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SIGNATURE REPORT 5: Baccalaureate Attainment: A National View of the Postsecondary Outcomes of Students Who Transfer from Two-Year to Four-Year Institutions

We are pleased to share with you the fifth report in a series of Signature Reports™ from the National Student Clearinghouse® Research Center™. In this report we examine an increasingly important role community colleges play in helping students attain a baccalaureate degree. Among the study's findings:

- More than 60 percent of students who transferred from two-year schools in the 2005-2006 academic year obtained degrees at four-year institutions. Another eight percent remained in college and were still working on a four-year degree six years after transfer.
- Most students transfer from two- to four-year institutions without first receiving a credential from the two-year institution, which is consistent with findings from previous Signature Reports.
- Baccalaureate attainment rates were higher for students who transferred with a two-year degree or certificate (72%) than for those who transferred without a credential (56%).
- Students transferring to a four-year public institution had a 65 percent completion rate compared to a 60 percent completion rate for those transferring to a four-year private institution.
- The gap in the six-year completion rate was large (26 percentage points) between students who transferred to a four-year institution within one year of their most recent enrollment at a two-year institution and students who transferred after stopping-out for more than one year.
- There is a negligible difference (less than 2%) in completion after transfer between women and men.
- Students attending full time after transfer had a better chance of graduating than those who attended part time or with mixed enrollment (83 percent, 24.8 percent and 62.1 percent respectively).

"The report shows that most students who transfer do earn a bachelor's degree and the data suggest that students who complete a degree at the community college are more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than the thousands of students who transfer before completing their community college degree," according to Thomas Bailey, George and Abby O'Neill Professor of Economics of Education and the Director of the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University. [Read the full comment \(pdf\)](#).

For more information, see our [press release](#) or download your free copy of the report now at www.studentclearinghouse.info/signature/5/NSC_Signature_Report_5.pdf

The Signature Report series from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center serves as a national resource for the continued study of student pathways and college enrollment patterns and have immediate relevance for institutional, state, and federal policy. Written specifically for public and institutional policymakers, the Signature Reports provide comparison data that reveal patterns and valuable insight on students' postsecondary access, persistence, and other success outcomes.

The National Student Clearinghouse is the nation's trusted source for degree and enrollment information and provides reporting, verification, and research services for more than 3,500 colleges and universities representing nearly 98 percent of all students in public and private U.S. institutions. If you have questions about the content of the Signature Report and the Clearinghouse data that was used in the study, please contact research@studentclearinghouse.org.

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