

Barton College Student Achievement Evaluation Criteria and Benchmarks

Barton College evaluates the achievement of its students in relation to its mission using a variety of methods, including enrollment data, retention rates, graduation rates, degrees per FTE, gateway and capstone course success rates, scores on licensing and certification examinations, and job placement rates. These outcomes are intended to provide a diverse, adaptive, and sensitive set of criteria to be used for continuous improvement of student learning and, ultimately, lead to student success. The benchmarks that the College has set are ambitious, but attainable, and follow best practices in higher education (Table 1).

Table 1. Student Attainment Evaluation Criteria, Rationale, and Benchmarks

Evaluation Criteria	Rationale	Benchmarks
Enrollment Data	Enrollment data, including demographic data of the incoming class, is used to anticipate the level of support services needed and plays an integral role in resource allocation.	Enrollment goals are set annually by the Administration and tracked by the Strategic Enrollment Management committee
Retention Rate (First-to-Second Year)	Barton College monitors annual retention rates as a measure of student satisfaction and success.	Meet or exceed average rate of IPEDS peers*
Graduation Rate	The graduation rate of undergraduate students is a direct measure of the College's fulfillment of its mission through degree attainment.	Meet or exceed average rate of IPEDS peers*
Number of Degrees Conferred	The number of degrees conferred is also a direct measure of student achievement. Many students at Barton complete more than one degree.	Meet or exceed ratio of degrees conferred to 100 FTE compared to IPEDS peers*
Course Success Rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENG 101/102, College Writing I/II • MTH 120, Finite Math, and MTH 130, College Algebra • GEN 301, General Education Capstone • Major capstone courses 	Course success rates are early predictors of graduation rates. Completion of the general education core classes and the capstone courses are direct measures of student progression. These data are also used to support faculty in the development of learning strategies and to concentrate attention and corrective action on courses with lower success rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of enrolled students will earn a C- or above • 70% of enrolled students will earn a C- or above • 80% of enrolled students will earn a C or above • 90% of enrolled students will earn a C or above
Success Rate on Licensing Exams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) • State Board of Education Approved Licensing Exams 	These data examine achievement in high-demand career fields. Passing on the first attempt is viewed as a direct indicator of the student's learning that is attributable to the institution.	Meet or exceed NC average pass rate
Job/Graduate School Placement Rates	In light of the College's mission to challenge students <i>"for future leadership and service to their local and global communities,"</i> the job and/or graduate school placement information indicates alumni success.	Meet or exceed national average from National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE) Annual First Destination Survey

* The Barton College IPEDS Peers group was reevaluated and modified in 2013-2014.

Enrollment Data:

While undergraduate enrollment has slowly declined from Fall 2013 to Fall 2017, Fall 2016 saw a very slight increase in undergraduate enrollment over the previous year. An increase in the number of graduate programs has contributed to overall enrollment figures remaining fairly consistent. The drop off in Fall 2017 enrollment mirrors a trend experienced by other small, private liberal arts institutions in NC and in general.

Table 2 displays undergraduate and graduate enrollment in Fall 2013 through Fall 2017.

Table 2. Undergraduate and Graduate Student Enrollment 2013-2017

Level	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Undergraduate	1057	1010	985	988	890
Graduate	8	25	62	63	73
Total	1065	1035	1047	1051	963

Enrollment projections are set each year by the Administration in accordance with the College's Strategic Plan to enroll 1200 students annually by the year 2020. Enrollment targets are based on available physical resources, personnel, accreditation requirements, and program need and capacity. The following data tables show first-time freshmen admissions results for the past five years (Table 3) and projected full-time enrollment of students contrasted with actual full-time student enrollment in each of the last four academic years (Table 4). Note that graduate enrollment counts include new and continuing full-time students.

