* students are first-time to college students between the ages of 17 and 24 excluding transient students and students who are members of the College Pathway Initiative.

## Key Findings

Findings from this report suggest that the Start Strong policies can be critical to helping students to have a strong academic start when they first enroll at NOVA. **Students who complied with all or most policies had stronger academic outcomes—including higher GPAs, higher graduation rates, and higher rates of transfer to four-year institutions.** This suggests that the Start Strong policies target key aspects of the first semester that students may otherwise struggle with, and NOVA should focus attention on policies with the lowest compliance rates.

### Compliance with Start Strong Policies

- **Overall Average Compliance Rate:** The average compliance rate was 81 percent and remained steady from Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 cohorts. (Figure 1)
- **Highest Compliance Rate:** The On-Time Registration policy had the highest compliance rate at 96 percent for the Fall 2016 cohort. (Figure 2)
- **Lowest Compliance Rate:** Developmental math enrollment, part of the policy requiring enrollment in developmental courses for placed students, had the lowest compliance rate at 64 percent of placed students for the Fall 2016 cohort. (Figure 2).
- **Greatest Increase in Compliance:** The rate of enrollment in SDV courses increased the greatest—by 10 percentage points—from 58 percent in Fall 2014 to 68 percent in Fall 2016. (Figure 4)
- **Greatest Decrease in Compliance:** The rate of compliance with the orientation/advising policies decreased the greatest—by 4 percentage points—from 90 percent in Fall 2014 to 86 percent in Fall 2016. (Figure 5)

### Impact of Start Strong Policies on Student Success Outcomes

- **Fall-to-Spring Retention:** The fall-to-spring retention rate of students who complied with most or all (three-quarters or more) of the policies required of them was up to 23 percentage points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies. (Figure 11)
- **Fall-to-Fall Retention:** The fall-to-fall retention rate of students who complied with most or all of the policies required of them was up to 32 percentage points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies. (Figure 12)
- **First Semester GPA:**
  - Students who complied with most or all of the policies required of them were more likely to have first semester GPAs higher than 2.0 (64 percent as compared to less than half of students who failed to comply with multiple policies in Fall 2016). (Figures 13-15)
  - The mean first semester GPAs of students who complied with most or all of the policies were 0.5 to 0.67 points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies. (Figure 16)
- **Three-Year Graduation Rate:** Students who complied with most or all of the policies graduated from NOVA at a rate up to 15 percentage points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies. (Figure 17)
- **Three-Year Transfer Rate:** Students who complied with most or all of the policies transferred to a four-year institution at a rate up to 8 percentage points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies. (Figure 18)

## Data Analysis and Data Notes

### I. Data Analysis

This report presents rates of compliance with each of the Start Strong policies for three cohorts of *GPS for Success* students: Fall 2014, Fall 2015, and Fall 2016. This report also shows success outcomes—including retention, first semester GPA, graduation rates, and transfer rates—by level of compliance with the Start Strong policies.

For this report, the six Start Strong policies were measured using seven metrics (listed below). Orientation and advising, although separate policies, were counted as one metric since students complete both requirements at the same time. The requirement to take placement tests was measured using two metrics—to differentiate between the English placement test and the math placement test—as was the requirement to enroll in developmental courses (measured separately for English and math).

#### Metrics Used in This Report:

1. Register on-time (Required of all students)
2. Attend orientation/advising (Required of all students)<sup>2</sup>
3. Enroll in SDV Course (Fall 2014 cohort exemptions through ABLE Exam)
4. Take English Placement Test (Exemptions permitted)<sup>3</sup>
5. Take Math Placement Test (Exemptions permitted)<sup>3</sup>
6. Enroll in Developmental English (Required only if placed)
7. Enroll in Developmental Math (Required only if placed)

As noted above, not every student is required to comply with every policy due to exemptions. For example, a student who scores high enough on a pre-college exam can be exempt from taking the English or math placement exam. Likewise, a student is only required to enroll in developmental courses if they place into them based on placement test results.

The **Compliance Rate**, or percentage of policies with which a student complied, is calculated individually for each student based on the number of policies required for that student. For example, a student who was only required to comply with five policies and met the requirements for four of them has an overall compliance rate of 80 percent.

---

<sup>2</sup> Student orientation includes academic advising, therefore compliance with these two policies are combined.

<sup>3</sup> While the Start Strong policy regarding placement testing refers to both the English and math placement tests in one policy, for the purpose of this report, the two tests are considered separately.



## II. Data Notes

- **SDV Compliance:** At the time of this publication, some Fall 2015 and Fall 2016 students had not yet earned 15 credits. These students are not yet considered incompliant with the policy, which is a requirement to earn a D or better in the course within their first 15 credits.
- **On-Time Compliance:** The spirit of this policy was to prevent students from missing the first day of class. Therefore, students are still considered compliant if they registered after 11:59 p.m. the day before the session started but *before* the first class meeting. Compliance was not calculated for students who only enrolled in courses in the Dynamic session.
- **Developmental Enrollment Compliance:** A student is considered compliant if they enrolled in at least one developmental course (if placed). However, students may be required to take additional developmental courses to complete developmental requirements.
- **Orientation and Advising Compliance:** A student is considered compliant if they attended orientation at any point prior to or during the fall term, but excludes a small number of students who attended orientation online through ELI.
- **SDV Success Outcomes:** SDV success outcomes were calculated for students who completed SDV in their first semester only (or within five years prior to the first fall semester).

## Limitations

This analysis is a descriptive analysis, not a causal analysis. Simply finding a relationship between level of compliance with the Start Strong policies and college-level success is not sufficient evidence for concluding that the relationship is causal. Further, it does not answer how much of the variation in student success can be attributed to compliance with the policies, compared to the impact of other cognitive and non-cognitive factors (such as student motivation, academic engagement, financial need, etc.) on student success.

## Section 1. Compliance with Start Strong Policies

Figure 1, below, presents the overall average compliance rate (e.g., the average compliance rate across each metric) for the Fall 2014, Fall 2015, and Fall 2016 cohorts.

- The average compliance rate for each of these cohorts was consistent at 81 percent.
- This means that a student who was required to comply with 5 of the policies (as measured by the metrics listed on page 3) complied with 4 of them on average.

