

# Analysis of High School GPA and Student Retention NMSU First-time Entering Students, All Campuses New Mexico State University

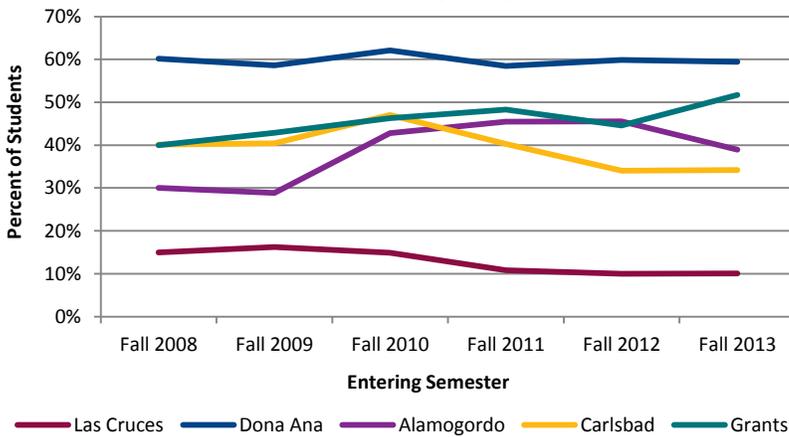
## I. Description of First-time Entering Student Populations

**First-time Entering\* Students by Campus**

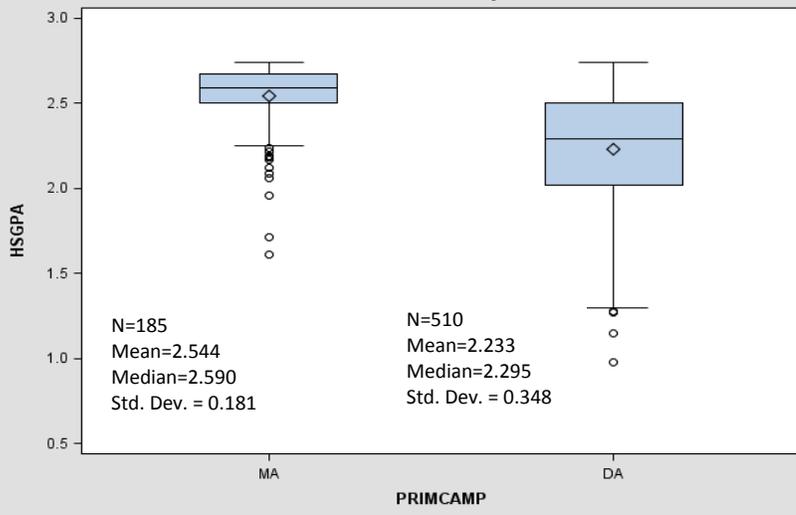
	Las Cruces	Dona Ana	Alamogordo	Carlsbad	Grants
Fall 2008	2,191	552	183	122	50
Fall 2009	2,437	672	149	136	35
Fall 2010	2,254	889	180	136	54
Fall 2011	2,151	958	167	134	58
Fall 2012	1,970	997	169	144	65
Fall 2013	1,855	862	154	158	58

\*First-time entering students are defined in this analysis as students entering higher education after high school graduation, with a **high school graduation date between January 1 and the first day of classes for the fall semester of the same year. Students who earned a GED are excluded.** The campus is the student's primary campus (student is enrolled in at least 1 credit at that campus in the entering fall semester).

