

Persistence, Progression, Transfer, and Completion: A Review of Valencia's Student Outcomes

A review of Valencia's student outcomes data informs us about questions such as:

- How have Valencia students' completion rates and time to degree changed over time?
- How have Valencia students' academic persistence and momentum changed over time?
- At what rate do Valencia students succeed at the course level?
- Is Valencia achieving equity in student outcomes?

In 2018, our Executive Council proposed the following draft objectives related to student outcomes:

- By 2025, the five-year graduation rate for FTIC degree-seeking students of all races and ethnicities will exceed 50%.
- By 2021, 75% of FTIC degree-seeking students will successfully complete 15 credit hours within two years.
- By 2023, 50% of FTIC degree-seeking students will successfully complete all five of their first five classes at Valencia.

Executive Summary

- Overall, completion rates have increased and time to degree has decreased over time.
- Completion rates for students of all races and ethnicities have increased over time. However, while the gaps in completion rates between Black or African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic students had narrowed, they have re-opened and grown wider.
- Compared to peer institutions, Valencia's completion rates are higher by any measure.
- The percentage of students completing a degree before transferring has grown over time. However, a non-trivial proportion of students transfer before completing a degree from Valencia.
- While academic momentum has fluctuated over time, the percentage of students achieving key academic milestones is on an upward trend.
- Overall, student success in the highest enrolled courses has increased over time.
- First-time-in-college (FTIC) student success in most "front door" courses has declined over time. When examining FTIC student success disaggregated by race and ethnicity, significant gaps emerge.
- Students' success in their first five classes at Valencia is critical. Students who do not successfully complete all of their first five classes have substantially lower rates of completion.

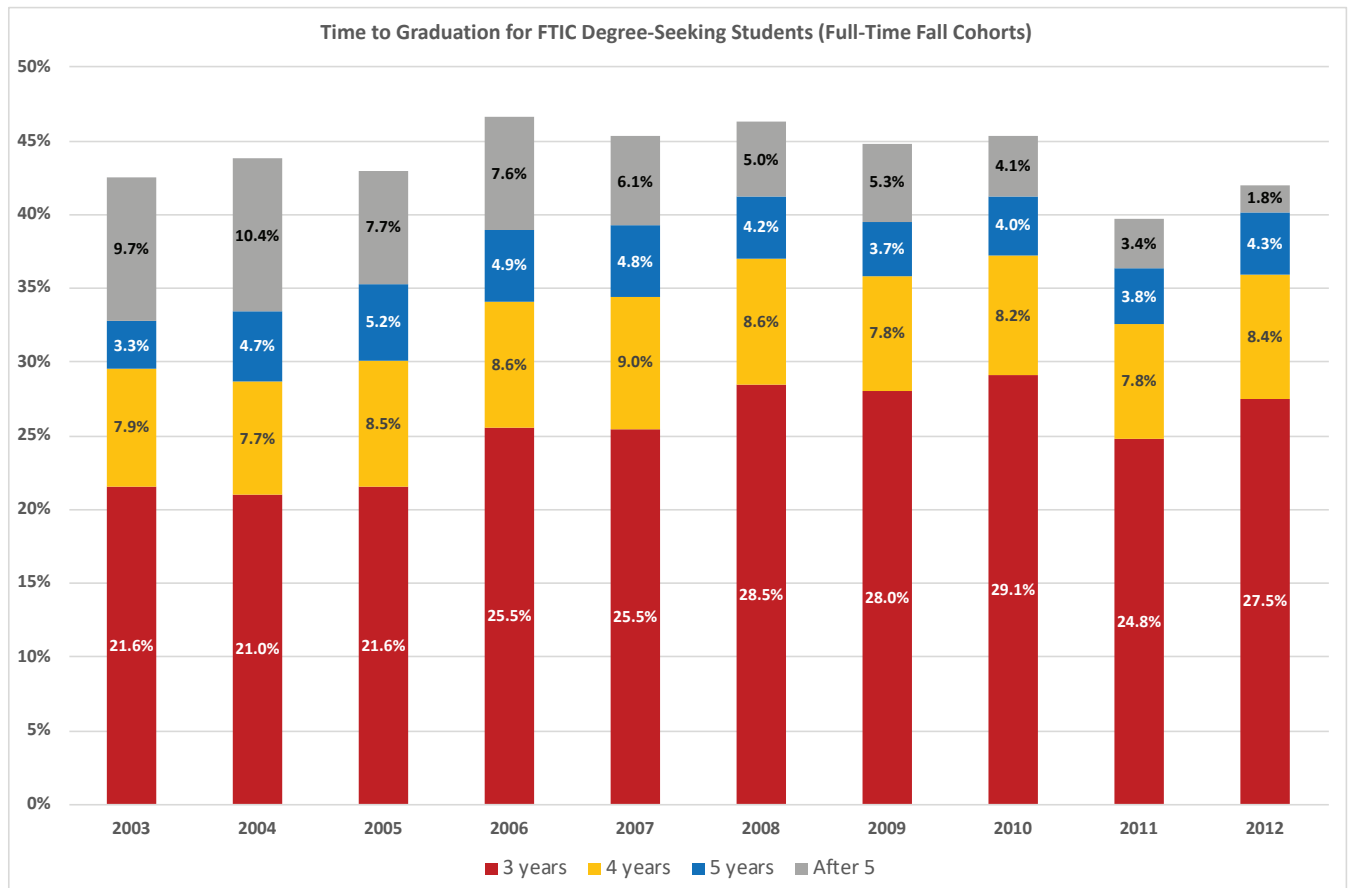
Completion Trends

Cohort Graduation Rates and Time to Degree

Over the last ten years, the proportion of students graduating from Valencia has increased, and students' time to degree has decreased. The five-year graduation rate for first-time-in-college (FTIC) students who enrolled full-time at Valencia in Fall 2003 was 32.8%; for FTIC students who enrolled full-time at Valencia in Fall 2012, the five-year graduation rate was 40.2%.

While rates of completion and time to degree have improved overall, progress at times has been uneven. The FTIC full-time cohort that enrolled at Valencia in Fall 2010 had the highest three-year (29.1%) and five-year (41.3%) graduation rates, while the Fall 2011 cohort experienced declines in performance, with a 24.8% three-year and a 36.4% five-year graduation rate. The 2012 cohort recovered somewhat in performance, with a 27.5% three-year and a 40.2% five-year graduation rate.

The 2011 cohort, which had the lowest completion rates of any cohort since 2005, was the largest in size. While 4,522 FTIC students enrolled full-time at Valencia in Fall 2011, only 4,246 students enrolled in Fall 2012, a similar size to the 2009 cohort (4,263 students).

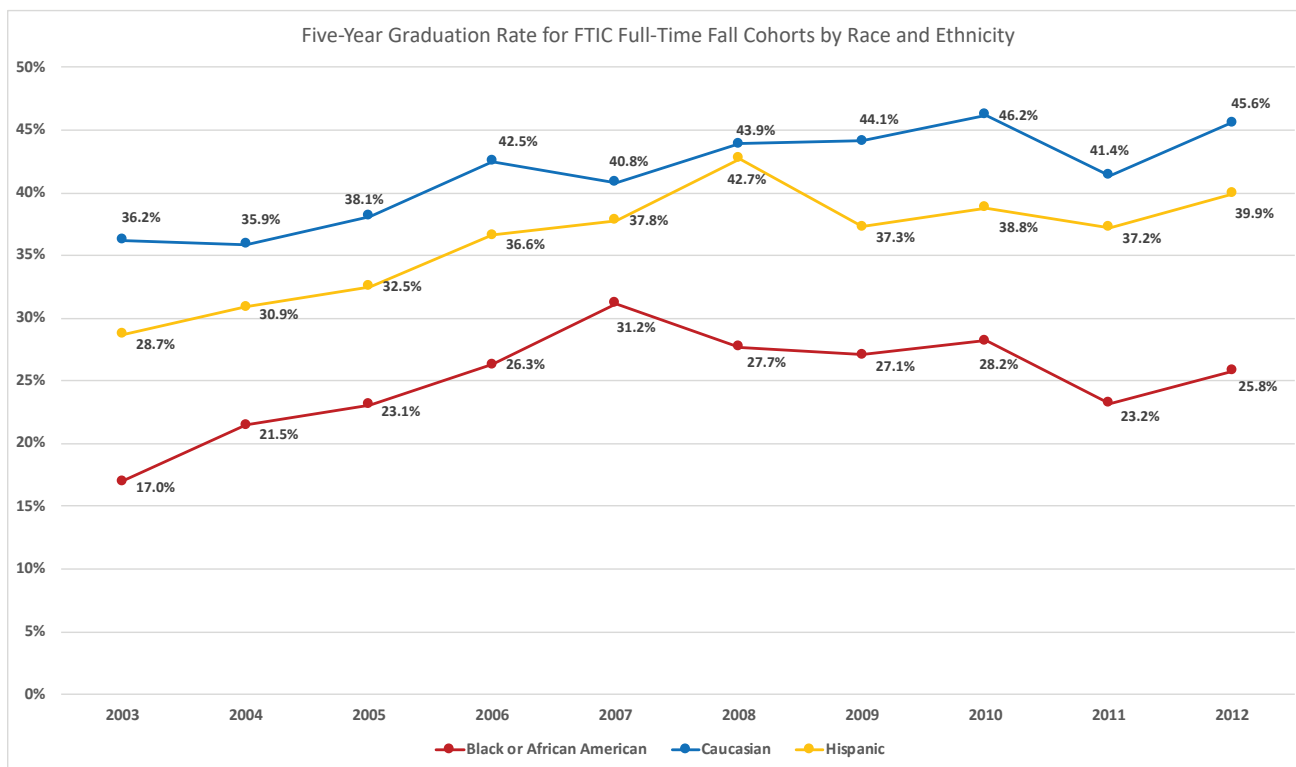


Graduation Rates Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity

Completion rates for students of all races and ethnicities have increased over the last decade. The five-year graduation rate for FTIC Black or African American students enrolled full-time in Fall has increased by more than 50% from 17.0% (2003 cohort) to 25.8% (2012 cohort). Similarly, the five-year graduation rate for FTIC Hispanic students enrolled full-time has increased by more than 33%, from 28.7% (2003 cohort) to 39.9% (2012 cohort).

