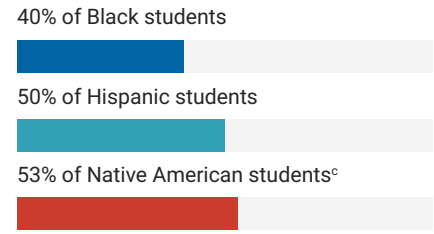


Community colleges serve a diverse and talented pool of students. Nationally, community colleges enroll ...

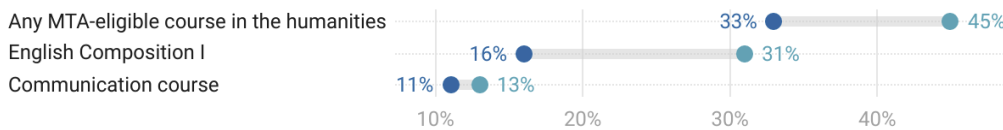
**9.6 million** undergraduate students (2019–20 academic year) accounting for **4 in 10** undergraduate students<sup>b</sup>



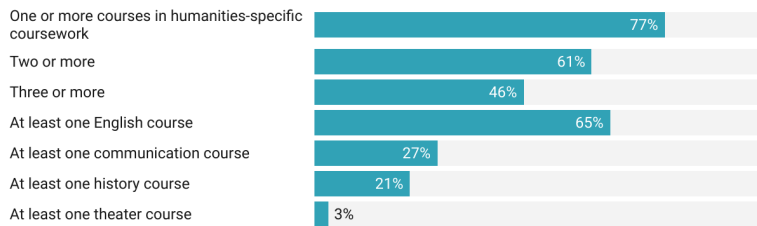
**400k** associate of arts degrees in general studies/liberal arts were awarded by community colleges (2015)

**<10%** were awarded in communication, English, history, or theater/visual arts<sup>d</sup>

A greater share of Michigan community college students completed MTA-eligible courses in the humanities within their first year of enrollment in 2016 than in 2009.



Among the 2016 entering cohort, many students took at least one humanities course before transferring.



Michigan community college students are increasingly taking humanities courses.

In Michigan, many bachelor's degree completers in humanities and other fields have taken coursework at a community college.<sup>e</sup>

**81%** of bachelor's degree completers who first enrolled at any MI college took a course at a MI community college (2009–2014)

**85%** of bachelor's degree completers in humanities took a humanities course at a community college (2009–2014)

**75%** of bachelor's degree completers in humanities took two or more humanities courses at a community college (2009–2014)

75% of Black completers took a community college course

86% of Hispanic completers took a community college course

79% of Black completers in humanities took a humanities course at a community college

87% of Hispanic completers in humanities took a humanities course at a community college

66% of Black completers in humanities took two or more community college humanities courses

78% of Hispanic completers in humanities took two or more community college humanities courses

<sup>a</sup>Unless otherwise noted, information in this table is based on analysis of Michigan administrative data that includes student demographic characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, SES), course enrollment and outcomes, colleges attended, and degrees awarded from academic years 2009–10 through 2019–20 for all students who enrolled as a first-time-in-college student in a Michigan community college during these years.

<sup>b</sup>Jenkins & Fink (2020).

<sup>c</sup>American Association of Community Colleges (2022).

<sup>d</sup>Authors' calculations using IPEDS awards data for two-year colleges in 2015. All humanities degrees include degrees awarded under CIP 24, whereas only 30,000 associate degrees were awarded in communication, English, history, and theater/visual arts.

<sup>e</sup>We derive these statistics by cross-referencing our administrative data from Michigan, which includes enrollment, coursetaking, and degrees awarded for any student who ever enrolled in a Michigan community college, with IPEDS awards data for public and private four-year colleges in Michigan. <sup>f</sup>CCRC (2021a).

For more on this research, read [Smoothing Pathways to Transfer in the Humanities: A Report on the Strengthening Michigan Humanities Project](#) by Susan Bickerstaff, Selena Cho, Daniel Sparks, and John Fink

# THE CHALLENGE <sup>a</sup>

## Measures on Michigan Transfer in the Humanities

Too few community college students transfer and complete a bachelor's degree, and Black, Hispanic, and low-income students are disproportionately affected. Nationally<sup>f</sup> ...

In Michigan ...

**43%** of community college students transferred (2013 entering cohort)



**31%** of community college students ever transfer to a four-year college

**14%** earn a bachelor's degree

**2x** White and higher income students are twice as likely to transfer as Black and Hispanic students

**15%** completed a bachelor's degree in six years (2013 entering cohort)

Fewer than 2% (2,961) of community college students in the 2009–2014 entry cohorts in Michigan transferred and completed a bachelor's degree in humanities in six years.

**2,961**  
completers

1,273 in communication  
418 in English  
195 in history  
817 in theater/visual arts

In the same cohorts, Black and Hispanic students comprised ...

23% of community college enrollment

22% of transfer students

11% of all bachelor's degree completers

12% of bachelor's degree completers in humanities

**Few Michigan community college students earn bachelor's degrees in the humanities.**

Even among Michigan transfer students who do complete a bachelor's degree, few do so in the humanities.

**5%**

of students who earned an associate degree and transferred completed a bachelor's degree in the humanities (business and health are the most popular fields, accounting for more than 40% of bachelor's degree completions among associate of arts degree earners). (2009–2014 entry cohorts)

Among the 2009–2014 entering cohorts, who went on to transfer and complete a bachelor's degree in humanities?

**2.7%** of students who took one or more humanities courses at the community college

**3.1%** of students who took two or more humanities courses at the community college

**3.6%** of students who took three or more humanities courses at the community college

**Transfer and bachelor's degree completion rates in the humanities are only slightly higher among Michigan students who took related coursework at the community college.**

**Michigan community college students who complete bachelor's degrees accumulate upwards of 30 excess credits.**

Humanities graduates on average earn slightly fewer excess credits than non-humanities graduates, but the number is still high. Black and Hispanic students graduate with slightly more excess credits on average than White students.

- Transfer students in the 2009–2014 entry cohorts who completed a bachelor's degree in the humanities on average earned **150 credits**, compared to an average of **157 credits** among non-humanities completers.
- **Black and Hispanic** humanities bachelor's degree completers earned **153 and 154 credits**, respectively.
- The mean and median number of credits earned by bachelor's degree completers who transferred **declined by about 12 credits** from 2009 to 2014 entry cohorts.