**Figure 1. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Overall Average Compliance Rate: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

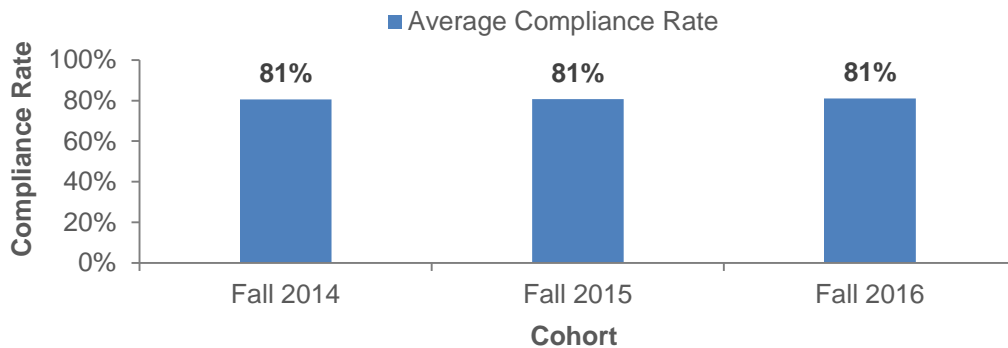


Figure 2, below, compares the compliance rates of each metric for the Fall 2016 cohort.

- The On-Time Registration policy had the highest compliance rate at 96 percent.
- The rate of enrollment in developmental math for students who were placed had the lowest compliance rate (64 percent of placed students).

**Figure 2. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Comparing Compliance Rates by Policy: Fall 2016 Cohort**

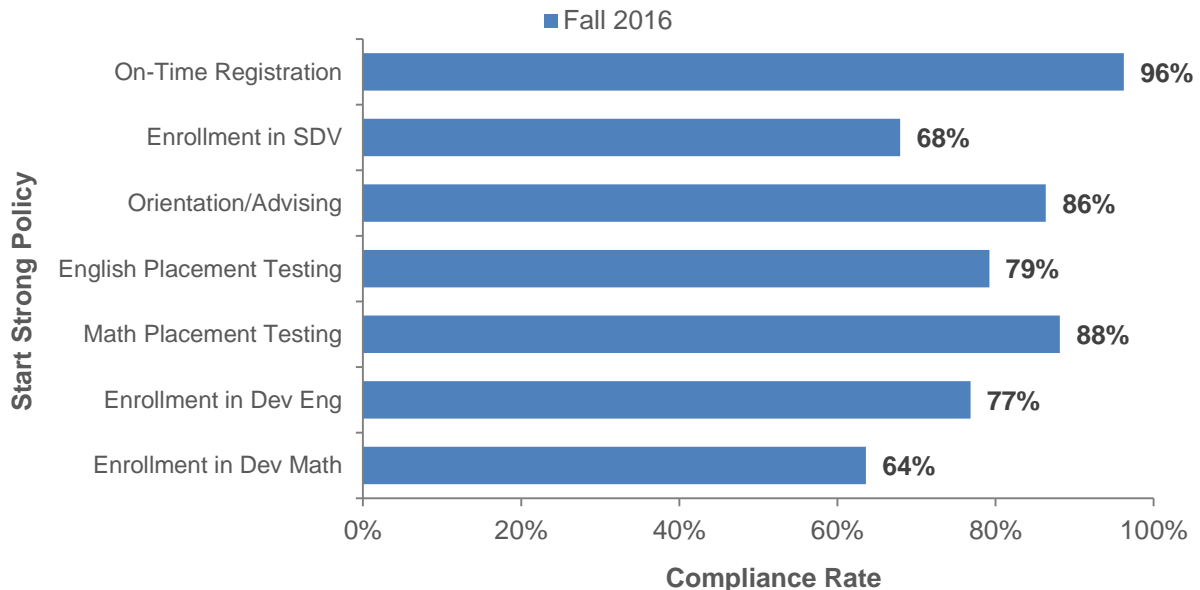


Figure 3, below, presents the rate of compliance with the On-Time Registration policy. This policy is required of all students, but the data presented here include only GPS students.

- The rate of on-time registration decreased slightly from 98 percent in Fall 2014 to 96 percent in both Fall 2015 and Fall 2016.

**Figure 3. Start Strong Policy Compliance – On-Time Registration Policy:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

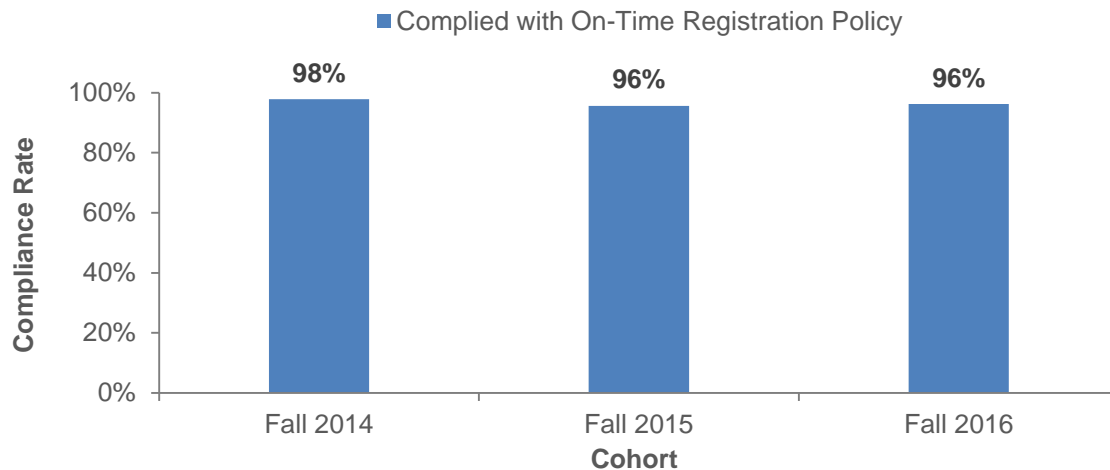


Figure 4, below, shows the rate of compliance with the SDV course policy. This policy is required of all GPS students.

- The rate of enrollment in SDV courses increased by 10 percentage points, from 58 percent in Fall 2014 to 68 percent in Fall 2016.

