

PARTNERSHIP FOR COLLEGE COMPLETION

Accelerating action to close the graduation gap

ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY EQUITY PLAN

Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative

April 10, 2020

Note: Roosevelt University's Equity Plan on April 10, 2020 will include projections and data, prior to the integration of Robert Morris University Illinois into the Roosevelt community.

Executive Summary

Introduction

ILEA is the signature initiative of the Partnership for College Completion (PCC), a non-profit organization founded in 2016 to catalyze and champion policies, systems, and practices that ensure all students can graduate from college and achieve their career aspirations. With an initial focus on northeastern Illinois, PCC has set a goal to eliminate institutional achievement gaps in college degree completion for low-income, first generation, Latinx or Hispanic, and Black or African-American students in Illinois by 2025, establishing the region as a national leader in equity in attainment.

Equity Statement

Roosevelt University was built on diversity, acceptance, and the possibility of opportunities. As an institution that is proud of its origins, we are committed to providing an environment for diverse individuals to learn and grow without fear of exclusion or disadvantage. We are a community committed to the values of our mission: that knowledge and integrity can only develop through valuing the rich diversity of our histories, experiences, and ideas. The greatest expression of our commitment to diversity is ensuring that all students, regardless of their racial or economic background, are thriving and achieving equitable outcomes. At Roosevelt University, respect flourishes, voices are valued, and the principles of social justice are treasured, unfettered in the pursuit toward a safe space for all who encounter the institution as well as a more just society outside of it.

Current State

Roosevelt University has had a historically diverse student body since its founding in 1945. For this study, we will focus on the past 5 years of data.

Graduation rates provide an illustration of the trajectory of new students based on a degree completion window of six years, depending on the first semester of enrollment. Six-year graduation rates have fluctuated between the five cohorts and gaps between select demographics have decreased over time, but a 21% difference is identifiable between White and Black or African-American new full-time freshmen in the most current cohort of fall 2013.

Fall-to-fall retention rates are harbingers for future graduation rate. The retention rate gap between Black or African-American and White students has decreased by 25% from the starting cohort of fall 2015 to fall 2018 but currently remains at an 11% difference.

In terms of new undergraduates by Pell Grant status, overall fall-to-fall retention rates have increased over the past two years, decreasing the gap between Pell Grant recipients and non-Pell Grant recipients by 11%.

Current Initiatives

Over the past few years, Roosevelt has restructured its core administration and hired staff members with fresh ideas to better serve the student body. Roosevelt's faculty have also contributed to these ideas with resource support and direct implementation of initiatives. These initiatives compose the major catalyst for the overall increase in retention rates over the past two years and will continue to increase graduation and retention rates in the future. Some examples of the current initiatives and platforms in place to reduce equity in attainment gaps include the RU food and toiletry pantry, Multicultural Student Support Service (MSSS), students of concern team, early alert program, the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), and the McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program.

Future Vision

The goal of the Equity Plan and the Illinois Equity in Attainment initiative is to eliminate disparities in degree completion rates on our campuses between African-American and White students, Latinx and White students, and students based on Pell Grant eligibility, while increasing the overall 6-year graduation rate for all full-time freshmen. The central focus of this project is to improve 6-year graduation rates and fall-to-fall retention rates for new full-time freshmen and fall-to-fall retention rates for new full-time transfers.

To decrease the equity gap in achievement between demographics of students at Roosevelt, our goal is a minimum 44% 6-year graduation rate for all new full-time freshmen of the fall 2020 for each racial/ethnic identity of study with a central focus on Black or African-American and Hispanic or Latinx students. The 6-year graduation rate goal for White students is the same as their average 6-year graduation rate for the past five cohorts, decreasing equity gaps while maintaining higher rates for selected student populations.

By the end of the 2025-2026 academic year, we expect to minimize the first-year fall-to-fall retention rate gaps between African-American and White students, Latinx and White students, and Pell Grant recipients and non-Pell Grant recipients for full-time freshmen and reach close to a parity between selected student populations for full-time transfers.

Institutional Strategies

Roosevelt will implement several strategies to decrease equity in attainment that exist for several student populations.

For African-American students, we will utilize the EAB (formerly the Education Advisory Board) platform to track and support African-Americans and utilize the Office of Multicultural Student Support Services (MSSS) to increase supports for African-Americans. For Latinx/Hispanic students, we will utilize EAB platform to track and support Latinx/Hispanic students, utilize the Office of Multicultural Student Support Services to increase supports for Latinx/Hispanic students on campus, and attain Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation for grant-funded

support for Latinx/Hispanic students. For Pell Grant eligible students, we will utilize the EAB platform to track and support students who are Pell Grant eligible, increase institutional giving to specifically support students who are Pell Grant recipients, and increase full-time professional academic advisors. In terms of cross functional support of all ILEA constituencies (Pell Grant recipients and Latinx and African-American students), we will identify/hire a diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist to identify gaps in systems and processes that create barriers to equitable student success, enhance classroom learning, increase grant funding that supports these student populations, and participate in the Gateways to Completion national program.

Evaluating Impact

Roosevelt’s commitment to the ILEA initiative is corroborated in its core value of diversity and inclusiveness, in which the University “embraces diversity, values personal perspectives, and strives to ensure equity in student success to address societal gaps in educational attainment.”

¹ Each aspect of the University’s Equity Plan will be continuously reviewed, based on our progress towards institutional benchmarks.

Institutional Research will provide the majority of final statistics for the Equity Plan . These data will be assessed, based on the set benchmarks for each cohort in the Equity Plan. Final retention rates will be analyzed after grades are confirmed for the subsequent semester (spring term) or year (fall term) after the student has been admitted as either a new freshman or transfer.

¹ Joe Regan et al, *Building a Stronger Roosevelt 5-Year Strategic Plan: 2019-2014*, 2019

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Endorsement Page

Roosevelt University ***Equity Plan: 2020 - 2025***

This Equity Plan has been endorsed by the following members of Roosevelt's community:

Ali Malekzadeh

President 4-10-2020

Lois Becker

Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs 4-10-2020

Joseph Regan

Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Accreditation 4-10-2020

Michael Cassidy

Vice President for Enrollment Management and Athletics 4-10-2020

Jamar Orr

Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students 4-10-2020

Katrina Coakley

Associate Provost for Student Success 4-10-2020

Joe Roeges

Research Associate, Institutional Research 4-10-2020

Mike Maly

Associate Provost for Research and Faculty Success 4-10-2020

Amanda Wornhoff

Assistant Provost for Core Curriculum and Assessment 4-10-2020

Roosevelt University's entire community of faculty, administrators, and staff were able to provide feedback on the Equity Plan, prior to its publication.

1: Introduction

1a: ILEA Overview

Despite improvements in high school graduation and college matriculation rates for Illinois students, there are wide and persistent gaps in college completion rates especially for low-income, first-generation students, and students of color. The launch of the **Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative (ILEA)** marks a major step forward for 25 two-year and four-year public and private non-profit colleges and universities from northeastern Illinois and across the state who are committing to eliminate racial and socio-economic achievement gaps by 2025, while aggressively increasing completion rates on their campuses.

ILEA is the signature initiative of the Partnership for College Completion (PCC), a non-profit organization founded in 2016 to catalyze and champion policies, systems, and practices that ensure all students can graduate from college and achieve their career aspirations. With an initial focus on northeastern Illinois, PCC has set a goal to eliminate institutional achievement gaps in college degree completion for low-income, first generation, Latinx or Hispanic, and Black or African-American students in Illinois by 2025, establishing the region as a national leader in equity in attainment.

Beginning with this initial cohort, PCC will offer direct support and resources to the 25 colleges and universities who have embraced the Equity Initiative. PCC will work alongside these partner colleges to jointly set commitments, identify appropriate evidence-based strategies to utilize on their campuses, and scale effective practices. PCC will support policy and practice change efforts that have the explicit goal of eliminating racial and socioeconomic degree completion gaps, while increasing institutional college completion rates overall.

By participating in ILEA, partners commit to a core set of principles:

- Institutions are responsible for graduating all of their degree-seeking students as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- All students can graduate with college degrees if they have the right information, tools, and support systems.
- Achievement gaps between low-income, Black or African-American, and Latinx or Hispanic students and their higher-income and White peers are unacceptable and should be eliminated.
- These efforts will be undertaken without sacrificing institutional quality or excellence or increasing admission standards.

The ILEA colleges will conduct a deep analysis of their institutional data, develop equity plans that contain annual growth targets, and report progress toward their goals, which will be shared publicly. The colleges will also work to identify obstacles students face and develop programs and policies that break down unnecessary barriers to college graduation. The ILEA colleges and universities will ensure the road to each degree path is clearly mapped out and

communicated, guaranteeing that students can access courses when they need them to maintain momentum in pursuit of their degree.

