

The Transfer Playbook 2.0

A Practical Guide for Achieving Excellence in Transfer and Bachelor's Attainment for Community College Students

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Learnings from Tracking Transfer

Broken Transfer Negatively Impacts Millions of Students

80% of community college students want a bachelor's degree



33% of community college students transfer to a four-year institution



16% of community college students will graduate with a bachelor's degree within six years of starting college



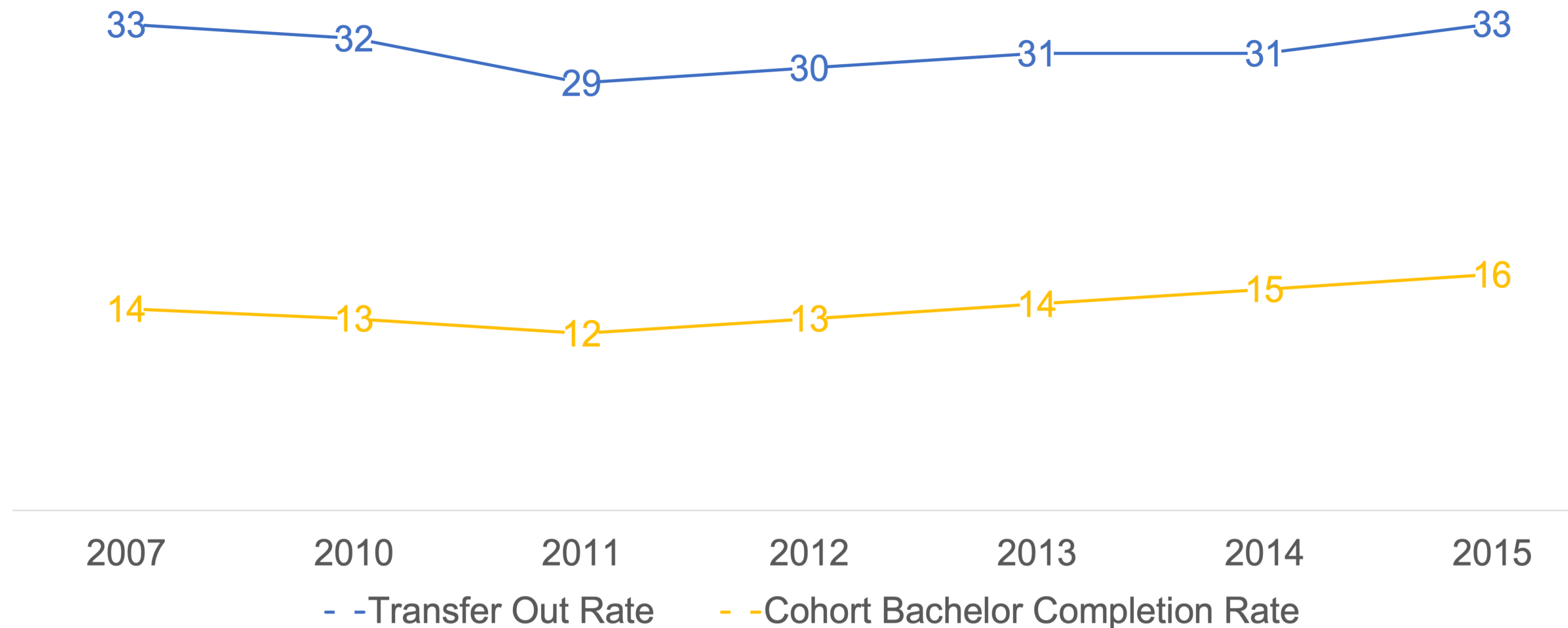
Velasco, Fink, Bedoya-Guevara, Jenkins, & LaViolet. (2024, February). Tracking Transfer: Community College and Four-Year Institutional Effectiveness in Broadening Bachelor's Degree Attainment. In <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/Tracking-Transfer-Community-College-and-Four-Year-Institutional-Effectiveness-in-Broadening-Bachelors-Degree-Attainment.html>.

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Transfer Outcomes Have Improved Slightly but Remain Too Low

