

» Office of Institutional  
Research and Planning



**FRESHMAN RETENTION AND  
GRADUATION STUDY – FALL 2018**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Executive Summary ..... ii  
    Purpose and Rationale ..... ii  
    Summary of Major Findings ..... ii  
    Research Questions ..... ii  
Results ..... 1  
    First year Retention Rate for Students Who Enrolled as *First-Time Freshmen* ..... 1  
    Six year Graduation Rate for Students Who Enrolled as *First-Time Freshmen* ..... 3

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

### Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to provide a brief overview of the institution's first-time freshman student population. Specifically, this study explores and describes trends and behaviors regarding student retention and graduation rates.

### Summary of Major Findings

- Georgia Tech is doing a better job of retaining students for two years. From 2011 (91.6%) to 2016 (94.4%) the number of students retained for at least two years has gone up.
- The College of Computing and the College of Design had the highest first year retention rate with the 2018 cohorts at 98.6% and 98.2% respectively. (Figure 1).
- Overall, Black/African American students tend to have the lowest first-year retention rates of freshman students. First year retention rates for Black/African American students increased to a high of 96.58% in for the 2014 cohort, which was higher than Hispanic/Latino (96.2%) and white/Caucasian (96.49%) students.
- Approximately 80% of students who received bachelor's degrees in 2018 graduated within five years.

### Research Questions

- RQ1 What is the first-year retention rate of students who enrolled at Georgia Institute of Technology as *first-time freshmen* between Fall 2011 and Fall 2017?
- RQ2 What is the six-year graduation rate of students who enrolled at Georgia Institute of Technology as *first-time freshmen* between AY2011 and AY2017?

## RESULTS

### First year Retention Rate for Students Who Enrolled as *First-Time Freshmen*

RQ1. What is the first-year retention rate of students who enrolled at Georgia Institute of Technology as *first-time freshmen* between Fall 2011 and Fall 2017?

- The first-year student retention rate has continued to increase over the past five years consecutively, with the 2017 Cohort retained at 97.2%.
- The 2011 and 2012 cohorts had the greatest drop in retention (-4.1) between their first and second year from 95.7% to 91.6% and 95.6% to 91.5%, respectively (See Table 1).

Table 1: Retention by Cohort

Cohort	N	Retained 1 Year		Retained 2 Years		Retained 3 Years		Retained 4 Years		Retained 5 Years		Retained 6 Years		Retained 7 Years	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2011	2,692	2,576	95.7%	2,465	91.6%	2,399	89.1%	2,399	89.1%	2,393	88.9%	2,396	89.0%	2,402	89.2%
2012	3,039	2,904	95.6%	2,782	91.5%	2,749	90.5%	2,737	90.1%	2,729	89.8%	2,721	89.5%		
2013	2,669	2,563	96.0%	2,496	93.5%	2,488	93.2%	2,456	92.0%	2,458	92.1%				
2014	2,805	2,713	96.7%	2,626	93.6%	2,586	92.2%	2,573	91.7%						
2015	3,087	3,005	97.3%	2,923	94.7%	2,884	93.4%								
2016	2,871	2,782	96.9%	2,709	94.4%										
2017	2,854	2,775	97.2%												

