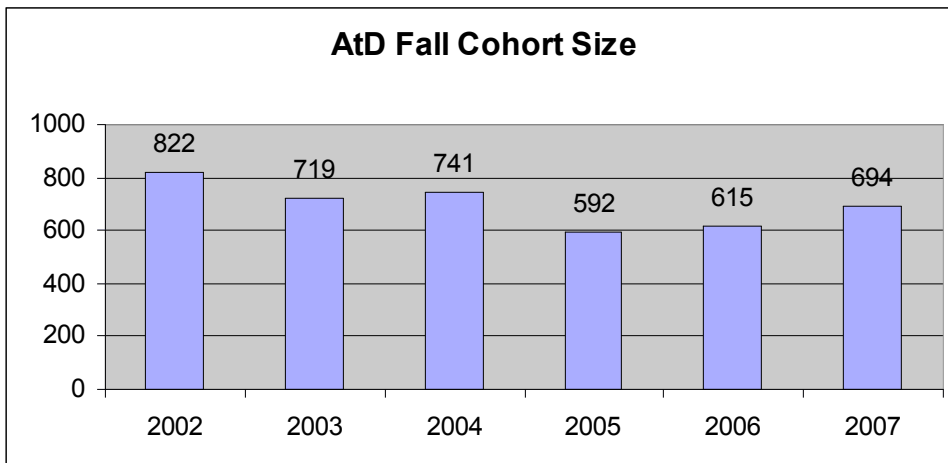


## Fall 2008 Progress Report on Achieving the Dream

Achieving the Dream (AtD) is a national initiative to help more community college students persist through developmental and college-level courses toward a credential. NC State is one of five Ohio colleges involved with the initiative since 2005, and one of the few in the nation to completely self-fund implementation. After a year of research, the College implemented several strategies in fall 2006 to improve the success of students in developmental courses. Based on additional research and planning, strategies were implemented in fall 2007 to improve success in several “gateway” courses that are often the first credit-bearing course for a technical program. These strategies involved refinements in advising, curriculum, instruction, professional development and even community engagement.

The purpose of this report is to report, in a concise manner, key metrics identified by the “Core Team” of faculty, staff and administration for AtD performance measurement. The metrics represent the five key focus areas of the initiative: developmental course completion, gateway course completion, credit completion, persistence and credential completion. “Success” in one level improves the chances of reaching the next level.

AtD metrics are based on the performance of student “cohorts”, defined as first-time, credential-seeking students entering NC State in the fall quarter (no PSEO/dual enrollment). Students enrolling in fall 2002 will always remain part of that cohort regardless of their subsequent academic experience, and so on. This methodology ideally allows for uniform tracking and comparison over defined time periods. The chart below shows cohort size the past six years.



AtD requires colleges to identify large subgroups that appear to be struggling worse than their cohort as a whole in academics. Colleges would then attempt to include strategies to meet unique subgroup needs, as well as the entire cohort. In 2005-06, NC State identified male students, students age 23-29, and African American students as subgroups whose improved performance would dramatically impact the entire cohort. The size of these subgroups has grown the past years with each new fall cohort the past few years, adding to need to improve their performance.

