

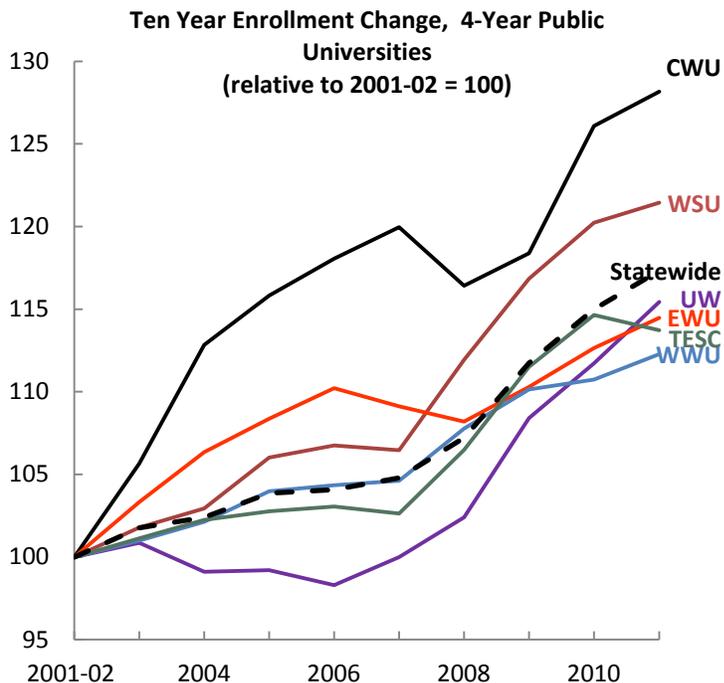
2012 Baccalaureate Performance Plans – Statewide Context

Washington’s Baccalaureate System Has Grown, But Remains Small Compared to Other States

Washington’s public baccalaureate sector includes six very different institutions, each with its own areas of expertise.

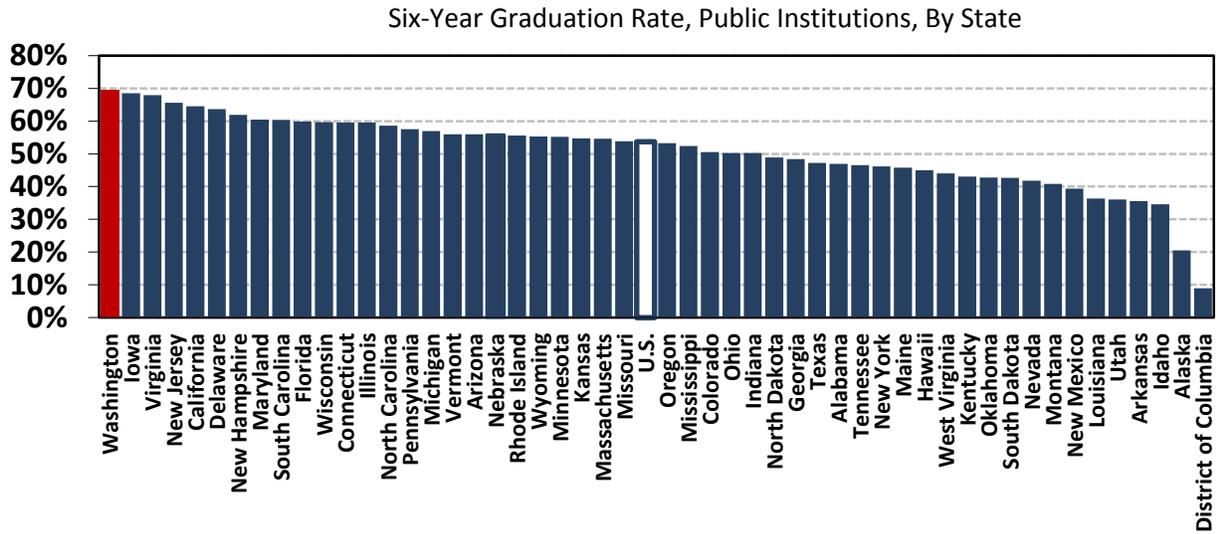
Washington’s post-secondary education system served 386,446 students in 2010, 55% of whom attended public community or technical colleges. This is the fourth-highest share of enrollment in community and technical colleges in the country, and the 211,925 students in the two-year sector helps Washington’s ranking in overall participation in higher education. However, Washington ranks relatively low in participation in undergraduate baccalaureate education. This is true for both public and private institutions.