The launch of the Initiative follows a galvanizing 2017 PCC report, “[Unequal Opportunity in Illinois: A Look at Who Graduates College and Why It Matters](#),” which found that only 33.7 percent of African American students who start at four-year institutions earn bachelor’s degrees within six years – a rate 32.7 percentage points below that of their White peers. For Latinos, 49.3 percent are earning degrees, a still-wide gap of 17.1 percentage points. The completion gap between low-income and wealthier students is also alarming: according to Advance Illinois, only 37 percent of low-income students graduate in six years while 75 percent of wealthier students do.

Increased and more equitable graduation outcomes across the diversity of our state’s higher education institutions benefits students, their families, and the state of Illinois. A 3% increase in graduation rates is projected to produce a \$1.7B increase in net earnings, \$132M increase in tax revenue, and \$35M in public system savings. The progress of the ILEA member colleges and universities will provide a set of learnings that the Partnership will document and share with practitioners and policymakers across Illinois, the region and the nation, establishing a path forward that will promote equity in college achievement.

For more information on ILEA, please visit: <http://partnershipfcc.org/ilea>.

1b: Institution Overview

Mission

Reflecting the ideals of its founders in 1945, Roosevelt University is a private, nonsectarian community of educators, scholars, and learners committed to academic, creative, and service excellence who value differences in personal experiences and perspectives; ask the difficult questions; and promote mutual understanding, inclusion, social consciousness, and action toward social justice. Recognizing that difference broadens perspectives, Roosevelt University seeks and serves a diverse, promising student body from metropolitan Chicago and around the world.

The hallmarks of the Roosevelt University experience are strong student-faculty interaction and engagement with metropolitan Chicago as both a laboratory for learning and as an expression of its commitment to social justice. The experience is created through the efforts of a strong faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and creative activity and a staff equally focused on helping students grow and achieve their educational and life goals.

Roosevelt is a metropolitan university that is an active partner in the social, economic, and cultural development of the communities it serves. It offers a broad array of academic

programs, from the baccalaureate through doctoral levels, in a highly interactive environment where students can explore, discover, and develop their unique abilities and interests.

Vision

Roosevelt University is nationally recognized for providing transformational experiences and opportunities for discovery that create socially conscious citizens who are leaders in their professions and their communities.

Core Values

From its founding, Roosevelt University has been dedicated to the enlightenment of the human spirit. The following core values are rooted in social consciousness – providing opportunities and developing individuals, thereby contributing to a just society:

Diversity and Inclusiveness – The University embraces diversity, values personal perspectives, and strives to ensure equity in student success to address societal gaps in educational attainment.

Enlightenment and Awareness – Roosevelt inspires the discovery of personal and universal truths through learning opportunities that highlight individual responsibility within a society.

Integrity and Civility – The University supports respectful discourse and a deep understanding of various perspectives, leading to actions that promote a common good for all and the sustainable environment which our world depends on.

Adaptability and Transformation – Roosevelt adapts its curriculum and practices to emphasize effective teaching and experiential learning to broaden the acquisition of knowledge to transform students.

Knowledge and Wisdom – The University fosters exemplary teaching, interactive learning, and research for the community to gain knowledge. The University provides a broad array of experiences so that knowledge can be further developed and wisdom can be gained and acted upon.

Current Enrollment

Fall 2019 Semester

4,071 total enrollment

2,321 undergraduate students

1,750 graduate and doctoral students

Institutional Quick Facts Profile

Faculty/Staff	197 full-time faculty 87% of full-time faculty hold a PhD or equivalent degree 256 non clerical Administrators
Student/Faculty Ratio	11:1
Average Class Size	18
Academics	5 colleges: College of Arts and Sciences , Heller College of Business , College of Education , Chicago College of Performing Arts , College of Pharmacy
Degree Programs	63 undergraduate majors and 38 minors 56 graduate programs 2 doctoral programs
Campuses	Chicago : 32-story vertical campus and historic Auditorium Building in downtown Chicago’s South Loop neighborhood Schaumburg : 225,000-square-foot facility on 27 acres of land 30 miles outside of downtown Chicago in northwest suburban Schaumburg Harper University Center : At Harper Community College in Palatine.

History of Addressing Equity on Campus

As explained in our mission and founding principles, Roosevelt has a strong history of inclusion and social justice. In 1945, “Roosevelt College was created in a courageous effort to make higher education more democratic. It was born into a world where racial, gender and religious segregation dominated colleges and universities, in a nation where fewer than 20 percent of high school graduates went on to higher education and in a city where stores, restaurants, housing and recreation excluded African Americans.”²

Roosevelt’s founding as an independent, private, coeducational institution of higher learning was a feat requiring considerable courage. The University was born of a dispute between the

² Lynn Weiner, “The Equality Experiment”, *Roosevelt Review Spring 2015*, 2015

Board of Trustees of Chicago's Central YMCA College and then-President Edward J. Sparling over equality of opportunity and academic freedom. In 1945, the Board of the Central YMCA College mandated that quotas be placed on the admission of minority students, not an uncommon practice at the time. President Sparling, a man of uncompromising principles, defied this mandate and was fired as a result. In a remarkable vote of confidence and shared purpose, 92% of the faculty and 97% of the student body left the school with him. Together, they established a different kind of academic institution, one committed to equal access to higher education for all Chicago residents.

The ethical conduct of Roosevelt's founders attracted the support of leaders in the fields of diplomacy, the sciences, the arts, literature, and business. Members of the University's earliest advisory board included Eleanor Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, Ralph Bunche, Marian Anderson, Pearl Buck, Thomas Mann, and Gunnar Myrdal. Today, Roosevelt's principled beginnings continue to inspire a community dedicated to honoring its roots and furthering the values that define the institution.

In 2015, our efforts to continue to live our mission were further amplified by the introduction of a campus climate survey. The results of that survey resulted in the creation of five distinct task forces, one of which was the inclusion statement and action plan task force. From the work of this committee, the university established an inclusion statement, but has yet to complete the action plan. Thus, joining ILEA is the first step toward creating a plan to increase student access and success across campus, while closing the equity gap.

Equity Statement

Roosevelt University was built on diversity, acceptance, and the possibility of opportunities. As an institution that is proud of its origins, we are committed to providing an environment for diverse individuals to learn and grow without fear of exclusion or disadvantage. We are a community committed to the values of our mission: that knowledge and integrity can only develop through valuing the rich diversity of our histories, experiences, and ideas. The greatest expression of our commitment to diversity is ensuring that all students, regardless of their racial or economic background, are thriving and achieving equitable outcomes. At Roosevelt University, respect flourishes, voices are valued, and the principles of social justice are treasured, unfettered in the pursuit toward a safe space for all who encounter the institution as well as a more just society outside of it.

1c: Purpose of the Equity Plan

The ILEA Equity Plan is intended to serve as a roadmap for outlining how [your college or university] will work toward closing gaps in degree attainment for low-income, first generation,

African American, and Latinx students. Due to the persistence and size of equity gaps across colleges and universities in Illinois, the Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative seeks to prioritize urgent action on equitable degree completion outcomes for students across racial and socioeconomic groups. Below please find the degree completion disparities between the following target student groups:

- African-American and White students
- Latina/o students and White students
- Students receiving Pell Grants and those who are not eligible

The ILEA Equity Plan is intended to complement other institutional efforts to increase equity and degree completion.

1f: Campus Engagement Plan

At the behest of our President, Ali Malekzadeh, Roosevelt University joined the ILEA coalition. The ILEA Leadership team consists of the following:

Ali Malekzadeh, President

Lois Becker, Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs

Joseph Regan, Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Accreditation

Michael Cassidy, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Athletics

Jamar Orr, Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Katrina Coakley, Associate Provost for Student Success

Joe Roeges, Research Associate, Institutional Research

Amanda Wornhoff, Assistant Provost for Core Curriculum and Assessment

Mike Maly, Associate Provost for Research and Faculty Success

These individuals represent a cross section of University Leadership, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Institutional Research. In phase 1, this core team attended the Fall Symposium, and has subsequently met to discuss and launch the ICAT Survey. The broader campus community was informed of the ILEA initiatives by President Malekzadeh on March 22, 2019, in a university wide message, which launched the ICAT survey. Additionally, the campus was informed about the purpose of ICAT and ILEA on the floor of the University Senate on March 22, 2019, by Provost Becker.

The next phase of our campus engagement plan is to bring together various stakeholders on campus to discuss the ICAT Survey Results. Invitees from the following functional areas will be present: Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Financial Services, Budget and Planning, IT, Institutional Research, Full-time Faculty, Executive Council, and Dean's Council.

Beyond the ICAT Debrief in April 2019, the results of the survey will be shared with the entire campus community. We will also solicit support from other members of the campus community who are passionate about closing the equity gap, and invite them to participate in drafting the equity plan.

2. Current State

2a: Undergraduate Enrollment

Roosevelt University has had a historically diverse student body since its founding in 1945. For this study, we will focus on the past 5 years of data. Chart 1 represents the total number of enrolled undergraduates by self-identified race/ethnicity, based on federally-defined classifications.

