

# Beyond Articulation Agreements

The Role of Transfer in the National Pursuit of  
Equitable Student Success

**TACKLING  
TRANSFER**



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# Warm Up Discussion

Tell me who you are! In the chat, put your name, title & institution/org, and one transfer-related task you do regularly.

e.g., Tania LaViolet, Director Aspen CEP, make the case for increased transfer opportunity and success using data.

Three volunteers: Unmute yourselves and tell me how you explain your job or transfer-related tasks to non-transfer professionals.

# What is Equity?

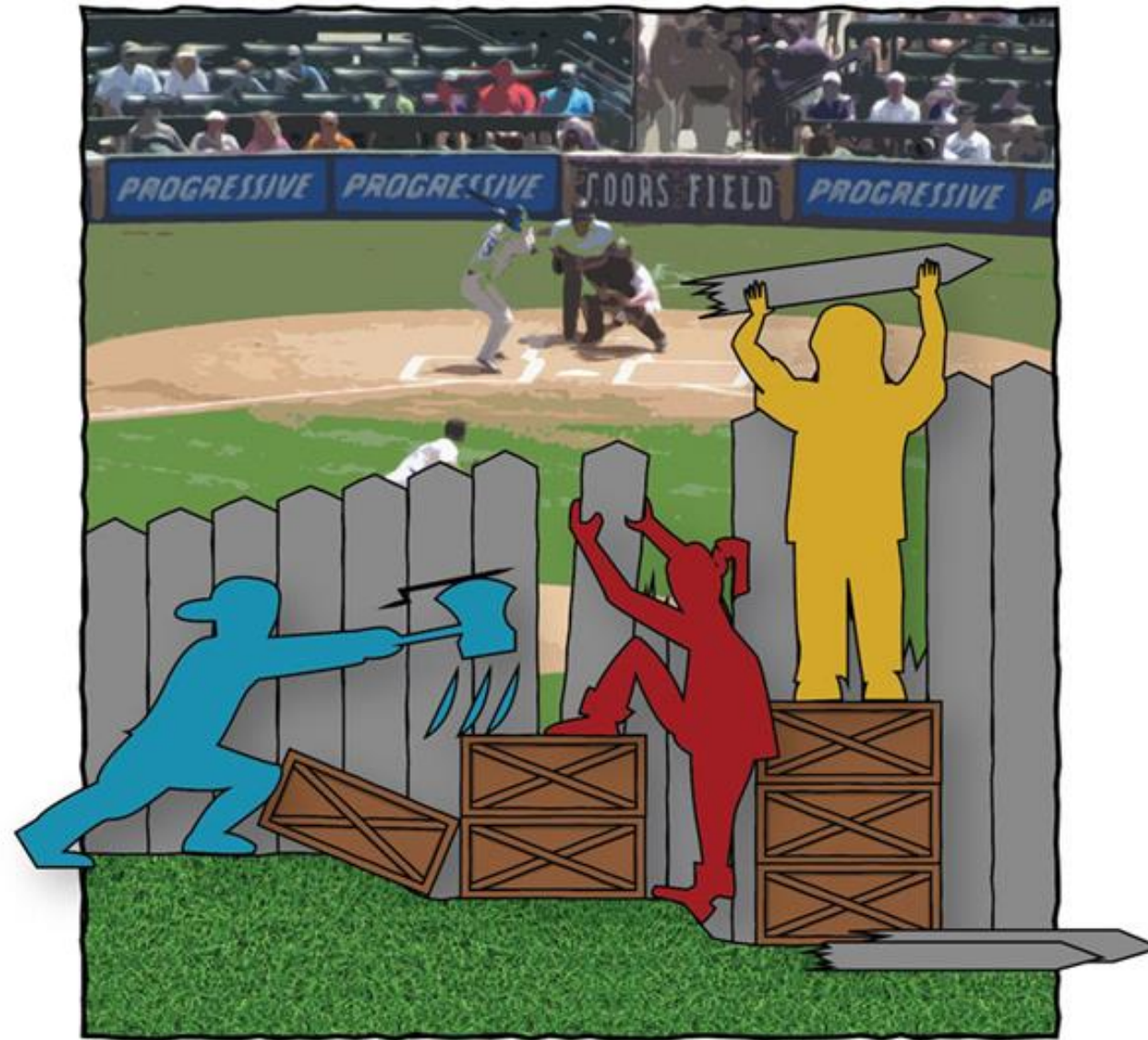


**EQUALITY**



**EQUITY**

# What is Equity?

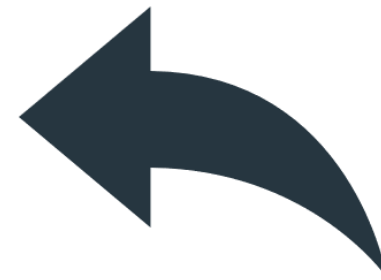


**JUSTICE**

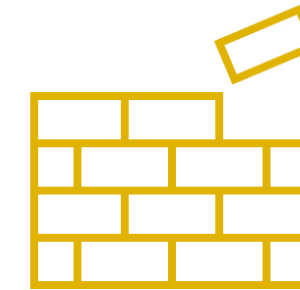
# Advancing equity and justice in higher education by



Navigating



Undoing



Redoing

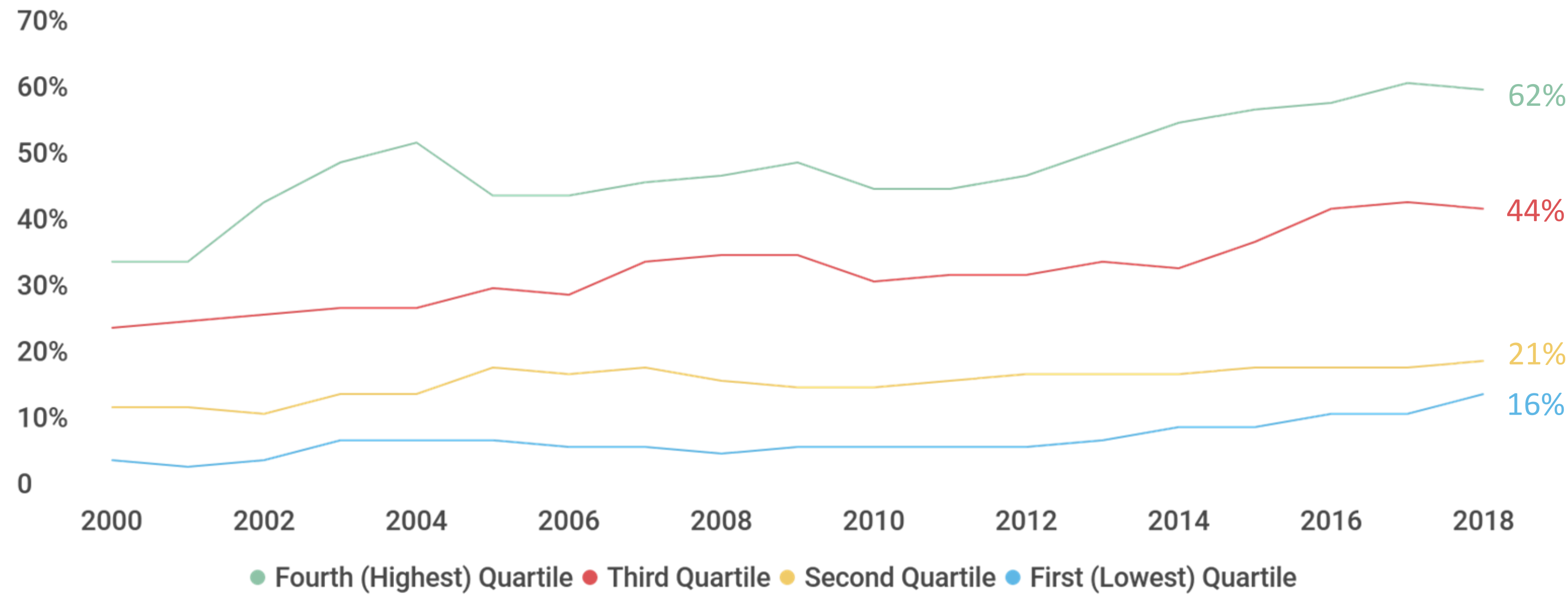
transfer practice and policy.

