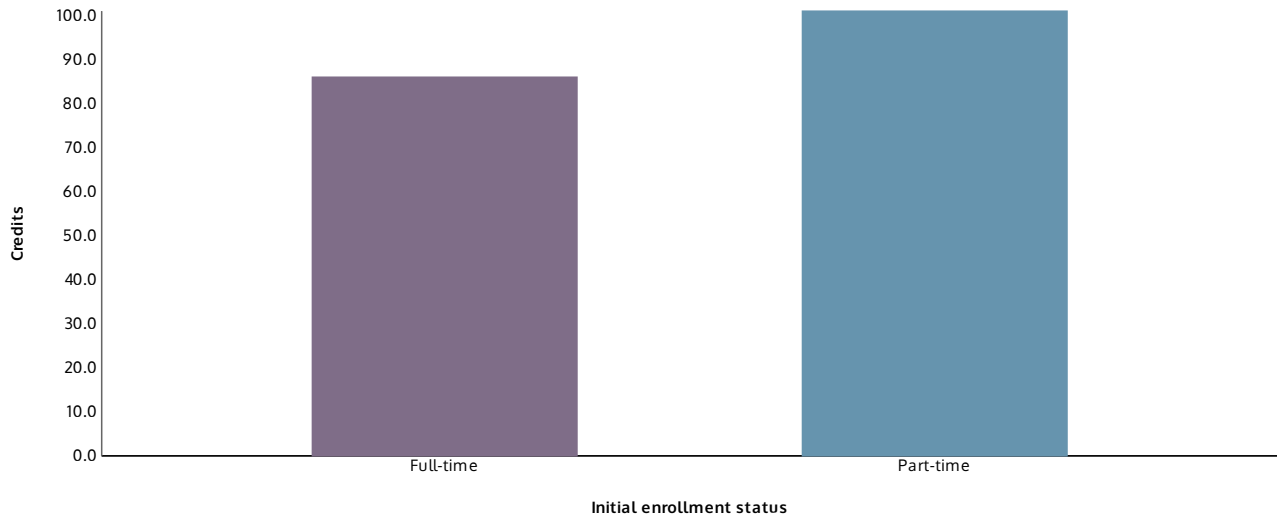


TRANSFER AND COMPLETION

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CREDITS TO A CERTIFICATE AND AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE: SOUTH DAKOTA

Average credits to a certificate and an associate degree in South Dakota Community Colleges



What Is Measured?

Average number of college credits earned from initial enrollment to completion of an associate degree

Who Is Counted?

South Dakota Community College students, including transfer students, who completed an associate degree in 2007-08

What It Tells Us

The average number of credits to complete an associate degree was 101 for part-time students and 86 for full-time students.

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

Certificates: include postsecondary programs that are equivalent in length to at least one academic year for full-time students or equivalent to 30 semester/trimester credit hours, 45 quarter credit hours, or 900 clock or contact hours.

Time elapsed to completion: calculated starting from a student's first enrollment in any postsecondary institution.

Full-time status: defined as enrollment in at least 12 semester or quarter credits or at least 24 contact hours per week at time of entry. Part-time status is defined as less than 12 semester or quarter credits or less than 24 contact hours per week at time of entry.

Results may include some associate degrees earned at four-year institutions and may exclude students with a break in enrollment in excess of five years.

DATA SOURCE

Complete College America. (2011, September). *Time is the enemy*. Washington, DC: Author.

Complete College America. (2011, March). *Common college completion metrics technical guide*. Washington, DC: Author.

