

DIVIDED WE FAIL:

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

Key Findings by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

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. For purposes of this report, completion is defined as completion of a certificate, associate degree, or transferring to a university within six years.

Why a race/ethnicity and gender lens matters:

- Approximately 8 out of 10 black and Latino college undergraduates in California enroll in a community college; successful outcomes are critical.
- Six years after enrolling, only three in ten students have earned a certificate, associate degree, or transferred to a four-year university. For students of color, these outcomes are even more bleak with only 26% of blacks and 22% of Latinos achieving any of these measures of completion.
- In each of the major racial/ethnic groups, the overall completion rate (of a certificate, degree, or transfer to a university) was higher among female students (29%) than among males (26%).
- "Women's earnings and income increase dramatically when they have college degrees, and completing a four-year college degree sharply reduces women's chances of being poor, from 16.7 percent to 1.6 percent compared with those with only high school education."*

**Shut out: low income mothers and higher education in post-welfare America by Valerie Polakow (2004)*

This additional supplement of the Divided We Fail: Improving Completion and Closing Racial Gaps in California's Community Colleges was produced with support from Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE), The Women's Foundation of California, and The Campaign for College Opportunity, by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy (IHELP).

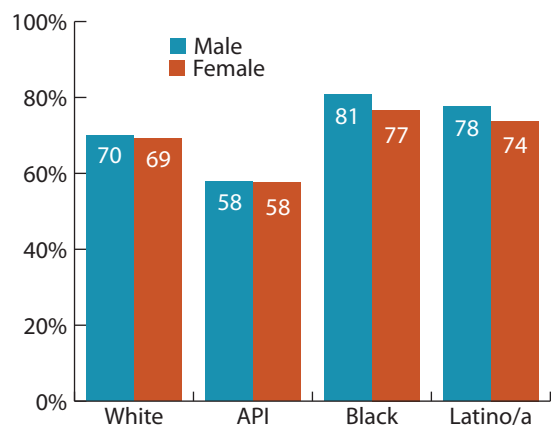




Key Findings by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

- In each of the major racial/ethnic groups, the **overall completion rate** (of a certificate, degree, or transfer to a university) was **higher among female students (29%) than among males (26%)**. The **size of the gender gap in the overall completion rate** was generally similar across racial/ethnic groups, with the completion rate being **about 4 percentage points higher among female students** as compared to male students. **The exception was among black students**, where the overall completion rate for females (27%) was only about one percentage point higher than for males (26%) because the rate of transferring to a university was slightly higher for male students.
- Black and Latino/a transfer students were far more likely than white transfer students to enroll in a for-profit institution. **Black females were the most likely to enroll in a for-profit**, with more than 1 in 5 (22%) black female transfer students doing so. Latino transfer students were the next most likely, with 18% enrolling in a for-profit institution.
- While Latino/a students were the least likely to transfer, Latino/a transfer students were more likely than black or white transfer students to have **completed an associate degree or a 60-credit transfer curriculum** at a community college. Latinas were more likely than their male counterparts to do so. **Black students**, both male and female, **were the most likely to transfer to a university without first completing two years worth of community college credits**.

Majority of California undergraduates enroll in a community college Fall 2009



* API = Asian Pacific Islander

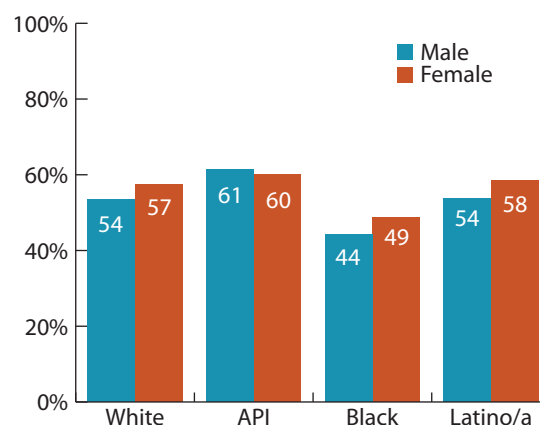
Black males and Latinos are especially likely to enroll in a California Community College (81% and 78% respectively). Black females and Latinas also attend at very high rates (77% and 74% of undergraduates, respectively).

Latino/as are projected to make up more than half (51%) of the college-age population by 2015.

