

4.1 The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Criteria may include enrollment data; retention, graduation, course completion, and job placement rates; state licensing examinations; student portfolios; or other means of demonstrating achievement of goals. (*Student achievement*)

Compliance

Student success is at the core of Covenant College's institutional value system. Covenant College consistently evaluates the success of its students with regard to achievement of established targets by monitoring a number of criteria: course completion, retention rates, graduation rates, state licensing examination pass rates, employment rates, and graduate school attendance rates.

The criteria chosen to evaluate the success of Covenant students are appropriate and consistent with Covenant's mission. These assessments are useful tools in measuring and supporting student success. The establishment of [student achievement benchmarks](#) involved individuals responsible for the delivery of services, program directors, faculty, deans, and vice presidents.

Course completion. Covenant monitors student progress toward successful program completion in many ways including monitoring course completion. Course completion is central to degree attainment and provides an indicator of faithful stewardship of resources which is important to Covenant's mission. Covenant's assessment of course completion is conducted within individual courses. Each student is evaluated using course-specific exams or other summative evaluations to determine acquisition of skills and knowledge in each academic discipline. The director of institutional research calculates course completion rates of students each term. The overall course completion rates as well as the completion rates disaggregated by subject code and course level (see below) are then distributed to the dean of academic programs for review. Based on historic trends, Covenant has established two course completion benchmarks for undergraduate students. First, the overall course completion rate will reach 95% (based on a four-semester rolling average). Second, 90% of all subject codes will have a completion rate of at least 90% (based on a four-semester rolling average).

- Overall course completion rates (see below) for the past two years have ranged from 94.2% to 96.1%, with an overall (4-semester) course completion rate of 95%. The lower level (100-200 level) courses ranged from 94.3% to 96.1% and upper level (300-400) courses ranged from 92.3% to 96.3%.

Course Completion by Term, 2014-2015 & 2015-2016

Term	Total Enrollment	Completion Rate*		
		Overall	Course Level	
			100-200	300-400
Fall 2014	6063	94.5%	94.3%	94.9%
Spring 2015	5466	95.7%	95.3%	96.3%
Fall 2015	5783	94.2%	95.3%	92.3%
Spring 2016	5294	96.1%	96.1%	96.0%
Overall Four-semester Average: 95.0%				

**Completion rate is calculated by dividing courses completed by course attempted. A course is considered completed if a student earned credit for the course.*

- Course completion rates disaggregated by [subject code](#) are also high, with 95% of the four-term averages reaching 90% or above, which exceeds Covenant's target.

Graduation rates. Covenant College also collects data on the percentage of students that graduate from the college within a six-year window. For determining a threshold of acceptability, a [graduation rate comparison](#) was done to compare Covenant with both all private colleges of the same institutional size and Carnegie class as well as with 12 peer schools that have a similar Christian mission and are therefore used for benchmarking. Covenant's six-year graduation rate target was set to 60% (based on a three-year rolling average), which is above the six-year graduation rate for the small private colleges and approaching the graduation rate for Christian peer schools.

- Over the last three years, Covenant's graduation rate ranged from 57% to 64%, with a three-year rolling average of 60%. Although Covenant met its target, for continued improvement, Covenant has implemented several policies to continue to raise its graduation rate, including early identification of at risk students, requiring slowly progressing students to meet with the director of academic support, and establishing a Center for Student Success. Initial indications of the success of these changes are evidenced in Covenant's increasing freshman retention rates (see next bullet point).

Covenant College Graduation Rates (six-year), 2013-2015			
2013	2014	2015	3 Year Avg
58%	57%	64%	60%

Retention rates. Since graduation rate is a lagging indicator, retention rate data are also evaluated. As above, a [retention rate comparison](#) of Covenant with both all private colleges of the same institutional size and Carnegie class as well as with 12 peer schools was used to determine the threshold of acceptability. Covenant’s freshman retention rate target was set to 85% (based on a three-year rolling average), which is above the retention rate for both all small private colleges and the Christian peer schools.

- Covenant’s fall to fall freshman retention rate average for the last three years is 85%. This meets the institutional goal.

