

# DIVIDED WE FAIL:

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

## Regional Profile—SACRAMENTO-TAHOE

*Counties of Alpine, Amador, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba*

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:

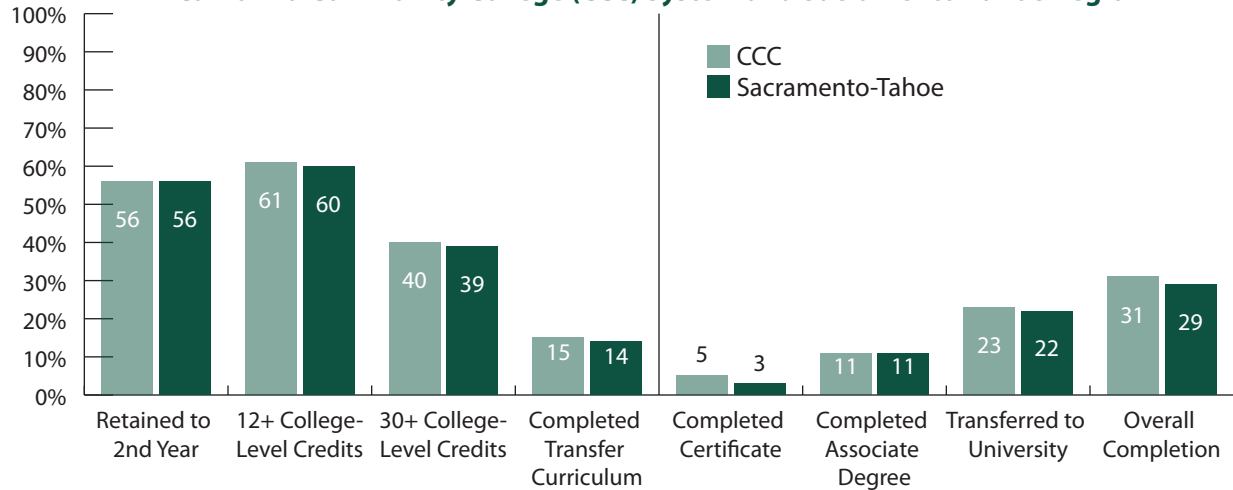
- Six years after enrolling, **70% of degree-seeking students had not completed a certificate or degree and had not transferred to a university.**
- **75-80% of Latino and black degree-seeking students did not complete.**
- Only **23% of degree seekers transferred to a university**, **11% earned an associate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

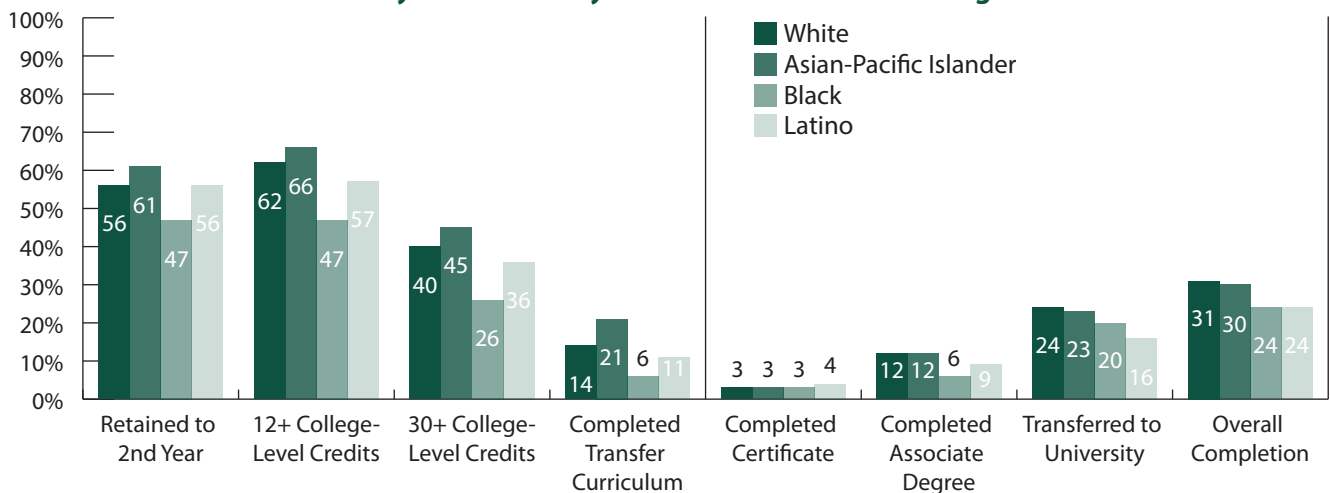
### Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years California Community College (CCC) System and Sacramento-Tahoe Region