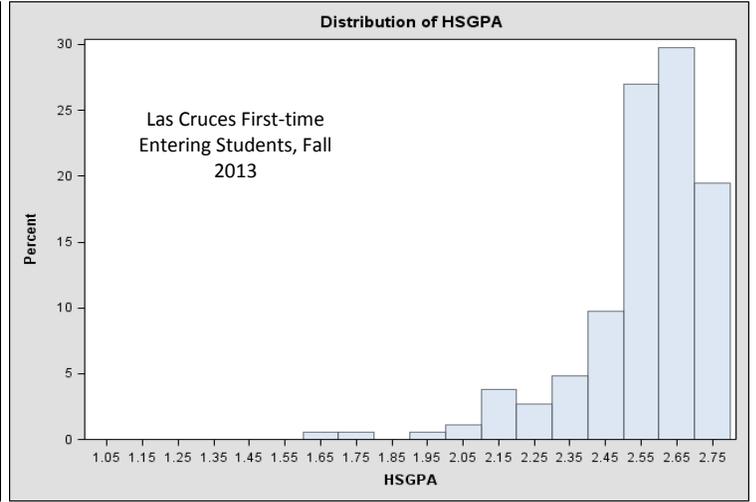
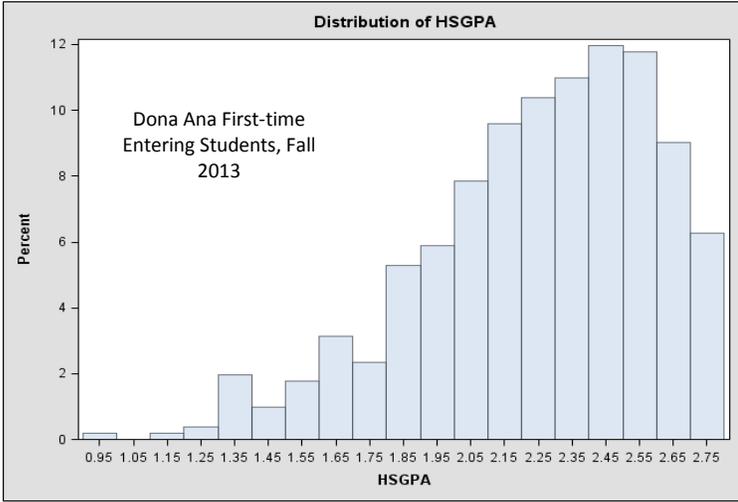
**Entering First-time Students with Less than 2.75 High School GPA, by Campus**



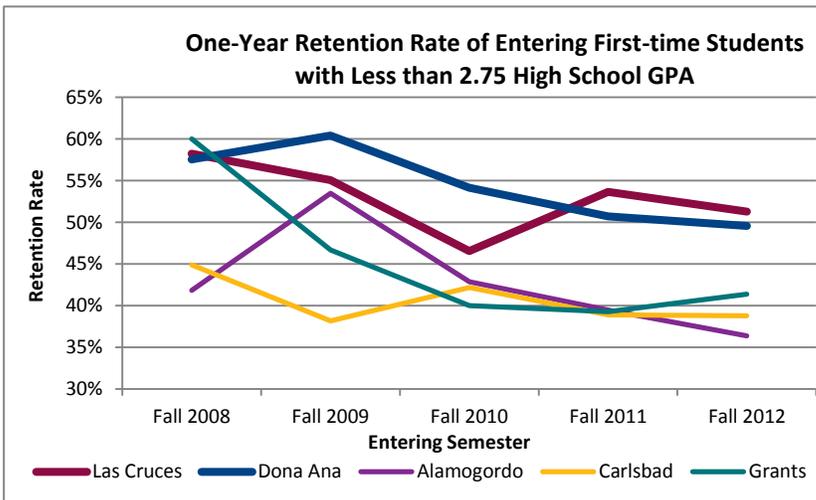
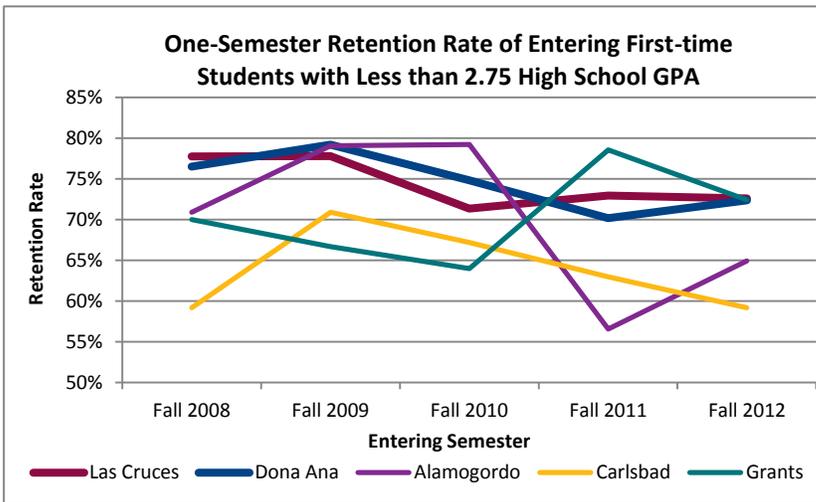
**Distribution of HSGPA by PRIMCAMP**



