



Southwestern Michigan College

Student Success Glossary of Terms

Auditing (a class)

Term used when a student takes a course but does not receive credit toward a degree or other formal award. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Awards Conferred/ Completions

Annual component of IPEDS collecting the number of awards and certificates awarded in an academic year (July 1 of calendar year through June 30 of following year)
(<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Cohort

A group of students sharing common characteristics that are typically created for tracking purposes. A common cohort used by IPEDS and in higher education in general is the Full Time FTIAC (First Time in Any College) cohort. These students are entering college full time for the fall for the first time (not transferring in).

College Level Course Success

This is from the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) Form 7 Enrollee Success Rate. This is the percent of students that received passing grades in credit, college level courses at the end of [defined] term. Enrollee Success Rate and College Level Course Success are used interchangeably though there are two other metrics available (retention rate and completer success rate – for further information, see the NCCBP National Report).

Completer/Graduate

A student who receives a degree or certificate; the award must be conferred.
(<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Credit course

A course that when completed can be applied to achieving a degree, diploma or certificate.
(<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Degree/Certificate Seeking

Students enrolled in courses for credit who are seeking a degree, certificate or other formal award (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Fall Enrollment (IPEDS)

Students who enroll for credit regardless of whether or not they are seeking a degree. Includes high school students taking regular college courses for credit and/or students taking remedial courses for credit. It does not include students exclusively auditing or exclusively taking continuing education units (CEUs). (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

FTIAC student

An acronym standing for First Time in Any College. A student who has no prior postsecondary experience attending an institution for the first time at the undergraduate level. It includes students who earned

credits the prior summer for fall enrollment and students who earned credit in high school. The term used by IPEDS is First-Time Student. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>) FTIAC and first time student are used interchangeably.

Full Time

A student enrolled in 12 or more credit hours in a semester.

Graduation Rate (IPEDS)

IPEDS annual report to satisfy requirements of Student Right-to-Know legislation. Data are collected on the number of students entering the institution as full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students in a particular year (cohort), by race/ethnicity and gender; the number completing their program within 150 percent of normal time to completion; and the number that transfer to other institutions if transfer is part of the institution's mission. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Institutional Report Card

Set of key performance indicators that Southwestern Michigan College uses to track progress in attracting, retaining, and graduating students. There are currently 18 metrics on the IRC.

IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System)

IPEDS is the annual collection of data by NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) consisting of: Institutional Characteristics, 12 Month Enrollment, Completions, Student Financial Aid, Human Resources, Fall Enrollment, Graduation Rates, Outcome Measures, Finance and Academic Libraries. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Metric

This is the metric number of the graph from the Institutional Report Card.

Michigan Two Year Colleges (benchmarking group)

Data is pulled from IPEDS for Michigan Public 2 Years (excluding the bachelor granting schools because they have a different cohort year for graduation/transfer rates). Results in 24 community colleges throughout the state of Michigan. IPEDS Data Center, Summary Tables report.

National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP)

SMC has participated in the NCCBP since Fall 2006. This is a voluntary benchmarking project for community colleges which provides reports on completion and transfer for full and part time students, retention and persistence, student performance and satisfaction and engagement.

National Two Year Colleges (benchmarking group)

Data is pulled from IPEDS for National Public 2 Years. Results in approximately 950 community colleges throughout the nation. IPEDS Data Center, EZ group 2 year publics, Summary Tables report.

Noncredit Course

A course that has no credit toward a degree or certificate. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Non-Degree-Seeking Student

A student enrolled in a course(s) for credit who is not working toward degree or certificate. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Non-Traditional (Age) Student

A student that is older than 24 years.

Part Time

A student enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours in a semester.

Percentile

A number where a certain percentage of scores fall below that number.

(<https://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/percentiles-rank-range/>)

Persistence Rate, Next Term

As measured by the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), this is the percent of credit students, full and part time, in the fall semester who return to campus the next Spring semester. This metric excludes students who graduated with degrees or certificates in that time frame.

Persistence Rate, Fall to Fall

As measured by the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), this is the percent of credit students, full and part time, in the fall semester who return to campus the next fall semester. This metric excludes students who graduated with degrees or certificates in that time frame.

Preliminary Freeze

A commonly used data source in which data is "frozen" at the beginning of the term. The use of "frozen" data allows users to recreate numbers for validation rather than constantly working with shifting "live" numbers.

Race/Ethnicity

These are the IPEDS categories (as developed by the Office of Management and Budget). Students are first asked to designate ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino or Not Hispanic or Latino) and then are asked to check among the following: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White. A Nonresident Alien is an International student. Unknown is used when race/ethnicity is not known. Multi-racial is used when more than one category is chosen.

(<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>)

Recent High School Graduate

A term used at SMC. Typically denotes a Full Time FTIAC who has graduated in the most recent high school graduating class (used for recruiting)

Student Satisfaction Inventory (Ruffalo Noel Levitz survey)

An online satisfaction survey administered in odd numbered Spring semesters. It reports on 8 scales (Campus Climate, Registration Effectiveness, Campus Services, Admissions/Financial Aid, Academic Advising, Safety and Security, Instructional Effectiveness, Student Centeredness) which benchmarks SMC with others participating in the survey. SMC uses Form B (<https://survey.ruffalonl.com/#/survey/intro>) (For a paper sample see: <https://www.ruffalonl.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/SSIFormB2yrPaperandPencilSample.pdf>)

Target

Most of the metrics on the Institutional Report card have targets based on the 75th percentile. More information on the target can be found in the Data Notes section of the Institutional Report Card.

Tax Paying District

The tax paying district of SMC is Cass County, and Hamilton and Keeler Township in Van Buren County.

Traditional (Age) Student

A student that is 24 years of age or less.

Transfer Rate (IPEDS)

Part of IPEDS Graduation Rates data collection. Total number of full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students in a particular year (cohort) that transfer out of the reporting institution within 150 percent of normal time to completion if transfer is part of the institution's mission. (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>) Transfer can be lateral (another associate granting institution) or vertical (bachelor granting institution).

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