

## RETENTION

Merit University is committed to providing an educational environment and support system that encourages students to achieve their educational goals of graduation and employment for which they were trained. MU offers challenging courses of study so that it attracts a quality student body. Student persistence, which includes remaining enrolled and graduating, is important for the university. In order to achieve effective retention results, the entire community of the university, students, faculty, staff, and administration, must be committed.

Each **cohort** is defined and referred to according to **year of entry** into MU (program start date). For example, the 2016 cohort is a group of students who started between January 2016 and December 2016 (Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall Quarter of 2016) and are expected to graduate between January and December 2019 (100% normal time) or between June 2020 and March 2021 (150% normal time).

### Retention Rate Percentage (RRP)

MU considers students in a cohort to be retained if they enroll at MU for four consecutive quarters (one year). **Retention rate** is measured by the proportion of students who have been enrolled for four consecutive quarters to the total number of enrolled students in the cohort.

### Campus Retention Rates

The goal for the 2025 campus retention rate is to maintain a retention rate of 70 percent or higher. The purpose of this review is to compare performance over time with other institutions. Data is collected from the Registrar's Office. The campus retention rates by cohort are shown in Table 2A below.

**Table 2A. MU Campus Student Retention**

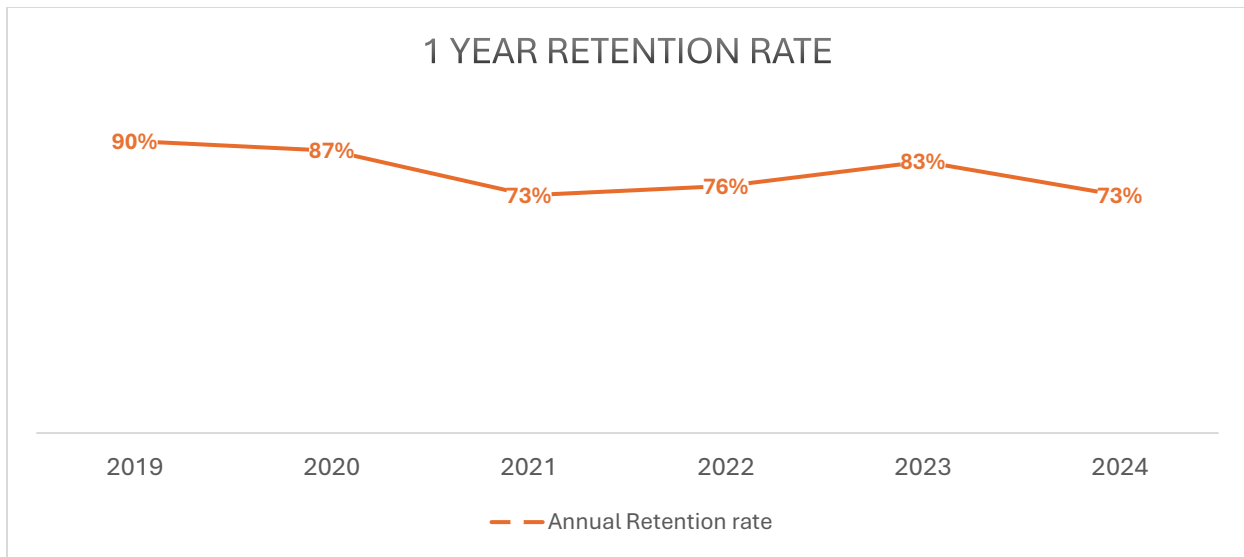
Year / Cohort	Program Start Date (month/year)	Number Started	Total Retained Students	Cohort Retention Rate (%)	Annual Retention rate (%)
2019	19-Jan	4	3	75%	90%
	19-Apr	3	3	100%	
	19-Jul	6	5	83%	
	19-Oct	2	2	100%	
2020	20-Jan	2	2	100%	87%
	20-Apr	1	1	100%	
	20-Jul				
	20-Oct	5	3	60%	
2021	21-Jan	3	1	33%	73%
	21-Apr				
	21-Jul	7	6	86%	
	21-Oct	2	2	100%	
2022	22-Jan	3	3	100%	76%
	22-Apr	6	5	83%	
	22-Jul	5	3	60%	

2023	22-Oct	5	3	60%	83%
	23-Jan	3	1	33%	
	23-Apr	1	1	100%	
	23-Jul	2	2	100%	
	23-Oct	4	4	100%	
2024	24-Jan	2	2	100%	73%
	24-Apr	3	2	67%	
	24-Jul	3	3	100%	
	24-Oct	4	1	25%	

*Note: Reporting period is from January to December from 2019 to 2025 and student enrollment data collected from the Populi system.*

For example, January 2023 Cohort retention rate is 33%, April 2023 Cohort is 100%, July 2023 Cohort is 100%, October 2023 Cohort is 100%, and 2023 Annual Retention Rate is 83%.

