

DIVIDED WE FAIL:

Improving Completion and Closing Racial Gaps in California's Community Colleges

Regional Profile—LOS ANGELES

County of Los Angeles

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:

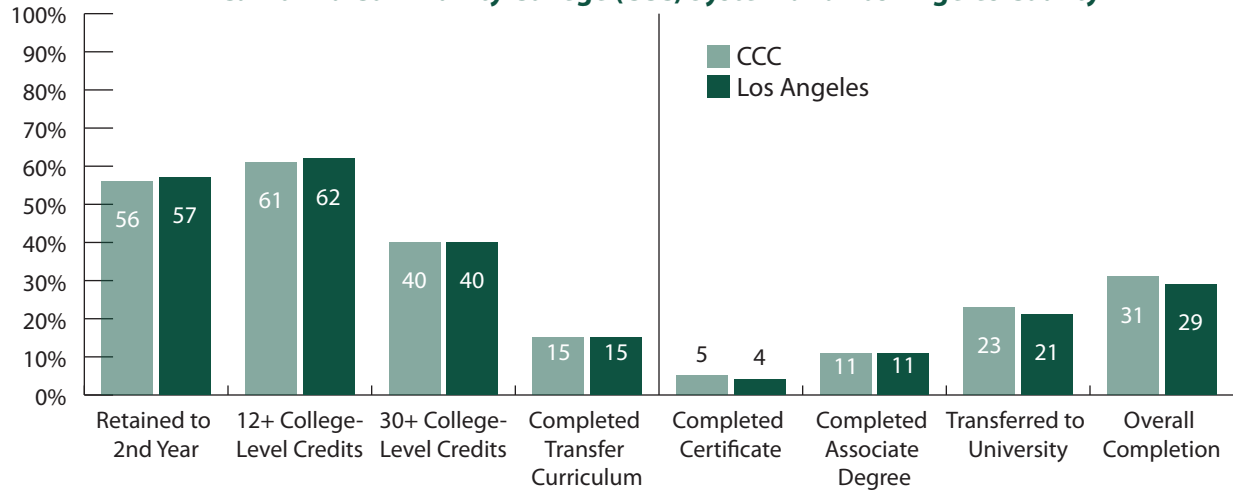
- Six years after enrolling, **70% of degree-seeking students had not completed a certificate or degree and had not transferred to a university.**
- **75-80% of Latino and black degree-seeking students did not complete.**
- Only **23% of degree seekers transferred to a university, 11% earned an associate 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%).

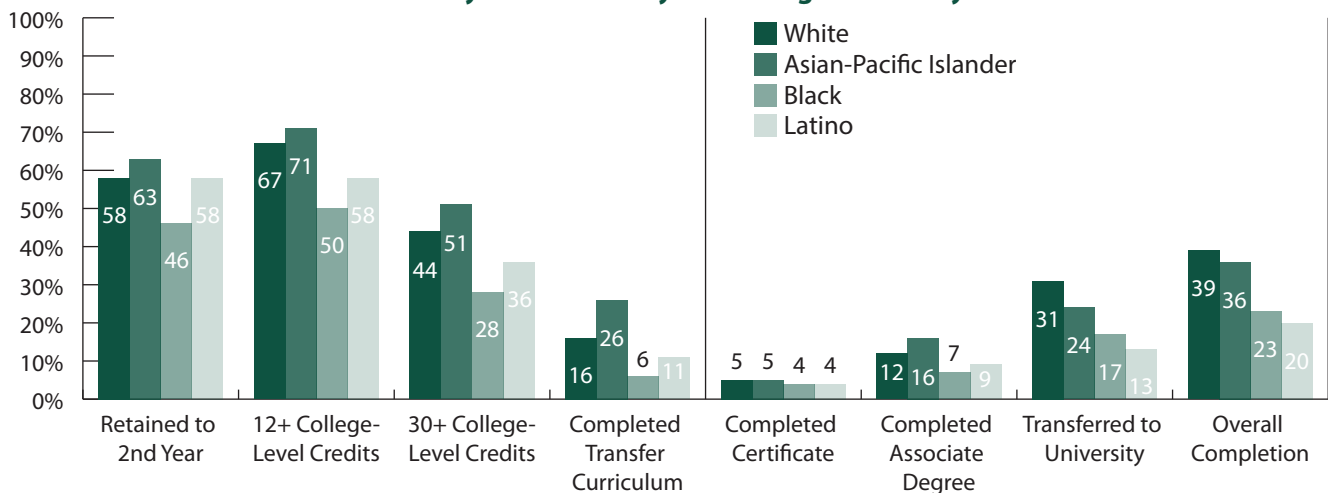
Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years California Community College (CCC) System and Los Angeles County



