



10 YEARS AFTER HISTORIC TRANSFER REFORM

*How far have we come and where
do we need to go?*

Transfer from California's community colleges to its public universities has long been central to the state's higher education system. **Though most of the 2.2 million community college students intend to transfer, fewer than half do so within six years of their initial enrollment.**

A low transfer rate is bad news for California. The state's economy needs 1.65 million more college degrees and credentials by 2030 in order to meet workforce demand, and 70 percent of all college students in California attend a community college. Most of those students are Latinx, Black, and students from several Asian subgroups.

If the majority of students in college in California are in our community colleges and the majority of those students belong to racial/ethnic groups with low bachelor's degree attainment, then improving transfer is key to producing the bachelor's degrees we need.

That is why in 2010, the Campaign for College Opportunity sponsored historic legislation to create the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) and significantly increase the number of students who transfer with a degree in hand and earn junior standing at the California State University (CSU). Community college students earn an ADT after taking 60 semester/90 quarter units consisting of general education courses and courses in an academic major. This degree guarantees junior standing at a CSU campus, meaning students can complete their bachelor's degree within two years of transfer. The guarantees built into the ADT are not afforded to students who earn local Associate of Art or Associate of Science (AA/AS) degrees.

GOOD NEWS

In the 10 years since the creation of the ADT—or as it is often called, a “Degree with a Guarantee”—the system has awarded 217,611 ADTs.

- 119,505 Associate of Art for Transfer degrees have been awarded.
- 98,106 Associate of Science for Transfer degrees have been awarded.
- In 2019, 23,295 students enrolled at a Cal State University campus with an ADT in hand, and the proportion of transfer students enrolling on a guaranteed path is growing annually.
- Transfer students on the ADT guaranteed pathway have doubled since 2015, from 11 percent to 23 percent in 2019.
- The growth in ADTs has driven recent growth in associate's degree production in California.
- 41 percent of Latinx Associate's Degree earners earned ADTs, the highest share for any racial group.

BAD NEWS

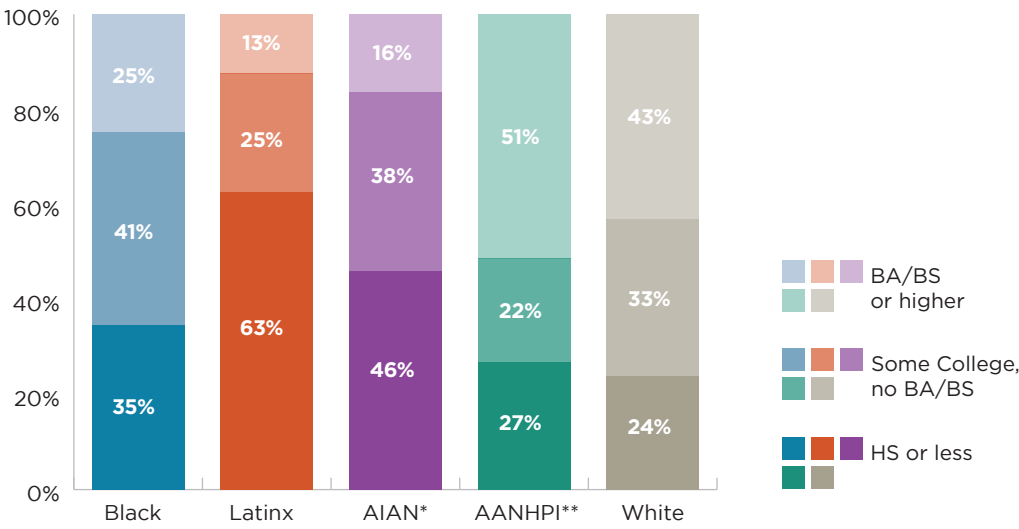
The Associate Degree for Transfer is not the preferred pathway by which students transfer, and gaps exist by race/ethnicity amongst ADT earners.