Your work is in  
service of a  
larger national  
imperative



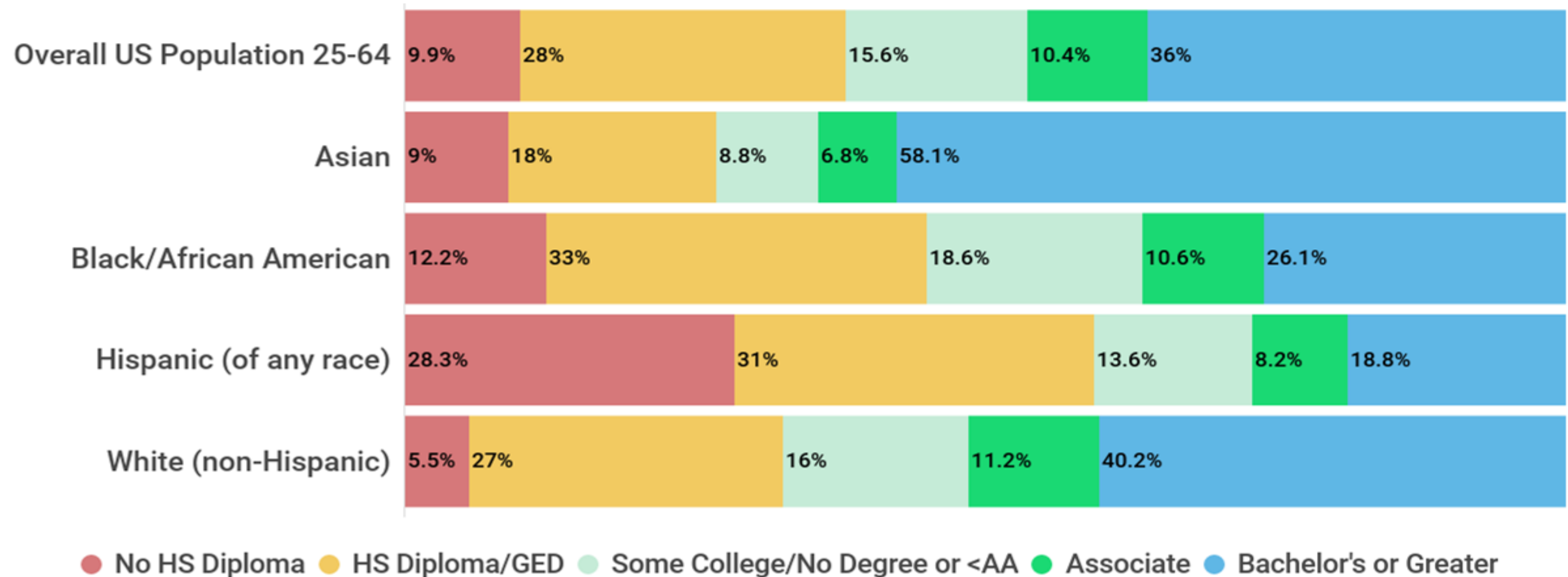
# BA Attainment for Low-Income Young People at 16%

Bachelor's degree attainment rate by age 24 by family income quartile, dependent family members (2000-2018)

