



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

Leveraging Data and Research to Support Test Optional Policy Decision Making

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SHEEO Policy Conference

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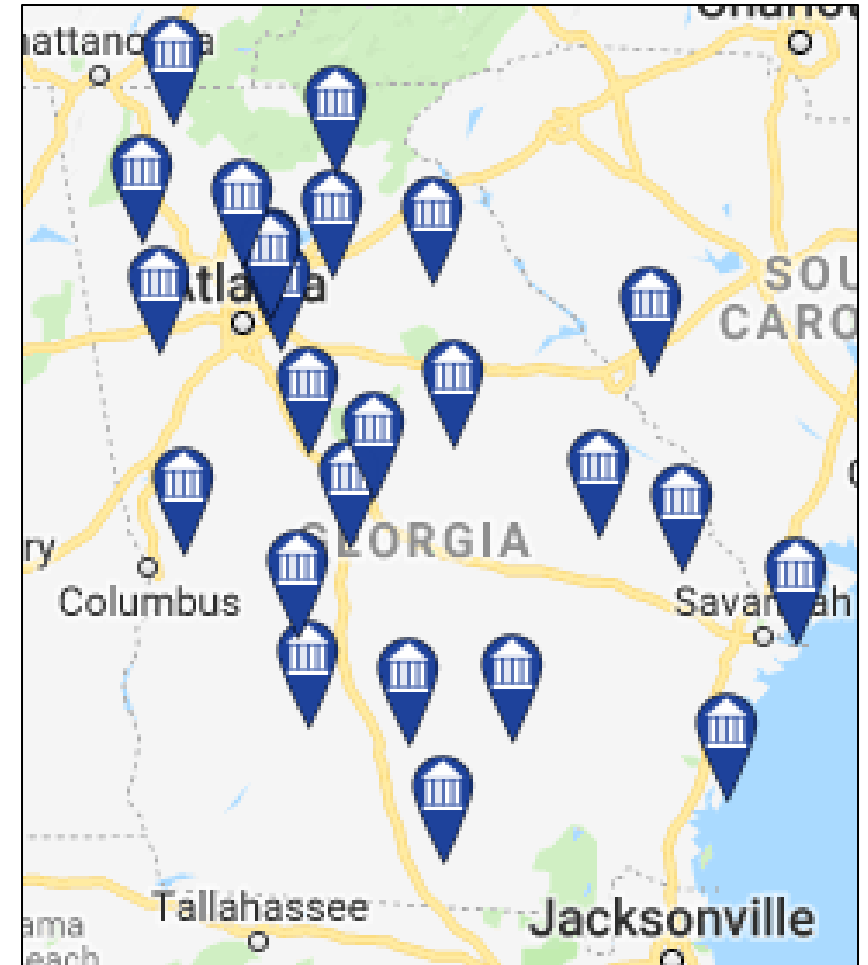
Overview/Agenda

- USG Context and Test Taking Policy Timeline
- Effect of Test Taking Policy on Enrollment
- Effect of Test Taking Policy on Student Success
- Effect of Test Taking Policy on Applications and Applicant Enrollment Destinations
- Statewide Test Taking Behavior
- Testing Policy Environment
- Conclusion and Discussion



University System of Georgia

- Governed by Board of Regents (governor appointed) which has broad policy oversight, including admissions.
- 26 public, four-year universities and colleges
 - 4 Research Universities
 - 4 Comprehensive Universities
 - 9 State Universities
 - 9 State Colleges
- Does not include community colleges or technical colleges
- 344,000+ students in Fall 2023
- 75,000+ credentials in FY 2023



Sector Eligibility Requirements

	Through Summer 2020	Summer and Fall 2020	Spring – Fall 2021	Fall 2022* and forward	
	Freshman Index **	HS GPA	HS GPA	Freshman Index** OR HS GPA	
Research	2500	3.0	3.0	2500	3.4
Comprehensive	2040	2.31	2.6	2040	3.2
State University	1940	2.18	2.4	1940	3.0
State College	1830	2.0	2.0	1830	2.0

* Started Test-Required, but then reversed decision and implemented higher GPA requirements and UGA, GA Tech, and Georgia College and State University still test required

** Additionally, must have ≥ 2.0 HSGPA (system requirement) and completed RHSC

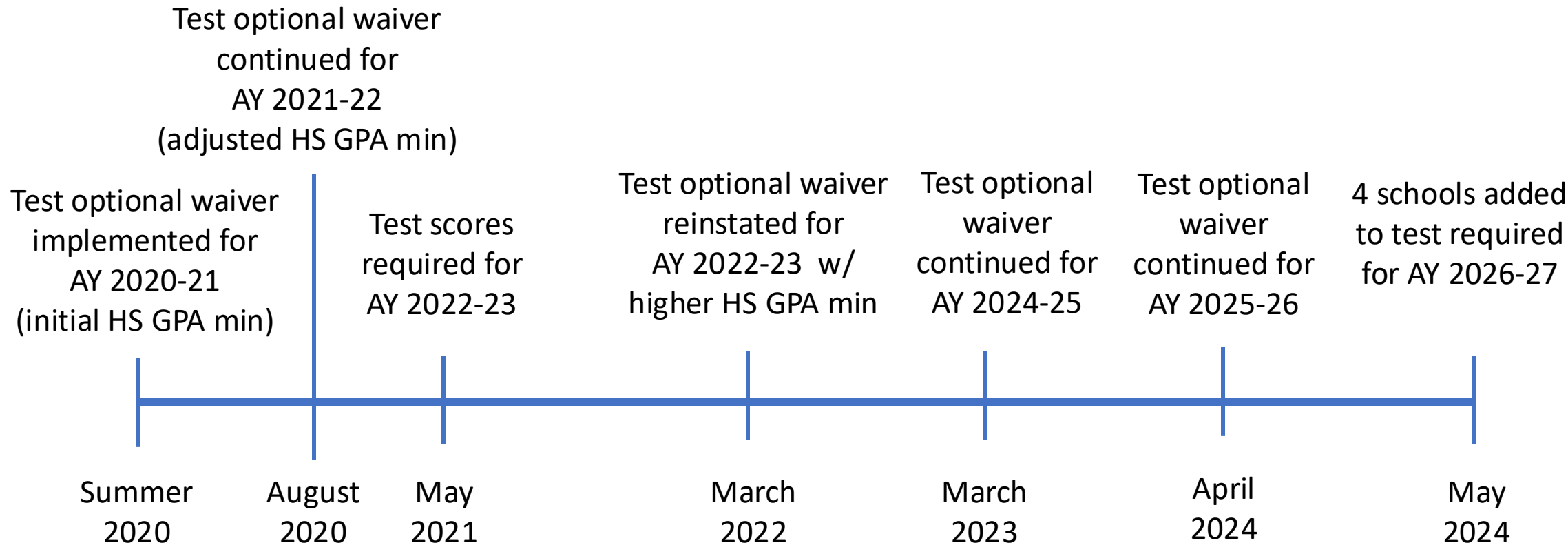
Freshman Index = $500 \times \text{HSGPA} + 1.06 \times (\text{SAT EBRW} + \text{SAT Math}) - 74$

OR

Freshman Index = $500 \times \text{HSGPA} + 42 \times (\text{ACT Composite}) + 88$



Testing Policy Timeline



Issues Analyses Explored

- Preserving access to college across populations with differential access to testing and testing preparation
- Ensuring admitted students had a reasonable chance of success
- Limiting enrollment redistribution between the types/sectors of USG institutions
- Responding to increased competition for students from institutions within and beyond Georgia



Effect of Test Taking Policy on Enrollment: First-time Freshmen Eligibility & Enrollment Fall 2019-Fall 2023



How did changes in testing policy shape enrollment and academic preparation by sector?

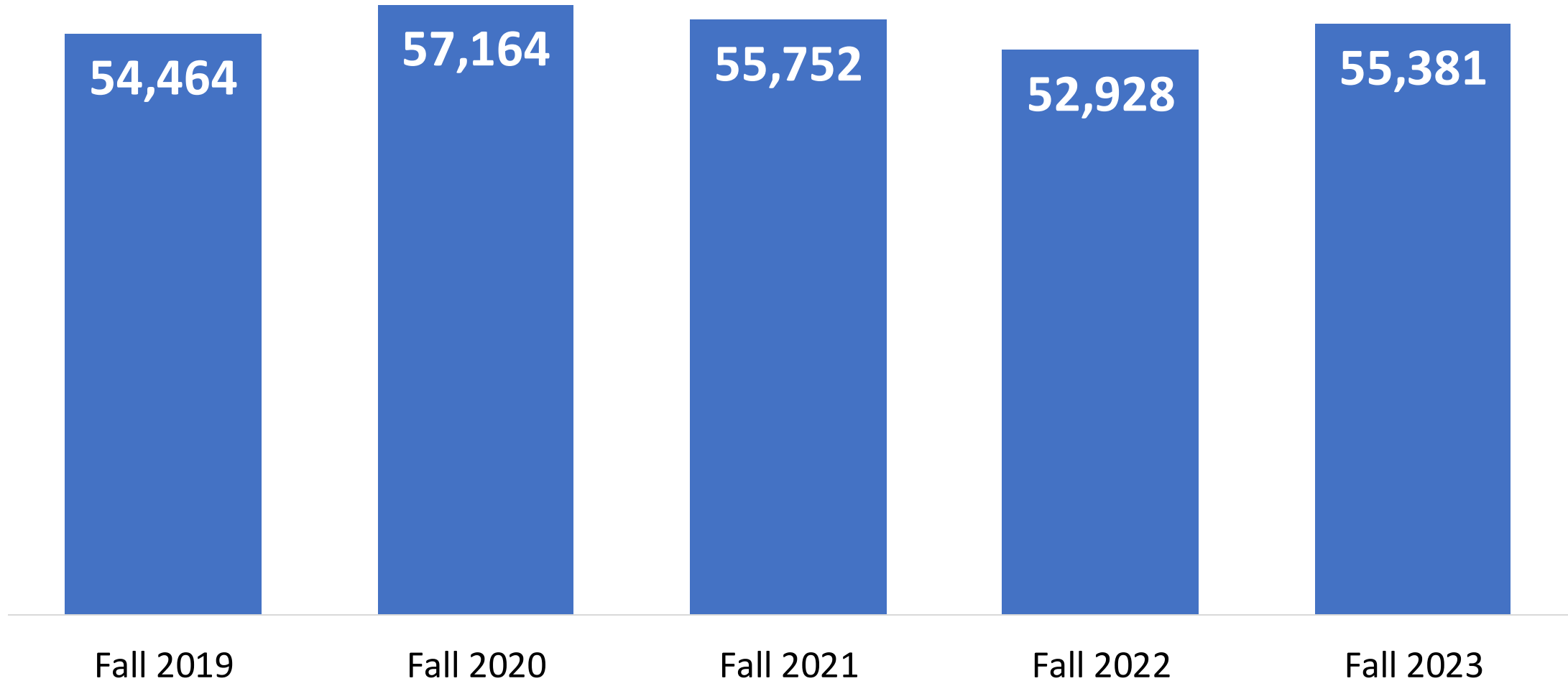


Data Sources and Considerations

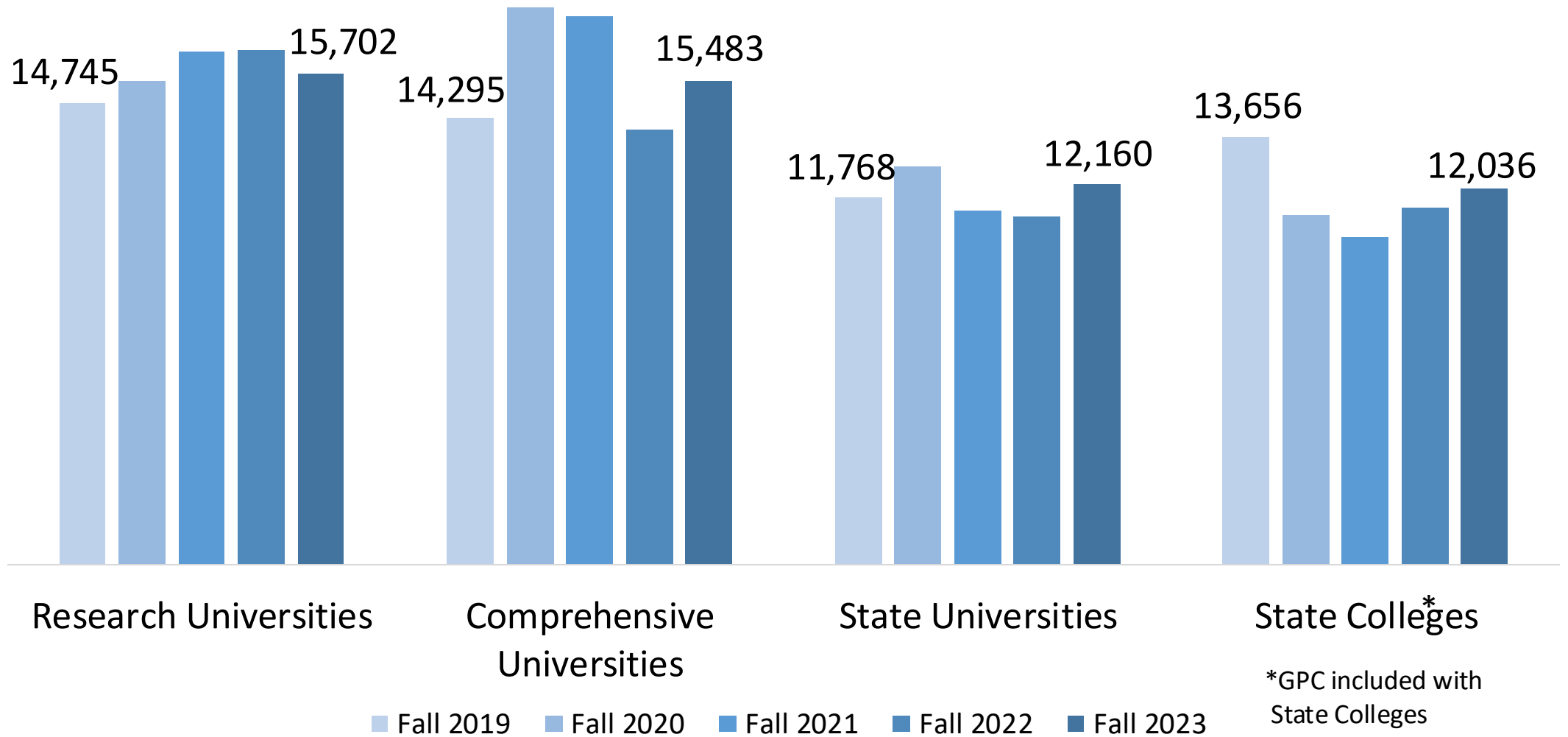
- Academic Data Collection for students enrolled
- Fall cohorts of first-time freshmen
- Work involved pulling data from databases, formatting data, generating series of visuals



