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 Superior California Region**

*(2,299 degree-seeking students)*

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

- Fewer than half of students enrolled in community college in the Superior California region were enrolled one year after initial entry, the lowest among all regions in the state.

- 12% of Superior California students earned an associate degree, similar to the statewide rate.

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

- 41% of the transfers from Superior California community colleges enrolled in a university outside of California.
Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years
California Community College (CCC) System and Superior California Region

Intermediate Milestones

Completed Transfer Curriculum

Overall Completion

Completion

Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years
by Race/Ethnicity in Superior California

Intermediate Milestones

Degree-Seekers

N=2,299

Completers

N=665

Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to “Completers”
in Superior California Colleges

Intermediate Milestones

Completed Transfer Curriculum

Overall Completion

White

75%

Other

5%

Latino

10%

API

6%

Black

4%

Black

5%

Other

3%

Latino

8%

API

8%

White

77%
Most Transfer Students in Superior California Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits

*Figures not shown by race/ethnicity because of the small number of non-white transfer students.

Completed Transfer Curriculum: 34%
Completed Associate Degree: 32%

Transfer Destination of Superior California Students

- Out-of-State Public: 33%
- In-State Private: 11%
- For-Profit: 7%
- UC: 7%
- CSU: 34%

*Figures not shown by race/ethnicity because of the small numbers of non-white transfer students.
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, 44% of students who took and passed college-level English within two years completed a certificate, degree or transfer within six years compared to only 18% who did not; 50% of students who passed college level Math within 2 years succeeded (vs. 18% who did not); and 55% of students who accumulated at least 20 credits in the first year succeeded (vs. 19% who did not). Unfortunately, few Superior California students follow these successful patterns (see below).

Too Few Superior California Community College Students Follow Successful Enrollment Patterns

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*Figures for Asian-Pacific Islander, black, and Latino students not shown due to small numbers in the cohort; under-represented minority (URM) category includes black, Latino, and Native American students.

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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