



**THOMPSON
RIVERS
UNIVERSITY**

Integrated
Planning &
Effectiveness

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Fall 2017 Student Retention

Aboriginal Baccalaureate Students

Open and Selective Baccalaureate Programs

Arts, Business, Computing Science, Fine Arts,
Natural Resource Science, Science, Tourism

Kamloops Campus



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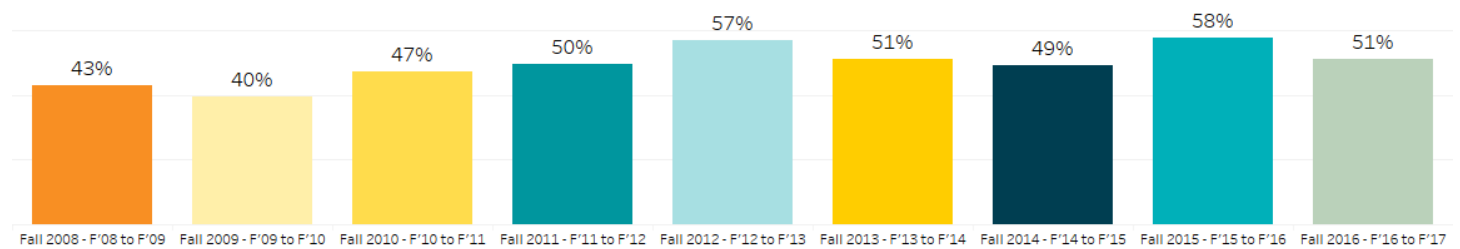
Summary

This report examines the pathways of Aboriginal students after they begin one of the following Kamloops baccalaureate programs at TRU in a fall semester: Arts, Business Administration, Computing Science, Fine Arts, Natural Resource Science, Science, and Tourism Management. A group of new students who start in the same semester is called a ‘cohort.’ **Students in these cohorts may have started in a new credential type only (for example, moved from a TRU diploma to a TRU baccalaureate program) or they may be completely new to TRU.** TRU’s selected baccalaureate programs account for the largest intake of new students each year; 11% of the students in the Fall 2016 cohort self-identified to TRU as Aboriginal.

Findings

The fall to fall retention rate of Aboriginal students in the Kamloops programs (Arts, Business Administration, Computing Science, Fine Arts, Natural Resource Science, Science, and Tourism) has fluctuated over the past nine years. Due to the smaller number of Aboriginal students, the retention rates fluctuate more year to year than the overall new student cohort. Of the 141 new Aboriginal baccalaureate students who began studies in these seven programs at Kamloops campus in Fall 2016, 51% (72 students) returned in Fall 2017 (in any program, on any campus). Half of the students who left before completing a credential left between the first and the second fall.

Figure 1: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Retention Rates for Aboriginal Students (Selected Baccalaureate Programs in Kamloops)



The smallest Aboriginal cohort size in the last nine years was in Fall 2010 (76 students), and the highest was in Fall 2016 with 141 students (Figure 2). The peak in cohort size and Fall to Fall retention for the cohort Fall 2016 resulted in 72 students continuing into the second Fall, which is the largest number of the students retained over all the cohorts. Although the retention rate decreased for the cohort Fall 2016, there were still 12 more students retained in the second fall compared to cohort Fall 2015 due to the larger cohort size of cohort Fall 2016.

Figure 2: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Cohort Sizes for Aboriginal Students (Selected Baccalaureate Programs in Kamloops)

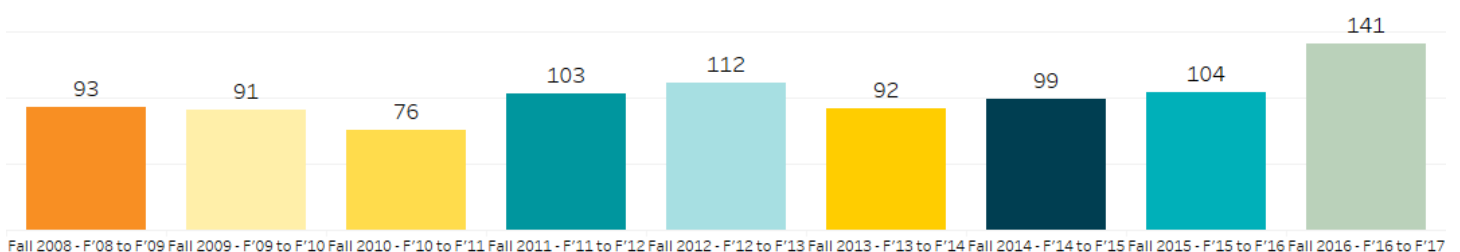


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Notes and Definitions

The TRU Registrar has defined the following:

Open Baccalaureate Programs: Arts, Business Administration, Science

Selective Baccalaureate Programs: Computing Science, Fine Arts, and Tourism Management, General Studies, Health Sciences, Interdisciplinary Studies, Journalism, Technology

Selective (Competitive) Baccalaureate Programs: Education, Nursing, and Social Work

Criteria for inclusion in this report:

- Students started in one of seven open and selective (non-competitive) baccalaureate programs: Arts, Business Administration, Computing Science, Fine Arts, Natural Resource Science, Science, or Tourism
- Student self-identified as Aboriginal (including Metis, Inuit, or Status, Treaty and non-Treaty First Nation)
- Did not previously study in a baccalaureate program at TRU
- Started at Kamloops campus
- Started in a fall semester between Fall 2008 and Fall 2016

Excluded:

- Students who started in winter or summer semesters
- Cohorts of less than 5 are not displayed

Aboriginal: Students have the option to self-identify as Aboriginal, including Metis, Inuit, or Status, Treaty and non-Treaty First Nation when they register with TRU.

Age Group: Age was calculated as of the year that students began studies at TRU.

Cohort: A group of students who began their studies in the same semester.

Completion: When students earned a credential. Some students continued to be enrolled at TRU after completing a credential. Additionally, some students did not graduate immediately after finishing the requirements for a credential. To accommodate for this, students were counted as having completed in the semester that they last attended classes if they graduated within two semesters of ceasing to be enrolled at TRU.

Course Load: Calculated as a sum of credits taken by the student in the first semester. Twelve (12) or more credits is considered full-time by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education. Nine (9) credits or more is considered full-time for the purposes of financial aid. Less than 9 credits is considered part-time.

Fall to Fall Retention Rate: The percentage of a cohort that remained enrolled at TRU in the next Fall semester, regardless of whether they switched programs or attended a different campus.

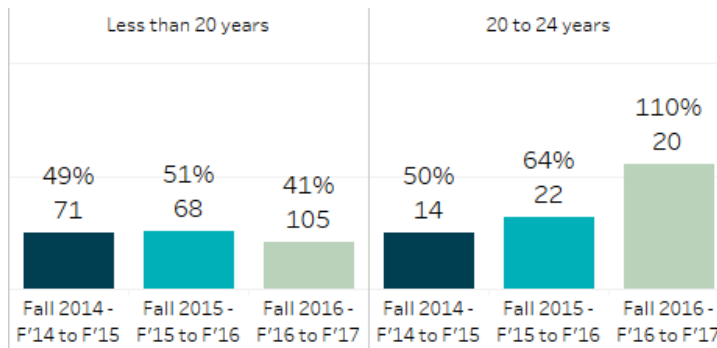
Percentage-point: The difference between two percentage numbers.

Fall 1 to Fall 2 Retention Characteristics

Age Group

The largest age group of students was those who were less than 20 years old. The Fall 1 to fall 2 retention rate for this group decreased by 10 percentage-points for cohort Fall 2016 (F'16 to F'17). However, more Aboriginal students were retained compared to the previous cohorts because of the larger cohort size of Fall 2016. Retention rates for the 20 to 24 years group increased, while the rates decreased for the 25 to 29 years group (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Aboriginal Student Retention by Age Group



Bar height indicates retention rate. Starting cohort size is displayed below retention rate. Cohorts of less than five are not displayed.

Credential Sought Some retention rates by program are not displayed due to small cohort sizes (Figure 4).