**Figure 4. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in SDV Course Policy:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

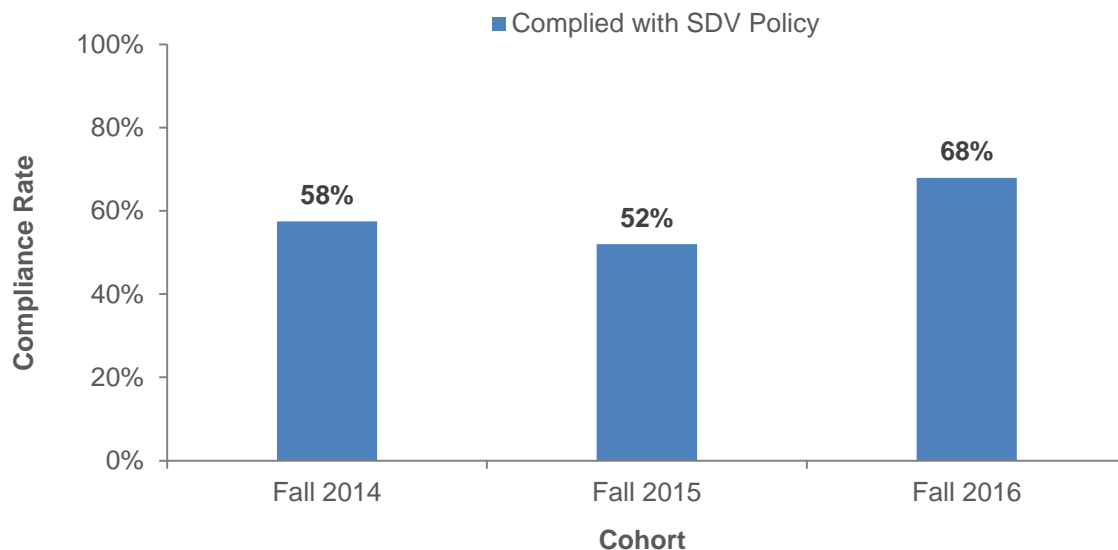


Figure 5 shows the rate of compliance with the Attendance at Orientation and Participation in Advising policies. Both policies are required of all GPS students. These policies were measured using a single metric, since orientation sessions included advising.

- The rate of compliance with the orientation/advising policies decreased by 4 percentage points from 90 percent in Fall 2014 to 86 percent in Fall 2016.

**Figure 5. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Attendance at Orientation and Participation in Advising Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

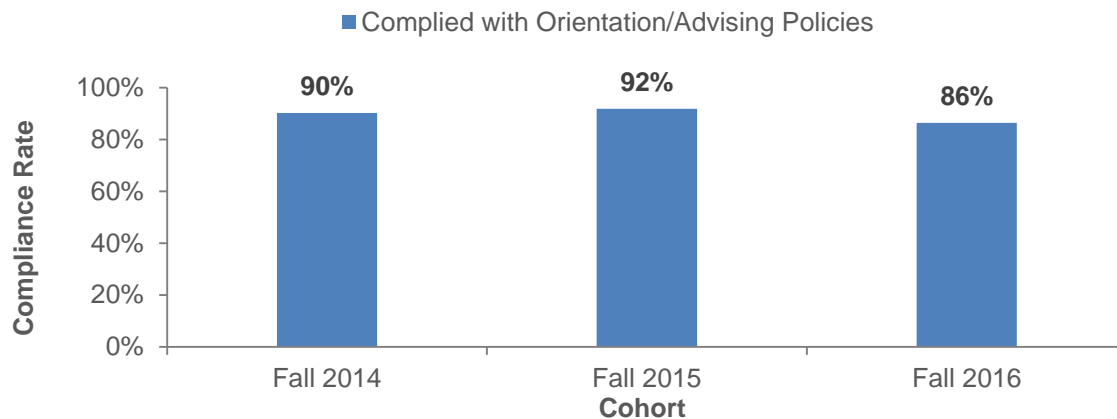


Figure 6 shows the rate of compliance with the Placement Testing policy for the English Placement Test, specifically.

- Placement testing for English and math are both required as part of one policy for GPS students who are not exempt. Students are exempt from placement tests for reasons such as obtaining minimum SAT or ACT scores in reading/writing.
- The rate of English placement testing (for students not exempt) decreased by 3 percentage points from 82 percent in Fall 2014 to 79 percent in Fall 2016.

**Figure 6. Start Strong Policy Compliance – English Placement Testing Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

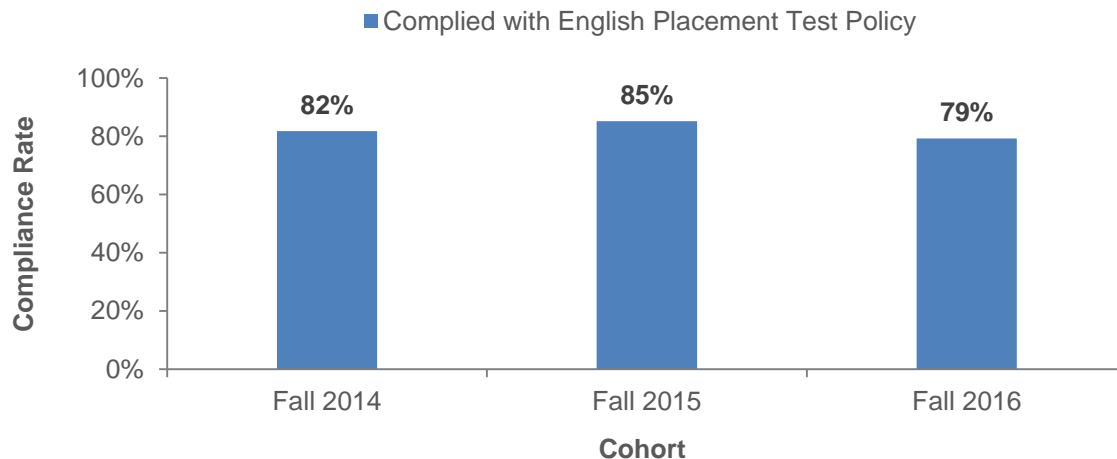


Figure 7 shows the rate of compliance with the Placement Testing policy for the Math Placement Test, specifically.

- Placement testing for English and math are both required as part of one policy for GPS students who are not exempt. Students are exempt from placement tests for reasons such as obtaining certain minimum SAT or ACT scores in math.
- The rate of math placement testing (for students not exempt) decreased by 1 percentage point from 89 percent in Fall 2014 to 88 percent in Fall 2016.