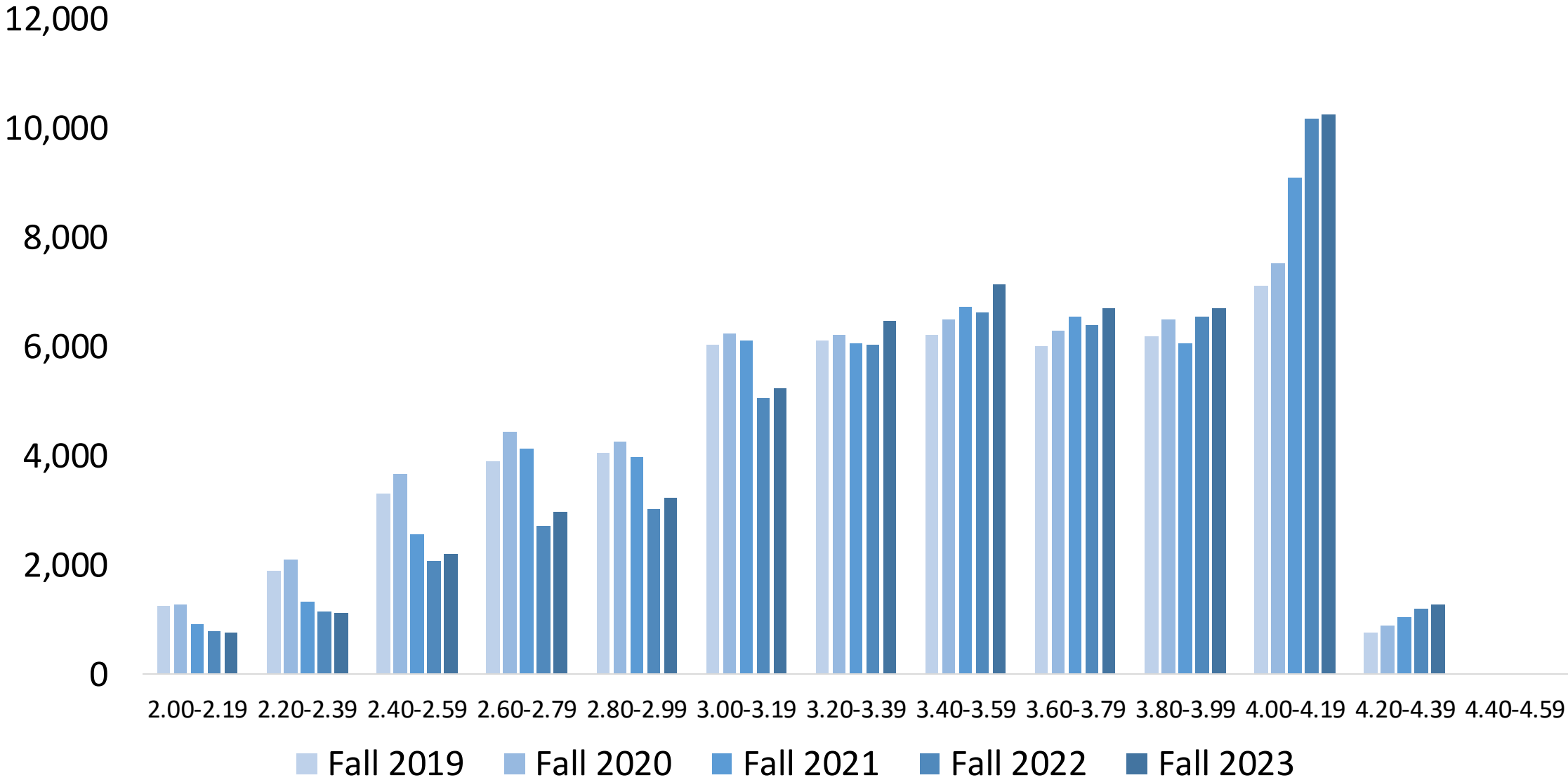
System Total FTF



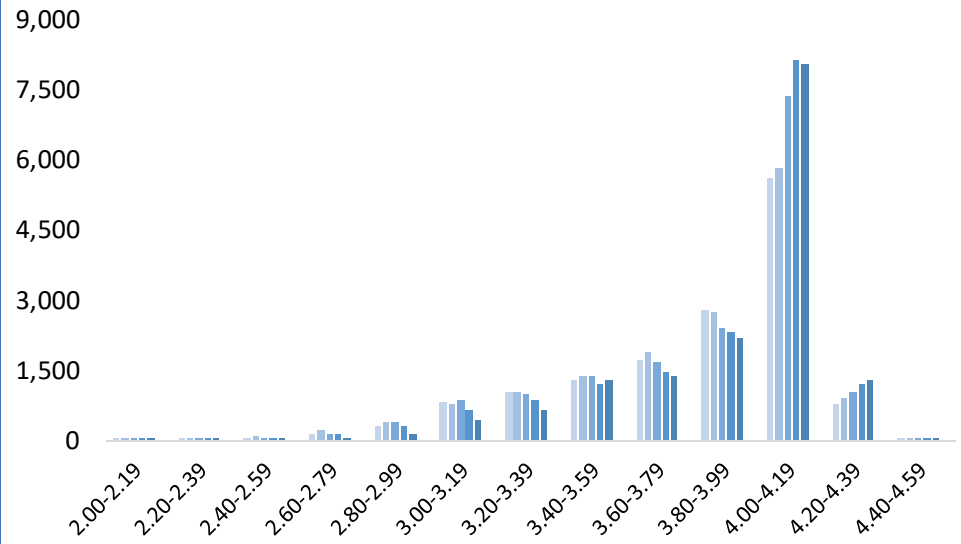
FTF Enrollment by Sector



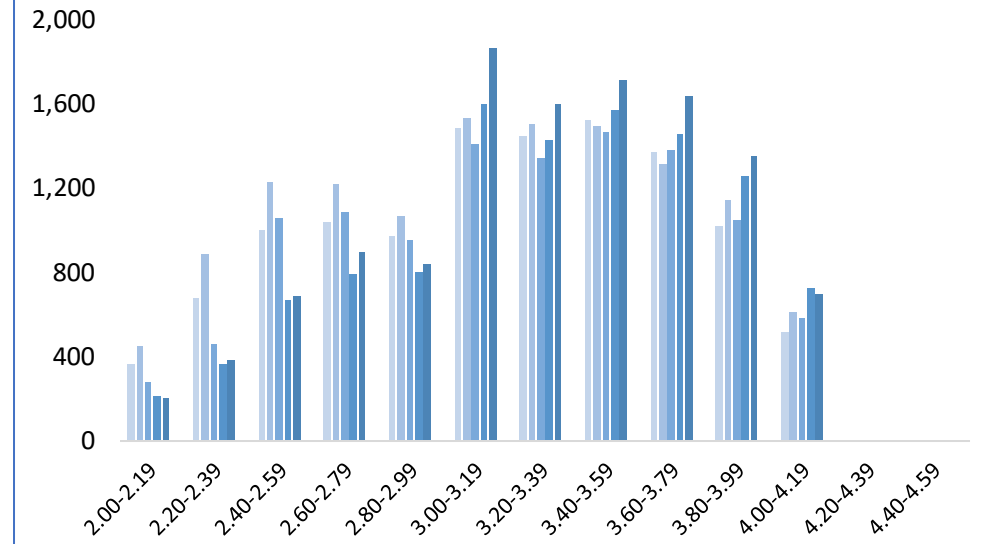
System Total FTF by HSGPA



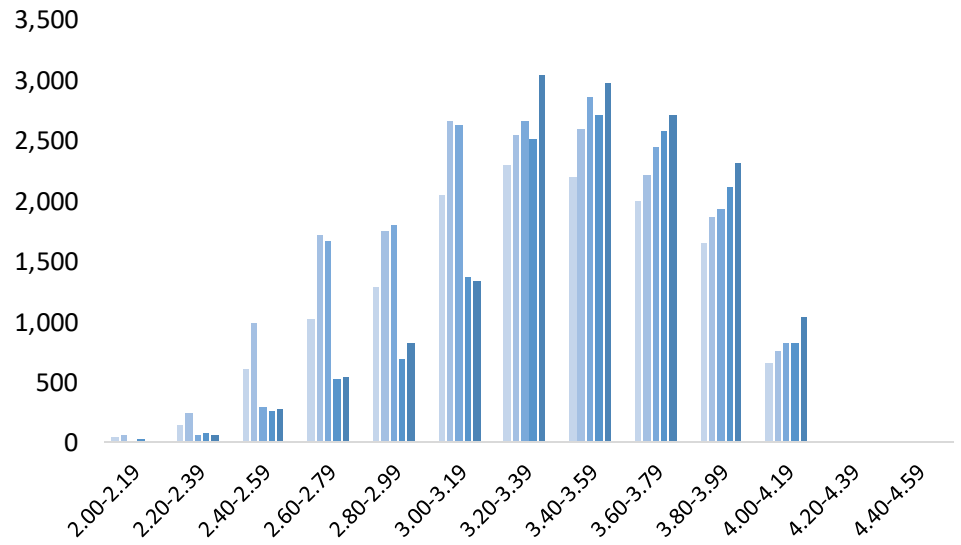
Research Universities FTF by HSGPA



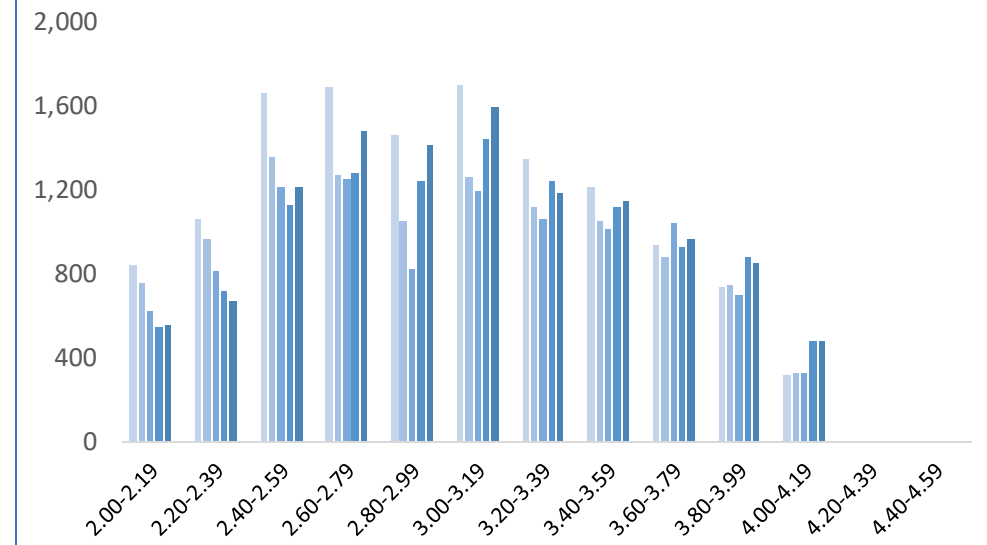
State Universities FTF by HSGPA



Comprehensive Universities FTF by HSGPA



State Colleges FTF by HSGPA

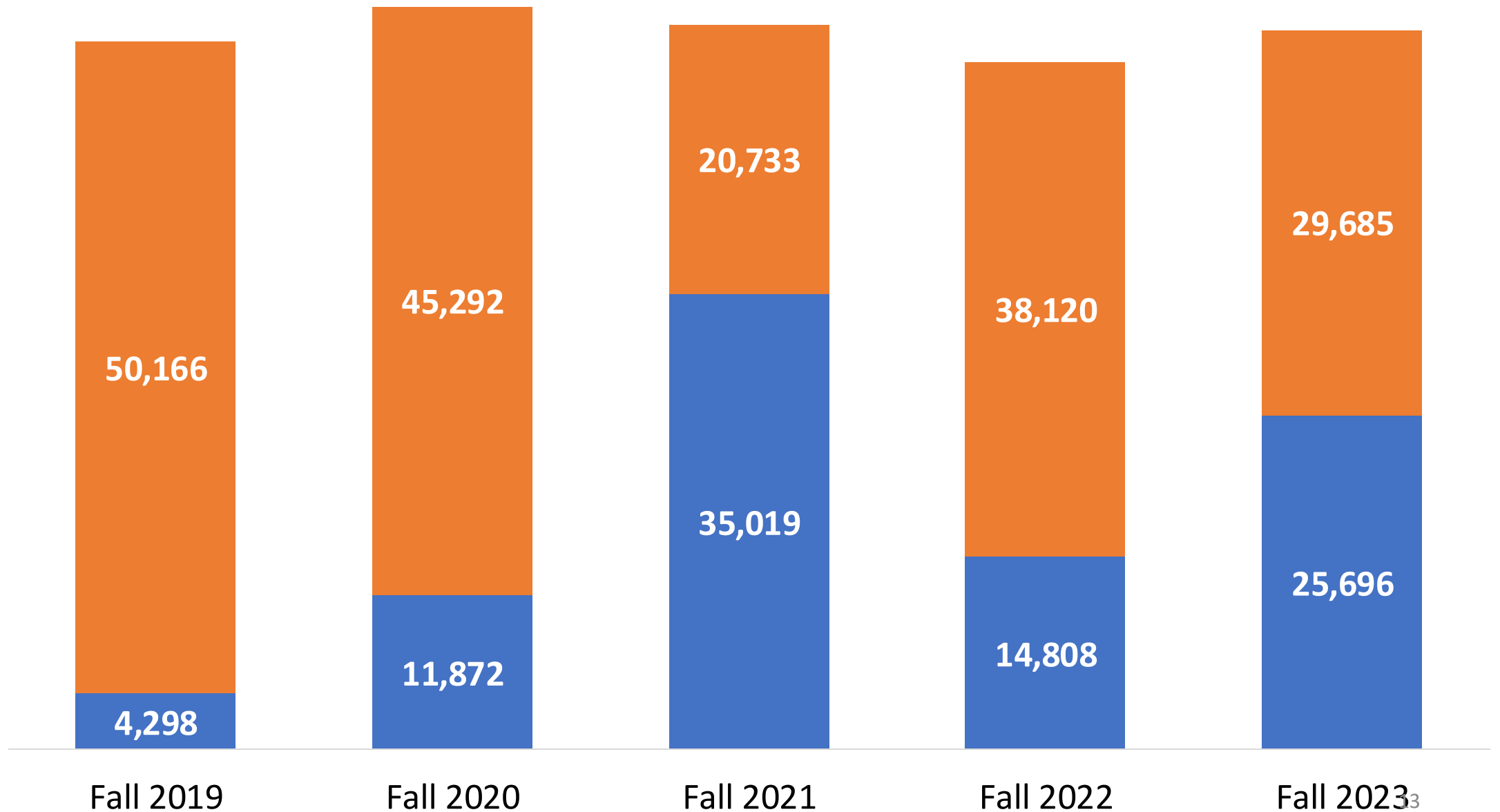


■ Fall 2019
 ■ Fall 2020
 ■ Fall 2021
 ■ Fall 2022
 ■ Fall 2023

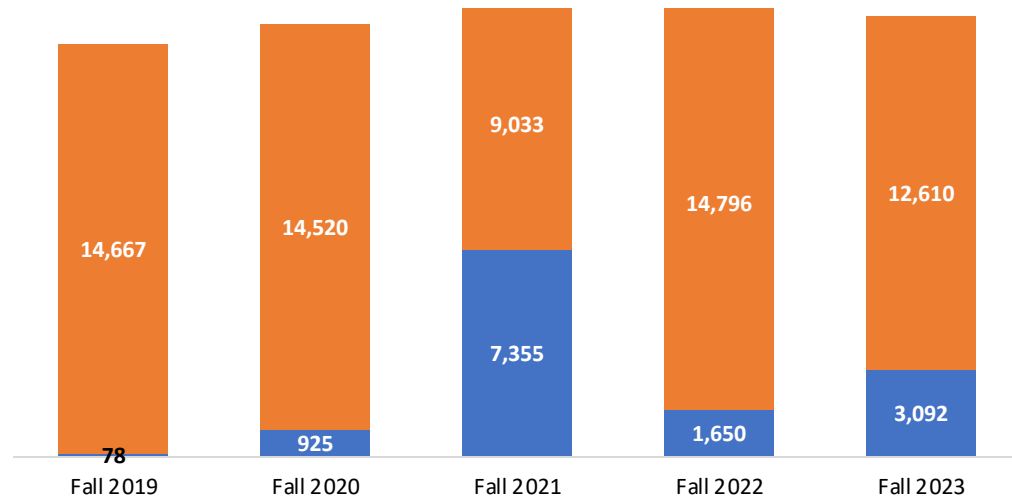


Number of FTF **with** and **without** Test Scores

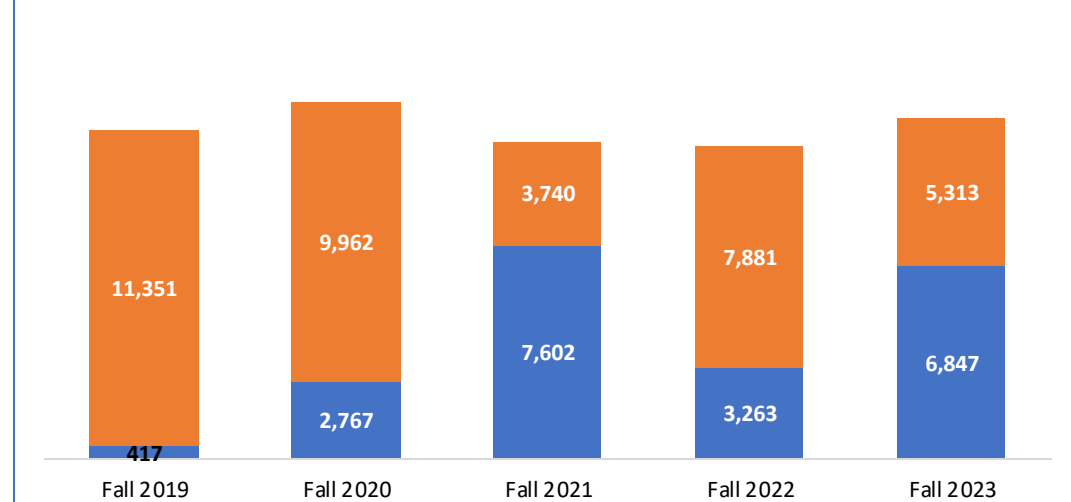
Test Score
No Test Score



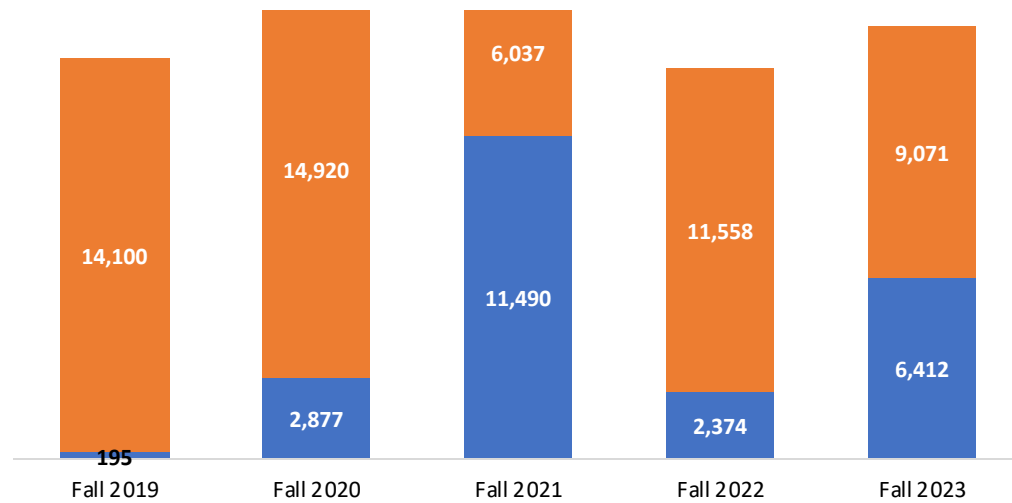
Number of FTF with and without Test Scores
Research