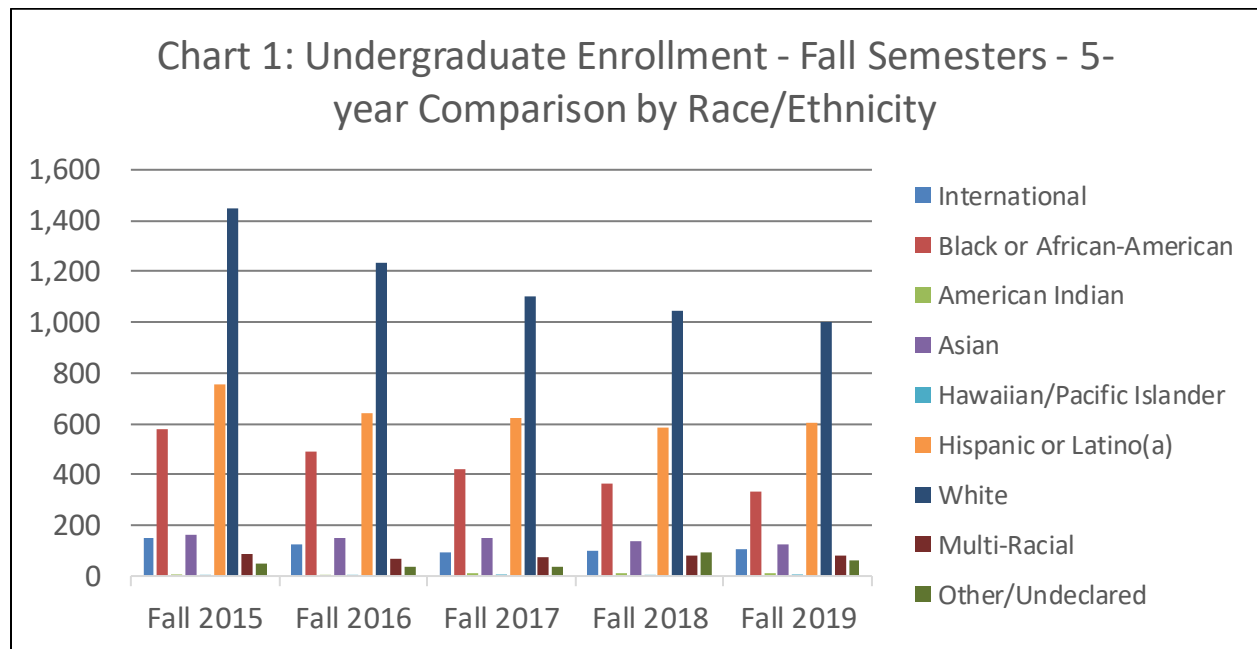


Table 1 - Undergraduate Enrollment Statistics - Fall Semesters - 5-year Comparison by Race/Ethnicity

Race-Ethnicity	Fall 2015		Fall 2016		Fall 2017		Fall 2018		Fall 2019	
	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total
American Indian	6	0.2%	7	0.3%	9	0.4%	10	0.4%	9	0.4%
Asian	162	5.3%	149	5.7%	149	6.3%	137	6.0%	126	5.8%
Black or African-American	577	18.8%	491	18.9%	421	17.9%	366	16.1%	333	15.2%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	7	0.2%	8	0.3%	6	0.3%	7	0.3%	5	0.2%
Hispanic or Latino(a)	755	24.6%	643	24.7%	625	26.5%	582	25.6%	604	27.6%
Multi-Racial	86	2.8%	69	2.7%	76	3.2%	79	3.5%	78	3.6%
International	148	4.8%	125	4.8%	95	4.0%	100	4.4%	104	4.8%
White	1,449	47.2%	1,232	47.3%	1,099	46.6%	1,044	46.0%	1,000	45.7%
Other/Undeclared	49	1.6%	34	1.3%	34	1.4%	94	4.1%	62	2.8%

Table 1 includes a proportional comparison, per fall semester, of the self-reported demographics of undergraduates at Roosevelt University. For the purposes of ILEA and to decrease equity gaps between students, we will focus our analyses on demographics of students that have historically faced disproportionately steep societal barriers that have hampered their opportunities to earn a college degree. The target student populations include Pell Grant recipients and students that identify as being either Black/African-American or Hispanic/Latina/o. In the table above, the proportion of undergraduates that identify as either being White or Black/African-American has slightly decreased over the past five years. The

proportion of Hispanic or Latina/o undergraduates has increased between the fall semesters of 2015 and 2019.

Students potentially encounter excessive financial restrictions that affect their abilities to afford an education. Many of these undergraduate are eligible to receive a Pell Grant. New undergraduate enrollment for the past 5 fall semesters by Pell Grant status is included in table 2, below (new freshmen and transfers).

Table 2 - Undergraduate Enrollment Statistics - Fall Semesters - 5-Year Comparison by Pell Grant Status

Pell Grant Status for All Undergraduates	Fall 2015		Fall 2016		Fall 2017		Fall 2018		Fall 2019	
	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total
Pell Grant Recipient	1,397	43.1%	1,178	42.7%	1,133	45.1%	1,059	43.8%	1,022	44.0%
Non-Pell Grant Recipient	1,842	56.9%	1,580	57.3%	1,381	54.9%	1,360	56.2%	1,299	56.0%

As part of submitting yearly student data to IPEDS for accreditation, we review undergraduate 6-year graduation and fall-to-fall retention rates for new cohorts of full-time transfer and freshman students. These key statistics will be the benchmarks for our institutional analysis of current and future equity initiatives.

2b: New Undergraduate 6-year Graduation Rates

Graduation rates provide an illustration of the trajectory of new students based on a degree completion window of six years, depending on the first semester of enrollment.