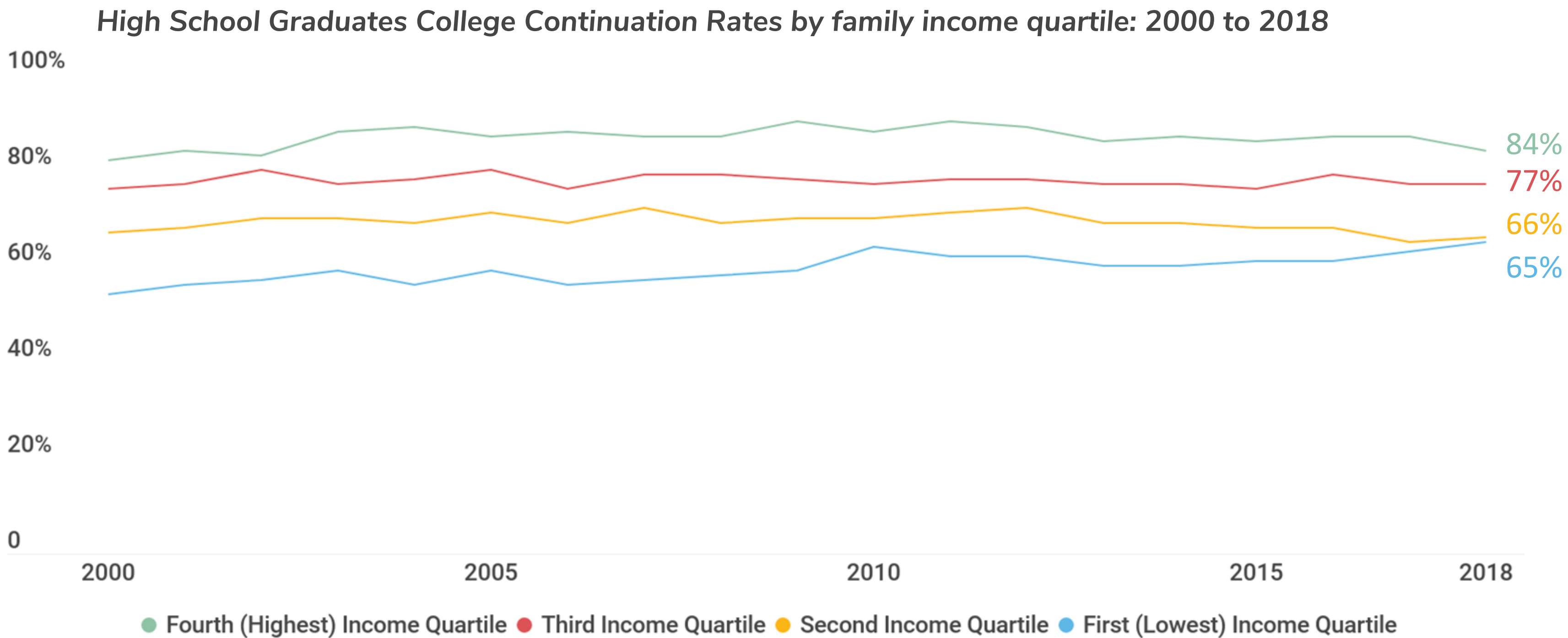


# Disparities in Educational Attainment By Race

*Highest level of educational attainment (ages 25-64)*

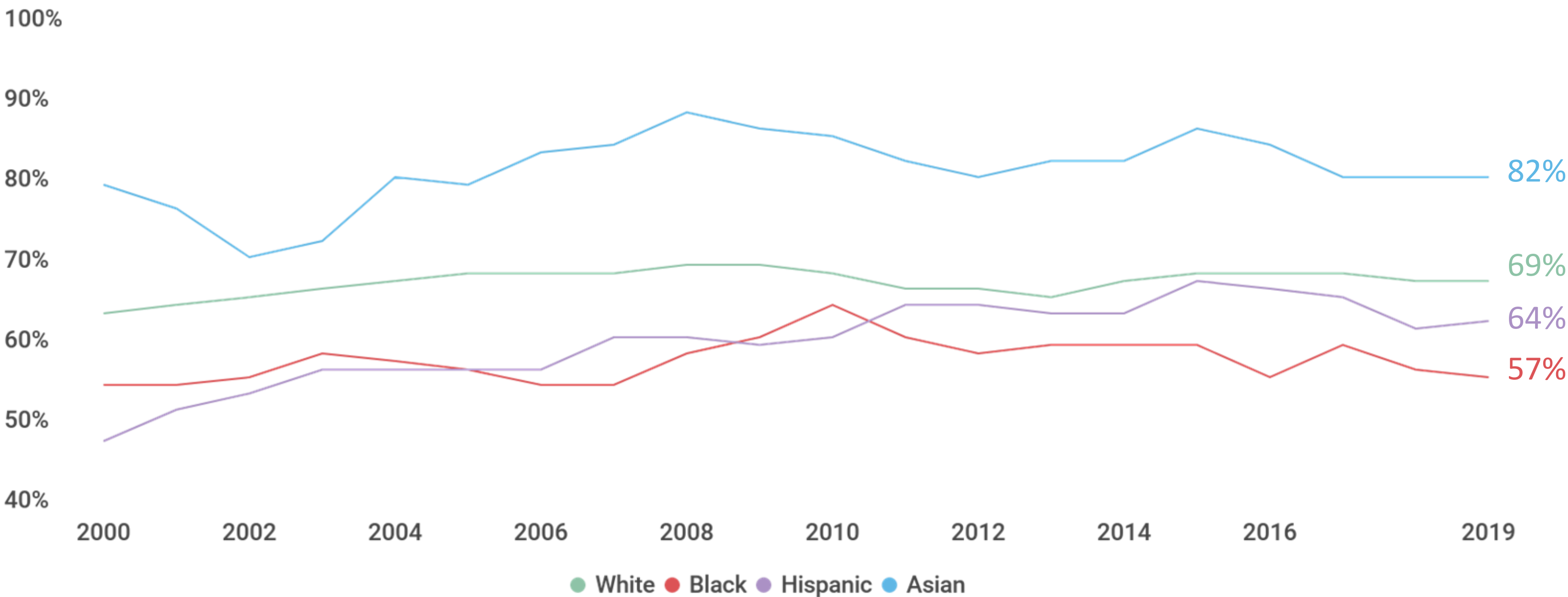


# College Going Rates by Income: Room for Improvement



# College Going Rates by Race: Room for Improvement

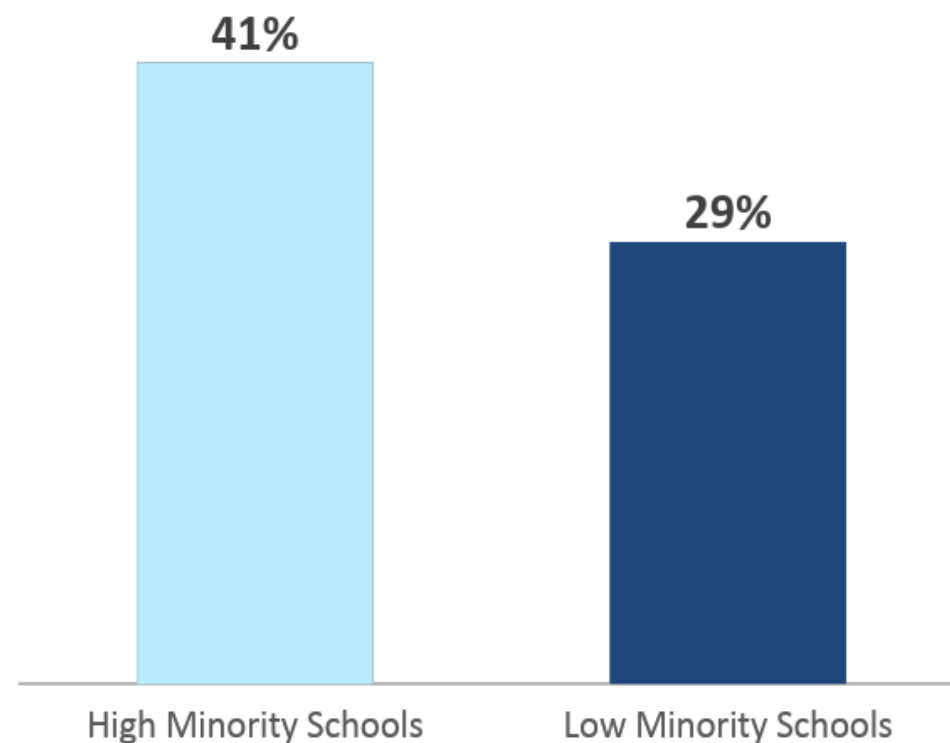
Percentage of recent high school completers enrolled in college, by race/ethnicity: 2000 through 2019



# Where are Historically Underrepresented Students Enrolling in College?

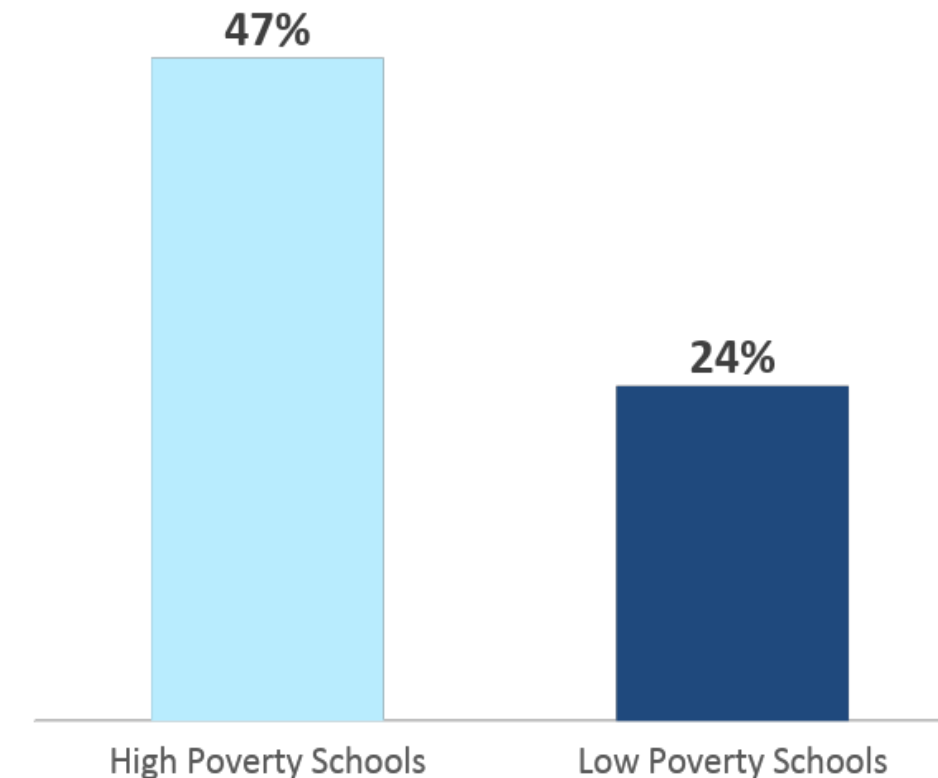
**College goers from “high-minority” high schools enroll in community colleges at a higher rate than their peers from “low-minority” schools**

*Class of 2017: 2-Year College Enrollment Rate of College Goers in the First Fall after High School Graduation, by School Minority Levels*



**College goers from high-poverty high schools enroll in community college at nearly double the rate of their peers from low-poverty schools**

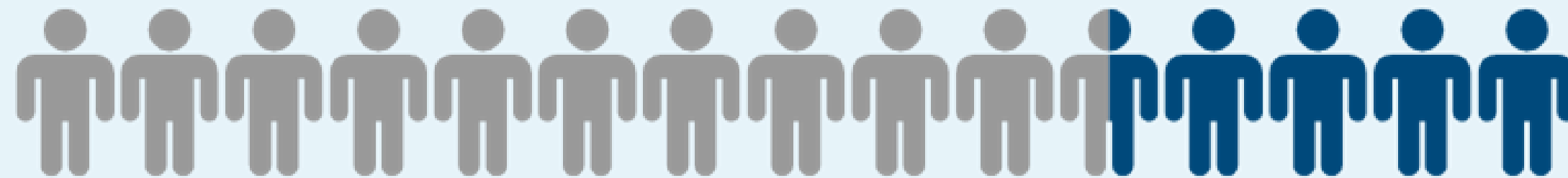
*Class of 2017: 2-Year College Enrollment Rate of College Goers in the First Fall after High School Graduation, by School Income Levels*



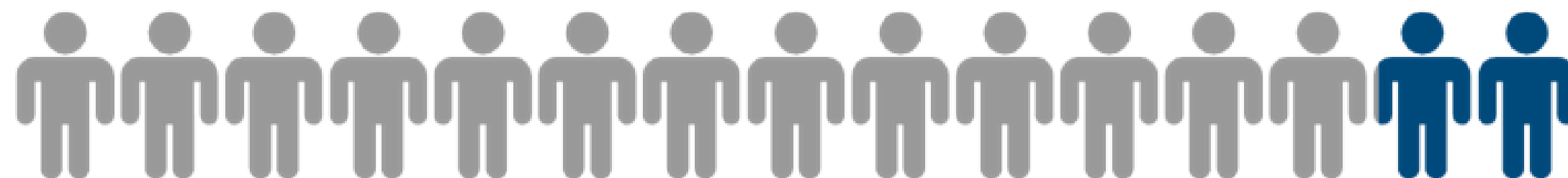
# There is Immense Potential to Serve More Students Through Transfer



