

Achievement Gaps at NOVA: ATD Leader College of Distinction



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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.

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Introduction

The term “achievement gap” refers to “any significant and persistent disparity in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students.”¹ Community colleges nationwide serve diverse populations of students, including many students from historically underrepresented groups. When they arrive on campus, these students face a multitude of challenges that can directly impact their ability to make progress toward their academic goals. As a result, community colleges continue to observe alarming achievement gaps among various subgroups of students. Therefore, Achieving the Dream (ATD) has encouraged member colleges to put equity at the forefront of completion efforts.²

In recent years, students from historically underrepresented backgrounds have become an increasingly larger proportion of all students enrolled in college. For example, students of a minority race or ethnicity represented only 29 percent of all college students in the 1995-96 academic year, but representation had increased to 48 percent by 2015-16.³ This shows that access to college has improved for many historically underrepresented groups over the past two decades. However, despite improvements in access, these groups continue to lag behind their peers in terms of success. For example, many historically underrepresented populations have substantially lower completion rates than their counterparts. Therefore, colleges overall—and community colleges in particular—are due for a renewed focus on achievement gaps and completion efforts.

Achieving the Dream at NOVA

Achieving the Dream (ATD) is a multi-year national initiative created to help community colleges close the achievement gap and improve success rates. NOVA joined ATD as a participating institution in 2007 as part of its work to identify student populations that disproportionately experience low success rates; develop interventions to improve outcomes; and measure changes in student success over time. With its participation in ATD, NOVA has further refined its evaluation and data-driven decision-making processes. This, in turn, helps NOVA to more effectively measure outcomes and determine ways the College can continually improve student success.

In 2010, ATD recognized NOVA as an ATD Leader College, which recognizes institutions that have implemented successful strategies aimed at improving student achievement. NOVA earned the ATD Leader College designation every year from 2007 to 2019. In 2020, ATD further recognized NOVA as an ATD Leader College of Distinction, which “honors colleges who have gone above and beyond in closing the gaps and increasing student success.”

¹ (2013). *Achievement Gap*. The Glossary of Education Reform.

² Achieving the Dream Equity Statement.

³ Espinosa, L.L., Turk, J.M., & Chessman, H.M. (2019). *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: A Status Report*. American Council on Education.

In This Report

This Report presents data on several student success metrics for first-time in college, program placed students at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). In order to show where achievement gaps exist within these success metrics—as well as where they have improved over time—this Report disaggregates data by the following student characteristics: gender, race/ethnicity, Pell grant recipient status, and first generation status.

The Report is organized in the following sections, with each section presenting Key Findings:

- **Section 1.** Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates
- **Section 2.** Gatekeeper Course Success Rates: English 111
- **Section 3.** Gatekeeper Course Success Rates: Math 151
- **Section 4.** Overall Course Success Rates
- **Section 5.** Four-Year Graduation Rates from NOVA
- **Section 6.** Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates

Section 1. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates

Retention is a critical measure of student achievement at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). The fall-to-fall retention rate is defined as the percentage of first-time in college, program placed students who entered NOVA in the fall and either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the subsequent fall semester.

This section presents the fall-to-fall retention rates for four cohorts (Fall 2014 through Fall 2017) of first-time in college, program placed students at NOVA. Retention rates are presented by various subgroups of students in order to identify where achievement gaps exist and where they have improved at the College over time.

Key Section Findings: Fall-to-Fall Retention

Where Achievement Gaps Exist

- Female students, non-Pell grant recipients, continuing generation students, and Asian students have higher fall-to-fall retention rates than their respective counterparts.
- A substantial achievement gap exists by gender, in which female students have fall-to-fall retention rates that are six percentage points higher than male students.
- Another significant achievement gap exists among various race/ethnic groups. Asian students have retention rates that are eleven percentage points higher than black students, seven percentage points higher than white students, and six percentage points higher than Hispanic students.

Where Achievement Gaps Are Improving (↑)

- ↑ **Pell Grant Status:** From Fall 2014 to Fall 2017, the fall-to-fall retention rate improved for both Pell grant recipients and non-Pell recipients. The increase for Pell grant recipients was slightly larger (+2 percentage points), which narrowed the achievement gap between Pell and non-Pell students.
- ↑ **First Generation Status:** From Fall 2014 to Fall 2017, the fall-to-fall retention rate improved by one percentage point each for both first generation and continuing generation students. Across this period, the achievement gap between these two subgroups of students remained at a two-percentage point difference.
- ↑ **Race/Ethnicity:** From Fall 2014 to Fall 2017, the fall-to-fall retention rate of black students increased by seven percentage points. This decreased the achievement gap between black students and Asian students (the group with the highest retention rates) from a 26 percentage point difference in Fall 2014 to an 11 percentage point difference in Fall 2017.

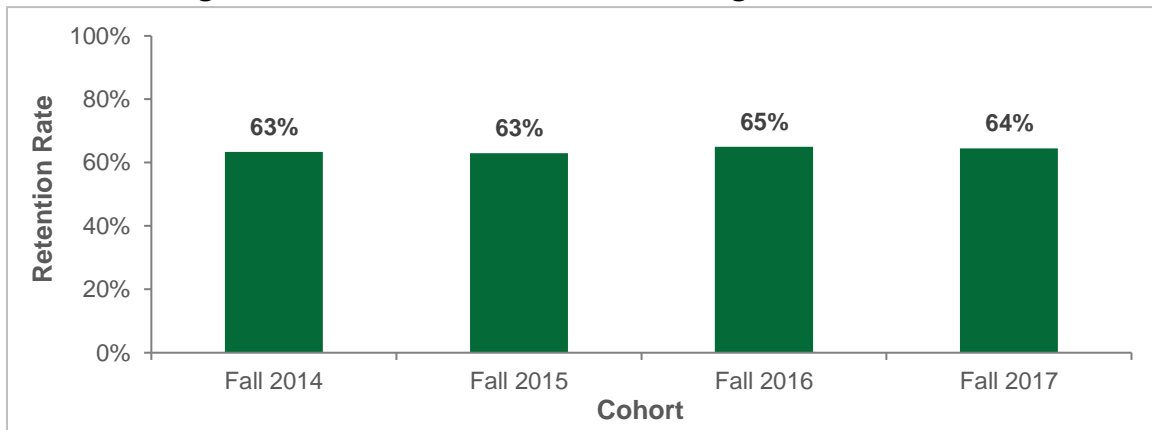
Where Achievement Gaps Are Widening (↓) or Stagnating (→)

- ↓ **Gender:** Between Fall 2014 and Fall 2017, the achievement gap between male and female students has widened. This is due to an increase in the fall-to-fall retention rate for female students (+3 percentage points during this time), while the fall-to-fall retention rate for male students has remained the same.

College-Wide Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate (Figure 1)

- Among the Fall 2017 cohort of first-time in college, program placed students, the College-wide fall-to-fall retention rate was 64 percent. This means that 64 percent of students who entered NOVA in Fall 2017 returned to campus or completed their program by Fall 2018.

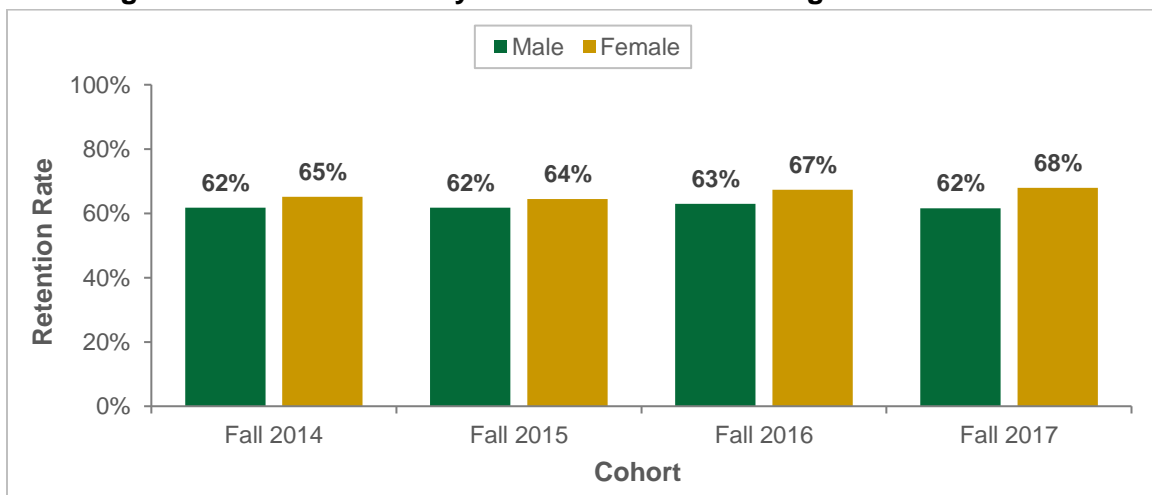
Figure 1. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students: Fall 2014 through Fall 2017 Cohorts



Fall-to-Fall Retention by Gender (Figure 2)

- From the Fall 2014 to Fall 2017 cohorts, fall-to-fall retention rates increased by three percentage points for female students (from 65 to 68 percent) and remained the same for male students (62 percent).
- Among the Fall 2017 cohort, fall-to-fall retention rates were six percentage points higher for female students compared to male students. This is an increase from the Fall 2014 cohort, in which there was only a three percentage point difference.

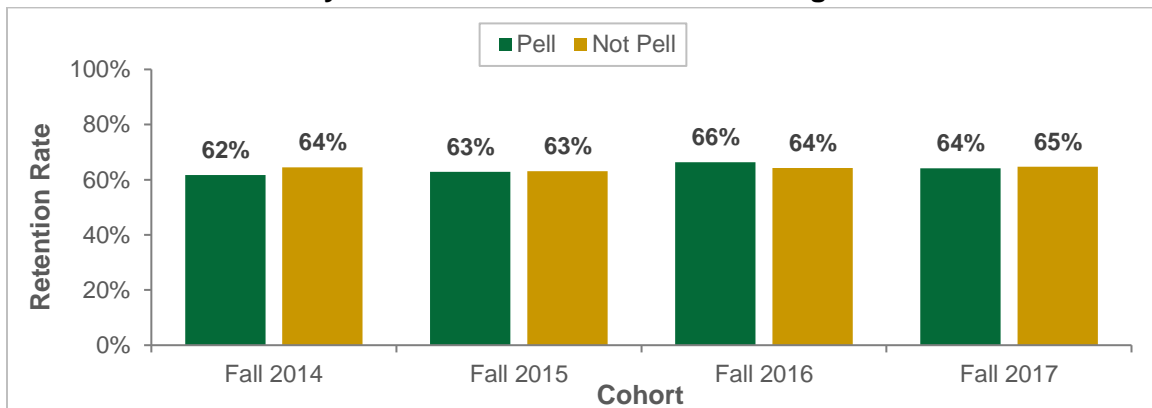
Figure 2. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Gender: Fall 2014 through Fall 2017 Cohorts



Fall-to-Fall Retention by Pell Grant Status (Figure 3)

- From the Fall 2014 to Fall 2017 cohorts, fall-to-fall retention rates increased by two percentage points for students who received a Pell grant (from 62 to 64 percent) and one percentage point for non-Pell grant recipients (from 64 to 65 percent).
- Across these cohorts, fall-to-fall retention rates were slightly higher among non-Pell grant recipients. However, the achievement gap between the two groups narrowed from a two percentage point difference for the Fall 2014 cohort to a one percentage point difference for the Fall 2017 cohort.

