The University of Texas at Tyler
Office of the Faculty Senate
Thursday May 8, 2025

12:30-1:50 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/dysOnQLcvc9mCMBHL9edKcGPEDkycHWKCQdLwvAJoYZ4

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Faculty Senate

	Class of 2025	**Class of 2026**	**Class of 2027**
At Large	Nelson Fumo	Dominick Fazarro	Kevin Gosselin*
CAS	Matthew Kelly	Kenneth Bryant	Katrin Kellner
Soules College of Business	Vivek Pandey*	Brent Beal*	Marwan Al-Sharmi
CEP	Forrest Kaiser	Ramona Grad	Gina Doepker*
COE	Chung Goh	Aaditya Khanal	Ali Ghorshi
SON	Dixie Rose*	Gina Dudley*	Michelle Nelson
COP	Ayman Hamouda*	Santosh Aryal*	Farah Deba
Library	Nicholas Bambach	Michael Skinner*	Esmeralda Rodgers
SHP	Jessica Escareno	Ahmed Abdelal	Arturo Arce-Esquivel*
SOM	James Menard	Pierre Neuenschwander*	Sujitha Nandimandalam

*means member was in attendance

Senate Executive Officers 2024-2025

Joshua Banta* President	Yanira Oliveras* President-Elect
Amentahru Walhrab* Past President	Catherine Ross Parliamentarian
Dixie Rose* Secretary	Pierre Neuenschwander* Treasurer

In Person Attendance: Dwain Morris, Amir Mirmiran, Amanda Whitt, Marissa Glosecki, David Barron, Colleen Swain, Laura Waits, Gracy Buentello, LouAnn Berman, Stephanie Fenter, Coby Dillard, Rick Helfers

Zoom Attendance: Tanya Schlemmer, Anna Hanson, Traci Taylor, Cindy Davis, Anita Lowe, Chuck Brown, Yonjoo Cho, Jaema Krier, Ann Beebe, David Christian, Christy Gipson, Ashleigh Dinkins, Lisa Dempsey, Zain Al Houri, Melissa Watson, Roger Lirely, Lynn Harris, Christine Forisha, David Milan, Rosemary Cooper, Rochell McWhorter, Lorri Allen

12:30 – Welcome and Call to Order (Dr. Josh Banta)

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Reminder to sign in to the chat
- Minutes were approved as posted

Parking Updates and Q&A Assistant Chief Bradley Standerfer, UT Tyler Police Department

- Update from January 2025 to present
- See slides for further details
- Question – what is shared permit violation? Is it in master plan to include better signage for what each parking lot is? Response – upgrade on campus map with all lots clearly noted and improving signage; 2 cars on same permit parking on campus as the same time
- Question – what about the license plate reader – if the student or employee has no car registered with the department, do they still get a ticket if parked in incorrect spot? Yes, they verify each individual plate and issue citations, working on email notification system
- Question – If I have a reserved spot and park somewhere else, will I get a citation? Encourage to stay in reserved spot, but can park other places at less busy time
- Question – how will higher enrollment for fall impact beginning of the semester? Fall is always busy in first 2-3 weeks and will have bottlenecks in Lot 6, 7, and possibly 4. Will work to direct traffic as needed. Issue warnings during first 2-3 weeks
- Question – will city still be working with us to use the spaces on Varsity Drive? No, due to safety concerns after multiple complaints, this has been removed as a parking option
- Question – has new master plan trickled down to the parking plans? Response – addition to parking garage is currently prepare to take to the Board of Regents in August

Provost Updates (Dr. Amir Mirmiran)

- Parking – class scheduling has major impact, especially classes with 100 or more registered. Had Registrar to work with colleges to schedule these at different times on the class schedule.

- AI integration – good response with 9 proposals. The committee reviewed and selected 4 awardees. There will be an announcement coming soon and work in partnership with CETL to allow them to present their ideas and updates.
- Instead of posting Dr. Kumar's position, her duties are being reassigned to several different departments and will be finalized in the next few weeks.
- College of Pharmacy Dean – completed online interviews and are preparing for on campus interviews
- Dean of Graduate School – three interviews but decided to postpone hiring with the departure of Dr. Kumar. Hoping to provide update in the near future.
- Important to highlight the job skills that our graduates will be prepared to perform. Will make a plea to faculty to advise students to make use of Career Success Coaches on how to be prepared for job requirements on graduation
- Increase in enrollment and retention is strong
- Question – how does this relate to marketable skills that were requested by coordinating board? Response - Working to show these on the website of each program as well as students to know how to work with the Career Success Coaches for internships through graduation
- Question – Explain thinking of combining Dr. Kumar's position with Dean of Graduate School? Response – transition period with no deadline to really look at what is needed and how can we address them best in one or two positions. Hope to finalize by end of month and repost position(s)
- Question – CAP student retention has increased? Response– this is a good thing. They are part time students preparing for UT Austin and do not count against us if they transfer. The retention numbers represent those who went full-time and stayed versus transferring
- Highest enrollment in summer currently

Academic Affairs Updates Dr. Lou Ann Berman, Associate Provost for Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness

- Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) plans came about as a UT System Initiative
- Target adult learners with some college and real-world experience
- See slides for further details
- Coby Dillard shared successes with CPL with the Veterans Program
- Colleen Swain shared the 2025-26 UT Tyler CPL Pilot goals
- Question – Two different types of CPL (transcript or just learning), is that right? Response – not based on length of time, but about the ability to discuss what you

have learned and provide examples. It is not asking students to take your final exam but taking their situation into consideration.

- Question – Would a prospect be considered with zero college, but decades of industry? Yes, but need to have realistic expectations on what can be received. We are going to be conservative
- Question – Will this have to be well documented for SACSCOC? Yes, all forms will be part of the student's permanent record. This is why we are starting small and will stay at 20% or below.

Peer Observations of Teaching Dr. Neil Gray, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

- See slides for more details
- 2014 policy that addressed 2 parts of teaching evaluation – student and peer
- Had not re-evaluated the peer observation process since 2014
- Recommendations:
    - Recommend everyone go through peer observation at least once per year
    - Recommend Rebrand locally, align systemically – change to peer learning or peer mentoring and the UT System required term of peer evaluation or observation
    - Recommend eliminating rank and tenure restrictions
    - Recommend strengthening online peer observation processes
    - Recommend encouraging collaborative peer structures with flexibility (peer learning across colleges or departments)
    - Recommend a faculty reflection narrative
    - Recommend policy review cycle
- Question – for peer observations regardless of rank, could observe a full professor's teaching? Response – yes, that is our recommendation. Should be handled individually in each department
- Question – Where would the SOM fall where a professor only teach one lecture a year? It is important to know that each department is different and allow flexibility
- Question – What about the power dynamics of asking someone below them to evaluate them? Remember everything is private between the two parties. Focus on mentoring and being a strong example
- Question – Could you consider pushing back the due date for when revised? Clarification that it is during fall and not before fall
- Send an email if further questions or input

Jeff Noblitt, Vice President of Marketing

- Sharing Beta version of interactive map – in testing and review with goal of launch in the next month
- Has wayfinding capability including finding accessible pathways to avoid stairways, etc.
- Will continue to add functionality and features – ability in the future to add interior wayfinding
- Great response on survey and will be reviewing to implement new signage
- Virtual tour will launch before the fall semester

Faculty Senate President's Updates

- End of course evaluations stay open through finals week at the request of students
  - Does not affect evaluations negatively
  - If you feel they did negatively impact, contact Josh
  - Does not extend until after they see their final grades

2:01 – Adjournment

Policies for Evaluating Faculty: Recommendations for
Incorporating Student and Peer Reviews in the Faculty Evaluation Process

<u>**Overview**</u>

Effective teaching is the core of any outstanding university and is very important at every institution in The University of Texas System. UT System invests significant resources in rewarding outstanding teaching, and effective teaching is a requirement for the promotion and tenure of every faculty member. The System campuses have centers which support good teaching, and many departments work collegially to improve and augment the development of teaching within specific programs. Thus, it is entirely appropriate that excellence in teaching serves as an important foundation for a System-wide task force of faculty members and students.

<u>**Task Force Background**</u>

In 2011, The University of Texas System Chancellor unveiled his Framework for Advancing Excellence. The Framework is an action plan to implement and measure the effectiveness of nine overarching goals aimed at advancing UT institutions. Included among the Framework goals is an item addressing faculty excellence, specifically, to strengthen performance evaluations. The Chancellor appointed two task forces in 2012 to recommend ways to address this strategy.

The **Task Force on the Evaluation of Faculty Teaching** was charged to:

1. Identify an appropriate, consistent, and limited set of faculty teaching evaluation questions that can be administered System-wide;

2. Recommend a process consistent across all campuses that incorporates the critical questions which evaluate faculty teaching at the end of the semester; and

3. Identify mechanisms to provide faculty feedback throughout the semester.

The **Task Force on Faculty Peer Observations of Teaching** was charged to develop a policy that every academic campus could adopt regarding faculty peer evaluations, including guidelines for implementation and a template form.

In February 2013, a work group was organized to review the recommendations of both task forces and develop a set of instructions for campuses to follow to implement the recommendations. This document provides the guidelines developed by the work group and approved by the Chancellor. Each campus is expected to incorporate these items into their policies addressing faculty evaluations and begin applying the student evaluations policies in Fall 2013 and the faculty peer review policies in Fall 2014 or earlier.

Guidelines for Student Evaluations of Faculty

<u>Task Force Background</u>

Texas Education Code Section 51.974 requires institutions of higher education to conduct end-of-course faculty evaluations and make the evaluations available on the institution's website. Most universities have accommodated this request by providing summary responses to a general overall evaluation question. The UT System would like to expand beyond the overall question, but maintain consistency across campuses.

In Spring 2012, a task force was created to identify a consistent method of evaluating faculty teaching across the UT System. The Task Force on the Evaluation of Faculty Teaching consisted of representatives from across the UT System, including students and faculty from academic and health institutions. The group met regularly throughout the spring and summer to identify a common set of evaluation questions, recommend an evaluation process, and identify mechanisms for providing continuous feedback between faculty and students. Based on the recommendations presented in the task force report, the following information is provided to assist institutions in complying with the new requirements affecting student evaluations of faculty teaching.

<u>General Points</u>

- For the purposes of student evaluations, faculty members are defined as the courses' *instructors of record*. Faculty members deliver the curriculum and are identified by the campus as the courses' responsible parties.

- Confidentiality of student evaluations of faculty teaching must be protected, and it is important that the methods used to maintain confidentiality are clearly demonstrated to students. Evaluations will not be administered for any class containing fewer than five people, as of the day after the final university drop date. If a class contains five or more students, but fewer than five completed the evaluations, the evaluation data will be utilized.

<u>Mandatory Survey Questions</u>
Each campus will incorporate the following five questions in every end-of-course student evaluation survey. The questions should be the first five questions of every end-of-course evaluation. The questions must be in this specific order with this specific wording:

1. The instructor clearly defined and explained the course objectives and expectations.
2. The instructor was prepared for each instructional activity.
3. The instructor communicated information effectively.
4. The instructor encouraged me to take an active role in my own learning.
5. The instructor was available to students either electronically or in person.

The response scale for each question should appear as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

All five questions should be considered mandatory. Any additional questions, specific to each institution, college, department, or faculty member may follow. Institutions should consider that long surveys typically lead to lower response rates and less accurate responses.

<u>Encouraging Student Participation</u>
Student participation is crucial, as survey results are used in the formal evaluation of faculty. Students need to understand that their responses can also help instructors improve teaching styles and course materials. To incentivize student participation, institutions are encouraged to withhold a student's access to grades until the student completes all course evaluations. Mandatory completion of course evaluations is not new – most UT health institutions already have such a system in place. Understanding that mandatory course evaluations will require a cultural shift on most campuses, the following suggestions may help to encourage acceptance and participation:

- Encourage faculty to inform students of the importance of completing course evaluations. **Students have indicated repeatedly that the faculty member's emphasis on the importance of completing evaluations is the most compelling reason for compliance.**

- Encourage faculty members to note on the course syllabus that course evaluations are required.

- Encourage faculty members to allow class time to complete the evaluations. Make students aware of this time allocation in advance, so that they may bring phones, tablets, laptops, etc. in order to comply. Reserve a computer room, even for a portion of the class time, to encourage compliance.

- Consider applying an incentive at the course level.

- Consider having the President, Provost, or VP for Student Affairs send a memo or email communication to all students towards the end of each semester informing them of the importance of course evaluations. Remind students that course evaluations enhance academic excellence, impact faculty's professional development, and affect faculty's overall evaluations at the institutional level.

- Collaborate with campus student governments in promoting the importance of completing course evaluations. Student government promotional campaigns aid student understanding of the goals and the process of course evaluations. Ultimately, this awareness helps to increase student participation and acceptance.

- Accentuate completion as a positive: Indicate that students that complete course evaluations by a certain date will have ***priority access to grades***. One institution currently locks its online grading system two weeks before finals, allowing *priority access* one week after finals and releasing grades to all students one week later. These timeframes can be adjusted based on the campus processes.

<u>Electronic Course Evaluations</u>
We strongly recommend institutions to utilize an online system for course evaluations. An online system is more economical and sustainable than a paper-based system, providing quicker results and offering greater ability to perform data analytics. It is often the case that the response rates to online course evaluations are lower than those of paper-based evaluations, but the suggestions listed above will encourage student participation and help to improve online response rates. The UT System administration will collect the responses to the five required survey questions and an online system will allow the sharing of data in a more efficient manner. The recommendations for encouraging student participation are particularly important if an online system is used to administer course evaluations.

<u>Timeframe</u>
Each campus is expected to incorporate these five questions into their student evaluations for the **Fall 2013 semester**.

<u>Online Student Comments</u>
Student comments are not required and should not be forwarded to UT System. A faculty member may want to gather comments from his or her class, but the institution should develop policies and procedures to oversee this feedback. In developing these processes, institutions should be clear to students that providing in-class comments to an instructor is separate from the course evaluation.

<u>Continuous Feedback</u>
A survey of past recipients of The University of Texas System Regents Outstanding Teaching Awards revealed that systematic and frequent faculty-student feedback should be regarded as an integral component of every course. Students should receive feedback from professors and have many opportunities to provide feedback to faculty. Institutions are encouraged to use available continuous feedback mechanisms and MyEdu is developing the functionality to accommodate continuous feedback.

Guidelines for Faculty Peer Review of Teaching

Task Force Background

In spring 2012, a task force was created to identify effective ways to conduct faculty peer reviews. Faculty and administrators from select UT System academic institutions met in June 2012 to research and create a report on best practices. The Task Force on Faculty Peer Observations of Teaching noted in its report that a number of UT System institutions already have peer review policies in place, but there is wide variation across and within institutions. Emphasizing the importance of peer review in improving teaching, the task force focused it recommendations on guiding principles and minimum requirements for ensuring that peer observations are simple, yet constructive tools that should be used to improve instruction.

Peer evaluations are a mechanism for constructive feedback and continuous improvement. Institutions are required to implement a peer review system as part of a comprehensive effort for enhancing the teaching mission and continuous improvement. Based on the principles and recommendations presented in the task force report, the following standards are provided to assist institutions in the implementation of peer reviews of faculty teaching.

There are two purposes for using peer review: 1) for evaluation purposes (only in tenure and promotion cases) and 2) for improving teaching.

Conducting Peer Reviews for Promotion and Tenure
Each campus should develop a policy requiring peer review of faculty members, utilizing peer observations, as part of the institution's promotion and tenure process. Institutions must determine whether a modification to existing peer review policies or a new policy is necessary. All promotion and tenure review reports sent to UT System must show evidence of peer evaluations of teaching.

With extensive consultation from faculty members, each unit (college, school, or department) should develop its own system for peer review, appropriate to the subject being taught and the method of course delivery. This process should include the frequency and format options for peer observations and timelines which accommodate the promotion and tenure process. In addition, these academic units should define "peer" for their purposes and determine whether a peer can be of higher, equal, or lower rank and/or drawn from different departments. Observations by learning experts who are not faculty are valuable, particularly during the early stages of faculty development – but these should supplement, not substitute for, peer observations.

Peer Review to Improving Teaching
The quality of teaching should be of paramount importance to all faculty. Peer reviews are especially useful when used to improve faculty teaching. Understanding that even the best instructors can benefit from constructive feedback, each evaluation report should include comments on what the instructor does well and suggested areas for improvement. Peer review reports that are added to an instructor's record should include a list of observations conducted (with course, observer, and date), but not the content of the report unless released by the instructor. Instructors can be asked to supply for their records a narrative covering what they have learned from the observation process. Given the time commitment that must be assumed, department heads/chairs and faculty within a specific unit shall develop policy and procedures as to how often and by whom this process can be implemented.

Timeframe
Each campus is expected to have a peer review process in place for the **Fall 2014 semester or earlier**.

Minimum Requirements for Peer Review Reports

Evaluations should include the use of short forms that merit careful attention by the reviewer. Questions on the forms should call for either a narrative response or a choice among three or four responses. For example, a choice between *observed, needs improvement, not observed* or *truly exemplary, done well, needs improvement, N/A.*

Each peer evaluation/observation report should include:
- Number and title of course observed;
- Date of report;
- Name and signature of observer;
- Date of pre-observation meeting between observer and instructor, at which the syllabus and assignments are reviewed, special instructor concerns are addressed, and a mutually agreed class and date are specified;
- Date of classroom observation;
- An instrument that reflects methods by which instructor engages students in active learning;
- Date of post-observation meeting of observer with instructor, at which the observation was discussed;
- Instructor's signature affirming that the discussions took place.

Training
Before peer evaluations are conducted on a campus, peer evaluators should be given detailed guidance and an opportunity for training. Evaluation templates should be used to guide the evaluator's observations of teaching.

Sample Template
The following sample peer observation forms can be found in the Appendix. These examples are provided to guide institutions as they develop their own peer observation forms.

Example A: Peer Observation for Formative Assessment of Teaching
This sample template was developed based on templates currently in use at The University of Texas at Austin, with input from faculty representatives serving on the Task Force on Faculty Peer Observations of Teaching.

Example B: Classroom Observation Form
This sample template was developed by the members of the Faculty Evaluation Implementation Work Group. It was adapted from an instrument currently used at the University of Minnesota, modified to include recommendations from the Task Force on Faculty Peer Observations of Teaching.

Example C: Online Course Review Rubric
This sample template was heavily influenced by a rubric used by the UT TeleCampus to evaluate online courses.

Appendix: Sample Templates

Example A: Peer Observation for Formative Assessment of Teaching

Example B: Classroom Observation Form

Example C: Online Course Review Rubric

Example A

Peer Observation for Formative Assessment of Teaching

Faculty Member Observed _____ Rank _____

Date of Observation _____ Course Observed _____

Type of Course (lecture, lab, etc.) _____

	Not Applicable	Needs Improvement	Done Well	Truly Exemplary
CONTENT				
1. Presented main ideas clearly	NA	NI	DW	TE
2. Clearly addressed relevancy of main ideas	NA	NI	DW	TE
3. Called for higher order thinking of students	NA	NI	DW	TE
4. Related ideas to students' prior knowledge	NA	NI	DW	TE
5. Provided definitions for new terms/concepts	NA	NI	DW	TE
6. Referred students to sources of credible information to deepen and/or broaden their knowledge of an idea	NA	NI	DW	TE
ORGANIZATION				
7. Was prepared for class				
8. Connected content to previous classes	NA	NI	DW	TE
9. Stated organization/objectives	NA	NI	DW	TE
10. Used clear, effective transitions with summaries	NA	NI	DW	TE
11. Used instructional time well	NA	NI	DW	TE
CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS				
12. Facilitated students' active engagement/participation in learning	NA	NI	DW	TE
13. Used and responded to questions effectively	NA	NI	DW	TE
14. Showed awareness of different levels of students' knowledge	NA	NI	DW	TE
15. Had a good rapport/engagement with students	NA	NI	DW	TE
16. Was responsive to verbal and nonverbal feedback from students	NA	NI	DW	TE
17. Treated students with respect	NA	NI	DW	TE
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION				
18. Was confident and enthusiastic	NA	NI	DW	TE
19. Made adequate eye contact with students	NA	NI	DW	TE
20. Used clear articulation and pronunciation	NA	NI	DW	TE
21. Avoided distracting mannerisms and language	NA	NI	DW	TE
22. Projected voice to be easily heard	NA	NI	DW	TE
23. Used appropriate pace of delivery	NA	NI	DW	TE
USE OF MEDIA AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS				
24. Used classroom technology proficiently	NA	NI	DW	TE
25. Websites, video clips, and other visuals and audiovisuals effectively	NA	NI	DW	TE
26. Provided effective outline/handouts	NA	NI	DW	TE

Example A

Comments

Quality of the syllabus:

Date of Conference on Syllabus before Classroom Visit _____

Quality of instruction:

    Strengths and innovations

    Areas for improvement

Date of Conference after Classroom Visit _____
Observer Signature _____
Observer Name (Print) _____
Observer Title _____
Signature of instructor _____

At the closing conference the observer should inquire about the instructor's availability to students outside of class time. If the instructor's availability is consider limited, the observer should share strategies that will increase availability to students.

Example B
Classroom Observation Form

Faculty Member Observed_____ Rank_____
Date of Observation_____ Course observed _____
Type of Course (lecture, lab, etc.) _____

1. **Content/learning objectives:** (Are objectives for the class given verbally or in writing? Are main ideas clear and relevant? Is the content accurate? Are higher order thinking skills promoted? Are new ideas connected to students' prior knowledge?)

2. **Organization and preparation for class session:** Is the instructor prepared for class? Is the class connected content to previous classes? Does the instructor use clear, effective transitions with summaries? Is instructional time used well?)

3. **Classroom interactions and educational climate:** (Are students and instructor interested and enthusiastic? Does the instructor use student names? Is humor used appropriately? Does instructor treat students with respect? Is the atmosphere of the classroom participative?)

4. **Effective communication:** (Is the delivery paced appropriately? Can the instructor be seen and heard? Are explanations clear to students? Are examples, metaphors, and analogies appropriate? I as the instructor stimulating and thought provoking? Is the instructor confident and enthusiastic? Does the instructor use adequate eye contact with students? Does the instructor use clear articulation and pronunciation? Does the instructor avoid using distracting mannerisms and language?)

5. **Use of Media and instructional materials:** (Do films, websites, and other audiovisual materials have a clear purpose? Are handouts appropriate in number and subject? Does the instructor give help with reading or using the text, if necessary? Does the instructor use technology proficiently?)

Quality of the syllabus:

Date of Conference on Syllabus before Classroom Visit _____

Summary comments:

Date of Conference after Classroom Visit _____
Observer Signature _____
Observer Name (Print) _____
Observer Title _____

Signature of instructor: _____

At the closing conference the observer should inquire about the instructor's availability to students outside of class time. If the instructor's availability is consider limited, the observer should share strategies that will increase availability to students.

Example C
ONLINE COURSE REVIEW RUBRIC

Name of instructor _____ Rank _____

Number and title of course: _____ Date of review/evaluation _____

COURSE CONTENT AND DESIGN – addresses elements of instructional design which includes structure of the course, learning objectives, organization of content and instructional strategies.

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Goals and Objectives	Goals and objectives are easily located within the course Goals and objectives are clearly written at the appropriate level and reflect desired outcomes Goals and objectives are written in measureable outcomes (i.e., students know what they are expected to be able to do) Goals and objectives are made available in a variety of areas in the course (within the syllabus and each individual learning unit)	Goals and objectives are located within the course syllabus or the individual learning units Objectives are written to reflect desired learning outcomes, although not all are written as measureable outcomes Students have some understanding of what is expected of them	Goals and objectives are not easily located within the course Goals and objective are not clearly written in measurable learning outcomes Students may be unsure of what they are expected to be able to do The level does not match the desired outcomes	Goals and objectives are not easily located within the course Some are missing and others poorly written The level does not match the desired learning outcomes
Content Presentation	Content is made available or "chunked" in manageable segments (i.e., presented in distinct learning units or modules) Navigation is intuitive Content flows in a logical progression Content is presented using a variety of appropriate mechanisms (e.g., content modules, single pages, links to external resources, RSS Feeds, print material) Content is enhanced with visual and auditory elements; supplementary resources are made available (e.g., course CDs, textbooks, course manuals, etc.)	Content is made available or "chunked" in manageable segments (i.e., presented in distinct learning units or modules) Navigation is somewhat intuitive, but some "exploring" is required to determine the flow of content Content is presented using a variety of mechanisms (e.g., content modules, single pages, links to external resources, RSS Feeds, print material) Visual and/or auditory elements occasionally enhance the content; supplementary resources are made available (e.g., course CDs, textbooks, course manuals, etc.)	Some content segments are overly large (or possibly too small) for the specified objectives Navigation is only occasionally intuitive, thus the flow of content is sometimes not easily determined The design does not avail of the content presentation tools (e.g., content modules, single pages, links) Few or no visual and/or auditory elements are used to enhance the content Supplementary resources may be made available (e.g., course CDs, textbooks, course manuals, etc.)	Content is not "chunked" into manageable segments; Navigation is not intuitive and the flow of content is unclear; The design does not avail of the content presentation tools (content modules, single pages, links); No visual or auditory elements are used to enhance the content; Supplementary resources are not made available (e.g., course CDs, textbooks, course manuals, etc.)

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Accuracy	All course content is credible All sources clearly identified All required copyright permissions are in place Breadth of content coverage is excellent	Course content is credible Most sources are clearly identified Most required copyright permissions are in place Breadth of content coverage is sufficient	Some sources are not clearly identified Some required copyright permissions are missing Breadth of content coverage may be insufficient	Information sources are not clearly identified Required copyright permissions are missing Breadth of content coverage is insufficient
	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Syllabus Elements	Syllabus is complete and detailed with no errors Printable version of the syllabus is included (PDF) Printable version of the course schedule is included (PDF)	Syllabus is complete and detailed Errors may be present Course schedule may not be complete	Syllabus is complete but not detailed Typos and errors may be present	Some syllabus elements are missing Errors may be present
Learner Engagement	It is clear how the instructional strategies will enable students to reach course goals and objectives Course design includes guidance for learners to work with content in meaningful ways (e.g., pre-reading outlines, web-quests, devil's advocate challenges, etc.); Higher order thinking (e.g., analysis, problem solving, or critical reflection) is expected of learners and explained with examples or models Individualized instruction, remedial activities, or resources for advanced learning activities are provided	Instructional strategies are designed to help students to reach course goals and objectives, although this relation-ship may not be obvious to learners Guidance is provided, but could be improved with greater detail or depth Higher order thinking is required for some activities but is not well-explained or supported (e.g., by providing examples of "good answers") Differentiated instruction (such as remediation) may be available on a limited basis	It is not clear how the instructional strategies will help learners achieve course goals and objectives Guidance in using content materials may only be provided on a limited basis Higher order thinking is not required or encouraged; Differentiated instructional opportunities are not provided, although there may be supplementary content resources available	Instructional strategies do not provide students with skills needed to achieve course goals and objectives Content is provided but it is not clear what students are expected to do with it Higher order thinking is not expected from students No supplementary resources or activities are provided for remediation or advanced study
Technology Use	Tools available within the LMS are used to facilitate learning by engaging students with course content LMS tools are used to reduce the labor-intensity of learning (e.g., providing links to needed resources where they will be used in the course) Technologies are used creatively in ways that transcend traditional, teacher-centered instruction A wide variety of delivery media are incorporated into the course	Tools available within the LMS could be utilized more (or more creatively) to engage learners with course content LMS tools are made available to assist students, but could be organized or arranged for even greater usefulness Technologies within the course are used in many cases merely to replicate traditional face-to-face instruction There is some variety in the tools used to deliver instruction	Tools available within the LMS are not used to their full extent or not used when it would be appropriate to do so Only a few tools (of those available within the LMS) are used in a way that streamlines access to materials and activities for students Technologies within the LMS are used primarily by instructors and not students There is little variety in use of technologies within the LMS	Technologies used within the LMS do not engage students with learning Tools that could reduce the labor-intensity of online instruction are not utilized Students are not expected to use technologies available within the LMS Only a few technologies available within the LMS are used

INTERACTION AND COLLABORATION – Interaction and Collaboration can take many forms. Interaction denotes communication between and among learners and instructors, synchronously or asynchronously. Collaboration is a subset of interaction and refers specifically to those activities in which groups are working interdependently toward a shared result. This differs from group activities that can be completed by students working independently of one another and then combining the results, much as one would when assembling a jigsaw puzzle with parts of the puzzle worked out separately then assembled together. A learning community is defined here as the sense of belonging to a group, rather than each student perceiving himself/herself studying independently.

