



Message from the Associate Provost for Institutional Research and Analysis & Chief Data Officer

I am so glad you are visiting this latest edition of the OIRA newsletter. In this edition we feature an interview with Sylvia Seward, who is a long-standing staff member and an Eagle alumna! In our Data Literacy brief, we explore the differences between the terms retention and persistence, and show retention, graduation, and persistence rates for our five most recent first-time, fulltime fall cohorts. We also discuss the most recent trends in degree awards and enrollment, and feature a deep dive into what faculty can do to improve response rates on their course evaluations.

I am proud that the OIRA team won the 2021 Ultimate Homecoming decorating competition! We had a great time blowing up balloons and decorating our doors, and we were thrilled that Alumni Santa stopped by to cheer us on! 😊 Let us know what you think of our video.



OIRA video: <https://youtu.be/NwAU08Dpwj>

Sarah



Featured Interview with Ms. Sylvia Seward Occupation: Business and Technology Application Analyst, OIRA

OIRA Specialty Areas: SAS Programming, Tableau Creator, Ad-Hoc Reporting, and External Surveys

Alumna: North Carolina Wesleyan College and North Carolina Central University

Number of Years at NCCU: 20 years

Hometown: Oxford, N.C. (born and raised)

Before your time at NCCU, what was your previous professional role?

I started my career in Henderson, N.C., where I was employed at Harriet and Henderson Yarns Incorporated. I held two positions while I was employed there: human

resources officer and shift manager. I was responsible for tallying employee production which directly affected pay compensation. I was already involved in data collection at the time.

What does a day in the OIRA office look like for you?

A typical day involves organizing my surveys, both internal and external, that includes making updates and reviewing upcoming due dates. I log in to manage Team Dynamics requests that are submitted by faculty and staff for data. I handle a number of external surveys that require data about NCCU to include Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS), US News & World Report rankings and the Petersons Survey just to name a few. I attend meetings weekly with our data team, Tableau team and other campus partners to ensure accuracy and data integrity are at the forefront of developing, maintaining and launching Tableau dashboards. When it comes to ad-hoc reporting, I am a 20-year SAS programmer veteran and much of my day-to-day reporting involves this tool.

Have you always had a passion for data collection? Reporting? Visualization?

Yes, I have always had a passion for this type of work. I started my career in a human resources role doing some type of data collection, which has grown since joining NCCU. I was an amateur in programming back then, but I made the move to come to NCCU once I completed my bachelors in computer information science and business administration, the same year. While I was at NCCU, I was able to earn my master's degree in information science through the School of Library and Information Sciences to enhance my skills even further. I still had a desire to grow professionally and so I went to explore another opportunity at Computer Information Systems in Research Triangle Park for four years, where our team worked to install the NC Community College System software (Colleague). But, the pull to return to the Nest was strong and I came back home in 2004. Since then, my passion for data collection, reporting and visualization has grown into what you see today.

What are some hobbies that you enjoy outside of work?

I spend most of my free time in and around Durham by supporting the arts community volunteering at the Durham Performing Arts Center. I am able to enjoy many plays and concerts while meeting new people. I love to travel all over the state in my RV and spend time crafting. I visit as many yard sales as I can, and I have a deep love for antiques.

time. To persist into the third year means that the student is still enrolled during their second year, or graduated after the second year they first enrolled. Retention rates are often given more attention verses persistence rates.

OIRA Data Literacy Brief

What is the difference between retention and persistence rates?

The terms retention and persistence are often used interchangeably and causes big confusion regarding their differences. Both terms are used to measure the success and outcomes of college students. Additionally, both terms are critical metrics in evaluating an institution's impact on student success. Read how OIRA defines retention and persistence.

Retention



OIRA's definition of retention rate is the percentage of fulltime, first-time bachelor's (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates of a specified point in time (given cohort) who are again enrolled in the current fall semesters (first year, second year, third year, etc.) after they first enrolled.

Persistence



OIRA's definition of persistence is based on the definition used by the University of North Carolina System Office. This is the percentage of fulltime, first-time bachelor's (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates of a specified point in time (given cohort) who are graduating with a bachelor's degree or are enrolled at a specified point in

Retention Rates											
Cohort		1 Year Retention		2 Year Retention		3 Year Retention		4 Year Retention		5 Year Retention	
Term	N	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct
2016	1128	872	77.3	690	61.2	593	52.6	251	22.3	79	7.0
2017	1264	1040	82.3	774	61.2	660	52.2	287	22.7		
2018	1126	860	76.4	655	58.2	547	48.6				
2019	1023	797	77.9	636	62.2						
2020	1210	891	73.6								

Graduation Rates											
Cohort		Graduation After Year 1		Graduation After Year 2		Graduation After Year 3		Graduation After Year 4		Graduation After Year 5	
Term	N	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct
2016	1128	3	0.3	9	0.8	27	2.4	301	26.7	471	41.8
2017	1264	0	0.0	4	0.3	21	1.7	345	27.3	.	.
2018	1126	0	0.0	8	0.7	36	3.2	.	.	.	.
2019	1023	0	0.0	9	0.9	.	.	.	.	.	.