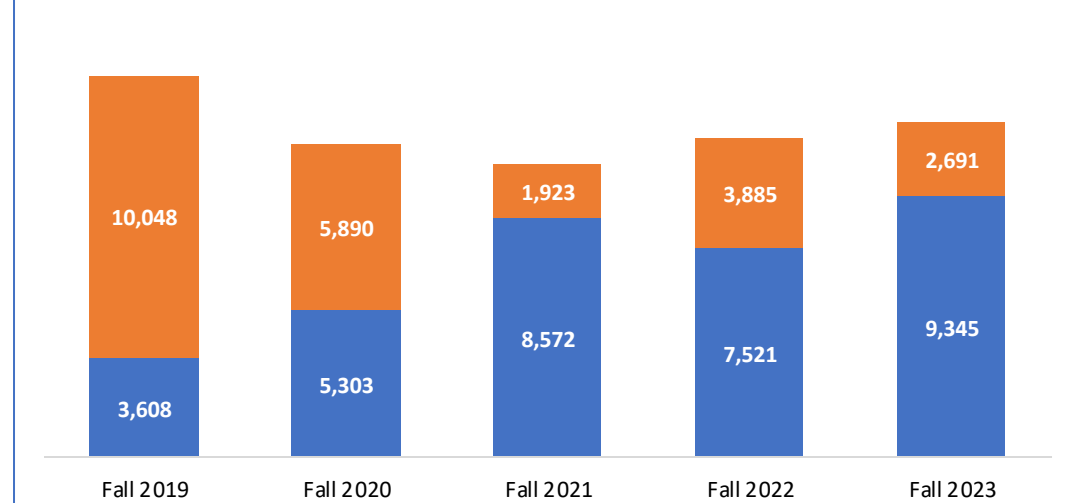
Number of FTF with and without Test Scores
State Univ



Number of FTF with and without Test Scores
Comprehensive



Number of FTF with and without Test Scores
State Coll



■ No Test Score ■ Test Score



Effect of Test Taking Policy on Student Success: Outcomes by Year, Sector, and HS GPA Fall 2019-Fall 2023



Were changes to testing policy and subsequent shifts in enrollment affecting student success?

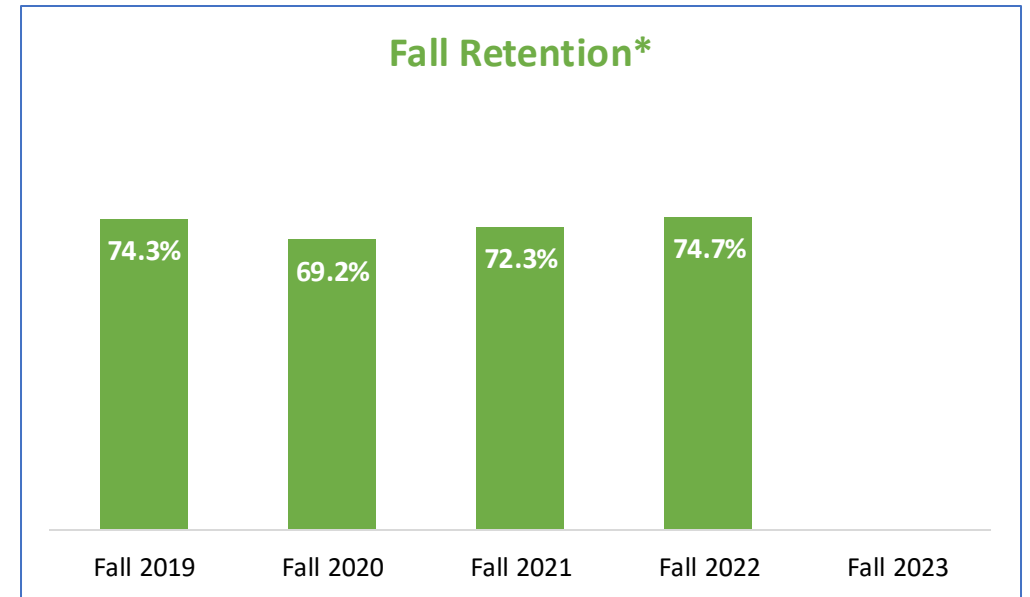
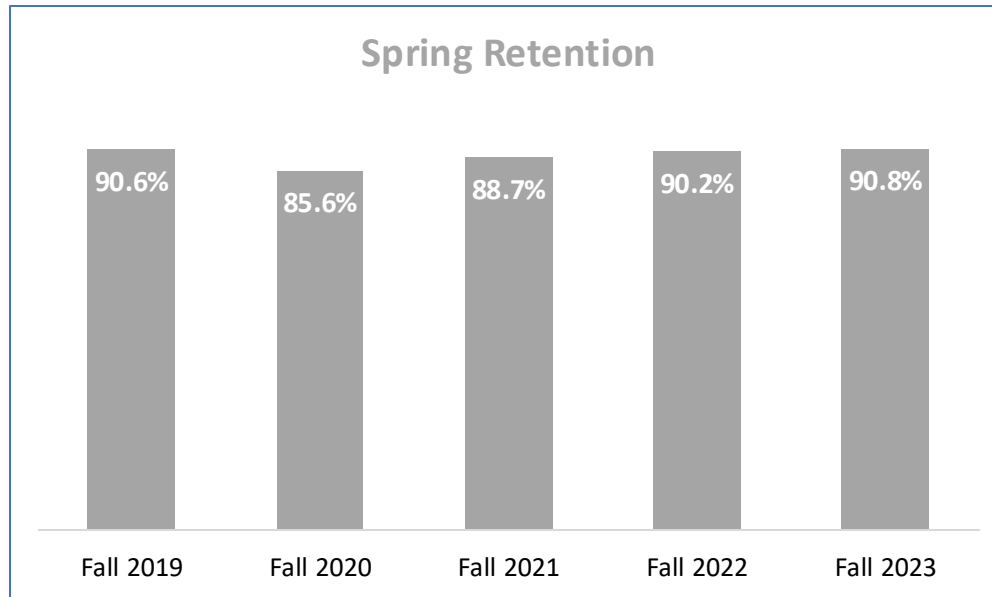
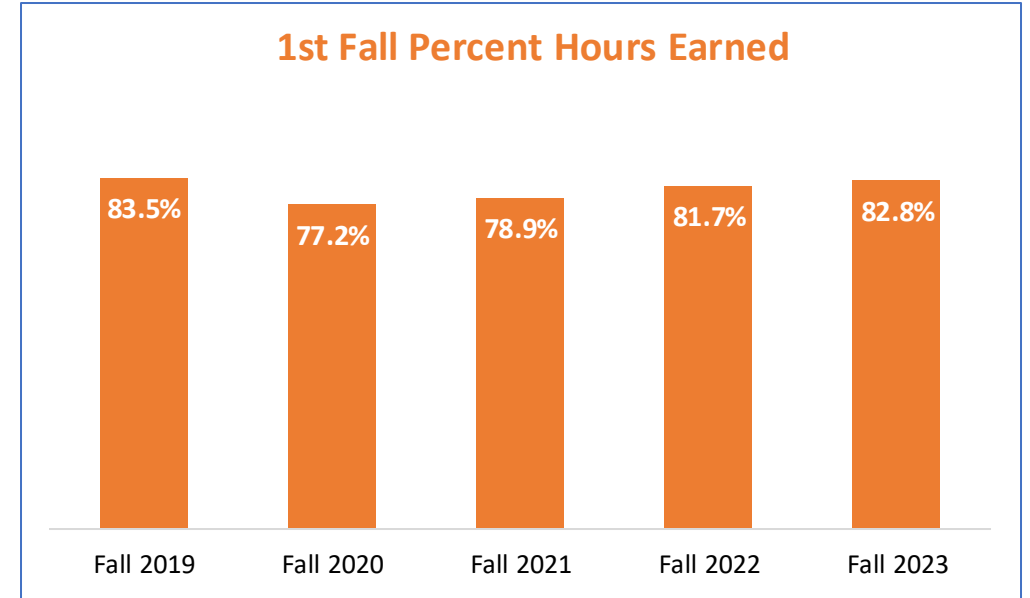
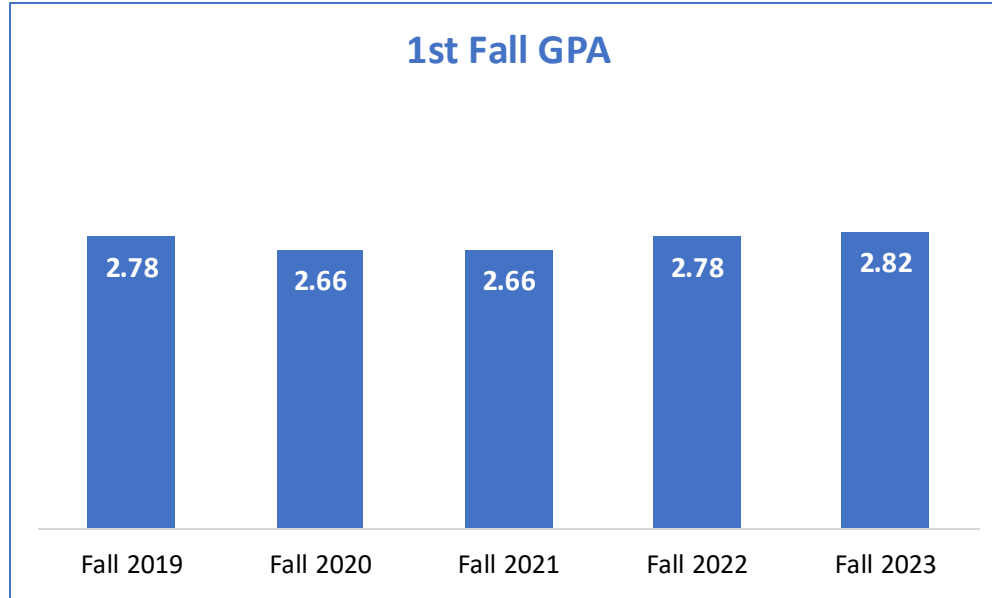


Data Sources and Considerations

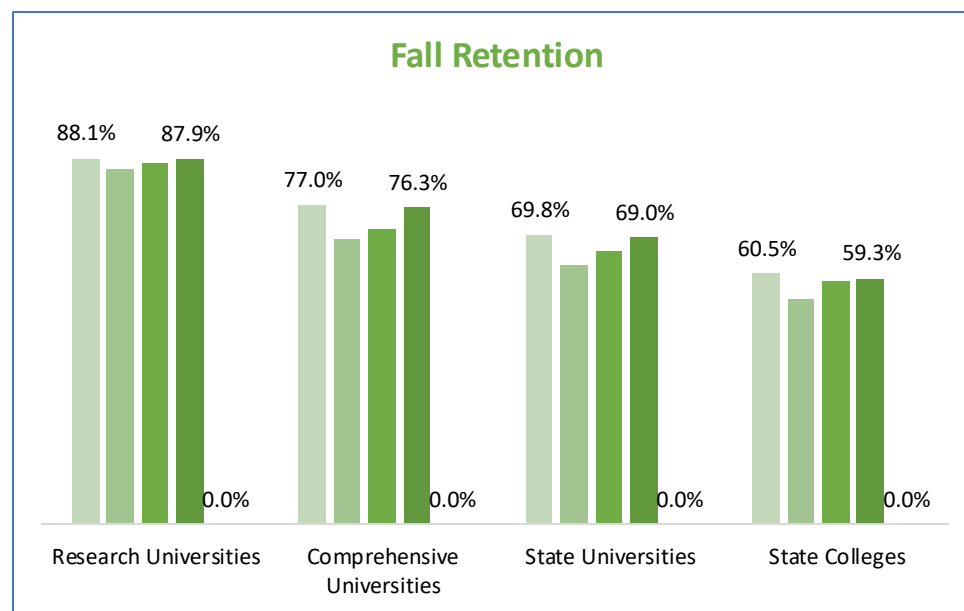
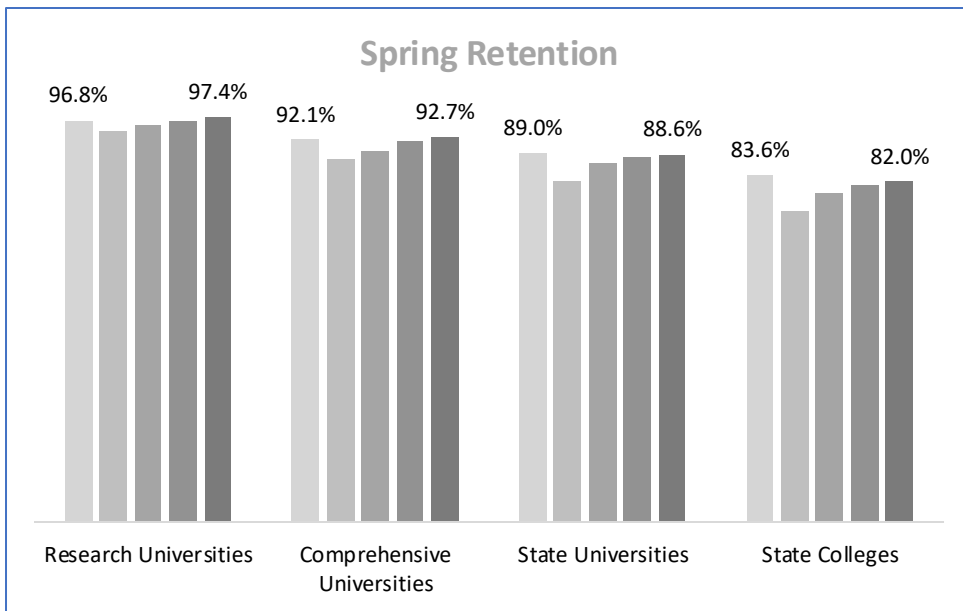
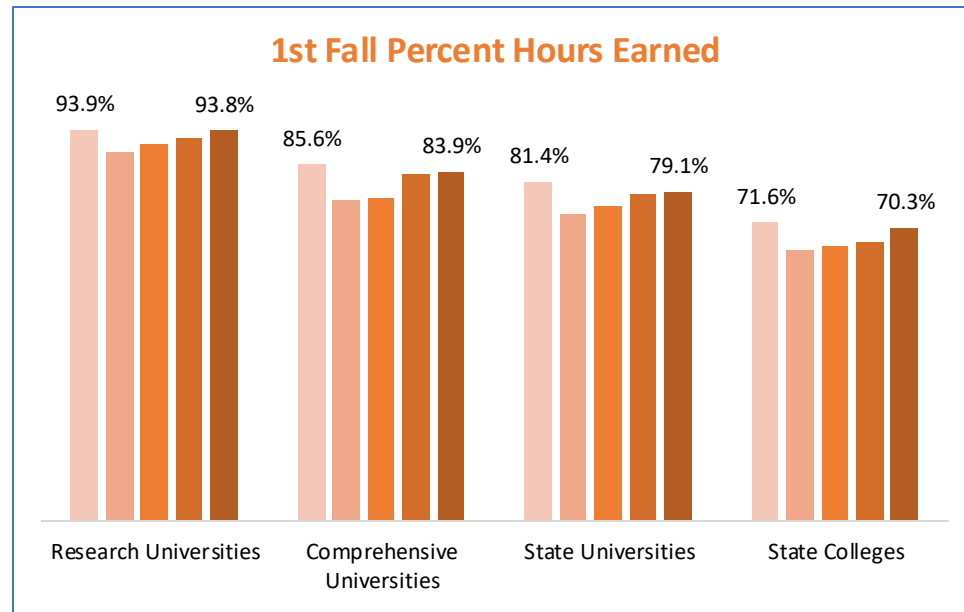
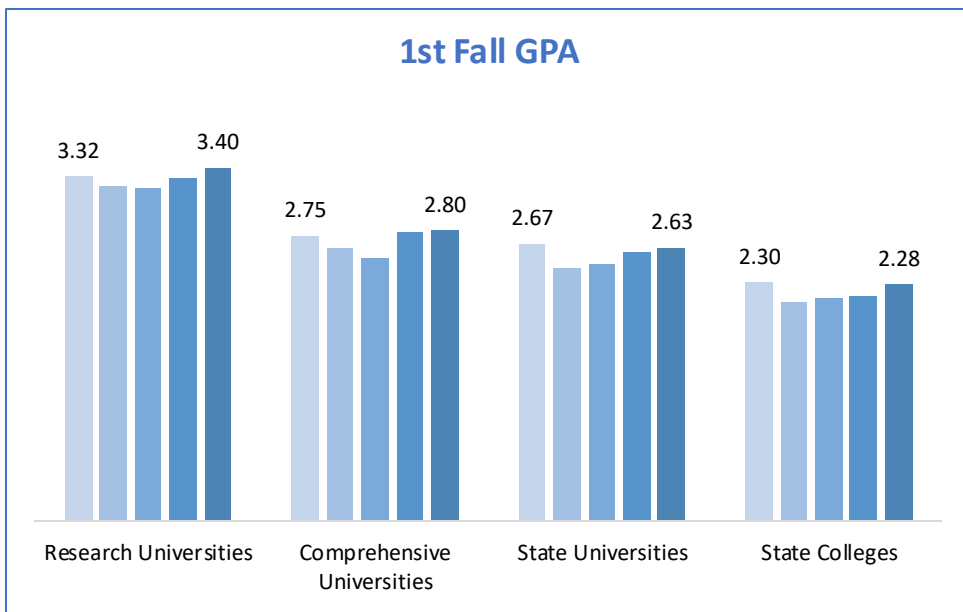
- Academic Data Collection for students enrolled
- Fall cohorts of first-time freshmen
- Work involved pulling data from databases, formatting data, generating series of visuals
- Given timing of when updates were needed for Board meetings, we had to supplement outcomes data with preliminary data