**80%** of new community college students aim to earn a bachelor's.



**30%** of these students transfer to a four-year college within six years.

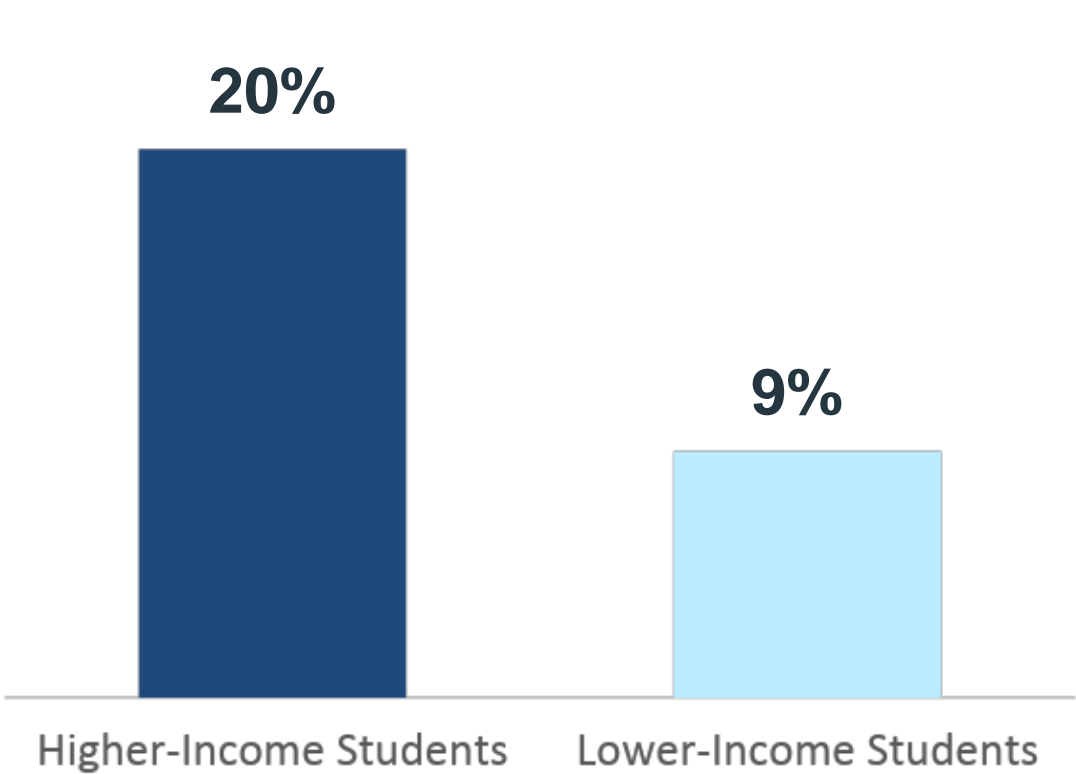


**13%** earn a bachelor's within six years of starting college.

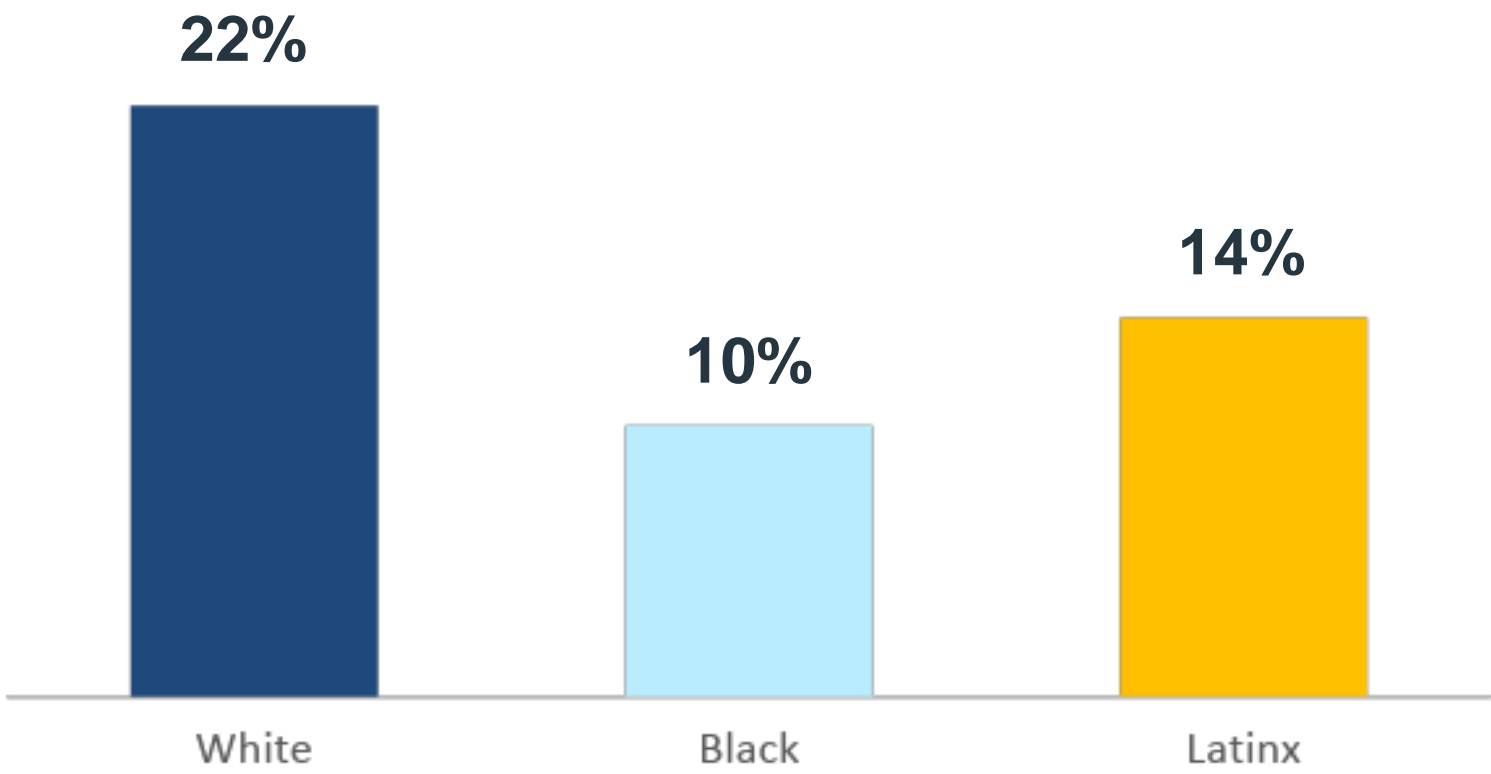
# Broken Transfer Impacts Lower-Income, Black, & Latinx Students Most

Lower-income, Black, and Latinx students entering community colleges complete bachelor's degrees at lower rates than higher-income and white peers.

Six-Year Bachelor's Completion Rate for Students Who Started at Community College by Income (Fall 2012 cohort)



Six-Year Completion Rate at a Four-Year Institution for Students Who Started at Two-Year Public Institutions by Race and Ethnicity (Fall 2013 cohort)



# Key Takeaways:



BA attainment is lower for people from Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and lower-income communities



College going rates among these populations are **relatively high with opportunities to improve**



Many college goers from these underserved populations **start in community colleges**



Supporting increased BA attainment for historically underserved groups will require major focus on **improving community college transfer outcomes**

# Tracking Transfer

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## Tracking Transfer

**New Measures of Institutional and State Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students Attain Bachelor's Degrees**



**January 2016**

**CCRC** COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
RESEARCH CENTER  
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

  
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

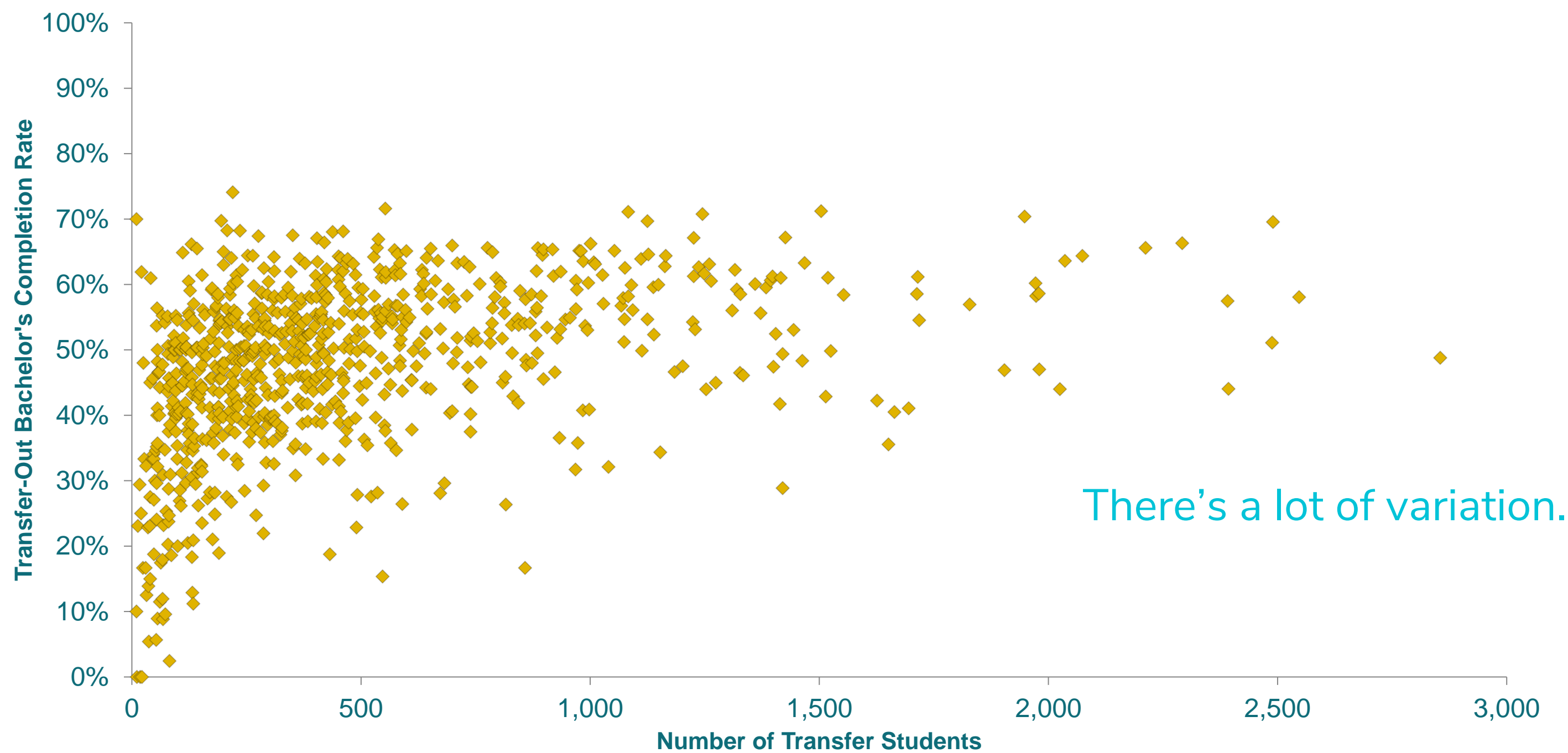
NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE  
RESEARCH CENTER

