

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

Complete College America Common College Completion Metrics Technical Guide

Updated February 3, 2012 for the 2011-12 Data Collection Managed by SHEEO

Note: Technical guide may be periodically updated to reflect improvements to the instructions as states collect data and work through the metrics

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Introduction

This *Technical Guide* describes the concepts, data elements and definitions supporting the Common College Completion Metrics adopted by Complete College America (CCA). The goal of this guide is to increase consistency and commonality across states in reporting benchmark data and measuring future progress. These metrics are intended to be publicly reported by the state with data collected from all **public postsecondary institutions** in the state. Beginning with the 2011-12 data collection, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) will perform data collection and warehousing operations on behalf of Complete College America.

Data Collection and Common Metrics Reporting

States with unit record systems may use their system- or state-level data to construct the metrics for reporting purposes.

States without complete or any unit record systems may collect these data by requesting them from the colleges and universities in a way that allows for aggregation at the state level and used in constructing the metrics. These states should begin the process of adding the additional data elements to their unit record systems as soon as possible.

All states are encouraged to supplement their data through the National Student Clearinghouse (to provide more accuracy in respect to transfer students within the state).

Origination, Purpose, and Guiding Principles

On July 27-28, 2009, Complete College America, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) hosted a Data/Metrics Convening in Denver, Colorado to discuss a common core set of metrics in the area of college completion. In May 2010, the National Governors Association convened a group of state and national experts to further refine the metrics. The metrics contained within this *Technical Guide* reflect the major conclusions reached at these two convenings.

As a basis for the collective work, individuals involved in the development of the common completion metrics strongly endorsed the following statement of purpose. The purpose of the metrics is to:

- **Inform** - help policymakers and the general public understand how students (particularly historically underserved, low-income, and minority young adults), institutions of higher education, and the state are doing on college completion;
- **Analyze** - help policymakers and institutions of higher education identify specific challenges and opportunities for improvement;
- **Show Progress** - establish a fair baseline and show progress over time; and
- **Hold Accountable** - hold students, institutions of higher education, and the state accountable to the general public and to policymakers investing taxpayer dollars in higher education.

Additionally, the initial working group identified a set of guiding principles to contextualize, prioritize, and guide the implementation of the metrics. These principles are:

1. The data on which the metrics are based must be collected uniformly, allowing for comparisons across states and, whenever possible, across institutions of higher education.
2. The metrics should be capable of being disaggregated by subpopulations (by age, race, gender, income) and by the value or type of degree or credential, in order to continuously assess the equity of postsecondary opportunity.
3. The initial set of metrics should be capable of being constructed from readily available data. While data systems should improve over time, the urgent need to improve college completion necessitates utilizing currently available data to measure progress.
4. The quantity of metrics implemented should be carefully balanced to reflect a focus on data that connect most clearly to completion rates.
5. The metrics should help to identify barriers to student achievement and provide guidance as to actions that might be taken to improve student success. This means that progression (intermediate) as well as outcome (completion) metrics should be included. It also means that metrics should be disaggregated by and allow for comparison among institutions of higher education.
6. Priority should be placed on measuring improvement over time.
7. The metrics should be transparent and publicly reported.
8. The metrics should be constructed in a manner that minimizes the potential for unintended negative consequences.

Outcomes, Progress, and Context

The common metrics are organized in three categories:

1. Outcome Metrics;
2. Progress Metrics; and
3. Context Metrics.

The Outcome Metrics quantify the end product of the educational process, mainly the completion of an undergraduate academic program, and additionally for community colleges, the successful transfer of students to a baccalaureate campus.

The Progress Metrics measure student progress from semester-to-semester or year-to-year toward the completion of an undergraduate academic program. Such metrics allow institutions of higher education the ability to track student progression in a way that allows for early intervention and support to increase the likelihood of a successful completion or transfer outcome.

The Context Metrics tell the broader story of how the state is doing on college completion. These metrics allow state policymakers to understand both college completion outcomes relative to growth in enrollment and the overall effectiveness of their higher education system in increasing educational attainment of the state's citizens.

Significantly increasing college completion will require closing the gaps in success rates for low-income and minority students and ensuring the success of targeted sub-groups such as adults, transfer students, part-time students, and students who required remedial education. The metrics also should facilitate measuring progress on a state's specific postsecondary goals, such as increasing the number of graduates in STEM or health fields. To understand and track improvement, outcome and progression metrics must be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, income (Pell Grant recipients), age group, student attendance status, transfer versus native-to-the-institution students, degree type, and discipline. States also may wish to flag within their data systems those students who graduated from high schools within the state ("in-state" students).

For all of these metrics, the standard rule of non-disclosure of personally identifiable information applies. States and institutions should not publicly report disaggregated data that pertain to a sample size (N) of 10 or fewer students.

