

A Profile of the

# Student Support Services Program

1998–1999 THROUGH 2001–2002



U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Postsecondary Education  
Federal TRIO Programs  
2005



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Prepared for

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Office of Postsecondary Education  
Federal TRIO Programs  
2005

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To ensure the success of President Bush’s education initiative “No Child Left Behind,” high-quality postsecondary educational opportunities must be available to all students. In keeping with this goal, the Federal TRIO Programs provide outreach and support to help low-income and first-generation college students who need academic support progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to postbaccalaureate programs.

On behalf of the Federal TRIO Programs, I am pleased to present this report, *A Profile of the Student Support Services Program: 1998–1999 Through 2001–2002*. This TRIO program is designed to increase college retention and graduation rates for eligible students, increase the transfer rates of eligible students from two-year to four-year institutions, and foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of low-income and first-generation college students and individuals with disabilities.

This report is the third in a series of reports that present a national profile of the Student Support Services (SSS) Program (see Appendix D: Bibliography for last two titles). It presents grantee data from 2000–01 and 2001–02 for the first time and includes data from earlier years for comparison purposes. Individual project reports, published separately, summarize specific information submitted by each SSS project and provide aggregate information on other SSS projects in the same federal region, the same institutional sector, and the nation. The performance report, submitted annually by SSS projects, was the primary data source for both the individual project reports and the national profile.

We are proud to continue our process for sharing national statistical information on the Student Support Services Program. It is our hope that the collection and dissemination of this information will foster communication aimed at assessing our mission and implementing measures to see how well we are doing. We look forward to continuing to work together to improve program services and increase the number of students who earn college degrees.

Larry Oxendine  
Director  
Federal TRIO Programs



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This report describes the annual performance report (APR) data provided by Student Support Services (SSS) grantees for program years 1998–99 to 2001–02, and compares selected program outcomes with those from a national representative sample. Program year 2001–02 was the beginning of a new four-year funding cycle. The response rate of participant-level data improved from 96 percent in 1998–99 to 98 percent in 2001–02. The rate of missing data for key program measures such as “degree completion” declined from 47 percent in 1998–99 to 16 percent in 2001–02.

### **Grantees**

- In 2001–02, the SSS Program supported 944 grantees, a 19 percent increase over the number of grantees supported in 2000–01, the final year of the previous funding cycle.
- Approximately 51 percent of the SSS grantees in 2001–02 were four-year institutions, a 3 percentage point reduction from the previous funding cycle.
- Approximately 35 percent of the SSS grantees in 2001–02 were four-year public institutions and another 47 percent were two-year public institutions.
- More than 20 percent of the grantees in 2001–02 were minority-serving institutions.

### **Services**

- Among the 935 grantee institutions that submitted APRs in 2001–02, approximately 30 percent provided at least one type of academic instruction, 81 percent provided at least one type of academic support, 98 percent provided at least one type of counseling and advising, and 91 percent provided at least one type of cultural or enrichment activity.
- The most popular service was academic advising; 78 percent of participants received this service in program year 2001–02.
- The percentages of grantee institutions meeting program objectives on persistence, good academic standing, and graduation in program year 2001–02 were 94, 92 and 83 percent respectively.

### **Participants**

- SSS Program grantees were funded to serve 199,956 postsecondary students in program year 2001–02, a 13 percent increase over the number of students to be served in 2000–01.
- The average per-student award increased over \$300 in four years, from \$965 in 1998–99 to \$1,275 in 2001–02.

- The average number of students served by each grantee decreased slightly from 224 students in 1998–99 to 212 students in 2001–02.
- Approximately 42 percent of students served in 1998–99 were new participants. This percentage increased to 46 percent in 2001–02, owing mostly to the increase among participants in two-year institutions.
- About 73 percent of the participants served in 2001–02 were either low-income and first-generation college students, low-income college students with disabilities, or college students with disabilities only.
- About two-thirds of students served in each program year were female.
- Across years, between 37 and 40 percent of all students served were freshmen and another one-third were sophomores.
- Between 43 and 45 percent of students served during the four program years were white, between 28 and 29 percent were African American, and between 17 and 18 percent were Hispanic.
- In each program year, between 79 and 81 percent of students served entered the program in their first year of postsecondary education.
- Over one-third of students served between 1998–99 and 2000–01 had multiple academic needs.
- About two-thirds of the students served each program year were enrolled as full-time, with a higher percentage of full-time participants in four-year institutions than in two-year institutions.
- Every year, between 70 and 79 percent of the SSS participants applied for financial aid and between 96 and 98 percent of those who applied received some form of financial aid, even though the proportion receiving full aid decreased between 1998–99 and 2001–02.

### **Program outcomes**

- The average cumulative grade point average (GPA) of the 1998–99 cohort in four-year institutions improved from 2.3 in their freshman year to 2.6 in their senior year.
- The percentage of the 1998–99 cohort in good academic standing increased from 77 percent in their freshman year to 88 percent in their senior year in four-year institutions.
- The graduation rate of students served in two-year institutions has increased, with about 7 percent of the 2000–01 freshman cohort in two-year institutions completing associate degrees after two years of study versus 5 percent of the 1998–99 freshman cohort.
- The SSS 1998–99 freshman cohort in two-year institutions persisted at a higher rate and graduated at a similar rate when compared with a national sample of all postsecondary students with comparable disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The SSS 1998–99 freshman cohort in four-year institutions persisted at a higher rate in the second year when compared with a national sample of all postsecondary students with comparable disadvantaged backgrounds.



# Introduction

This report is the third in a series of profiles describing the U.S. Department of Education’s Student Support Services (SSS) Program, one of the Federal TRIO Programs that provide educational support and opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to assist them in preparing for, enrolling in, and completing postsecondary education programs.

Since the 1995–96 funding year, the U.S. Department of Education has required each SSS grantee to submit an annual performance report (APR) that includes individual participant data on all students served during the reporting year and prior year participants still enrolled at the grantee institution. This reporting format permits the Department of Education to track the educational progress of participants over multiple years to assess the extent to which program goals and objectives are achieved. The APRs also include project-level information on services and activities provided and a summary of project goals and objectives.

The series of SSS profiles is based on the analyses of the APR data. This report is different from the previous profiles in three ways:

- This report presents four years of APR data (1998–99 through 2001–02) to show trends in grantee and participant characteristics. The 2000–01 and 2001–02 APR data have not been reported previously.
- Beginning with the 1998–99 cohort of college freshmen served by the SSS Program, this report presents program outcomes related to academic standing, grade point average, persistence, and credentials and degrees earned.
- This report also uses data from the U.S. Department of Education’s *Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study* (BPS) to provide a context for the SSS Program’s persistence and graduation rates.

## Background

Authorized in 1968, the SSS Program is one of the three original TRIO programs.<sup>1</sup> The goal of the SSS Program is to increase the postsecondary persistence and graduation rates of low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities and to facilitate these students’ transition

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<sup>1</sup>The Federal TRIO Programs have grown from three to eight since they were first authorized in the 1960s and now include Upward Bound (1964), Talent Search (1965), Student Support Services (1968), Educational Opportunity Centers (1972), Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs (1976), Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement (1986), Upward Bound Math-Science (1990), and TRIO Dissemination Partnership (1998).

from one level of higher education to the next. Activities and services offered by SSS projects include, but are not limited to, instruction in basic skills, tutoring, academic advising, financial aid and career counseling, transfer and graduate school counseling, and mentoring. SSS projects may also provide special services to eligible students with limited English proficiency. Beginning in 2001–02, they may use up to 20 percent of the project funds for grant aid to participants.

The 2001–02 program year (fiscal year [FY] 2001) was the beginning of a new four-year funding cycle. In that year, the Department of Education allocated \$254.9 million under the SSS Program to 944 grantees to serve a targeted total of 199,956 college students (Table 1.01). In comparison to the 2000–01 program year of the previous funding cycle (FY 2000), this represents a 39 percent increase in program funding (from \$183.3 million to \$254.9 million), a 19 percent growth in the number of funded projects (from 795 to 944), and a 13 percent increase in the estimated numbers of students to be served (from 176,614 to 199,956). The large increase in funding for the SSS Program in 2001–02 includes \$23.5 million in supplemental funding for SSS projects to use to provide grant aid to eligible SSS participants. The average cost per student increased by \$237 (from \$1,038 to \$1,275) between those same years, and the average number of students to be served by each project decreased by 10 students (from 222 to 212).

**Table 1.01. Total and average annual SSS Program awards and number of students to be served: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Fiscal year	Appropriation	Number of awards	Number of students to be served	Average award per grantee	Average award per student	Average number of students to be served per award
1998	\$171,893,687	796	178,099	\$215,947	\$965	224
1999	178,916,836	796	178,099	224,770	1,005	224
2000	183,298,415	795	176,614	230,564	1,038	222
2001	254,892,170	944	199,956	270,013	1,275	212

NOTE: The number of students to be served is the sum of participants proposed by projects each year.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs.

As Table 1.02 and Figure 1.01 show, public two-year institutions received the largest share of the awards, and this share increased from 44 percent in 2000–01 to 47 percent in 2001–02. Almost 100 more two-year institutions were funded in the new funding cycle. At the same time, because more awards were made in 2001–02, the actual number of awards made to other sectors did not decrease. Awards to minority-serving institutions remained stable between 1998–99 and 2001–02, as did those to non-minority-serving institutions.

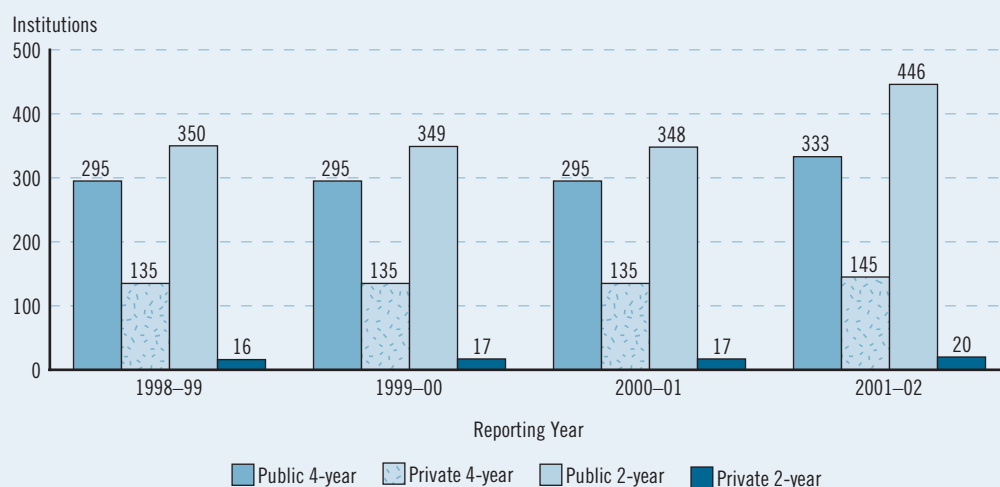
**Table 1.02. Percentage distribution of awards and students to be served in the SSS Program, by selected grantee characteristics: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99		1999–00		2000–01		2001–02	
	Awards	Students	Awards	Students	Awards	Students	Awards	Students
Number <sup>1</sup>	796	178,099	796	175,573	795	174,088	944	199,956
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Selected grantee characteristics								
Sector								
Public four-year	37.1	41.5	37.1	41.5	37.1	41.7	35.3	39.7
Private four-year	17.0	15.6	17.0	15.6	17.0	15.6	15.4	14.6
Public two-year	44.0	41.5	43.8	41.4	43.8	41.2	47.2	44.1
Private two-year	2.0	1.4	2.1	1.5	2.1	1.5	2.1	1.6
Minority-serving institutions								
Historically black colleges and universities	7.5	7.3	7.5	7.3	7.5	7.4	7.2	7.2
Hispanic-serving institutions	9.5	11.8	9.7	11.9	9.7	12.0	10.5	12.3
Tribal institutions or agencies	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.4	2.5	1.9
Not identified as minority-specific	80.9	79.6	80.8	79.5	80.8	79.3	79.8	78.7

<sup>1</sup>Total number of projects funded and estimated (projected) numbers of students to be served.

NOTE: Percentages in each column may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs.

**Figure 1.01. Number of grantee institutions, by institutional sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs.

Federal regions IV, V and VI received a larger share of the SSS Program funds than other regions (Table 1.03). Together, projects in these three regions received about half the total awards made and proposed to serve about half of the students in each of the four years.

**Table 1.03. Percentage distribution of awards and students to be served in the SSS Program, by region: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99		1999–00		2000–01		2001–02	
	Awards	Students	Awards	Students	Awards	Students	Awards	Students
Number	796	178,099	796	175,573	795	174,088	944	199,956
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region I	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.0	5.1
Region II	9.7	11.6	9.7	11.6	9.7	11.6	9.0	10.8
Region III	8.4	7.9	8.4	7.9	8.3	7.8	7.5	7.3
Region IV	20.7	16.8	20.7	16.8	20.8	17.0	19.8	16.8
Region V	16.5	17.3	16.5	17.3	16.5	17.0	15.5	16.1
Region VI	12.2	13.7	12.2	13.7	12.2	13.8	14.1	15.0
Region VII	7.4	7.1	7.4	7.1	7.4	7.2	7.8	7.5
Region VIII	6.5	6.0	6.5	6.0	6.5	6.0	6.6	6.1
Region IX	9.5	10.8	9.5	10.8	9.6	10.7	10.3	11.1
Region X	3.9	3.4	3.9	3.4	3.9	3.6	4.4	4.0

Please refer to Appendix A for a list of states within each region.

NOTE: Percentages in each column may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs.

## Data issues

The APR requirements in each of the Federal TRIO Programs were revised in recent years in response to the *Government Performance and Results Act* (GPRA) of 1993 and the U.S. Department of Education's strategic plan. In addition to providing statistical information on the TRIO programs, the new APRs measure program outcomes and progress toward meeting program goals. The SSS Program was the first of the TRIO Programs to implement a revised performance reporting form following GPRA. This report is the first to examine program outcomes by using the multiple years of SSS data that are now available.

The APR consists of two data sets—project-aggregate data on services and activities and student-level information. Previously published profile reports have presented data from the 1996–97 to 1998–99 APRs, and because of low response rates and other data quality issues, the 1995–96 data have not been reported. Because reliable student identification is not available for participants served from 1996–97 through 1997–98, we have eliminated those cohorts from this report. The remaining data (from 1998–99 through 2001–02 reporting years) allow the tracking of students who started as freshmen in 1998–99 through four years of postsecondary enrollment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Among the data quality concerns with the 1996–97 and 1997–98 data are (1) missing data from 20 percent of grantees in 1996–97 and 14 percent in 1997–98 and (2) student Social Security numbers not collected in 1996–97 and 1997–98, resulting in lower match rates with subsequent data files and with the Title IV financial aid records.

The grantee response rates have increased annually over the four-year period covered in this report (see Appendix A). As noted above, a complete APR consists of two data sets—project-aggregate data and student-level information. A few grantees submitted aggregate data but did not provide individual student data. Appendix A provides detailed information about response rates, missing data, and other data issues. In this report, project-aggregate data is reported in chapter 2 and student-level information is reported in chapters 3 and 4.

The student numbers provided in Tables 1.01, 1.02 and 1.03 are the estimated (projected) number of students to be served by SSS projects with the funds provided, not the actual number of students served during the funding year. The student numbers provided in chapters 2, 3 and 4 are the actual numbers of students served as reported by the grantees on the APRs. The number of SSS participants receiving services in 2001–02 cited in chapter 2 (201,695) is derived from the project-level data reported by the grantees, whereas the number of active SSS participants (new and continuing) for 2001–02 reported in chapter 3 (207,198) is derived from the individual participant records. For some grantees, the two numbers differ. One possible explanation for the difference in the two numbers is that a few grantees may have reported some prior-year participants as continuing participants on the individual participant data file, even though these individuals did not receive project services during the project year being reported.

Another data issue concerns estimating persistence and graduation rates. Data from the national study of the SSS Program show that many SSS participants (over 25 percent by the third year) attend more than one postsecondary institution as undergraduates.<sup>3</sup> Because the APRs require grantees to report the educational progress of participants only for as long as they are enrolled at the grantee institution, the postsecondary persistence and graduation rates of SSS participants will be underreported.

To improve these estimates, the SSS APR data were merged with the national Title IV financial aid records of 1998–99 to 2000–01 to capture enrollment information for participants who left the grantee institutions but continued at another postsecondary institution.<sup>4</sup> Because most students served by the SSS Program apply for financial aid, this merge with financial aid data has supplemented critical enrollment information for participants who transferred to another postsecondary institution. In addition, SSS grantees were asked to verify or update enrollment information on participants missing from the 2001–02 data file who, according to their enrollment status at the end of 2000–01, should have been enrolled in 2001–02. As discussed in chapter 4, these efforts to find missing data resulted in increasing the reported postsecondary persistence rates of SSS participants by about 10 to 11 percentage points for the 1998–99 cohort in the 1999–2000 reporting year.

