ASSOCIATE DEGREE FOR TRANSFER STATUS REPORT 2023

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT CALIFORNIA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



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ABOUT AICCU

The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of over 80 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, which make up the Independent California Colleges and Universities (ICCU) sector. The ICCU sector plays a pivotal role in the development of the state's model higher education offerings and in making California a symbol of innovation across the globe. Within California, ICCU institutions award 21 percent of all undergraduate degrees and 55 percent of graduate degrees, making them the largest preparers of California's advanced workforce.

Independent California Colleges and Universities are recognized in the state's Master Plan for Higher Education as a provider of affordable college access and a partner with other sectors and the state in the preparation of future leaders and the state's workforce. Independent colleges and universities are defined in California Education Code 66010 (b): As used, "independent institutions of higher education" are those nonpublic higher education institutions that grant undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, and that are formed as nonprofit corporations in this state and are accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.

INTRODUCTION

This report to the Legislature and Department of Finance, submitted by the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) on behalf of California independent, nonprofit higher education institutions, provides an annual update on the status of Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) applications to participating independent, nonprofit colleges and universities.

Transfer pathways, including the ADT, are valued options for students seeking to pursue a bachelor's degree following their time at a California Community College (CCC). Broadly, 57 of AICCU's 75 undergraduate serving institutions have at least one articulation agreement with a CCC.[1]

Created in 2010, the program was originally designed for students to transfer from CCCs to the California State University (CSU). The core pillars of the program are similar regardless of whether students on ADT pathways transfer to a CSU or a participating AICCU institution – at least a 2.0 grade point average, enrolling at the CSU with junior standing, and a guarantee to be able to complete in no more than 60 units (two years) at the receiving institution.

One key difference, however, is that the ADT guarantees students admittance to the specific AICCU institution they have applied to, whereas students admitted to the CSU may be redirected to nonimpacted campuses.

2023 UPDATE

Last year's final state budget included a transition to a dynamic methodology for calculating ADT targets. The methodology sets an annual target based on the prior year ADT admit number to AICCU institutions, adjusted by the year-over-year percentage change in new transfer student enrollment from CCCs to the private, nonprofit sector.[2] AICCU elected to use the California Community College Chancellor's Office Data Mart[3] as the data source for determining the new student transfer enrollment population as it is publicly available and the

[1] https://bit.ly/3zUeEAk
[2] AICCU based new transfer student enrollment on the entire sector of private, nonprofit institutions in order to account for any fluctuations in membership.
[3] https://datamart.cccco.edu

closest representation of students transferring into the sector specifically from a CCC. Using the new ADT target methodology, AICCU staff calculated a target number of 2,663.

2022-23 ADT ADMITS ARE DOWN

A total of 2,163 unduplicated ADT students were admitted to 36 AICCU participating institutions for the 2022-2023 academic year. Four institutions reported zero ADT applications. Half of participating institutions reported lower ADT admit numbers compared to the prior year, while the other half reported stable or increased admits.

Table 1 presents the number of ADT students admitted to participating AICCU institutions since ADT collection began. It also contains the number of institutions reporting during a given time period.

Table 1: ADT Students Admitted Since Collection Began

Collection Year	Academic Year	Institutions Reporting	De-duplicated ADT Students Admitted	Percentage Change over Prior Year
1	2018-19	34	869	N/A
2	2019-20	36	2,372	173.8%
3	2020-21	29	2,175	-8.3%
4	2021-22	37	2,898	33.2%
5	2022-23	36	2,163	-25.4%

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Each institution was provided a generic Excel workbook containing basic fields for each student record. Institutional representatives were instructed to work across departments to collect relevant student admit records, sign an MOU for data sharing between AICCU and the institution, and upload the file to a secured OneDrive folder. Once records were submitted, AICCU de-duplicated records and aggregated total ADT students admitted within the sector.