**Figure 7. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Math Placement Testing Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

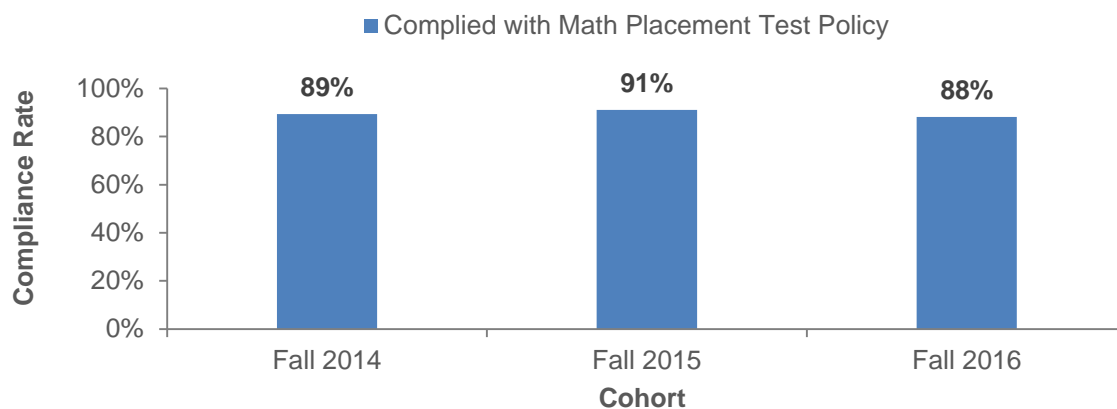


Figure 8 shows the rate of compliance with the policy that students placed in developmental-level courses must enroll; this figure shows the enrollment rate in developmental English, specifically.

- The rate of enrollment in developmental English (for placed students) decreased by 1 percentage point from 78 percent in Fall 2014 to 77 percent in Fall 2016.

**Figure 8. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental English Policy (For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

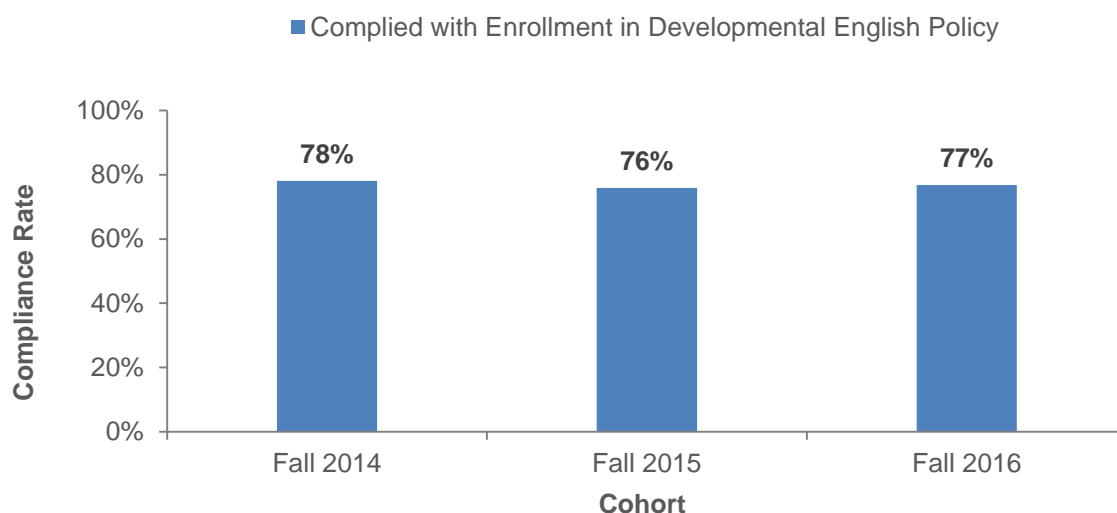


Figure 9 shows the rate of compliance with the policy that students placed in developmental-level courses must enroll; this figure shows the enrollment rate in developmental math, specifically.

- The rate of enrollment in developmental math (for placed students) decreased by 2 percentage points from 66 percent in Fall 2014 to 64 percent in Fall 2016.

**Figure 9. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental Math Policy (For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

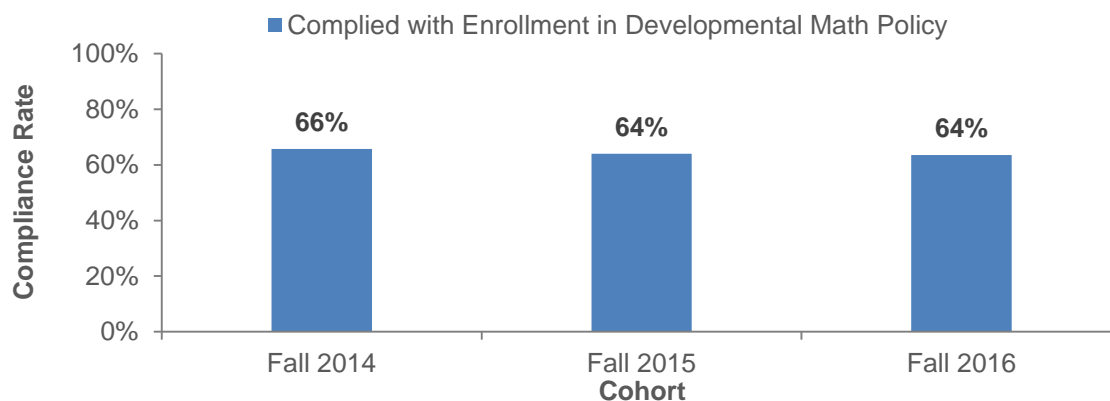
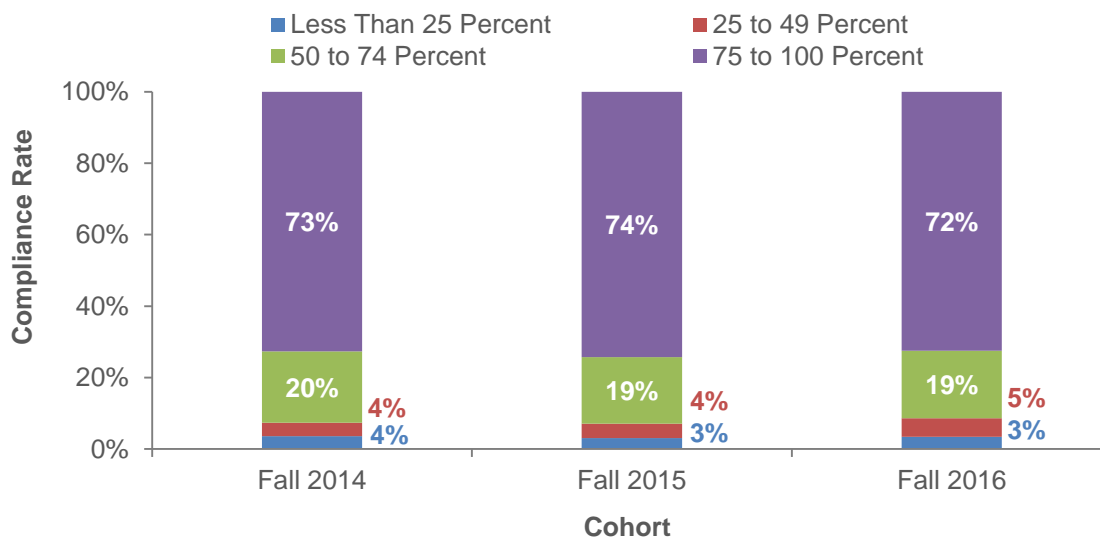


Figure 10 presents the percentage of all required policies with which students complied.

