

RESEARCH BRIEF

01-16

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Four-Year Degree Completion of NOVA Transfer Students: 2006-07 through 2009-10

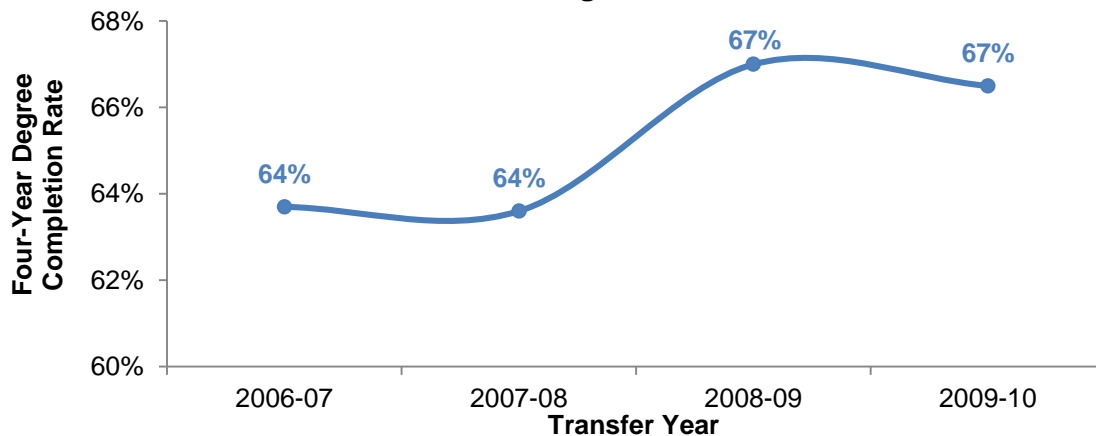
This Research Brief presents a summary of Bachelor's degree completion rates for NOVA students who transferred to a four-year institution in Virginia between the 2006-07 and 2009-10 academic years. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) data are used to report the percentage of students in each cohort that completed a four-year degree within four years of transfer. Four years was chosen by SCHEV to parallel the six-year graduation rate used for Bachelor's degree-seeking students. See Tables 1 and 2 at the end of the document for complete data.

Degree completion rates for each cohort are shown in total (Figure 1) and are disaggregated by various student characteristics: age at transfer, credits attained prior to transfer, and degree attained prior to transfer (Figures 2-4). This disaggregation of the data is meant to help identify disparities in outcomes across sub-groups.

All NOVA Transfer Students

Figure 1 presents four-year degree completion rates for NOVA students who transferred to a four-year institution in Virginia. The last data point in the figure shows that 67 percent of students who transferred from NOVA in 2009-10 attained a degree from a four-year institution by 2013-14 (within four years). Over the reported time period, four-year degree completion rates of NOVA transfer students were between 64 and 67 percent.

Figure 1. Four-Year Degree Completion Rates of All NOVA Transfer Students: 2006-07 through 2009-10

