

# AMBERTON UNIVERSITY

## Student Achievement Data – Business Programs

Amberton University faculty, staff, and administration are committed to assessing student learning outcomes for the purpose of continuous improvement of undergraduate and graduate business programs. Amberton caters to a mature working adult population. The majority of students have spent many years in the business world. Therefore, we use and value student derived indicators to assess the relevancy of our business programs. In addition to graduation rates and course completion, these indicators rely heavily on student satisfaction, student professional growth and advancement, and program relevancy.

### Course Completion

Each session, the Office for Institutional Effectiveness produces a report on grade distribution by course. This report gives a breakdown of grades given for each course taught for the session. As a part of this report, the percentage of withdrawals for the courses is reported. At year’s end, a summary report is provided for grades awarded to students enrolled for the academic year. The administration reviews these reports each session and at year’s end looking for courses that have a pattern of higher than normal withdrawals.

Adult students often have work and family responsibilities that prevent them from successful course completion. Amberton University faculty works with these students on an individual basis to help them successfully complete the course; however, sometimes the best decision is to withdraw and to re-take the course at another time.

The following chart represents a seven- year history of course completion rates for undergraduate and graduate students from academic years 2013/2014 through 2019/2020 derived from the annual reports of grade distributions. A course is counted as completed if the student did not drop and earned academic credit. Because of the unique nature of Amberton University and its primary focus on the adult learner, sources for comparative data are insufficient. In determining an acceptable threshold for course completion rates, the University relies on its historical data for trends and benchmarks.

<b>Seven Year History of Course Completion Rates</b>														
	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
Completion Rate	UG	G	UG	G	UG	G	UG	G	UG	G	UG	G	UG	G
	85%	90%	85%	90%	83%	89%	84%	90%	84%	90%	85%	89%	87%	88%

The course completion data for the past seven years shows a consistency in rates for undergraduates and graduates. Undergraduates complete courses within a range of 83% to 87% while graduate students complete at a rate of 88% to 90%. It is to be expected that undergraduate students would have a slightly lower completion rate than graduate students because they tend to take more hours per session. In reviewing course completion data, the

University seeks to achieve greater than an 80% completion rate for undergraduates and graduates. The 2019/20 course completion rate for graduates dipped slightly due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amberton University also monitors course completion by academic division – Business, Human Development, and Interdisciplinary. These three divisions reflect the emphasis of the University’s degree programs on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Courses in the Business Division include Accounting, Business, Economics, Finance, Management, Management Information Systems, and Marketing. Human Development courses include Counseling, Human Behavior and Development, and Psychology. Interdisciplinary courses include Communication, English, History, Human Resources and Training, Humanities, Math, Religion, Required Graduate Studies (Ethics/Research) and Science.

The following chart reflects course completion by academic division for the past three years. Results are divided further by courses taken at the undergraduate and graduate levels. As in the previous chart, a course is counted as completed if the student did not drop and earned academic credit.

<b>Amberton University Three Year History of Course Completion by Academic Division</b>						
<b>Divisions</b>	<b>2017/18</b>		<b>2018/19</b>		<b>2019/20</b>	
	<b>UG</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>G</b>
Business	87%	89%	88%	88%	90%	89%
Human Development	81%	93%	87%	92%	85%	93%
Interdisciplinary	78%	84%	78%	83%	83%	83%

A review of the three-year data by academic division shows that in all but two categories, the University met its goal of a course completion rate of greater than 80%. In the category of Interdisciplinary studies – Undergraduate students for year 2017/18 and 2018/19 the rate was 78%, which is two points under the goal. A further review of the data for this period showed that a significant number of the course withdrawals came from computational courses, science courses, and writing intensive courses offered online. Academic Services is addressing the issue of trying to keep students engaged throughout the session in order to decrease the number of withdrawals. In all three years, undergraduate students taking business courses completed their coursework at a higher percentage than their colleagues enrolled in other disciplines. Graduate students taking business courses completed coursework at a slightly lower percentage than Human Development counterparts but at a higher percentage than Interdisciplinary students.

### **Graduation Rates**

Amberton University monitors student achievement through graduation rates. The most recent data shows that the average graduation rate for degree-seeking new students entering in the IPEDS reporting year Fall 2012-Summer 2013 is approximately 53% for graduate programs and undergraduate students combined based on a completion timeframe of eight years and allowing for the fact that the students were enrolled part-time. Disaggregated by academic level, the data shows a graduation rate of 55% for graduates and a 37% graduation rate for undergraduates. The charts presented below shows graduation rates for the periods of four, six, and eight years for undergraduates and graduates. The graduation rates are affected by the number of hours accepted in transfer, especially for the undergraduate student, and the

length of the program. For this calculation, the University's graduate programs ranged from a minimum of 36 hours to a maximum of 48 hours depending on degree program requirements.