- For example, a student who did not place into any developmental-level courses might be required to comply with five of the Start Strong policies (as measured in this report; see page 3). If that student, for example, completed orientation/advising, SDV, both placement tests, but registered late for a course, he/she would be compliant with four out of five required policies, an 80 percent compliance rate.

**Figure 10. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Compliance Percentage of the Start Strong Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100 percent.

## Section 2. Impact of Start Strong Policies on Student Success Outcomes

This section presents student success outcomes by policy compliance rate ranges: 0 to 49 percent compliant, 50 to 74 percent compliant, and 75 to 100 percent compliant.

The **Compliance Rate**, or percentage of policies with which a student complied, is calculated individually for each student based on the number of policies required for that student. For example, a student who was only required to comply with five policies and met the requirements for four of them has an overall compliance rate of 80 percent.

Figure 11 presents fall-to-spring retention rates by policy compliance rates for three fall cohorts.

- The fall-to-spring retention rate of students who complied with most or all of the policies required of them was up to 23 percentage points higher than the retention rate of students who failed to comply with multiple policies.

**Figure 11. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Spring Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

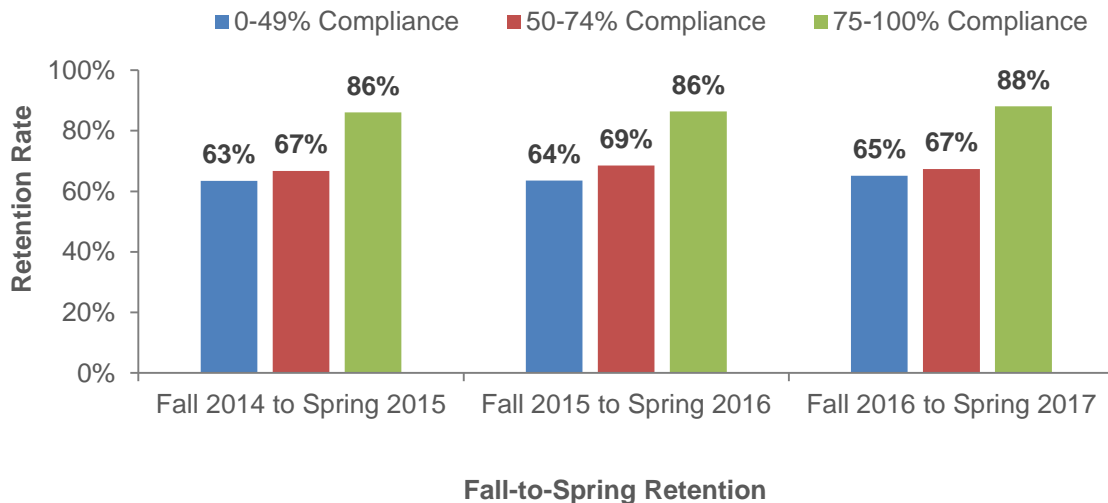
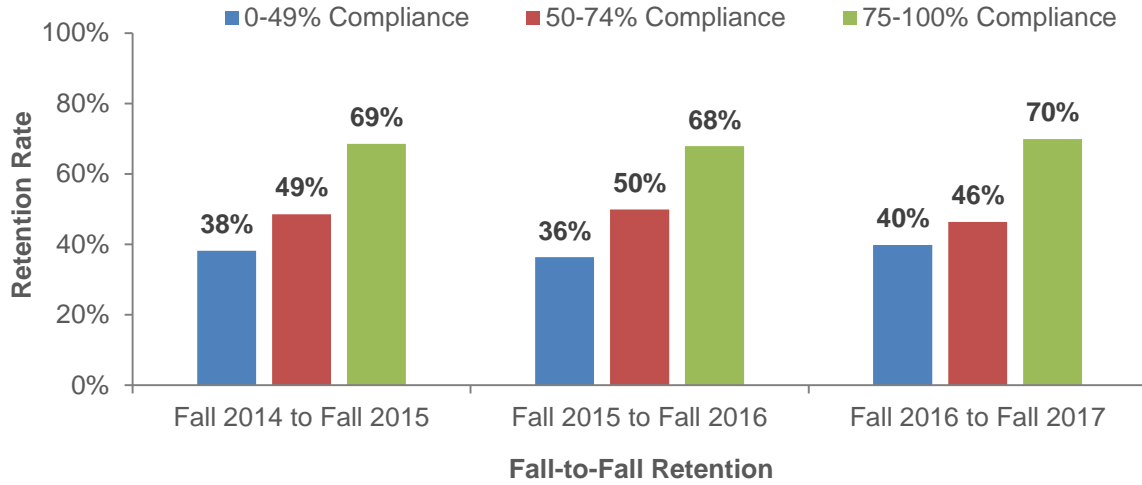


Figure 12 (next page) presents fall-to-fall retention rates by policy compliance rate for three fall cohorts.

- The fall-to-fall retention rate of students who complied with most or all of the policies required of them was up to 32 percentage points higher than the retention rate of students who failed to comply with multiple policies.

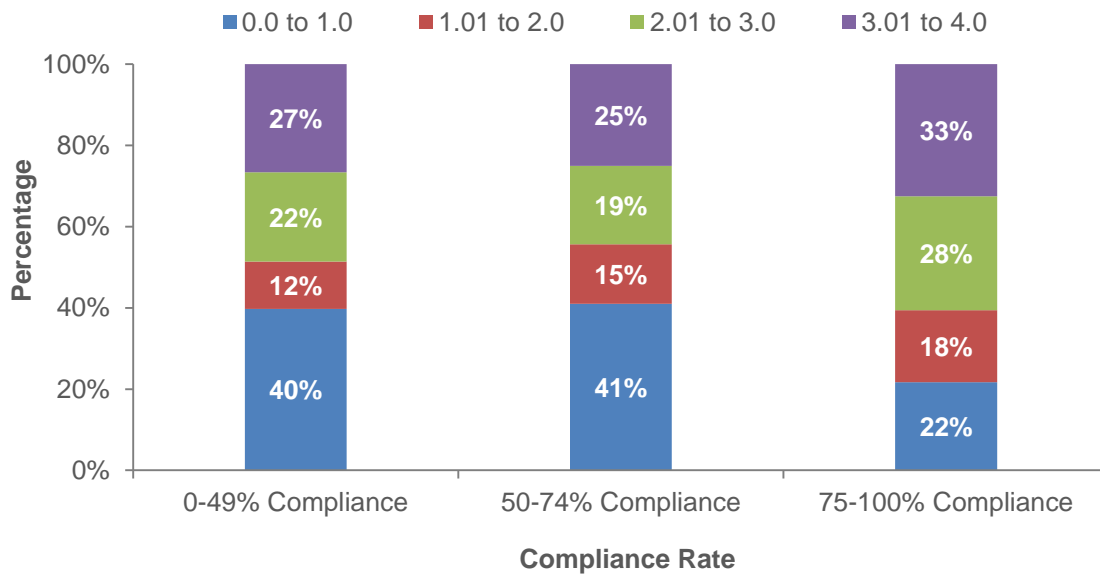
**Figure 12. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Fall Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**



