

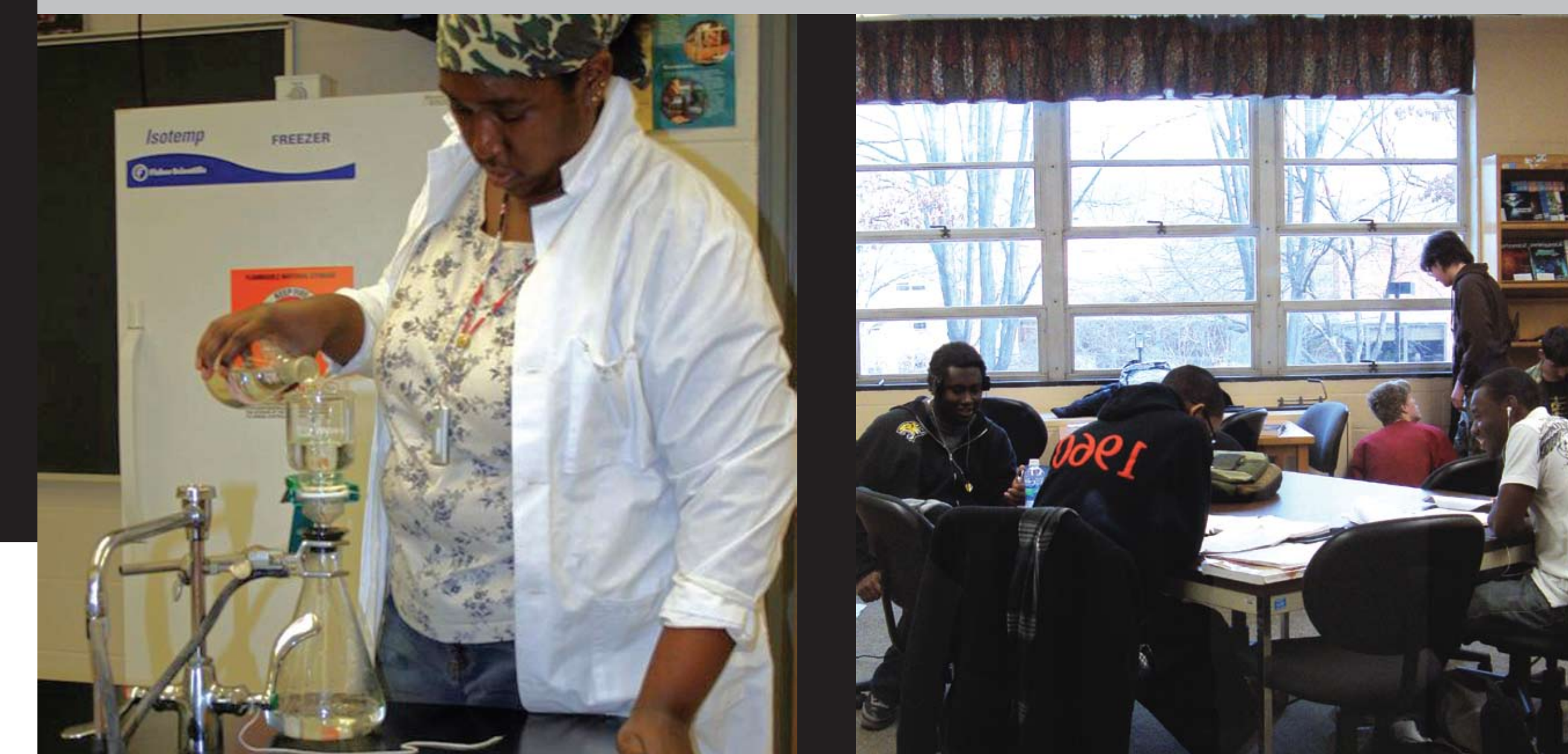
Institutional Culture

The TOPS Program was designed to recruit and retain students with STEM career interests who are from under-served communities in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area.

TOPS is a partnership between Towson University (TU) and Baltimore City Community College (BCCC); BCCC is only 10 miles from Towson but few students were transferring to TU.

Only active mentoring and revisiting/revising articulation were initially identified as solutions for increasing the number of Baltimore City Community College students who matriculate to Towson University in STEM majors.

Other outreach programs at TU, serving students from under-served communities, did not address the range of challenges STEM students from these communities were facing.



Institutional Change

Barriers to student matriculation and retention are identified enabling program staff to provide appropriate support and effect change in institutional policies.

BCCC students take classes at TU that then transfer back to BCCC increasing the number of students who receive an Associates Degree while working towards a Bachelors Degree.

