

Executive Summary

CSRDE Retention and Graduation Rates

First-Time Full-Time Degree-Seeking Freshmen from 2001 to 2007



Texas A&M University
A Unique American Institution

Office of Institutional Studies and Planning
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Comparison of Texas A&M with Peer Institutions

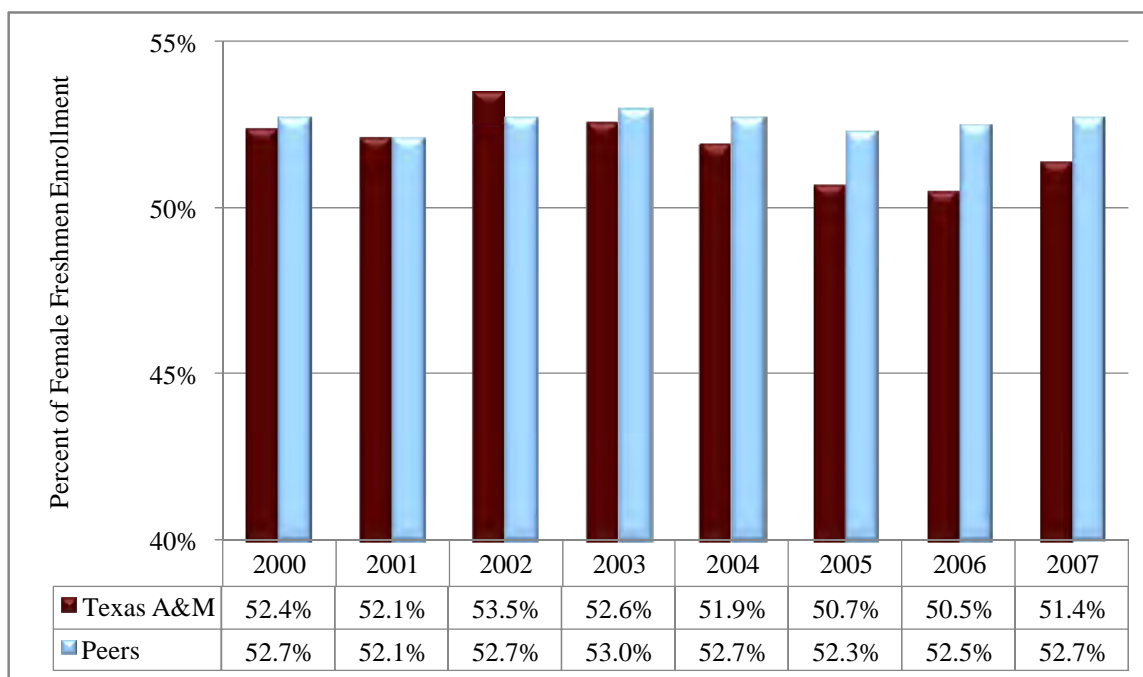
Each year Texas A&M University participates in the national survey of Freshmen Retention and Graduation Rates conducted through the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE). The survey tracks the year-to-year retention and graduation rates of the first-time full-time degree-seeking freshman cohorts, including the freshmen who are enrolled in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors. Each of the yearly cohorts is followed from the fall of the first year enrollment through the fall of the following six years. The data elements include initial cohort headcount, average ACT/SAT, as well as the retention and graduation rates from the second year through the sixth years for each of the cohorts. Cohort data is also provided by gender and race. The data is collected at the cohort level, not the unit record level.

This report summarizes the retention and graduation rates of 2000-2007 entering freshman cohorts in Texas A&M University as compared to our Vision 2020 peer universities. General overview of the trends and findings is presented to benchmark our efforts in navigating our freshmen through graduation. There are two sections in the report: retention and graduation rates for All Freshmen; and for Under Represented Minority (URM).