Intermediate Milestones

Completion

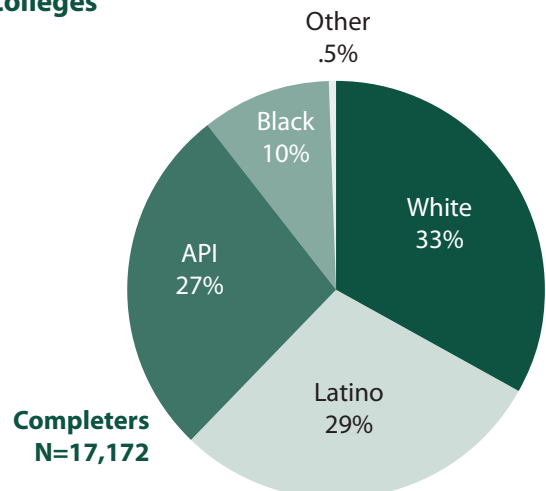
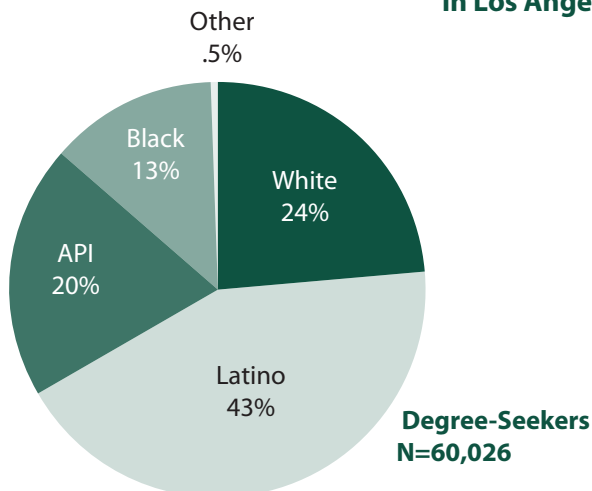
Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years by Race/Ethnicity in Los Angeles County