Articulation and active mentoring are only part of a more holistic strategy that includes community building, mentorship, and financial support.

Program staff serve as a resource for faculty and staff members working with this student population.

Institutionalization

Students are scheduled as cohorts into the same sections of the same courses enabling easy development of study groups and more effective tutoring sessions.

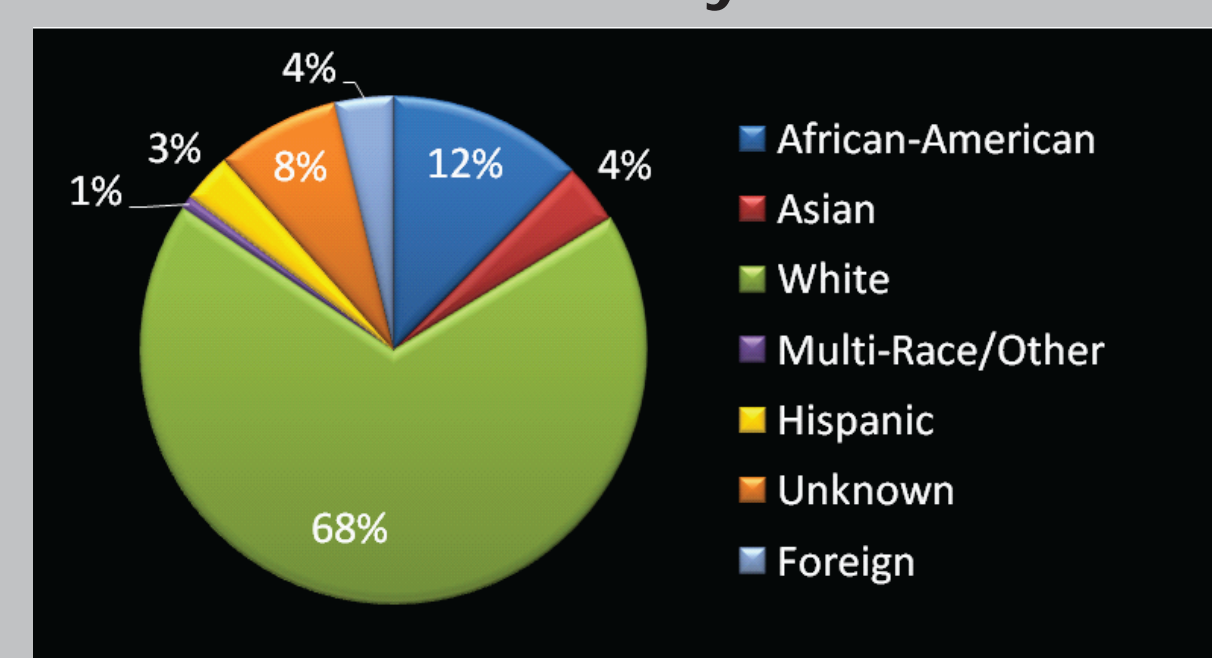
The Articulation Agreement between the two institutions is being examined with the goal of increasing the number of credits that are directly transferable.

The Learning Center is an essential space for students in the program to congregate and study. It is centrally located on campus in the science building.

A pre-first-year program brings TOPS students and university faculty together.