#### Intermediate Milestones

#### Completion

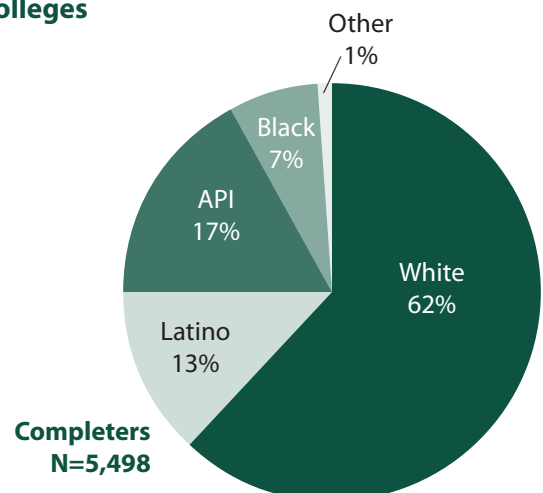
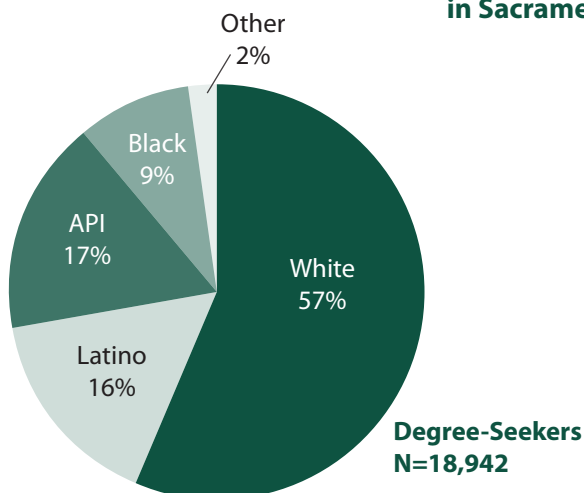
### Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years by Race/Ethnicity in the Sacramento-Tahoe Region