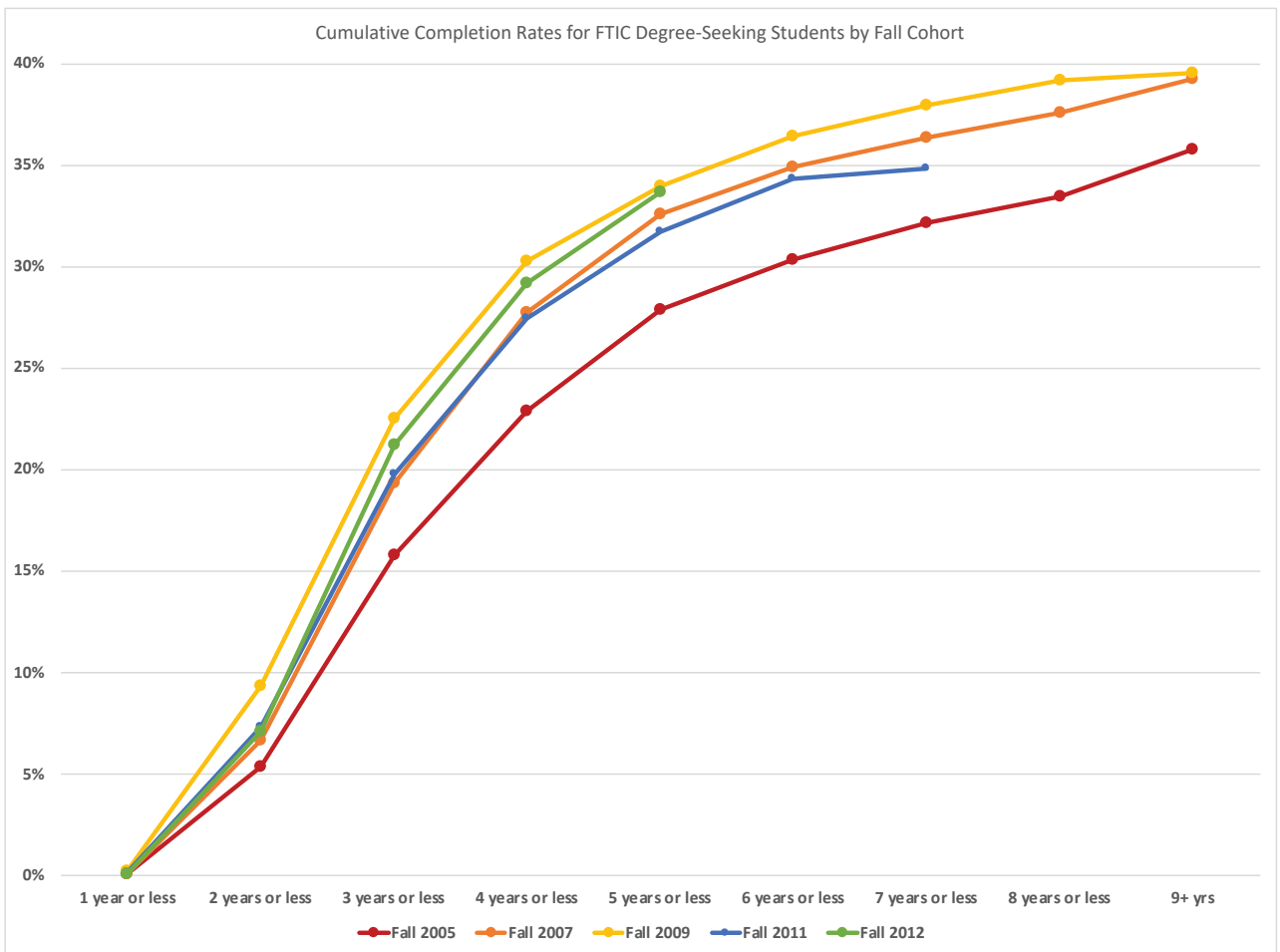
However, while gaps in performance had narrowed substantially in 2007, when there was less than a 10 percentage point difference in five-year graduation rates between Black or African American, Hispanic, and Caucasian students, the gap has reappeared. In fact, the difference in the five-year graduation rate between Black or African American and Caucasian students was larger for the 2012 full-time cohort (19.8 percentage points) than the 2003 cohort (19.2 percentage points).

Similarly, while the five-year graduation rate of Hispanic students (42.7%) in the 2008 cohort nearly matched the performance of Caucasian students (43.9%), the performance of Caucasian students has since improved while the performance of Hispanic students has declined. Still, the difference in completion rates between Hispanic and Caucasian students was less in the 2012 cohort (5.7 percentage points) than in the 2003 cohort (7.5 percentage points).



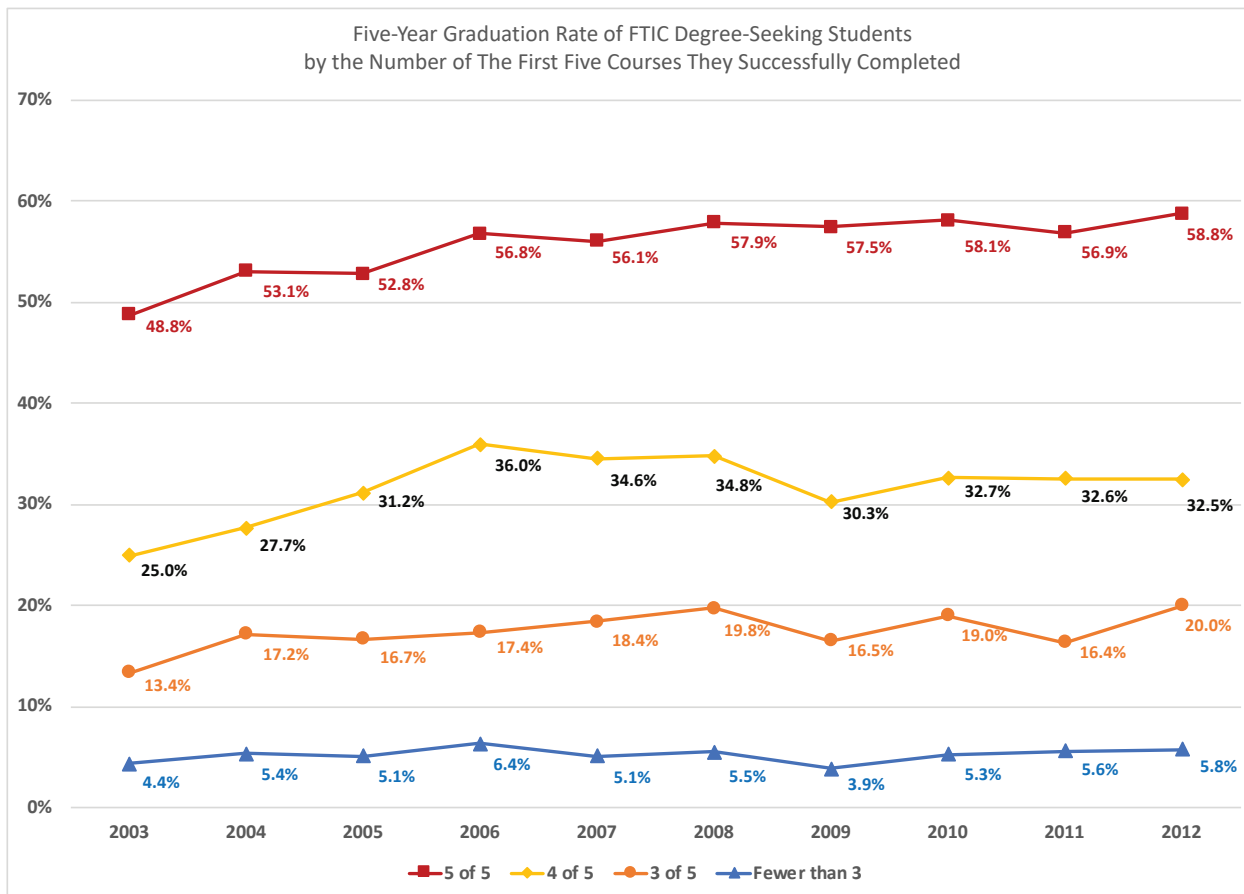
Cumulative Completion Rates Over Time

One method to visualize students' time-to-degree is to plot cumulative completion rates over time. Students' cumulative completion rates have increased since the Fall 2005 cohort; the Fall 2009 FTIC cohort (full-time and part-time) had the highest graduation rate at each milestone (at two years, at three years, etc.). While the Fall 2011 cohort had a decline in completion rates at each milestone, the Fall 2012 cohort has shown signs of recovery. In fact, the five-year graduation rate for the Fall 2009 and Fall 2012 FTIC cohorts (full-time and part-time) are very similar (34.0% for Fall 2009; 33.7% for Fall 2012).



Success in First Five Courses

Students' success in their first five courses at Valencia is a powerful predictor of graduation. Students who successfully complete (earn an A, B, or C in) all five of the first five classes they take at Valencia have had a five-year graduation rate that approaches double the rate of students who successfully complete four of their first five courses, and nearly triple the graduation rate of students who successfully complete three of their first five classes at Valencia.