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Communication Strategies	There are plentiful opportunities for synchronous and/or asynchronous interaction, as appropriate Asynchronous communication strategies promote critical reflection or other higher order thinking aligned with learning objectives Synchronous communication activities benefit from real-time interactions and facilitate "rapid response" communication (i.e., students gain practice discussing course content extemporaneously without looking up basic, declarative information)	Several communication activities are included to reinforce the desired learning outcomes Asynchronous communications sometimes require reflection or other higher order thinking Synchronous interactions are meaningful but may not take full advantage of the real-time presence of instructor and/or peers	Communication strategies are included, however, they may not consistently reinforce desired learning outcomes Asynchronous communications are focused primarily on lower levels of thinking (e.g., summarizing, describing, interpreting, etc.) Synchronous interactions are used mostly for instructor explanation or clarification of content, or other instructor-focused activities	Little to no attention has been devoted to communication strategies Interaction activities that are included do not invoke critical thinking, reinforce learning, or take advantage of the specific strengths of the communication tools used
Development of Learning Community	Communication activities are designed to help build a sense of community among learners Student-to-student interactions are required as part of the course Students are encouraged to initiate communication with the instructor Collaboration activities (if included) reinforce course content and learning outcomes, while building workplace-useful skills such as teamwork, cooperation, negotiation, and consensus-building	Communication activities may help learners build a sense of community, but do not appear to be designed with this in mind Some student-to-student interaction is built into the course Students interact with the instructor, although primarily as a result of instructor-initiated contact Collaboration activities (if included) support some team-building skills, but may not purposefully integrate these elements	Effort has been devoted to fostering a sense of community in the course, but only minimally. More focus is needed on designing activities and a course climate that foster student-to-student interactions as well as student-to-instructor interactions.	Little to no attention has been devoted to building a sense of community in this course.

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Interaction Logistics	Guidelines explaining required levels of participation (i.e., quantity of interactions) are provided Expectations regarding the quality of communications (e.g., what constitutes a "good" answer) are clearly defined A rubric or equivalent grading document is included to explain how participation will be evaluated The instructor actively participates in communication activities, including providing feedback to students The instructor uses communication tools to provide course updates, reminders, special announcements, etc.	Expectations of student participation in communication activities are given, but would benefit from more detail Expectations regarding the quality of communications are included, but may be sketchy and lack detail or illustrative examples Minimal information may be provided regarding grading criteria for communications activities The instructor is occasionally involved in communication activities The instructor sometimes takes advantage of LMS tools to post announcements, reminders, etc.	Instructor expectations of student interactions are not made clear Little information is provided regarding what constitutes a "good" response or posting Students are not given a clear set of criteria for how communications activities will be graded The instructor appears to be largely absent from communication activities Few announcements, reminders, or other updates are provided	Few or no guidelines are provided to students regarding the desired quantity or quality of communications and/or interactions within the course The instructor does not participate in communications activities with students;

ASSESSMENT –Assessment focuses on instructional activities designed to measure progress towards learning outcomes, provide feedback to students and instructor, and/or enable grade assignment. This section addresses the quality and type of student assessments within the course.

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Expectations	Assessments match the goals & objectives Learners are directed to the appropriate objective(s) for each assessment Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are provided (e.g., models of "good work" may be shown) Instructions are written clearly and with sufficient detail to ensure understanding	Assessments match the goals & objectives Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are included for some assessment activities Instructions are written clearly, with some detail included	Students are assessed on the topics described in the course goals and objectives There may be some explanation of how assessments will be scored/ graded Instructions lack detail that would help students understand how to complete the activities	Assessments bear little resemblance to goals & objectives Expectations or grading criteria are not provided Instructions are limited or absent

Assessment Design	Assessments appear to measure the performance they claim to measure (e.g., activities are explained using appropriate reading level and vocabulary) Higher order thinking is required (e.g., analysis, problem-solving, etc.) Assessments are designed to mimic authentic environments to facilitate transfer Assessment activities occur frequently throughout the duration of the course Multiple types of assessments are used (e.g., research paper, objective test, discussions, etc.)	Assessment activities have "face validity" (i.e., they appear to match the curriculum) Some activities involve higher order thinking Assessment activities may focus on tasks similar to real-world application of skills Multiple assessments are included; at least three different types of assessments are used	It is not clear whether the assessment activities actually measure the desired skill The vast majority of assessments require only low-level thinking (e.g., memorization) Assessment activities typically do not include tasks that are relevant beyond the scope of this course; multiple assessments are included Two types of assessments are included, at a minimum	Assessment activities appear to lack validity due to bias, lack of clarity in questions or tasks, or because students are evaluated on performance unrelated to the stated objectives No higher-order thinking skills are required to complete assessment activities There is little or no evidence of authenticity built into assessments Assessments are too few and far apart for the course content
Student Learning Styles	Most course content is presented in a wide variety of ways to insure quality instruction for all student learning styles	Alternative modes of delivery of content are present for several portions of the course	Basic alternative modes of delivery (e.g., graphics, media, interactive exercises, labs, etc.) are present for a few portions of the course	Course content is presented primarily as text
Self-assessment	Many opportunities for self-assessment are provided; Self-assessments provide constructive, meaningful feedback	Some self-assessment activities are included Self-assessments provide feedback to learners	There may be self-assessment activities, but they are limited in scope and do not offer useful feedback	A few self-assessments may be included, but they offer little more feedback than flash cards

LEARNER SUPPORT – addresses the support resources made available to students taking the course. Such resources may be accessible within or external to the course environment. Specifically, learner support resources address a variety of student services including, but not limited to the following.

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Orientation to Course and LMS	Clearly labeled tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the LMS and the specific course are included Tutorials are found easily (few clicks) whether internal or external to the course, with easy return to other areas of the course Tutorial materials support multiple learning modalities: audio, visual, and text based	Clearly labeled tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the LMS and the specific course are included Tutorials may not be easily accessed, or require the learner to leave course site without an easy return Tutorial materials support multiple learning modalities: audio, visual, and text based	Tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the LMS and/or the specific course may be evident, but not easily found Materials do not support multiple learning modalities and are text-based only	Tutorial materials explaining how to navigate the LMS or the specific course may be included but are difficult to find, lack detail, are not well organized, or are incomplete Tutorial materials that are included do not support learning modalities

Supportive Software (Plug-ins)	Clear explanations of optional and/or required software including any additional costs (in addition to the LMS) are provided within the courses Software required to use course materials is listed with links to where it can be captured and installed Links are located within the course where learners will use the software (i.e., near the materials requiring its use)	Clear explanations of optional and/or required software (in addition to the LMS) are provided within the course Software required to use course materials is listed but links to where it can be captured and installed are not found near where it will be used	Software (in addition to the LMS) required to use course materials is mentioned, but not explained Links to where it can be captured and installed are provided, although they may not be conveniently located	The need for additional software required to use course materials may be mentioned Links to software may be missing or incomplete
Instructor Role and Information	Contact information for the instructor is easy to find and includes multiple forms of communication (for example, e-mail, phone, chat, etc.) Expected response time for e-mail replies is included The Instructor's role within the course is explained (for example, whether he/she will respond to "tech support" type questions) The instructors methods of collecting and returning work are clearly explained	Contact information for the instructor is included but may not be easy to find; contact information includes more than one type of communication tool Expected response time for e-mail replies may be included Instructor's role within the course is not clearly spelled out to students The instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are clearly explained	Contact information for the instructor is provided but not easy to find Contact information includes only one way to reach the instructor Information concerning response time for e-mail replies is not included Little or no information is given regarding the instructor's role in the course The instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are evident but not clearly explained	Contact information for the instructor is sketchy, at best Lacks information concerning response time for e-mail replies is included Information regarding the instructor's role in the course is not included Instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are confusing or non-existent;
	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Course Institutional Policies & Support	Links to institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are clearly labeled and easy to find Links allow easy navigation from the course to the information and back; course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette are easy to find and written clearly to avoid confusion Links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid office are clearly labeled and easy to find	Links to institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are included but may require searching to find Links allow easy navigation from the course to the information and back Course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette are included and are written clearly to avoid confusion Links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid office may be included but require searching to find	Links to some institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are included but are difficult to find Course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette are included but are not clearly written or would benefit from more detail A few links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid office may be included but require searching to find	Links to some institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are not included Some course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette may be included but are not clearly written or would benefit from more detail Links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid office are not included

Technical Accessibility Issues	Course materials use standard formats to ensure accessibility If specific software is required to which some learners may not have access, alternative file types are provided Large files are identified to help learners consider download times Alternative (smaller) files are provided where appropriate Video are streamed whenever possible; graphics are optimized for web delivery and display without needing extensive scrolling	Course materials use standard formats to ensure accessibility If specific software is required to which some learners may not have access, alternative file types are sometimes provided Large files are not identified as such; alternative (smaller) files are not provided Video files are streamed in some cases Graphics are not be optimized for web delivery but display without extensive scrolling	Course materials use standard formats to ensure accessibility If specific software is required to which some learners may not have access, alternative file types are not provided Large files are not identified as such and alternative (smaller) files are not provided Video files are not streamed Graphics are not optimized for web delivery and may require extensive scrolling	Course materials sometimes use standard formats to ensure accessibility If specific software is required to access course materials, no mention of this is included and alternative file types are not provided Large files are not identified as such and alternative (smaller) files are not provided Video files are not streamed Graphic files are not optimized for web delivery and require extensive scrolling
Accommodations for Disabilities	Supportive mechanisms allow learners with disabilities to participate fully in the online community The design and delivery of content integrate alternative resources (e.g., transcripts) or enable assistive processes (e.g., voice recognition) for those needing accommodation Links to institutional policies, contacts, and procedures for supporting learners with disabilities are included and easy to find Design factors such as color, text size manipulations, audio and video controls, and alt tags reflect universal accessibility considerations	Supportive mechanisms allow learners with disabilities to participate in the online community for most activities The design and delivery of content integrate some alternative resources or enable assistive processes for those needing accommodation Links to institutional policies, contacts, and procedures to support learners with disabilities are included but may not be easy to find Design factors such as color, text size manipulation, audio and video controls, and alt tags have been considered in some cases	Supportive mechanisms allow some learners with disabilities to participate fully in the online community The design and delivery of content do not include alternative resources nor enable assistive processes for those needing accommodation Links to institutional policies, contacts, and procedures to support learners with disabilities are not evident Design factors such as color, text size manipulation, audio and video controls, and alt tags have not been considered	Supportive mechanisms allow some learners with disabilities to participate in the online community for some activities The design and delivery of content do not apply alternative resources nor enable assistive processes for those needing accommodations Links to institutional policies, contacts, and procedures to support learners with disabilities are not evident Design factors such as color, text size manipulation, audio and video controls, and alt tags have not been considered
	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Incomplete
Feedback	Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design and course content both during course delivery and after course completion Feedback mechanisms allow students to participate anonymously in course evaluation	Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content, but only after course completion Feedback mechanisms allow students to participate anonymously in course evaluation	Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design or course content, but only after course completion Feedback mechanisms do not guarantee privacy to the student	Learners do not have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design or course content Feedback mechanisms do not guarantee privacy to the student

Date of Conference before course review/evaluation _____   Date of Conference after course review/evaluation _____

Reviewer's Title _____   Reviewer's Signature _____

Reviewer's Name (Print) _____   Signature of instructor: _____

Faculty Senate Open Meeting

May 2025

Agenda

- 12:30: Welcome (introduction) and call to order
- 12:32: Approval of previous minutes
- 12:35: Parking Updates and Q&A, Assistant Chief Bradley Standerfer, UT Tyler Police Department
- 1:50: Provost updates, Dr. Amir Mirmiran
- 1:05: Academic Affairs Updates, Dr. Lou Ann Berman, Associate Provost for Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness

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CPL PURPOSE

Expand opportunities for UT Tyler adult learners to earn CPL based on faculty verified demonstration of knowledge, competencies, and/or skills attained through professional experiences and non-traditional learning pathways.

CPL DEFINITION

Academic college-level credit awarded by qualified faculty in the discipline for learning related to a specific course that was gained outside of the traditional academic environment.

UT TYLER CPL ACADEMIC CREDIT

UT Tyler CPL is awarded *only* for documented LEARNING gained through experiences and not just for having had a particular experience.

CPL OVERARCHING GOALS

➢ **Protect the integrity, quality, rigor, value, and credibility of UT Tyler programs and academic credits.**

➢ **Ensure that all UT Tyler academic credit awards are determined by qualified faculty in the discipline using recognized approved assessment methods.**

2025-2026 UT TYLER CPL PILOT

➢Summer/Fall 2025 - CPL Advisory Team Appointments

➢Fall 2025 and Ongoing - Professional Development for Academic Advisors, BAAS faculty and other faculty interested in learning more about CPL options for their students.

➢Spring 2026 - Launch CPL Portfolio in BAAS Program

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CPL PLANNING TEAM

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Dr. Poonam Kumar, Associate Provost Online and Continuing Education 2022-2025

Dr. Colleen Swain, Associate Provost Academic Success and Undergraduate Dean

Dr. Troy White, University Registrar

Dr. Gilbert Ramirez, School of Health Professions Associate Dean of Assessment, Analysis, and Accreditation; Population Health Leadership and Analytics Department Chair; Master of Public Health Professor and Program Director

Coby Dillard, Director, Military Veterans Success Center

Dr. Lou Ann Berman, Associate Provost Continuous Improvement and Accreditation

Agenda

- 1:20: Peer Observations of Teaching, Dr. Neil Gray, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

- 1:35: Information about exterior building signage and interactive campus maps, Jeff Noblitt, Vice President for Marketing

- 12:45: Faculty Senate President's updates

- 1:50: Adjournment

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Task Force Recommendations for Fall 2025 (Updated)

- 1. Annual Peer Observation for All Faculty
  - Every faculty member should participate in one observation per academic year.
  - However, first-year faculty are not expected to serve as peer observers. While being observed is important early on, serving as an observer should be optional during their first year, depending on their readiness and departmental context.
  - Departments may choose to involve new faculty in observer-in-training or mentoring partnerships for development purposes, but this should not be required.

Terminology: Rebrand Locally, Align Systemically

- 2. Terminology: Rebrand Locally, Align Systemically
  - Encourage internal use of terms such as "peer learning" or "peer mentoring" to reflect the developmental nature of the process.
  - In formal evaluations or reports submitted to UT System, use the required term "peer evaluation or observation" to maintain alignment with system expectations.

Eliminate Rank and Tenure Restrictions

- 3. Eliminate Rank and Tenure Restrictions
  - Remove policies that restrict peer reviewers to higher-rank or tenured faculty only.
  - Observations should be based on teaching insight and training, not formal rank.
  - Junior faculty can offer valuable insights; confidentiality and collegial norms should mitigate power dynamics.

Strengthen Online Peer Observation Processes

- 4. Strengthen Online Peer Observation Processes
  - All departmental policies must include specific procedures for observing online and hybrid courses.
  - Observers should receive training tailored to evaluating digital learning environments, using an updated version of the institution's Online Instruction Checklist.
  - Departments should adapt tools to account for course format, enrollment size, and discipline.

Encourage Collaborative Peer Structures with Flexibility

- 5. Encourage Collaborative Peer Structures with Flexibility
  - Departments are encouraged to implement teaching triangles or observer pairs to foster a culture of mutual learning and distribute observation responsibilities equitably.
  - However, structured group models should not preclude faculty from requesting a specific peer to serve as their reviewer. Requests based on mentoring relationships, teaching respect, or disciplinary alignment should be honored when feasible.

Faculty Reflection Narrative

- 6. Faculty Reflection Narrative
  - Following each observation, faculty should complete a brief reflection that considers what they have learned from their peer and the peer learning experience.
  - These reflections are written by the faculty member and are included in evaluation files.
  - Departments are encouraged to support and recognize reflective narratives as part of annual or promotion reviews when appropriate.

Policy Review Cycle

- 7. Policy Review Cycle
  - All departmental peer review policies must be updated by Fall 2025.
  - Policies should be reviewed every three years to ensure relevance to changing teaching practices and modalities.

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End-of-Course Evaluations

- Eight faculty from the main campus and one from the health science center campus, comprising all eight colleges
- Six people from health professions
- Six administrators
- Three students, including the SGA president
- Met many times since 2021
- Faculty Senators actively consulted, both formally and on an ad-hoc basis

End-of-Course Evaluations

- Evaluation Window:
  - Evaluations remain open through the final exam period, but before final grades are posted.

- No Bias Observed:
  - Multiple years of data show no significant difference in instructor evaluation scores based on whether students responded before or during finals.

- Exception Handling:
  - If a faculty member can demonstrate an outlier case, evaluations submitted during finals may be excluded upon request.

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Changes to the Emeritus Process

- Eligibility criteria for committee members were revised:
  - The requirement that members be "tenured" was removed. Members must now simply be full-time faculty with at least six years of continuous service and no administrative position above department chair.

- Nomination eligibility language was clarified:
  - The invitation to submit nominations now applies to all full-time faculty with six years of service, not just "tenured members of the faculty."

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Changes to the Emeritus Process

- At closed session, Faculty Senators unanimously supported extending Emeritus eligibility to Lecturers and Distinguished Senior Lecturers with six years of continuous full-time service.

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Faculty Senate meetings

- Open sessions (this meeting)
  - Monthly forum that brings together faculty, staff, and administrators to provide updates and foster discussions
  - Open to everyone
  - Hosted by Faculty Senate

- Closed sessions
  - Monthly meetings for Faculty Senators to brainstorm and strategize
  - Open to Faculty Senators as well as the Faculty Senate executive committee

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Faculty Senate

- Composition: Elected from among the faculty body
- Purpose: Facilitate shared governance by providing a platform for faculty to participate in the decision-making processes of the institution
- Shared governance: Faculty and university administrators, with a shared stake in the success of our institution, working together in service of our common goals

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The University of Texas at Tyler
Credit for Prior Learning Policy and Guidelines
2025-2026

Credit for Prior Learning Purpose

To expand opportunities for UT Tyler adult learners to earn Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) that demonstrates knowledge, competencies, and/or skills attained through professional experiences and non-traditional learning pathways.

Policy Description

The UT Tyler Policy for CPL describes the process and guidelines to award academic credit based on evidence of college-level learning acquired outside of the traditional classroom as a high-quality pathway toward degree completion.

The policy sets forth expectations to ensure that the CPL process and practices are consistent with recognized practices in higher education and follow all UT Tyler, UT System, THECB, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policies, requirements, and Principles of Accreditation.

The UT Tyler CPL Policy includes the transfer of CPL credit toward degree completion at UT Tyler when transferred from a previous institution accredited by a recognized institutional accrediting agency and following all UT Tyler transfer credit award policies. Credit for prior learning awarded and applied at a previous institution may or may not be applicable to the UT Tyler program of study, depending upon the student's degree requirements and the number of elective credits from the transfer institution.

Definitions

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)
Academic college-level credit awarded by qualified faculty in the discipline for learning related to a specific course or subject that the adult learner gained outside of the traditional academic environment such as military service, on-the-job training, volunteering, and previous work experience.

Adult Learner
Adult learners are typically working professionals, career changers, military personnel, or individuals returning to college after a break. They bring valuable skills and knowledge gained through work experience, industry certifications, military training, or other non-traditional learning pathways. Offering CPL recognizes this experience and provides a

structured way for these learners to earn academic credit, accelerating their path to degree completion while reducing time and cost.

CPL GOALS*

1. Prioritize the award of transfer credit and credit for prior learning, and its application to degree requirements, as an essential component of student success. Establish a UT Tyler campus community culture that recognizes the prior learning adult learners bring with them as an asset.

2. Adjust UT Tyler end-to-end policies and practices to improve the ability of students to receive credit for learning already acquired, including removing unnecessary obstacles that prevent students from accessing their transcripts to continue their education at another institution.

3. Leverage innovative technologies to facilitate the review of credit, to provide greater consistency across credit award determinations, and to increase the efficiency and timeliness of the process.

4. Improve transparency by providing information about how credit will be awarded and will be applied to the adult learner's degree pathway prior to upfront and. preferably, before enrollment.

5. Dedicate the resources necessary to ensure quality advising that provides adult learners with early, knowledgeable, and personalized information and guidance at key points throughout the course of their learning pathway.

CPL Guiding Principles

These principles accompany the UT Tyler *Academic Catalog* academic award policies to detail processes in which the different types of transfer and nontraditional learning are evaluated, awarded credit and/or accepted. Nontraditional learning credit awarded must maintain the reputation, integrity, quality and value of UT Tyler academic programs. *UT Tyler CPL is awarded **only** for documented learning gained through experiences and not just for having had a particular experience.*

1. UT Tyler will follow a systematic process through which adult learners earn academic credit for prior learning. Two overarching goals are considered in all decisions: to protect the integrity and credibility of UT Tyler programs and academic credits and to ensure that all UT Tyler academic credit awards are determined by qualified faculty in the discipline.

2. A CPL Advisory Team will assure the maintenance of uniform academic standards regarding the assessment of prior learning and provide for a uniform transfer of credit for prior learning attained from institutions UT Tyler transfer students attended. The CPL Advisory Team members will include representatives from the Registrar's Office, the Military Veteran's Success Office, and the Assessment Team, Graduate Dean, Associate Provost for Academic Success and Undergraduate Dean, and program coordinators representing participating programs.

3. Adult learners are eligible to earn credit for prior learning upon matriculation at UT Tyler.

4. All awarded credit for prior learning will be appropriately identified by source and method on the UT Tyler transcript codes established by the University Registrar.

5. In the interest of accurate recognition of learning, credit for prior learning should be for specific courses offered in a UT Tyler program.

6. Faculty will assign the course title and number to the credit awarded and the neutral grade of CR (credit) will be used to designate credit awarded for prior learning. Conventional letter grades will not be awarded.

7. Credit for prior learning must apply towards degree requirements.

8. Credit for prior learning do not fulfill UT Tyler residency requirements.

9. Credit for prior learning will not be awarded if credit has already been granted through other college-level courses.

10. Credit for prior learning must be less than 25% of the semester credit hours required for any undergraduate or graduate degree.

11. Credit for prior learning awarded and applied at UT Tyler may or may not be applicable to the program of study at another institution, depending upon the student's degree requirements and the number of elective credits in the program of study at the transfer institution.

Approved Methods for Assessing Prior Learning

UT Tyler awards credit for prior learning by reviewing and validating the learning on an individual bases using recognized approved methods and instruments. The CPL Advisory Team will review the approved assessment methods annually and make recommendations to the Provost and Faculty Senate. The process will be piloted first in the BAAS degree program in Spring 2026 and then expanded to other programs.

Portfolio Development and Assessment

A portfolio assessment will be used as a structured method for evaluating adult learners' prior learning gained through work experience, training, and other non-traditional learning experiences. Students will compile a portfolio that documents their competencies, reflections, and evidence of learning, aligning with course and program outcomes. A standard template for portfolio development will be used that will be provided on the website for students to access and submit their portfolios. The process for assessing the portfolio is outlined below:

Step 1: Portfolio Inquiry & Initial Consultation
- The student expresses interest in earning credit for prior learning and contacts academic advisor.
- The student meets with the academic advisor to determine eligibility and review potential courses for CPL.
- The academic advisor reviews the required components of the CPL portfolio and provides additional guidance based on the adult learner's professional learning experiences, chosen academic pathway, and professional goals.

Step 2: Application & Portfolio Submission for CPL Assessment
- The student submits a formal **CPL application** identifying relevant work experience, certifications, military training, or other learning experiences. Student will use the format provided on the University website.
- The application includes supporting documents such as resumes, certificates, training transcripts, industry certifications, or job descriptions.
- The Academic Advisor reviews the application for completeness and forwards the application to the appropriate department chair, who will then assign it to a faculty based on the course discipline for which CPL Credit will be considered.

Step 3: Portfolio Assessment
- The student submits a detailed portfolio with evidence using the online UT-Tyler template (e.g., work samples, projects, certifications, a reflective essay connecting experience to learning outcomes).
- The department chair will assign a qualified faculty with expertise in subject area to evaluate the portfolio.
- Faculty will evaluate the portfolio within 3 weeks of submission and may request additional information/ documentation from the student through the advisor.
- Faculty member determines if the portfolio provides evidence of learning equivalent to college level course based on learning outcomes and competencies and then makes recommendation to award or not award credit.

Step 4. Credit Recommendation & Final Approval
- The department chair and academic dean review and approve the faculty recommendation for credit.
- The Faculty member informs the student of the decision via email or an official letter.

Step 5: Notification & Credit Posting
- Approved credits are processed by the registrar and applied toward the student's degree requirements.
- Approved credits are documented as **"Prior Learning Credit"** on the student's transcript. Students will receive a grade of "CR" with the applicable credits assigned.

Standardized Exams

1. Advanced Placement (AP). AP exams are curriculum-based and are taken after students complete the corresponding Advanced Placement course in high school. Advanced Placement courses are challenging, college-level courses that are designed to parallel typical lower level undergraduate courses. Exams are developed by committees of college and secondary faculty and are given to test groups of students in actual college courses to determine appropriate passing scores. UT Tyler grants course credit for advanced placement courses offered in secondary schools provided the student scores 3 or above on the advanced placement test.

2. College Level Examination Program (CLEP). The College-Level Examination Program is designed to assess students' knowledge on a variety of college-level subjects, regardless of where they may have learned the material. CLEP exams are developed by committees of college faculty who design questions based on what is typically covered in lower-level college courses and who set passing standards for the exams. UT Tyler awards credits for a minimum score of 50.

3. Advanced International Certificate of Education Program (AICE). The AICE program is an international, advanced secondary curriculum and assessment program equivalent to the British system of "A-Levels." AS-Level courses are comprised of curricula lasting one academic year. A-Level courses encompass all AS-Level curriculum as well as additional topics. A-Level coursework is completed over two academic years. Information about the program, including course syllabi, can be found on-line at Cambridge International Education. Credits shall be awarded for grades of E or better (US equivalent of C or better).

4. DSST (DANTES). The DSST exams, are not built around curricula, but rather are designed to test students' knowledge on a variety of college-level subjects, regardless of where they may have learned the material. Committees of college faculty develop exams. UT Tyler awards credit for a minimum score of 400 on the Criterion Referenced test or 45 on the Norm Referenced test.

5. [Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT)](). As part of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center provides resident instruction at the Presidio of Monterey in two dozen languages, five days a week, seven hours per day, with two to three hours of homework each night. Courses last from 26 to 64 weeks, depending on the difficulty of the language. DLIFLC is a multi-service school for active and reserve components, foreign military students, and civilian personnel working in the federal government and various law enforcement agencies. To attend DLIFLC, one must be a member of the Armed Forces or be sponsored by a government agency. DLIFLC students are taught by approximately 1,800 highly educated instructors, 98 percent of whom are native speakers of the languages they teach. UT Tyler Credits are awarded for minimum score of 3.

6. [International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization Diploma Program](). The IB program is a challenging curriculum offered in high schools around the world designed to prepare students for advanced work in many countries' postsecondary systems. Most subjects include Standard Level (SL) and Higher Level (HL) versions, which are taught over two academic years and typically require additional specialized research or independent work. Students who have completed an IB diploma with a score of 29 or less and students who did not complete a diploma will be guaranteed credit for higher-level IB exams with scores of "5" or better. The credit awarded will apply toward the overall number of credits required for graduation and in some cases toward major and general education requirements.

Non-Collegiate Credit Evaluators

Noncredit coursework such as in rigorous employer and military training and education programs or continuing education programs offered at universities and colleges, is evaluated by nationally recognized organizations who offer a recommended credit equivalency to degree granting institutions.

When evaluating programs offered by the armed forces, the UT Tyler Military & Veterans Success Center (MVSC) collaborates with qualified faculty for evaluation of the [Joint Service Transcript (JST]() provided by the [American Council on Education (ACE)](), the [Community College of the Air Force (CCAF]() transcript, and other military records or transcripts. JST credit recommendations are evaluated by using the [ACE Military Guide]().

Procedures for Military Experience Evaluations

1) Initial review and evaluation of the Joint Service Transcript (JST) or Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) transcript will be conducted by the Registrar for quality of nontraditional learning, equivalency of college-level credit to UT Tyler standards and assessment of learning attainment.

2) After the Registrar's review, the JST/CCAF transcript forwarded to the Military & Veterans Success Center (MVSC) for review.

3) MVSC staff will review the transcript for potential equivalences using the ACE Military Guide and CCAF Academic Catalog, as appropriate.

4) The MVSC will make credit recommendations to the student's academic advisor through ACE Military Guide (for JSTs) or via email (for CCAF transcripts).

5) The academic advisor will review the recommendation and seek approval from the appropriate department chair for credit recommendation.