Persistence Rates											
Cohort		Persisted Into Year 2		Persisted Into Year 3		Persisted Into Year 4		Persisted Into Year 5		Persisted Into Year 6	
Term	N	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct
2016	1128	875	77.6	699	62.0	620	55.0	552	48.9	550	48.8
2017	1264	1040	82.3	778	61.6	681	53.9	632	50.0		
2018	1126	860	76.4	663	58.9	583	51.8				
2019	1023	797	77.9	645	63.0						

N=Number; Pct=Percent

Check out OIRA's [Data Literacy Corner](#) for more data definitions, resources, videos, and materials to better understand and use institutional data.

To explore retention, persistence and graduation dashboards check out the following links:

[NCCU's Retention and Graduation rate dashboard](#)

[UNC System Office Graduation/Persistence Dashboard](#)

OIRA Data Highlights: Degrees Awarded & Fall Enrollment

1,616
2020-2021 Degrees Awarded

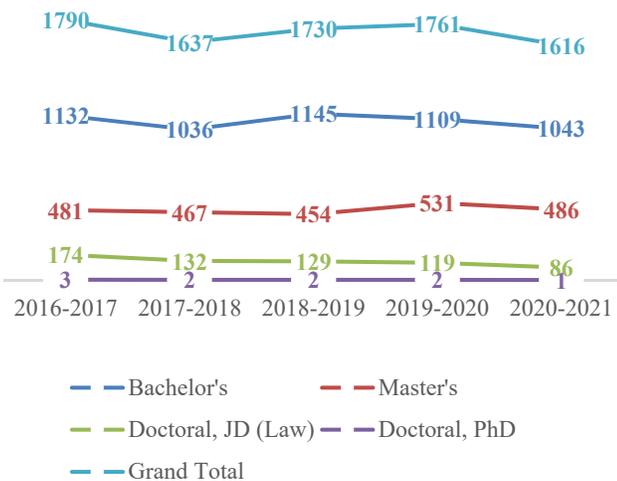
What does this five-year degrees awarded trend reveal?

- Undergraduate degrees awarded decreased by 7.9%.
- Doctoral, Professional Practice (JD) degrees awarded decreased by 50.6%.
- NCCU's five-year degrees awarded decrease is being driven by the decline of professional degrees.

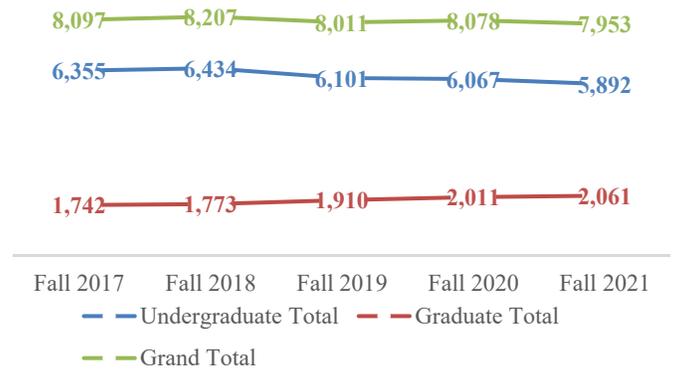


7,953
Fall 2021 Enrollment

2016-2021 NCCU DEGREES AWARDED



NCCU 2017-2021 FALL ENROLLMENT TREND



What does this 5-year fall enrollment trend reveal?

- Undergraduate enrollment has decreased by 7.3%.
- Graduate enrollment has increased by 18.3%.
- NCCU's 5-year enrollment trend decrease is being driven by the yearly decline of undergraduate student enrollments.

OIRA Event: Exploring the Data Visualizations of W.E.B. Du Bois with Jason Forrest

As a result of attending this event, 89% of the participants strongly agree/agree they are able to identify W.E. B. Du Bois' contributions to the field of data visualization. If you missed the presentation or want to rewatch it, you can access it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFdQ9jCbK8c>

OIRA Event: OIRA Virtual Open House

As result of attending this event, 88% of the participants strongly agree they are able to explain the purpose of the OIRA, and 91% of the participants are able to access information on OIRA website.

Thank you for attending!

Time-Tested Strategies for Raising Response Rates on Course Evaluations

NCCU Three-Year SRI Response Rate at University Level

Term	Response Rate %
2018 Fall	56.7%
2019 Spring	53.4%
2019 Fall	50.6%
2020 Spring	46.4%
2020 Fall	45.5%
2021 Spring	46.8%

Raising response rates is one of the top goals that campuses want from the course evaluations process. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, anxieties around response rates have only increased. But there's now an opportunity for NCCU to rethink how we communicate the value of course evaluations. In this article, we discussed ways to raise response rates in the traditional classroom, as well as remote modalities. We also discussed the concrete strategies that have worked for other campuses.

Strategies to Increase Course Evaluation Response Rates

The best way to increase both the response rate and usefulness of your course evaluations is to demonstrate to your students that the evaluations are important to you. Here are some strategies to do so:

- ✚ Explain the value of course evaluations.