Covenant College Freshman Retention Rates, 2013-2015			
2013	2014	2015	3 Year Avg
85%	85%	85%	85%

Licensing Examination Pass Rates. Covenant College’s Education Department offers the college’s only programs that require state licensing examinations. Covenant’s Department of Education works closely with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) in preparing students to acquire a Georgia teaching license. Covenant students interested in earning initial teacher certification must take and pass both the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) Basic Skills Tests and the Content Assessments before recommendation for certification for the GaPSC. Each year Covenant tracks GACE test scores and certification rates for students who have completed its program (see below). Covenant’s certification rate target is 80% (the state of Georgia’s target is also 80%). Due to small cohorts of students, Covenant uses a five-year rolling average to determine success in reaching its target.

Covenant Education Department Undergraduate Certification Data, 2011-2015
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Year	Total # Students*	Total # certified (passed GACE)	% certified
2011	43	35	81%
2012	37	33	89%
2013	39	36	92%
2014	24	24	100%
2015	36	36	100%
5 Yr Avg.	179	164	92%

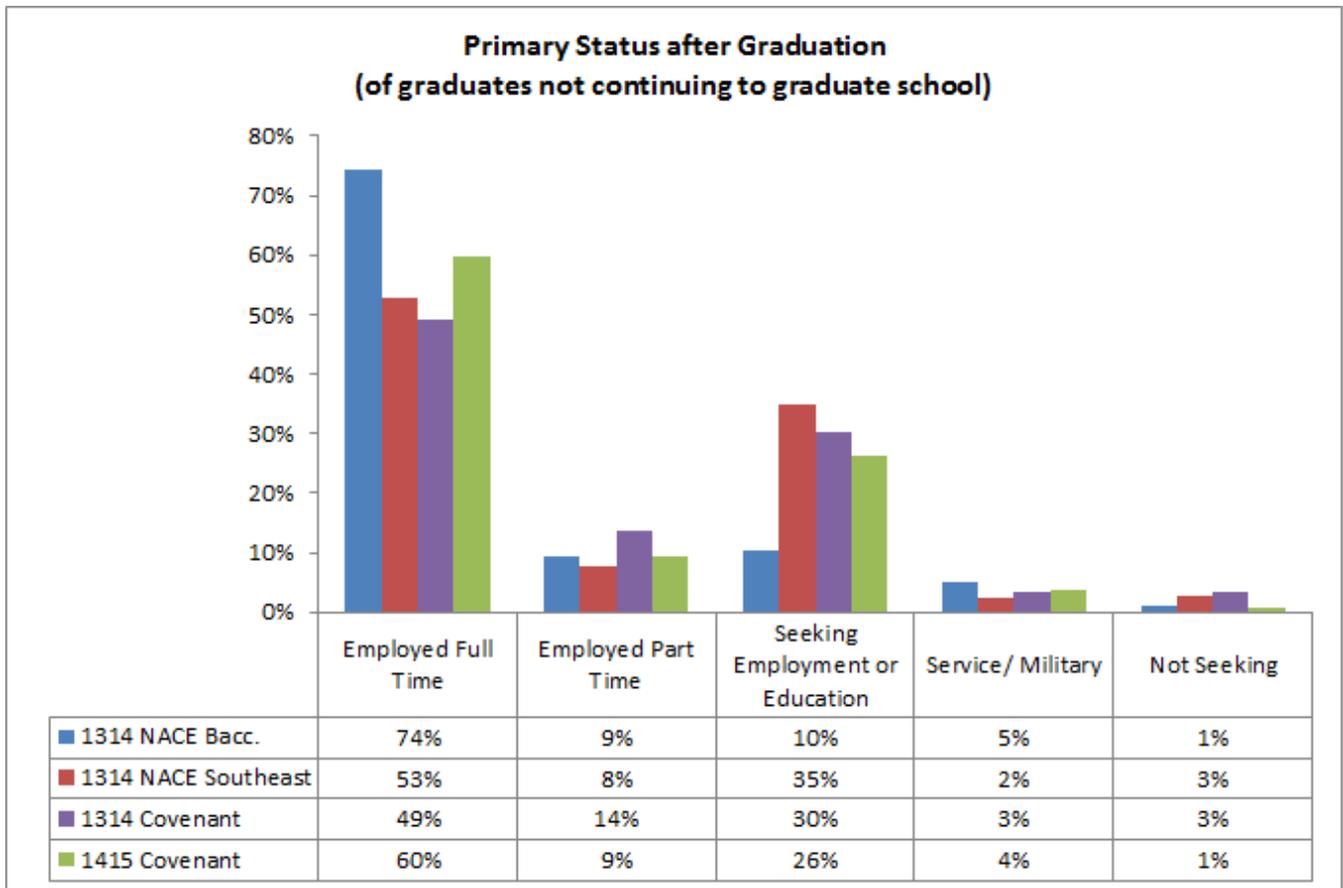
**Includes both Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (BSECE) students*

