

II. KEY MEASURE ANALYSIS

Agency Mission: ORS 351.009 – The Legislative Assembly declares that the mission of all higher education in Oregon is to: 1) Enable students to extend prior educational experiences in order to reach their full potential as participating and contributing citizens by helping them develop scientific, professional, and technological expertise, together with heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities and a sense of purpose; 2) Create, collect, evaluate, store, and pass on the body of knowledge necessary to educate future generations; 3) Provide appropriate instructional, research, and public service programs to enrich the cultural life of Oregon and to support and maintain a healthy state economy.

KPM #9	PERSISTENCE – Percent of full-time freshmen who demonstrate progress by returning for the second year	Measure since: 1997
Goal	Quality: Increase quality of undergraduate program – student success	
Oregon Context	OBM26 – College completion	
Data source	OUS Institutional Research Services, <i>Retention, Attrition, and Graduation of OUS Freshmen</i>	
Owner	OUS Strategic Programs and Planning, Kimberly Rambo (541) 346-5777	

1. **OUR STRATEGY**

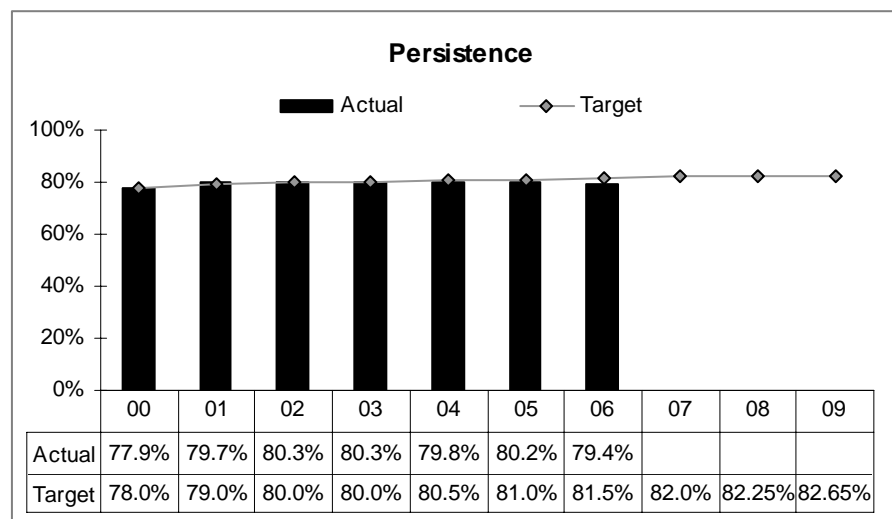
Enhance student readiness and fortify early student support programs.

2. **ABOUT THE TARGETS**

Agency targets assumed continual and somewhat ambitious improvement on the measure, and as a result were not met in the three most recent years. Future targets seek to retain and slowly improve current performance on this measure. Targets shown for 2008 and 2009 are those approved during the 2007 legislative session to reflect agency funding for the biennium.

3. **HOW WE ARE DOING**

Between 1995 and 2001, the persistence rate rose from roughly 75% to 80%, and held steady for five years. In 2006, the rate dropped eight-tenths of a percent, signaling the impact of the long-term erosion of faculty and administrative infrastructure on which student progress is dependent.



4. **HOW WE COMPARE**

The 2006 retention rate (79.4%) is higher than the average of 74.0% reported by ACT for first-time freshman cohorts at all four-year universities.

5. **FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS**

Persistence to the second year is a vital step in the path toward a bachelor’s degree. While the overall six-year graduation rate for OUS students is 58.7%, students who return after their first-year complete at a rate of 71.7%. Campuses strive to retain students and provide support to those who are academically at-risk. In general, increasing access – particularly to populations with lower historical rates of college participation and preparation – can have a negative impact on student persistence and completion. The challenge is to identify and address the needs of these students before and after their entry into college.

6. **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

OUS institutions continue to implement instructional and support programs tailored toward the unique needs of their student populations. Campuses implement programs that monitor student progress and provide a personal connection to peers, faculty, and student activities. Programs used by campuses

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include: living and learning communities, enhanced academic advising, mentoring relationships with upper-division students, and summer bridge programs. Successful efforts will reflect OUS institutions' creation and refinement of programs designed for the specific needs of student groups which include underprepared first-time freshman, first-generation college students, and returning adults. Cross-sector efforts among educational groups are underway to enhance student preparation for college and evaluate the elements critical for student success.

7. ABOUT THE DATA

Performance data represent the proportion of first-time, full-time freshman entering an OUS institution one fall and returning to any OUS institution the following fall. Data are reported in the returning year (e.g., persistence rates reported in 2006 represent the fall 2005 cohort returning in fall 2006). The reporting cycle is the academic year. Disaggregated data by campus are available in the annual campus performance and target setting reports found in the Monitoring Performance section of the OUS website at www.ous.edu.