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From Enrollment to Graduation: A Four-Year Cohort Analysis of Undergraduate Students (A Descriptive Analysis of the 2021–2022 Enrollment Cohort and 2024–2025 Graduates)

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Abstract

This study examined the four-year graduation pattern of undergraduate students who enrolled in the first semester of School Year 2021–2022 and the number from the same cohort who graduated by the second semester of School Year 2024–2025. It aimed to determine the proportion of students who completed their programs within four years and to compare graduation percentages across seven colleges. A descriptive quantitative design was used. Enrollment and graduation records were organized by college and academic program, and frequencies and percentages were computed to describe the cohort's four-year completion pattern. Across the seven colleges, 4,997 students were enrolled in 2021–2022, while 790 were recorded as graduates in 2024–2025, giving an overall four-year graduation percentage of 15.81%. The College of Nursing recorded the highest college-level percentage at

25.89%, followed by the College of Education at 24.50%. The College of Arts and Sciences recorded 17.40%, the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management 15.16%, the College of Business and Accountancy 11.19%, and the College of Criminal Justice Education 9.60%. The College of Allied Medical Sciences had the lowest percentage at 6.28%. Program-level results also showed wide differences in four-year completion. The findings indicate that only a limited proportion of the original cohort graduated within the expected four-year period. The study highlights the need for closer monitoring of student progression and further investigation of factors associated with delayed or non-completion. Strengthened academic advising, early identification of students at risk of delay, and appropriate student support may help improve timely graduation across programs.

Keywords: Cohort Analysis, Graduation Percentage, Student Progression, Higher Education, Timely Completion

Introduction

In addition to attracting and enrolling students, higher education institutions are supposed to nurture them to completion. The rate of student graduation after the expected period is one of the metrics used for measuring student progression and success (Berg *et al.*, 2005; Vugteveen, Figueroa & Luijer, 2025) ^[1, 8]. Investigating student progression from entry through graduation will help determine the number of students who are successful in graduating.

As far as the majority of undergraduate programs covered in this project are concerned, four years constitute the expected period starting from first-year enrolment up to graduation (Guiamalon, Amad & Dalamban, 2025) ^[3]. Yet there are some students who enter the program but are unable to graduate within the expected period due to such factors as academic delays, transfers to other programs, leaves of absence, etc. Consequently, the comparison of the initial number of students enrolled in a certain program and the number of graduates four years later will be helpful in this regard.

This study targets the students admitted in the first semester of SY 2021–2022 and looks into the number of these students who have graduated by the second semester of SY 2024–2025. Seven colleges and their corresponding undergraduate programs were considered in the study. It was found that there is variance in the rate of graduates in a span of four years among the colleges and programs.

These findings could be used as a guide in evaluating the progress of the students (Saeed & Mohamedali, 2022) ^[6] as well as providing adequate support for them. The colleges and programs where there is a low percentage of graduates in four years can be further investigated in order to find the causes behind it, and the necessary steps can be taken to solve this problem.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to examine the four-year graduation pattern of undergraduate students who enrolled in School Year 2021–2022. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What percentage of the students who enrolled in the first semester of School Year 2021–2022 graduated by the second semester of School Year 2024–2025?
2. What are the four-year graduation percentages of students in each college and academic program?
3. Which colleges and programs recorded the highest and lowest percentages of students graduating within the four-year period?
4. What implications may be drawn from the observed enrollment-to-graduation patterns for student monitoring and support?

Methodology

This study used a descriptive quantitative research design (Slater & Hasson, 2025) [7]. to examine the four-year graduation pattern of undergraduate students. The study covered the cohort that enrolled in the first semester of School Year 2021–2022 and compared it with the number from the same cohort who graduated by the second semester of School Year 2024–2025. The analysis included the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business and Accountancy, College of Criminal Justice Education, College of Education, College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, College of Nursing, and College of Allied Medical Sciences.

Enrollment and graduation records were grouped according to college and academic program. The frequency was used in the presentation of the total enrollees and graduates, while the percentage was calculated by dividing the total graduates by the total enrollees and then multiplying by 100. The analysis is based on graduation within the four years; those who did not graduate during the four years cannot be termed as dropouts since they might have shifted their course of study.

Results and Discussion

Across the seven colleges, a total of 4,997 students were enrolled in the first semester of School Year 2021–2022. By the second semester of School Year 2024–2025, 790 students from the cohort were recorded as graduates, equivalent to an overall four-year graduation percentage of 15.81%.

