COMMUNITY AND
TECHNICAL COLLEGES
Washington State Board

BASELINE REPORT 2019-20

WACTC STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT PLAN

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Context

Washington state set a goal through the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) 2013 Road Map to achieve a 70 percent postsecondary attainment rate for adults.[1] To meet this goal requires 380,000 new credential holders by 2023.[2] The key strategies to accomplish this goal include closing the achievement gap for underserved students, improving postsecondary recruitment, retention, and completion, and addressing affordability issues.

Washington's community and technical college system is well-positioned to play a major role in meeting this goal but faces challenges similar to those at institutions across the nation with respect to retention and completion. Enrollment in the state's community and technical colleges has declined 21 percent in the past 15 years while tuition has doubled. Interestingly, full-time equivalent enrollments (FTES) have increased approximately seven percent in the same time period. This suggests a change in the population of adults who are attending college now. The number of high school graduates is flat and more of the recent graduates (traditional-aged students) are attending four-year institutions.[3] These trends make clear that our efforts to meet the state's goals will require recruiting and engaging students who have not historically participated in higher education (e.g. adults with some college but no credential). Current conditions suggest this is an optimal time to engage in a thoughtful strategic enrollment management plan.

In fall 2017, the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges (WACTC) authorized the formation of the WACTC Strategic Enrollment Task Force to build a stronger enrollment base for community and technical colleges. Over a two-year period, the Task Force worked to identify state-level and institutional strategies that will improve access and retention system-wide and to incorporate those strategies into an adopted Strategic Enrollment Work Plan. The Task Force conducted monthly four-hour meetings beginning Oct. 30, 2017, and concluding April 24, 2019, and sought feedback from councils and commissions throughout the process. Participants in the Task Force included presidents from the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges (WACTC) and representation from WACTC commissions and other key system groups including instruction, student services, Chief Diversity and Equity Officers (CDEO), research and planning, public information, business affairs, information technology; faculty leadership (AFT, AHE, FACTC), and student groups. Additional college personnel and partner stakeholders (K-12, community organizations, and workforce) were consulted in this work as needed. SBCTC Education Division staff also contributed their time and perspectives.

As the Strategic Enrollment Task Force developed and implemented the work plan, the following guiding principles were adopted:

- Equity — increasing enrollment and completion of students from underserved populations — is integral to the work of the Task Force.
- The number of students pursuing and completing a postsecondary credential needs to be

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[1] http://www.wsac.wa.gov/strategic-action-plan

[2] DuPree, D. (2015). CTC role in WSAC roadmap goals: Issue brief. Retrieved from https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/research/reports/socioeconomic-research.aspx

[3] Education Research and Data Center High school feedback reports http://www.erdcdata.wa.gov/hsfb.aspx

increased while minimizing competition between colleges in our system.

- Outreach, onboarding, retention, and completion are key considerations.
- The Task Force work will strengthen partnerships with K12, universities, employers, and community organizations.
- The work plan will include system-level and college-level strategies, and have clear prioritization.

In year two of the project, the Task Force reviewed data metrics, identified focus areas, determined goals/outcomes, and finalized strategies to be implemented in the community and technical college system beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year. The four focus areas, K-12 alignment, adult reengagement, onboarding/entry, and retention/persistence, were assigned objectives that focused both on measurable goals and the following overarching project goals:

1. Increase overall system enrollments.
2. Eliminate the retention and completion gap among all student groups, including underserved students.

The SBCTC research director and research analysts supported the work plan goals by developing enrollment dashboards available on the SBCTC website (Enrollment Dashboard[4]; Strategic Enrollment Dashboard[5] and First-Time Entering Student Outcomes Dashboard[6]). An exhaustive literature review and issue brief[7] provided researched examples of exemplary work conducted around strategic enrollment nationwide. The Task Force recommended to WACTC that data-informed statewide targets be adopted as a guideline for measuring work plan objectives. These targets were approved at the July 27, 2018, WACTC meeting.

During the 2018-2019 academic year, the Strategic Enrollment Task Force formed workgroups around each focus area (K-12 alignment, adult reengagement, onboarding/entry, and retention/persistence) and monitored the various strategies, many of which were being carried out through WACTC councils and commission work plans. Outside of the two-year sector entities, such as the Office of the Superintendent of Instruction (OSPI) and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) were also engaged in this work. The outcomes of the Strategic Enrollment Task Force's work, including detailed strategies for each Focus Area, can be found in the *Final Recommendations*.