OUTCOME METRICS

Outcome Metric 1: Degree Production

Purpose: To determine how many undergraduate degrees and certificates the state's system of postsecondary education and its public colleges and universities are awarding annually, and to measure change over time.

Definition: Annual number of certificates or diplomas of less than 1 academic year (of economic value, with industry certification or licensure), at least 1 academic year but less than 2 academic years, and at least 2 academic years but less than 4 academic years in length, associate's degrees, and bachelor's degrees awarded; disaggregated by age group, gender, race/ethnicity, Pell status (at any time), remedial status (at any time), and discipline.

See definitions of Data Elements and Disaggregation Categories on page 20 for more information on the disaggregation specified throughout this guide

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

For the 2011-12 data collection, data collected are from 2004-05 and 2008-09.

Degree production should be reported for the state and for each public institution of higher education within the state as appropriate. Each type of award should be reported and displayed individually.

Data should be unduplicated at the institution or state level to show only the highest degree earned by a student in a given year. This metric is not a calculation of cohort survival rate.

Outcome Metric 2: Graduation Rates

Purpose: To determine the rate at which students graduate from a public institution of higher education.

Definition: Number and percentage of entering undergraduate students who graduate from a degree or certificate program within 100%, 150%, and 200% of normal program time. Disaggregated by degree/credential type, institution type (two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year), and by race/ethnicity, gender, age group, Pell status (at time of entry), and remedial status (at time of entry).

1. Certificates (of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years in program length):

a. First-time, full-time certificate-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 100%, 150%, and 200% of the expected (full-time) program length (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time, full-time certificate-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is full-time.

b. First-time, part-time certificate-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 100%, 150%, and 200% of the expected (full-time) program length (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time, part-time certificate-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is part-time.

c. Transfer at entry certificate-seeking students (includes both part-time and full-time students who were transfer students at time of entry)

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 100%, 150%, and 200% of the expected (full-time) program length (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively)

Denominator: Number of certificate-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year who enter with or without credits after attending another institution of higher education (exclude students entering with only AP or dual enrollment credits here and include them as first-time student).

2. Associate Degrees:

a. First-time, full-time associate degree-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 2 years for 100% time, in 3 years for 150% time, and in 4 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time associate degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of the given year and whose attendance status at entry is full-time.

b. First-time, part-time associate degree-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 2 years for 100% time, in 3 years for 150% time, and in 4 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time associate degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is part-time.

- c. Transfer at entry associate degree-seeking students (includes both part-time and full-time students who were transfer students at time of entry)

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 2 years for 100% time, in 3 years for 150% time, and in 4 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of associate degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year who enter with or without some college credits after attending another institution of higher education (exclude students entering with only AP or dual enrollment credits here and include them as first-time students).

3. Bachelor's Degree – Four-Year Institutions – Research Universities, Very High Activity:

- a. First-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 4 years for 100% time, in 6 years for 150% time, and in 8 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is full-time.

- b. First-time, part-time bachelor's degree-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 4 years for 100% time, in 6 years for 150% time, and in 8 years for 200% time (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is part-time.

- c. Transfer at entry bachelor's degree-seeking students (includes both part-time and full-time students who were transfer students at time of entry)

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 4 years for 100% time, in 6 years for 150% time, and in 8 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year who enter, with or without credits, after attending another institution of higher education (exclude students entering with only AP or dual enrollment credits here and include them as first-time students).

4. Bachelor's Degree – All Other Four-Year Institutions

a. First-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 4 years for 100% time, in 6 years for 150% time, and in 8 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is full-time.

b. First-time, part-time bachelor's degree-seeking students

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 4 years for 100% time, in 6 years for 150% time, and in 8 years for 200% time (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of first-time bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year and whose attendance status at entry is part-time.

c. Transfer at entry bachelor's degree-seeking students (includes both part-time and full-time students who were transfer students at time of entry)

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) who earn an award in 4 years for 100% time, in 6 years for 150% time, and in 8 years for 200% (each timeframe should be reported cumulatively).

Denominator: Number of bachelor's degree-seeking students entering in the fall semester of a given year who enter, with or without credits, after attending another institution of higher education (exclude students entering with only AP or dual enrollment credits here and include them as first-time students).

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

For 2011-12 data collection, entering cohorts are as follows:

1. Certificate of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years -Seeking Cohorts

First-time, full-time cohort ; first-time, part-time cohort; and transfer at entry cohort identified in the fall semester 2006; 100% time by August 31, 2008; 150% time by August 31, 2009; 200% time by August 31, 2010. ¹

2. Associate Degree-Seeking Cohorts

First-time, full-time cohort ; first-time, part-time cohort; and transfer at entry cohort identified in fall semester 2005; 100% time by August 31, 2007; 150% time by August 31, 2008; and 200% time by August 31, 2009.

3. Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Cohorts

First-time, full-time cohort ; first-time, part-time cohort; and transfer at entry cohort identified in fall semester 2003; 100% time by August 31, 2007; 150% time by August 31, 2009; 200% time by August 31, 2011.

Graduation rates should be produced for the state and for each public institution of higher education within the state as appropriate. Institutions that award both associate and bachelor's degrees can report graduation rates for each cohort separately. For a public institution of higher education graduation rate, the award must have been completed at that specific institution to be counted in the numerator. For graduation rates at the state level, the award can be counted in the numerator regardless of where that student started and completed as long as it was an in-state institution (for states with longitudinal databases that allow for such tracking of students and/or states that use the National Student Clearinghouse).

Each timeframe (100%, 150%, and 200%) should be reported and displayed individually for each respective student type (first-time full-time, first-time part-time, and transfer at time of entry) for each type of award (Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, and Certificate). The timeframes (100%, 150%, and 200%) are defined by program length.

For the certificate-seeking cohort, the cohort includes students seeking a certificate that is at least one year but less than two years in program length. As such, the timeframes (100%, 150%, and 200%) are based on completion of a certificate that is two years program length.

Attendance status of student (full-time, part-time, transfer) is defined at time of entry. "Transfer at entry" is defined as a student who previously attended a postsecondary institution (with or without

¹ Please note that the 100%, 150%, and 200% dates for certificates greater than one year but less than two years were selected to ensure that completion times for longer certificate programs were not unreasonably brief. The dates do, however, give additional time to one-year certificates beyond what one would report to IPEDS.

credit and who may or may not have a degree award). Undergraduate students entering the institution directly from high school who earned dual credit or Advanced Placement credit or any other type of college credit while enrolled in high school should not be considered transfer students at entry, but rather “first-time” students at entry.

Students identified as "transfer at entry" include both part-time and full-time students.

Data should be unduplicated at the state level. States unable to unduplicate at the state level should note that fact in the comment box.

Optional Methods to Supplement the Graduation Rate Metrics

1) Attendance Status: Recognizing that many institutions serve large numbers of students whose attendance status may change over the course of their enrollment, an additional graduation rate calculation (following the same calculation methodology and baseline cohort years) that includes all students regardless of full or part-time enrollment may be useful to supplement the above graduation rate metrics. Please note, however, that the reporting template does not accommodate this option.

2) 12-Month Enrollment vs. Fall Semester Entry (Program vs. Academic Year): Recognizing that many colleges, especially community colleges, increasingly enroll students throughout the year or have non-traditional academic calendars, states may wish to make a provision for institutions to adopt a 12-month enrollment method of identifying graduation rate cohorts. Institutions currently have this option for identifying their Graduation Rate Survey (GRS) cohorts for reporting IPEDS (referred to as “program year” reporting as opposed to “academic year” reporting). States or institutions choosing this option should note this in the comment box.

Outcome Metric 3: Transfer Out (for Two-Year colleges only)

Purpose: To determine the proportion of students successfully transferring from two-year institution of higher education to four-year institutions of higher education.

Definition: Annual number and percentage of students who transfer from a two-year campus to a four-year campus by enrollment status at entry, number of credits or credential completed prior to transfer, race/ethnicity, gender, age group, Pell status (at time of entry), and remedial status (at time of entry).

Numerator: Number of students from the cohort (denominator) who enroll at a four-year public institution of higher education or received a degree.

Denominator: Number of entering students in two-year public institutions of higher education in the fall semester of a specified year.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

For the 2011-12 data collection, data collected are as follows:

First-time, full-time cohort; first-time, part-time cohort; and transfer at entry cohort are identified in fall semester 2005 and followed annually until August 31, 2009.

The transfer-out metric should be produced for the state and for each public two-year institution of higher education in the state. Many institutions do not have the ability to determine what type of institution (if any) students enroll in after transferring out of their institution. Therefore, in most states this metric will need to be supplied by systems or by the state for institutions using either a student-unit record system or the National Student Clearinghouse.

Students that transfer should be categorized by the number of credits they receive at the 2-year institution before they enroll in a four-year institution. They should be reported in the following categories:

- Completed 12 or Fewer Credit Hours
- Completed 13 to 30 Credit Hours
- Completed More than 30 Credit Hours but Not an Associate's
- Completed an Associate's Degree

Outcomes Metric 4: Credits and Time to Degree

Purpose: To determine the average length of time in years and number of credits to complete a certificate or undergraduate degree by student entry status, number of credits transferred in for transfer students at entry, institutional classification for four-year institutions, race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, Pell status (at any time), and remedial status (at any time).

