



# **Students with Disabilities At Maryland Colleges and Universities**

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## **Introduction**

This annual report presents data on students who registered with disability services at Maryland colleges and universities and provides analysis on graduation, transfer and retention outcomes for those students.

To better understand higher education outcomes for students with disabilities in Maryland, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Disabilities and in partnership with the state's higher education institutions, created a survey administered to colleges and universities<sup>1</sup> to collect retention and completion data on these students. The data may be used to inform policy that may be beneficial to this unique population.

The aggregated data collected reflect the number of students who registered with disability services<sup>2</sup> at their college or university and report on retention and graduation outcomes for those students.<sup>3</sup>

## **Maryland Statewide Results**

In fiscal year 2019, 15,814<sup>4</sup> undergraduate students and 1,417 graduate students were registered with their institutions' disability services office as students with disabilities<sup>5</sup>, which represents 3.8% of all students enrolled in fiscal year 2019 (a 0.2% increase from fiscal year 2018). Specifically, this represents 4.3% of undergraduate students and 1.6% of graduate students enrolled.

<sup>1</sup> Surveys are administered annually to Maryland's 16 community colleges, 13 four-year public institutions, and 13 state-aided independent colleges and universities.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report, the terms disability services and disability services office will be used throughout for consistency. It is important to note that the name of this office can vary from campus to campus.

<sup>3</sup> For detailed background information on students with disabilities in Maryland and the nation, please refer to previous reports found at MHEC's Office of Research and Policy Analysis webpage <https://mhec.state.md.us/publications/Pages/research/index.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> This report does not contain data for the University of Maryland Eastern Shore due to the institution's inability to accurately or appropriately retrieve the data.

<sup>5</sup> Students registered with their institutions' disability services office in this report's analysis include those who have permanent or temporary disabilities.

### *Four-Year Institutions*

In fiscal year 2019, Maryland's four-year public and state-aided independent institutions reported that 9,208 students were registered as students with disabilities with disability services. Four-year public institutions reported 4,961 undergraduate students and 776 graduate students while state-aided independent institutions reported 2,830 undergraduate students and 641 graduate students.

Maryland's four-year public and state-aided independent institutions also reported on the first-time, full-time, degree- or certificate-seeking students who were registered with the disability services office and enrolled in Fall 2018. To obtain a retention rate on those students, institutions reported the number of these students who returned to the institution in Fall 2019. See Table 1 and Table 2 on the following page for a four-year trend of data which includes undergraduate and graduate student 12-month enrollment, and a four-year trend of retention rates for students registered with the disability services office, respectively. The trend data show that both students attending Maryland's four-year public institutions and state-aided independent institutions who are registered with their disabilities services office have retention rates comparable to the total undergraduate population.

### *Community Colleges*

In fiscal year 2019, 8,023 undergraduate students registered with the disability services office of their community college campus. This represents 4.9% of the total undergraduate enrollment at Maryland's community colleges.

Maryland's community colleges reported data using the Degree Progress Analysis model. <sup>6</sup>These data (see Table 3 on the following page) reflect a Fall 2015 cohort of students and are compared to the outcomes of all other students in the Fall 2015 cohort. The Degree Progress Analysis<sup>7</sup> shows that slightly over 40% of the undergraduate students registered with disabilities services offices graduated/transferred within four years after initial enrollment. The rate is roughly 10% lower than the statewide graduation/transfer rate of 52.2% (Fall 2015 cohort). Table 3 also indicates that undergraduate students registered with disabilities services offices have a successful persister rate (72.0%) comparable to the statewide rate (71.6%). A Successful Persister Rate is a rate which includes students within the cohort who, within four years, graduate or transfer, are still enrolled at the institution, or who complete at least 30 credits or more with a GPA of 2.00 or better<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> The Degree Progress Analysis is a cohort model used to report the progress toward degree completion of community college students. It incorporates measures of success including completion and transfer rates to other institutions and successful persisting as indicators of progress.

<sup>7</sup> The Degree Progress Analysis cohort model tracks the success of first-time full- and part-time students over four years who have attempted at least 18 credit hours within the first two years of initial enrollment.

<sup>8</sup> Students included in the Graduation/Transfer Rate are also included in the Successful Persister Rate.

