

8.1 The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution’s mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success.

(Student achievement) **[CR; Off-Site/On-Site Review]**

[Note: Each member institution has chosen a specific metric with SACSCOC for measuring graduation rate and analyzing that measure of student success. As part of its response to this standard, the institution should identify its chosen metric; provide appropriate data regarding its performance as measured by that metric (including its baseline data, goals, and outcomes); and discuss any changes it has made based on its analysis of this graduation-rate data. Institutions are also required to disaggregate their graduation data in appropriate ways; they should discuss that disaggregated data and any changes made as a result of analyzing that data.]

Narrative:

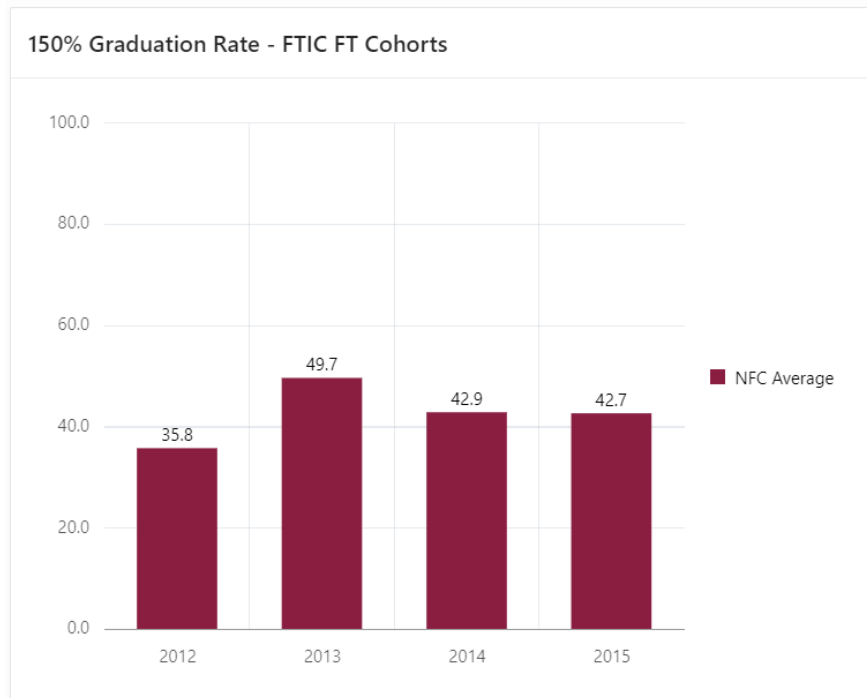
North Florida College (NFC) complies with Core Requirement 8.1 Student Achievement as it identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals, minimum thresholds, and outcomes for student achievement that are appropriate to the institution’s mission, students it serves, and programs offered. In addition to the primary 150% Completion Rate measure, NFC uses multiple other key performance indicators as predictors to student success.

As stated, North Florida College uses the 150% Graduation Rate of its incoming first-time full-time cohort as the primary measure of student success. The 150% Graduation Rate is monitored for overall cohort success and is disaggregated to identify subgroups with unsatisfactory performance. For example, viewing the results of the entire cohort quickly allows the College to see the cohort average rate of completion for the entire cohort. Whereas, disaggregating the data by ethnicity reveals subpopulations that do not perform as well. Specific examples of this will be illustrated below.

This 150% Graduation Rate metric was chosen because it is a standardized metric across community colleges and permits peer comparison. Also, it is the critical performance metric considered by the State of Florida Department of Education. Also, and pursuant to Florida State Statute 1001.66, the Florida College System uses graduation rates as one of the metrics to measure eligibility to receive performance funding. These reasons are why NFC has chosen the rate of completion of a degree or certification, within a specified timeframe, as its primary measure of success. In addition, this performance metric directly reflects the vision and mission of the College. To be our communities “first choice”, which is an excerpt from NFC’s vision statement, for the members of the communities served, NFC must be able to demonstrate its ability to help students achieve their goal of degree completion. In addition, always striving to be an “exceptional college dedicated to an individualized and supportive atmosphere”, which is an excerpt from the College’s mission statement, speaks directly to ensuring students have the resources and support they need to complete their program of choice. Furthermore, high completion rates encourage community enrollment and give community members the confidence to trust NFC as the institution to help them accomplish their goals.