- ADT earners still account for less than half of all associate's degree earners.
- The proportion of associate's degrees that are ADTs is lower for Black students and Native American students than for other groups. The growth in ADTs for Native American students is lower than growth for all other groups.
- Of ADT earners who enrolled at a Cal State campus last year, close to half were not on a guaranteed path—meaning they earned their ADT, but they enrolled at a CSU on a path that did not guarantee them junior standing.
 - 13,302 students with an ADT transferred to the CSU on a guaranteed path.
 - 9,993 students with an ADT were not on a guaranteed path when they transferred to CSU.
 - 35,239 students transferred to the CSU without an ADT. They either earned an AA/AS or transferred without a two-year degree.
- Students continue to spend an entire extra year in community college, earning an average of 90 units for their ADTs; that's 30 more units than the 60 required for the ADT.



California’s Latinx population has the lowest Bachelor’s degree attainment in the state, but Latinx students comprise the largest group of students in the state and in community colleges; their educational success is key to meeting the state’s demand for a more educated workforce.

Figure 1. Educational attainment by Race in CA, Age 25 and Older, 2018



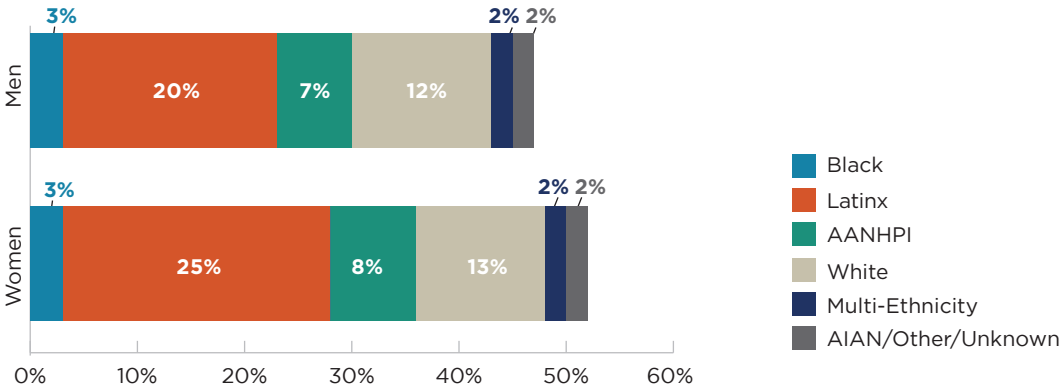
Data collection for the gender identity of students in public higher education is currently limited to men and women

*American Indian and Alaskan Native

**Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, 2018 Public Use Microdata Sample

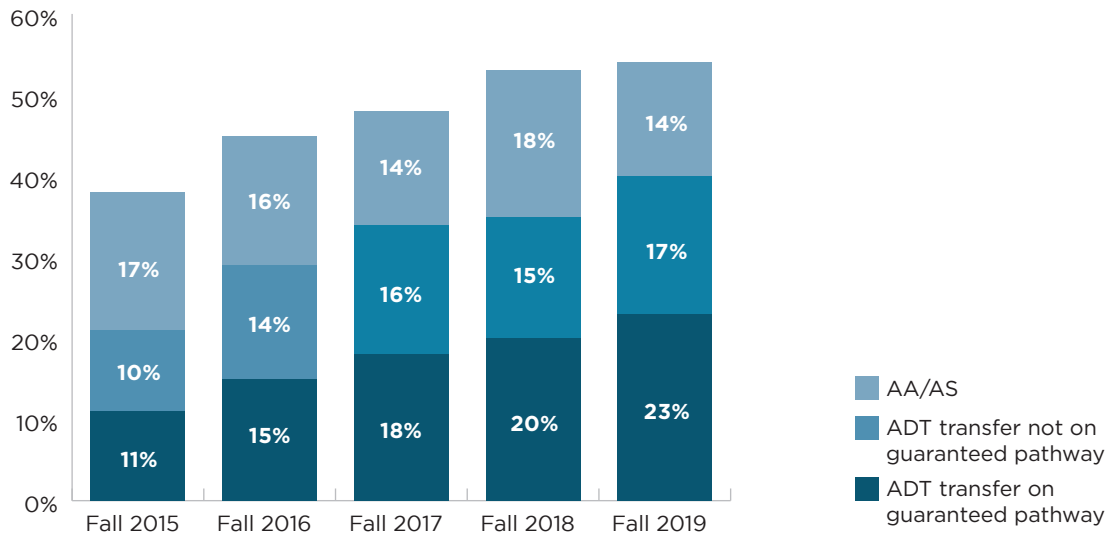
Figure 2. CA Community College Students by Race and Ethnicity, 2018-19



