

MEASURE 1: Students will Demonstrate Achievement Across All Levels of Academic Instruction through course completion rates

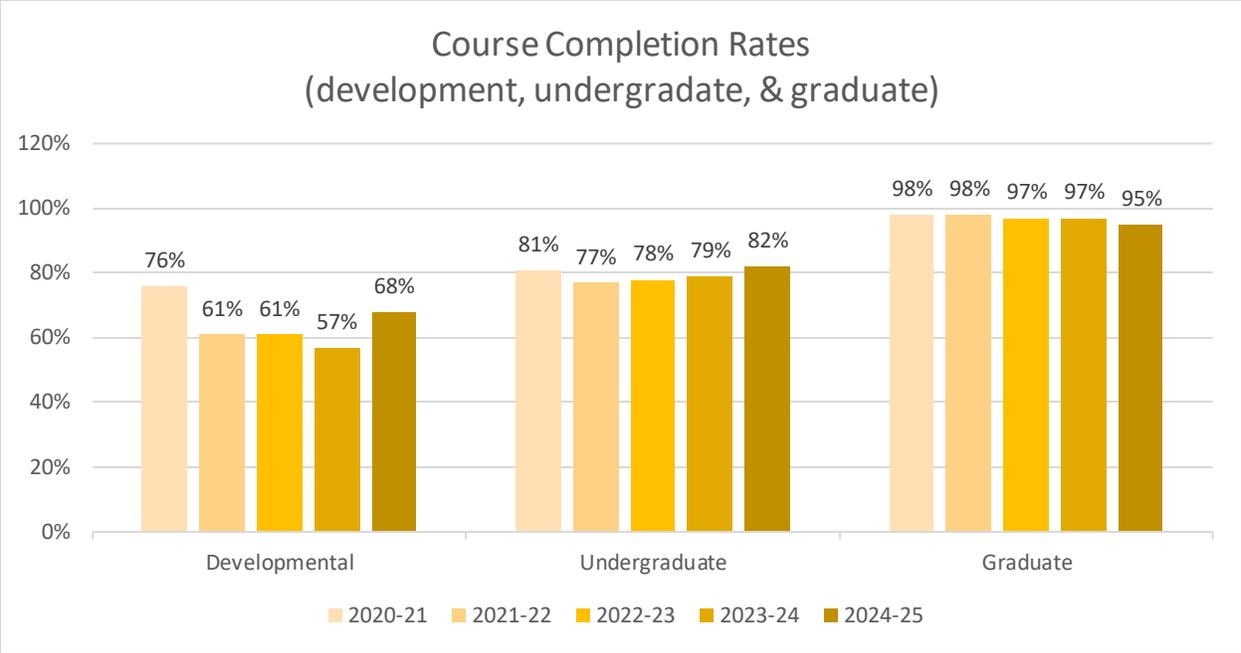
Metric: Course Completion Rates

Identification: Alabama State University's rationale for selecting course completion rates as a criterion for achievement arises from recognizing that course completion rates are a vital performance metric used to assess student achievement across all levels of academic instruction. The systematic monitoring of these rates plays a crucial role in the formative evaluation of undergraduate and graduate students' progression toward degree attainment, aligning with ASU's mission to promote professional competence as outlined in **Focus 2030**. The University monitors course completion rates across all instructional levels, from developmental courses to doctoral programs. Course completion rates are defined as the percentage of students who complete a course with a passing grade (A, B, C, or P) divided by the total number of students who enrolled in the course, excluding those who received no grade or an incomplete. Students who withdrew from a course due to low attendance or who formally withdrew are included in the total enrollment figure. Course completion rates are analyzed separately for the following levels: developmental, undergraduate (college-level), and graduate.

ASU established a minimum threshold of acceptability for course completion rates as 60%, 75%, and 95% for developmental, undergraduate, and graduate courses, respectively. The rationale for this threshold comes from the review of historical data across the three levels that would be a minimum to support student matriculation and completion. However, the goal for course completion rates is to exceed 76%, 83%, and 98%, for the three levels. **Focus 2030** sets a goal of 83.5% for undergraduate course completion by 2030. Increases in course completion rates support the objectives outlined in Focus 2030.

Aggregate course completion rates for these three levels, covering the period from 2020-21 to 2024-25, are presented in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Course Completion Rates 2020-21 to 2024-25



Note: Course completion numbers include all students (full-time and part-time) enrolled in the courses after the official “last day to drop a course.” Completion includes students who earned an A, B, C, or P in the course. Non-completion includes students with the following codes: D, F, W, WF, and X.

Evaluation: The overall percentage of course completions for all levels at the University for the 2024-25 academic year is 83%. From 2020-21 to 2024-25, the percentage of developmental course completions decreased by 8 percentage points. Developmental courses are designed to help specific students build foundational skills before progressing to standard college coursework. The pass rates for developmental courses can be significantly affected by student withdrawals. The decrease in the pass rate during this time period was due, in part, to high withdrawal rates for developmental English and high failure rates for developmental math. Additionally, the rate of undergraduate course completions increased by 1%, while graduate course completions saw a decline of 3%. Each year, the Institutional Research department conducts an analysis of courses and instructors with the highest numbers and percentages of students failing or withdrawing. Subsequently, the Institutional Effectiveness team holds working sessions with academic colleges and departments to share these data to discuss strategies for improvement plans to better (a) support struggling students and (b) enhance instructor effectiveness. College and departmental leaders then integrate these findings into their unit's continuous improvement plans. Moreover, data on course completion rates are publicly available on **ASU’s Student Achievement website**.

The low course completion rates for developmental courses prompted the development of an improvement plan. One of the contributing factors to the low completion rate was the high number of withdrawals. The University determined that some incoming freshmen were being placed in the incorrect initial math and English courses due to improper assessments, causing students to later withdraw from the developmental course in which they were placed. As a result, the University began using the Accuplacer assessment for all incoming freshmen without an ACT score. Additionally, for students struggling with the course content, ASU is strengthening its academic support offering by improving the marketing of academic tutoring labs, and beginning online tutoring services.