The following sections provide the baseline data as available in 2019-2020, and against which progress toward attaining the Strategic Enrollment Goals for each Focus Area will be measured. Ongoing evaluations and review of these metrics will be undertaken and published annually, and Strategies strengthened as required to ensure that Washington's community and technical colleges continue to support and enable all students to earn a postsecondary credential.

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[4] https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/research/data-public/enrollment-data-dashboard.aspx
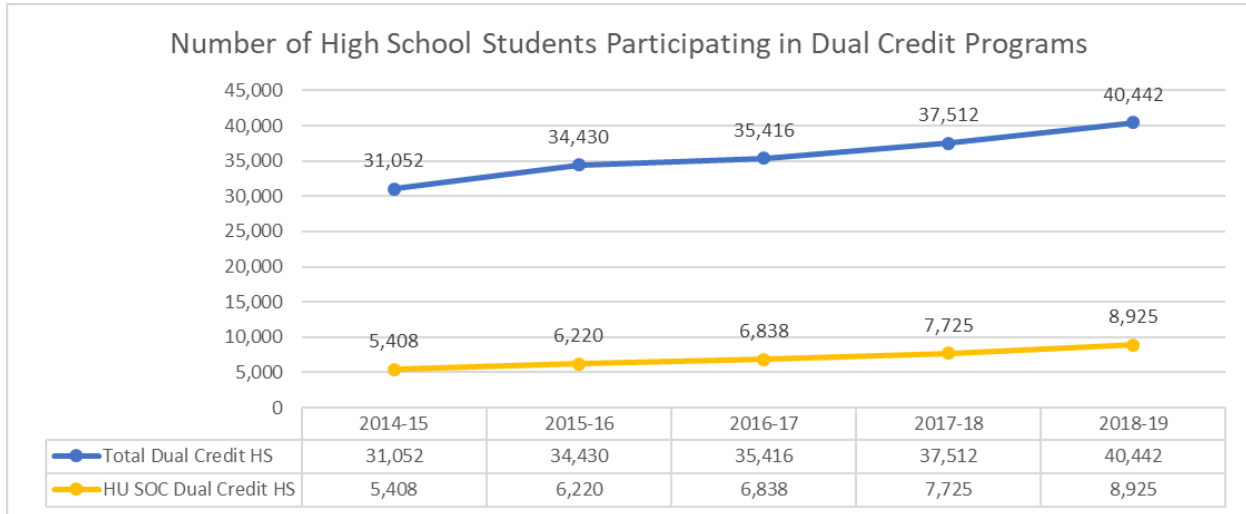[5] https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/research/data-public/strategic-enrollment-dashboard.aspx
[6] https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/collegeaccess/research-data/first-time-entering-student-outcomes-dashboard.aspx
[7] https://www.sbctc.edu/resources/documents/colleges-staff/research/research-briefs/strategic-enrollment-management-for-community-and-technical-colleges.pdf
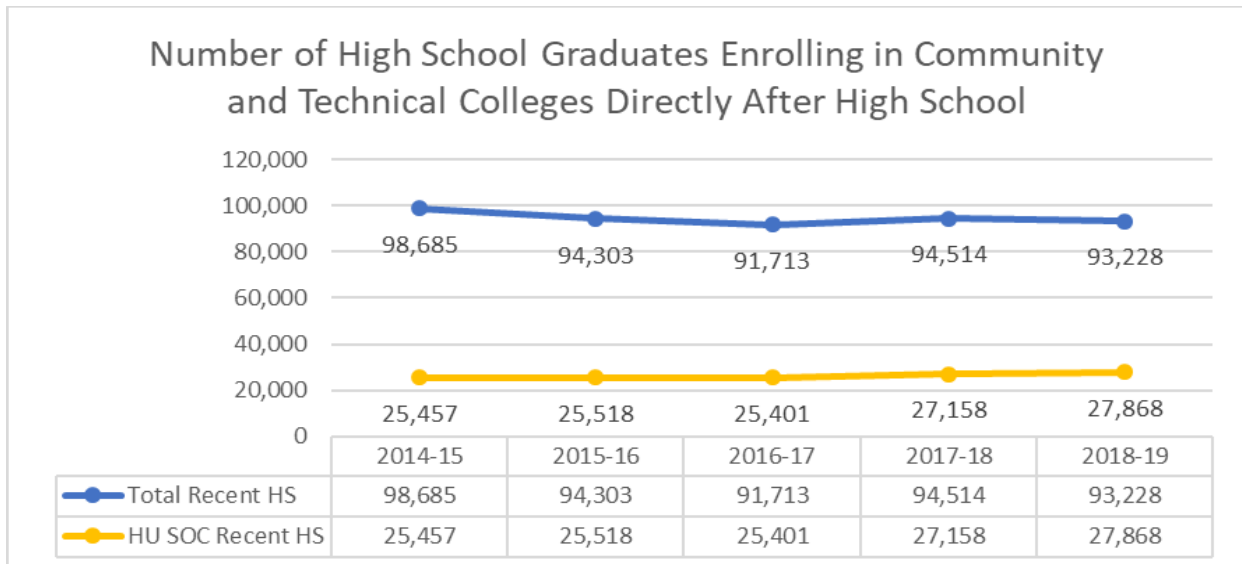
Focus Area: K-12 Alignment

