

# Movement in Primary College

## Fall Term 2012 Cohort Class

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Many students change majors during the course of their college studies. Of course, “undeclared” students need to select a major at some point and thus will “change” their major. Students at Oregon State University are no exception, and indeed, the university is supportive of students exploring various options to determine the best major for their interests and career path. Even so, it is helpful for the university and colleges to track the rates of these major changes. This report provides statistics on major program changes for an entering fall freshman cohort.

We provide data on students that entered as part of a fall freshmen cohort. While transfer students and graduate students may also change majors, students starting as first-time freshmen are more likely to change majors. We use the same fall freshmen cohort that is the basis for standard retention and graduation rate reporting. This cohort represents students that are attending college for the first time as degree-seeking students and enrolled in the fall quarter (students that started the preceding summer are included) and were enrolled in 12 credits or more (full-time). The label “freshmen” is traditional but the cohort is not restricted to a certain class level. Sometimes the term “first-time college student from high school” is used, which is more accurate, albeit unwieldy.

Universities use retention and graduation rates to track the progress of students. The retention rate is a measure of continued enrollment and is usually from an entering quarter to an ensuing quarter. For example, the one-year retention rate is the percentage of new freshmen that entered in a given fall term and were enrolled the following fall term. The graduation rate is the percentage of a given fall cohort that have received their first bachelor’s degree by a certain point in time. The six year graduation rate measures the proportion that have graduated before the 7<sup>th</sup> fall quarter after their entering fall term. One should note that graduated students are not counted in retention rates after they have graduated, even if they continue to enroll.

This report provides data on the Fall 2012 freshman cohort, which consisted of 3321 students. The six-year graduation rate for this group was 67.0% and another 4.0% had not graduated but were still enrolled. We report the combination of those who have either

graduated or are still enrolled. Informally, some refer to this as “retention”, although we will not use that here, to avoid confusion with the retention rate.

Ideally, we would analyze individual major changes. But given the many majors available at OSU, students with multiple majors, and changes in program titles, department and college assignments, tables would require thousands of cells to account for all combinations. For convenience, we limit the analysis to changes in the college of the primary major listed in the student information system. Even here, we need to account for programs that move from one college to another.

Another simplification is to use the college where the first degree was earned as the “college graduated from”. This may be misleading when a student begins in one college, receives their first degree in another and later receives a degree in the original college. But accounting for this makes tables difficult to read.

Table 1 provides an overall university snapshot. For example, of the 175 freshmen that began with a major in the College of Agricultural Sciences in Fall 2012, six years later 93 received their first degree or were still enrolled with a primary major in Agricultural Sciences. Another 30 received a first degree or had a primary major under one of the other listed colleges. 52 did not receive an OSU degree and were not enrolled, at this point in time. Thus, 53% of entering Agricultural Sciences students graduated or were retained within the college six years later, while 70% of the same cohort graduated or were retained from OSU as a whole.

**Table 1: 2012 First-time, Full-time, Degree-seeking Entering Cohort: Primary College Movement  
(Graduated or Still Enrolled at 6 Years)**

College at Entry	2012 Cohort	College Movement								No Graduation or Enrollment	% Grad or Enrolled	
		AG	BUS	EOAS	ENGR	FOR	LA	PHHS	SCI		College	OSU
Agricultural Sciences	175	93	4	0	0	2	9	10	5	52	53%	70%
Business	374	4	190	0	5	1	53	19	1	101	51%	73%
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	46	1	3	17	3	2	4	2	3	11	37%	76%
Engineering	1051	22	54	10	535	14	42	20	39	315	51%	70%
Forestry	49	1	0	2	2	31	2	0	1	10	63%	80%
Liberal Arts	278	2	13	0	2	1	145	21	2	92	52%	67%
Public Health and Human Sciences	355	6	11	0	1	0	21	205	5	106	58%	70%
Science	661	27	16	6	21	2	44	98	281	166	43%	75%
University Exploratory Studies Program	332	12	31	5	13	12	65	67	16	110	n/a	67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3321</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>71%</b>

1. Based on college associated with primary major 1; does not account for multiple majors.

2. Graduation is based on college of primary major for first degree earned.

- About 30% of freshmen who graduated or were enrolled after 6 years had a different major from the one they started with (not counting UESP)

For those students who changed programs, the table reveals the typical patterns of movement from one college to another. For instance, Liberal Arts students frequently move to Public Health and Human Services, and vice versa. Science, which graduates or continues to enroll 43% of its students within the college had students migrate most frequently to Public Health and Human Services, followed by Liberal Arts and Agricultural Sciences. Students who entered the university without a declared major (i.e., University Exploratory Studies Program) most frequently ended up in Public Health and Human Services, followed by Liberal Arts and then Business.

Whereas the preceding table provided an overview of all colleges at the end of six years, what follows is a series of tables providing year-to-year data for each college. This allows for a look not only at which colleges students are moving to, but when those changes are typically made. For instance, most students who move to a different college appear to have done so by the end of two years.

### COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

2012 Cohort = 175

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Agricultural Sciences</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>
Graduated	0	0	3	58	86	90
Enrolled but not graduated	125	106	98	32	8	3
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>
Business	4	4	4	4	4	4
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forestry	0	0	1	2	2	2
Public Health & Human Sciences	7	9	9	9	9	10
Liberal Arts	4	7	10	10	10	9
Science	3	6	5	5	4	5
University Exploratory Studies Program	3	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>70%</b>

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

2012 Cohort = 374

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Business</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>190</b>
Graduated	0	0	6	126	181	186
Enrolled but not graduated	264	229	193	66	10	4
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>83</b>
Agricultural Sciences	4	4	5	4	4	4
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering	4	7	6	6	6	5
Forestry	1	1	2	2	1	1
Public Health & Human Sciences	12	16	19	18	19	19
Liberal Arts	20	36	48	50	49	53
Science	1	1	1	1	1	1
University Exploratory Studies Program	5	3	1	1	1	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>73%</b>

## COLLEGE OF EARTH, OCEAN, AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES

2012 Cohort = 46

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Earth, Ocean, and Atmos. Sciences</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
Graduated	0	0	1	12	15	16
Enrolled but not graduated	28	18	15	5	2	1
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>
Agricultural Sciences	3	3	3	1	1	1
Business	1	1	2	3	3	3
Engineering	2	2	2	3	3	3
Forestry	2	2	2	2	3	2
Public Health & Human Sciences	1	4	3	1	2	2
Liberal Arts	0	3	4	4	4	4
Science	1	3	3	3	3	3
University Exploratory Studies Program	3	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>76%</b>

## COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

2012 Cohort = 1051

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>535</b>
Graduated	0	1	6	172	437	500
Enrolled but not graduated	762	635	578	345	105	35
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>201</b>
Agricultural Sciences	10	16	18	20	22	22
Business	23	43	47	52	53	54
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	5	9	11	12	9	10
Forestry	4	9	12	14	14	14
Public Health & Human Sciences	14	27	26	23	20	20
Liberal Arts	16	28	35	40	38	42
Science	34	39	43	36	34	39
University Exploratory Studies Program	33	15	11	4	1	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>315</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>70%</b>

## COLLEGE OF FORESTRY

2012 Cohort = 49

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Forestry</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>31</b>
Graduated	0	0	0	12	24	30
Enrolled but not graduated	37	34	31	19	4	1
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
Agricultural Sciences	2	3	0	0	1	1
Business	0	0	0	0	0	0
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	1	1	2	2	1	2
Engineering	1	2	2	2	2	2
Public Health & Human Sciences	1	0	0	0	0	0
Liberal Arts	0	0	2	2	2	2
Science	0	0	1	1	1	1
University Exploratory Studies Program	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>80%</b>

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

2012 Cohort = 278

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Liberal Arts</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>145</b>
Graduated	0	2	12	106	135	139
Enrolled but not graduated	195	158	140	35	9	6
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>
Agricultural Sciences	2	2	1	2	2	2
Business	14	14	15	12	13	13
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	1	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering	3	4	2	2	2	2
Forestry	1	1	1	1	1	1
Public Health & Human Sciences	7	23	24	22	20	21
Science	2	1	2	2	2	2
University Exploratory Studies Program	3	1	1	1	0	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>67%</b>

## COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

2012 Cohort = 355

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Public Health &amp; Human Sciences</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>205</b>
Graduated	0	0	5	151	201	203
Enrolled but not graduated	253	220	211	51	6	2
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>
Agricultural Sciences	3	5	5	6	6	6
Business	8	12	12	11	10	11
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering	1	1	1	1	1	1
Forestry	0	0	0	0	0	0
Liberal Arts	9	19	18	21	21	21
Science	4	4	5	5	5	5
University Exploratory Studies Program	6	2	2	0	1	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>70%</b>



## COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

2012 Cohort = 661

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>Science</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>281</b>
Graduated	0	0	20	190	256	267
Enrolled but not graduated	437	323	271	90	15	14
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>214</b>
Agricultural Sciences	20	26	26	27	27	27
Business	10	15	20	19	18	16
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	2	4	7	6	6	6
Engineering	16	21	23	17	20	21
Forestry	1	1	1	2	2	2
Public Health & Human Sciences	45	91	96	92	93	98
Liberal Arts	19	32	45	44	45	44
University Exploratory Studies Program	21	9	3	3	4	0
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>75%</b>

## University Exploratory Studies Program

2012 Cohort = 332

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	6 Year
<b>University Exploratory Studies Program</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Graduated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enrolled but not graduated	134	17	2	0	2	1
<b>Enrolled or Graduated in Other Colleges</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>221</b>
Agricultural Sciences	8	13	13	12	11	12
Business	31	28	32	29	31	31
Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences	4	6	5	6	6	5
Engineering	8	15	16	11	15	13
Forestry	6	12	11	13	12	12
Public Health & Human Sciences	40	73	70	64	66	67
Liberal Arts	33	63	63	67	65	65
Science	8	15	15	13	17	16
<b>Not Enrolled or Graduated</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>% Changed College</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated in College</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>% Enrolled or Graduated at OSU</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>67%</b>