

# What Happens When Colleges Broaden Access to Transfer-Level Courses?

Evidence from California Community Colleges

October 8, 2019

Marisol Cuellar Mejia, Olga Rodriguez, and Hans Johnson

Supported with funding from the California Acceleration Project  
and the Sutton Family Fund



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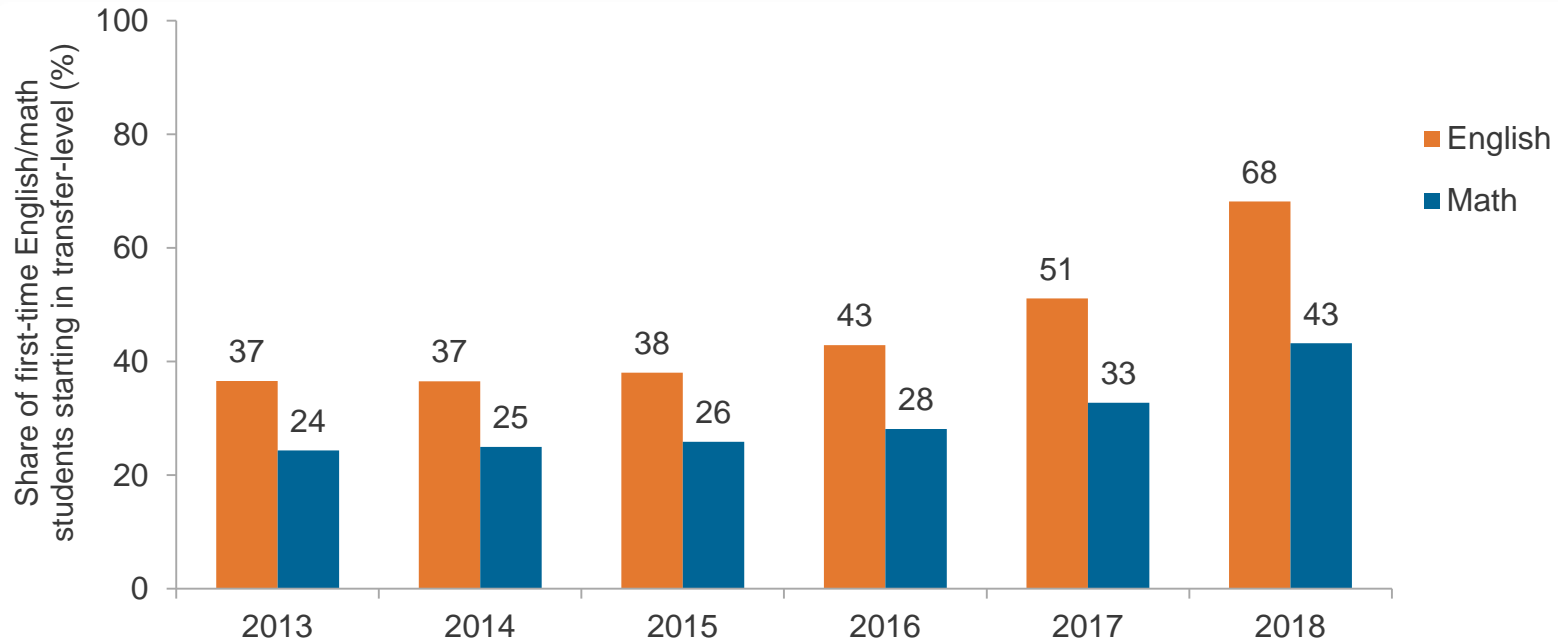
25 YEARS