Section I. All Freshmen

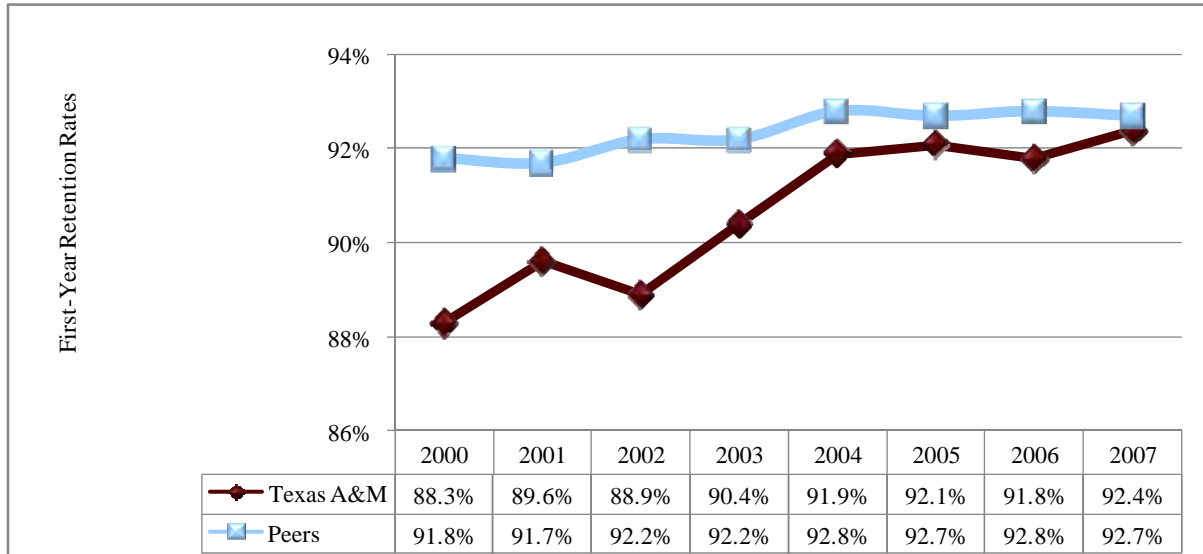
- 1) **Freshman enrollment increased steadily from 2000 through 2007** for both Texas A&M and our peers, with female students making up a slightly higher percentage of the freshman cohorts than male students. In the cohort of 2007 at Texas A&M, 51.4% of the 7,587 freshmen were females and 48.6% were males (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percent of Female Freshmen Enrollment (2000-2007 Cohorts)



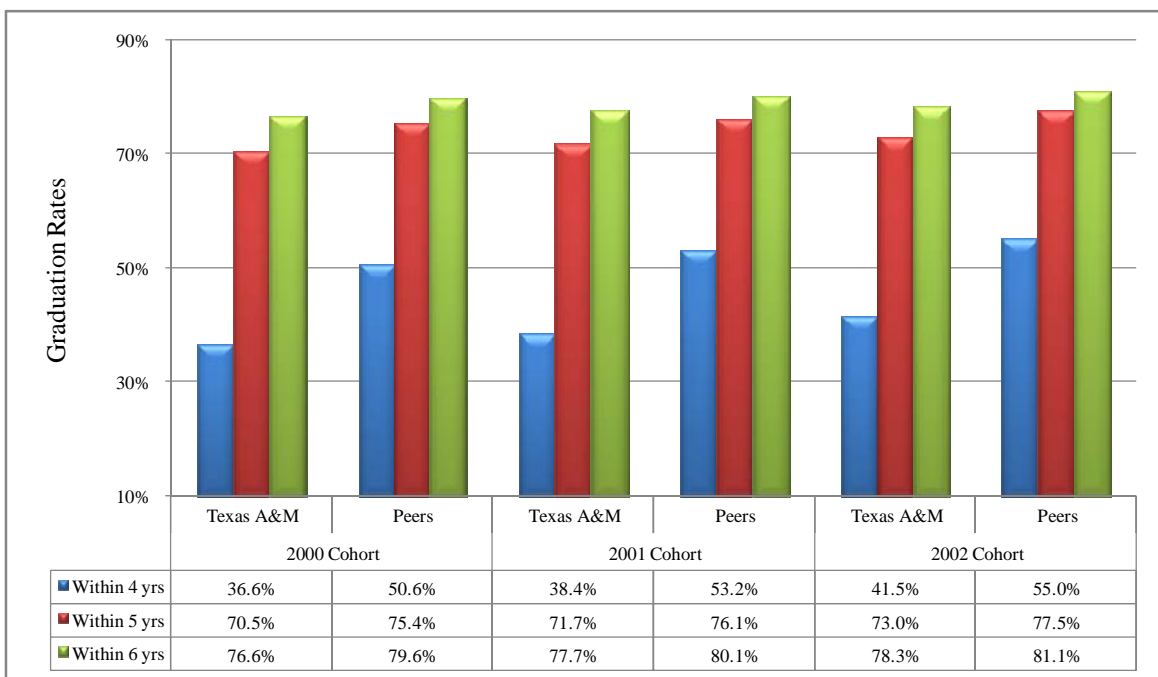
- 2) **Texas A&M first-year retention rates increased significantly** from 88.3% for the 2000 cohort to 92.4% for the 2007 cohort. Our peer’s average rate for the 2007 cohort was 92.7% (Figure 2).