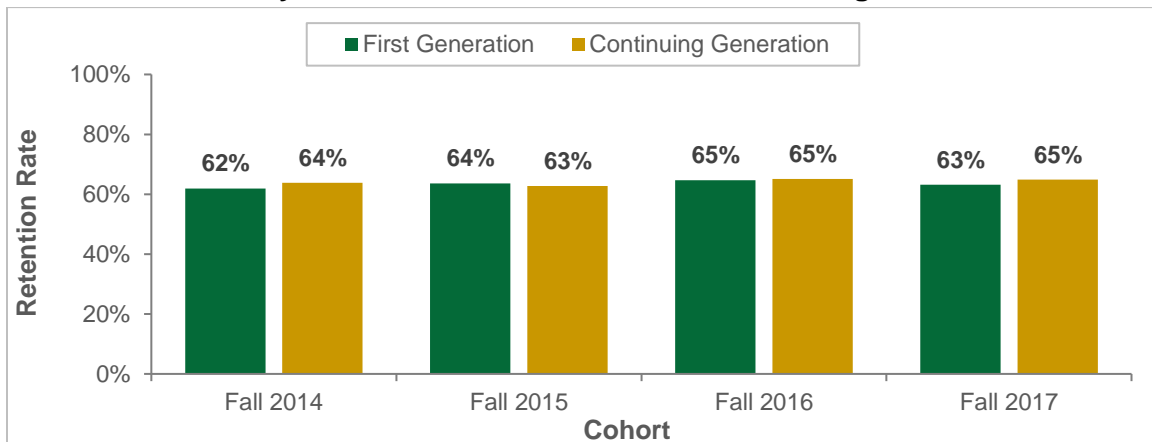
Figure 3. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Pell Grant Status: Fall 2014 through Fall 2017 Cohorts



Fall-to-Fall Retention by First Generation Status (Figure 4)

- From the Fall 2014 to Fall 2017 cohorts, fall-to-fall retention rates increased by one percentage point for first generation students (from 62 to 63 percent) and one percentage point for continuing generation students (from 64 to 65 percent).
- Among the Fall 2017 cohort, fall-to-fall retention rates were slightly higher among continuing generation students (65 versus 63 percent).

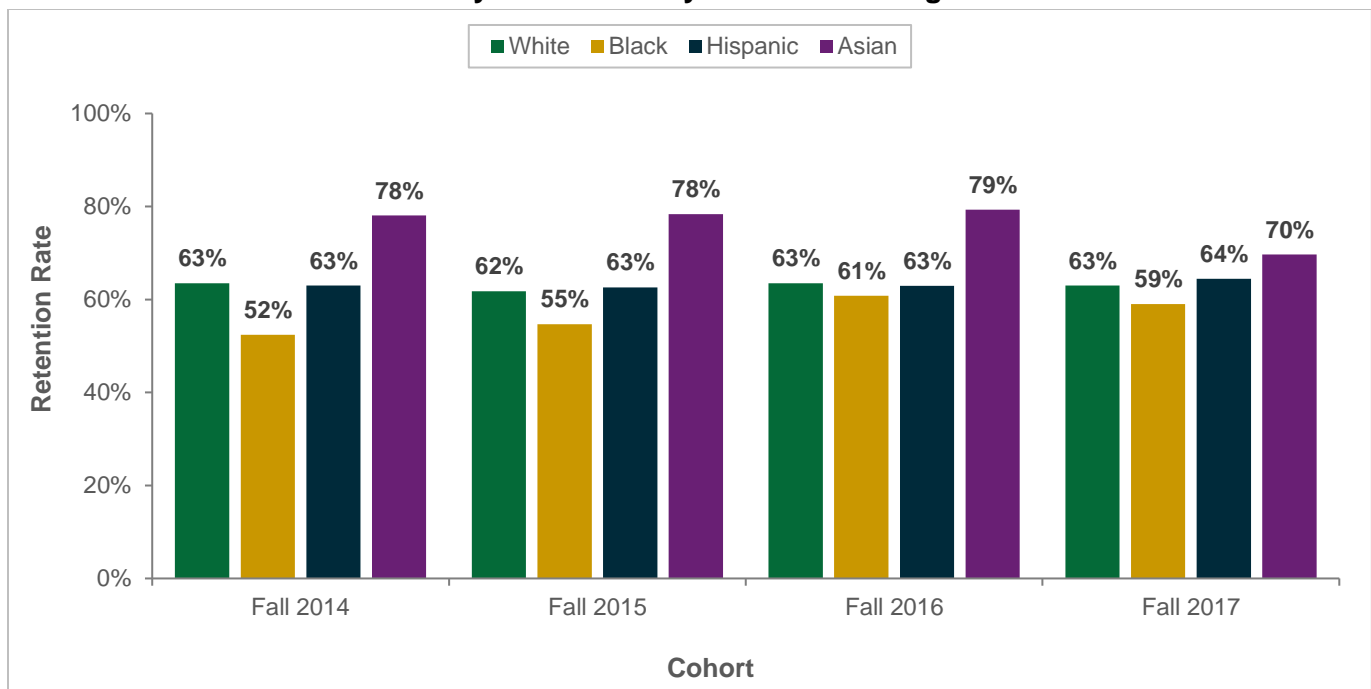
Figure 4. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Program Placed Students by First Generation Status: Fall 2014 through Fall 2017 Cohorts



Fall-to-Fall Retention by Race/Ethnicity (Figure 5)

- From the Fall 2014 to Fall 2017 cohorts, fall-to-fall retention rates increased by seven percentage points for black students and one percentage point for Hispanic students. Fall-to-fall retention rates remained the same for white students and decreased by eight percentage points for Asian students.
- Among the Fall 2017 cohort, Asian students had the highest fall-to-fall retention rates (70 percent), whereas black students had the lowest fall-to-fall retention rates (59 percent).
- Due to the increase in the retention rate of black students (from 52 to 59 percent), the achievement gap between black students and students of other race/ethnicities decreased substantially.

Figure 5. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2014 through Fall 2017 Cohorts



Section 2. Gatekeeper Course Success Rates: English 111

Students who succeed in gatekeeper English are able to subsequently enroll in advanced coursework and make progress towards their academic goals of graduation or transfer. Success in gatekeeper English is defined as the percentage of first-time in college, program placed students who successfully complete English 111 within one year of initial enrollment at NOVA.

This section presents the ENG 111 success rate for first-time in college, program placed students during four fall terms (Fall 2015 through Fall 2018). ENG 111 success rates are presented by various subgroups of students in order to identify where achievement gaps exist and where they have improved at the College over time.

Key Section Findings

Where Achievement Gaps Exist

- Female students, non-Pell grant recipients, first generation students, and Asian and white students have higher success rates in ENG 111 than their respective counterparts.
- A substantial achievement gap exists among various racial and ethnic groups. Asian and white students have ENG 111 success rates that are thirteen percentage points higher than the success rates of black students.
- Another substantial achievement gap exists by gender, in which female students have ENG 111 success rates that are five percentage points higher than male students.

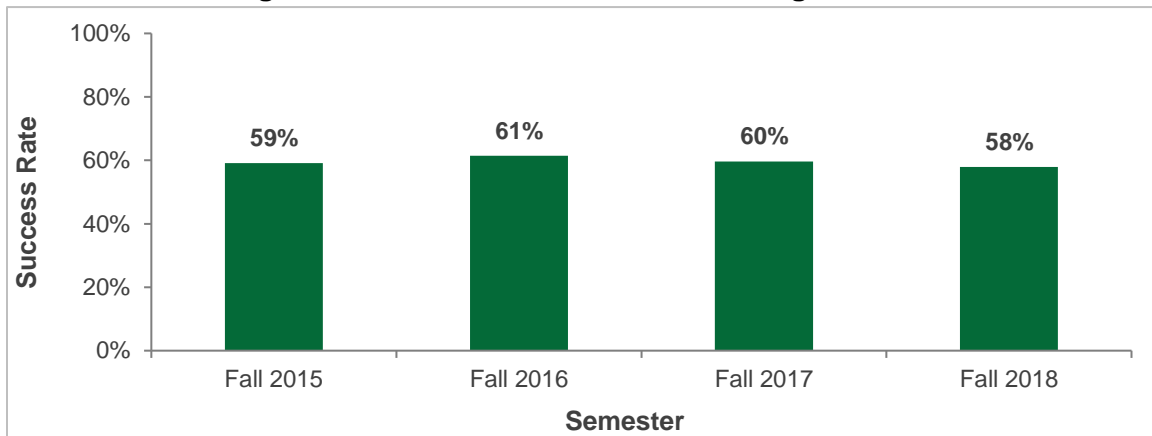
Where Achievement Gaps Are **Widening (↓)** or **Stagnating (→)**

- ↓ **Gender:** The achievement gap between male and female students has decreased between Fall 2015 and Fall 2018. However, this is due to the decline in ENG 111 success rates for female students (from 63 to 61 percent). The success rates for male students remained the same at 56 percent.
- ↓ **Pell Grant Status:** In Fall 2015, Pell grant recipients had ENG 111 success rates that were one percentage point higher than non-Pell recipients. However, by Fall 2018, the success rates of Pell grant recipients declined by four percentage points, leading to a three percentage point achievement gap between Pell and non-Pell students.
- **First Generation Status:** In Fall 2015, first generation students had ENG 111 success rates that were one percentage point higher than continuing generation students. However, in Fall 2018, it was the reverse: the success rates of first generation students were one percentage point lower than their counterparts.
- ↓ **Race/Ethnicity:** Between Fall 2015 and Fall 2018, success rates in ENG 111 declined or remained the same for all four race/ethnic groups analyzed. Furthermore, across all four years, black students had ENG 111 success rates that were substantially lower than that of white students and Asian students.