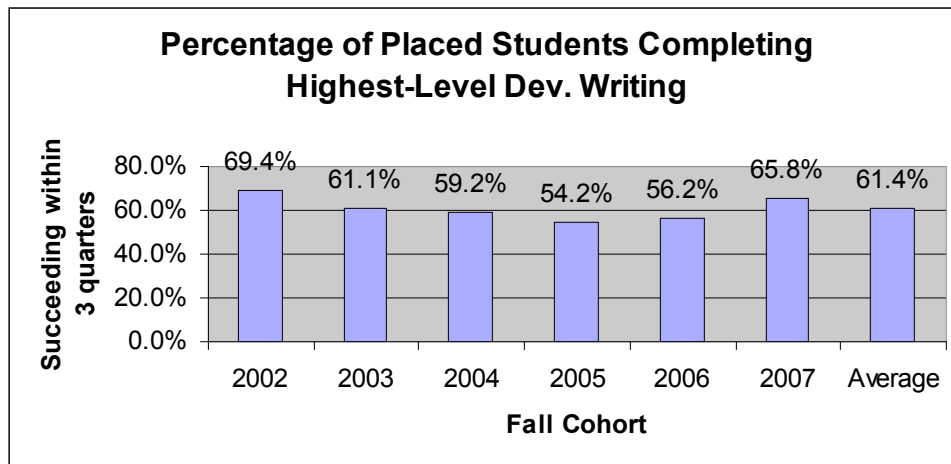
## Course Completion Tracking

The Core Team, following guidance from the national AtD initiative, defines successful course completion as earning a grade of at least C-. Withdrawals past the census are not counted within course completions, though the College realizes there are often non-academic reasons behind withdrawals. The College has adopted a longitudinal tracking system that attempts to compare performance for each fall cohort uniformly across the first three quarters for each cohort.

Developmental reading and writing represent a best-case scenario for performance measurement according to AtD guidelines. That is because their placement/progression processes allows the College to truly see the percentage of students referred who then go onto complete the highest developmental level. Likewise, because all students must take ENG 101, the college can achieve continual “apples to apples” comparisons. Developmental and gateway math have not had such uniform pathways for measurements. For example, until the 2008-09 academic year not all programs required referred students to pass or demonstrate competency for the highest-level developmental math (MTH 103) before progressing to college-level, and there is no one standard “gateway” math course as assumed by AtD national. Discipline-specific gateways also have data limitations, especially taking into account students adopting a major late or switching majors.

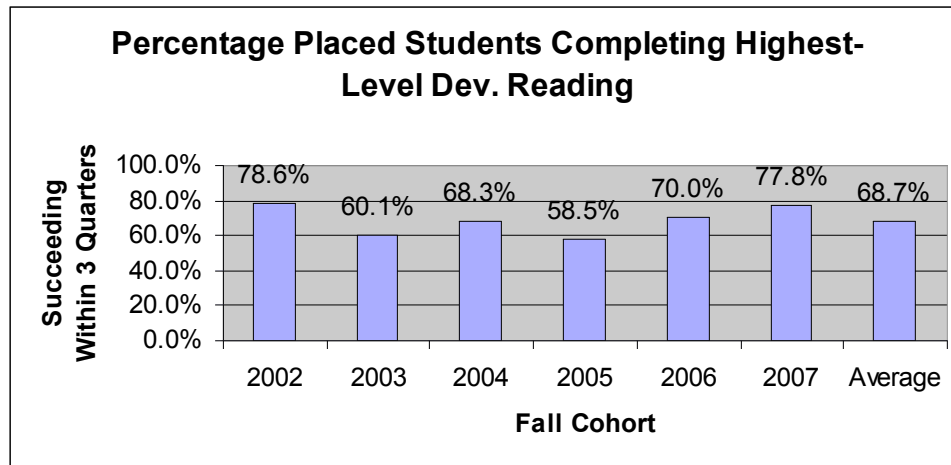
### I. Developmental Course Completion (Strategies First Implemented 2006-07) *Reading and Writing*

The success rate for developmental writing students has dramatically increased since implementation of strategies in fall 2006. There were 225 developmental writing students in the fall 2007 cohort – the most since the fall 2004 cohort.



Male 2007 cohort students posted their highest success rate ever at 62.4%, compared to a six-year average of 53.2%. African American students posted their second consecutive increase at 41.4% for the 2007 cohort, compared to 25%.0 for the 2005 cohort. Students age 23-29 had a 51.3% success rate, also increasing two consecutive years compared to 41.2% for the fall 2005 cohort.

The success rate for developmental reading students has also dramatically increased since implementation of strategies in fall 2006. There were 144 developmental reading students in the fall 2007 cohort – the most since the fall 2005 cohort.

