Demonstrating Student Achievement

The Retention Advisory Board identifies *retention of first-time, full-time students* as a criterion of student achievement for the University of Mississippi, and discussed and approved the threshold of acceptability and retention goals during its March 20, 2018, meeting.

The Retention Advisory Board set the threshold of acceptability (minimum expectation) for retention of first-time, full-time students at 80%. This threshold is based on a review of the UM overall retention rates (see Figure 1) and the focused and increased institutional commitment to improve retention rates that began in 2007.
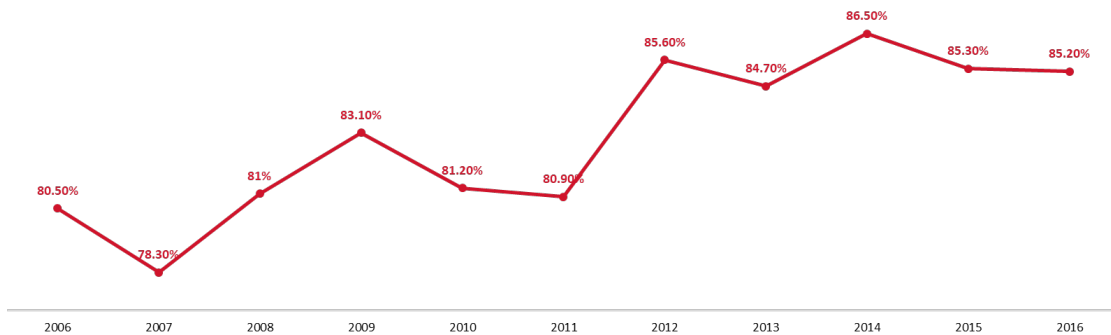

Figure 1. UM Overall Retention Rate Trends

The goal for retention of first-time, full-time students is to exceed the average of Mississippi universities that comprise the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and to exceed the average of peer institutions (see Table 1). Additionally, the Retention Advisory Board, with support from institutional leaders, expects continuous improvement in retention and aspires to achieve a retention rate comparable to the Southeastern Conference (SEC) public institutions and Southern University Group (SUG) institutions.

Table 1. UM and Comparison Institution Retention Rates

	Fall 2013 Cohort	Fall 2014 Cohort	Fall 2015 Cohort
UM	84.7%	86.5%	85.3%
IHL Retention Average	71.0%	74.9%	74.3%
Peer* Retention Average	85.3%	84.95%	84.6%
SEC Public Average	87.1%	87.3%	87.2%
SUG Average	88.1%	88.2%	88.0%

*Peer Institutions include the 20 UM prospective peer institutions identified by Faculty Excellence Task Force and approved for use in AY 2018 and AY 2019. Prospective Peer Institutions include Auburn University, Clemson University, Colorado State University, Iowa State University, Kansas State University, Louisiana State University, Mississippi State University, Ohio University, Oregon State University, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Arkansas, University of California-Irvine, University of Cincinnati, University of Kansas, University of New Mexico, University of Oklahoma, University of Oregon, University of South Carolina, Virginia Commonwealth University, West Virginia University.