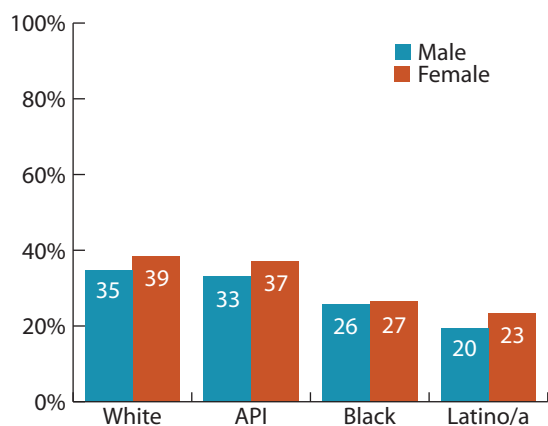
Retention rates to the second year were lowest for black males, followed by black females. For both, fewer than 50% of students returned the second year.

White and Latino students had about the same 2nd year retention rate.

Many students do not come back the 2nd year



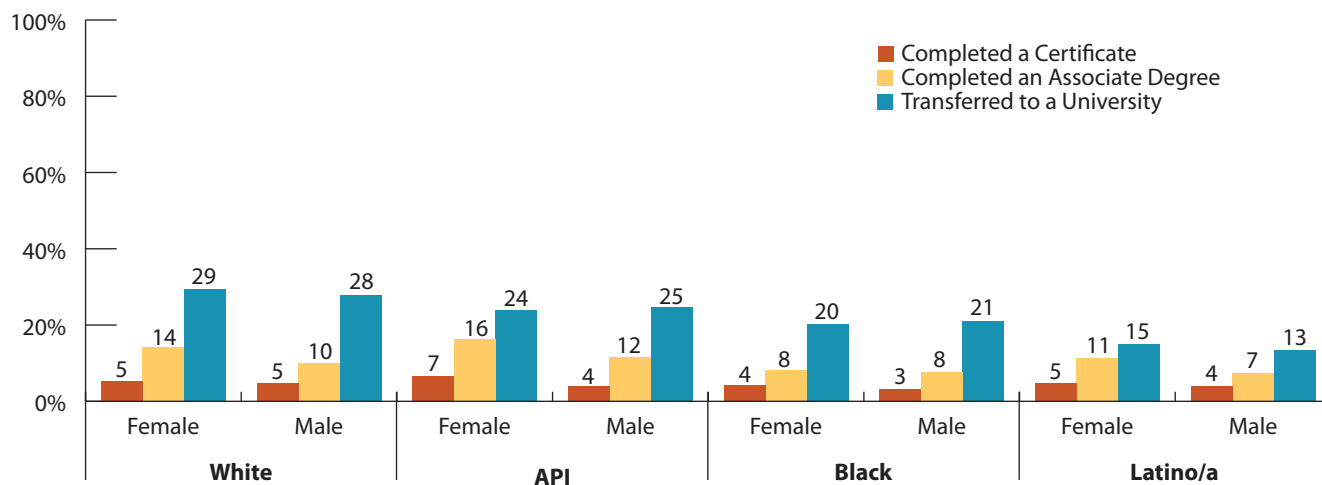
After six years, overall completion rates were poor across all racial/ethnic groups



Only 27% of black females and 23% of Latinas completed a certificate, associate degree, or transferred to a university within six years, compared to 39% of white females. Similarly, 26% of black males and 20% of Latinos completed, compared to 35% of white males.

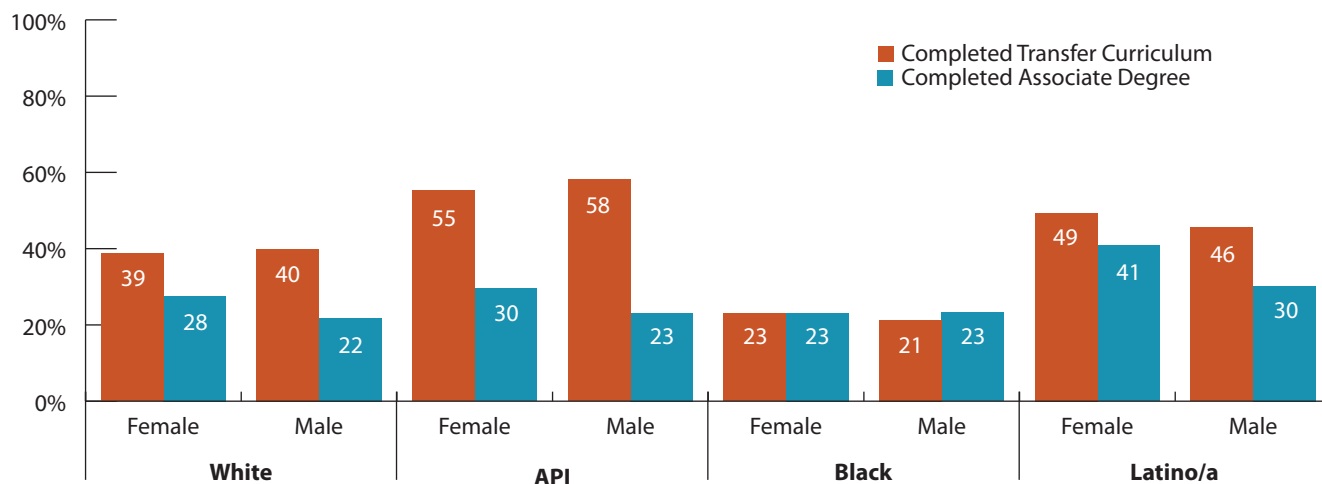
Among specific measures of completion, success rates were again similar among males and females within racial/ethnic groups, but disparities existed when comparing the groups against one another. The only notable difference between genders is for associate degree completion, in which females in all racial/ethnic groups, except blacks, complete at higher rates than males.