Despite the Great Recession and a fundamental change in the way the public baccalaureate sector is funded, enrollment in the state’s public four year college and universities grew from 2002-2011. Tuition has replaced state funding as the primary source of operating funds for the colleges and universities. The rise in tuition has, thus far at least, allowed the system to maintain and even grow enrollment. The public baccalaureates enrolled 98,500 student FTEs in the 2009 academic year, and 103,200 in 2011, a figure that’s projected to grow to 104,500 in 2012. This comes after a decade of enrollment growth at each campus. Growth at the branch campuses enabled the research universities to grow, especially after 2007, but it is Central Washington University that has had the highest percentage increase – nearly 30%.



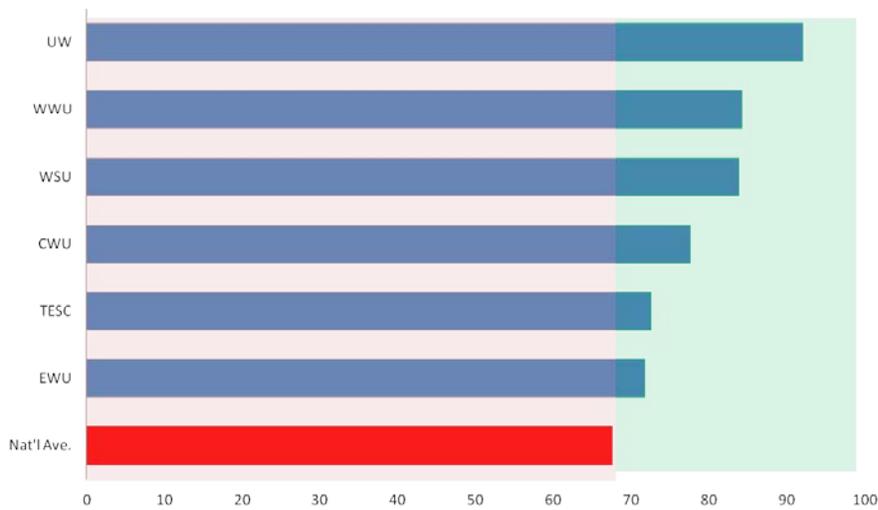
National Benchmarks Highlight Washington Institutions' Successes

Washington excels in measures of efficiency related to degree production—our public institutions produce degrees at the third-lowest total cost in the nation, and Washington’s six-year graduation rate is the best in the nation:

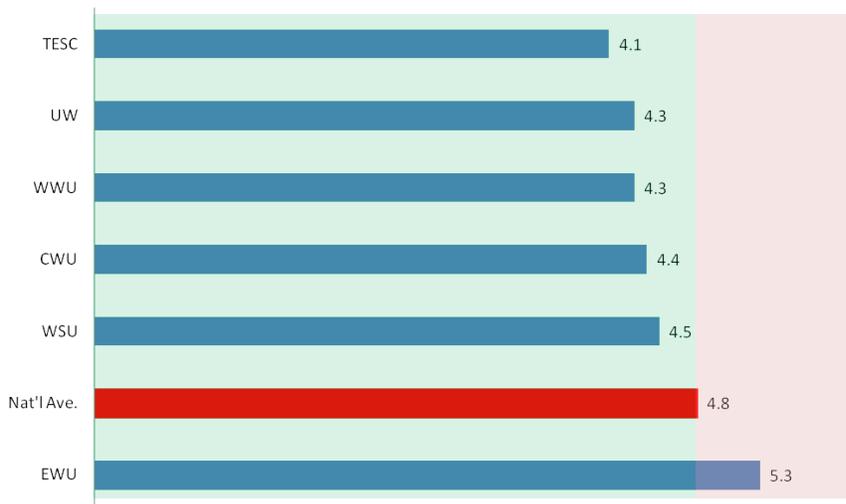


Trend data show that when institutions focused their attention on a particular measure, they were able to improve performance. Western Washington’s graduation rate rose significantly from 2003-2010 after they implemented strategies targeting “bottleneck” courses. Washington State University improved its graduation rate by about 10 percentage points over the same time, and the Evergreen State College took its time-to-degree from below the national average to one of the best in the nation. These data also demonstrate that Washington’s public baccalaureates performed better than the national average overall, and that below-average performance was confined to a few metrics at two institutions. Each campus was above the national average in freshman retention, and all but one bested the national average in time-to-degree.