Explain the value and purpose of course evaluation data directly to students. Address the elephant in the room, which is the stigma around feedback. When you discuss course evaluations throughout the semester, it positions course evaluations as an ongoing conversation, not a once a semester activity centered on compliance.

- ✚ Give students time in class.

Instructors who provide students time in class to complete their evaluations, see an average response rate of 83% (compared to an average response rate of 59% for those who did not). Devoting class time

shows students that the evaluations are important to you. Students can complete the evaluations on any computer, tablet or smart phone connected to the internet.

- ✚ Confirm anonymity of evaluations to students.
- ✚ Give specific examples of how you've used evaluations in the past.

Use a recent example so students can see how the feedback from prior students benefited them and how their feedback will thus benefit future students.

- ✚ Check your response rates DURING the evaluation period.

If you log into myCourseEval during the evaluation period, you'll see your up-to-the-minute response rate.

- ✚ Post reminders.

Remind students to complete their evaluations during class time, during lectures and on assignments/handouts.

- ✚ Send personal reminder email to students

While reminders are sent through CourseEval, you can also send a message to your students via personal email to encourage them to complete the evaluation.

Reference

Grennel, K. and Jorgensen, C. Time-Tested Strategies for Raising Response Rates. Anthology. <https://www.anthology.com/webinar/time-tested-strategies-for-raising-response-rate>

Making Sense of Student Feedback

Along with the fresh start of the new year, many instructors will receive an opportunity to assess their teaching skills when they receive student evaluations of their fall courses. Making sense of student feedback can be challenging so we offer the following tips for examining evaluations.

When considering student evaluations:

- ✚ Pick a good time to do so, when you will have enough time to digest at least some of the information, have privacy, and can give yourself some mental ‘space’ to analyze the information.
- ✚ Track quantitative results. Consider how the summary rating received for each item fits with your own teaching goals and your department’s expectations for teaching.
- ✚ Look for patterns in students’ comments—identify trends, note what you have done well and what needs improvement.
- ✚ Take your experience into account. If you are new to teaching, the school, or even the course, you may still be learning about various aspects of being a professor, such as course design, teaching skills, student interaction, and departmental expectations.
- ✚ Take the context and characteristics of your course into account. Research shows that student evaluations often are more positive in courses that are smaller rather than larger, and elective rather than required. Also, evaluations are usually more positive in courses in which students tend to do well.



When deciding how to further your development as a teacher:

- ✚ Bear in mind the most frequently mentioned areas for teaching improvement in analysis of student evaluations within and across universities: 1) clearer, more specific in-class communication; and 2) clearer, more explicit organization of course content.
- ✚ Consider scheduling an appointment at the Office of Faculty Professional Development for a consultation to help you interpret your evaluations. Research suggests that teachers who consult with someone about their evaluations are more likely to score higher on the next set of evaluations than others who do not discuss them with anyone. To schedule a consultation on student evaluations, call the Office of Faculty Professional Development at 530-7188.

When dealing with negative student feedback:

- ✚ Know that almost all faculty members receive negative feedback at some point in their careers, including those who are senior and highly successful.
- ✚ Allow yourself to acknowledge that it can feel hurtful or make you angry, but also provides a pointer toward important areas for your continued development.

When planning steps to improve the feedback you receive in evaluations, consider the following options:

- ✚ Use one minute evaluations at the end of selected class sessions, asking students to note the main idea they learned that class, or two ideas about a major construct considered, or a question about content, and so forth.
- ✚ Give a “midterm evaluation” of the course to check how the class is progressing while you can use the information to make changes.



- ✚ Talk with the class about their interim feedback, and explicitly put one of their suggestions into practice.

References

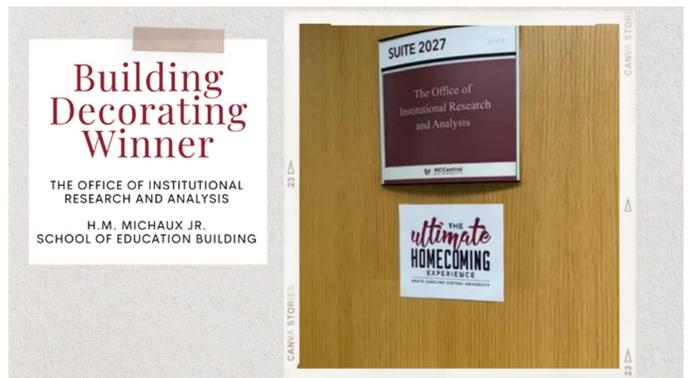
Adapted from “Some Guidelines and Principles to Consider In Making Sense of Evaluation Feedback” by Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey, Professor of Psychology, Emeritus, Vanderbilt University.

Data Request

OIRA operates primarily as the central unit for the collection, processing, analysis, interpretation, reporting and maintenance of official historical, institutional data.

You can request university historical data by clicking on: [Data Request Form](#).

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[The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis Building Decorating Video](#)



[Sylvia Seward Home Decorating Video](#)