Rates of Completion of a Certificate, Associate Degree, or Transfer to a University
by Race and Gender



Although black students were more likely to transfer to a university than Latino/as, they were significantly less likely to have completed a transfer curriculum or an associate degree before doing so than all other groups. This is likely due to the higher rates of transfer to for-profit or out-of-state insititutions.

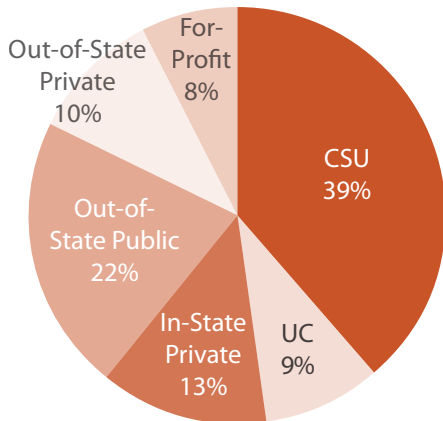
Completion of Transfer Curriculum or Associate Degree Before Transfer by Race and Gender



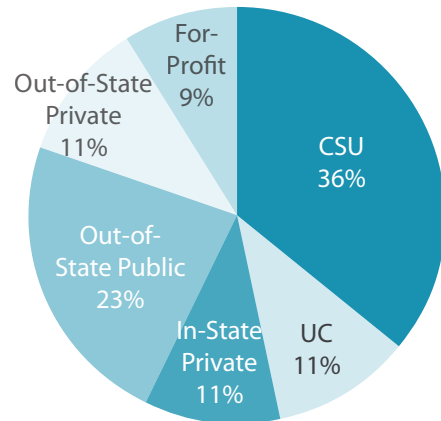
Across all groups, less than half completed a transfer curriculum, except for APIs. Even fewer transfer students complete an associate degree before leaving the CCC. While Latino/a students completed a transfer curriculum at a rate about twice that of black students, and at rates significantly higher than white students, most students still transferred without completing two years of credits.

