



Just the Facts...

Where Do They Go? Following Up On Non-returning Freshmen at Samford University

Freshman Retention

This issue of *Just the Facts* attempts to shed light on the activities of non-returning freshmen at Samford University. Freshman retention is an important topic at any institution. The ability to track non-returners as they enter other institutions of postsecondary education allows colleges to better understand why these students leave.

The current analysis utilizes the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), to track the subsequent enrollment of non-returning Samford freshmen over the past five years. Degree information was also obtained on these students.

ity of non-returning freshmen at Samford do in fact go on to attend other post-secondary institutions. In addition, a large portion have gone on to receive degrees. This highlights the fact that non-returners are not necessarily failures of the higher education system.

The findings of this brief reveal that the vast major-

The Baccalaureate Pipeline in Southern States

STATE	Of 100 9th Graders, How Many...	Graduate from High School on Time?	Directly Enter College?	Are Still Enrolled Their Sophomore Year?	Graduate Within 150% Time?
AL	100	59	34	23	13
FL	100	55	32	23	14
GA	100	52	32	21	12
KY	100	66	39	25	13
LA	100	56	33	22	12
MS	100	56	36	23	13
TN	100	55	34	23	14

SOURCE: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

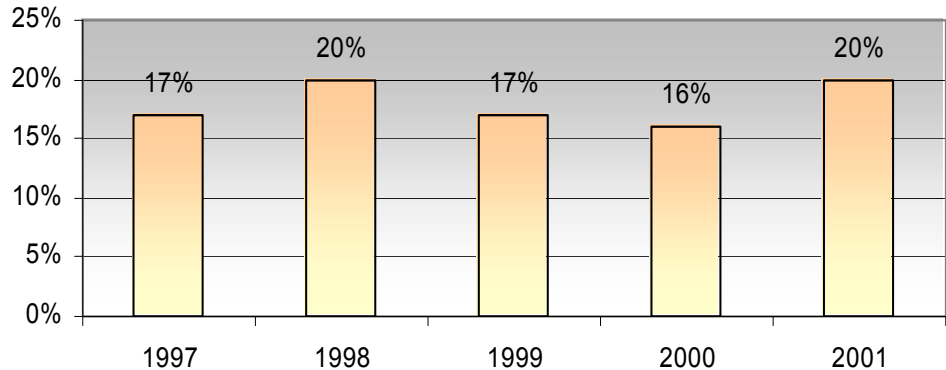
Samford's freshman retention rate has averaged 82% over the last three years. This is compared to an average first-year retention rate at private Master's level institutions of 77%.

SOURCE: Center for Institutional Data Analysis and Exchange

What Do Non-Returners at Samford Look Like?

Percent of Entering Freshmen Who Do Not Return for Their Second Year at Samford

The percent of entering freshmen at Samford who do not return for their second year has averaged 18% over the last five years.



Academic Characteristics of Non-Returners

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Ave. HS GPA of Non-Returners	3.43	3.38	3.51	3.44	3.47
Ave. ACT of Non-Returners	23.9	23.8	24.3	24.0	24.2
<i>Ave ACT of All Entering Freshmen</i>	24.8	24.6	24.6	24.7	24.8
Ave 1st Term GPA of Non-Returners	2.46	2.50	2.63	2.46	2.72

The average High School GPA and first-term Samford GPA of non-returners has increased slightly over the last five years.

States of Origin

Over the last five years, the leading states of origin for non-returners have been:

Alabama—32.0%

Georgia—12.8%

Tennessee—10.3%

Florida—7.5%

This is representative of the distribution of states of origin for incoming freshmen. In Fall 2002, for example, the four leading states of origin of Samford freshmen were Alabama (39%), Tennessee (17.9%), Georgia (17.7%), and Florida (8.7%).

Where Do They Go?

Transfer and Degree Activity of Non-Returners

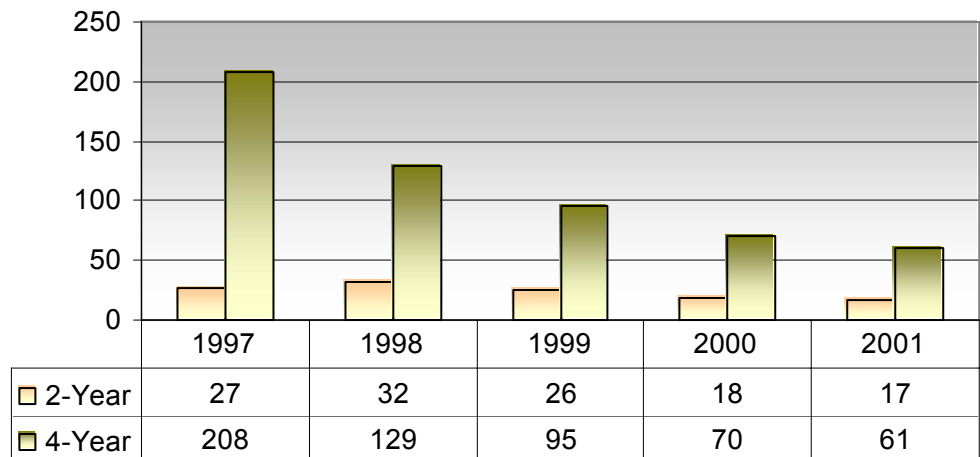
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Total Number of Entering Freshmen	743	624	668	655	660
Number of Non-returners	128 (17%)	126 (20%)	113 (17%)	104 (16%)	131 (20%)
Number of Non-returners with a Transfer Record ¹	96 (75%)	100 (79%)	84 (74%)	66 (63%)	66 (50%)
Number of Non-returners with a Degree Record	47 (37%)	29 (23%)	9 (8%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)