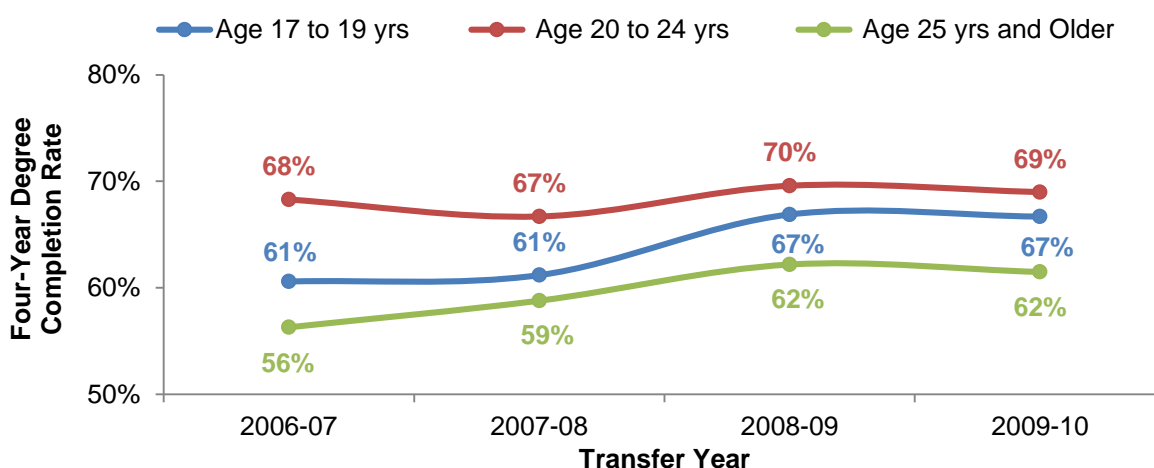


NOVA Transfer Students by Age

Students who transferred from NOVA when they were between the ages of 20 and 24 were most likely to have completed their four-year degree at the new institution within four years (67 to 70 percent completion rates). However, there was a marked increase in degree completion rates for students in the other two age groups. For the 17 to 19 age group, completion rates increased from 61 percent for the 2006-07 cohort to 67 percent for the 2009-10 cohort. For the 25 years and older age group, completion rates increased from 56 percent for the 2006-07 cohort to 62 percent for the 2009-10 cohort.

Students ages 25 or older at the time of transfer were least likely to complete their degree within four years. It is very likely that students who were 25 years or older at the time of transfer delayed enrolling at the four-year institution or stopped-out of their program at some point. Research shows that students who delay enrollment or stop-out of school face a greater risk of not completing their credential than their counterparts who continue without interruption.¹

Figure 2. Four-Year Degree Completion Rates of NOVA Transfer Students by Age: 2006-07 through 2009-10

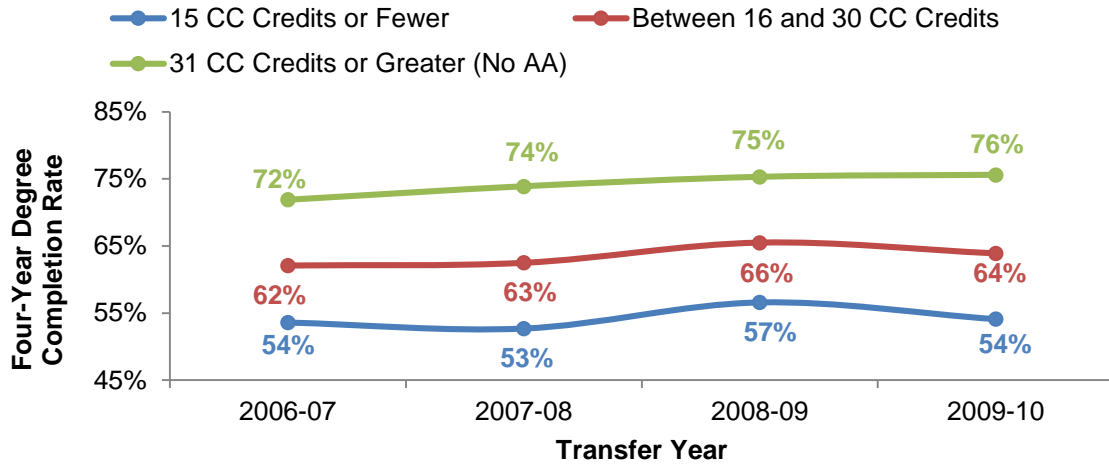


NOVA Transfer Students by Credits Attained Prior to Transfer

As shown in Figure 3 (next page), the probability of transfer students attaining their degree at the new institution within four years increased with the number of credits they attained at NOVA prior to transfer. Looking at the 2009-10 cohort, 54 percent of students who transferred with 15 or fewer credits attained a degree from the four-year institution within four years; compared to 64 percent of students who transferred with 16 to 30 credits, and 76 percent of students who transferred with 31 credits or more. This result is likely due to the correlation between credits attained and eligibility to graduate. The fewer credits attained prior to transfer, the more time a student will need to complete their degree at the new institution.

¹For example, see the NCES report, *Persistence and Attainment of Nontraditional Students* available at <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs/web/97578g.asp>

Figure 3. Four-Year Degree Completion Rates of NOVA Transfer Students by Credits Attained Prior to Transfer: 2006-07 through 2009-10



NOVA Transfer Students by Degree Attained at NOVA

NOVA students who attained an A.A./A.S. degree were more likely to complete a degree at the four-year institution within four years than students who attained an A.A.S. degree. However, it is important to note the small sample size of students with an A.A.S. degree (Table 1).