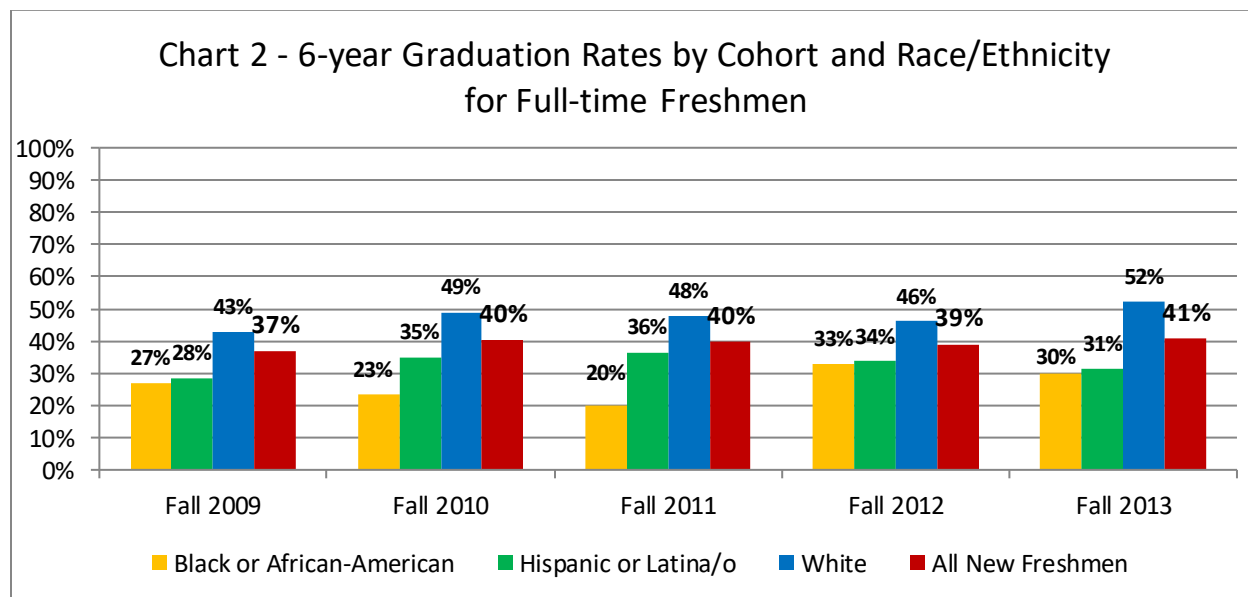
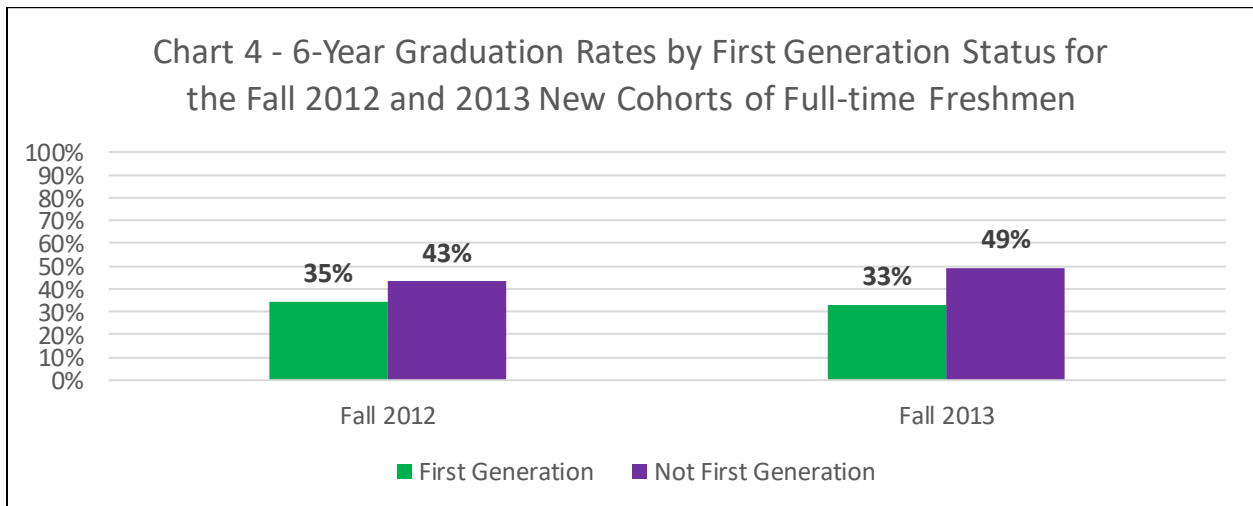
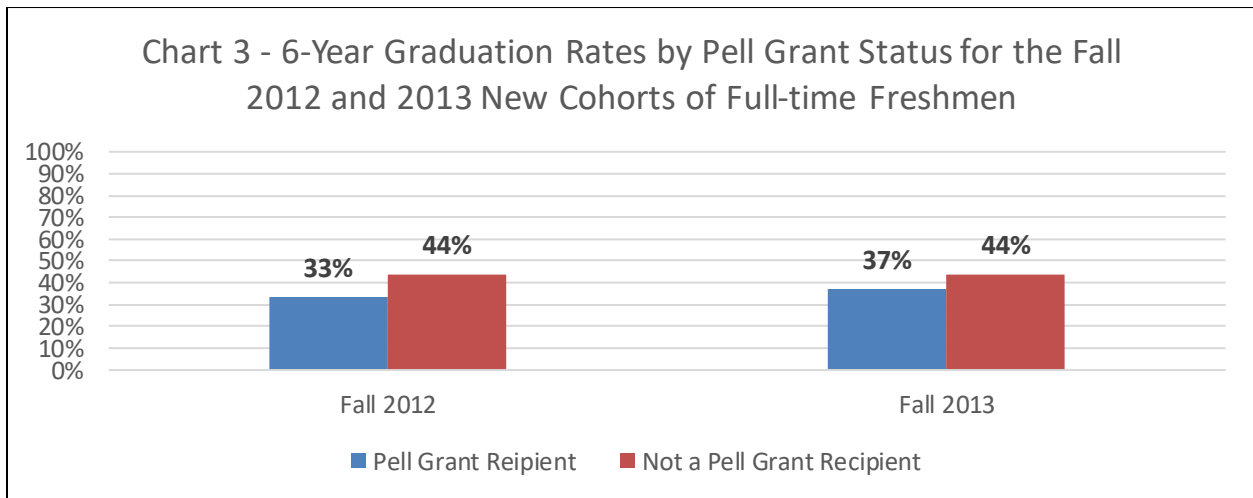


Chart 2 represents the 6-year graduation rates of the last five fall cohorts of full-time freshmen by three comparative demographics of students: Black or African-American, Hispanic or Latina/o, and White. Six-year graduation rates have fluctuated between the five cohorts and gaps between select demographics have decreased over time, but a 22% difference is identifiable between White and Black or African-American new full-time freshmen in the most current cohort of fall 2013. We did not include 6-year graduation rates for new full-time

transfers due to the variability of credit hours earned from previous institutions and the class code of the student.

Pell Grant and first generation status were first included as a database category during the fall 2012 semester. Chart 3 includes the 6-year graduation rates for the most recent two cohorts of new full-time freshmen by Pell Grant status. The overall 6-year graduation rate for non-Pell Grant recipients is at least 7% higher than Pell Grant recipients in each new cohort of full-time freshmen. The impact of first generation status is shown in chart 4, where non-first generation students had a 16% larger 6-year graduation rate than first generation new full-time freshmen for the fall 2013 cohort.



2c: New Undergraduate Fall-to-fall Retention Rates

Fall-to-fall retention rates are based on the number of enrolled new full-time freshmen and transfers that returned for the subsequent fall term.

Chart 5 - Fall-to-fall Retention Rates by Cohort and Race/Ethnicity for Full-time Freshmen

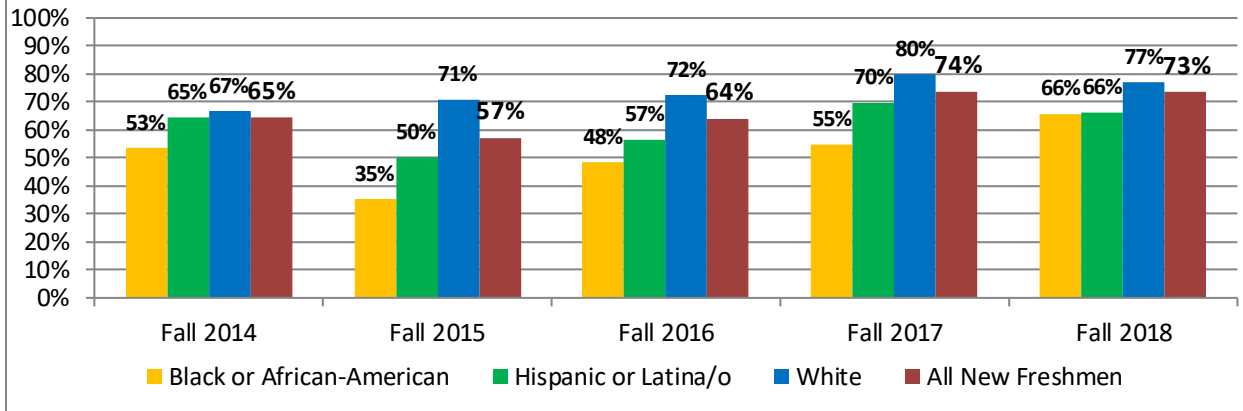


Chart 5 includes fall-to-fall retention rates for the most current five cohorts of full-time freshmen for Black or African-American, Hispanic or Latina/o, and White students. Over the past two years, retention rates have increased each year for the three demographics of students in our study. The retention rate gap between Black or African-American and White students has also decreased by 25% from the starting cohort of fall 2015 to fall 2018 but currently remains at an 11% difference. In terms of new undergraduates by Pell Grant status, chart 6 also shows that retention rates have increased over the past three years, decreasing the gap between Pell Grant recipients and non-Pell Grant recipients by 11%.

Chart 6 - Fall-to-fall Retention Rates by Cohort and Pell Grant Status for Full-time Freshmen

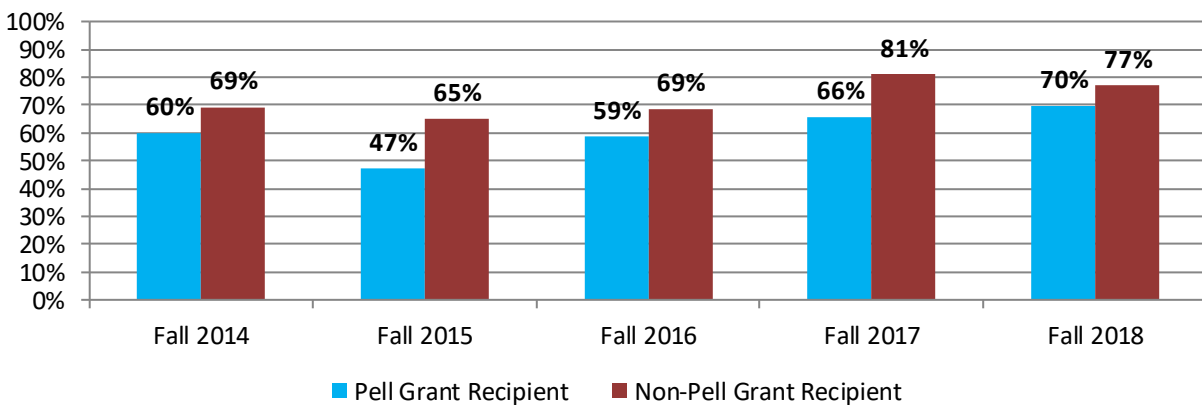
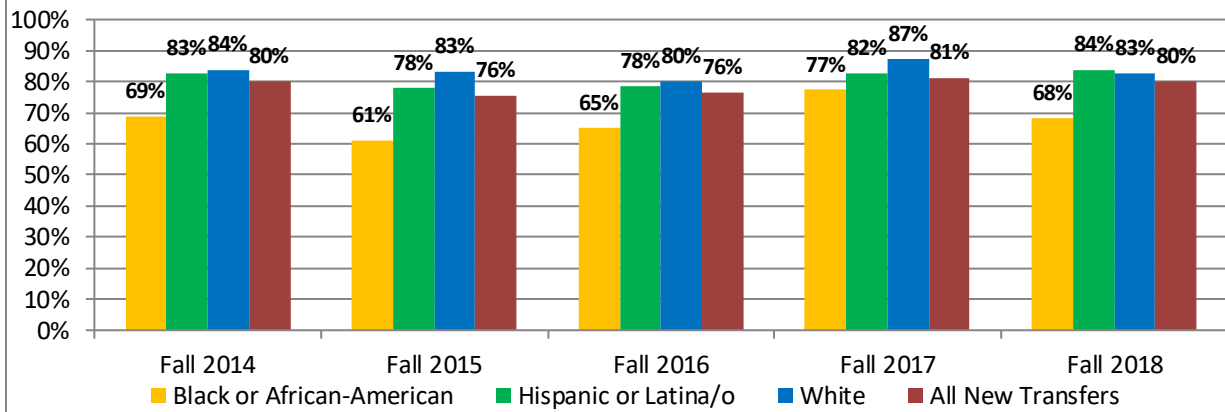


