



# **STUDENT AND GUIDANCE COUNSELOR FEEDBACK ON THE COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE**

A Paper Commissioned by the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative

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May 2012

*This project has been funded, either wholly or in part, with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under Coffey Consulting, LLC's Contract No ED-04-CO-0044-0001. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of same by the U.S. Government.*

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### **Suggested Citation**

MacAllum, K., and Glover, D. (2012). *Student and Guidance Counselor Feedback on the College Navigator Website*. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Postsecondary Education Cooperative. Retrieved [date] from <http://nces.ed.gov/npec>.

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## Introduction

The National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) commissioned Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, Maryland, to solicit feedback from consumers on the College Navigator (<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>) search site through focus groups. College Navigator is a website designed to help students, parents, and high school guidance counselors search for and compare information on different postsecondary institutions as one of the first steps in the college search process.

NPEC was established by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 1995 as a voluntary organization that encompasses federal agencies, postsecondary institutions, associations, and other organizations with a major interest in postsecondary education data. NPEC's mission is to promote the quality, comparability, and utility of postsecondary data and information that support policy development at the federal, state, and institution levels. Because College Navigator is designed to provide prospective students, parents, and guidance counselors with comparable information about different postsecondary institutions, NPEC has an interest in helping ensure that data made available through the site is easily comprehended and useful to users.

College Navigator was developed by NCES and released in September 2007 as the U.S. Department of Education's primary source for comparing postsecondary institutions that participate in federal student financial aid programs. It currently receives approximately 200,000 unique visits and 5,000,000 page views per month.

In 2008, the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) detailed several new data requirements to be included on the College Navigator website. The vast majority of the data included on the site are collected through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, an annual data collection conducted by NCES. NCES implemented the HEOA-required additions to the College Navigator site between 2009 and 2010. Given the large amount of information now available on the site, NPEC is interested in providing suggestions and feedback to NCES on how it might improve the presentation of the data on the website to enhance its usability by students and parents.

Specifically, NPEC has suggested the development of a College Profile to serve as a "first look" at an institution on the College Navigator website. When users conduct searches and click on an institution within the search results, the profile would be the initial information they see about a college. The profile would include a subset of data points with links to more information in the following informational areas:

- General information about the institution (i.e., directory information)
- Undergraduate admissions
- Tuition and fees
- Student financial aid

- Estimated student expenses before and after grant and scholarship aid
- Undergraduate students (i.e., student characteristics)
- Undergraduate student persistence and success
- Degrees and certificates awarded to students

The focus groups used draft versions of the College Profile. The goal was to learn from two consumer groups—students and guidance counselors—whether the information included in the draft profile was most important to them compared with other information available on the College Navigator website, and whether it was presented in a format easy to understand and use in the college search process.

### **Description of the Focus Groups**

Focus groups were conducted with the following three groups:

- Six graduating high school seniors, age 17-19, who have been accepted into and are planning to attend a 2-year college in fall 2011. The group was diverse with respect to family income, race/ethnicity, and gender.
- Nine graduating high school seniors, age 17-19, who have been accepted into and are planning to attend a 4-year college in fall 2011. The group was diverse with respect to family income, race/ethnicity, and gender.
- Nine high school guidance counselors with an MA in counseling or related field and at least 3 years' experience counseling prospective college students in public or charter schools in the DC metropolitan area where at least 15 percent of the students come from lower-income families. The group was diverse with respect to race/ethnicity and gender.

### **Format of the Focus Groups**

The moderator began the focus groups by asking the participants' their perspectives on the college search experience. A summary of these perspectives is included in Appendix A.

Next, draft versions of the College Profile for two randomly selected institutions were presented. Two slightly different versions of the College Profile were used in the 2-year and 4-year groups. Specifically, the draft College Profile for 2-year colleges did not include the "About Undergraduate Admissions" category, as most two-year institutions are open admission institutions. An "About Tuition and Fees" category was included on the 2-year institution draft College Profile instead. The counselor focus group was asked to react to the 4-year version of the College Profile.

The moderator walked participants through the different information categories and data points included in the draft profiles and asked participants for their reactions. Participants were asked to react to the overall importance of the information categories and the way the information in the profile was presented.

Finally, at different points in the sessions, the focus group participants were asked to complete ranking exercises. The first exercise asked them to rank the importance of the overall information categories included in the profile. The second exercise asked them to rank the importance of the individual data elements contained *within* each category. The detailed results of these exercises are presented in Appendix D.

## Summary of Findings

A summary of the focus groups' general reactions to the type, amount, and presentation of information included in the draft versions of the College Profile follow below. Detailed feedback on the information categories and data points is included in the subsequent section.

### Types of Information

In general, the focus group participants felt that the informational categories used in the draft College Profile were appropriate. Among the categories presented, the following information was reported to be the most valuable and important:

- Undergraduate admissions (4-year group and counselors)
- Tuition and fees
- Estimated expenses before and after grant and scholarship aid
- Financial aid
- Undergraduate students, including size of institution (4-year group)

Participants noted additional information important to them in the college search process included location/distance from home, campus environment, and course/program availability.

The value of the different types of information varied somewhat across the groups. For example, counselors attributed more importance than students to certain items such as information on persistence and success, and both students and counselors thought that information on cost and financial aid would be particularly important to parents.

Participants were individually asked to rank the different informational categories on how important they were to them. Participants also noted that the importance of these categories may change depending on the stage of the student's college search process (for example, early exploration stage versus final decision stage). The overall rankings of the information categories for each of the focus groups are presented in the following table.



**Overall Ranking of College Profile Categories, by Focus Group**

Category	4-Year Students	2-Year Students	Guidance Counselors
<b>About the Institution</b>	*	*	*
<b>Undergraduate Admissions</b>	1	†	1
<b>Tuition and Fees</b>	†	1	†
<b>Student Financial Aid</b>	3	3	3
<b>Estimated Student Expenses Before and After Grant and Scholarship Aid</b>	4	2	2
<b>Undergraduate Students</b>	2	4	4
<b>Undergraduate Student Persistence and Success</b>	5	5	5
<b>Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students</b>	6	6	6

\* The informational area on institution type and location was not included in the ranking exercise because it includes basic directory information.

† The draft College Profile for 2-year colleges did not include the “Undergraduate Admissions” category because most two-year institutions are open admission. Instead, a “Tuition and Fees” category was included in the 2-year institution draft College Profile.