6) The department chair will approve or reject the credit recommendation in ACE Military Guide (for JSTs) OR via email (for CCAF transcripts).

7) If approved, the academic advisor will complete the Military Service Credit Evaluation form with the student. The advisor then sends a copy of the Military Service Credit Evaluation form to the Registrar.

8) The advisor follows up with the Registrar on the final number of credits awarded to the student and records this in Civitas/EAB.

Ongoing Policy Review & Faculty Training

- The CPL Advisory Team conducts an annual review of policies and assessment methods.
- Faculty interested in CPL participate in professional development offered through CETL on best practices to develop and evaluate meaningful prior learning experiences to ensure preservation of academic quality, integrity, and rigor for all UT Tyler academic award decisions and to ensure consistency and fairness for all adult learners applying for CPL.
- Updates are made to align with higher education accreditation standards and industry best practices.

Oversight and Evaluation

To protect the integrity and credibility of this policy, the CPL Advisory Team will maintain the UT Tyler inventory of all CPL awards in accordance with coding designed by the Office of the University Registrar and in collaboration with the Office of Information Analysis using the following criteria:

1. Documentation for all credit awarded for prior learning, to include the method(s) used, the classification of the credits awarded, the amount of credit awarded by each method, and the total number of credit hours awarded through this policy.
2. Summary information of credit awarded through prior learning assessments will be regularly queried and monitored by the Office of Academic Affairs and under the guidance of the Provost.

Policy Review Schedule

The CPL Advisory Team will review the UT Tyler CPL Policy and make recommendations to the Provost annually following the spring semester.

Credit for Prior Learning
Resource Documents

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND ACCELERATED BACHELOR'S DEGREES

Prepared for University of Texas System, Office of Academic Affairs

September 2024

In the following report, Hanover Research examines research literature, trade publications, and case studies highlighting trends and best practices in ensuring timely graduation for bachelor's degree students via robust prior learning credit initiatives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HR | HIGHER EDUCATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an analysis of policies case studies and best practices, Hanover recommends that University of Texas System (UT System):

PRIORITIZE OUTREACH AND MARKETING FOR ADVANCED PLACEMENT AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, OTHER WIDELY-USED THIRD-PARY EXAMS.

Data from Texas, Utah, and nationwide suggest that AP is by far the largest source of prior learning credit. Outreach should prioritize generous credit and course equivalence policies.

INVEST IN STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF TO GUIDE STUDENTS AND ASSIST WITH CREDIT TRANSFER EFFORTS.

Adult, non-traditional, and military and veteran students are often unaware that they may be eligible for prior learning credit and lack support to navigate the process. Investing in staff to market prior learning credit as an accessible and cost-effective option and guide students on credit transfer is an essential first step toward maximizing the number of credits awarded.

CONSIDER DEVELOPING A REQUIRED COURSE IN WHICH TRANSFER AND NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS BUILD A CASE FOR PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT.

The University of Louisville's LEAD 300/307: Prior Learning Assessment is a 3-credit major requirement in the B.S. in Organizational Leadership and Learning in which students work with faculty to build a case for earning between nine and 48 semester credits from prior work or military experience. The course facilitates the often-arduous documentation and review processes while also counting toward the degree.

KEY FINDINGS

The most cost-effective priority area for credit for prior learning is likely to be well-established national exams such as the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST). More than 90 percent of colleges and universities surveyed in 2024 that reported accepting credit for prior learning cited evaluation of non-college education and training and standardized exams as recognized sources. In Texas, an estimated 577,350 AP exams were taken in 2021-2022, and 288,274 of those results were passing scores of 3, 4, or 5 out of 5. CLEP and IB test taker volumes are much lower.

Generous credit policies that grant both general/elective and major credit for prior learning, as well as robust marketing of these opportunities and their potential to reduce student costs and timelines, are essential investments. Credit for prior learning could be playing a larger role in college completion efforts, but institutional policies such as a refusal to consider prior learning for transfer students, more stringent AP credit standards, or limited guidance for students are impediments.

Most institutions do a poor job granting academic credit, and especially upper-level or major credit instead of elective credit, for military or workforce experience. American Council on Education (ACE) policies for course and credit equivalences are too often ignored. More robust transfer policies are likely to require substantial investments in advising resources, as well as faculty time to evaluate military and workforce experience in light of institutional policies and ACE recommendations.

While there is growing interest in abbreviated three-year bachelor's options, accreditors remain hesitant to approve them. The scarcity of examples of these types of program mean that student and employer exposure to them is very limited. Given that elite institutions are especially resistant to granting prior learning credit, it is likely that pioneering examples of three-year bachelor's degrees will face a long campaign to demonstrate their quality.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The University of Texas System, Office of Academic Affairs (UT System) seeks to stay abreast of the latest developments related to the emergence and implementation of accelerated bachelor's degree programs in the United States. UT System has an existing Task Force on Credit For Prior Learning that has taken a deeper dive into the types of prior experiences that may be considered as part of an accelerated degree program. UT System would like to complement the work of this task force by considering the broader opportunities and implementation challenges of an accelerated degree program that leverages students' existing credits and/or work experiences to help students complete a bachelor degree on an expedited timeline while still achieving the 120 credits required by the state for completion.

REPORT CONTENTS AND STRUCTURE

This report includes four sections:

➢ **Section I: Overview – Credit for Prior Learning Current Status and Taxonomy** summarizes the current status of CPL, as well as its major types.

➢ **Section II: Prior Learning Credits Via Third Party Exams** showcases the major exams and their popularity among students, as well as best practices for helping students to pursue exam-based credit.

➢ **Section III: Prior Learning Credits for Non-Traditional Students** examines the role of exams and portfolios in granting credit to non-traditional students.

➢ **Section IV: Prior Learning Credits for Military and Veteran Students** focuses on strategies and best practices for ensuring that military students receive credit for skills acquired during their service.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What strategies are institutions using to grant credit for prior learning, particularly as it relates to accelerated bachelor's degrees?

- Prior learning assessments
- Transfer credits
- Combining associate degrees and work experience
- Tools or systems for assessing prior experiences
- Industry partnerships to articulate credit for work experience

In what ways are academic institutions leveraging these programs to attract:

- AP/IB or dual degree high school students
- Non-traditional or returning students (e.g., military, adult learners)
- UT System stopped-out students

How do students, educational institutions, and employers perceive the value of three-year bachelor's degree programs in terms of career readiness and job market competitiveness?

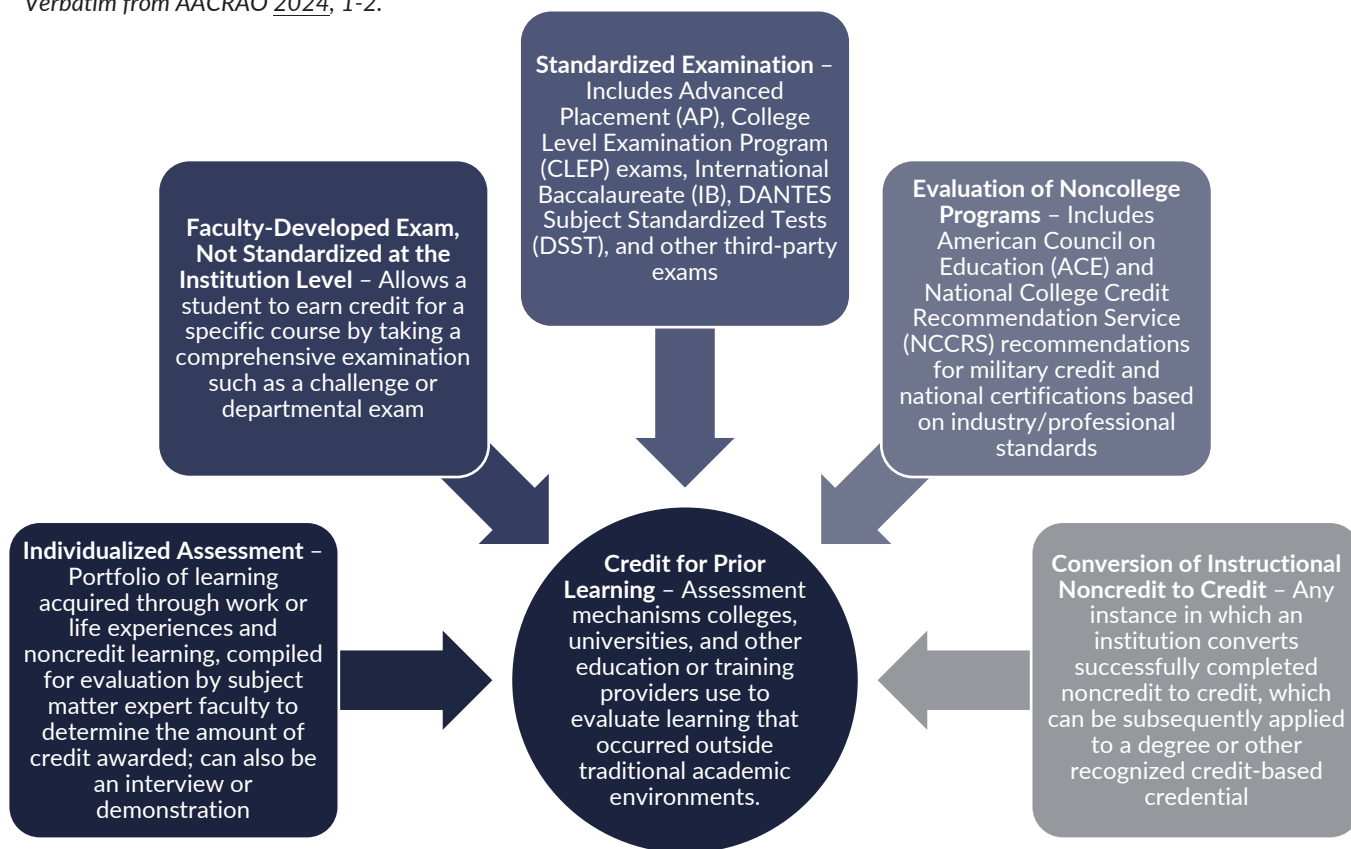# OVERVIEW – CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING CURRENT STATUS AND TAXONOMY

Overview of the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) process and recent trends in institutions' policies and practices.

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING TAXONOMY AND PREVALENCE

The AACRAO divides Credit for Prior Learning, which is currently offered by approximately 82 percent of U.S. institutions, into five types based on the method(s) used to evaluate and assign potential postsecondary education credit; as noted on the next page, Evaluation of Non-College Programs and Standardized Examinations are the most widely-accepted ways of granting credit. Faculty-Developed Exams are among the most labor-intensive option, and the only one of the five types with limited uptake (31 percent).
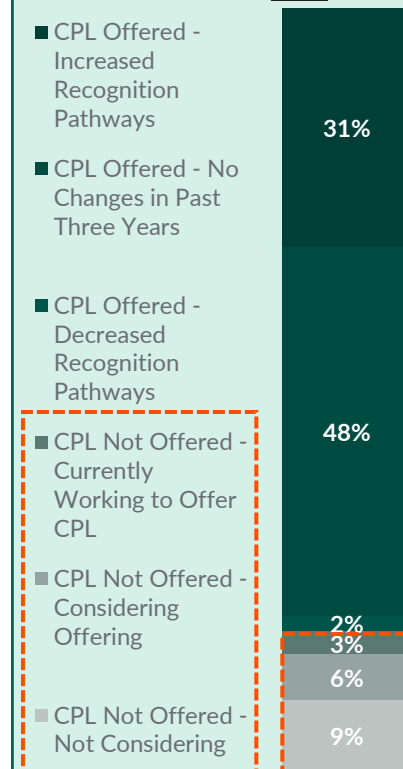
AACRAO DEFINITION OF PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT TYPES
Verbatim from AACRAO 2024, 1-2.

Standardized Examination – Includes Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, International Baccalaureate (IB), DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), and other third-party exams

Faculty-Developed Exam, Not Standardized at the Institution Level – Allows a student to earn credit for a specific course by taking a comprehensive examination such as a challenge or departmental exam

Evaluation of Noncollege Programs – Includes American Council on Education (ACE) and National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) recommendations for military credit and national certifications based on industry/professional standards

Individualized Assessment – Portfolio of learning acquired through work or life experiences and noncredit learning, compiled for evaluation by subject matter expert faculty to determine the amount of credit awarded; can also be an interview or demonstration

Credit for Prior Learning – Assessment mechanisms colleges, universities, and other education or training providers use to evaluate learning that occurred outside traditional academic environments.

Conversion of Instructional Noncredit to Credit – Any instance in which an institution converts successfully completed noncredit to credit, which can be subsequently applied to a degree or other recognized credit-based credential

CPL PREVALENCE
Data derive from AACRAO 2024, 4.

- CPL Offered - Increased Recognition Pathways — 31%
- CPL Offered - No Changes in Past Three Years
- CPL Offered - Decreased Recognition Pathways — 48%
- CPL Not Offered - Currently Working to Offer CPL — 2%
- CPL Not Offered - Considering Offering — 3%
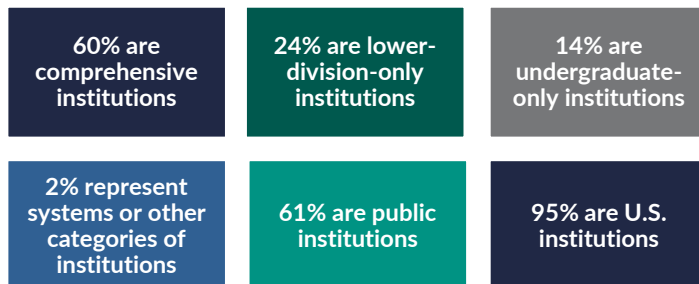- CPL Not Offered - Not Considering — 6%
  — 9%

CPL PREVALENCE AND TRENDS

While credit for prior learning is widely offered among all sorts of higher education institutions, students seeking to earn credits toward their undergraduate degree continue to face challenges in policies and institutional under-resourcing that limit these efforts' effectiveness in promoting faster graduation. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) *2024 Landscape of Credit for Prior Learning in U.S. and Canadian Higher Education* report is one in a series of reports on credit for prior learning dating back to 2014. These reports have been completed in partnership with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), and the 2024 iteration surveyed nearly 400 U.S. and Canadian institutions, of which 95 percent were U.S. colleges or universities (4).

Inside Higher Ed's **Colleen Flaherty writes that the 2024 report's finding that 82 percent of responding institutions offer credit for prior learning is "about the same" as the 79 percent figure in 2019.** To the extent that institutions are making progress in offering credit, their efforts involve new pathway creation (cited by 46 percent of responding institutions with three years of data) and increasing the number of credits evaluated or awarded (48 percent of respondents).

2024 AACRAO RESPONDENT GROUP OVERVIEW
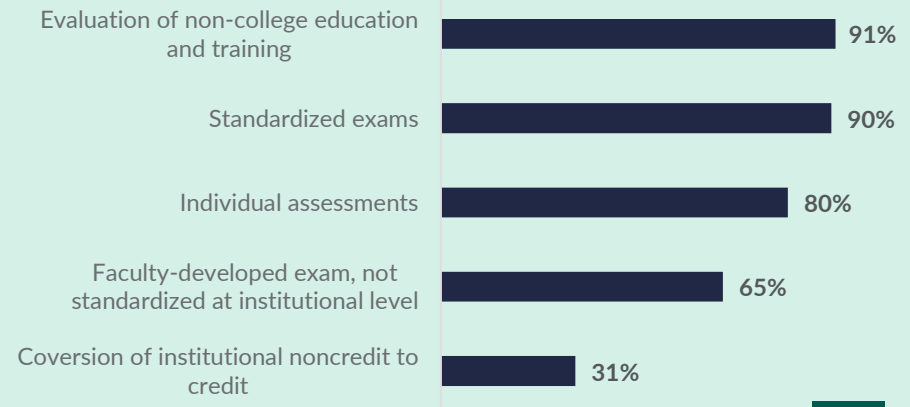*Data derive from AACRAO 2024, 4. There were "nearly 400" survey respondents.*

60% are comprehensive institutions	**24% are lower-division-only institutions**	**14% are undergraduate-only institutions**
2% represent systems or other categories of institutions	**61% are public institutions**	**95% are U.S. institutions**

TOP SOURCES OF PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT
Data derive from AACRAO 2024, 8. Values are the share of institutions accepting each type of credit.

Source	%
Military experience	91%
Professional experience, including licensures	88%
Noncredit courses	80%
Learning aquired outside of a teaching environment	74%
Expired college course credit, updated by learner's knowledge/experience	40%
Volunteering	34%
Self-taught/autodidactically	26%
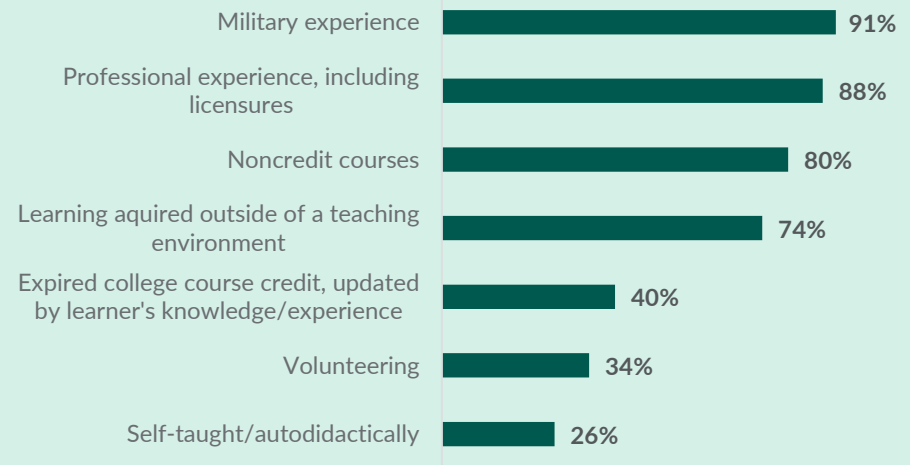
MAJOR PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT PATHWAYS
Data derive from AACRAO 2024, 9. Values are the share of institutions accepting each type of credit.

Pathway	%
Evaluation of non-college education and training	91%
Standardized exams	90%
Individual assessments	80%
Faculty-developed exam, not standardized at institutional level	65%
Coversion of institutional noncredit to credit	31%

HR

HIGHER EDUCATION

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING BEST PRACTICES

KEY FINDINGS – 2024 AACRAO STUDY

Figure reproduces and summarizes content from AACRAO 2024, iv.

(1)

CPL is widely-offered, and the share of institutions offering it and expanding their capacity to evaluate is experiencing modest growth.

82% of the responding institutions offer one or more CPL pathways to learners

Among those with at least three years of data:
- 46% report an increase in the CPL pathways offered over a three-year period
- 48% observed an increase in the evaluation of learning for prior credit and/or the number of credits awarded through CPL pathways

(2)

CPL is still not universally offered to transfer students, credits awarded may be capped, and students may need to already be admitted and pay a fee for credit evaluation.

54% will not accept CPL in transfer, independent of whether CPL is offered at the institution

67% charge a fee for on or more types of CPL; few offer financial assistance to offset any fees

71% of institutions require a learner to be admitted to the institution before CPL can be evaluated for credit; 14% do not and the remaining 16% report, "maybe, it depends on a number of factors"

85% set a limit on the amount of credit awarded through CPL that may be applied to a credential

(3)

Despite strong student outcomes, resource constraints remain a core challenge.

Institutions offering CPL have found outcomes that include enhanced degree completion, learner progression and a reduction in the overall cost of education for learners

Institutional challenges revolve around resource intensity, staffing constraints, and little systematization in evaluation, policy and practice, and faculty buy-in and institutional awareness of CPL

BEST PRACTICES FOR EXPANDING PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT – 2019 NEW AMERICA STUDY

> *Why did colleges have so much trouble putting the programs into place and getting students to take advantage of them? There are a number of possible explanations. Judging from the evaluations, **the three most common hurdles were: lack of guidance connecting students to PLA opportunities, mismatch between how PLA was administered and program design, and continued wariness about accepting learning outside of the classroom.***
>
> *New America, 2019, 14*

In a 2019 report for New America, Iris Palmer and Sophy Nguyen contend that while CPL was relatively widely-offered five years ago (and slightly more so now, based on AARCAO findings), **getting students to seek credit successfully is a core challenge.** Even former military students, for whom there are well-established equivalences between training and skills and postsecondary credit, tend to under-utilize these benefits. Substantial investments in advising capacity, whether through dedicated staff or trained faculty, are likely to be essential for more wide-spread CPL successes (14-15).

Along those lines, making CPL award determinations automatic, or at least highly streamlined, has been shown to increase student uptake (15). New America found that "the more automatic the process was for granting credit for prior learning, the more likely students were to make use of it" (15). For this reason, established programs like IB, AP, and CLEP should be core priorities.

RETENTION IMPACTS OF PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT

QUANTIFYING RETENTION IMPACTS

It is difficult to distinguish the impacts of prior learning credit on student outcomes, regardless of the source of the credits (e.g., CLEP, military experience, etc.). The major challenge is disentangling the credit granted from the other factors and personal attributes of individual students. In other words, the same core attributes could make them more likely to graduate *and* more likely to seek prior learning credit.

For instance, a 2022 study of students enrolled at the primarily online and military-friendly University of Maryland University College found that students who completed prior learning courses via platform called Sophia had better outcomes. Specifically, they:

➢ Completed their UMGC first-term courses successfully at a 22% higher rate than students without Sophia courses.
➢ Continued to the second term at a 47% higher rate.
➢ Were enrolled in their fourth term at an 86% higher rate.

At the same time, the author and UMUC Vice President for Academic Quality observes that: "The students that have been successful at Sophia are successful students. They have the skills to thrive in an online environment and they are among the most likely to succeed at UMGC."

American Council on Education (ACE) findings also suggest that successful prior learning assessment (PLA) is associated with improved college outcomes, but ACE also fails to account for confounding factors.

Credit Boost	Equity Outcomes	Retention Impacts
PLA earners are 17 percent more likely to complete their credential after earning PLA and earn 17.6 percent more credits.	Underrepresented students experience an even larger 25 percent increase in their likelihood of graduating.	PLA credit can save students $1,500 to $10,00 in tuition and 9 to 14 months of study. Both factors likely improve retention.

BEYOND PRIOR LEARNING – DO NOT NEGLECT OTHER STUDENT SUPPORTS

The ACE Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit published a guide entitled *Valuing Military Learning* in 2016, which focuses on maximizing military and veteran students' PLA outcomes. While the focus is on prior learning credit, the authors also stress the need for students to choose their institutions and programs carefully. They cite the following as essential student supports beyond PLA.

NON-PLA SUPPORT CONSIDERATIONS
Sources: Figure excerpts content from ACE, 2016, 9.

Environmental Factor	Discussion
Faculty-to-student ratios	"These numbers – especially in core program classes – may help you understand what your academic life will be like. With smaller ratios, you may be better able to access your program instructors and get more personalized attention."
Advising and tutoring	"Learn what kind of academic advising the school or program offers. If you need help with coursework, find out what kind of assistance the school offers, such as one-on-one tutoring, group tutoring sessions, and/or computerized services."
Student veteran support resources	"Be sure to seek out your school's central point of contact to learn about eligibility for education benefits, benefit application processes, academic counseling, financial aid counseling, and student support services."
Academic accommodations for disabilities	"If you have a service-connected disability or any other need for an accommodation, meet with the … office for students with disabilities. … Explore accommodation options for a disability…"
Job placement services	"Do they offer assistance with military skills translation and resume writing, internship/job placement services, and/or interviewing skills workshops? What are their statistics around job placement and average salary after graduation?"

PRIOR LEARNING CREDITS VIA THIRD PARTY EXAMS

Strategies for recruiting, retaining, and graduating students entering with AP, IB, and CLEP credits.

PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT BY ASSESSMENT

Sources are cited via hyperlinks in the table.

Exam-Based Program	Organization	Cost	Qualification for Exam	Overview
Advanced Placement (AP)	College Board AP exams are approved by the Texas Education Agency	$94 per exam	Students generally enroll in the appropriate AP course to be eligible to sit for the exam, but taking the course is not required.	Institutions may award credits based on student results on the AP exam in 38 subjects. Tests are offered in May and scores range from 1 to 5, with a score of 4 or 5 conveying credit in most cases.
College-Level Examination Program (CELP)	College Board CLEP exams are approved by the Texas Education Agency	$95 per exam	Access to exams is typically provided through each student's high school district.	Remote or center-based exams in 34 subjects; a passing score "could earn three or more college credits at 2,900" institutions.
International Baccalaureate (IB)	International Baccalaureate	$79 per exam (usually paid by the test taker's school)	Students taking the IB curriculum sit for November and May exams in each of six major subject areas. Each area has several course choices.	Most universities award credit for each subject area exam score. Scores of 1-7 are possible, and students must earn 24 total points to earn an IB diploma.
Dual Credit (TEA)	Texas Education Agency	Varies	Academic credit is granted based on local agreements, pending successful completion of the course.	Eligible high school students enroll in college courses and receive both high school and college credit.

ESTIMATED MARKET SIZES

The Texas AP student population is by far the largest, followed by dual enrollment and IB; these data suggest that the University of Texas System should prioritize AP students in its credit for prior learning policies. Nationwide, the number of CLEP exams taken in the 2021-22 academic year was 122,00, down from 160,000 in 2019. While no state-level CLEP data exist, the low national number of test takers suggests that CLEP is not a major method of credit by examination in Texas. In contrast, the AP reports that 1.2 million students in the class of 2022 took more than 4 million AP exams. As of 2020, 89,000 U.S. students took IB exams, suggesting that IB participation is substantially larger than CLEP participation (assuming most students take more than one CLEP exam) but much smaller than the AP program.

TEXAS TEST TAKER AND ENROLLMENT DATA

Data derives from Texas Education Agency, May 2023 (AP, 2021-22) and Texas Education Agency, August 2023 (AP and IB, 2021-22, public schools only), Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (DE, 2019-20)
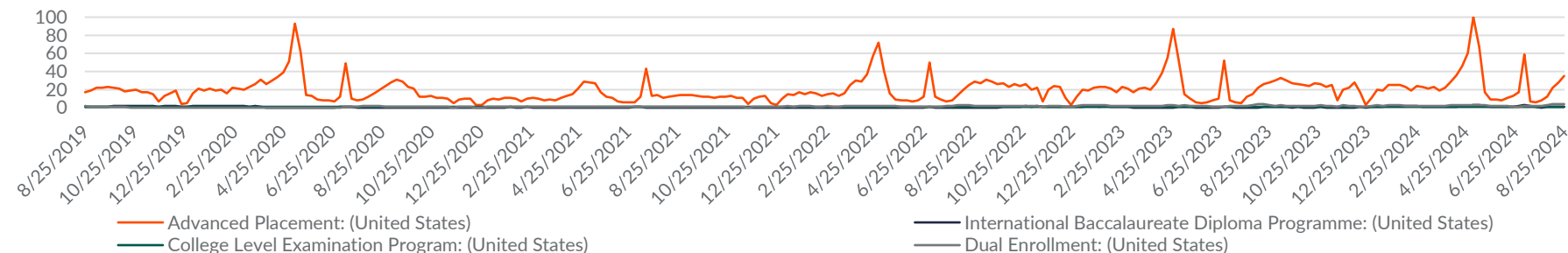
AP Tests Taken (94% were taken by public school students)	577,350
AP Score of 3+	288,274
Dual Credit Enrollment (Non AP or IB)	183,725
IB Tests Taken (Texas public schools only)	20,217
IB Score of 4-7	16,578

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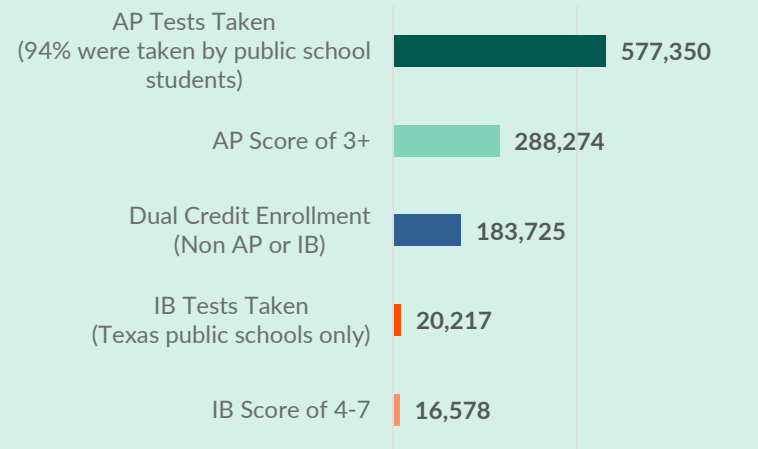
GOOGLE SEARCH TRENDS ANALYSIS

Another measure of the relative importance of different forms of exam-based college credit is Google search volumes, which again indicate overwhelming interest in AP both nationally and in Texas. For the past year Goole was <u>used</u> for 87.45 percent of searches conducted in the United States, including 95.05 percent of all searches on mobile devices. It is also notable that search volumes are highly cyclical, with peaks each spring in April and May when students are typically taking these exams. As shown in the Moz.com keyword search below, most users searching for AP credit are seeking general information, courses, or scores, and informational searches about institutions that accept AP credits are relatively low-volume (<1,000 per month).