Number of award-seeking dual credit high school students (age 24 or under), total population and population of historically underserved students of color (HU SOC).

Number of High School Students Participating in Dual Credit Programs

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Dual Credit HS	31,052	34,430	35,416	37,512	40,442
HU SOC Dual Credit HS	5,408	6,220	6,838	7,725	8,925

Source: Strategic Enrollment Dashboard

Number of award-seeking recent high school graduate students (age 24 or under), total population and population of historically underserved students of color (HU SOC).

Number of High School Graduates Enrolling in Community and Technical Colleges Directly After High School

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Recent HS	98,685	94,303	91,713	94,514	93,228
HU SOC Recent HS	25,457	25,518	25,401	27,158	27,868

Source: Strategic Enrollment Dashboard

Focus Area: Adult Reengagement

Number of award-seeking students: current or prior basic education for adults, adults with no prior college (age 25 or over), all students and historically underserved students of color (HU SOC).

Number of Adult Students Starting College with Either No Prior College or Pre-College Courses Only

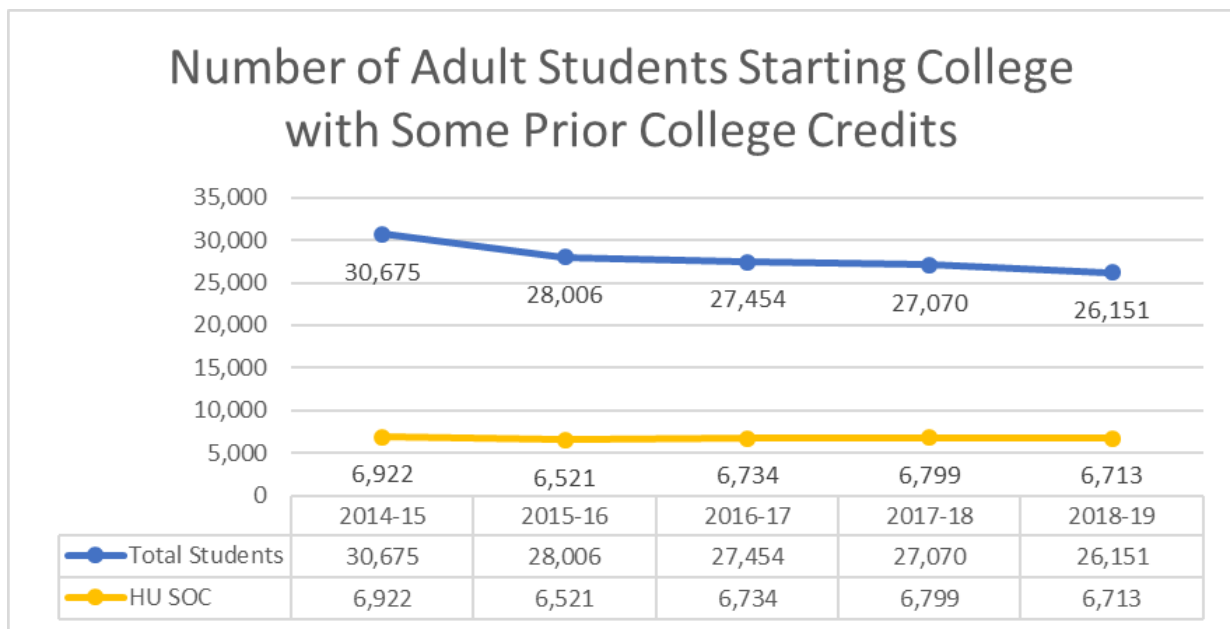|	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Students	64,502	65,895	65,862	65,893	65,025
HU SOC	17,432	17,236	17,355	17,530	17,571
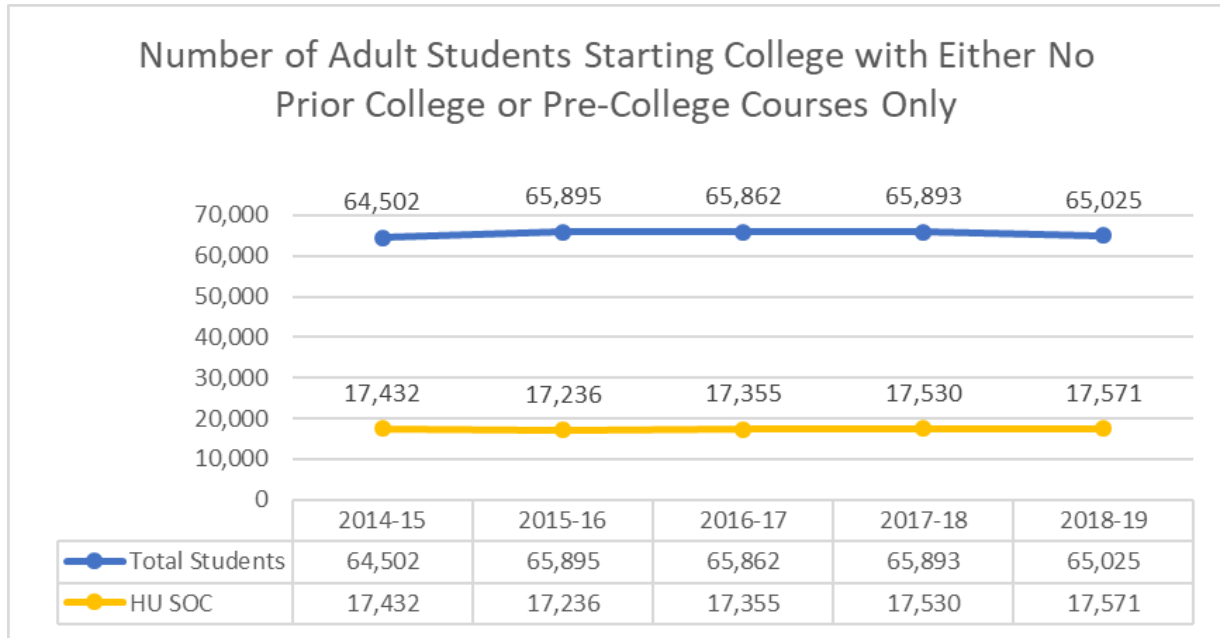
Source: Strategic Enrollment Dashboard