Outcomes by Year – All FTF



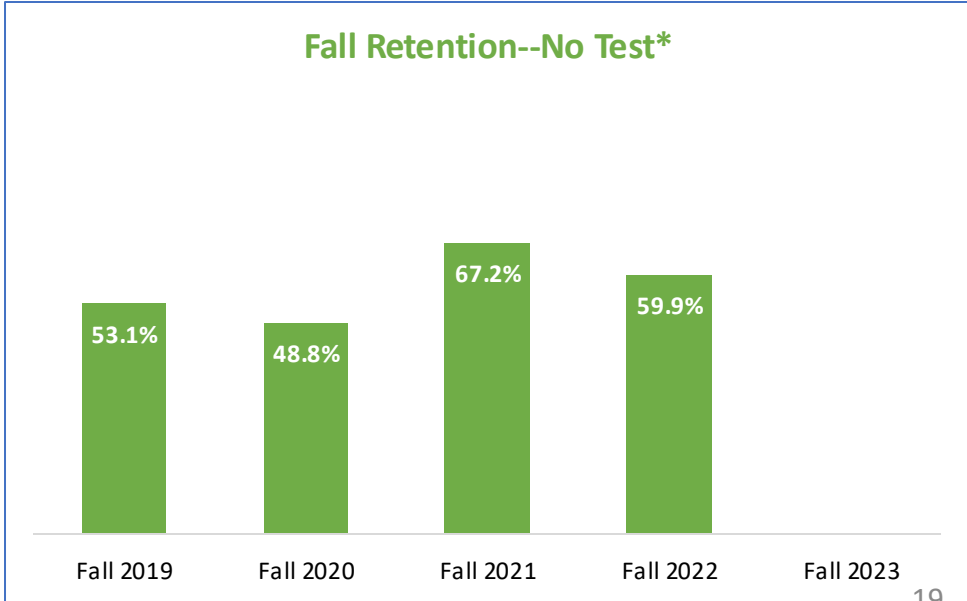
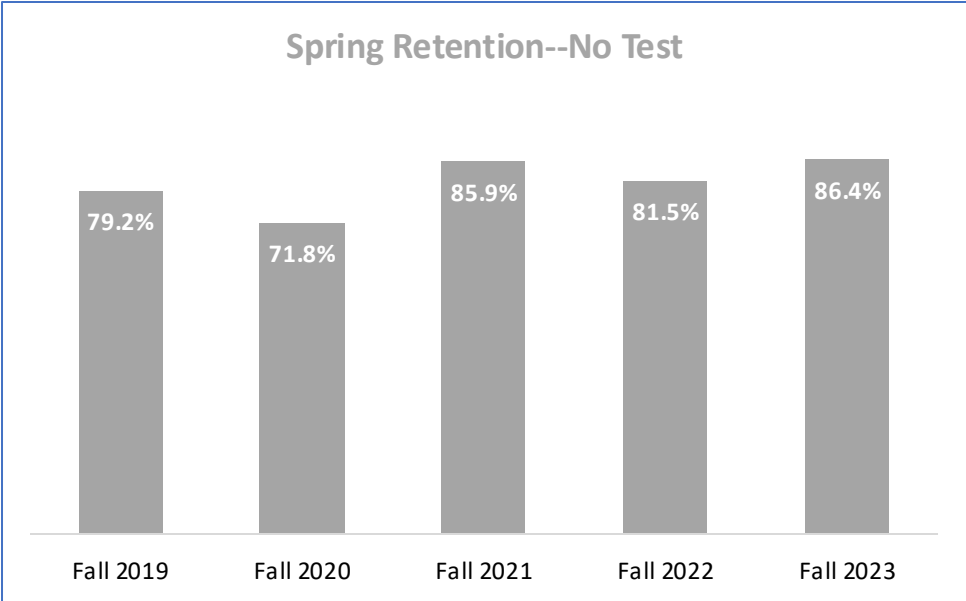
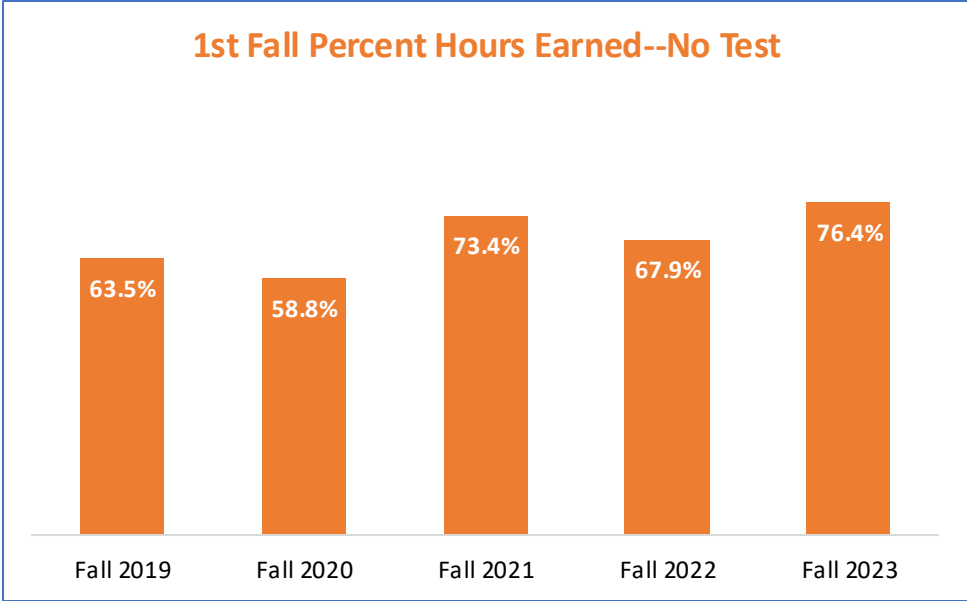
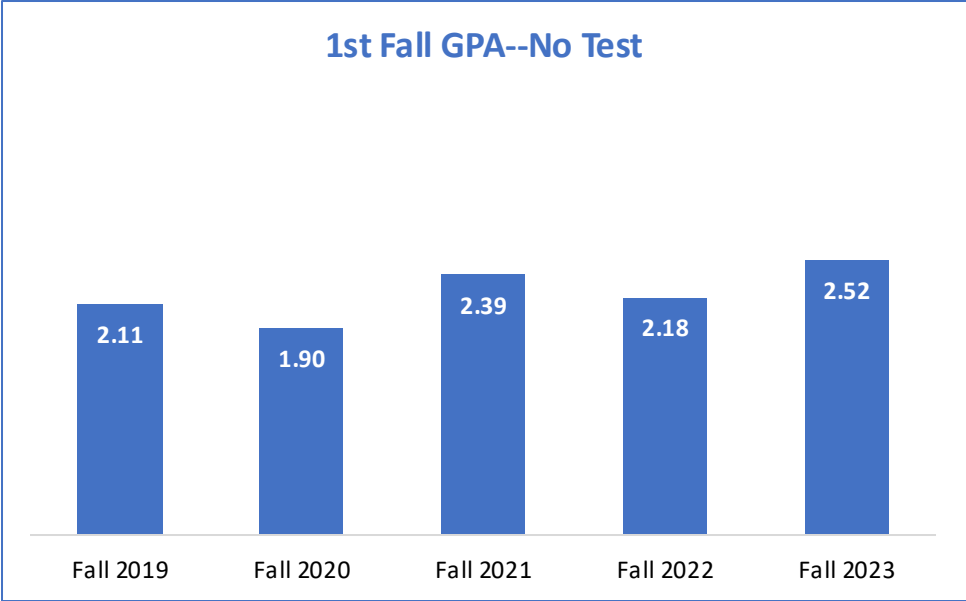
Outcomes by Sector – All FTF



