

## Illinois Community College Board Frequently Asked Questions

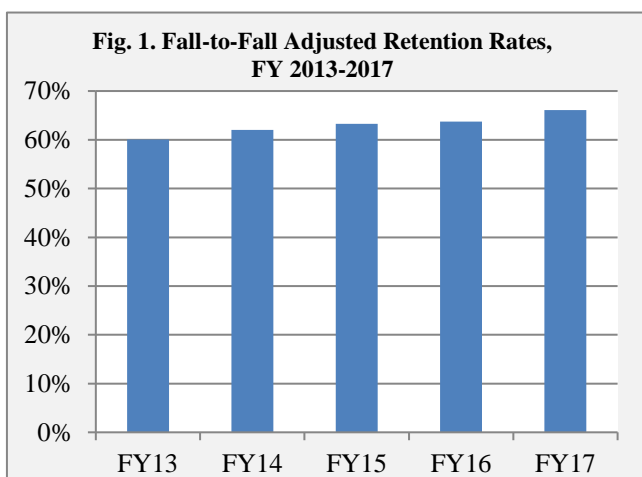
### WHAT IS THE RETENTION RATE FOR ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGES STUDENTS?

Retention Rates provide a measure of student attachment to college. First-year retention is particularly important since new students—especially recent high school graduates—need to successfully transition to college and the accompanying elevated academic and personal responsibility expectations. Elevated Retention Rates show an ongoing engagement in the educational process and demonstrate an attachment to college. Elevated Retention Rates are typically associated with individuals who are making academic progress and improve the individual’s chances of completing a certificate or degree.

Statewide first-time, full-time student Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates were calculated for the most recent five years. The source of the data was the Fall Enrollment (E1) and Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) data. Retention Rates are always expressed as a percentage. A **Retention Rate** only includes individuals who re-enrolled the following fall, and an **Adjusted Retention Rate** includes individuals who re-enrolled the next fall plus those individuals who graduated during the intervening or returning year. Part of the reason for the adjustment is that a variety of community college certificate programs can be completed within one year. The Adjusted Retention Rate reflects a more comprehensive perspective and will be the focus of the analysis provided. The differences between these two rates are typically small.

Table 1 Fall to Fall Adjusted Retention (Including Completers) for First-Time College Level Students in Illinois Public Community Colleges Fiscal Years 2013-2017					
	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
New Full-Time Entering Cohort	33,576	33,593	31,501	29,927	29,803
Returned	19,055	19,915	19,194	18,368	18,994
Completed Year 1	880	662	555	494	488
Completed Year 2	239	258	189	205	208
Not Returned, Not Completed	13,402	12,758	11,563	10,860	10,113
Returned or Completed	20,174	20,835	19,938	19,067	19,690
<b>Adjusted Retention</b>	<b>60.1%</b>	<b>62.0%</b>	<b>63.3%</b>	<b>63.7%</b>	<b>66.1%</b>

SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Fall Enrollment (E1) and Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1)



**Current results are above the five-year median (63.3 percent) and are above the five-year average (63.0 percent).**

According to NCES’s Digest of Education Statistics (2017, [Table 326.30](#)), the national first to second year Retention Rate for full-time, first-time freshmen in public community colleges was 62.0 percent (Fall 2015 to Fall 2016). An Adjusted Retention Rate is not calculated. The unadjusted overall statewide Retention Rate for the Illinois community colleges—63.7 percent—compares favorably with this national figure.