Number of award-seeking students: adult students with some prior college (age 25 or over): all students and historically underserved students of color (HU SOC).

Number of Adult Students Starting College with Some Prior College Credits

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Students	30,675	28,006	27,454	27,070	26,151
HU SOC	6,922	6,521	6,734	6,799	6,713

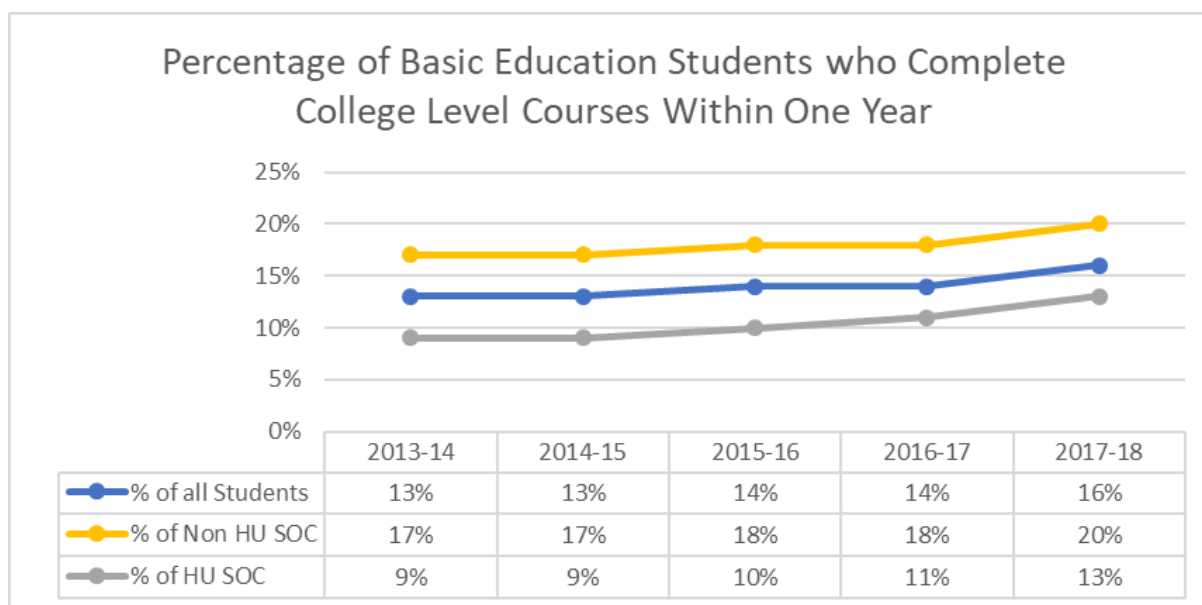*Source: Strategic Enrollment Dashboard*

Focus Area: Onboarding and Entry

Percent of new award-seeking students completing 15 college level credits in their first year: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percentage of Students who Successfully Complete the First 15 College-Level Credits Within the First Year