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<sup>3</sup>Chaney, B., Muraskin, L.D., Cahalan, M.W., and Goodwin, D. (1998). Helping the Progress of Disadvantaged Students in Higher Education: The Federal Student Support Services Program. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 20(3), 197–215.

<sup>4</sup>Title IV financial aid data for 2001–02 were not available at the time of the analysis.



## Program Activities and Objectives: 2001–02

The Student Support Services (SSS) Program grantees provide a variety of services to their students. This chapter describes the distribution of services among SSS grantee institutions and indicates the percentages of participants involved in each service. This chapter also reports on the extent to which grantee institutions meet five program objectives (persistence, good academic standing, graduation, transfer, and administration).

In the reporting year 2001–02, nine of the 944 institutions receiving awards did not submit APRs. Accordingly, this chapter is based on 935 grantees.<sup>5</sup> In each section of this chapter, tables report data for three populations—all grantees, four-year institutions, and two-year institutions. This chapter reports only on the 2001–02 reporting year, because early analyses indicated that program services and objectives did not vary significantly from year to year. The data from a single reporting year—the last reporting year—mirror program services and objectives provided from 1998–99 through 2001–02.

### Program services

SSS grantees provide four types of services: (1) academic instruction, (2) academic support, (3) counseling and mentoring, and (4) cultural and enrichment activities. Grantees report the total number of participants served in each of these activities and the contact hours provided. Grantees may also report on allowable services in the predetermined category “other.” The services reported in “other” are not specified in the APR; accordingly they are grant-specific and vary across grantees.

### Academic instruction

SSS grantees offered formal academic instruction in both for-credit and not-for-credit formats in the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, English, and English for students of limited proficiency. Table 2.01 reports the percentage of grantee institutions that provided each type of academic instruction and the percentage of students who received that instruction, divided into those who received credit for that instruction and those who did not.

Mathematics was the most popular type of academic instruction offered by grantees, followed by writing and reading. Overall, more than 30 percent of grantees provided mathematics instruction. The percentage of grantees offering academic instruction in mathematics differed by type of institution: more

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<sup>5</sup> Figures in this chapter are aggregated from Section III of the APR that reports grant-level data, not individual level data as in the next chapter.

four-year institutions (36 percent) than two-year institutions (26 percent) offered academic instruction in mathematics. Generally, more four-year institutions than two-year institutions provided services in each academic instruction area.

At the student level, more than 16 percent of students from two-year institutions received noncredit academic instruction in English, the largest among all categories of academic instruction. Fewer than 10 percent of the students received any other specific type of academic instruction. Aside from noncredit instruction in English in two-year colleges, more participants in four-year than two-year institutions received academic instructions in every other area.

**Table 2.01. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants receiving SSS-funded academic instruction, by subject area and type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering service	Percentage of participants receiving service	
		Credit	Noncredit
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>	
Reading	23.2	3.7	2.9
Writing	24.8	3.0	4.5
Mathematics	30.9	6.9	6.5
English	19.7	5.3	9.9
English for students of limited proficiency	8.1	0.4	1.1
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>	
Reading	26.2	4.5	3.9
Writing	30.3	3.1	6.2
Mathematics	36.0	8.7	6.9
English	21.1	7.2	3.9
English for students of limited proficiency	8.8	0.3	1.5
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>	
Reading	20.2	2.7	1.7
Writing	19.1	2.8	2.6
Mathematics	25.8	4.8	6.1
English	18.2	3.1	16.9
English for students of limited proficiency	7.3	0.5	0.7

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

The grant-specific services reported in “other” can be categorized into several groups. The four major groups are (1) study skills, (2) orientation, (3) other subjects, and (4) computer skills. “Study skills” refers to instruction in academic skills, study strategies, thinking skills, grammar, and learning. “Orientation” includes instruction in campus life, such as survival in college study, communication, personal development, cultural adjustment, transition, and future careers and jobs. “Other subjects” refers to academic areas other than the areas discussed earlier. “Computer skills” refers to all instruction related to improving students’ knowledge and skills in the use of computers.



Table 2.02 presents the top four grant-specific academic instruction areas reported. From 2 to 12 percent of grantees offered “other” academic instruction. About 10 percent of the 935 grantees offered instruction in study skills, the most popular grant-specific service reported. A higher percentage of four-year grantees (12 percent) provided study skills than did two-year grantees (7 percent). The percentage of students receiving the grant-specific academic instruction was low; on average, less than 1 percent of participants received grant-specific academic instruction.

**Table 2.02. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants receiving SSS-funded grant-specific “other” academic instruction, by support area and type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering service	Percentage of participants receiving service	
		Credit	Noncredit
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>	
Study skills	9.9	1.9	1.1
Orientation	7.6	0.9	0.3
Other subjects	5.6	0.4	1.1
Computer skills	3.0	0.2	0.8
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>	
Study skills	12.3	2.9	1.2
Orientation	6.5	0.7	0.2
Other subjects	6.7	0.4	1.4
Computer skills	3.6	0.2	1.0
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>	
Study skills	7.3	0.8	0.9
Orientation	8.8	1.1	0.4
Other subjects	4.5	0.4	0.8
Computer skills	2.4	0.2	0.6

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Academic support

Academic support includes tutoring, supplemental instruction, assisted labs, and workshops for study skills or orientation. These areas of support are defined in the APR as follows:

- *Peer tutoring*—individual or small-group tutoring provided by other students
- *Professional tutoring*—individual or small-group tutoring provided by a graduate student or a professional staff person
- *Supplemental instruction*—organized tutoring sessions for specific courses, which are tied directly to the instruction in the courses
- *Assisted labs*—academic support or tutoring provided through a learning center or other formal means

- *Computer-assisted instruction*—academic support or tutoring provided by means of computers instead of peer or professional tutors
- *Study skills classes/workshops*—activities designed to help students gain the skills needed to succeed in the academic programs of the institution
- *Orientation classes/workshops*—sessions or classes that help students adjust to the institution and may include help in registering for courses and familiarizing them with the academic requirements of the institution

Table 2.03 shows the percentage of grantees that provided academic support in each of these predetermined categories, the percentage of students who received these services, and the average per-participant contact hours. Peer one-to-one tutoring was the most frequently provided support service, reported by 81 percent of grantees. The second most popular academic support service was study skills workshops (73 percent), followed by professional one-to-one tutoring (65 percent). Often-provided services usually served high percentages of participants. Peer one-to-one tutoring had the highest participant percentage (29 percent). Some academic support services reported a relatively lower percentage of grantees but had larger average per-participant contact hours, such as assisted labs with 36 percent and 14 hours, respectively.

Four-year grantees were more likely to provide one-to-one peer tutoring than two-year grantees (86 percent vs. 77 percent). Conversely, four-year grantees were less likely to provide one-to-one professional tutoring than two-year grantees (62 percent vs. 69 percent). With the exception of computer-assisted instruction, four-year grantees reported more contact hours than two-year institutions in each of the academic support categories listed.

In addition to the academic support services listed in the APR, grantees provided many grant-specific academic support services (see Table 2.04). A small proportion of grantees, approximately 9 percent, provided technology and resource support to program participants. Such support included use of computers and other media, access to the Internet, and labs. About 9 percent of schools provided support and placement evaluations to students with disabilities. Some schools reported support for study skills (8 percent) and orientation and seminars for adjusting to college life (5 percent).

A large difference between two- and four-year institutions emerged in the average contact hours for support and placement services for students with disabilities. Overall, the average contact hours reported for this service was about 15 hours. The average contact hours reported by four-year institutions (23 hours) was more than twice that reported by two-year institutions (10 hours).

**Table 2.03. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants receiving SSS-funded academic support services plus average contact hours, by type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering service	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average contact hours per participant
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>	
Peer tutoring (one-to-one)	81.4	28.8	12.2
Peer tutoring (group)	45.8	11.8	10.6
Professional tutoring (one-to-one)	65.1	18.3	10.1
Professional tutoring (group)	35.6	8.6	12.6
Supplemental instruction	32.2	6.4	13.3
Assisted labs	35.6	11.5	14.0
Computer-assisted instruction	42.4	10.9	9.0
Study skills workshops	72.6	20.2	7.0
Orientation workshops	62.2	22.2	4.4
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>	
Peer tutoring (one-to-one)	86.0	32.3	12.8
Peer tutoring (group)	50.8	14.8	11.8
Professional tutoring (one-to-one)	61.7	14.8	10.3
Professional tutoring (group)	33.5	7.9	13.1
Supplemental instruction	35.6	7.3	13.6
Assisted labs	33.5	9.7	15.6
Computer-assisted instruction	41.2	10.8	8.1
Study skills workshops	74.7	20.7	7.6
Orientation workshops	63.2	21.2	5.5
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>	
Peer tutoring (one-to-one)	76.6	24.7	11.2
Peer tutoring (group)	40.6	8.2	8.1
Professional tutoring (one-to-one)	68.7	22.3	10.1
Professional tutoring (group)	37.8	9.4	12.1
Supplemental instruction	28.8	5.4	12.8
Assisted labs	37.8	13.7	12.7
Computer-assisted instruction	43.6	11.0	10.1
Study skills workshops	70.4	19.5	6.3
Orientation workshops	61.2	23.4	3.1

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 2.04. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants receiving SSS-funded grant-specific “other” academic support services plus average contact hours, by type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering service	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average contact hours per participant
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>	
Technology and resource support	8.9	3.1	7.4
Support for students with disabilities	8.7	2.4	14.7
Study skills	7.6	2.4	9.6
Academic activities and monitoring	5.7	2.3	4.6
Orientation and seminar	5.3	1.1	7.8
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>	
Technology and resource support	9.2	3.0	9.7
Support for students with disabilities	8.4	1.7	22.6
Study skills	9.4	2.9	10.0
Academic activities and monitoring	5.9	1.9	5.7
Orientation and seminar	5.4	1.3	8.4
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>	
Technology and resource support	8.6	3.2	4.8
Support for students with disabilities	9.0	3.1	9.8
Study skills	5.8	1.8	8.9
Academic activities and monitoring	5.6	2.7	3.7
Orientation and seminar	5.2	0.9	6.9

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Counseling and mentoring services

The SSS Program not only provides academic instruction and academic support services, but also offers counseling and mentoring to participants. The definition of each type of service is provided in the APR as follows:

- *Personal counseling*—crisis intervention and assistance with personal problems and decisions
- *Academic advising*—assistance for students in making educational plans, selecting appropriate courses, meeting academic requirements, and planning for graduation and further education
- *Financial aid counseling*—assistance for students individually or in small groups in completing financial aid applications or in working with the institution’s financial aid office to develop aid packages that will meet the students’ financial needs for attendance at the institution

- *Career counseling and employment assistance*—assistance for students in learning about career opportunities through written and computerized information, assessing their career interests and capabilities, and making occupational plans
- *Transfer counseling*—assistance for students interested in four-year programs in meeting the academic requirements of those programs, choosing four-year institutions, and applying for admission and financial aid at those institutions
- *Graduate school counseling*—assistance for students in choosing graduate or professional programs and applying for admission and financial aid for those programs
- *Professional mentoring*—professionals, other than project staff, working with project students to expose them to career and other opportunities available to them
- *Peer counseling/mentoring*—a variety of supports, personal or academic, provided by other students and designed to help project participants adjust to the institution

The percentage of grantees providing each of these services ranged from 33 percent to 98 percent (see Table 2.05). The percentage of participants who received these services ranged from 6 percent to 78 percent. The average contact hours ranged from 2 hours to 6 hours.

More than 90 percent of grantees provided personal counseling (94 percent), academic advising (98 percent), financial aid counseling (95 percent), and career counseling and employment assistance (93 percent). Academic advising attracted the highest percentage of participants, 78 percent, with services that averaged 4 contact hours. Peer counseling and mentoring were reported by 47 percent of grantees and had the longest average contact hours (6 hours).

A few two-year grantees provided graduate school counseling (9 percent), with an average of 23 contact hours. This service was very popular with four-year grantees (81 percent), but the average contact hours were only 2, less than one-tenth the average contact hours in two-year institutions. As expected, the percentage of two-year institutions providing transfer counseling (94 percent) was much higher than that of four-year institutions (50 percent). In two-year institutions, 32 percent of participants received transfer counseling compared with 4 percent in four-year institutions. In contrast, two-year institutions were less likely to provide peer counseling and mentoring (38 percent) than were four-year institutions (57 percent), and a lower percentage of their participants received this service (8 percent) than did participants in four-year institutions (17 percent).

**Table 2.05. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants receiving SSS-funded counseling and mentoring services plus average contact hours, by type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering service	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average contact hours per participant
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>	
Personal counseling	94.1	41.3	4.3
Academic advising	97.8	78.2	3.5
Financial aid counseling	95.4	47.5	2.4
Career counseling and employment assistance	93.4	36.0	3.5
Transfer counseling	71.6	16.6	2.6
Graduate school counseling	45.3	6.1	3.2
Professional mentoring	33.1	7.4	4.5
Peer counseling and mentoring	47.4	12.6	6.1
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>	
Personal counseling	94.8	41.5	5.5
Academic advising	97.9	75.8	3.8
Financial aid counseling	95.0	44.3	3.3
Career counseling and employment assistance	93.9	34.8	4.4
Transfer counseling	50.0	3.5	1.6
Graduate school counseling	81.0	10.6	1.9
Professional mentoring	35.1	7.8	4.9
Peer counseling/mentoring	56.7	16.8	6.5
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>	
Personal counseling	93.3	41.0	2.8
Academic advising	97.6	81.0	3.1
Financial aid counseling	95.9	51.3	1.5
Career counseling and employment assistance	92.9	37.5	2.5
Transfer counseling	93.8	32.0	2.8
Graduate school counseling	8.8	0.8	23.1
Professional mentoring	30.9	6.9	3.8
Peer counseling/mentoring	37.8	7.6	5.0

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

The top four of the many grant-specific counseling and mentoring services the SSS grantees provided are listed in Table 2.06. Campus life assistance provides information about housing, personal crises, and financial problems. Academic counseling includes setting goals, preparing for graduate school, seeking a mentor, and withdrawing from courses. The contact and visit service refers to grantee offices getting in touch with participants through e-mail, phone, newsletter, interviews, or visits. The support for students with disabilities includes testing and referral.

The percentage of participants who received campus life assistance was relatively low (less than 2 percent). The contact and visit service was time intensive, averaging 23 contact hours overall, but the average contact hours reported by two-year institutions was almost three times that reported by four-year institutions (37 hours vs. 13 hours).

**Table 2.06. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants receiving SSS-funded grant-specific “other” counseling and mentoring services plus average contact hours: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering service	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average contact hours per participant
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>	
Campus life assistance	11.4	1.9	5.0
Academic counseling	6.8	1.5	6.4
Contact and visit	5.0	0.6	23.1
Support for students with disabilities	7.7	1.3	9.5
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>	
Campus life assistance	11.5	1.8	5.4
Academic counseling	7.3	1.5	9.7
Contact and visit	5.4	0.6	13.0
Support for students with disabilities	6.7	1.2	16.7
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>	
Campus life assistance	11.4	2.0	4.5
Academic counseling	6.2	1.4	2.3
Contact and visit	4.5	0.5	36.8
Support for students with disabilities	8.8	1.6	3.5

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Cultural and enrichment activities

Three cultural and enrichment activities are defined in the APR:

- *Cultural activities*—any project-sponsored activities, such as field trips and special lectures and symposia, that have as their purpose the improvement of the project participants’ academic progress and personal development
- *Campus visitations*—project-sponsored trips to other postsecondary institutions for the purpose of acquainting students with institutions that the project participants may wish to attend to further their education (i.e., two-year/four-year transfers or graduate and professional schools)
- *Information workshops*—a variety of short workshops or seminars (usually a half day or less) on topics that range from stress management and test taking to drug and alcohol abuse

More than 90 percent of grantees provided cultural and enrichment activities in which approximately one-third of participants took part (Table 2.07). Information workshops were reported by about three-quarters of grantees, and one in four program participants joined the workshops. More than half the grantees (54 percent) organized campus visitations, but because these are highly customized activities, only 7 percent of students participated. Because transferring students to four-year institutions is a goal for two-year institutions, 82 percent of two-year institutions reported campus visitations, much higher than the percentage reported at four-year institutions (26 percent).

