



---

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

---

# **Student Achievement Goals and Outcomes**

According to the SACSCOC policy statement on institutional obligations for public disclosure, an accredited SACSCOC institution “is obligated to provide to its students, constituents, and the public information about itself that is complete, accurate, timely, accessible, clear and sufficient...[including] statements of its goals for student achievement and the success of students in achieving those goals. Information on student success may include reliable information in retention, graduation, course completion, licensure examinations, and job placement rates and other measures of student success appropriate to institutional mission.”

In addition, SACSCOC Core Requirement 8.1 (Student achievement) requires an accredited institution to identify, evaluate, and publish goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution’s mission, nature of students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success. Further, the institution is expected to indicate the criteria and threshold of acceptability used to determine that success. The criteria are the items to be measured (and published); the thresholds of acceptability are the minimal expectations set by the institution to define its own acceptable level of achievement (i.e., a minimum target).

**ETSU strives to increase the number of graduates from our programs while maintaining high academic standards.**

ETSU is committed to increasing the level of educational attainment in the state and region. ETSU awards degrees in over one hundred baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctoral programs, including distinctive interdisciplinary programs and distance education offerings that serve students from the region and beyond.

**Goal 1a:** As indicated in the ETSU Strategic Plan 2016-2026, ETSU aspires to retain 85% of first-time, full-time degree seeking undergraduate students from fall-to-fall.

**Threshold of acceptability 1a:** The threshold of acceptability is to achieve the baseline peer group average fall-to-fall retention rate of 76% by 2026. Reaching this threshold will require an annual increase of 0.5% per year. There for, our annual threshold of acceptability for the fall 2017 cohort is 72%.

**Outcome 1a:** Retention rates are shown in the table below. The first time ETSU achieved the annual increase required to reach the threshold since implementing the new strategic plan was with the fall 2016 cohort, which realized an annual increase of 4.6 percent. Although the retention rate in fall 2017 was lower than fall 2016, it remains above the threshold of acceptability in all years since 2016. ETSU continues to exceed the threshold of acceptability.

<b>Undergraduate Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates (First-time, Full-time, Graduation Rate)</b>		
<b>Entry Semester</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>
2010	2,053	69.8
2011	2,105	65.6
2012	2,038	66.2
2013	1,849	69.4
2014	2,025	71.5
2015	1,976	71.3
2016	1,869	75.9
2017	2,034	73.0

**Goal 1b:** As indicated in the ETSU Strategic Plan 2016-2026, ETSU aspires to graduate 60% of first-time, full-time degree seeking undergraduate students within six years.

**Threshold of acceptability 1b:** The threshold of acceptability is to achieve the baseline peer group average six-year graduation rate of 46% by 2026. Reaching this threshold will require an annual increase of 0.5% per year. Therefore, our annual threshold of acceptability for the fall 2012 cohort is 41.5%.

**Outcome 1b:** Graduation rates are shown in the table below. The first time ETSU achieved the annual increase required to reach the threshold since implementing the new strategic plan was with the 2011 cohort, which realized an increase of 0.9%.

<b>Undergraduate Graduation/Continuation Rates</b>							
<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Headcount Enrollment</b>	<b>Within Four Years</b>		<b>Within Five Years</b>		<b>Within Six Years*</b>	
		<b>Graduated</b>	<b>Continued</b>	<b>Graduated</b>	<b>Continued</b>	<b>Graduated</b>	<b>Continued</b>
2008	1940	19.6	29.7	36.9	11.1	43.0	4.5
2009	2068	20.1	28.7	37.9	9.4	43.2	4.2
2010	2053	20.1	26.8	34.4	10.8	40.1	4.8
2011	2105	21.2	24.7	36.7	8.2	41.0	4.0
2012	2038	23.3	25.7	39.2	9.1	44.2	3.8
2013	1849	29.7	23.5	44.6	7.0		
2014	2025	30.4	21.7				
2015	1976						
2016	1869						
2017	2034						

\*IPEDS "traditional" overall graduation rate (150% standard time)

**Goal 1c:** By 2026, ETSU strives to produce annually a number of graduate/professional degrees per graduate/professional FTE that meets or exceeds the average for our aspirational peer group.

