Navitas Graduate Student Success at UMass Boston, Spring 2017

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The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (OIRAP) has been working with Kristof Zaba, the Executive Director of Navitas at UMass Boston, to provide tracking of student success for Navitas students. As part of the pre-master's program (PMP), Navitas graduate students enrolled in courses beginning in Fall 2014. The tracking can be complicated because Navitas graduate students are enrolled as non-degree students for one or two semesters before declaring a major. This report provides a comparison of the progress of Navitas students, non-Navitas International students, and domestic students enrolled in degree-seeking graduate programs.

Assessment of graduate student success differs in key measures from those used to evaluate undergraduate student success, such as retention and graduation rates. Additionally, differences in graduate programs, such as master's or doctorate level, number of credits required, and targeted time to degree, make it difficult to group all graduate students together for comparative analysis purposes. Therefore, Navitas graduate students are compared to other students within the same program. Refer to *Graduate Student Success Indicators at UMass Boston, Fall 2016* for a breakdown of key metrics for each program, including the target metrics based on program requirements, metrics based on degrees awarded in academic year 2016, and enrollment metrics for Fall 2016.

Enrolled Student Progress

Across all cohorts, Navitas students maintain an equal or higher credit load when compared with non-Navitas international students (Table 1). In general, international students tend to take more credit hours per semester than domestic students, suggesting that domestic students are more likely to take graduate courses on a part-time basis.

The Computer Science (MS) major tends to be the most common course of study for Navitas graduate students, as well as being more common for all international students compared to domestic students.

Table 1 - Mean Credit Hours Taken across Student Types per Masters Degree Program

		Spring 2015		Fall 2015[(1)]		Spring 2016[(2)]		Fall 2016[(3)]		Spring 2017[(4)]	
Program	**Student Type**	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***
Computer Science	Navitas	9	8.3	15	9.3	11	7.9	31	9.5	30	8.9
	Non-Navt Int'l	65	8.7	83	8.8	93	8.2	69	8.9	69	7.9
	Domestic	23	6.9	29	5.7	30	6.3	26	7.9	25	7.3
MBA	Navitas	---	---	3	10.3	3	9.0	16	9.8	22	8.4
	Non-Navt Int'l	41	10.3	61	10.3	62	10.2	52	10.0	48	8.8
	Domestic	164	5.9	196	6.3	198	6.3	231	6.9	238	6.9
Finance	Navitas	---	---	2	9.0	3	10.0	7	9.0	5	10.8
	Non-Navt Int'l	27	10.1	26	9.2	31	9.7	30	9.1	32	9.1
	Domestic	13	6.0	18	6.0	13	6.2	18	5.7	16	5.6
Information Technology	Navitas	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	10.0	5	9.6
	Non-Navt Int'l	---	---	---	---	---	---	23	8.4	26	8.5
	Domestic	---	---	---	---	---	---	16	6.6	15	6.3
Accounting	Navitas	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	8.3
	Non-Navt Int'l	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	25	7.9
	Domestic	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	63	6.1

Note: (1) Fall 2015 enrollment for Navitas graduate students included 1 full-time student each in Accounting, Information Technology, and Public Administration majors. (2) Spring 2016 enrollment for Navitas graduate students included full-time students in Accounting-2, Information Technology-1, and Public Administration-1 majors. (3) Fall 2016 enrollment for Navitas graduate students included full-time students in Accounting-1, International Management-1, Education Admin-1, and Non-Degree-11 majors. (4) Spring 2017 enrollment for Navitas graduate students included full-time students in Applied Physics-1, Education Administration-1, International Management-1, Public Admin-1, and PhD Integrative Biosciences-1.

Time to degree (TTD) is a key metric for graduate student success. However, the TTD varies according to the program, because the degree requirements vary. Table 2 depicts the projected time to degree for various student types in selected programs. The projected time to degree is calculated by taking the actual time to degree for graduates in those programs during the previous academic year (AY15-16) and dividing it by the average annual course load derived from Table 1.

According to Table 2, Navitas and non-Navitas international graduate students are on track to earn their degree faster than the actual time to degree for graduates in AY16, except for those in the MBA or IT majors.

Table 2 - Projected Time to Degree (years) across Student Types per Masters Degree Program

Program	AY16 Final Credits	AY16 Actual TTD	Student Type		
			Navitas	Non-Navt Int'l	Domestic
Computer Science	33.0	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.3
MBA	48.7	2.6	2.9	2.8	3.5
Finance	40.4	2.3	1.9	2.2	3.6
Information Tech	47.2	2.2	2.5	2.8	3.7
Accounting	39.4	2.7	2.4	2.5	3.2

Grade point averages among graduate students differ according to degree program. Table 3 depicts the cumulative grade point averages across student types for selected programs. In the MBA and Finance programs, Navitas students maintain grade point averages at comparable levels with other students. However, Navitas students have a significantly lower grade point average ($t = 3.89$, $p = .000$) than other students in the Computer Science program.

Table 3 - Cumulative Grade Point Average across Student Types per Masters Degree Program

		Fall 2015		Spring 2016		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
Program	**Student Type**	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***	***n***	***M***
Computer Science	Navitas	15	3.36	11	3.35	31	3.23	27	3.12
	Non-Navt Int'l	49	3.28	79	3.31	50	3.25	62	3.46
	Domestic	21	3.57	25	3.36	24	3.43	24	3.56
MBA	Navitas	3	3.67	3	3.71	16	3.60	19	3.64
	Non-Navt Int'l	35	3.68	58	3.55	37	3.57	44	3.50
	Domestic	127	3.63	181	3.62	175	3.64	213	3.64
Finance	Navitas	2	3.25	3	3.66	7	3.61	5	3.61
	Non-Navt Int'l	16	3.62	22	3.64	19	3.67	28	3.72
	Domestic	15	3.63	11	3.62	15	3.57	14	3.69

Conclusion

During the Spring 2017 semester, Navitas graduate students were on track with other international students or other domestic students on key measures, such as credits taken and projected time to degree. However, for cumulative grade point average, the Navitas students maintained comparable marks for the MBA and Finance programs, while performing lower in the Computer Science program.