### Amount of Information

The focus groups indicated that the amount of information presented in the College Profile was generally appropriate. While they were not always interested in all of the information presented, the participants appreciated that other students and parents might want to know such things. Counselors, for example, thought that the draft College Profile contained “a lot of information,” and “a lot that we don’t use,” but recognized that given the diversity of students they work with, the information should remain in the College Profile template since “you don’t know what each one is looking for individually.” The students, in particular, were satisfied with the amount of information included in the profile alone, and were not often inclined to click on the links to get to the additional information that is available on College Navigator.

### Presentation of Information

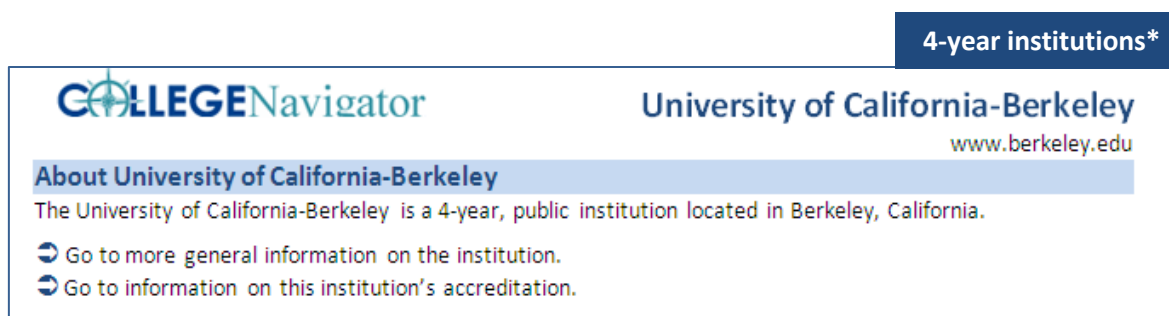
Students and counselors both commented on the importance of effective visual presentation. Some were critical of the draft College Profile’s graphics and suggested that the Profile could be presented in a more visually appealing way, comparing it with commercial websites available. In particular, participants suggested the use of campus pictures, school colors, and mascots. Counselors suggested greater use of different data presentations and graphs, not just bar graphs. Counselors also thought that comparisons to national averages would be worthwhile. In addition, participants noted that there may be a need for the use of mouse rollovers or additional notes to provide definitions and explanations of unclear terminology and concepts. Multiple interpretations of the data charts indicate that participants were unable to interpret the provided information correctly. Counselors suggested they or others would need to help students apply the information correctly.

## Detailed Findings

Detailed feedback received for each of the information categories and the data within them is presented in the following sections.

### Section 1: About the Institution

The first section of the draft College Profile contains basic directory information as well as links to more general information and information about the institution's accreditation, as seen in the figure below.



\*Note: The 2- and 4-year College Profile slides contain comparable information; the 4-year profile slide is displayed here.

Students in both student focus groups stated that information presented under this category was “helpful,” important, and presented in a “straightforward” way. All groups considered the distinction between a 2-year and a 4-year college to be “very important.” However, students had trouble understanding some of the terms. For example probing by the moderator on participants’ understanding of institutional control (public; private, nonprofit; private, for-profit) and accreditation, revealed the following:

- *Public versus Private:* Students in both groups were able to identify correctly differences between public and private colleges. At least one student noted that public schools were subsidized by the state. Other comments reflected assumptions students hold concerning public versus private institutions (e.g. “private colleges are stricter,” “private colleges are more expensive”).
- *Private, nonprofit versus Private, for-profit:* Students were not familiar with or clear about the distinction between private, nonprofit and private, for-profit institutions. Counselors reported that their students would not understand the distinction between them.
- *Accreditation:* Neither of the student groups knew the meaning of this term. Most students in the 4-year group stated that accreditation was “not important” when comparing colleges. One student reported that “it never crossed my mind.” Additionally, counselors stated that their students do not understand the concept of accreditation, nor do they use it when comparing colleges.

The counselor group suggested adding an explanation for difficult concepts.

Suggestions for additional information that could be included in this section were institution size and cost (2-year student group) and a link to admissions criteria (e.g., SAT and GPA requirements) to allow for a quick check on academic fit (counselor group).

## Section 2a. About Undergraduate Admissions (4-year students and counselors only)

The second section of the draft College Profile for 4-year colleges and universities provides information on undergraduate admissions.

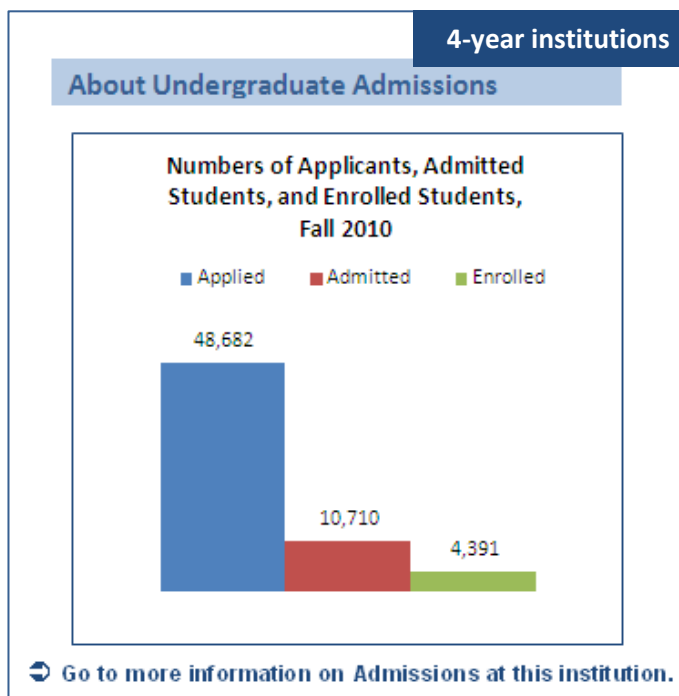
The number of applicants, students admitted, and students who ultimately enrolled are displayed in a bar graph, as shown in the figure to the right. The link to additional information brings users to the full College Navigator section on Admissions which includes SAT/ACT scores (when used by the institution); admissions considerations (i.e., a list of criteria considered in admission decisions); and the cost of the application fee.

Students found the admissions information included in the College Profile to be straightforward, and the majority reported that the information was very important. Counselors believed their students would be able to understand the information fairly easily.

However, both groups suggested displaying information in terms of percentages rather than raw figures.

