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 Upper Sacramento Valley**

(2,115 degree-seeking students)

- The overall completion rate of degree-seeking community college students in the Upper Sacramento Valley was 31%, the same as the statewide rate.
- The share of degree-seeking community college students in the Upper Sacramento Valley transferring to a university was 21%, lower than the statewide figure.
- **11% of Upper Sacramento Valley students earned an associate degree,** virtually the same as the state rate.
- The share of students earning a certificate in the Upper Sacramento Valley, while still low at 8%, was the highest in the state.
- **42% of transfer students from community colleges in the Upper Sacramento Valley transferred to universities out of state.**
Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years
California Community College (CCC) System and Upper Sacramento Valley

Intermediate Milestones
Completion

Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years
by Race/Ethnicity in the Upper Sacramento Valley

Intermediate Milestones
Completion

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

*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.
Most Transfer Students in the Upper Sacramento Valley Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits

- Completed Transfer Curriculum: 34
- Completed Associate Degree: 26

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

Transfer Destination of Upper Sacramento Valley Students

- CSU: 42%
- Out-of-State Public: 33%
- Out-of-State Private: 9%
- For-Profit: 10%
- In-State Private: 3%
- UC: 3%

*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, 51% of students who took and passed college-level English within two years completed a certificate, degree or transfer within six years compared to only 21% who did not; 53% of students who passed college level Math within 2 years succeeded (vs. 22% who did not); and 63% of students who accumulated at least 20 credits in the first year succeeded (vs. 20% who did not). Unfortunately, few Upper Sacramento Valley students follow these successful patterns (see below).

Too Few Upper Sacramento Valley Community College Students Follow Successful Enrollment Patterns

*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.

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