Success in First Five Courses Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity

The relationship between students' success in their first five courses at Valencia and completion holds true for all races and ethnicities; however, the magnitude of impact is highest for students of color. For example, while 49.0% of Black or African American students who successfully completed all of their first five courses in 2012 graduated within five years, only 23.4% who successfully completed four out of five graduated within five years. Put another way, fewer than one in four Black or African American students who have just one unsuccessful course attempt in their first five courses at Valencia graduates within five years.

Five-Year Graduation Rate for the 2012 Cohort by Success in First Five Courses at Valencia				
	All Students	Black or African American	Caucasian	Hispanic
5/5	58.8%	49.0%	62.1%	56.6%
4/5	32.5%	23.4%	38.5%	29.6%
3/5	20.0%	10.1%	21.4%	24.1%
Fewer than 3	5.8%	2.5%	5.8%	6.6%

External Analyses of Completion

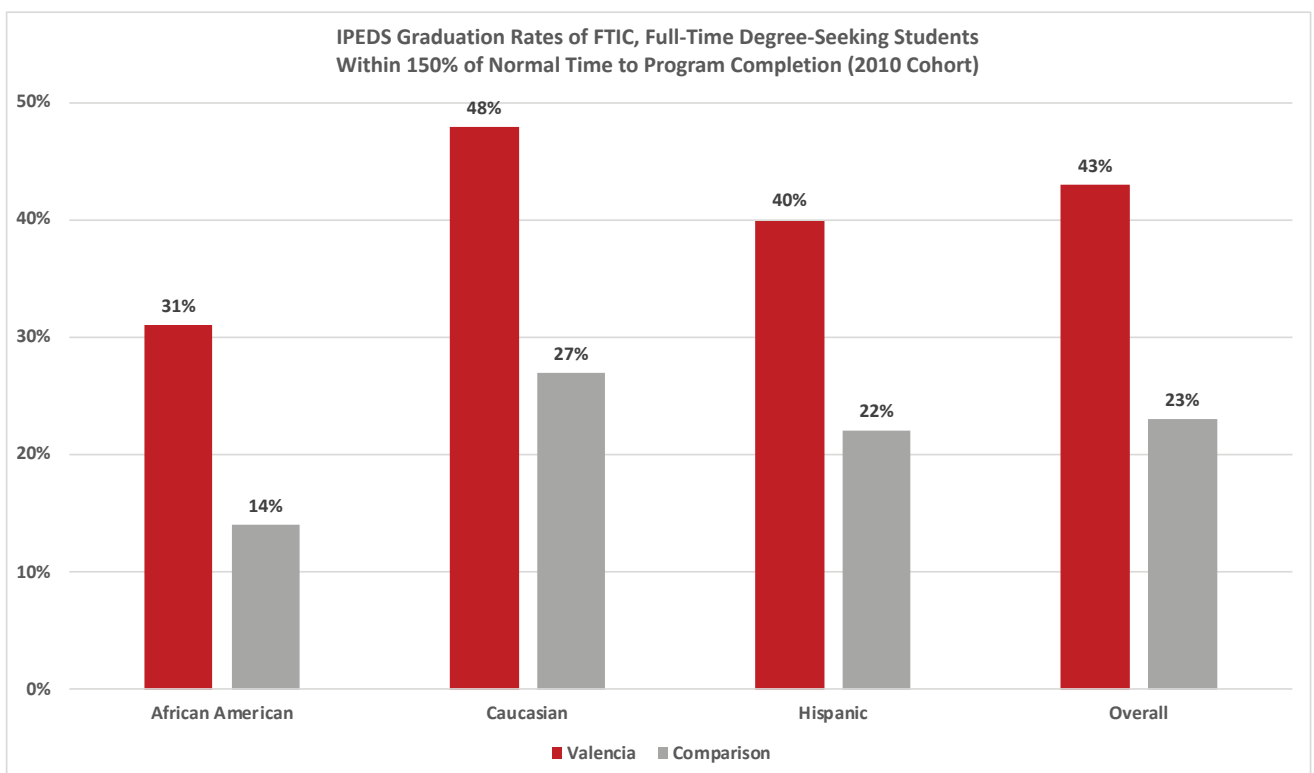
IPEDS

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) collects data from about 7,000 institutions across the United States. Data is reported by each institution, and is used at the federal and state levels for policy analysis. It is shared with each institution for benchmarking and is made available to students and parents through an online College Navigator tool.

The comparison group selected for Valencia College includes 29 institutions that award four-year degrees, have a Carnegie classification of Associate's dominant, are public, and have an enrollment of a similar size. Florida colleges within Valencia's comparison group include Broward College, Eastern Florida State College, Miami Dade College, Palm Beach State College, Pasco-Hernando State College, Santa Fe College, Seminole State College, and Tallahassee Community College.

IPEDS measures graduation rates at 150% of normal time to program completion for cohorts of FTIC students who enrolled full-time in Fall. The data are self-reported and FTIC Fall full-time cohorts are defined using the same data definition as Valencia's Institutional Research. However, because Valencia is classified as a four-year degree granting institution, as is any college in Florida that awards baccalaureate degrees, graduation rates are measured at six years. Accordingly, Valencia's IPEDS graduation rates are slightly higher than Valencia's self-reported five-year graduation rates.

IPEDS data does allow for review of Valencia's performance compared to a group of similar institutions, which reveals significantly higher graduation rates for all students at Valencia.

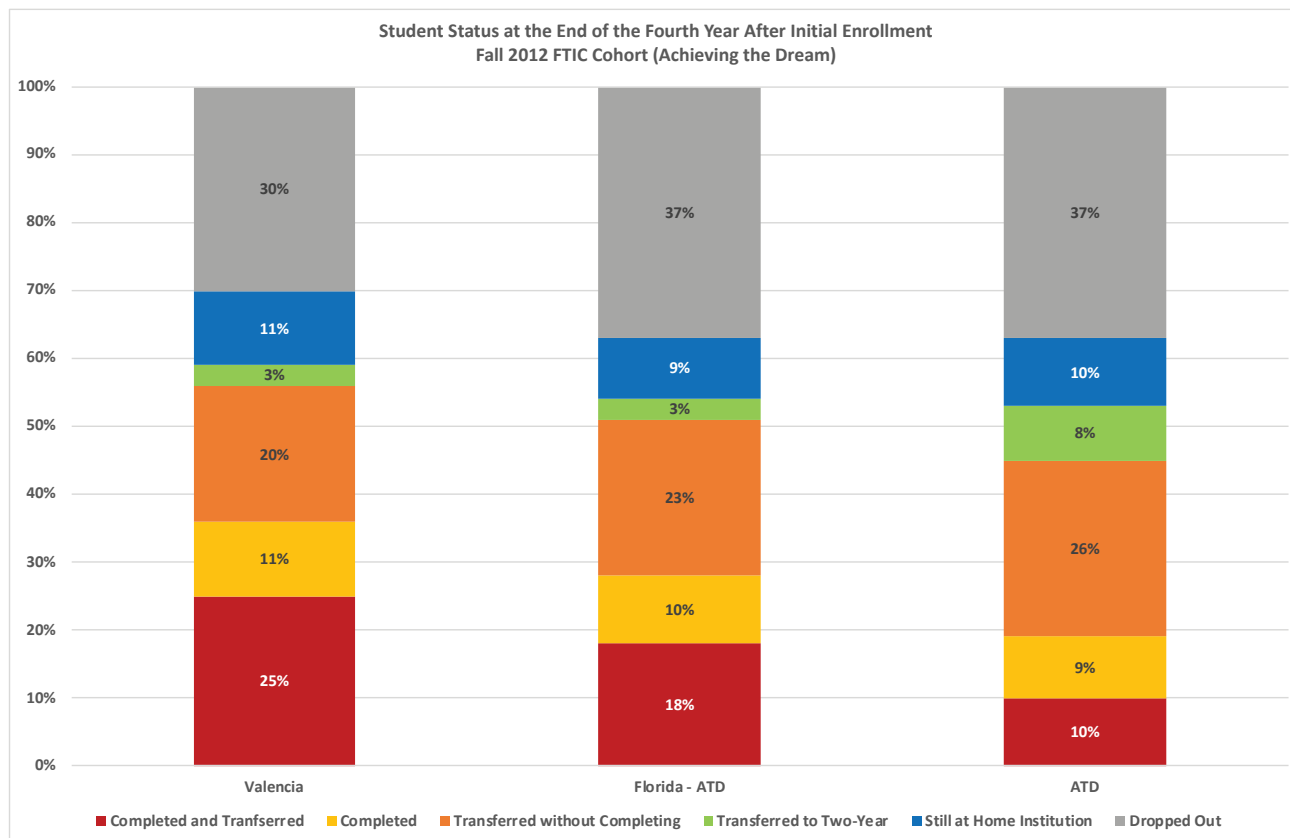


Achieving the Dream

Achieving the Dream (ATD) analyzes student enrollment data submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse. Cohorts include students who first enrolled at an ATD college in the fall semester, both full-time and part-time, who completed 15 FTE weeks of enrollment (approximately 12 credit hours) in the first two years after initial enrollment. This definition is used as a proxy to identify degree-seeking students, and is similar to the methodology used by the American Association of Community College's Voluntary Framework for Accountability (AACC's VFA).

The percentage of students who completed and then transferred combined with the percentage of students who completed but did not transfer from the 2012 cohort is very similar to Valencia's self-reported four-year graduation rate for full-time FTIC students (36%). The ATD data also reveal that 20% of students transferred before having completed an associate's degree from Valencia, and that 11% of students were still enrolled at Valencia after four years; 30% of students from the 2014 cohort had dropped out within four years.