Figures 13 through 15 (below and on the next page) show first semester GPA ranges (0.0 to 1.0, 1.01 to 2.0, 2.01 to 3.0, and 3.01 to 4.0) by policy compliance rate for three fall cohorts.<sup>4</sup>

- Students who complied with most or all of the policies required of them were more likely to have first semester GPAs greater than 2.0 (64 percent in Fall 2016 compared to less than half of students who failed to comply with multiple policies).

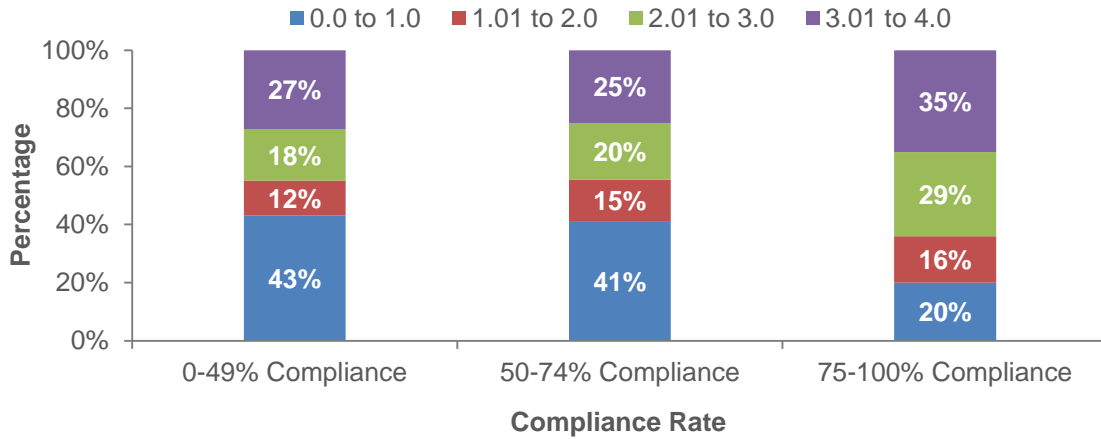
**Figure 13. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort**



<sup>4</sup> Due to rounding, percentages in these figures may not add to 100 percent.



**Figure 14. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2015 Cohort**



**Figure 15. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2016 Cohort**

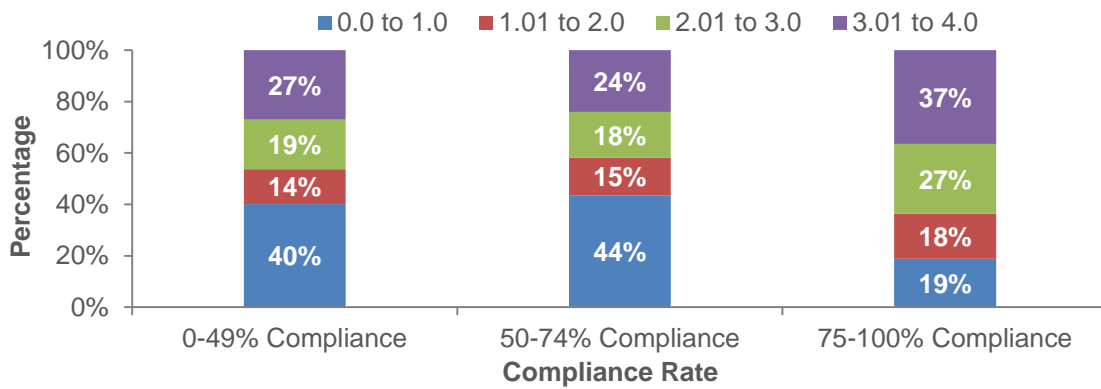
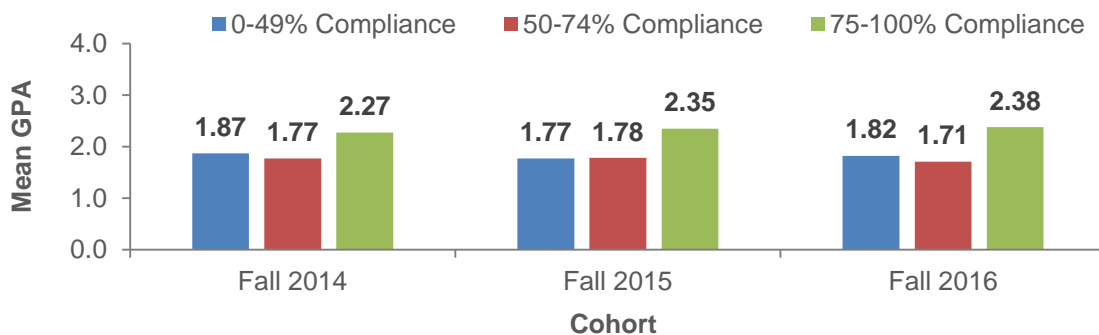


Figure 16 presents first semester mean GPAs by policy compliance rate for three fall cohorts.

- Students who complied with most or all of the policies had higher first semester GPAs.
- First semester GPAs for students who complied with most or all of the policies were 0.50 to 0.67 points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies.