Definitions: Time to degree. Average length of time in years a student takes to complete an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or a certificate of greater than 1 year but less than 2 academic years. Start with the degrees/ certificates awarded in a specified year and determine how many total years and months elapsed from the first date of entry to the date of completion. Partial years should be expressed as a decimal. Average the number of years across students and report by degree type.

Credits to degree. Average number of semester credits a student has accumulated when they earn an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or a certificate of 1 but less than 2 academic years. Start with the degrees/certificates awarded in a specified year and determine the total number of semester credit hours each student completed since first enrolling. Average the number of semester credit hours across students and report by degree type.

Years to Collect/Report: Certificates and degrees awarded in Academic Year 2008-09.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for the state and each public institution of higher education within the state. For calculating the metrics for each institution, only include elapsed time and accumulated credits that the student was enrolled in/completed at that specific institution. At the state-level, include all time and credits accrued beginning with the student's initial post-high school enrollment in a postsecondary education institution.

Some states may not have the ability to track students' total length of time to degree or total number of credits to degree. If available, please instead provide average length of time or number of credits *after* transfer, but indicate in an explanatory note that this is what was done. For Transfer Student cohort, please calculate years and credits consistently. If average years are calculated *after* transfer, then average total credits should be calculated *after* transfer as well, if possible. Please note with an explanatory note if this is not the manner in which the data is presented.

Student status (full-time, part-time, transfer) is identified at time of entry to the public institution of higher education. Transfer-in students at 4-year public universities should be classified by the number of credit hours they earned at previously attended institutions regardless of how the credit hours are accepted toward a degree at the reporting institution. Based on these criteria transfer students should be classified into the following categories:

- Transfer in 30 or Fewer Credits
- Transfer in 31 to 59 Credits
- Transfer in 60 or More Credits

For this metric, student race/ethnicity should be based upon data reported at the time of completion (as opposed to at entry) to conform to the new IPEDS race/ethnicity codes.

Conversion of Quarter Credit Hours to Semester Credit Hours

Credits should be reported as semester credit hours. States and institutions using the quarter system should divide quarter hours by 1.5 to convert to semester hours prior to reporting.

PROGRESS METRICS

Progress Metric 1: Enrollment in Remedial Education

Purpose: To determine the proportion of undergraduate students who enroll in remedial coursework at public institutions of higher education.

Definition: Annual number and percentage of entering first-time undergraduate students who enroll in remedial math, English/reading, or both math and English/reading courses; by institution type (two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year), race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, and Pell status (at time of entry).

1. Remedial Math Only:

Numerator: Number and percent of students from the cohort (denominator) who enrolled in a remedial math course (but not a remedial English/reading course) during the first academic year.

Denominator: All first-time degree or certificate-seeking students entering in the fall semester of the specified year.

2. Remedial English/Reading Only:

Numerator: Number and percent of students from the cohort (denominator) who enrolled in a remedial English/reading course (but not a remedial math course) during the first academic year.

Denominator: All first-time degree or certificate-seeking students entering in the fall semester of the specified year.

3. Both Remedial Math and English:

Numerator: Number and percent of students from the cohort (denominator) who enrolled in a remedial English/reading **and** a remedial math course during the first academic year.

Denominator: All first-time degree or certificate-seeking students entering in the fall semester of the specified year.

Progress Metric 2: Success in Remedial Education

Purpose: To determine the proportion of undergraduate students who enroll in remedial education, complete remedial education, and go on to complete college-level coursework in the same subject within two academic years.

Definition: Annual number of entering first-time undergraduate students enrolled in remedial education courses who complete² remedial education courses in math, English/reading, or both and complete a college-level course in the same subject; by institution type (two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year), by race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, and Pell status (at time of entry).

1. Remedial Math Only:

Numerator: Number of students enrolled in a remedial math course during their first academic year (denominator) who complete all required courses in remedial math and the first college-level math course within two academic years.

Denominator: All first-time degree or certificate-seeking students enrolled in a remedial math course (but not a remedial English/reading course) during the first academic year.

² "Complete" means passing or earning a credit for the course. Institutions should determine what counts as successful completion of a course (i.e., a mark of "pass" for a pass/fail course; a grade of C or better, etc.).

2. Remedial English/Reading Only:

Numerator: Number of students enrolled in a remedial English/reading course during their first academic year (denominator) who complete all required courses in remedial English/reading and the first college-level English/reading course within two academic years.

Denominator: All first-time degree or certificate-seeking students enrolled in remedial English/reading course (but not a remedial Math course) during the first academic year.

3. Both Remedial Math and English:

Numerator: Number of students enrolled in a remedial English/reading and a remedial math course during the first academic year (denominator) who complete all required courses in remedial English/reading and math and the first college-level English/reading and math courses within two academic years.

Denominator: All first-time degree or certificate-seeking students enrolled in both remedial English/reading and math course(s) during the first academic year.