**Threshold of acceptability 1c:** The number of graduate/professional degrees produced each year per graduate/professional FTE will meet or exceed the baseline benchmark of .388 established from IPEDS in 2016-2017.

**Outcome 1c:** Graduate/professional degrees per graduate/professional FTE are shown in the table below.

<b>ETSU Graduate and Professional Degrees Produced as a Percent of Graduate and Professional FTE</b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>ETSU</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Threshold Met</b>	<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>Goal Met</b>
2016-17	.398	.388	Yes	.424	No

**ETSU strives to increase the critical thinking skills of our students.**

Employers and graduate programs value the ability to think clearly, solve problems, and evaluate arguments, and ETSU is committed to increasing the critical thinking skills of our students. The values and skills developed here will prepare our graduates to become productive, enlightened citizens who actively serve their communities and the world. ETSU uses the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) to assess the critical thinking skill of our graduating students.

**Goal 2a:** ETSU aspires to achieve a mean CCTST overall score of at least 19, the minimum range of what the test vendor considers “strong” critical thinking skill.

**Threshold of acceptability 2a:** ETSU’s participation in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s Quality Assurance Funding initiative requires the institution to meet or exceed the national average (for four-year college and university level test takers) each year as a component for consideration of full funding for the general education assessment standard.

**Outcome 2a:** CCTST means are shown in the table below.

<b>East Tennessee State University, California Critical Thinking Skills Test Mean OVERALL Scores, 2005-2015</b>							
<b>Year</b>	<b>ETSU Students Tested (N)</b>	<b>National Mean</b>	<b>ETSU Mean</b>	<b>ETSU Standard Deviation</b>	<b>ETSU Median</b>	<b>ETSU Interquartile Ranges</b>	
						<b>25%</b>	<b>75%</b>
2017-18	1650	16.2	17.4	4.8	17	14	21
2016-17	1635	16.2	17.3	4.8	17	14	21
2015-16	1713	17.1	17.2	4.9	17	14	21
2014-15	1575	17.2	17.2	4.9	17	14	21
2013-14	2016	17.0	17.0	4.9	17	14	20

**ETSU strives to successfully prepare students for licensure exams.**

Several disciplines at ETSU require state and/or national licensing examinations in order to practice or meet employment requirements. Licensing examinations serve as one indicator of program quality.

**Goal 3a:** ETSU aims for 100% of students in Special Education, Elementary Education, Dental Hygiene, Cardiopulmonary Science, Radiologic Science, and Nursing to pass licensure exams.

**Threshold of acceptability 3a:** ETSU’s participation in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s Quality Assurance Funding program requires annual reporting for a number of licensure programs. Programs are considered successful if the assessment score is either at or above the comparison score – typically either a national or institutional average.

**Outcome 3a:** Licensure pass rates are provided in the table below.

Program	Degree	Test Type	Test Year	ETSU Pass Rate	Comparison Pass Rate
Special Education	BS	PRAXIS	2016-17	100%	98%
			2015-16	100%	98%
			2014-15	100%	100%
Elementary Education	BSED	PRAXIS	2016-17	100%	99%
			2015-16	100%	100%
			2014-15	100%	99%
Dental Hygiene	BSDH	NBDH	2017	88.0%	93.9%
			2016	95.5%	95%
			2015	80%	95.7%
Cardiopulmonary Science*	BS	CRT	2017	55.6%	93.1%
			2016	78.9%	92.5%
			2015	100%	92.3%
Radiologic Science	BS	ARRT	2017	100%	89.3%
			2016	100%	87.2%
			2015	96.3%	88.4%
Nursing	BSN	NCLEX	2017	94.6%	87.1%
			2016	87.9%	84.6%
			2015	87.6%	84.5%

\*ETSU has expressed concerns to THEC regarding comparison to the national pass rate. ETSU began using this licensure exam for the Major Field Test requirement during the 2015-16 Quality Assurance Funding (QAF) year. That year, ETSU initially reported the pass rate as 100% because 18 out of 18 students passed the exam. However comments from THEC staff on the QAF Evaluation, changed the

ETSU pass rate to 78% and informed the institution that ETSU must use the first time pass rate, which in 2015-16 was 78%. ETSU reported first time pass rate on the exam since that time.