Data source: CA Community College Chancellor’s Office. (2020). DataMart 2018-2019. [Data portal]. Available from: <https://datamart.cccco.edu/>

More than half of students who transferred to the CSU in 2019 had a degree, and of those who transfer with a degree, the majority have an ADT.

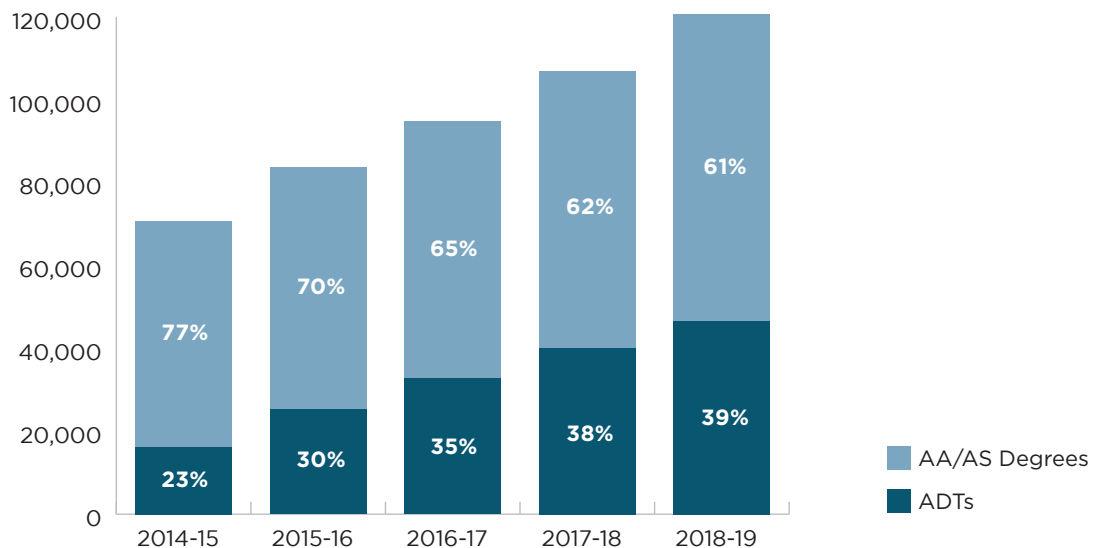
Figure 3. California State University Transfer Students with Associate’s Degree by Degree Type



Data source: California State University Institutional Research and Analyses. (2020). Enrollment summary, Fall 2019. [Data dashboard]. Available from: <http://asd.calstate.edu/dashboard/enrollment-live.html>

The growth in ADTs is driving overall growth in the number of community college students earning an associate’s degree.

