MOMENTUM
COMPLETION OF COURSES ATTEMPTED: CALIFORNIA

Course completion rates for California Community College students in spring 2011

GENDER

AGE

RACE/ETHNICITY
What Is Measured?
Percentage of courses completed

Who Is Counted?
Number of course enrollments in California Community Colleges in spring 2011

What It Tells Us
California Community College students enrolled in over four million courses in spring 2011 and successfully completed approximately 68 percent of them. Women completed a slightly higher proportion of courses than did men (69 percent vs. 67 percent), and students 25 or older completed a higher proportion of courses (72 percent) than students 20 to 24 (65 percent) and students 19 or younger (66 percent). Asian American students had the highest rate of course completion among racial/ethnic groups (73 percent), while African American students had the lowest rate (54 percent). Among types of courses attempted, students passed health courses at the highest rate (84 percent) and STEM courses at the lowest rate (63 percent).

Why It’s Important
Students who complete all the courses they attempt avoid having to repeat coursework, accumulate credits faster, and take less time to attain a credential or transfer than students who fail to complete some courses. Incomplete courses may result from a failing grade or withdrawal. Multiple studies have found that excessive course withdrawals may reduce the likelihood of completion and transfer (Adelman, 2005, tables 32 and 33; Cabrera, Burkum, & La Nasa, 2005; Chen, 2005).

ABOUT THE DATA
Estimates are generated by Data Mart, a web-based reporting tool of the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems, and are updated periodically. The course “success rate” is the percentage of courses in which the student earned a passing grade (A, B, C, or Credit/Pass) out of essentially all courses attempted.

DATA SOURCE