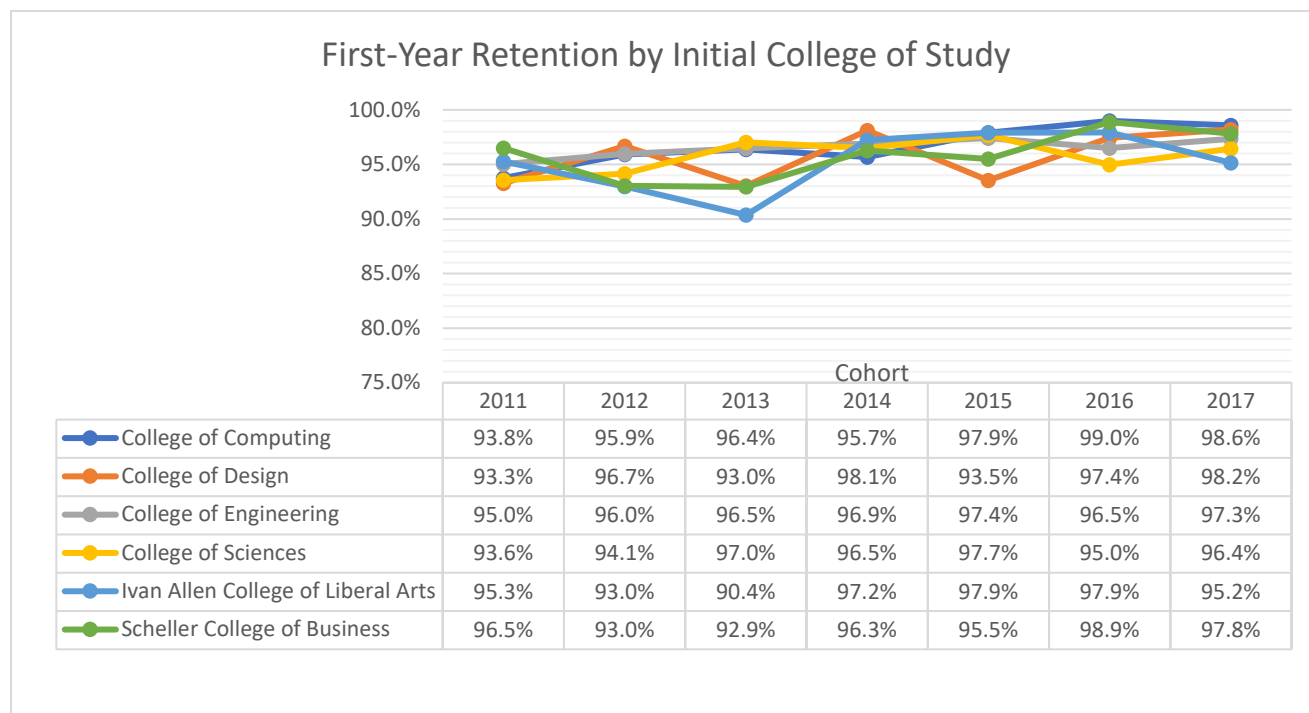
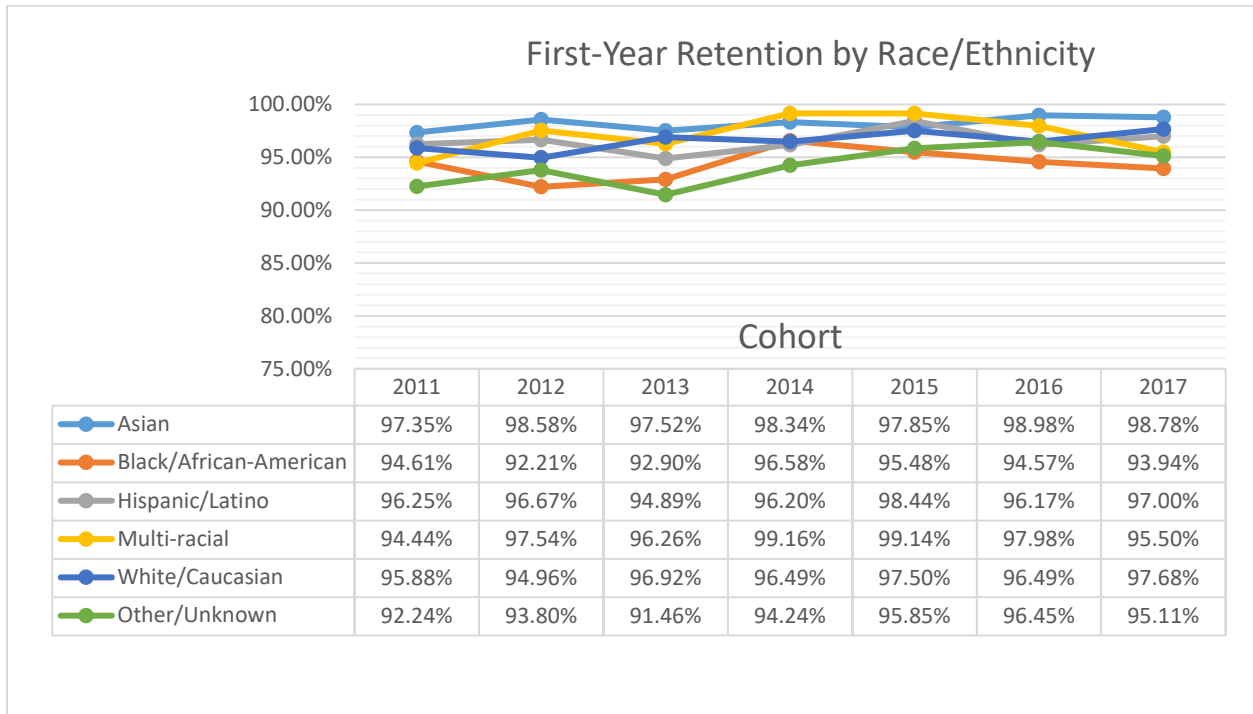