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% of All Students	60%	62%	63%	63%	67%
% of Non HU SOC	63%	65%	66%	66%	69%
% of HU SOC	54%	57%	57%	58%	62%
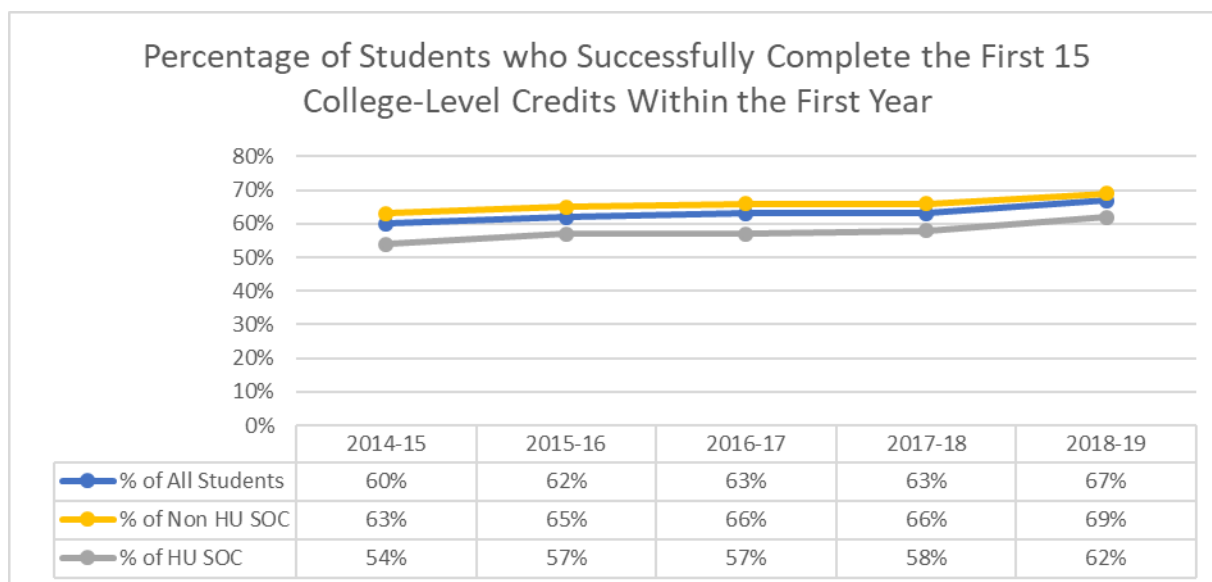
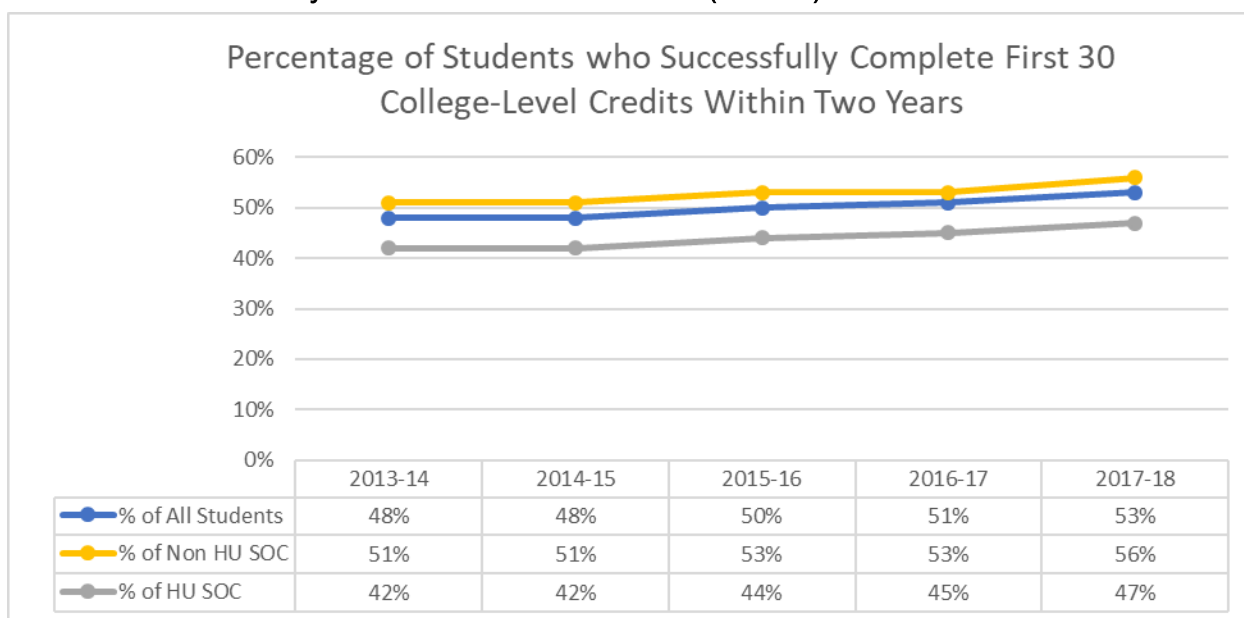*Source: First-Time Entering Students Outcomes Dashboard*