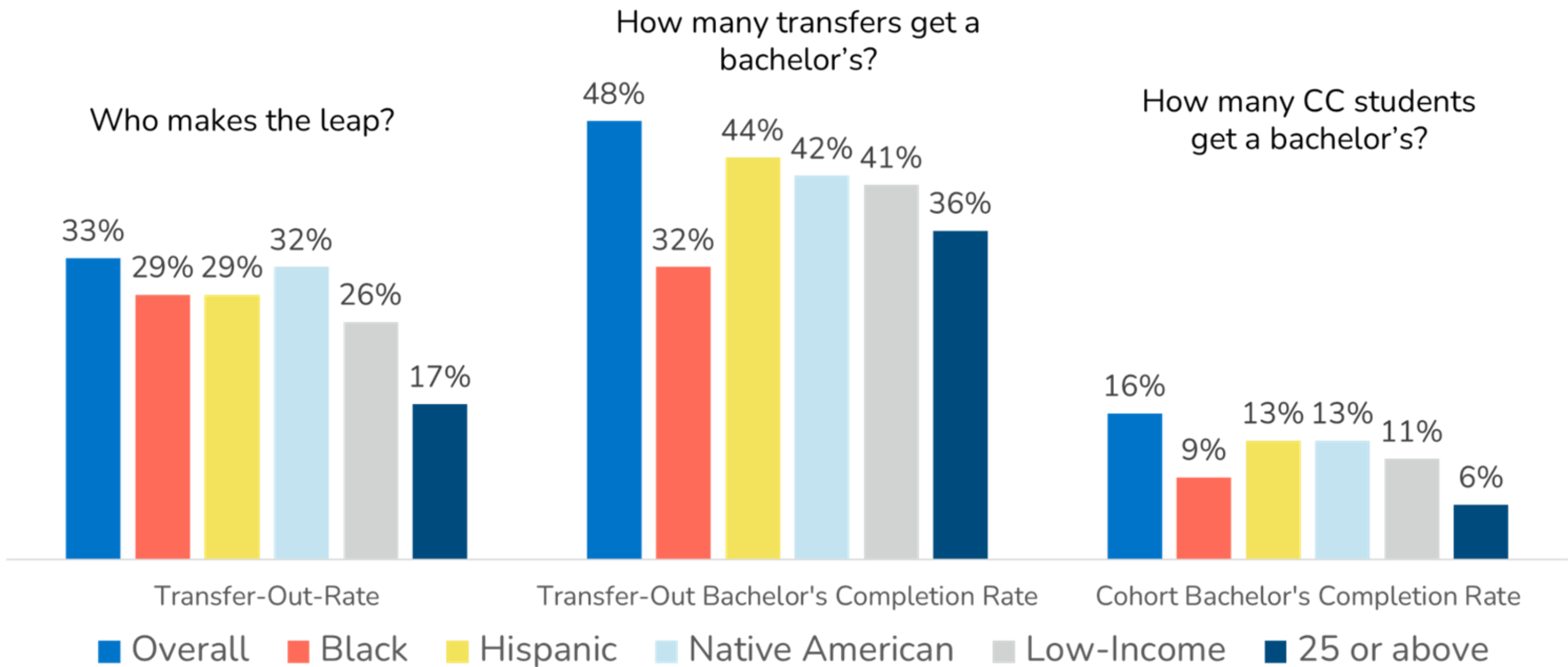
Trends in National Transfer Outcome Rates: Fall 2007 to Fall 2015 FTIC Community College Entrants



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Transfer: Low Outcomes, High Disparities

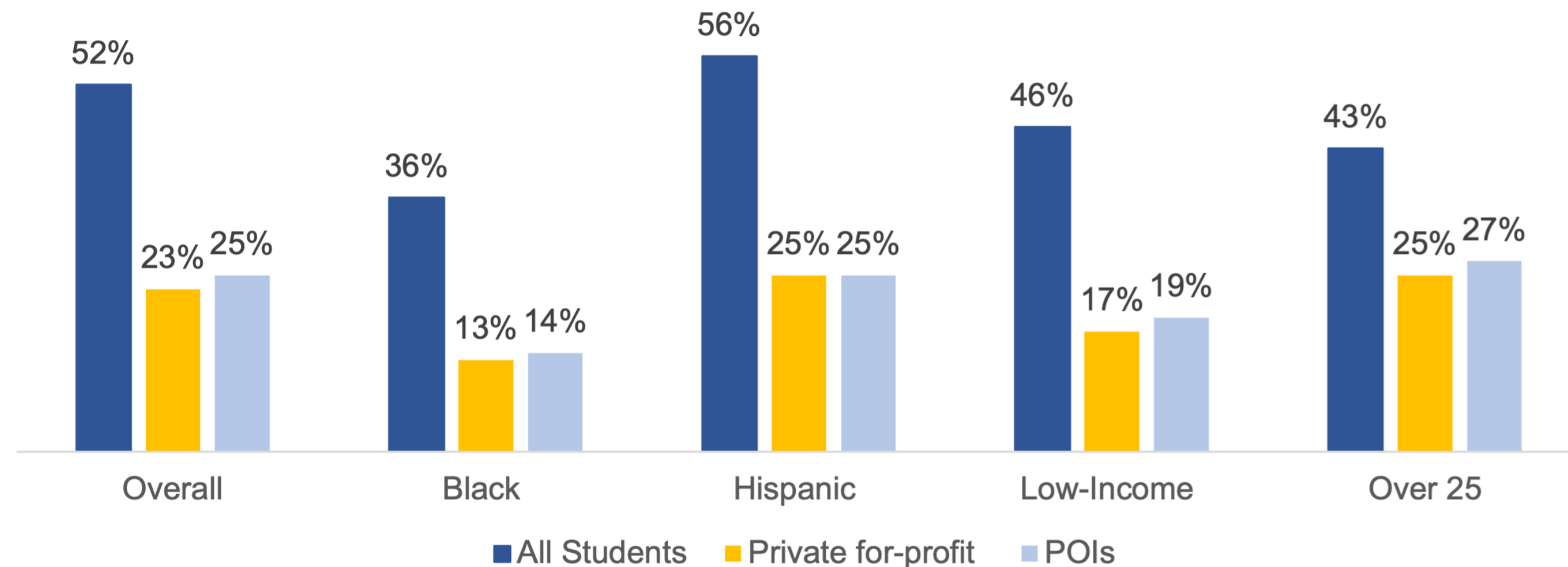
National Six-Year Transfer Outcomes Rates:
Fall 2015 FTIC Community College Entrants