# Community colleges are changing the way they assess college readiness and deliver remedial support

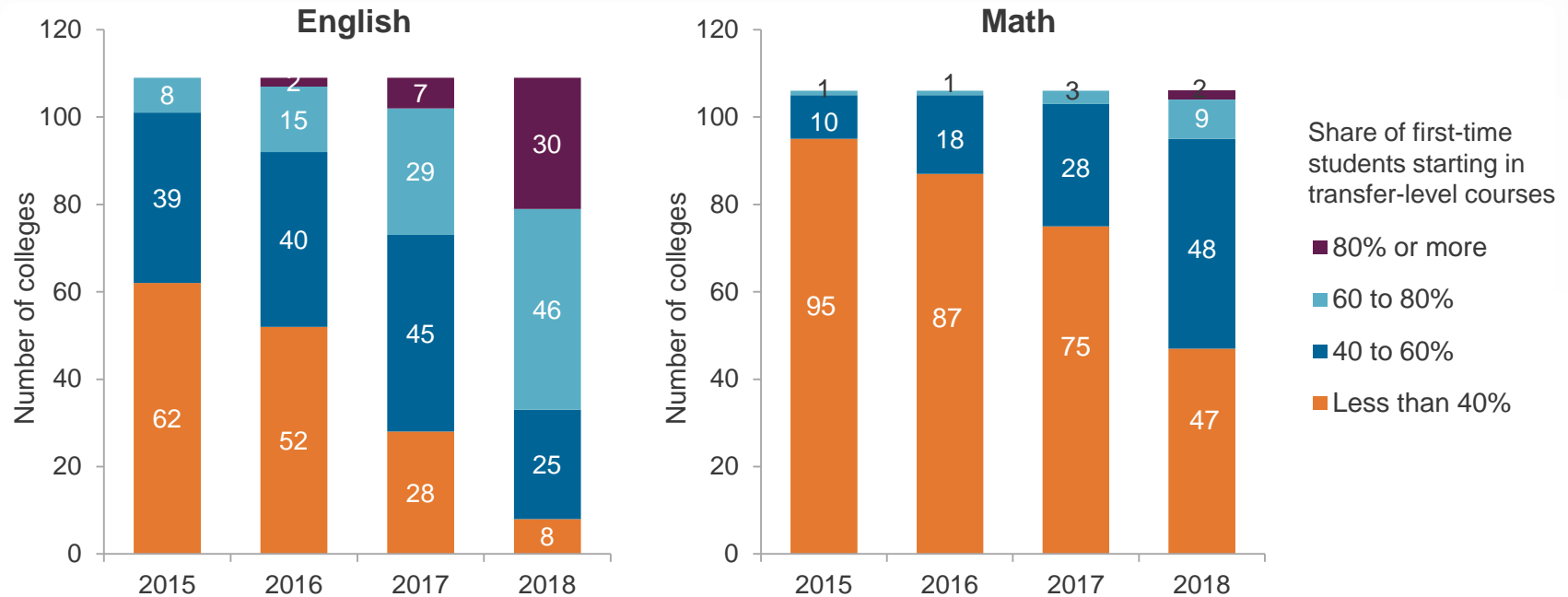
- Remedial education has been a stumbling block for community college students seeking degrees or transfers to four-year schools
- Landmark legislation (AB 705) was enacted to address this challenge
  - Instead of relying on standardized placement tests, colleges are required to factor in student performance in high school
  - Most students will start in transfer-level courses with or without concurrent remediation (mostly in the form of co-requisite courses)
- Colleges that significantly broadened access to transfer-level courses in recent years can shed light on AB 705's potential impact