Table 3. First-Time Freshmen (Full-time and Part-time) Admissions

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of applicants	2916	3088	2920	2828	2632
Number of acceptances	1218	1188	1220	1156	1024
Number enrolled	217	191	220	241	198

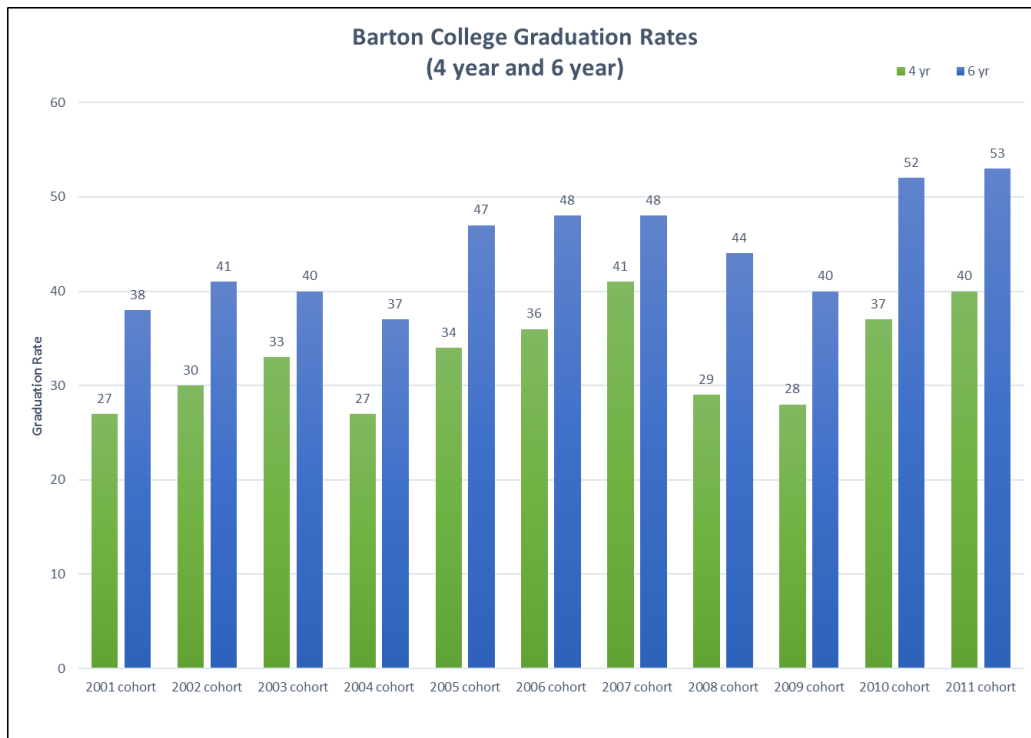
Table 4. Fall Full-Time Enrollment Projections versus Actual Full-Time Enrollment

	Fall 2014 Projected	Fall 2014 Actual	Fall 2015 Projected	Fall 2015 Actual	Fall 2016 Projected	Fall 2016 Actual	Fall 2017 Projected	Fall 2017 Actual
First-time, Freshman	210	185	210	218	245	241	234	198
Transfers (new)	100	107	110	121	95	73	85	67
Graduate Enrollment								
M.Ed.	5	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
MSA & AIG (FTE - Hrs enrolled)	8	-	8	-	5	-	10	15
MSN	12	11	14	13	11	17	25	15
MBA							22	22

Graduation Rates:

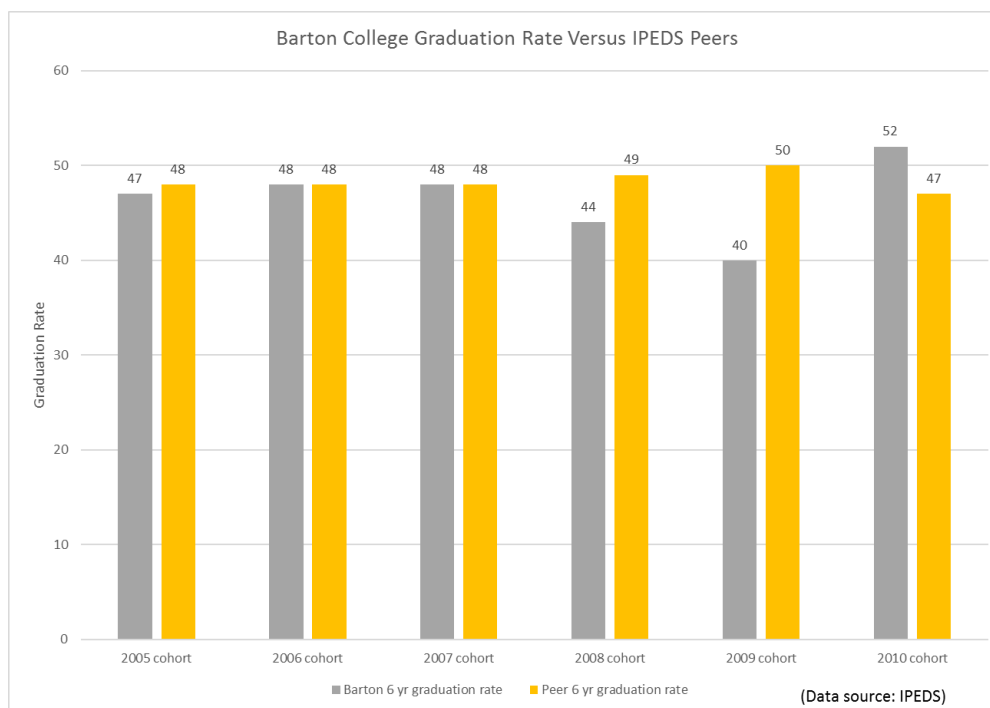
Barton College tracks student graduation rates after four and six years. The latest available data is for the 2011 cohort. The six-year graduation rate data was fairly consistent for the 2001 through 2004 cohorts, with the overall average percentage of graduates hovering around 40%. Since 2005, the 6-year average graduation rate has risen to 47.4%. Barton's 2011 cohort, like its 2010 cohort, had a significantly improved six-year graduation rate over 52%. (Table 5.) It's worth noting that graduation rates are defined as the total number of individuals from a given cohort of full-time, first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates who completed a degree within a specified amount of time, divided by the entire cohort of full-time, first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates.

Table 5. Barton College Graduation Rates (4 Year and 6 Year)



Graduation rates are also benchmarked against our IPEDS peer institutions as shown in Table 6. For the 2005-2007 cohorts, Barton College's six-year graduation rates were within 1% of the median of the peer comparison group. The graduation rate of the Barton College 2008 cohort was 5 percentage points less than the IPEDS peer comparison group and the 2009 cohort was 10 percentage points lower than the peer comparison group. However, the graduation rate of the Barton College 2010 cohort showed significant improvement and was 5 percentage points more than the IPEDS peer comparison group.

Table 6. Graduation Rate versus IPEDS Peers



Retention Rates:

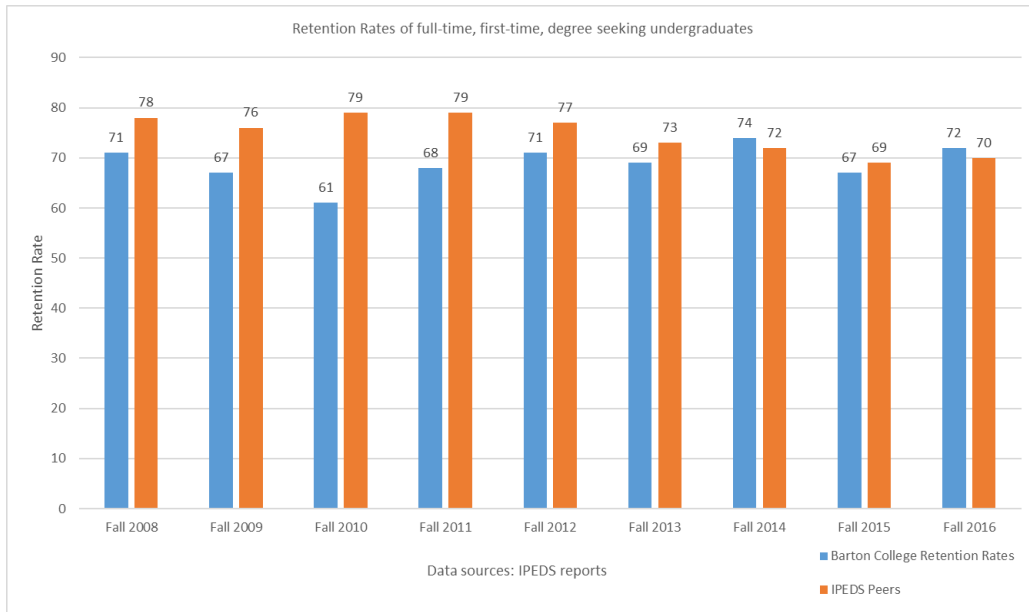
First-to-second year retention data has been collected by the College since 1994. As shown in Table 7, the freshman to sophomore retention rate dropped to 61% in 2010 and has been slowly moving upward as the College put a concerted effort into retention initiatives. The Retention and Student Development Taskforce was formed in fall 2010 to address the low retention rate. The taskforce's charter was to improve pre-enrollment as well as academic and co-curricular experiences for students in an effort to increase retention rates. Recommendations from the taskforce led to the creation of an Honors living-learning community, changes to the First-Year Seminar curriculum, and the introduction of Supplemental Instruction. As a result of these efforts Barton saw a 5% increase in the freshmen to sophomore retention rate from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014 with an all-time high of 74.4% that year. The retention rate from Fall 2014 to Fall 2015 dipped slightly to 67%, rebounded from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016 to 72%, and again dipped in the Fall of 2017 to 62.9%. Recent enrollment management strategies have looked at the way students are awarded financial aid in an effort to retain students who might otherwise leave the College for financial reasons. The purchase and implementation of a retention management software product in 2016 also supports these efforts through early alert mechanisms, tracking of student interventions, and analytical modeling to focus retention initiatives.

Retention rates are also benchmarked against our peer institutions as shown in Table 7. Since Fall 2013, Barton College's retention rate has ranged within 2-4 percentage points of its IPEDS peer group. In Fall 2016, the most recent data available, Barton College's retention rate was 2% higher than its IPEDS peers.

Barton College reviews its retention rate at the beginning of each semester to examine summer and fall melt. The Strategic Enrollment Management committee meets bimonthly to discuss retention and persistence issues. Policies and procedures are examined on a regular basis and revised as needed to eliminate barriers to student success.

Strategic Objective 2.2 in the **Being Bold for Barton** Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is focused on increasing student retention in each class level by 5% over current levels by 2020.

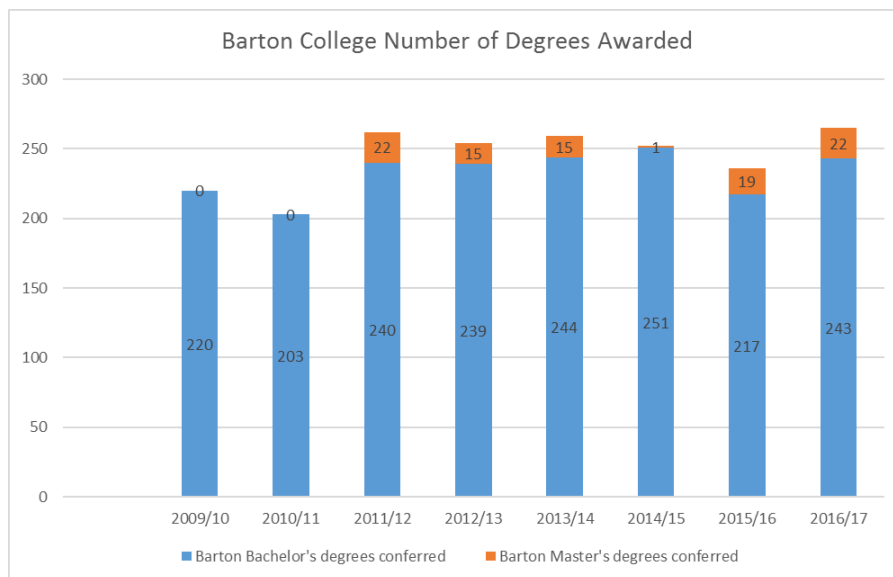
Table 7. Retention Rate versus IPEDS Peers