The QAF Guidelines indicate that “all licensure programs will be compared with appropriate national pass rate” – however, ETSU argues that the appropriate national pass rate is not being used in this case. ETSU’s first time pass rate is being compared to a national three-year average overall pass rate, because this is the only national pass rate that CoARC reports. First time pass rate is very different from an overall pass rate, even without considering that the reported national rate is a three-year average.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare ETSU’s first time pass rate with a national first time pass rate, as CoARC does not publish nationwide first time pass results. For accreditation, CoARC monitors a program’s annual pass rate. ETSU asserts it is therefore appropriate to either compare ETSU’s overall annual pass rate or three-year overall average pass rate (rather than ETSU’s first time pass rate) with the national overall pass rate.

The rates for each year are provided below:

QAF Reporting Year	Test Year	National 3-year Overall Average	ETSU 3-year Overall Average	ETSU Test Year Overall Annual Pass Rate	ETSU Test Year First Time Pass Rate
2015-16	2015	92.3%	96.4%	100%	72.2%
2016-17	2016	92.5%	96.5%	84.2%	78.9%
2017-18	2017	93.1%	91.2%	72.2%	55.6%

**Goal 3b:** Students in ETSU’s MD and PharmD programs are required to pass state and/or national licensing examinations in order to practice. ETSU aims for 100% of students in the MD and PharmD programs to pass licensure exams.

**Threshold of acceptability 3b:** ETSU’s MD and PharmD programs meet or exceed the appropriate national licensure exam first-time pass rate (Comparison). Given ETSU’s small class sizes (approximately 60-70 students per MD cohort and 70-80 students per PharmD cohort) and the potential for a single result to skew the mean, the three-year rolling average is used to determine the threshold of acceptability.

**Outcome 3b:** Licensure pass rates are shown in the table below.

Program	Degree	Test Year	Test Type	ETSU Pass Rate (1 <sup>st</sup> attempt)	ETSU Pass Rate (3-year rolling average)	Comparison Pass Rate (3-year rolling average)
Medicine	MD	2017-18	USMLE (step 1)	95%	98%	95%
			USMLE (step 2 CK)	96%	96%	96%
			USMLE (step 2 CS)	90%	96%	96%
		2016-17	USMLE (step 1)	99%	97%	95%
			USMLE (step 2 CK)	97%	95%	96%
			USMLE (step 2 CS)	98%	97%	96%
		2015-16	USMLE (step 1)	99%		
			USMLE (step 2 CK)	94%		
			USMLE (step 2 CS)	100%		
		2014-15	USMLE (step 1)	93%		
			USMLE (step 2 CK)	93%		
			USMLE (step 2 CS)	92%		
Pharmacy	PharmD	2017	NAPLEX	93.67%	91.64%	88.82%
			MPJE	96.00%	93.18%	88.10%
		2016	NAPLEX	87.84%	93.31%	91.13%
			MPJE	85.71%	93.12%	90.75%
		2015	NAPLEX	93.42%		
			MPJE	97.83%		
		2014	NAPLEX	98.68%		
			MPJE	95.83%		

The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) is a three-step examination for medical licensure in the United States; all state medical boards utilize this national examination for allopathic physicians. The North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) measures a candidate’s knowledge of the practice of pharmacy. The Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE) is a pharmacy law exam created to help state boards of pharmacy assess the competency and knowledge of pharmacy law.