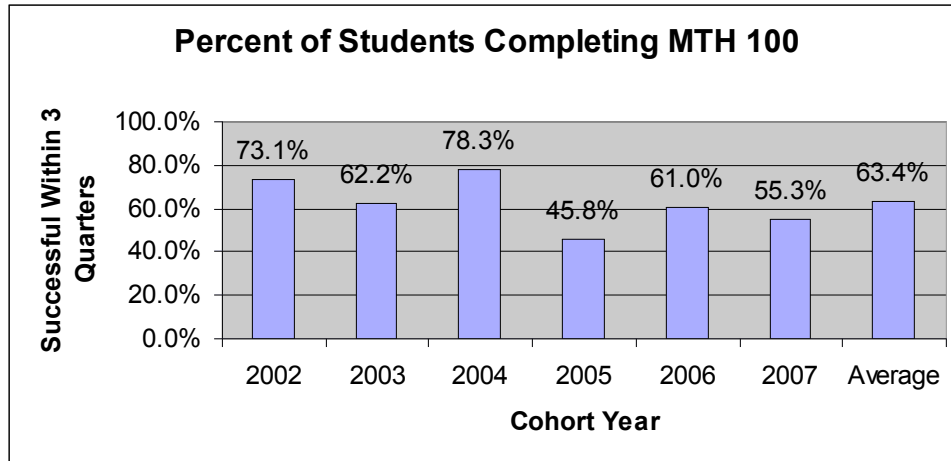


Male 2007 cohort students posted their highest success rate ever at 72.5%, compared to a six-year average of 60.4%. The African American success rate has been flat since strategy implementation around 56%. Students age 23-29 have slightly increased success rates, at 68.4% for the 2007 cohort compared to 66.7% for 2005.

### *Mathematics*

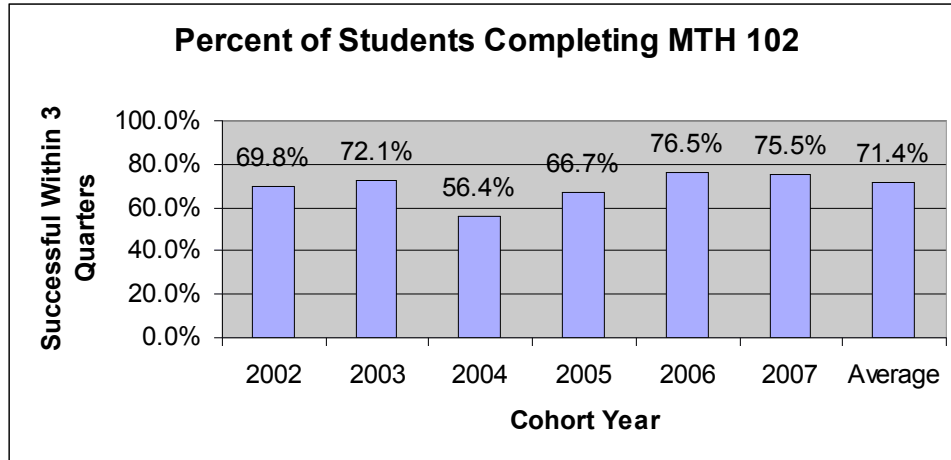
The fall 2007 cohort enrollment in developmental mathematics showed the full impact of implementing mandatory placement and increasing cut-off scores in prior years. Consequently, one must keep in mind that the competency levels of 2007 cohort students assigned to various developmental math levels is likely different than in prior years in making comparisons. The 2008 cohort will allow the college to establish a new baseline measurement for the percent of referred students completing the highest level developmental math, since a uniform progression policy has now been established.

Enrollment more than doubled in the lowest-level developmental math (MTH 100), from 41 in the 2006 cohort to 94 in the 2007 cohort. Unfortunately, success rates declined to 55% compared to 61% for the 2006 cohort.