As shown in the chart below, the average 150% completion rate for NFC was less than 50% from 2012 through 2015, with the 2012 cohort completing less than 4 out of every 10 first-time full-time students

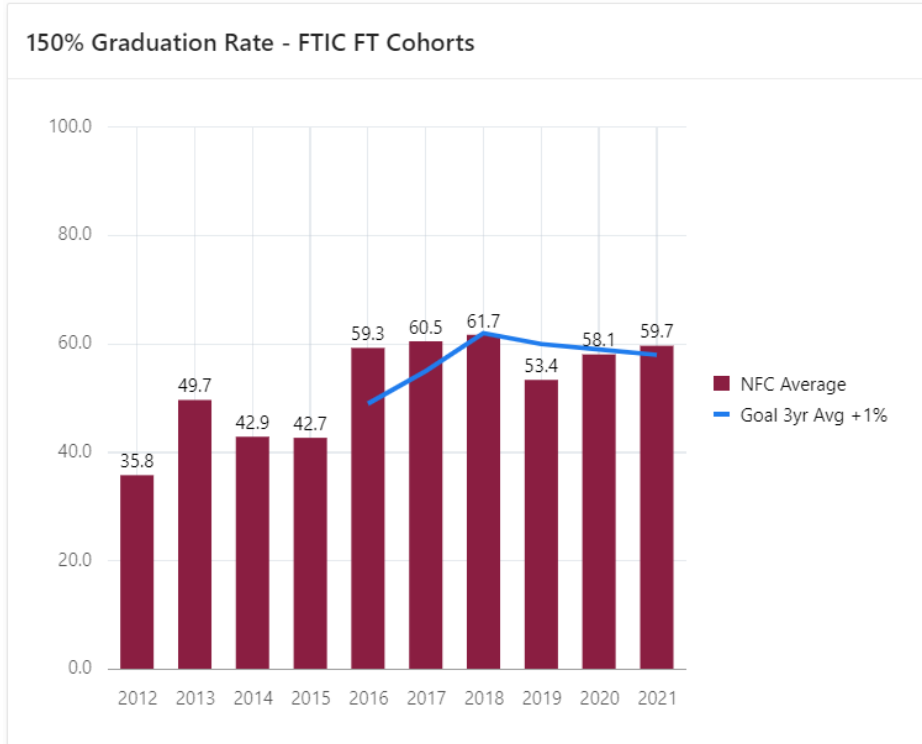
within the 150% timeframe. Even though the NFC 150% completion rate was well above the national IPEDs rate of 35% for 2yr colleges, the College sought ways to improve.



Setting Goals

Recognizing the rates above as an unsatisfactory outcome, the College began implementing strategies and setting goals to ensure appropriate action was taken to improve this critical metric. To align with the College’s mission to be an “exceptional college dedicated to an individualized and supportive atmosphere” (NFC mission statement), NFC implemented strategies to promote student engagement, encourage usage of educational support services, and improve overall student success. All of these were components of the 2014 NFC Quality Enhancement Plan (2014 QEP).