**Table 2.07. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants taking part in SSS-funded cultural and enrichment activities, by type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering	Percentage of participants taking part
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>
Cultural activities	91.1	34.4
Campus visitations	53.8	6.7
Information workshops	74.7	24.1
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>
Cultural activities	90.2	34.0
Campus visitations	26.2	3.3
Information workshops	70.9	23.1
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>
Cultural activities	92.1	34.8
Campus visitations	82.2	10.6
Information workshops	78.5	25.2

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

In addition to the activities listed above, grantee institutions provided several grant-specific cultural and enrichment activities not listed in the APR. Table 2.08 reports the three most commonly cited grant-specific activities. About 9 percent of the grantees offered activities for campus life enrichment, such as career fairs, newsletters, and club activities. Social events were the second most popular activities. Approximately 7 percent of grantees provided social events such as award banquets, TRIO day, and SSS student meetings. The third largest group of activities included academic support services, such as mentoring, goal setting for students, conferences, and meetings. However, only 4 percent of grantees reported these activities. Two-year institutions were more likely to offer these grant-specific cultural and enrichment activities than were four-year institutions.



**Table 2.08. Percentage of grantees offering and percentage of participants taking part in SSS-funded grant-specific “other” cultural and enrichment activities, by type of institution: 2001–02**

	Percentage of grantees offering	Percentage of participants taking part
<b>All institutions</b>	<b>N = 935<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 201,695<sup>2</sup></b>
Campus life enrichment	9.0	3.3
Social events	7.4	2.2
Academic supports	3.8	1.1
<b>Four-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 471<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 108,718<sup>2</sup></b>
Campus life enrichment	7.3	1.9
Social events	6.3	1.9
Academic supports	3.6	1.0
<b>Two-year institutions</b>	<b>N = 464<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N = 92,977<sup>2</sup></b>
Campus life enrichment	10.7	4.9
Social events	8.6	2.6
Academic supports	4.1	1.2

<sup>1</sup>Total number of grantees submitting APRs.

<sup>2</sup>Number of participants reported are aggregated from the grant-level data submitted by the 935 grantees.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Program objectives: 2001–02

The APR also collects narrative information on the grantees’ progress in meeting the program objectives. The information includes the approved objectives, the extent to which the grantee achieved each objective, and specific information to support the accomplishment of each objective. Five objectives were defined in the 2001–02 APR:

- *Persistence*—percentage of eligible participants who will persist toward completing the academic programs in which they were enrolled
- *Good academic standing*—percentage of eligible participants who will meet academic performance levels required to stay in good academic standing at the grantee institution
- *Graduation*—percentage of eligible participants who will graduate each year
- *Transfer*—percentage of eligible participants who will transfer each year
- *Administration*—the extent to which the grantee will meet the administrative requirements, including record keeping, reporting, and financial accountability

To examine the 2001–02 program objectives, random samples of 7 percent of grantee institutions were selected from a total of 935 grantees, proportional to the numbers of four-year and two-year grantees.<sup>6</sup> In all, 34 four-year and 33 two-year grantee institutions were included in the samples.

<sup>6</sup>The sample size was determined by the desired power of the analysis (set at 90 percent in this case) for detecting the minimum difference desired (set at 10 percent in this case).

Most grantees reported data on persistence, good academic standing, graduation, and administration. Because transfer was not an objective for four-year institutions, only four of 34 sampled four-year institutions reported data on this objective. Table 2.09 reports the percentage of sampled grantees that met their objectives in the 2001–02 program year.

More than 90 percent of grantees met objectives of persistence (94 percent) and good academic standing (92 percent). More than 70 percent of grantees met the other three objectives. All four-year institutions that reported data on persistence met the objective (100 percent). In contrast, only 88 percent of the two-year institutions reportedly attained this objective.

**Table 2.09. Percentage of sampled grantees that met SSS-approved program objectives: 2001–02**

Objectives	All institutions		Four-year institutions		Two-year institutions	
	N <sup>1</sup>	Percent <sup>2</sup>	N <sup>1</sup>	Percent <sup>2</sup>	N <sup>1</sup>	Percent <sup>2</sup>
Persistence	64	93.7	32	100.0	32	87.5
Good academic standing	65	92.3	33	93.9	32	90.6
Graduation	63	82.5	33	87.9	30	76.7
Transfer	29	70.0	4	75.0	25	68.0
Administration	60	85.0	31	87.1	29	82.8

<sup>1</sup>Number of sampled institutions reporting the listed objectives.

<sup>2</sup>Percent of sampled institutions meeting the listed objectives.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

# Program Participants: 1998–99 to 2001–02

Every reporting year, SSS grantees report demographic, academic and program participation information on participants. This chapter characterizes participants who were served by the program at any point during the four years from 1998–99 to 2001–02.

The number of participants reported in this chapter is slightly different from that reported in chapters 1 and 2. The number of participants reported in chapter 1 is the proposed number. In chapter 2, the number of participants is based on grant-level data as reported by grantees. In this chapter, the number of participants is based on individual participant records reported by grantees that submitted APRs in each reporting year. As discussed early in chapter 1, a few grantees submitted aggregate data but did not provide individual student data (see Appendix A). Because of this, the number of grantees and participants reported in this chapter may differ from numbers reported in earlier chapters. In addition, the number of participants reported in each table varies due to the fact that grantees, at times, did not report the information.

In order to adjust for the fact that the estimates of postsecondary persistence and graduation rates only account for participants enrolled at the grantee institution, the SSS APR data used in this profile were merged with the Title IV financial aid records from 1998–99 to 2000–01 in an attempt to capture enrollment information for participants who left the grantee institution but continued at or graduated from another postsecondary institution.

Depending on whether or not they receive program services in a given year, participants fall into one of the following three status categories:

- *New participant*—the individual has not been reported in previous years and has a project entry date in the academic year in which they are reported as “new.”
- *Continuing participant*—the individual is currently enrolled and served and has a project entry date falling prior to the year in which they are reported as “continuing.”
- *Prior participant*—the individual received project services before the reporting year but did not receive project services during the reporting year. Starting in reporting year 2001–02, the category of “prior participant” was further differentiated to distinguish between those who were still enrolled and those who were no longer enrolled at the grantee institution.

The first two categories (i.e., *new participant* and *continuing participant*) combined reflect *active participants*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Refer to Appendix C for a description on the verification of participant status.

Table 3.01 presents the distribution of participant status over the four reporting years. Overall, new participants constituted about 30 percent of all participants in each reporting year. The percentage of new participants varied with the type of institution. In the four-year institutions, about one in four participants was new in each reporting year, and the percentage of new participants dropped slightly between 1998–99 and 2001–02. In comparison, new participants constituted about 38 percent of all participants in two-year institutions, and the percentage increased slightly from 1998–99 to 2001–02.

**Table 3.01. Percentage distribution of active and prior SSS Program participants, by participant status and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>All participants:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	234,322	248,667	247,295	312,148
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
New participants	31.4	30.2	29.6	30.5
Continuing participants	43.8	43.4	44.0	35.9
Prior participants	24.8	26.4	26.3	33.6
Enrolled	—	—	—	19.5
No longer enrolled	—	—	—	14.1
<b>All participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	143,180	155,964	155,926	186,660
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
New participants	27.3	25.9	25.2	24.6
Continuing participants	41.8	41.2	41.9	36.1
Prior participants	30.9	33.0	32.9	39.3
Enrolled	—	—	—	24.9
No longer enrolled	—	—	—	14.4
<b>All participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	91,142	92,703	91,369	125,488
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
New participants	37.9	37.6	37.2	39.3
Continuing participants	47.0	47.2	47.7	35.6
Prior participants	15.1	15.3	15.1	25.2
Enrolled	—	—	—	11.4
No longer enrolled	—	—	—	13.8

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

About 44 percent of the participants in the first three reporting years were continuing students (i.e., those who received services both before *and* during the reporting year). The percentage dropped to about 36 percent in 2001–02. Interestingly, the percentage of prior students (i.e., those who had received program services before but not during the reporting year) increased by almost the same amount from the earlier years to 2001–02. Separating the prior participants into enrolled and not enrolled categories in 2001–02 evidently provided the clarification needed to correctly report prior participants who continued to be enrolled in the grantee institution.

The percentage of continuing participants and the decrease in that percentage in 2001–02 varies by type of institution. Two-year institutions had a larger drop in the percentage of students classified as continuing in 2001–02 than did four-year institutions (a drop of 11 percentage points for the two-year institutions between reporting years 1998–99 and 2001–02 vs. a drop of 6 percentage points for the four-year institutions).

In addition, with the exception of reporting year 2001–02, the percentage of prior participants in two-year institutions was about half that in four-year institutions. The smaller percentage of prior participants in two-year institutions reflects the fact that participants in two-year programs simply have less time, relative to their counterparts in four-year institutions, to become prior participants.

The remainder of this chapter focuses only on *active* participants (i.e., both “new” and “continuing” participants). Overall, between two-thirds and three-quarters of the participants in each reporting year were active participants. The percentage of active participants was lower for four-year institutions than for two-year institutions throughout the period under consideration. As Table 3.02 shows, the number of students that the SSS Program grantees served per year increased from 176,311 in 1998–99 to 207,198 in 2001–02. Among the active participants, the percentage of new participants remained stable at around 41 percent between 1998–99 and 2000–01 and jumped to 46 percent in 2001–02 because a large number of new grantees were funded in the new funding cycle.

**Table 3.02. Percentage distribution and number of active SSS Program participants, by participant status and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99		1999–00		2000–01		2001–02	
	Percent	Total <sup>1</sup>	Percent	Total <sup>1</sup>	Percent	Total <sup>1</sup>	Percent	Total <sup>1</sup>
Active participants, all institutions:	100.0	176,311	100.0	183,048	100.0	182,182	100.0	207,198
New participants	41.8	73,661	41.1	75,156	40.2	73,285	45.9	95,155
Continuing participants	58.2	102,650	58.9	107,892	59.8	108,897	54.1	112,043
Active participants, four-year institutions:	100.0	98,895	100.0	104,502	100.0	104,621	100.0	113,306
New participants	39.6	39,114	38.6	40,327	37.6	39,296	40.5	45,895
Continuing participants	60.4	59,781	61.4	64,175	62.4	65,325	59.5	67,411
Active participants, two-year institutions:	100.0	77,416	100.0	78,546	100.0	77,561	100.0	93,892
New participants	44.6	34,547	44.3	34,829	43.8	33,989	52.5	49,260
Continuing participants	55.4	42,869	55.7	43,717	56.2	43,572	47.5	44,632

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

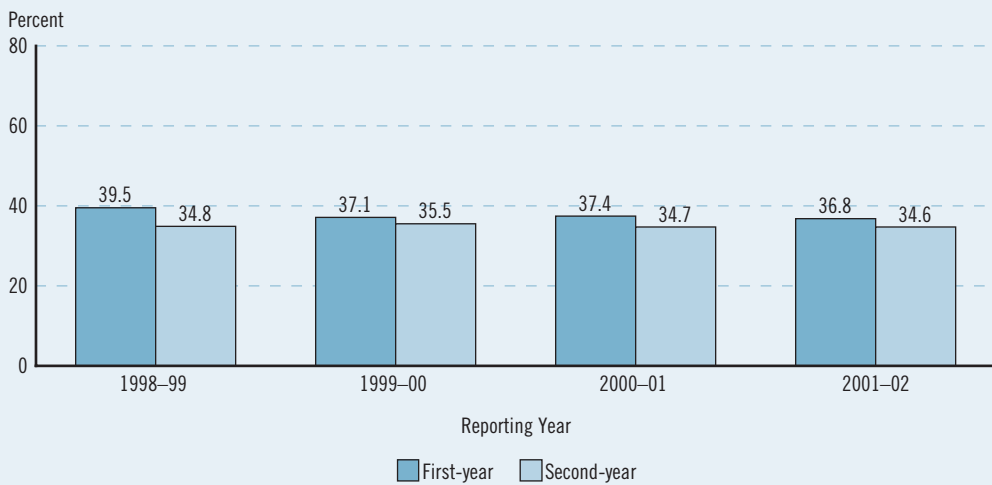
### Current college grade

Overall, almost three-quarters of active participants in each reporting year were first- or second-year students. As both Figure 3.01 and Table 3.03 show, the percentage of active second-year participants remained stable at about 35 percent throughout the four-year period, but the percentage of first-year students dropped about 3 percentage points over the period (i.e., from 40 percent in 1998–99 to 37 percent in 2001–02). Table 3.03 further shows that about 22 to 25 percent of the active participants were in their third or fourth years. Another 2 to 3 percent of participants were in their fifth year of college or later.

By definition, only first- and second-year students are expected to be enrolled in two-year institutions. Active participants in two-year institutions were almost equally divided between first- and second-year students during the four reporting years. At four-year institutions, although the percentage of first-year participants was lower than in two-year institutions, more first-year students were in the program than were students from any other college grade level. However, the percentage of first-year participants in four-year institutions declined over the reporting period. In 2001–02, about 27 percent of the active participants in four-year institutions were first-year students, a decrease of about 4 percentage points when compared with 1998–99.

Within each reporting year, the percentage of active participants in four-year institutions decreased with each higher college grade level, until the fourth year when the decline is reversed, reflecting perhaps the special needs of the graduating students.

**Figure 3.01. Percentage of active SSS Program participants who are first- or second-year students: 1998–99 to 2001–02**



SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 3.03. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by college grade level and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	172,987	180,055	178,861	203,948
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
First year	39.5	37.1	37.4	36.8
Second year	34.8	35.5	34.7	34.6
Third year	10.7	11.2	11.2	10.3
Fourth year	12.5	13.1	13.7	12.0
Fifth year	2.2	2.6	2.5	1.8
Graduated with associate degree	—	—	—	1.8
Graduated with bachelor's degree	—	—	—	2.4
Graduate/professional	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.2
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	96,152	102,158	101,778	111,672
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
First year	30.8	28.0	28.3	27.3
Second year	24.5	24.9	23.6	24.3
Third year	18.2	19.0	19.2	18.4
Fourth year	22.2	22.8	23.9	21.6
Fifth year	3.7	4.5	4.3	3.3
Graduated with associate degree	—	—	—	0.4
Graduated with bachelor's degree	—	—	—	4.3
Graduate/professional	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.3
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	76,835	77,897	77,083	92,276
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
First year	50.4	49.1	49.5	48.3
Second year	47.6	49.3	49.3	47.1
Third year	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.6
Fourth year	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4
Fifth year	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1
Graduated with associate degree	—	—	—	3.5
Graduated with bachelor's degree	—	—	—	0.0
Graduate/professional	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

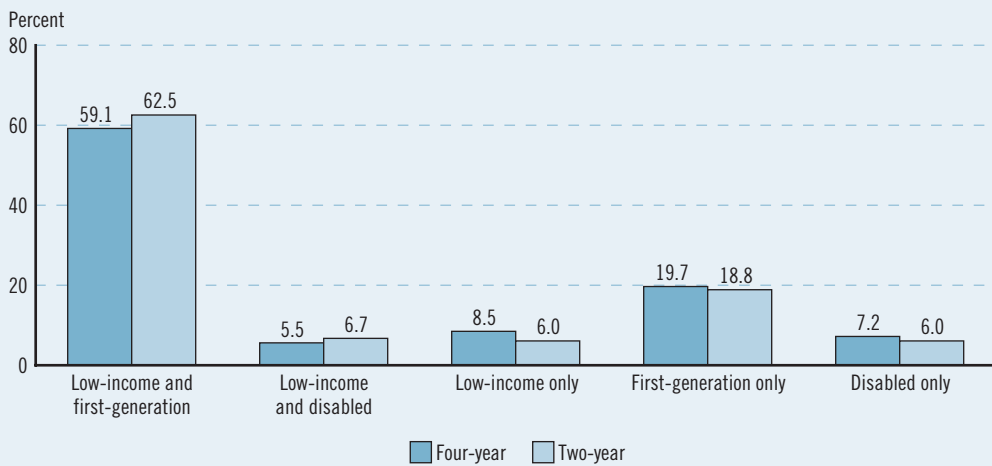
## Eligibility status

To be eligible to participate in the SSS Program, a student must be low-income, a first-generation college student, or disabled. These terms are defined below:

- *Low-income student*—a student whose family’s taxable income does not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level in the calendar year preceding the year in which the individual initially participates in the project. The poverty level amount is determined by using criteria established by the Bureau of the Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce.<sup>8</sup>
- *First-generation college student*—a student from a family in which neither parent (whether natural or adoptive) received a baccalaureate degree or a student who, prior to the age of 18, regularly resided with and received support from only one natural or adoptive parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree.
- *Student with disabilities*—a student who has a diagnosed physical or mental impairment that substantially limits his or her ability to participate in the educational experiences and opportunities offered by the grantee institution.

The statute and regulations governing SSS require that two-thirds of the participants in any SSS project must be either disabled or first-generation college students from low-income families. The remaining one-third may be low-income individuals, first-generation individuals, individuals with disabilities or a combination of the three. At least one-third of the individuals with disabilities must also be low-income individuals. Figure 3.02 shows the percentage of active SSS Program participants, by program eligibility and type of institution.

**Figure 3.02. Percentage of active SSS Program participants, by program eligibility and type of institution: 2001–02**



SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

<sup>8</sup>In 2001, for example, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$17,650. Thus the 150 percent income limit was \$26,475.