Degrees Conferred:

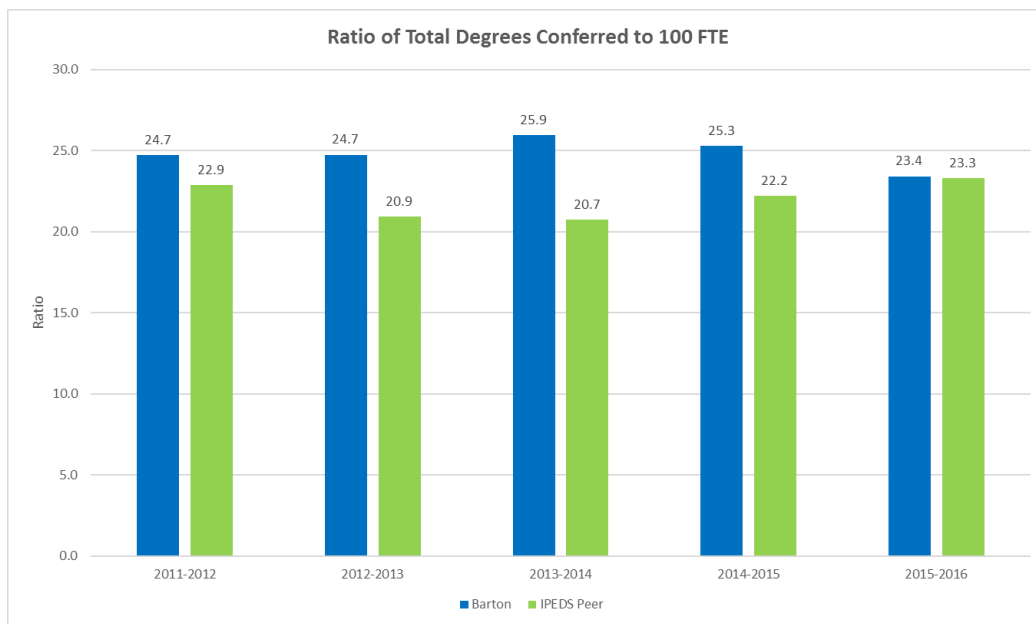
The number of degrees conferred each year is another direct measure of student persistence and achievement. With the exception of the 2015-2016 year, when the number of degrees awarded dropped from 252 to 235, the number of degrees awarded at Barton College has been fairly consistent since 2011-2012 (Table 8).

Table 8. Barton College Number of Degrees Awarded



The ratio of the number of degrees conferred: 100 FTE is also compared against our IPEDS peer institutions. As evidenced in Table 9, since 2011-2012, Barton has consistently awarded more degrees per FTE than its IPEDS peers.

Table 9. Ratio of Degrees Conferred to 100 FTE



Course Completion:

Course success rates in entry-level courses are early predictors of persistence and graduation rates. English 101 and 102 and Math 120 and 130 are entry-level core requirements. Failure to pass these foundational courses puts a student at risk because s/he cannot progress in the major until these core requirements are fulfilled. The average SAT score of incoming freshmen in 2015 was 950, so a threshold of 70% of students in the foundational Math and English courses receiving a C- was deemed appropriate.

Failure to meet the established thresholds in Table 10 indicates that students are either not learning the material as intended or there is a problem with the pedagogy or delivery. Recent efforts to address the on-going deficiencies in the entry-level Math courses include assessment and revision of the criteria used for initial math placement, implementation of Smarthinking online tutoring which provides 24/7 math support, making Peer Tutors available for all entry-level math courses, and using a revised Math Readiness Test for initial math placement.