There were a variety of interpretations among participants about what some of the data meant. For example, when asked by the moderator, “What do you think the information in the graph tells you?” participant responses included the following:

- The low number of those enrolling indicated “this was a safety school.” (student)
- “Maybe there’s something really bad about it that makes half the people not want to go there.” (student)
- Students are not enrolling because of “location” or “price.” (student)
- “This shows the type of student who is going there, because if someone is turning down Berkeley, they must be going to an even better school, so the people here are really smart.” (student)
- “It would almost discourage you because of the vast difference between applied and admitted.” (counselor)

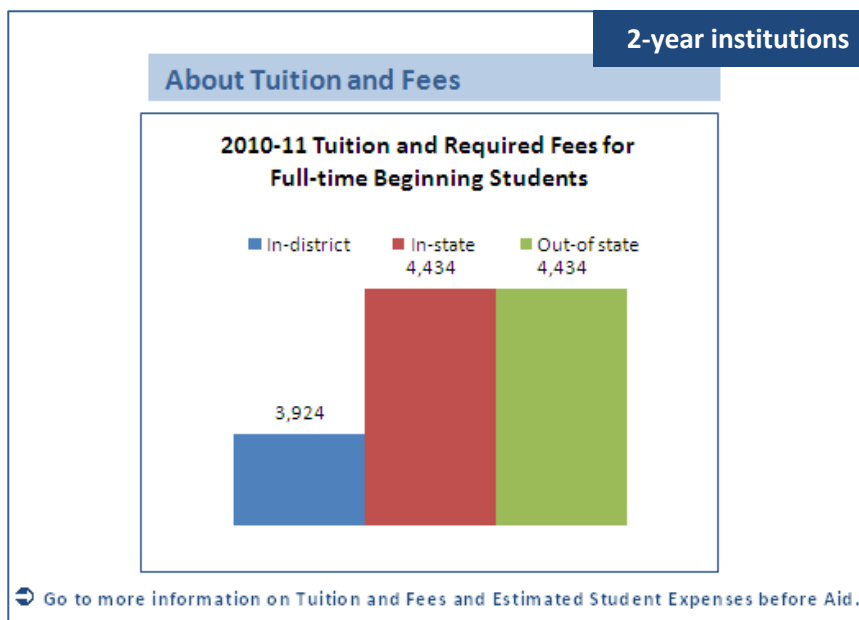


Following the discussion of the information included in the Admissions section of the College Profile, participants were asked to vote individually on the *one* piece of Admissions information available in the full Admissions section on the College Navigator site that they would find *most* important. Among students, test scores (SAT/ACT) were voted most important, and among counselors, admissions considerations received the most votes. The admissions data currently included in the draft College Profile received no votes from either group.

## Section 2b. About Tuition and Fees (2-year students only)

The second section of the draft College Profile for 2-year institutions provides information on tuition and fees, rather than undergraduate admissions, since most 2-year institutions have open admissions.

The College Profile includes the tuition and fees charged to in-district, in-state, and out-of-state students, as shown in the figure to the right. The link to additional information brings students to additional information in the full College Navigator site on the availability of alternative tuition plans (e.g., tuition guarantees) and the per credit charge for part-time students.



All of the students indicated that the information on tuition and fees included in the College Profile chart was very important to their decision-making and would play a major role in their final decisions. However, with respect to how the information was displayed for the particular example used, students found it confusing that the chart showed the same tuition and fees for in-state and out-of-state students. They also noted that the scale used for graphing the data was misleading because the actual difference in tuition and fees were not very large.

In voting for the most important information on tuition and fees available on the full College Navigator site, all but one student indicated the information currently being used in the College Profile was more important than the part-time per credit costs and information on alternative tuition plans. However, in discussing these items, students noted that it might be helpful to include the part-time costs on the Profile as well as the full-time costs currently displayed. All of the students were unfamiliar with alternative tuition plans included in the full College Navigator site. Students indicated that definitions or explanations would be necessary to make this information useful.

### Section 3. About Student Financial Aid

The third section of the draft College Profile provides information on the percentage of students receiving different types and sources of financial aid and the average amount they received. The 4-year institution version includes more details about the sources of the aid than the 2-year institution version so that both versions could be tested with students.

The overall reaction among all the groups to the displays was that the information, particularly the average amount of aid received, is important and helpful in decision-making; however, the presentation of the information could be improved. In general, students understood what the information being presented meant. For example, students understood the differences between loans and grants/scholarships. However, students were unsure of more specific terms like “Pell Grant” and “Institutional Grant.” Counselors who were viewing the 4-year version of the profile thought that students would have a hard time interpreting the table because it had too many numbers and that it would be information of more interest to parents. Both the counselors and students found the 4-year version, in particular, to be “overwhelming,” “cluttered,” and “too complex.” They thought that explanations/definitions would be necessary to explain some of the terms. In addition, the presentation of the information should clearer how the different amounts are

4-year institutions

About Student Financial Aid

Financial aid awarded to full-time beginning students, 2008-09	Percentage of students receiving type of aid	Average amount received by those students
<b>Any financial aid</b>	66%	
<b>Any grant or scholarship</b>	54%	\$11,913
<b>Federal grant</b>	27%	\$4,486
Pell grant	24%	\$3,837
Other federal grant	24%	\$1,126
<b>State/local grant or scholarship</b>	26%	\$3,954
<b>Institutional grant or scholarship</b>	52%	\$8,176
<b>Any student loan</b>	31%	\$5,412
Federal student loan	30%	\$4,868
Other student loan	2%	\$12,640

[Go to more information on Student Financial Aid at this institution.](#)

2-year institutions

About Student Financial Aid

Financial Aid to Full-time Beginning Students, 2008-09	Percentage of student receiving type of aid	Average amount received by those students
<b>Grant or scholarship</b>	75%	\$3,793
<b>from the Federal government</b>	74%	\$2,937
<b>from the State or local government</b>	26%	\$1,785
From the institution	18%	\$1,090
<b>Federal student loan</b>	11%	\$3,222
<b>Other student loan</b>	0%	\$0