Figure 2. First-Year Retention Rates (2000-2007 Cohorts)



- 3) When measured by 4-, 5-, and 6-year **graduation rates**, **Texas A&M showed consistently lower rates** than our peers. For the 2002 cohort, there was a 2.8 percentage point difference between Texas A&M 6-year graduation rates (78.3%) and our peers (81.1%; Figure 3).

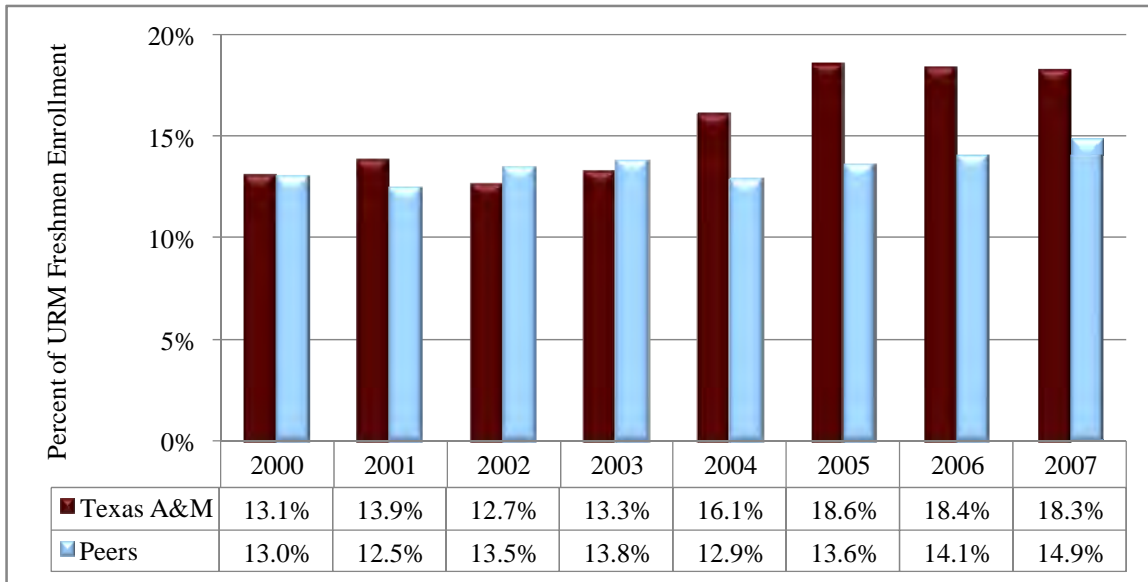
Figure 3. Graduation Rates by Years-to-Graduation (2000, 2001, and 2002 Cohorts)



Section II. Under Represented Minority Freshmen (URM)

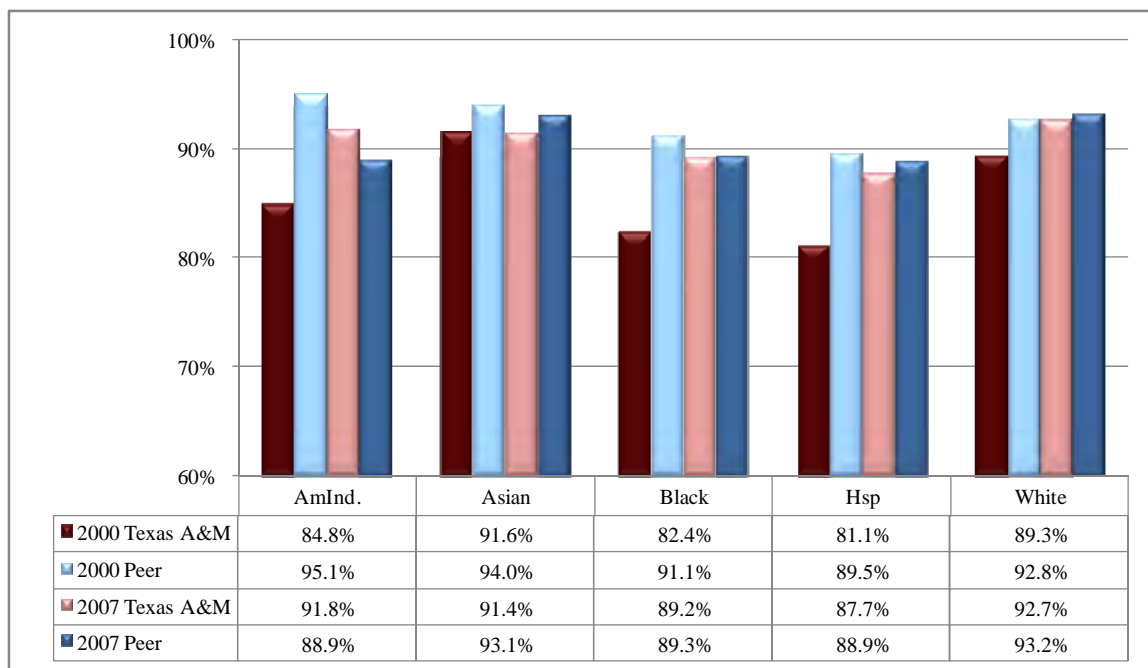
4) CSRDE defines the underrepresented minority students (URM) as those with the ethnic origins of American Indian, Black, and Hispanic. **There was a 5.2 percentage points increase (18.3%-13.1%) in the Texas A&M URM freshmen enrollment** from 2000 to 2007. The comparable proportion for our peers is 1.9% (14.9%-13.0%; Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent of URM to Total First-time Freshmen Enrollment (2000-2006 Cohort)