NATIONAL COMPARATIVE SEARCH VOLUME, 2019-2024, BY PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT OPTION

Data derives from Google Trends, with each search term classified as a "topic." The maximum search volume within the past five years is shown as a score of 100, and volumes for all four terms are shown relative to that maximum.

Legend:
— Advanced Placement: (United States)
— College Level Examination Program: (United States)
— International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme: (United States)
— Dual Enrollment: (United States)

TOP NATIONAL KEYWORD SEARCHES RELATED TO "ADVANCED PLACEMENT CREDIT"

Data derives from Moz.com search engine analytics Keyword Search tool. Graph shows all highly-relevant search terms with >500 average monthly searches. Hanover has curated the Keyword List to eliminate irrelevant, but linguistically similar search terms (e.g., AP News). Values are the average monthly search volume for the past year.

Keyword	Volume
ap college board	33,923
college board ap scores	17,537
college board ap	11,828
ap classes	9,050
ap central	8,747
ap exams	7,005
ap exam	7,005
ap scores	5,477
ap test	5,176
advanced placement	4,936
ap courses	2,821
ap credit	800
ap credits	800
college board ap credit	731
what colleges don't...	674
advanced placement...	358
ap classes in high...	358
do ap classes count...	346
do you get college...	334
how many college...	310
advanced placement...	275
AP class credit value	275
ap credit policy search	252
ap credit policy	240

TEXAS GOOGLE SEARCH TRENDS

COMPARATIVE SEARCH VOLUME, 2019-2024, BY PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT OPTION

Data derives from Google Trends, with each search term classified as a "topic." The maximum search volume within the past five years is shown as a score of 100, and volumes for all four terms are shown relative to that maximum.

— Advanced Placement: (Texas)   — International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme: (Texas)   — College Level Examination Program: (Texas)   — Dual Enrollment: (Texas)
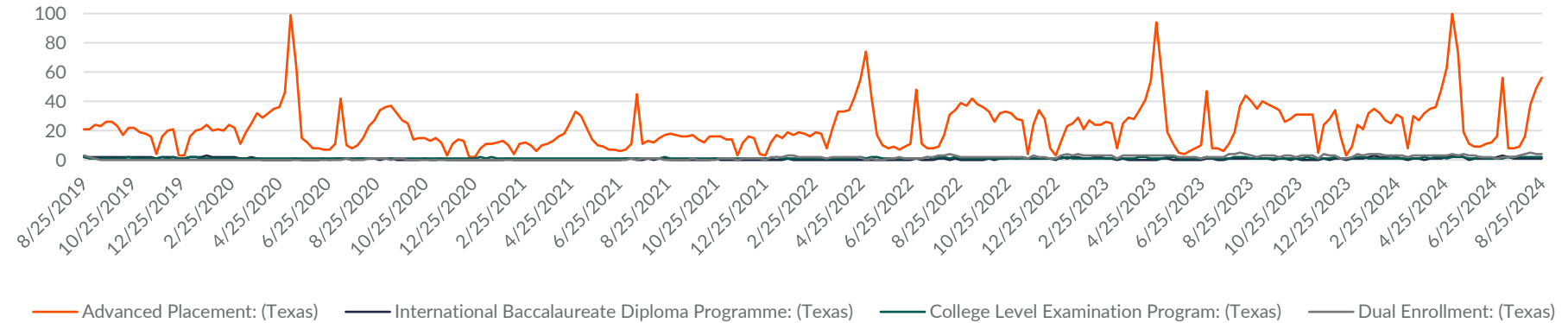
COMPARATIVE SEARCH VOLUME, 2019-2024 AVERAGES, BY TEXAS METRO AREA

Data derives from Google Trends, with each search term classified as a "topic."

- Dual Enrollment
- College Level Examination Program
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme
- Advanced Placement

HIGHER EDUCATION

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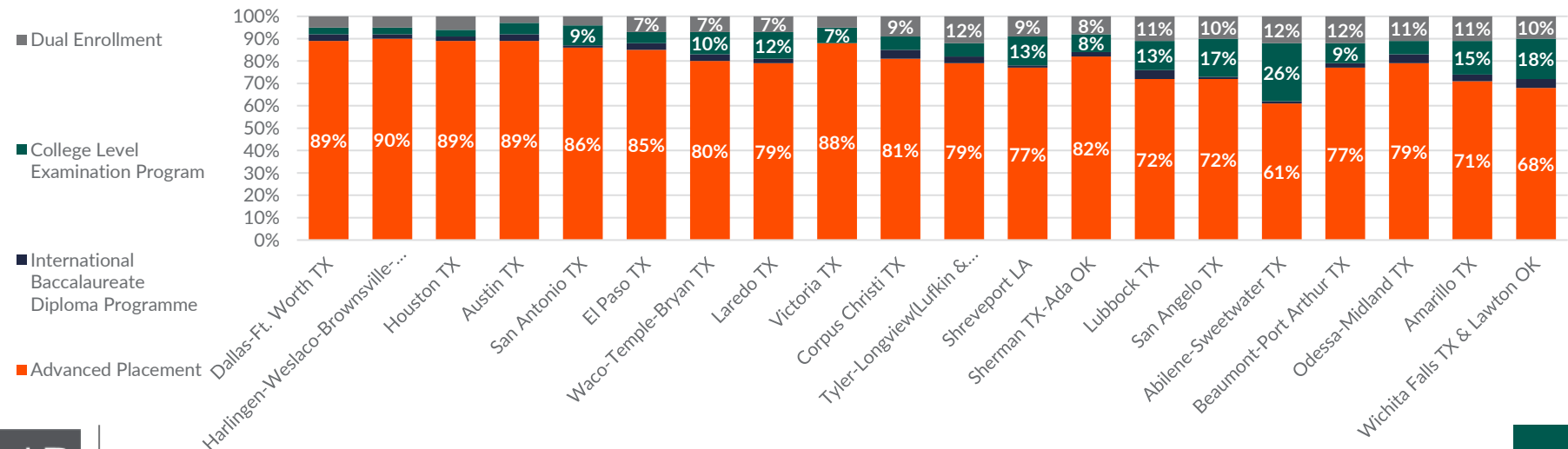
CURRENT STATUS AND CHALLENGES

Despite the prevalence of AP, IB, CLEP, and Dual Enrollment options, they have a longstanding reputation for being only marginally useful in cutting college costs or accelerating time-to-degree, particularly among more elite institutions. A 2017 feature in CNBC cites a 2016 study of 153 top national universities, which found that 86 percent restricted AP credits for incoming students. Common limitations include subject areas where the credits can be applied or restrictions on acceptable scores, with the cutoff set at 4 or even 5 out of 5, rather than the AP-recognized passing score of 3.

The idea of leveraging AP credits to accelerate students' progress through a bachelor's degree is well-established, but there are few examples beyond anecdotal accounts of students who managed to do so. A 2018 *U.S. News & World Report* account describes how one California student "was able to use credits from eight AP exams that amounted to 32 credits – one-fourth of the credits needed to graduate" from the University of Southern California. At the same time, she noted that not all of her AP credit transferred. Another student profiled in that feature entered Purdue University with 39 credits, allowing him to graduate from a bachelor's program in computer science in three years. The article notes that "Purdue gave him more credits for those transfer classes than his in-state options in Texas."

Paul Weinstein Jr.'s 2016 study found that "while the number of students taking AP exams grows, colleges and universities are making it increasingly difficult for them to get actual college credit" (2). The most common institutional policies inhibiting the use of AP credit (or credits acquired via similar programs like IB, CLEP, or Dual Enrollment) include:

- Restrict the number of AP subject areas that eligible for course credit
- Hike the minimum AP score needed to receive credit
- Cap the total amount of AP credit that students can receive

THREE-YEAR OPTIONS AND ACCREDITATION

A 2024 position statement by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) defines a three-year bachelor's option as "typically" requiring 90 to 100 semester credits and expresses concerns about inadequate breadth and depth of study for a streamlined option. They identify acceptance of additional prior learning credits as one of several potential strategies:

- Adding year-round (including summer) options to lower time-to-completion to three years with or without lowering required credit hours
- **Accepting more credits toward the baccalaureate degree, such as: liberalizing acceptance of Advanced Placement credits, accepting credits from the high school International Baccalaureate degree, and/or accepting credit for prior learning**
- Innovating term length and the number of credits offered in a term
- Incentivizing students who do not switch majors after they enroll
- Reducing the number of required credits by recreating curricula and updating baccalaureate degree learning outcomes

More generous credit policies for prior learning by exam could be the most viable path to an accelerated and more affordable bachelor's degree.

Notably, none of the 12 institutions piloting three-year bachelor's degree options are in the SACSCOC jurisdiction, and some of the proposed programs have yet to win regional accreditation. For instance, New England College proposed a 100 credit bachelor's degree in criminal justice, which was denied accreditation by the New England Commission of Higher Education. However, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities approved 90 and 94 credit programs to be offered by Brigham Young University – Idaho and Ensign College in September of 2023.

PRIOR LEARNING CREDITS FOR NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

Strategies for recruiting, retaining, and graduating nontraditional students, with a focus on granting prior learning credits.

UTAH PRIOR LEARNING INITIATIVE

The Utah Board of Higher Education, citing evidence that earning credit for prior learning boosted graduation rates in one study of 230,000 adult students from 27 percent to 49 percent, has encouraged **institutions within the state to "expand the opportunities their students have to demonstrate college-level learning and to earn appropriate credit for it" (1).** While the Board delegates authority to evaluate and approve CPL to the state's public institutions, it has "ask[ed] institutions to expand the range of educational opportunities that may be assessed, incorporate them into the credit award system, and remove restrictions to access" (2). The types of prior learning prioritized by the Board are largely standard.

The major sources of credit hours in Utah are AP credits, followed by credits granted to students for strong SAT or ACT performance, foreign language exam credits, third-party certification exams, and portfolio review. Utah institutions use the Brigham Young University Foreign Language Aptitude Tests to evaluate students' language skills (2).

METHODS OF CPL AND CREDITS EARNED
Utah System of Higher Education Credit for Prior Learning Annual Report, 2024.
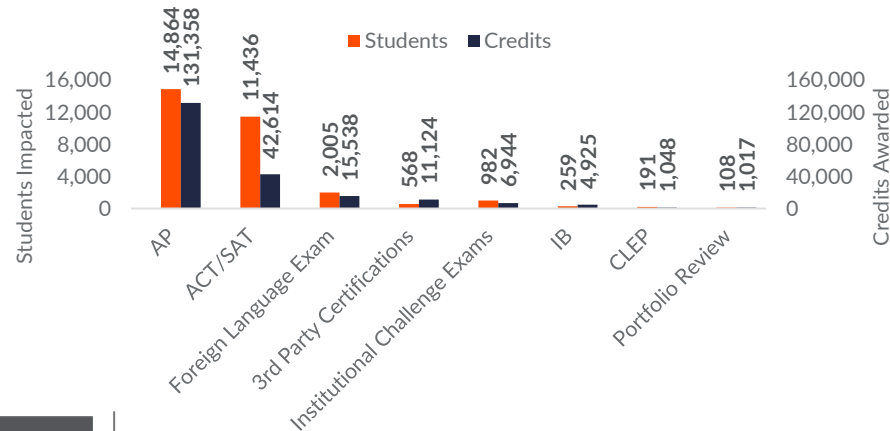
UTAH BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION PRIOR LEARNING POLICIES BY CREDIT TYPE

Source: Content excerpted from the Utah System of Higher Education Prior Learning Assessment Quality Standards and Practices Handbook

Recognized Standardized Exams: [AP, CLEP, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) and IB] USHE Faculty Major Committees meet to make recommendations on the minimum scores/maximum credits and course equivalencies...

Institutional Course Challenge Exams: Institutional challenge exams are developed by faculty or curriculum teams and administered through campus testing centers or academic departments.

Workplace Training Evaluations: Students with workplace education/ training and professional experiences may want to be evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE). ... Institutions should also consider developing assessments for workplace experience through partnerships with local employers ... and should identify when professional licensure standards can equate to course credit...

Credit for Current and Former Military Personnel: Institutions will provide credit for current and former military personnel based on a review of recommendations from a Board-approved postsecondary association to include the American Council on Education and other sources as deemed appropriate by the institution.

Portfolio Assessments or Individualized Prior Learning Assessment Options: Provide [students] with an opportunity to request course credit for knowledge and skills as displayed in a portfolio package of samples of their work related to the specific skills, theoretical background, and content knowledge of a particular course or courses.

PORTFOLIO-BASED CPL

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Utah Board of Regents lists several general best practices for effective portfolio-based CPL initiatives. As shown on the previous page, relatively few students attempt to use this strategy, which can be time-consuming and resource-intensive. Key strategies are outlined below.

STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR SUPPORTING PORTFOLIO-BASED REVIEW
Infographic summarizes content from Utah System of Higher Education Prior Learning Assessment Quality Standards and Best Practices Handbook, 3-4.

Building Institutional Capacity for Portfolio Review	
Invest in and train designated advisors and mentors to guide students through the CPL process.	*Address faculty workload and compensation issues arising from portfolio review, which can be labor intensive.*

Market the Credit Review Process to Students	
Ensure that messages encouraging students to seek CPL is prominent and inviting, rather than intimidating.	*Develop a central PLA website to cover all possible methodologies and explain and provide examples of portfolios.*

Serving Students Seeking Credit for Prior Learning	
Students should work with faculty and department chairs to determine the most suitable means of assessment.	*If a portfolio is chosen, the student prepares its contents with feedback from the advisor and faculty member.*

CASE STUDY – UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA PORTFOLIO REVIEW

The Utah Board of Regents *Handbook* names University of North Georgia as an exemplar institution for CPL portfolio review. The UNG CPL process can only be implemented if departmental or standardized examinations are not a viable option for assessing credit eligibility:

> **A student may request consideration for PLA Portfolio credit for any course in the UNG Catalog, but the eligibility for portfolio credit is not guaranteed.** Traditional instructional methods are deemed more appropriate for specific courses, and portfolio credit is not optimal for all courses.
>
> **Courses available for completion through CLEP, departmental examination, FLATS, and DSST methods of earning credit will not be eligible for credit through the portfolio process.** Also, courses for which the student has already registered for are not eligible unless the student withdraws from the course no later than the last date in the term to withdraw with a W. (7)

As part of this process, students must **"prepare and submit a collection of documents that establish and support their claim that they have specific relevant skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, understandings, achievements, experiences, competencies, training, and certifications aligned with specific course objectives."** The portfolio should clearly link the student's achievements with course learning outcomes. Additionally, the student should "offer a critical self-assessment of what college-level learning has been acquired through selected non-traditional experience" such as "work, training, reading and research, civil and military service, or life learning." Students must prepare a separate portfolio for each course they seek to earn credit for, and faculty assessors must evaluate them (7).

CASE STUDY – CUNY SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES CREDIT PREDICTOR TOOL

In her 2024 *Inside Higher Ed* piece on prior learning credit, Colleen Flaherty profiles the City University of New York School of Professional Studies, which has developed an online tool to help prospective students identify opportunities to earn prior learning credits. The School of Professional Studies "provides online, classroom-based and customized programs of study that are responsive to the needs of our students and our city" with a focus on accessibility. To that end, it allows students to apply up to 45 credits of prior learning toward their 120-credit bachelor's degree and notes that "the total of all prior learning credit, including transfer credit, cannot exceed 105 credits."

The Credit Predictor Tool promises to provide a credit for prior learning estimate in three minutes, and the tool asks a series of basic questions about the student's prior work and volunteer experience, professional certifications, and military experience. The final output, shown to the right of the welcome screen, lists the predicted savings and solicits contact information for a staff member to follow up with the prospective student.

CREDIT PREDICTOR TOOL WELCOME SCREE

CU NY | School of Professional Studies

Get the credit you deserve.

In just 3 minutes you will be closer to fulfilling your dream of earning a credential or degree.

Let's start! ❯

John Doe

We have a great plan for you to earn credit for what you've learned outside of the classroom!

How much can I save?

🖥 Money	📅 Time
$915 - $930	1 months

Just enter your email and learn how this approach could save you time and money.

Email

john@doe.com

☐ I agree to the privacy policy

Learn more ❯

PRIOR LEARNING CREDITS FOR MILITARY AND VETERAN STUDENTS

Strategies for recruiting, retaining, and graduating military and veteran students, with a focus on granting prior learning credits.

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION CREDIT REVIEW PROCESS

The American Council on Education (ACE) is a leading resource in determining post-secondary education credit for military training and experience and "presents credit recommendations and detailed summaries for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the military." Since 1954, ACE has reviewed military education and training programs, as well as occupations. Reviews are conducted by college and university faculty teaching in the relevant discipline, and each review team "assesses and validates whether the courses or occupations have the appropriate content, scope, and rigor for college credit recommendations." The program is administered by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), which conducts it under a Department of Defense (DoD) contract.

ACE reviews are intended to "bridge the gap between professional military education and postsecondary education" by recommending semester credit hour equivalences between military courses and occupations and college or university courses. There are two major types of reviews, each of which relies on college and university faculty members in the relevant discipline:

➢ **Course Reviews:** The ACE review team examines the materials used to deliver the content of a military training course course, including instructor materials, student materials, and assessments.

➢ **Occupation Reviews:** The team examines the official documentation for the military occupational specialty (MOS) or rating and validates the occupation's critical tasks and skills during interviews with service members.

WHAT DOES AN ACE REVIEW ENTAIL?

A 2021 ACE and Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) report observes that ACE faculty reviewers are "subject matter experts" and "active teachers" who are "trained to evaluate workplace "courses and careers" to determine whether the material can be considered college-equivalent learning" (4). They use rubrics to evaluate equivalences between military training and occupations and post-secondary education with a focus on evaluating five attributes of military occupations or courses. These are summarized below.

ACE REVIEW RUBRIC FOCUS AREAS
Figure excerpts content from ACE and WICHE, 2021, 4-5.

Content: *The knowledge, skills, and attitudes imparted by learning areas/subjects, cross-cutting approaches, and performance activities. Topics and subjects are current and align with higher education, professional, national, state, and/or local standards of curriculum. A connection to higher education level concepts exists and is clear and descriptive.*

Scope: *Describes the expectations and breadth of what is to be covered in each content area and the overall instructional goals including content, skills, and knowledge needed. Breadth and depth of content is current and consistent with higher education foci. Measurable, cumulative, and supportive evidence are present.*

Rigor: *Demanding curriculum that causes the application of critical thinking skills to assimilate, adapt, and apply the content, and which is appropriately assessed to the designated scope. Student learning outcomes clearly align with course objectives and assessments. Measurable understanding of content and/or application of knowledge, through assessment, promotes multiple and varied complex opportunities to demonstrate evidence of learning.*

Breadth: *The learning aligns with the full span of knowledge for the specific subject within the academic discipline.*

Depth: *The extent to which specific topics for the academic discipline and subject are focused upon, amplified, and explored.*

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES MAY LIMIT PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT

The WICHE and ACE 2021 report notes that while there is a long list of institutions that nominally accept ACE credit, including University of Texas System institutions, there is substantial work to be done at the state and institutional levels to ensure that military students can leverage ACE credits to graduate more quickly. Specifically, the authors call for additional efforts to engage "registrars, admissions staff and faculty" and articulate clear pathways by which military training counts toward students' major requirements rather than merely being counted as general education or elective credits (10). Many faculty are unaware of the rigor of ACE reviews and therefore are less likely to support granting credit. Moreover, institutions themselves may be resistant to accepting ACE recommendations (11).

> *Many institutions accept the ACE recommendations as elective credit without assessing how the credits might be used to complete core or general education requirements to facilitate degree completion. There is work that needs to be done to address the fair and equitable use of ACE credit recommendations for military training and workplace learning. This includes, but is not limited to, engaging registrars, admissions staff and faculty.*

ACE and WICHE, 2021, *4, 10*

Terry Howell's 2022 feature in *College Recon*, entitled "The Reality of College Credit for Military Service," observes that while "ACE credits are normally accepted at most colleges and universities," they are "NOT required to accept ACE credits and they normally have a limit on how many credits they will accept." College Recon's School Finder allows service members and veterans to search for institutions by state, degree level, and field of study and provides information about credit transfer and

LACK OF AWARENESS AND CONSISTENCY

A 2020 national survey of 1,003 U.S. undergraduate students at public and private institutions who had earned credits from more than one institution found that credit outcomes for the small subset of students with military experience were poor. These students seldom requested credit evaluations of their military transcripts and most of those who did earned fewer credits than their Joint Services Transcripts would indicate:

> *Only 27 survey respondents indicated they had military experience, and just 13 requested their Joint Services Transcript be sent to their current institution. Of those, only four respondents earned all of the credit they expected to earn, six earned some credit, and three received no credit for learning documented on the Joint Services Transcript.*

ACE and AACRAO, 2020, 11

The degree to which institutions accept those credits is highly variable based on a large 2018 ACE study, and ACE has been focusing heavily on evaluating military and industry trainings and occupations in high-demand fields. For instance, in 2018 they prioritized "Cyber Security, Information Technology, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Operations and Logistics, and Leadership and Management."

> *...in the 2018 fiscal year, ACE sent 400,000 transcripts to hundreds of receiving institutions across eight Carnegie classifications. Acceptance of ACE credit recommendations remains an institution level decision with great variability across the higher education community.*

ACE and WICHE, 2021, *4*

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CHALLENGES WITH GRANTING UPPER-LEVEL OR MAJOR CREDITS

One of the core challenges that four-year institutions need to address is the fact that most military experience evaluated by ACE is deemed to be associate's level, meaning it is unlikely to count toward upper-level major requirements. Recent course review annual results have linked only 27-to-29 percent of evaluated credits with bachelor's-level study, as shown in the graph below. One of Howell's major pieces of advice for veterans seeking to convert their training into academic credit is that "most ACE credits are for lower level." More specifically:

> ACE credits are nearly always applied to Associates Level free elective credits, meaning they can apply to cover the required free-elective courses, but they are seldom applied toward specific degree requirements.

ACE CREDIT LEVEL DISTRIBUTION
Results show the range (minimum and maximum) in the share of military trainings reviewed by ACE in recent years that are linked to academic credentials. ACE and WICHE, 2021, 4.

	Maximum	Minimum
Vocational	2%	1%
Graduate	7%	5%
Bachelor	29%	27%
Associate	67%	63%
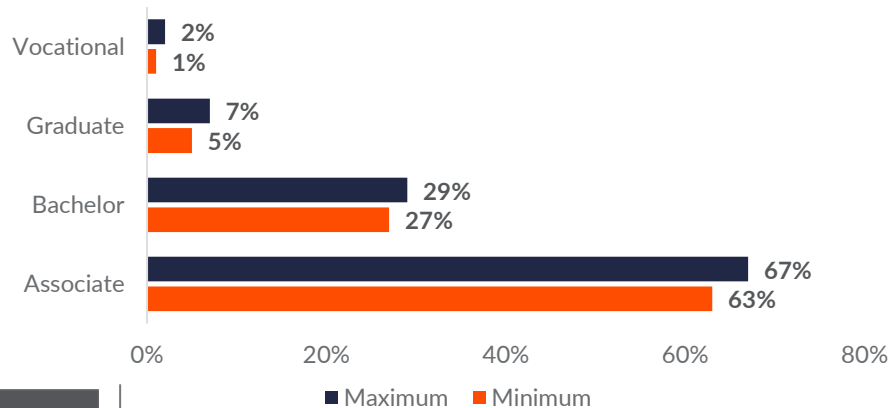
CASE STUDY – BACHELOR'S LEVEL CREDIT

Within the past decade, many initiatives seeking to grant credit for military experience more systematically and comprehensively have prioritized associate's degrees. For instance, the Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit, which did not include Texas among its 14 members, overwhelmingly focuses on associate's degree and certificate programs (36-72). Individual programs that accept a wide range of transfer credits, including ACE recommendations for military experience, exist, but they are can be difficult to find and requirements for students to document their experience for review can be daunting.

One example of an effective bachelor's degree credit transfer program is the Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership and Learning offered by the University of Louisville College of Education and Human Development. The 2021 ACE and WICHE report cites this program as one which has:

> …over the past 20 years, … matriculated military-affiliated students at a high rate because of the university's use of ACE credit recommendations to complete a significant part of the degree, including core and general education requirements. (8)

This degree provides a formal, built-in "opportunity for students to earn college credit for learning and development accomplished outside of the traditional classroom through the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) process." They do so by taking a 3-credit course "at normal tuition cost" designed to help them produce a portfolio documenting their "work experience (i.e., on-the-job training, professional development, etc.) and/or military and /or industry training." A committee then reviews the portfolio and grants up to 48 credit hours, some of which can be applied toward major requirements. The course, called *LEAD 300/307: Prior Learning Assessment*, is a major requirement that also includes an introduction to the major's writing requirements and style guidelines.

SUBSTANTIAL CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING MAY REQUIRE INSTITUTIONS TO BUILD PROGRAMS FROM SCRATCH

In a June 2022 feature on credit for prior learning among military students, National University System president Chris Graham talked to interviewers at The Evolllution and described the process by which his **organization developed a bachelor's-level credit for prior learning program.** This initiative, completed as a partnership between Palomar College and National University and marketed mainly to Marine Corps Sergeant School participants at nearby Camp Pendleton, illustrates how institutions can study what service members are learning and craft a degree program in response. National University is a private, non-profit institution in San Diego that specializes in distance education, and Palomar College is the local community college.

BUILDING A PATHWAY FROM THE GROUND UP
The figure below summarizes how Palomar College partnered with National University to design a military-to-associates-to-bachelor's pathway. Source: Evolllution, 2022.

Palomar College "took a real initiative to coordinate and collaborate," with the Sergeant School on base "to build a Certificate of Achievement, Apprenticeship program, and an Associate of Science degree in Military Leadership."	"Marines who have already completed Marine Corps Sergeant School have the opportunity to use credit for prior learning to obtain their Certificate of Achievement or Associate Degree from Palomar College faster." Palomar partnered with National University to offer bachelor's pathways.	Through its community college partnerships, National University sought to "articulate and develop a bachelor's completion roadmap" with Palomar and "review curriculum and content." The review showed that the B.S. in Organizational Leadership as the best-aligned degree for Sergeant School graduates.

CASE STUDY – TESTING OUT OF CORE COURSES IN A WELL-DESIGNED DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

The ACE and WICHE 2021 report cites the cybersecurity program at University of Charleston, West Virginia, as another exemplary bachelor's degree option in terms of credit for military experience. In this case, planners designed the program from the ground up to align with both Google IT and military standards, enabling faculty to grant substantial credit for prior learning to students who demonstrate military or civilian workforce experience or training:

> The university's curriculum aligns the cyber and network training offered by the Google IT certification program and the U.S. Armed Forces' initial cyber training. The ACE credit recommendations for the Google IT certification is 12 hours and, for the military, it ranges from nine to 15 hours in cyber and/or networking. Using a mix of one or both, students can use relevant, hands-on learning to complete an undergraduate degree or certificate in cybersecurity in a short time. (8)

The program is offered as a two-year degree completion option delivered entirely online and marketed to students who hold an associate's degree in the field. It allows students who have substantial professional experience to test out of pre-requisite courses in Hardware/Software, Networking, and Security. Students who register for the program and wish to test out of these requirements are assigned a mentor and given a study guidebook, then permitted to take each subject matter test. University of Charleston offers this degree at a special $250 per credit hour rate for military students.

ENSURING AWARENESS OF PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT POLICIES

ACE and WICHE contend, and other research agrees, that military and veteran students often show poor awareness of potential credit transfer opportunities and the processes to evaluate credit awards. A 2020 San Jose State University Master of Public Administration thesis surveyed 186 military and veteran students at the university and found that 44 percent said they had received academic credit for prior training, 22 percent said they had not, and 34 percent did not know. Those who said they received credit "were not aware how many credits they received and whether it was already granted" (37-38) which suggests widespread confusion about prior learning credit policies, at least at SJSU.