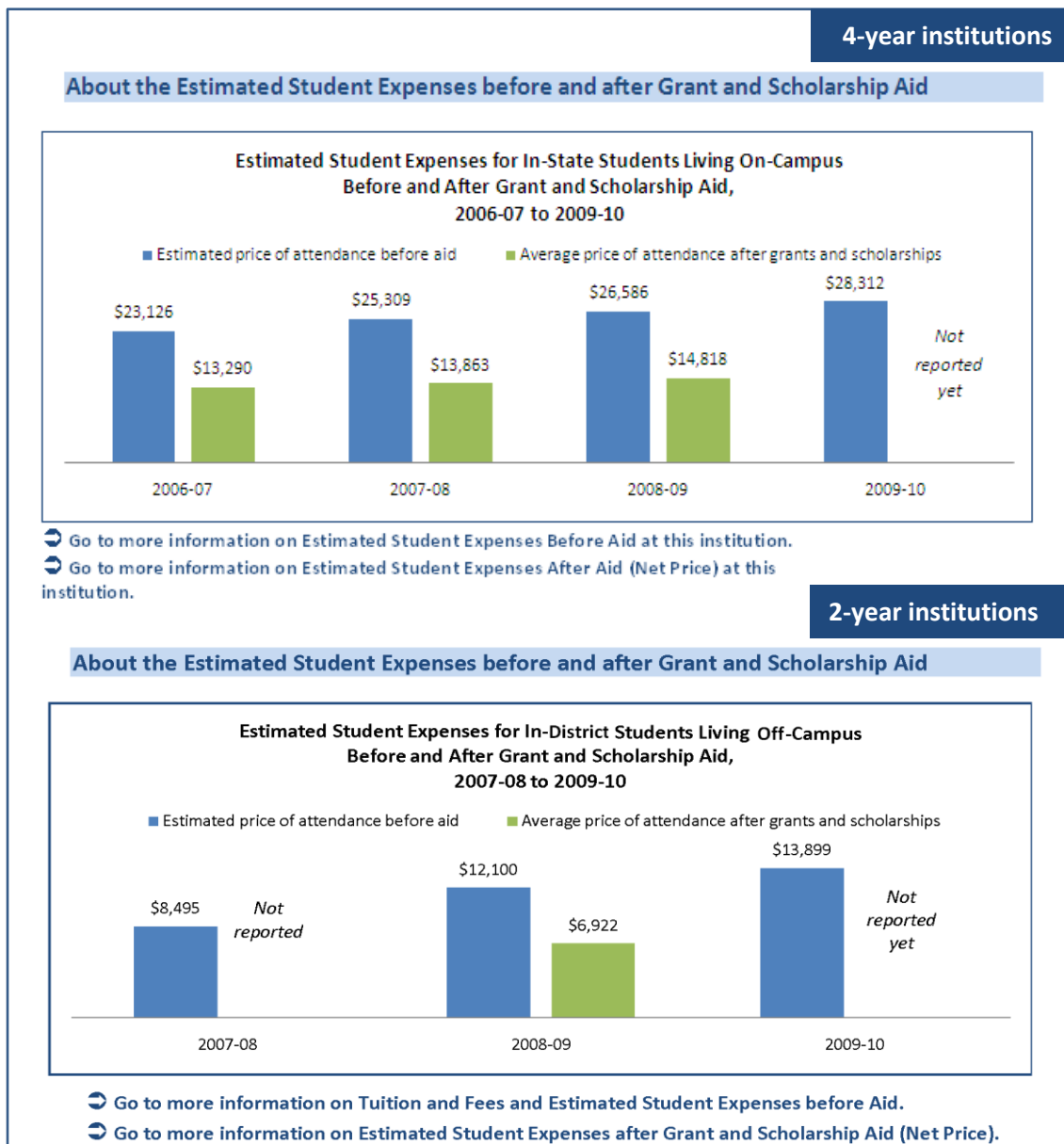
[Go to more information on Student Financial Aid at this institution.](#)

related to each other (i.e., What is a subset of what? What should be summed, and what should not?).

Finally, the participants noted that the importance of this information, and the detail at which it is provided, varies throughout the different stages of the college search process. At the early stages, when potential colleges are being identified, detailed information concerning financial aid is less important. When making a final decision, the detailed information may be more important.

#### Section 4. About the Estimated Student Expenses Before and After Grant and Scholarship Aid

The fourth section of the draft College Profile provides multiple years' worth of data on the overall price/cost of attendance (i.e., the typical published or "sticker price") and "net price" (i.e., the price/cost of attendance minus grant/scholarship aid). The 4-year version of the profile shows four years' worth of data, and the 2-year version shows three years' worth of data, to help communicate to students and parents not only the most recent year's estimated expenses but also trends over time.



Students and counselors alike agreed that this information is important and helpful in decision-making. Students also noted that they have not found this information readily available during their college searches. The students particularly liked seeing the difference between estimated price before aid and average price after grants and scholarships (and they understood the differences in these two concepts). They also liked that there were multiple years of data displayed.

A few questions were raised by the different groups in response to this information. They included the following:

- which expenses were included (student and counselor groups);
- why information was only for in-state students living on campus (student groups);
- what was meant by not yet reported data (student groups); and
- the meaning of net price or the ease of understanding the term (student and counselor groups).

They also expressed concern that expenses might be misinterpreted to include expenses for all four years rather than an annual figure.

Specific suggestions for improvements on this display included the following:

- using the term “cost” instead of “price” (counselor group);
- distinguishing tuition and fees from the other expenses (counselor group); and
- providing a better explanation of the terms.