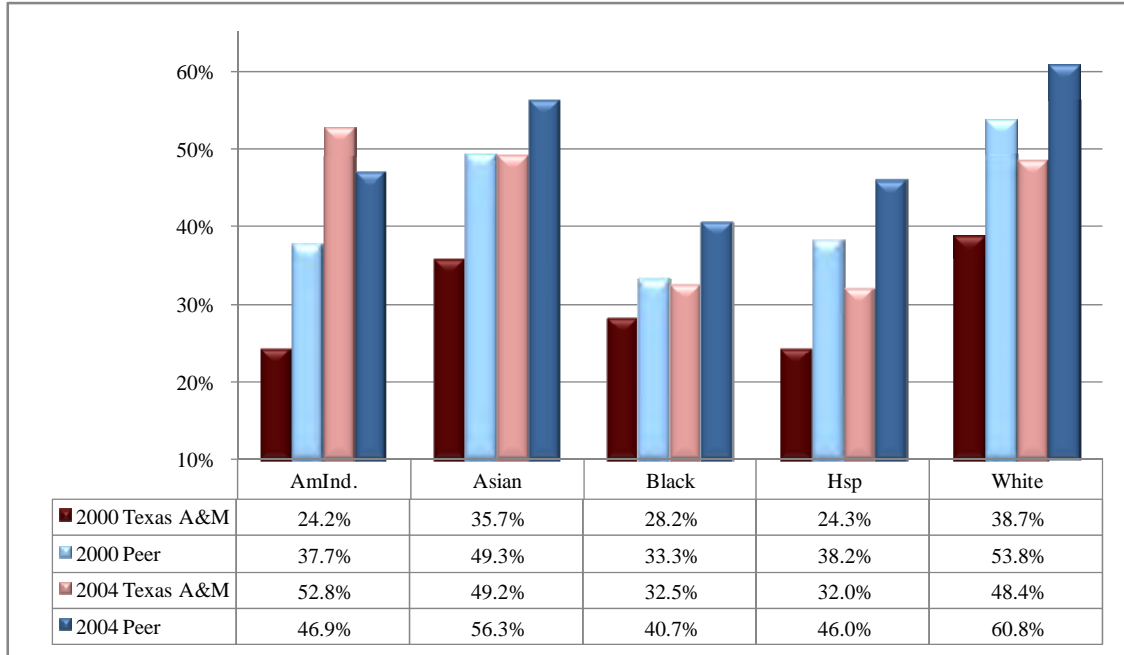
5) At Texas A&M and our peers, URM students performed lower first-year retention rates than the non-URM groups. However, **Texas A&M has improved its URM retention significantly** in 2007 cohorts, especially for the Black and Hispanic students (Figure 5).

Figure 5. First-Year Retention Rates by Ethnicity (2000 and 2007 Cohorts)



- 6) **Four-Year Graduation rates were generally lower for URM students than for students from other ethnic groups.** This was true for both Texas A&M and our peer institutions (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Four-Year Graduation Rates by Ethnicity (2000 and 2004 Cohort)



- 7) The gap between URM students and students from other ethnic groups narrowed when the **Six-Year Graduation rates** were measured. For both Texas A&M and our peers, **Black students showed consistently the lowest graduation rates** (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Six-Year Graduation Rates by Ethnicity (2000 and 2002 Cohort)