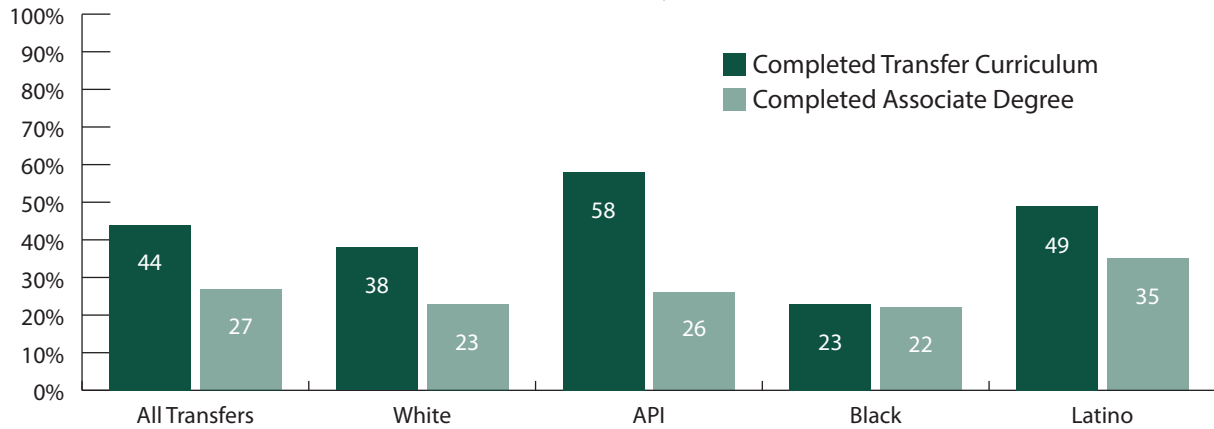
Intermediate Milestones

Completion

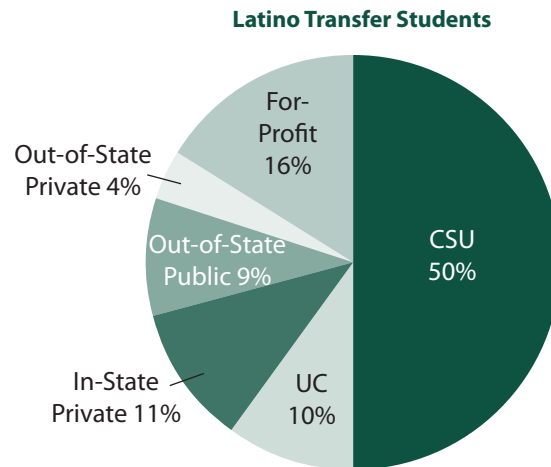
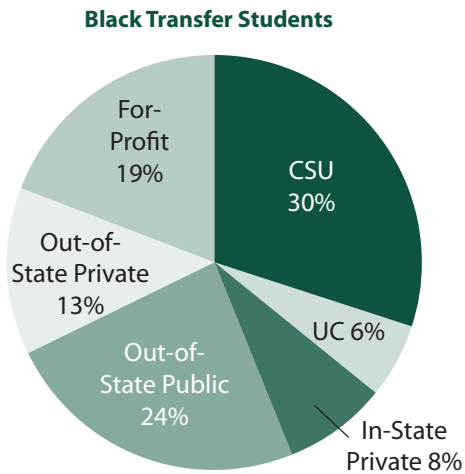
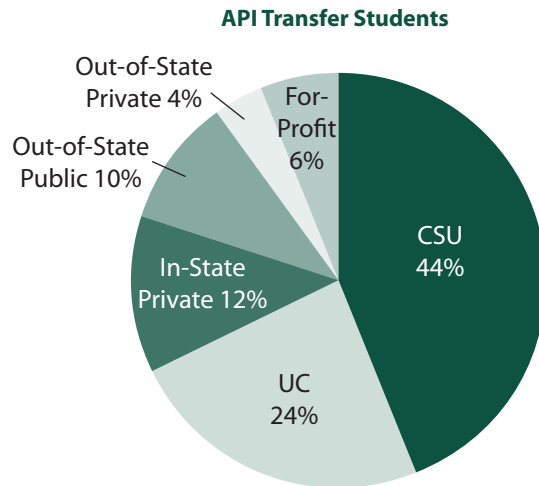
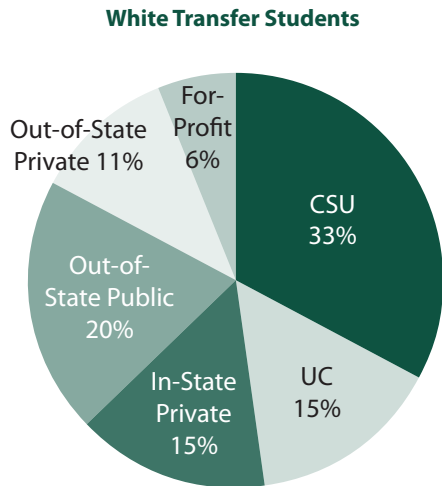
Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to "Completers" in Los Angeles County Colleges



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



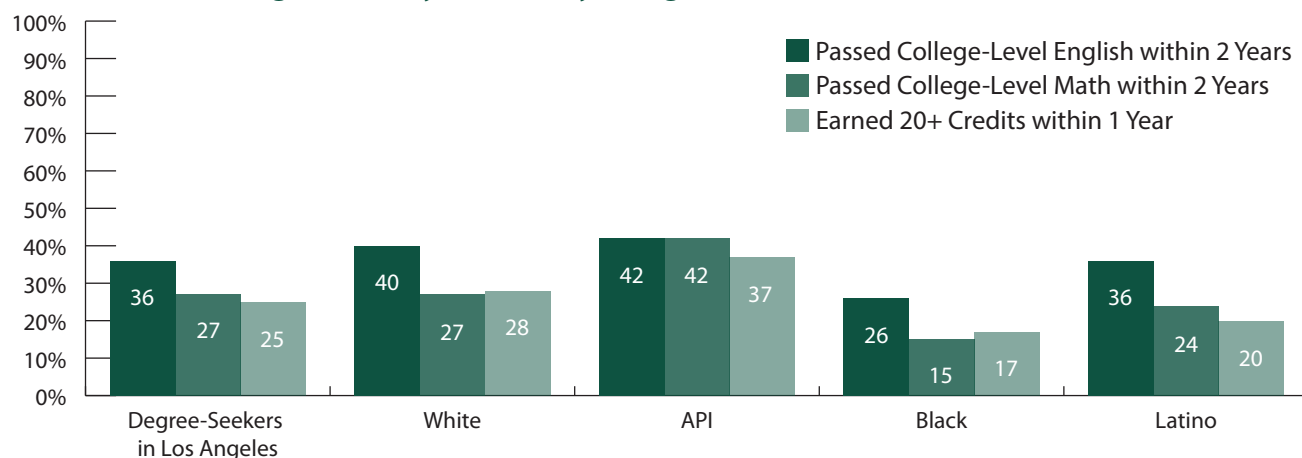
Transfer Destination of Los Angeles County Students Varies by Race/Ethnicity



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



The Campaign for

College
Opportunity

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