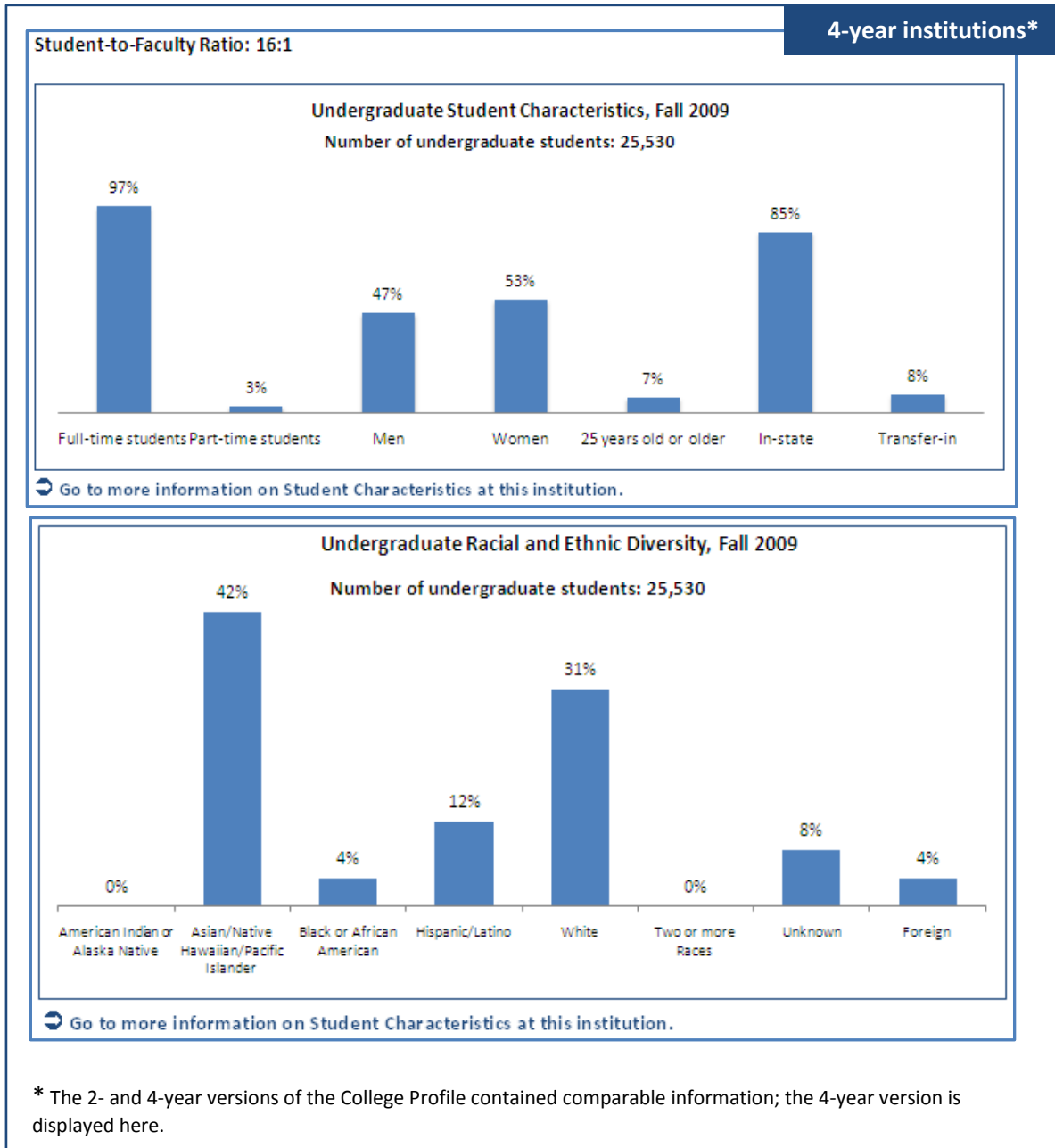
When assessing the extent to which the information would be useful to their students, counselors generally agreed that the table would be hard to use in working with students. They did not think students would be inclined to click on the links for more information. Nearly all agreed this information would be more beneficial to parents.

## **Section 5. About Undergraduate Students**

The fifth section of the draft College Profile provides in two graphs information about the composition of the undergraduate student body. The first graph displays information about student attendance status (full-time versus part-time), gender, age, residency (in-state versus out-of-state), and transfer status. Also included is the number of undergraduates and the student-to-faculty ratio. The second graph displays information on the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body.

Overall, students stated that these characteristics were meaningful and important to them. The 4-year students seemed to think that the information was more important, although the 2-year students indicated this information might be more important as they got to the final phase of college decision-making.

Counselors believed that their students were very interested in student characteristics. They described this information as very important and stated that they often use this information to compare colleges when working with their students.



Both student groups and counselors emphasized the importance of knowing the number of undergraduate students and the student-to-faculty ratio, which they suggested needed to be more prominently displayed. Students in the 4-year group at first did not see the relevance of the information related to age (i.e., the percentage of students 25 years old or older) and



transfer-status (i.e., percentage of students who transfer-in); however after some discussion they acknowledged that other students would probably be interested in this information.

Student characteristics broken out by race/ethnicity were described as “important” by both students and counselors, and students said that they would use the information as part of their college search. In addition, counselors felt that that this level of information was enough, and that most students would not be inclined to click on additional information. Students could not think of any other student characteristics that were important to list that did not already appear. A few counselors suggested adding the category of “Percentage studying abroad.”

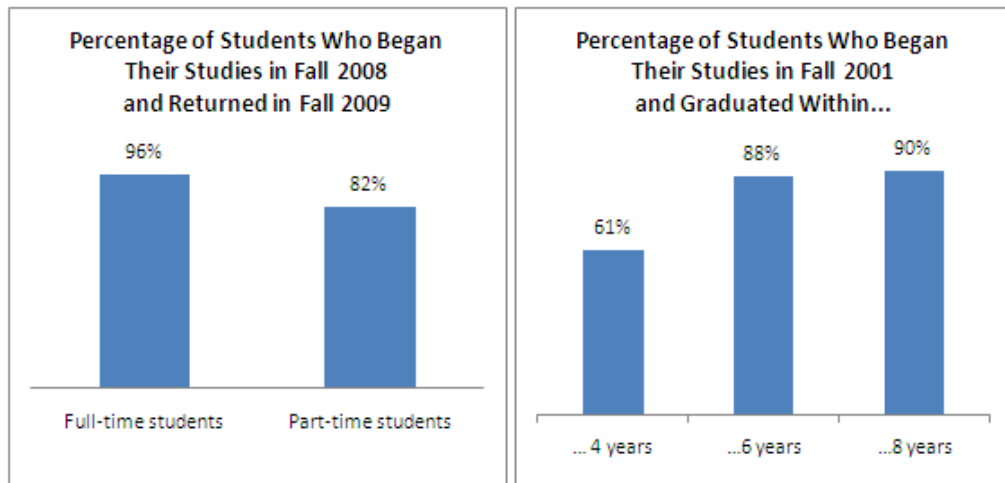
In responding to the terminology used in the display, counselors and students suggested using the term “International” instead of “Foreign” to describe the no-resident alien students captured in the graph. Counselors also suggested changing the term “Two or more races” to “Multiracial.”

The actual display of the information drew a lot of comments and suggestions for changes. These were from both counselors and students and included the following:

- data seemed to not belong on the same graph;
- it is confusing to have categories of information that summed to 100% (i.e. Full time & Part time, Men & Women) adjacent to categories that did not (25 years old or older; In-state, Transfer-in);
- graphs were not necessary, or perhaps use pie charts instead of bar graphs; and,
- items should appear in order of importance from left to right, with Transfer-in and 25 years old or older to the far right.