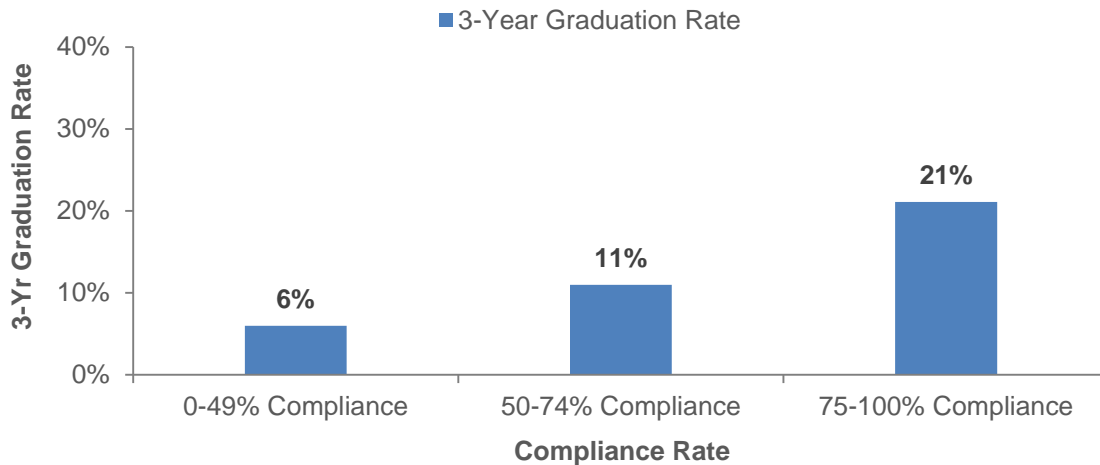
**Figure 16. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Mean First Semester GPA by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**



Figures 17 and 18, below, present three-year graduation rates and three-year transfer rates for the Fall 2014 cohort. At the time of this publication, the graduation and transfer rates for the Fall 2015 and Fall 2016 cohorts were not yet available.

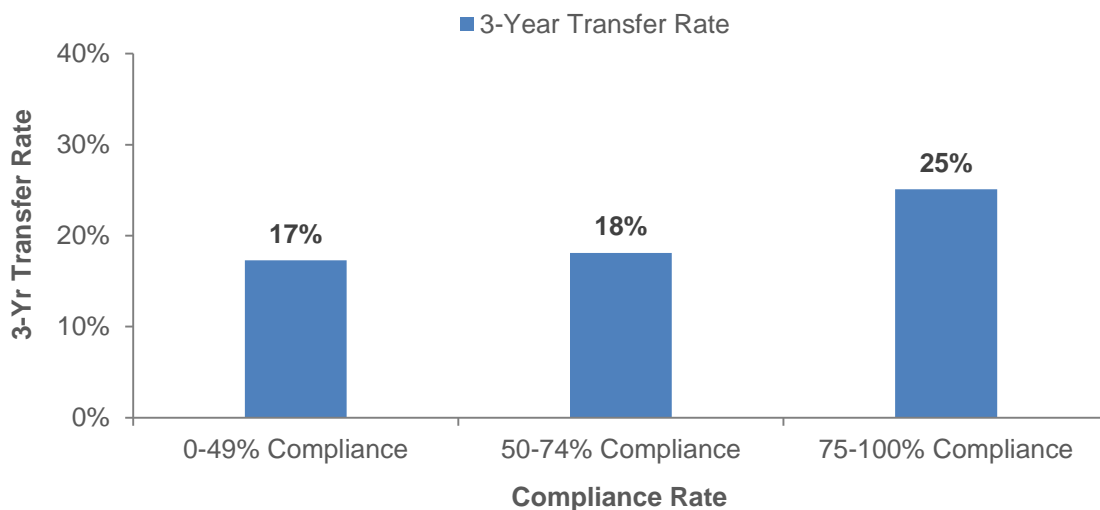
- Students who complied with most or all of the policies graduated from NOVA at a rate up to 15 percentage points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies (21 percent as compared to 6 percent). (Figure 17)

**Figure 17. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year NOVA Graduation Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort**



- Students who complied with most or all of the policies transferred to four-year institutions at a rate up to 8 percentage points higher than students who failed to comply with multiple policies (25 percent as compared to 17 percent). (Figure 18)

**Figure 18. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year Transfer Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort**



## Appendix: Data Tables

**Table A1. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Overall Average Compliance Rate:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	N	Average Compliance Rate
Fall 2014	5,033	80.5%
Fall 2015	5,297	80.7%
Fall 2016	5,536	81.1%

**Table A2. Start Strong Policy Compliance – On-Time Registration Policy:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with On-Time Registration Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	4,596	97.8%	4,701
Fall 2015	4,914	95.6%	5,138
Fall 2016	5,119	96.2%	5,320

**Table A3. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in SDV Course Policy:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with SDV Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	2,860	57.5%	4,970
Fall 2015	2,753	52.0%	5,297
Fall 2016	3,761	67.9%	5,536

**Table A4. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Attendance at Orientation and Participation in Advising Policy: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with Orientation/Advising Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	4,547	90.3%	5,033
Fall 2015	4,870	91.9%	5,297
Fall 2016	4,781	86.4%	5,536

**Table A5. Start Strong Policy Compliance – English Placement Testing Policy:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with English Placement Test Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	3,894	81.7%	4,769
Fall 2015	4,239	85.1%	4,981
Fall 2016	4,076	79.2%	5,145

**Table A6. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Math Placement Testing Policy:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with Math Placement Test Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	4,390	89.4%	4,909
Fall 2015	4,647	91.1%	5,103
Fall 2016	4,701	88.1%	5,334

**Table A7. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental English Policy  
(For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with Enrollment in Developmental English Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	708	78.1%	907
Fall 2015	720	75.9%	948
Fall 2016	693	76.8%	902

**Table A8. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Enrollment in Developmental Math Policy  
(For Placed Students): Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Complied with Enrollment in Developmental Math Policy		Total
	#	%	
Fall 2014	1,337	65.7%	2,035
Fall 2015	1,331	64.0%	2,079
Fall 2016	1,301	63.6%	2,045

**Table A9. Start Strong Policy Compliance – Percentage of the Six Policies Complied with:  
Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Cohort	Compliance Rate								Total
	Less Than 25 Percent		25 to 49 Percent		50 to 74 Percent		75 to 100 Percent		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Fall 2014	179	3.6	190	3.8	1,004	19.9	3,660	72.7	5,033
Fall 2015	165	3.1	211	4.0	986	18.6	3,935	74.3	5,297
Fall 2016	190	3.4	288	5.2	1,049	18.9	4,009	72.4	5,536