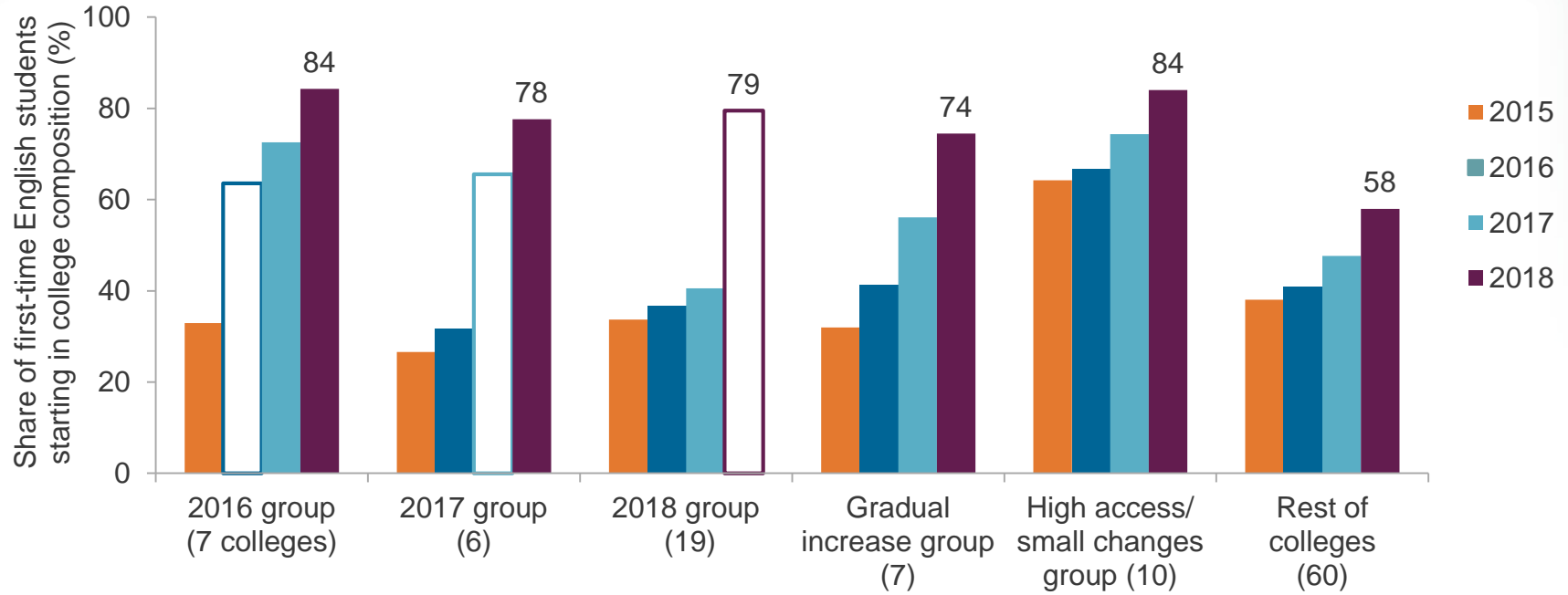
# Access to transfer-level courses has increased substantially, especially in English