The annual campus retention rates for the years 2019-2024 are shown below.



In 2019, the retention rate was 90 percent. Ten students continued their enrollment, and 15 new students enrolled during the 2019 academic year. Total enrollment was 25 and students withdrew from the program. Thirteen students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Two students were expelled due to unsatisfactory academic progress. The other two students voluntarily withdrew because they had to return to their home countries.

In 2020, the retention rate was 87 percent. Twenty-one students continued and 8 new students were enrolled. Six students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Two students withdrew during this year. One student returned to her home country due to family emergency and another student was expelled due to unsatisfactory academic progress.

In 2021, the retention rate was 73 percent. Twenty-four students continued and 12 new students were enrolled, and the total enrollment was 36 in this reporting year. Nine students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Five students withdrew and returned to their home countries where they received offers for employment.

In 2022, the retention rate was 76 percent. Seventeen are continuing and 19 new students have been enrolled. Fourteen students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Five withdrawals have been reported. Among the withdrawals, 4 students withdrew from the program because their career interests shifted away from business management. One student went back to their home country due to a family emergency.

In 2023, ten new students have been enrolled. Eight students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Therefore, the retention rate was 83 percent.

In 2024, twelve students have been enrolled. Eight students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Therefore, the retention rate was 73 percent.

**Program Retention Rates**

MU offers an MBA degree program and MSM degree program. The MSM program opened enrollment from the winter quarter of 2022.

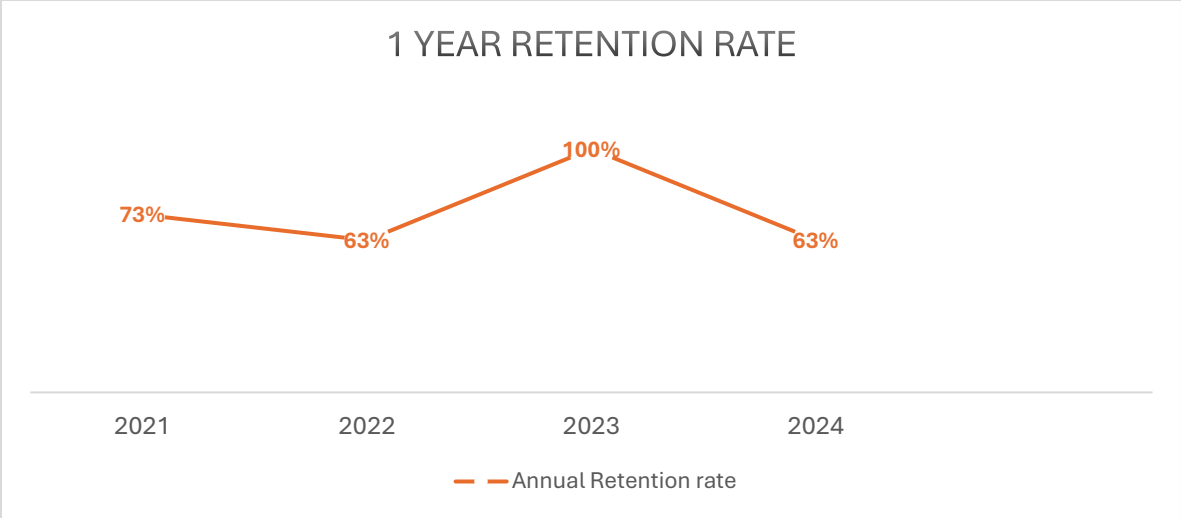
The goal for the 2025 retention rate by program is to maintain a retention rate of 70 percent or higher. The MBA program retention rate is shown in Table 2B below.

**Table 2B. MU MBA Program Student Retention**

Year / Cohort	Program Start Date (month/year)	Number Started	Total Retained Students	Cohort Retention Rate (%)	Annual Retention rate (%)
2021	21-Jan	3	1	33%	73%
	21-Apr				
	21-Jul	7	6	86%	
	21-Oct	2	2	100%	
2022	22-Jan	2	2	100%	63%
	22-Apr	2	2	100%	
	22-Jul	4	2	50%	
	22-Oct	2	0	0%	
2023	23-Jan	1	1	33%	100%
	23-Apr	1	1	100%	
	23-Jul	1	1	100%	
	23-Oct	3	3	100%	
2024	24-Jan	2	2	100%	63%
	24-Apr	2	1	50%	
	24-Jul	2	2	100%	
	24-Oct	2	0	0%	

*Note: Reporting period is from January to December from 2021 to 2025 and student enrollment data collected from the Populi system.*

The annual MBA program retention rates for the years 2021-2024 are shown below.



