

## Fall and Spring 2021 Surveys

The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (OIRAP) conducts three major annual surveys--the Graduating Student Survey, the Freshman Survey, and the Alumni Survey--and a number of smaller surveys.

We are gearing up for our 2021 Graduating Student Survey, which will be launched in May. This crucial survey collects information on graduating students' post-graduation plans, student outcomes, use of career resources, and satisfaction with the UMass Boston academic program and the institution as a whole. This information helps administrators show the value of a UMass Boston degree program. The data are also used for college ranking, improving student outcomes, learning about potential employers, helping prospective students assess the value of a UMass Boston education, and making other data-informed decisions. The results of the 2021 Graduating Student Survey will be published [here](#).

OIRAP's yearly Fall Freshman Survey is administered in September. The survey is designed to obtain information about our first-year students, their high school experience, and their expectations of UMass Boston for the coming year. The survey results are published in December. Previous years' results can be found [here](#).

OIRAP administers its annual Alumni Survey during December and January. The survey provides information about UMass Boston alumni's post-graduation outcomes, alumni's willingness to engage in various future activities, and their experience at this institution. Alumni who received their degrees in 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020 were invited to participate in the 2020 survey. The 2020 Alumni Survey results will be published in April 2021. Survey results from 2017 to 2019 are published [here](#).

OIRAP conducts a variety of ad-hoc surveys each year, such as the IT Satisfaction Survey, the Community Engagement Survey for Faculty and Staff, and the Remote Learning Survey. We work with campus constituents in designing appropriate research strategies using a variety of techniques. We also provide consultation on best practices for data collection and analysis, including survey methods. For services or questions, please contact [inst.research@umb.edu](mailto:inst.research@umb.edu). Data requests can be submitted [here](#).

## Meet Our New IR Associate Director

Catherine Gildae joined OIRAP in November. Prior to that, she worked at Mass Maritime as the institutional effectiveness associate. Catherine graduated with an MEd in educational technology (2018) from Framingham State, where she was a graduate assistant in the Office of Institutional Assessment. In addition to her MEd, Catherine holds a PhD in law, policy, and society from Northeastern University (2008), an MTS from Harvard Divinity School (1999), and a BA in religious studies and developmental psychology from Emmanuel College (1996). Her responsibilities include retention and graduation analyses; support and training related to learning outcomes assessment; and coordination of institution-wide assessment efforts such as NSSE.

In her free time Catherine loves spending time at the beach, baking, and movie nights with her kids. She currently holds a leadership position in South Coast Toastmasters and is a past board member of MetroWest Parents of Multiples.



## Enrollment Statistics

Our office creates enrollment stats by student group and demographic, course, and major/degree. These stats are taken at the same point in the term, every term, so that data are comparable over numerous consecutive terms.

## Graduation and Retention Statistics

Our retention and graduation rates are up from last year and our graduation rate set a historical high for UMass Boston:

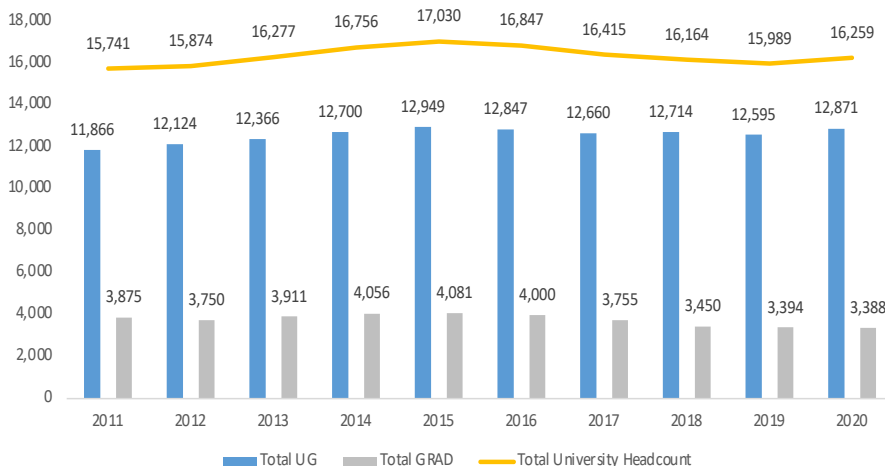
This year our retention rate of first-time full-time freshmen went up to 76% (fall 2019–2020).

Last year our retention rate of first-time full-time freshmen was 75% (fall 2018–2019).

Our six-year graduation rate of first-time full-time freshmen was a record 49.47% (fall 2014–summer 2020).

Last year our six-year graduation rate of first-time full-time freshmen was 49.0% (fall 2013–summer 2019).

