

University of Wisconsin System Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree for Bachelor's Degree Recipients

Introduction

Two measures, which are often used to gauge institutional efficiency and student success, are time-to-degree and credits-to-degree for bachelor's degree recipients. Several factors influence time-to-degree and credits-to-degree. Students often change majors, transfer to other UW institutions, and take extra electives. Institution controlled factors include: the number of credits required for degree completion, course availability, academic advising, and the number of credits accepted for transfer.

This project attempts to determine these measures for first-time bachelor's degree recipients in the University of Wisconsin System using the CDR database. Time-to-degree is determined by years elapsed between student's most recent enrollment as a new freshman and the last enrollment as an undergraduate while credits-to-degree focuses on how many credits the student attempted in earning the bachelor's degree.

In this project, students are classified as new freshmen if their Entrance Status for the term is 'N' and their Student Classification is 'A', 'B', 'C', or 'D'. Attempted credits are based on the credits for the courses in which students were enrolled on the term Census Date ("10th day of classes"). Students are classified as undergraduates if their Student Classification for the term is 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D', 'I', 'J', 'N', 'S', or 'T'. Undergraduates are counted as being enrolled with a full-time status in the fall or spring term if they were enrolled for 12 or more credits. Both state-supported ("GPR-funded") and total credits (all credits including Study Away credits) are analyzed.

Population

Only first-time bachelor's degree recipients who once enrolled in the UW System as a new freshman are taken into consideration. If a student earned multiple bachelor's degrees from a UW institution or different UW institutions in one term and he/she never received a bachelor's degree before that term from any UW institutions, the student is included in the population. In this case, if the multiple degrees were granted by the same UW institution, only one degree is counted. If the multiple degrees were granted by different UW institutions, the degrees are all counted.

For example, if a student earned a bachelor's degree both from UW-Madison and UW-Whitewater in fall 2006, and the student entered the UW System as a new freshman and never received a bachelor's degree from a UW institution before fall 2006, both of the degrees will be counted, one counted for UW-Madison, and the other for UW-Whitewater. But all the other time-to-degree and credits-to-degree measures are the same for these two degrees. So if the student accumulated 140 credits before the degrees were granted, these 140 credits will be counted toward both of the degrees, regardless of at which UW institution they were earned.

If a student entered the UW System not as a new freshman but obtained this status in some following term and later received his/her first bachelor's degree from a UW institution, he/she is included in the population.

Student SSN and Campus Student ID are used to track students.

Time-to-degree measures

When calculating a student's time-to-degree, only the time between the student's most recent enrollment as a new freshman and the last enrollment as an undergraduate is counted. The time when students actually received their degree is not used because for some students, there is a gap between the time he/she last enrolled as an undergraduate in the UW System and the time the degree was posted. For example, a student entered UW-Madison in fall 2001 and his last enrollment as an undergraduate was in spring 2005. In summer 2007, his bachelor's degree was posted. In this case, we consider the student to have graduated in 4 years.

If a student didn't enter as a new freshman but is classified as a 'new freshman' in a later term, the term the student is classified as a 'new freshman' is counted as the first term when calculating time-to-degree. Also if a student is classified as a 'new freshman' in several different terms, the latest term the student is classified as a new freshman is taken as the first term in calculating the measures.

All terms when students enrolled as an undergraduate between the student's most recent enrollment as a new freshman and the last enrollment as an undergraduate are taken into consideration for term related analysis. If a student enrolled in more than one institution in the same term, the enrollment in that term is counted only once. For stop outs, only stop outs in fall or spring terms are counted. Also for part-time semesters, only part-time enrollment in fall/spring terms is counted. Two schools, UW-River Falls between 1973-74 and 1989-90 and UW-Superior between 1977-78 and 1987-88, used a trimester system. One trimester is weighted as 0.67 fall/spring semester.

For years elapsed between entry and last term, entering in summer is equivalent to entering in fall and entering in winter is equivalent to entering in spring. Last attending in summer is equivalent to last attending in spring and last attending in winter is equivalent to last attending in fall.

Credits-to-degree measures

All attempted credits when students enrolled as an undergraduate in the time period beginning from the most recent new freshman term to the last term enrolled as an undergraduate, including credits attempted in summer and winter terms, are counted toward total credits-to-degree. State-supported credits-to-degree exclude remedial credits, study away credits and UW-Extension credits. Also all attempted credits, including remedial credits, study away credits and UW-Extension credits, are used to determine students' full-time status.

If a student enrolled in more than one institution in the same term, credits in all the institutions enrolled are counted. Credits attempted in a trimester are weighted at $\frac{2}{3}$ value of credits attempted in a semester.

