TRANSFER AND COMPLETION
AVERAGE NUMBER OF CREDITS TO AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE: VIRGINIA

Average number of credits earned toward degree by first-time degree-seeking students who entered Virginia Community Colleges in 2008-09

What Is Measured?
Average number of credits earned toward degree

Who Is Counted?
First-time degree-seeking Virginia Community College students who completed an associate degree in 2008-09

What It Tells Us
First-time Virginia Community College students who completed an associate degree in 2008-09 earned more credits on average than the 60 that are typically required. Those who were initially enrolled full time earned on average almost 77 credits from their first institution, while those enrolled part time earned about 74 credits.

Why It’s Important
Typically, an associate degree requires 60 semester credit hours (credits) of college-level coursework or the equivalent, which requires two academic years of full-time enrollment to complete. The course requirements for certificates range widely, from less than 10 credits to more than 60 credits, and many certificate programs are measured in terms of clock or contact hours rather than credits (Bosworth, 2010). Earning credits in excess of the program requirements may represent additional effort and learning above and beyond the bare minimum, but it also means that students and colleges are expending scarce resources on courses that do not count toward a certificate or degree.

ABOUT THE DATA
Data were collected from Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) participating states. Estimates from institutions identified by SREB as technical institutes or colleges may not be included due to their offerings of short-term programs. Data from community colleges were restricted to associate degree completers. Data shown in the figure include only those who completed an associate degree from the institution in which they first enrolled; transfer students are not included.

To calculate average credits earned, participating states and institutions counted the attempted credits for all terms in which a student was enrolled. Transfer, AP, and IB credits were not included.

DATA SOURCE