The ATD data allow for comparison of Valencia's student performance with other ATD colleges in the state of Florida (Florida-ATD) as well as all ATD colleges (ATD). Overall, Valencia students tend to complete an associate's degree at a higher rate, fewer Valencia students transfer without having completed an associate's degree, and fewer Valencia students drop out as compared to students at other ATD colleges.



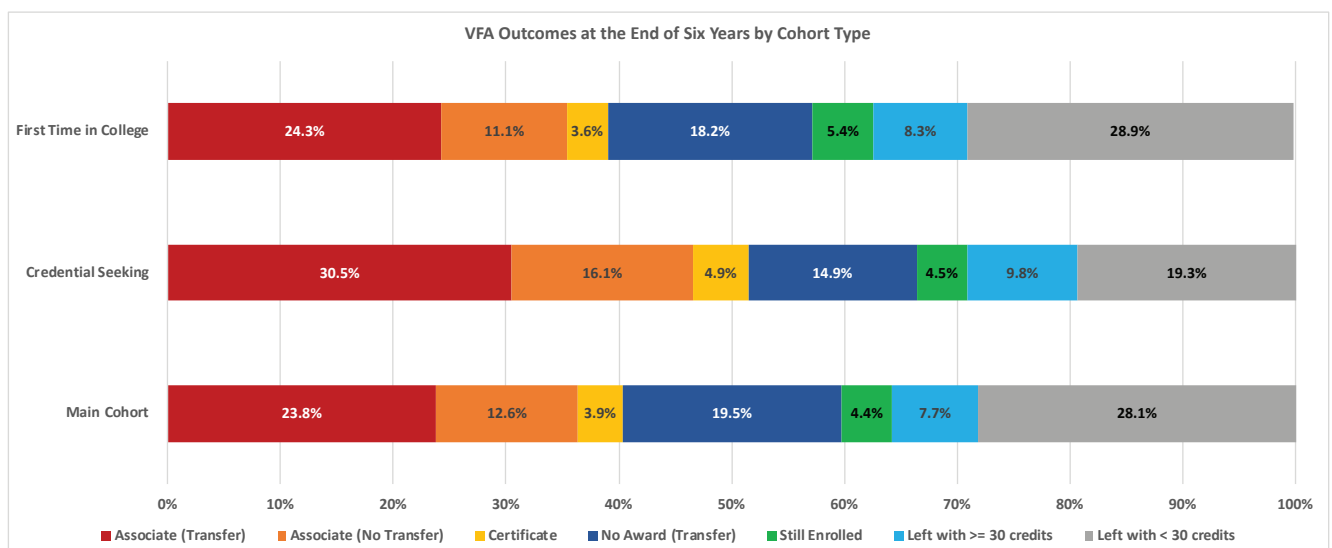
Voluntary Framework of Accountability

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) facilitated the development of the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) for community colleges. The VFA is intended to address perceived shortcomings of IPEDS measures, including the exclusion of part-time students, the measurement of completion at 150% of program length, and the exclusion of transfer outcomes.

While the IPEDS completion rate for many colleges is significantly lower than the VFA completion rate, Valencia's IPEDS and VFA completion rates do not differ dramatically. Given that the majority of community colleges are classified by IPEDS as two-year degree granting institutions, their IPEDS completion rate is measured at three years (150% of normal completion time), while the VFA completion rate is measured at six years. Since Valencia is considered a four-year degree granting institution within IPEDS, Valencia's IPEDS completion rate is measured at six years, just as it is within the VFA.

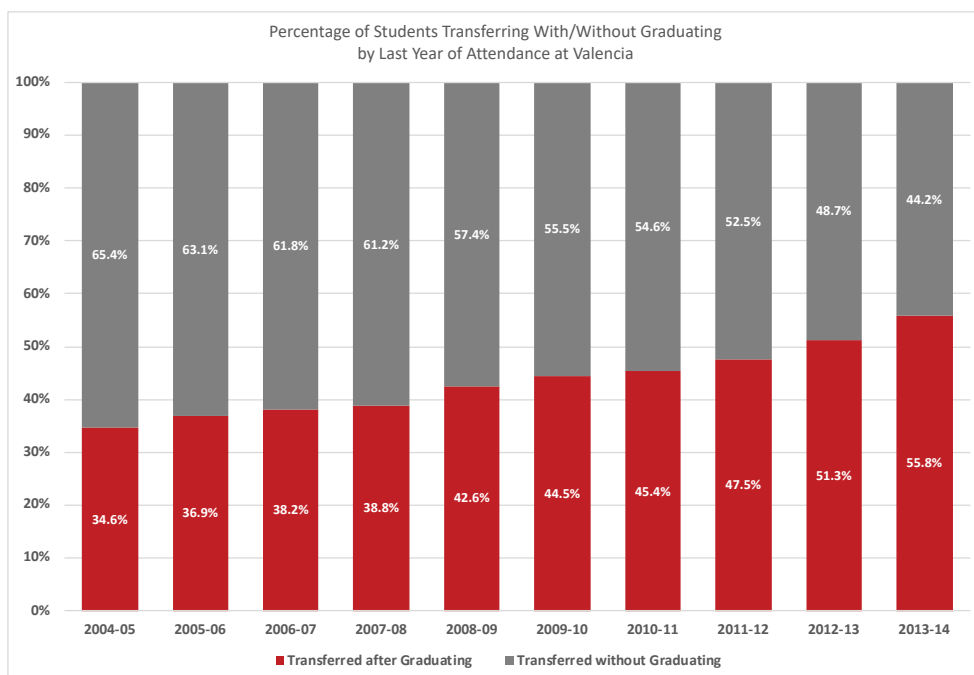
The VFA tracks three cohorts of students: the main cohort is more inclusive than IPEDS, including all students who were first-time-at-Valencia in Fall 2010, not just full-time or FTIC students. The Credential Seeking cohort is defined using the same methodology as ATD (any student who started at Valencia in the Fall and earned 12 credit hours within two years). The First Time in College cohort tracks the completion of students who were FTIC in the Fall.

Of all students who enrolled at Valencia for the first time in Fall 2010, 36.4% completed an associate's degree within six years; nearly two-thirds of those graduates transferred to continue their studies. Nearly 20% of the students who started at Valencia in Fall 2010 transferred without completing an associate's degree, which represents only a slightly smaller proportion than those who transferred after having completed an associate's degree (23.8%). Nearly 30% of students who started at Valencia in Fall 2010 dropped out with fewer than 30 credit hours.



Transfer Patterns

Of all of the degree-seeking students whose last year at Valencia was between 2004-05 and 2013-14 and who transferred to another institution, 44% completed an associate's degree at Valencia before transferring. The percentage of students completing an associate's degree before transferring has steadily increased over time: of the students whose last year at Valencia was 2004-05, 34.6% graduated before transferring; of the students whose last year at Valencia was 2013-14, 55.8% graduated before transferring.



Students Who Graduate from Valencia and Transfer

The University of Central Florida was the top transfer destination for students who completed an associate's degree before transferring (68.1%). Other popular destinations included University of South Florida (3.2%), Seminole State College (2.9%), and University of Florida (2.5%). Most students who graduated from Valencia and then transferred had selected Associate in Arts-General as their program of study while at Valencia (80.2%).

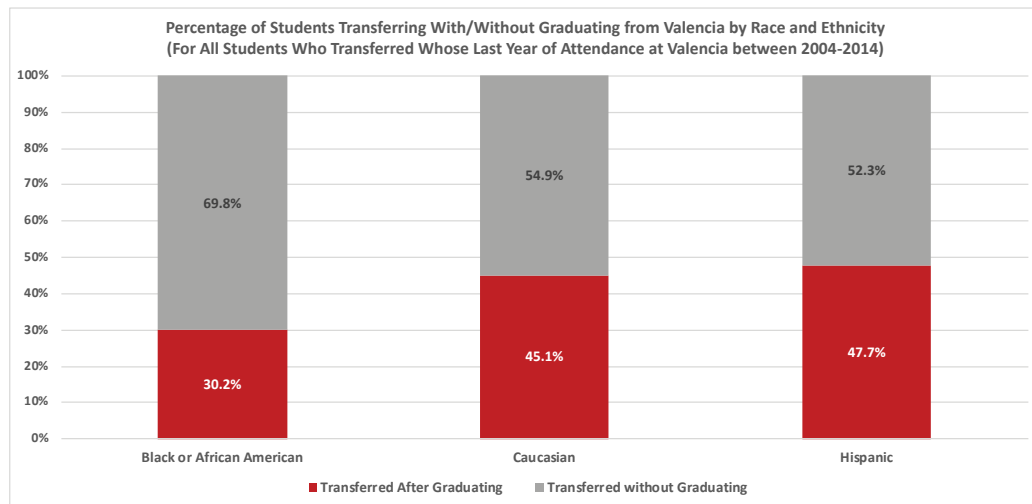
Most students who graduated and then transferred had completed between 61-89 credit hours at Valencia (46.8%); 30.4% completed between 36-60 credit hours at Valencia prior to transfer, and 9.3% completed 90 or more credit hours at Valencia before transferring.

Students Who Transfer Without Graduating From Valencia

The top destination for Valencia students who transfer without graduating is Seminole State College (15.6%). Other popular destinations include UCF (5.7%) and University of Phoenix (3.8%). Most students who transferred without graduating had selected AA-General (40.9%) or A.S.-Nursing (12.0%) as their program of study.

Most students who transferred without graduating completed 18 or fewer credit hours at Valencia (58.5%); 14.6% had completed between 36-60 credit hours at Valencia, and 6.1% had completed more than 60 credit hours at Valencia without graduating. 57.3% were in good academic standing at the time they transferred.