The results for the 2021 to 2024 MBA program retention rates are as follows:

- The 2021 program retention rate for the MBA program was 73 percent which was same as campus retention rate since MU only offered MBA program this year.
- The 2022 program retention rate for the MBA program is 63 percent. Ten new students have been enrolled. Six students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. There were 4 withdrawals. Three students withdrew from the program due to their career changes. One student went back to their home country due to a family emergency.
- The 2023 program retention rate for the MBA program is 100 percent. Six new students have enrolled. Six students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters.
- The 2024 program retention rate for the MBA program is 63 percent. Eight new students have enrolled. Five students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters.

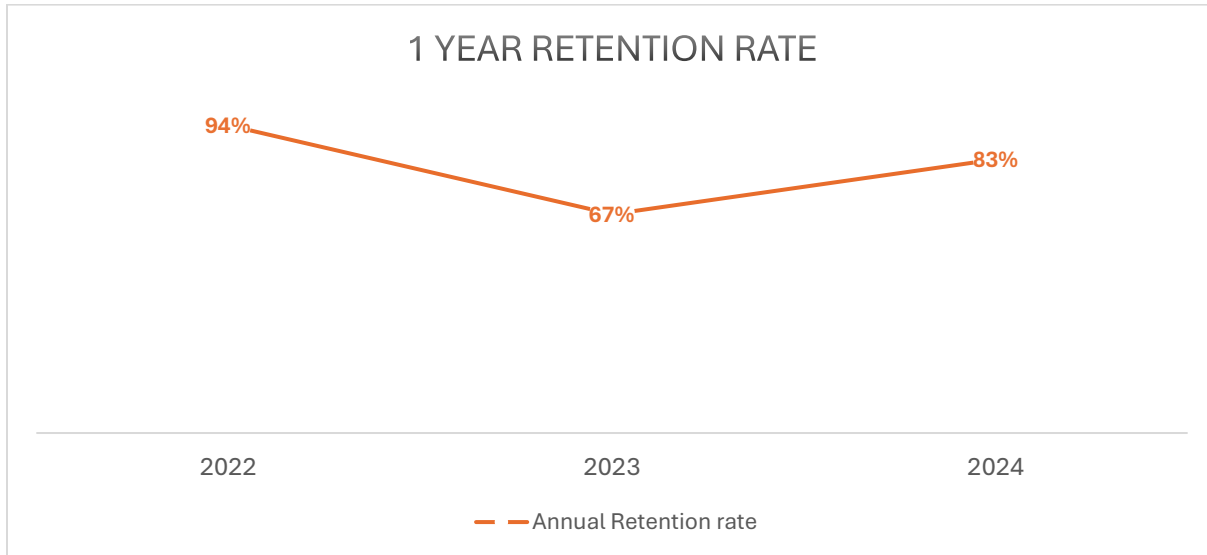
The MSM program retention rate is shown in Table 2C below.

**Table 2C. MU MSM Program Student Retention**

Year / Cohort	Program Start Date (month/year)	Number Started	Total Retained Students	Cohort Retention Rate (%)	Annual Retention rate (%)
2022	22-Jan	1	1	100%	94%
	22-Apr	4	3	75%	
	22-Jul	1	1	100%	
	22-Oct	3	3	100%	
2023	23-Jan	2	0	0%	67%
	23-Apr				
	23-Jul	1	1	100%	
	23-Oct	1	1	100%	
2024	24-Jan				83%
	24-Apr	1	1	100%	
	24-Jul	1	1	100%	
	24-Oct	2	1	50%	

*Note: Reporting period is from January to December from 2022 to 2025 and student enrollment data collected from the Populi system.*

The annual MSM program retention rates for the years 2022-2024 are shown below.



The results for the 2022 to 2024 MSM program retention rates are as follows:

- The 2022 program retention rate for the MSM program is 94 percent. Nine new students have been enrolled. One student withdrew from the program and went back to their home country due to a family emergency.
- The 2023 program retention rate for the MSM program is 67 percent. Four new students have enrolled. Two students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. Two students withdrew from the program due to their career changes.
- The 2024 program retention rate for the MSM program is 83 percent. Four new students have enrolled. Three students were retained from the cohort for 4 consecutive quarters. One student withdrew from the program.

### **Retention Action Plan**

Based on these findings, the following initiatives will be undertaken for the next three years:

1. The university encourages staff and faculty to counsel students to meet their individual needs more effectively and to address educational problems more adequately.
2. The university provides more scholarship opportunities to current students who are in good academic standing to help students experiencing financial difficulties.
3. Also, the university becoming accredited along with improving quality education program updates are being considered to improve the retention rate.