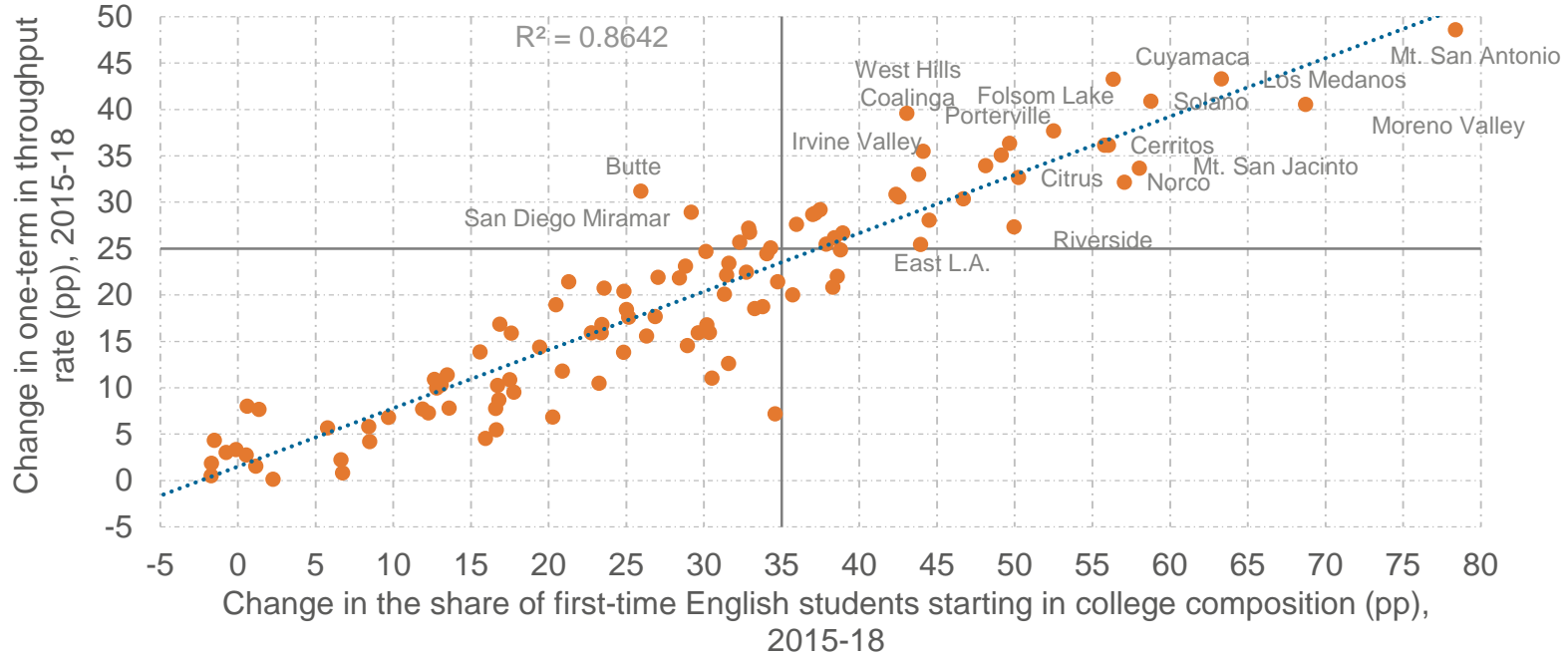
# Increased access has been unevenly distributed across colleges



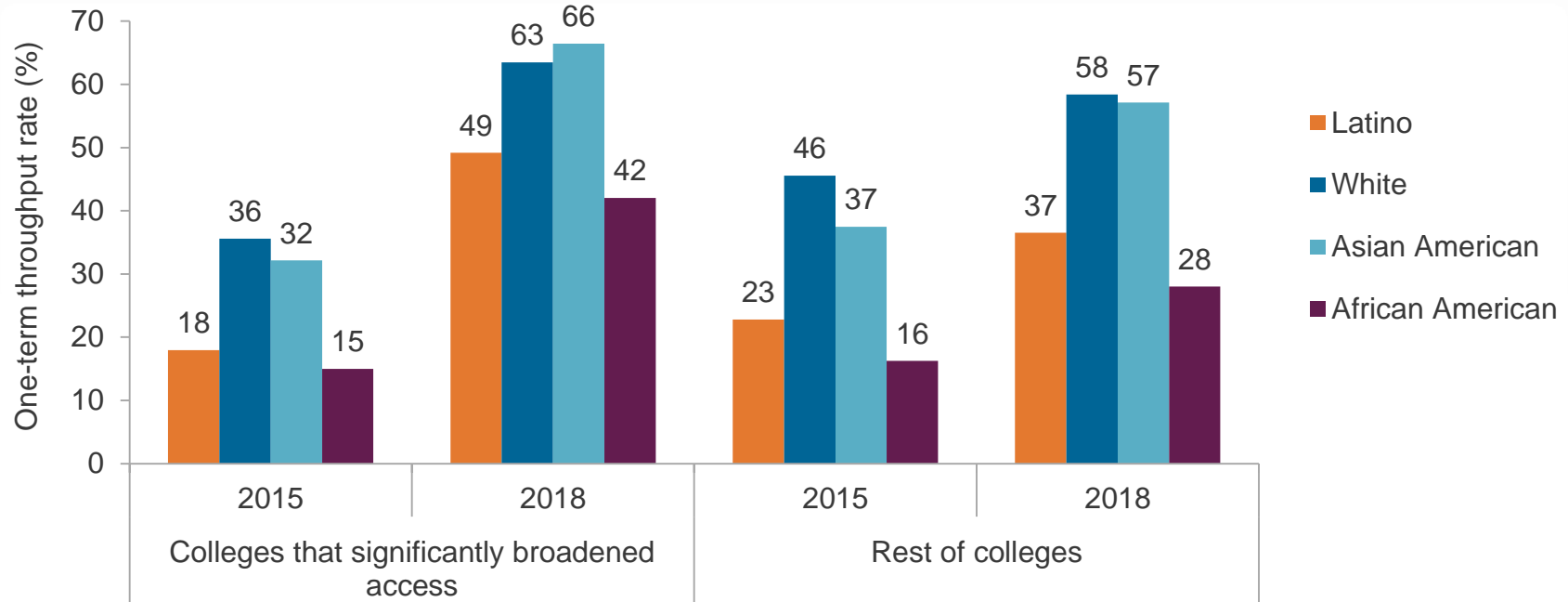
# 39 colleges significantly broadened access in English