Percent of new basic education for adult students attempting a college level course within two years: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percentage of Basic Education Students who Complete College Level Courses Within One Year

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% of all Students	13%	13%	14%	14%	16%
% of Non HU SOC	17%	17%	18%	18%	20%
% of HU SOC	9%	9%	10%	11%	13%

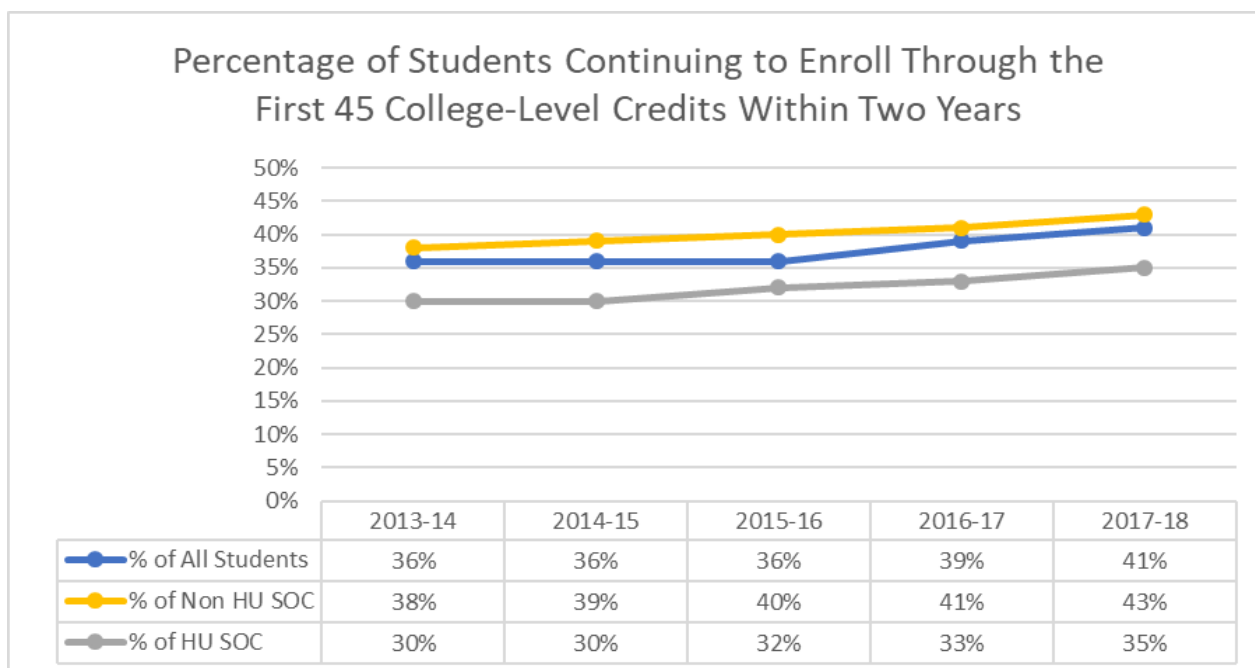*Source: Basic Education for Adults Outcomes (BEdA) Dashboard*

Focus Area: Retention and Persistence

Percent of new award-seeking students completing 30 college level credits within two years: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percentage of Students who Successfully Complete First 30 College-Level Credits Within Two Years