Table 3.04 shows that approximately 73 percent of active participants in all institutions were either low-income and first-generation college students, low-income college students with disabilities or college students with disabilities only, as required by the governing statutes. Over 19 percent of active participants in all institutions were first-generation college students only and just over 7 percent were low-income only students. Approximately half of participants with disabilities were from low-income families. The eligibility distributions of active participants in four-year and two-year institutions are very similar.

**Table 3.04. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by eligibility criteria and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	175,236	182,347	181,122	202,616
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Low-income and first-generation	59.7	59.9	59.7	60.7
Low-income and disabled	6.2	6.0	5.8	6.0
Low-income only	7.7	7.6	7.3	7.4
First-generation only	19.4	19.4	20.1	19.3
Disabled only	6.9	7.1	7.0	6.7
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	98,252	104,018	103,764	110,525
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Low-income and first-generation	59.1	59.2	58.6	59.1
Low-income and disabled	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.5
Low-income only	8.7	8.6	8.3	8.5
First-generation only	19.3	19.3	20.1	19.7
Disabled only	7.2	7.3	7.6	7.2
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	76,984	78,329	77,358	92,091
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Low-income and first-generation	60.5	60.8	61.3	62.5
Low-income and disabled	6.9	6.5	6.3	6.7
Low-income only	6.5	6.4	6.0	6.0
First-generation only	19.6	19.5	20.1	18.8
Disabled only	6.5	6.8	6.3	6.0

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Demographic characteristics

### Gender

According to the *Digest of Education Statistics*, approximately 44 percent of the 15 million students enrolled in U.S. colleges in 1998–99 were male and 57 percent were female.<sup>9</sup> Compared with this national enrollment pattern, the enrollment pattern for the SSS Program shows that male students have been consistently underrepresented; half as many male as female participants were served by grantees for all the reporting years under consideration (see Table 3.05). The gender difference was more pronounced in the two-year institutions than in the four-year institutions.

**Table 3.05. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by gender: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	176,208	182,919	182,129	203,860
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	34.2	33.9	33.8	32.9
Female	65.8	66.1	66.2	67.1
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	98,820	104,412	104,586	111,619
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	37.0	36.7	36.8	35.9
Female	63.0	63.3	63.3	64.1
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	77,388	78,507	77,543	92,241
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	30.7	30.1	29.8	29.3
Female	69.3	69.8	70.2	70.7

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

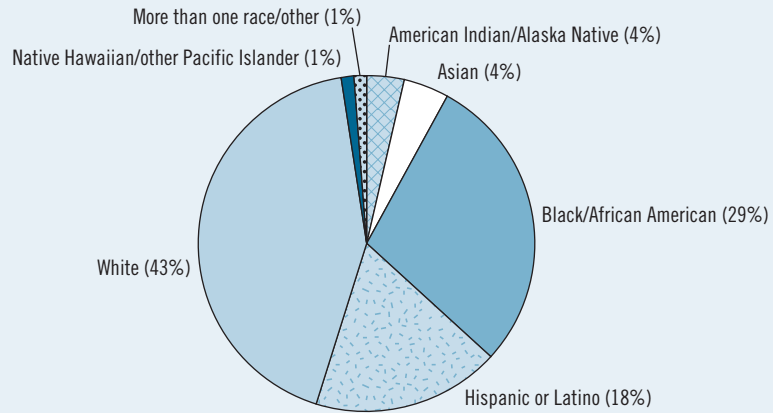
SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Race/ethnicity

In 2001–02, about 43 percent of all active SSS Program participants were white (see Figure 3.03). About 38 percent of the students served by four-year institutions were white, compared with 41 percent in 1998–99 (see Figure 3.04 and Table 3.06). About half of the participants in two-year institutions were white, and another quarter were African American. Ratios between whites and African Americans were smaller in four-year institutions.

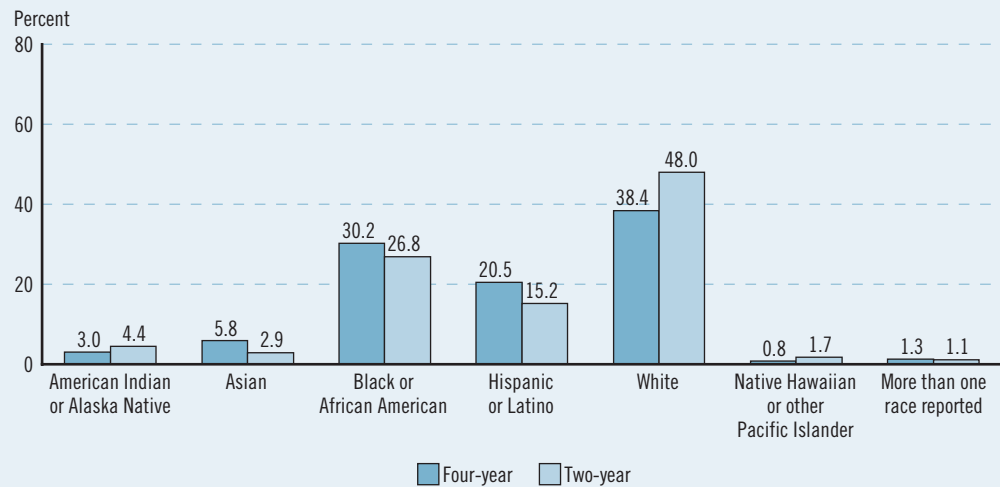
<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2002, NCES 2003–060, by Thomas D. Snyder. Production Manager, Charlene M. Hoffman. Washington, DC: 2003.

**Figure 3.03. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by race/ethnicity: 2001–02**



SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Figure 3.04. Percentage of active SSS Program participants, by race/ethnicity and type of institution: 2001–02**



SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 3.06. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by race/ethnicity and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	174,203	181,344	180,467	201,550
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.6
Asian	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.4
Black or African American	28.2	28.2	29.2	28.7
Hispanic or Latino	17.1	17.4	17.2	18.1
White	45.0	44.4	43.5	42.7
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
More than one race reported	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.2
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	97,393	103,203	103,333	110,019
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.9	2.6	2.6	3.0
Asian	5.6	5.9	5.8	5.8
Black or African American	29.8	29.2	30.2	30.2
Hispanic or Latino	19.1	20.4	20.4	20.5
White	41.0	40.0	39.0	38.4
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8
More than one race reported	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.3
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	76,810	78,141	77,134	91,531
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	3.8	4.0	3.9	4.4
Asian	3.6	3.4	3.3	2.9
Black or African American	26.1	26.8	27.7	26.8
Hispanic or Latino	14.6	13.6	13.1	15.2
White	50.0	50.1	49.6	48.0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.7
More than one race reported	0.5	0.7	0.8	1.1

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Average age at entry

Overall, the average age of active participants remained stable at 25.2 years throughout the four-year reporting period. Participants served by two-year grantee institutions were about four years older than their counterparts in four-year institutions (see Table 3.07).

### Grade level at program entry

Approximately 80 percent of the active participants entered the SSS Program when they were in their first year of study, including 22 percent who had attended previously. Around 12 to 13 percent of participants entered in their second year, and the remaining were in either their third or fourth year when they joined the program (see Table 3.08).

**Table 3.07. Average age at entry of active SSS Program participants, by type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions</b>				
Average age at entry <sup>1</sup>	25.2	25.2	25.0	25.2
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions</b>				
Average age at entry <sup>1</sup>	23.5	23.6	23.1	23.2
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions</b>				
Average age at entry <sup>1</sup>	27.4	27.6	27.5	27.6

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data. Calculation based on the starting date of the reporting year, July 1.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 3.08. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by college grade level at entry and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	173,495	180,769	180,224	201,453
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1st year, never attended before	57.3	58.7	60.2	57.0
1st year, attended before	21.9	21.1	21.0	22.1
2nd year	13.0	12.7	11.8	13.3
3rd year	5.2	5.0	4.7	5.0
4th year	2.3	2.1	1.9	2.4
5th year/other undergraduate	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	96,961	103,089	103,420	109,793
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1st year, never attended before	62.0	62.9	64.6	62.1
1st year, attended before	12.8	12.3	12.4	12.3
2nd year	11.8	11.8	11.0	11.7
3rd year	9.0	8.7	8.1	9.0
4th year	4.0	3.7	3.3	4.4
5th year/other undergraduate	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	76,534	77,680	76,804	91,660
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1st year, never attended before	51.4	53.1	54.3	50.8
1st year, attended before	33.5	32.9	32.7	33.7
2nd year	14.5	13.8	12.8	15.2
3rd year	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2
4th year	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1
5th year/other undergraduate	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

In two-year institutions, about 85 percent of the active participants were first-year students when they joined the program, 10 percent more than in four-year institutions. In addition, at program entry, 20 percent more first-year students in two-year institutions had previously attended college than had their counterparts in four-year institutions.

## Academic need

Students join the SSS Program for help with a variety of academic needs. Table 3.09 lists the distribution of students by the needs reported. For reporting years 1998–99 to 2000–01, students for whom the main need was not possible to determine were reported as having “multiple needs.” Within these three years, more students were reported with multiple needs than with any single need listed, followed by students whose academic needs were identified with diagnostic tests. The multiple-needs category was dropped in 2001–02, and those students were recategorized into one of the other 11 categories provided. This change may explain the larger percentage of participants classified as “other” in 2001–02.

Students at two-year institutions had very different needs from those of students at four-year institutions. The percentage of participants whose academic needs were identified with “diagnostic tests,” for example, was more than twice as high at two-year institutions (30 percent) as at four-year institutions (12 percent) in 2001–02. The percentage of participants in two-year institutions who had been out of the academic pipeline for five or more years was more than twice that in four-year institutions.

**Table 3.09. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by academic need and institution type: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
Active participants, all institutions:				
Number <sup>1</sup>	171,407	179,565	179,773	194,978
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Low high school GPA	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.5
Low SAT scores, verbal	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.4
Low SAT scores, math	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.2
Low ACT scores	7.6	7.4	7.5	9.1
Predictive indicator <sup>2</sup>	7.8	8.5	9.5	20.7
Diagnostic tests	16.9	16.6	16.2	20.3
Low college GPA	3.4	3.1	2.9	4.2
High school equivalency	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.0
Failing grades	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.9
Out of academic pipeline for 5+ years	4.3	4.4	4.3	6.5
Multiple	38.4	37.9	38.0	—
Other	14.2	14.6	14.1	29.0

*Table continued on next page*

**Table 3.09. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by academic need and institution type: 1998–99 to 2001–02—Continued**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	96,053	101,918	102,649	105,272
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Low high school GPA	4.0	4.0	4.5	5.3
Low SAT scores, verbal	1.8	1.6	1.6	2.4
Low SAT scores, math	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.9
Low ACT scores	10.6	10.5	10.4	12.9
Predictive indicator <sup>2</sup>	7.4	8.0	8.7	22.5
Diagnostic tests	10.9	10.1	9.3	12.4
Low college GPA	4.2	4.1	3.9	5.7
High school equivalency	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5
Failing grades	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.9
Out of academic pipeline for 5+ years	2.9	2.9	2.8	4.0
Multiple	39.8	38.7	38.8	—
Other	15.4	16.7	16.3	29.7
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	75,354	77,647	77,124	89,706
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Low high school GPA	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.3
Low SAT scores, verbal	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Low SAT scores, math	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4
Low ACT scores	3.8	3.4	3.7	4.6
Predictive indicator <sup>2</sup>	8.4	9.3	10.6	18.7
Diagnostic tests	24.5	25.2	25.5	29.6
Low college GPA	2.5	1.9	1.6	2.6
High school equivalency	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.7
Failing grades	2.6	2.4	1.8	3.0
Out of academic pipeline for 5+ years	6.1	6.2	6.3	9.5
Multiple	36.7	36.9	37.0	—
Other	12.7	11.9	11.1	28.3

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

<sup>2</sup>Predictive indicator is defined as “a composite variable for estimating the potential success of a student in college using a variety of factors that may include indicators such as high school GPA, SAT, or ACT test scores, high school preparedness, etc.”

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Length of service provision

### Length of time receiving service

From 1998–99 to 2001–02, about two-thirds to three-quarters of the participants received program services for two years or less (see Table 3.10). Not surprisingly, more students received services for two years or less in two-year than in four-year institutions. For the reporting period under consideration, 73 to 80 percent of the participants in two-year institutions received services for two years or less; between 62 to 68 percent of students in four-year institutions received services for two years or less.

**Table 3.10. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by years receiving services and institution type: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	169,965	166,360	174,359	195,626
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of years				
0–1	45.2	38.4	41.1	47.3
1–2	27.9	28.4	25.6	23.0
2–3	12.5	16.8	15.3	13.1
3–4	7.0	7.9	9.4	8.0
4–5	3.8	4.1	4.3	4.4
Over 5	3.7	4.4	4.3	4.1
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	95,513	97,171	100,008	107,750
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of years				
0–1	41.7	35.8	37.5	41.7
1–2	26.1	26.6	24.1	23.0
2–3	13.7	17.0	16.2	14.6
3–4	8.8	9.9	11.1	10.1
4–5	5.2	5.4	5.8	5.7
Over 5	4.6	5.3	5.3	5.0
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	74,452	69,189	74,351	87,876
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of years				
0–1	49.6	42.1	45.9	54.3
1–2	30.2	30.9	27.7	23.2
2–3	11.0	16.5	14.1	11.3
3–4	4.7	5.2	7.1	5.5
4–5	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.8
Over 5	2.4	3.1	2.9	2.9

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

NOTE: The APR requires grantee institutions to report all individual participants served by the project in the current year. Because the APR does not set a standard date for defining the length of time receiving services, the specific starting and ending dates for the reporting period vary across postsecondary institutions. In this table, June 30 was used as the cut-off date for the end of reporting year and the starting date of the new reporting period is July 1.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.



### Project entry period

Students could enter the SSS Program at any time. Because project entry date defines new participants, Table 3.11 focuses on the new participants only. Table 3.11 shows that most new participants entered the program in the fall of each of the four years under consideration. More participants in two-year institutions than in four-year institutions entered in the period from December to February.

**Table 3.11. Percentage distribution of new SSS Program participants, by entry season and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>New participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	73,661	75,156	73,285	95,155
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Entry Season				
September–November	44.1	43.1	43.4	40.0
December–February	20.8	21.4	21.5	23.6
March–May	9.0	8.8	8.5	10.5
June–August	26.1	26.7	26.7	25.9
<b>New participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	39,114	40,327	39,296	45,895
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Entry Season				
September–November	46.0	44.7	46.2	42.2
December–February	17.7	17.6	17.3	19.2
March–May	7.7	7.8	7.6	8.1
June–August	28.7	29.9	28.9	30.6
<b>New participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	34,547	34,829	33,989	49,260
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Entry Season				
September–November	41.9	41.2	39.9	37.8
December–February	24.5	26.0	26.5	28.1
March–May	10.6	10.1	9.7	13.0
June–August	23.0	22.7	24.0	21.0

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Enrollment status

Persistence (i.e., continued enrollment in postsecondary institutions) is a primary objective of the SSS Program. SSS grantees are required to report individual student information for as long as the participant remains enrolled in the grantee institution. The enrollment status of participants who leave grantee institutions and go to other institutions of higher education is not reported, leading to an underestimation of the impact that the SSS Program might have on the participants. To improve the estimation of continued enrollment of the SSS participants, other data were sought to supplement the APRs.

Because the majority of the students served by the program are from low-income families, many of them apply for student financial aid. Financial aid is disbursed only to enrolled students. Student-level information collected by the Federal Student Aid Office of the U.S. Department of Education was merged with the SSS data in an effort to adjust the estimates of end-of-year enrollment by including those enrolled in nongrant institutions. At the time this report was prepared, 2001–02 financial aid data were not available, so the enrollment during the year in 2001–02 could not be adjusted this way. Instead, grantees with participants who were enrolled in 2000–01 but were not reported in the 2001–02 APRs were recontacted to fill in the missing 2001–02 participants' enrollment status.

### **Enrollment status during the reporting period**

Between 1998–99 and 2001–02, about two-thirds of active participants were enrolled in each reporting year as full-time students, although the percentage of full-time students decreased slightly in later years (see Table 3.12). Only about half the active program participants in two-year institutions were enrolled as full-time students; another one-quarter of the active participants varied between full-time and part-time throughout the year. In 2001–02, the percentage of full-time participants at four-year institutions was 25 percentage points higher than at two-year institutions (approximately 78 percent vs. 53 percent, respectively). The percentage of participants who reported varied enrollment status in two-year institutions was twice as large as that in four-year institutions (e.g., 23 percent vs. 12 percent, respectively).