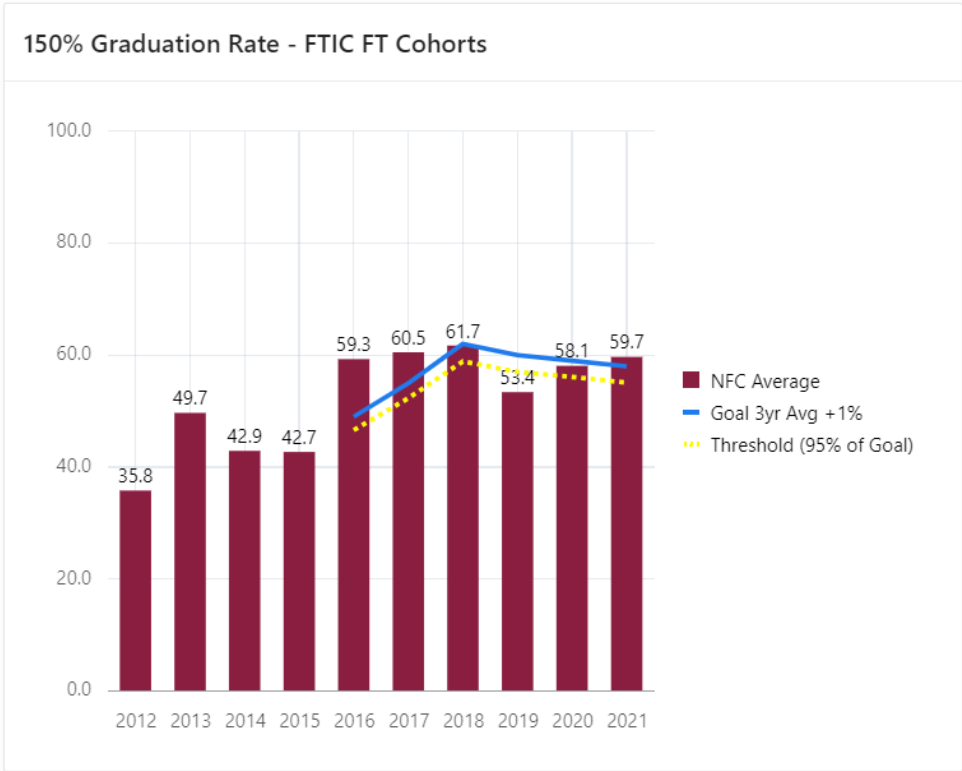
Seeking continuous improvement and documenting the expectations of the strategies implemented, the College set the 150% Completion Rate goal at the previous 3-year average + 1%. Setting this goal allows College leadership an opportunity to monitor the completion success of its students, continually striving for improvement with each completing year.



As seen in the chart above, the 150% Completion Rates saw an immediate improvement with a lift in rates of over 15% and each year meeting or exceeding the goal of the previous 3 years average + 1%. Setting this goal promised that this crucial metric, which could identify NFC as an exceptional institution and bring the College more in line with the institution’s mission, was monitored for success and appropriate actions were taken.

Setting Thresholds

With the 150% Completion Rate set as the primary measure for student success, the College continued to seek ways to improve on its success. With slight variability, which NFC contributes to small cohort sizes, the downslide in results for the 2019 cohort made the College ask, “at what point do we need to make major adjustments?”. This resulted in the addition of a threshold marker to identify a minimum expectation for the metric. Accordingly, each cohort year now has a goal of the previous 3yr average + 1% and a minimum threshold that is equal to 95% of that goal. Because NFC’s mission promises an “exceptional college,” a 95% threshold alerts an immediate response at the first sign of performance decline. In the chart below, the solid blue line and yellow dotted line display both the 150% Completion Rate goal for each cohort year and the minimum threshold. An example of the actions taken from adding this threshold are explained in later sections.



Disaggregating

Ways to improve the 150% Completion Rate may be found when the cohorts are disaggregated to reveal underperforming subgroups. This became apparent when the College began exploring why the 2019 cohort of students did not meet the minimum threshold marker, as seen in the chart above. However, as mentioned, the incoming cohort of first-time full-time students to NFC is very small which makes disaggregating this cohort challenging. For example, when entire cohort counts range from 115 to 77, disaggregating may result in subgroup sizes smaller than the acceptable sample size of 30. This is especially true when NFC’s incoming first-time full-time cohorts are disaggregated by ethnicity, as seen in the charts below. Chart 1.1 displays the entire cohort, while Chart 1.2 displays the same cohorts disaggregated by their self-reported ethnicity subgroup.