■ Fall 2019
 ■ Fall 2020
 ■ Fall 2021
 ■ Fall 2022
 ■ Fall 2023

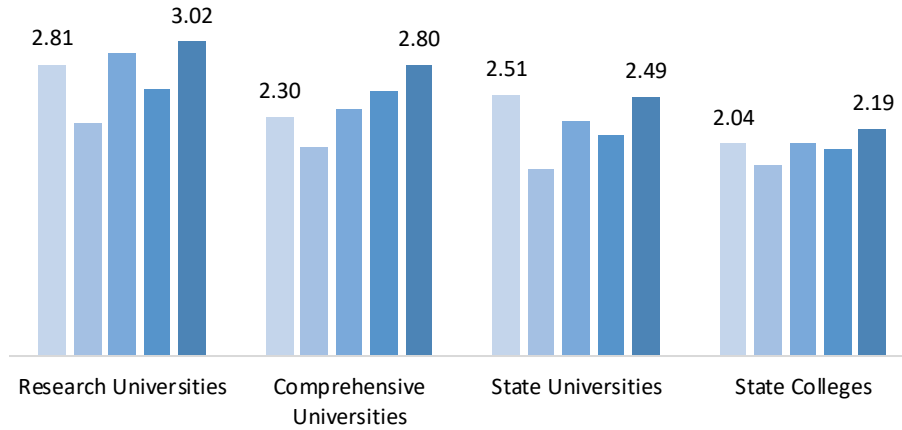


Outcomes by Year – Only FTF who did NOT submit test scores

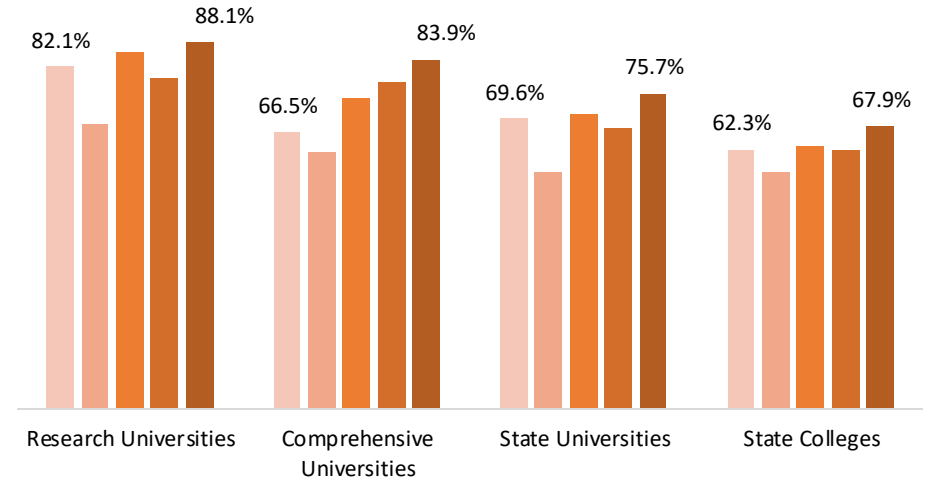


Outcomes by Sector – Only FTF who did NOT submit test scores

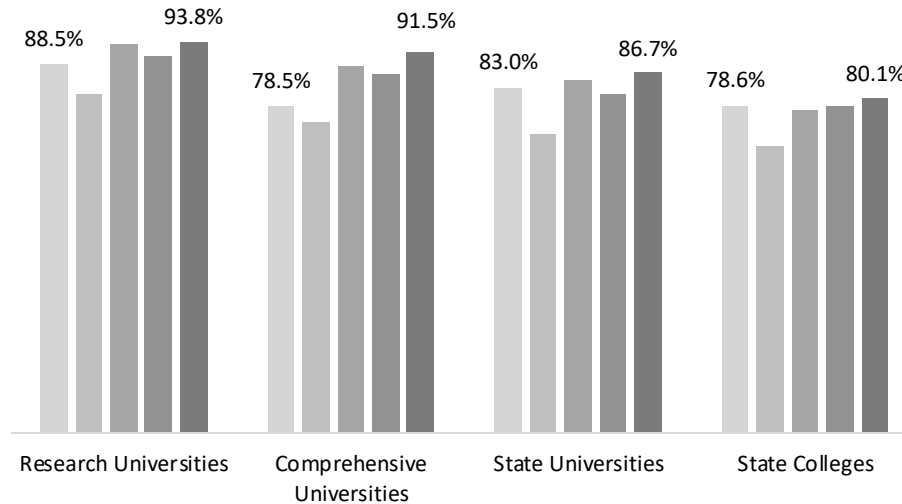
1st Fall GPA--No Test



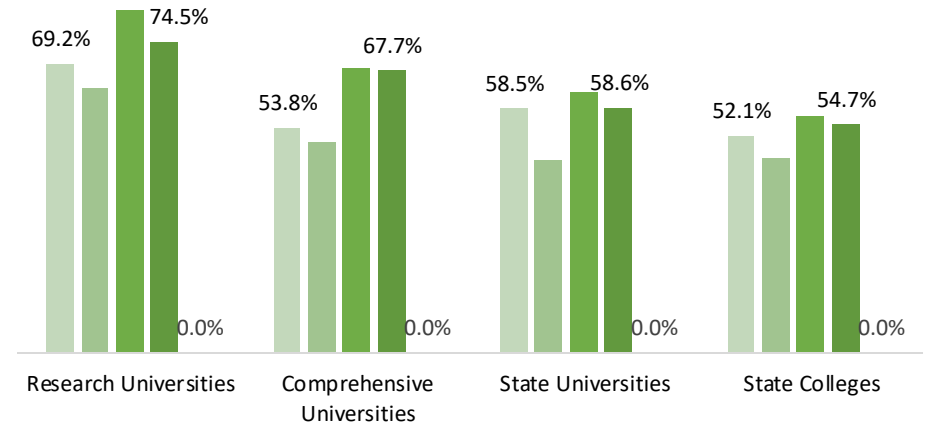
1st Fall Percent Hours Earned--No Test



Spring Retention--No Test



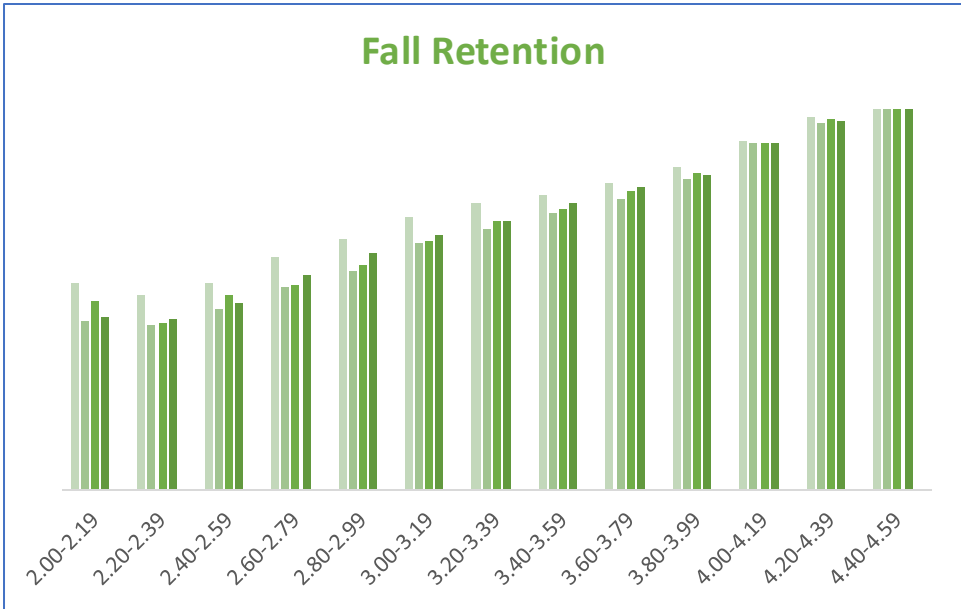
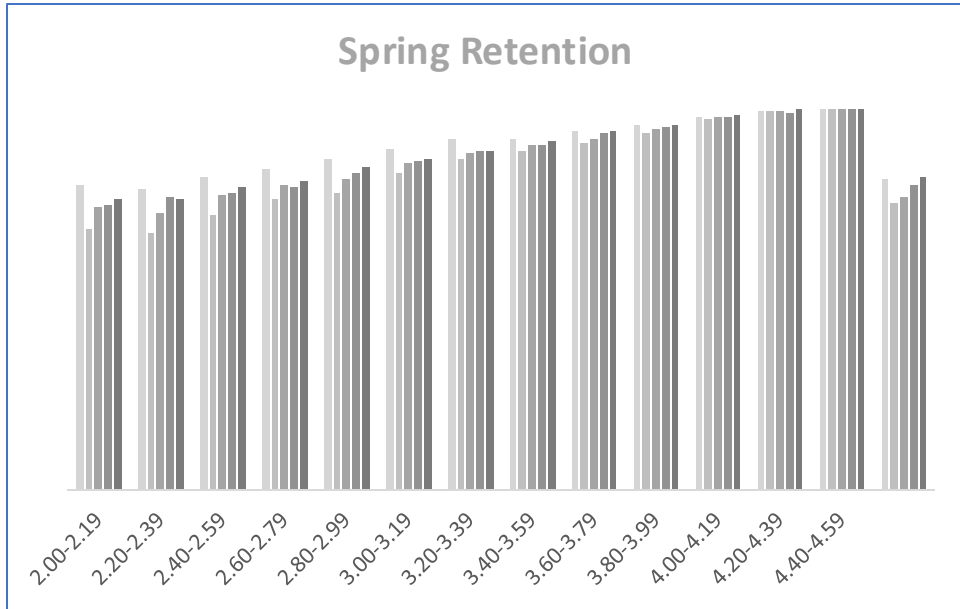
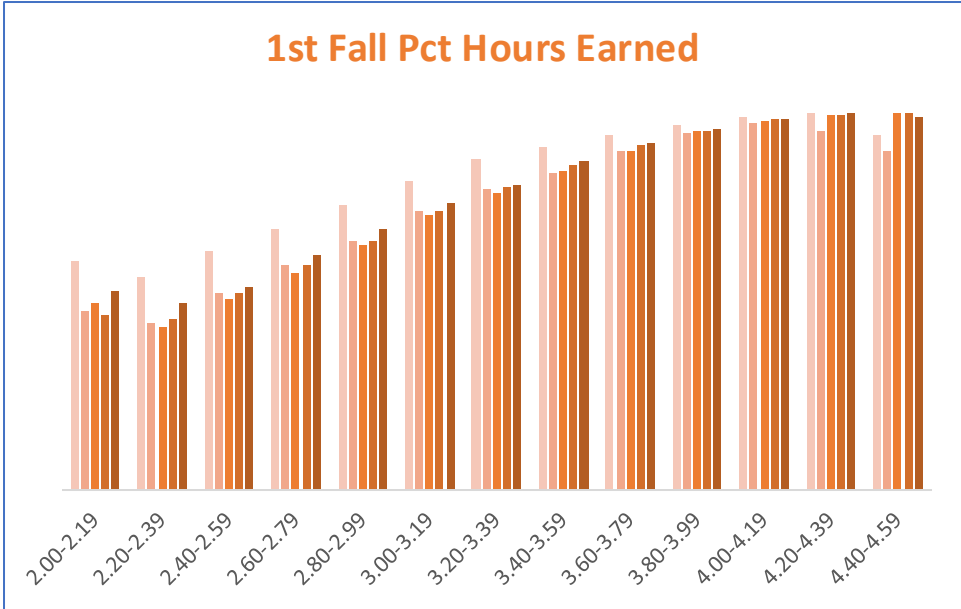
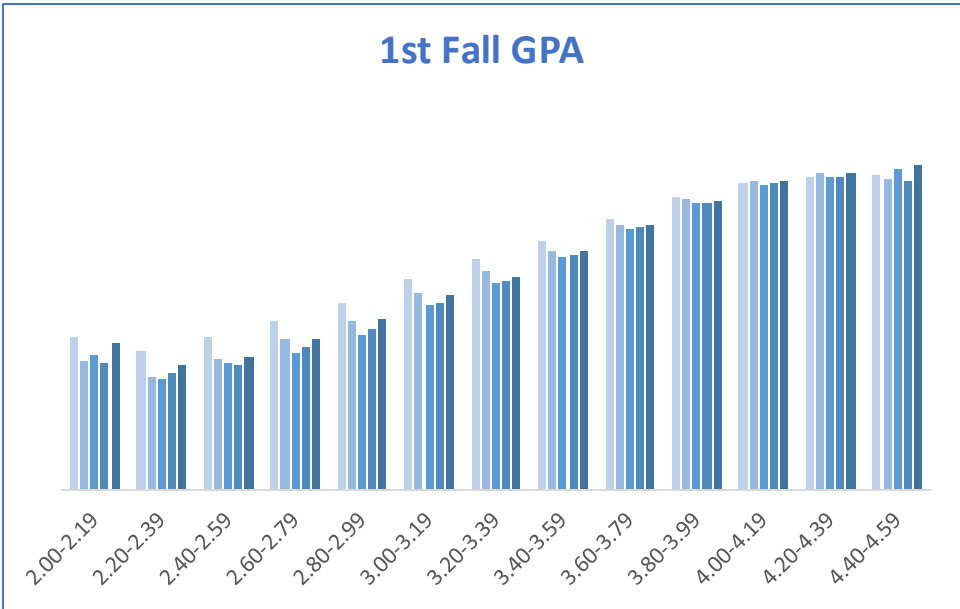
Fall Retention--No Test



■ Fall 2019 ■ Fall 2020 ■ Fall 2021 ■ Fall 2022 ■ Fall 2023

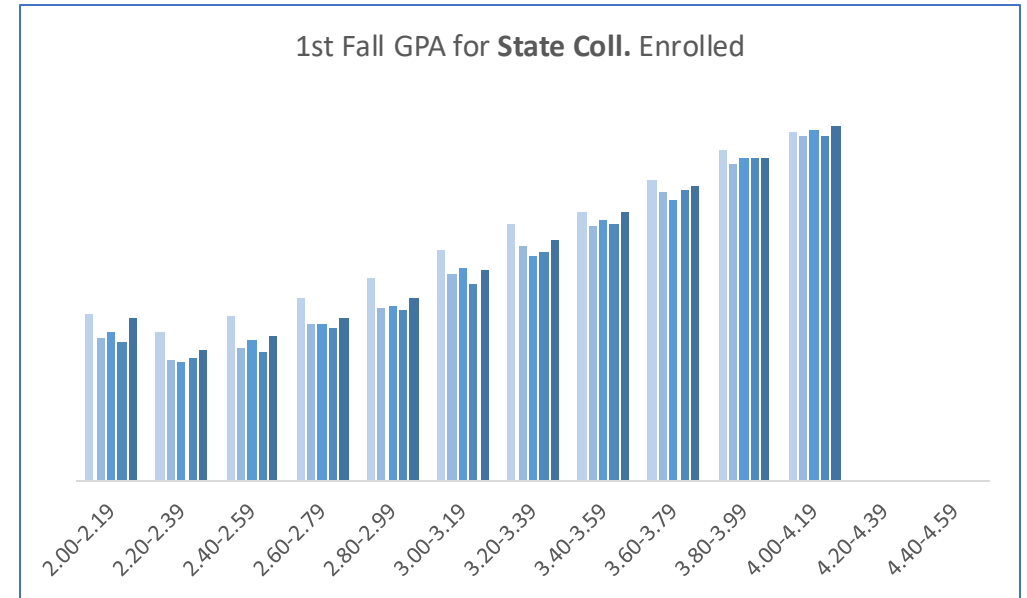
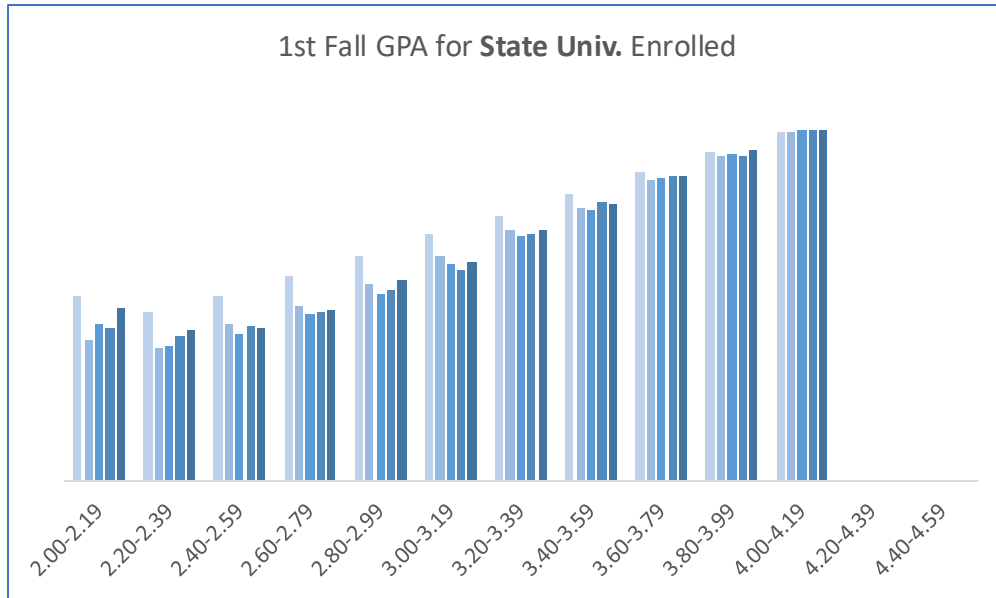
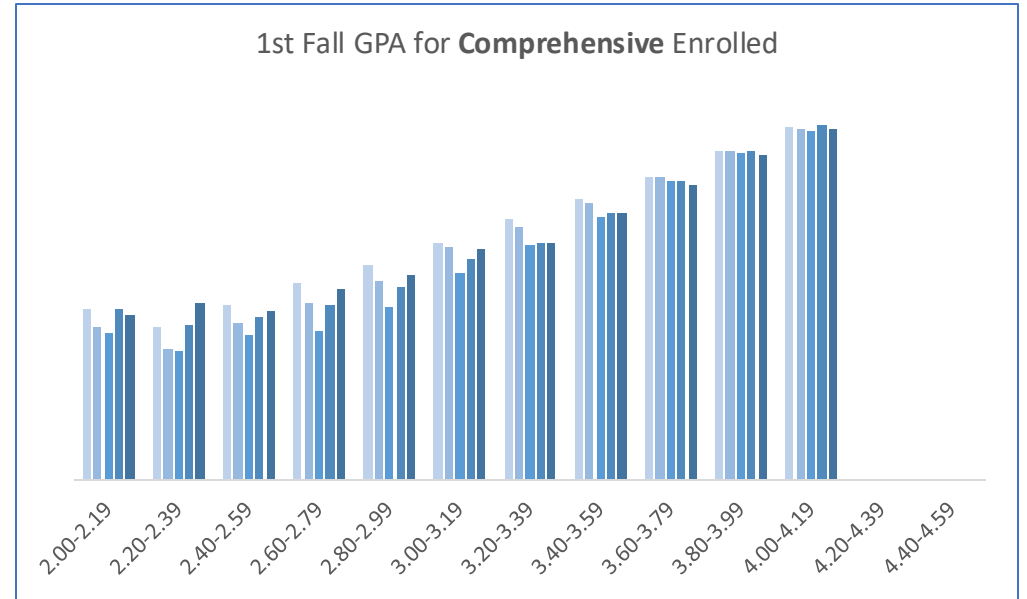
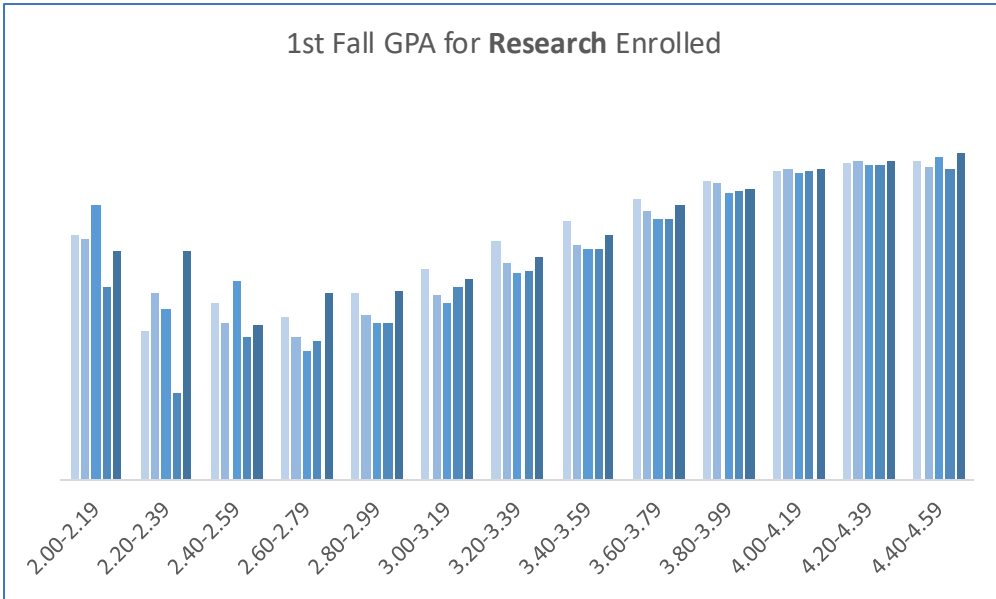