### **Enrollment status at the end of the program year**

Overall, the percentage of students who enrolled at the end of the reporting year and expected to continue to enroll in the following year—the continuing participants category in Table 3.13—declined from 73 percent to 67 percent over the period under consideration. When examined across type of institution, four-year institutions had higher percentages of continuing students than two-year institutions in each of the reporting years. At the same time, the percentage of students who graduated increased over the four years in both two-year and four-year institutions. The graduation rates of 2000–01 and 2001–02 participants in both types of institutions and overall increased by almost the same percentage as the decrease in the percentage of continuing students. Thus, recontacting the grantees may have resulted in a switch of some of the participants from “continuing” to “graduated” status.

Table 3.13 also shows that, as expected, two-year institutions reported larger percentages of students transferring before graduation (about 6 percent in two-year institutions vs. 2 to 3 percent in four-year institutions). Finally, the percentage of participants who withdrew for personal reasons was larger in two-year institutions than in four-year institutions (10 to 11 percent of participants in two-year institutions vs. 4 to 5 percent in four-year institutions in each reporting year).

**Table 3.12. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by enrollment status and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	174,991	182,284	181,685	204,970
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full-time	68.6	68.0	67.8	66.5
¾ time	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.1
½ time	5.7	6.1	5.8	5.7
Less than ½ time	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.2
Varied	15.8	16.0	16.6	16.9
Not enrolled <sup>2</sup>	1.2	1.6	1.4	2.7
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	98,399	104,030	104,399	111,684
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full-time	80.6	79.4	79.9	77.8
¾ time	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.1
½ time	3.6	4.1	3.9	3.2
Less than ½ time	2.3	1.9	2.0	1.7
Varied	9.4	10.4	9.8	11.5
Not enrolled <sup>2</sup>	1.0	1.3	1.2	2.9
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	76,592	78,254	77,286	93,286
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full-time	53.3	52.7	51.5	53.0
¾ time	6.7	7.3	7.1	7.5
½ time	8.4	8.9	8.3	8.7
Less than ½ time	6.0	5.8	5.6	4.9
Varied	24.0	23.4	25.9	23.4
Not enrolled <sup>2</sup>	1.6	2.0	1.6	2.5

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

<sup>2</sup>"Not enrolled" reflects invalid data but is included here to allow summation to 100 percent.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 3.13. Percentage distribution of the end-of-year status of active SSS Program participants, by institution type: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	165,396	175,720	175,597	198,002
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Continuing participants	72.6	70.9	71.4	66.8
Academic dismissal	2.3	1.9	2.2	2.0
Dismissal for nonacademic reasons	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Withdrew for financial reasons	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7
Withdrew for health reasons	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7
Withdrew for academic reasons	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5
Withdrew for personal reasons	6.9	7.5	7.2	6.4
Transferred	3.5	3.8	3.6	4.5
Graduated	8.9	9.8	10.0	14.6
Graduated and transferred	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.4
Enrolled in graduate degree program	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	93,829	100,946	100,969	109,175
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Continuing participants	78.1	76.8	77.1	71.9
Academic dismissal	2.9	2.5	2.8	2.4
Dismissal for nonacademic reasons	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1
Withdrew for financial reasons	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4
Withdrew for health reasons	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Withdrew for academic reasons	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.2
Withdrew for personal reasons	4.8	4.8	4.4	3.8
Transferred	2.0	2.1	2.0	3.0
Graduated	9.1	10.3	10.9	16.1
Graduated and transferred	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2
Enrolled in graduate degree program	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.4
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	71,567	74,774	74,628	88,827
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Continuing participants	65.5	62.9	63.6	60.9
Academic dismissal	1.5	1.0	1.4	1.3
Dismissal for nonacademic reasons	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Withdrew for financial reasons	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9
Withdrew for health reasons	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.0
Withdrew for academic reasons	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.9
Withdrew for personal reasons	9.7	11.3	10.9	9.5
Transferred	5.5	6.0	5.8	6.3
Graduated	8.6	9.0	8.9	12.8
Graduated and transferred	5.1	5.6	5.7	5.1
Enrolled in graduate degree program	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Grade point average and academic standing

Table 3.14 presents the average cumulative grade point average (GPA) for active participants enrolled in institutions with 4-point scale systems. The average was approximately 2.6 for all the years reported, regardless of type of institution.

New participants consistently showed slightly lower GPAs than continuing participants, who had received project services for a longer time. This pattern occurred in both four-year and two-year grantee institutions.

**Table 3.14. Average cumulative GPA of active SSS Program participants, by type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	171,951	178,797	178,052	199,046
All active participants	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
New participants	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6
Continuing participants	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	96,828	102,549	102,616	108,981
All active participants	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
New participants	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Continuing participants	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	75,123	76,248	75,436	90,065
All active participants	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
New participants	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6
Continuing participants	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

Table 3.15 presents the percentage of active participants who were reported to be in good academic standing at the end of each reporting year. As expected from the findings presented in the previous table, there was a small increase in the percentage of participants in good academic standing throughout the reporting years. Also as expected, the percentage of those in good academic standing was higher among continuing participants than among new participants.

**Table 3.15. Percentage of active SSS Program participants in good academic standing, by type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	170,892	179,380	179,067	199,751
All active participants	86.1	87.2	87.6	87.9
New participants	83.6	85.0	85.1	86.1
Continuing participants	87.9	88.8	89.2	89.5
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	97,121	102,874	103,049	109,164
All active participants	85.8	87.3	87.7	87.9
New participants	82.3	84.4	84.6	85.0
Continuing participants	88.1	89.1	89.6	89.9
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	73,771	76,506	76,018	90,587
All active participants	86.5	87.2	87.4	88.0
New participants	85.1	85.6	85.6	87.1
Continuing participants	87.6	88.4	88.8	89.0

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

### Degree or certificate completed

The percentage of active participants completing a degree or certificate increased during the reporting period but varied by the type of institution (see Table 3.16). From 1998–99 to 2001–02, the percentage of participants who completed their first bachelor’s degree in four-year institutions increased from 9 percent to 11 percent. During the same period, the percentage of participants who completed an associate degree in two-year institutions remained relatively stable (i.e., between 12 and 13 percent). Relatively few participants, especially those at four-year institutions, attained certificates or diplomas in the period under consideration. The percentage of students in all institutions who were still working to graduate, reported as “No degree or certificate completed” in Table 3.16, increased from 40 percent in 1998–99 to 72 percent in the 2001–02 reporting year. At the same time, the table shows a large downward shift in the percentage of participants with missing information, decreasing from 47 percent in 1998–99 to 13 percent in the 2001–02 reporting year. The shift occurred in both two-year and four-year institutions, again suggesting that the effort of recontacting the grantees to fill in enrollment and related graduation information for the 2001–02 participants improved the reporting of students who continued in both types of institutions.

**Table 3.16. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program participants, by degree or certificate completed and type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	176,407	183,078	182,424	207,198
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Certificate/diploma for less than two-year program	0.9	1.4	1.2	1.3
Certificate/diploma for two-year program	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.7
Associate degree	5.7	6.1	6.3	5.9
1st bachelor's degree	5.1	6.2	6.4	6.2
2nd bachelor's degree	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teaching credential program	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Graduate or professional degree	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
No degree or certificate completed	39.7	49.8	55.2	72.3
Missing	47.3	35.5	30.0	13.4
<b>Active participants, four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	98,948	104,523	104,794	113,306
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Certificate/diploma for less than two-year program	0.1	0.7	0.4	0.4
Certificate/diploma for two-year program	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.2
Associate degree	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.1
1st bachelor's degree	8.9	10.8	11.0	11.3
2nd bachelor's degree	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Teaching credential program	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Graduate or professional degree	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3
No degree or certificate completed	41.7	49.9	55.6	72.4
Missing	47.3	36.6	31.1	14.3
<b>Active participants, two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	77,459	78,555	77,630	93,892
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Certificate/diploma for less than two-year program	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.4
Certificate/diploma for two-year program	1.7	1.4	1.7	1.3
Associate degree	11.9	12.3	12.9	11.7
1st bachelor's degree	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
2nd bachelor's degree	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teaching credential program	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Graduate or professional degree	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.1
No degree or certificate completed	36.7	49.6	54.5	72.3
Missing	47.2	34.2	28.5	12.2

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants may differ from other tables due to missing data.

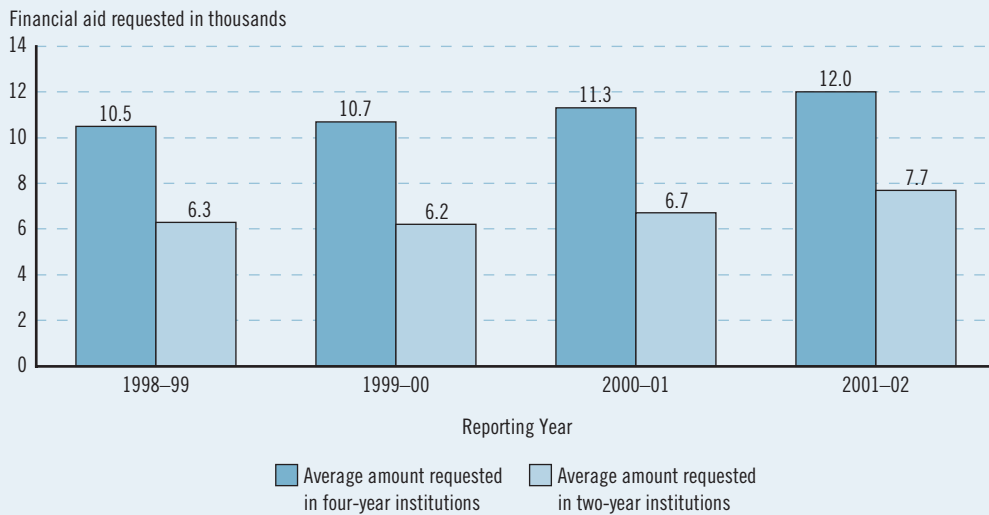
NOTE: Because the percentages in this table include records of active participants only, the estimates are lower than those percentages reported in previous reports that had included all participants, regardless of their participant status. For example, during the 1998–99 program year, if all participants had been included, the percentage of participants who completed their first bachelor's degree in four-year institutions would have been 15 rather than 9 percent.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Financial aid

Because two-year institutions usually cost less than four-year institutions, and private institutions usually have higher costs than public institutions, this discussion differentiates the findings by both institution type and sector (public/private). As Figure 3.05 shows, in each reporting year, the average amount of financial aid requested by active participants in two-year institutions was about two-thirds the amount requested by active participants in four-year institutions.

**Figure 3.05. Average amount of financial aid requested by active SSS Program participants in four-year and two-year institutions: 1998–99 to 2001–02**



SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Four-year institutions

Because students from low-income families are one of the targeted populations for the SSS Program, a large portion of the SSS active participants need financial aid. From 1998–99 to 2001–02, close to 80 percent of active participants in four-year institutions applied for financial aid (see Table 3.17), and virtually all who applied received some aid. The percentage of active program participants who applied for financial aid differed across private and public four-year institutions. In private four-year institutions, 85 to 89 percent of the active participants applied for financial aid, compared with about three-quarters of participants in public institutions. The gap, however, is narrowing—from a 14 percentage point difference in 1998–99 to a 9 percentage point difference in 2001–02.

Overall, among four-year institutions, the percentage of active program participants who applied for financial aid and were offered full aid dropped from approximately 47 percent in 1998–99 to about 43 percent in 2001–02. The drop was more pronounced among private four-year institutions than public four-year institutions. The lower percentage of program participants receiving full aid can be attributed



to the rise in the cost of attendance per student—during the period, the average amount of financial aid requested increased around 15 percent. The ratio of the amount awarded to the amount requested, however, was relatively stable across both public and private institutions and across years, at approximately 89 percent.

Another factor affecting the percentage of program participants receiving full aid is a change in the Higher Education Act (HEA) amendments in 1998. Prior to 1998, SSS grantees were required to meet the full financial need of SSS participants. After the 1998 amendments, SSS grantees were encouraged but not required to provide full aid. This change in the statute partially explains the drop in the percentage of active participants receiving full aid between 1999–2000 and 2000–01 and the further drop between 2000–01 and 2001–02.

**Table 3.17. Percentage of active SSS Program participants who applied for and received financial aid, and mean aid requested and offered in four-year institutions, by sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	98,895	104,502	104,621	113,306
Percent requesting aid (aid applicants)	78.1	78.9	77.5	77.8
Number of aid applicants	77,203	82,470	81,087	88,097
Percent awarded any aid (aid awardees)	97.3	97.9	97.3	97.8
Number of aid awardees	75,148	80,693	78,881	86,178
Percent awarded full aid	47.2	47.8	45.6	42.8
Mean aid requested	\$10,458	10,724	11,342	12,039
Mean aid offered	\$9,258	9,498	10,100	10,851
<b>Active participants, public four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	74,253	78,004	76,954	84,890
Percent requesting aid (aid applicants)	74.5	75.4	74.8	75.5
Number of aid applicants	55,290	58,781	57,553	64,069
Percent awarded any aid (aid awardees)	96.8	97.6	96.8	97.5
Number of aid awardees	53,503	57,353	55,735	62,499
Percent awarded full aid	44.0	46.7	45.4	42.8
Mean aid requested	\$9,110	9,498	9,748	10,501
Mean aid offered	\$7,942	8,290	8,638	9,224
<b>Active participants, private four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	24,642	26,498	27,667	28,416
Percent requesting aid (aid applicants)	88.9	89.4	85.1	84.6
Number of aid applicants	21,913	23,689	23,534	24,028
Percent awarded any aid (aid awardees)	98.8	98.5	98.4	98.6
Number of aid awardees	21,645	23,340	23,146	23,679
Percent awarded full aid	49.9	50.7	46.2	42.8
Mean aid requested	\$13,860	13,789	15,238	16,161
Mean aid offered	\$12,624	12,563	13,676	14,407

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Two-year institutions

From 1998–99 to 2000–01, the percentage of active participants in two-year institutions requesting financial aid remained stable at about 70 percent but increased to 73 percent in 2001–02 (see Table 3.18). In every year from 1998–99 to 2001–02, approximately 96 percent of all applicants received some financial aid.

As was the case in four-year institutions, the increased cost of attendance and the change in the 1998 statute affected the percentage of students who received full aid in two-year institutions. The drop, however, was much larger than that in four-year institutions. In 2001–02, fewer than 30 percent of students received full aid in two-year institutions compared with more than 40 percent the year before. The drop was particularly large for those enrolled in private two-year institutions. At the same time, the amount of aid requested by and awarded to the aid recipients increased from 1998–99 to 2001–02, but especially between reporting years 2000–01 and 2001–02. The increase was higher for the participants at private two-year institutions than at public two-year institutions.

In spite of the larger awards, the percentage of the average amount of aid offered versus the amount requested for private two-year institutions decreased from 72 percent in 1998–99 to 66 percent in 2001–02. For public institution participants, the percentage remained more constant at between 70 and 66 percent. These percentages are lower than those of the four-year institutions.

## Reasons full financial aid not offered or awarded

As previously shown, not all active program participants who applied for financial aid received it, and some of those who received aid did not get all that they had requested. The APR collected a comprehensive list of reasons full aid was not offered. For ease of discussion, these reasons are broadly grouped into three main classifications: (1) student and personal reasons, including refused loan, failed to make adequate academic progress, refused college work-study aid, was not enrolled full-time, and was not eligible for financial aid; (2) institutional reasons, including insufficient federal grant aid, insufficient college work-study aid, insufficient institutional aid, and insufficient loans; and (3) other reasons.

## Four-year institutions

Table 3.19 reports the distribution of the reasons active SSS participants in four-year institutions were not offered the aid requested.<sup>10</sup> The table shows that in the four-year period under consideration, approximately one in six participants did not receive the full amount because of institutional reasons, including various problems with insufficient funding, and another one in five did not receive the full amount because of personal reasons, the most prevalent of which was refusing the loan (approximately 12 percent).

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<sup>10</sup> In 2001–02, six new potential reasons were added: “student did not apply,” “student applied too late,” “student defaulted on federal student loans,” “student withdrew,” “student failed to provide requested information,” and “not applicable.” To make the new reasons in 2001–02 comparable with those in earlier reporting years, these six reasons were grouped into “other reasons or no response.”