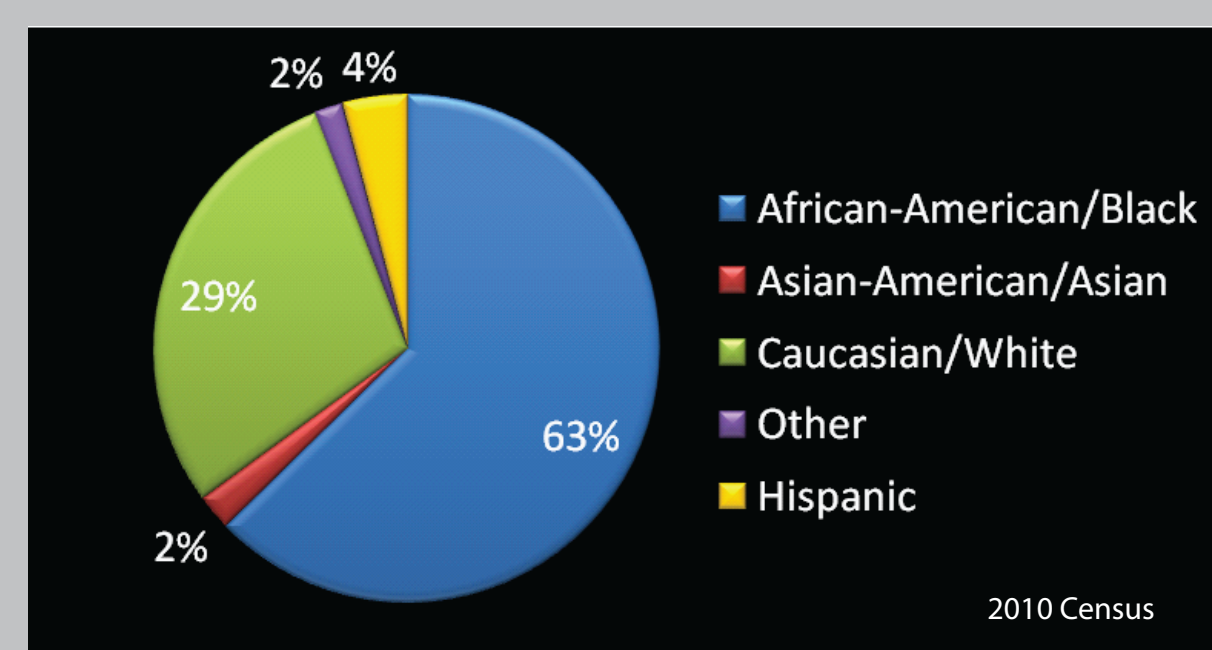
A STEM Residential Learning Community, established in partnership with the Department of Housing and Residential Life, is thriving.

Demographics Towson University

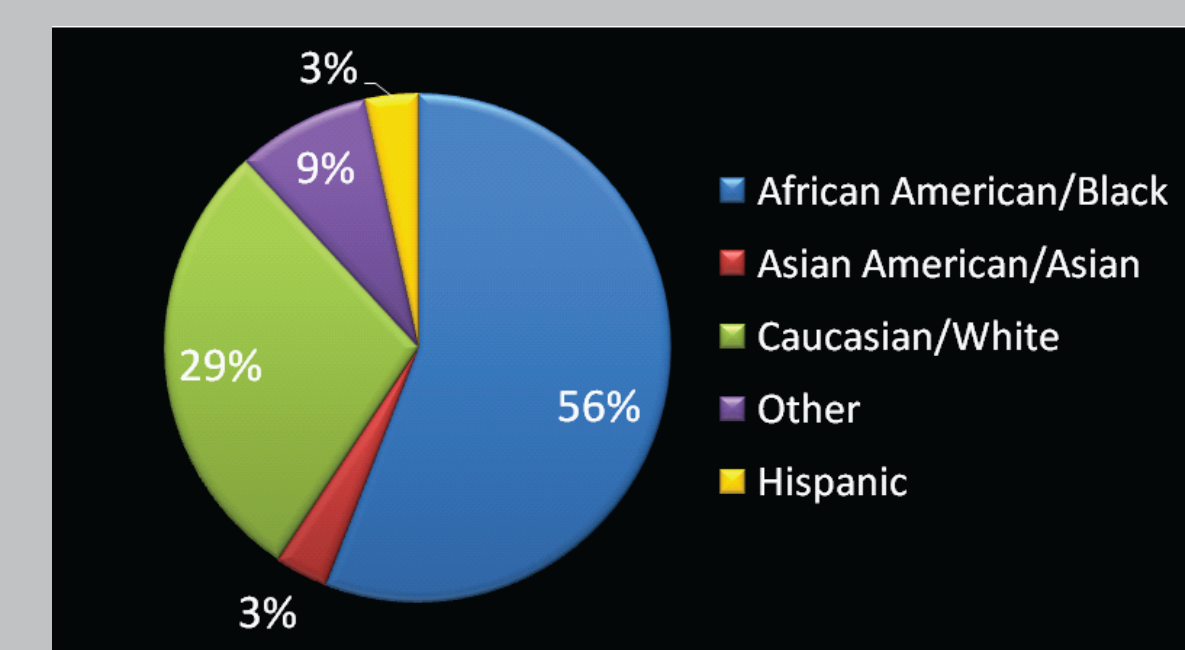


Towson University, the State of Maryland's comprehensive Metropolitan University, is responding to the higher education needs of the greater metropolitan area in part by creating a learning community which mirrors the face of the population surrounding us. As shown below, TOPS is contributing to the realization of this vision.

