



INSTITUTE
FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION
LEADERSHIP
& POLICY

From Access to Success in the California Community Colleges:

Questioning Assumptions and Establishing Principles



Nancy Shulock

Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy

Presented at:

League Commission on the Future

February 26, 2010

Sacramento, California

California State University, Sacramento

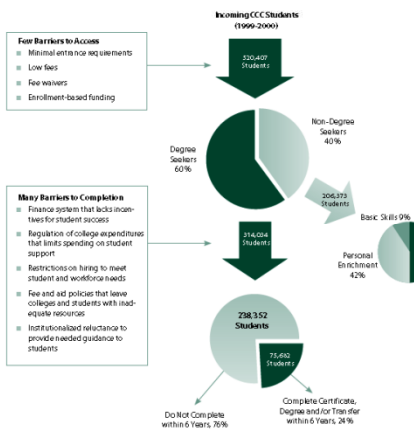


Key Points

- California faces huge performance challenges in postsecondary education
- Good news/bad news in how we are addressing the challenges
- 2020 Vision – *It Could Happen* – if we question assumptions and adopt new principles

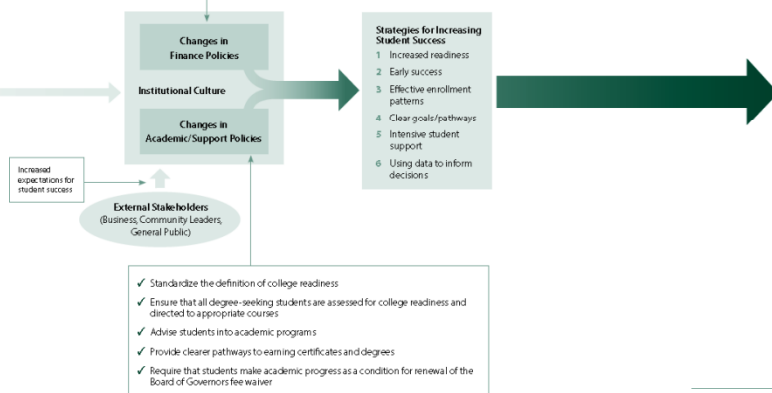
Looking Ahead (from insert from IHELP report: "It Could Happen")

The Situation Today: Too Few Degree-Seekers and Too Little Success

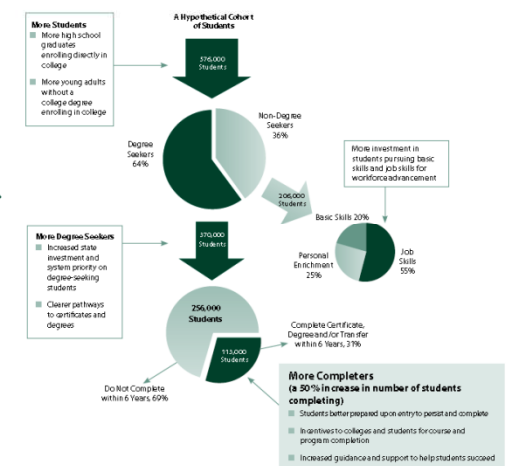


An Achievable Agenda for Greater Student Success

- ✓ Increase the state's investment in educating community college students seeking a credential, basic skills, or workforce advancement
- ✓ Allow districts to retain fee revenue on top of the state appropriation
- ✓ Reduce the portion of the base allocation to districts that comes from 3rd week enrollment and incorporate incentives for student progress and success
- ✓ Provide enriched funding levels for serving under-prepared and low-income students with added incentive for graduating such students
- ✓ Modify the 50 percent law to incorporate all but administrative and facility expenditures to allow colleges to find the best mix of academic, academic support, and student support services to promote student success
- ✓ In conjunction with an allocation formula that rewards student progress and success, minimize rules that prescribe how colleges are to spend their funds



A Vision of Greater Success: More Students, More Degree-Seekers, More Completers



Performance Challenges



California Is Becoming Less Educated Than Other States

(Rank Among States in % with College Degrees)

