

High Performance in Freshman Year is Important for Success

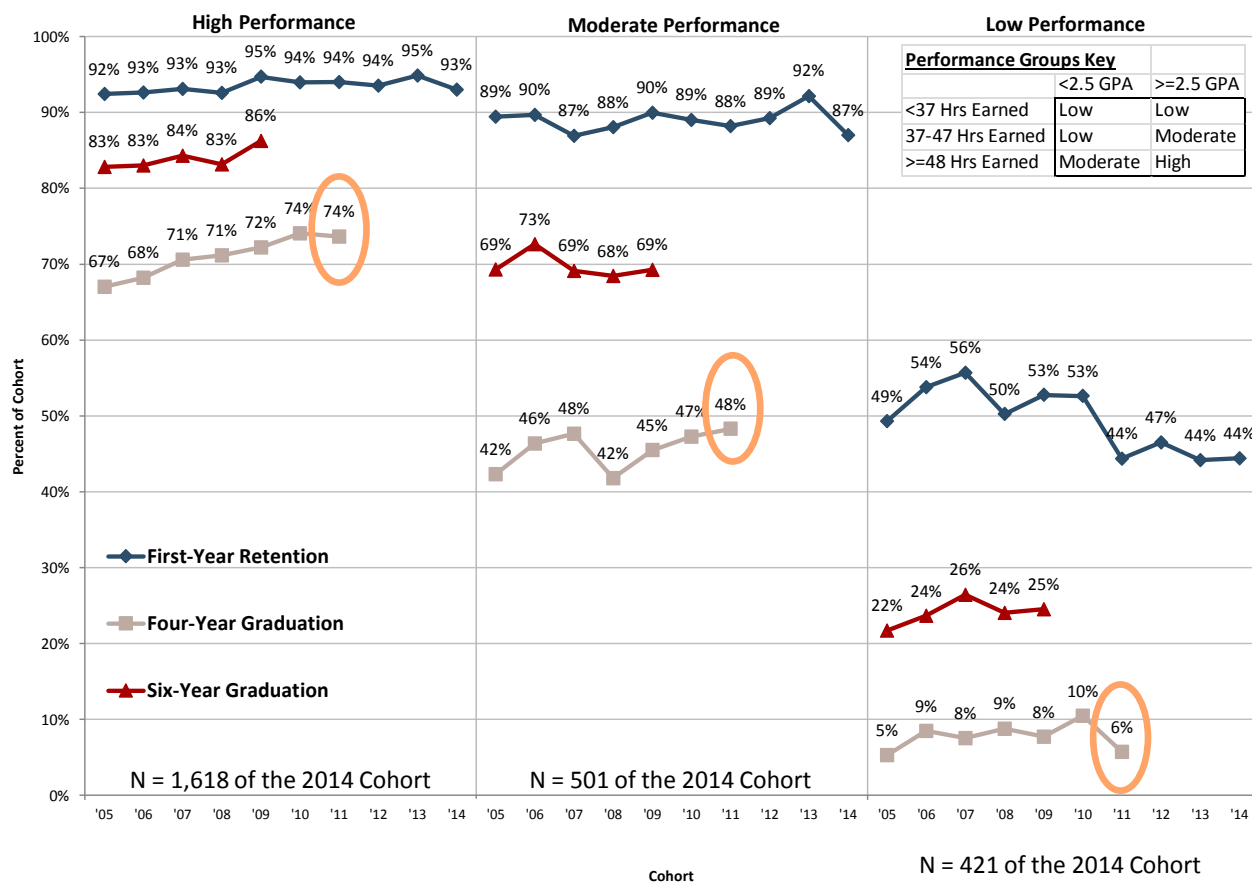
For several years, DePaul has emphasized that a strong GPA and completing a full load of classes during the all-important freshman year was the surest way to complete a degree. In this context, earning a freshman grade-point average of 2.5 or higher **and** 48 or more credit hours during freshman year is considered high performance.

Annual retention and graduation rate tracking continues to provide evidence of the value of these academic performance benchmarks. Students in the high performance group returned for their second year and graduated in four and six years at higher rates when compared with their counterparts who

met only one or neither of the benchmarks.

For the freshmen cohort entering in 2011 (the most recent with graduation outcomes), 74 percent of the high performance group graduated within four years, compared to 48 percent of the moderate performance group and only 6 percent of the low performance group (see chart below for definitions of moderate and low performance). The gap between high and moderate academic performance was not as wide at six years, but both groups graduated at rates 40 to 60 percentage points higher than the low performance group.

First-Year Retention, Four-Year Graduation, Six-Year Graduation - By First Year Academic Performance



Source: IRMA, Trends in Freshman Retention and Graduation, Fall 2015. For the full report, contact Liz Holder at eholder1@depaul.edu.