**Davis Jenkins**  
Community College Research Center  
Teachers College, Columbia University

**John Fink**  
Community College Research Center  
Teachers College, Columbia University

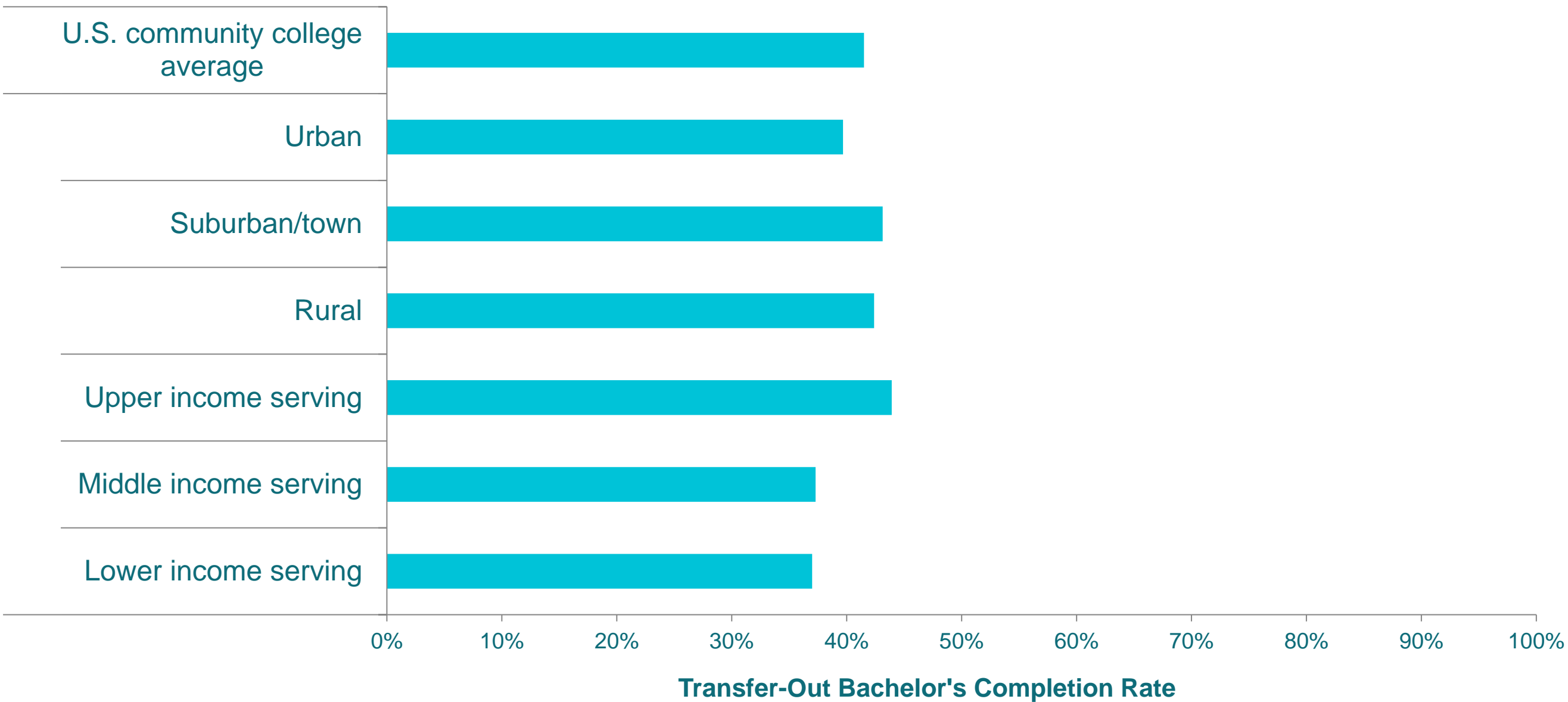
# What Predicts Strong Transfer Student Outcomes?

Six-Year Bachelor's Completion Rates for Transfer Students by Individual Community College



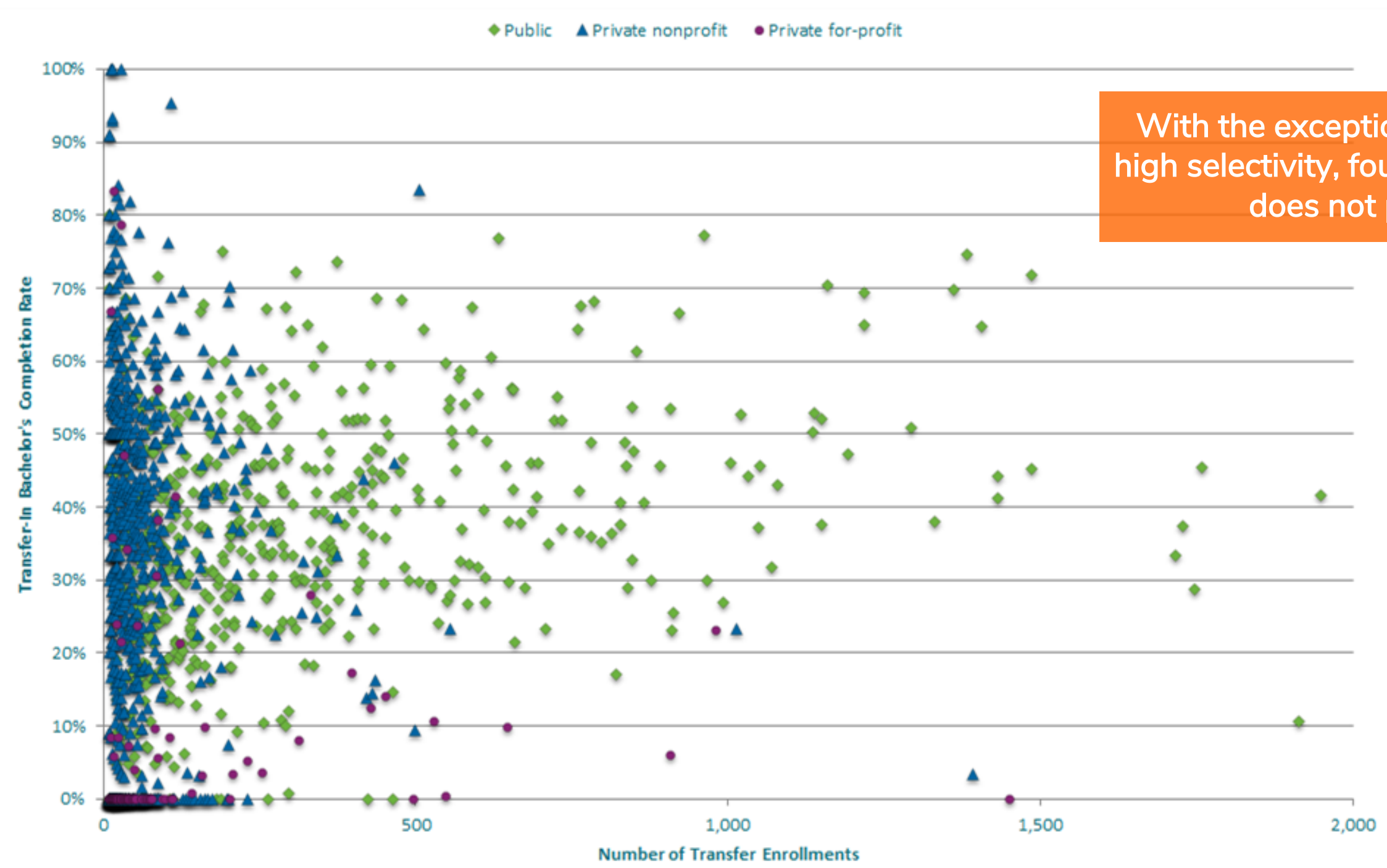
# While outcomes at community colleges vary, what we imagine would predict variation doesn't...