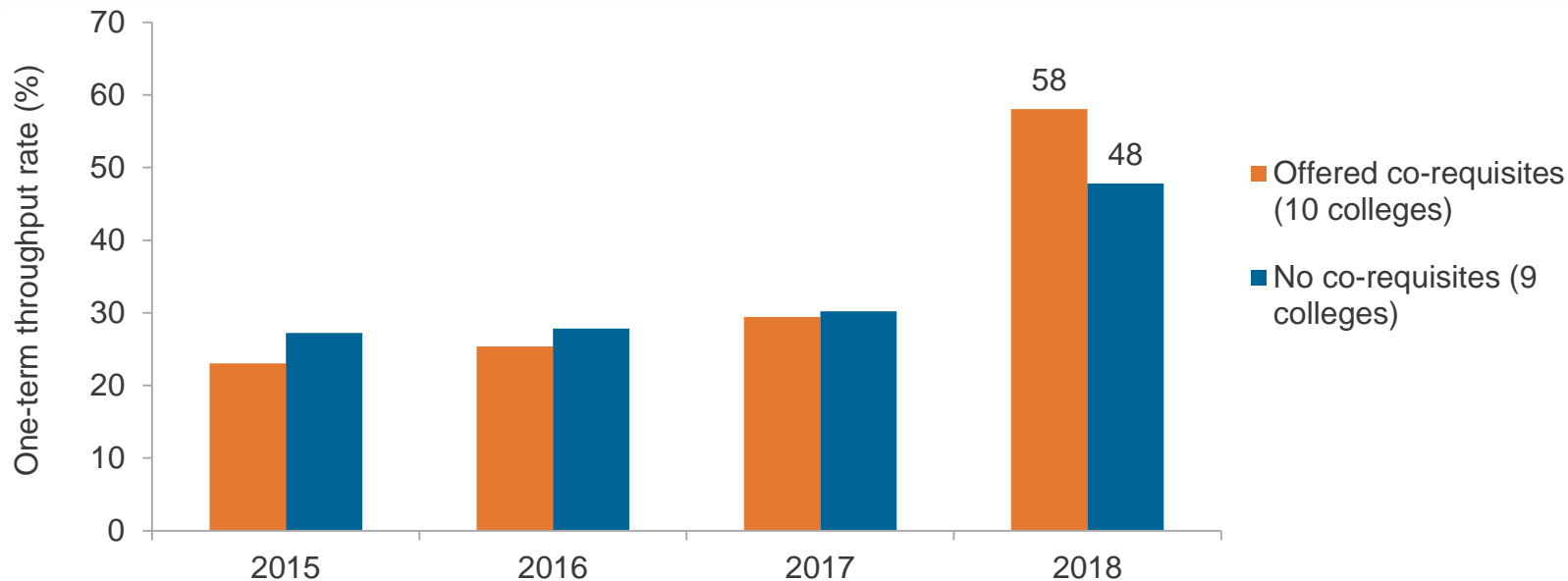
# Increases in access led to increased completion