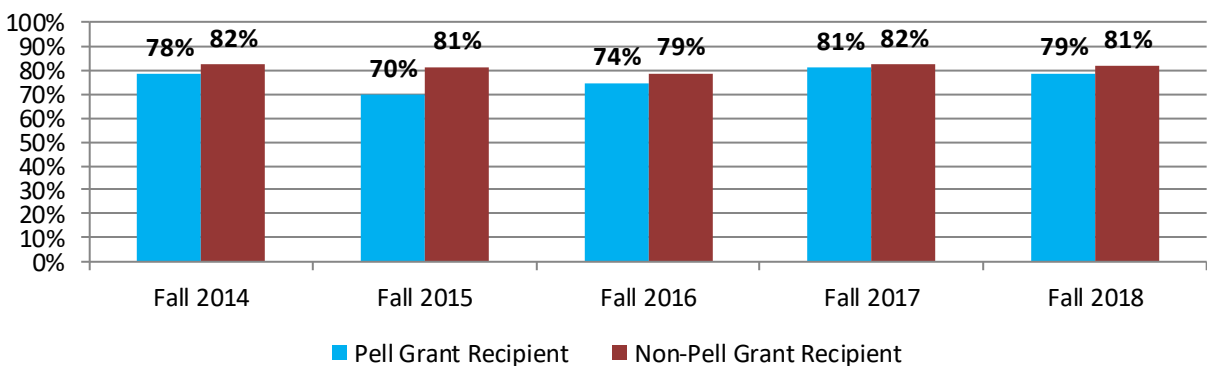
Chart 7 - Fall-to-fall Retention Rates by Cohort and Race/Ethnicity for Full-time Transfers



Fall-to-fall retention rates have also increased since fall 2015 cohort for new full-time transfers for each demographic included in our study. Chart 7 demonstrates the 7% increase in fall-to-fall retention for Black or African-Americans in the past three years but a 9% decrease from the 2017 cohort to the 2018 cohort.

The fall-to-fall retention rate for new full-time transfer Pell Grant recipients has also improved since the fall 2015 semester in Chart 8, increasing from 70% to 79%. The fall-to-fall retention rate gap between Pell Grant and non-Pell Grant recipients for new full-time transfers is within 2%.

Chart 8 - Fall-to-fall Retention Rates by Cohort and Pell Grant Status for Full-time Transfers



Fall-to-fall retention rate increases over the past few years have been catalyzed by recent initiatives implemented by administrators at Roosevelt University and will be discussed in further depth in the next section.

2d: Current Initiatives

Over the past few years, Roosevelt has restructured its core administration and hired staff members with fresh ideas to better serve the student body. Roosevelt's faculty have also contributed to these ideas with resource support and direct implementation of initiatives. These initiatives compose the major catalyst for the overall increase in retention rates over the past two years and will continue to increase graduation and retention rates in the future. We will highlight several of the programs that have been created or expanded upon in the past three years.

- **RU Food and Toiletry Pantry**

The pantry was created by the Homeless and Food Insecurity Task Force with the overall purpose to provide services related to food insecurity amongst the Roosevelt University student body. The pantry's primary focus is to service students who do not have financial means to sustain a nutritionally rich diet and those who do not have access to an on campus meal plan or other options to fulfill their dietary needs. Student facing issues of hunger and/or homelessness are at a greater risk for early dropout, poor academic performance, mental health concerns, and physical issues.

During the first seven months of the 2018-2019 academic year, the food and toiletry pantry serviced 60 self-identified students, of which many required more than one visit due to their financial hardship. More than 50% of these students were Pell Grant recipients during the 2018-2019 academic year. The program proportionately helped more minority students, 45.0% identifying as Black or African-American, 13.3% identifying as Hispanic or Latina/o, and 15.0% identifying as White.

- **Multicultural Student Support Service (MSSS)**

MSSS provides academic support designed to improve the retention and graduation rates of first-generation college students, students of color, and students from limited income backgrounds through sustained developmental programming, advocacy, financial literacy, and by providing a network of people and resources to help students succeed.

During the spring 2019 semester, 75 undergraduate students were registered for the program. Of these students, 37.3% were Hispanic or Latina/o, 32.0% were Black or African-American, and 17.3% were White. Two-thirds of the registered undergraduates were also Pell Grant recipients and one-third were first-generation college students.

- **Student of Concern**

The staff in the Office of the Dean of Students and Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities serve as the student ombudspersons to investigate situations and assist in the resolution of grievances brought by a student against people at all levels within the university. The Dean of Students also chairs the Behavioral Assessment Team which

assesses disruptive or concerning behavior by students, faculty, staff, or guests and provides consultation; makes recommendations to the authoritative entity that, in turn, takes action; and brings in appropriate services and departments to resolve situation before they become emergencies. An individual is identified as a 'student of concern' if she/he is facing one or more various forms of crisis, trauma, or conflict within or outside the boundaries of the University.

Students are less likely to return the following semester if they felt threatened or harassed, have gone through a trauma without support, and/or did not feel confident in the university's ability to respond to a crisis. The Office of the Dean of Students works with many campus partners in helping our students face challenging personal times. Of the 46 individual students that faced one or more personal crisis away from their studies during the spring 2018 semester, 73.9% were retained in the fall 2018 semester. For the 58 students that faced a crisis or concern away from the classroom during the fall 2018 semester, more than 87% were retained in the spring 2019 semester, as of February, 2019.

- **Early Alert**

The Academic Advising office began using the Faculty Feedback (Early Alert) module in Banner as our formal early alert system in spring 2016. The program was instituted to help connect students to resources on campus to fit each student's need. Given Roosevelt's student population, the Early Alert program is vital to helping students succeed and persist to graduation. The purpose of the program is to create a University culture that encourages student success, to foster collaboration between the Academic Advising Office and faculty and to facilitate greater faculty engagement with students.

During the fall 2017 term, 157 officially enrolled undergraduates had received early alerts from a faculty and/or academic advisor based on signs of underperformance in classes to help reach students identified as at-risk. Undergraduates that received early alerts were largely Pell Grant recipients, non-White, and with a range of academic experience (21% seniors versus 29% freshmen).

In the fall 2018 term, 228 enrolled undergraduates had received an early alert from a faculty and/or academic advisor. Students that received early alerts were mostly minority students with a wide range of academic experience (freshmen class consisted of the smallest proportion at 22.8%).

- **Academic Affairs**

The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) has organized faculty development initiatives that center on inclusionary pedagogical practices. The OAA organizes a yearly faculty day long retreat involving workshops to help bolster faculty teaching. The most recent

retreat featured a workshop entitled “Bandwidth Recovery,” led by Dr. Cia Verschelden. The workshop addressed a variety of evidence-based interventions that are meant to help students to regain cognitive resources that have been diminished by the negative effects of economic insecurity, discrimination and hostility against non-majority groups based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and other aspects of difference. OAA also organized a workshop entitled “Educating for Success in the First Year” for RU First Year Success and Transfer Success instructors, led by Dr. Jillian Kinzie, a nationally recognized education leader from Indiana University. The workshop centered on best practices for teaching first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students. Finally, OAA has also organized workshops to bolster skills in terms of mentoring undergraduate research, as evidence suggests improved mentoring positively impacts underrepresented students the most. These efforts are ongoing, focusing on helping faculty create inclusionary classrooms.