Figure 1: Student Retention by Initial College of Study

- Although not relatively low in comparison to other colleges of study, the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts has the lowest first-year student retention rate at 95.2% for the 2017 Cohort, while the College of Computing had the highest first-year retention rate (98.6%) followed by the Scheller College of Business (97.8%).
- From 2011 to 2017, the first year retention rate for all Colleges has experienced an upward trajectory. Fluctuations have occurred over time due to changes in business practices or policy that take place within each individual college.



**Figure 2: Student Retention by Race/Ethnicity**

- The first-year retention rates have increased over time from 2011-2017 for all race/ethnicity categories.
- The retention rate for Black/African American students has been historically lower than for other races. Since 2014, retention rates have gradually declined by approximately one percentage point per cohort.

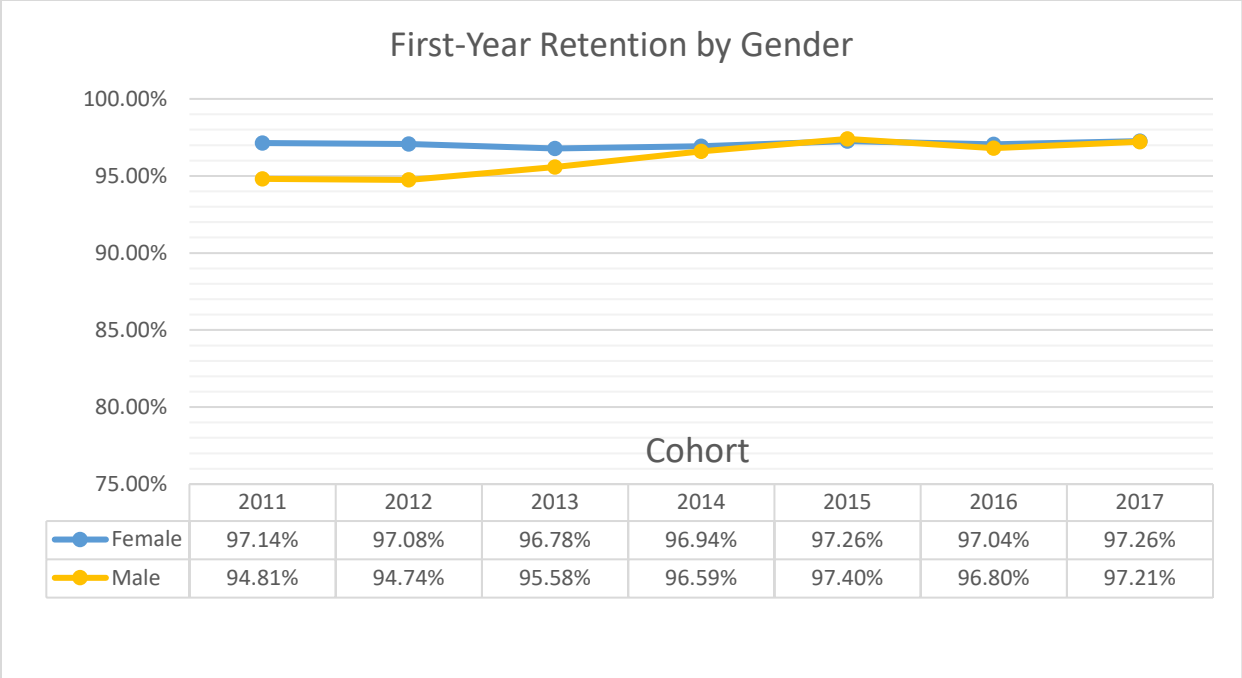


Figure 3: Student Retention by Gender

- From 2014 to 2017, female student retention rates achieved parity with male students.
- First-year retention rates for both males and females have remained steady at approximately 97% since 2015.