The vast majority of non-returning Samford freshmen are later found at other institutions. Furthermore, several have completed degrees. Of the 128 non-returners from the 1997 cohort, over one-third have subsequently obtained a postsecondary degree.

¹Unduplicated count—displays only one transfer activity per student

Transfer Activity by College Type ²

The majority of transfer records found from non-returning students were to 4-year institutions.



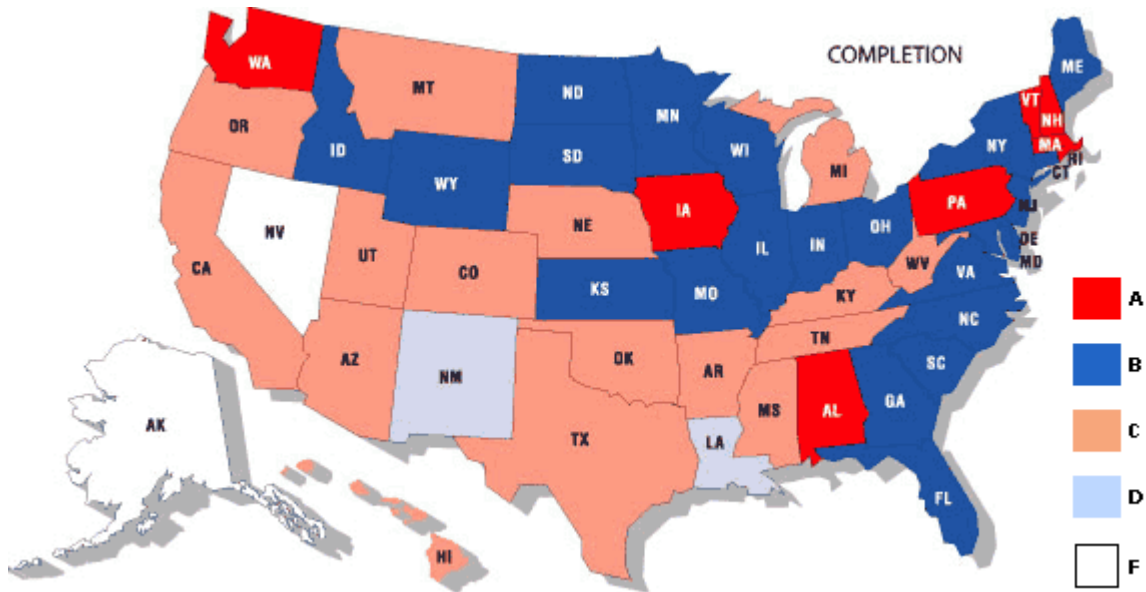
²Duplicated count—displays multiple records per student

Leading Transfer Schools

Typically, more than 85% of students who transfer, transfer to schools in their home state. Over the last five years, the most common transfer schools have been:

- UAB—6.2%
- Auburn—6%
- University of Georgia—3.8%
- University of Alabama—3.4%
- University of Tennessee—2.2%

Focus on...Persistence



The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education recently released *Measuring Up 2002*. This study systematically graded each state's education system in six areas: Preparation, Participation, Affordability, Completion, Benefits, and Learning. The completion category, which is of interest in the current analysis, examined persistence and completion patterns of students in each state. Alabama received an A in this category.



***Generating discussion,
fostering understanding, and
promoting improvement one
analysis at a time.***

314 Brooks Hall
800 Lakeshore Dr.
Birmingham, AL 35229-2240

Phone: 205-726-2484
Fax: 205-726-2971
Email: sclatham@samford.edu

**Check us out on the web:
www.samford.edu/instresearch**

The Office of Institutional Research serves as the chief information provider for the Samford community. Critical processes include a.) research, evaluation, and policy analysis necessary to continually improve the university and support the decision making structure of the institution; b.) data gathering; c.) reporting; d.) responding to a large number of complex surveys; and e.) the design, administration, and analysis of ongoing assessment measures.

Director: Sarah C. Latham
Assistant Director: Dea G. Mathews
Research Analyst: Karen G. Hamby

Just the Facts is published throughout the academic year and focuses on various issues facing Samford University and higher education throughout the nation.

Check out our next issue:

Just the Facts...Progression to the Baccalaureate at Samford. What Matters?