Age Group:	Assoc. or Higher	Bach. or Higher
>64	3 rd	4 th
45-64	14 th	13 th
35-44	26 th	17 th
25-34	31 st	26 th

The Grades are In:

California lags most other states in important aspects of higher education performance

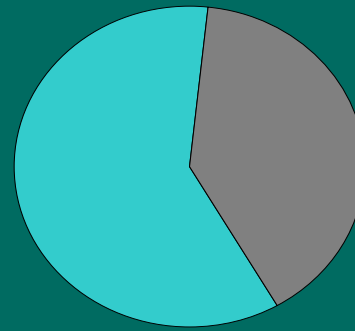
- 45th in share of HS students taking advanced math/science
- 40th in rate of HS grads going directly to college
- 47th in number of degrees/certificates awarded in relation to enrollment
- Huge variations by region and race/ethnicity

Policies to Promote Access

Incoming CCC Students
1999-2000

520,407
Students

Degree-
Seekers: 60%

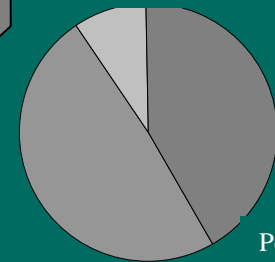


Non-Degree-
Seekers: 40%

206,373
Students

Job Skills:
49%

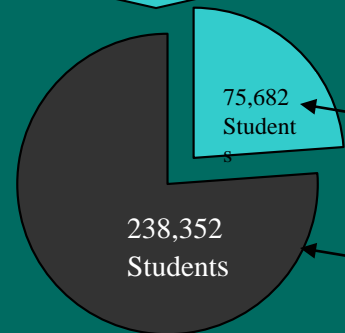
Basic
Skills: 9%



Personal
Enrichment:
42%

314,034
Students

Policy Barriers
to Completion



Complete
Certificate, Degree
or Transfer within
6 Years: 24%

Do Not Complete
within 6 Years: 76%

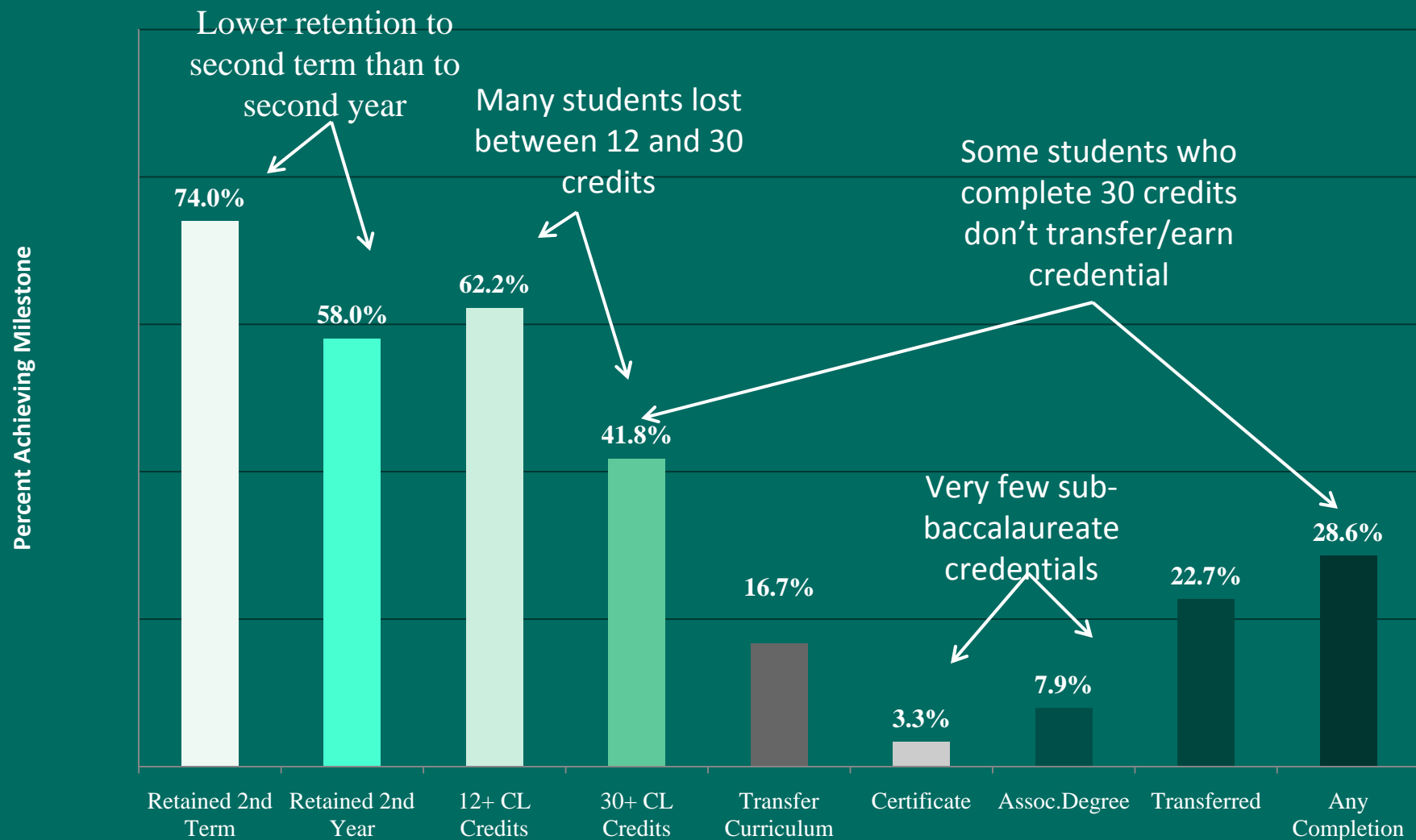
75,682
Student

238,352
Students

Completion Rates Worse for Certain Groups

- 33% for Asian students
 - 27% for white students
 - 18% for Latino students
 - 15% for black students
-
- 27% for students age 17-19
 - 21% for students in their 20s
 - 18% for students in their 30s
 - 16% for students age 40 or older

