The future of California depends heavily on increasing the number of Californians with certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor’s degrees. Educational attainment in California has been declining with each younger generation – a statistic that bodes poorly for the state’s economic competitiveness.

*Divided We Fail* is a report that tracked more than a quarter of a million students (255,253) who entered a California Community College in 2003-04 over six years and analyzed their progress and outcomes by major racial/ethnic population. Analyses were restricted to “degree-seekers” (students believed to be seeking a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor’s degree), defined as all new students enrolling in more than 6 credits in the first year.

In California, too many students fail to complete community college:
- Six years after enrolling, **70% of degree-seeking students had not completed a certificate or degree and had not transferred to a university.**
- **75-80% of Latino and black degree-seeking students did not complete.**
- Only **23% of degree seekers transferred to a university, 11% earned an associate degree,** and only **5% earned a certificate.**

**Key Findings for the Los Angeles Region**

*(60,026 degree-seeking students)*

- The **overall completion** rate of degree-seeking community college students in the Los Angeles region was **29%**, slightly lower than the statewide rate. The lower percentage can be attributed, in part, to the somewhat lower share of students transferring to a university.

- The share of degree-seeking community college students in the Los Angeles region transferring to a university was **21%**, somewhat lower than the statewide figure. **11% of Los Angeles students earned an associate degree,** similar to the statewide rate.

- The share of students earning a certificate in the Los Angeles region, **4%**, was slightly lower than the statewide rate.

- **Latino students comprised** 43% of degree-seekers in Los Angeles community colleges, but **only 29% of completers.**

- **Nearly 1 in 5 black students in the Los Angeles region that transferred moved on to a for-profit university** (19%), a rate much higher than their white and Asian-Pacific Islander peers (6%).
Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years
California Community College (CCC) System and Los Angeles County

Intermediate Milestones

Completion

Intermediate Milestones

Completion

Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to “Completers” in Los Angeles County Colleges

Degree-Seekers N=60,026

Completers N=17,172

Other .5%

Black 13%

API 20%

Latino 43%

White 24%

Other .5%

Black 10%

API 27%

Latino 29%

White 33%
Most Transfer Students in Los Angeles County Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits

Transfer Destination of Los Angeles County Students Varies by Race/Ethnicity
Completion Rates Vary Depending on Students’ Enrollment Patterns

Students who followed certain enrollment patterns did much better. Passing college level English and Math within 2 years and accumulating at least 20 credits in the first year increase student chances of success. As examples, 46% of students who took and passed college-level English within two years completed a certificate, degree or transfer within six years compared to only 19% who did not; 52% of students who passed college level Math within 2 years succeeded (vs. 20% who did not); and 55% of students who accumulated at least 20 credits in the first year succeeded (vs. 20% who did not). Unfortunately, few Los Angeles students follow these successful patterns (see below).

Too Few Los Angeles County Community College Students Follow Successful Enrollment Patterns

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The full report can be accessed at www.csus.edu/ihelp www.collegecampaign.org