Transfer destination varies by race/ethnicity and gender

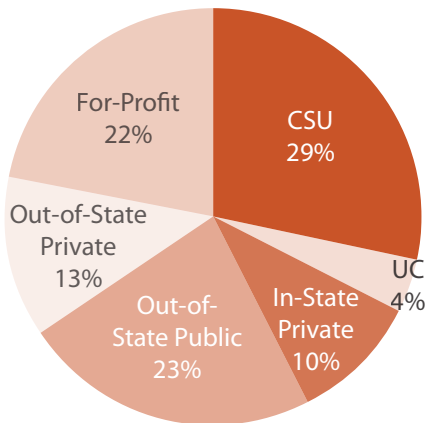
White Female Transfer Students



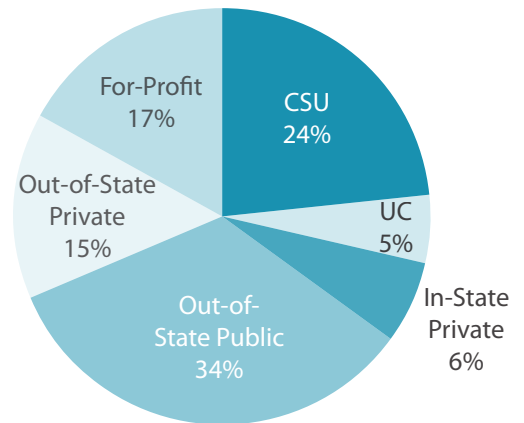
White Male Transfer Students



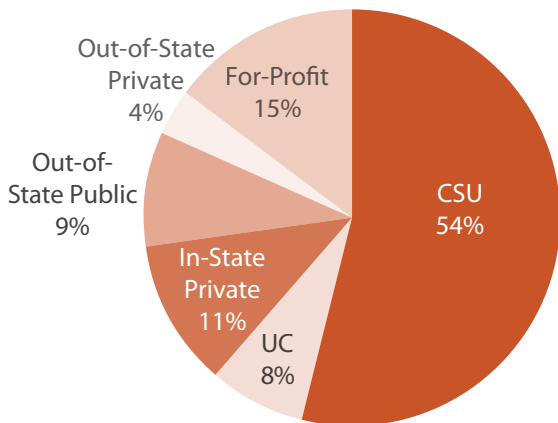
Black Female Transfer Students



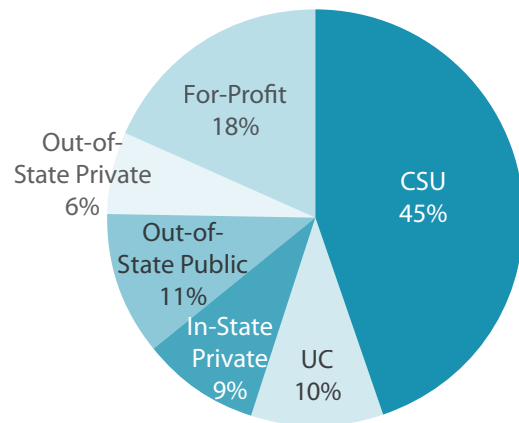
Black Male Transfer Students



Latina (female) Transfer Students

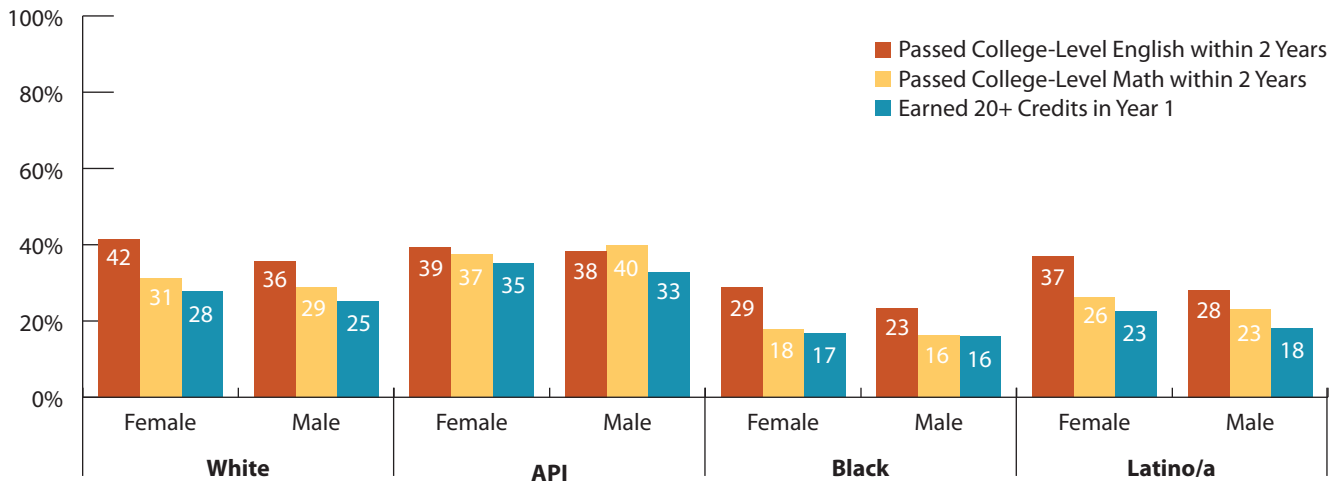


Latino (male) Transfer Students



While the transfer destinations of white males and females mirrored each other, there were gender differences to be found among black and Latino transfer students. Black students, in particular, transfer out-of-state at significantly higher rates than all other groups. At 49%, black male students are the most likely to transfer out-of-state, followed by their female counterparts at 36%. Among Latino/as, 54% of Latinas transferred to the CSU system compared to 45% of Latinos. Black females were the most likely to transfer to a for-profit institution (22%), a rate almost three times that of white females (8%), higher than Latinas (15%), and 5 percentage points higher than their male counterparts.

Too few students follow successful enrollment patterns



Particular enrollment patterns, such as passing college-level math and English within 2 years, or earning at least 20 credits within the first year, are associated with greater student success. Unfortunately, too few students followed these successful enrollment patterns, particularly black students.

Black females passed college-level English within the first two years at a rate of only 29%, significantly lower than white females at 42% and Latinas at 37%. Similarly, black males passed college-level English at a rate of 23%, compared to 36% of white males and 28% of Latinos. Black males and females completed college-level math and at least 20 credits within the recommended time frames at rates similar to one another, but still much lower than their white, API, and Latino peers.



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 statewide report and 13 regional profiles can be accessed at:

www.csus.edu/ihelp

www.collegecampaign.org