



Characterizing Students who Enrolled in UNIV 100: Fall 2023 First-Time Full-Time Incoming Cohort

*Please note because the following document focuses on descriptive statistics, **there is no assumption of causality.***

SUMMARY:

In Fall 2023, 11% of the Fall 2023 First-Time Full-Time cohort enrolled in UNIV 100. The UNIV 100 student population varied by college, most heavily represented by the College of Science (33% of the Fall 2023 students), College of Engineering and Computing (21%), and College of Public Health (15%).

The population that enrolled in UNIV 100 were more likely to be female, URM, and on-campus students than those who did not enroll in the course; however, this is reflective of the overrepresentation of colleges within the population and cannot be accredited to the course itself. There was no difference in the rate of Pell Grant recipients or 1st generation students between those who did and did not enroll in UNIV 100.

There was no overwhelming difference in median college GPA and 1-year retention rates between students who did and didn't enroll in UNIV 100. After accounting for high school GPA, there was still no evidence that students who enrolled in UNIV 100 had a lower or higher college GPA and 1-year retention rate than those who did not.

DISCUSSION:

UNIV 100 (Introduction to Mason) is a one-credit elective course offered at George Mason intended to serve as a transition into college life for first-time freshman. In the Fall 2023 semester, George Mason offered 33 sections of UNIV 100, resulting in 709 total seats and 524 enrolled students. The purpose of this analysis is to characterize the first-time freshmen who enrolled in UNIV 100, investigate how they differed demographically from the first-time freshman who did not take the course, and determine if students who enrolled in UNIV 100 had different student success outcomes than those who didn't take UNIV 100.

What percentage of the Fall 2023 cohort enrolled in UNIV 100?

Because UNIV 100 is an optional elective course, most of the Fall 2023 first-time cohort did not take the course. Of the 4451 students included in the cohort:

- 491 (11%) enrolled in UNIV 100 in Fall 2023.
- 3960 (89%) did not enroll in UNIV 100 in Fall 2023.

Of the 33 sections that were offered in Fall 2023, 9 of them were restricted to specific subpopulations of students. This included:

- Two sections for student-athletes.
- One section for off-campus students.
- One section for 1st generation students.
- One section for LGBTQ+ students.
- One section for students in STEM.
- One section for students in the College of Public Health.
- One section for students in the Schar School of Policy and Government.
- One section for students in the China 1-2-1 program.

The students who enrolled in these specific sections of UNIV 100 were removed from the analysis.

After removing these groups, there were 402 first-time full-time students enrolled in UNIV 100 in Fall 2023.

How are schools/colleges represented within the group of students who enrolled in UNIV 100?

When students begin their first semester at Mason, they are typically advised on which courses to take by their department. Departmental advising may influence student decision making. In other words, UNIV 100 might be recommended in the advising process; however, it is their choice insofar as it is not required.

The population of students who enrolled in UNIV 100 is not proportionally distributed among the different schools and colleges within George Mason. Certain schools/ colleges were overrepresented within the group of students who enrolled in UNIV 100. Table 1 below shows the proportion of students enrolled in UNIV 100 by school/ college, as well as the proportion of students represented in the overall cohort within schools/ colleges at Mason for the Fall 2023 cohort.

Table 1. Fall 2023 FTFT UNIV 100 Students, by School/College

	Enrolled in UNIV 100	Overall Fall 2023 FTFT Cohort:
Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution	0%	<0.1%
College of Visual and Performing Arts	2%	5%
College of Public Health	15%	6%
College of Science	33%	14%
College of Education and Human Development	6%	3%
College of Engineering and Computing	21%	39%
College of Humanities and Social Sciences	9%	16%
Schar School of Policy and Government	3%	3%
Costello College of Business	8%	13%
Undecided	3%	1%

Compared to representation in the cohort, CPH, COS, CEHD, and undecided students were overrepresented in the UNIV 100 population. All others were underrepresented.