**Six year Graduation Rate for Students Who Enrolled as *First-Time Freshmen***

RQ2 What is the six-year graduation rate of students who enrolled at Georgia Institute of Technology as *first-time freshmen* between AY2011 and AY2017?

- The average six-year graduation rate for students across all cohorts is 84.33% (See Table 2). The six-year graduation rate was measured iteratively at or less than ( $\leq$ ) four years (40.42%), five years (80.27%), and culminating at six years.
- Although graduation rates have remained steady over the last five years, the 4-year graduation rates have continued to increase from 36.85% in 2011 to 43.81% in 2014, with 80.27% of students graduating in five years (See Table 2).
- When disaggregated by race and completion year, Black/African-American students have the lowest 4-year and 5-year graduation rates at 25.7% and 63.1% respectively (See Figure 4).
- Asian students have the highest graduation rates across all intervals (4-year, 5-year, and 6-year) and among all races at 53.4%, 82.5%, and 85.9% respectively.

Table 2: First Year First Time Freshman Graduation Rates by Cohort

Cohort	N	4-Yr Graduation Rate		5-Yr Graduation Rate		6-Yr Graduation Rate	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
2011	2,692	1,063	36.85%	2,167	77.86%	2,318	83.47%
2012	3,039	1,213	37.74%	2,503	80.19%	2,655	85.19%
2013	2,669	1,221	43.27%	2,275	82.77%		
2014	2,805	1,305	43.81%				
2015	3,087	-					
<b>Avg (<math>\mu</math>)</b>		<b>40.42%</b>		<b>80.27%</b>		<b>84.33%</b>	