Chart 1.1

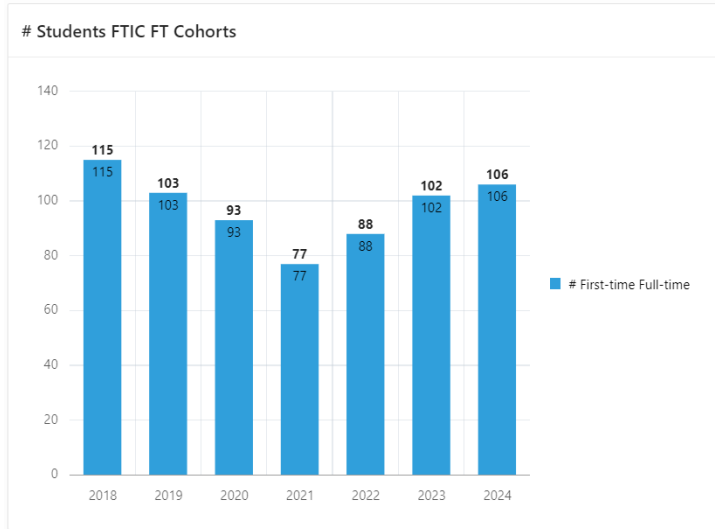
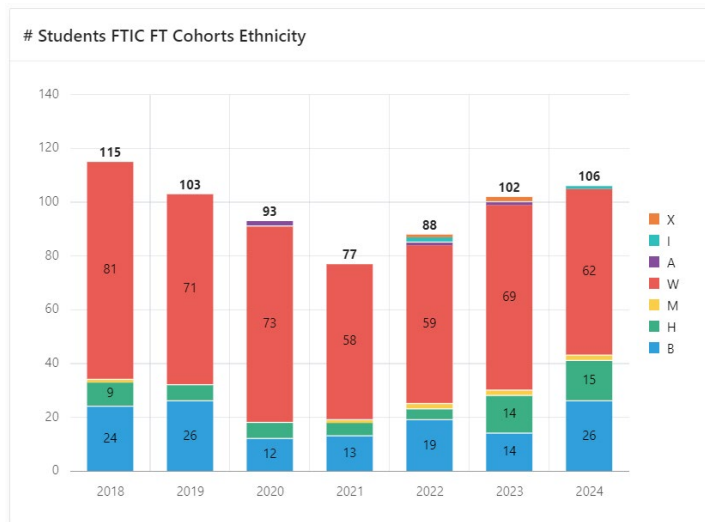
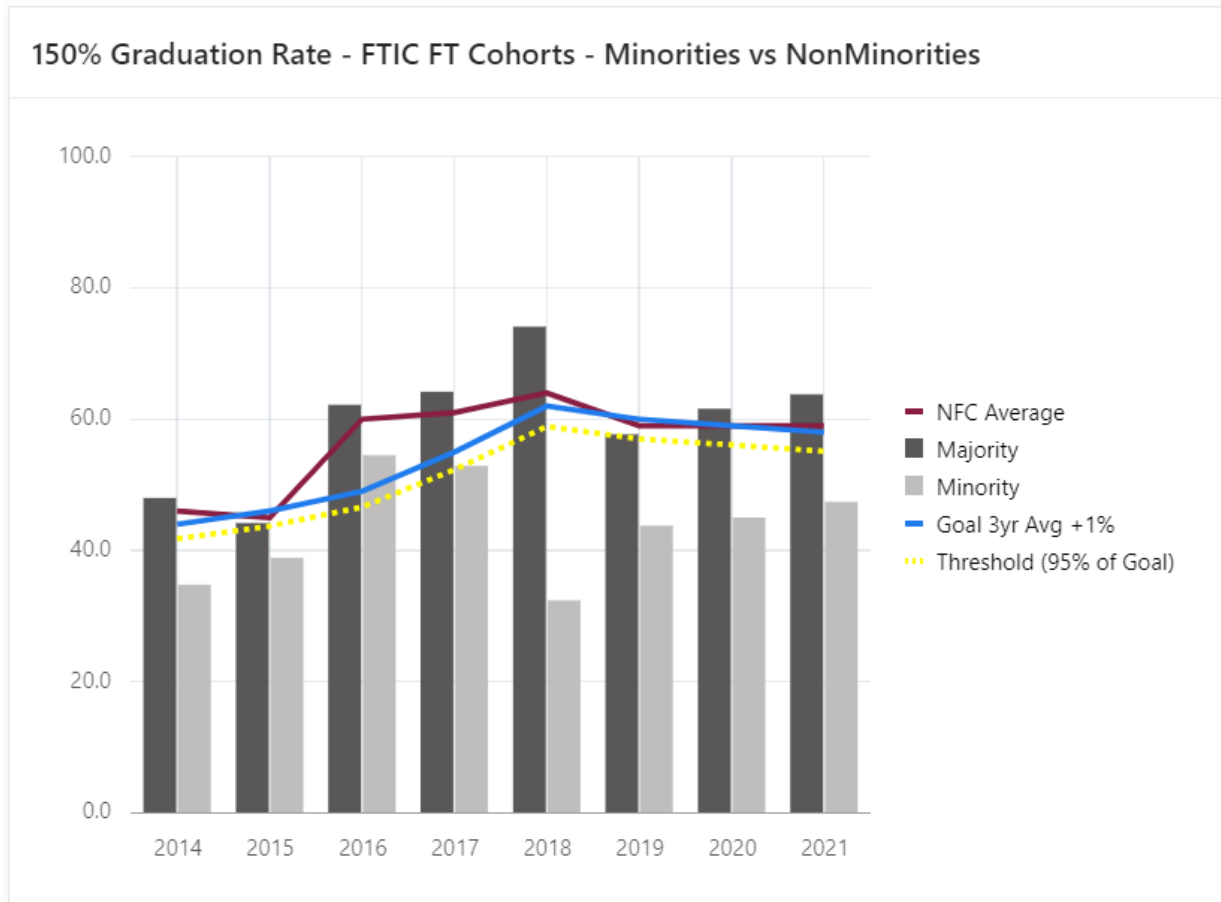