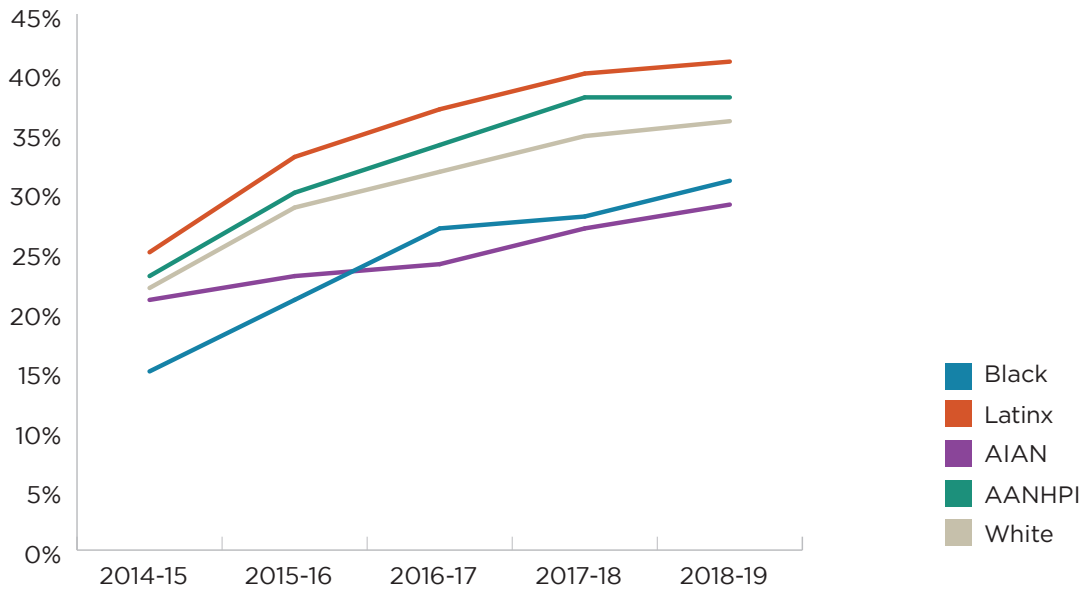
Figure 4. Students Earning Associate’s Degrees by Degree Type



Data source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2020). Student Success Metrics. [Data Dashboard]. Retrieved from: <https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/Student-Success-Metrics>

For every 100 Latinx community college graduates, 41 were awarded ADTs in 2018-19, the highest of any demographic group. In contrast, fewer than one third of Black graduates and AIAN graduates earned ADTs.

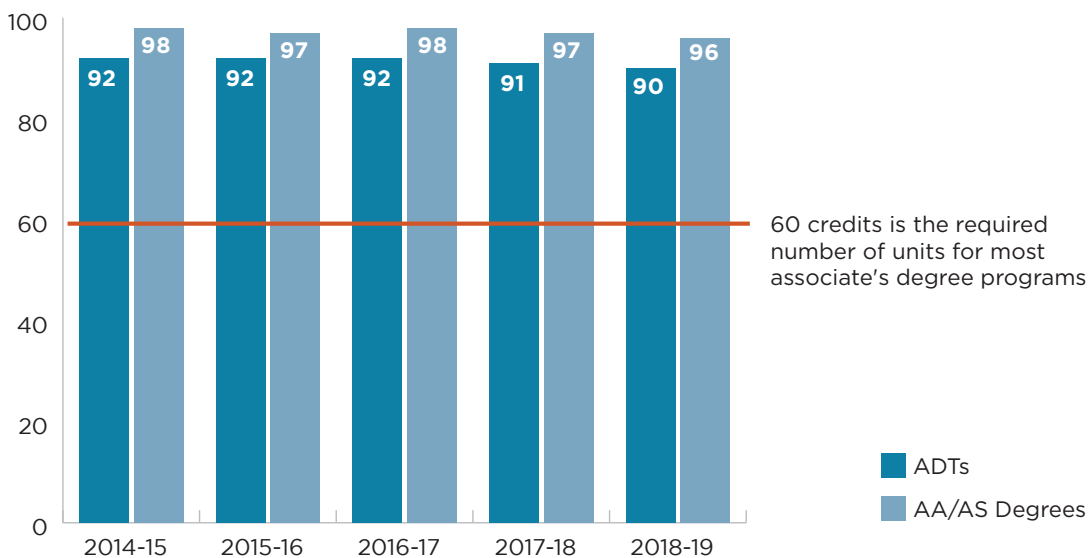
Figure 5. ADTs as a Share of Associate's Degrees by Race/Ethnicity



Data source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2020). Student Success Metrics. [Data Dashboard]. Retrieved from: <https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/Student-Success-Metrics>

The ADT has reduced excess credits compared to AA/AS earners. With a course fee of \$46 per credit at California Community Colleges, this constitutes a total cost savings for students of over \$12 million in 2018-19 alone. Further reducing credits-earned by just six units, would save students an additional \$20 million. Reducing credits-earned by six units among students who earned AA or AS degrees would have saved an additional \$20 million. ADT earners, however, still earned 30 credits more than the 60-credit degree requirement.