Black or African American students are more likely to transfer to another institution without having graduated from Valencia than Hispanic or Caucasian students. Of the Black or African American students who transferred without having graduated, 44% were in good academic standing at the time of transfer, 47% waited a year or more after their last term at Valencia before continuing their education, and 22% transferred to Seminole State.



Summary: Completion

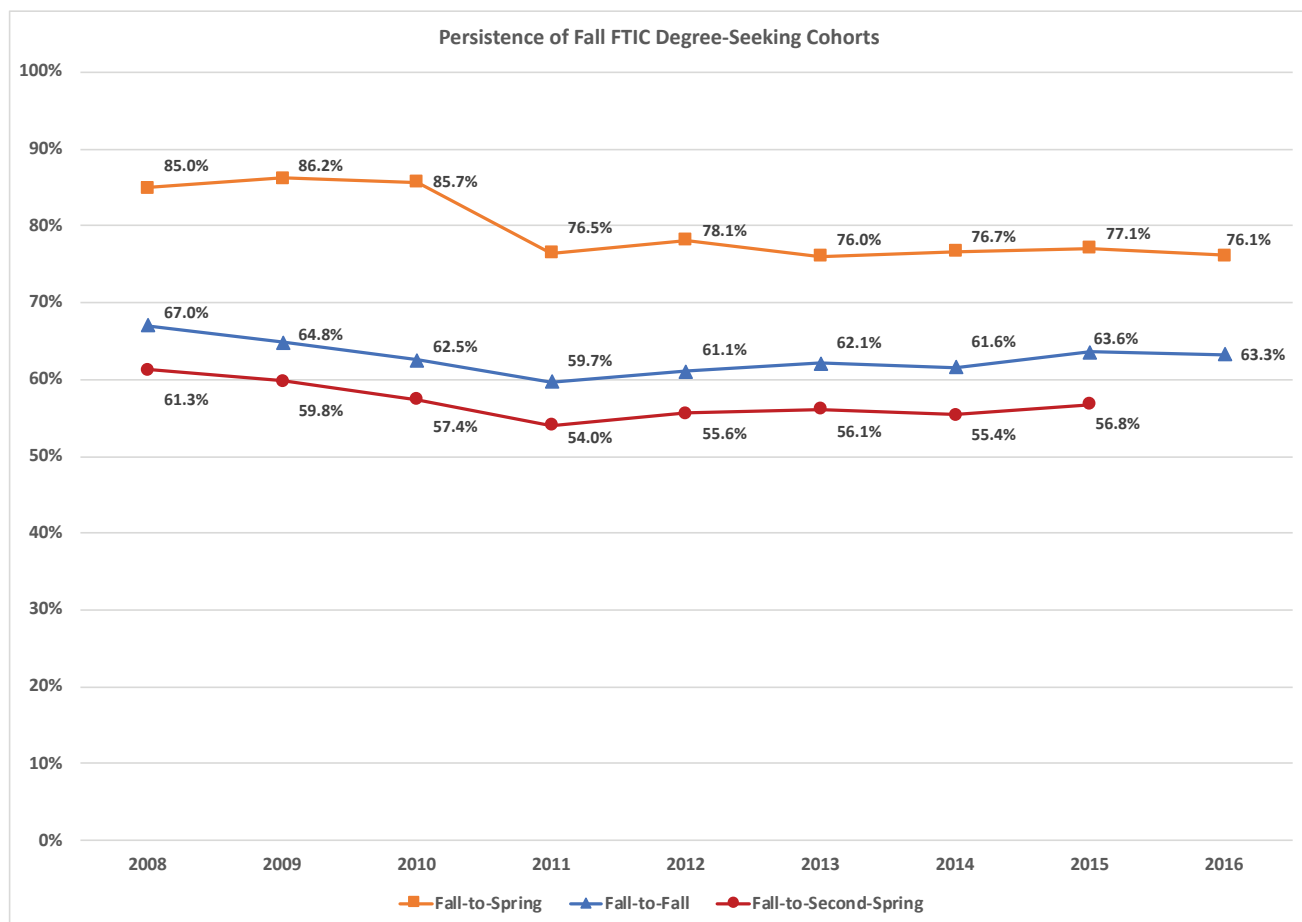
- Graduation rates for Valencia students have increased since 2003, while students' time to degree has decreased.
- The 2010 full-time FTIC cohort experienced the highest three-year graduation rate; graduation rates declined for the 2011 cohort but rebounded for the 2012 cohort.
- While the difference in graduation rates between Black or African American and Caucasian students was 19.2 percentage points in 2003 (Black or African American: 17.0%; Caucasian: 36.2%), the gap closed to 9.6 percentage points in 2007 (Black or African American: 31.2%; Caucasian: 40.8%). However, the difference grew to 19.8 percentage points in 2012 (Black or African American: 25.8%; Caucasian: 45.6%), representing the largest difference in performance within the last decade.
- While the graduation rate of Hispanic students (42.7%) nearly matched Caucasian students (43.9%) in 2008, Hispanic student performance subsequently declined while Caucasian student performance improved, leading to a 5.7 percentage point difference in performance in 2012 (Hispanic: 39.9%; Caucasian: 45.6%).
- Students' success in their first five classes at Valencia is a powerful predictor of their likelihood of graduating, and one non-successful attempt within the first five classes has a tremendous impact on the rate at which students graduate.
- The percentage of students completing an associate's degree before transferring is increasing. However, the proportion of students who transfer before graduating is not insignificant. In fact, of all of the students who enrolled for the first time at Valencia in Fall 2010, 23.8% completed an associate's degree and then transferred; 19.5% transferred without having completed a degree.

Trends in Student Persistence and Momentum

Cohort Persistence

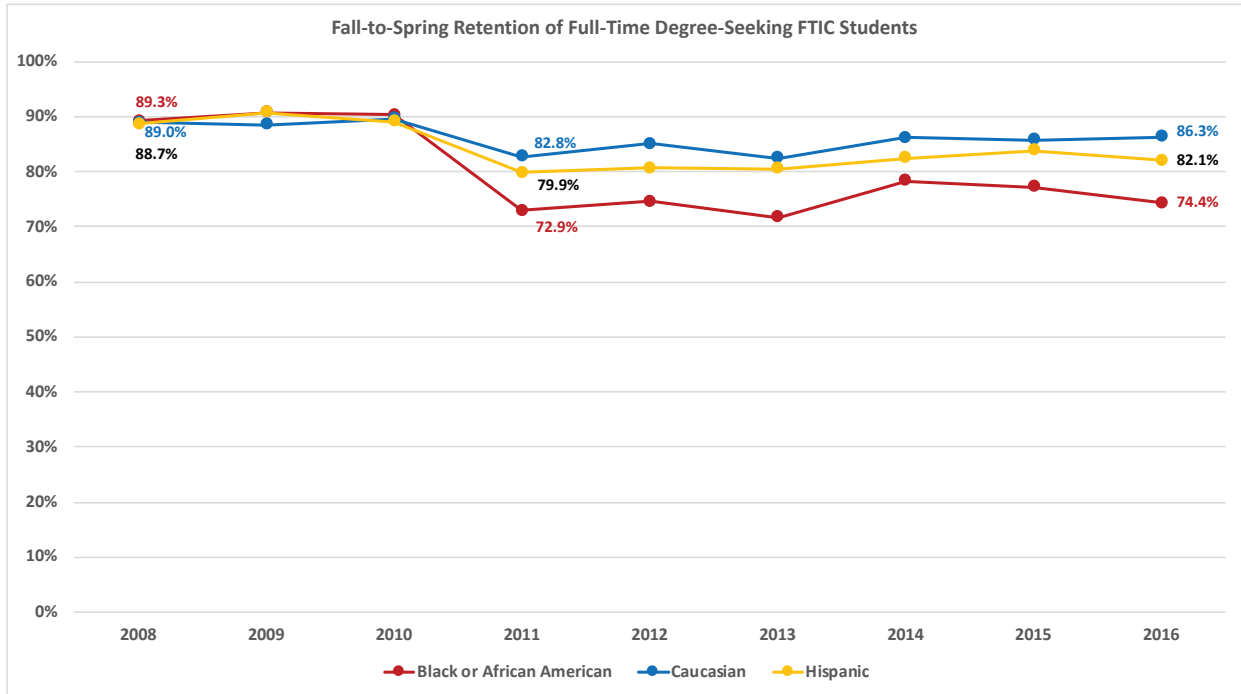
Over the last five years, fall-to-spring, fall-to-fall, and fall-to-second-spring persistence has been relatively stable for students who enroll as FTIC degree-seeking students in the Fall. However, persistence rates of the Fall 2011 cohort dropped significantly as compared to the previous three cohorts.

Notably, a new Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) process was implemented in Fall 2011. In previous years, students who did not meet SAP requirements were placed on probation, prior to being suspended from Financial Aid. In Fall 2011, students who did not meet SAP requirements were automatically placed on Financial Aid suspension, with an opportunity to appeal the suspension to once again become eligible for financial aid.