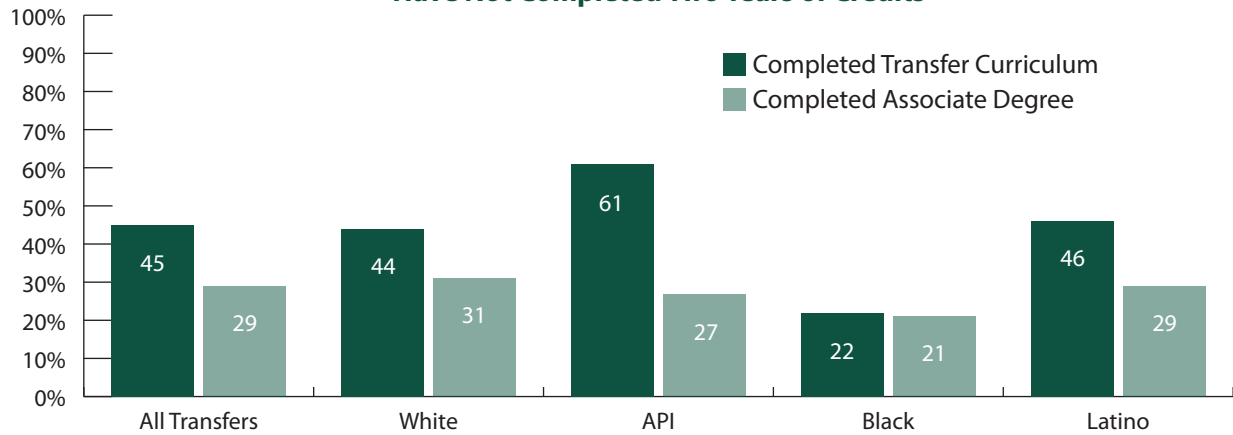
#### Intermediate Milestones

#### Completion

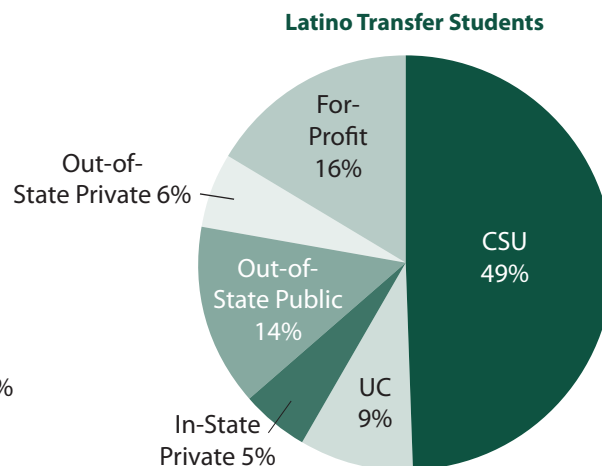
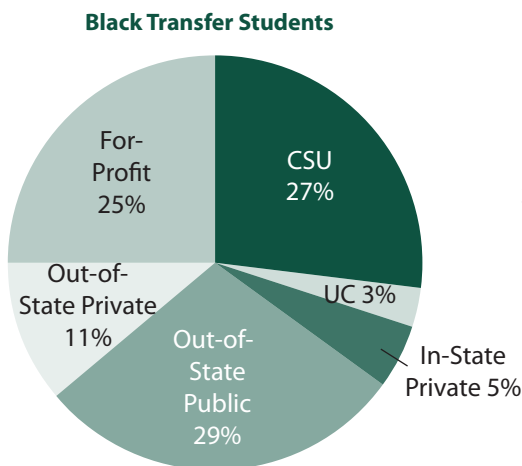
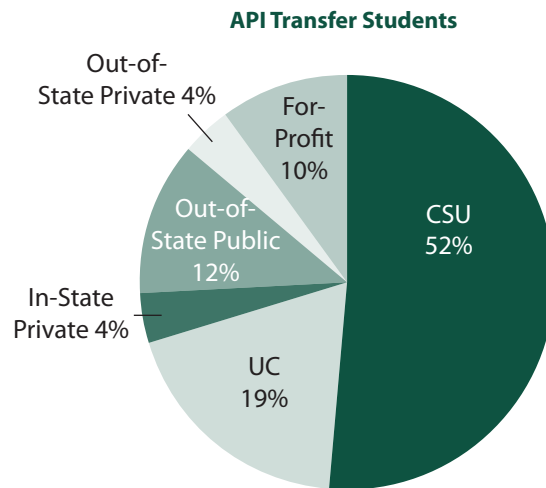
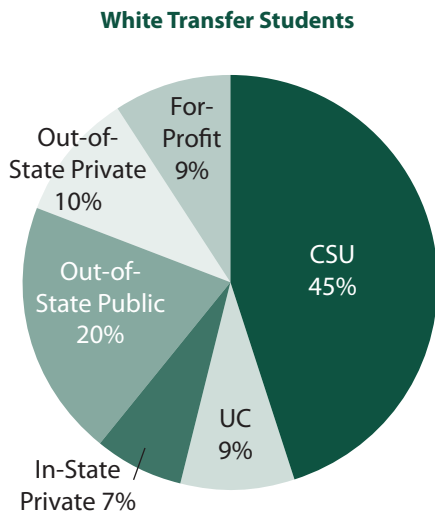
### Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to "Completers" in Sacramento-Tahoe Colleges



### Most Transfer Students in Sacramento-Tahoe Region Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits



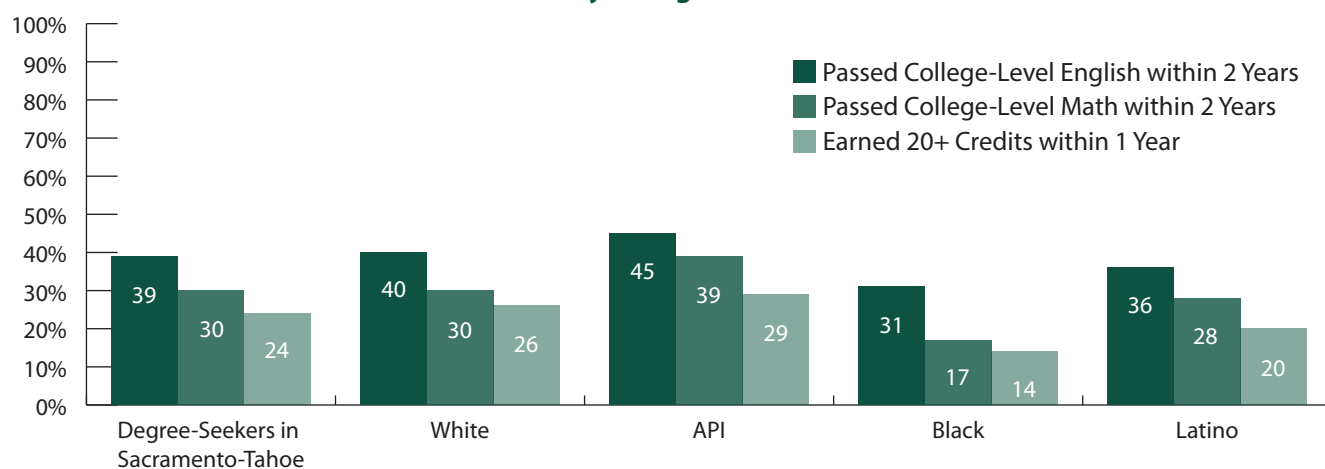
### Transfer Destination of Sacramento-Tahoe Students Varies by Race/Ethnicity



## 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, **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



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](http://www.csus.edu/ihelp)  
[www.collegecampaign.org](http://www.collegecampaign.org)