> " *Many post-traditional students are unaware of how their military or corporate learning can be leveraged as college-equivalent learning according to several briefs in this series.32 Frequently, potential students learn about workplace credit word-of-mouth from other classmates. Usually by this point, students are too far along in their program to effectively capitalize on the opportunity.* "
>
> ACE and WICHE, 2021, *10*

The MPA thesis author, Janani Chandrasekar, argues that "to increase awareness among student veterans, the Veteran Resource Center in conjunction with the Articulation Officer" should "educate students on the various ways credit for prior military training/courses can be obtained" **(48).** One successful example of this process comes from Wright State University, whose policy education and student support efforts are unusually robust. Even there, however, most credits transfer as lower-level general education courses. Chandrasekar's analysis of outcomes at California public universities suggest that most fall well short of ACE best practices in awarding credit to service members (41, 43, 45).

CASE STUDY – EDUCATING VETERANS ABOUT PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT

Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, serves roughly 700 students each semester through its Veteran and Military Center. The campus's proximity to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and long history of serving military-affiliated students means that it frequently ranks among the top institutions nationwide for serving veteran and military students. The Veteran and Military Center is a 4,500 square foot facility opened in 2014 and features "staff members who will help you process your GI Bill® benefits" and provide "academic support and advocacy, career and leadership development, and community engagement."

Wright State advertises a robust credit transfer program facilitated by the VMC staff. They note that "military transcripts are not required (except Community College of the Air Force and Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center) for an admission decision," but they "recommend you submit them for credit evaluation." In terms of credit offerings, university policy differentiates between whether a credit is accepted and whether it applies toward a specific major:

➤ **Transferability** means any eligible military training, experience, and coursework for credit will be posted to your Wright State transcript.

➤ **Applicability** means the transfer credits posted to your Wright State transcript will apply toward your degree. The applicability of credit is dependent upon previously established course equivalencies, statewide policies, and evaluations by academic advisors or faculty. Credits may be transferable, but may not be applicable to your degree requirements at Wright State.

For instance, military students can earn academic credit by taking a Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) Standardized Subject Test, but of the 18 DSST subject matter courses listed, only one replaces a specific course.

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The State of American Higher Education Outcomes in 2023

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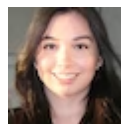Former Senior Fellow, Higher Education
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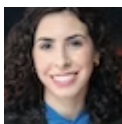
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Is the US higher education system providing a baseline level of quality for college students? To answer that question, we have been regularly examining institutional outcomes in three key areas: completion, post-enrollment earnings, and student loan repayment. These metrics are informative in their own right, and they are also closely intertwined. Leaving college with a

credential in hand is needed to fully unlock the financial and personal benefits associated with higher education, and graduation is a major indicator of future success—college graduates earn more than $1 million more over the course of their lifetime, while those who do not complete are three times more likely to default on their student loans. [1] This report unpacks each of these critical outcomes at over 5,000 institutions of higher education and breaks down the data points by predominant degree awarded and sector, allowing for side-by-side examination of trends in multiple student success metrics across certificate programs and two- and four-year degrees at public, private non-profit, and for-profit institutions in the US.

Much has changed since Third Way published our last update to this report in 2019, yet a postsecondary credential remains vital to obtaining middle-class jobs and economic security. During the pandemic, workers with a high school diploma or less experienced the largest decline in labor force participation, and over the next decade, more jobs—including many of the fastest-growing and highest-paying—will require some level of postsecondary training. [2] Policymakers must prioritize strengthening student outcomes across federally-funded higher education institutions to ensure that the US remains globally competitive, that taxpayer dollars are wielded responsibly, and that students are prepared to enter a changing workforce. This report offers a snapshot of how the higher education system is faring across key performance indicators related to graduating students and setting them up to make a sufficient income to repay their loans—and highlights where more work needs to be done.

Takeaways

Four-Year Institutions:

- Median Completion Rate: 78%

- Median Percentage Earning Above the Average High School Graduate: 76%

- Median Remaining on Loan Principal After Five Years: 90%

Two-Year Institutions:

- Median Completion Rate: 42%

- Median Percentage Earning Above the Average High School Graduate: 59%

- Median Remaining on Loan Principal After Five Years: 102%

Certificate-Granting Institutions:

- Median Completion Rate: 54%

- Median Percentage Earning Above the Average High School Graduate: 48%

- Median Remaining on Loan Principal After Five Years: 97%

Methodology

For this analysis, we examine the outcomes of over 5,000 institutions of higher education using information from the US Department of Education (Department). Specifically, we pull information from the Accreditor Data File, which has information on institutional characteristics, completion rates, loan repayment rates, and the amount of federal financial aid (student grants and loans) that is distributed each year. [3] We also incorporate the earnings of former students from the Department's College Scorecard. [4] Federal data elements are limited to those students who received federal student aid, and institutions

without relevant available data were excluded from each part of the analysis in which data were absent.

For college completion rates, data are originated from the Department's Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS). [5] Specifically, we use completion rates from the Outcome Measures survey, which, unlike other graduation rates, includes students who are part-time, as well as those who have transferred into an institution. Because part-time students are included, we use the most generous measurement period available for completion—eight years after initial enrollment. Rather than count students who transferred out of an institution as a failure, we exclude them from an institution's completion rate. Therefore, only students who enroll and never transfer are included in the calculation. [6]

To examine economic outcomes, we use an earnings threshold that looks at the percentage of former students who earn more than the typical high school graduate (aged 25-34) 10 years after they initially enroll in an institution. The Department calculated the typical salary of a high school graduate at $31,000 per year for the measurement period used in this analysis. [7] So, for example, if an institution had a cohort of 1,000 students and 750 of them were earning more than $31,000 10 years after enrolling, that institution would show an earnings threshold rate of 75%. [8]

To measure loan repayment outcomes, we use a dollar-based repayment rate for student borrowers who attended an institution. This tells us whether a cohort of students was able to effectively begin the process of paying down their education debt within five years of leaving the institution and entering repayment. If an institution shows a dollar-based repayment rate of over 100%, it indicates that their student borrowers now owe *more* on their loans than the amount they entered repayment with five years prior—in other words, their payments were less than the amount of interest accrued over this period. More information on each of these metrics can be found in the appendix of this report.

Four-Year Institutions

Overall, there are 1,823 institutions that predominantly award bachelor's degrees in the US. The typical four-year institution enrolls around 1,794 students, which is similar to the median enrollment of two-year institutions but far more than certificate-granting institutions. They are generally more expensive than their counterparts and serve a more well-off population—though roughly one-third of students at these schools receive a federal Pell Grant, indicating they are from low- or moderate-income backgrounds. And while the time to earn a degree may be longer at a four-year institution and the overall cost may be greater, the payoff is also more substantial. Students who go on to earn a bachelor's degree typically earn nearly 40% more than those with an associate degree. [9]

Quick Stats for Four-Year Institutions

Quick Stats: Four-Year Institutions

1,823 Institutions

8,972,244 Students

550 Public	5,937,843 Public
1,198 Private Non-Profit	2,579,675 Private Non-Profit
75 For-Profit	454,726 For-Profit

1,794: Median Undergraduate Enrollment

$19,427: Median Net Price

35%: Median Percent of Pell Grant Recipients

78%: Median Completion Rate

76%: Median Percent Earning Above Average High School Graduate

90%: Median Remaining on Loan Principal After 5 Years

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data. The median is used for each statistic to provide an understanding of a "typical" four-year institution. Median completion data is limited to institutions with more than 30 students within the cohort.

College Completion

 Most four-year institutions show strong completion rates, with 87% graduating the majority of students who pursue a degree. Over half (55%) graduate more than 75% of students who enroll. However, 214 four-year schools (12%) still leave most students degreeless, even eight years after entering the institution.

College Completion
Four-Year Institutions

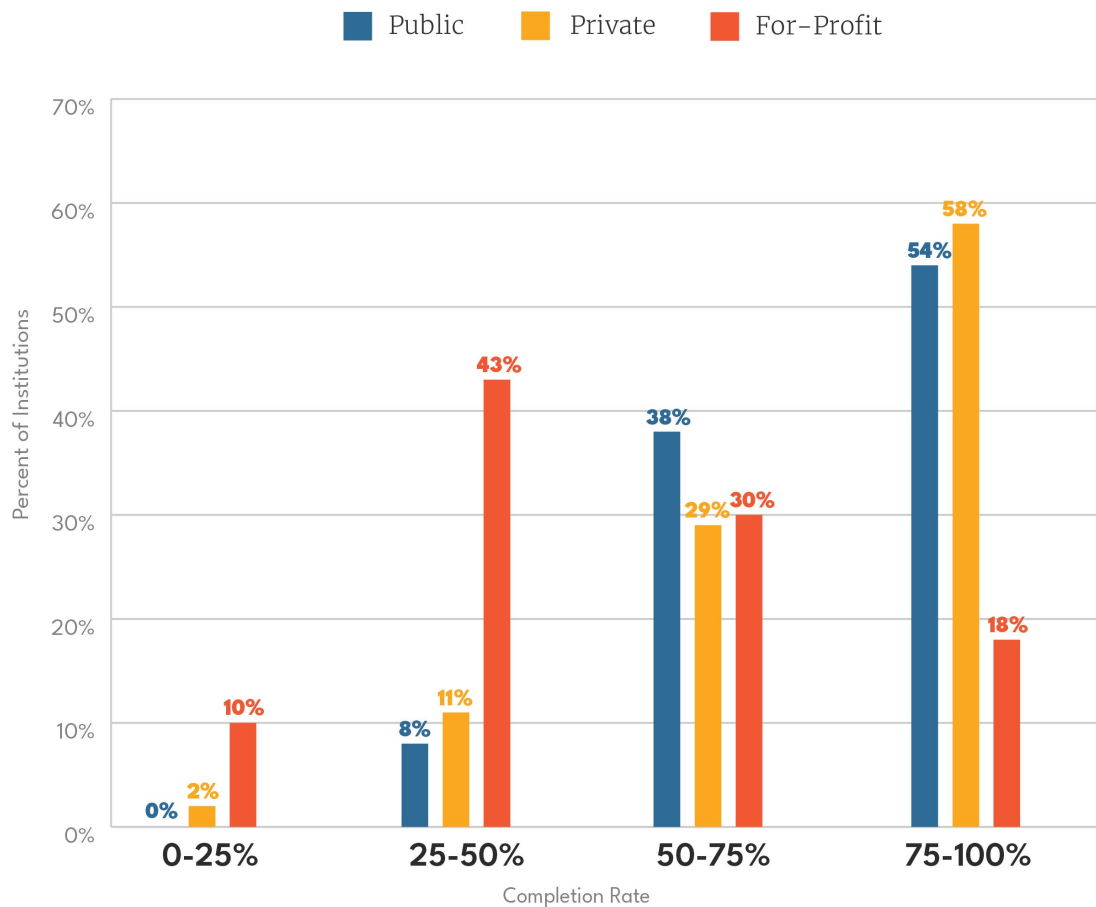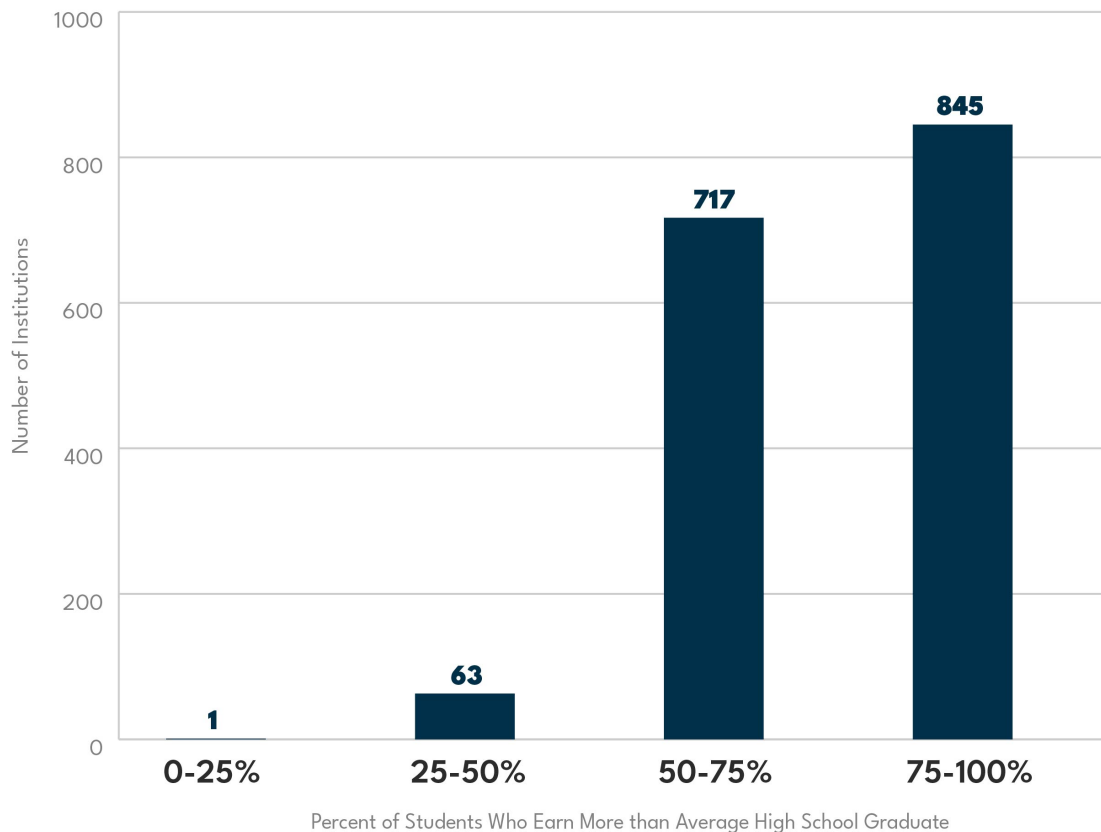**Source:** Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Completion at Four-Year Institutions by Sector

While the overall completion rates for four-year institutions are strong, outcomes can often vary by the sector of institution offering the degree. Nearly all four-year public (92%) and private non-profit (87%) institutions graduate

the majority of students who enroll. And more than half of four-year public institutions (54%) and private non-profit institutions (58%) graduate more than 75% of their students. While there are fewer of them, four-year for-profit institutions tend to have poorer outcomes. Over half (53%) leave most of their students with no credential whatsoever, even eight years after entering the institution.

THIRD WAY

College Completion
Four-Year Institutions by Sector

Public Private For-Profit

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Earnings Outcomes

Students who attend a four-year institution are likely to earn more than if they hadn't gone to college in the first place. Almost all (96%) four-year institutions

see the majority of their students earning more than their peers with no college experience 10 years post-enrollment. And over half (52%) leave more than 75% of their students earning above this minimum economic benchmark.

Earnings Above High School Graduate
Four-Year Institutions

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

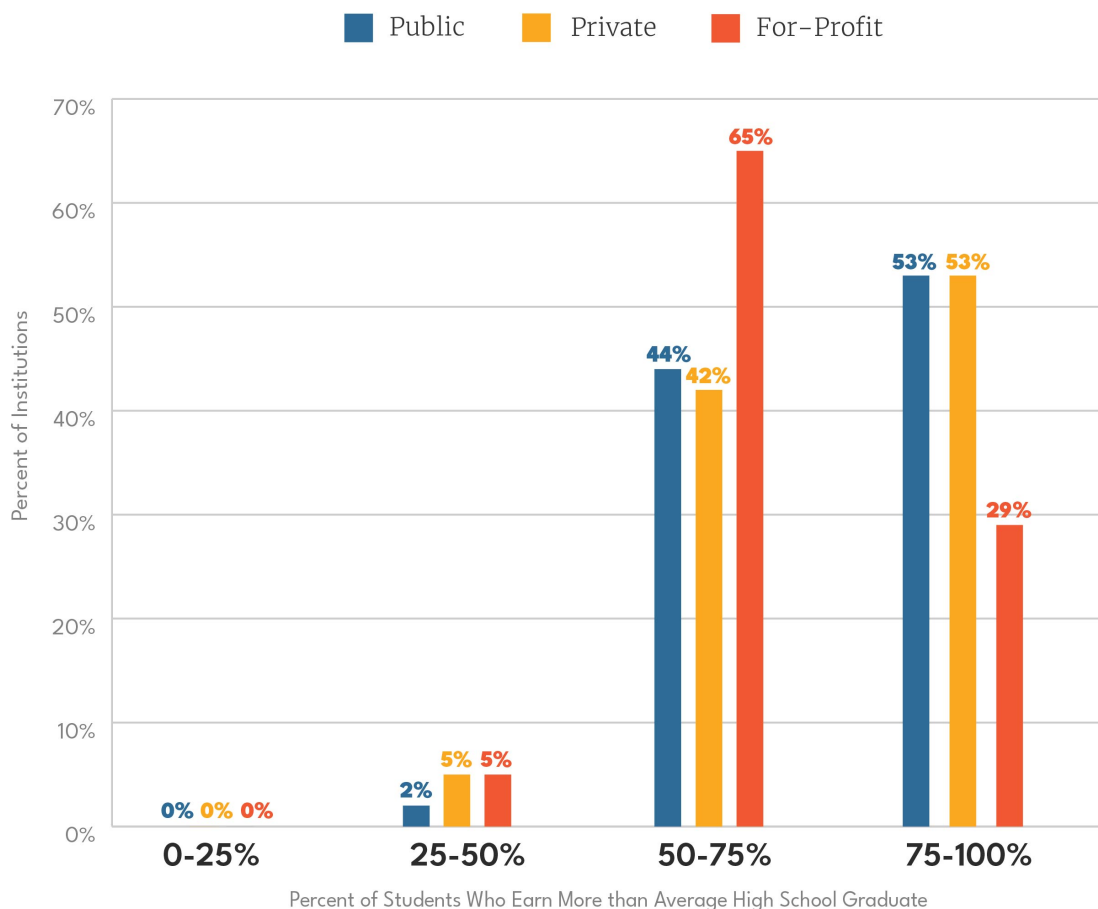## Earnings at Four-Year Institutions by Sector

While the vast majority of four-year institutions show their students earning more than they would have if they had never attended, the typical earnings boost received varies by institutional sector. Generally, public and private non-profit colleges show better earnings outcomes than for-profit institutions. More than half (53%) of public and private non-profit four-year institutions see at least 75% of their students earning more than the typical high school graduate ten

years after enrolling, in comparison to only 29% of for-profit schools showing the same result. However, almost all four-year colleges, regardless of the sector, show the majority of their students earning above this minimum economic threshold.

Earnings Above High School Graduate
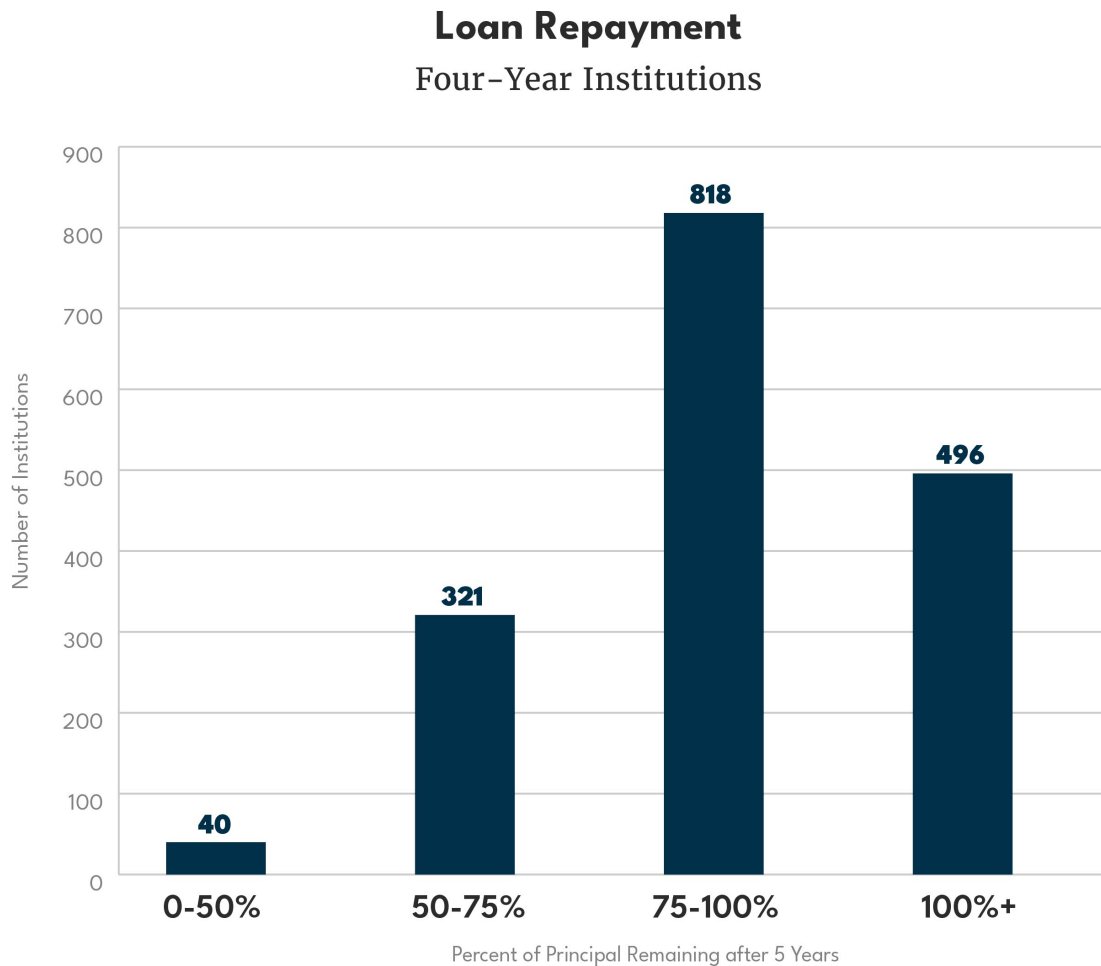### Four-Year Institutions by Sector

■ Public   ■ Private   ■ For-Profit

Percent of Institutions

- 0-25%: Public 0%, Private 0%, For-Profit 0%
- 25-50%: Public 2%, Private 5%, For-Profit 5%
- 50-75%: Public 44%, Private 42%, For-Profit 65%
- 75-100%: Public 53%, Private 53%, For-Profit 29%

Percent of Students Who Earn More than Average High School Graduate

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Loan Repayment

Most four-year institutions leave their students on a pathway to paying down their loans shortly after leaving. Seventy percent of four-year institutions see the majority of students able to begin the process of paying down their principal within five years of entering repayment. However, 496 four-year institutions

(30%) leave their students unable to make sufficient payments to even cover their accumulating interest over this time.
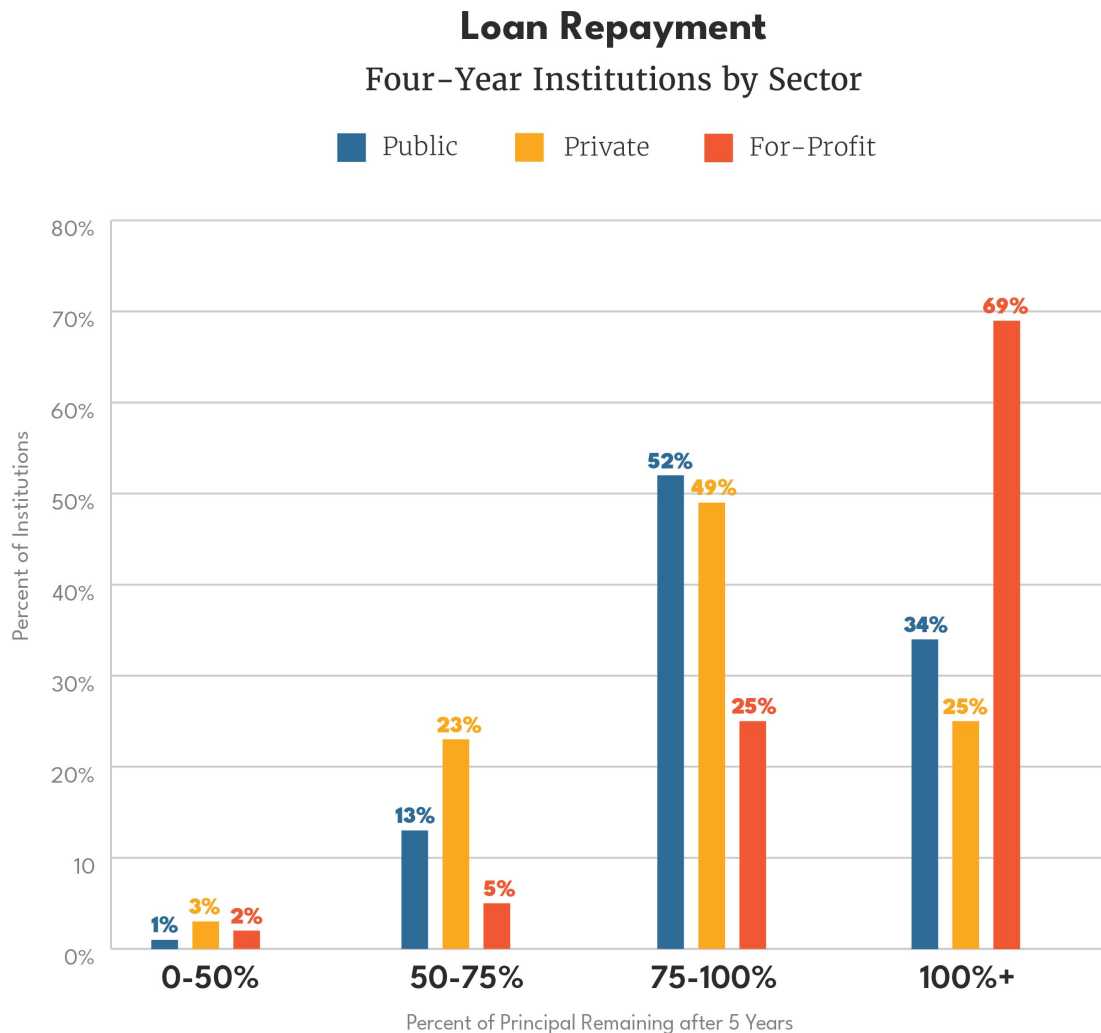
Loan Repayment
Four-Year Institutions

Percent of Principal Remaining after 5 Years

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Repayment at Four-Year Institutions by Sector

Consistent with earnings outcomes, we see public and private non-profit four-year institutions leaving their students with better loan repayment outcomes. The majority of public (66%) and private non-profit (75%) four-year institutions leave their students on a path to paying down their loan balance within five years of leaving the institution. Conversely, over two-thirds (69%) of four-year for-profit institutions leave former students unable to keep up with

accruing interest on their loans, meaning they find themselves owing more than they did five years prior.

Loan Repayment
Four-Year Institutions by Sector

■ Public   ■ Private   ■ For-Profit

Percent of Institutions

	0-50%	50-75%	75-100%	100%+
Public	1%	13%	52%	34%
Private	3%	23%	49%	25%
For-Profit	2%	5%	25%	69%

Percent of Principal Remaining after 5 Years

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Summary

Most four-year institutions show the majority of their students completing college, earning a decent wage, and beginning to pay down their debt.

Eighty-seven percent of four-year institutions see the majority of their students completing their degree. But discrepancies emerge when breaking down completion by sector. Most public and private four-year schools graduate the

majority of their students, but fewer than half (48%) of for-profit four-year institutions can say the same. Four-year schools also see good earnings outcomes—public, private non-profit, and for-profit four-year institutions all show 95% or more of their students earning more than the typical high school graduate. Because students see good earnings outcomes, they're also more likely to start paying down their student debt faster. Seventy percent of four-year schools leave their students on a path to start paying down their loans within five years of leaving. Sixty-six percent of public and 75% of private non-profit four-year institutions show this outcome, but only 30% of for-profit four-year colleges can say the same. While four-year institutions broadly leave their students better off, there is still room for improvement.

Two-Year Institutions

There are 941 associate degree-granting institutions in the US, fewer than their counterparts that focus on awarding four-year degrees or shorter certificates. However, their enrollments trend larger, with nearly 2,000 students at each individual institution. They are often a more affordable up-front option than four-year institutions, with lower out-of-pocket costs and shorter timelines to complete a degree.

Quick Stats for Two-Year Institutions

Quick Stats: Two-Year Institutions

941 Institutions

692
Public

130
Private Non-Profit

119
For-Profit

3,834,827 Students

3,625,939
Public

81,830
Private Non-Profit

127,058
For-Profit

1,918: Median Undergraduate Enrollment

$8,424: Median Net Price

36%: Median Percent of Pell Grant Recipients

42%: Median Completion Rate

59%: Median Percent Earning Above Average High School Graduate

102%: Median Remaining on Loan Principal After 5 Years

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data. The median is used for each statistic to provide an understanding of a "typical" four-year institution. Median completion data is limited to institutions with more than 30 students within the cohort.

