Percentage of first-time credential-seeking Achieving the Dream students who enrolled in a gatekeeper English course within three years, by student demographic and enrollment characteristics.
What Is Measured?
Percentage of students who enrolled in a gateway English course within three years

Who Is Counted?

What It Tells Us
Overall, about one-half (51 percent) of students enrolled in a gatekeeper English course within three years. Enrollment rates were higher among students 22 or younger (59 percent) than students 23-29 (35 percent) or students 30 or older (29 percent). Students who initially attended full time enrolled in a gatekeeper English course at a higher rate (63 percent) than students who initially attended half time (45 percent) or less than half time (22 percent). Enrollment rates were lower among students who were referred to developmental English than among students who were not (45 percent vs. 53 percent).

Why It’s Important
A gatekeeper course is the first or lowest-level college-level course students take in a subject such as mathematics, reading, or writing, often following completion of one or more developmental courses in that subject. Most certificate, degree, and transfer programs require students to pass gatekeeper courses in one or more subjects. Yet the largest obstacle to passing gatekeeper courses seems to be that students do not enroll in them. One study found that only 63 percent of those who finished developmental mathematics and 72 percent who finished developmental reading enrolled in gatekeeper courses for those subjects within three years of starting college. However, of those who did enroll, 79 percent passed gatekeeper mathematics and 75 percent passed gatekeeper reading (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010).

ABOUT THE DATA
Gatekeeper courses: colleges chose their own “gatekeeper” courses, but the term was formally defined in the data gathering instructions to the colleges as the first college-level courses the student must take after remediation. Gatekeeper enrollment was reported by the institutions.


DATA SOURCE