Gender

Changes in Aboriginal student retention were not isolated to a specific gender or age group. Due to the size of the female cohort increase from 68 students in Fall 2015 (F'15 to F'16) to 97 in Fall 2016 (F'16 to F'17) (Figure 5), more female Aboriginal students were retained for the Fall 2016 cohort despite a 6 percentage-points drop of retention rate. The same was true for male students (8 percentage-points drop, but larger cohort size of Fall 2016) (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Aboriginal Student Retention by Credential Sought

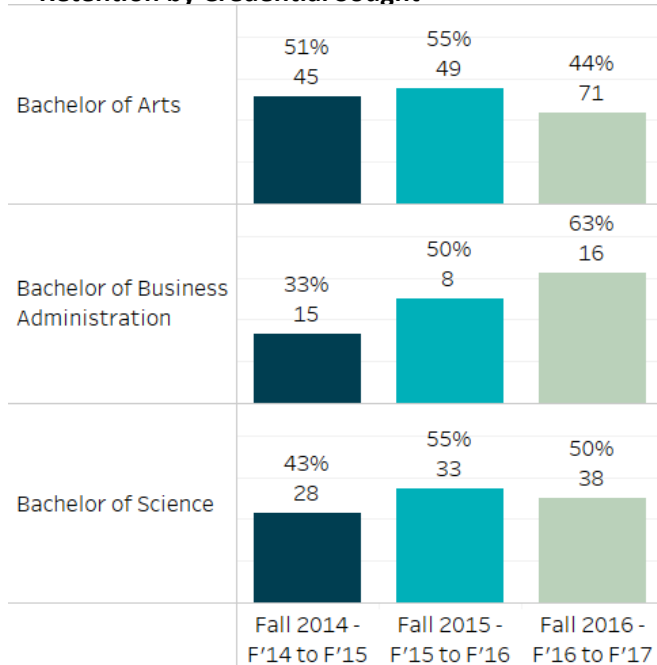
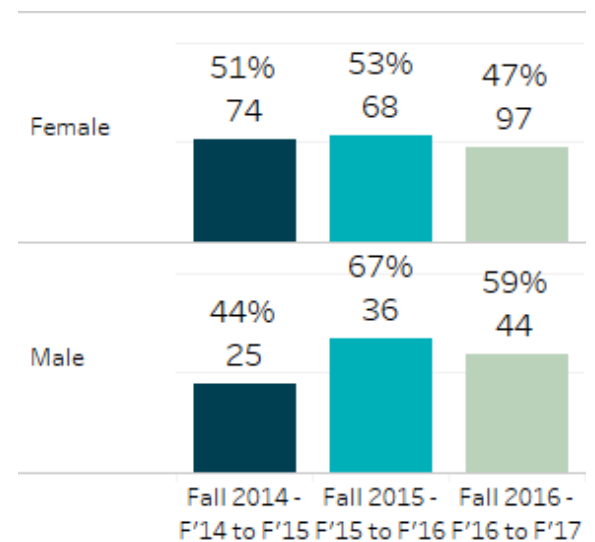


Figure 5: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Aboriginal Student Retention by Gender

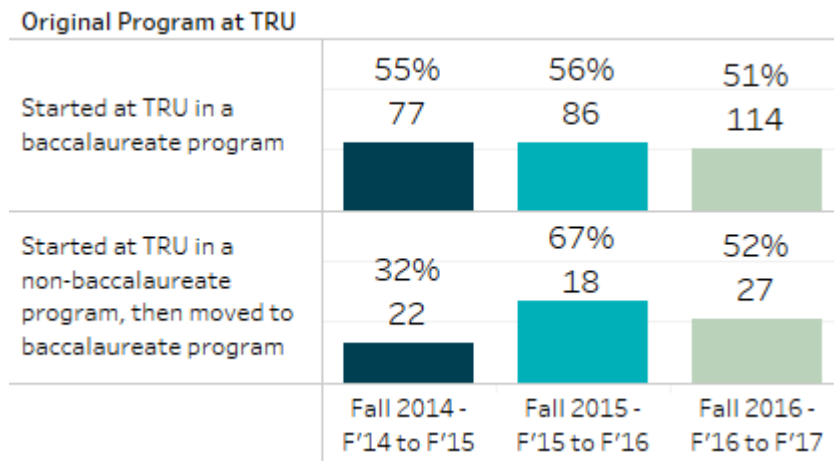


Original Program at TRU

Retention varied by original program at TRU, credits earned in first term, and first term GPA. Retention rates for first year baccalaureate Kamloops Aboriginal students were highest for those who took a full course load in the first term, and achieved GPAs at 3.00 or above in that term.