## **Section 6. About Undergraduate Student Persistence and Success**

The sixth section of the draft College Profile provides information about student retention and institutional graduation rates. First-year retention rates for both full-time and part-time students are shown in the first graph, and 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates are shown in a second graph for 4-year institutions. For 2-year institutions, 2-year, 3-year, and 4-year graduation rates are displayed.



[Go to more information on Student Persistence and Success at this institution.](#)

\* The 2- and 4-year versions of the College Profile contained comparable information; the 4-year version is displayed here.

Feedback across the groups regarding this information was not consistent. For example, 4-year students indicated they understood what the persistence (retention rates) graph was referring to, but appeared confused by the success (graduation rates) graph. Two-year students indicated that the tables were unclear. Attempts by students in the 2-year group to interpret the persistence graph resulted in multiple interpretations, reflecting their confusion. One student was able to correctly interpret both charts. “It makes sense after it was explained,” said another student, “but I wouldn’t have gotten it otherwise.”

Counselors rated the importance of persistence and success information much more highly than students did. Only a few 4-year students indicated that they would use this information to compare institutions. As one student stated, “It’s nice to know but not really important.” However, students in the 2-year group felt that knowing the percentage that graduated within “normal time” was “really important information.”

Specific sources of confusion included the following:

- Interpreting the bars for percentage graduating within 4, 6, and 8 years and, more specifically, if the percentages were cumulative or based on the percentage not yet graduated shown in the previous category. Counselors stated that their students would need assistance in interpreting this information.
- The distinction between full-time and part-time in the retention rate graph was not clear to them. Another student replied that “it depends on the number of credits taken,” but the group thought a definition would be useful. Counselors commented that many students need to consider part-time enrollment due to financial constraints.

- Many 2-year students were unable to understand why the percentages were based on Fall 2005 data. This confusion was augmented by having data for Fall 2008 and Fall 2009 in the adjacent chart. “I would want to know the same year,” said one student, “the 2005 has nothing to do with it in my opinion.” Another wanted to know why the Persistence chart did not start with 2007 “since it’s a 2-year college.”

Students and counselors both had some additional comments and suggestions for change or more information. For example:

- Counselors suggested that students were more familiar with the term “retention rate” rather than persistence.
- Students in the 2-year college group expressed an interest in knowing why students did not return. They asked aloud if it was due to positive reasons (e.g., transfer) or negative (e.g., dropped out, couldn’t afford it).
- Counselors suggested that comparisons to national persistence and success rates would be useful.

When students reviewed the additional graduation rate data available in the full College Navigator neither student group felt that breaking them down by race/ethnicity was especially useful or important.

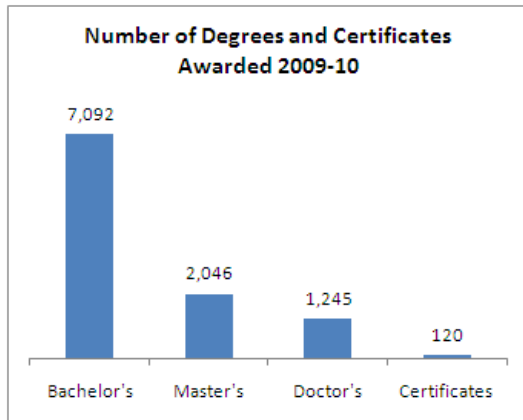
### **Section 7. About Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students**

The final section of the draft College Profile provides two pieces of information: a graph showing the number of degrees awarded by level of award and a text box listing the five largest areas of study by degree type.

Neither student group described the numerical information on degrees and certificates to be important in their search. Most students indicated that the number of Master and Doctorate degrees awarded was not relevant to their search. Only one student, who was considering an advanced degree after college, found this piece of information useful. In contrast, students reported that information on the five largest program areas (majors) for degrees to be helpful and important. Most students reported that they would use information on areas of study to compare colleges.

## 4-year institutions

### About Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students



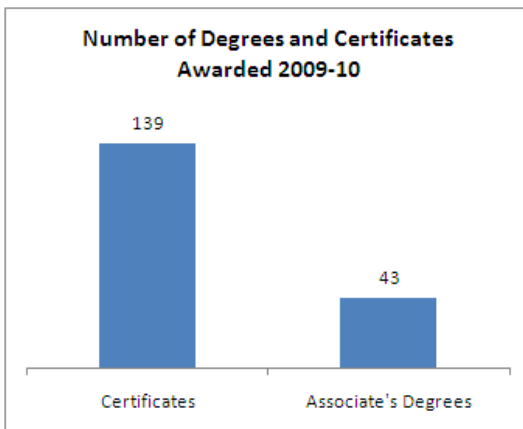
#### Largest Areas of Bachelor's Degrees in 2009-10

- Social Sciences
- Engineering
- Biological and Biomedical Sciences
- English Language and Literature
- Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies

[Go to more information on Degrees and Certificates at this institution.](#)

## 2-year institutions

### About Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students



#### Largest Areas of Associate's Degrees in 2009-10

- Health Professions and Related Programs
- Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services

#### Largest Areas of Certificates in 2009-10

- Health Professions and Related Programs
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support
- Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities

[Go to more information on Degrees and Certificates at this institution.](#)

Like the students, counselors believed that the information on largest areas of study was very important and they would use this information when working with students. However, they were surprised to see information about advanced degrees given the prior focus on undergraduate study only and felt it was unnecessary. They suggested that the top 10 majors might be worth including.

On the display, students assumed that the largest areas of study were listed in descending order but were not sure. They also were not sure if these were the largest areas proportionately or in sheer numbers.

Neither the counselors nor either student group indicated that additional breakdowns of awarded degrees by gender or race/ethnicity were important to know. "It's fun to know," said one student, "but not useful." Counselors added that students may be interested in breakdowns for overall enrollment by gender and by race/ethnicity but not by major or program.

## Appendix A: Participants' Perspectives on the College Search Experience

### Timing:

- Most 2-year and 4-year college-bound seniors reported starting their college search as juniors while others reported they started their search as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Counselors reported that their students are typically introduced to the concept of going to college around the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, with one saying the concept is introduced as early as elementary school. However, more than half acknowledged that many students do not begin their search process until junior or senior year.