Chart 1.2



To overcome this obstacle, NFC disaggregates data in many ways to reflect a majority subgroup with all others placed into a minority subgroup. The chart below shows an example of this, by dividing the cohorts into the subgroups mentioned, the College can quickly identify which groups are performing below the overall NFC average, whether the group met the identified goal, as well as which group may

need potential interventions due to not meeting the minimum threshold expectation.

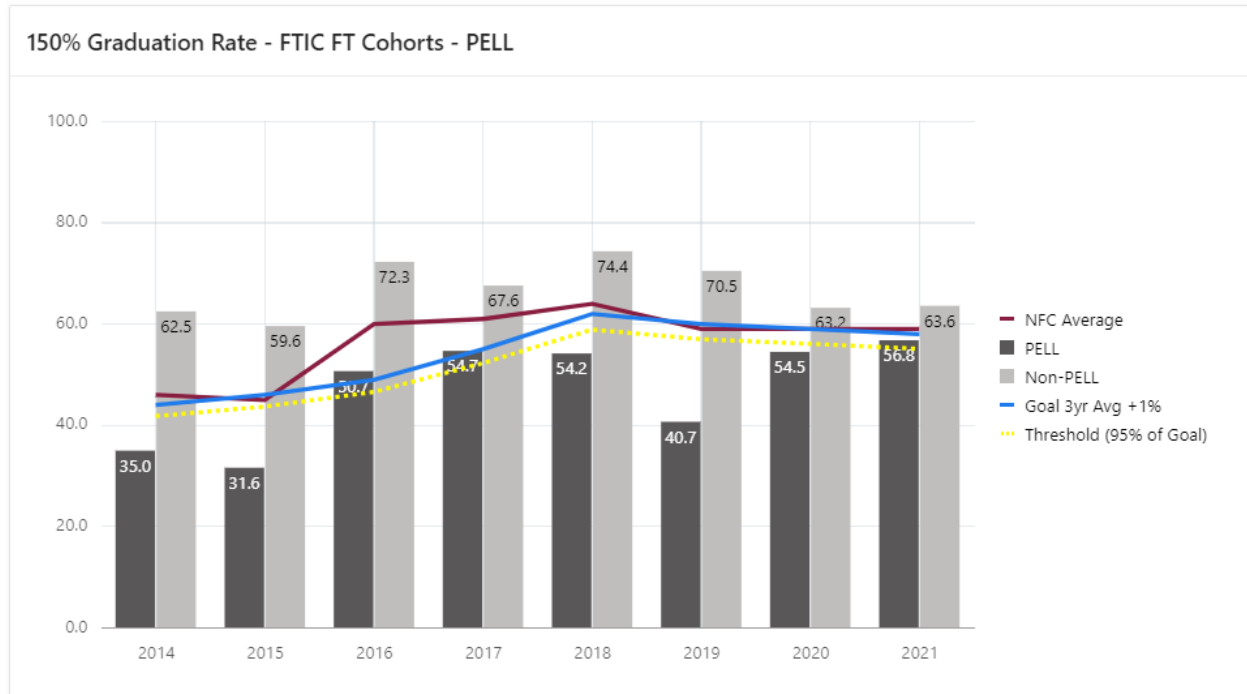


The chart above illustrates the 150% Completion Rate for NFC from 2014 through the latest measurable cohort year of 2021. Disaggregating the data, NFC can clearly observe an opportunity for performance improvement between different types of student groups.

Results like those above challenge the College to develop strategies to address the gap in performance between subgroups within its population. The 2014 QEP, which focused on promoting student engagement, as well as encouraging the usage of educational support services, resulted in improvements for both the entire cohort and individual subgroups. However, an opportunity to increase rates remained. In 2020, NFC began to look for other ways to support the underperforming minority group and developed a mentoring program in 2021. Students identifying in the underperforming minority group are invited to participate in the iCARE Mentoring Program. The program matches at-risk students with faculty and staff volunteers who have completed Mentor Training to become mentors. Building relationships, providing guidance, and directing students to resources are the primary components of the program and have proven quantitative results, as seen in the chart above, and qualitative results, as seen in the article published in the NFC Connections Magazine Spring 2022 issue.

In addition to disaggregating data by ethnicity, NFC also disaggregates data in other ways such as dividing the incoming cohorts by socio-economic status. NFC uses the Federal PELL award as an indicator of low-socio economic status separating the cohort into two groups based on Federal PELL grant eligibility. As seen in the chart below, from 2014 through 2019, the gap in student success was as large as 30%

between students with different socio-economic statuses. However, in recent years this performance gap has begun to close. NFC explicitly contributes this improvement to the strategies implemented within the 2014 QEP, which promoted student engagement and encouraged the usage of educational support services. Again, NFC recognizes the value of dismantling cohorts into smaller subgroups to reveal any disparity in performance between groups.