University of Wisconsin System
Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree Measures
for Bachelor's Degree Recipients in 2000-01

2000-01 Graduates	Years to Degree					Total
	4 Years and Under	5 Years	6 Years	6 Years and Under	More than 6 Years	
Number of Graduates	5,646	6,989	1,979	14,614	1,904	16,518
% of Total	34.2%	42.3%	12.0%	88.5%	11.5%	100.0%
Fall/Spring Semesters	7.8	9.4	11	9	13.2	9.5
Summers	0.9	1	1.3	1	1.9	1.1
Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.4	0.9	0.3	3.5	0.7
Stop Outs	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	6.9	0.9
Median State-Supported Credits	121	138	158	131	165	133
Median Total Credits	123	140	161	133	169	136
Mean State-Supported Credits	119	138	157	134	167	137
Mean Total Credits	122	141	160	136	171	140
Average Age at Entrance	18.2	18.3	18.6	18.3	19	18.4
Average Age at Graduation	21.6	22.5	23.8	22.3	28.5	23

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University of Wisconsin System
Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree Measures
for Bachelor's Degree Recipients in 2003-04

2003-04 Graduates	Years to Degree					Total
	4 Years and Under	5 Years	6 Years	6 Years and Under	More than 6 Years	
Number of Graduates	6,709	7,931	2,270	16,910	2,025	18,935
% of Total	35.4%	41.9%	12.0%	89.3%	10.7%	100.0%
Fall/Spring Semesters	7.8	9.5	11	9	13.2	9.5
Summers	0.9	1	1.2	1	1.9	1.1
Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.3	0.8	0.3	3.6	0.6
Stop Outs	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	7.6	0.9
Median State-Supported Credits	119	137	157	130	165	132
Median Total Credits	122	141	160	134	168	136
Mean State-Supported Credits	118	138	156	132	165	136
Mean Total Credits	122	142	160	136	170	140
Average Age at Entrance	18.3	18.3	18.4	18.3	18.9	18.4
Average Age at Graduation	21.6	22.5	23.6	22.3	28.7	23

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**University of Wisconsin System
Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree Measures
for Bachelor's Degree Recipients in 2006-07**

2006-07 Graduates	Years to Degree					Total
	4 Years and Under	5 Years	6 Years	6 Years and Under	More than 6 Years	
Number of Graduates	7,317	7,627	2,258	17,202	1,961	19,163
% of Total	38.2%	39.8%	11.8%	89.8%	10.2%	100.0%
Fall/Spring Semesters	7.8	9.5	11	9	12.9	9.4
Summers	0.9	1	1.2	1	1.7	1
Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.3	0.8	0.3	3.2	0.6
Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.5	0.1	8.2	0.9
Median State-Supported Credits	119	137	155	129	161	130
Median Total Credits	122	141	159	133	167	135
Mean State-Supported Credits	117	137	154	130	162	134
Mean Total Credits	121	142	159	135	167	139
Average Age at Entrance	18.2	18.3	18.4	18.3	18.8	18.4
Average Age at Graduation	21.5	22.5	23.6	22.3	28.8	22.9

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University of Wisconsin System
Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree Measures by Institution
for Bachelor's Degree Recipients in 2006-07

		4 Years and Under	5 Years	6 Years	More than 6 years	TOTAL
UW SYSTEM	Graduates	7,317	7,627	2,258	1,961	19,163
	% of Total	38%	40%	12%	10%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.5	11	12.9	9.4
	Summers	0.9	1	1.2	1.7	1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.3	0.8	3.2	0.6
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.5	8.2	0.9
	Median State-Supported Credits	119	137	155	161	130
	Median Total Credits	122	141	159	167	135
	Mean State-Supported Credits	117	137	154	162	134
	Mean Total Credits	121	142	159	167	139
Madison	Graduates	2,970	1,837	287	220	5,314
	% of Total	56%	35%	5%	4%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.5	10.8	12	8.7
	Summers	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.9	1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.4	0.9	2.8	0.4
	Stop Outs	0.1	0.1	0.7	7.5	0.4
	Median State-Supported Credits	113	131	150	154	120
	Median Total Credits	118	137	155	158	125
	Mean State-Supported Credits	111	132	148	156	122
	Mean Total Credits	118	138	153	160	128
Milwaukee	Graduates	685	925	437	543	2,590
	% of Total	26%	36%	17%	21%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.5	11	13.1	10
	Summers	1	1.3	1.5	2	1.4
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.4	0.9	3.5	1.1
	Stop Outs	0.1	0.1	0.5	7.1	1.6
	Median State-Supported Credits	114	130	145	154	129
	Median Total Credits	123	139	156	165	140
	Mean State-Supported Credits	113	130	146	157	134
	Mean Total Credits	123	141	156	169	145
Eau Claire	Graduates	531	790	226	112	1,659
	% of Total	32%	48%	14%	7%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.9	9.5	11.1	13.1	9.4
	Summers	0.9	1	1.1	1.7	1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.2	0.6	3.1	0.4
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.3	9.2	0.7
	Median State-Supported Credits	121	138	158	168	134
	Median Total Credits	124	142	162	169	138
	Mean State-Supported Credits	120	138	157	169	137
	Mean Total Credits	124	142	160	172	141
Green Bay	Graduates	297	335	78	96	806
	% of Total	37%	42%	10%	12%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.4	10.8	12.2	9.3
	Summers	0.8	0.9	1.2	1.4	1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.6	0.7
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.7	12.3	1.6
	Median State-Supported Credits	121	136	142	149	129
	Median Total Credits	122	138	147	149	131
	Mean State-Supported Credits	119	136	145	146	132
	Mean Total Credits	121	138	148	149	134