Table 1: College of Arts and Sciences

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Arts in Communication	74	7
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology	79	25
Bachelor of Science in Psychology	262	38
Bachelor of Science in Social Work	200	37
Total	615	107

Table 1 shows the number of students who enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences in School Year 2021–2022 and the number from the same group who graduated four years later in School Year 2024–2025. Of the 615 students who initially enrolled, 107 or 17.40% graduated within the four-

year period. Among the programs, BA Psychology had the highest percentage of graduates at 31.65%, followed by BS Social Work at 18.50%, BS Psychology at 14.50%, and BA Communication at 9.46%.

The findings show that only 17.40% graduated within four years. This suggests the need to determine why many students were not able to complete their programs within the expected period and to strengthen student monitoring and support.

Table 2: College of Business and Accountancy

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Science in Accountancy	681	21
Bachelor of Science in Management Accounting	181	69
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration	532	66
Total	1394	156

Of the 1,394 students who enrolled in the College of Business and Accountancy in 2021–2022, 156 or 11.19% graduated within four years. BS Management Accounting had the highest percentage at 38.12%, followed by BS Business Administration at 12.41%, while BS Accountancy had the lowest at 3.08%.

The findings show that only 11.19% graduated within four years. The College may further examine the reasons for delayed completion and strengthen student monitoring and support.

Table 3: College of Criminal Justice Education

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Science in Criminology	250	24
Total	250	24

Of the 250 students who enrolled in BS Criminology in 2021–2022, 24 or 9.60% graduated within four years. This means that fewer than one out of every ten students from the original cohort completed the program within the period.

The findings suggest the need to determine why many students were not able to complete the program within four years and to strengthen appropriate student support.

Table 4: College of Education

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education	18	3
Bachelor of Elementary Education	83	29
Bachelor of Physical Education	74	11
Bachelor of Secondary Education	127	31
Total	302	74

Out of 302 students who were registered for study in the College of Education for 2021/2022, 74 or 24.50% graduated within four years. The Bachelor of Elementary Education graduate the most at 34.94%, then Bachelor of Secondary Education at 24.41%, Bachelor of Early

Childhood Education at 16.67%, and lastly Bachelor of Physical Education at 14.86%.

From the above results, one out of four students graduated within four years. More follow-up can be done to ensure that students finish their programs in four years.

Table 5: College of Hospitality and Tourism Management

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management	303	41
Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management	378	58
Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics	5	5
Total	686	104

Among 686 students enrolled in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management for 2021-2022, 104 or 15.16% completed their studies within four years. BS Nutrition and Dietetics has 5 or 100% students, BS Tourism Management has 15.34%, and BS Hospitality Management has 13.53%. It is revealed that 15.16% graduated in four years. The College could explore the causes of delayed completion and provide more assistance to students.

Table 6: College of Nursing

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	1097	284
Total	1097	284

Of the 1,097 students who enrolled in BS Nursing in 2021-2022, 284 or 25.89% graduated within four years. This means that about one out of every four students from the original cohort completed the program within the period. The findings show that 25.89% graduated within four years. Continued student monitoring and support may help improve timely completion.

Table 7: College of Allied Medical Sciences

Program	Number of Enrollees 2021-2022 (1st Sem)	Number of Graduates 2024-2025 (2nd Sem)
Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology	448	23
Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy	163	3
Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology	42	15
Total	653	41

Of the 653 students who enrolled in the College of Allied Medical Sciences in 2021-2022, 41 or 6.28% graduated within four years. BS Radiologic Technology had the highest percentage at 35.71%, followed by BS Medical Technology at 5.13% and BS Physical Therapy at 1.84%. The findings show that only 6.28% graduated within four years. The College may further examine the reasons for

delayed completion and strengthen student monitoring and support.

Conclusions

1. Out of the total of 4,997 students who enrolled in the 2021-2022 year, 790 students graduated in the 2024-2025 year across the seven colleges, making the overall four-year graduation rate 15.81%.
2. The College of Nursing had the highest college-level four-year graduation rate, standing at 25.89%, which means one in four students of the original cohort graduated during the given time.
3. This was followed by the College of Education, whose four-year graduation rate was 24.50%, while the College of Arts and Sciences had a four-year graduation rate of 17.40%.
4. The College of Hospitality and Tourism Management had a four-year graduation rate of 15.16%, while the College of Business and Accountancy had 11.19%.
5. The College of Criminal Justice Education reported that its four-year graduation rate was 9.60%.
6. The College of Allied Medical Sciences reported that its four-year graduation rate was the lowest at 6.28% even though the rates were quite different between the individual programs in this college.
7. Based on the low four-year graduation rates, there seems to be an indication of the need for additional studies about the causes of delay and for better student monitoring and advising.

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