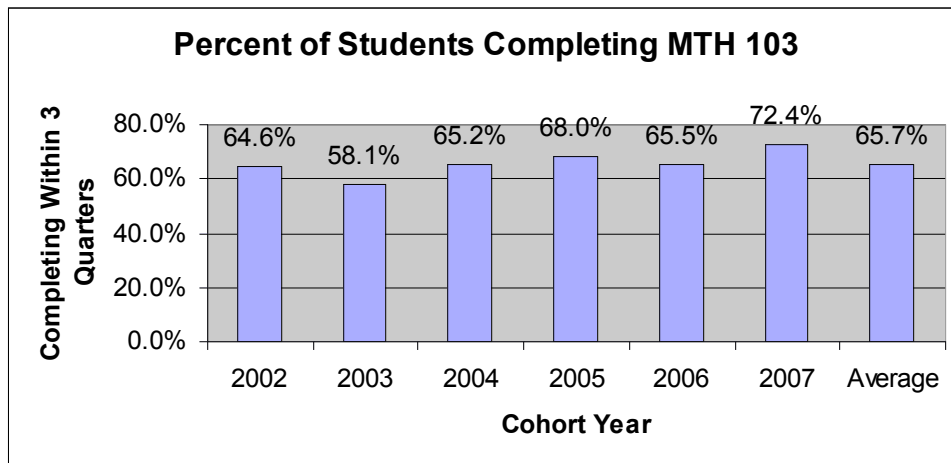
The performance of male 2007 cohort students dropped to 48.5%, compared to a six-year average of 63.0%. African American 2007 cohort students had the highest enrollment recorded (N=16), and increased success from to 50.0%, compared to a 41.0% six-year average. Enrollment in the age 23-29 range quadrupled from the 2006 to 2007 cohort (N=31), but the success rate fell from 100% to 54.8%.

2007 cohort enrollment in prealgebra (MTH 102) dramatically rose to 147 from 85 the prior cohort year. Success rates remained stable at 75.5%, which is a marked improvement from performance of the 2004 and 2005 cohorts.



Enrollment by males increased to 40 students in the 2007 cohort from 25 the prior year, and success increased to 75.0% from 68.0%. African American 2007 cohort enrollment quadrupled to 17. Success rates were 52.9%, compared to a six-year average of 51.4%. 2007 cohort enrollment for age 23-29 (N=22) only slightly increased from the prior year, though success dropped from 83% in the 2006 cohort year to 68%.

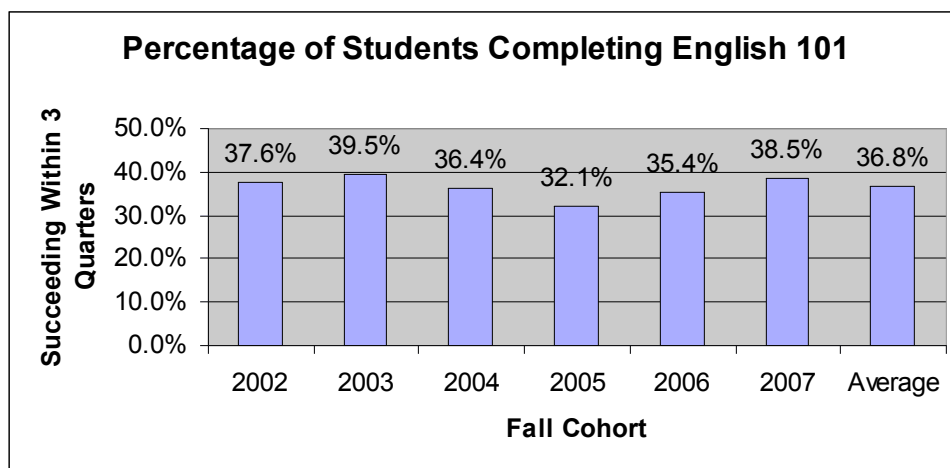
Enrollment in Introduction to Algebra (MTH 103), increased from 84 for the 2006 cohort to 116 for the 2007 cohort – not as drastic as the other courses. However, success rates increased to 72.4% -- the highest recorded for this course.