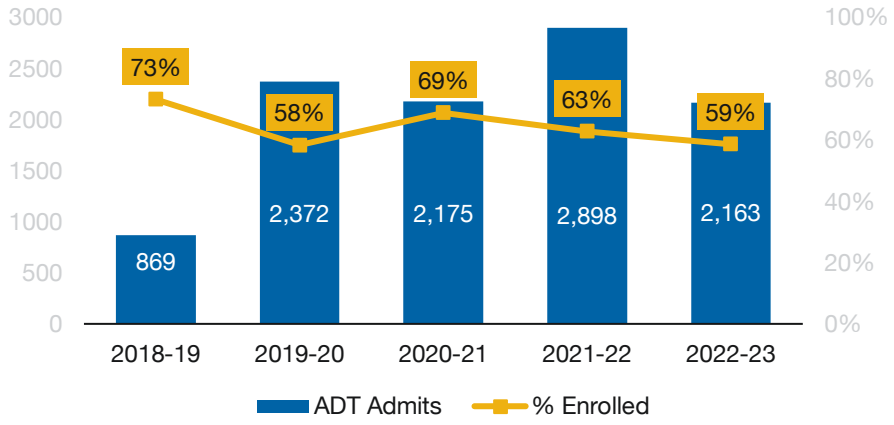
Last year, AICCU began requesting data pertaining to the outcome measures of current and previously admitted ADT students. These additional metrics were submitted through a separate Google form.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

This year marks the fifth ADT reporting cycle. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of the ADT pathway over the last several years, AICCU has expanded the scope of the data collection to capture enrollment trends beyond admittance.

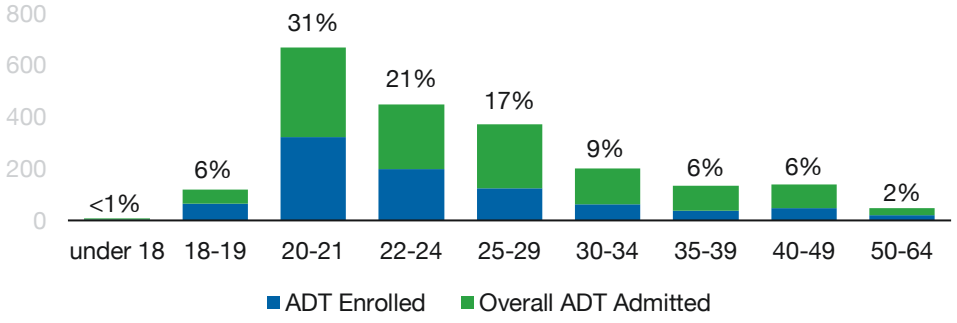
Over the course of five years, AICCU institutions have accepted a total of 10,477 ADT applicants, over 60% of whom have enrolled, as indicated in Figure 1.[4]

Figure 1: Year-over-year Enrollment of ADT Students Admitted to AICCU Institutions



This year, AICCU also collected data on the demographics of ADT admits and enrollees. Of these initial findings, the median age of ADT students admitted to AICCU institutions was 23 years, with over 75% of the admits being under the age of 30.