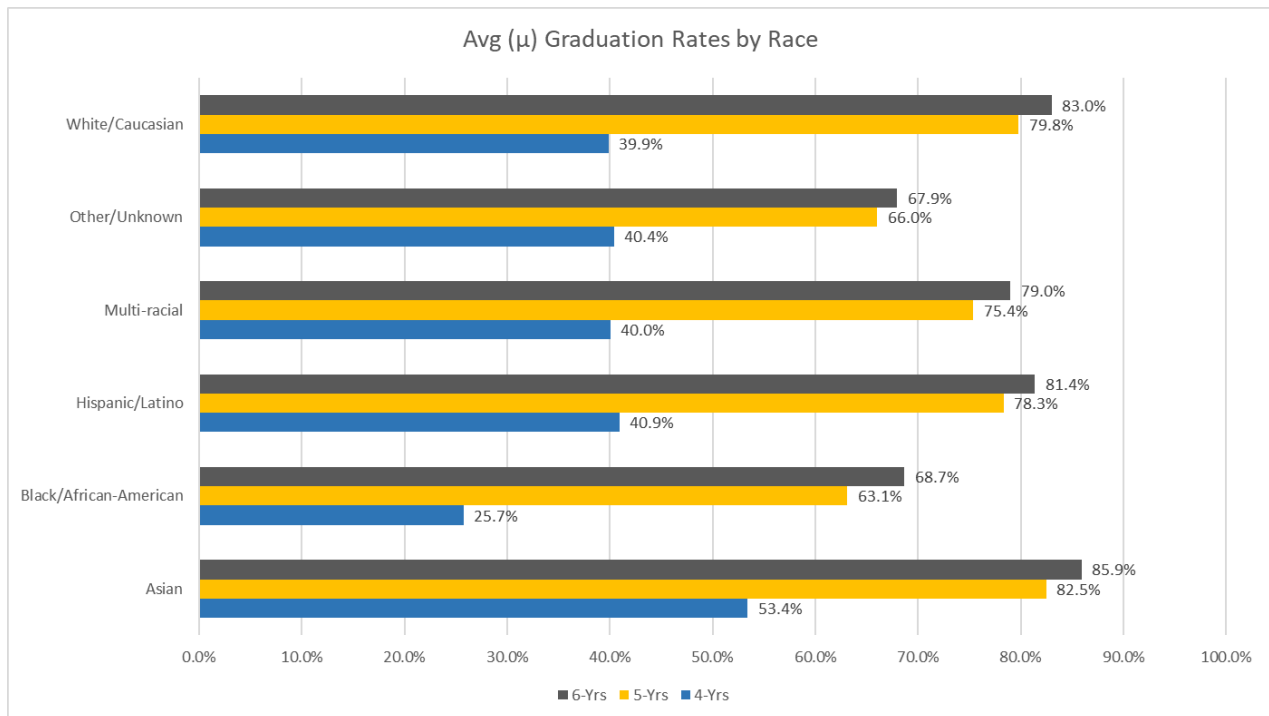


Figure 4: Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Completion Year

- The five-year and six-year graduation rates for initial majors in the Scheller College of Business and the College of Computing are higher than the other colleges of study (See Figure 5). This could be attributed to increasing enrollment in the College of Computing while enrollment in the Scheller College of Business has remained relatively flat (See Figure 6).
- The College of Engineering has the lowest five-year and six-year graduation rates (See Figure 5), despite having the highest enrollment of all colleges of study.
- Four-year and five-year graduation rates are nearly in parity for all other Colleges (See Figure 5).

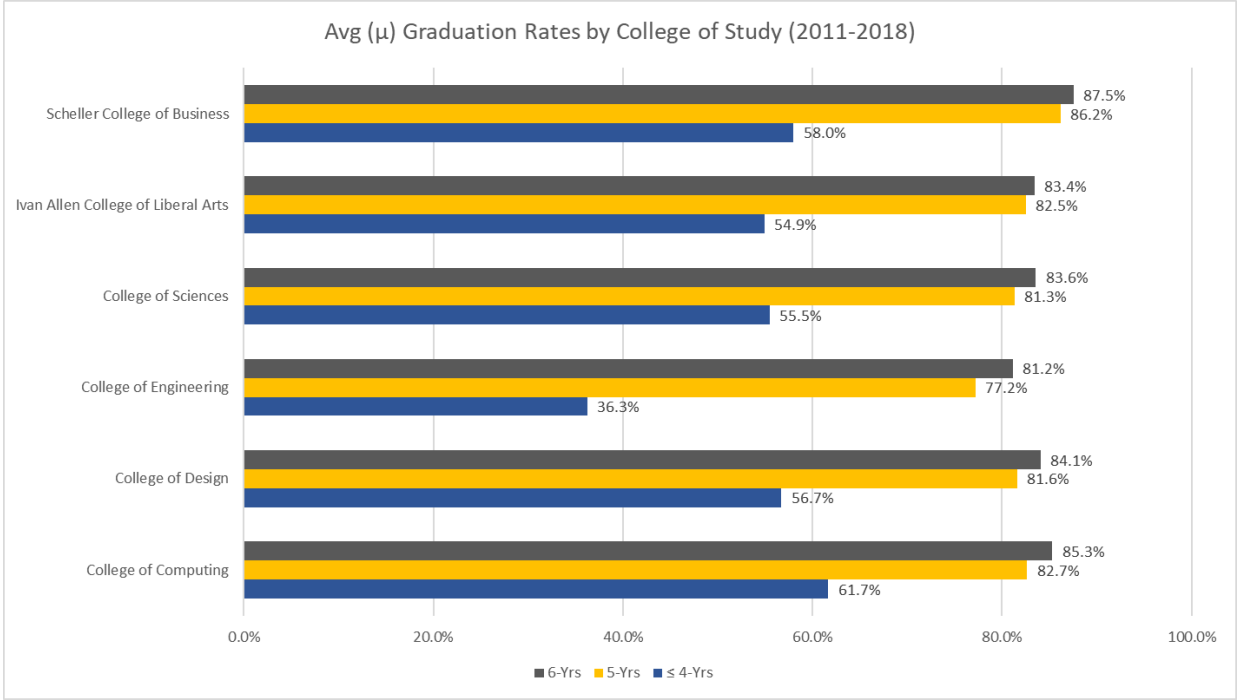


Figure 5: Graduation Rates by College of Study (2011-2018)

- The College of Engineering (COE) has the lowest four-year graduation rate (36.4%) of the six colleges at Georgia Tech; however, the programs of study in COE have higher credit hour requirements than programs offered within other colleges at Georgia Tech which may attribute to the lower four-year rate.