Figure 6. Credits Earned by Degree Type



Data source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2020). Student Success Metrics. [Data Dashboard]. Retrieved from: <https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/Student-Success-Metrics>

Only 12 of 114 California Community Colleges award more ADTs than local associate's degrees.

Table 1. Top Performing Community Colleges in ADT Awards. Campuses Awarding More ADTs than Traditional/Local Associate's Degrees

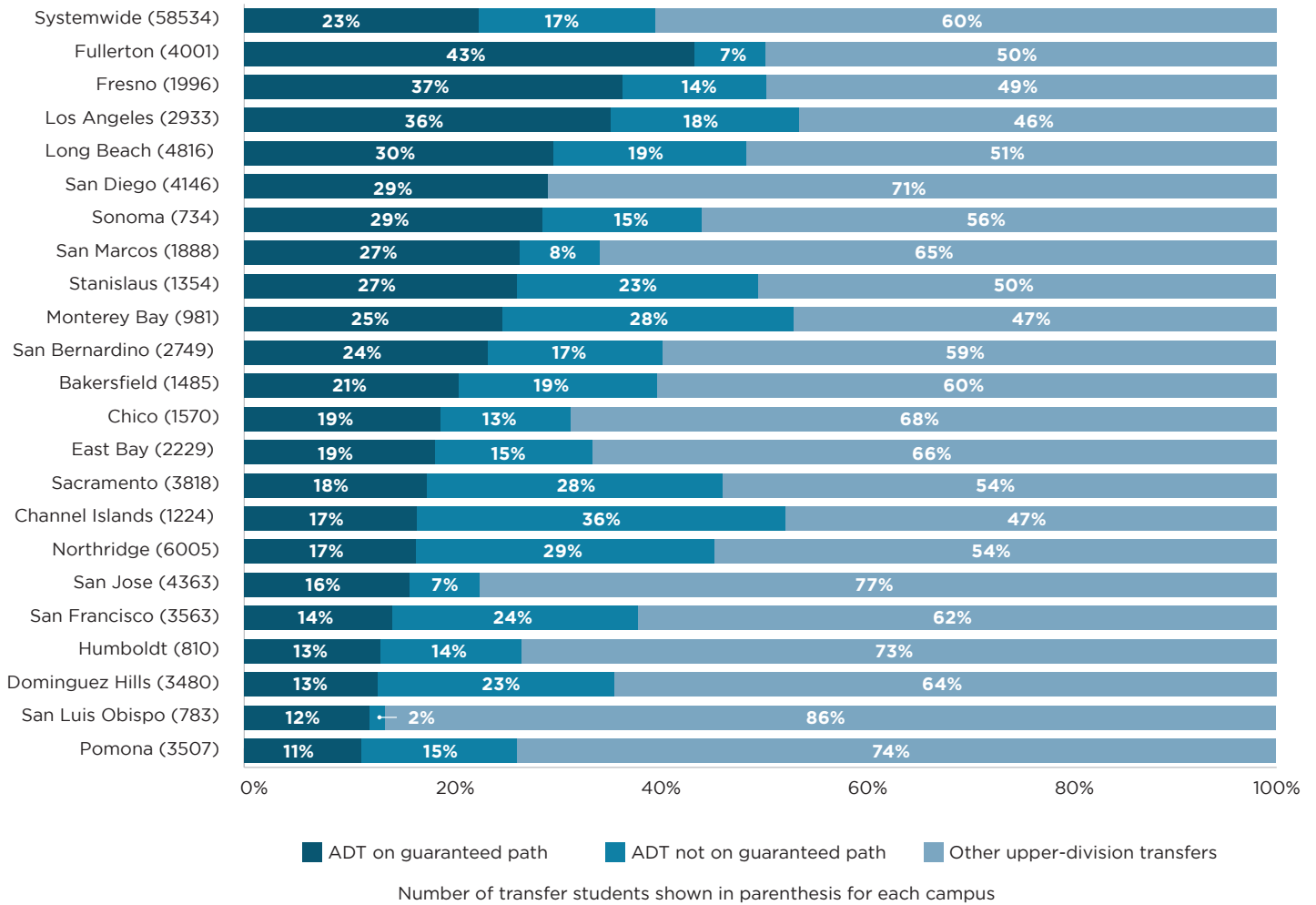
College	ADTs	Percent of all Associate Degrees	FTE Student Enrollment
Long Beach City	1,491	62%	35,001
Glendale Community	639	61%	24,974
Berkeley City	248	60%	10,903
Evergreen Valley	488	59%	14,557
College of the Desert	671	59%	16,066
West Valley	445	55%	14,091
Clovis Community	604	55%	12,033
Foothill	653	54%	30,065
Fresno City	1,015	53%	37,781
Reedley	550	52%	17,854
Diablo Valley	1,064	52%	28,547
College of San Mateo	477	51%	13,376

