

Transfer Students at New Mexico Highlands University, Fall 2000 through Fall 2007

A Report Prepared by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

This report covers 3754 transfer students who first enrolled at NMHU in the past eight years. Of these 3754 students, 2,885 (76.9%) were degree-seeking their first semester at Highlands.

What Role Transfer Students Play in Our Overall Enrollments?

Of the fall, 2007 student body of 2046 undergraduate students, 968 (47.3%) could be identified as having begun their career at Highlands as transfer students. This is compared to 836 students (40.9%) who could be identified as having begun at Highlands as first-time freshmen. Of the 364 students who received undergraduate degrees at NMHU between December of 2006 and July of 2007, 254 (69.8%) could be identified as having begun their career at Highlands as transfer students, compared to 52 (14.3%) who began their career as first-time freshmen. So transfer students actually account for a larger percentage of our student body than do first-time freshmen, and a disproportionate percentage of our baccalaureate degree recipients.

Demographics

The data below is based upon the 2885 degree-seeking transfer students coded in Banner. Transfer students differ significantly from first-time freshmen in terms of demographics. Transfer students are predominately female, even more so than the student body as a whole.

Gender of Transfer Students

	#	% of Transfer Students	% of First-time Freshmen	% of 2007 Undergraduates
Female	1950	67.6%	46.7%	59.6%
Male	935	32.4%	53.3%	40.4%

Transfers students have a higher percentage of Native American students, a higher percentage of Caucasian students, and a lower percentage of Hispanic students than do first-time freshmen or the student body as a whole.

Ethnicity of Transfer Students

Ethnicity	#	% of Transfer Students	% of First-time Freshmen	% of 2007 Undergraduates
African American	171	5.9%	5.6%	5.7%
American Indian	279	9.7%	7.7%	7.4%
Asian or Pacific Islander	54	1.9%	1%	1.9%
Caucasian White	900	31.2%	13.9%	21.2%
Hispanic	1331	46.1%	65.8%	58.8%
Non-Resident Alien	22	0.8%	1.3%	1.9%
Other	6	0.2%	.01%	3.1%
No Response	122	4.2%	8.7%	5.7%

Of the transfer students in the database, 450 (15.6%) were student athletes. The four-year graduation rate for degree-seeking transfer student athletes is 39.8%, lower than the four-year graduation rate for transfer students as a whole and lower than the six-year graduation rate for first-time freshmen athletes.

About $\frac{3}{4}$ of our transfer students are from New Mexico institutions.

	#	% of Total
In-State	2078	72%
Out-of-State	807	28%

Coding of transfer students has changed since we instituted Banner in 2000, so that two-year versus four-year transfer status is not coded for all students. However, based upon the data that we do have, it seems that we have about 3 times as many transfer students from two-year institutions than we do from four-year institutions.

	#	% of Total
Two-year	1173	40.7%
Four-year	307	10.6%
Unknown	1405	48.7%

Graduation Rates of Transfer Students

Data on graduation rates will be limited to the 2,885 transfer students who were degree-seeking their first-semester. Of these students, 1,009 (35%) have received undergraduate degrees from NMHU.

Our overall 4-year graduation rate for transfer students is 51.3%. The rate for students who begin in the fall is 52.6%. Rates for the spring and summer cohorts are much more variable than for fall cohorts, ranging from 37% to 80%. The graduation rate for transfer students is more than double that of first-time freshmen.

Graduation Rates of Degree-Seeking Fall Cohort Transfer Students

Fall Cohort	#	Graduated	% Graduated
Fall 2000	243	125	51.4%
Fall 2001	208	109	52.4%
Fall 2002	237	131	55.3%
Fall 2003	220	113	51.4%
Total	908	478	52.6%

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Graduation rates of transfer students are affected by several issues. In-state transfers have a much higher graduation rate than do out-of-state transfers.

Graduation Rates by In-State and Out-of-State Transfer Status

	Graduated	Did Not Graduate	% Graduated
In-State	509	392	56.5%
Out-of-State	134	218	38.1%
Total	643	610	51.3%

As with all groups of students at NMHU, females have a higher graduation rate than males.

Graduation Rates of Transfer Students by Gender

	Graduated	Did Not Graduate	% Graduated
Female	474	358	57%
Male	169	252	40.1%

Graduation Rates of Transfer Students by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Graduated	Did Not Graduate	% Graduated
African American	18	52	25.7%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	66	56	54.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	10	5	66.7%
Caucasian White	234	172	57.6%
Hispanic	278	282	49.6%
Non-Resident Alien	7	3	70.0%
Other	0	5	0.0%
No Response	30	35	46.2%

The most significant factor predicting graduation rates among transfer students is whether or not they transfer into NMHU with an Associate Degree.

Graduation Rates of Transfer Students by Associate Degree Recipients

	Graduated	Did Not Graduate	% Graduated
Associate Degree	396	146	73.1%
No Associate Degree	247	464	34.8%

Transfer Students and the Branch Campuses

It is difficult to say how many of our transfer students “belong” to the branch campuses, since Banner assigns a campus code to each student for each class. One example of this difficulty is the fact that I have seven athletes coded as branch campus students, when this seems quite unlikely. However, overall, it seems that about 40% of our degree-seeking transfer students are enrolled at the branch campuses, and this number has remained fairly steady across fall cohorts over the past eight years.

Degree-seeking transfer students at the branch campuses differ in significant ways from transfer students on the main campus. Almost all degree-seeking transfer students at the branch campuses (92%) transferred from in-state institutions, a much higher percentage have associate degrees (57.6% vs. 33.5%), and, for some reason, a much higher percentage are female (84.4% vs. 56.3%).

In-State vs. Out-of-State Transfer Students at the Branch Campuses

		#	% of Total
Main Campus	In-State	1014	58.6%
	Out-of-State	715	41.4%
Branch Campuses	In-State	1064	92%
	Out-of-State	92	8%

Associate Degree Recipients Among Transfer Students at the Branch Campuses

	Associate Degree	No Associate Degree	% Degree
Main Campus	579	1150	33.5%
Branch Campuses	666	490	57.6%

Gender of Transfer Students at the Branch Campuses

	Male	Female	% Female
Main Campus	755	975	56.3%
Branch Campuses	180	976	84.4%

It seems that the branch campuses have a higher graduation rate than the main campus. This statistic should be viewed with caution, since, as stated above, it is difficult to assign a student to just one campus. This analysis should be run again after we have developed a standard way to decide which campus a student “belongs” to. However, based upon a rough classification by campus, it seems that transfer students at the branch campuses have a four-year graduation rate of 67.6% while transfer students at the main campus have a graduation rate of 42.1%. This actually should not be a surprise, since transfer students at the branch campuses are higher on every factor predictive of graduation (in-state transfer, female gender, and having an associate degree).

Graduation Rates of Transfer Students at Branch vs. Main Campus

	Graduated	Did Not Graduate	% Graduated
Main Campus	338	464	42.1%
Branch Campuses	305	146	67.6%
Total	643	610	51.3%