College Completion

Two-year institutions graduate a smaller proportion of students than four-year colleges. Two-thirds (67%) leave over half of their students without a credential, even eight years after they enroll, and only 10% have more than 75% of their students completing within this timeframe. Eighty-two two-year institutions (9%) graduate fewer than one-in-four students who enter their doors.

College Completion
Two-Year Institutions
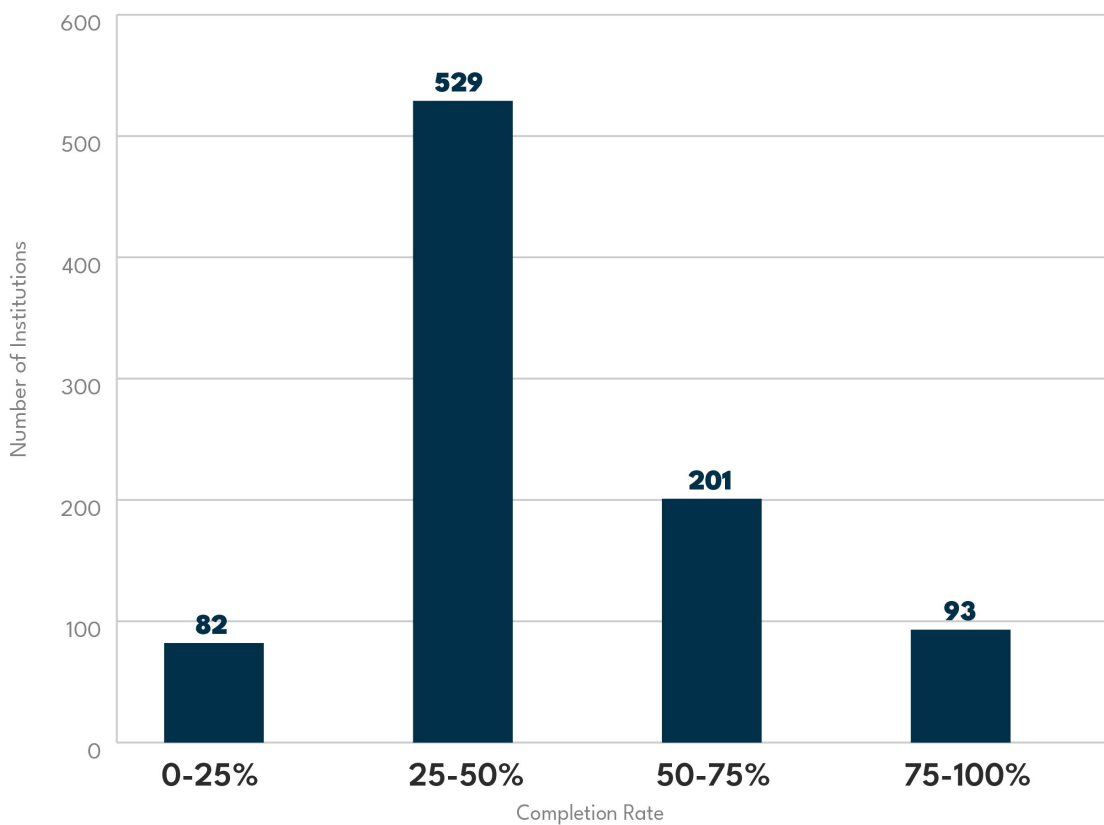
Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.
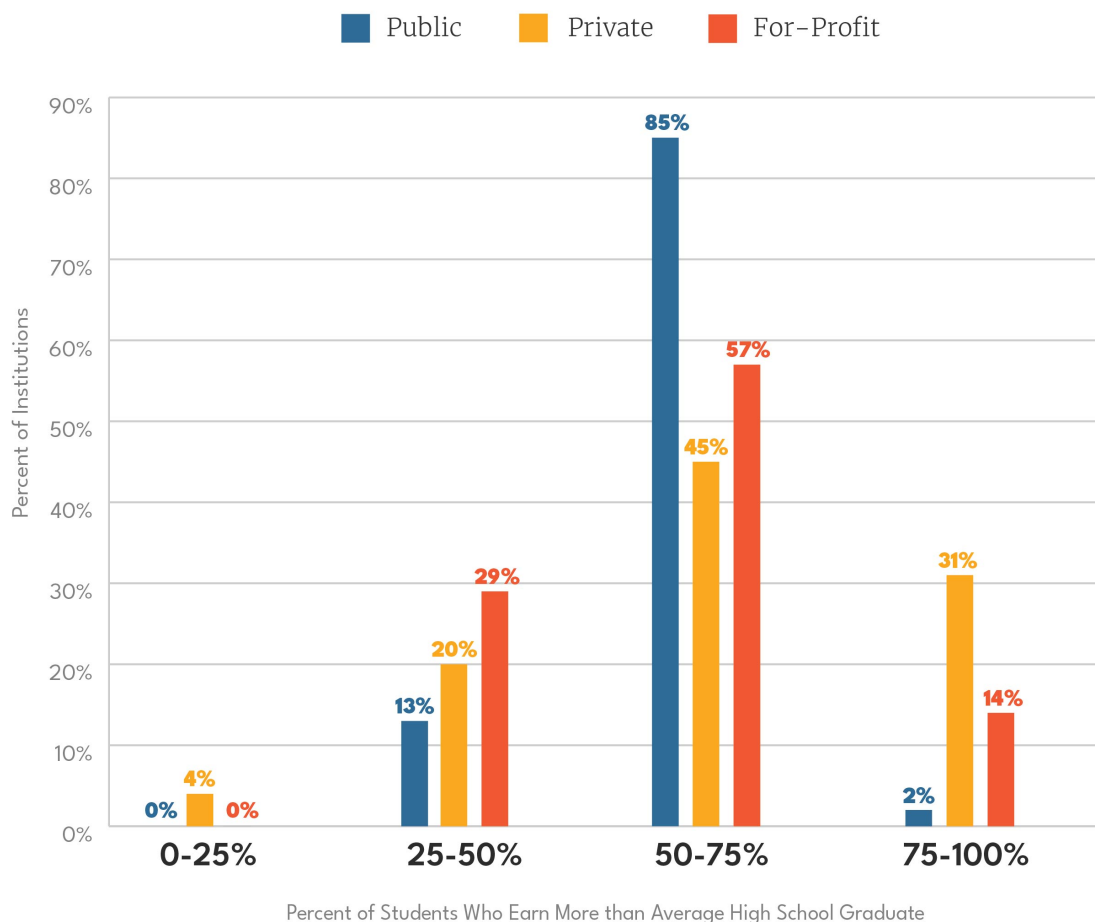
Completion at Two-Year Institutions by Sector

While public institutions comprise much of the two-year landscape, they graduate a smaller proportion of those who enroll than other sectors. Only 19%

of public two-year institutions graduate over half of their students eight years after enrollment, compared to 72% of private non-profit two-year institutions and 76% of for-profit two-year institutions. And while just over one-third (36%) of two-year private non-profit and for-profit institutions complete more than 75% of their students, only 2% of publics can say the same.

College Completion

Two-Year Institutions by Sector

Legend: Public, Private, For-Profit

Completion Rate	Public	Private	For-Profit
0-25%	10%	7%	3%
25-50%	70%	21%	21%
50-75%	17%	36%	40%
75-100%	2%	36%	36%

Percent of Institutions (y-axis), Completion Rate (x-axis)
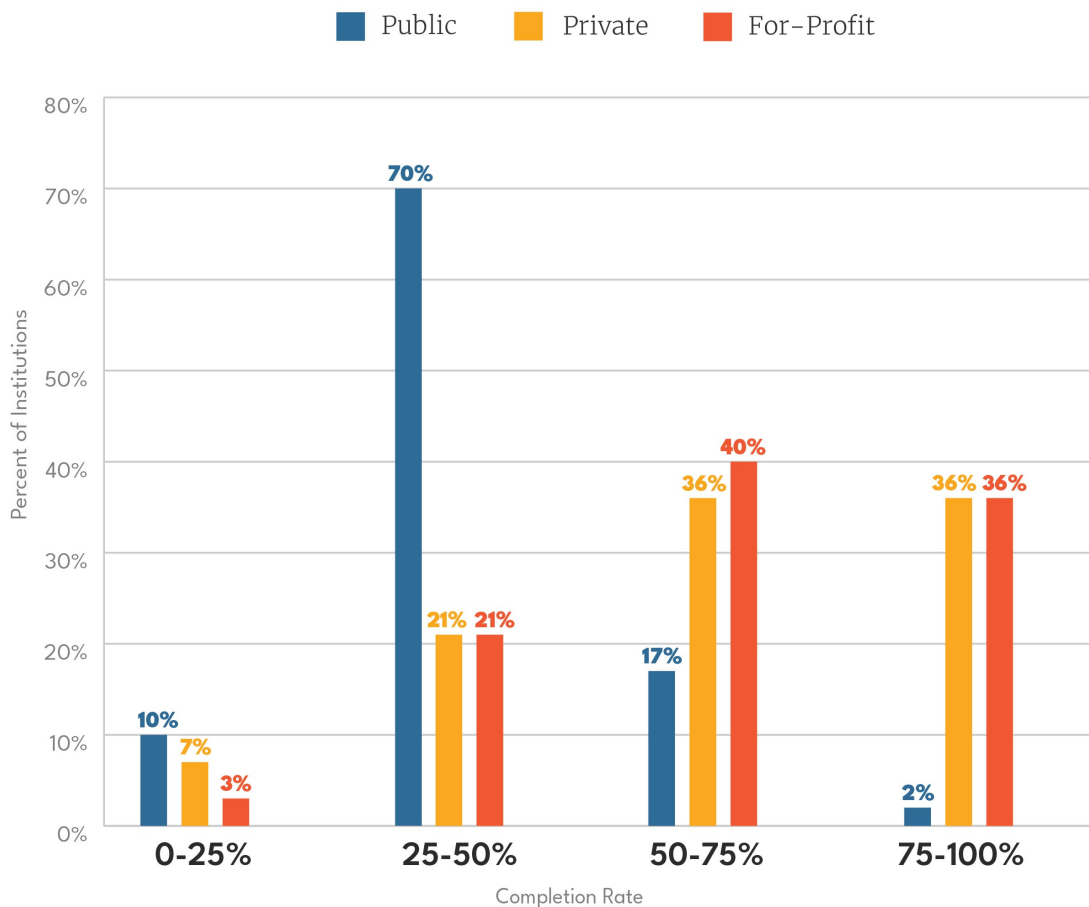
Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Earnings Outcomes

Even though completion rates at two-year schools are lower across the board than at four-year colleges, enrolling in a two-year school still often leads to some economic benefit for those who enroll. The vast majority (84%) show most

students earning more than a high school graduate 10 years post-enrollment. However, many still fail to show a large proportion of their students doing so. Only 53 two-year schools leave at least three-quarters of their students meeting this minimum economic threshold (6% of two-years versus 52% of four-years).

Earnings Above High School Graduate
Two-Year Institutions

Number of Institutions

659

133

1

53

0-25%   25-50%   50-75%   75-100%

Percent of Students Who Earn More than Average High School Graduate
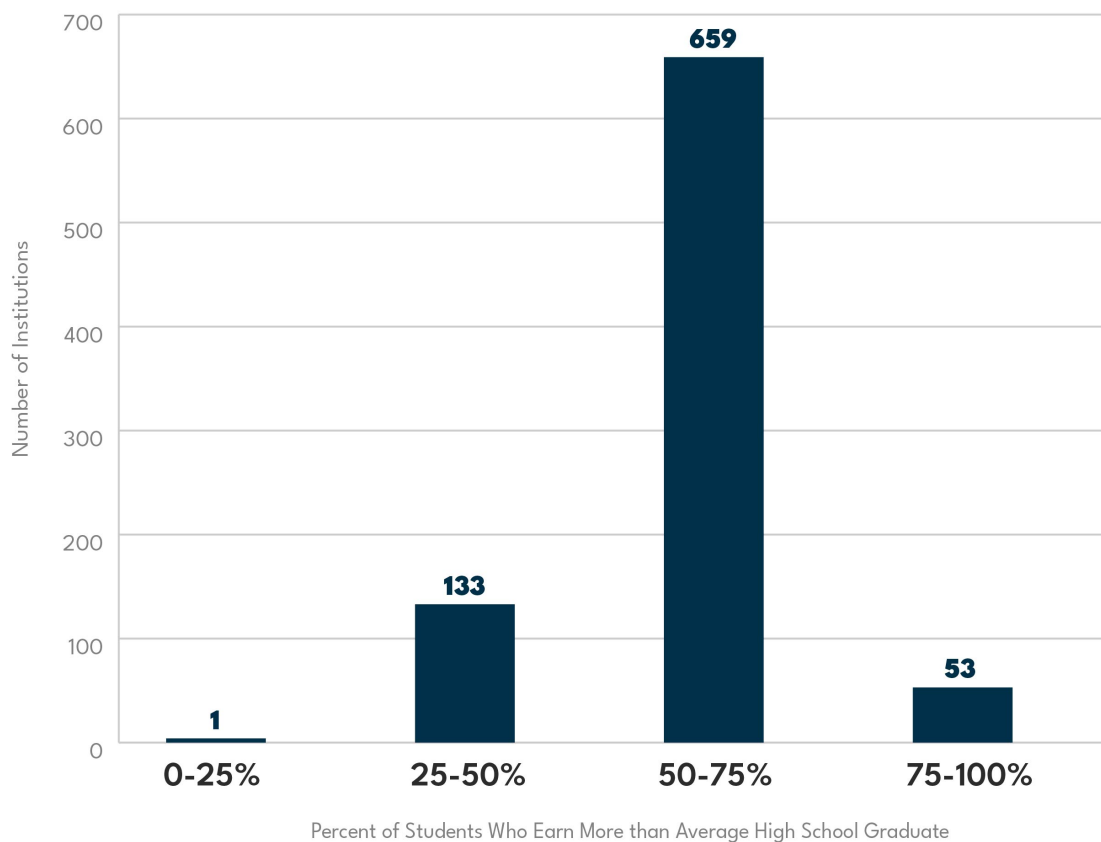
Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Earnings at Two-Year Institutions by Sector

While fewer in number compared to other sectors, a higher proportion of private non-profit two-year institutions show their students with strong earnings after attending. Nearly a third leave over 75% of their students able to earn more than their high school graduate counterparts. Most public two-year schools also have

reasonably strong earnings outcomes, with 87% leaving most of their students earning more than the typical high school graduate. Nearly a third (29%) of two-year for-profit institutions fail to meet this benchmark for the majority of their students.

Earnings Above High School Graduate
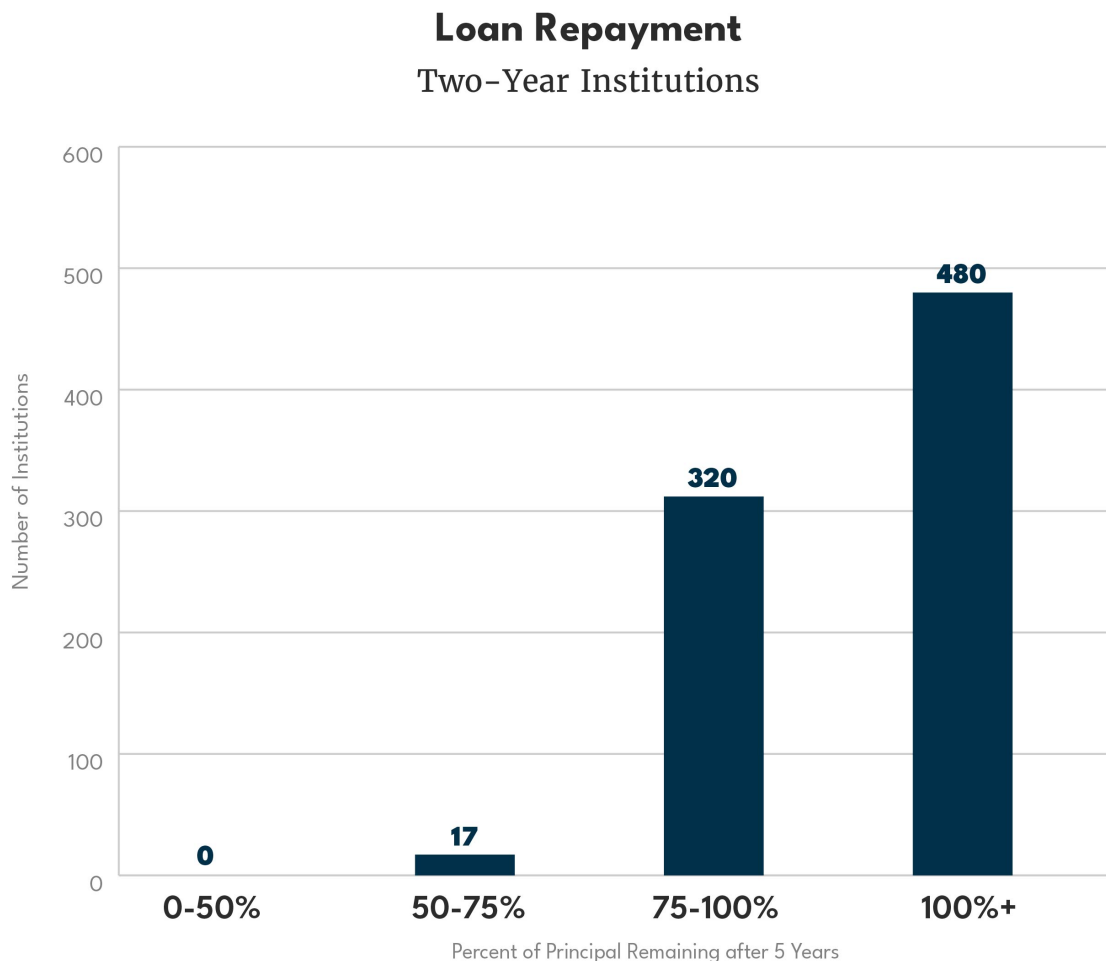### Two-Year Institutions by Sector

■ Public   ■ Private   ■ For-Profit

	0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%
Public	0%	13%	85%	2%
Private	4%	20%	45%	31%
For-Profit	0%	29%	57%	14%

Percent of Institutions (y-axis)

Percent of Students Who Earn More than Average High School Graduate

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Loan Repayment

In comparison to four-year institutions, two-year colleges are more likely to leave their students unable to pay down their loans over time—despite the fact at the up-front cost may have been lower. The majority (59%) show their student

borrowers making payments that do not keep up with their accruing interest, meaning they actually owe more on their federal student loans than they did at the start, even five years after they've entered repayment.
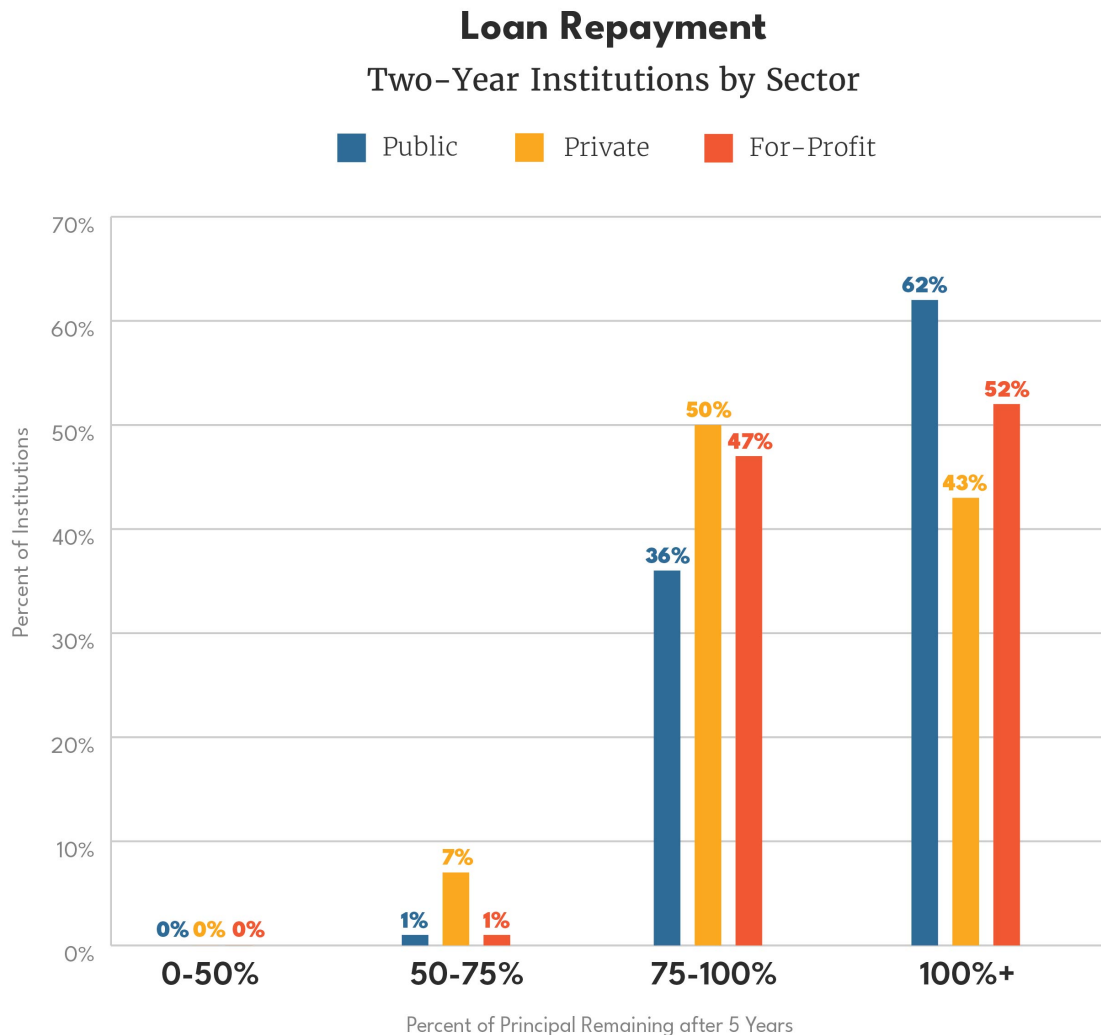
Loan Repayment
Two-Year Institutions

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Repayment at Two-Year Institutions by Sector

Regardless of institutional sector, many students who attend two-year colleges struggle to begin the process of paying down their loans after leaving. The majority of public (62%) and for-profit (52%) two-year institutions leave their students owing more on their educational debt five years after entering repayment, and 43% of private non-profit two-year institutions show the same. As noted above, these outcomes metrics are intertwined: given the low

completion rates at these institutions, it follows that many students who enroll may find themselves without a degree and struggling to repay their loans.

THIRD WAY

Loan Repayment
Two-Year Institutions by Sector

■ Public   ■ Private   ■ For-Profit

Percent of Institutions

	0-50%	50-75%	75-100%	100%+
Public	0%	1%	36%	62%
Private	0%	7%	50%	43%
For-Profit	0%	1%	47%	52%

Percent of Principal Remaining after 5 Years

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Summary

Overall, two-year institutions see low rates of college completion, middling earnings outcomes, and subpar student debt repayment rates after five years.

Sixty-seven percent of two-year institutions don't graduate the majority of their students. Most non-completers attended public two-year institutions, 80% of which fail to graduate the majority of their students, compared to 30% of private

non-profit and 24% of for-profit two-year institutions. Despite low completion rates, most students attending two-year schools see reasonable earnings outcomes, with 84% percent of two-year institutions leaving most of their students earning more than the typical high school graduate. Private non-profit two-year schools see more of their students meeting this threshold, but two-year schools across all sectors see the majority of their students earning more than the typical high school graduate. Yet despite those numbers, only 41% of two-year institutions see the majority of their students able to start paying down their student debt five years into repayment. The issue is more pronounced at public and for-profit two-year schools, where only 37% and 48% of institutions, respectively, see their students meeting this threshold. Private non-profit two-year colleges perform a bit better, with 57% seeing their students start to pay down their debt.

Certificate-Granting Institutions

Certificate-granting institutions offer non-degree programs that are designed to help students acquire a specific set of technical skills needed to enter a profession. These non-degree credentials typically take between six and 18 months to complete. There are far more certificate-granting institutions than there are four-year or two-year institutions, though each institution serves far fewer students, with a median enrollment of 143 students across the sector. And while these programs are shorter than those offered at two-year institutions, they cost about $6,000 more per year (nearly double) compared to the cost of attending a two-year school. Despite this price difference, certificate-granting institutions enroll more Pell recipients than either four-year or two-year institutions.

Quick Stats for Certificate-Granting Institutions

Quick Stats: Certificate-Granting Institutions

2,117 Institutions

582
Public

135
Private Non-Profit

1,400
For-Profit

1,681,976 Students

1,186,601
Public

27,732
Private Non-Profit

467,643
For-Profit

143: Median Undergraduate Enrollment

$14,473: Median Net Price

51%: Median Percent of Pell Grant Recipients

54%: Median Completion Rate

48%: Median Percent Earning Above Average High School Graduate

97%: Median Remaining on Loan Principal After 5 Years

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data. The median is used for each statistic to provide an understanding of a "typical" four–year institution. Median completion data is limited to institutions with more than 30 students within the cohort.

College Completion

Certificate-granting institutions offer programs that take less time to complete, so not surprisingly, they produce completion outcomes that are better than two-year institutions—though they still lag behind four-year schools. Fifty-five percent of certificate-granting institutions see the majority of their students completing their credential within eight years of enrollment. Yet only 89 schools (18%) show over 75% of students who enter leaving with a credential in hand.