**Table 3.18. Percentage of active SSS Program participants who applied for and received financial aid, and mean aid requested and offered in two-year institutions, by sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Active participants, all two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	77,416	78,546	77,561	93,892
Percent requested aid (aid applicants)	69.7	69.5	70.1	72.7
Number of aid applicants	53,928	54,580	54,399	68,290
Percent awarded any aid (awardees)	95.9	96.3	95.9	96.3
Number of aid awardees	51,727	52,558	52,154	65,757
Percent awarded full aid	41.5	41.4	40.5	28.7
Mean aid requested	\$6,289	6,227	6,676	7,717
Mean aid offered	\$4,323	4,374	4,645	5,118
<b>Active participants, public two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	74,788	75,929	75,061	90,813
Percent requested aid (aid applicants)	69.1	68.7	69.5	72.2
Number of aid applicants	51,662	52,172	52,151	65,560
Percent awarded any aid (awardees)	95.9	96.2	95.7	96.3
Number of aid awardees	49,523	50,182	49,931	63,113
Percent awarded full aid	41.3	41.2	40.4	28.9
Mean aid requested	\$6,168	6,083	6,541	7,554
Mean aid offered	\$4,228	4,250	4,525	5,011
<b>Active participants, private two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	2,628	2,617	2,500	3,079
Percent requested aid (aid applicants)	86.2	92.0	89.9	88.7
Number of aid applicants	2,266	2,408	2,248	2,730
Percent awarded any aid (awardees)	97.3	98.7	98.9	96.9
Number of aid awardees	2,204	2,376	2,223	2,644
Percent awarded full aid	46.5	45.4	43.8	22.7
Mean aid requested	\$9,043	9,358	9,811	11,640
Mean aid offered	\$6,542	7,078	7,391	7,719

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

More participants in public vs. private four-year institutions did not receive the full amount because of personal reasons (e.g., 21 percent vs. 12 percent, respectively, in 2001–02). At the same time, more participants in private vs. public four-year institutions did not receive the full amount because of institutional reasons (e.g., 23 percent vs. 14 percent, respectively, in 2001–02). Comparing 1998–99 with 2001–02, the percentage of aid applicants who failed to receive full aid due to institutional reasons decreased in four-year public institutions (17 percent vs. 14 percent) and increased in four-year private institutions (15 percent vs. 23 percent).

**Table 3.19. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program aid applicants, by reason of denial of full financial aid in four-year institutions and sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>All four-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	77,203	82,470	81,087	88,097
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Personal reasons	19.8	18.5	19.4	18.7
Student refused loan	12.4	11.6	12.3	11.8
Student failed to make adequate academic progress	1.3	0.9	1.0	1.1
Student refused college work-study aid	2.7	2.7	3.0	3.1
Student not enrolled full-time	2.4	2.2	2.1	1.9
Student not eligible for financial aid	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.8
Institutional reasons	16.2	16.1	16.0	16.0
Insufficient federal grant aid	8.2	7.8	7.2	5.8
Insufficient college work-study aid	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.1
Insufficient institutional aid	5.7	5.6	5.8	7.0
Insufficient loans	0.9	1.4	1.7	2.1
Other reasons or no response	18.1	18.5	20.2	23.5
Full amount awarded	45.9	46.8	44.4	41.9
<b>Four-year public institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	55,290	58,781	57,553	64,069
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Personal reasons	21.4	21.0	21.3	21.4
Student refused loan	13.1	12.8	13.1	13.3
Student failed to make adequate academic progress	1.6	1.1	1.0	1.3
Student refused college work-study aid	2.8	3.1	3.4	3.6
Student not enrolled full-time	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.3
Student not eligible for financial aid	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.9
Institutional reasons	16.8	16.7	16.2	13.6
Insufficient federal grant aid	8.6	8.5	7.6	4.6
Insufficient college work-study aid	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.1
Insufficient institutional aid	5.4	5.3	5.6	6.2
Insufficient loans	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.7
Other reasons or no response	17.3	16.8	18.5	23.3
Full amount awarded	44.6	45.5	43.9	41.8

*Table continued on next page*

**Table 3.19. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program aid applicants, by reason of denial of full financial aid in four-year institutions and sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02—Continued**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Four-year private institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	21,913	23,689	23,534	24,028
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Personal reasons</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>11.5</b>
Student refused loan	10.8	8.7	10.4	7.7
Student failed to make adequate academic progress	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.5
Student refused college work-study aid	2.2	1.8	2.0	1.8
Student not enrolled full-time	1.4	1.1	1.0	0.9
Student not eligible for financial aid	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
<b>Institutional reasons</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>22.5</b>
Insufficient federal grant aid	7.4	6.1	6.1	8.8
Insufficient college work-study aid	0.7	0.6	0.9	1.2
Insufficient institutional aid	6.5	6.5	6.3	9.2
Insufficient loans	0.3	1.5	2.3	3.3
<b>Other reasons or no response</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>23.9</b>
<b>Full amount awarded</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>42.2</b>

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Two-year institutions

Table 3.20 shows that among program participants in two-year institutions who applied for financial aid in the period under consideration, about one in three did not receive the full amount because of personal reasons and another 15 to 19 percent were denied because of institutional reasons. Personal reasons for not receiving full aid at private two-year institutions fluctuated from 7 to 14 percent during the same period, less than half that of public two-year institutions.

The largest percentage of program participants in two-year institutions failed to receive full aid because of personal reasons, but among participants in private two-year institutions, institutional reasons were the most commonly reported for failing to receive full aid.

**Table 3.20. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program aid applicants, by reason of denial of full financial aid in two-year institutions and sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>All two-year institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	53,928	54,580	54,399	68,290
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Personal reasons</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>31.5</b>
Student refused loan	14.3	14.5	14.2	15.1
Student failed to make adequate academic progress	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.7
Student refused college work-study aid	4.7	4.4	4.8	5.0
Student not enrolled full-time	6.3	5.2	7.4	8.4
Student not eligible for financial aid	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.3
<b>Institutional reasons</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>18.6</b>
Insufficient federal grant aid	6.6	7.0	7.2	8.0
Insufficient college work-study aid	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.7
Insufficient institutional aid	5.9	4.6	5.6	7.2
Insufficient loans	0.7	1.3	1.2	1.7
<b>Other reasons or no response</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>22.4</b>
Full amount awarded	39.8	39.9	38.9	27.6
<b>Two-year public institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	51,662	52,172	52,151	65,560
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Personal reasons</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>32.5</b>
Student refused loan	14.5	14.9	14.5	15.5
Student failed to make adequate academic progress	1.4	1.5	1.8	1.8
Student refused college work-study aid	4.9	4.6	4.9	5.1
Student not enrolled full-time	6.5	5.4	7.7	8.8
Student not eligible for financial aid	2.4	2.3	2.2	1.3
<b>Institutional reasons</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>18.0</b>
Insufficient federal grant aid	6.4	6.9	6.9	7.8
Insufficient college work-study aid	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.7
Insufficient institutional aid	5.5	4.2	5.4	6.9
Insufficient loans	0.7	1.3	1.2	1.6
<b>Other reasons or no response</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>21.7</b>
Full amount awarded	39.6	39.6	38.7	27.9

*Table continued on next page*

**Table 3.20. Percentage distribution of active SSS Program aid applicants, by reason of denial of full financial aid in two-year institutions and sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02—Continued**

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>Two-year private institutions:</b>				
Number <sup>1</sup>	2,266	2,408	2,248	2,730
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Personal reasons</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>
Student refused loan	7.9	4.0	6.8	5.5
Student failed to make adequate academic progress	3.4	1.0	1.7	0.3
Student refused college work-study aid	0.5	0.6	1.6	0.8
Student not enrolled full-time	1.1	0.7	1.3	0.2
Student not eligible for financial aid	1.5	0.8	1.3	1.3
<b>Institutional reasons</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>29.0</b>
Insufficient federal grant aid	10.0	8.9	12.3	11.8
Insufficient college work-study aid	1.3	3.1	1.5	1.8
Insufficient institutional aid	15.0	12.6	11.5	13.7
Insufficient loans	0.6	0.2	0.0	1.7
<b>Other reasons or no response</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>40.8</b>
<b>Full amount awarded</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>44.8</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>22.0</b>

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.





## Program Outcomes and Impacts

As discussed earlier, the SSS Program is designed to provide support and opportunities for disadvantaged participants to assist them in completing postsecondary educational programs. This chapter presents enrollment status, academic standing, grade point average (GPA), and degree completion for four freshman cohorts (i.e., SSS participants who started their first year of postsecondary education in 1998–99, 1999–2000, 2000–01, and 2001–02). To provide a context for these program outcomes, the chapter also compares enrollment and degree completion of SSS participants who were in their first year in 1998–99 with that of a national sample of students.

### A note on the data used

Enrollment and degree completion information are required to measure the overarching SSS Program goal of postsecondary education completion. Tracking enrollment and degree completions for individual participants while they are still enrolled in the grantee institution presents less of a problem than tracking the same information for those who have left the grantee institutions prior to graduation. Grantees are not required to report on participants who have left the grantee institution. Many of these students, especially those from two-year institutions, transfer to other institutions and proceed to complete a degree in four-year institutions. Therefore, using the APRs as the sole source of information will underestimate the actual program outcomes. External data sources are needed to supplement the APRs for a more accurate reporting of the SSS Program outcomes.

Most of the SSS participants are from low-income families and are likely to apply for federal financial assistance such as the Pell Grant when enrolling in postsecondary institutions. Because financial aid applications are filed individually and awards are disbursed only to those who enroll, the Title IV financial aid dataset in effect tracks the enrollment status of an individual student until graduation. For this reason, the APRs of 1998–99, 1999–2000, and 2000–01 were merged with the Title IV financial aid data for those years to obtain enrollment data and, for a few participants enrolled in four-year institutions, bachelor's degree completion data.<sup>11</sup> At the time the datasets were merged, financial aid data were not available for 2001–02.

About 80 percent of the SSS participants were matched with the financial aid data for the three years that data were available. For 2001–02 APRs, financial aid data were not available, but grantees were contacted to update the enrollment and degree completion information of students who, on the basis of the

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<sup>11</sup> Title IV financial aid data report degrees completed at the time of aid application, which is usually before May of each year. Degrees earned after filing for financial aid are not captured in these data. In addition, degrees other than bachelor's degrees are not recorded.

2000–01 report, should have been enrolled in the grantee institution but were not reported in 2001–02. This second approach improved both the enrollment and the degree completion information for those who remained in the same institution but not for those who had transferred to other institutions.

Another data issue is conflicting information. For example, 18 percent of the 1998–99 freshmen had “continuing” participation status, and 5 percent of new participants in the same year had entry dates different from the reporting year. To assess program impact, this chapter follows the academic progress of the new participants who were in their freshman year in postsecondary institutions in 1998–99, 1999–2000, 2000–01, and 2001–02. To ensure the integrity of the data used, records of the 1999–2000 and 2000–01 cohorts were checked against the records of the preceding year to confirm that these same students were not reported in the previous year. Thus, in this chapter, freshman cohort refers to students who received SSS services for the first time in the reporting year (“new participants”), were in their first year in postsecondary education, and had never attained a bachelor’s degree before. Because figures presented in each table are based on individual-level records with valid responses, the total counts vary among tables, depending on the variable being discussed.

## Program outcomes

### Academic standing

SSS grantees report each participant’s academic standing at the end of the reporting year. A participant’s standing is rated as “good” or “not good” according to each institution’s independent criteria. Table 4.01 reports the academic standing for the four cohorts of SSS freshmen, by type of institution, from 1998–99 to 2001–02.

The percentage of students in good academic standing increases as the participants persist in their collegiate careers, with the magnitude of the increase in four-year institutions higher than that in two-year institutions. For example, the percentage of the 1998–99 freshman cohort in good academic standing in 1999–2000 increased about 2 percentage points among those in two-year institutions and about 4 percentage points for those in four-year institutions. Further, while in their freshman year, 77 percent of the 1998–99 cohort in four-year institutions were in good academic standing. In 2001–02, the percentage of the same cohort in good academic standing increased to 88 percent.

### Grade point average

Grade point average (GPA) is the arithmetic mean of the 4-point scale given to letter grades (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0). Table 4.02 presents the average cumulative GPA for each freshman cohort from 1998–99 to 2001–02. Consistent with the data in Table 4.01, the average GPA increased for all cohorts as they persisted.

However, only part of the improvement shown in Tables 4.01 and 4.02 reflects the positive impact of the SSS Program. Part of the increase in the percentage of participants in good standing and in the rising GPAs, of course, could also be attributed to the fact that students with lower academic standing and lower GPAs drop out as the years go on.

**Table 4.01. Percentage distribution of the academic standing of four SSS freshman cohorts, by type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Freshman year	Academic standing	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Four-year institutions</b>					
1998–99	Number <sup>1</sup>	20,453	14,424	10,294	8,848
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Good	76.5	80.3	85.8	87.8
	Not good	23.5	19.7	14.2	12.2
1999–00	Number <sup>1</sup>	20,711	14,723	12,196	—
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	—
	Good	78.6	81.8	84.6	—
	Not good	21.4	18.2	15.4	—
2000–01	Number <sup>1</sup>	21,283	16,915	—	—
	Percent	100.0	100.0	—	—
	Good	78.6	79.5	—	—
	Not good	21.4	20.5	—	—
2001–02	Number <sup>1</sup>	22,774	—	—	—
	Percent	100.0	—	—	—
	Good	78.5	—	—	—
	Not good	21.5	—	—	—
<b>Two-year institutions</b>					
1998–99	Number <sup>1</sup>	22,818	13,614	†	†
	Percent	100.0	100.0	†	†
	Good	81.7	83.9	†	†
	Not good	18.3	16.1	†	†
1999–00	Number <sup>1</sup>	23,274	14,050	†	†
	Percent	100.0	100.0	†	†
	Good	82.0	84.9	†	†
	Not good	18.0	15.1	†	†
2000–01	Number <sup>1</sup>	23,326	15,687	—	—
	Percent	100.0	100.0	—	—
	Good	81.8	83.1	—	—
	Not good	18.2	16.9	—	—
2001–02	Number <sup>1</sup>	30,738	—	—	—
	Percent	100.0	—	—	—
	Good	82.9	—	—	—
	Not good	17.1	—	—	—

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

†Indicates number for the cell is not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 4.02. Average cumulative GPA of four SSS freshman cohorts over years, by type of institution: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Freshman year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Four-year institutions</b>				
1998–99				
Number <sup>1</sup>	20,156	14,446	10,299	9,119
Average GPA	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.6
1999–00				
Number <sup>1</sup>	20,514	14,666	12,248	—
Average GPA	2.3	2.4	2.5	—
2000–01				
Number <sup>1</sup>	20,930	16,976	—	—
Average GPA	2.3	2.4	—	—
2001–02				
Number <sup>1</sup>	22,600	—	—	—
Average GPA	2.3	—	—	—
<b>Two-year institutions</b>				
1998–99				
Number <sup>1</sup>	23,025	13,504	†	†
Average GPA	2.4	2.6	†	†
1999–00				
Number <sup>1</sup>	23,197	14,038	†	†
Average GPA	2.4	2.6	†	†
2000–01				
Number <sup>1</sup>	22,814	15,636	—	—
Average GPA	2.4	2.5	—	—
2001–02				
Number <sup>1</sup>	30,355	—	—	—
Average GPA	2.4	—	—	—

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

†Indicates number for the cell is not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants based on valid responses only; total may differ from other tables due to missing data.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## Persistence

Continuous enrollment, or persistence, is the percentage of the cohort that continues to be enrolled in later years. Because the second- and later-year enrollment data for the 2001–02 cohort are not available, Tables 4.03 and 4.04 present the persistence of the three earlier cohorts in two-year institutions and four-year institutions respectively. A participant is considered enrolled if he/she either was reported as enrolled during the year or, when such information was missing, reported attained degree (and thus must have enrolled) during the year.

Table 4.03 shows that, at two-year institutions, two-thirds or more of each cohort remained enrolled at any institution in the second year, with a majority still enrolled in the same institution. Between 11 and 15 percent of the 1998–99 and 1999–2000 cohorts respectively were enrolled at other institutions in the second year.

**Table 4.03. Percentage of SSS freshmen enrolled at the original two-year institution and at other institutions in the second and third years: 1998–99 to 2000–01**

Freshman year	Total	Percent enrolled at original institution	Percent enrolled at other institution	Percent enrolled at <i>any</i> institution <sup>2</sup>
<b>Second year</b>				
1998–99	23,964	55.7	10.8	66.5
1999–00	24,393	55.8	14.6	70.4
2000–01	23,923	63.3	8.2 <sup>1</sup>	71.5
<b>Third year</b>				
1998–99	23,964	32.1	15.5	47.6
1999–00	24,393	36.5	5.6 <sup>1</sup>	42.1
2000–01	23,923	—	—	—

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

<sup>1</sup>Underestimated because financial aid data for 2001–02 were not available at time of submission.

<sup>2</sup>The last column is the sum of the preceding two columns.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table 4.04. Percentage of SSS freshmen who remained enrolled at the original four-year institution or any other postsecondary institution in the second, third and fourth years: 1998–99 to 2000–01**

Freshman year	Total	Percent enrolled at original institution	Percent enrolled at other institution	Percent enrolled at <i>any</i> institution <sup>2</sup>
<b>Second year</b>				
1998–99	21,068	66.8	10.0	76.8
1999–00	21,344	67.1	14.1	81.2
2000–01	21,977	72.6	2.5 <sup>1</sup>	75.1
<b>Third year</b>				
1998–99	21,068	49.2	14.3	63.5
1999–00	21,344	54.8	2.4 <sup>1</sup>	57.2
2000–01	21,977	—	—	—
<b>Fourth year</b>				
1998–99	21,068	42.3	1.3 <sup>1</sup>	43.6
1999–00	21,344	—	—	—
2000–01	21,977	—	—	—

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

<sup>1</sup>Underestimated because financial aid data for 2001–02 were not available at time of submission.