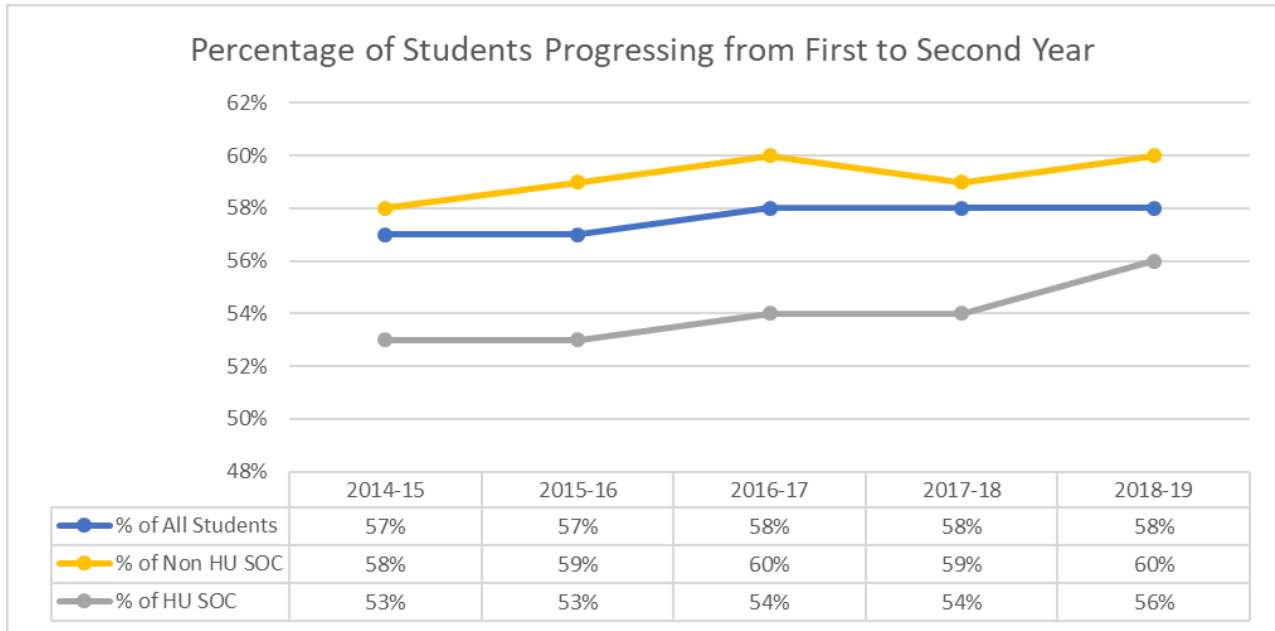|	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% of All Students	48%	48%	50%	51%	53%
% of Non HU SOC	51%	51%	53%	53%	56%
% of HU SOC	42%	42%	44%	45%	47%

Source: First-Time Entering Students Outcomes Dashboard

Percent of new award-seeking students completing 45 college level credits within two years: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percentage of Students Continuing to Enroll Through the First 45 College-Level Credits Within Two Years

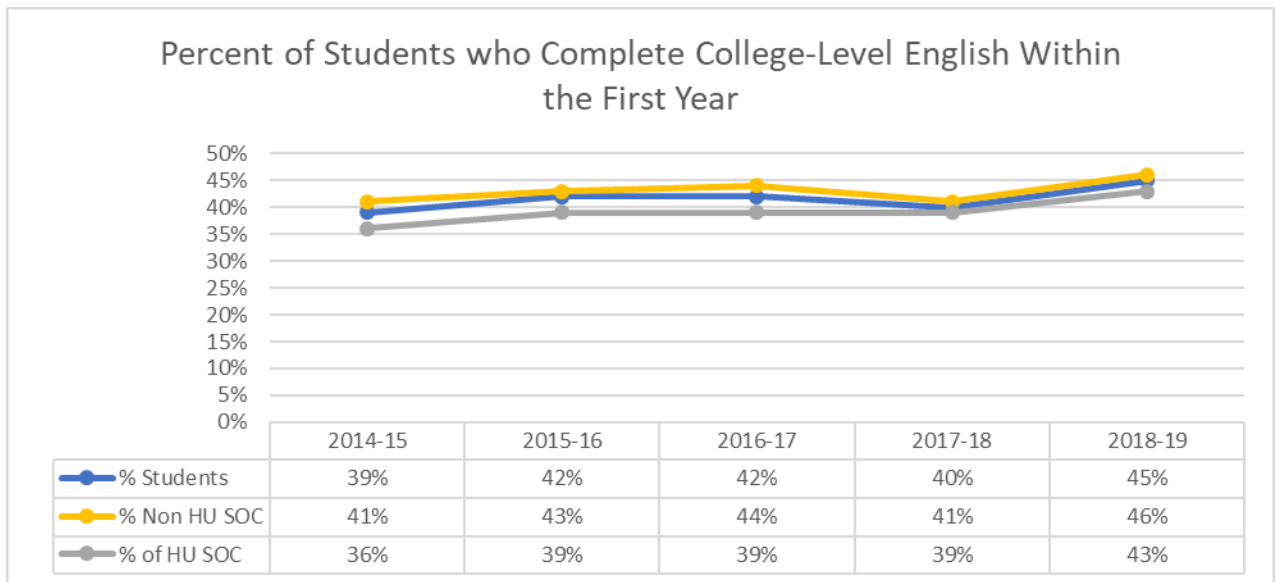|	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% of All Students	36%	36%	36%	39%	41%
% of Non HU SOC	38%	39%	40%	41%	43%
% of HU SOC	30%	30%	32%	33%	35%