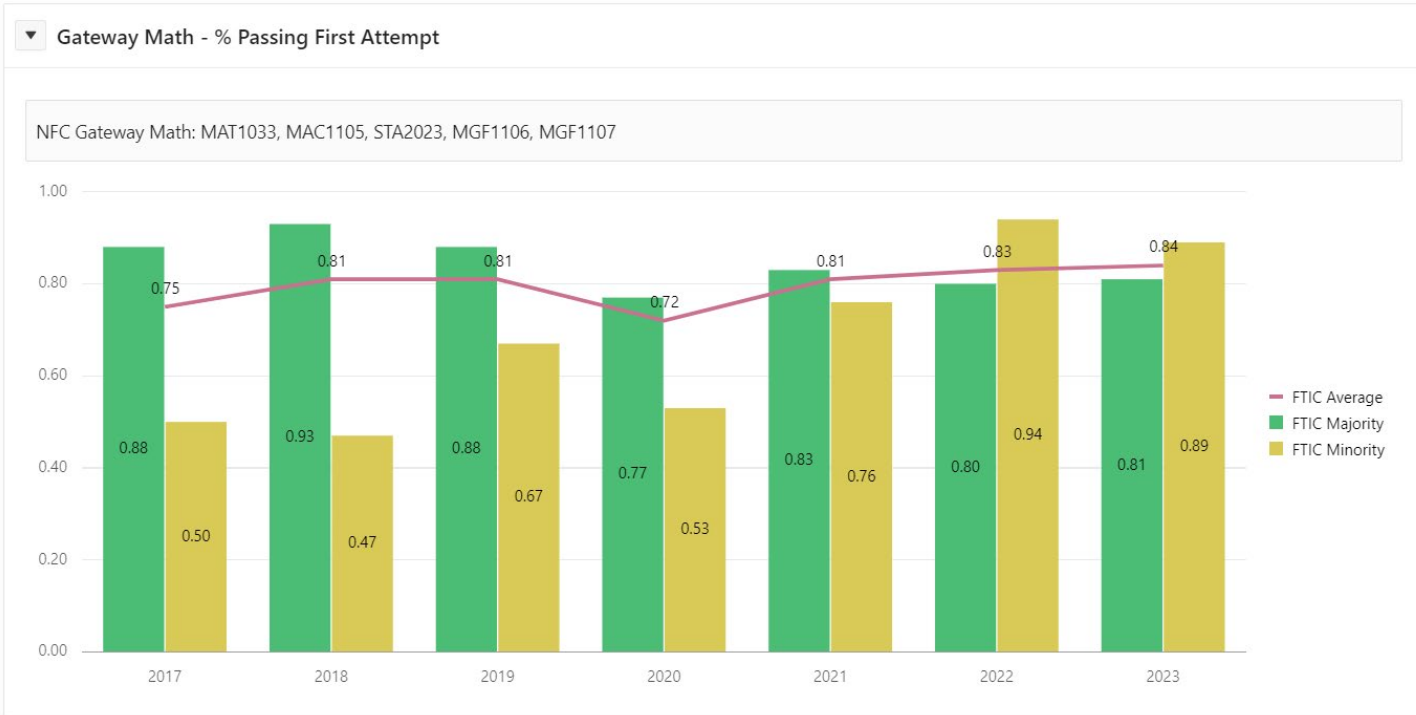
NFC realizes the 150% Completion rate is the most critical way to meet the mission of the College and to be recognized as *“an exceptional college dedicated to an individualized and supportive academic atmosphere, accessible education, lifelong learning opportunities, and professional growth for our students and communities”* is to complete all students equitably. In recognition of its commitment and dedication to achieving equitable completion outcomes for all students, across all population subgroups, NFC has been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence four times, with the latest invitation to apply for the 2025 award pending review for recognition. Per the Aspen website, *“the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence is awarded every two years and is the nation’s signature recognition for America’s community colleges”*. The organization honors colleges with outstanding achievement in six critical areas and includes both 1) overall certificate and degree completion and 2) equitable student achievements, both of which NFC identifies as critical to the success of its institution.

