Percentage of first-time degree-seeking Virginia Community College students entering in 1999 who persisted, by age and enrollment status

**CURRENT ENROLLMENT STATUS**

**AGE**

**ENROLLMENT STATUS**

What Is Measured?
Percentage of students still enrolled without a degree who have earned 30 or more credits

Who Is Counted?
First-time degree-seeking students who entered Virginia Community Colleges in 1999

What It Tells Us
Among first-time degree-seeking students enrolled in Virginia Community Colleges in 1999, about 3 percent had not attained a degree but were still enrolled six years later. By comparison, over one-third of students (35 percent) had earned a certificate, associate degree, or transferred.

Why It’s Important
Traditionally, students must study full time for two years in community college to earn an associate degree or complete a lower-division curriculum for transfer to a four-year college (and usually less than one year to earn a certificate). But less than half of community college students enroll full time in their first term (Offenstein & Shulock, 2009), and even fewer enroll full time for two consecutive years (Clery, 2010). Because many part-time students enroll less than half time, and most must take at least one developmental education course that does not count toward a degree or transfer, some have argued that even six years is not sufficiently long for community students to meet their educational goals (Moltz, 2011). This measure represents the proportion of community college students who were not able to complete or transfer within six years but still may do so.

ABOUT THE DATA
Still enrolled students: include students enrolled in the fall, spring, or summer semester and who had earned at least 30 credits.

Degree-seeking students: include students who selected a certificate, diploma, or associate degree program of study during their initial registration or enrollment process.

Full-time students: include students taking at least four-fifths of a full course load in their first term, equivalent to at least 12 out of 15 units.

Part-time students: include students who did not meet the criteria for full-time enrollment.

Estimates are based on data collected during the initial registration enrollment process. Certificate programs vary in length and include short Career Studies Certificates (CSC) requiring 9 to 29 credit hours as well as longer-term certificates that require at least 30 credit hours. CSC completers who earned their certificate during their first year in college are not included. Students who did not identify their program of study are also excluded.

DATA SOURCE