Source: CA Community College Chancellor's Office. (2020). DataMart. [Data portal]. Available from: <https://datamart.cccco.edu/>



The share of ADT transfers on a guaranteed path¹ upon enrollment varies greatly across CSU campuses. A majority of CSU campuses have less than one-quarter of transfer students on an ADT guaranteed pathway. Fullerton, Fresno, Los Angeles, and Long Beach are top performing CSU campuses.

Figure 7. Composition of Transfer Students to the California State University by Campus, Fall 2019



Data source: California State University Institutional Research and Analyses. (2020). Enrollment summary, Fall 2019. [Data dashboard]. Available from: <http://asd.calstate.edu/dashboard/enrollment-live.html>

¹ Students on a guaranteed path enter the CSU with junior standing, allowing them to complete their bachelor's degree within two years. Students who are not on a guaranteed path may take longer, as not all courses taken at the community college level are guaranteed to transfer to the CSU.





In the decade since its creation, hundreds of thousands of students have chosen the ADT as their pathway to transfer, and a growing number of California Community College students are choosing the degree with a guarantee. However, much work remains. The ADT is not the preferred pathway, as the majority of students continue to earn traditional associate’s degrees rather than ADTs. Furthermore, while the ADT has lowered the number of units earned by graduates, the average ADT earner completes 30 units more than most programs require. In the fall of 2020, the Campaign for College Opportunity will convene policymakers, practitioners and researchers for an in-depth analysis of the ADT and transfer pathways from California’s Community Colleges, with a focus on how to strengthen the ADT and finally ensure it is the preferred transfer pathway.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policymakers, governing boards, and campuses must recommit to a bold, **new vision for strengthening transfer for California community college students that ensures the ADT is the preferred transfer pathway.**

1. California Community Colleges need to identify strategies to support the reduction of excess units earned by ADT students in order to meet the goal of no more than 60 units per ADT earner.
2. California Community Colleges must close racial gaps in ADTs as a share of associate’s degrees earned by ensuring equitable access to ADT pathways.
3. The California State University system and its Board of Trustees should identify why particular campuses have too few ADT admits and/or far too many not on a guaranteed pathway to ensure greater equity for students across the state.
4. Ensure the state’s longitudinal data system can inform critical questions about obstacles faced by California’s transfer student population.



LOS ANGELES OFFICE

1149 S. Hill Street, Ste. 925
Los Angeles, CA 90015
Tel: (213) 744-9434
Fax: (877) 207-3560

SACRAMENTO OFFICE

1512 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: (916) 443-1681
Fax: (916) 443-1682

www.collegecampaign.org



@collegecampaign



@CollegeOpp

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER
bit.ly/CollegeOppNews

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thomas A. Saenz, Chair

Rob Lapsley, Vice Chair

Maria Anguiano, Treasurer

Sonya Christian, Secretary

Estela Mara Bensimon

Lena Carew

Elena Chavez Quezada

Paul Granillo

Pamela David

Irma Rodriguez Moisa

Maria Ott

Vincent Pan

Iliana Perez

David Wolf

J. Luke Wood