Male students performance remained stable at a 72.7% pass rate for the 2007 cohort (N=44). African American enrollment was too low at five for the 2007 cohort to be conclusive. Enrollment for students age 23-29 increased to from 15 for the 2006 cohort to 22 for 2007, but success fell from 93.9% to 59.1%.

## II. Gateway Course Completion (Strategies Implemented 2007-08)

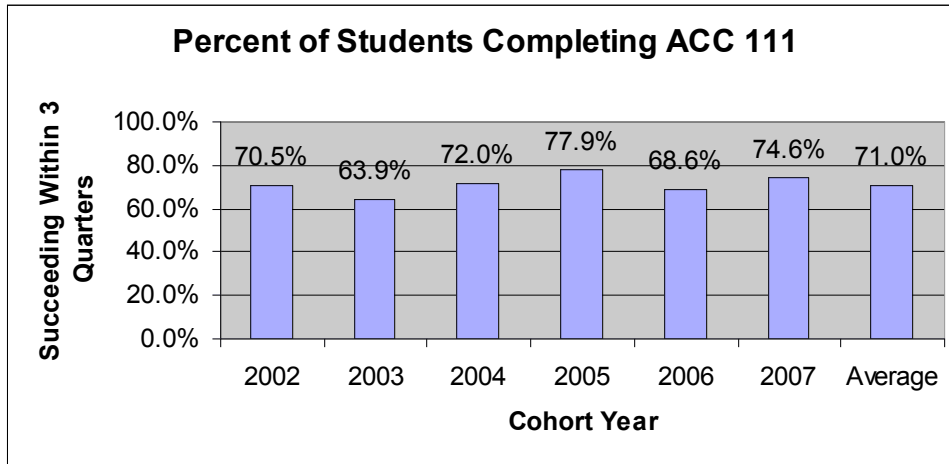
More 2007 cohort students (both numerically and as a percentage) completed ENG 101 since the 2003 cohort. Nearly 700 fall 2007 cohort students attempted the course.



Male 2007 cohort students posted their highest success rate ever at 33.8%, compared to a six-year average of 30.5%. African American 2007 cohort students had a 26.7% success rate – the highest ever compared to an average 17.0%. Age 23-29 students have increased success rates for two consecutive years, from 24.2% for the fall 2005 cohort to 29.4% for fall 2007.

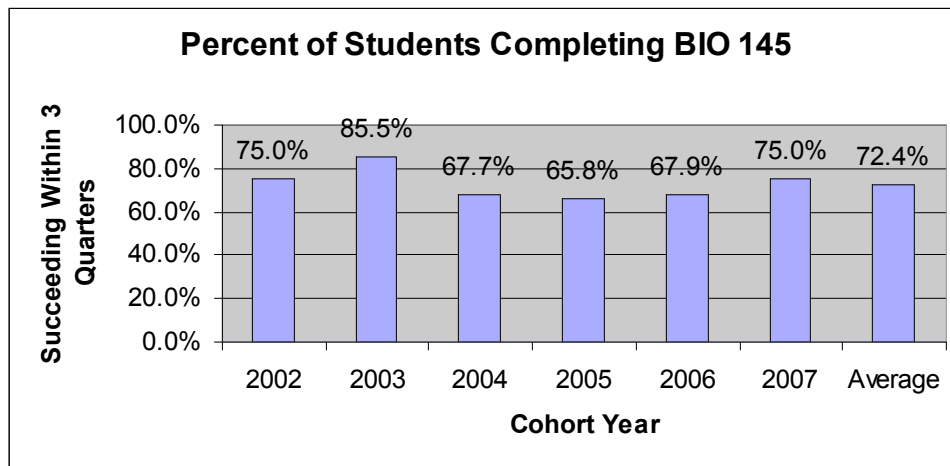
The technical gateway courses implementing strategies included ACC 111, BIO 145, BUS 121, CIS 110 and CRJ 145. As a result of research, the business and CIS programs created new gateway courses and they are not included in this report. Nearly

75% of 2007 cohort students passed ACC 111 within three quarters, the second-highest rate since the 2002 cohort. There were 71 attempts for the fall 2007 cohort.