### Search methods and application process:

- Virtually all students used the Internet extensively in their college searches.
- The most commonly mentioned web-based resource was Naviance.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent comments about the College Profile often referenced Naviance as a comparison point.
- None of the student participants had used or heard of College Navigator. A few counselors had heard of it but only one reported ever accessing the site.
- Four-year college-bound seniors reported applying to between 3 and 11 colleges with the majority applying to between 3 and 5. In contrast, 2-year college-bound seniors reported applying to between 1 and 4 colleges.

### Key information in the search and decision process:

- Four-year college-bound seniors reported the following as the most important types of information: admission requirements; distance/location; campus environment; size; classes/programs offered; tuition and cost; and living arrangements. Reputation was acknowledged only in response to a specific probe.
- Four-year college-bound seniors based their final selection on the following: tuition; admission requirements; and reputation. Two-year college-bound seniors based their final selection on the following: proximity to home; affordability/price; program; and ability to transfer credits.
- Two-year college-bound seniors reported the following as the most important types of information: price; classes/program offered; distance/location; and financial aid.
- Prior to acceptance, counselors reported their students are most interested in the following: distance/location; student life; name recognition/status; sports; and admission criteria. The importance of academic reputation "depends on the student."
- Guidance counselors reported the following as the most important types of information for their students: cost; financial aid; retention and graduation rates; and student services. However, counselors indicated that these are often considered *after* college acceptance.

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<sup>1</sup> Product offered by Hobsons (<http://www.naviance.com/>)

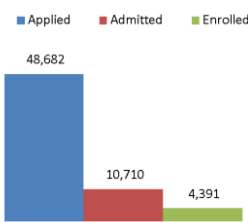
### About University of California-Berkeley

The University of California-Berkeley is a 4-year, public institution located in Berkeley, California.

- Go to more general information on the institution.
- Go to information on this institution's accreditation.

### About Undergraduate Admissions

Numbers of Applicants, Admitted Students, and Enrolled Students, Fall 2010



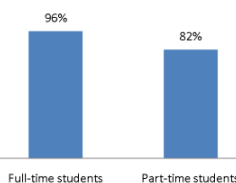
- Go to more information on Admissions at this institution.
- Go to more information on Student Financial Aid at this institution.

### About Student Financial Aid

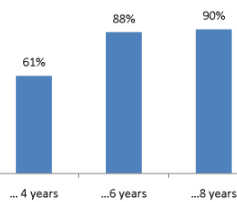
Financial aid awarded to full-time beginning students, 2008-09	Percentage of students receiving type of aid	Average amount received by those students
Any financial aid	66%	
Any grant or scholarship	54%	\$11,913
Federal grant	27%	\$4,486
Pell grant	24%	\$3,837
Other federal grant	24%	\$1,126
State/local grant or scholarship	26%	\$3,954
Institutional grant or scholarship	52%	\$8,176
Any student loan	31%	\$5,412
Federal student loan	30%	\$4,868
Other student loan	2%	\$12,640

### About Undergraduate Student Persistence and Success

Percentage of Students Who Began Their Studies in Fall 2008 and Returned in Fall 2009



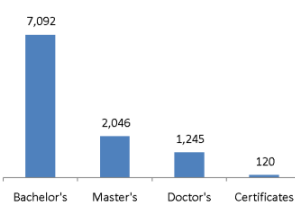
Percentage of Students Who Began Their Studies in Fall 2001 and Graduated Within...



- Go to more information on Student Persistence and Success at this institution.

### About Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students

Number of Degrees and Certificates Awarded 2009-10



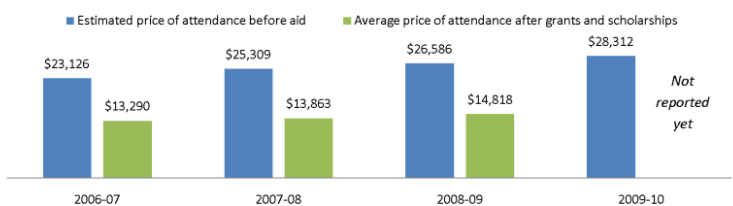
Largest Areas of Bachelor's Degrees in 2009-10

- Social Sciences
- Engineering
- Biological and Biomedical Sciences
- English Language and Literature
- Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies

- Go to more information on Degrees and Certificates at this institution.

### About the Estimated Student Expenses before and after Grant and Scholarship Aid

Estimated Student Expenses for In-State Students Living On-Campus Before and After Grant and Scholarship Aid, 2006-07 to 2009-10

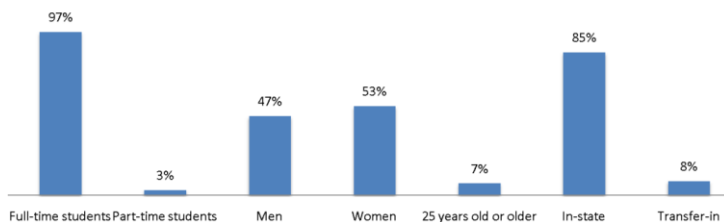


- Go to more information on Estimated Student Expenses Before Aid at this institution.
- Go to more information on Estimated Student Expenses After Aid (Net Price) at this institution.

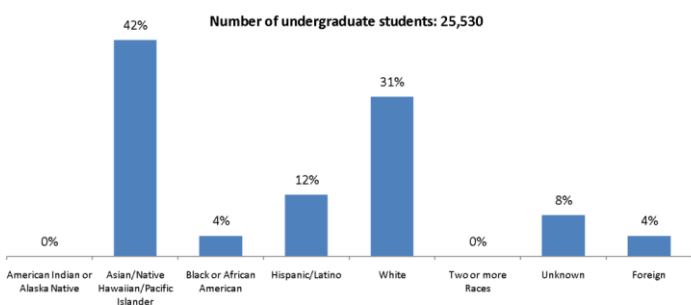
### About Undergraduate Students

Student-to-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Undergraduate Student Characteristics, Fall 2009  
Number of undergraduate students: 25,530



Undergraduate Racial and Ethnic Diversity, Fall 2009  
Number of undergraduate students: 25,530



- Go to more information on Student Characteristics at this institution.

Go to information on Varsity Athletics availability at University of California - Berkeley.

Go to more information on crimes on campus at University of California - Berkeley.

Go to more information on Federal Student Loans and Loan Default Rates University of California - Berkeley.

## Appendix C: Draft College Profile—2-Year



Salem Community College  
www.salemcc.edu

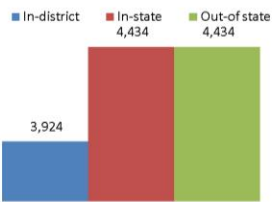
### About Salem Community College

Salem Community College is a 2-year, Public institution located in Carneys Point, New Jersey. It has an open admissions policy.