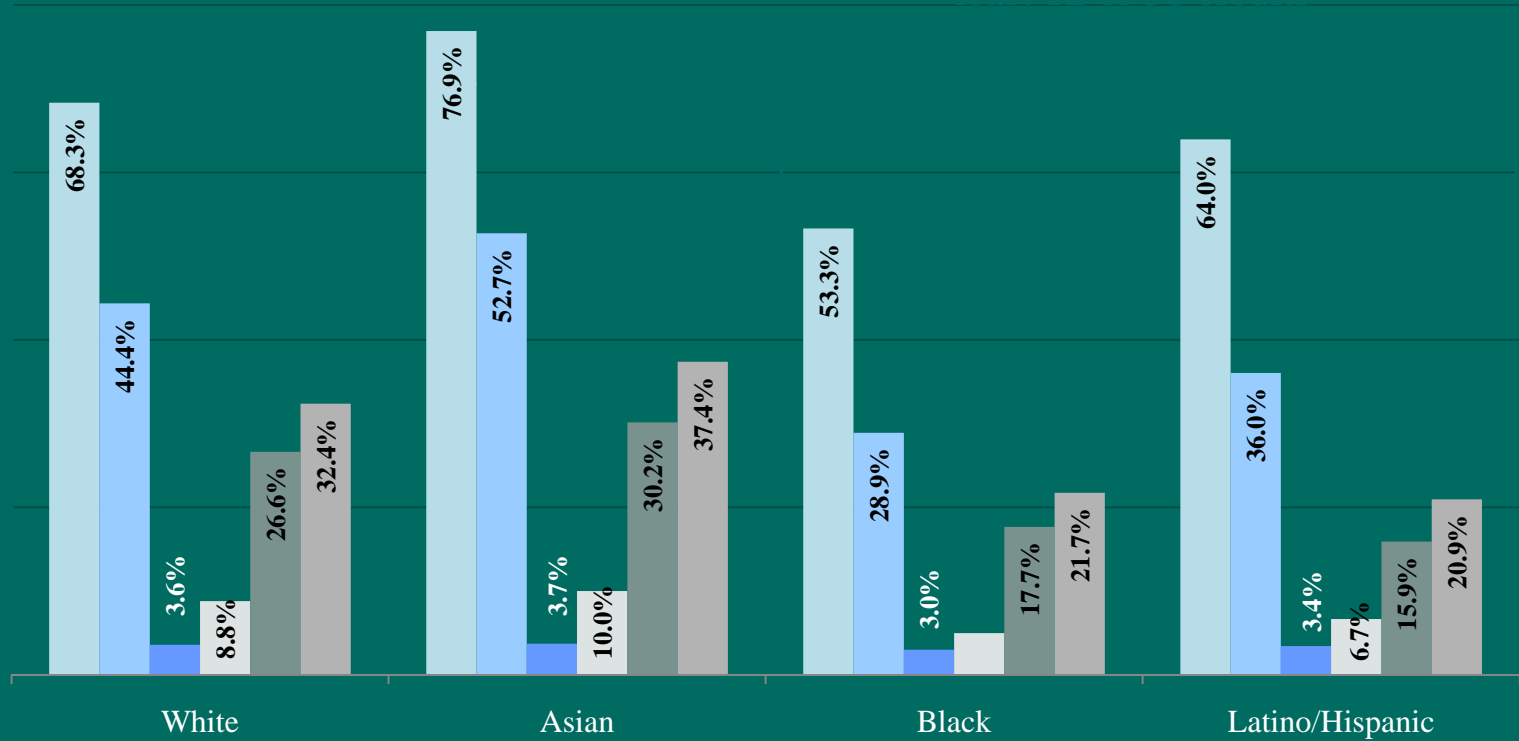
Milestones Point to Where Student Progress Stalls



Differences in Achievements Among Groups

■ 12+ CL Credits ■ 30+ CL Credits ■ Certificate ■ Assoc.Degree ■ Transferred ■ Any Completion

Percent Achieving Milestone



Many Barriers in State Policies to Improving Student Success

- Finance system that lacks incentives for student success
- Regulation of college expenditures that limits spending on student support
- Restrictions on hiring to meet student and workforce needs
- Fees and aid policies that leave colleges and students with inadequate resources
- Insufficient structure and guidance for students

Good News/Bad News



Good News: We Know What Works (From Research)

1. Increased readiness for college
2. Early success/basic skills
3. Effective enrollment patterns
4. Clear goals and pathways
5. Intensive, integrated student support
6. Using data to inform decisions

And with Committed and Engaged Leadership are Starting to Do It – some examples

1. Increased readiness for college
 - EAP
2. Early success/basic skills
 - Assessment, prerequisites, contextualized basic skills
3. Effective enrollment patterns
 - More emphasis on FAFSA completion
4. Clear goals and pathways
 - Interest in transfer associate degrees
5. Intensive student support
 - Many small-scale programs
6. Using data to inform decisions
 - BRIC project

The Bad News: Lost time = Lots of Catching Up

Other states' cultures more amenable to reform:

- Accept completion as measure of student success
- Fewer rules and regulations
- More able to consider statewide approaches
- More willing to impose structures on students

Other states making more progress on policy reforms:

- Financial rewards for progress and success
- Common assessment/placement; early remediation
- Clearer pathways toward certificates and degrees

The Worst News

- The price of lagging other states has grown
- Potential funders are very reluctant to invest in California:
 - Gates, Lumina, Hewlett, Irvine...
 - Feds, State