Outcomes by HS GPA



■ Fall 2019 ■ Fall 2020 ■ Fall 2021 ■ Fall 2022 ■ Fall 2023

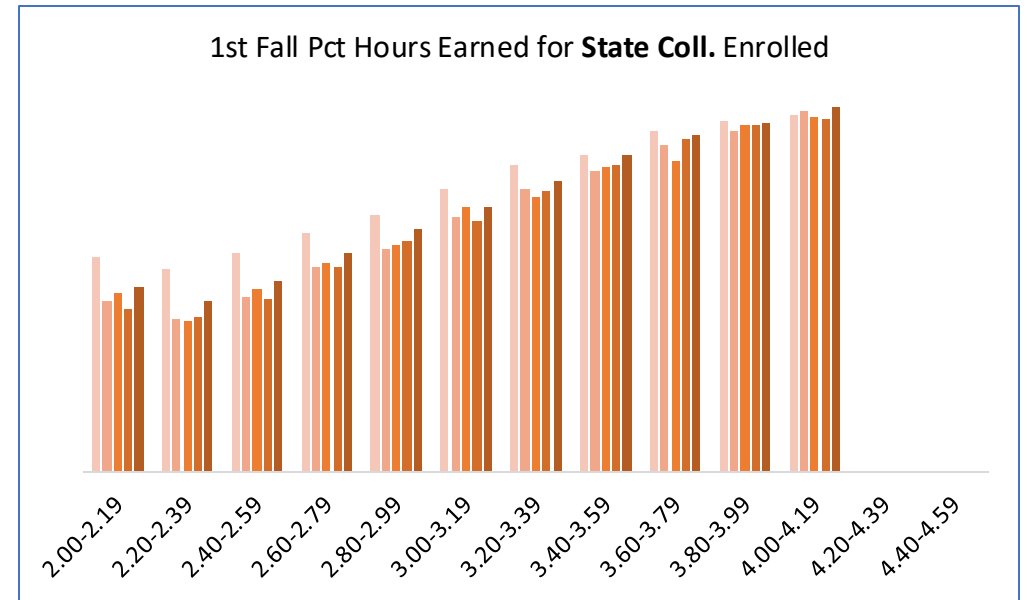
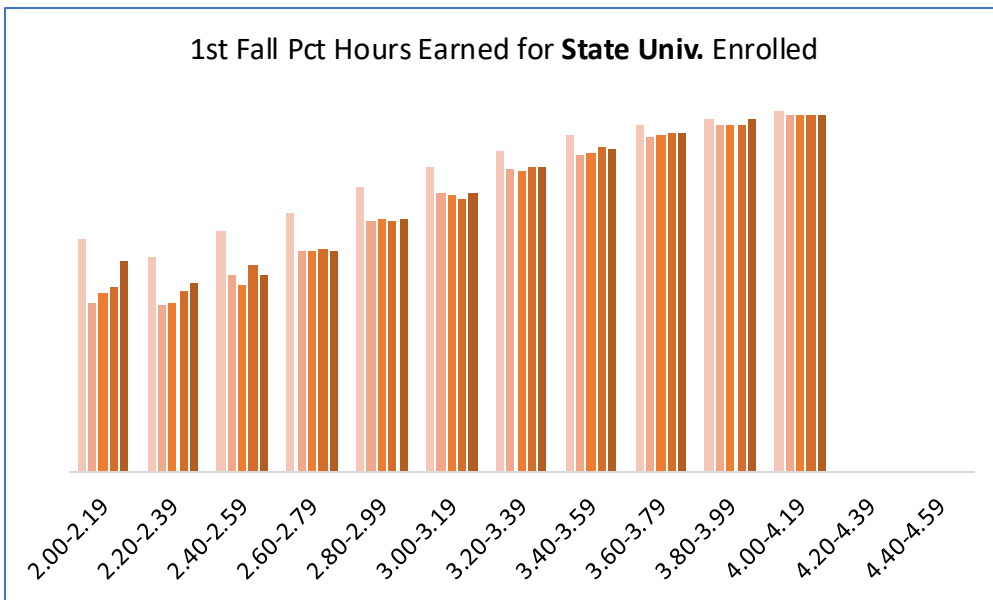
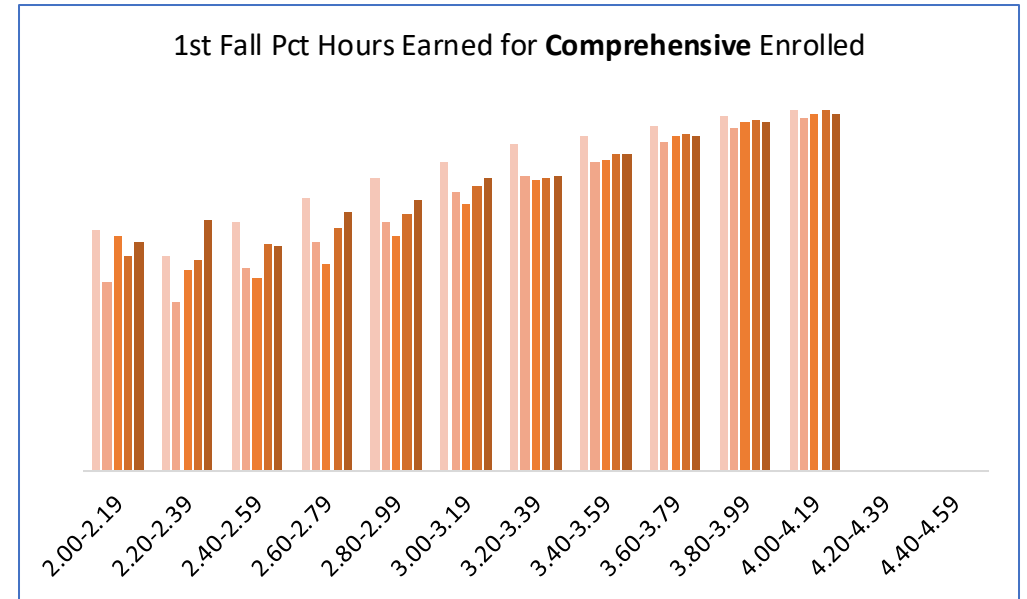
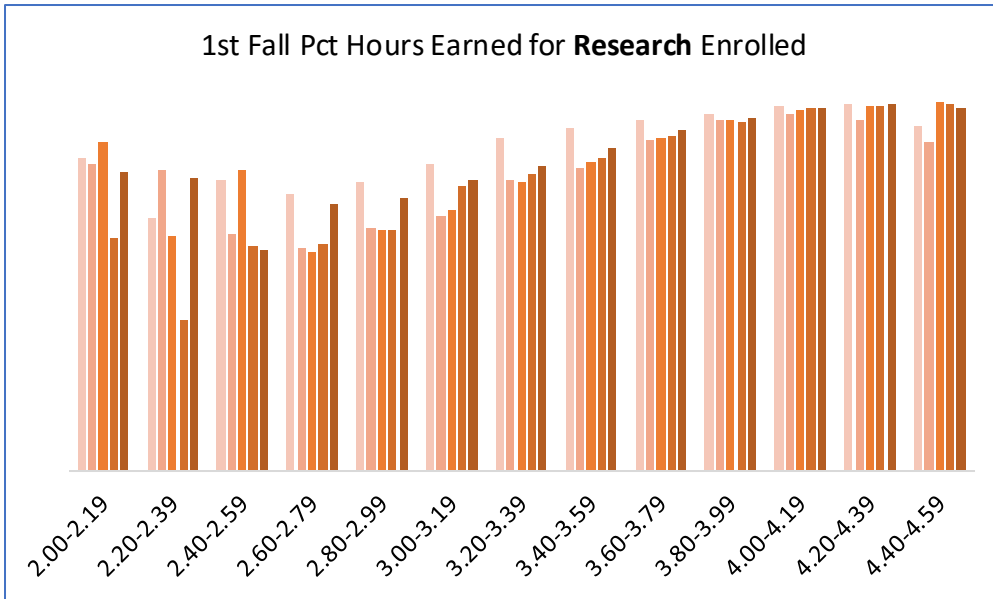
1st Fall GPA by Sector and HS GPA



■ Fall 2019
 ■ Fall 2020
 ■ Fall 2021
 ■ Fall 2022
 ■ Fall 2023



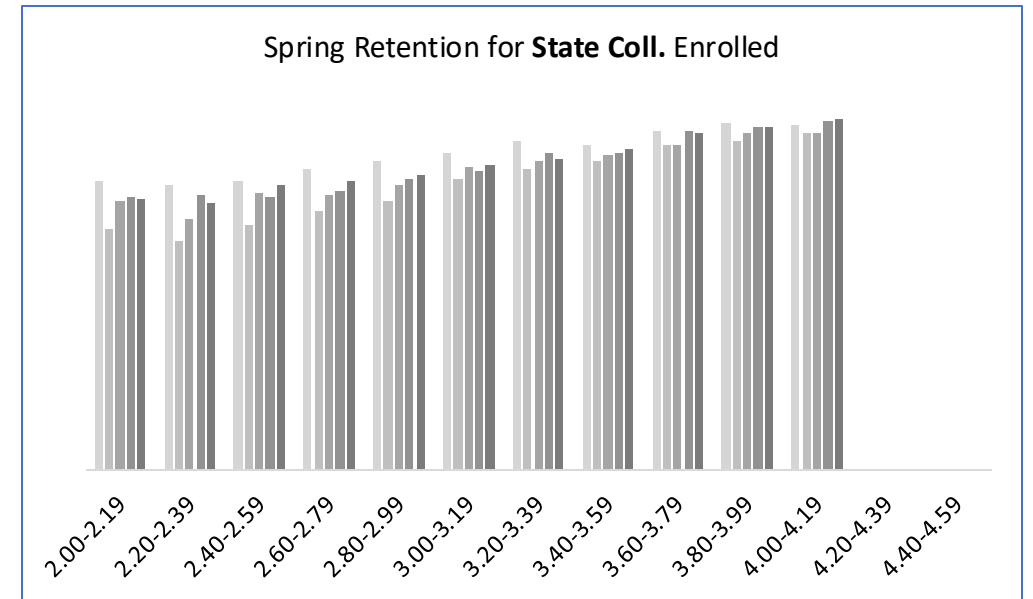
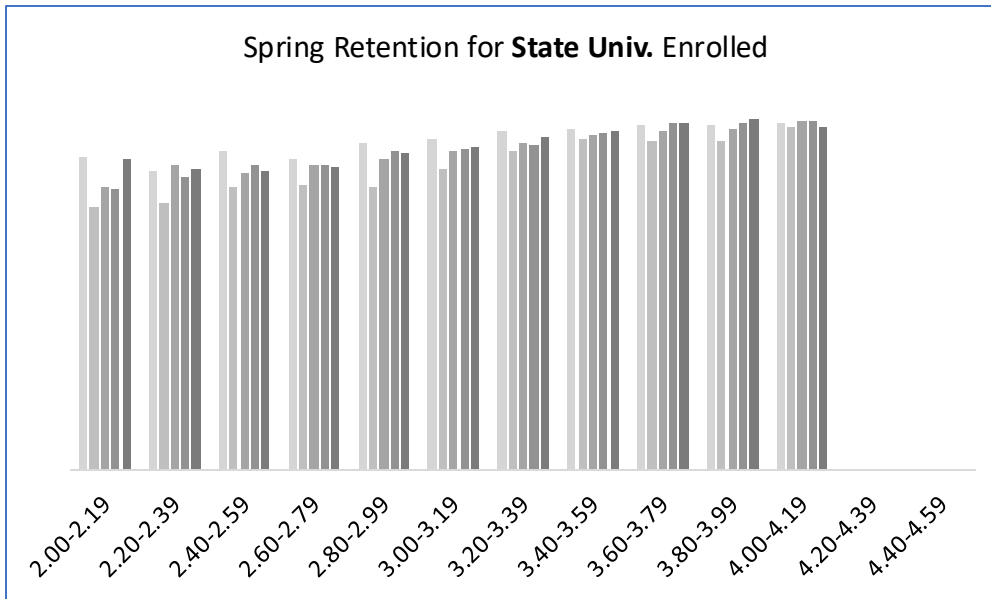
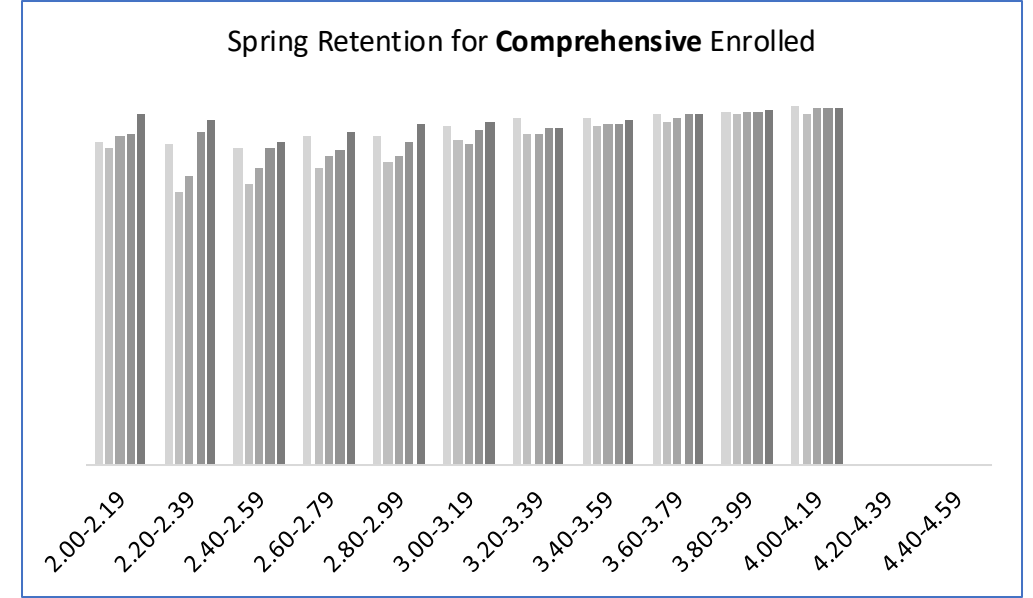
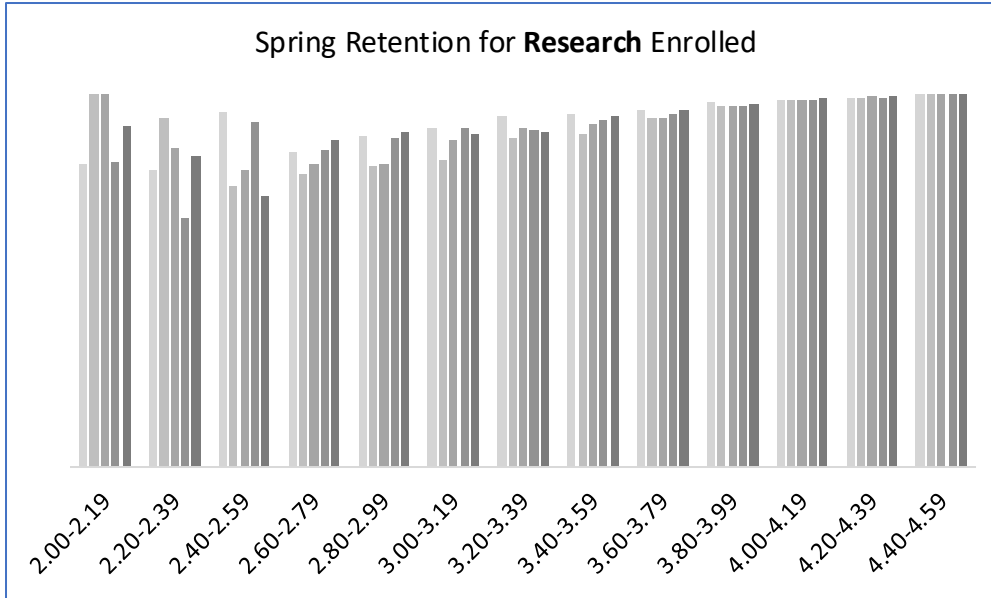
1st Fall Percent of Hours Earned by Sector and HS GPA



