

Lee, Julie M

Subject: ASAP 25: On Student Success

From: Ducoffe, Robert H <ducoffe@uwp.edu>

Sent: Thursday, May 26, 2022 11:21 AM

To: Ducoffe, Robert H <ducoffe@uwp.edu>

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Colleagues,

With Commencement behind us and summer ahead, I plan to share a few thoughts with you on how we are doing. I'll spread these over five memos each focusing on a priority in the [Academic and Student Affairs Plan 2025](#) (ASAP 25).

My hope is that we continue to build a common understanding of these priorities, where we are making progress, where we are not, and how the plan helps us to align our collective efforts.

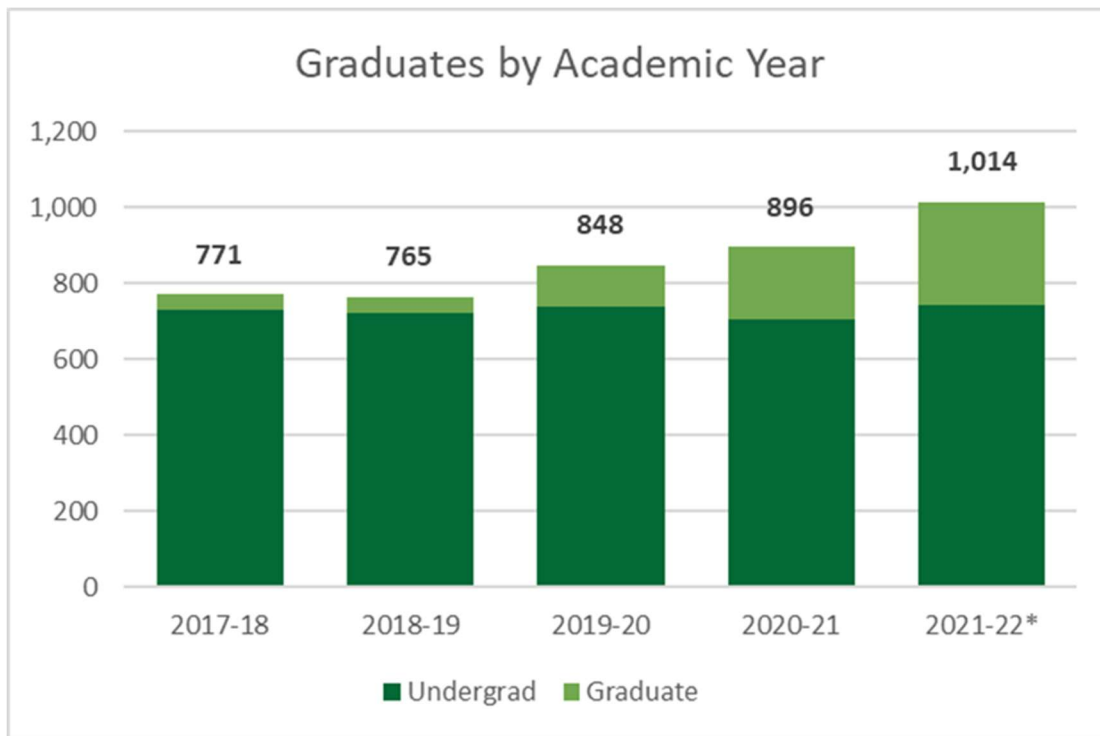
Our priority of priorities is improving "student success" (e.g., the number of graduates and graduation rates). It may sound obvious, but it would be hard to claim to have acted on this with sufficient resolve given our history as a campus showing that, until 2010, three-in-four of our first-time-full-time undergraduates did not graduate in six years.

Despite a consistent media murmur questioning of the value of a higher education, over 95 percent of jobs created in the recovery since 2008 went to workers with at least some postsecondary education.^[i] In our region, we need to step into the breach to address intolerable gaps among people of color and White residents. You may know that Milwaukee and Racine have been ranked among the worst cities in the nation for Black-White quality-of-life gaps.^[ii]

This is why we promise in our [Strategic Framework](#) to produce 50 percent more graduates annually by 2025. It's worth pausing to consider the unprecedented ambition behind this goal (and we can thank Chancellor Ford for that)!