Covenant Education Department MAT Certification Data, 2012-2015			
Year	Total # Students*	Total # certified (passed GACE)	% certified
2012	7	7	100%
2013	6	6	100%
2014	8	8	100%
2015	8	8	100%
4 Yr Avg.	29	29	100%

- Over the past five years, 92% of Covenant undergraduate students who have taken this exam have passed and received their Georgia teaching license. Notably, the certification rate for each individual year has also exceeded the institutional goal.
- In addition, Covenant's Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program has had 100% of its students certified each year since beginning in 2012.

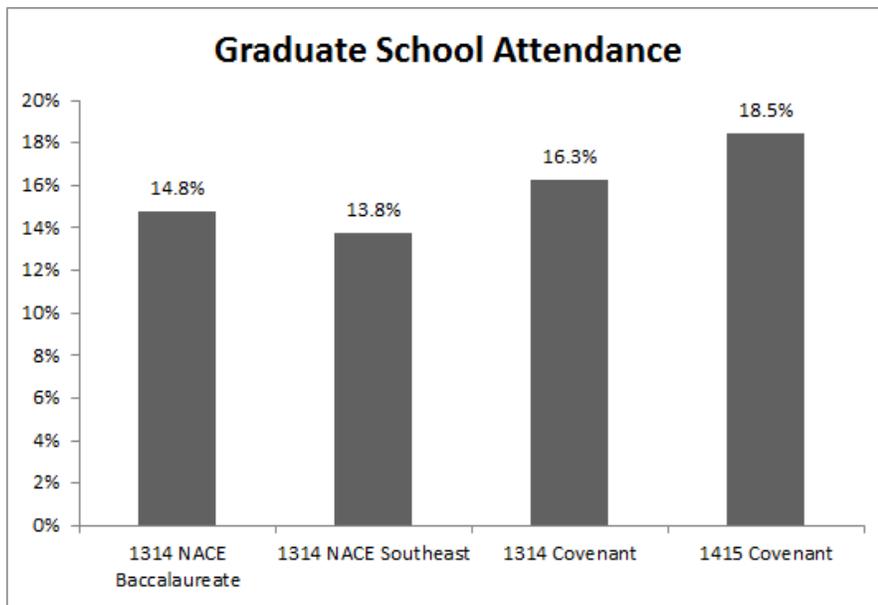
Employment rates. The College has in place, through the Center for Calling and Career, a [Senior Exit Survey](#) which is designed to track graduating seniors at graduation and then again at

six to seven months post-graduation. Although the survey has been administered since 2010, the survey has been recently updated in order to align it with the [standards and protocols](#) for undergraduate first-destination surveys established by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). For the last two years, Covenant’s survey has had a response rate greater than 90%. Given the very high response rate, the survey gives the college very accurate data about the nature of students' first experiences upon graduating. For determining a threshold of acceptability for employment rates of new graduates, Covenant compared itself to statistics from the undergraduate first-destination survey established by NACE. Covenant has established both a target and a stretch goal for full-time employment within six months of graduation. Covenant’s target goal is to exceed the NACE average for colleges from the same geographic region (Southeast). Covenant’s stretch goal is to see a modest improvement of 3% a year in full-time employment until the college meets or exceeds the NACE average for graduates from baccalaureate colleges. Using the most recent NACE survey data (2013-2014), Covenant’s target for full-time employment within six months of graduation (NACE Southeast: employed full-time + service/military in chart below) is 55%.