- Go to more general information on the institution.
- Go to information on this institution's accreditation.

### About Tuition and Fees

#### 2010-11 Tuition and Required Fees for Full-time Beginning Students

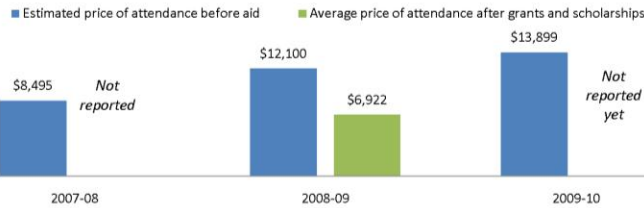


### About Student Financial Aid

Financial Aid to Full-time Beginning Students, 2008-09	Percentage of student receiving type of aid	Average amount received by those students
Grant or scholarship from the Federal government	75%	\$3,793
from the State or local government	74%	\$2,937
from the institution	26%	\$1,785
Federal student loan	18%	\$1,090
Other student loan	11%	\$3,222
	0%	50

### About the Estimated Student Expenses before and after Grant and Scholarship Aid

#### Estimated Student Expenses for In-District Students Living Off-Campus Before and After Grant and Scholarship Aid, 2007-08 to 2009-10



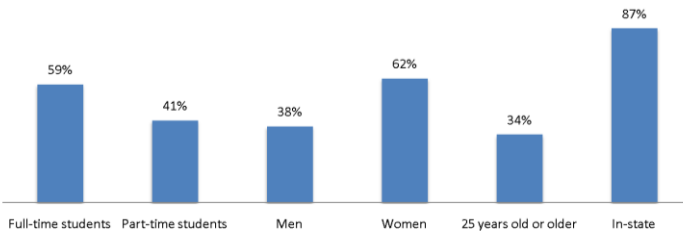
- Go to more information on Tuition and Fees and Estimated Student Expenses before Aid.
- Go to more information on Estimated Student Expenses after Grant and Scholarship Aid (Net Price).
- Go to more information on Financial Aid.

66

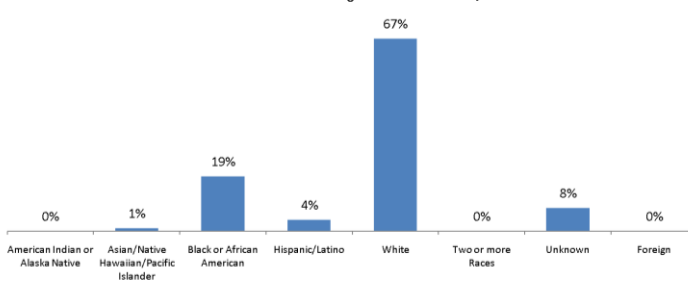
### About Undergraduate Students

Student-to-Faculty Ratio: 22:1

#### Undergraduate Student Characteristics, Fall 2009 Number of undergraduate students: 1,541



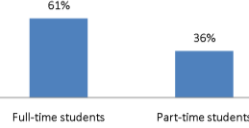
#### Undergraduate Racial and Ethnic Diversity, Fall 2009 Number of undergraduate students: 1,541



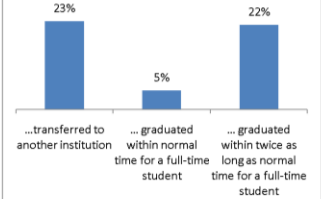
- Go to more information on Student Characteristics at this institution.

### About Undergraduate Student Persistence and Success

#### Percentage of Students Who Began Their Studies in Fall 2008 and Returned in Fall 2009



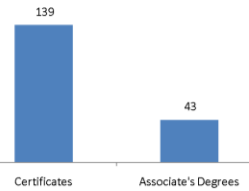
#### Percentage of Students Who Began Their Studies as a Full-Time Student in Fall 2005 and ...



- Go to more information on Student Persistence and Success at this institution.

### About Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students

#### Number of Degrees and Certificates Awarded 2009-10



#### Largest Areas of Associate's Degrees in 2009-10

- Health Professions and Related Programs
- Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services

#### Largest Areas of Certificates in 2009-10

- Health Professions and Related Programs
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support
- Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities

- Go to more information on Degrees and Certificates at this institution.

Go to information on Varsity Athletics availability at Salem Community College.

Go to more information on crimes on campus at Salem Community College.

Go to more information on Federal Student Loans and Loan Default Rates at Salem Community College.



## Appendix D: Rankings of Most Important Piece of Information

Within Category Rankings of Most Important Piece of Information, by 4-year, 2-year, and Counselor Groups				
Category	Information	Tally		
		4	2	C
<b>About Undergraduate Admissions</b>	Numbers of applicants, admitted, enrolled	0		0
	Percent admitted, percent enrolled	0		1
	SAT/ACT test scores	6		3
	Admissions considerations	3		5
<b>About Tuition and Fees (2-year group only)</b>	Tuition and required fees for full-time beginning students		5	
	Per credit tuition rate for part-time students		0	
	Alternative tuition plans		1	
<b>About Student Financial Aid</b>	Total financial aid for full-time, beginning students	5	2	1
	Specific types of aid for full-time, beginning students	1	4	4
	Financial aid info for ALL undergrads	3		4
<b>About Estimated Student Expenses Before and After Grant and Scholarship Aid</b>	Before and after aid for instate students living on campus	2	0	1
	For full-time, beginning undergrads by living arrangement	5	0	1
	For full-time beginning undergrads by type of expense	2	6	6
	Average net price	0	0	1
<b>About Undergraduate Students</b>	Student-to-faculty ratio	1	2	2
	Number of undergrads	5	0	3
	Undergraduate Student Characteristics	2	0	2
	Undergraduate Racial and Ethnic Diversity	1	4	2
<b>About Undergraduate Student Persistence and Success</b>	First-year retention rate	2	0	2
	Graduation rate	2	3	1
	Graduation rates, by race/ethnicity	1	0	4
	Overall graduation and transfer-out rates	4	3	2
<b>About Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Students</b>	Number of degrees/certificates awarded, by type of degree	1	3	1
	Largest areas of degrees	8	2	7
	Number of degrees awarded in an area of study, by gender	0	0	0
	Number of degrees awarded in an area of study, by race/ethnicity	0	1	1