Average Bachelor's Completion Rates for Transfer Students By Starting Community College Type



# What Predicts Strong Transfer Student Outcomes?

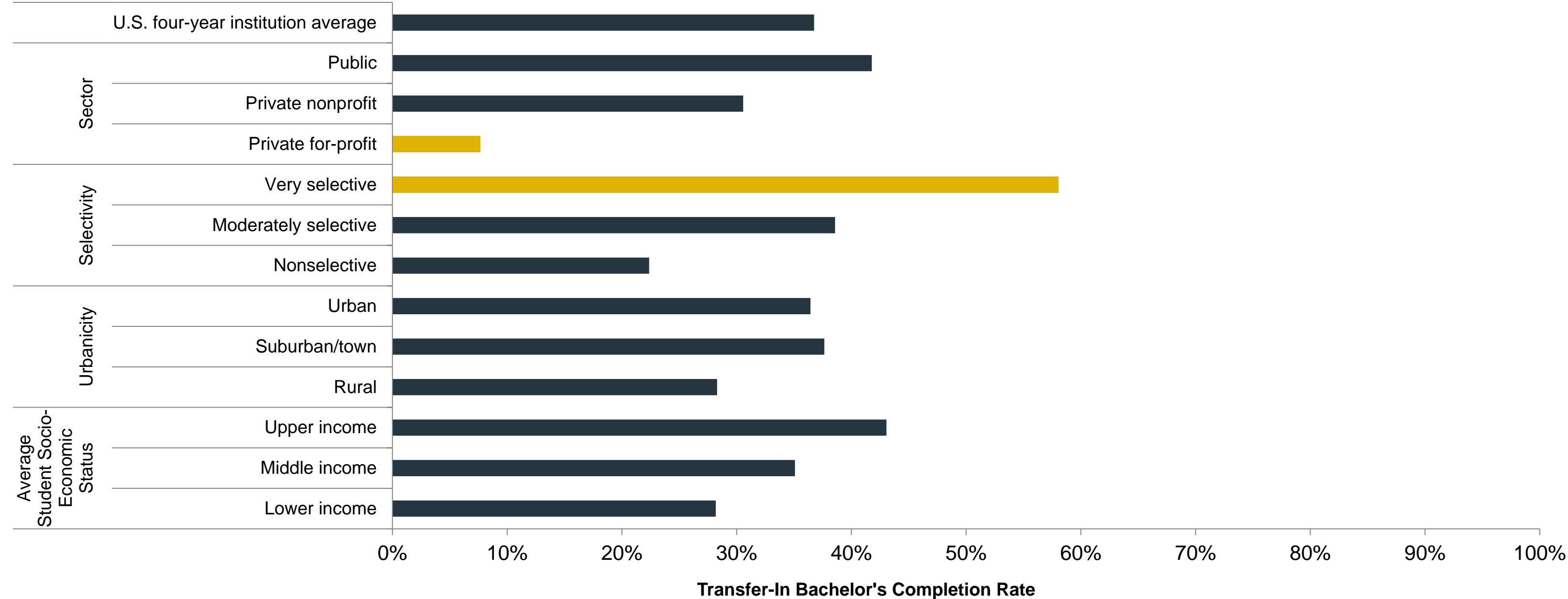
Six-Year Bachelor's Completion Rates for Transfer Students by Individual Four-Year Institution



With the exception of for-profit status and high selectivity, four-year institution type also does not predict outcomes.

# The characteristics of four-year schools matter (somewhat) when it comes to how many transfer students get a bachelor's.

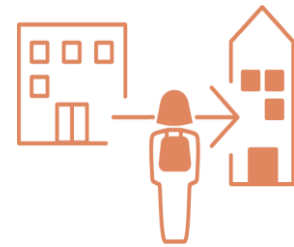
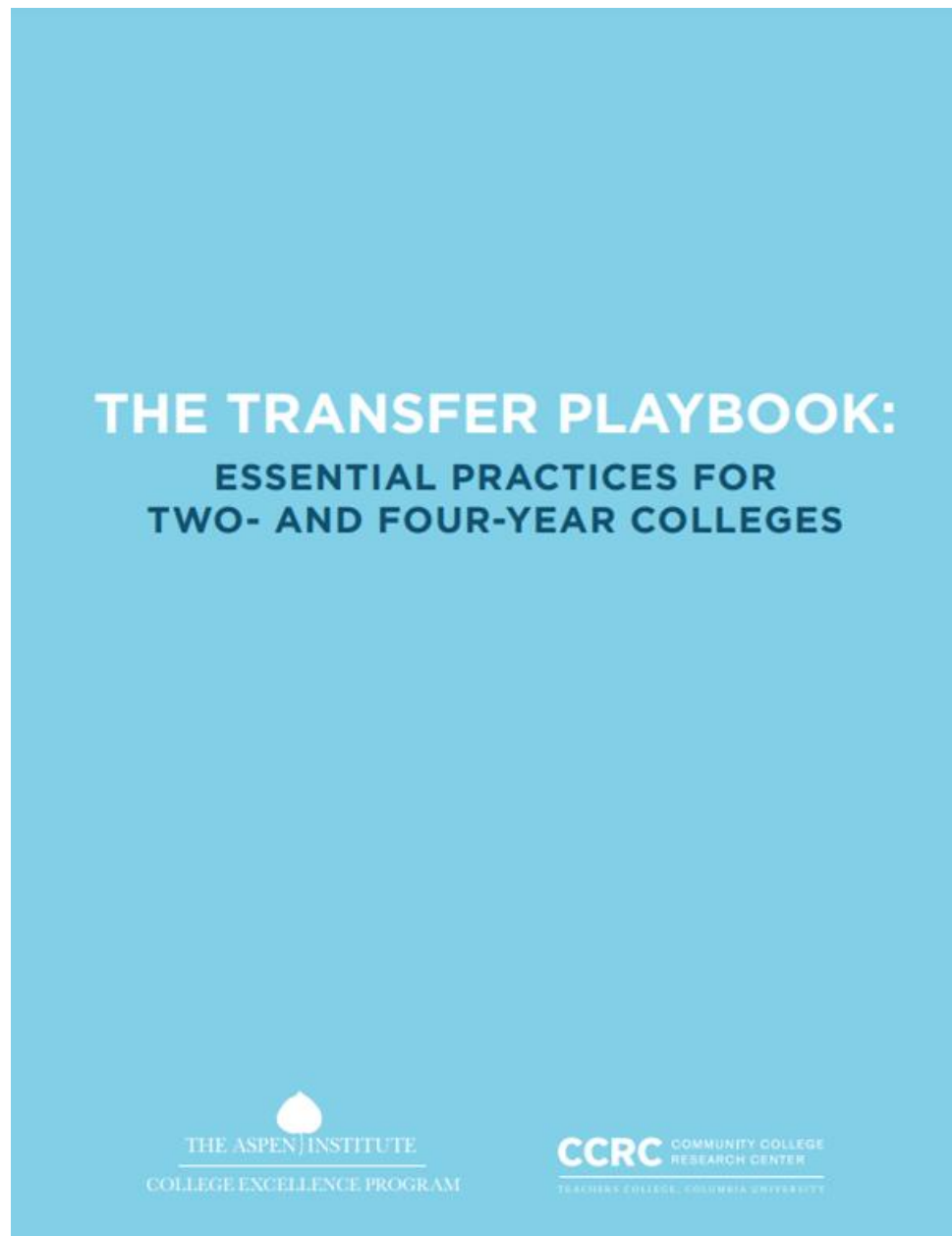
*Six-Year Bachelor's Completion Rates for Transfer Students by Four-Year Institution Type*



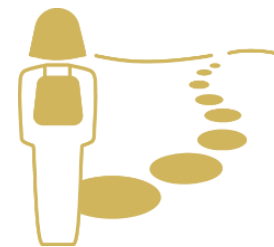


Our conclusion... Transfer outcomes depend on what community colleges and 4-year colleges do to educate and support their transfer students.