- This analysis of low GPA first-time entering students at NMSU's five campuses focuses on those students who first entered NMSU directly after graduating high school, and had a high school GPA of less than 2.75. Students who earned a GED were excluded from this analysis of
- The number of students entering the NMSU system directly after graduating high school is largest at the Las Cruces campus, followed by Doña Ana campus (DACC); few enter at the Grants campus.
- The number of students entering the Las Cruces campus has decreased since Fall 2009, while DACC had growth until Fall 2013. Enrollment at the Grants campus has been steady, and the Carlsbad campus surpassed the Alamogordo campus in Fall 2013.
- Although the Las Cruces campus requires at least a 2.00 high school GPA for most students, the branch campuses have no minimum high school GPA for admission.
- Approximately 60% of first-time students entering DACC either do not report their high school GPA, or their high school GPA is less than 2.75. In contrast, less than 20%, and recently around 10% of first-time students entering the Las Cruces campus have less than a 2.75 high school GPA.
- Between 30 to 50% of first-time students entering NMSU Alamogordo, Carlsbad or Grants have less than a 2.75 high school GPA. The percentage has varied widely over time.
- Although the Las Cruces campus enrolls more first-time entering students directly from high school than does DACC, a much higher number of students with less than a 2.75 high school GPA (510 in Fall 2013) enroll at DACC than enroll at Las Cruces (185 in Fall 2013).
- Additionally, the distributions of high school GPAs for the enrolled students are substantially different for the two campuses. Students enrolling at the Las Cruces campus with less than a 2.75 GPA tend to have GPAs averaging above 2.50, while students enrolling at DACC in this high school GPA range average just above 2.23. The averages have varied slightly across the past five years, with a slight upward trend for the Las Cruces campus.
- The high school GPA distributions for students with less than a 2.75 GPA entering the other campuses are more dispersed (flat distribution), mostly because of the small number of students enrolling at those campuses.



## II. Retention of First-time Entering Students



### Fall 2012 Cohorts Retained to Spring 2013

HS GPA Range	Las Cruces	Dona Ana
Less than 2.0	33% (n=1)	57% (n=73)
2.00 - 2.499	63% (n=27)	75% (n=203)
2.50 - 2.749	76% (n=151)	79% (n=156)

- The retention of students who enter NMSU having earned less than a 2.75 GPA in high school is much lower than students who enter with at least a 2.75 GPA.
- Because of the limited number of students entering the three smaller campuses with less than a 2.75 GPA, the one-semester retention rate varies considerably over time, and tends to be lower than for the Las Cruces campus.
- However, the retention rate to the spring semester for DACC students approximates the rate of the Las Cruces students.
- Retention to the second fall semester is a greater challenge for students at the smaller campuses. Students beginning at DACC had higher one-year retention rates than Las Cruces students, except for the Fall 2011 and Fall 2012 cohorts.
- As discussed above, the population of DACC students who enter with a high school GPA less than 2.75 consists of students with substantially lower GPAs than the
- Reviewing the one-semester retention rates for DACC and Las Cruces students by finer high school GPA ranges within the less than 2.75 GPA constraint indicates students **are retained at a slightly higher rate at DACC** within each of the three GPA ranges. The much larger number of students who enter DACC with less than a 2.50 GPA has a negative effect on the overall retention rate for less than 2.75 GPA students. However, it appears that retention of low high school GPA students is slightly higher for students enrolling at DACC than for similar students enrolling at the Las Cruces campus. Although the difference between retention rates across the two campuses varies over years, the overall trend is consistent. There is insufficient evidence to conclude this is true for the three smaller campuses.