Table 10. Core Course Success Rates

CORE COURSES	Benchmark	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
ENG 101	70%	89%	75%	83%	65%	87%
ENG 102	70%	77%	80%	75%	80%	85%
MTH 120	70%	87%	55%	75%	54%	72%
MTH 130	70%	67%	51%	74%	52%	81%

In addition to passing these foundational courses, the College also has a General Education capstone course that is a problem-based learning seminar in which students think soundly and creatively to plan, design, and evaluate real solutions to authentic problems in today's world. The General Education capstone brings together all of the material learned in the general college core and is required of all students, including transfers. The threshold for the General Education capstone is higher (80%) and has been met every semester since the measure began.

Table 11. General Education Capstone Course Success Rates

CAPSTONE COURSE	Benchmark	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
GEN 301	80%	96%	85%	96%	96%	99%

Finally, each program of study has a senior capstone course where students demonstrate competency in their chosen field of study. The threshold for the discipline-specific capstone is 90%, because as a student progresses through the curriculum, academic rigor and expectations increase. Overall, Barton students are meeting this benchmark as evidenced in Table 12. It is important to note that some of the majors contain very few students, so one student's lack of success has the ability to greatly reduce the overall success rate of the major capstone course.

Table 12. Major Capstone Course Success Rates

MAJOR CAPSTONE COURSES	Benchmark	% of students earning a C- or above	% of students earning a C- or above	% of students earning a C- or above	% of students earning a C- or above	% of students earning a C- or above	% of students earning a C- or above
		Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
ART 403	90%	100%	-	83%	-	100%	100%
ART 405	90%	-	-	100%	-	-	
BUS 490	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CCJ 415	90%	-	100%	-	100%	-	100%
COM 451	90%	69%	-	94%	-	100%	
EDU 450	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
ENG 457	90%	67%	100%	100%	100%	-	100%
GRN 440	90%	-	95%	-	100%	-	100%
HEA 401	90%	94%	-	100%	-	94%	
HUM 450	90%						75%
NUR 407	90%	-	100%	-	100%	-	100%
POL 410	90%	-	100%	-	-	-	100%
PSY 499	90%	100%	-	100%	-	100%	
REL 450	90%	83%	-	100%	-	100%	
SCI 490	90%	73%	100%	94%	-	100%	100%
SPA 457	90%	100%	-	-	-	-	
SWK 428	90%	-	93%	-	98%	-	93%

Licensing Exams:

As appropriate, some programs may choose to adopt additional criteria by which they measure student achievement that may be uniquely important or relevant to the success of their majors.

Student Teacher Licensure Pass Rates – The College benchmarks its pass rate for Education exit tests (Pearson and Praxis II) against the statewide average. In 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015, the College exceeded the statewide pass rate. In 2015-2016, Barton’s pass rate was well off the statewide average pass rate of 79%. Initial pass rates from 2016-2017 show a much-improved pass rate of 94% compared to the statewide average of 72% (Table 13).

Table 13. Student Teacher Licensure Pass Rates

Student Teacher Licensure Pass Rates		
	Barton College	NC Statewide
2012-2013	100%	93%
2013-2014	100%	96%
2014-2015	94%	92%
2015-2016	67%	79%
2016-2017	94%	72%

Source: State reports prepared by State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction

It’s worth noting that the state-wide pass rate in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 is based on the results of Praxis tests formally known as Praxis II. In 2014-2015, the state of North Carolina replaced the Praxis exit exam for Elementary Education with new tests administered by Pearson - the North Carolina Foundations of Reading Test and the North Carolina General Curriculum Test, which contains two sub-tests: Mathematics and Multi-subjects. Students seeking a teaching license in Special Education were also required to pass the new tests from Pearson and another Praxis test. Therefore, pass rates reported for 2014-2015 and after include the pass rates of the new Pearson tests as well as the Praxis exit exams.