It's also important we acknowledge that those underserved by higher education continue to make up a larger part of our region. This implies, therefore, that achieving our goal means we need more graduates and higher graduation rates among first-generation, Pell-eligible, and students of color. In other words, UW-Parkside students!

The chart below shows we are doing pretty well in moving toward that goal.



*Estimate including Summer '22 graduates.

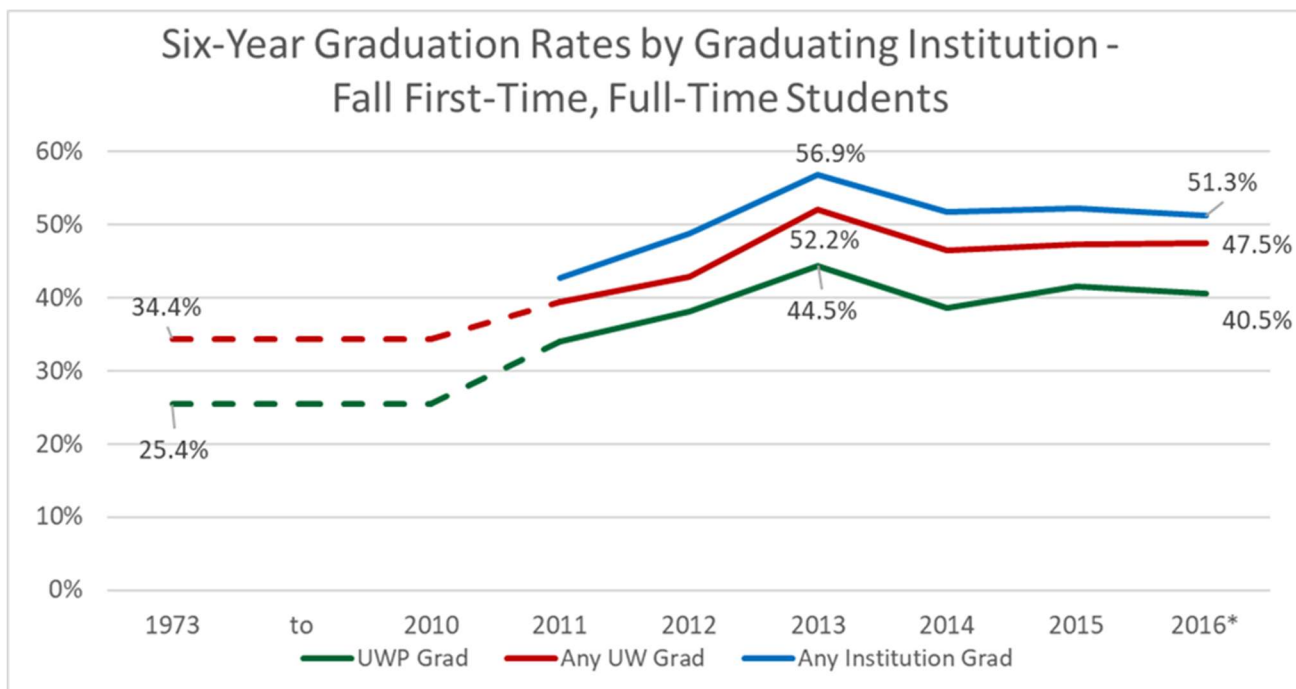
We set the goal using 771, the number of graduates in 2017-2018, itself an historic record and therefore an aggressive baseline. If we round that to 800 and add 50 percent, our 2025 target number of graduates is 1,200. With the current year estimate of 1,014, we're a bit over half-way to our goal!

Two important positive evolutions are occurring.

First, we're innovating across our curriculum. Since Fall 2016, 40 new UW-Parkside academic programs, majors, or concentrations have been approved, launched, or revised. UW-Parkside was reclassified as Medium Master's College/University and its master's population was recognized as one of the 10 fastest-growing in the nation among small colleges/universities. We're graduating larger numbers of master's students.