Source: First-Time Entering Students Outcomes Dashboard

Percent of new award-seeking students still enrolled after one year: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percentage of Students Progressing from First to Second Year

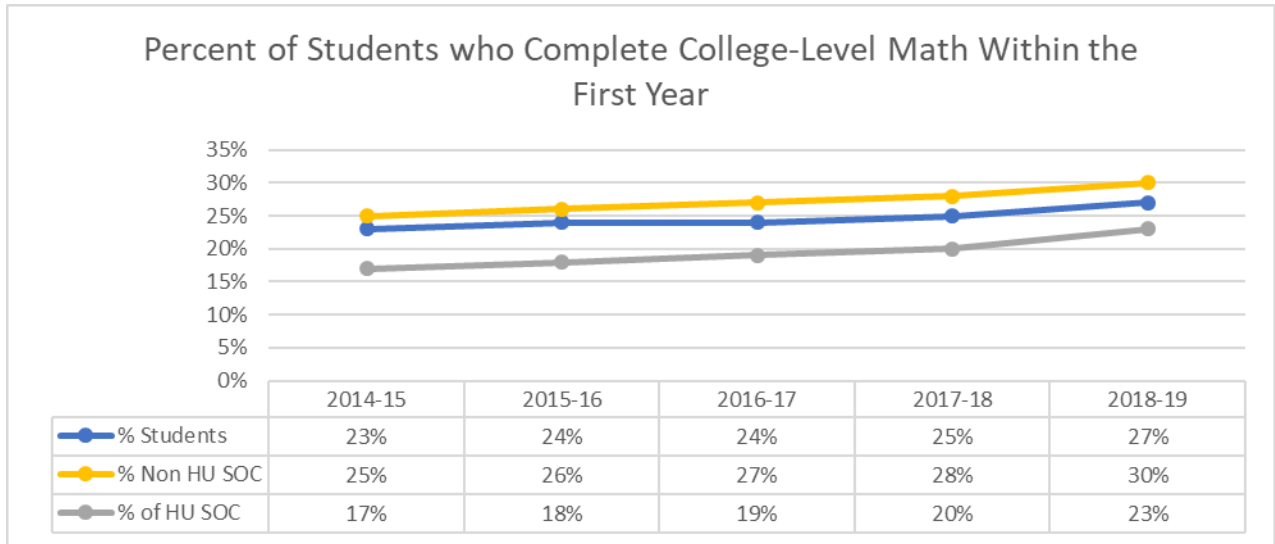|	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% of All Students	57%	57%	58%	58%	58%
% of Non HU SOC	58%	59%	60%	59%	60%
% of HU SOC	53%	53%	54%	54%	56%

Source: First-Time Entering Students Outcomes Dashboard

Percent of new award-seeking students completing a college level English course in their first year: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percent of Students who Complete College-Level English Within the First Year

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% Students	39%	42%	42%	40%	45%
% Non HU SOC	41%	43%	44%	41%	46%
% of HU SOC	36%	39%	39%	39%	43%

Source: First-Time Entering Students Outcomes Dashboard

Percent of new award-seeking students completing a college level math course in their first year: historically underserved students of color (HU SOC) and other students.

Percent of Students who Complete College-Level Math Within the First Year

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% Students	23%	24%	24%	25%	27%
% Non HU SOC	25%	26%	27%	28%	30%
% of HU SOC	17%	18%	19%	20%	23%

Source: First-Time Entering Students Outcomes Dashboard

For information and questions relating to the monitoring and evaluation metrics included here, please direct enquiries to:

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