# The Transfer Playbook



**Prioritize transfer** through communication, shared data, and resource allocation



**Create clear programmatic pathways** that are regularly updated and aligned with high-quality instruction



**Provide tailored transfer student advising** with committed personnel, frequent feedback, and quick intervention

A composite image featuring a photograph of a baseball game in progress at Coors Field, with a cartoon overlay. The photograph shows a batter swinging at a pitch, a catcher crouching, and a pitcher in the background. The stadium seating is filled with spectators. A blue banner with the word "PROGRESSIVE" is visible in the background. Overlaid on the bottom half of the image is a cartoon illustration of three stylized human figures standing behind a grey fence. The figure on the left is blue, the middle one is red, and the one on the right is yellow. They are all standing on wooden crates. The blue figure is holding a white object (possibly a phone or a cup) and has one arm raised. The red figure has both arms raised in a cheering gesture. The yellow figure is also cheering with both arms raised. The ground in front of the fence is green grass.

Alone, articulation agreements or course equivalencies may promote credit **transferability**, but they do not necessarily support **credit applicability** and **clarity for students**.

Without all three, it will be difficult to achieve timely, affordable, and equitable bachelor's attainment for transfer students at scale.

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# BEYOND ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS: Five Student-Centered Principles to Improve Transfer

[highered.aspeninstitute.org/tackling-transfer](https://highered.aspeninstitute.org/tackling-transfer)



# STUDENT-CENTERED ALTERNATIVES TO ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

## 1. UNDERSTAND TRANSFER STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES

Collect and use quantitative and qualitative data on student trends and engage with current, prospective, and former transfer students to understand barriers to success.

## 2. DEFINE A VISION AND GOALS FOR EQUITABLE TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS

Find common ground between community colleges and four-year institutions on student access, success, and equity that meets both institution's goals and lays the foundation for continued collaboration.

## 3. CREATE CLEAR PATHS TO A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE:

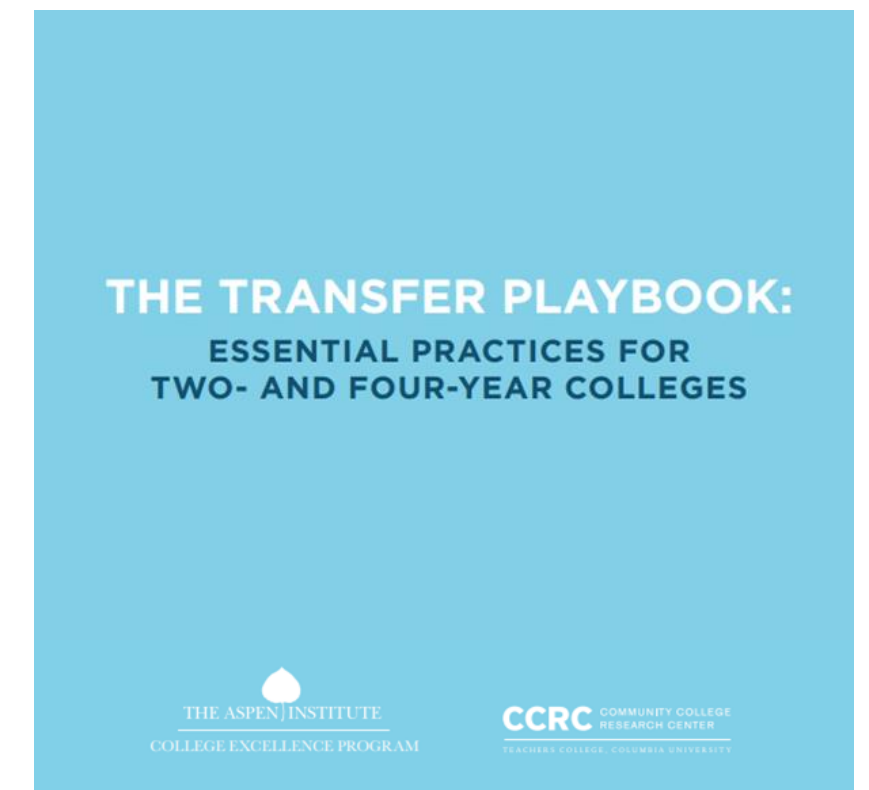
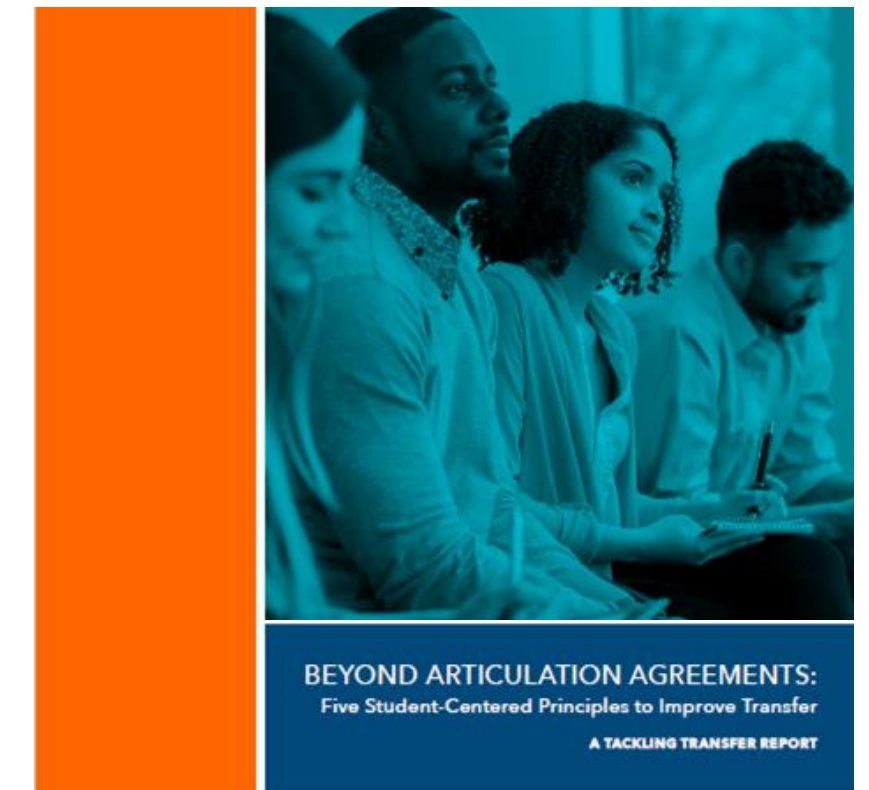
Create time and space for faculty from community colleges and four-year institutions to collectively build maps that detail the courses and learning necessary for students to complete entire programs (not just isolated courses).

## 4. PROVIDE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT TRANSFER INFORMATION AND ADVISING:

Create a system of advising that guides every student to make decisions about transfer early and complete their bachelor's degree with minimal excess credits. These efforts hinge on the engagement of knowledgeable advisors and on student-friendly communication, tools, and policies.

## 5. COMMIT TO ROUTINES OF COLLABORATION WITH THE GOAL OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Assume that transfer outcomes can always be improved, and put processes in place for faculty, advisors, deans, provosts, and presidents to celebrate successes, evaluate progress to goals, and commit to specific improvements to advance student success and close equity gaps.



# Examples of Excellence

# DirectConnect to UCF: Guaranteed Admissions, Clear Milestones, & Personal Success Coaches

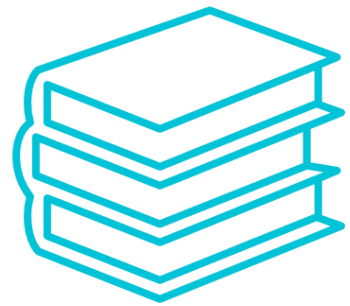


DirectConnect resulted in the  
2018-19 school year, 62%  
of bachelor degrees awarded  
were to transfer students

# DirectConnect to UCF: Behind the Scenes

**United by a common goal:** Prepare more local students-- especially those from minoritized backgrounds-- to thrive in a regional economy that put a growing premium on bachelor's degrees.