How do the demographics of UNIV100 student differ from the overall Fall 2024 FTFT cohort?

Table 2 shows demographic information (including Pell Grant recipient rates, 1st generation rates, and underrepresented minority rates) for the students who enrolled in UNIV 100, the students who didn't, and the cohort overall.

Table 2. Fall 2023 FTFT Cohort Demographics, by UNIV 100 Status

	Pell	1 st Gen	URM	Female	On-Campus	In-State	Median HS GPA
Overall Fall 2023 FTFT Cohort:	29.4%	19.8%	35.4%	47.9%	54.2%	79.6%	3.75
Enrolled in UNIV 100	27.8%	19.6%	44.0%	57.4%	62.9%	75.9%	3.70
Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	29.6%	19.9%	34.6%	47.1%	53.2%	80.0%	3.75

Students who registered for UNIV 100 were more likely to be underrepresented minorities, female, and on-campus students; however, these increased rates cannot be assumed to be attributed to UNIV 100. The population of the College of Public Health, the most overrepresented college within the UNIV 100 population, also has a higher rate of female students (83% vs. university-wide 47%), underrepresented minority students (51% vs. university-wide 35%), and on-campus students (87% vs. university-wide 79%).

Between students who did and didn't take UNIV 100 there was not a notable difference in rates the proportion of Pell Grant recipients, 1st generation students, or median high school GPA.

How were student success outcome variables different between those who did and didn't take UNIV 100?

As causality cannot be assumed, the following is not an evaluation of the effectiveness at UNIV 100 in assisting student success.

Table 3 below shows the median end-of-term college GPA, median end-of-year college GPA, and 1-year student retention rate for the Fall 2023 Cohort by UNIV 100 status.

Table 3. Outcome Variables for Fall 2023 Cohort, by UNIV 100 Status

	Median End-Of-Term GPA	Median End-Of-Year GPA	1-Year Student Retention Rate
Overall Fall 2023 FTFT Cohort:	3.15	3.15	85.2%
Enrolled in UNIV 100	3.05	3.04	85.8%
Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	3.17	3.16	85.1%

Overall, the population of students who enrolled in UNIV 100 had a lower median GPA and a similar retention rate to those who did not enroll in UNIV 100.

From previous analyses it has been determined that high school GPA is the strongest indicator of student success in college. Table 4 shows the same outcome variables as Table 3 while accounting for high school GPA.

Table 4. Outcome Variables for Fall 2023 Cohort, by HS GPA and UNIV100 Status

HSGPA:	UNIV 100 Status:	Median End-of-Term GPA	Median End-of-Year GPA	1-Year Student Retention Rate
<3.0	Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.18 (6)	2.87 (6)	66.6%
	Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.29 (57)	2.47 (57)	80.7%
3.00 – 3.25	Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.11 (44)	2.11 (44)	75.0%
	Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.33 (389)	2.47 (389)	76.3%
3.25 – 3.50	Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.57 (87)	2.51 (87)	90.8%
	Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.60 (728)	2.63 (728)	79.0%
3.50 – 3.75	Enrolled in UNIV 100	2.67 (80)	2.67 (80)	81.3%
	Not Enrolled in UNIV100	2.96 (868)	2.93 (868)	87.4%
3.75 – 4.00	Enrolled in UNIV 100	3.40 (95)	3.28 (95)	86.3%
	Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	3.29 (912)	3.26 (912)	85.9%
>4.0	Enrolled in UNIV 100	3.62 (90)	3.59 (90)	91.1%
	Not Enrolled in UNIV 100	3.69 (1165)	3.65 (1165)	90.4%

After accounting for high school GPA, there is no evidence that students who enrolled in UNIV 100 had a notably lower or higher college GPA and 1-year retention rate than those who did not enroll in UNIV 100, as the differences seen within each high school GPA grouping varies in directionality.