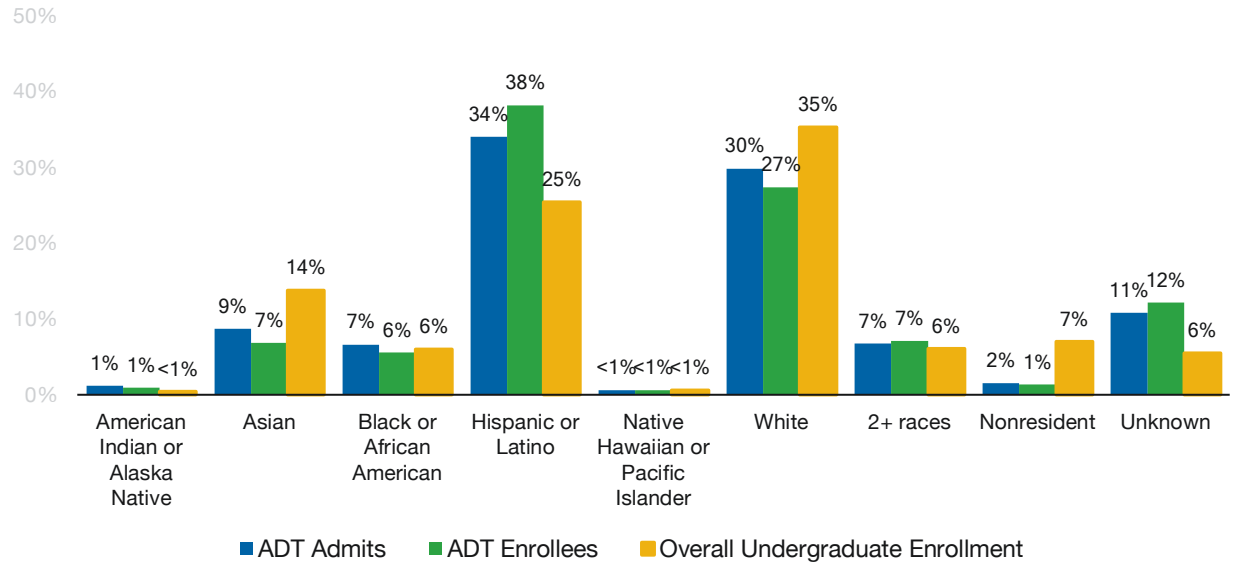
Figure 2: Age Distribution of ADT Population



[4] Source: AICCU ADT Data Collection, 2018-2023

As seen in Figure 3 below, ADT applicants and enrollees are more likely to be Hispanic or Latino than the overall undergraduate population at AICCU institutions, whereas the breakdown of other racial/ethnic categories of ADT students largely mirror those of the general undergraduate student population.[5]

Figure 3: Diversity of ADT Population vs. Overall Undergraduate Enrollment



In total, nearly half (45%) of students enrolling at AICCU institutions through the ADT pathway are from underrepresented backgrounds.

EMERGING TRENDS IN STUDENT PERSISTENCE

For a second year, AICCU collected data[6] on one-year retention[7] and two-year graduation[8] rates for ADT pathways. While we do not have a definitive systemwide understanding of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on these outcomes, we can compare data to that of ADT students on guaranteed pathways at the CSU system.

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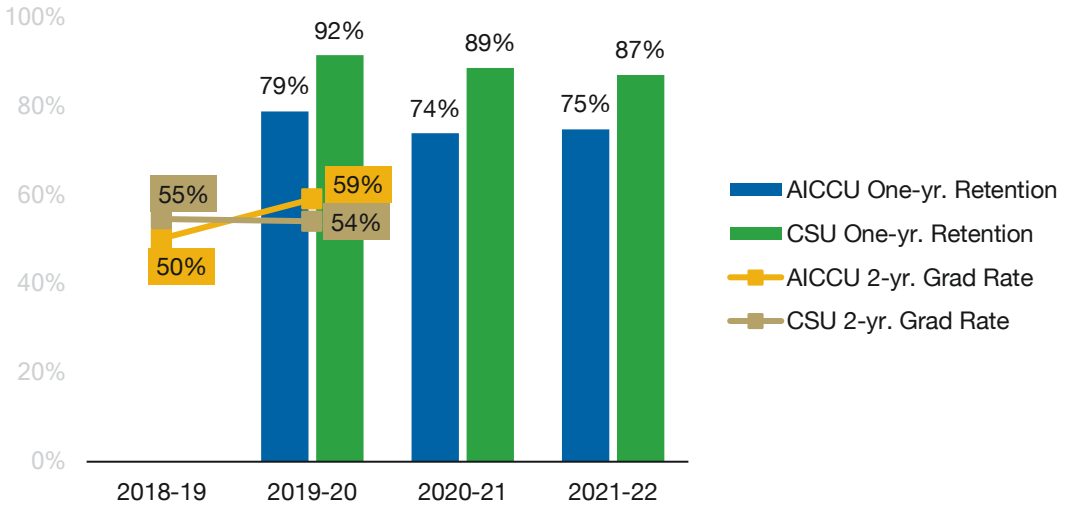
[5] Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS, 2021-2022, 12-month enrollment

[6] Institutions that were unable to track accurate information on one-year retention and two-year graduation were excluded.

