MOMENTUM
CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT: CALIFORNIA

Percentage of first-time degree-seeking California Community College students who maintained continuous enrollment

What Is Measured?
Percentage of students continuously enrolled

Who Is Counted?
First-time degree-seeking California Community College students enrolled in 2000-01

What It Tells Us
Among first-time degree-seeking California Community College students enrolled in 2000-01, less than half (40 percent) maintained continuous enrollment during the period between 2000-01 and 2006-07.

Why It’s Important
Students who enroll continuously in community college are more likely to complete an associate degree (Adelman, 2005, table 33), transfer to a four-year institution (Adelman, 2005, table 32), and earn a bachelor's degree (Skomsvold, Radford, & Berkner, 2011, table 2.1-B) than students who do not enroll, or “stop out,” for a significant period of time. Continuous enrollment is usually defined as enrollment every consecutive term exclusive of summer terms (Clery, 2010, note 7) or enrollment with no break greater than four months (Skomsvold, Radford, & Berkner, 2011, p. G8), though some research allows a break of up to one semester (Adelman, 2005, p. 85). Students who stop out are not earning credits during their absence and may find it difficult to resume their momentum in community college afterward.

ABOUT THE DATA
Degree-seeking students: include students who enrolled in more than six units during their first year.

Continuous enrollment is defined in the original source as enrollment without periods of stopouts. However, the period of enrollment is not defined and may vary for students.

Estimates are from student records data available in the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems. The results are based on students whole enrolled in one or more credit-bearing course and more than a total of six units during the 2000-01 academic year, excluding noncredit students and students concurrently enrolled in high school.

DATA SOURCE