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 Sacramento-Tahoe Region
(18,942 degree-seeking students)

• The overall completion rate of degree-seeking community college students in the Sacramento-Tahoe region was 29%, slightly lower than the state rate.
• The share of degree-seeking community college students in the Sacramento-Tahoe region transferring to a university was 22%, similar to the share statewide.
• Only 30% of black transfer students in the Sacramento-Tahoe region enrolled in a California State University or the University of California.
• 11% of Sacramento-Tahoe students earned an associate degree, the same as the statewide figure.
• The share of students earning a certificate in the Sacramento-Tahoe region, 3%, was among the lowest in California, two percentage points below the statewide rate.
• Black students were the least likely among all groups to complete a transfer curriculum (22%) or an associate degree (21%) before enrolling in a university. Yet black students were the most likely to enroll in a for-profit institution (25%).
### Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years
California Community College (CCC) System and Sacramento-Tahoe Region

**Overall Completion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Completed Transfer Curriculum</th>
<th>Completed Associate Degree</th>
<th>Transferred to University</th>
<th>Overall Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retained to 2nd Year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+ College Credits</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+ College Credits</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intermediate Milestones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Completed Transfer Curriculum</th>
<th>Completed Associate Degree</th>
<th>Transferred to University</th>
<th>Overall Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retained to 2nd Year</td>
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</tr>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years by Race/Ethnicity in the Sacramento-Tahoe Region**

- **White**: 62%
- **Latino**: 16%
- **Asian-Pacific Islander (API)**: 17%
- **Black**: 9%
- **Other**: 2%

**Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to “Completers” in Sacramento-Tahoe Colleges**

- **Degree-Seekers**
  - White: 57%
  - Latino: 16%
  - API: 17%
  - Black: 9%
  - Other: 2%

- **Completers**
  - White: 62%
  - Latino: 13%
  - API: 17%
  - Black: 7%
  - Other: 1%
Most Transfer Students in Sacramento-Tahoe Region Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits

Completed Transfer Curriculum
Completed Associate Degree

= 0%
= 10%
= 20%
= 30%
= 40%
= 50%
= 60%
= 70%
= 80%
= 90%
= 100%

Latino Black API White All Transfers

45 29 31 44 61 27 22 21 46 29

Transfer Destination of Sacramento-Tahoe Students Varies by Race/Ethnicity

White Transfer Students

CSU 45%
UC 9%
Out-of-State Public 20%
Out-of-State Private 10%
In-State Private 7%
For-Profit 9%

API Transfer Students

CSU 52%
UC 19%
Out-of-State Public 12%
Out-of-State Private 4%
In-State Private 4%
For-Profit 10%

Black Transfer Students

CSU 27%
Out-of-State Public 29%
Out-of-State Private 11%
In-State Private 5%
For-Profit 25%
UC 3%

Latino Transfer Students

CSU 49%
Out-of-State Public 14%
Out-of-State Private 6%
In-State Private 5%
For-Profit 16%
UC 9%
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, 47% of students who took and passed college-level English within two years completed a certificate, degree or transfer within six years compared to only 17% who did not; 53% of students who passed college level Math within 2 years succeeded (vs. 19% who did not); and 56% of students who accumulated at least 20 credits in the first year succeeded (vs. 20% who did not). Unfortunately, few Sacramento-Tahoe students follow these successful patterns (see below).

Too Few Sacramento-Tahoe Community College Students Follow Successful Enrollment Patterns

[Graph showing completion rates for different groups, including Degree-Seekers in Sacramento-Tahoe, White, API, Black, and Latino, with notes on successful enrollment patterns and completion rates.]

Divided We Fail: Improving Completion and Closing Racial Gaps in California’s Community Colleges is a report by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy at California State University, Sacramento and is sponsored by The Campaign for College Opportunity.

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