University of Wisconsin System
Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree Measures by Institution
for Bachelor's Degree Recipients in 2006-07

		4 Years and Under	5 Years	6 Years	More than 6 years	TOTAL
La Crosse	Graduates	556	533	163	76	1,328
	% of Total	42%	40%	12%	6%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.9	9.5	11.1	12.6	9.2
	Summers	0.8	1	1.1	1.6	0.9
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.2	0.4	1.7	0.2
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.2	4.7	0.3
	Median State-Supported Credits	123	144	169	178	136
	Median Total Credits	124	147	170	180	139
	Mean State-Supported Credits	123	144	168	177	140
Mean Total Credits	125	147	170	180	143	
Oshkosh	Graduates	322	603	247	238	1,410
	% of Total	23%	43%	18%	17%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.5	11.1	13.2	10.1
	Summers	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.3	0.7
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.3	0.7	3.4	0.9
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.3	7.4	1.3
	Median State-Supported Credits	123	140	160	168	141
	Median Total Credits	124	143	162	172	143
	Mean State-Supported Credits	122	142	161	167	145
Mean Total Credits	124	143	164	171	147	
Parkside	Graduates	84	152	76	92	404
	% of Total	21%	38%	19%	23%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.7	9.6	11.1	13.4	10.3
	Summers	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.7	1.3
	Part-Time Semesters	0.2	0.5	1.3	5	1.6
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.5	8.9	2.2
	Median State-Supported Credits	121	136	146	154	136
	Median Total Credits	125	139	150	157	140
	Mean State-Supported Credits	121	137	148	154	139
Mean Total Credits	123	140	152	158	143	
Platteville	Graduates	245	385	126	90	846
	% of Total	29%	46%	15%	11%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.6	11	13.4	9.7
	Summers	1	0.9	1	1.6	1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.3	0.7	2.8	0.5
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.4	4.7	0.6
	Median State-Supported Credits	125	146	163	178	143
	Median Total Credits	127	146	164	182	145
	Mean State-Supported Credits	125	145	160	181	145
Mean Total Credits	127	146	162	183	147	
River Falls	Graduates	341	311	57	52	761
	% of Total	45%	41%	7%	7%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.4	10.6	11.7	8.9
	Summers	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.3	0.9
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.2	0.7	1.9	0.3
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.8	8.8	0.7
	Median State-Supported Credits	121	138	148	152	129
	Median Total Credits	124	141	153	156	132
	Mean State-Supported Credits	120	138	150	155	132
Mean Total Credits	123	141	153	159	135	

University of Wisconsin System
Time-to-Degree and Credits-to-Degree Measures by Institution
for Bachelor's Degree Recipients in 2006-07

		4 Years and Under	5 Years	6 Years	More than 6 years	TOTAL
Stevens Point	Graduates	380	636	196	134	1,346
	% of Total	28%	47%	15%	10%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.6	11.1	13.2	9.7
	Summers	0.9	1	1.1	1.9	1.1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.2	0.6	3.2	0.5
	Stop Outs	0	0	0.4	10.5	1.1
	Median State-Supported Credits	121	142	159	166	137
	Median Total Credits	124	145	163	167	141
	Mean State-Supported Credits	120	141	157	169	140
	Mean Total Credits	123	145	161	172	144
Stout	Graduates	291	423	140	97	951
	% of Total	31%	44%	15%	10%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.5	10.9	12.1	9.5
	Summers	1.5	1.2	1.3	2.1	1.4
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.4	0.8	2.9	0.6
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.7	9.8	1.2
	Median State-Supported Credits	126	139	151	165	136
	Median Total Credits	128	143	155	169	140
	Mean State-Supported Credits	126	140	153	157	139
	Mean Total Credits	128	143	156	161	142
Superior	Graduates	66	61	24	48	199
	% of Total	33%	31%	12%	24%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.6	9.3	10.7	12.3	9.6
	Summers	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.2	0.9
	Part-Time Semesters	0.2	0.4	0.8	3.6	1.1
	Stop Outs	0	0.2	0.7	11.8	3
	Median State-Supported Credits	120	132	151	145	129
	Median Total Credits	123	137	156	148	134
	Mean State-Supported Credits	115	133	150	153	134
	Mean Total Credits	119	137	155	155	137
Whitewater	Graduates	549	636	201	163	1,549
	% of Total	35%	41%	13%	11%	100%
	Fall/Springs	7.8	9.5	11.1	12.8	9.5
	Summers	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.9	1
	Part-Time Semesters	0.1	0.2	0.8	3	0.5
	Stop Outs	0	0.1	0.3	9.9	1.1
	Median State-Supported Credits	123	138	157	167	134
	Median Total Credits	124	142	161	171	137
	Mean State-Supported Credits	122	139	156	167	138
	Mean Total Credits	124	142	161	171	141