- **McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program**

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education as part of the Federal TRIO program, the mission of the McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program at Roosevelt University is to provide promising undergraduates with the knowledge necessary to achieve and successfully complete a doctoral degree. The McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program accomplishes this through enhancement workshops, advanced research, a mentoring program, and a supportive atmosphere. McNair students are required by their senior year to complete a number of scholarly activities as they prepare to apply for graduate school and graduate funding opportunities. McNair students benefit from a summer research program, presenting research at professional conferences, visits to graduate schools they are interested in attending, academic counseling, course tutoring, preparing for GRE exams, and receiving advice and assistance with the graduate school selection and application process. The McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program is committed to helping students build solid foundations in their professional and personal relationships through mentoring, community building activities, and nurturing a sense of accomplishment in their educational goals at the end of their program. Federal guidelines require that two-thirds of the participants be first-generation college students and low-income (based on federal thresholds). The remaining one-third may be underrepresented students (African-American, Latina/o, Native American or Pacific Islander) in higher education.

The McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program is in the second year of the 5-year grant. At the onset of 2018, Roosevelt University accepted 25 students into the program. Of the 25 students accepted, 17 are first-generation and low-income (by federal guidelines) and 8 are underrepresented. Of the first cohort, 18 are graduating by spring 2019. A second McNair scholar cohort was recruited throughout the fall 2018 semester. As of spring 2019, 18 new students will join 7 from Cohort 1. Cohort 2 has 13

first-generation/low-income students and 5 that are considered underrepresented. So far, 100% of the McNair cohort conducted research, 100% applied to graduate school, 96% were accepted into graduate school, and 100% will obtain their undergraduate degree.

3. Future Vision

Goal

The goal of the Equity Plan and the Illinois Equity in Attainment initiative is to eliminate disparities in degree completion rates on our campuses between African-American and White students, Latino/a and White students, and students based on Pell Grant eligibility, while increasing the overall 6-year graduation rate for all full-time freshmen. The central focus of this project is to improve 6-year graduation rates and fall-to-fall retention rates for new full-time freshmen and fall-to-fall retention rates for new full-time transfers. We will not include goals for new full-time transfer graduation rates due to the variance of transferred credit hours and the corresponding student’s class standing. Roosevelt’s target 6-year graduation rate goals are presented in table 3, below.

Table 3 - Minimum 6-year Graduation Rate Goals for New Full-time Freshmen by Selected Student Population

Cohort	Ethnic/Racial Identity				Pell Grant Status		Total
	Black or African-American Students	Hispanic or Latino/a Students	White Students	All Other Racial/Ethnic Identities	Pell Grant Recipients	Non-Pell Grant Recipients	Target Total
Fall 2020	44%*	44%*	44%*	44%*	44%*	44%*	50%**

* Minimum 6-year graduation rate for selected student population.

** Target goal for the entire university.

To decrease the equity gap in achievement between demographics of students at Roosevelt, our goal is a minimum 44% 6-year graduation rate for all new full-time freshmen of the fall 2020 for each racial/ethnic identity of study with a central focus on Black or African-American and Hispanic or Latino/a students. The 6-year graduation rate goal for white students is the same as their average 6-year graduation rate for the past five cohorts, decreasing equity gaps while maintaining higher rates for selected student populations.

New full-time freshmen Pell Grant recipients and non-recipients are expecting, at minimum, a 44% 6-year graduation rate for the fall 2020 cohort, the same 6-year graduation rate for non-Pell Grant recipients for the most recent finishing cohort of full-time freshmen (fall 2013). We expect 6-year graduation rate gaps by socioeconomic status to drastically decrease for future cohorts due to recently implemented retention programs.

Our goal is to increase the university’s overall new full-time freshmen 6-year graduation rate to above 50%, 9% higher than the corresponding rate for the fall 2013 cohort. We will need to at least reach, if not surpass, all of our selected student population 6-year graduation rate goals to

attain a similar achievement rate benchmark as our peer institutions and to greatly improve the future outcomes of our students.

Table 4 - 6-year Graduation Rate Goals for New Full-time Freshmen by Selected Student Population per Cohort

Cohort	Degree in 6 years - Goals						
	New Full-time Freshmen						
	Black or African-American Students	Hispanic or Latino/a Students	White Students	All Other Racial/Ethnic Identities	Pell Grant Recipients	Non-Pell Grant Recipients	TOTAL
Fall 2012*	33%	34%	46%	32% ¹	33%	44%	39%
Fall 2013*	30%	31%	52%	36%	37%	44%	41%
Fall 2014	32%	40%	46%	43%	35%	45%	41%
Fall 2015	20%	31%	48%	39%	30%	44%	38%
Fall 2016	33%	37%	48%	43%	40%	46%	44%
Fall 2017	39%	47%	53%	49%	43%	54%	49%
Fall 2018	43%	48%	53%	51%	44%	54%	49%
Fall 2019	44%	48%	53%	40%	44%	54%	49%
Fall 2020	45%	48%	53%	51%	45%	55%	50%

*Actual data - not a projection

¹ The 6-year graduation rate for students within the "All other racial/ethnic identities" category was much lower for the fall 2012 cohort than the average of the fall 2008-2012 cohorts (32% to 39%).

Table 4 includes yearly projections by selected student population, leading to our minimal goals for the fall 2020 cohort in table 3. Most of the retention programs currently implemented were created in the past two years. Additionally, a cohort's first year generally has the greatest impact on the 6-year graduation rate. We can then assume that 6-year graduation rates will increase more rapidly from the fall 2017 cohort onward. 6-year graduation rate goals for full-time freshmen are also calculated based the implementation of retention programs and the fall-to-fall retention rates for corresponding cohorts of students. The difference between fall-to-fall retention rates and 6-year graduation rates for first-year full-time freshmen within the same cohort usually falls between 20-30%, depending on special exceptions for the corresponding academic year.

We expect a larger increase in 6-year graduation rates for White students and/or non-Pell Grant recipients than included in table 4, but our main focus is to decrease the equity gaps between specific student populations. Table 4 reflects the yearly change in first-year fall-to-fall retention rates for the fall 2014-18 cohorts of new full-time freshmen, including the overall decrease in the retention rate due to administrative missteps that directly affected the fall 2015-16 cohorts.

Table 5 - First-year Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate Goals for New Full-time Freshmen by Selected Student Population per Cohort

Cohort	First-year Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates						
	New Full-time Freshmen						
	Black or African-American Students	Hispanic or Latino/a Students	White Students	All Other Racial/Ethnic Identities	Pell Grant Recipients	Non-Pell Grant Recipients	TOTAL
Fall 2012*	56%	52%	63%	58%	54%	62%	58%
Fall 2013*	52%	66%	71%	59%	62%	68%	65%
Fall 2014*	53%	65%	67%	68%	60%	69%	64%
Fall 2015*	35%	50%	71%	57%	47%	65%	57%
Fall 2016*	48%	57%	72%	64%	59%	69%	64%
Fall 2017*	55%	70%	80%	77%	66%	81%	74%
Fall 2018*	66%	66%	77%	77%	70%	77%	73%
Fall 2019	66%	70%	79%	76%	71%	79%	75%
Fall 2020-25	70%	72%	79%	76%	72%	79%	76%

*Actual data - not a projection

Table 5 includes first-year fall-to-fall retention rates for full-time freshmen for the fall 2014-18 cohorts and the projections for subsequent years leading to the target academic year of 2025-2026. The fall 2017 cohort of new full-time freshmen had the highest known fall-to-fall first-year retention rate recorded at the University (74%). We will use that percentage as a benchmark for future academic years, with additional improvements expected based on new retention programs implemented after the fall 2017 semester. The fall-to-fall retention rate for new full-time freshmen in the fall 2018 cohort was within 1% of the 2017 cohort’s record year. We are striving to decrease achievement gaps between selected student populations while increasing overall first-year fall-to-fall retention rates and 6-year graduation rates for full-time freshmen. In terms of new full-time transfers for this study, we will focus on yearly retention rate targets for each selected student population.

Table 6 - First-year Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate Goals for New Full-time Transfers by Selected Student Population per Cohort

Cohort	First-year Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates						
	New Full-time Transfers						
	Black or African-American Students	Hispanic or Latino/a Students	White Students	All Other Racial/Ethnic Identities	Pell Grant Recipients	Non-Pell Grant Recipients	TOTAL
Fall 2013*	71%	81%	81%	73%	77%	79%	78%
Fall 2014*	69%	83%	84%	79%	78%	82%	80%
Fall 2015*	61%	78%	83%	68%	70%	81%	76%
Fall 2016*	65%	78%	80%	80%	74%	79%	76%
Fall 2017*	77%	82%	87%	71%	81%	82%	81%
Fall 2018*	68%	84%	83%	80%	79%	81%	80%
Fall 2019	79%	83%	85%	82%	81%	83%	82%
Fall 2020-25	81%	83%	85%	82%	82%	83%	83%

*Actual data - not a projection

First-year fall-to-fall retention rates for new transfer students are included in table 6, above. Fall 2014-18 cohorts have been presented to gauge the yearly trend of enrollment to better assess the improvements to the equity gap in achievement for future Roosevelt students. By

the end of the 2025-2026 academic year, we expect to minimize the first-year fall-to-fall retention rate gaps between African-American and White students, Latino/a and White students, and Pell Grant recipients and non-Pell Grant recipients for full-time freshmen and reach close to a parity between selected student populations for full-time transfers.