Table 1: Students Registered with Disability Services at Maryland Colleges and Universities: 2016-2019 Enrollment Trends

	FY 2016: Undergraduate Students			FY 2017: Undergraduate Students			FY 2018: Undergraduate Students			FY 2019: Undergraduate Students		
	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities
Four-Year Public Institutions	163,047	3,480	2.1%	169,986	4,300	2.5%	172,181	4,567	2.7%	174,660	4,961	2.8%
State-Aided Independent Institutions	30,740	2,359	7.7%	29,277	2,692	9.2%	29,121	2,926	10%	29,223	2,830	9.7%
Community Colleges	179,824	7,723	4.3%	172,695	7,837	4.5%	165,375	7,809	4.7%	163,749	8,023	4.9%
	FY 2016: Graduate Students			FY 2017: Graduate Students			FY 2018: Graduate Students			FY 2019: Graduate Students		
	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities	12-month Total Enrollment	Students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	% of Students registered with Disabilities
Four-Year Public Institutions	53,990	467	0.9%	52,422	692	1.3%	52,911	680	1.3%	52,080	776	1.5%
State-Aided Independent Institutions	32,138	356	1.1%	34,224	447	1.3%	35,713	493	1.4%	36,638	641	1.7%

Notes: For the 2020 report, the trend data (Maryland and IPEDS data) does not include the University of Maryland Eastern Shore for FY17, FY18 and FY19; in Spring 2020, MHEC was notified that the University's data were incorrect for the three years of submissions; therefore, MHEC removed the institution's data from analysis, which results in different totals and subtotals than previously published reports. Data include counts of students registered with disability services office from the Maryland Survey in fiscal year 2019 and total 12-month enrollment from 2018-2019 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved March 2021 from <http://nces.ed.gov>

Table 2: Undergraduate Students Registered with Disability Services at Maryland Colleges and Universities: 2016-2019 Retention Trends

	2016 Retention Rate		2017 Retention Rate		2018 Retention Rate		2019 Retention Rate	
	Total Undergraduate Students	Undergraduate students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	Total Undergraduate Students	Undergraduate students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	Total Undergraduate Students	Undergraduate students registered with Disabilities Services Offices	Total Undergraduate Students	Undergraduate students registered with Disabilities Services Offices
Four-Year Public Institutions	84.2%	84.0%	85.7%	87.1%	84.9%	83.4%	85.8%	85.5%
State-Aided Independent Institutions	83.1%	82.0%	85.3%	85.1%	84.8%	82.8%	84.8%	85.4%
Statewide	83.4%	83.4%	85.2%	86.1%	84.9%	83.1%	86.2%	85.4%

Note: Data for the University of Maryland Eastern Shore is not in the trend data for 2017, 2018, or 2019 due to the institution’s inability to accurately or appropriately retrieve the data. Their data has been removed from the students with disabilities data and from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data which makes this report have different data from previous reports. Retention rates for the Fall 2018 cohort are obtained from 2019 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved March 2021 from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/login.aspx?gotoReportId=1>

Table 3: Degree Progress Analysis Rates: Four Years after Initial Enrollment, Maryland Community Colleges, Entering Class of 2015

<b>Degree Progress Analysis Rates: Four Years after Initial Enrollment, Maryland Community Colleges, Entering Class of 2015</b>				
	<b>Entering Class</b>	<b>Analysis Cohort</b>	<b>Graduation/Transfer Rate</b>	<b>Successful Persister Rate</b>
<b>Undergraduate students registered with Disabilities Services Offices</b>	986 <sup>1</sup>	806	42.3%	72.0%
<b>Statewide</b>	24,503 <sup>2</sup>	16,870	52.2%	71.6%

Note: The first-time full- and part-time fall headcount and the number of students attempting fewer than 18 credit hours over their first two years of enrollment are not included in the analysis cohort calculation for certain community colleges due to missing or incomplete data.

<sup>1</sup> Represents the headcount of students registered with disabilities services within the Fall 2015 cohort at Maryland community colleges who are first-time full- and part-time students, as reported by institutions.

<sup>2</sup> Represents the headcount of all students within the Fall 2015 cohort at Maryland community colleges who are first-time full- and part-time students, as reported by institution.

## **Conclusions**

Data collected from Maryland's community colleges, four-year public institutions, and state-aided independent institutions indicate that students are seeking services for their disabilities. Students attending Maryland's four-year institutions who were identified in the survey as registering for disability services had second-year retention rates that were comparable to the overall cohort with slightly higher rates at the state-aided independent institutions. This suggests that students who seek disability services are obtaining the support and accommodations they need to successfully persist.

In future analysis, the data collected by MHEC will allow for additional outcome measures to be analyzed, including four-year graduation rates for students enrolled in the state's four-year institutions. MHEC will also continue to collect Degree Progress Analysis data for undergraduate students registered with disabilities services offices, which will allow community colleges to track the success of their students seeking disability services. The information may give institutions greater insight into how these students compare to the larger student body and perhaps identify ways to ensure they have the support needed to succeed.