

## **Mills College**

### **Fall 2007 Retention Analysis Entering First-Time Student Cohort Fall 2006**

*A total of 185 Freshwomen entered Mills College in Fall of 2006. This report summarizes the characteristics of students who returned in the Fall of 2007 as well as non-returning students. The reasons women come to or leave Mills are as complex and unique as they are and are generally not influenced by a single factor or event. This report examines only first order influences; additional studies will be conducted to obtain a deeper understanding of the issues involved. Nursing students were not included in this analysis, only students pursuing four year degrees. A similar analysis is being done for both the nursing and transfer cohorts.*

#### **Overall & Demographic Characteristics**

- The retention rate for the entering first-year 2006 cohort was 73.5%, a slight increase from 71% in the 2005 entering class, and approaching the average of 75% for the past three years, and the average of 76% over the last 10 years.
- The retention rate was highest among Bi-multi-racial, Latino/a, and Asian/Pacific students (83%, 80%, and 81% respectively). These rates are higher than last year for these groups (73%, 76%, and 78% respectively). Retention of African American students is stable, at 78% this year compared to 79% last year. The rate for White, Non-Hispanic students was 71%, an increase over last year (66%). Students who do not have a race/ethnicity specified have the lowest retention rate (49%).
- Among the states of origin, California's retention rate was stronger than out of state, with 76% retained compared to 59% for all other states. This is consistent with last year's data. Of the states with the largest student representation, both Washington and Oregon had retention rates this year (69% and 80% respectively) slightly higher than last year (67% and 78% respectively). This is significant since more students were recruited from these states this year (16 and 9 respectively) than last year (6 and 4 respectively). By increasing our recruitment and retention in these states, we have added several students to our retained population. New York is added to the analysis this year, since 80% of the 5 students recruited from New York have remained enrolled. Analysis of the remaining small pockets of students from out of state revealed differential rates: 33% of Minnesota students were retained, which is double last year; 75% of the students from Hawaii were retained; and both students from Massachusetts were retained this year when all 3 students from Massachusetts left the College last year. Illinois, however, shows only a 50% retention rate for the 6 students recruited from there.

## **Academics**

- The Admissions ranking criteria used by the College did not prove to as be predictive of the likelihood of returning, as was reported last year. Consistent with last year's data, students in the SAW program were retained at a very high rate (94%); in fact, all but one student in the program was retained. However, unlike last year's data, students ranked highest did not have the highest retention rate. This year the students ranked second had the highest retention rate (83%), followed by the students with the lowest rank, not including students accepted on probation (77%). The retention rate for these students, in fact, was higher than that of the students with the highest ranking. Students accepted with a ranking of 3 or 4 had the lowest retention rates (65% and 57% respectively), these rates being fairly consistent with last year's rates (62% and 59% respectively).
- As was the case last year, the students who were retained had a higher average GPA than those not retained (3.15 and 2.85 respectively). However, this year the differential between the averages is less than last year (.30 this year compared to .53 last year). Of interest, although not an indicator for retention, is that, where the GPAs between fall and spring declined for both the retained and non-retained students last year, the GPA's between Fall 06 and Spring 07 improved for both of this year's groups.
- Looking at course load, in general, there is a direct correlation between load and retention, with students taking larger course loads also being retained at a higher rate. Students who took greater than the recommended maximum course load for first-years had the highest retention rate (95%). While this group only consists of 7 students, it is of note. The next highest retention rate was among those taking from 4.5 to 4.75 credits (81%). Students enrolled in the "normal" recommended course load (4.25) were retained at a 74% rate, while those enrolled full-time but below the recommended load were retained at a slightly lower rate (68%). Students enrolled less than full-time had the lowest retention rate. Since students who are assigned a lower course load on the basis of a learning difference are in this category, other factors are at play here. In general, the course load data is relatively consistent with last year, except that last year the rate for students taking a "normal" course load was higher than those taking a greater than normal load.
- Students taking only lower division classes their first semester were retained at a higher rate than those who took at least one upper division course (77% vs 66%). The average entering GPA for all groups (retained, not retained, with or without an upper division course) were within a similar range, so entering GPA does not appear to be a factor here. However, of those retained, the average Mills GPA achieved was above a 3.0 for the first semester, whereas the average Mills GPA of those not retained fell below a 3.0, regardless of whether the students enrolled in an upper

division course. Interestingly, the average Mills GPA of those students who took an upper division course was higher than the average Mills GPA of those who took all lower division courses.

### **Special Retention & Academic Programs**

- See the attached page for a full analysis of retention in the LLC program. As reported here for Fall 2007 only, the average retention rate for students in an LLC was 69% compared to 81% last year. Retention rates for the various LLC groups ranged from 30% (Computer Science) to 100% (Wellness). Since basically all first years were assigned an LLC, we really don't have a true comparison group; however, those few (10) students who were not assigned to an LLC had a significantly higher retention rate (91%) than the average retention within the LLCs (69%). Wellness, Spanish, and Justice LLC had the highest retention rates (100%, 89%, and 86% respectively), while Computer Science, Chemistry and Public Policy had the lowest rates (30%, 40%, and 50% respectively).
- The Field of Interest on Entrance is a measure of retention based on the first-choice field of interest that an entering student indicates, either on the admissions application or the advising survey. This information is used, among other things, to select the appropriate advisor. This is the second year that we have looked at retention with this as a measure, and so it is too early to find any clear patterns, should they exist.