College-Wide ENG 111 Success Rate (Figure 6)

- Among the Fall 2018 cohort of first-time in college, program placed students, the College-wide ENG 111 success rate was 58 percent. This means that 58 percent of students who entered NOVA in Fall 2018 successfully completed ENG 111 within one year of enrollment.

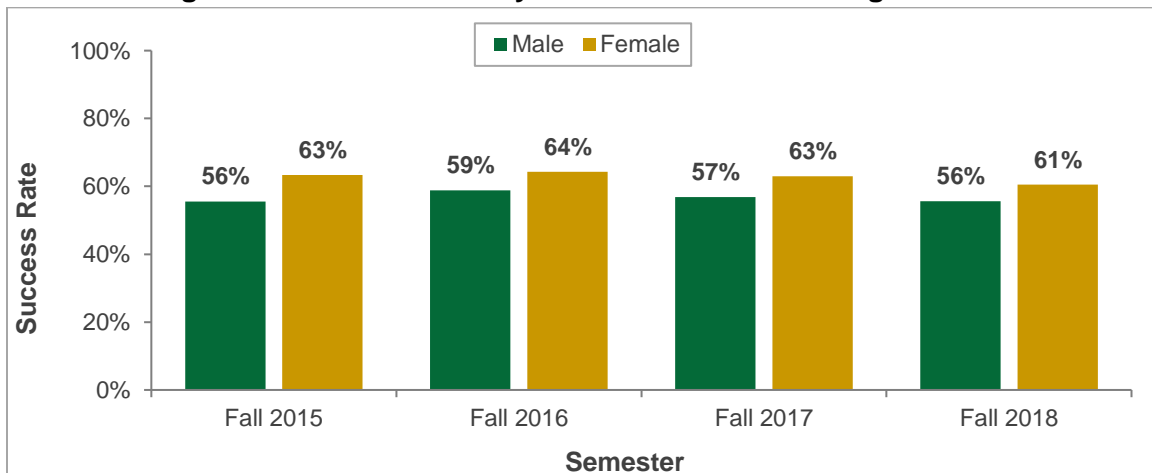
Figure 6. Success Rates in ENG 111 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



ENG 111 Success Rates by Gender (Figure 7)

- From the Fall 2015 to Fall 2018 cohorts, success rates in English 111 decreased by two percentage points for female students (from 63 to 61 percent) and remained the same for male students (56 percent).
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, ENG 111 success rates were five percentage points higher for female students compared to male students. While this is a smaller achievement gap than that observed in Fall 2015, it is due to a decrease in the ENG 111 success rate for female students.

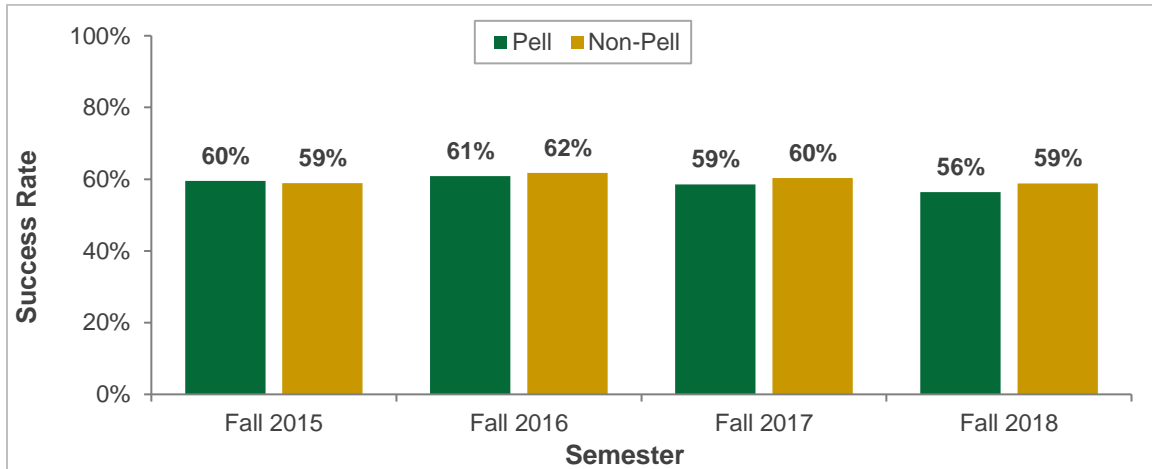
Figure 7. Success Rates in ENG 111 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Gender: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



ENG 111 Success Rates by Pell Grant Status (Figure 8)

- From the Fall 2015 to Fall 2018 cohorts, success rates in English 111 decreased by four percentage points for students who received a Pell grant (from 60 to 56 percent) and remained the same for non-Pell grant recipients (59 percent).
- In Fall 2018, ENG 111 success rates were three percentage points higher among non-Pell grant recipients compared to students who received a Pell grant.

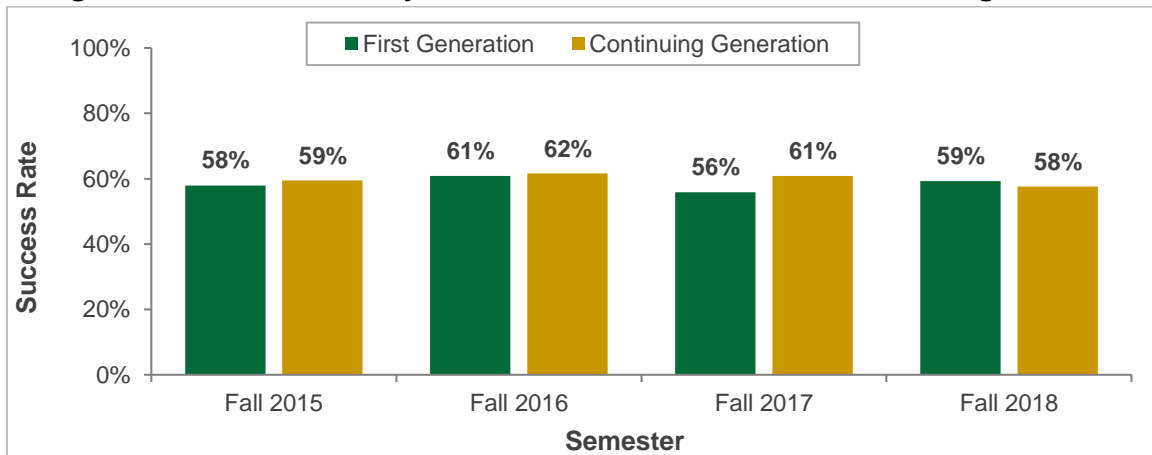
Figure 8. Success Rates in ENG 111 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Pell Grant Status: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



ENG 111 Success Rates by First Generation Status (Figure 9)

- From the Fall 2015 to Fall 2018 cohorts, success rates in English 111 increased by one percentage point for first generation students (from 58 to 59 percent), but decreased one percentage point for continuing generation students (from 59 percent to 58 percent).
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, ENG 111 success rates were slightly higher among first generation students (59 versus 58 percent).

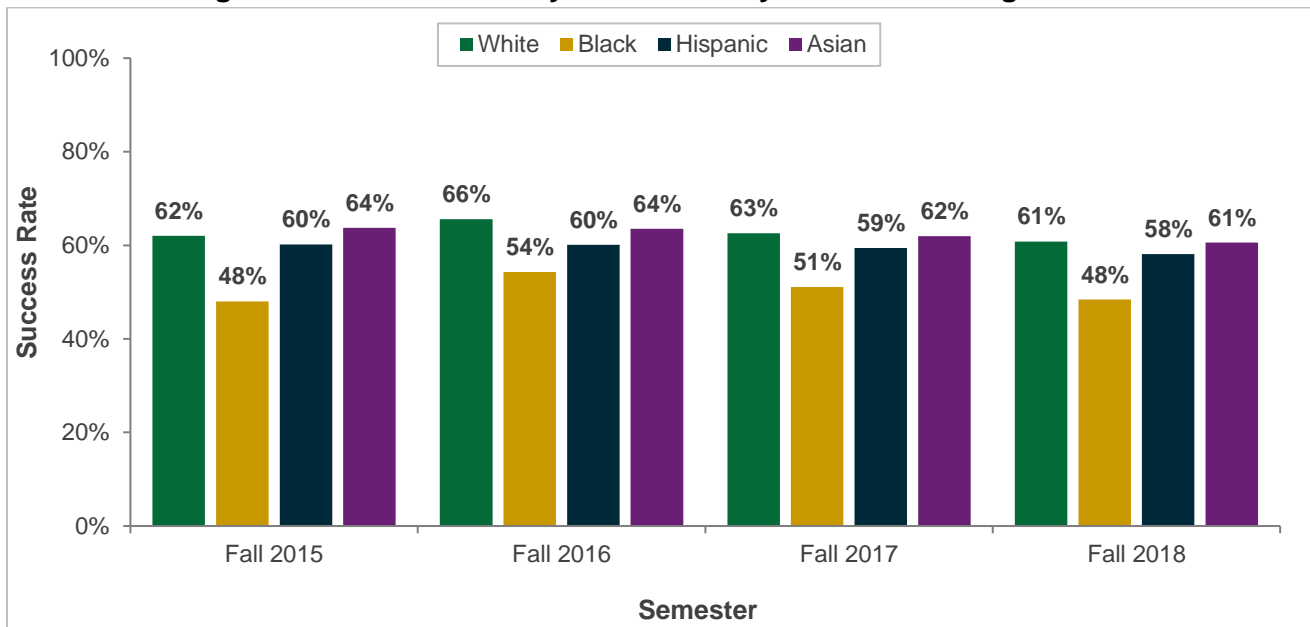
Figure 9. Success Rates in ENG 111 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by First Generation Status: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



ENG 111 Success Rates by Race/Ethnicity (Figure 10)

- From the Fall 2015 to Fall 2018 cohorts, success rates in English 111 decreased by two percentage points for Hispanic students, three percentage points for Asian students, and one percentage point for white students. Success rates in English 111 remained the same for black students.
- For the Fall 2018 cohort, Asian students and white students had the highest success rates in English 111 (61 percent), whereas black students had the lowest success rates (48 percent).