<sup>2</sup>The last column is the sum of the preceding two columns.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

As some of the participants at two-year institutions graduated at the end of the second year, the proportion of each cohort enrolled in their third year decreases. For example, about 9 percent of the participants in the two-year institutions completed either a certificate or an associate degree at the end of the second year (Table 4.05). These participants are not likely to enroll for a third year, partially accounting for the drop in enrollment from 67 percent in the second year to 48 percent in the third year (Table 4.03).

Because the records were not adjusted with the 2001–02 financial aid data, only 8 percent of the 2000–01 cohort were reported to be enrolled at any other institution in their second year. Similarly, the 1999–2000 cohort also exhibits a low third-year enrollment rate. Comparing these enrollment rates with the adjusted rates in earlier years shows that adjusting enrollment status with financial aid data increases enrollment figures by 5 to 10 percentage points.

Table 4.04 shows the continued enrollment of freshman cohorts in four-year institutions. Again, because second- and third-year enrollment information for the 2001–02 freshman cohort was not available, only information on the three earlier cohorts is presented.

As Table 4.04 shows, at least three-fourths of each cohort remained enrolled in the second year, a higher retention rate than that reported for the two-year institutions in the same time period. Furthermore, more of the freshmen at four-year institutions remained enrolled in their original institution; for example, 67 percent of the 1998–99 freshman cohort was enrolled in the same institution in 1999–2000 (listed as “second year” in Table 4.04), compared with about 56 percent of the same year cohort in two-year institutions (Table 4.03).

Similar to the two-year institution participants, the enrollment rate of participants in four-year institutions declined over time. About 64 percent of the 1998–99 freshman cohort remained enrolled in the third reporting year, and about 44 percent were still enrolled in the fourth reporting year. Because only a small percentage of the participants in a four-year institution would be expected to complete their program in two or three years (Table 4.06), the decline in persistence rates cannot be attributed to graduation. The decline in enrollment could be attributed to changes in the proportion of freshman cohort who remained actively receiving program services designed to support their education persistence. In the third year, only about one-third of freshmen in four-year institutions were still receiving program services.

### **Credentials and degrees earned**

Two-year institutions offer both associate degrees and certificates. In both cases, the number of participants receiving these credentials in a particular cohort grows over time. Thus, the cumulative total indicates the number of participants in a particular cohort who have received such credentials at the time the data are collected.

At the end of the second year—the conventional length of study at two-year institutions—about 5 to 7 percent of the SSS participants had completed their associate degree and another 3 to 4 percent had completed a certificate (see Table 4.05). The total cumulative completion rate increased each year,

to approximately 10 to 13 percent in the third year. Table 4.05 also shows that about 3 percent more of the 2000–01 freshman cohort completed their associate degrees at the end of their second year than the 1999–2000 freshman cohort. Because the present data show only two cohorts, we cannot determine whether the increase is an aberration or the beginning of a trend.

**Table 4.05. Percentage of SSS freshmen at two-year institutions who received certificates or associate degrees at the end of the first, second and third years: 1998–99 to 2000–01**

Freshman year	Total	Percent earning certificate or associate degrees:					
		End of year 1		End of year 2		End of year 3	
		Certificate	Associate	Certificate	Associate	Certificate	Associate
1998–99	23,964	2.0	1.5	3.8	5.3	5.1	9.6
1999–00	24,399	2.3	1.0	3.9	4.6	5.2	12.5
2000–01	23,923	2.0	1.6	2.9	7.1	—	—

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

NOTE: Attainment of certification or associate degree rates is cumulative.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

Because it generally takes four years or longer to complete the bachelor's degree in four-year institutions, only the 1998–99 cohort has sufficient data for a meaningful measure of degree completion. As Table 4.06 shows, the completion rate for SSS participants was approximately 14 percent at the end of the fourth year in college. Because students from disadvantaged backgrounds generally take longer to complete their program, many SSS participants may take longer than four years to complete their bachelor's degree. Future reports using additional years of data will provide a fuller picture on the degree completion rates of the 1998-99 cohort.

**Table 4.06. Percentage of SSS freshmen at four-year institutions who received bachelor's degrees at the end of the second, third and fourth years: 1998–99 to 2000–01**

Freshman year	Total	Percent earning a bachelor's degree:		
		End of year 2	End of year 3	End of year 4
1998–99	21,068	1.4	2.6	13.7
1999–00	21,344	0.6	1.7	—
2000–01	21,977	1.2	—	—

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

NOTE: Attainment of degree rate is cumulative.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

## The impact of the SSS Program

There is consistent evidence that students from low-income families have lower persistence rates in college than those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. In fact, students' family income was found to correlate positively with their enrollment, persistence, and graduation.<sup>12, 13, 14</sup> The goal of the SSS Program is to help students overcome these challenges. To better understand the program outcomes, this report examines whether SSS participants performed similarly to or differently from students who did not receive SSS services.

The data used to provide this context come from a longitudinal study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, the *Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study* (BPS). BPS tracked a U.S. representative sample of more than 12,000 first-time entrants in postsecondary education in 1995–96 and collected data on their academic performance every other year (with the respondents providing information on both years when responding) until 2000–01. Because the BPS sample was designed to provide national estimates of students and did not oversample students from disadvantaged populations, a group extracted from the BPS sample that matches the distribution of SSS participants was too small to provide stable estimates.<sup>15</sup> Instead, the report presents the following comparisons.

- SSS participants are compared with BPS students who were rated as either mildly or severely disadvantaged in their socioeconomic status and who satisfied at least one of the five eligibility criteria for participation in the SSS Program (i.e., low-income, low-income and first-generation, first-generation, disabled, or disabled and low-income). This composite group of BPS freshmen, with a distribution of SSS eligibility characteristics different from that of SSS participants, will be referred to as the “1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds” in this chapter.
- SSS participants are also compared with BPS students by eligibility status separately, where possible. Sufficient numbers of BPS students categorized as “low-income and first-generation” and “first-generation only” were reported to allow comparisons. Because of the relatively small number of cases when considered separately, a composite group was made that combined “low-income only,” “disabled only,” and “low-income with disabilities.” This composite group will be referred to as the “combined group” in this chapter.

Because all the SSS cohorts are from later years than the 1995–96 BPS sample, only the earliest SSS cohort, 1998–99, was used to minimize the time lag in the comparisons.

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<sup>12</sup> Heller, D.E. (2001). Trends in the Affordability of Public Colleges. The Contradiction of Increasing Prices and Increasing Enrollment. In D.E. Heller (Ed.), *The States and Public Higher Education Policy: Affordability, Access, and Accountability* (pp. 11–38). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Manski, C., and Wise, D. (1983). *College Choice in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

<sup>14</sup> McDonough, P.M. (1997). *Choosing Colleges: How Social Class and Schools Structure Opportunity*. New York: SUNY Press.

<sup>15</sup> More information of BPS data is available from Web site: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps>. The first two reports listed in Appendix D used BPS data.



### A comparison of enrollment

Among students attending two-year institutions, a higher proportion of SSS participants remained enrolled than the BPS students from disadvantaged backgrounds (see Table 4.07). About sixty-seven percent of SSS participants remained enrolled in their second year, compared to 51 percent for the BPS sample, a difference of more than 15 percentage points. This pattern of higher persistence among SSS participants continues to the third year (48 percent vs. 33 percent).

**Table 4.07. Comparison of enrollment rates in the second and third years in two-year institutions between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	Number enrolled at beginning of first year	Percent still enrolled during year 2	Percent still enrolled during year 3
1998–99 SSS freshmen	23,964	66.5**	47.6**
1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (estimated population)	942,000	51.3	32.8

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

When compared separately by eligibility criteria, for students enrolled at two-year institutions, the impact of the SSS Program is more evident in the second year as a much higher proportion of SSS participants who were “first-generation only” and “combined group” remained enrolled in the second year than did students with similar backgrounds in the BPS sample (Table 4.08). The gap became narrower in the third year for these two groups of students, although the difference was still substantial. The persistence rate of the “low-income and first-generation” group does not differ between the BPS students and the SSS participants (50 percent and 49 percent respectively in the third year).

Table 4.09 shows that the enrollment rate in the second year for students in four-year institutions was higher for the SSS participants than that of the BPS students, but the lead was less than that in two-year institutions, and it disappeared in the third year.

One explanation for the diminished lead may be attributed to the decline in the proportion of students participating in program activities previously discussed—only about one-third of the 1998–99 freshmen still actively participated in SSS Program activities in 2000–01. Further investigation also reveals that the distribution of the “at-risk” population differs between the SSS participants and the BPS students (Table B-1 in Appendix B). This difference may also explain in part the smaller lead in enrollment rate SSS participants had over the BPS sample at four-year institutions.

In the BPS data collection instrument, a “risk index” ranging from 0 to 7 is developed from summing over seven risk factors.<sup>16</sup> The higher the score, the higher the risk is for not completing postsecondary education. Although only 20 percent of the BPS sample used in the comparison for the two-year institution participants was classified as having zero risk, about 65 percent of the BPS sample in the comparison

<sup>16</sup> Please refer to Appendix B for a description of the BPS risk factors.

of the four-year institutions was classified as zero risk. The high percent of low-risk students attending four-year institutions in the BPS sample could account for their higher percent of continued enrollments in the third year when compared with the SSS participants.<sup>17</sup> The same pattern persists when analyzed by eligibility criteria separately, but the results are not shown.

**Table 4.08. Comparison of enrollment rates in the second and third years in two-year institutions between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from various backgrounds**

	1998–99 SSS freshmen		1995–96 BPS freshmen	
	N	Percent enrolled	Estimated population	Percent enrolled
<b>Second year</b>				
Low-income and first-generation	14,485	66.6	175,000	58.3
First-generation only	4,961	63.8**	656,000	46.8
Combined group (low-income only, disabled only and disabled and low-income)	4,428	69.0**	111,000	50.2
<b>Third year</b>				
Low-income and first-generation	14,485	48.9	175,000	50.1
First-generation only	4,961	43.5**	656,000	31.1
Combined group (low-income only, disabled only, and disabled and low-income)	4,428	48.3**	111,000	32.0

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

Sample sizes for the BPS students who were low-income and disabled in two-year institutions are too small to provide stable estimates and are combined.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

**Table 4.09. Comparison of enrollment rates in the second and third years in four-year institutions between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	Total	Percent enrolled in 1999–2000	Percent enrolled in 2000–01
1998–99 SSS freshmen	21,068	78.8**	63.5
1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (estimated population)	507,000	68.4	61.7

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

<sup>17</sup> Enrollment and degree completion rates for the BPS four-year institution students who had risk scores greater than zero were much lower than those of the SSS participants. Please see Appendix B, Table B-2 for more details. Because the distribution of the risk scores among the SSS participants is unknown, a direct comparison of the program outcomes between SSS participants with the BPS sample who had risk scores greater than zero is not valid, even though it is reasonable to hypothesize that the results would favor the SSS Program.

Comparisons of enrollment thus far have been based on the entire cohort regardless of freshman year enrollment status. Students who registered full-time in their freshman year could be in a more favorable position to continue their education than those who registered less than full-time. To attain a more precise measure of the program impact, freshman year enrollment status should be controlled. Tables 4.10 and 4.11 summarize the enrollment rates of the two cohorts who registered full-time in their freshman year in two-year and in four-year institutions.

The tables show that, similar to findings discussed previously, the proportion of students who registered full-time in their freshman year and remained enrolled in their second year was higher among the SSS participants than their BPS counterparts by 19 percentage points for two-year institution students and by almost 11 percentage points for four-year institution students. The gap once again became smaller in the third year for the four-year institution students (Table 4.11).

**Table 4.10. Comparison of enrollment rates during the second and third years in two-year institutions between the 1998–99 full-time SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS full-time freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	Number enrolled at beginning of first year	Percent still enrolled during year 2	Percent still enrolled during year 3
1998–99 SSS freshmen (full-time only)	12,274	74.4**	46.7**
1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (full-time only, estimated population)	418,000	55.3	35.5

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

**Table 4.11. Comparison of enrollment rates during the second and third years in four-year institutions between the 1998–99 full-time SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS full-time freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	Number enrolled at beginning of first year	Percent still enrolled during year 2	Percent still enrolled during year 3
<b>Four-year institutions</b>			
1998–99 SSS freshmen (full-time only)	16,423	82.5**	67.0
1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (full-time only, estimated population)	427,000	71.9	66.1

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

**A comparison of degrees earned**

Table 4.12 shows that among students enrolled in two-year institutions, a small percent of the SSS participants obtained their associate degrees at the end of their first year, which is shorter than normally expected. One possible explanation is that some SSS participants may have previously attended these institutions and accumulated some college credits, and have now returned to finish their programs.

At the end of the second year, the associate degree completion rate of the SSS cohort was higher than that of the BPS sample, but the difference was not significant.

When analyzed separately by eligibility status as presented in Table 4.13, the SSS Program seems to benefit most students who are first-generation attending college. Seven percent of SSS first-generation freshmen attained associate degrees at the end of the second year compared with 4 percent of the BPS sample.

**Table 4.12. Comparison of percentage of credentials earned in two-year institutions at the end of the first and second years between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	1998–99 SSS freshmen (23,964)		1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (estimated population: 942,000)	
	Percent earning a certificate	Percent earning an associate degree	Percent earning a certificate	Percent earning an associate degree
End of first year	2.0*	1.5**	3.3	0.0
End of second year	3.8	5.3	6.1	3.6

\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .05$  level.

\*\*Indicates the difference is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

NOTE: The percentages are cumulative.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

**Table 4.13. Comparison of percentage of associate degrees earned in two-year institutions at the end of the second year between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from different disadvantaged backgrounds**

	1998–99 SSS freshmen		1995–96 BPS freshmen from different disadvantaged backgrounds	
	N	Percent earning an associate degree	Estimated population	Percent earning an associate degree
End of second year				
Low-income and first-generation	14,485	4.7	175,000	3.9
First-generation only	4,961	7.1**	656,000	3.7
Combined of low-income only, disabled only, and disabled and low-income	1,427	3.4	111,000	3.4

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

NOTE: Sample sizes for the BPS students who were low-income and/or disabled in two-year institutions are too small to provide stable estimates and are combined.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Analysis on enrollment already showed that the lead that SSS participants had over the BPS sample narrowed in the third year. The decline continued on to graduation. As Table 4.14 shows, 17 percent of the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds obtained bachelor’s degrees at the end of the fourth year, whereas 14 percent of the 1998–99 SSS freshmen did so. Again, this pattern may be partially explained by the continued decline in the proportion of students actively participating in program activities and by the differences in the distribution of the at-risk population between the two freshman cohorts of four-year and two-year institutions. As shown in Table B-1, BPS students in four-year institutions were less likely than their counterparts in two-year institutions to have many of the risk factors that make degree attainment less likely. For the same reason as explained previously, SSS cohorts in two-year institutions had higher graduation rates than the BPS cohort, but this does not hold for the cohorts in four-year institutions.

**Table 4.14. Comparison of percentage of bachelor’s degrees earned in four-year institutions at the end of the fourth year between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	<u>1998–99 SSS freshmen (21,068)</u> Percent earned bachelor’s degree	<u>1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (Estimated population: 507,000)</u> Percent earned bachelor’s degree
End of fourth year	13.7*	17.4

\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .05$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.



## Future Plans

The analysis in this report suggests that students in two-year institutions benefited more from the SSS Program than their counterparts in four-year institutions. For example, more SSS participants in two-year institutions enrolled during the second year, and more “first-generation only” students graduated in the second year than BPS students. The result is less clear among participants in four-year institutions—the enrollment in their third year and the graduation rates of the SSS participants were not better than those of students from disadvantaged backgrounds in general. As explained in chapter 4, the smaller success rate among four-year institutions could be a result of differences in the proportion of students actually receiving services and the distributions of the at-risk populations. This phenomenon will continue to be tracked in future reports. Furthermore, BPS is planning to follow a new freshman cohort in the near future which will offer opportunities for drawing conclusions from comparisons made between the BPS and the SSS participants of the same time period.

The response rate for participant-level data increased from 96 percent in 1998–99 to 98 percent in 2001–02 (Table A-1). The percentage of missing records for degree completed decreased from 47 percent in 1998–99 to 16 percent in 2000–01 (Table A-4). Still, full understanding of the SSS Program’s impact on the participants requires data that even an error-free APR cannot provide: enrollment and degrees attained by participants outside of the grantee institution. Adjusting the persistence rate and graduation rate by financial aid data will be continued in future reports.