⊛ **THIRD WAY**

College Completion
Certificate-Granting Institutions
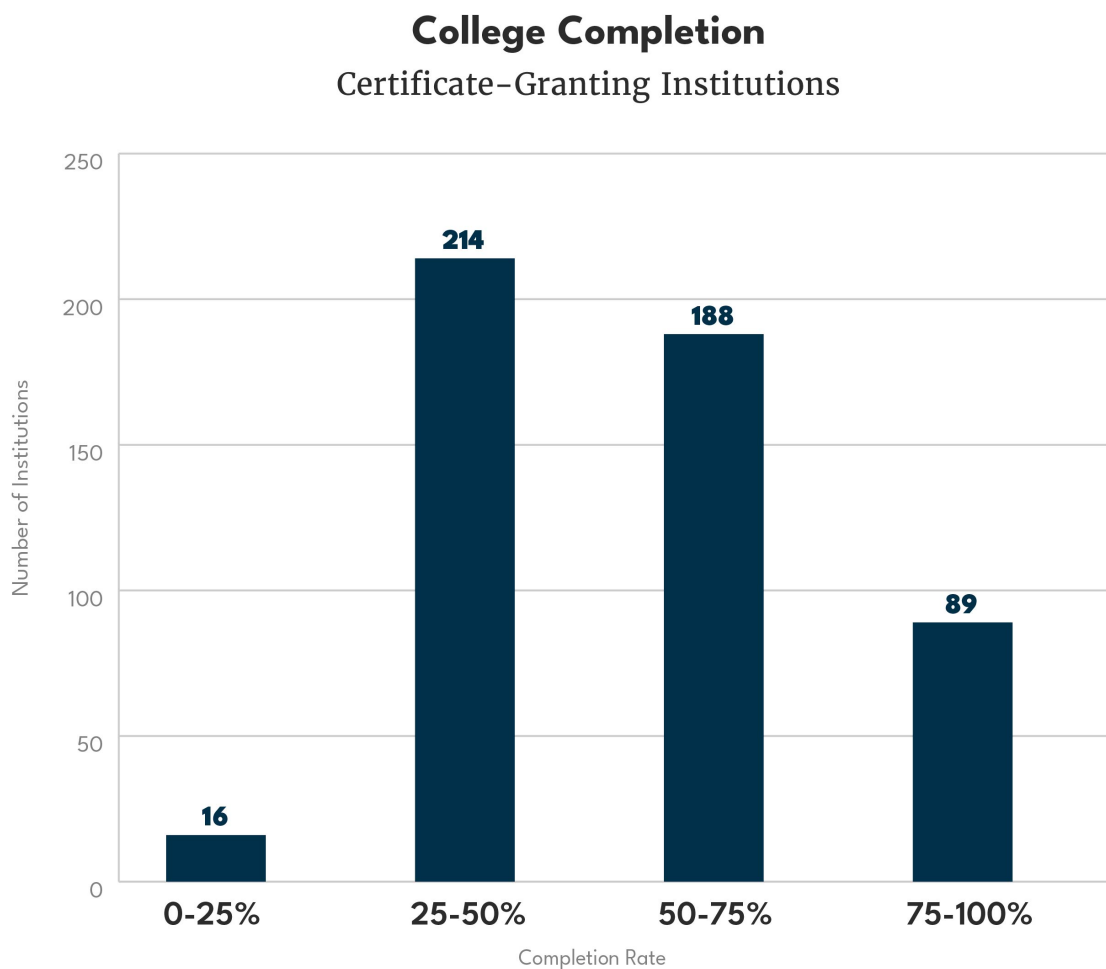
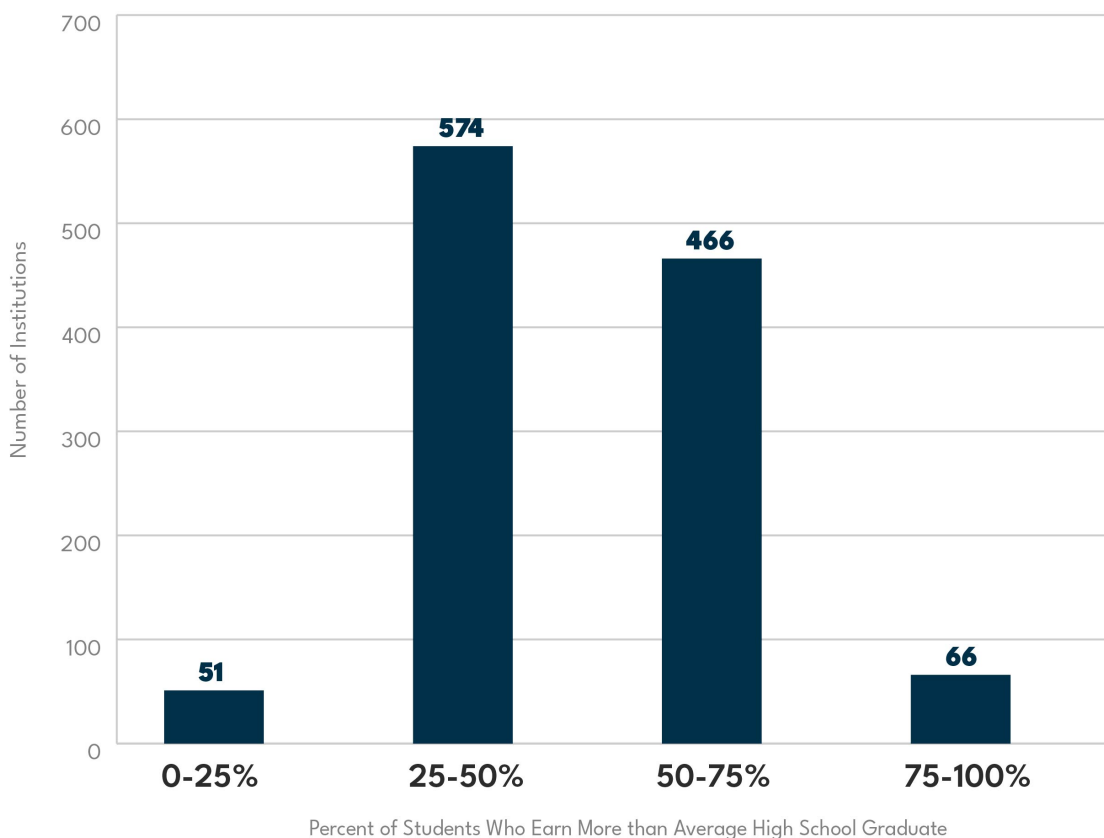**Source:** Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Completion at Certificate-Granting Institutions by Sector

Similar to two-year institutions, public certificate-granting institutions underperform those in the private non-profit and for-profit sectors. Only 30% of public colleges leave the majority of their students with a credential compared to 84% of private non-profit and 85% of for-profit certificate-granting institutions, respectively.

THIRD WAY

College Completion
Certificate-Granting Institutions by Sector

- Public
- Private
- For-Profit

Completion Rate	Public	Private	For-Profit
0-25%	5%	0%	1%
25-50%	64%	16%	14%
50-75%	27%	44%	50%
75-100%	3%	40%	35%

Percent of Institutions

Completion Rate
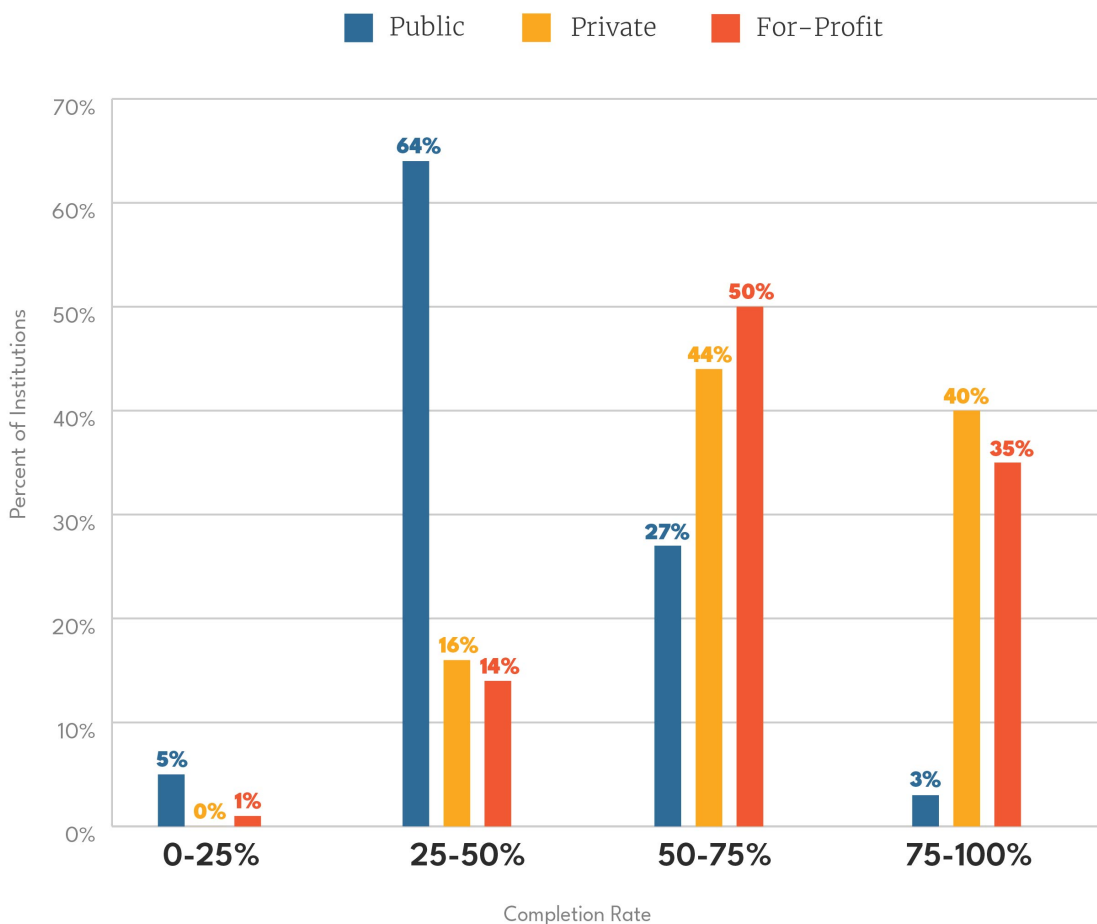
Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Earnings Outcomes

While certificate-granting institutions are more likely to leave their students with a credential than their two-year counterparts, the majority show their students earning less than a high school graduate after they attend. Only 46% of these institutions see most of their students earning more than this minimum economic benchmark, indicating that a credential from some of these institutions does not reliably lead to income gains—despite their purported career orientation.

Earnings Above High School Graduate
Certificate-Granting Institutions

Percent of Students Who Earn More than Average High School Graduate

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Earnings at Certificate-Granting Institutions by Sector

Even though more certificate-granting institutions in the public sector fail to leave their students with a credential, they are still more likely to deliver better employment outcomes than those in the for-profit sector. The large majority of public (67%) and private non-profit (65%) see most of their students earning more than the typical high school graduate. But nearly three-in-four (74%) for-profit schools that primarily award certificates leave the majority of their students failing to meet this threshold, even 10 years after enrollment. While fewer in number (135), private non-profit certificate-granting institutions generally perform better. Forty-four percent of private non-profit institutions leave more than 75% of their graduates earning more than the typical high school graduate, compared to just 3% of public and for-profit institutions.

Earnings Above High School Graduate
Certificate-Granting Institutions by Sector

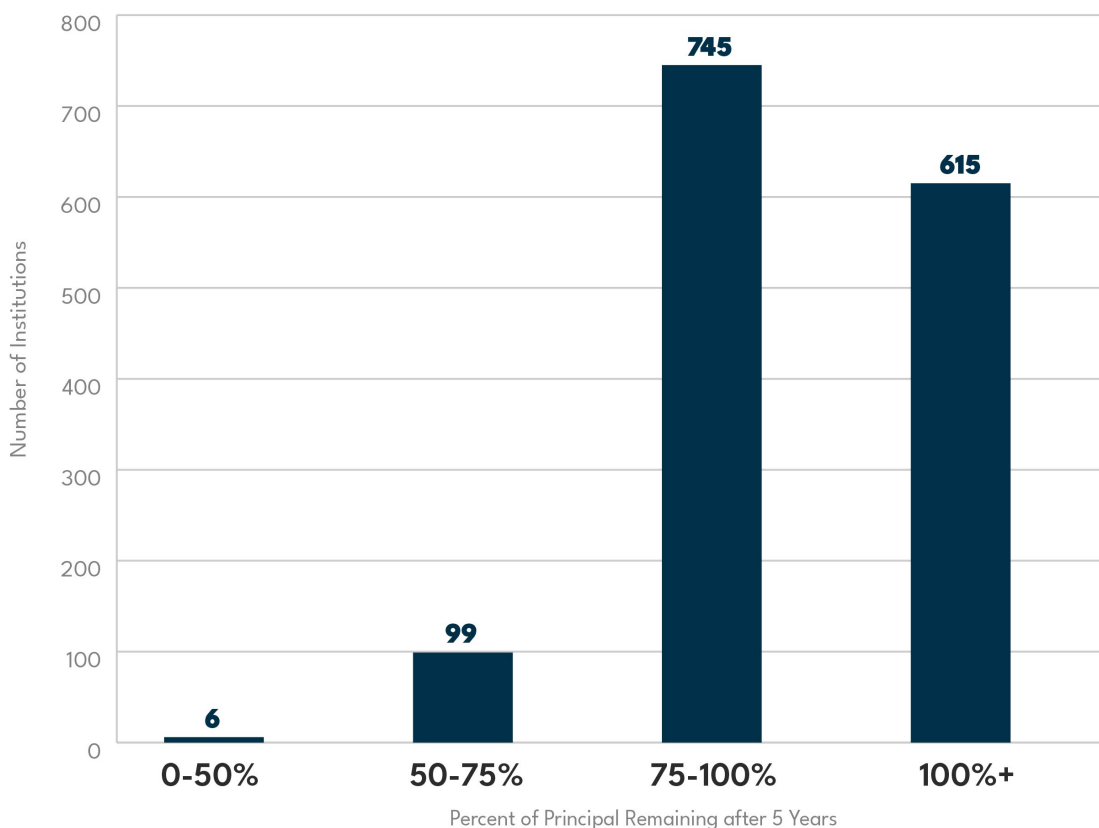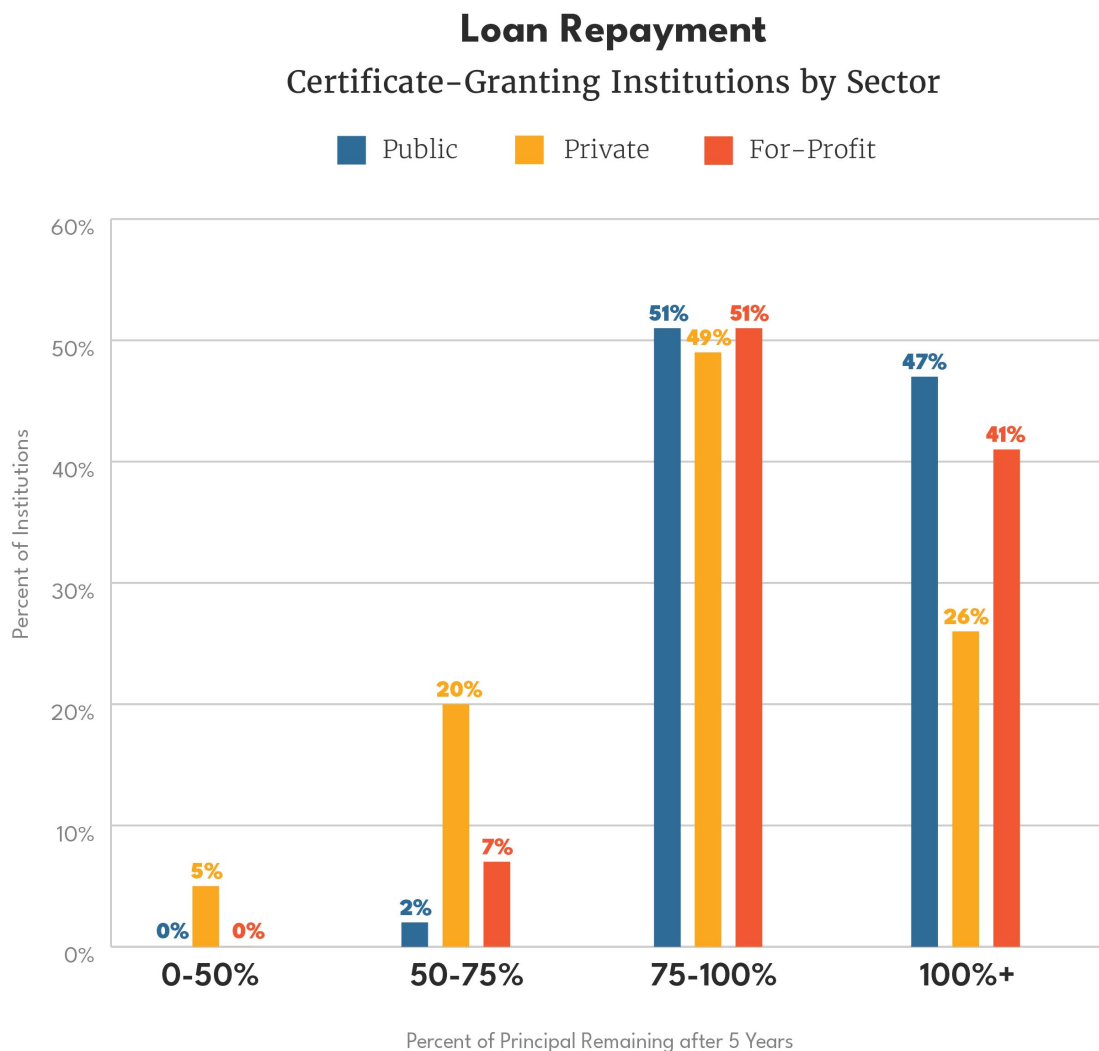**Public**   **Private**   **For-Profit**
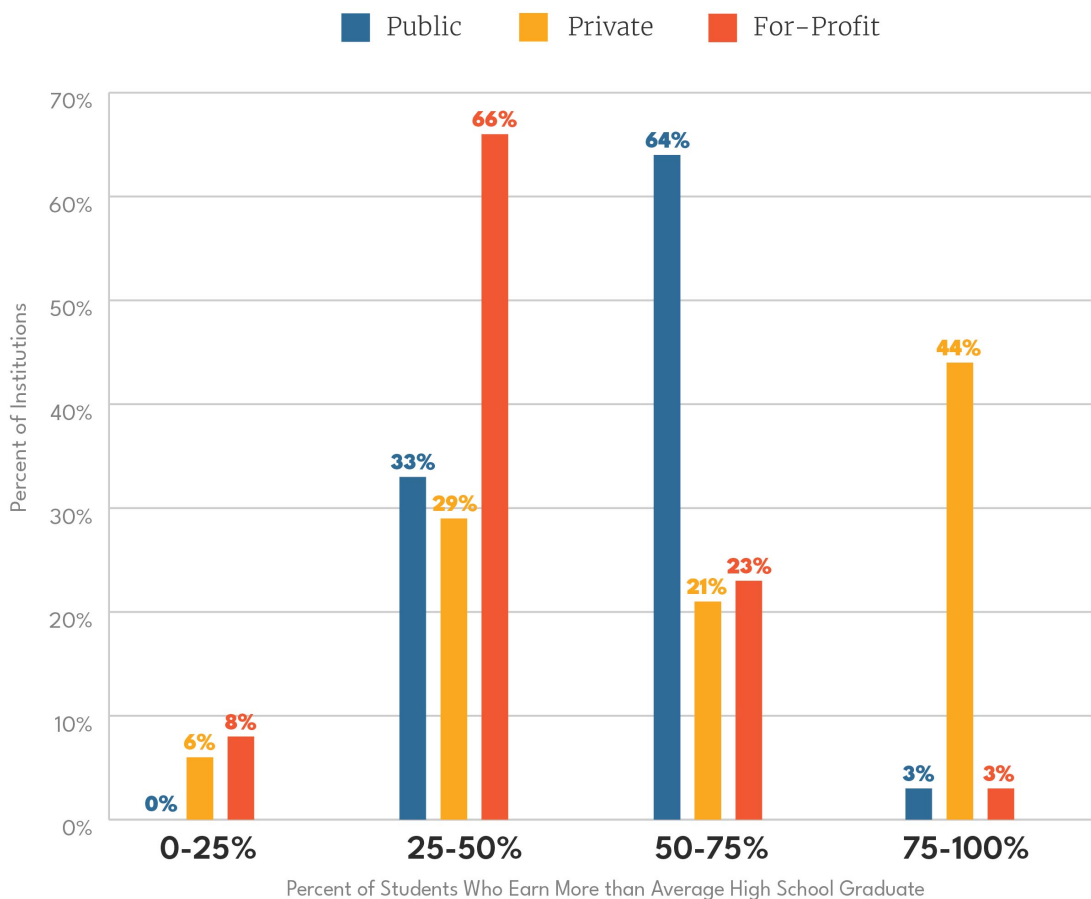
Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Loan Repayment

While most certificate-granting institutions see their students beginning to pay down their debt after five years, more than four out of 10 (42%) leave their students owing more debt than they had when they left school five years prior. In fact, only 7% show their student borrowers able to pay down over 25% of the initial principal on their loan balance over this time.

Loan Repayment
Certificate-Granting Institutions

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Repayment at Certificate-Granting Institutions by Sector

While less prevalent, private non-profit certificate-granting institutions show better loan repayment outcomes than public and for-profit institutions. Seventy-four percent leave students able to make a dent on their loan principal within five years of entering repayment, in comparison to 53% and 59% of public and for-profit institutions, respectively. While every sector shows the majority of institutions enabling students to begin the process of loan repayment, there is substantial room for improvement for those that focus on awarding short-term credentials.

Loan Repayment
Certificate-Granting Institutions by Sector

■ Public   ■ Private   ■ For-Profit

Source: Authors' calculations from US Department of Education data.

Summary

Certificate-granting institutions see average completion rates, poor earnings outcomes, and middling loan repayment outcomes.

Fifty-four percent of certificate-granting institutions show the majority of their students graduating, which still leaves a large number of non-completers. Most of the institutions failing to meet this threshold are in the public sector—69% of public certificate-granting institutions fail to graduate the majority of their students, compared to just 16% of private and 15% of for-profit institutions.

Fifty-four percent of certificate-granting institutions leave the majority of their students earning less than the typical high school graduate. For-profit institutions see the worst earnings outcomes, with 74% of institutions leaving most of their students unable to meet this threshold, compared to 33% of public and 35% of private non-profit certificate-granting institutions. Still, most students who attend these schools are able to start paying down their loans after five years—58% of certificate-granting institutions show their students making progress on their debt within that time period. The majority of certificate-granting institutions in all sectors meet this repayment threshold, with private non-profit institutions slightly outperforming their counterparts.

Conclusion

Examining completion, earnings, and loan repayment outcomes across US institutions of higher education reveals significant room for improvement in delivering on the promise of a postsecondary degree. While some credential levels or institutional sectors typically deliver better outcomes for students, too many schools leave too many students with no degree, high debt, and limited employment opportunities—making it difficult to recoup their educational costs or see a return on their investment. To ensure that students are served well and that the considerable taxpayer dollars flowing into our higher education system only go to high-quality programs, policymakers in Congress and the Department of Education must remain focused on instituting incentives and guardrails that promote better outcomes and more informed student choice—not continuing to send blank checks to schools that consistently leave students worse off than when they enrolled.

Appendix

	Measurement year	Source
uate g	Fall 2020	Accreditor Data File: https://sites.ed.gov/naciqi/files/2022/06/Accreditor-Data-File-Updated-Summer-2022.xlsx

	Academic Year 2019–20	Accreditor Data File: https://sites.ed.gov/naciqi/files/2022/06/Accreditor-Data-File-Updated-Summer-2022.xlsx
r		
non– eight ed to	Academic Year 2020–2021	Accreditor Data File: https://sites.ed.gov/naciqi/files/2022/06/Accreditor-Data-File-Updated-Summer-2022.xlsx
0	Treasury AY2007–08, AY2008–09 pooled cohort measured in CY2018, CY2019, inflation adjusted to 2020 dollars	College Scorecard (Treasury): https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/data
on ng loan	Award year 2018–19 and 2019–20 (2–year pooled)	Accreditor Data File: https://sites.ed.gov/naciqi/files/2022/06/Accreditor-Data-File-Updated-Summer-2022.xlsx

TOPICS

HIGHER EDUCATION   621

ENDNOTES

1. Carnevale, Anthony P., et al. "The College Payoff: More Education Doesn't Always Mean More Earnings." *Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce,* 2021. https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/collegepayoff2021/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

2. Falk, Gene, et al. "Unemployment Rates During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Congressional Research Service,* 20 Aug 2021. https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R46554.pdf. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.; "Occupational Outlook Handbook." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,* 8 Sept 2022. https://www.bls.gov/ooh/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

3. Carnevale, Anthony P., et al. "The College Payoff: More Education Doesn't Always Mean More Earnings." *Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce,* 2021. https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/collegepayoff2021/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

4. Falk, Gene, et al. "Unemployment Rates During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Congressional Research Service,* 20 Aug 2021. https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R46554.pdf. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.; "Occupational Outlook Handbook." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,* 8 Sept 2022. https://www.bls.gov/ooh/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

5. "Archive of Meetings." *National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, U.S. Department of Education,* 2022. https://sites.ed.gov/naciqi/archive-of-meetings/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

6. "College Scorecard." *U.S. Department of Education.* https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/data/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

7. "Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System." *National Center for Education Statistics.* https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/. Accessed 24 Jan 2023.

8. For more information on why we excluded transfer students, please see: https://medium.com/@ThirdWayTweet/the-most-complete-way-to-measure-college-completion-with-current-data-d3c9d2b78914.

9. The typical salary of high school graduates can vary significantly by state. For example, the typical salary of a high school graduate may be lower in Kentucky than it is in Connecticut. While this analysis aims to give a general overview of the economic outcomes of college attendees, this should be considered when assessing the economic outcomes for individual institutions. For information on how the earnings threshold was calculated by the Department, please see: https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/assets/InstitutionDataDocumentation.pdf.

**DIRECT ASSESSMENT
COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Policy Statement

Academic credit has provided the basis for measuring the amount of engaged learning time expected of a typical student enrolled not only in traditional classroom settings but also laboratories, studios, internships and other experiential learning, and distance and correspondence education. Students, institutions, employers, and others rely on the common currency of academic credit to support a wide range of activities, including the transfer of students from one institution to another.

In recent years, some institutions have recognized the potential of innovative learning models and have developed creative programs that allow students the flexibility to learn at the pace that makes sense for them, both in career-technical and degree programs. Students progress in these programs by demonstrating their achievement of specific skills or knowledge. These programs, commonly called competency-based programs, fit into traditional learning models that measure progress in credit or clock hours, but increasing numbers do not. Direct assessment competency-based educational programs use the direct assessment of student learning in lieu of measuring student learning in credit or clock hours.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to institutions and evaluation committees on the Commission's expectations regarding the establishment and review of direct assessment competency-based programs and its hybrids as defined below.

Definitions. For the purpose of the application of this policy and in accord with federal regulations, the Commission uses the following definitions:

Competency: A competency is a clearly defined and measurable statement of the knowledge, skill, and ability a student has acquired in a designated program.

Competency-Based Educational Programs. A competency-based educational program is outcome-based and assesses a student's attainment of competencies as the sole means of determining whether the student earns a degree or a credential. Such programs may be organized around traditional course-based units (credit or clock hours) that students must earn to complete their educational program, or may depart from course-based units (credit or clock hours) to rely solely on the attainment of defined competencies.

Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs *(also referred to in this policy as direct assessment programs)*. Federal regulations define a direct assessment competency-based educational program as an instructional program that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, uses direct assessment of student learning relying solely on the attainment of defined competencies, or recognizes the direct assessment of student learning by others. The assessment must be consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program using the results of the assessment.

Hybrid Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs *(also referred to in this policy as hybrid programs)*. A hybrid competency-based educational program combines course-based competencies (clock and credit hours awarded) with non-course based competencies (no clock or credit hours awarded).

Characteristics of a Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Program. A direct assessment program has several characteristics:

1. It does not subscribe to conventional notions of the clock hour, seat time, term length, or the credit hour; rather, it relies on the student's ability to demonstrate clearly defined and measurable competencies in a designated program.
2. It is designed and delivered within the framework of the program's defined knowledge, skills, and competencies as demonstrated by students, rather than in terms of prescribed courses.
3. A student may acquire the requisite competencies from multiple sources and at various times other than, or in addition to, the learning experiences provided by the institution. As such, the length of time it takes to demonstrate learning may be different for each student.
4. It often allows for alternative approaches to teaching and learning.
5. If may rely almost exclusively upon students using direct assessment testing models to demonstrate their mastery of program and degree content.

Direct Assessment as a Substantive Change. Because the initiation of a direct assessment or a hybrid program constitutes the addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those offered when the institution was last evaluated, each program is considered a substantive change that requires approval by SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Substantive change policy statements related to direct assessment and hybrid programs, as well as to other types of substantive changes, can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Commission Obligations in the Review of Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs. In accord with federal policy as it relates to direct assessment competency-based programs only, SACSCOC is required to (1) evaluate the institution's offering of direct assessment programs and include them in the institution's grant of accreditation and (2) confirm the institution's claim of the direct assessment program's equivalence in terms of credit or clock hours and any other information that the DOE may require to determine whether to approve the institution's application. As with the identification of non-compliance with other standards of the *Principles of Accreditation*, the Commission is obligated to take action in accord with that used in relation to other standards of non-compliance. Because SACSCOC requires approval of direct assessment and hybrid programs, once approved, the offering of both types of competency-based programs will be included in the institution's award of accreditation.

Institutional Obligations. The Commission's requirements, policies, processes, and procedures are predicated on the expectation that an institution operates with integrity in all matters, including the maintenance of academic quality in the establishment of direct assessment competency-based educational programs. An institution is responsible for the academic quality of any credit or clock hour unit or any competency-based unit recorded on the institution's transcript, whether applied to a direct assessment or a hybrid program. In determining whether to approve a direct assessment or hybrid program, the Commission expects that the institution will comply with the following practices and procedures: (1) adhere to initial obligations and an expected framework; (2) ensure compliance with appropriate SACSCOC requirements and standards outlined in the *Principles for Accreditation* and with Commission policy; and (3) follow procedures for the notification and approval of the substantive change.

1. **Adherence to Initial Obligations and an Expected Framework**

   Report the initiation of direct assessment and hybrid programs. The institution has an obligation to notify the Commission and seek approval for the offering of such programs. Once approved, the direct assessment and hybrid programs will be included in the institution's award of accreditation. To secure

federal financial aid, the institution must also seek approval from the U.S. Department of Education—only if the entire program is a direct assessment competency-based program.

Identify institutional contributions. The institution offering the direct assessment is able to identify and articulate the educational contribution it provides to students in this program. Such contribution may take the form of modules, engagement with faculty, exercises, assessment of student learning or other activities that either expand the student's knowledge beyond any prior learning that the student may have demonstrated upon entry into the direct assessment or hybrid competency-based program or that assist the student in documenting how prior learning translates to the attainment of competencies required for receiving academic credit.