They are not convinced we can change



Hypothetical Cohort:
The Vision

More Students

- High school grads w/o delay
- Young adults w/o degrees



576,000
Students

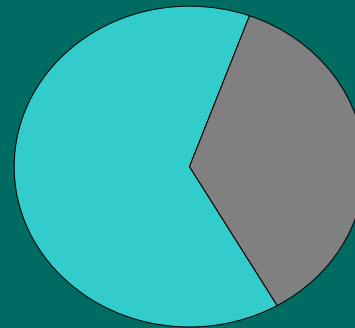


More Degree-seekers

- Increased priority on degree-seekers
- Clearer pathways to certificates and degrees

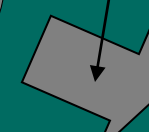


Degree-
Seekers: 64%



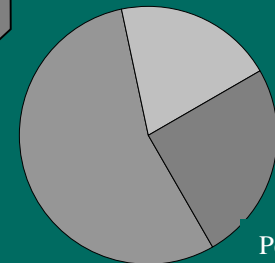
Non-Degree-
Seekers: 36%

206,000
Students



Job Skills:
55%

Basic Skills: 20%



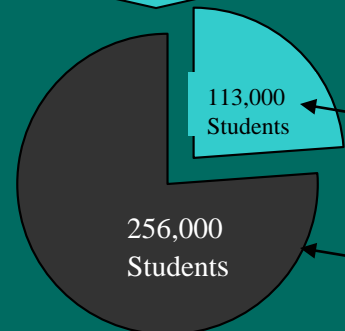
Personal
Enrichment:
25%

370,000
Students



50% More Completers

- Better prepared students
- Better incentives
- Increased guidance and support



113,000
Students

Complete
Certificate, Degree
or Transfer within
6 Years: 31%

Do Not Complete
within 6 Years: 69%

256,000
Students

Accomplishing the Vision Requires Reconsidering Core Assumptions

1. ***Inputs*** should be monitored, not ***outcomes***
2. Extensive ***rules and regulations*** are needed; ***flexibility*** will lead to bad decisions
3. ***Choice*** for students serves them better than ***structure***
4. ***Local*** autonomy should be safeguarded against ***statewide*** approaches

The CCC Policy Environment

Assumptions foster:

- Recreational FTE
- Insufficient revenues (fees)
- Few course prerequisites
- Reduced rigor in some courses
- Inadequate student support
- No basis to track outcomes by academic program
- Rule following

And discourage:

- Sufficient basic skills sections
- Consistent course rigor
- Common assessment
- Early basic skills if needed
- Timely course registration
- Declaration of major program
- Clear system accountability
- Leadership and innovation

From Assumptions that Preserve Status Quo to Principles that Promote Change

Assumptions

1. Inputs/FTE
2. Rules
3. Student choices
4. Local option



Principles

1. Outcomes/Success
2. Flexibility for leadership
3. Structure/guidance
4. Statewide solutions

Some Desirable Reforms

- ✓ Common, mandatory assessment - clear readiness message
- ✓ More meaningful goal at enrollment and major/program declaration after reasonable period of time
- ✓ Completion of basic skills in set period (2 yrs?)
- ✓ Greater use of course prerequisites
- ✓ Incentives for student progress and success in funding model
- ✓ Added incentives for under-prepared students
- ✓ Fewer restrictions on *how* funds are used (e.g., 50% law)
- ✓ Clearer and more structured pathways with better aligned programmatic requirements



Regardless of Specific Reforms...

- Adopt a set of principles that put student success first
- Accelerate the pace of change
- Empower, encourage, and reward college leaders who increase student success

Send a message to the skeptics
that we can and will change



INSTITUTE
FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION
LEADERSHIP
& POLICY

IHELP Contact Information

Reports and presentations available at: www.csus.edu/ihelp

Printed copies available upon request:

(916) 278-3888

ihelp@csus.edu

nshulock@csus.edu

Series on community college student success:

Rules of the Game, February 2007

Beyond the Open Door, August 2007

Invest in Success, October 2007

It Could Happen, February 2008

Steps to Success, October 2009