Multiple Measures

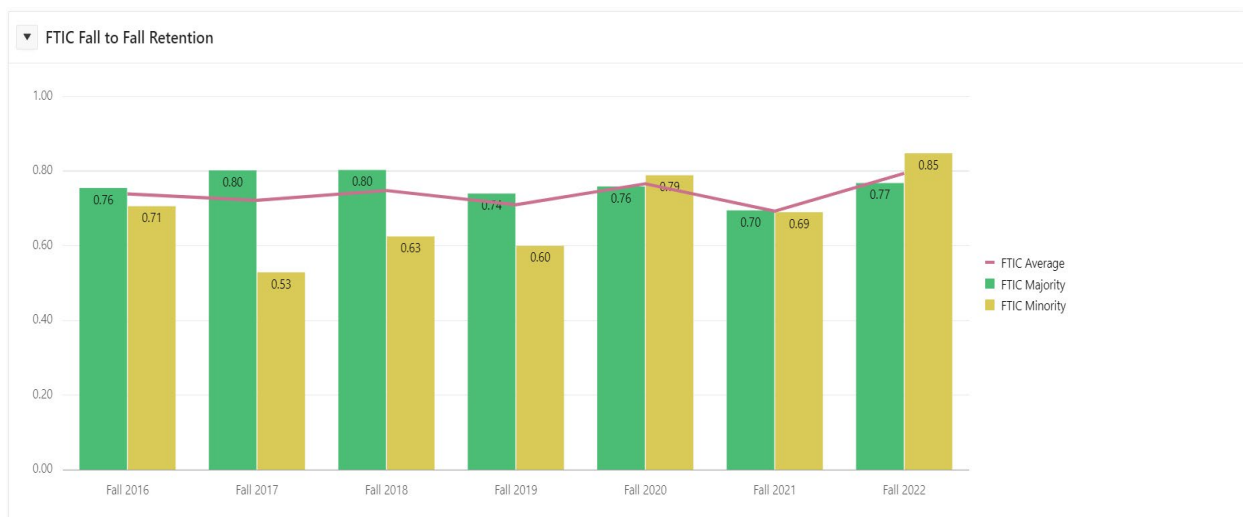
As mentioned, NFC has identified the 150% Completion Rate as its primary measure of success. However, because the 150% Completion Rate measure is a delayed metric, the College monitors a multitude of key performance indicators as predictors of this final measure. Furthermore, and as mentioned, disaggregating the data for each performance indicator is a vital practice to identify opportunities for improvement. For example, monitoring first-time pass rates for gateway English and math courses may provide early indicators of the performance of a specific cohort. NFC attributes the notable increase in the performance of the FTIC Minority group to the implementation of the iCARE

Mentoring Program. As seen below, using the results from monitoring the 150% Completion Rate metric and the disaggregation of data to reveal underperforming subgroups led the college to implement intentional strategies designed to positively impact an identified subgroup of struggling students, such as the iCARE Mentoring Program and the 2014 QEP. Again, referring back to the portion of the College’s mission that is relevant to this intervention, the iCARE Mentoring Program helped to create “an individualized and supportive academic atmosphere...with accessible education”.





NFC identifies another early indicator of success is fall to fall retention. A student must remain enrolled in classes to progress through the required program courses and complete the degree. As seen in the chart below, the burgundy line displays the cohort's average retention rate while the green and yellow bars show the rates of retention for each subgroup, disaggregated by ethnicity. The green bar represents the students identifying in the FTIC Majority ethnic group while the yellow bar represents the FTIC Minority ethnic group. Granular data like that below, assists the college in identifying and evaluating the success of entire cohorts and individual subgroups, all while also having the ability to see increases and decreases from year to year and provide instructional strategies and timely interventions to support success for all students.



In conclusion and as seen from the multitude of data above, North Florida College identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals, minimum thresholds, and outcomes for student achievement that are appropriate to the institution's mission, students it serves, and programs offered. The College does this by setting goals, monitoring the outcomes, and setting minimum expectations. NFC stands ready to pivot into action at the first sign of decline in its primary performance metric because student success and institutional success are woven together, coexisting to ensure the College's focus remains on being "an exceptional college dedicated to an individualized and supportive academic atmosphere, accessible education, lifelong learning opportunities, and professional growth for our students and communities."