■ Fall 2019
 ■ Fall 2020
 ■ Fall 2021
 ■ Fall 2022
 ■ Fall 2023

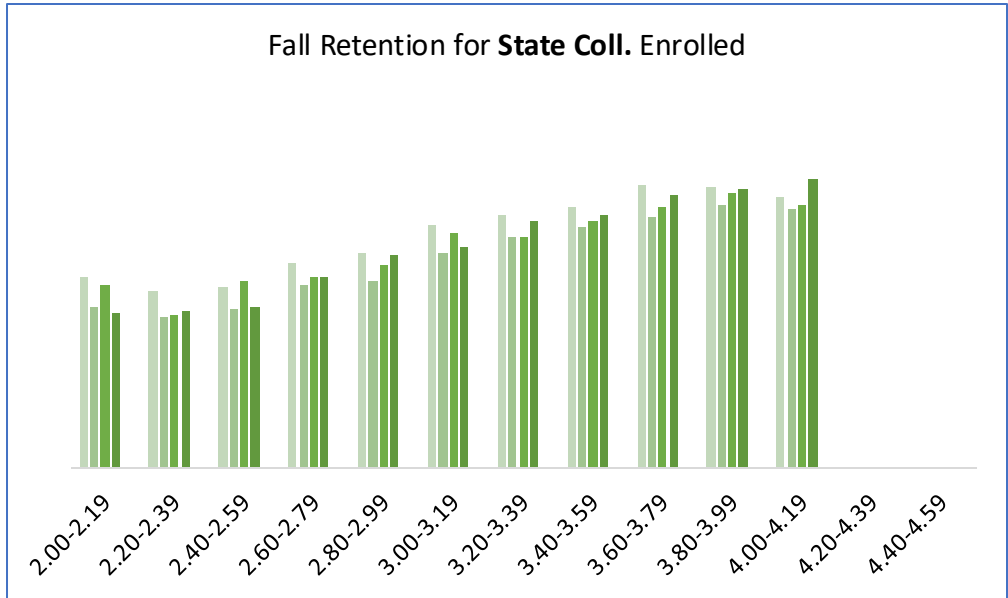
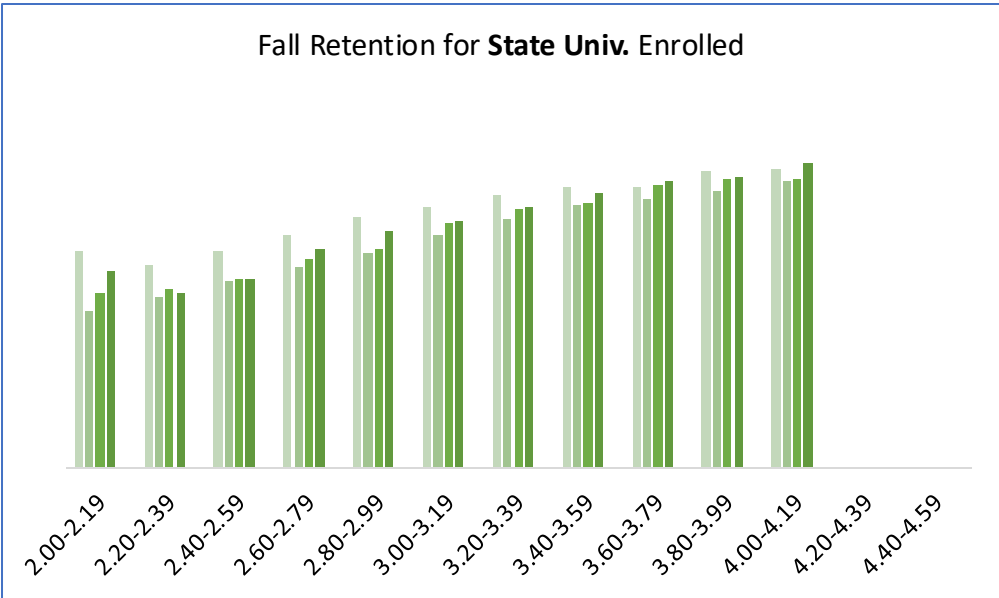
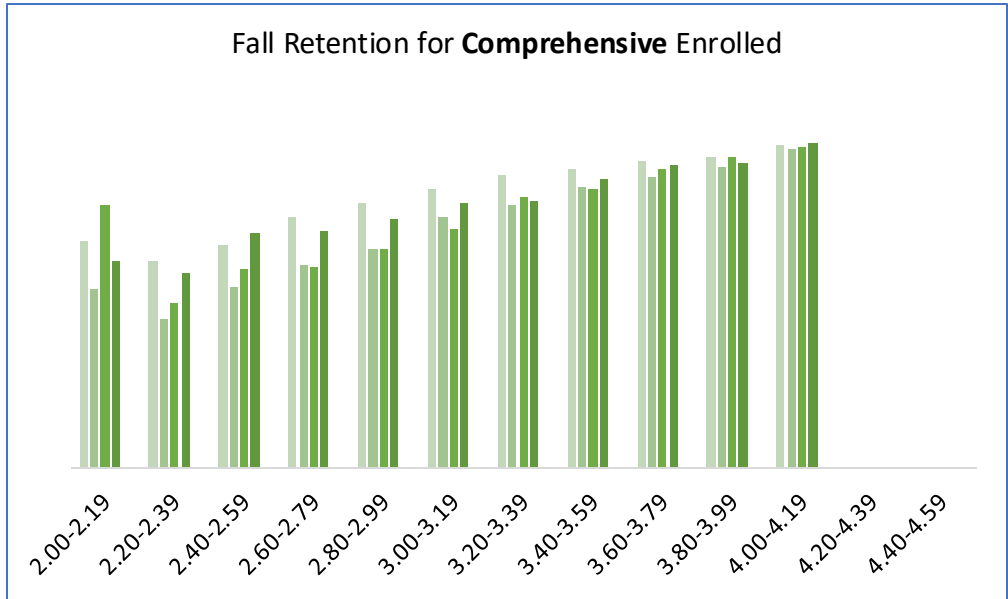
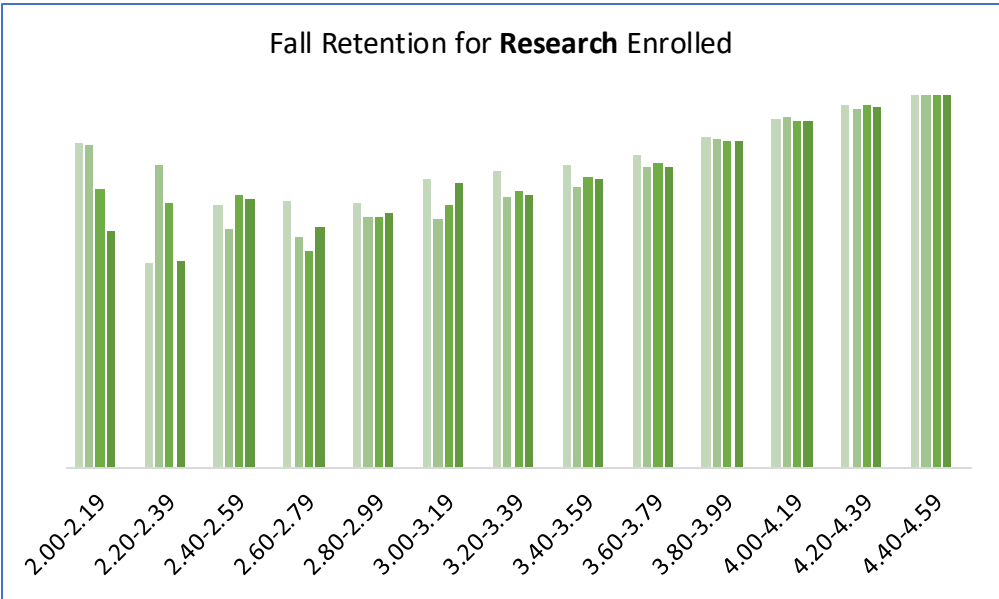


Spring Retention by Sector and HS GPA



■ Fall 2019 ■ Fall 2020 ■ Fall 2021 ■ Fall 2022 ■ Fall 2023

Fall Retention by Sector and HS GPA*



■ Fall 2019
 ■ Fall 2020
 ■ Fall 2021
 ■ Fall 2022
 ■ Fall 2023



In USG High School GPA More Highly Correlated with First-Year Success than Tests

Correlation of Admissions Indicators with First Semester GPA							
Institution	Freshman Index	HS GPA	SAT Total	ACT Composite	Difference FI and HS GPA	Difference HS GPA and SAT	Difference HS GPA and ACT
Research Universities	0.48	0.47	0.42	0.43	0.02	0.05	0.04
Georgia Institute of Technology	0.42	0.23	0.46	0.41	0.19	-0.23	-0.18
University of Georgia	0.34	0.21	0.30	0.32	0.13	-0.09	-0.11
Comprehensive Universities	0.47	0.42	0.29	0.27	0.05	0.13	0.15
State Universities	0.56	0.52	0.42	0.38	0.03	0.10	0.14
State Colleges	NA	0.48	0.40	0.37	NA	0.08	0.11
System Total	0.58	0.56	0.47	0.47	0.01	0.09	0.09

*All correlations statistically significant; Perimeter College is included in state colleges.

Orange = Instances where test score more highly correlated with first-year success than HS GPA.
-Only other instance is SAT at Columbus State.



Effect of Test Taking Policy on Applications and Enrollment Destinations: Applicant Data Collection and Analysis



Was testing policy affecting whether students apply to and enroll in the USG?



Data Sources and Considerations

- Ad hoc admissions data collection from institutions for previous fall admissions (around October)
- Submitted files to National Student Clearinghouse for subsequent enrollment
- Labor intensive and iterative



Where Did In-State Applicants* to USG Ultimately Enroll?

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change 2019 to 2023	Change 2022 to 2023
Applicants*	57,431	68,857	66,925	60,650	58,789	1,358	-1,861
USG Beginning Freshmen**	31,350	35,692	33,895	30,761	32,388	1,038	1,627
	54.6%	51.8%	50.6%	50.7%	55.1%	0.5%	4.4%
Out of State	5,071	5,668	6,460	6,523	6,023	952	-500
	8.4%	7.9%	9.3%	10.5%	10.0%	1.6%	-0.4%
Non-USG Public (TCSG or GMC)	1,703	1,909	2,028	1,920	2,032	329	112
	3.0%	2.8%	3.1%	3.2%	3.5%	0.5%	0.3%
GA Private	2,241	2,578	2,666	2,562	2,463	222	-99
	3.8%	3.7%	3.9%	4.2%	4.2%	0.4%	0.0%

* in-state applicants with HS GPA \geq 2.0, excluding UGA, Tech, and State Colleges

** in-state beginning freshmen, excluding UGA, Tech, and State Colleges



Where are we for Fall 2024* with current Test Optional policy?

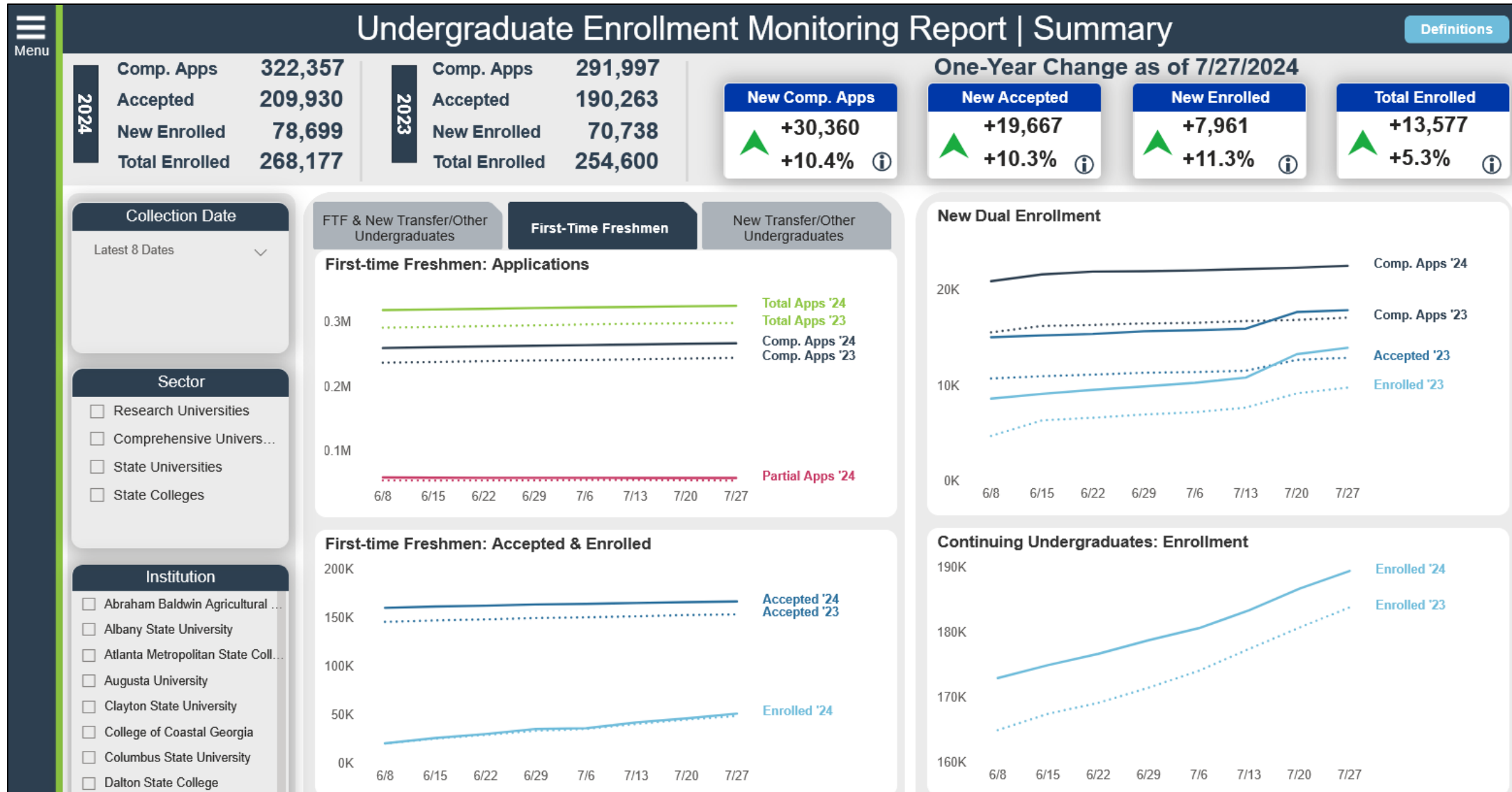
All USG First-time Freshman Pipeline for Fall 2023 and 2024

	2023	2024	Change	% Change
Total Applications	248,172	273,383	25,211	10.2%
Completed Applications	200,501	219,873	19,372	9.7%
Acceptances	102,208	116,635	14,427	14.1%

*as of March 2024



Real-Time Enrollment Pipeline Monitoring



Statewide Test Taking Behavior: Data on Current High School Seniors



Are test taking
behavior and
scores unevenly
distributed across
the state?