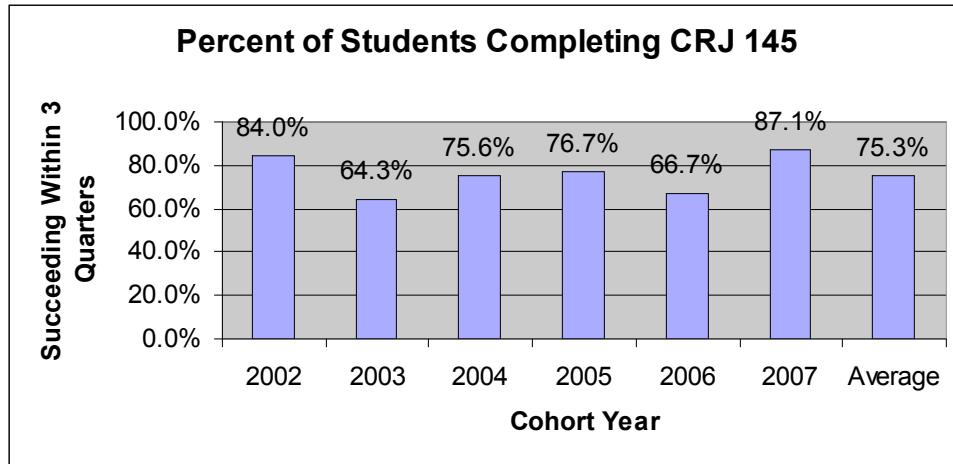
Despite the number of male ACC 111 students increasing 60%, the 2007 cohort pass rate improved to 68.8% from 55.0% the prior year. While there were more African American students in the 2007 cohort taking the class than any prior year (6) and 67% succeeded, the numbers are too small to draw definitive conclusions. Students age 23-29 actually dropped in performance from 90.0% for the 2006 cohort to 63.6% for the 2007 cohort, but there were only 10 attempts for the 2007 cohort.

BIO 145 had a record enrollment for the 2007 cohort at 112 students (no prior year exceeded 78). Despite the increase, the success rate dramatically increased.



While the 2007 male cohort pass rate fell to 71.9% from 84.6% the prior cohort year, the number of male students had nearly tripled to 32. African American students had a 100% success rate for the 2007 cohort, but only three attempted. Age 23-29 students in the 2007 cohort saw dramatic increases in both enrollment (21) and success rates (76.2% compared to 50.0% the prior year).

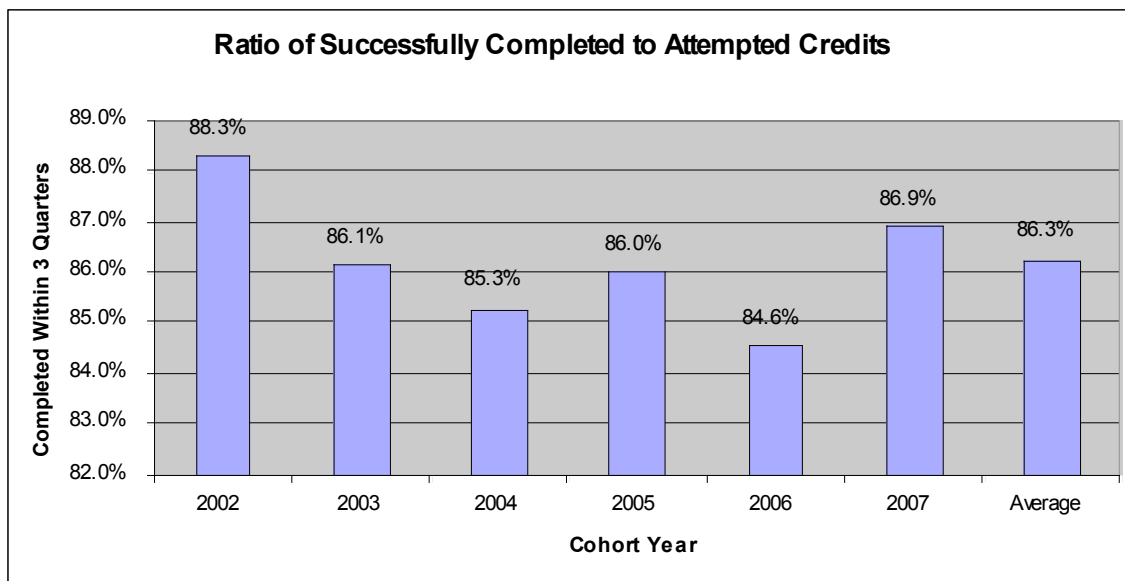
The CRJ 145 2007 cohort pass rates rose to their highest levels recorded at 87%, compared to a six-year average of 75%. Thirty-one students attempted the course.