Aboriginal students who started at TRU by immediately entering a baccalaureate program were retained at 51% in Fall 2016 (F'16 to F'17). Those who started at TRU in a non-baccalaureate program and then moved to a baccalaureate program were retained at 52% for the same cohort. Although retention rates decreased for the both groups of cohort Fall 2016, there were actually more students retained (Figure 6) due to the larger starting cohort size compared to the previous cohorts.

Figure 6: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Aboriginal Student Retention by Original Program at TRU



Bar height indicates retention rate. Starting cohort size is displayed below retention rate. Cohorts of less than five are not displayed.

Credits Earned in First Term

The Fall 2016 (F'16 to F'17) retention rate was highest for students who took 12 or more credits (64%), compared to students who took 9 to 11 credits (43%) and less than 9 credits (27%) (Figure 7).

First Term GPA

Fall 1 to fall 2 retention rates varied by GPA. Aboriginal students who achieved a first term GPA of 3.00 or higher had the highest retention rates (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Aboriginal Student Retention by Credits Earned in First Term

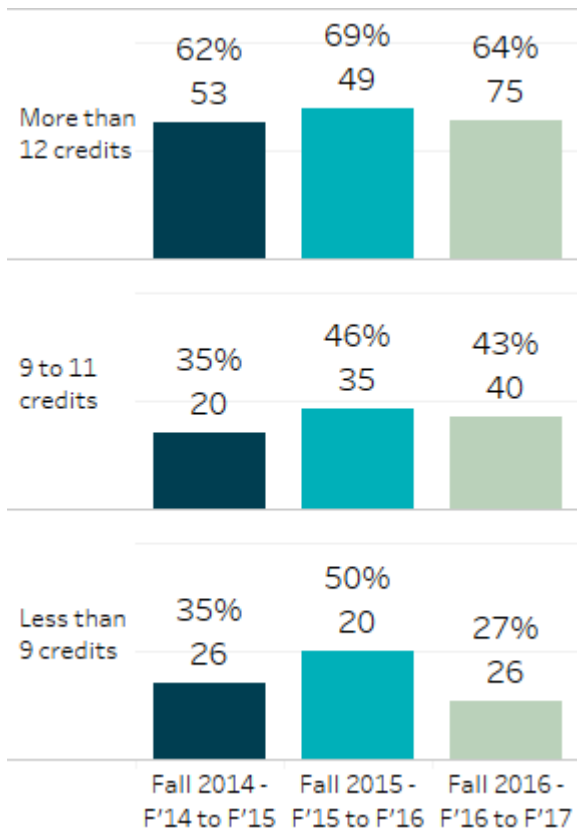
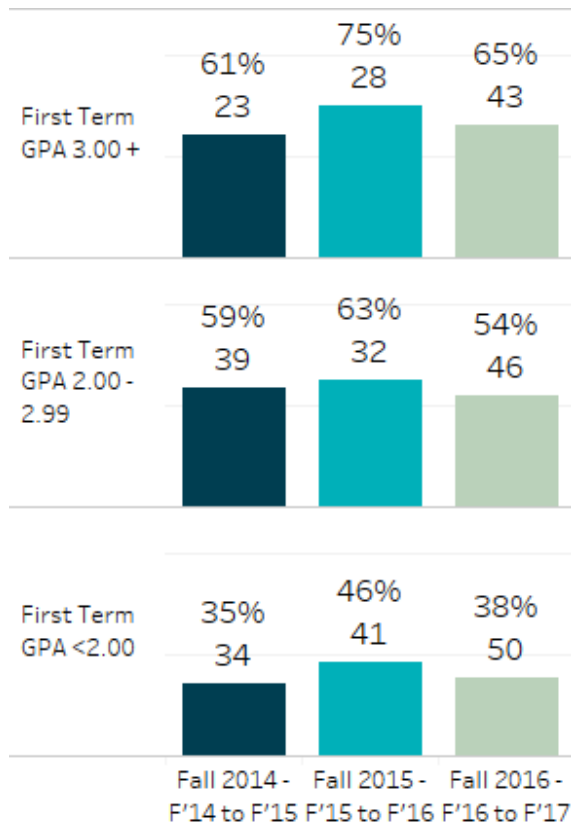


Figure 8: Fall 1 to Fall 2 Aboriginal Student Retention by First Term GPA



Bar height indicates retention rate. Starting cohort size is displayed below retention rate. Cohorts of less than five are not displayed.