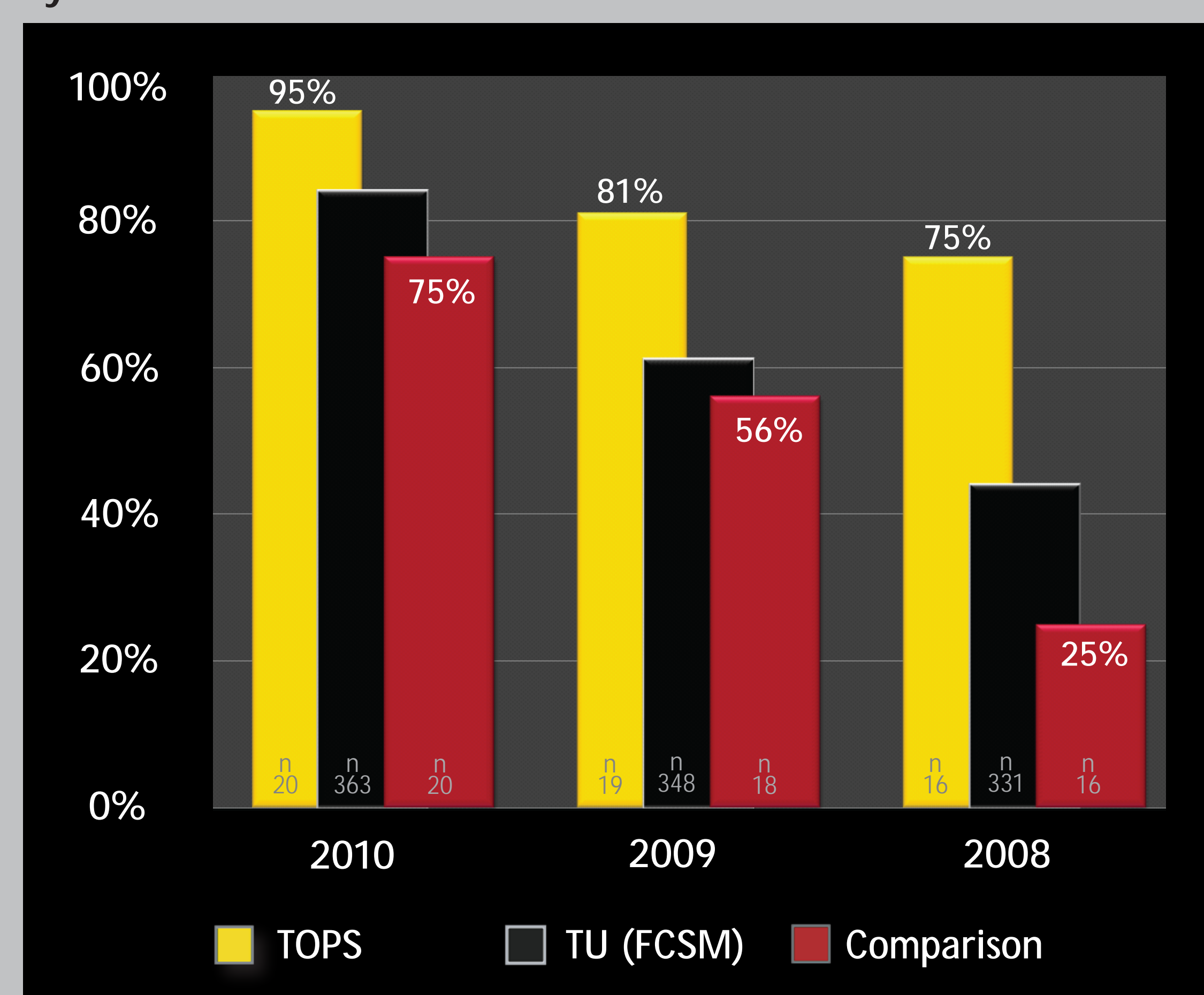
Baltimore Metro Area



TOPS



Retention in STEM Majors by Cohort



Demographics Comparison Group vs. TOPS

Total	Column1	Comparison Group *	TOPS Group **
Number of Students		54	55
Major***			
Biology		17	23
Computer Science		10	10
Information Systems			1
Mathematics		13	7
Medicinal Chemistry		4	2
MBBB		2	1
Forensic Chemistry			3
Chemistry			5
Physics			2
Environmental Science		2	1
Sex			
Male		25	28
Female		29	27
AVG Math SAT		572	573
Low Income****		21	19
1st Generation		28	28
Under-represented		29	38

* Students who matriculated at Towson University, were invited to join TOPS, and chose not to apply to the program.
 ** Students selected for TOPS
 *** As selected on Admissions Application
 **** Low Income or Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) = 0