## Response Rates and Data Issues

Table A-1 presents the percentage of SSS projects submitting performance reports and participant records from 1998–99 to 2001–02, by sector. When compared with the other sectors, private two-year grantees showed the lowest response rate in submitting the APRs during the 1999–2000 and 2000–01 program years. This may be attributed to the small number of private two-year grantees included in the population; one non-responding grantee accounts for a larger percentage than in other sectors. In the 2001–02 program year, all private two-year grantees submitted a complete APR. Overall, the APR response rate of participant-level data has improved from 1998–99 to 2001–02 (from 96 percent to 98 percent).

**Table A-1. Percentage of SSS projects submitting aggregate performance reports (“Agg.”) and individual participant records (“Ind.”), by sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Sector	1998–99		1999–00		2000–01		2001–02	
	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.
All sectors	—	96.2	98.0	97.4	97.7	96.9	99.1	98.4
Public four-year	—	95.9	97.3	96.6	96.6	95.9	98.8	98.5
Private four-year	—	93.3	98.5	96.3	97.8	97.8	98.6	97.2
Public two-year	—	97.4	98.6	98.6	98.9	97.4	99.3	98.7
Private two-year	—	100.0	94.1	94.1	94.1	94.1	100.0	100.0

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

Table A-2 reports the APR response rate by federal region. In general, the response rates of both grantee-level and student-level data increased over the four years, but the rates varied by region. The largest increase in the response rate of aggregate-level data was 6 percent in region II (94 percent in 1998–99 to 100 percent in 2001–02). (Table A-3 shows the states and territories associated with each region.)

Because most aggregate data were generated from individual-level data, the quality of the aggregate data depends on the quality of the individual-level data. Table A-4 reports the percentage of missing cases and out-of-range values for selected individual-level data elements. As shown in Table A-4, the percentage of missing or out-of-range values declined for some items (i.e., date of birth, participant status and the degree completed) in recent program years. For other items, such as gender, project entry date, college grade level at entry into project, and end-of-year enrollment status, the percentage of missing or out-of-range values increased slightly.

**Table A-2. Percentage of SSS projects submitting aggregate performance reports (“Agg.”) and individual participant records (“Ind.”), by region: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Region	1998–99		1999–00		2000–01		2001–02	
	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.	Percent Agg.	Percent Ind.
Region I	—	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.6	97.6	100.0	100.0
Region II	—	93.5	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	100.0	100.0
Region III	—	95.5	98.5	98.5	95.5	95.5	98.6	98.6
Region IV	—	96.4	98.8	98.8	99.4	99.4	98.9	98.4
Region V	—	98.5	100.0	98.5	98.5	98.5	99.3	98.6
Region VI	—	93.8	95.9	93.8	94.8	92.8	99.2	97.7
Region VII	—	98.3	98.3	98.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region VIII	—	98.1	96.2	94.2	96.2	94.2	100.0	100.0
Region IX	—	92.1	93.4	93.4	96.1	92.1	95.9	93.8
Region X	—	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.8	100.0	100.0

—Indicates number for the cell is not available.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department Of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table A-3. States and territories in each region**

Region	Associated states and territories
Region I	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont
Region II	New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands
Region III	Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, DC
Region IV	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee
Region V	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin
Region VI	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas
Region VII	Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska
Region VIII	Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming
Region IX	Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, The Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa
Region X	Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs.

The percentage of missing or out-of-range values for degree completed decreased significantly over the reporting period (Table A-4). Overall, the percentage decreased more than 30 percentage points, from 47 percent in 1998–99 to 16 percent in 2001–02, indicating remarkable improvement in the quality of APR reporting.

**Table A-4. Percentage of student records with missing or out-of-range values, all sectors: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Selected data element	1998–99 N = 236,383 <sup>1</sup>	1999–00 N = 236,383 <sup>1</sup>	2000–01 N = 254,093 <sup>1</sup>	2001–02 N = 297,348 <sup>1</sup>
Gender	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.7
Ethnicity	2.0	1.4	1.4	1.9
Date of birth	4.4	3.0	2.6	2.3
First school enrollment date	8.4	8.8	8.2	8.9
Project entry date	12.4	12.6	12.9	14.6
Eligibility status	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.8
Participant status	0.9	2.1	0.8	0.6
College grade level at entry into project	2.4	1.9	1.3	2.7
College grade level—current	4.0	3.3	3.2	8.0
Enrollment status—end of year	8.6	7.3	6.1	9.9
Degree completed	47.4	35.7	30.2	16.3

<sup>1</sup>Total number of records found in APR.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

The percentage of missing or out-of-range values on some items was different for different sectors. As Tables A-5 and A-6 show, the percentages of invalid first school enrollment date, project entry date, and end-of-year enrollment status decreased in four-year institutions but increased in two-year institutions. For example, the percentage of missing or out-of-range project entry dates for two-year grantees in 2001–02 (15 percent) was more than the percentage recorded in the 1998–99 program year (10 percent).<sup>18</sup> During the same period, the percentage of missing or out-of-range project entry dates for the four-year sector decreased from 17 percent in 1998–99 to 10 percent in 2001–02. Starting in the 2001–02 reporting year, the APR began to include records for prior participants no longer enrolled. The greater mobility of students at two-year vs. four-year institutions limits accurate updating of information for some prior participants no longer enrolled.

Two-year grantees reduced the percentage of missing or out-of-range values in student ethnicity from 2 percent in the 1998–99 program year to 1 percent in the 2001–02 program year. During the same program years, missing or out-of-range values for ethnicity in four-year grantee institutions increased from 1 percent to 2 percent.

<sup>18</sup>The APR does not define a valid cutpoint for project entry date. In this report, project entry dates started longer than 22 years ago are arbitrarily considered invalid. It is possible that a participant's project entry date was reported 22 years ago, as he/she started SSS Program at 18 years old and reentered after 40 years old, but this case is rare and more likely subject to reporting error. For this reason, a project entry date reported as more than 22 years ago was considered as out-of-range or invalid.

**Table A-5. Percentage of student records with missing or out-of-range values, four-year sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Selected data element	1998–99 N = 144,051 <sup>1</sup>	1999–00 N = 159,829 <sup>1</sup>	2000–01 N = 157,342 <sup>1</sup>	2001–02 N = 178,759 <sup>1</sup>
Gender	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.5
Ethnicity	1.4	1.8	1.7	2.4
Date of birth	3.7	2.5	4.1	2.1
First school enrollment date	11.0	6.4	9.2	6.5
Project entry date	17.1	9.3	12.8	10.2
Eligibility status	1.4	1.0	1.0	2.2
Participant status	1.3	2.4	1.2	0.8
College grade-level at entry into project	1.8	2.0	1.4	2.7
College grade-level—current	2.0	4.0	2.9	8.0
Enrollment status—end of year	10.5	7.3	4.6	10.3
Degree completed	47.2	36.3	24.6	17.2

<sup>1</sup>Total number of records found in APR.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department Of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

**Table A-6. Percentage of student records with missing or out-of-range values, two-year sector: 1998–99 to 2001–02**

Selected data element	1998–99 N = 92,332 <sup>1</sup>	1999–00 N = 76,554 <sup>1</sup>	2000–01 N = 96,751 <sup>1</sup>	2001–02 N = 118,589 <sup>1</sup>
Gender	0.1	0.2	0.0	1.0
Ethnicity	2.4	0.7	0.0	1.1
Date of birth	4.8	3.7	3.1	2.7
First school enrollment date	6.8	12.8	6.2	12.5
Project entry date	9.5	18.1	16.1	14.7
Eligibility status	1.0	0.9	0.3	1.3
Participant status	0.6	1.7	0.6	0.3
College grade-level at entry into project	2.8	1.9	0.3	2.7
College grade-level—current	5.3	2.0	0.6	8.1
Enrollment status—end of year	7.4	7.3	3.1	9.3
Degree completed	48.0	34.7	24.8	14.9

<sup>1</sup>Total number of records found in APR.

SOURCE: Data from program files of the U.S. Department Of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, SSS Annual Performance Reports.

The trends in the numbers of awards, the numbers of participants, the amount of funding, and the average per-person award suggest an improvement in the scope and quality of service provided by the program in recent years. The quality of the APR has improved, although efforts to decrease missing and invalid numbers must be ongoing.

## Risk Factors of 1995–96 BPS Freshmen from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

The BPS risk index is a score that ranges between 0 to 7 derived from seven characteristics known to adversely affect persistence and attainment: delayed enrollment, no high school diploma (including GED recipients), part-time enrollment, financial independence, having dependents other than spouse, single parent status, and working full-time while enrolled (35 hours or more). Table B-1 shows that the 1995–96 BPS freshmen in two-year institutions had higher percentages of at least one risk factor than did those in four-year institutions.

**Table B-1. Percentage distribution of risk factors of 1995–96 BPS freshmen, by type of institution**

	Four-year institutions		Two-year institutions	
	Estimated population	Percent	Estimated population	Percent
No risk factor	331,000	65.3	192,000	20.4
At least one risk factor	159,000	31.4	701,000	74.4
Missing	17,000	3.3	49,000	5.2
Total	507,000	100.0	942,000	100.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Table B-2 reports the comparison of enrollment rates as reported in Table 4.09 in chapter 4, using BPS students who had at least one risk factor. The pattern of higher persistence among SSS participants continues to the end of the third year even though the difference narrows. Table B-3 reports the completion rate of bachelor's degree at the end of fourth year. The completion rate of the SSS 1998–99 cohort is higher than that of the BPS sample. However, since the distribution of the at-risk population of the SSS 1998–99 freshmen was not known, comparisons with those at risk only may not be appropriate. The data are presented here for reference only.

**Table B-2. Comparison of enrollment rates during the second and third year in four-year institutions between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995-96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds with at least one risk factor**

	Total	Percent enrolled during year 2	Percent enrolled during year 3
1998–99 SSS freshmen	21,068	78.8**	63.5**
1995–96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds (estimated population)	159,000	54.1	49.8

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

**Table B-3. Comparison of percentage of bachelor's degrees earned at the end of the fourth year in four-year institutions between the 1998–99 SSS freshmen and the 1995-96 BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds with at least one risk factor**

	1998–99 SSS freshmen (21,068)	1995–96 BPS freshmen (estimated population 159,000)
	Percent	Percent
At the end of the fourth year	13.7**	8.9

\*\*Indicates the difference between the SSS participants and the BPS sample is significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

SOURCE: Data for SSS from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Program, SSS Annual Performance Reports; data for the BPS from program files of the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

## Glossary

This glossary contains a listing of terms used in the report. Some of them are specific to the TRIO program and do not necessarily apply to other Department of Education programs or grants.

**Academic instruction** falls into two categories: (1) remedial or developmental courses supported with project funds and which allow the students to receive institutional credit for successfully completing the courses; and (2) formal instruction provided for academic support, paid for with project funds, but which does not qualify for institutional credit.

**Academic support** is defined as follows:

- **Peer tutoring** means individual or small group tutoring provided by other students.
- **Professional tutoring** means individual or small group tutoring provided by a graduate student or a professional staff person.
- **Supplemental instruction** means organized tutoring sessions for specific courses that are tied directly to the instruction in the courses.
- **Assisted labs** means academic support or tutoring provided through a learning center or other formal means.
- **Computer assisted instruction** means academic support or tutoring provided via computers instead of peer or professional tutors.
- **Study skills classes/workshops** means activities designed to help students gain the skills needed to succeed in the academic programs of the institution.
- **Orientation classes/workshops** means sessions or classes that help students adjust to the institution, and may include help in registering for courses and familiarizing them with the academic requirements of the institution.

**Annual Performance Report (APR)** is the program report submitted by grantees to TRIO annually. The SSS APRs include information describing the participants, activities and outcomes for the funded programs.

The **Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS)**, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, is a longitudinal study that follows students who begin their postsecondary education for the first time. BPS students are a subsample of the students selected for the *National Postsecondary Student Aid Study* (NPSAS). These students are asked to provide information about their experiences during, and transitions through, postsecondary education and into the labor force, as well as on family formation.

In the first BPS, about 10,600 students were identified in NPSAS:90 as being first-time beginning postsecondary students during academic year 1989–90. These students were followed in 1992 (BPS:90/92) and in 1994 (BPS:90/94). A second cohort of 12,085 first-time beginning students was identified in NPSAS:96, with follow-ups in 1998 (BPS:96/98) and in 2001 (BPS:96/2001). The next cohort was identified in NPSAS:04. See <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps/>. Comparisons presented in chapter 4 of this report are based on students from BPS:96/2001.

**BPS freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds** were selected and grouped by applying the SSS eligibility criteria to the following BPS variables:

- Socioeconomic diversity index—DISADVAN
- Analysis weight BPS 96/98—B98AWT
- First institution level 1995–96—ITNPLV
- First institution percent of full-time months 1995–96—FTPCT1
- Parents income—PARINC95
- Parent family size—PBFMSZY1
- Parents highest education—PBEDHI3
- Student have any disabilities—DSANY

Rates of enrollment and degree completed were estimated with the following BPS variables:

- Cumulative persistence outcome in 1996–97 to 1997–98—PROUTYX2 and PROUTYX3
- Outcome of enrollment in 1996–97 to 1997–98—PROUTY2 and PROUTY3

**Counseling and mentoring** are defined as follows:

- **Personal counseling** means crisis intervention and assistance with personal problems and decisions.
- **Academic advising** means assisting students in making educational plans, selecting appropriate courses, meeting academic requirements, and planning for graduation and further education.
- **Financial aid counseling** means assisting students individually or in small groups in completing financial aid applications or in working with the institution's financial aid office to develop aid packages that will meet the students' financial needs for attendance at the institution.
- **Career counseling and employment assistance** mean helping students learn about career opportunities through written and computerized information, assessing their career interests and capabilities, and making occupational plans.
- **Transfer counseling** means assisting students interested in four-year programs in meeting the academic requirements of those programs, choosing four-year institutions, and applying for admission and financial aid at those institutions.
- **Graduate school counseling** means assisting students in choosing graduate or professional programs and applying for admission and financial aid for those programs.



- **Professional mentoring** means professionals, other than project staff, working with project students to expose them to career and other opportunities available to them.
- **Peer counseling/mentoring** means a variety of support, personal or academic, provided by other students designed to help project participants adjust to the institution.

**Cultural and enrichment activities** are defined as follows:

- **Cultural activities** means any project-sponsored activities, such as field trips, special lectures, and symposia, that have as their purpose the improvement of the project participants' academic progress and personal development.
- **Campus visitations** means project-sponsored trips to other postsecondary institutions for the purpose of acquainting students with institutions that the project participants may wish to attend to further their education (i.e., two-year/four-year transfers or graduate and professional schools).
- **Information workshops** include a variety of short workshops or seminars (usually a half day or less) on topics that may range from stress management and test taking to drug and alcohol abuse.

**First-generation college student** means an individual neither of whose natural or adoptive parents received a baccalaureate degree; or a student who, prior to the age of 18, regularly resided with and received support from only one natural or adoptive parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree.

**Individual with disabilities** means a person who has a diagnosed physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that person's ability to participate in the educational experiences and opportunities offered by the grantee institution.

**Low-income individual** means an individual whose family taxable income did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level amount in the calendar year preceding the year in which the individual initially participates in the project. The poverty level amount is determined using criteria established by the Bureau of the Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

**Objectives** refer to the approved project objectives on persistence, good academic standing, graduation, transfer, and administrative requirements.

**Participant status** indicates involvement in the SSS Program for each student in the reporting year. We describe two types of participant status—the status as reported by grantees in the APRs and status as verified by the data. Participant status as reported by grantees could be one of the following:

- A *new participant* is an individual who participated in the SSS Program for the first time in the reporting period.
- A *continuing participant* is an individual who participated in the project in both the current reporting period and in a previous reporting period.
- A *prior-year participant* is a former project participant who did not participate in the project during the current reporting period.

- A *prior-year participant no longer enrolled* is a former project participant who did not participate in the project during the current reporting period and is no longer enrolled at the original grantee institution.
- *Active participants* include those students whom grantees classify as “new” and “continuing.”

We verified participant status to resolve inconsistencies in this variable as reported by grantees. Participant status was verified using prior-year data as described below, and all students reported in each year were reclassified into one of the following participant groups for that year: new participant, continuing participant, and prior participant. We used the following criteria to verify the participation status of active participants:

- New participants include those students whom grantees classify as “new” participants and who (a) are not reported in previous years or (b) have a project entry date in the academic year in which they are reported as “new.”
- Continuing participants include students classified as “continuing” who (a) are also currently enrolled as an undergraduate and (b) have a project entry date falling prior to the year in which they are reported as “continuing.”

**Proposed number of students served** is the approved number of students SSS projects are expected to serve with the funds provided.

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