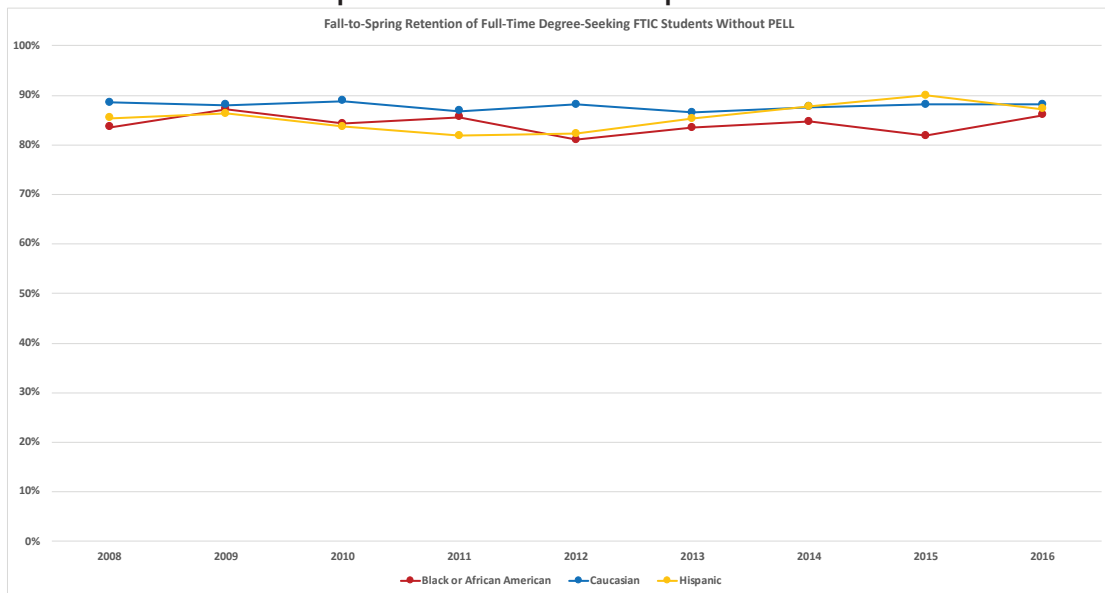


Persistence Rates Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity

While Fall-to-Spring persistence rates were similar for students of different races and ethnicities before 2010, gaps in persistence appeared beginning with the Fall 2011 cohort. And while all student groups in the Fall 2011 cohort experienced a decline in persistence rates, Black or African American students experienced the greatest decline. In fact, Black or African American students had the highest persistence rate of full-time, degree-seeking FTIC students in Fall 2008 (89.3%). Their persistence rate dropped from 90.4% in 2010 to 72.9% in 2011. Notably, the five-year graduation rate of Black or African American students dropped from 28.2% to 23.2% between the 2010 and 2011 cohorts.



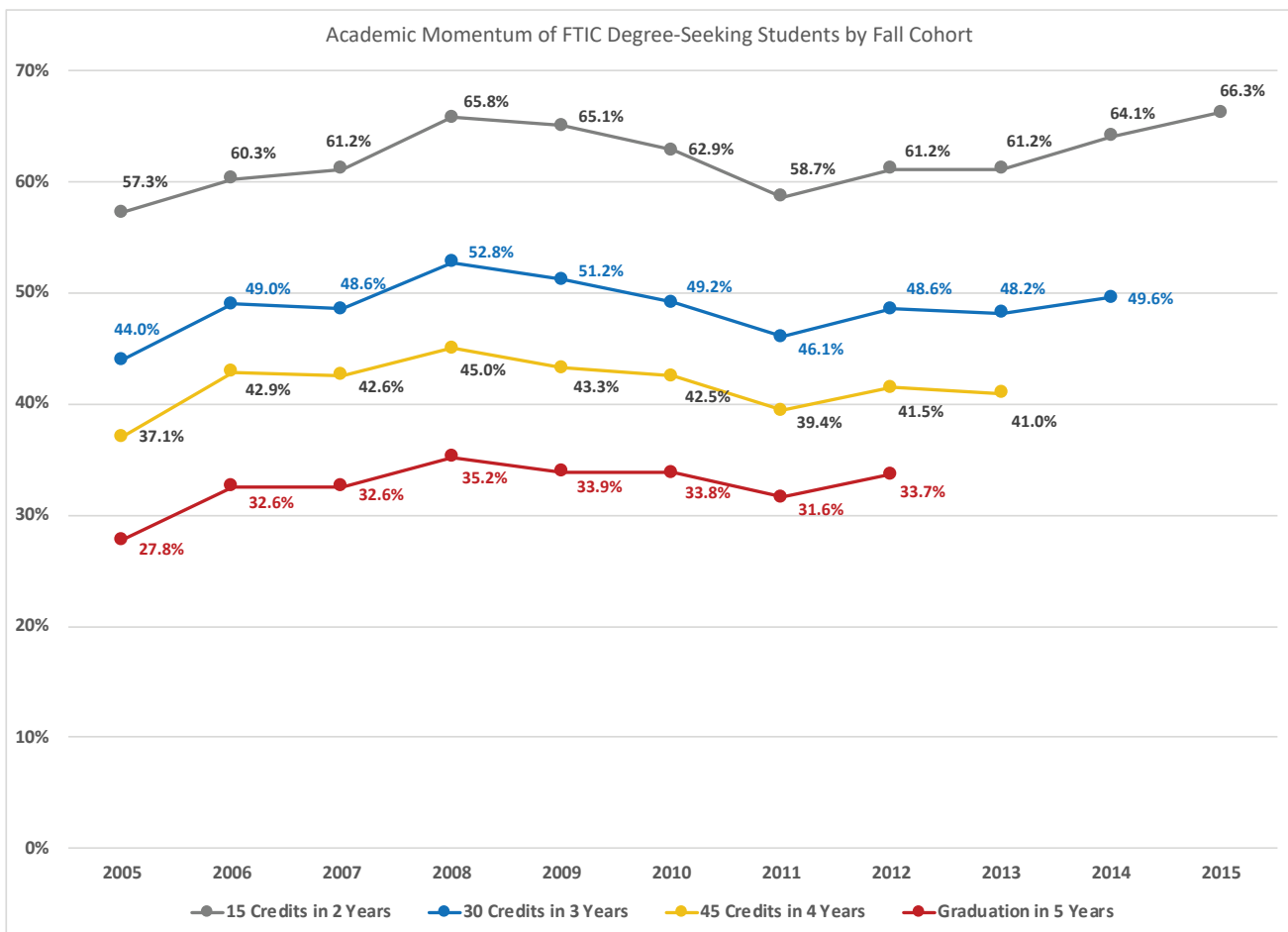
When examining persistence rates of students who were not awarded a PELL grant, there is not a significant difference between African American, Hispanic, or Caucasian students in the Fall 2016 cohort, nor is there a noticeable decline between the Fall 2010 and Fall 2011 cohorts, supporting the hypothesis that the new SAP process affected student persistence.



Academic Momentum

Academic momentum points, such as completion of 15 credit hours within two years, serve as a leading indicator for a cohort’s future graduation rate. The proportion of FTIC degree-seeking students (full-time and part-time) who completed 15 credit hours within two years grew between Fall 2005 and 2008, reaching a peak of 65.8%, and then declined between 2009 and 2011. Nevertheless, the proportion of students who completed 15 credit hours within two years in 2011 (58.7%) was higher than 2005 (57.3%). Since 2011, the proportion of students who completed 15 credit hours within two years has increased, reaching 66.3% in the Fall 2015 cohort.

Echoes of these trends are visible throughout the data related to other academic momentum points, including 30 credits in three years, 45 credits in four years, and ultimately, graduation within five years. Accordingly, the increase in the proportion of students who have completed 15 credit hours within two years is a positive trend as this could serve as an early indicator that five-year graduation rates will also be on the rise.



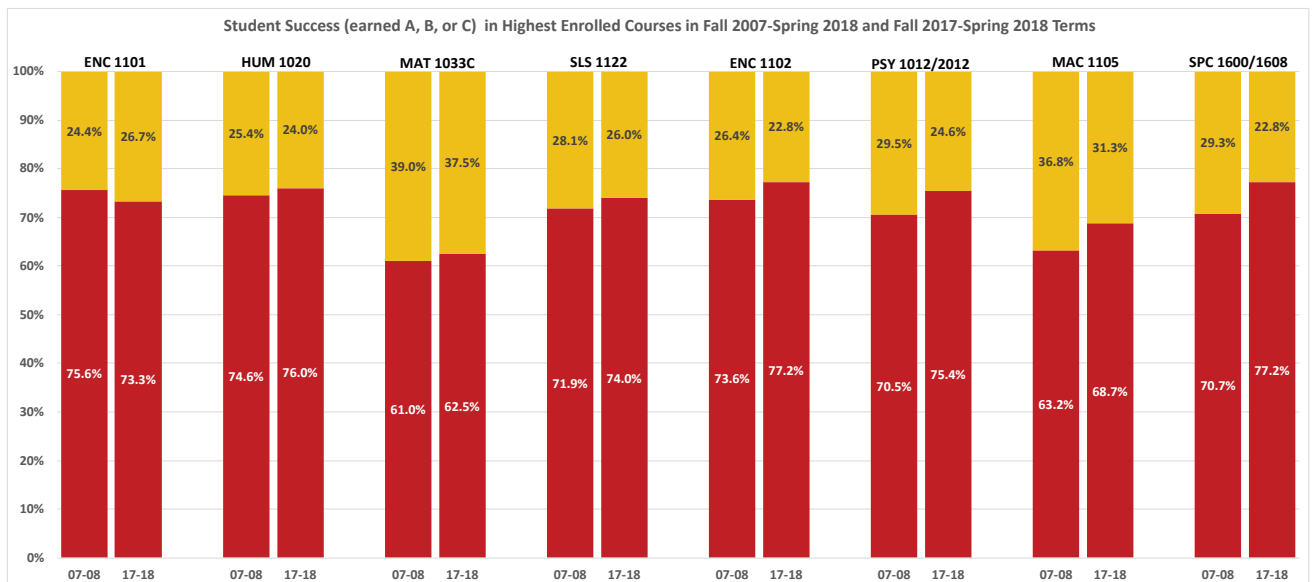
Course Success

Highest Enrolled Courses - All Students

The courses with the highest enrollment overall have changed little over the last ten years. One difference that does exist is likely due to Valencia’s changes in the general education curriculum: POS 2014 had the highest enrollment of all courses in 2007-08 (Fall 2007 and Spring 2008) but it was not amongst the ten courses with the highest enrollment in 2017-18. Similarly, while developmental mathematics (MAT 0024C) was one of the courses with the highest enrollment overall in 2007-08, no developmental courses were in the top ten in 2017-18, likely due to the changes effected by Senate Bill 1720 (SB 1720).

