MOMENTUM
FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE IN FIRST YEAR: ACHIEVING THE DREAM

What Is Measured?
Percentage of students enrolled full time

Who Is Counted?
All degree-seeking students who entered Achieving the Dream community colleges between 2002 and 2006

What It Tells Us
Between 2002 and 2006, about half (52 percent) of students at Achieving the Dream community colleges enrolled full time for their first term. However, just 31 percent remained enrolled full time for the whole year.

Why It’s Important
Community college students who enroll full time during their first term are more likely to persist and eventually complete their program or transfer (Calvagno et al., 2006; Clery, 2010, figure 4). By definition, full-time students attempt more credits than part-time students, so they are better able to earn a substantial number of credits during their first year (another measure of Progress). Not all students who enroll full time in their first term will enroll full time in all subsequent terms, but those who enroll exclusively full time are more likely to earn a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor’s degree than those who enroll part time for at least one term (Skomsvold, Radford, & Berkner, 2011, table 2.1-B).

ABOUT THE DATA
Full-time students: include students attempting 12 credits or more.

Degree-seeking students: include students seeking a credential, such as a degree or certificate.

"Full-year attendance" was defined as attending all terms during the regular academic year. For quarter systems, students had to enroll during the fall, winter, and spring terms to be defined as full-year; for semester systems, students had to enroll during both the fall and spring terms. Summer terms and mid-winter short terms were not included.

DATA SOURCE