Ensure the integrity of accreditation and awards. Because SACSCOC accreditation that has been awarded to a member institution is not transferable—either in actuality or appearance—SACSCOC prohibits the use of its accreditation to authenticate courses, programs, or awards offered by organizations not so accredited. If the SACSCOC-accredited institution has contracted with an external organization to provide part of or the entire direct assessment program, including course materials provided to students, the institution ensures that it retains sufficient control of the development and implementation of the program. The Commission's policies require the institution to seek approval of the contract at the same time it seeks approval to initiate a direct assessment and a hybrid program.

2. Compliance with Appropriate SACSCOC Requirements and Standards

Requirements and standards in the *Principles of Accreditation* which affect direct assessment and hybrid programs are listed below. They should be considered when developing contracts, completing the substantive change prospectus, and demonstrating compliance. In addition, the prospectus template for approval of this substantive change refers to Commission policies that are applicable to competency-based programs.

Institutional Mission. The institution has a clearly defined mission and philosophy undergirding its direct assessment and hybrid programs. It has clearly defined goals and a framework for its programs that ensure an appropriate design for quality and learning, as appropriate for higher education. (CR 2.1)

Information to Students. The institution provides clear information to students outlining the structure and expectations of the direct assessment and hybrid programs, tuition and fees, and academic policies that apply to students in the programs. This information is clearly communicated to students prior to their admission to the direct assessment and hybrid programs. (Standard 10.5)

Structure and Coherence of the Program. The institution outlines the structure of the direct assessment and hybrid programs and establishes clearly defined competencies related to the program and the learning outcomes that students must attain to be awarded the credential appropriate to higher education. The program has a clearly defined beginning, middle and end, and the institution has a mechanism for monitoring student progress towards acquisition of competencies and attainment of the credential being awarded at the end of the program. In undergraduate degree programs, the institution requires the successful attainment of competencies of a general education component at the collegiate level that is a substantial part of the degree, ensures breadth of knowledge, and is based on a coherent rationale. The institution clearly defines expectations for student work and the means for assessing the learning and competencies acquired through that work. The competencies required for the program build a unified body of knowledge that is consistent with a program or career path; that is, they are not taken as merely discrete units. (CR 9.1, CR 9.2, and CR 9.3)

Student Admissions and Eligibility. The institution has an appropriate mechanism for determining prior to admission in the direct assessment program whether a student has the capacity to complete an educational credential within the program and, therefore, is eligible to enroll in that program. Even an open admissions institution should have such a mechanism for direct assessment competency-based

alternatives. (Standard 10.5)

Assessment of Programs and Student Learning. The institution regularly reviews its direct assessment and hybrid programs in light of its mission in order to ensure that it identifies any areas of weakness in the programs and implements timely improvements. (Standard 8.2.a)

The direct assessment and hybrid programs rely on a strong foundation for assessment established by the institution, with demonstrated capacity to evaluate student work at the course and program level in general education and in the major or concentration. At all levels, assessment supports academic improvement. The comprehensive student learning outcomes in the academic program area are reviewed regularly and reflect concepts generally agreed on by the related academic program(s). (Standard 8.2.a, Standard 8.2.b, and Standard 9.7)

The institution has a mechanism for determining how modules and competencies in the direct assessment program are equivalent to traditional courses and credit or clock hours in a conventional course-based program, and how the modules and competencies are related to accepted expectations of academic achievement and rigor, as based on the following principles:

- Student work performed in courses/units comprising direct assessment and hybrid programs (e.g., demonstrated mastery of tasks, assignments, competencies, etc.) are equivalent to student work performed in traditional courses (e.g., successful completion of tests, assignments, projects, etc.)
- Student learning outcomes and program outcomes in direct assessment programs offered by the institution are equivalent to student learning outcomes defined by the academic program in a traditional academic program.
- The application of student learning assessments (e.g., examinations, portfolios, projects, capstone presentations, and other recognized demonstrations of mastery, etc.,) in direct assessment and hybrid programs are equivalent to the outcome assessments that are used in traditional courses.

These strategies will be responsive to the complexity of learning and the accumulation and integration of knowledge expected for the educational degree or credential. (CR 8.1, CR 9.2, and Standard 10.7)

Faculty. Faculty or instructors with subject matter expertise in the student's academic program and in general education play a formative role in the competency-based student's academic program. While qualified faculty with subject matter expertise design the competency-based program's curriculum, this faculty or other similarly qualified faculty or instructors also regularly engage with students during the course of the program, provide expert assistance and support to students in the program, and have a meaningful role in directing and reviewing the assessment of competencies. Program faculty are well suited for this role by qualifications and experience and receive appropriate professional development and support from the institution in executing this role. While mentors or counselors may have an important role in competency-based programs in supporting or assisting students, they do not replace faculty or instructors with subject-matter expertise. In addition, the number of mentors and counselors assigned to the competency-based program is sufficient to work with enrolled students and qualified to advise students at the college level. (Standard 6.2.a, Standard 6.2.b, Standard 6.2.c, Standard 6.5, and Standard 10.4)

Institutional Responsibility for Awarding the Credential. The institution offering a direct assessment program is able to identify and articulate the educational contribution it provides to students in this program. Such contribution may take the form of modules, engagement with faculty, exercises, assessment of student learning or other activities that either expand the student's knowledge beyond any prior learning that the student may have demonstrated at matriculation or that assist the student in documenting how prior learning translates to the attainment of competencies required for receiving academic credit. For an undergraduate program, the institution demonstrates its contribution to be at

least 25 percent of the academic program; for a graduate program, it demonstrates a contribution of at least one-third of the direct assessment program. (Standard 9.4 and Standard 9.5)

Application of Academic Policies. The institution determines how its already-established academic policies in such areas as academic discipline, probation and suspension apply to students in the direct assessment program, and it makes appropriate amendments to its academic policies where appropriate. It is clear how the institution determines when a student in the program is not making sufficient progress and should be moved to a traditional course-based format to complete his or her academic program or when other disciplinary action should be taken. The institution develops policies that address SACSCOC and/or federal requirements, including credit hour definitions, transcript recording and reporting, the assessment and award of credit for prior learning, and the roles of faculty members and other educational professionals. (Standard 10.1 and Standard 10.7)

Acceptance and Awarding of Credit or a Unit of Competency. The institution demonstrates that students in the direct assessment or hybrid competency-based program are achieving at least the same outcomes and at the same academic rigor as in traditional programs and courses offered by the institution. The institution prepares and maintains a transcript for each student documenting both the competencies earned and the equivalent courses or credit hours based on expectations noted above. The transcript is prepared and updated during the course of the student's academic program so that it is available in the event that a student transfers to another institution or drops out prior to completing the competency-based program. Such equivalencies are also available at the program level for state and federal agencies and for the Commission in their review of the program. In addition, the transcript provides clear and sufficient information for other institutions and employers to understand the student's accomplishments. (Standard 10.7)

The direct assessment programs provided by the institution are clearly distinguished from assessment of prior learning that may take place at the outset of the program. When students demonstrate competencies at the beginning of a program on the basis of prior learning, transcripts and other documents should make clear that these competencies are awarded as "prior-learning credit." Once the institution has identified prior-learning credit for each student, other competencies should be awarded only after the student has completed the modules that form the program or demonstrated mastery of the competencies defined by them. (Standard 10.7 and Standard 10.8)

Contractual Agreements. The institution provides notification to SACSCOC of agreements involving direct assessment programs, providing signed copies of agreements, and providing any other documentation or information required by SACSCOC policies and procedures for review. In addition, the member institution ensures that SACSCOC has timely access to its contracted external organization's materials and accreditation-related activities. (Standard 10.9)

Student Support Services and Access to Academic Resources. The institution offers student support services that appropriately guide students in these competency-based programs. In addition, the institution is prepared to assist students in a timely manner who drop out of these programs in making the transition back to a traditional course-based format so as to ensure that those students can continue to progress towards a degree or certificate. (CR 12.1) The institution provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to learning resources consistent with the competency-based academic programs. (CR 11.1)

Fees and Compliance with Title IV Funding. While the institution may charge a fee for its assessment of a student's prior learning as well as its transcription of competencies, the institution charges tuition only for those courses, modules, components, and services that the institution contributes in the development or formation of the student or for the term in which the student is enrolled in the direct assessment program. Similarly, the institution assists students in seeking Title IV student aid funds for those courses, modules or components of the academic program that the institution contributes to the development or formation of the student. It develops policies that address the disbursement of financial

aid, and tuition charges and refunds. (Standard 10.2 and Standard 13.6)

3. **Procedures for the Notification and Approval of Direct Assessment and Hybrid Programs**

Before initiating direct assessment or hybrid competency-based educational programs (degree, diploma, and certificate), an institution must seek prior approval when the programs have either of the following characteristics:

- The entire program is direct assessment and relies exclusively on measured achievement of competencies rather than student learning through credit or clock hours, or
- At least 50 percent of the competency-based program is direct assessment.

Time of Notification An institution offering direct assessment or hybrid competency-based educational programs must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC when it begins to offer 25 percent of a direct assessment program; that is, when a student can earn 25 percent of an educational credential (e.g., degree, diploma, certificate) based on measured achievement of competencies rather than credit or clock hours. The institution seeking approval to offer an entire program that is direct assessment or where at least 50 percent of the competency-based program is direct assessment must notify the President of SACSCOC six months in advance of the initiation of 50 percent of the educational credential based on measured achievement of competencies rather than credit or clock hours.

Submission of a Prospectus An institution seeking approval of a direct assessment competency-based program or a hybrid direct assessment program should complete the screening form included as Appendix B of this document. After Commission staff have reviewed the document, the institution will receive a response either asking it to complete a full prospectus for approval of the proposed program or notifying the institution that the program does not constitute either a direct assessment or hybrid direct assessment competency-based program.

If the institution is directed to complete a prospectus, it must be submitted by **March 15** for consideration at the June meeting of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, or by **September 1** for consideration at the December meeting of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees to allow ample time for review and approval. The institution will be provided a link to the appropriate prospectus form when it is sent the SACSCOC letter requesting a prospectus. Four copies should be submitted to the President of SACSCOC as a print document, or an electronic device (e.g., flash drive, CD or DVD). Upon receipt of the prospectus, it will be forwarded to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for review and approval at its next scheduled meeting: June or December.

Options of the Committees on Compliance and Reports Following Review of the Prospectus
The Committee on Compliance and Reports, a standing committee of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, will review the prospectus and any additional material submitted, and will take one of the following actions:

1. accept the prospectus, recommend approval of the program, and authorize a substantive change committee visit. A committee visit is required within six months after the initiation of the program,
2. defer action and seek additional information, or
3. recommend denial of approval and continue the institution's accreditation. The reason for denial of approval may have been caused by an institution's current non-compliance with a standard or policy. Consequently, denial may be accompanied by monitoring or imposition of a sanction.

Options of the Committees on Compliance and Reports Following Review by a Substantive Change Committee
The report of the Substantive Change Committee, together with the response of the institution to

any recommendations contained in that report (due within five months of the Committee visit), will be reviewed by the Committee on Compliance and Reports. The Committee may recommend one of the following actions:

1. continue the institution in accreditation, with or without a monitoring report,
2. continue the institution in accreditation, impose a sanction, and request a monitoring report, with/without a special committee visit (mandatory visit if placed on Probation), or
3. remove accreditation, subject to the provisions of SACSCOC policies and procedures.

Appendix A

Substantive Change Policy Statements
Related to Direct Assessment and
Hybrid Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs

1. The *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* applies to all programs and services of SACSCOC-accredited institutions wherever they are located or however they are delivered. Failure to comply with the *Principles* or with procedures referred to in this policy could result in the institution being placed on sanction or being removed from membership.

2. Denial of approval of substantive change is not appealable. An institution that fails to gain approval of the substantive change may resubmit a revised prospectus or application following the guidelines and time frames described in this policy statement.

3. An accredited institution in the appeals process or in litigation with SACSCOC is not eligible for consideration of substantive change.

4. The SACSCOC substantive change policy applies only to SACSCOC-accredited institutions. Applicant and candidate institutions may not initiate substantive change.

5. An institution may withdraw its prospectus/application or may discontinue substantive change at any time during the review process by submitting a formal letter of withdrawal to the President of SACSCOC.

6. Once an institution submits its prospectus or application and the document is reviewed by either the Committee on Compliance and Reports or by SACSCOC staff prior to approval by the Board, any information included therein that indicates possible non-compliance with any of the Core Requirements or Comprehensive Standards may lead SACSCOC to further review the institution, even if the prospectus is withdrawn or approval of the change is denied.

7. SACSCOC staff conducts a preliminary review of all changes requiring final approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. All substantive changes described in this procedure are referred to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

8. If an institution fails to report or to gain approval of this type of substantive change prior to its implementation, both the prospectus/application and the issue of late submission will be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action.

9. All final decisions regarding the accreditation status of an institution are made by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Denial of substantive change and the imposition of sanctions are not appealable actions.

10. The date of the letter of approval of a substantive change is considered the date on which the change is included as part of the institution's accreditation.

11. If an institution fails to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures, it may lose its Title IV funding or be required by the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse it for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution's case may be referred to SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership.

Appendix B

Screening Form for the Approval of Direct Assessment
Competency-Based Educational Programs

Purpose of the Screening Form

An institution that intends to seek approval for one or more direct assessment competency-based educational programs (degree, certificate, diploma) should first complete the attached screening form so that Commission staff can determine whether the program requires prior notification or approval.

Definitions

For the purpose of the application of the Commission's policy, the Commission uses the following definitions:

Competency-Based Educational Programs. A competency-based educational program is outcome-based and assesses a student's attainment of competencies as the sole means of determining whether the student earns a degree or a credential. Such programs may be organized around traditional course-based units (credit or clock hours) that students must earn to complete their educational program, or may depart from course-based units (credit or clock hours) to rely solely on the attainment of defined competencies.

Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs *(also referred to in this policy as direct assessment programs)*. Federal regulations define a direct assessment competency-based educational program as an instructional program that, in lieu of credit hours or clock hours as a measure of student learning, uses direct assessment of student learning relying solely on the attainment of defined competencies, or recognizes the direct assessment of student learning by others. The assessment must be consistent with the accreditation of the institution or program using the results of the assessment.

Hybrid Direct Assessment Competency-Based Educational Programs *(also referred to in this policy as hybrid programs)*. A hybrid competency-based educational program combines course-based competencies (clock and credit hours awarded) with non-course based competencies (no clock or credit hours awarded).

Programs that Require Prior Approval

An institution must seek prior approval when it offers a direct assessment competency-based educational program characterized by the following:

1. The entire educational program is direct assessment and relies exclusively on measured achievement of competencies rather than student learning through credit or clock hours; or
2. At least 50 percent of the competency-based program is direct assessment; that is, 50 percent or more of the educational program relies on measured achievement of competencies rather than credit or clock hours.

An institution is required to provide formal notification when it begins to offer 25 percent of a direct assessment program; that is, when a student can earn 25 percent of an educational program based on measured achievement of competencies rather than credit or clock hours.

Directions

Please complete the following screening form and send it to:

Dr. Belle S Wheelan
ATTN: Substantive Change
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097

After reviewing the completed form, Commission staff will determine whether (1) the institution has provided sufficient information to constitute notification or (2) the institution will need to complete a Substantive Change Prospectus for Direct Assessment and Hybrid Direct Assessment Competency-Based Programs.

Directions:

Please provide responses to each of the questions below:

Date of submission: _____

|		
1.	Name of Institution: (City, State)	
2.	Institutional Contact Person:	Name: Phone number: Email Address:
3.	Name of Proposed Educational Program (e.g. degree, diploma, certificate as well as major, concentration, or other designated area of study, if applicable)	
4.	In lieu of credit or contact hours, check the percentage of the program that relies solely on the attainment of defined competencies as a measure of student learning.	___ 100% defined by attainment of competencies ___ 75-99% defined by attainment of competencies ___ 50-74% defined by attainment of competencies ___ 25-49% defined by attainment of competencies
5.	Will this program be formally identified as a "direct assessment" program?	Yes ____ No _____
6.	Will Title IV student financial aid be offered for this program?	Yes ____ No _____

Faculty Senate

Parking Presentation

Parking Enforcement

Parking Enforcement 1/24-5/24 vs 1/25-5/25
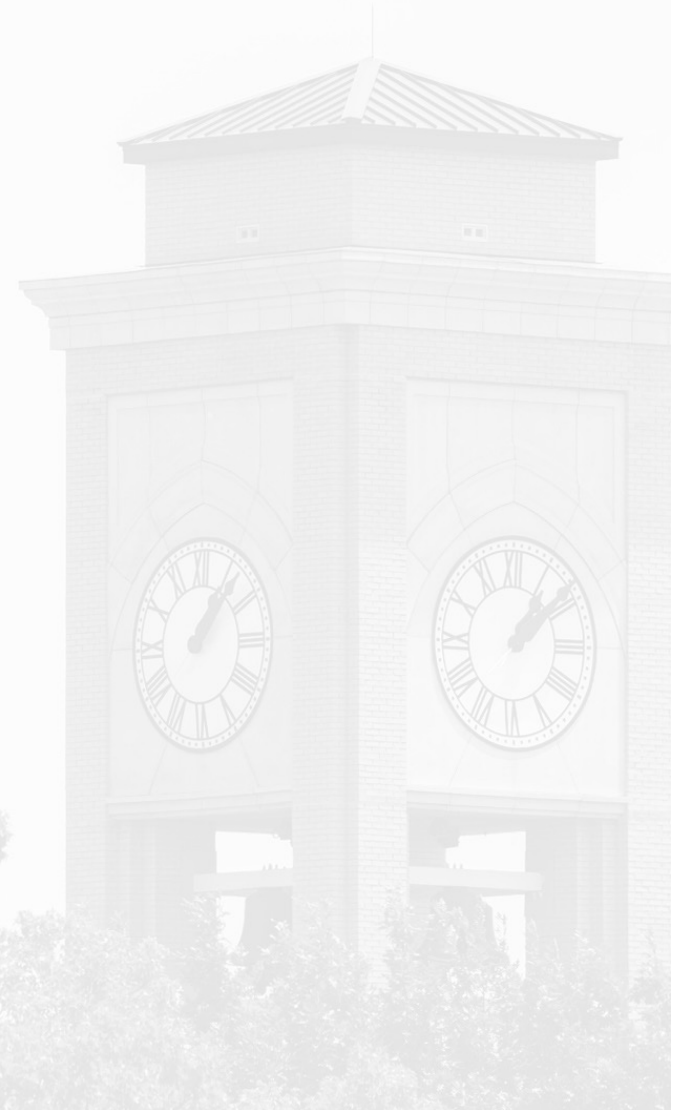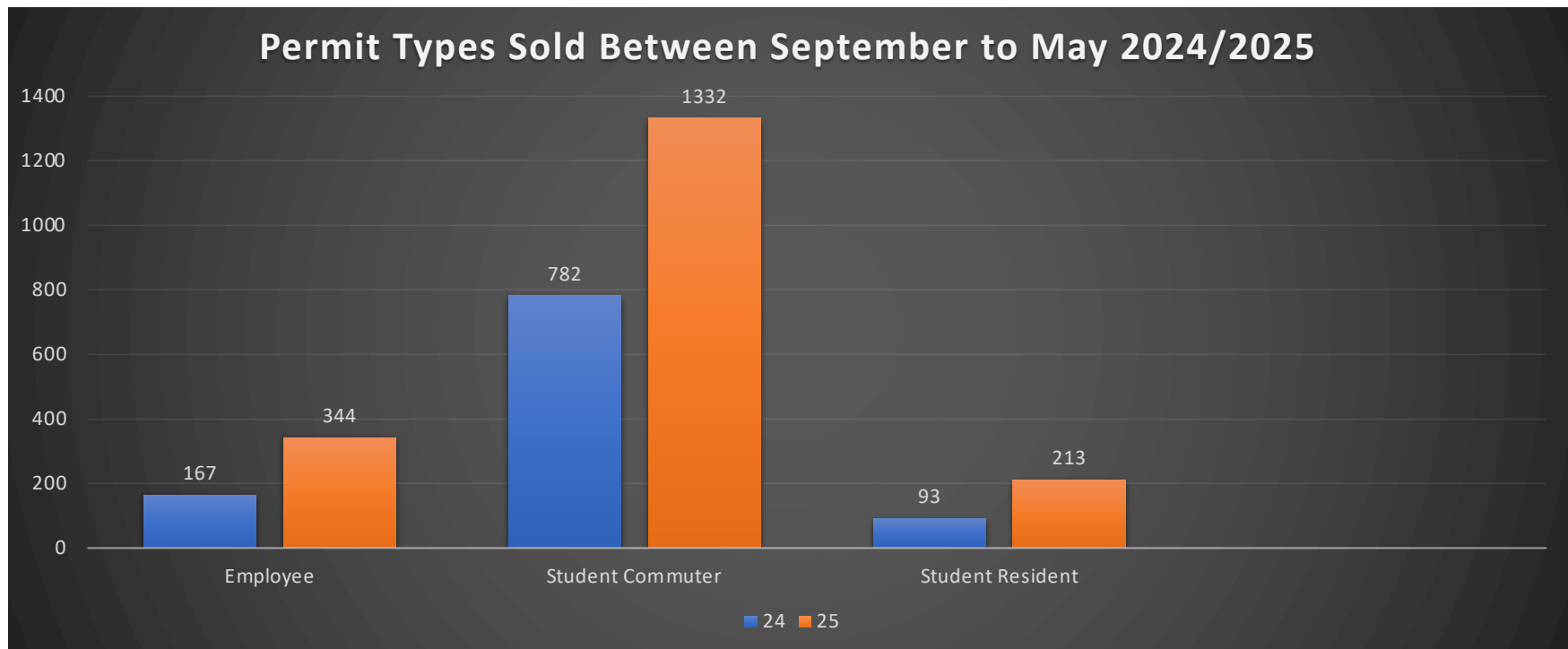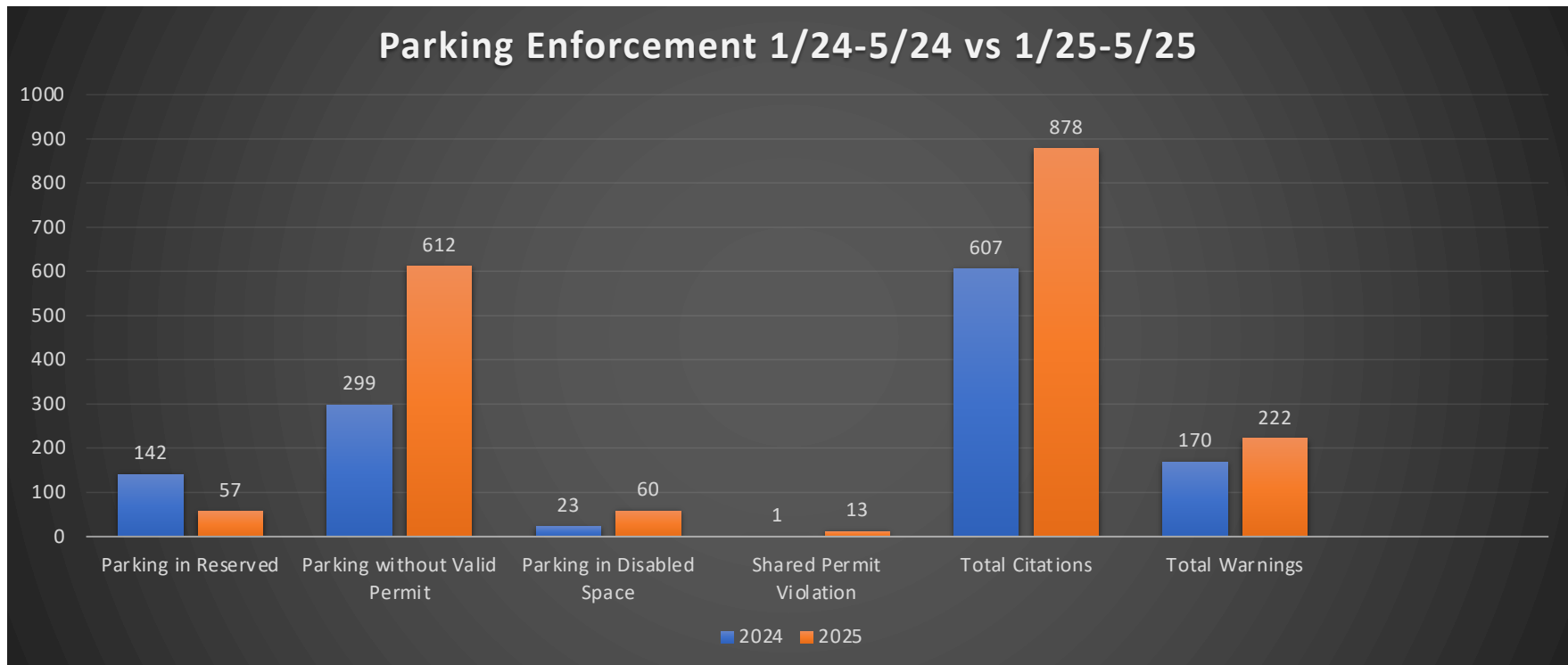
Donations for Citations
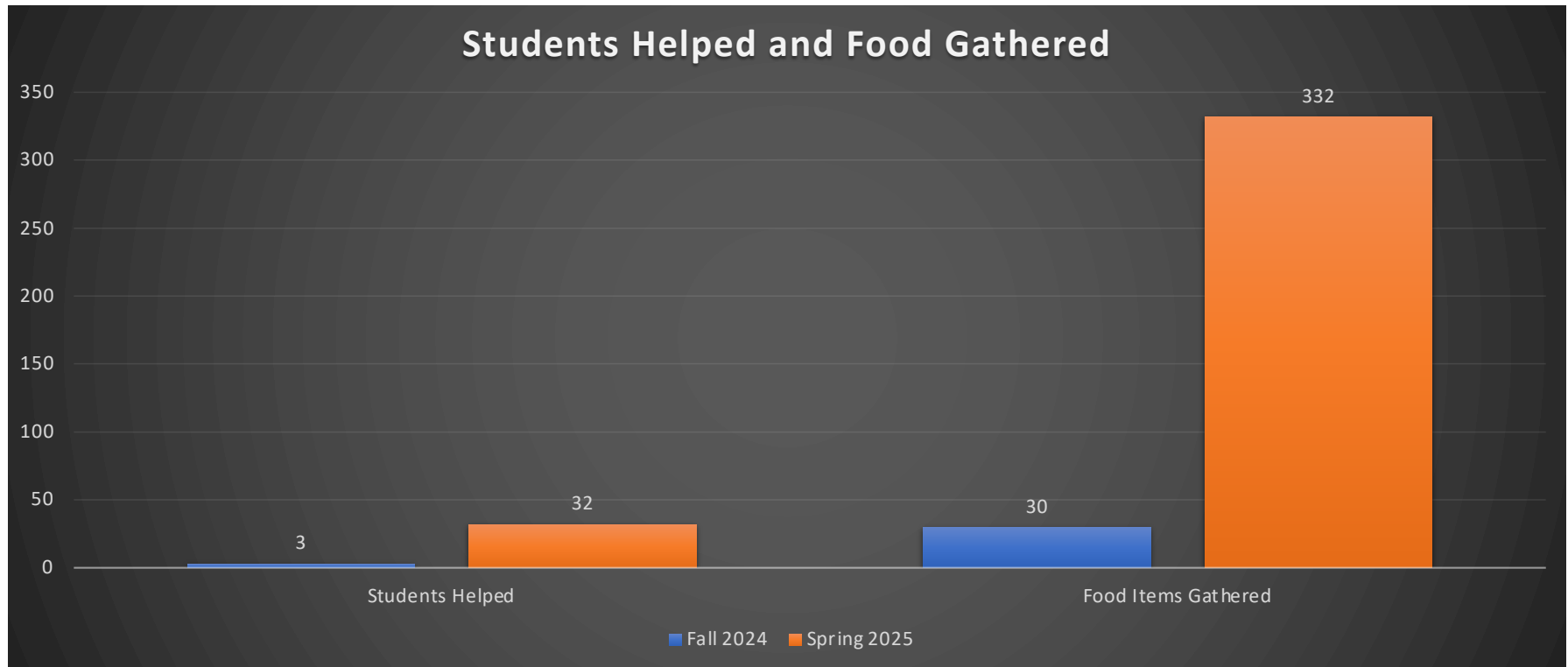
Other News

- Lot 7 will be closed for re-seal and striping
  - May 12 through at least May 21
- Lot 10 and 14 will be scheduled this summer
- Email communication for large blocks of spaces will continue.
- Working with individual events on campus suggesting we waive citations for that day instead of blocking off entire lots.
  - Some are unavoidable.
- Permit sales for 25/26 go on sale August 8
  - Pricing will remain the same ($150 Fac/Staff, $300 Reserved)

UT Tyler
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