Fall 2012 – Summer 2013  
Undergraduate Cohort N=99 Graduate Cohort=658

<b>Amberton University Graduation Rates Undergraduates and Graduates</b>				
	<b>Total Graduates</b>	<b>% Graduating Within Four Years</b>	<b>% Graduating Within Six Years</b>	<b>% Graduating Within Eight Years</b>
Undergraduates N=99	37	28.28%	37.37%	N/A
Graduates N=658	364	46.96%	53.19%	55.32%

Amberton also monitors graduation rates for the University's Business Programs, on the undergraduate and graduate levels. The following chart shows the data from the same cohort time period (Fall 2012 – Summer 2013):

Fall 2012 – Summer 2013  
Business Programs  
Undergraduate Cohort N=99 Graduate Cohort=658

<b>Amberton University Graduation Rates Undergraduates and Graduates</b>				
	<b>Total Graduates</b>	<b>% Graduating Within Four Years</b>	<b>% Graduating Within Six Years</b>	<b>% Graduating Within Eight Years</b>
Undergraduates N=51	17	21.57%	33.33%	N/A
Graduates N=274	155	51.46%	55.11%	56.57%

A comparison of the two charts shows that students graduating from the University's Graduate Business Programs did so at a higher rate than the overall composite. Students graduating from the University's Undergraduate Business Programs graduated at a lower rate than the overall composite, which is reflective of the non-traditional, part-time adult student.

Obtaining suitable comparative data for the non-traditional, part-time adult student is challenging as the information supplied through IPEDS and the Department of Education is for first-time, full-time students seeking bachelor's degrees. The University was able to obtain comparative data through Complete College America for the state of Texas but only for bachelor's degree seeking students. Established in 2009, Complete College America is a national nonprofit with a single mission: to work with states to increase significantly the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations.

According to the data supplied by the State of Texas to Complete College America, new students entering in 2009, attending part-time and in the age group of 25 and over had a graduation rate of 11% within four years and a graduation rate of 17% within six years. No data were available for the eight year timeframe. Amberton University's graduation rate for new

students entering in 2012/13, attending part-time and seeking a bachelor's degree was 37% within six years, roughly twice the rate reported by public universities in the State of Texas.

A study conducted by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center for the Fall 2012 beginning cohort at private non-profit Texas Institutions showed a 32.45% completion rate within six years for students attending part-time. Amberton's six-year completion rate of 37.37% for its 2012 undergraduate cohort, attending part-time.

### **Job Placement**

Since the majority of Amberton students are employed when they enroll, the University uses other, more relevant measures for student achievement. However, the University does track the percentage of employed students. For the 2019/20 academic year, the University had 621 unduplicated students enrolled in Business Programs. The percentage of employed students was 84%. For the 2020/21 academic year, the University had 713 unduplicated students enrolled in Business Programs, with the percentage of employed students falling to 81% due in part to the economic effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. Those not listing employers include those currently out of work and looking for employment, retired individuals, persons not seeking employment, and international students holding F1 visas who are prohibited from working while enrolled.

### **Surveys of Recent Graduates**

While the University does not use job placement rates, students are surveyed at the time of graduation and asked questions related to job status changes. Students are asked to indicate whether they have encountered a job status change since their enrollment and to what extent their additional education contributed to a significant salary increase or promotion since enrollment at Amberton. This information, broken down by degree level, is gathered as a part of the University's institutional research. This information is also gathered for the Business Division.

For the year 2020/21, 80% of business program undergraduates finishing their degrees reported a job status change compared to 75% in 2019/20. For the same reporting periods, graduate students reported a job status change in the following percentages: 69% (2020/2021) and 57% (2019/2020).

The data shows that a substantial percentage of Amberton graduates during these time periods received promotions or significant salary increases while they were enrolled and completing their degrees. For those who believed their added education had a positive effect on their advancement, 60% (20/21) to 75% (19/20) undergraduates credited their additional education as a reason for their positive job status change. For graduates, the percentage ranged from 63% (20/21) to 49% (19/20).

### **Student Satisfaction Results**

Each session, Amberton University gives all students the opportunity to evaluate their courses through the Professor/Course Evaluation. Business students are a part of this evaluation process. Through an analysis of the responses, the University is able to determine a level of students' satisfaction with the undergraduate and graduate business programs. This information is used for overall program improvement. All answers are tabulated on a scale from

2=poor to 10=excellent. The results for the following questions on the evaluation are tabulated below providing responses for the Fall 2018, Fall 2019, and Fall 2020 sessions:

**1. Rate the relevance of the assignments to meeting course competencies.**

	Undergraduates	Graduates
Fall 2018	8.85	9.13
Fall 2019	9.33	9.14
Fall 2020	9.27	9.08

**2. Rate the extent to which the course competencies were made clear to you.**

	Undergraduates	Graduates
Fall 2018	8.59	9.03
Fall 2019	9.28	9.11
Fall 2020	9.39	9.17

**3. Rate the extent to which this course provided you with a significant learning experience.**

	Undergraduates	Graduates
Fall 2018	8.64	8.86
Fall 2019	9.17	9.07
Fall 2020	9.12	8.66

**4. Rate the extent to which this class improved your ability to think critically and analyze issues.**

	Undergraduates	Graduates
Fall 2018	8.60	8.74
Fall 2019	8.90	8.91
Fall 2020	8.72	8.74

**5. Rate the extent to which this course added to your ability to apply appropriate ethical standards to discussions, interpretations, and personal use of information related to the discipline.**

	Undergraduates	Graduates
Fall 2018	8.73	8.76
Fall 2019	8.95	8.85
Fall 2020	8.20	8.55

**Conclusion**

The information presented in this report is not comprehensive. It is, however, representative of the unique nature of the student population of Amberton University and the students enrolled in the University's business programs. The administration and faculty regard the assessment of all of the institution's programs and services as a critical component in the overall quality assurance process.