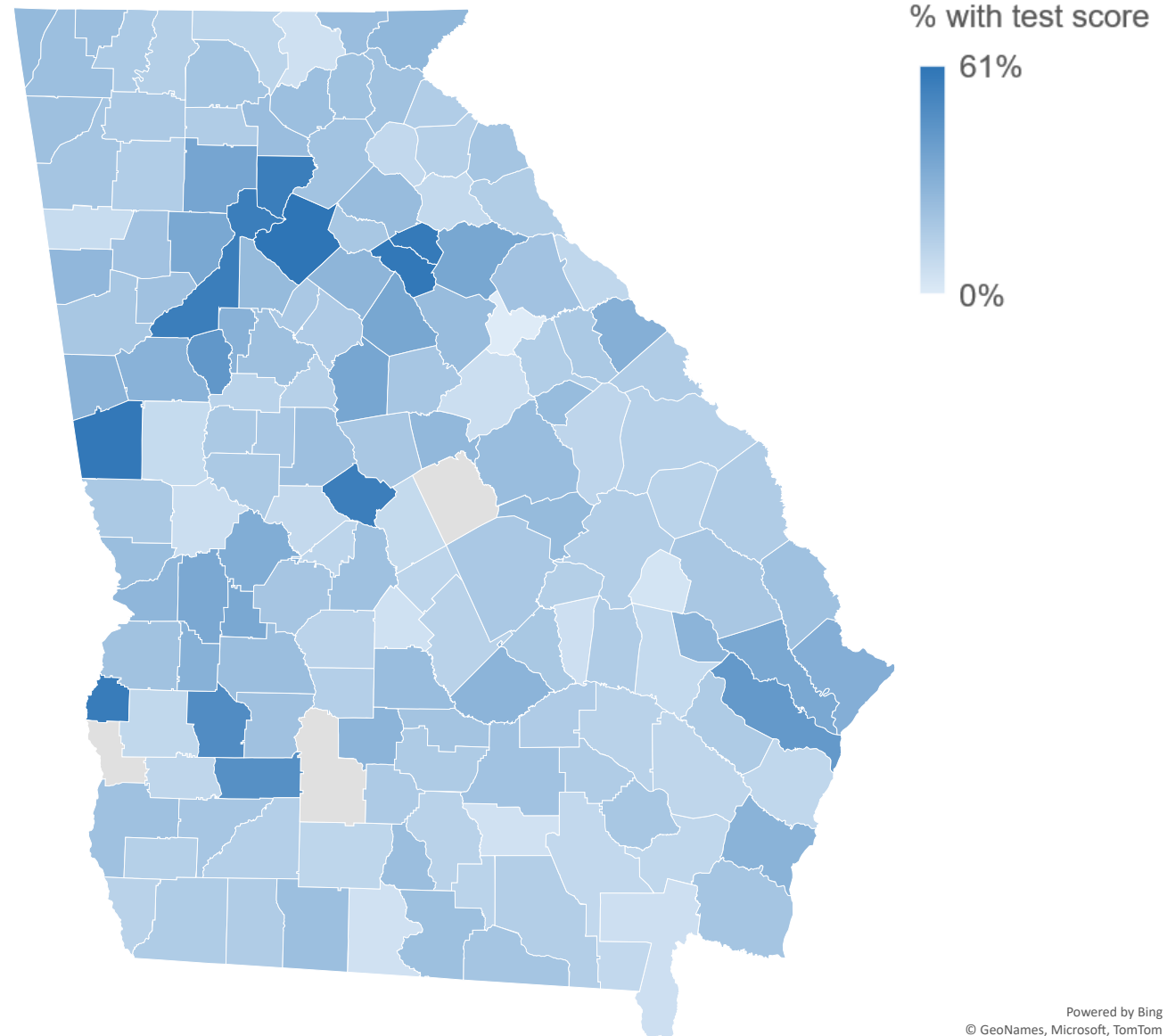
Data Sources and Considerations

- Georgia Student Finance Commission provided test taking data on all high school seniors as of November 2023
- Provided insight for fall 2024 class on availability of test scores
- Didn't include all test takers



County Percent HS Seniors with Test Score in November 2023

Counties by Percent with Admissions Test Scores		
Percent of Students Who Took Test	Number of Counties	Percent of Counties
0-9.9%	19	12%
10-19.9%	67	42%
20-29.9%	48	30%
30-39.9%	12	8%
40-61%	12	8%



*Georgia Student Finance Commission data



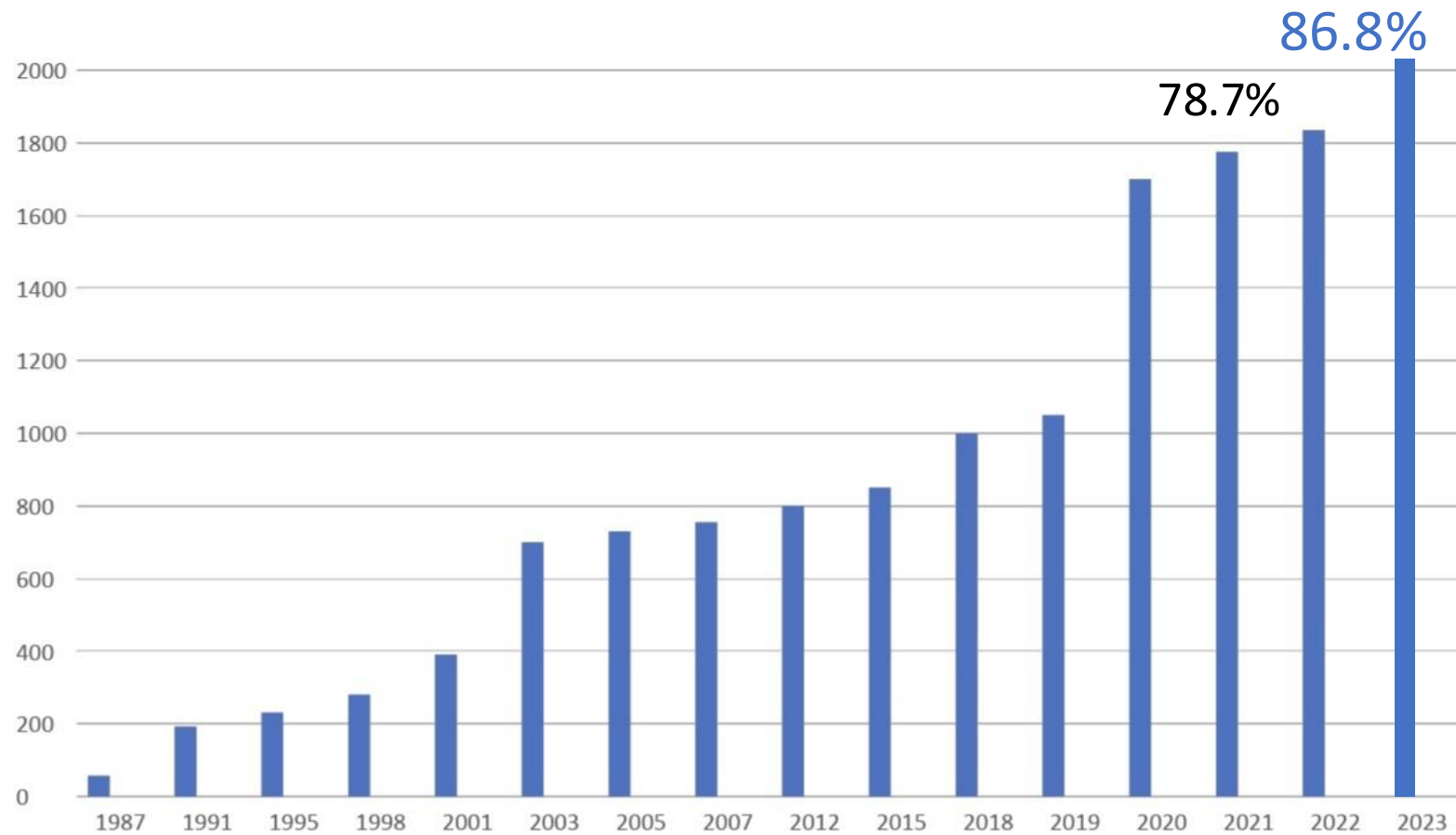
Testing Policy Environment: Testing Policy in Surrounding States



Is the USG
disadvantaging
itself in
competition for
students?



What is the Trend of Test Optional/ Test Free across the Nation?



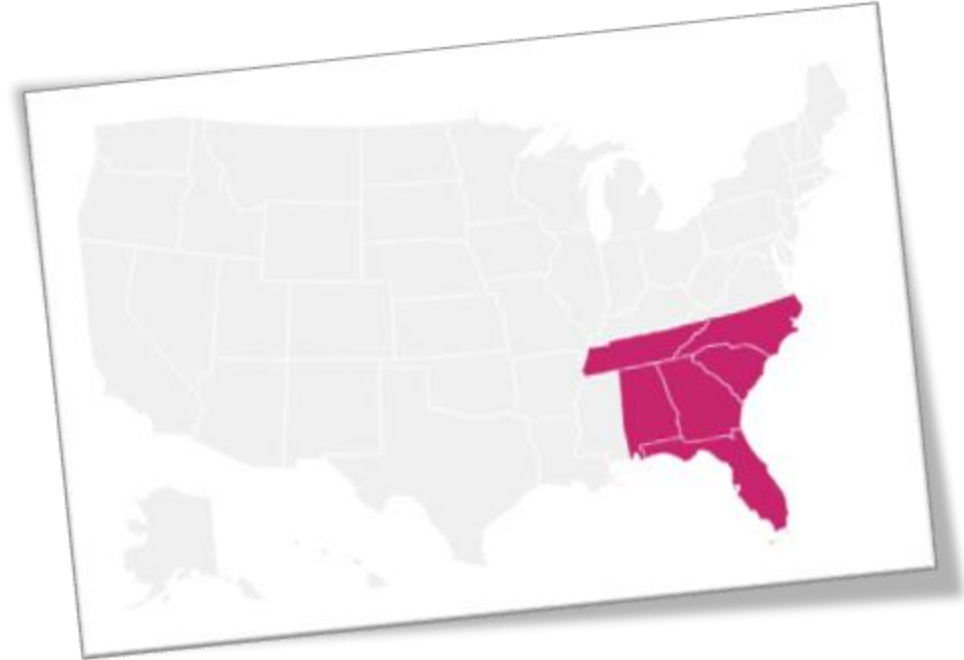
Accredited bachelor-degree institutions that are currently test optional.



What is Happening in Our Market?

Multiple State Systems and individual institutions remain test optional...

- Alabama: Most institutions indicate they are test optional through Fall 2023, but UA has announced they will remain test optional through Fall 2024.
- Tennessee: UT System (5 institutions) requires tests for Fall 2023. State Universities remain test optional (MTSU, Austin Peay, Univ. of Memphis, ETSU).
- North Carolina: UNC (16 institutions) is test optional through Fall 2024.
- South Carolina: University of South Carolina System (8 institutions) is test optional through Fall 2023.

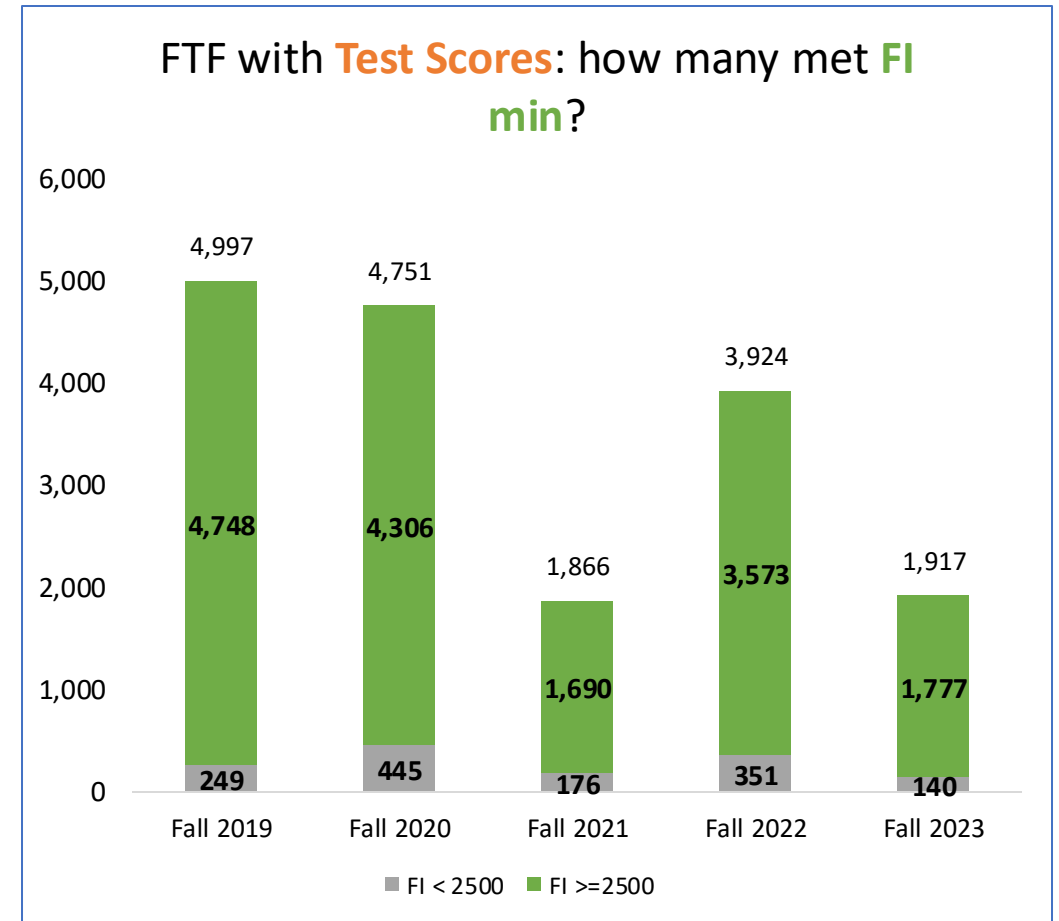
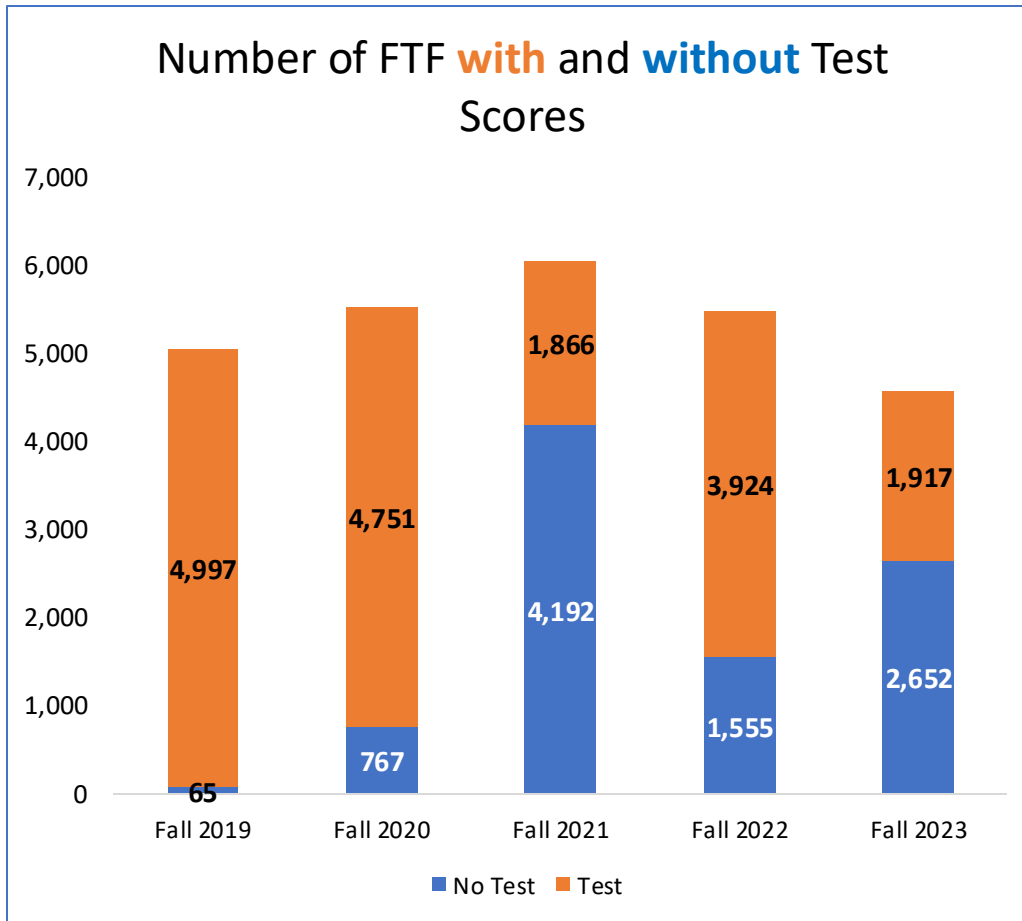


Additional Considerations



How Many Test Takers Meet the Minimum Freshman Index?

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY



Summary and Conclusions

- To inform admissions policy decisions, marshalled existing collections and collected and accessed new data resources
 - Kept adding more information as Regent questions shifted
- Created detailed data and tools for system office leadership preparation and then created streamlined information for Board
 - Almost all descriptive
- Real-time information was critical: admissions pipeline and test taking
- Extremely resource intensive and rapid turnaround
- Data important but fundamental beliefs also mattered
- Paved way for regular student-level applicant data collection



Discussion

- What test optional/admissions policy analysis has been done in your state/system?
- What future work could better inform admissions policy?



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