How UCF, neighboring Valencia College, and five other Florida state colleges collaborate to sustain seamless transfer pathways to a four-year degree:



**Aligned curriculum**  
in lower-division  
courses



Holistic advising on  
pathways, financial  
aid, admissions, and  
career options



**Annual data-sharing**  
across institutions



**Annual convenings**  
dedicated to  
**improving practice**

# Mount Holyoke College: Transferring Without Articulation Agreements

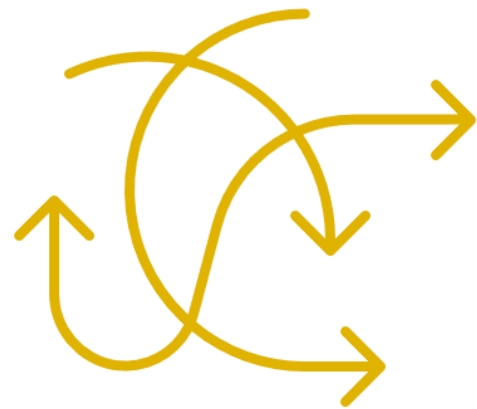


**Frances Perkins Scholars Program:**  
Since 1980 MHC has been dedicated to enrolling and holistically supporting older college students, **including many community college transfers**



**89% of Frances Perkins scholars earned a degree from Mount Holyoke.**

# Mount Holyoke College: From Course Equivalencies to Early Advising



College-specific articulation agreements **created many inefficiencies**, and strained resources

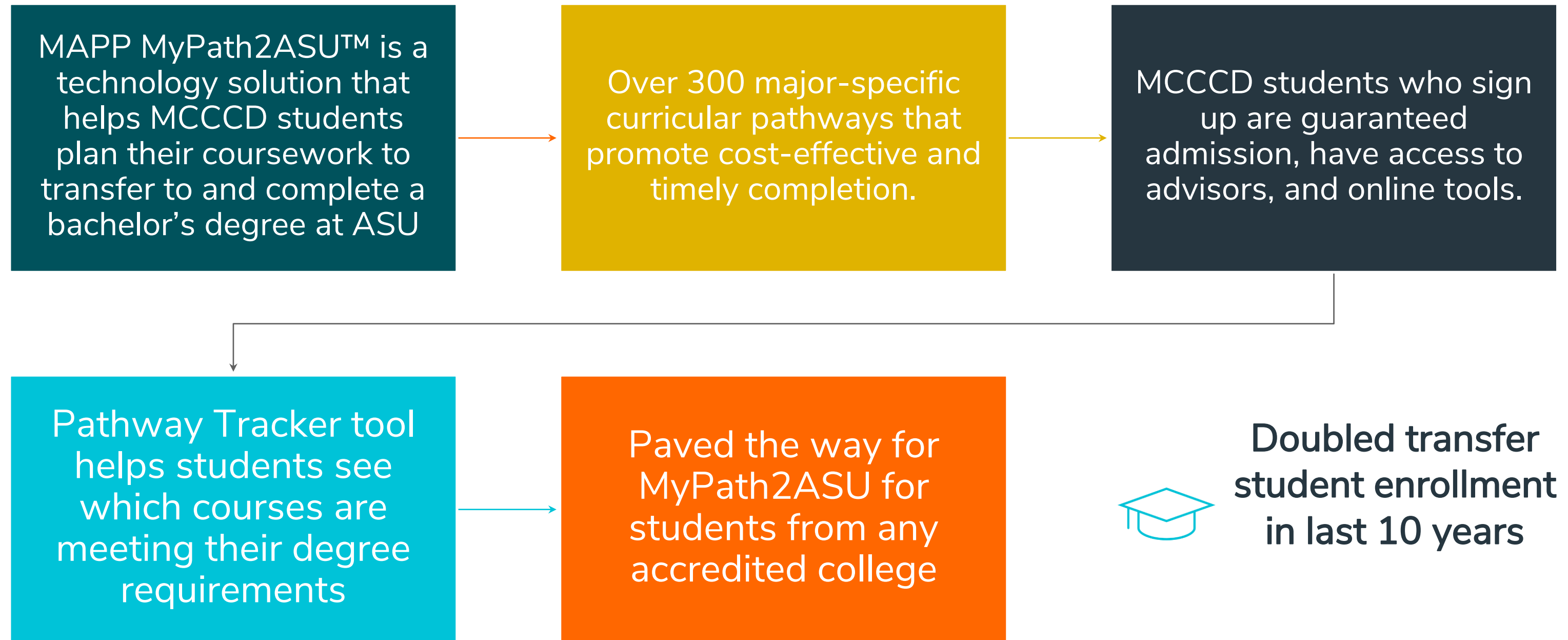


They then implemented a policy that states that “**academic credit is generally granted** for liberal arts courses with grades of C- or better.”



MHC now devotes resources to **developing early relationships** with prospective transfer students to set them up for a seamless transition

# Arizona State University & Maricopa County Community College District: Technology Solutions to Scale Success



# Arizona State University & Maricopa Community Colleges: Technology Solutions to Scale Success



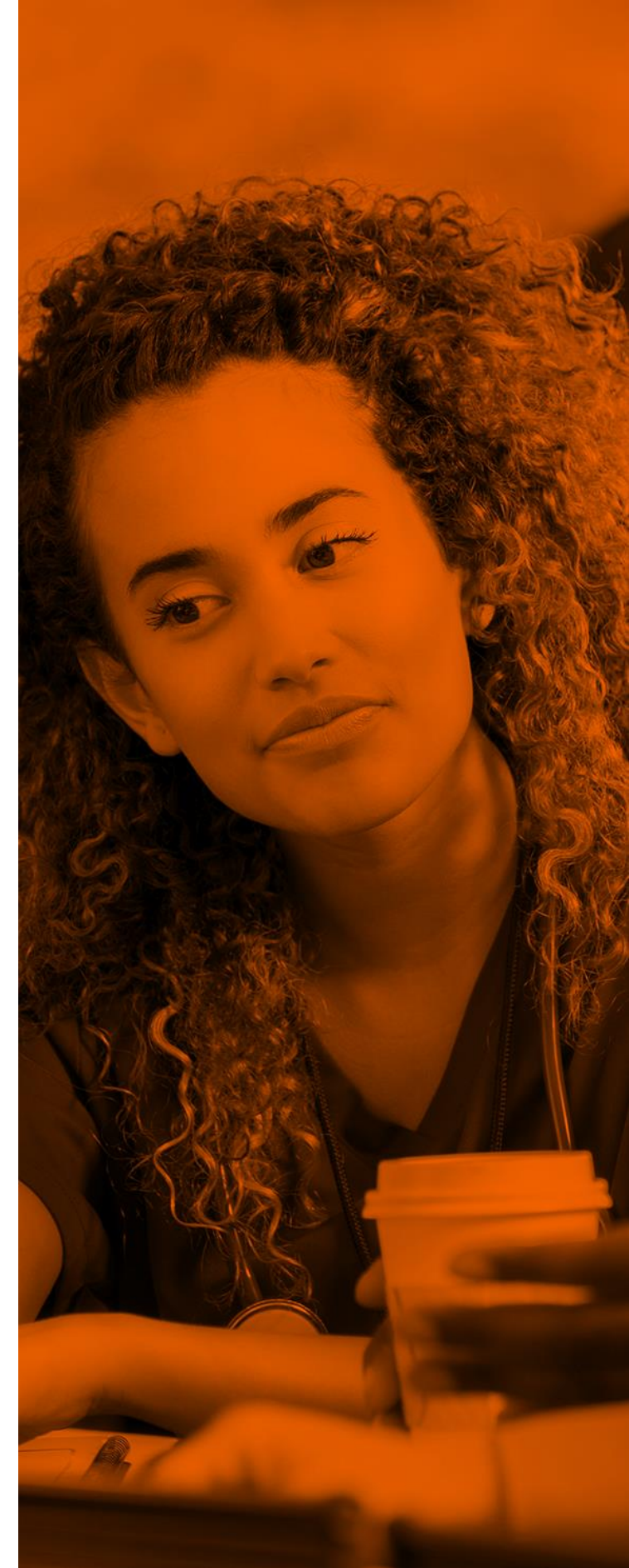
## Behind the Scenes:

- ASU VP for Academic Partnerships hosted regular meetings with MCCC CD presidents and administrators to discuss transfer challenges
- Faculty collaboration to align curricula and build pathways
- Professional development convenings for advisors
- Annual partnership reports documenting programmatic accomplishments

Behind the media buzz,  
dashboards, and tech solutions  
of the nation's transfer  
exemplars are people like you  
committed to student success  
and equity.

# What can you do right now?

1. Read the Transfer Playbook & Beyond Articulation Agreements
2. Understand your transfer student outcomes data
3. Take the practice self-assessment
4. Find us online and all these resources at:  
[aspeninstitute.org/programs/college-excellence-program/](https://aspeninstitute.org/programs/college-excellence-program/)



If you have any doubt of where to start ... start with the student experience.



Jack Kent Cooke Foundation awards prestigious Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship to 61 top community college graduates in the class of 2021



# Questions?