Years to Collect/Report:

For 2011-2012 data collection, both Progress Metric 1 and Progress Metric 2 use the same cohort. For both two-year institutions of higher education and four-year institutions of higher education, the cohort is established with the first-time entry students in the fall semester 2007. These students are followed through August 31, 2009 to determine the numerator.

A new cohort is established in each subsequent year (the next one is identified in the fall semester 2008) with the timeframe for completing the remedial course and the college-level course(s) in the same subject area(s) being within two academic years.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for each public institution of higher education within the state, and aggregated at the state level for each sector (two-year institutions and four-year institutions).

Both full-time and part-time students should be included.

Data should be unduplicated at the state level. States unable to unduplicate at the state level should note that in the comment box.

Disaggregation of Other Metrics by Remedial Status: Remedial course-taking functions both as a metric in itself and as a disaggregation category (see Definitions of Data Elements and Disaggregation Categories for more information). The remedial education metrics refer to enrollment in remedial courses during the period being reported on (i.e., 2008-09 academic year), while the remedial status disaggregation category refers to whether students took a least one remedial course at time of entry or at any time during their postsecondary enrollment depending upon the specific metric.

Progress Metric 3: Success in Gateway (First-Year) College Courses

Purpose: To determine the proportion of undergraduate students completing entry, college-level math courses, English courses, and both math and English courses within the first two academic years at public institutions of higher education.

Definition: Annual number and percentage of entering first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students who complete entry college-level math and English courses within the first two consecutive academic years; by institution type ((two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year), race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, Pell status (at time of entry), and remedial status (at time of entry).

Numerator(s): Number of students from cohort (denominator) who complete at least one entry college-level (non-remedial or developmental course) math course but not an entry-level English course within the first two consecutive academic years.

OR

Number of students from cohort (denominator) who complete at least one entry college-level (non-remedial or developmental course) English course but not an entry-level math course within the first two consecutive academic years.

OR

Number of students from cohort (denominator) who complete at least one entry college-level (non-remedial or developmental course) English course and at least one entry-level math course within the first two consecutive academic years.

Denominator: For each of the above numerators, the number of first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolling in the fall semester of a specified year.

Years to Collect/Report:

For data collection in 2011-12, for both two-year institutions of higher education and four-year institutions of higher education, the cohort is established with the first-time entry students in the fall semester 2007. These students are followed through August 31, 2009 to determine the numerator.

A new cohort is established in each subsequent year (the next one is identified in the fall semester 2008) with the timeframe for completing college-level course(s) being within two academic years.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for each public institution of higher education within the state and at the state level.

First-time students who are exempt from taking entry college-level courses in math or English or both math and English as a result of AP credit, dual credit earned while enrolled in high school, or CLEP credit should be included as completers in the numerators.

Both full-time and part-time students should be included.

Data should be unduplicated at the state level. States unable to unduplicate at the state level should note that fact in the comment box.

Progress Metric 4: Credit Accumulation

Purpose: To determine the proportion of undergraduate students making steady academic progress during one academic year at public institutions of higher education.

Definition: Number and percentage of first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students completing 24 semester credit hours (for full-time students) or 12 semester credit hours (for part-time students) within their first academic year by institution type (two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year), student entry status, race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, Pell status (at entry), and remedial status (at time of entry).

1. Full-time Students:

Numerator: Number of students from cohort (denominator) completing 24 semester credit hours within one academic year after entry.

Denominator: Number of first-time, full-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students entering in the fall semester of the specified year.

2. Part-time Students

Numerator: Number of students from cohort (denominator) completing 12 semester credit hours within one academic year of entry.

Denominator: Number of first-time, part-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students entering in the fall semester of the specified year.

Years to Collect/Report: For 2011-12 data collection, please report first-time entering students in the fall semester 2007.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for each public institution of higher education within the state and at the state level.

Student status (full-time, part-time) is identified at time of entry to the institution of higher education.

Data should be unduplicated at the state level. States unable to unduplicate at the state level should note that fact in the comment box.

Conversion of Quarter Credit Hours to Semester Credit Hours

Credits should be reported as semester credit hours. States and institutions using the quarter system should divide quarter hours by 1.5 to convert to semester hours prior to reporting.

Progress Metric 5: Retention Rates

Purpose: To determine the rate at which undergraduate students return to a public institution of higher education from fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall adjusted for transfers out and graduates.

Definition: Number and percentage of entering degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolling from fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall at an institution of higher education by institution type (two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year), student entry status, race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, Pell status (at time of entry), and remedial status (at time of entry).

Numerator: Number of students in cohort (denominator) enrolling in the next consecutive spring and the next consecutive fall semester, or who have been identified as transferring to another institution or graduating from the institution.

Denominator: Number of entering first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolling in the fall semester of a specified academic year.