[7] One-year retention was measured as students who enrolled during the indicated year, and continued to enroll one year later.

[8] Two-year graduation rates were used as the measurement of 100% degree completion, as the assumption is that four-year degrees typically require 120 units, and at least 60 units would transfer for students admitted with an ADT guaranteed pathway.

Figure 4: ADT Student Persistence Rates



It is noteworthy to observe, that as seen in Figure 4, ADT pathway students at AICCU and CSUs exhibited a similar decline in one-year retention[9] in the years following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.[10] There also seems to be an improvement in the two-year graduation rate, though it is still too early to determine whether these trends can be conclusive.

EFFORTS TO INCREASE TRANSFER

AICCU's 2022 report to the Legislature included programmatic efforts and recommendations for state policies that could help strengthen and improve transfer to ICCUs from CCCs. Several of those recommendations were the direct result of Teagle Foundation grant-funded work focused on ways to improve transfer from community colleges to private liberal arts colleges. Staff from AICCU and member institutions that started the intiative continued important work across several areas that reaffirm the commitment of our sector to robust opportunities for transfer-intending students.

Specifically, AICCU has undertaken three efforts that are direct, tangible responses to findings from our grant-funded work:

1. Integrating ICCUs into the ASSIST.org platform;

[9] Note: one-year retention was not requested from the 2018-2019 AICCU ADT admit cohort
[10] Source: CSU Graduation Dashboard, AICCU ADT Data Collection, 2018-2023

2. Launching a new initiative focused on better outreach and consolidated resources for counselors, students, and families; and
3. Planning a series of regional counselor conferences to facilitate stronger regional partnerships and understanding of opportunities at ICCUs.

ASSIST.ORG INTEGRATION EFFORTS ARE ON TRACK

The 2022-23 State Budget provided $1.5 million to the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) to integrate AICCU member institutions into the ASSIST platform. This funding was greatly appreciated by AICCU and its institutions, as the lack of integration into this key articulation tool was the most commonly cited issue by community college counselors in the regional convenings that occurred as part of the grant.

Since then, AICCU has been working on implementation with ASSIST staff, and formed a workgroup that also included campus representation. As of April 2023, that workgroup has held over a dozen meetings, developed implementation plans for communications and outreach and system integration, and drafted template memorandums of understanding between AICCU and ASSIST and for participating member institutions and ASSIST.

The current timeline to integrate participating AICCU institutions and to make the information publicly available for utilization is mid-2024. This would provide community college counselors with that additional information for advising transfer students beginning in Fall 2024.

LAUNCH OF PUBLIC AWARENESS AND OUTREACH INITIATIVE

The regional convenings with community college counselors also revealed the need for centralized, easily accessible information that transfer seeking students need. This past year, staff from AICCU and member institutions have worked collaboratively to launch a new initiative that provides easily-accessible, centralized information on admissions, financial aid, and other basic but important information on the universities. During the planning stages, staff recognized that it was essential to not just create this resource, but to also promote it to counselors, families, and community-based organizations.

This culminated in the creation of a new AICCU-led initiative, "California Private College is Possible." Formed initially among a workgroup of nine member institutions, AICCU aims to expand the initiative to all member institutions by the

end of the year. The initiative formally launched with an event at Santa Clara University on March 17, and included a college fair featuring nine AICCU institutions that started the intiative, the California Student Aid Commission, and several other community-based organizations focused on college access and success. The event was attended by over 300 students, families, and others.