Overall, course success rates in the most highly enrolled courses have increased between 2007-2008 and 2017-2018. ENC 1101 was the only course that saw a slight decline in student performance between 2007-2008 and 2017-2018.

Courses with Highest Enrollments - All Students			
2007-2008 Enrollments	2007-2008 Success Rates	2017-2018 Enrollments	2017-2018 Success Rates
1. POS 2041 - 8,168	66.4%	1. SLS 1122 - 14,914	74.0%
2. ENC 1101 - 8,052	75.6%	2. ENC 1101 - 13,779	73.3%
3. SPC 1600 - 7,591	70.7%	3. ENC 1102 - 9,807	77.2%
4. MAC 1105 - 7,099	63.2%	4. MAC 1105 - 8,761	68.7%
5. ENC 1102 - 6,369	73.6%	5. MAT 1033C - 8,716	62.5%
6. PSY 1012 - 6,259	70.5%	6. HUM 1020 - 7,977	76.0%
7. MAT 0024C - 5,645	48.5%	7. SPC 1608 - 7,947	77.2%
8. MAT 1033C - 5,241	61.0%	8. PSY 1012 - 7,477	75.4%
9. HUM 1020 - 5,141	74.6%	9. STA 2023 - 5,400	72.9%
10. SLS 1122 - 4,882	71.9%	10. BSC1010C - 4,844	67.0%

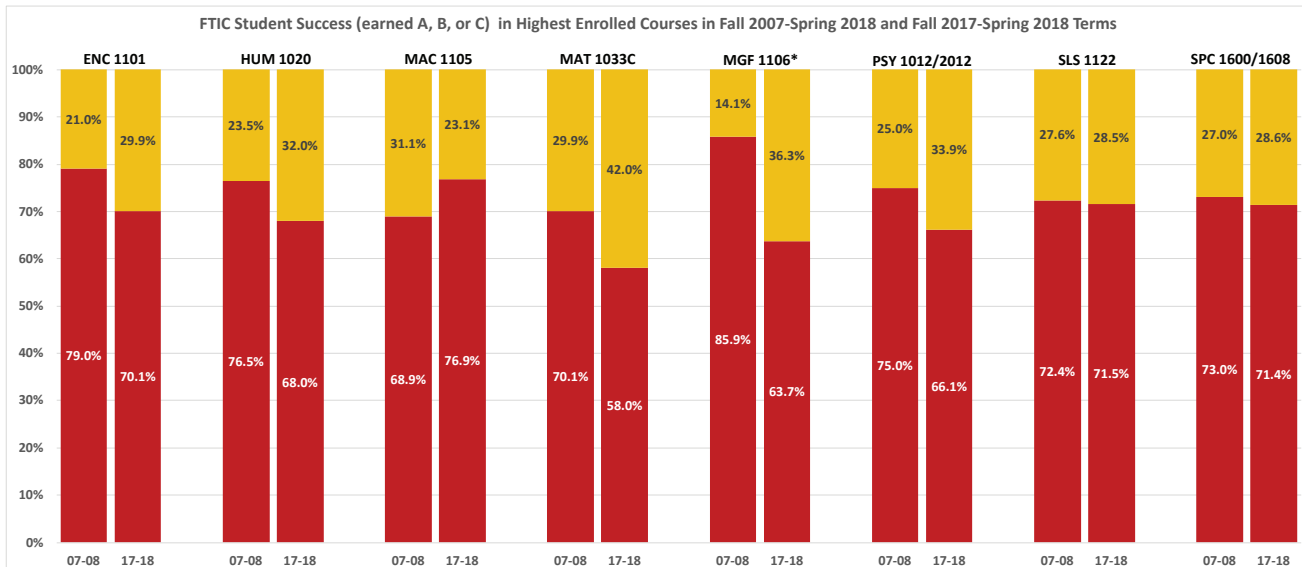


Highest Enrolled Courses - FTIC Students

Many of the courses with large enrollments overall also have a high enrollment of FTIC students. However, unlike the increase in student success overall in the highest enrolled courses, FTIC student success rates for most of these “front door” courses are lower in 2017-18 than in 2007-08.

The effects of SB 1720 can be seen in the enrollment data: MAT 1033C had the third highest FTIC enrollment in 2017-18, yet was not in the 2007-08 top ten; it is likely that many of the students who would have enrolled in MAT 0012C and MAT 0024C in 2007-08 instead enrolled as FTIC students in MAT 1033C. While there are fewer developmental courses in the 2017-18 list, it is interesting to note that two of the courses with the highest FTIC enrollment in 2017-18 still were developmental courses (MAT 0022C and ENC 0027), signifying that a large percentage of FTIC students do not fall under the exemption outlined in SB 1720. Moreover, MGF 1106 joined the 2017-18 list of courses with the highest enrollment of FTIC students, presumably as a result of Valencia’s Math Pathways options.

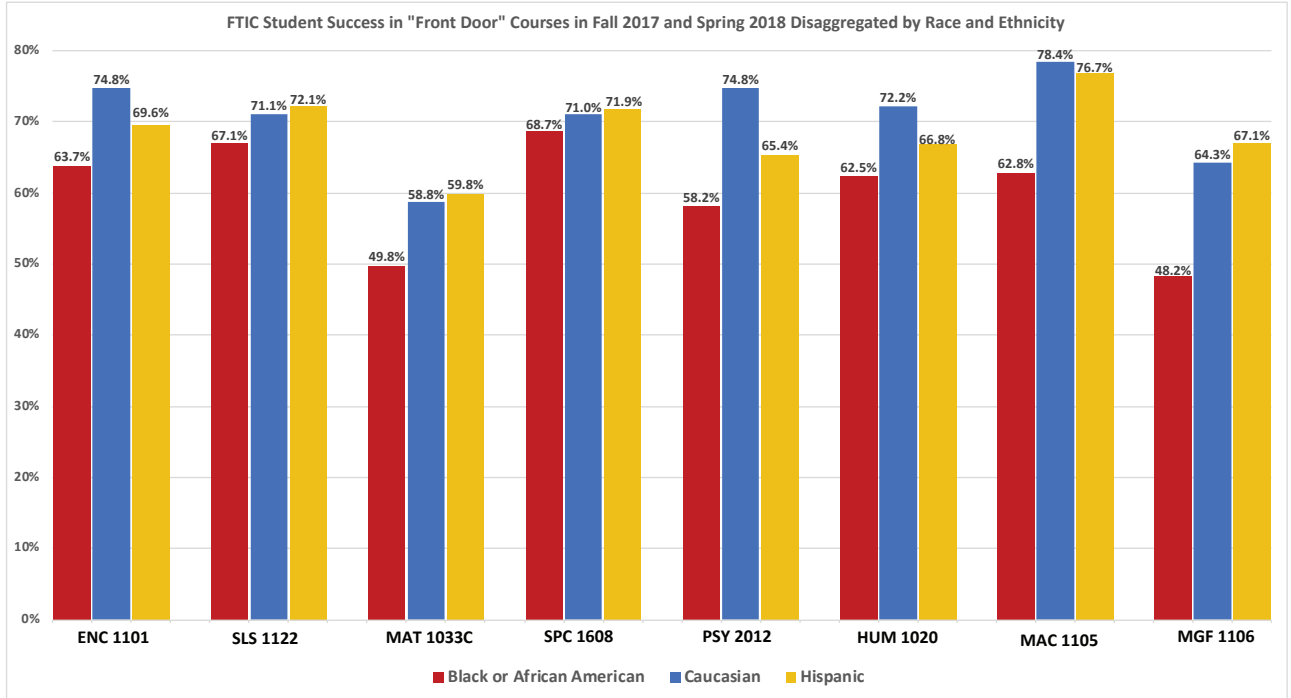
Courses with Highest Enrollments - FTIC Students			
2007-2008 Enrollments	2007-2008 Success Rates	2017-2018 Enrollments	2017-2018 Success Rates
1. SLS 1122 - 2,702	72.4%	1. ENC 1101 - 6,537	70.1%
2. ENC 1101 - 2,465	79.0%	2. SLS 1122 - 5,873	71.5%
3. REA 0002 - 1,750	73.9%	3. MAT 1033C - 3,022	58.0%
4. MAT 0012C - 1,633	52.2%	4. SPC 1608 - 1,920	71.4%
5. MAT 0024C - 1,610	54.5%	5. PSY 2012 - 1,579	66.1%
6. SPC 1600 - 1,467	73.0%	6. HUM 1020 - 1,269	68.0%
7. POS 2041 - 1,429	69.8%	7. MAT 0022C - 974	52.0%
8. ENC 0012 - 1,228	63.2%	8. ENC 0027 - 849	74.6%
9. PSY 1012 - 1,159	75.0%	9. MAC 1105 - 823	76.9%
10. MAC 1105 - 1,081	68.9%	10. MGF 1106 - 680	63.7%



*Only 64 FTIC students were enrolled in MGF 1106 in 2007-08, making the comparison in success less meaningful. It is important to note, however, that MGF 1106 had the third lowest FTIC success rate of all “front door” courses in 2017-18.