The 2007 male cohort (N=10) had a 100% success rate, compared to a six-year average of 75%. African American 2007 cohort, at two students, is too small to draw conclusions. Students age 23-29 in the 2007 cohort (N=10) improved to 86% success, compared to a 68% six-year average.

### III. Course Completion

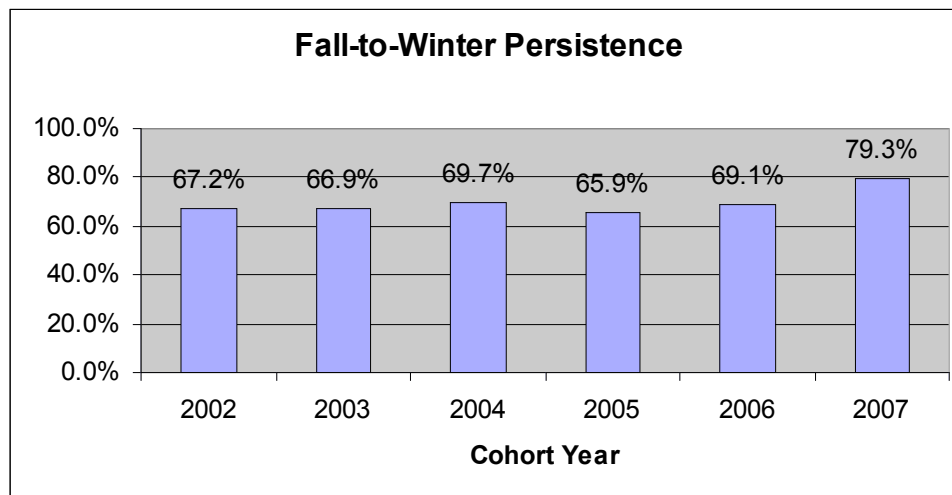
More students successfully progressing through their developmental and gateway courses should lead to more students successfully completing the credits they attempt. The following chart shows the completion percentage (over three quarters) by fall AtD cohort for any course attempted.



The 2007 cohort attempted nearly a quarter more credit hours than the prior two cohort years, yet still achieved a higher completion percentage. The 2007 male cohort attempted the highest number of hours of any cohort year and completed 84.6% -- higher than the six-year average of 84.0%. The 2007 African-American cohort also attempted the highest number of hours of any cohort year, and also recorded the highest completion percentage at 75.2%. Though the age 23-29 cohort also attempted 21% more credits in 2007 than the prior cohort year, the completion percentage dipped slightly from 88.0% to 85.9%.