Undergraduate and Graduate Enrollment Fall 2011 - Fall 2020



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## Looking at Data in New Ways

### Using Sankey Charts to Analyze Undergraduate Cohorts and Help Improve Graduation Rates

*Annie Lin*

The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (OIRAP) is working with other university offices to study cohort data and improve graduation rates. The static table format we have relied on for many years to display cohort data is still valuable, but using it to visualize patterns or summarize data can be challenging. A new interactive technology, Sankey Charts, makes comparable data readily visible and easier to understand and interpret. The Sankey Chart below was developed to study the fall 2012 cohort by major. The chart is written in the Tableau programming language. This report provides guidance on using the chart.

### Analyzing Changes of Majors in the Fall 2012 Undergraduate Cohort

The Sankey Chart below displays an interactive flow diagram from first enrolled major to last enrolled major. It helps users analyze changes of major in the fall 2012 cohort, and how these changes impact graduation rates.

Click on the chart image to see the interactive view of this chart. Once online, hover your mouse over the lines in the chart's middle section and you will see how many students switched majors in the ensuing six years. Hovering over any major in the right section, in a window that appears, you will see how many students from the 2012 cohort graduated and how many were still enrolled in fall 2018.

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## Sankey Chart Depicting Fall 2012 Undergraduate Cohort from First to Final Majors

*(Click here to see the interactive charts)*

## Meet IR Staff

### Annie Lin, Associate Director

Annie Lin received her master of computer science degree in 2002, and she also earned an MBA in finance in 1998.

Annie leads the campus student data reporting model design projects, resolves the systems and data issues, tests and approves the UMass University Information Technology (UITS) proposed design solutions, and works closely with other functional and technical professionals to develop systems to bring data from various sources together to ensure the compatibility, reliability, and validity of institutional data to be used for reporting.

Annie leads special complex projects in response to high-level data requests, and plays a crucial role by applying her knowledge of Peoplesoft, Summit, OBIEE, SQL Developer, SAS, and Tableau reporting tools to analyze systems and report on institutional data about students, faculty, and staff in support of campus decision-making, program planning, accountability requirements, and assessment of institutional effectiveness.



### James Castiola, Senior Data Specialist

James Castiola is an SAS programmer and Tableau power user who has been in the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning for 21 years. He has an undergraduate degree in history. His responsibilities include creating the snapshot datasets that are used for official university reporting; producing regular reports from that data; maintaining the university's academic structure; and fulfilling ad hoc requests.

### Fatema B. Ahad, Research Analyst

Fatema Ahad started working as a research analyst for the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (OIRAP) at UMass Boston right after she graduated with a master of public policy (MPP) from the University of Utah. Fatema is responsible for conducting research focused on learning assessment, institutional effectiveness, and policy evaluation for the improvement of outcomes. Fatema designs, administers, analyzes, and reports on OIRAP's annual and ad hoc surveys. She assists academic schools, departments, and offices in the development and operation of their assessment programs. She develops and conducts assessment workshops and is responsible for various data-reporting projects that require collaboration among different campus constituencies.

Fatema enjoys strolling outdoors with her two-year-old daughter, reading books, and watching thriller movies.

### Awat Osman, Administrative Assistant

Awat Osman graduated from the University of Massachusetts Boston in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in political science. She began working in the OIRAP office in 2012 as an administrative assistant. She handles a variety

of tasks and projects, among them compiling university data about admissions, enrollment, retention and graduation, and faculty and staff. Awat oversees the preparation and coordination of OIRAP's annual publications and newsletters. She also updates and maintains the IR website and provides support for daily office tasks, including management of budget, payroll, and purchasing.

**Fun Fact:** Awat speaks four languages: English, Kurdish, Hindi, and Urdu.

### Bruce Haimowitz, Senior Data Specialist

Bruce Haimowitz (PhD) is a senior data specialist in institutional research specializing in external college surveys such as IPEDS (US Department of Education), HEIRS (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education), and *US News & World Report's* review of colleges and universities. He is skilled in quantitative data collection, data analysis, and data reporting.

Bruce has a doctor of philosophy degree from UMass Boston and master's degrees from MIT, Syracuse University, and UMass Boston.

### James Hughes, Associate Provost

James Hughes (PhD) came to UMass Boston in 2016, having worked as director of institutional research and planning at Trinity College (Hartford, CT). A migrant from sociology ('94 UChicago), he is the author of *Citizen Cyborg* (2004, Basic) and writes frequently on technology ethics. He is co-founder and executive director of the nonprofit Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies and is a senior fellow with the UMass Boston Center for Applied Ethics.

**Fun Fact:** A former Buddhist monk, Prof. Hughes runs the weekly Buddhist Meditation Group.