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 San Diego – Imperial Region**

(27,273 degree-seeking students)

- The **overall completion rate** of degree-seeking community college students in the San Diego-Imperial region was **35%** which, while still low, was higher than the statewide rate.

- The share of degree-seeking community college students in the San Diego-Imperial region transferring to a university was **28%**, higher than the share statewide.

- **Less than 25% of black transfer students in the San Diego-Imperial region enrolled in a California State University or the University of California.**

- **11% of San Diego-Imperial students earned an associate degree**, the same as the statewide figure.

- The share of students earning a **certificate** in the San Diego-Imperial region, **5%**, was the same as the statewide figure.

- **Black and Latino students were more likely than others to transfer to a for-profit institution.** Among students who transferred, 18% of black and Latino students enrolled in the for-profit sector compared to 12% of Asian-Pacific Islander and 8% of white students.
Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years
California Community College (CCC) System and San Diego - Imperial Region

Intermediate Milestones

Completion

Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years
by Race/Ethnicity in the San Diego - Imperial Region

Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to “Completers” in San Diego - Imperial Colleges

Degree-Seekers
N=27,273

Completers
N=9,568

Divided We Fail
San Diego-Imperial Regional Profile
February 2011
Most Transfer Students in San Diego - Imperial Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits

Transfer Destination of San Diego - Imperial 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, 52% of students who took and passed college-level English within two years completed a certificate, degree or transfer within six years compared to only 26% who did not; 56% of students who passed college level Math within 2 years succeeded (vs. 27% who did not); and 59% of students who accumulated at least 20 credits in the first year succeeded (vs. 27% who did not). Unfortunately, few San Diego-Imperial students follow these successful patterns (see below).

Too Few San Diego - Imperial Community College Students Follow Successful Enrollment Patterns

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