The first-year retention rate of 81% for the fall 2017 cohort was at its highest level for full-time transfers in the past 5 years. We will use this rate as a benchmark for future academic years while expecting a slight increase due to the recent implementation of new retention programs after the fall 2017 semester.

Roosevelt will analyze equity gaps in achievement on a continuous basis to improve the learning environment for its students and to change the culture of the University to better reflect the mission of the institution and the roots of its commitment to social equality. The assessment of success in decreasing equity gaps in achievement will be further discussed in the “Evaluating Impact” section.

4. Institutional Strategies

4a: African-American Students

Strategy 1: Utilize EAB Platform to track and support African-American students

The EAB platform was integrated into Roosevelt's student success plan in spring 2016. The main goal of which was to increase overall student retention at the university. As was reported earlier, the fall 2017 cohort of new full-time freshmen had the highest fall-to-fall first-year retention rate recorded at the University (74%). As a result of this early success using the EAB platform broadly, we will begin specifically targeting supports toward African-American students.

This will include the use of reporting tools that can show us which classes our students of color tend to struggle with the most. This will allow us to work with faculty to make adjustments to the curriculum where needed. In addition, we will be able to identify what factors put a student at risk and employ pre-emptive strategies to support these students. These may include academic preparation, socialization issues, subject mastery, and attendance, to name a few.

With a narrowed focus on African-American students, we anticipate that we will increase not only our overall retention and graduation numbers, but will also support increases in our African-American completion rates.

Strategy 2: Utilize the Office of Multicultural Student Support Services (MSSS) to increase supports for African-American Students on campus

The MSSS office was originally created to focus heavily on first generation students, students of color, and Pell Grant students. Beginning in fall 2019, a much greater emphasis will be placed on supporting students of color and Pell Grant students, specifically. This shift, will allow RU to devote more resources to our African-American student population.

This office will specifically focus on African-American students' sense of belonging and mattering through pre-orientation programs, heritage month initiatives, peer-led tutoring, mentoring programs, cultural scholarship workshops, and other initiatives. To support this effort, beginning in fall 2019, the Black Student Union, which supports all African-American students on campus, will be housed in the MSSS office. Thus, allowing for greater institutional support, visibility, advising, and integration into the EAB platform.

We believe that this initiative will greatly increase our African-American students' sense of connection to campus thus aiding in our retention and graduation efforts.

"Programs that help students succeed clearly vary, but there is a common theme. They tend to espouse and reinforce the "you are not alone" idea, and the "you belong here" mantra, which is

where upper-income kids with college-educated parents who have navigated the system before have long had a built-in advantage.”³

Strategy 3: Identify/hire a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist

“To be most effective, chancellors, presidents, and provosts must join with diversity officers to build campus environments where equity, inclusion, and diversity become a part of everyday campus life.”⁴ To this end, RU seeks to identify a specialist by 2020. The role of the specialist will be to identify gaps in systems and processes that create barriers to equitable student success.

The specialist will be charged with increasing diversity on campus across all constituent groups, colleges, and departments; this includes, faculty, staff, and students. Through increasing the diversity of faculty, in particular, we believe that we will enhance the pedagogic experience in the classroom and will allow for greater support of not only our African-American students but for all of our students of color.

This person will work to enhance our ILEA goals, establish on going assessments of the cultural climate, and advance university wide strategic initiatives related to diversity.

4b: Latinx Students

Strategy 1: Utilize EAB Platform to track and support Latinx students

The EAB platform was integrated into Roosevelt’s student success plan in spring 2016. The main goal of which was to increase overall student retention at the university. As was reported earlier, the fall 2017 cohort of new full-time freshmen had the highest fall-to-fall first-year retention rate recorded at the University (74%). As a result of this early success using the EAB platform broadly, we will more specifically target supports toward our Latinx students.

This will include the use of reporting tools that can show us which classes our Latinx students tend to struggle with the most. This will allow us to work with faculty to make adjustments to the curriculum where needed. In addition, we will be able to identify what factors put a student at risk and employ pre-emptive strategies to support these students. These may include academic preparation, socialization issues, subject mastery, and attendance, to name a few.

With a narrowed focus on Latinx students, we anticipate that we will increase not only our overall retention and graduation numbers, but will also support increases in our Latinx completion rates.

³ Emily Deruy, *How to Graduate More Black Students*, 2016

⁴ Yvette Alex-Assensoh, *Hiring a Diversity Officer Is Only the First Step*, 2018

Strategy 2: Utilize the Office of Multicultural Student Support Services to increase supports for Latinx students on campus

MSSS office was originally created to focus heavily on first generation students, students of color, and Pell Grant students. Beginning in fall 2019, a much greater emphasis will be placed on supporting students of color and Pell Grant students, specifically. It is our hope that we will be the recipients of a Trio Grant that will focus on meeting the needs of the remaining 1ST generation student population. This shift, will allow RU to devote more resources to our students of color and Pell Grant recipients.

This office will specifically focus on Latinx students' sense of belonging and mattering through pre-orientation programs, heritage month initiatives, peer-led tutoring, mentoring programs, cultural scholarship workshops, and other initiatives. To support this effort, beginning in fall 2019, the Association of Latin American Students, which supports all Latinx students on campus, will be housed in the MSSS office. Thus, allowing for greater institutional support, visibility, advising, and integration into the EAB platform.

We believe that this initiative will greatly increase our Latinx students' sense of connection to campus thus aiding in our retention and graduation efforts.

In creating more inclusive environments and promoting student success, colleges and universities should further consider how to support the holistic needs of Latinx students according to intersectional experiences they may encounter.⁵

Strategy 3: Attain Hispanic Serving Institution Designation

An Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) is defined as an institution of higher education that— (A) is an eligible institution; and (B) has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application.⁶ By becoming an HSI, Roosevelt will be eligible to apply for a number of federal grants. These grants would go toward supporting our Latinx students on campus. It would additionally have a positive impact on our enrollment of Latinx students on campus.

We do not simply want to be a Latinx enrolling institution, we want to be Latinx serving. Becoming an HSI is critical to obtaining meaningful resources that will help us close the equity gap for this student population. Although increased federal funding is not the reason we decided to pursue this goal, these funds foster the general development of the university and can be used for a wide range of things to benefit all students, including educational materials, improved facilities, faculty development, tutoring or counseling programs, and other student support services.

⁵ Marcela Cuellar, *Understanding Latinx College Student Diversity and Why It Matters*, 2018

⁶ US Department of Education, *Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions*, 2019

Strategy 4: Identify/hire a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist

“To be most effective, chancellors, presidents, and provosts must join with diversity officers to build campus environments where equity, inclusion, and diversity become a part of everyday campus life.”⁷ To this end, RU seeks to identify a specialist by 2020. The role of the specialist will be to identify gaps in systems and processes that create barriers to equitable student success.

The specialist will be charged with increasing diversity on campus across all constituent groups, colleges, and departments; this includes, faculty, staff, and students. Through increasing the diversity of faculty, in particular, we believe that we will enhance the pedagogic experience in the classroom and will allow for greater support of not only our Latinx students but for all of our students of color.

This person will work to enhance our ILEA goals, establish on going assessments of the cultural climate, and advance university wide strategic initiatives related to diversity.

4c: Pell Recipients

Strategy 1: Utilize EAB Platform to track and support students who are Pell Grant Eligible

The EAB platform was integrated into Roosevelt’s student success plan in spring 2016. The main goal of which was to increase overall student retention at the university. As was reported earlier, the fall 2017 cohort of new full-time freshmen had the highest known fall-to-fall first-year retention rate recorded at the University (74%). As a result of this early success using the EAB platform broadly, we will more specifically target supports toward our students who are Pell Grant Eligible.

This will include the use of reporting tools that can show us which classes our students of color tend to struggle with academically. This will allow us to work with faculty to make adjustments to the curriculum where needed. In addition, we will be able to identify what factors put a student at risk and employ pre-emptive strategies to support these students. These may include academic preparation, financial roadblocks, socialization issues, subject mastery, and attendance, to name a few.

With a narrowed focus on Pell Grant Eligible students, we anticipate that we will increase not only our overall retention and graduation numbers, but will also support increases in our Pell Grant eligible student completion rates.

⁷ Yvette Alex-Assensoh, *Hiring a Diversity Officer Is Only the First Step*, 2018

Strategy 2: Increase institutional giving to specifically support students who are Pell Grant recipients

“There is a growing public understanding that student aid alone isn’t enough to help students fund their postsecondary aspirations because some are unable to meet their basic human needs with existing supports.”⁸ This statement is particularly resonant at RU. As of fall 2018, 47.2% of our student population were Pell Grant recipients. In fall 2014 and 2017, over 50% of our population were Pell Grant recipients. As our student body is largely made up of Pell Grant recipients, we recognize that there is a great need for additional financial support on campus. To this end, we intend to increase institutional giving that specifically supports this student population.

