

First and Second Year Retention at Whitman College

Neal Christopherson, Office of Institutional Research
September, 2007

Retention rates measure the percentage of students starting at Whitman College as first time, first year students who enroll for subsequent fall semesters. Retention rates at Whitman have increased over the last twenty years, and recently have held steady between 93% and 95% for first year retention and between 88% and 90% for second year retention. The 2006 fall cohort shows a typically strong retention rate, while the 2005 fall cohort represents a slight dip in the trend. The following table and graph show the percentage of first year cohorts returning for their 2nd and 3rd years.

Cohort Year	1 st Year Retention*	2 nd Year Retention**
1987	86.3%	77.8%
1988	88.3%	80.1%
1989	87.1%	78.2%
1990	86.0%	77.1%
1991	86.2%	81.1%
1992	91.6%	84.1%
1993	92.3%	85.7%
1994	89.3%	79.7%
1995	88.9%	80.5%
1996	95.0%	89.4%
1997	93.8%	89.2%
1998	92.7%	88.0%
1999	92.3%	90.3%
2000	94.0%	88.3%
2001	93.4%	88.2%
2002	95.0%	93.1%
2003	93.9%	90.1%
2004	94.5%	89.6%
2005	92.8%	88.4%
2006	94.5%	n/a

* Indicates % of original cohort returning for the 2nd year.

** Indicates % of original cohort returning for the 3rd year.