Figure 10. Success Rates in ENG 111 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



Section 3. Gatekeeper Course Success Rates: Math 151

Students who succeed in gatekeeper math are able to subsequently enroll in advanced coursework and make progress towards their academic goals of graduation or transfer. Success in gatekeeper math is defined as the percentage of first-time in college, program placed students who successfully complete Math 151 within one year of initial enrollment at NOVA.

This section presents the MTH 111 success rate for first-time in college, program placed students during four fall terms (Fall 2015 through Fall 2018). MTH 111 success rates are presented by various subgroups of students in order to identify where achievement gaps exist and where they have improved at the College over time.

Key Section Findings

Where Achievement Gaps Exist

- Female students, non-Pell grant recipients, first generation students, and white students have higher success rates in MTH 151 than their respective counterparts.
- A substantial achievement gap exists by gender, in which female students have MTH 151 success rates that are nine percentage points higher than male students.
- Another critical achievement gap exists among various racial and ethnic groups. White students have MTH 151 success rates that are eight percentage points higher than black students, four percentage points higher than Asian students, and two percentage points higher than Hispanic students.

Where Achievement Gaps Are Improving (↑)

- ↑ **Pell Grant Status:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, MTH 151 success rates improved by five percentage points for Pell grant recipients and six percentage points for non-Pell grant recipients.
- ↑ **First Generation Status:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, MTH 151 success rates improved by eight percentage points for first generation students and five percentage points for continuing generation students. In Fall 2018, success rates were two percentage points higher for first generation students when compared to continuing generation students.

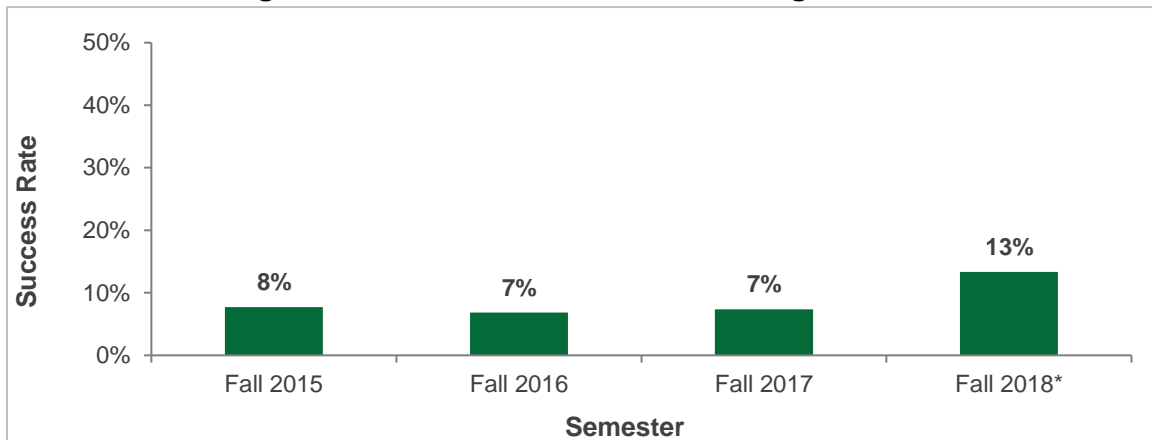
Where Achievement Gaps Are Widening (↓) or Stagnating (→)

- ↓ **Gender:** Between Fall 2015 and Fall 2018, the achievement gap between male and female students has increased. This is due in part by the large improvement in success rates for female students (from 10 to 18 percent), and smaller improvement in success rates for male students (from six to nine percent).
- ↓ **Race/Ethnicity:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, the MTH 151 success rates increased for all four race/ethnic groups analyzed. However, success rates improved at a slower rate for black students, which exacerbated existing achievement gaps.

College-Wide MTH 151 Success Rate (Figure 11)

- Among the Fall 2018 cohort of first-time in college, program placed students, the College-wide MTH 151 success rate was 13 percent. This means that only 13 percent of students who entered NOVA in Fall 2018 successfully completed MTH 151 within one year of enrollment.

Figure 11. Success Rates in MTH 151 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018

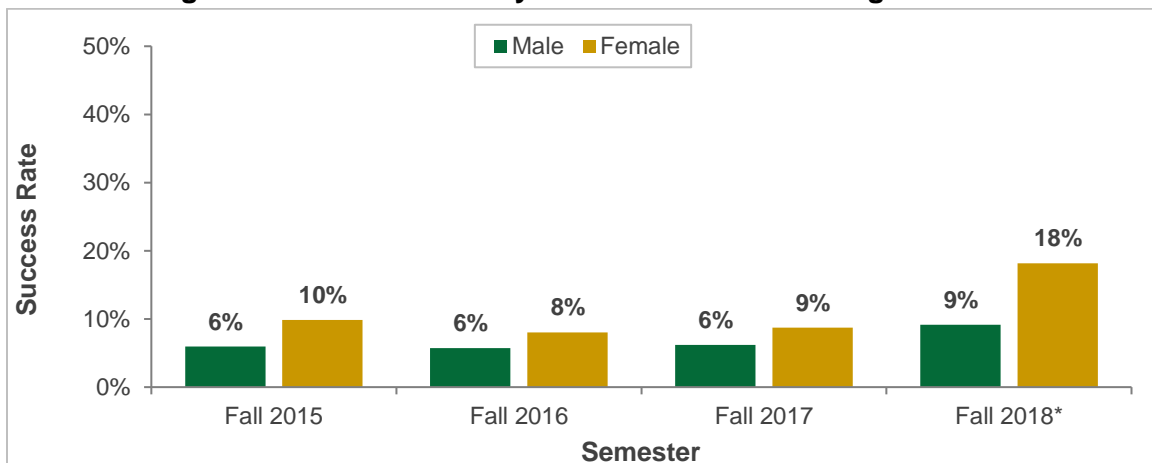


*In Fall 2018, math courses were redesigned; Fall 2018 data includes both MTH 151 and MTH 154.

MTH 151 Success Rates by Gender (Figure 12)

- From the Fall 2015 to Fall 2018 cohorts, success rates in Math 151 increased by three percentage points for male students (from 6 to 9 percent) and eight percentage points for female students (from 10 to 18 percent).
- Although there were improvements for both groups, the achievement gap between male and female students widened. Among the Fall 2018 cohort, there was a nine percentage point difference in the MTH 151 success rates between these two groups.

Figure 12. Success Rates in MTH 151 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Gender: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018

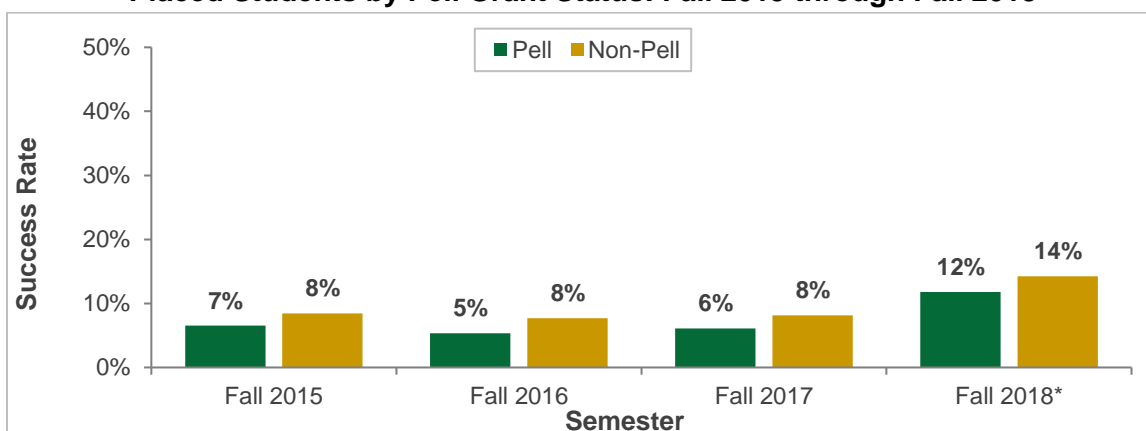


*In Fall 2018, math courses were redesigned; Fall 2018 data includes both MTH 151 and MTH 154.

MTH 151 Success Rates by Pell Grant Status (Figure 13)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, success rates in Math 151 increased by five percentage points for students who received a Pell grant (from 7 to 12 percent) and six percentage points non-Pell grant recipients (from 8 to 14 percent).
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, MTH 151 success rates were two percentage points higher among non-Pell grant recipients compared to students who received a Pell grant.

Figure 13. Success Rates in MTH 151 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Pell Grant Status: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018

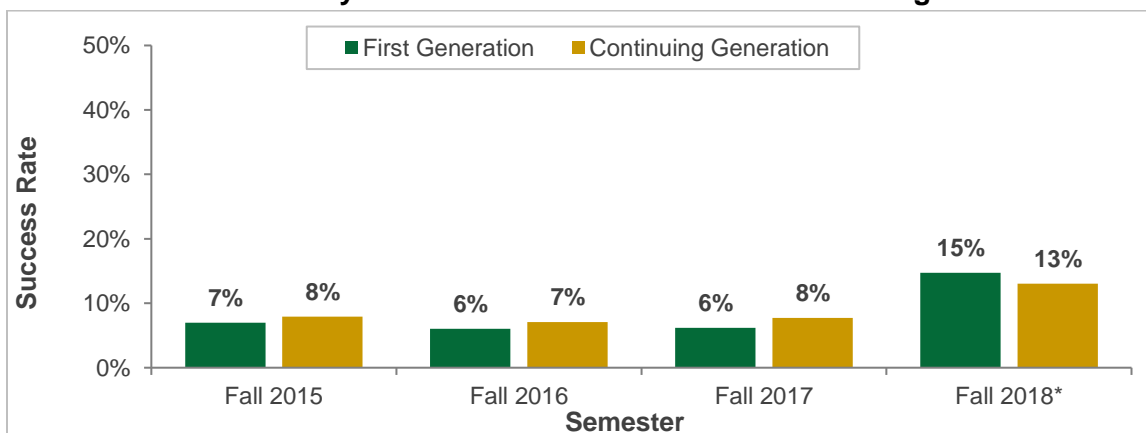


*In Fall 2018, math courses were redesigned; Fall 2018 data includes both MTH 151 and MTH 154.

MTH 151 Success Rates by First Generation Status (Figure 14)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, success rates in Math 151 increased by eight percentage points for first generation students (from 7 to 15 percent) and five percentage points for continuing generation students (from 8 percent to 13 percent).
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, MTH 151 success rates were slightly higher among first generation students (15 versus 13 percent).