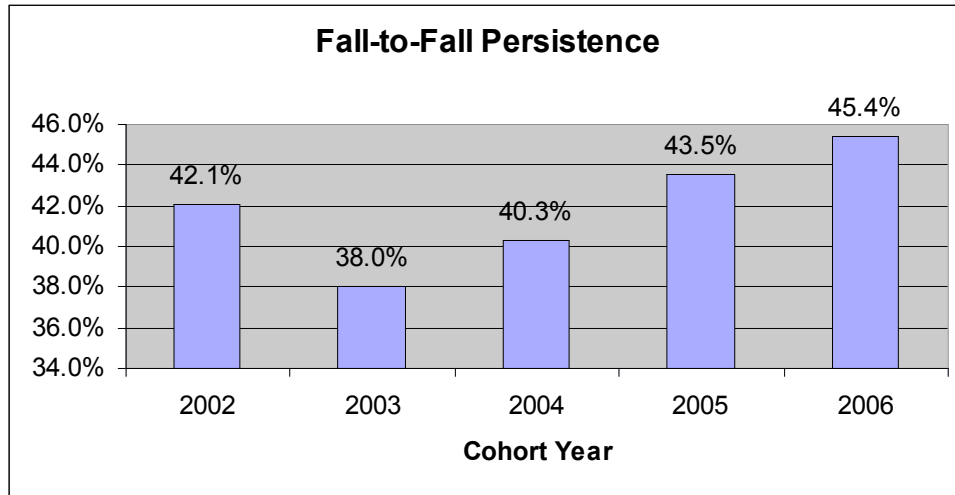
#### IV. Persistence

More students successfully completing credits should in turn lead to greater persistence. The 2007 cohort showed the highest fall to winter quarter persistence of any year by far, despite having the largest cohort size since 2004.



The 2007 male cohort had a 78.6% persistence rate -- with no other prior cohort year for males exceeding 67.1%. The 2007 African-American cohort achieved 71.1% persistence, with no other prior cohort year exceeding 64.5%. It also had the highest enrollment (45 students) since 2002. For the second straight year, the age 23-29 cohort achieved a persistence rate of 78% -- dramatically higher than cohorts prior to 2006.

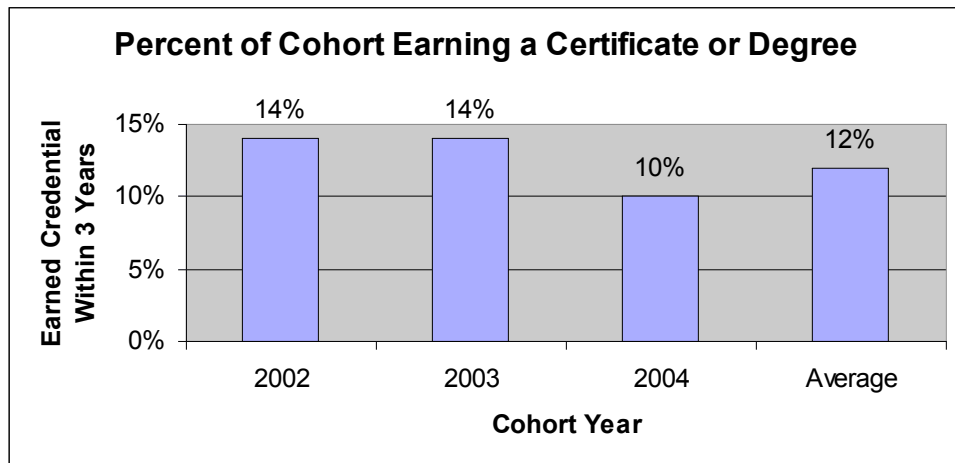
Persistence between fall quarters was rising even before AtD strategies were implemented in 06-07, but nonetheless continued with the fall 2006 cohort.



Males in the 2006 cohort achieved the highest persistence of any year at 40.8%. Unfortunately, persistence for the 2006 African American cohort fell to 16.7% from 28.9%. The age 23-29 cohort for 2006 achieved its highest persistence by far at 55.7% - no other cohort year exceeded 35.5%.

## V. Credit Completion

Improved persistence leads to the ultimate goal of AtD – achieving a certificate or degree. Unfortunately, NC State is too early into the initiative to attempt to make any correlation of strategies to credential achievement. The chart attempts to create a baseline against which future cohort years impacted by the strategies may be measured:



The three-year window is the standard federal reporting guideline, though many believe it is unrealistic given the prevalence of part-time students. Among the 2004 cohort, only 8% of males, 6% of African Americans and 8% of students age 23-29 earned a credential.