By expanding coordinated outreach and programming, the goals of the initiative are to increase the number of high school and community college students from low-income and/or historically underrepresented backgrounds who apply to, enroll in, and succeed at California's private colleges and universities. As the initiative continues, AICCU intends to develop and promote educational materials for target audiences in both English and Spanish languages.

AICCU is currently exploring potential grant opportunities to bolster this work over multiple years, including programming to host regional counselor conferences. These conferences would provide counselors from high schools and community colleges with professional development opportunities to learn more about admission, financial aid, academic programs, and transfer pathways to AICCU institutions.

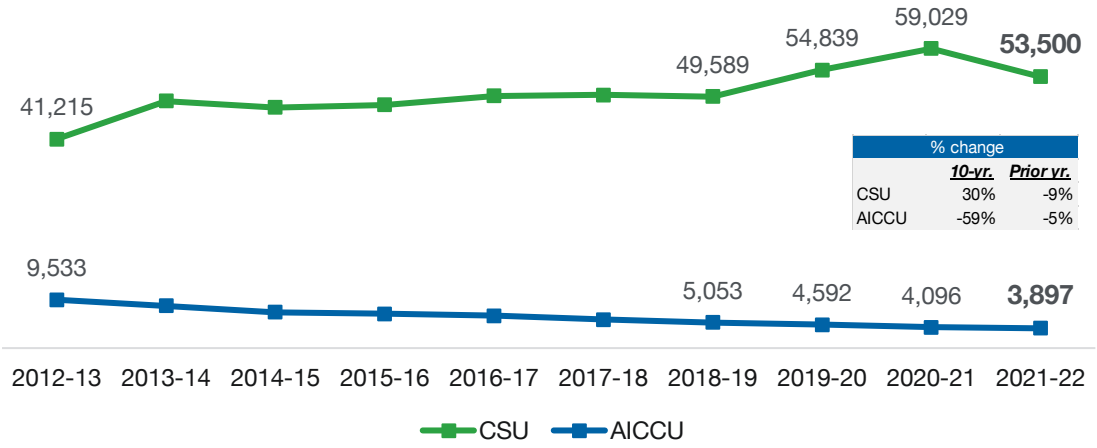
ONGOING CHALLENGES

TRANSFER ENROLLMENT IN DECLINE FOR A DECADE

As seen in Figure 5 below, the number of CCC students who transfer to AICCU institutions has significantly declined over the past ten years, while transfer enrollment at the California State University has been on an upward trajectory.[11]

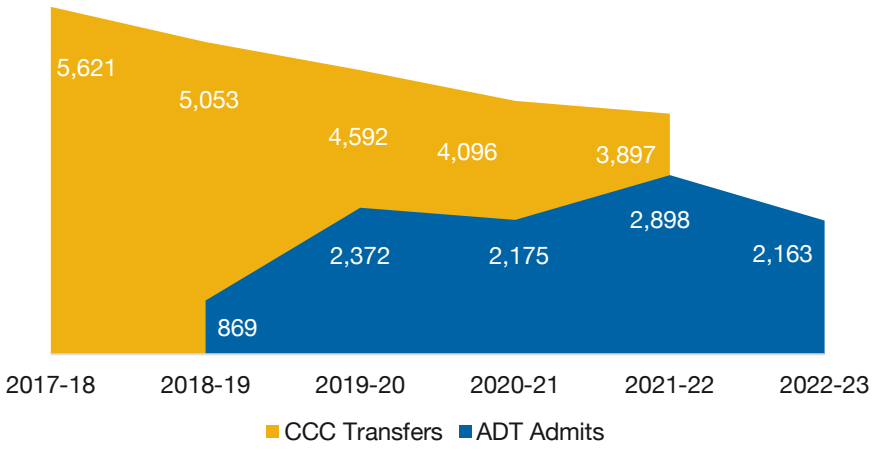
[11] Sources: CSU Enrollment Dashboard, Student Origins; California Community College Chancellor's Office Datamart, 2015-21