Freshman Retention Rate



Time to Degree (Years)

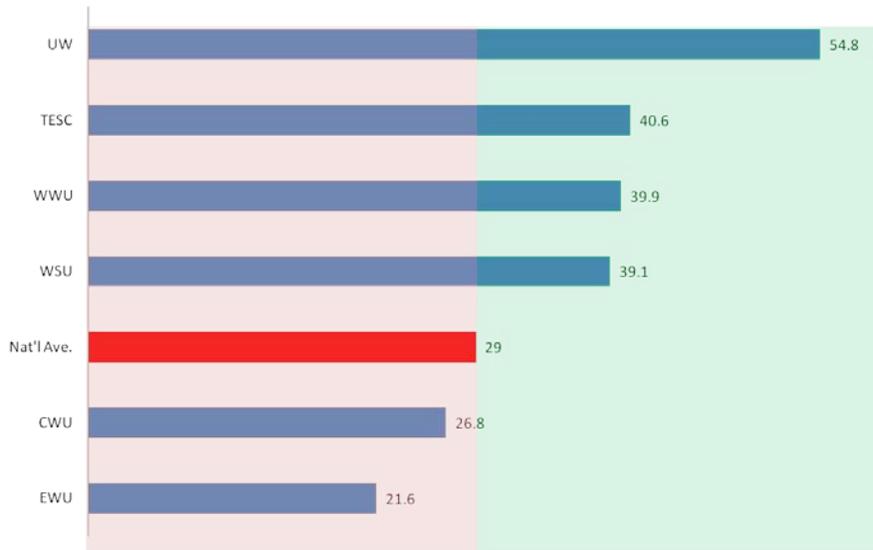


Only EWU trailed the national average in six-year graduation rate, while two institutions fell below the national average in four-year graduation rate. The average used for graduation rate includes all public baccalaureates; averages for highly selective or highly inclusive institutions differ.

Six-Year Grad. Rate

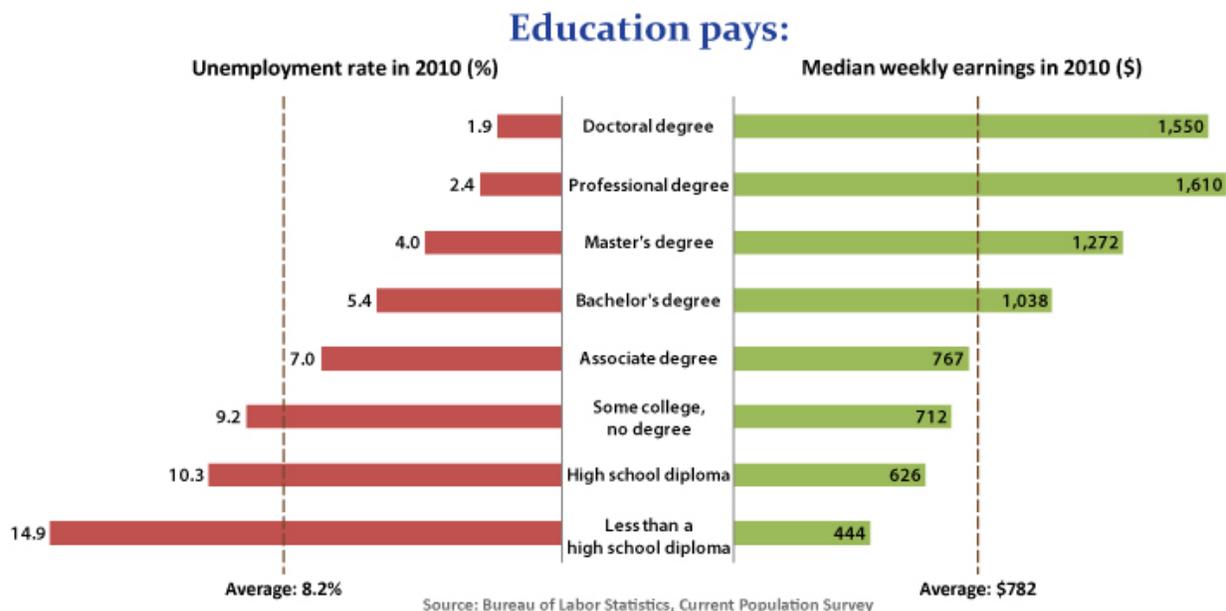


Four-Year Grad. Rate



Why is this Important?

Ultimately, a better educated workforce benefits everyone – nationwide, citizens with higher levels of education are less likely to require public assistance, and are much more likely to be employed, as this Bureau of Labor Statistics chart shows:



The state has recognized that current levels of production simply will not meet future workforce needs. Georgetown University's Center for Education and the Workforce says in its 2010 "Help Wanted" study, that Washington's workforce will require the 6th highest percentage of post-secondary graduates in the nation by 2018.