Figure 4. Four-Year Degree Completion Rates of NOVA Transfer Students by Degree Type Attained Prior to Transfer: 2006-07 through 2009-10

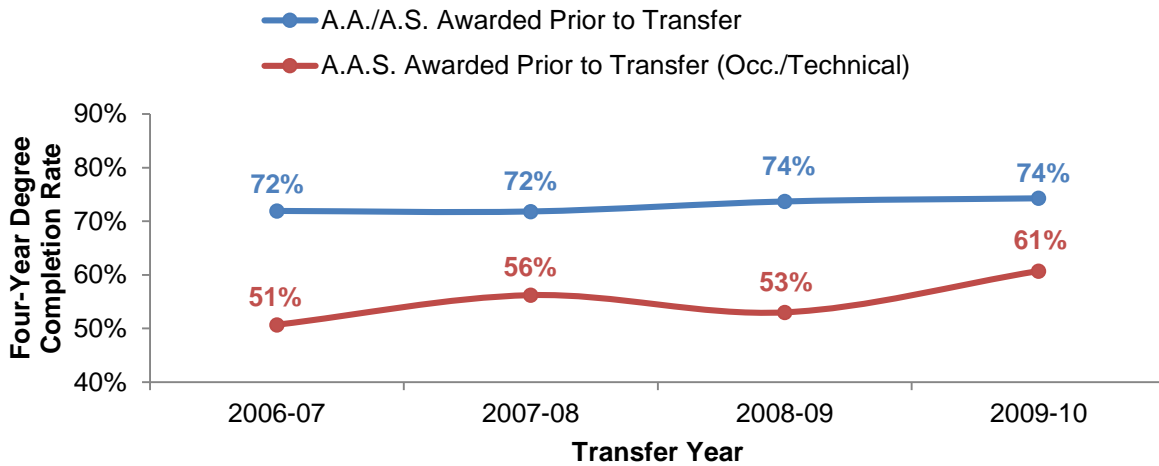


Table 1. Students Transferring in the Fall and Spring of the Designated Year: 2006-07 through 2009-10

Degree Completion	Transfers							
	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total								
All Transfers	2,899	100.0	3,225	100.0	3,424	100.0	3,720	100.0
Age at Transfer								
17-19	251	8.7	273	8.5	281	8.2	285	7.7
20-24	1,687	58.2	1,881	58.3	2,053	60.0	2,299	61.8
25 and Older	954	32.9	1,070	33.2	1,090	31.8	1,136	30.5
Credits Earned/Degree Status Prior to Transfer								
15 or Fewer	826	28.5	881	27.3	830	24.2	911	24.5
16 to 30	620	21.4	710	22.0	779	22.8	771	20.7
31 or Greater (No AA)	139	4.8	142	4.4	154	4.5	201	5.4
AA/AS Awarded	1,150	39.7	1,350	41.9	1,537	44.9	1,683	45.2
AAS Awarded (Occ/Technical)	140	4.8	121	3.8	117	3.4	135	3.6

Source: SCHEV as of 02/25/2016

Note: Starting cohorts of fewer than 10 are excluded from reporting.

Table 2. Four-Year Completion Rates of Students Transferring to a Four-Year Institution in Virginia in the Fall or Spring of the Designated Years: 2006-07 through 2009-10

Degree Completion	Completion Rate (%)			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Total				
All Transfers	63.7	63.6	67.0	66.5
Age at Transfer				
17-19	60.6	61.2	66.9	66.7
20-24	68.3	66.7	69.6	69.0
25 and Older	56.3	58.8	62.2	61.5
Credits Earned/Degree Status Prior to Transfer				
15 or Fewer	53.6	52.7	56.6	54.1
16 to 30	62.1	62.5	65.5	63.9
31 or Greater (No AA)	71.9	73.9	75.3	75.6
AA/AS Awarded	71.9	71.8	73.7	74.3
AAS Awarded (Occ/Technical)	50.7	56.2	53.0	60.7

Source: SCHEV as of 02/25/2016

Note: Starting cohorts of fewer than 10 are excluded from reporting.