Figure 14. Success Rates in MTH 151 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by First Generation Status: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018

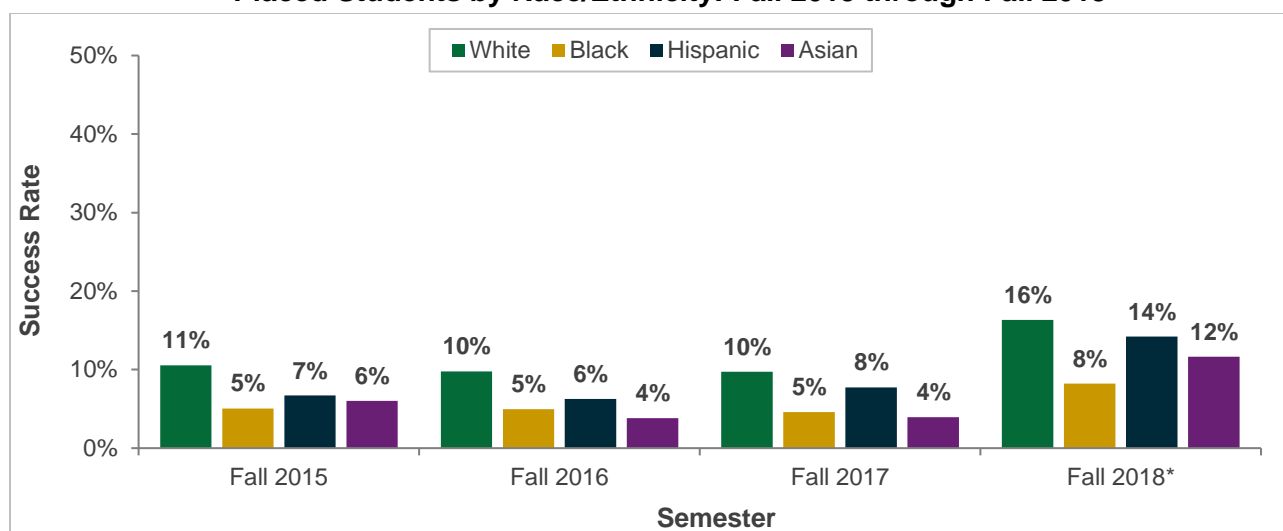


*In Fall 2018, math courses were redesigned; Fall 2018 data includes both MTH 151 and MTH 154.

MTH 151 Success Rates by Race/Ethnicity (Figure 15)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, success rates in Math 151 increased by seven percentage points for Hispanic students, six percentage points for Asian students, five percentage points for white students, and three percentage points for black students.
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, white students had the highest MTH 151 success rates (16 percent), whereas black students had the lowest success rates (8 percent).
- Moreover, the achievement gap between black students and students of other race/ethnicities widened among the Fall 2018 cohort when compared to the Fall 2015 cohort.

Figure 15. Success Rates in MTH 151 for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



*In Fall 2018, math courses were redesigned; Fall 2018 data includes both MTH 151 and MTH 154.

Section 4. Overall Course Success Rates

Course success is a critical measure of student achievement at NOVA. Students are considered successful in a course if they earn a C or higher in a credit-level course, or an S in a developmental course.

This section presents the overall course success rate for first-time in college, program placed students during four fall terms (Fall 2015 through Fall 2018). Overall course success rates are presented by various subgroups of students in order to identify where achievement gaps exist and where they have improved at the College over time.

Key Section Findings

Where Achievement Gaps Exist

- Female students, non-Pell grant recipients, first generation students, and Asian students have higher overall course success rates than their respective counterparts.
- An observable achievement gap exists by gender, in which female students have overall course success rates that are seven percentage points higher than male students.
- Another critical achievement gap exists among various racial and ethnic groups. Asian students have overall course success rates that are 16 percentage points higher than black students, twelve percentage points higher than Hispanic students, and four percentage points higher than white students.

Where Achievement Gaps Are Non-Existent

- **First Generation Status:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, overall course success rates remained stable for both first generation and continuing generation students. In Fall 2018, first generation students had overall course success rates that were one percentage point higher than continuing generation students.

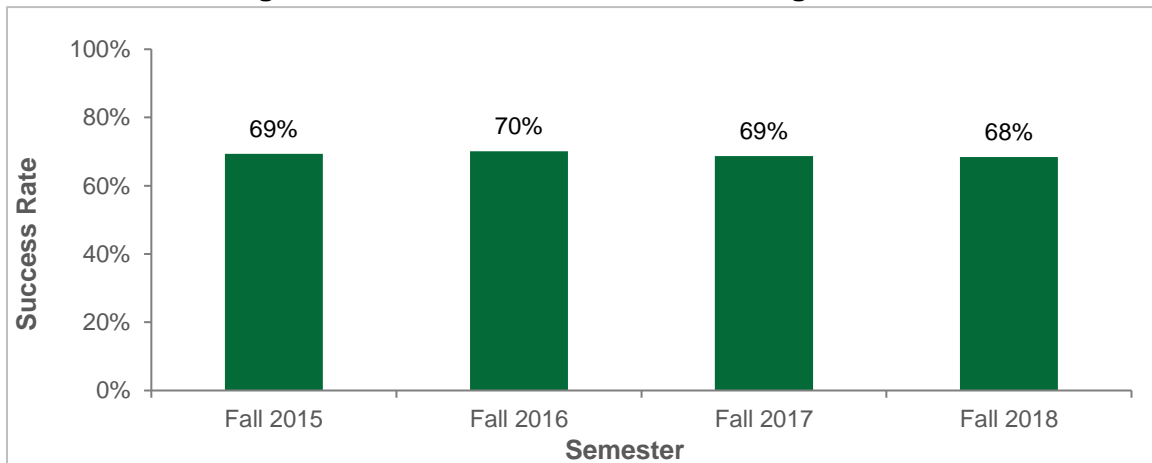
Where Achievement Gaps Are Widening (↓) or Stagnating (→)

- ↓ **Gender:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, the achievement gap between male and female students remained the same at a seven percentage point difference in overall course success rates.
- ↓ **Pell Grant Status:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, the achievement gap between Pell grant recipients and non-Pell grant recipients remained the same at a two percentage point difference in overall course success rates.
- ↓ **Race/Ethnicity:** From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, the overall course success rate remained stable or declined slightly (by no more than two percentage points) for all four race/ethnic groups analyzed. Across all four years, the overall course success rate for black students and Hispanic students remained substantially lower than that of white students and Asian students.

College-Wide Overall Course Success Rate (Figure 16)

- Among the Fall 2018 cohort of first-time in college, program placed students, the overall course success rate was 68 percent. This means that 68 percent of students who entered NOVA in Fall 2018 successfully completed ENG 111 within one year of enrollment.

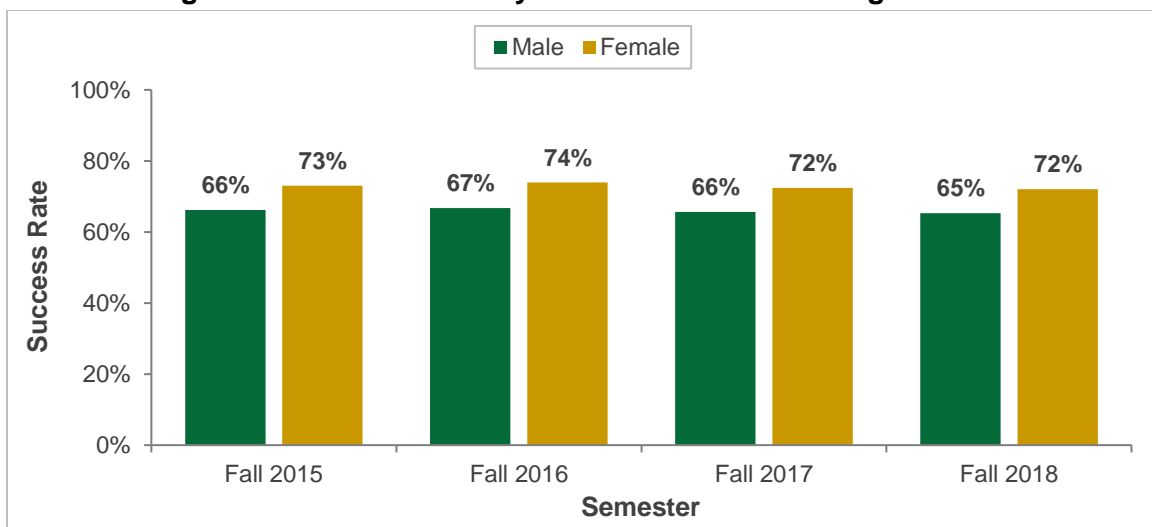
Figure 16. Overall Course Success Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



Overall Course Success Rates by Gender (Figure 17)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, overall course success rates decreased by one percentage point for both male and female students.
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, overall course success rates were seven percentage points higher for female students compared to male students (72 versus 65 percent).

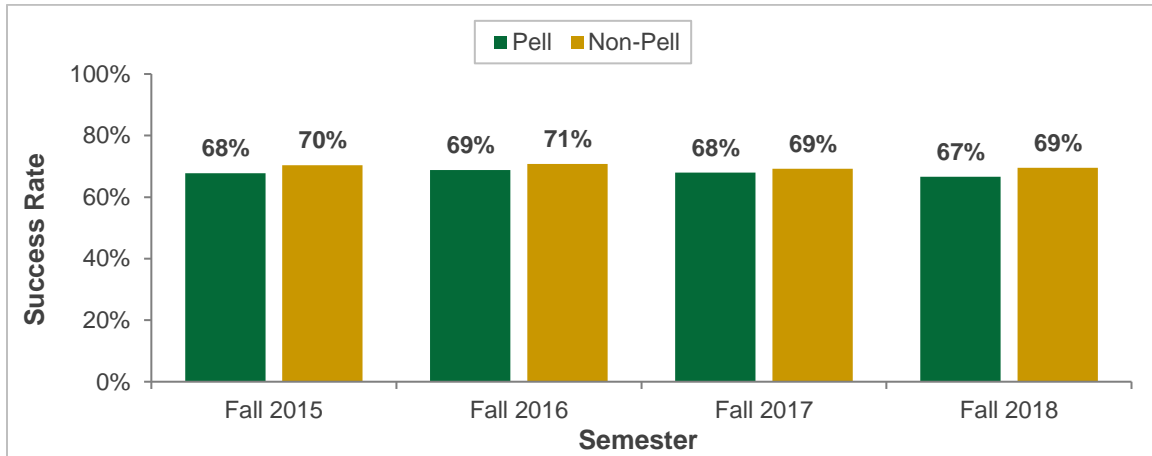
Figure 17. Overall Course Success Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Gender: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



Overall Course Success Rates by Pell Grant Status (Figure 18)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, overall course success rates decreased by one percentage point each for both Pell grant recipients and non-Pell grant recipients.
- Across these cohorts, overall course success rates were between one and two percentage points higher among non-Pell grant recipients compared to students who received a Pell grant.