Years to Collect/Report:

1. Two-Year Public Institutions

For two-year public institutions of higher education, the cohorts for first-time, full-time; first-time, part-time; and transfer students at entry are established with the students entering in the fall semester 2005. These students are followed and reported on annually for four years.

2. Four-Year Public Institutions

For four-year public institutions of higher education, the cohorts for first-time, full-time; first-time, part-time; and transfer students at entry are established with entering students in the fall semester 2003. These students are followed for six years.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for the state and each public institution of higher education within the state. For a public institution of higher education retention rate, the student must be retained at that specific institution to be counted in the numerator. For retention rates at the state level, the student can be counted in the numerator regardless of where that student started (for states with longitudinal databases that allow for such tracking of students and/or states that use the National Student Clearinghouse).

For institutions using a quarterly academic calendar, the fall-to-spring semester retention rate should be operationalized as fall quarter to following spring quarter (skipping the winter quarter).

Student status (full-time, part-time, transfer) is identified at time of entry to the public institution of higher education.

Data should be unduplicated at state level. States unable to unduplicate at the state level should note that fact in the comment box.

Progress Metric 6: Course Completion

Purpose: To determine the proportion of attempted credit hours being completed by entering undergraduate students at public institutions of higher education.

Definition: Percentage of credit hours completed out of those attempted by entering degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students annually and disaggregated by student entry status.

Numerator: Number of credit hours awarded to entering undergraduate students at the end of a specified academic year.

Denominator: Number of credit hours degree or certificate-seeking entering undergraduate students enrolled in during the same academic year.

Years to Collect/Report: Students entering in the fall semester 2008.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for the state and each public institution of higher education within the state.

Student status (full-time, part-time, transfer) is identified at time of entry to the institution of higher education.

Conversion of Quarter Credit Hours to Semester Credit Hours

Credits should be reported as semester credit hours. States and institutions using the quarter system should divide quarter hours by 1.5 to convert to semester hours prior to reporting.

CONTEXT METRICS

These metrics are calculated at the state and institutional levels from annual degree production and overall enrollment or state population data. These metrics help to inform state policymakers of the overall effectiveness of the state's higher education system, and help to place the outcome and progress measures in context.

Context Metric 1: Enrollment

Purpose: To determine the number of undergraduate students enrolling at institutions of public higher education and to measure changes in enrollment over time, overall, and for specific subgroups.

Definition: Annual unduplicated number of undergraduate students enrolled over a 12-month period at public institutions of higher education, disaggregated by entry and attendance status during the 12-month period (first-time or continuing full-time, first-time or continuing part-time, full-time transfer, or part-time transfer), race/ethnicity, gender, age, Pell recipient status during enrollment period, and remedial status. Enrollment should be reported for each public institution and aggregated by sector.

Years to Collect/Report: Academic Years 2003-04 and 2008-09.

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for the state and for each institution of higher education in the state.

High school students enrolled in postsecondary courses for credit should not be included.

Students should not be included in both the transfer category and the first-time and continuing category. See additional clarification on the categories below:

- Full-time transfers (entered as a transfer student during the 12-month period, status at entry was full-time)
- Part-time transfers (entered as a transfer student during the 12-month period, status at entry was part-time)
- Full-time First-time and Full-time Continuing (not included as a full-time transfer above)
- Part-Time First-time and Part-time Continuing (not included as a part-time transfer above)

Context Metric 2: Completion Ratio

Purpose: To determine the proportion of certificates (of at least 1 and less than 2 academic years in length) and undergraduate degrees awarded relative to undergraduate student enrollment at public institutions of higher education.

Definition: Annual ratio of undergraduate degrees and certificates (of at least 1 and less than 2 years in length) awarded per 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate students (disaggregated by institution type (two-year; four-year research, very high activity; all other four-year)).

Numerator: Number of undergraduate degrees and certificates (of at least 1 and less than 2 years in length) awarded in a specified year. (This is a duplicated count)

Denominator: Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate students in the same year.

Years to Collect/Report: Academic Year 2008-09 (for both the numerator and denominator).

Notes on Collection and Reporting:

The metric should be produced for the state and for each institution of higher education in the state.

Full-time, part-time, and transfer students should be included.

This metric is not a calculation of cohort survival rate.

Definitions of Data Elements and Disaggregation Categories

(Special note on disaggregation: For all metrics, the standard rule of non-disclosure of personally identifiable information applies. States and institutions should not publicly report disaggregated data that pertain to a sample size (N) of 10 or fewer students.)

Academic year

An academic year includes a summer, fall, winter, and spring term but not necessarily in that order.

Age groups

Date of birth as reported by student in the following age bands:

- 17-19 years old
- 20-24 years old
- 25 and older
- Unknown

As with age of majority, age is not rounded up: a student is 19 years old until his/her 20th birthday, and a student is 24 years old until his/her 25th birthday.