# Students in all racial/ethnic groups are completing college composition at higher rates



# Increases in completion were greater at colleges that offered co-requisite courses

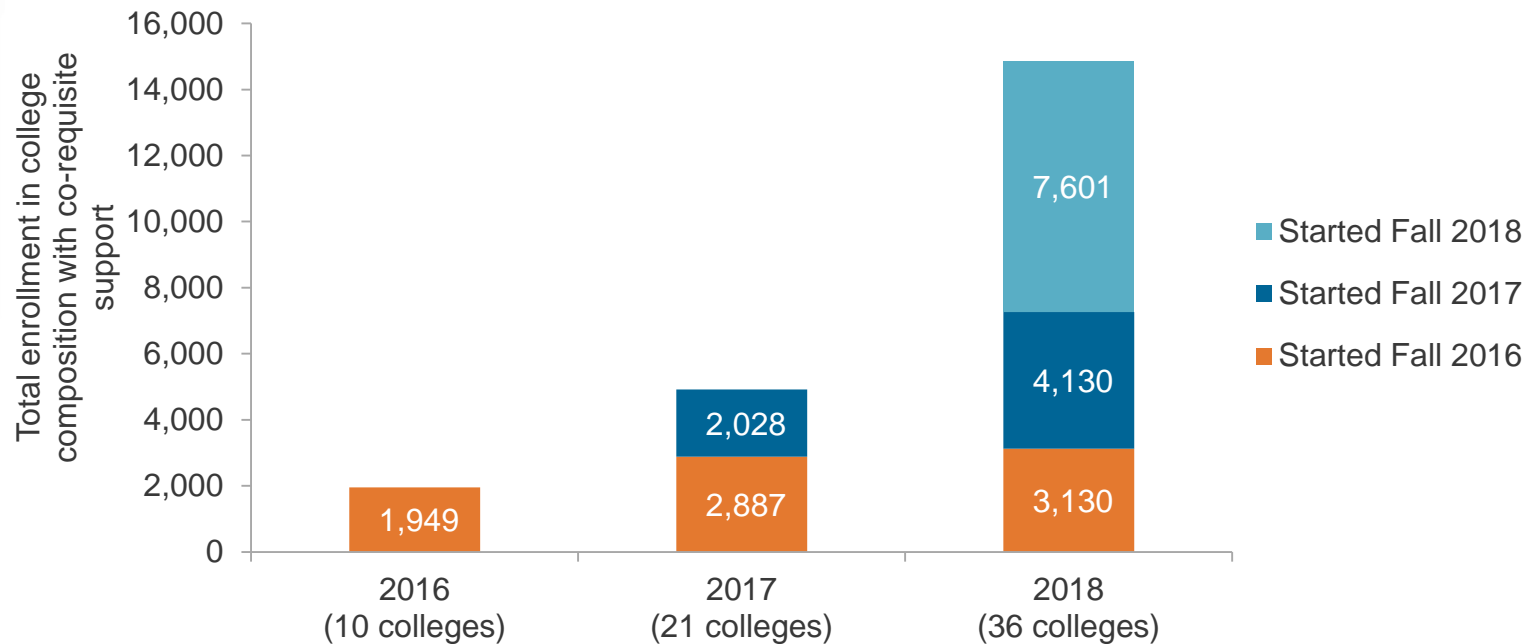


Note: Sample restricted to the group of 19 colleges that broadened access in fall 2018. 19,000 students versus 13,000.