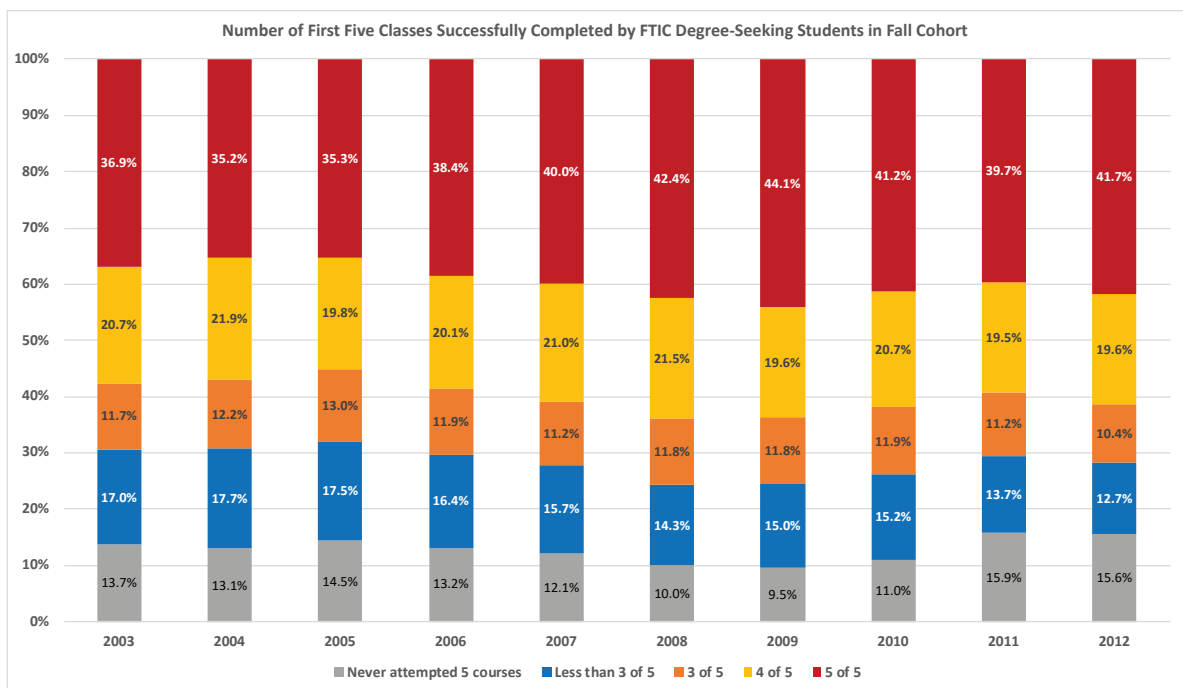
FTIC Student Success in “Front Door” Courses Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity

A review of FTIC student success data in “front door” courses disaggregated by race and ethnicity reveals significant performance gaps between Black or African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic students. The gaps are the largest in mathematics courses, as well as in PSY 2012, ENC 1101, and HUM 1020.



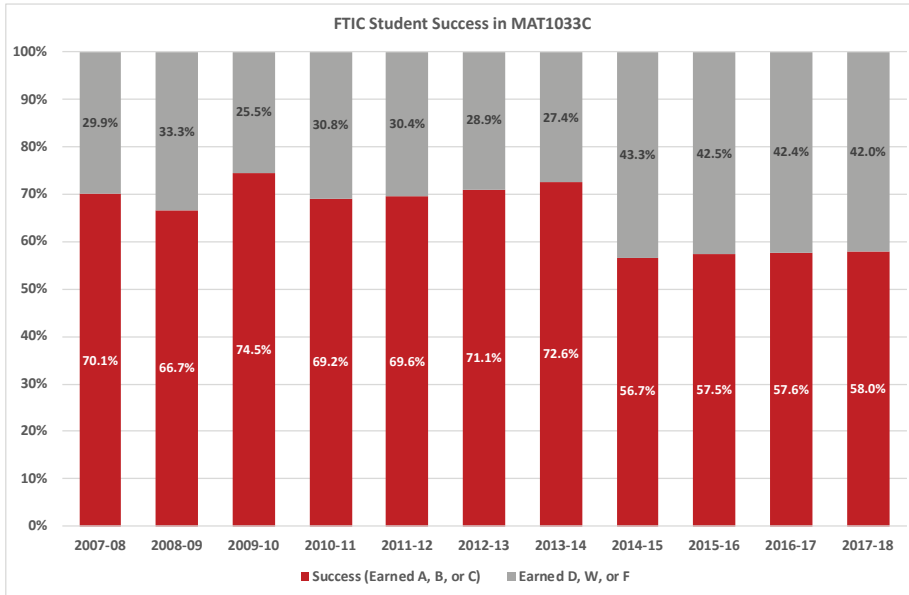
Success in First Five Courses

Students’ success in their first five courses at Valencia is a powerful predictor of their likelihood to graduate. The proportion of students who successfully completed all of their first five courses peaked in 2009. It is important to note that about 30% of FTIC students at Valencia successfully complete fewer than three of their first five courses or never attempt five courses.



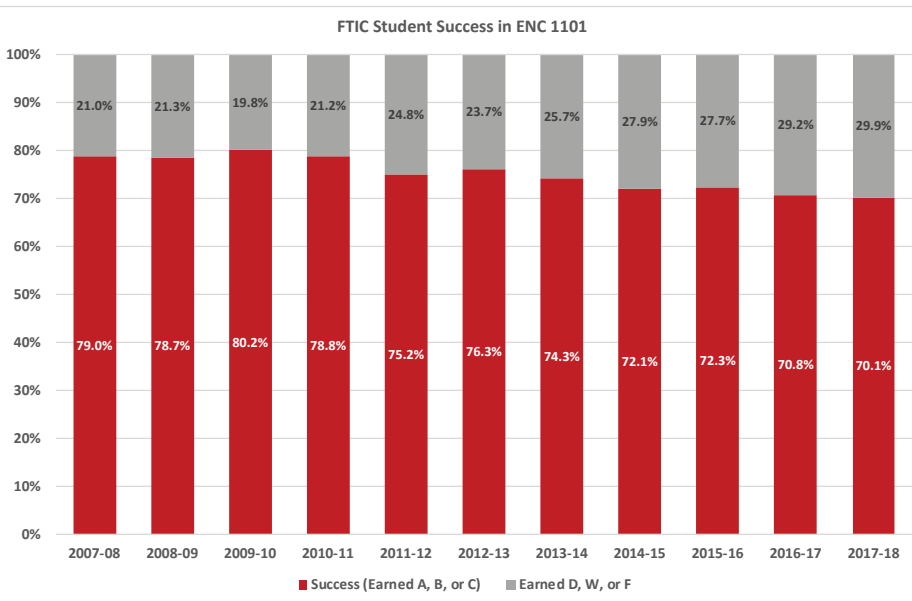
Success in MAT1033C and ENC 1101

FTIC student success in MAT 1033C and ENC 1101 has declined over time. While the proportion of FTIC students who successfully completed MAT 1033C decreased dramatically in 2014-15 (likely due to the changes effected by SB 1720), success rates in ENC 1101 have declined more steadily over the last ten years.



2007-08	972
2008-09	972
2009-10	847
2010-11	760
2011-12	923
2012-13	1,014
2013-14	1,327
2014-15	2,540
2015-16	2,714
2016-17	2,894
2017-18	3,022

While FTIC student enrollment nearly doubled in MAT 1033C between 2013-14 and 2014-15, student success dropped by 15.9 percentage points. The 2014-15 catalog year was the first year in which the college could not require “exempt” students to take a placement test nor enroll in developmental coursework. Accordingly, it is likely that the significant increase in enrollment in MAT 1033C was due to “exempt” students choosing to not take a placement test and self-place into a non-developmental mathematics course.



2007-08	2,465
2008-09	2,613
2009-10	2,911
2010-11	3,017
2011-12	3,591
2012-13	4,051
2013-14	4,291
2014-15	5,754
2015-16	6,098
2016-17	6,247
2017-18	6,537

FTIC success rates in ENC 1101 did not decline as dramatically in 2014-15 as in MAT 1033C. However, it is important to explore the decline in FTIC student success in ENC 1101 as non-success rates approach 30%, particularly given the magnitude of FTIC enrollment in the course.

Summary: Persistence and Momentum

- Student persistence rates declined sharply between the Fall 2010 and Fall 2011 cohorts; this coincides with the implementation of a new Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) process by which students were automatically placed on financial aid suspension, rather than on probation.
- The change in SAP process appears to have had the largest negative impact on the persistence of Black or African American students. When looking only at the subset of students who do not receive financial aid, there is no significant difference between persistence rates of Black or African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic students.
- While academic momentum declined for the Fall 2011 cohort, subsequent student cohorts regained momentum. In fact, the Fall 2015 cohort had the highest percentage of students completing 15 credit hours in two years than any student cohort during the last decade.
- Student success in almost all of the highest enrolled courses at Valencia increased between 2007-08 and 2017-18. While the percentage of students successfully completing Intermediate Algebra and College Algebra remained below 70% in 2017-18, rates of success in these courses have increased since 2007-08.
- FTIC student success in “front door” courses has declined over the last decade. Several “front door” courses have student success rates below 70%. 58.0% of FTIC students successfully complete MAT 1033C, 63.7% successfully complete MGF 1106, 66.1% successfully complete PSY 2012, and 68.0% successfully complete HUM 1020.
- When looking at FTIC student success disaggregated by race and ethnicity, significant gaps in performance emerge. FTIC Black or African American students tend to have a lower rate of success in “front door” courses.
- The percentage of students successful in all five of their first five classes, a powerful leading indicator of completion, peaked in 2009 (44.1%). In 2012, 41.7% of students successfully completed all five of their first five classes at Valencia.