Strengthening California’s Transfer Pathway

September 12, 2023

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Supported with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Sutton Family Fund
Strengthening California’s transfer pathway is as important as ever

- California depends heavily on transfer
- California’s community colleges (CCC) are the primary access point to higher education for underrepresented students
- Transfer is crucial to increasing the supply of bachelor’s degrees
Challenges in the Transfer Pathway
Substantial increases in transfer enrollment were stifled during the pandemic

Number of fall California community college transfers
Gains in transfer enrollment at CSU have been driven by large growth among Latino students

Racial/ethnic breakdown of California community college transfer enrollees at CSU
Latinos are still significantly underrepresented among UC transfers

Racial/ethnic breakdown of California community college transfer enrollees at UC
Regional disparities persist in transfer enrollment at UC

- For CSU, geographic distribution of transfers is in line with community college enrollment
- For UC, the Bay Area is highly overrepresented
  - Shares of transfers from the San Joaquin Valley and Inland Empire are substantially lower than community college population
Despite recent gains, transfer rates remain low systemwide

Share of transfer-intending students who transfer by CCC entering cohort

- 2015
- 2016
- 2017
- 2018
- 2019
- 2020

![Bar chart showing the share of transfer-intending students who transfer by CCC entering cohort over different years and time periods (2 years, 3 years, 4 years, 5 years, 6 years). The chart compares the transfer rates across these years, with the highest rates occurring in the 6th year.]
Trends in Academic Journeys of Successful Transfer Students
An increasing share of successful transfer students took two years or less to transfer

Share of successful transfer students transferring in 2 years by CCC transfer cohort
Other positive trends are emerging among recent transfer students

Share of successful transfer students by CCC transfer cohort

- Earned an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT): 21% (2015-2016), 45% (2021-2022)
- Completed TL English & math in first year: 15% (2015-2016), 30% (2021-2022)
- Enrolled in community college in high school: 14% (2015-2016), 18% (2021-2022)
More work is needed to understand who is transferring where, and who is not transferring

- Students who transfer to UC have unique demographic characteristics and course-taking trajectories
- Many popular out-of-state transfer destinations have large online programs
- Over a quarter of ADT earners do not end up transferring
Conclusions

- Recent legislation and initiatives have broadened and streamlined transfer pathways (e.g., ADT, TAG, AB 705)

- But more work is needed:
  - CSU and UC must increase outreach and widen transfer pathways
  - CCC must reduce barriers that prevent progress to transfer
  - Continual collaboration between institutions will be key
Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.