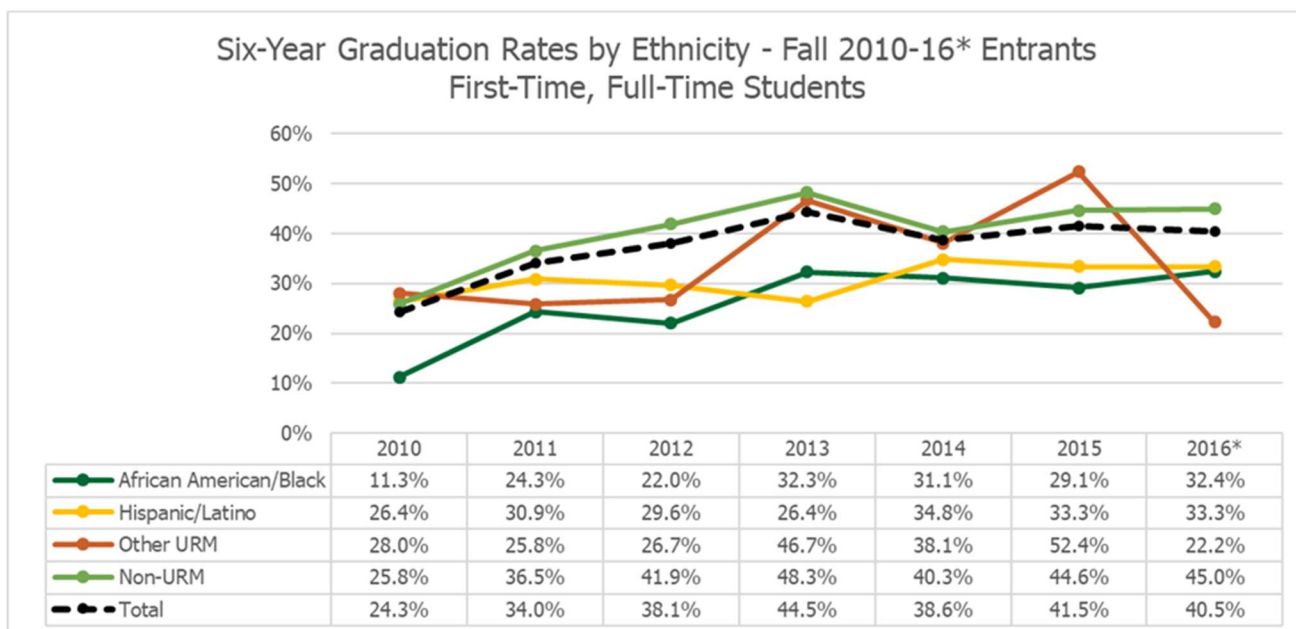
Second, we're improving completion rates among undergraduates through a range of interventions both in and outside the classroom and this is leading to increases in the number of graduates even as our undergraduate enrollments have declined. This year's estimate of 743 bachelor's graduates is the second highest in our history.

The chart below gives us a more granular look at the graduation rate trends.



The green line is the six-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students who completed at UW-Parkside. The red line is the rate for students who started at UW-Parkside and completed at another UW campus, and the blue line is the completion rate including those who graduated from any institution after leaving UW-Parkside. The horizontal axis condenses the period from 1973 to 2010 to take us back to the campus's first graduating class. During this 37-year period, the average six-year graduation rate from UW-Parkside for first-time, full-time students was about 25 percent. In recent years it has increased to the low 40s, over 60 percent higher. That's good progress, still lots of room to improve, but it's worth recognizing this notable increase.

I've got one more chart for you. This one breaks out graduation rates by group.



Note that the graduation rates for African American, Hispanic, and Non-URM students are all at or near their highs in the most recent seven-year period. These are all at or near historic highs too. The Other-URM group rate declined sharply and includes a much smaller population of students. And we do need to eliminate the graduation gaps among white and students of color. That's our goal by 2030 in partnership with EAB and higher ed partners in the Moonshot for Equity.

All-in-all, unmistakable progress and a long way to go. Pages 56-63 of the [ASAP 25](#) plan gives more background on what we're working on to continue these positive graduation rate trends.

Thanks for reading this far and please send me any comments or questions..

Rob

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^[i] America's Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots, Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University, <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/americas-divided-recovery/>.

^[ii] The Worst Cities for Black Americans, Samuel Stebbins, December 3, 2020, <https://247wallst.com/special-report/2020/12/03/the-worst-cities-for-black-americans-7/4/>.