In the current budget environment, we know that we cannot count on large-scale investments in capacity or enrollment. As efficient as our schools are, we need to ensure that every dollar invested in the sector sees the highest possible return.

What the Performance Plans Are, and What They Tell Us

The following Performance Plans include 12 common metrics in three areas: time to degree or degree efficiency, retention and graduation rates, and degree awards. Each measure is reported for the general student population and low-income students (using Pell Grant financial aid recipients as a proxy for low-income). They also include up to three measures chosen by each institution. The baseline and target data are based on data submitted by the institutions to the Office of Financial Management’s PCHEES (Public Centralized Higher Education Enrollment System) data system, and the measures are largely based on Complete to Compete metrics, a nationwide effort to reform and improve higher education performance measures. The baseline is simply the agency’s performance in the metric during the 2010 Academic Year. The “expected result” reflects what the institution expects its performance to be in the 2015 academic year, *assuming no change in total operating funding*. Finally, each institution submitted a “goal” for their performance if total funding (from tuition and state appropriations, combined) increased to fiscal year 2009 levels – *this would mean an additional \$100 million per year in funding for the public baccalaureate sector as a whole*.

To add context to this data, we have included information on institutional performance from the Higher Education Coordinating Board’s Accountability Framework, which measured the baccalaureate sector from 2003 through 2010. *While this data can add important information on trends and historical performance, it is NOT strictly comparable to the new measures*. This is because the data sources define a cohort (a freshman class for retention or graduation rate metrics) slightly differently. While the historical data doesn’t perfectly align with the metrics, it does allow us to compare each institution’s performance to national averages. This is because the Accountability Framework was based on IPEDS (Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System) data, which every institution reports.

When applicable and available, we have included the national average on the metric to the institutional performance trend. Institutional results that are significantly above the national average are shown in green, performances significantly below are in red, while performance within about 10% of the national average is shown in orange.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Performance is significant better than national average● Performance is near the national average● Performance is significantly below the national average |
|--|

The law requiring performance plans mandates that each institution estimate its performance on each measure at the end of the 2013-15 biennium compared to the baseline year of 2010. This was the first year of data available in the new PCHEES system. The institutions are to assume no change to state funding levels from the 2011-13 enacted appropriations. This means that the baseline year occurred before the reductions in state funding and increases in tuition assumed in the 2011-13 enacted budget, and it also means the institutions project performance without knowledge of the final 2012 supplemental or 2013-15 biennial appropriation levels.

Overall, the system as a whole projects a slight increase in degree production. Some of the institutions show growth in degrees awarded in the “expected” column, reflecting the historic enrollment growth that’s already enrolled in the system. Others show some growth under the “goal” scenario that includes total funding growth.

The institution-specific metrics reflect the diversity of the public four-year sector. The University of Washington targets enrollment in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields, while Western Washington targets student loan debt and its graduation rate for underrepresented minority students. Central Washington's measures reflect two new strategies aimed at retaining students and getting them to graduation: a dual-admissions pilot program and an on-line course alternative for current CWU students. The Evergreen State College seeks to maintain the percentage of Bachelor's degrees it awards to underrepresented students – a category which includes minority ethnic groups, veterans and non-traditional-age students. In lieu of institution-specific metrics, Eastern Washington focuses on its retention rate and graduation rates, putting undivided attention on raising its performance in these areas.

Despite efforts to maintain or increase performance, state budget cuts may result in reduced performance on measures. The institutional narratives all reference the uncertainty surrounding future funding, and that the gains (or even maintaining baseline-levels of performance) would be impossible to achieve if funding declines further.

Statutory Requirement:

E2SHB 1795

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.15 RCW to read as follows:

(1) To ensure institutional quality, promote access, and advance the public mission of the state universities, the regional universities, and The Evergreen State College, the authority to increase or decrease tuition rates shall be considered within the context of performance-based measures and goals for each state university, regional university, and The Evergreen State College. By September 1, 2011, and September 1st every two years thereafter, the state universities, the regional universities, and The Evergreen State College shall each negotiate an institutional performance plan with the office of financial management that includes expected outcomes that must be achieved by each institution in the subsequent biennium.

(2) At a minimum, an individual institutional performance plan must include but is not limited to the following expected outcomes:

- (a) Time and credits to degree;
- (b) Retention and success of students from low-income, diverse, or underrepresented communities;
- (c) Baccalaureate degree production for resident students; and
- (d) Degree production in high-employer demand programs of study and critical state need areas.