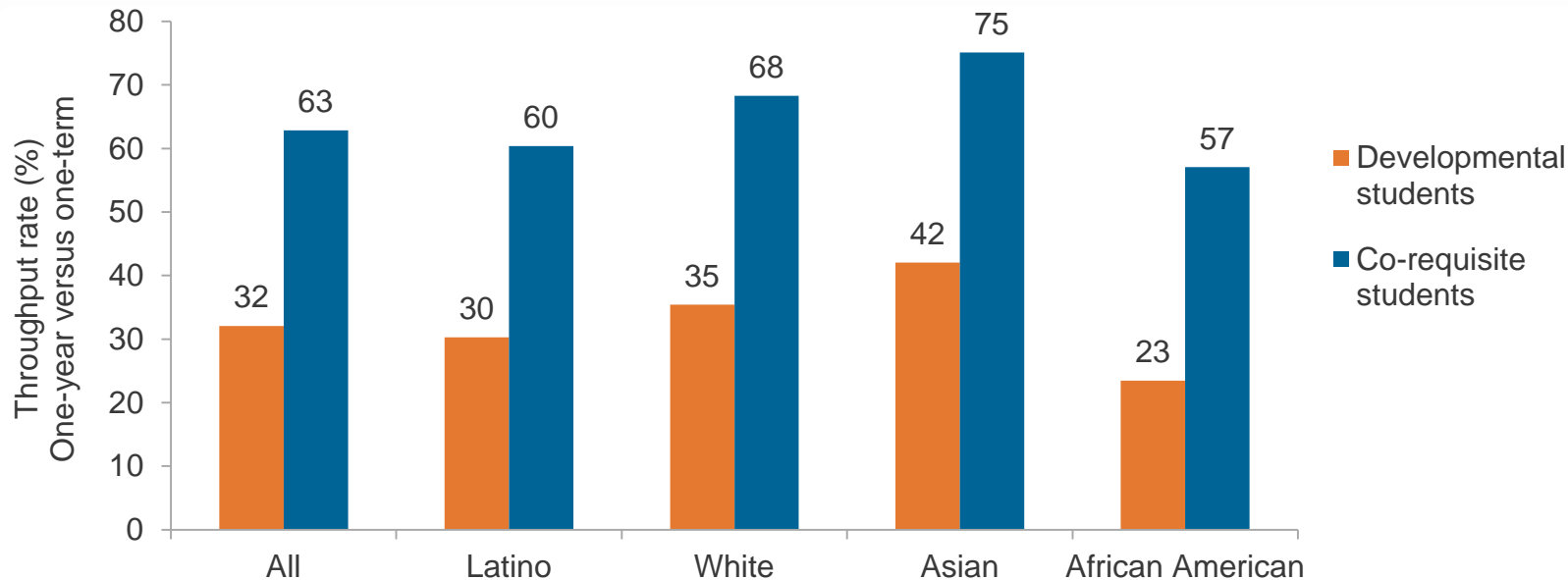




# About one in three colleges offered college composition with co-requisite support in fall 2018



# Co-requisite students had higher completion rates than students who started in developmental courses



Note: 27 colleges with cohorts sizes above 100 students. Compares 20,325 first-time remedial students in fall 2017 versus 7,605 first-time co-requisite students in fall 2018.



# Moving forward, evaluation will be critical

- Equity should be at the heart of reforms
- More research is needed to identify effective co-requisites
- Struggling students may need additional support
- Ongoing support, transparency, and accountability are 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:

Marisol Cuellar Mejia ([cuellar@ppic.org](mailto:cuellar@ppic.org); 916-440-1135)

Olga Rodriguez ([rodriguez@ppic.org](mailto:rodriguez@ppic.org); 415-291-4457)

Hans Johnson ([johnson@ppic.org](mailto:johnson@ppic.org); 415-291-4460)

Thank you for your interest in this work.



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