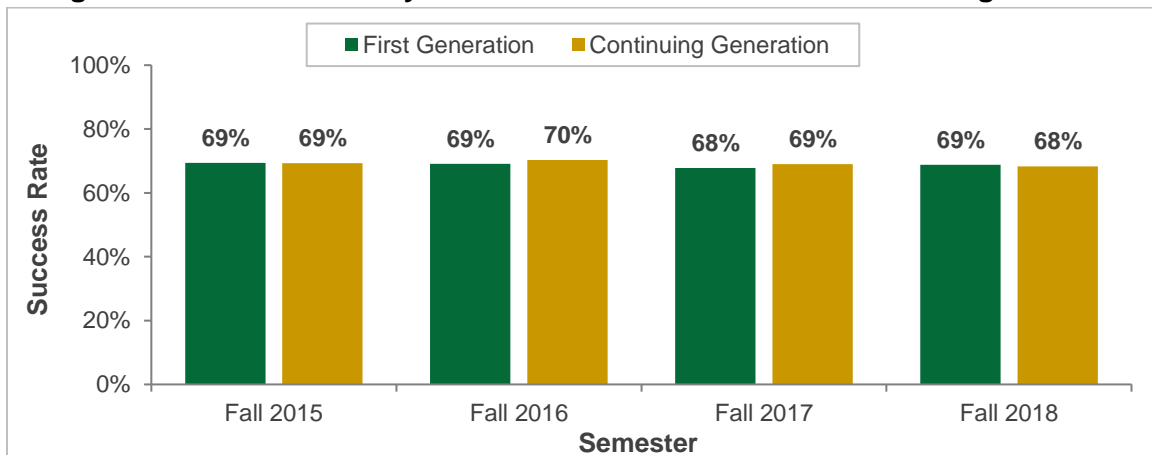
Figure 18. Overall Course Success Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Pell Grant Status: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



Overall Course Success Rates by First Generation Status (Figure 19)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, overall course success rates decreased by one percentage point for continuing generation students (from 69 to 68 percent) and remained the same for first generation students (69 percent).
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, overall course success rates were similar among both first generation and continuing generation students (69 versus 68 percent).

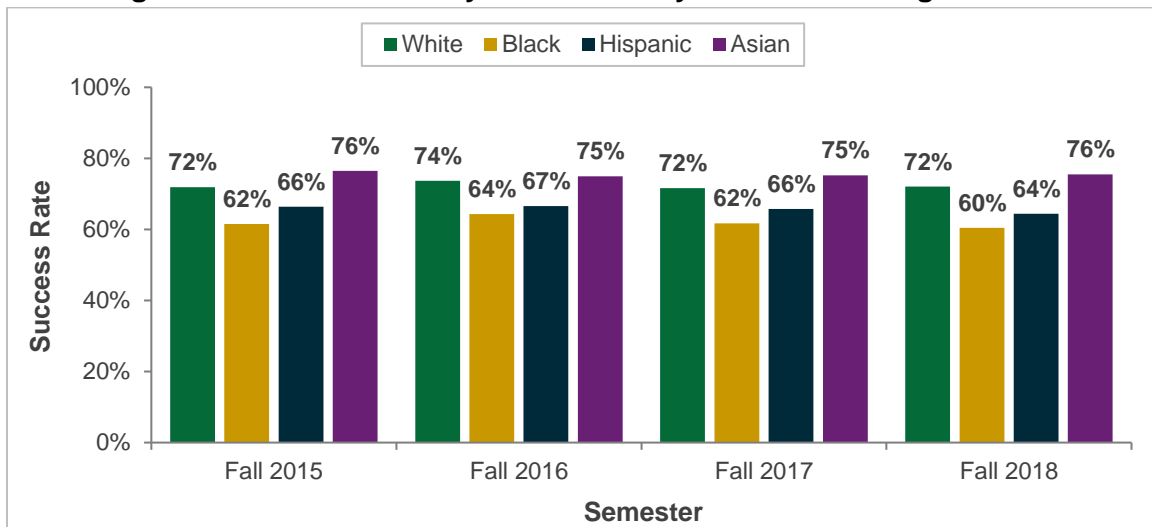
Figure 19. Overall Course Success Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by First Generation Status: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



Overall Course Success Rates by Race/Ethnicity (Figure 20)

- From Fall 2015 to Fall 2018, overall course success rates decreased by two percentage points each for black students (from 62 to 60 percent) and Hispanic students (from 66 to 64 percent). Overall course success rates remained the same for both white students (72 percent) and Asian students (76 percent).
- Among the Fall 2018 cohort, Asian students had the highest overall course success rates (76 percent), whereas Hispanic and black students had the lowest overall course success rates (64 and 60 percent, respectively).

Figure 20. Overall Course Success Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2015 through Fall 2018



Section 5. Four-Year Graduation from NOVA Rate

Graduation is a critical measure of student achievement at NOVA. The graduation rate is defined as the percentage of first-time, program placed students who complete their program within four years of initial enrollment at the College.

This section presents the four-year graduation rate for four cohorts (Fall 2011 through Fall 2014) of first-time in college, program placed students at NOVA. Graduation rates are presented by various subgroups of students in order to identify where achievement gaps exist and where they have improved at the College over time.

Key Section Findings

Where Achievement Gaps Exist

- Female students, Pell grant recipients, and Asian students have higher four-year graduation from NOVA rates than their respective counterparts.
- An achievement gap exists by gender, in which female students have four-year graduation rates that are four percentage points higher than male students.
- Another critical achievement gap exists among various racial and ethnic groups. Asian students have four-year graduation rates that are twenty-one percentage points higher than black students, eleven percentage points higher than Hispanic students, and nine percentage points higher than white students.

Where Achievement Gaps Are Improving (↑)

- ↑ **Gender:** From Fall 2011 and Fall 2014, the achievement gap between male and female students improved from a seven percentage point difference to a four percentage point difference. This is due in part to the increase in graduation rates for male students, from 21 percent in Fall 2011 to 23 percent in Fall 2014.
- ↑ **Pell Grant Status:** In Fall 2011, Pell students had four-year graduation rates that were five percentage points higher than non-Pell students. By Fall 2014, both groups of students had the same four-year graduation rates, due in part to the improvement in graduation rates of non-Pell grant recipients.
- ↑ **First Generation Status:** For both first generation students and continuing generation students, four-year graduation rates increased from 24 percent in Fall 2011 to 25 percent in Fall 2014.

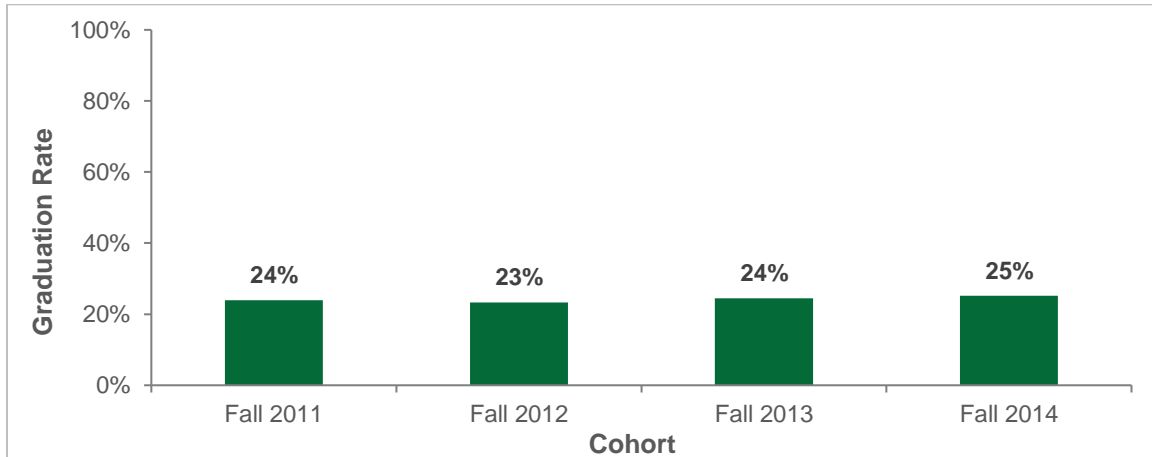
Where Achievement Gaps Are Widening (↓) or Stagnating (→)

- ↓ **Race/Ethnicity:** From Fall 2011 to Fall 2014, achievement gaps decreased slightly between Asian students and their white and Hispanic counterparts. However, four-year graduation rates decreased by one percentage point for black students during this time, exacerbating existing achievement gaps.

College-Wide Four-Year Graduation Rate (Figure 16)

- Among the Fall 2014 cohort of first-time in college, program placed students, the four-year graduation rate was 25 percent. This means that one-fourth of students who initially enrolled at NOVA in the Fall 2014 cohort had completed their program by Fall 2018.

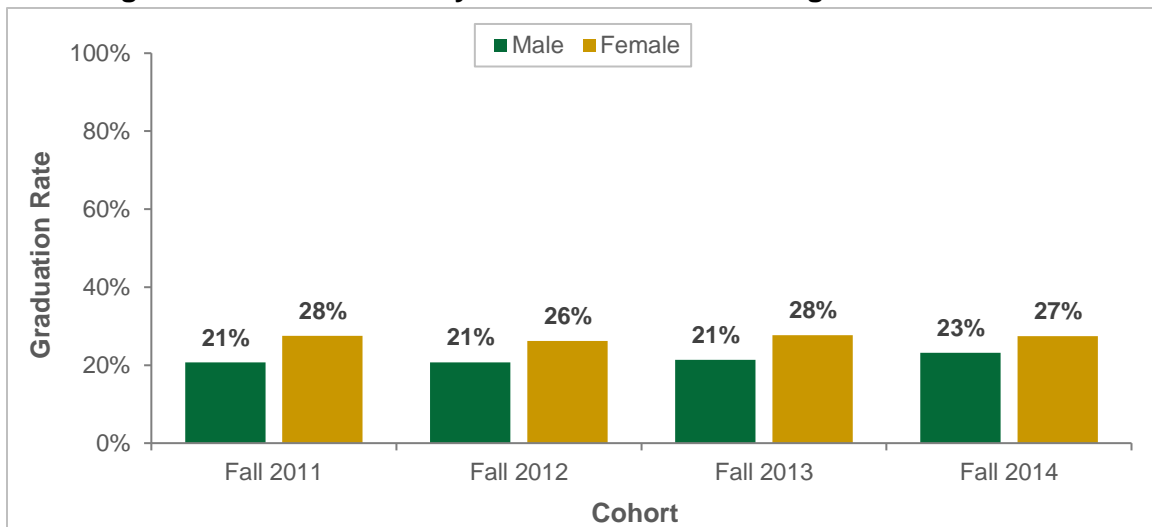
Figure 21. Four-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students: Fall 2011 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Four-Year Graduation Rates by Gender (Figure 22)

- From Fall 2011 to Fall 2014, four-year graduation rates increased by two percentage points for male students (from 21 to 23 percent), but decreased by one percentage point for female students (from 28 to 27 percent).
- Among the Fall 2014 cohort, four-year graduation rates were four percentage points higher for female students compared to male students (27 versus 23 percent).