### **Financial Aid**

- This report is building on the previous report with the addition of financial aid data. Specifically, this report looks at the unmet need between those students retained and not retained. This data by itself is inconclusive, but in future, adding to what we know about students' financial circumstances might indicate some clear patterns between financial aid and retention.

**SUMMARY DATA TABLES**

**Table 1 Overall Retention Trends**

Table 3a. All Students															4-Year Grad			6-Year Grad							
Cohort	Fall 1	Spr 1	GPA	Fall 2	%	Spr 2	GPA	Fall 3	%	Spr 3	GPA	Fall 4	%	Spr 4	Grad	%	GPA	Fall 5	Spr 5	GPA	Fall 6	Spr 6	Grad	%	GPA
1994	140	129	2.91	100	71%	95	2.99	82	59%	83	3.00	73	52%	68	68	49%	3.08	8	10	2.75	7	4	11	56%	2.69
1995	134	124	3.18	94	70%	88	2.98	79	59%	78	3.25	77	57%	70	69	51%	3.348	11	7	3.29	3	0	11	60%	3.56
1996	154	132	3.08	103	67%	99	3.16	89	58%	91	3.20	87	56%	79	81	53%	3.34	11	8	3.31	6	6	11	60%	2.83
1997	108	100	3.06	84	78%	80	3.19	70	65%	69	3.25	62	57%	59	62	57%	3.371	4	4	2.76	0	1	12	69%	3.22
1998	127	113	3.01	99	78%	91	3.14	82	65%	83	3.22	78	61%	73	67	53%	3.29	13	6	3.09	3	2	16	65%	3.58
1999	121	113	3.26	93	77%	87	3.41	85	70%	78	3.44	70	58%	65	71	59%	3.548	11	9	3.64	5	0	12	69%	3.52
2000	123	107	3.25	98	80%	98	3.28	90	73%	64	3.30	86	70%	77	72	59%	3.58	13	10	3.31	2	2	0	59%	-
2001	113	100	3.23	91	81%	81	3.25	69	61%	52	3.33	59	52%	55	57	50%	3.345	7	0	-	0	0	6	56%	3.31
2002	137	122	3.36	99	72%	95	3.37	80	58%	65	3.41	86	63%	78	71	52%	3.568	14	7	3.23	1	1	9	58%	3.43
2003	114	107	3.17	95	83%	70	3.39	79	69%	77	3.15	67	59%	60	59	52%	3.363	6	3	2.94					
2004	135	124	3.26	101	75%	100	3.25	89	66%	89	3.23	84	62%	75	66	49%	3.357								
2005	184	168	2.99	131	71%	123	3.18	110	60%	109	3.11														
2006	183	165	2.74	136	74%	133	3.15																		
2007	185	171	3.28																						
AVERAGES			3.13		75%		3.21		64%		3.24		59%		53%	3.38			3.15				61%	3.27	

## Demographics

**Table 2. Ethnic Identification**

<b>Ethnic Identification</b>	Retained	%	Non-Retained No.	%
Native American /Alaska Native	0	0%	0	0%
African American	14	78%	4	22%
Asian/Pacific Islander	13	81%	3	19%
Latino/a	20	80%	5	20%
White/non-Hispanic	63	71%	26	29%
Bi/Multi Racial	20	83%	4	17%
Unknown	6	46%	7	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>		<b>49</b>	

**Table 3. State of Origin**

<b>State of Origin</b>	Retained No.	%	Not-Retained No.	%
California	96	75.7	29	24.3
All out of state	39	58.3	20	41.7
Hawaii	3	75%	1	25%
Illinois	3	50%	3	50%
Massachusetts	2	100%	0	0%
Minnesota	1	33%	2	67%
New York	4	80%	1	20%
Washington	11	69%	5	31%
Oregon	7	78%	2	22%
All other out of state	7	54%	6	46%

**Academics**

**Table 4. Admissions Rank**

<b>Admissions Rank<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Retained No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Retained No.</b>	<b>%</b>
1	26	76%	8	24%
2	29	83%	6	17%
3	26	65%	14	35%
4	17	57%	13	43%
5	20	77%	6	23%
Probationary	2	67%	1	33%
SAW Invitational	8	100%	0	0%
SAW Mandatory	7	88%	1	13%
No Rank	1	100%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>		<b>49</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Rank 1 is the highest, 5 the lowest, P Probationary, SAW Summer Bridge Program; Ranks 1 – 4 are eligible for Merit Scholarships

**Table 5. GPA**

<b>Fall 06 GPA</b>	<b>Retained (N=136)</b>	<b>Not-Ret (N=49)</b>
Avg.	3.15	2.85
<b>Spring 07 GPA</b>	<b>Retained (N=136)</b>	<b>Not-Ret (N=49)</b>
Avg.	3.21	2.92

**Table 6. Units Attempted Fall 2006**

UNITS ATTEMPTED - FALL 2006	RETAINED		NOT-RETAINED	
	No.	%	No.	%
.25-3.25	2	33%	4	67%
3.5-4.0	27	68%	13	33%
4.25	54	74%	19	26%
4.50-4.75	48	81%	11	19%
More than 4.75*	5	95%	2	5%
Total	136		49	

\*First year students are advised that 4.75 credits are the maximum number they can take.

