Graduation & Retention Rates and Student Right-to-Know

As we state in our 10-year long-range plan PLU 2020, PLU is dedicated to providing “a supportive educational environment in which effective teaching and learning happens with regularity and for all participants. Pacific Lutheran University challenges students to succeed to the best of their ability academically, provides them support to reach their academic and personal goals and prepares them for a lifetime of success both in their careers and in service to others.”

During the fall semester of 2008, 714 first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students entered Pacific Lutheran University. After 6 years, as of August 31, 2014, 67.8% of these students had graduated from our institution or completed their programs. This percentage is based upon all students who start in the status of first-time and full-time and is tracked as a cohort regardless of any legitimate reasons they may have for leaving except military, missionary or foreign service assignment or death. If the students who transfer out of PLU are excluded, the percentage that started in the year 2008 and graduated in four years (by August 30 of 2012) was 76.9% and 96.9% graduated in 4.5 to 5 years.

Looking at our 2007 cohort, 715 first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students entered Pacific Lutheran University. After 6 years, as of August 31, 2013, 70.4% of these students had graduated from our institution or completed their programs. Excluding those who transfer out, the percentage that started in the year 2007 and graduated in four years (by August 30 of 2011) was 78.3% and 96.2% graduated in 4.5 to 5 years.

For Fall semester 2012, we welcomed 633 first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates. In fall of 2013, 518 of those students returned for a retention rate of 82%. The retention rate for students beginning Fall semester 2013, a first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate cohort of 648, is also 82% or 528 students.

Pacific Lutheran University offers this information on our institution’s graduation/completion and retention rates in compliance with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The act specifies that the graduation rates reflect the graduation/completion status of students for the most recent cohort that has had 150 percent of normal time for completion by August 31 of
the prior year. We are also required to make available the retention rate of certificate- or degree-seeking, first-time, undergraduate students as reported to IPEDS.