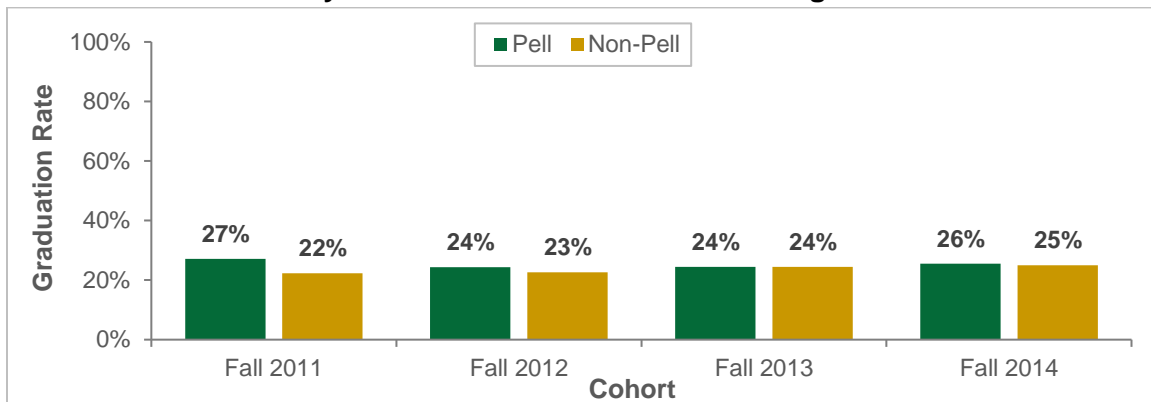
Figure 22. Four-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Gender: Fall 2011 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Four-Year Graduation Rates by Pell Grant Status (Figure 23)

- From Fall 2011 to Fall 2014, four-year graduation rates decreased by one percentage point for students who received a Pell grant (from 27 to 26 percent). However, the four-year graduation rate increased by three percentage points for non-Pell grant recipients (from 22 to 25 percent).
- Among the Fall 2014 cohort, four-year graduation rates were slightly higher among Pell grant recipients compared to non-Pell grant recipients (26 versus 25 percent, respectively).

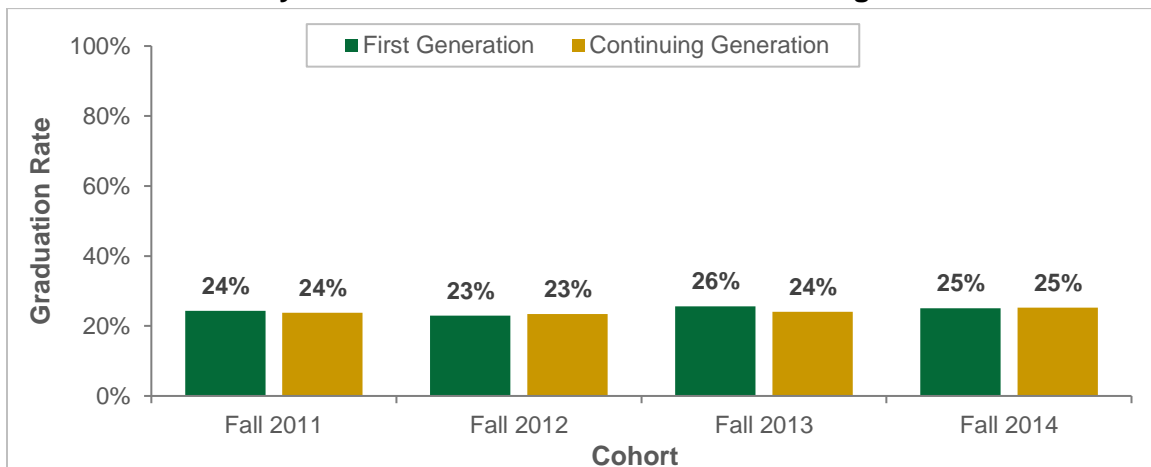
Figure 23. Four-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Pell Grant Status: Fall 2011 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Four-Year Graduation Rates by First Generation Status (Figure 24)

- From Fall 2011 to Fall 2014, four-year graduation rates increased by one percentage point for both first generation students and continuing generation students (from 24 to 25 percent each).
- Among the Fall 2014 cohort, four-year graduation rates were the same among both first generation and continuing generation students (25 percent).

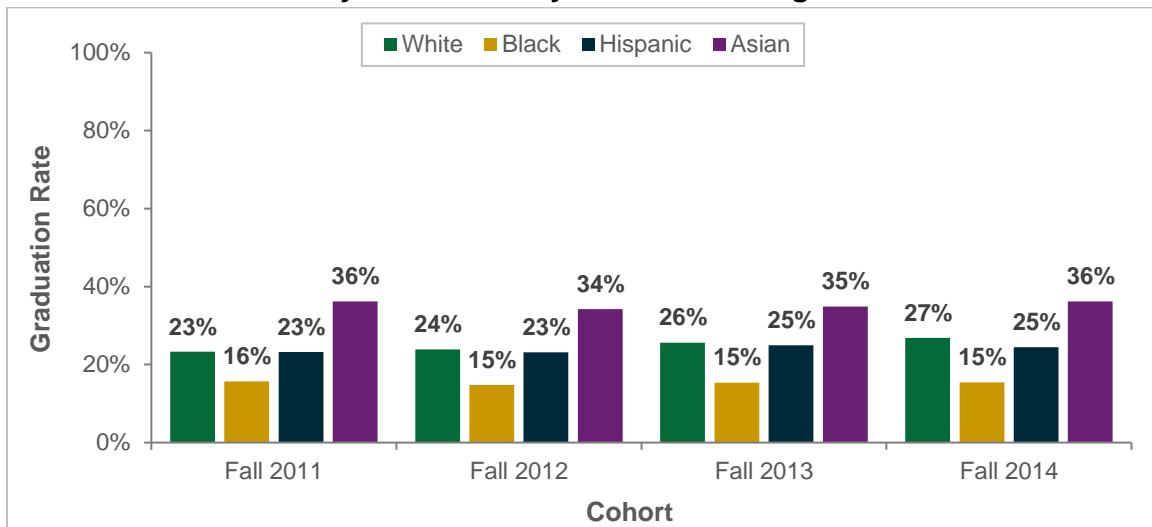
Figure 24. Four-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by First Generation Status: Fall 2011 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Four-Year Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity (Figure 25)

- From Fall 2011 to Fall 2014, four-year graduation rates increased by four percentage points for white students and two percentage points for Hispanic students. However, four-year graduation rates decreased by one percentage point for black students and remained the same for Asian students.
- Among the Fall 2014 cohort, Asian students had the highest four-year graduation rates (36 percent), whereas black students had the lowest four-year graduation rates (15 percent).

Figure 25. Four-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2011 through Fall 2014 Cohorts



Section 6. Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates

Transfer is a critical measure of student achievement at NOVA. The goal for students who transfer from NOVA is to earn a bachelor's degree. Therefore, the bachelor's degree graduation rate is defined as the percentage of first-time in college, program placed students who transfer to a four-year institution and earn a bachelor's degree within six years of initial enrollment at NOVA.

This section presents the six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate for four cohorts (Fall 2009 through Fall 2012) of first-time in college, program placed students at NOVA. Graduation rates are presented by various subgroups of students in order to identify where achievement gaps exist and where they have improved at the College over time.

Key Section Findings

Where Achievement Gaps Exist

- Female students, non-Pell grant recipients, continuing generation students, and white students have higher six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates than their respective counterparts.
- A large achievement gap exists by gender and by first-generation college student status. Female students have six-year graduation rates that are nine percentage points higher than male students. Continuing generation students have six-year graduation rates that are nine percentage points higher than first-generation students.
- Another critical achievement gap exists among various racial and ethnic groups. White students have six-year graduation rates that are twenty-two percentage points higher than black students, and ten percentage points higher than Hispanic students.

Where Achievement Gaps Are Improving (↑)

- ↑ **Gender:** Between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012, six-year graduation rates increased by six percentage points for male students and three percentage points for female students. Due to the faster rate of improvement for male students, the achievement gap improved from a twelve percentage point difference in graduation rates in Fall 2009 to a nine percentage point difference in Fall 2012.
- ↑ **Race/Ethnicity:** While achievement gaps remain large, the six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate increased for all four race/ethnic groups between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012: by eight percentage points for black students, five percentage points for white students, and three percentage points each for Hispanic and Asian students. The higher rate of increase for black students has led to a small decrease in the achievement gap between groups.