- For 2013-2014 graduates, 52% of degree-recipients not going on to graduate school obtained full-time employment within six months of graduation (employed full-time + service/military in above chart) as compared to the NACE statistics of 55% full-time employment for graduates from the Southeast (target) and 79% full-time employment for graduates from baccalaureate institutions (stretch). For 2014-2015 graduates, 64% of degree-recipients not going on to graduate school obtained full-time employment within six months of graduation. In its most recent graduate survey (2014-2015), Covenant exceeded its target goal and improved the percentage of graduates obtaining full-time employment within six months of graduation by 12% over 2013-2014, thus meeting its stretch goal. For continued improvement, Covenant has implemented several programs to raise the College's employment rate, including a mandatory career exploration assignment for all new students, resume and interview assistance, and a robust internship program.

Graduate school attendance rates. Covenant uses its Senior Exit Survey (described in more detail above) to track graduate school attendance of its recent graduates. For determining a threshold of acceptability for graduate school attendance rates, Covenant compared itself to statistics from the undergraduate first-destination survey established by NACE. For 2013-2014 graduates, 13.8% of graduates from Southeastern colleges and 14.8% of graduates from baccalaureate colleges have attended graduate school within six months of graduation. Covenant's target for graduate school attendance within six-months of graduation is 15%.



- Covenant has exceeded institutional goals with 16.3% of graduates attending graduate school in 2013-2014 and 18.5% attending in 2014-2015.

Employment Rates for Education Majors. Covenant’s Department of Education also tracks employment for students who have completed their program. For determining a threshold of acceptability for education majors, Covenant consulted employment statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). According to the NCES 2008/09 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, 70.7% (Std Dev = 1.74) of 2007-2008 bachelor’s degree recipients majoring in education had obtained full-time employment within one year of graduation (please note that these statistics do not place any restrictions on type of employment)¹. In light of these NCES statistics, Covenant’s Education department has established the following target for students who have completed the education program: at least 75% of certified students will obtain full-time employment within one year of graduation with at least 60% employed in education (both of these based on a five-year rolling average)

**Covenant Education Department Employment Data (for certified students),
2011-2015**

UG Program	Total*	Employed in Education	% Employed in Education	FT Employment
2011	35	24	69%	33
2012	33	23	70%	22
2013	36	25	69%	29
2014	24	17	71%	23
2015	36	29	81%	34
5 Yr Avg.	164	118	72%	141

**includes both Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (BSECE) students*

MAT Program	Total	Employed in Education	% Employed in Education	FT Employment
2012	7	6	86%	6
2013	6	4	67%	4
2014	8	6	75%	5

2015	8	8	100%	8
4 Yr Avg.	29	24	83%	23

- Over the past five years, 86% of Covenant undergraduate students who have obtained their teacher certification have found full-time employment within four months of graduation, exceeding the threshold of 75%.
- Over the past five years, 72% of Covenant undergraduate students who have obtained their teacher certification have found employment specifically in teaching, exceeding the threshold of 60%.
- In addition, Covenant’s MAT Program over the past four years has had 83% of its graduates employed in education, either full-time or part-time. These employment data exceed the institutional threshold of 60%. In addition, 79% of MAT graduates are working full-time which meets Covenant’s target.

Additional Assessments. The Center for Calling and Career, The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and The Office of Institutional Research also use several additional instruments to track alumni. These include:

- An alumni survey is distributed every five or six years. These surveys include requests for information on graduate school attendance and completion as well as professional information. Employment data from our most recent Covenant [alumni survey](#) (conducted in 2012) is consistent with the senior exit survey results (see above). Seventy-eight percent of Covenant alumni are employed in a stable position or self-employed, and 72% of alumni describe their current career as being closely related or somewhat related to their major.
- To monitor the number of Covenant alumni that receive doctorates, the office of Institutional Research retrieves data from the National Science Foundation’s [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#). The average number of doctorates per year earned by Covenant College graduates from 2010 to 2015 is 6. In order to compare Covenant’s doctoral data with other institutions the ratio of doctorate recipients (5 year average) to undergraduate degrees conferred (5 year average) was calculated. The relative number of Covenant graduates receiving doctorates (once adjusting for UG degrees conferred) is higher than the average of our peer schools.

Documentation:

- [Student Achievement Benchmarks](#)
- [Course Completion by Subject Code](#)
- [2010-2014 Graduation Rates](#)
- [2010-2014 Retention Rates](#)

- [Senior Exit Survey](#)
- [NACE First Destination Standards and Protocols](#)
- [2012 Alumni Survey](#)
- [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#)

¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2008/09 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, Retrieved (Jan 25th, 2016) from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d11/tables/dt11_404.asp.