

Bradley University
Retention, Persistence, Completer, and Graduation Rate Definitions
January 29, 2020

Below you will find definitions for Retention, Persistence, Completers, and Graduation Rates that were vetted during the Fall 2019 semester. These are the definitions being used to guide retention and program prioritization work occurring across campus.

University freshman to sophomore retention rate

University freshman to sophomore retention rate is defined by continued enrollment of first-time full-time students within Bradley University from the fall semester of the student's first year to the fall semester of the student's second year. Continued enrollment is at the University and not contingent upon changes to a student's major while they are at Bradley. *A first-time student is a student for whom Bradley University is their first higher education institution.*

University sophomore to junior retention rate

University sophomore to junior retention rate: the percent of first-time full-time students who continue within Bradley University from the fall semester of their second year to the fall semester of their third year.

University junior to senior retention rate

University junior to senior retention rate: the percent of first-time full-time students who continue within Bradley University or complete their degree from the fall semester of their third year until the fall semester of their fourth year.

University persistence rate

The percent of all students enrolled at Bradley University, regardless of when they entered the University, in consecutive fall and spring terms; or spring and fall terms. This definition includes first-time, continuing, and transfer undergraduate students as well as all graduate students.

Completers

The number of students graduating from Bradley within a defined academic year time frame spanning Summer, Fall, and Spring regardless of when they entered the University.

Graduation Rate

As a University, through the Strategic Plan, we have defined four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates. Graduation rates refer to the percent of students who entered Bradley University as first-time full-time students and completed their degrees at Bradley University within four, five, or six years. The unit of measurement is with the University and degree completion is not-contingent upon changes to a student's major while they are enrolled at Bradley.

Although the focus of the above definitions is the University, each of the calculations may also be made at the college or unit level using the same criteria. In other words, retention in a college could track students who entered the institution as a major in the college and were retained as a major within the same college. Unit level retention analysis would track students entering the institution as a major in one unit and continued enrollment in a major within that same unit.