Nursing NCLEX First-Time Pass Rates – The North Carolina Board of Nursing sets the pass rate based on a three-year average that is 95% of the national standard. The current 3-year average pass rate is 82%. Barton College has an 80% three-year average which is slightly less than the NC three-year average. Action plans were created and sent to the North Carolina Board of Nursing in 2016 and 2017 to address the low NCLEX first-time pass rates from 2014-2016. Numerous program adjustments were implemented, including increasing overall program requirements, strengthening of clinical and curricular experiences, the addition of digital study resources, and enhancement of resources necessary to support the program. All of these measures are thought to have contributed to significant improvement in the 2017 pass rates. (Table 14).

Table 14. Nursing NCLEX First-Time Pass Rates

NCLEX First-Time Pass Rates		
	Barton College	NC Pass Rate
2012	100%	86%
2013	95%	79%

2014	60%	78%
2015	73%	81%
2016	72%	81%
2017	95%	83%

Job Placement:

The College keeps data on the employment and continuing education of graduates. Some of this information comes from the Senior Survey administered in the student's final semester, some from Career Services, some from Alumni Surveys, and some from the academic deans. Table 15 summarizes six-month graduate survey data from the classes of 2013 through 2017.

Table 15. Six-Month Graduate Survey Results

Year	Number of Graduates	Response Rate	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Continuing Education
2013	222	63%	76%	9%	9%
2014	222	77%	78%	6%	11%
2015	273	70%	88%	2%	8%
2016	226	73%	79%	9%	7%
2017	265	69%	90%	1%	6%

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) First-Destination Survey for the Class of 2016 (October 2017), more than half of bachelor's degree graduates were employed full-time (57.9%), down from 58.4% for the Class of 2015. Approximately 16.1% were still seeking employment (up from 11% for the Class of 2015) and 17.5% were continuing their education (down slightly from 17.7% for the Class of 2015). In 2017, 90% of Barton graduates who responded to the survey reported that they were employed full-time, which is significantly higher than the NACE survey results. Fewer of our students were continuing their education (only 6%) compared to the national average of 17.5%.

Use of Student Achievement Data:

Student achievement data are shared with a variety of constituents in a variety of ways. The Office of Institutional Research shares enrollment figures, retention rates, graduation rates, Senior Survey results, and NSSE results with Senior Staff (the President and Vice Presidents) and Academic Council (Deans and Directors) on a regular basis via email, at staff meetings, or during retreats focused on these topics. Senior staff then share this information with faculty and staff at either the College Assembly or the Faculty and Staff Assemblies. Prior to the start of each semester, faculty and staff trainings (FAST) are held. Workshops have been held on a variety of topics to inform faculty and staff of our student's achievements and to evaluate and discuss the results. Student Achievement data is also reviewed annually at the spring meeting of the IE Task Force and at the spring Board of Trustees Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success subcommittee meeting.

In addition to sharing the student achievement data with administrative and academic leaders so that they can make data-informed decisions, Barton officials also share the data with the general public on the institution's webpage and through various printed media (Quick Facts, Viewbook). The Board of Trustees also hears about student achievement during their fall and spring Board Meetings during specially-designated time slots. Students are routinely invited Board meeting to talk about summer internship experiences, practicum experiences, or study abroad experiences. Graduating seniors and recent alumni

have given short presentations to the Board about either their future plans (graduate school and job prospects) or, in the case of the alumni, their employment after leaving Barton and how the College prepared them for the future. The student engagement with the Board of Trustees is always a highlight of the meetings.

Summary:

The above student achievement criteria along with the expected outcomes/thresholds guides the institution and ensures that we are meeting our mission to “provide programs and opportunities to encourage the intellectual, spiritual, social, and cultural development of its students and to challenge them for future leadership and service to their local and global communities.” The data above indicate that Barton College students are enrolled and retained at a comparable rate to our peer institutions (enrollment & retention metrics) and that they progress through the curriculum in an appropriate manner (course completion metrics). Barton College graduates leave the college with honed critical thinking and communication skills that allow them to be future leaders and serve their communities (graduation rates & capstone metrics). Barton College graduates are also successful in gaining employment upon graduation (job placement metrics).