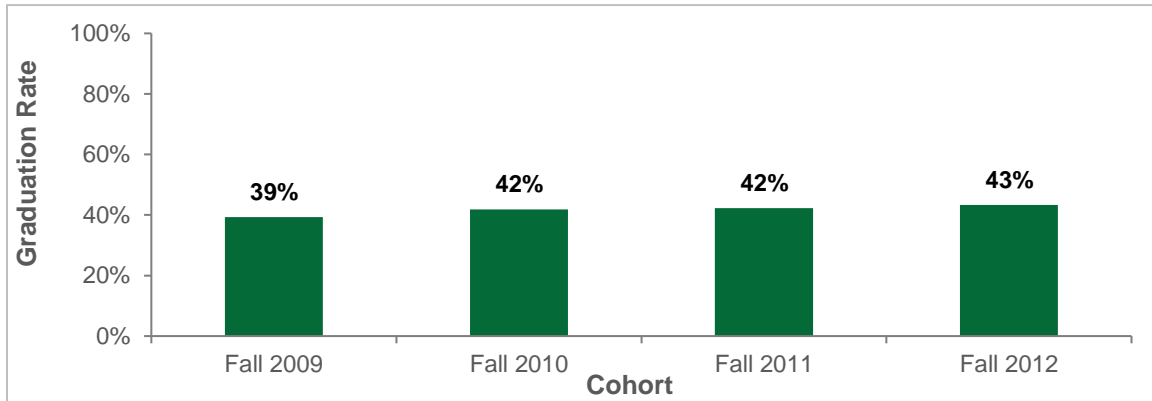
Where Achievement Gaps Are Widening (↓) or Stagnating (→)

- ↓ **Pell Grant Status:** From Fall 2009 to Fall 2012, the six-year graduation rate decreased by one percentage point for Pell grant recipients, but increased seven percentage points for non-Pell students, leading to an achievement gap between these two groups.
- ↓ **First Generation Status:** From Fall 2009 to Fall 2012, the six-year graduation rate decreased by two percentage points for first generation students but increased five percentage points for continuing generation students, widening achievement gaps.

College-Wide Six-Year Bachelor's Graduation Rate (Figure 16)

- Among the Fall 2012 cohort of first-time in college, program placed students, the six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate was 43 percent. This means that 43 percent of students who initially enrolled at NOVA in the Fall 2012 cohort had completed a bachelor's degree program by Fall 2018.

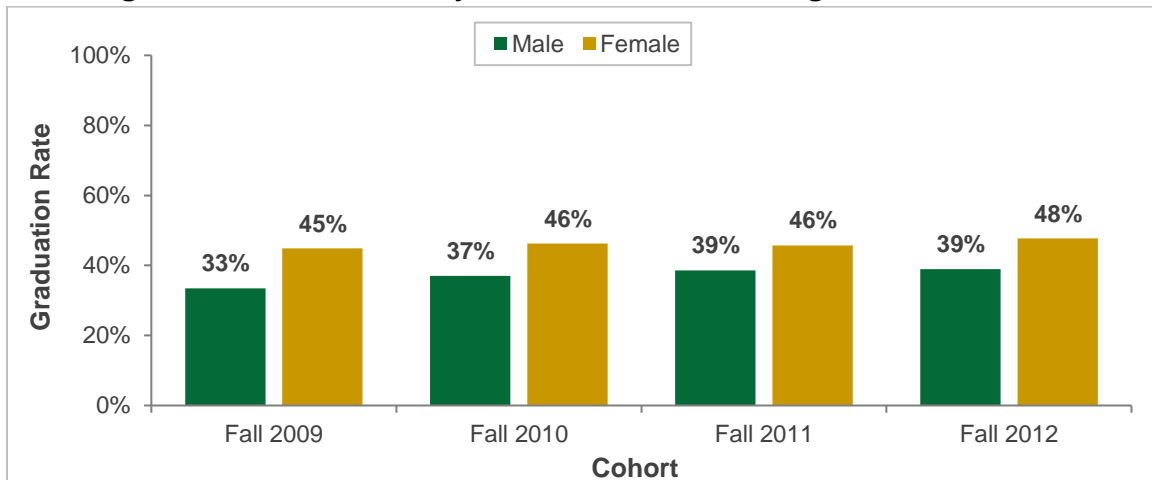
Figure 26. Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students: Fall 2009 through Fall 2012 Cohorts



Six-Year Bachelor's Graduation Rates by Gender (Figure 27)

- From the Fall 2009 to Fall 2012 cohorts, the proportion of students who graduated with a bachelor's degree within six years of starting at NOVA increased by six percentage points for male students and three percentage points for female students.
- Among the Fall 2012 cohort, six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates were nine percentage points higher for female students (48 percent) than male students (39 percent).

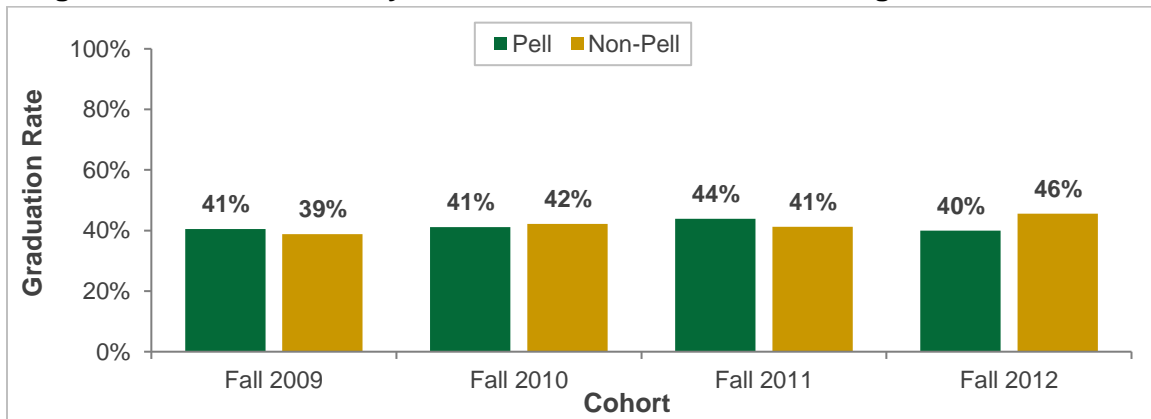
Figure 27. Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Gender: Fall 2009 through Fall 2012 Cohorts



Six-Year Bachelor's Graduation Rates by Pell Grant Status (Figure 28)

- From the Fall 2009 to Fall 2012 cohorts, the six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate decreased by one percentage point for students who received a Pell grant, but increased by seven percentage points for non-Pell grant recipients.
- Among the Fall 2012 cohort, six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates were six percentage points lower for Pell grant recipients (40 percent) compared to non-Pell grant recipients (46 percent).

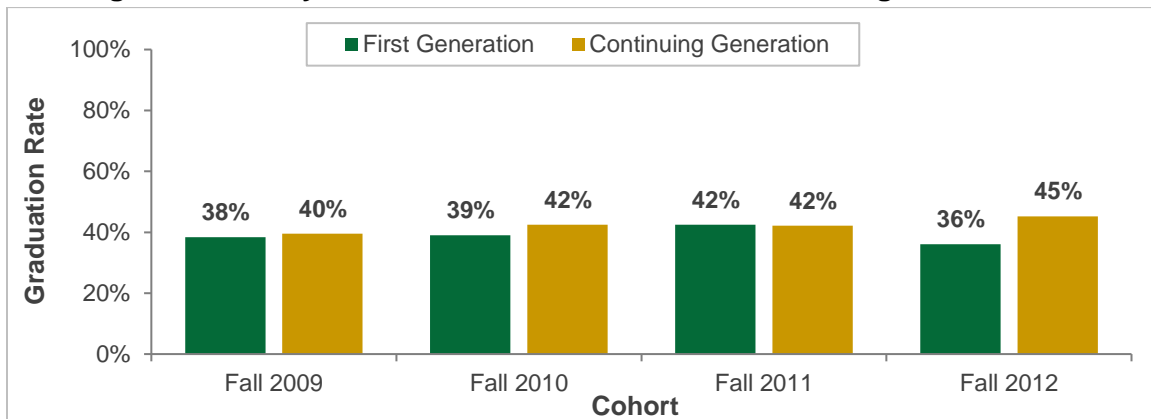
Figure 28. Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Pell Grant Status: Fall 2009 through Fall 2012 Cohorts



Six-Year Bachelor's Graduation Rates by First Generation Status (Figure 29)

- From the Fall 2009 to Fall 2012 cohorts, the six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate decreased by two percentage points for first generation students, but increased five percentage points for continuing generation students.
- Among the Fall 2012 cohort, six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates were nine percentage points higher for continuing generation students (45 percent) than first generation students (36 percent).

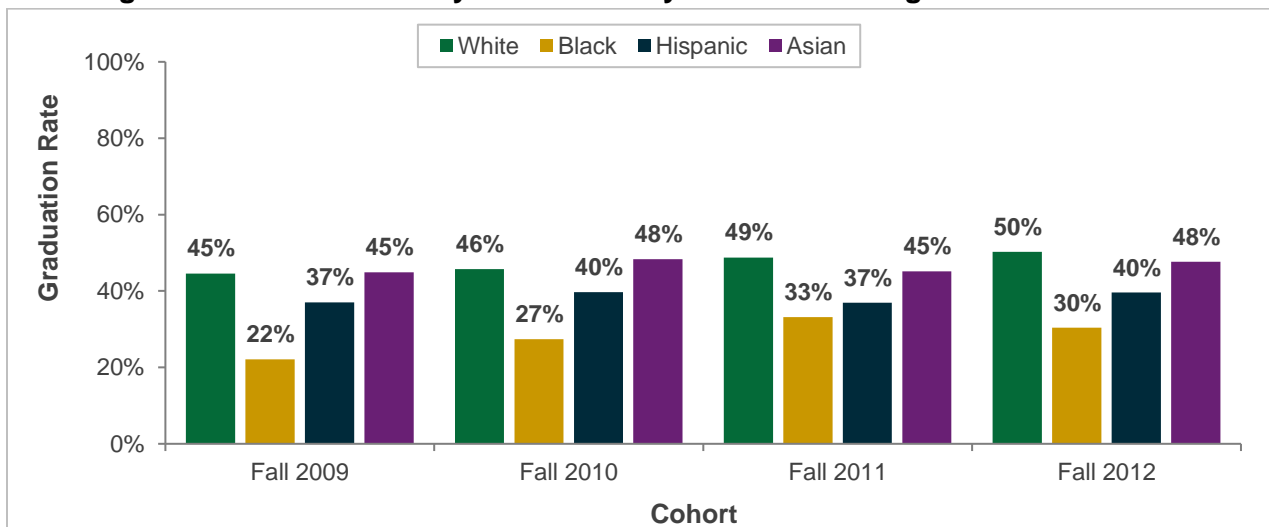
Figure 29. Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for Program-Placed, First-Time in College Students by First Generation Status: Fall 2009 through Fall 2012 Cohorts



Six-Year Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity (Figure 30)

- From the Fall 2009 to Fall 2012 cohorts, the six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate increased by eight percentage points for black students, five percentage points for white students, and three percentage points each for Hispanic and Asian students.
- Among the Fall 2012 cohort, six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates were highest for white (50 percent) and Asian students (48 percent). Six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates were lowest for black students (30 percent).

Figure 30. Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for First-Time in College, Program Placed Students by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2009 through Fall 2012 Cohorts



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**

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