Awards

Associate degree

An award (associate of arts or associate of science) that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work.

Bachelor's degree

An award (baccalaureate or equivalent degree, as determined by the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education) that normally requires at least 4 but not more than 5 years of full-time equivalent college-level work. This includes all bachelor's degrees conferred in a 5-year cooperative (work-study) program. A cooperative plan provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government; thus, it allows students to combine actual work experience with their college studies. Also includes bachelor's degrees in which the normal 4 years of work are completed in 3 years.

Certificate/Diploma (less than one academic year) of Economic Value with Industry Certification or Licensure

An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) of less than one full-time equivalent academic year in program length, and leading to an industry-recognized credential or certification of proven economic value.

Certificate/Diploma (at least one but less than two academic years in program length)

An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least one full-time equivalent academic year but fewer than two full-time equivalent academic years, or designed for completion in at least 30 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 45 quarter credit hours, or in at least 900 contact or clock hours, by a student enrolled full time.

Certificate/Diploma (at least two but less than 4 academic years)

An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least two full-time equivalent academic years but fewer than four full-time equivalent academic years.

Credit

Credit hour

A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.

Credit hour (attempted)

The total number of student credit hours attempted in a specified academic term.

Credit hour (completed)

The total number of credits earned in a specified academic term.

For the CCA/NGA metrics, all quarter system credit hours should be converted to semester credit hours by dividing quarter credit hours by 1.5 prior to reporting.

Degree/certificate-seeking students

Students enrolled in courses for credit and recognized by the institution as seeking a degree, certificate, or other formal award. High school students enrolled in postsecondary courses for credit are not considered degree/certificate-seeking.

Discipline

The following degree categories are based on the two-digit Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) codes defined by the National Center for Education Statistics. When providing data by discipline, aggregate up to the subcategory and report by subcategory (i.e., Education, Arts & Humanities, etc) as follows:

Education

13 Education

Arts and Humanities

5 Area, ethnic, cultural, and gender studies
16 Foreign languages, literatures, and linguistics
23 English language and literature/letters
24 Liberal arts and sciences, general studies and humanities
30 Multi/interdisciplinary studies
38 Philosophy and religious studies
39 Theology and religious vocations
50 Visual and performing arts
54 History

Social and Behavioral Sciences and Human Services

19 Family and consumer sciences/human sciences

- 25 Library science
- 31 Parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies
- 42 Psychology
- 44 Public administration and social service professions
- 45 Social sciences

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)

- 1 Agriculture, agriculture operations, and related sciences.
- 3 Natural resources and conservation
- 4 Architecture and related services
- 11 Computer and information sciences and support services.
- 14 Engineering
- 15 Engineering technologies/technicians
- 26 Biological and biomedical sciences
- 27 Mathematics and statistics
- 29 Military technologies
- 40 Physical sciences
- 41 Science technologies/technicians

Business and Communication

- 9 Communication, journalism, and related programs
- 10 Communications technologies/technicians and support services
- 52 Business, management, marketing, and related support services

Health

- 51 Health professions and related clinical sciences

Trades

- 12 Personal and culinary services
- 22 Legal Professions and Studies
- 43 Security and protective services
- 46 Construction trades
- 47 Mechanic and repair technologies/technicians
- 48 Precision production
- 49 Transportation and materials moving

First-time student (undergraduate)

A student who has no prior postsecondary experience (except as noted below) attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level. This includes students enrolled in academic or occupational programs. It also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).

First-year college course (also referred to as college-level or gateway college course)

The first credit-bearing college course in English or math that applies to course requirements for a certificate or degree.

Full-time equivalent student (FTE)

The preferred FTE calculation is the IPEDS definition based on instructional activity. The number of FTE students is calculated based on the credit and/or contact hours reported by the institution on the IPEDS 12-month enrollment (E12) component and the institution's calendar system, as reported on the Institutional Characteristics (IC) component. For institutions with continuous enrollment programs, FTE is determined by dividing the number of contact hours attempted by 900.

For institutions that do not have credit or contact hour information from which to generate the instructional-based FTE, the default FTE calculation should be as follows:

$$\text{Full-time annual unduplicated headcount} + \frac{\text{Part-time annual unduplicated headcount}}{3}$$

Gender

Sex (male or female or unknown) reported by the student.

Graduation rate

This rate follows closely the rate required of institutions for disclosure and/or reporting purposes under Student Right-to-Know Act. This rate is calculated as the total number of completers within 100%, 150%, and 200% of normal time divided by the cohort.