Figure 5: New Undergraduate Transfers from CCCs



Even with the adoption of ADT pathways in the the 2018-19 academic year, this downward trend has continued.[12]

Figure 6: CCC Transfer Population vs. ADT Admits at AICCU Institutions



ENROLLMENT DECLINE AT CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The enrollment trend at CCCs over the last several years is also concerning. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, community college transfer to four-year institutions has declined nationwide. According to data from the National

[12] Sources: California Community College Chancellor's Office Datamart, 2015-21; AICCU ADT Data Collection, 2018-2022

Student Clearinghouse, postsecondary enrollment in California, already on a downslope, declined sharply by nearly 5% between 2020 and 2022.[13] During this same time, transfer enrollment of African American and Latino students declined by 14.4% and 13.9%, respectively.[14] According to the Public Policy Institute of California, the transfer-intending population at California community colleges declined by 20%; this was particularly pronounced among students from underserved communities.[15]

CONTINUED LACK OF VISIBILITY IN CCC TRANSFER TOOL

There continues to be a lack of visibility for AICCU institutions that have adopted the ADT on icangotocollege.com. In 2021, AICCU and the CCCCO discussed the website's redesign and the need for better integration of AICCU institutions into the website.

The Transfer Tool on the website only lists the 23 CSUs among its transfer destinations, even if students attempt to use it with the "I Know Where I Want to Transfer" function, meaning transfer pathways to AICCU institutions are completely omitted for those using the tool. This complete lack of inclusion in the website renders it useless for students seeking information on transfer to an ICCU.[16]

Furthermore, only the 12 AICCU participating institutions that have signed the individual MOU with the Chancellor's Office are listed on the list of participating four-year universities website, and the list is difficult to find, excluding the remaining 24 that are accepting ADT students but have not signed the MOU.[17]

It is critical that the website be updated to elevate the visibility of transfer pathways to AICCU institutions for more students to know about these programs.

[13] https://nscresearchcenter.org/current-term-enrollment-estimates/
[14] https://nscresearchcenter.org/transfer-and-progress/
[15] https://www.ppic.org/publication/the-effects-of-covid-19-on-transfer-intending-students-in-californias-community-colleges/
[16] https://icangotocollege.com/transfer-tool
[17] https://cccco-media.imgix.net/CCC-Transfer-Flat-File-3.17.22.pdf

DATA TRACKING VARIABILITY

The ADT data collection process continues to be challenging and time intensive for AICCU institutions due to the lack of a standardized ADT indicator on CCC transcripts and variability in institutional tracking methods.

As AICCU institutions have reported that not all CCCs notate ADT-specific degrees on transcripts, some receiving institutions have had to compare student transcripts against individual CCC websites to ensure all ADT transfer students are accounted for. Institutions who do not have the capacity to conduct as rigorous an audit, instead, rely on applicants to self-attest to having completed an ADT degree.

Aside from differences in the institutional tracking methods, staff turnover and organizational changes make consistent year-over-year reporting a challenge. In an effort to on board new institutional staff, and to standardize the data collection process, AICCU implemented a virtual informational workshop this year, which covered details on the data submission process.

AICCU will continue to explore ways to support participating institutions and streamline the data tracking and collection process while minimizing institutional burden.

CONCLUSION

AICCU remains very committed to the program as an important pathway for community college students to continue their educational pursuits at an independent nonprofit college or university. While the ADT admit numbers are down this year, this is reflective of the impacts the pandemic has had across the state and nation's higher education landscape.

AICCU's leadership looks forward to engaging the incoming CCCCO Chancellor, Dr. Sonya Christian, to discuss ways to address program challenges and build even stronger partnerships between our institutions for the benefit of students and the state of California. A continued focus to strengthen regional partnerships between AICCU institutions and community colleges will also be important to increase community college transfer.

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