**Table 7. Enrollment in Upper Division Classes in First Semester**

Enrollment in Upper Division Classes	RETAINED				NOT RETAINED			
	No.	%	Ave. HS GPA	Ave. Mills GPA	No.	%	Ave. HS GPA	Ave Mills GPA
Lower Division Only	98	77%	3.54	3.07	29	23%	3.53	2.79
Took At Least One Upper Division Class <sup>2</sup>	38	66%	3.67	3.40	20	34%	3.56	2.95
Total	136				49			

<sup>2</sup>Excludes PE classes

**Academic Programs****Table 8. Living Learning Communities**

Students in Living Learning Communities <sup>3</sup>	RETAINED			NOT-RETAINED			LLC Description	
	No.	%	AVG. GPA	No.	%	AVG. GPA	Type	Shared Attributes
Chemistry	4	40%	2.92	6	60%	2.49	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
Computer Science	3	30%	3.14	7	70%	2.85	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
History	10	67%	2.97	5	33%	3.02	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
Music	7	78%	3.54	2	22%	3.90	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
Poetry	10	71%	3.13	4	29%	2.97	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
Public Policy	7	50%	3.18	7	50%	2.52	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
Spanish	8	89%	3.30	1	11%	3.30	Academic	Advisor, dorm, course
Wellness	18	100%	3.21	0	0%	0.00	Scholars-in-Action	Dorm, DSL Programming
Adventure Educ	14	78%	3.33	4	22%	2.59	Scholars-in-Action	Dorm, DSL Programming
Justice	25	86%	3.23	4	14%	3.50	Scholars-in-Action	Dorm, DSL Programming
Creative Arts	11	73%	3.59	4	27%	3.25	Hybrid	Advisor, Dorm, "themed" community
Open	9	69%	2.87	4	31%	3.18	Hybrid	Advisor, Dorm, "themed" community
<b>Total in LLC</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>2.80</b>		
Not Placed	10	91%	3.10	1	9%	2.56		
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>73.5%</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>26.5%</b>	<b>2.78</b>		

**Table 9. Field of Interest on Entrance**

Entering Major	This Year				Last Year			
	RETAINED		NOT-RETAINED		RETAINED		NOT-RETAINED	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Anthro & Soc	3	60%	2	40%	4	100%	0	0%
Art (Studio)	12	86%	2	14%	3	50%	3	50%
Art History	2	100%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%
Biochemistry & Molecular	2	67%	1	33%	1	50%	1	50%
Biology	8	80%	2	20%	10	59%	7	41%
Biopsychology	3	60%	2	40%	1	50%	1	50%
Business Economics	9	82%	2	18%	5	100%	0	0%
Chemistry	1	100%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Child Development	9	69%	4	31%	4	44%	5	56%
College Major	1	50%	1	50%				
Comparative Literature	0	0%	1	100%				
Computer Science	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%
Dance	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Engineering 3+2	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%		
English	11	69%	5	31%	20	95%	1	5%
English/Creative Writing	14	78%	4	22%	10	83%	2	17%
Enviro Science	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Ethnic Studies	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
French and Francophone	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Government	2	100%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
History	0	0%	1	100%	2	100%	0	0%
Intermedia Arts	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
International Relations	7	70%	3	30%	6	60%	4	40%
Mathematics	1	100%	0	0%				
Music	4	67%	2	33%	6	100%	0	0%
Philosophy	1	100%	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%
PLEA	5	71%	2	29%	9	56%	7	44%
Pre-med	2	67%	1	33%	2	40%	3	60%

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Psychology	12	67%	6	33%	8	80%	2	20%
Public Policy	2	100%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Social Sciences	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	1	100%
Sociology	7	100%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Spanish & Spanish America	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Undeclared	11	65%	6	35%	24	75%	8	25%
Women's Studies	3	75%	1	25%	4	100%	0	0%

**Table 10. Financial Aid: Unmet Need**

Unmet Financial Need	Retained		Not Retained	
Less than 0*	53	72%	21	28%
0	7	80%	1	20%
\$1 - \$2,500	12	67%	6	33%
\$2,500 - \$5,000	19	70%	8	30%
\$5,000 - \$7,500	15	83%	3	17%
\$7,500 - \$10,000	8	62%	5	38%
\$10,000 - \$12,500	8	80%	2	20%
\$12,500 - \$15,000	8	89%	1	11%
\$15,000 - \$17,500	2	67%	1	33%
\$17,500 - \$20,000	2	100%	0	0%
Over \$20,000	2	67%	1	33%
Average Unmet Need	\$-1939.00		\$-1606.00	
Total	136	73%	49	27%
*Financial Assistance exceeded need as defined by FAFSA.				