Institution of higher education***Two-year institution (also referred to as community college)***

A postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 2 but less than 4 years' duration. Those institutions that historically have offered and awarded programs of at least 2 years, but recently have added programs of 4 years should be included as long as the majority of degrees awarded still are for programs of at least two years but less than four years duration. Includes occupational and vocational schools with programs of at least 1800 hours and academic institutions with programs of less than 4 years. Does not include bachelor's degree-granting institutions where the baccalaureate program can be completed in 3 years.

Four-year institution

A postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 4 years duration or one that offers programs at or above the baccalaureate level. Does not include institutions that historically have offered and awarded programs of 2 years or less, but now offer programs of 4 years, if the majority of the degrees awarded still are for programs of at least two years but less than four years duration.

Four-year Institution—Research University, Very High Activity

A postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 4 years duration or one that offers programs at or above the baccalaureate level and is classified by the Carnegie Foundation classification system as RU/VH or Research University, Very High Activity.

All Other Four-Year Institutions

A postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 4 years duration or one that offers programs at or above the baccalaureate level and NOT classified by the Carnegie Foundation classification system as RU/VH or Research University, Very High Activity.

Pell recipient

Undergraduate postsecondary student who qualifies and receives grant assistance through the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IV, Part A, Subpart I, as amended.

Pell recipient at entry

An undergraduate student is considered a Pell recipient at entry if the student received a Pell grant within the first year of entry at a given institution of higher education.

Pell recipient at any time

An undergraduate student is considered a Pell recipient at any time if the student received a Pell grant at any time during the student's undergraduate tenure.

Race/ethnicity

Categories used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The categories do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. They are used to categorize U.S. citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible non-citizens.

Note about race/ethnicity data codes: For all categories the template collects based on the new IPEDS categories. In areas such as graduation rate, retention, and other metrics that track a cohort of students, states may have to map the old race/ethnicity codes to the new ones. The Association For Institutional Research provides guidance on how to map these categories here: <http://airweb.org/page.asp?page=1502>

In general the biggest change is that states should crosswalk Asian/Pacific Islander to the new categories should select Asian or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander based on the majority of students in the Asian/Pacific Islander category, if known.

New Categories (1997 OMB)

A new methodology was developed in 1997 by OMB to be used in reporting race/ethnicity. Individuals are asked to first designate ethnicity as:

Hispanic or Latino or
Not Hispanic or Latino

Second, individuals are asked to indicate one or more races that apply among the following:

American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Black or African American
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White
Two or more races

Hispanic or Latino (new definition)

A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

American Indian or Alaska Native (new definition)

A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian (new definition)

A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American (new definition)

A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (new definition)

A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White (new definition)

A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Two or More Races

A person who is not of Hispanic origin and who indicates having origins in two or more races.

Other descriptive categories

Nonresident alien

A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely. NOTE - Nonresident aliens are to be reported separately, in the boxes provided, rather than included in any of the seven racial/ethnic categories. Resident aliens and other eligible (for financial aid purposes) noncitizens who are not citizens or nationals of the United States and who have been admitted as legal immigrants for the purpose of obtaining permanent resident alien status (and who hold either an alien registration card (Form I-551 or I-151), a Temporary Resident Card (Form I-688), or an Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94) with a notation that conveys legal immigrant status such as Section 207 Refugee, Section 208 Asylee, Conditional Entrant Parolee or Cuban-Haitian) are to be reported in the appropriate racial/ethnic categories along with United States citizens.

Race and ethnicity unknown

This category is used only if the person did not select EITHER a racial or ethnic designation.

Remedial courses

Instructional courses (also called developmental education) designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum and educational setting.

Remedial status (at time of entry)

Remedial status at time of entry as a disaggregation category is determined by whether the student enrolled in a remedial course within the first year of entry at a given institution of higher education

Remedial status (at any time)

Remedial status at any time as a disaggregation category is determined by whether a student enrolled in a remedial course in any subject at any time during their enrollment in postsecondary institutions.

Retention rate

(Fall-to-spring)

A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the consecutive spring semester (or, for institutions on a quarter-based academic calendar, the following spring quarter). For all other institutions this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the following spring term.

(Fall-to-fall)

A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall.

Student Status

Full-time student

Undergraduate—A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more contact hours a week each term.

Part-time student

Undergraduate—A student enrolled for either less than 12 semester or quarter credits, or less than 24 contact hours a week each term.

Transfer at entry

A student entering the reporting institution for the first time but known to have previously attended a postsecondary institution. The student may transfer in with or without credit and/or a degree award. Students entering the institution directly from high school who earned dual credit or Advanced Placement credit or any other type of college credit while enrolled in high school should not be considered transfer students at entry. Instead, they should be included as “first-time” students.

Undergraduate

A student enrolled in a 4- or 5-year bachelor's degree program, an associate degree program, a vocational or technical program, or a certificate program below the baccalaureate.