Through increased donor funded scholarships we could reduce the number of students who are withdrawn or don’t complete their degrees because of financial constraints. We could also utilize additional funds to create a strategic micro grant fund for students who are close to degree completion but have outstanding balances with the University. In fall 2019, 332 students were at risk for financial holds with balances that would be impacted by a micro grant ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 dollars. If implemented, this could mean a 39% gain in semester to semester retention of this student population.

Strategy 3: Increase Full Time Professional Academic Advisors

Academic advising is a critical factor in student success. Helpful, knowledgeable, and accessible advisors are essential for helping students access campus programs and resources and improving retention rates. It is well documented that students who don’t receive adequate academic advising take longer to graduate and have more debt upon graduation.

“The average bachelor’s degree graduate in the United States earned more than 136 credits when 120 credits is usually enough . . . Excess credits are estimated to cost more than \$19 billion each year. Of that amount, nearly \$8 billion is paid by students.”⁹ For Pell Grant recipients these additional classes and additional costs can be disastrous and can hinder the rate of degree attainment.

Roosevelt seeks to increase the number of full time professional academic advisors on campus who are trained to provide inclusive advising to all students, which includes our Pell Grant recipients. Continuing our use of highly structured block scheduling, degree works, and EAB will help increase overall retention and graduation rates and close the equity gap for Pell Grant recipients.

⁸ Amy Ellen Duke-Benfield, *Bolstering Non Traditional Student Success*, 2015

⁹ Complete College America, *Guided Pathways to Success*, 2009

Strategy 4: Identify/hire a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist

“To be most effective, chancellors, presidents, and provosts must join with diversity officers to build campus environments where equity, inclusion, and diversity become a part of everyday campus life.”¹⁰ To this end, RU seeks to identify a specialist by 2020. The role of the specialist will be to identify gaps in systems and processes that create barriers to equitable student success, including financial hardships.

This person will work to enhance our ILEA goals, establish on going assessments of the cultural climate, and advance university wide strategic initiatives related to diversity.

4d: Cross functional support of all ILEA Constituencies (Pell Recipients and Latinx and African-American students)

Strategy 1: Enhance Classroom Learning

Roosevelt University is committed to enhancing the in-classroom learning experiences of African-American, Latinx, and Pell Grant eligible students. Low-income and diverse students are supported when faculty actually embed/promote services and methodologies directly geared toward these populations in their courses. We will engage faculty to promote inclusive, high-impact teaching and learning practices. These practices include putting a greater focus on experiential learning, implementing first year and transfer students’ success seminars, focusing on inclusive delivery models, and cultural competency training. All of which have been proven to be effective in engaging diverse learners and supporting their success. These efforts could potentially lead to the development of a Center for Teaching and Learning on campus that will continue to keep our faculty abreast of best practices in supporting these populations.

Strategy 2: Increase Grant Funding That Supports These Student Populations

Roosevelt University is committed to attaining grant funding that can be used to support the Latinx, African-American, and Pell Grant eligible student populations. We are currently applying for the Student Support Services (SSS) grant, which serves 160 students, as well as the Student Support Services STEM grant, which serves 140 students. These grants serve first generation students, many of whom are students of color, and students who are Pell Grant eligible.

The increased funding that would come from these grants would assist us in providing opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. The

¹⁰ Yvette Alex-Assensoh, *Hiring a Diversity Officer Is Only the First Step*, 2018

overall goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants. Thus, further expanding our ability to achieve our ILEA attainment goals.

Roosevelt will also strive to attain grants that specifically target academic programs that struggle to enroll and graduate students from underrepresented groups. We are currently the recipients of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Grant. The HHMI initiative challenges U.S. colleges and universities to substantially and sustainably increase their capacity for inclusion of all students, especially those students who belong to groups underrepresented in science.¹¹ Institutions who receive this grant, join a broader community of universities and colleges that have been engaged in the work of building capacity for inclusion and equity for all students in science. As a part of this learning community, Roosevelt is able to exchange strategies and experiences, approaches for ongoing assessment and evaluation, and resources developed by other institutions to increase their retention and graduation rates.

In addition to the grants outlined above, we will additionally seek to gain the following grants which support our targeted populations:

1. Title III grants which help institutions become self-sufficient and expand capacity to serve low-income students through improving and strengthening academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability
2. Promoting Post baccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans Program (PPOHA)
3. Title V grants - Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions grant program
4. HSI STEM – Scholarship dollars for Hispanic students in STEM

The awarding of these grants, and others, will provide Roosevelt with additional funding to support our institutional equity goals, as well as direct resources to students that will enhance their learning, provide individualized financial support, and enhance the academic support we are able to provide.

Strategy 3: Participation in the Gateways to Completion National Program

Roosevelt University has previously participated in programs sponsored by the Gardner Institute to enhance the learning environment in the classroom. Gardner Institute's Gateways to Completion (G2C) program is "an evidence-based process to create an institutional plan for improving student learning and success in high-enrollment courses that have historically resulted in high rates of Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes especially for low-income, first-generation and historically underrepresented students."¹²

¹¹ https://www.hhmi.org/science-education/programs/inclusive-excellence#IE_Institutions

¹² <https://www.jngi.org/gateways-to-completion>

A steering committee, composed of members of Roosevelt's faculty and administrators from numerous academic and research departments, will help redesign introductory courses and curricula (starting with history) to improve student learning and success, especially for subjects with high DFWI rates. Roosevelt's team will have access to an online platform with course listings with the highest enrollment by DFWI rate for each underrepresented population, to better understand and act to diminish the impact of barriers to degree completion.

5. Evaluating Impact

Roosevelt’s commitment to the ILEA initiative is corroborated in its core value of diversity and inclusiveness, in which the University “embraces diversity, values personal perspectives, and strives to ensure equity in student success to address societal gaps in educational attainment.”¹³ Each aspect of the University’s Equity Plan will be continuously reviewed, based on our progress towards institutional benchmarks.

Institutional Research will provide the majority of final statistics for the Equity Plan. The overall 6-year graduation rates for new students and selected student populations in the corresponding cohort will be processed once the full academic year has ended. These data will be assessed, based on the set benchmarks for each cohort in the Equity Plan. Final retention rates will be analyzed after grades are confirmed for the subsequent semester (spring term) or year (fall term) after the student has been admitted as either a new freshman or transfer. However, preliminary fall-to-fall retention rates will be reviewed on a semi-weekly basis, prior to the start of the corresponding fall term, to verify that progression towards target goals aligns with our requirements as an institution. While the fall-to-fall retention rates and 6-year graduation rates goals are intertwined with our commitment to the ILEA initiative, our 6-year graduation rates for first-year new freshmen will be the focal point of our assessment of progress towards the decrease of achievement gaps and improvement of overall student success.

Institutional Research will also collaborate with Student Success, Student Affairs, and Career Development to quantitatively evaluate the extent to which individual retention programs are assisting students in their pursuit of a degree. Part of the assessment of the Early Alert program will involve the semester-to-following-semester retention rates for students that have been at risk of failing a course. Early alerts are cataloged to verify that the student is given all of the resources available to succeed and is in close contact with his/her advisor. We will also assess the change in fall-to-fall retention rates to verify the extent to which we are helping students based on those that struggle with challenges such as food insecurity (Food Pantry) and dealing with a recent traumatic situation (Student of Concern). IR will additionally assess retention rates of students that have historically struggled to graduate (first-generation, minority, and/or low income) through Multicultural Student Support Services.

¹³ Joe Regan et al, *Building a Stronger Roosevelt 5-Year Strategic Plan: 2019-2014*, 2019

6. Budget

Institutional Strategy	Budget Implications	Revenue Source (New/Existing)	Sustainability Plan
EAB	\$125,000 per year	Existing	Early Alerts will improve retention and graduation rates, especially for underrepresented populations.
McNair Scholars Academic Achievement Program	\$69,000 per year	Existing	Total grant award for 10/1/19 to 09/30/20 is \$252,789.
Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP)	\$13,440 per year	Existing	The budget, set by the Office of Career Development, will promote student research projects.
Diversity Equity & Inclusion Specialist		New	This role will enhance student retention for these student populations and will guide our ILEA efforts. Funds earned through retention and grant funded initiatives will help support this role.
Coordinator for Multicultural Student Support Services		New	This role will enhance student retention for these student populations and will support our ILEA efforts. Funds earned through retention and grant funded initiatives will help support this role.

7. ILEA Team

ILEA Core Leadership Team	
Ali Malekzadeh	President
Lois Becker	Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs
Joseph Regan	Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Accreditation
Michael Cassidy	Vice President for Enrollment Management and Athletics
Jamar Orr	Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Katrina Coakley	Associate Provost for Student Success
Joe Roeges	Research Associate, Institutional Research
Amanda Wornhoff	Assistant Provost for Core Curriculum and Assessment
Mike Maly	Associate Provost for Research and Faculty Success