**Table A10. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Spring Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Compliance Rate	Fall 2014 to Spring 2015 Retention		Fall 2014 Total	Fall 2015 to Spring 2016 Retention		Fall 2015 Total	Fall 2016 to Spring 2017 Retention		Fall 2016 Total
	#	%		#	%		#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	234	63.4%	369	239	63.6%	376	311	65.1%	478
50 to 74 Percent	670	66.7%	1,004	675	68.5%	986	707	67.4%	1,049
75 to 100 Percent	3,152	86.1%	3,660	3,400	86.4%	3,935	3,531	88.1%	4,009
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,056</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>4,314</b>	<b>81.4%</b>	<b>5,297</b>	<b>4,549</b>	<b>82.2%</b>	<b>5,536</b>

**Table A11. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Fall-to-Fall Retention by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Compliance Rate	Fall 2014 to Fall 2015 Retention		Fall 2014 Total	Fall 2015 to Fall 2016 Retention		Fall 2015 Total	Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Retention		Fall 2016 Total
	#	%		#	%		#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	141	38.2%	369	137	36.4%	376	190	39.8%	478
50 to 74 Percent	488	48.6%	1,004	492	49.9%	986	487	46.4%	1,049
75 to 100 Percent	2,506	68.5%	3,660	2,671	67.9%	3,935	2,802	69.9%	4,009
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,135</b>	<b>62.3%</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>62.3%</b>	<b>5,297</b>	<b>3,479</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>5,536</b>

**Table A12. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort**

Compliance Rate	GPA of Fall 2014 Cohort								Total
	0.0 to 1.0		1.01 to 2.0		2.01 to 3.0		3.01 to 4.0		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	147	39.8%	43	11.7%	81	22.0%	98	26.6%	369
50 to 74 Percent	412	41.0%	147	14.6%	194	19.3%	251	25.0%	1,004
75 to 100 Percent	793	21.7%	649	17.7%	1,027	28.1%	1,191	32.5%	3,660
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>1,302</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>5,033</b>

**Table A13. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2015 Cohort**

Compliance Rate	GPA of Fall 2015 Cohort								Total
	0.0 to 1.0		1.01 to 2.0		2.01 to 3.0		3.01 to 4.0		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	162	43.1%	45	12.0%	67	17.8%	102	27.1%	376
50 to 74 Percent	402	40.9%	144	14.6%	192	19.5%	246	25.0%	984
75 to 100 Percent	785	20.0%	628	16.0%	1,142	29.0%	1,379	35.1%	3,934
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,349</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>1,401</b>	<b>26.5%</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>32.6%</b>	<b>5,294</b>

Note: GPA data is unavailable for 3 students in the Fall 2015 cohort.

**Table A14. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – First Semester GPA Ranges by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2016 Cohort**

Compliance Rate	GPA of Fall 2016 Cohort								Total
	0.0 to 1.0		1.01 to 2.0		2.01 to 3.0		3.01 to 4.0		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	192	40.2%	65	13.6%	92	19.3%	129	27.0%	478
50 to 74 Percent	456	43.5%	154	14.7%	187	17.8%	252	24.0%	1,049
75 to 100 Percent	756	18.9%	701	17.5%	1,089	27.2%	1,463	36.5%	4,009
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>1,844</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>5,536</b>

**Table A15. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Mean First Semester GPA by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 through Fall 2016 Cohorts**

Compliance Rate	Fall 2014 Cohort		Fall 2015 Cohort		Fall 2016 Cohort	
	N	Mean GPA	N	Mean GPA	N	Mean GPA
0 to 49 Percent	369	1.87	376	1.77	478	1.82
50 to 74 Percent	1,004	1.77	984	1.78	1,049	1.71
75 to 100 Percent	3,660	2.27	3,934	2.35	4,009	2.38

Note: GPA data is unavailable for 3 students in the Fall 2015 cohort.

**Table A16. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year NOVA Graduation Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort**

Compliance Rate	3-Year Graduation Rate		Fall 2014 Total
	#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	22	6.0%	369
50 to 74 Percent	110	11.0%	1,004
75 to 100 Percent	772	21.1%	3,660
<b>Total</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>5,033</b>

**Table A17. Start Strong Policy Success Outcomes – Three-Year Transfer Rate by Compliance with Six Policies: Fall 2014 Cohort**

Compliance Rate	3-Year Transfer Rate		Fall 2014 Total
	#	%	
0 to 49 Percent	64	17.3%	369
50 to 74 Percent	182	18.1%	1,004
75 to 100 Percent	919	25.1%	3,660
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>5,033</b>

# PATHWAY TO THE AMERICAN DREAM—NOVA'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2023

## THE NOVA COMMITMENT

As its primary contributions to meeting the needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Northern Virginia Community College pledges to advance the social and economic mobility of its students while producing an educated citizenry for the 21st Century.

## THE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To deliver on this commitment NOVA will focus its creativity and talent, its effort and energy, and its resources and persistence, on achieving three overarching goals—success, achievement, and prosperity. It will strive to enable **Every Student to Succeed, Every Program to Achieve, and Every Community to Prosper.**

To advance the completion agenda described above, thereby promoting students' success and enhancing their social mobility, ensuring that programs achieve, and producing an educated citizenry for the 21st Century, the following goals and objectives are adopted:

### GOAL 1: Every Student Succeeds

- **Objective 1:** Develop a College-wide approach to advising that ensures all students are advised and have access to support throughout their time at NOVA
- **Objective 2:** Implement VIP-PASS System as the foundational technology based on NOVA Informed Pathways for student self-advising, assignment and coordination of advisors, and course registration

### GOAL 2: Every Program Achieves

- **Objective 3:** Develop comprehensive, fully integrated Informed Pathways for every program to ensure seamless transitions from high school and other entry points to NOVA, and from NOVA to four-year transfer institutions or the workforce
- **Objective 4:** Develop effective processes and protocols for programmatic College-wide collective decisions that include consistent, accountable leadership and oversight of each academic program with designated "owners," active advisory committees, clear student learning outcomes and assessments, and program reviews in all modalities of instruction
- **Objective 5:** Align NOVA's organizational structures, position descriptions, and expectations for accountability with its overarching mission to support student engagement, learning, success and institutional effectiveness

### GOAL 3: Every Community Prospers

- **Objective 6:** Enhance the prosperity of every community in Northern Virginia by refocusing and prioritizing NOVA's workforce development efforts
- **Objective 7:** Further develop NOVA's IT and Cybersecurity programs to support regional job demand and position NOVA as the leading IT community college in the nation
- **Objective 8:** Re-envision workforce strategies and integrate workforce development into a NOVA core focus
- **Objective 9:** Plan to expand the breadth and reach of NOVA's healthcare and biotechnology programs, and prioritize future programs to support regional economic development goals economic development goals

# **NOVA**

---

**Northern Virginia  
Community College**

**703-323-3000 | [www.nvcc.edu](http://www.nvcc.edu)**