(Velasco et al., 2024)

For-profit Colleges and Predominately Online Institutions (POIs) Have the Weakest Transfer Outcomes

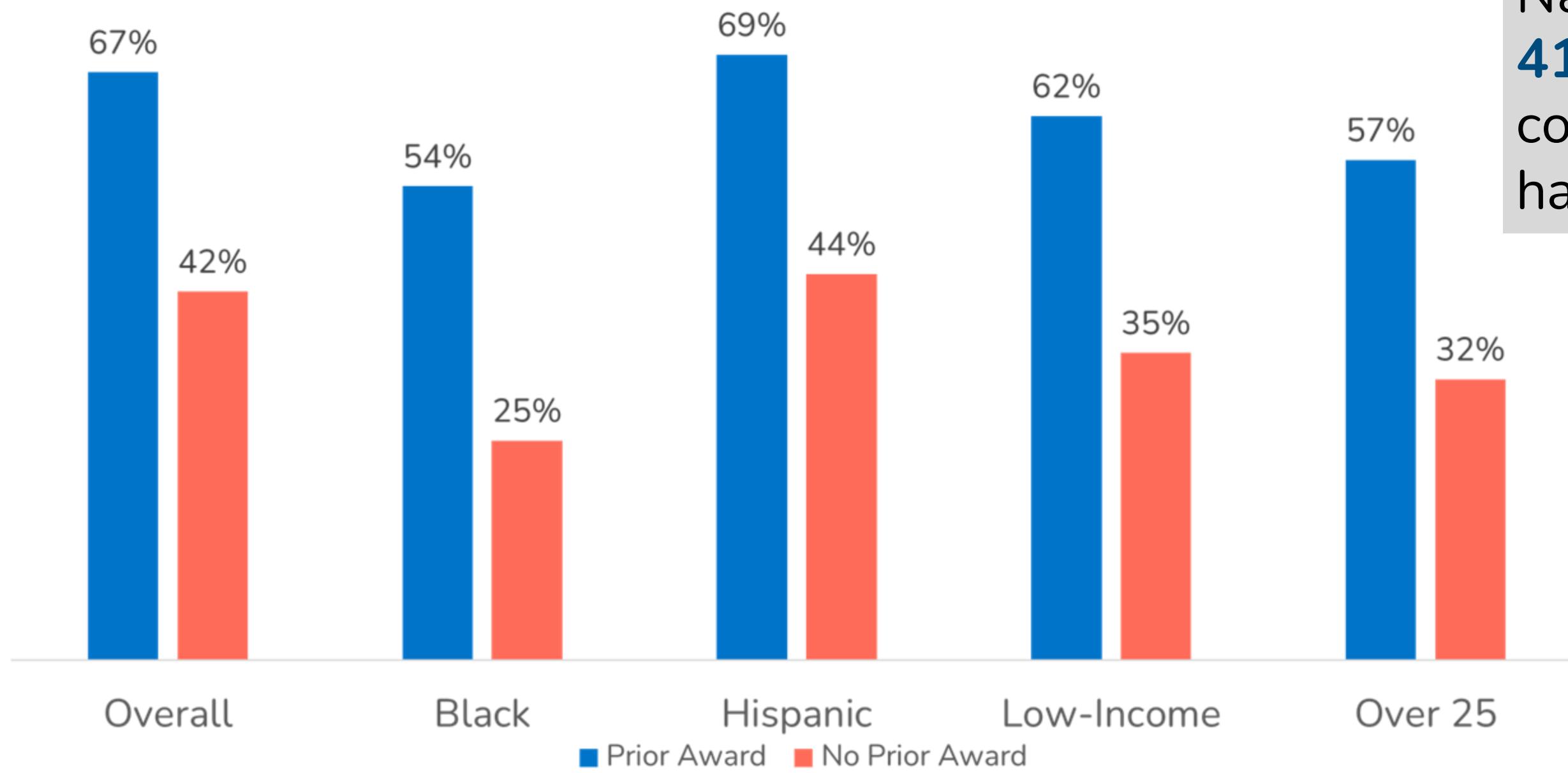
Community College Transfer-In Bachelor's Completion Rate Within Four Years by Student and Institutional Characteristics



(Velasco et al., 2024)

Prior Award Completion Is Associated with Stronger Outcomes

Community College Transfer-In Bachelor's Completion Rate Within Four Years by Pre-Transfer Community College Award

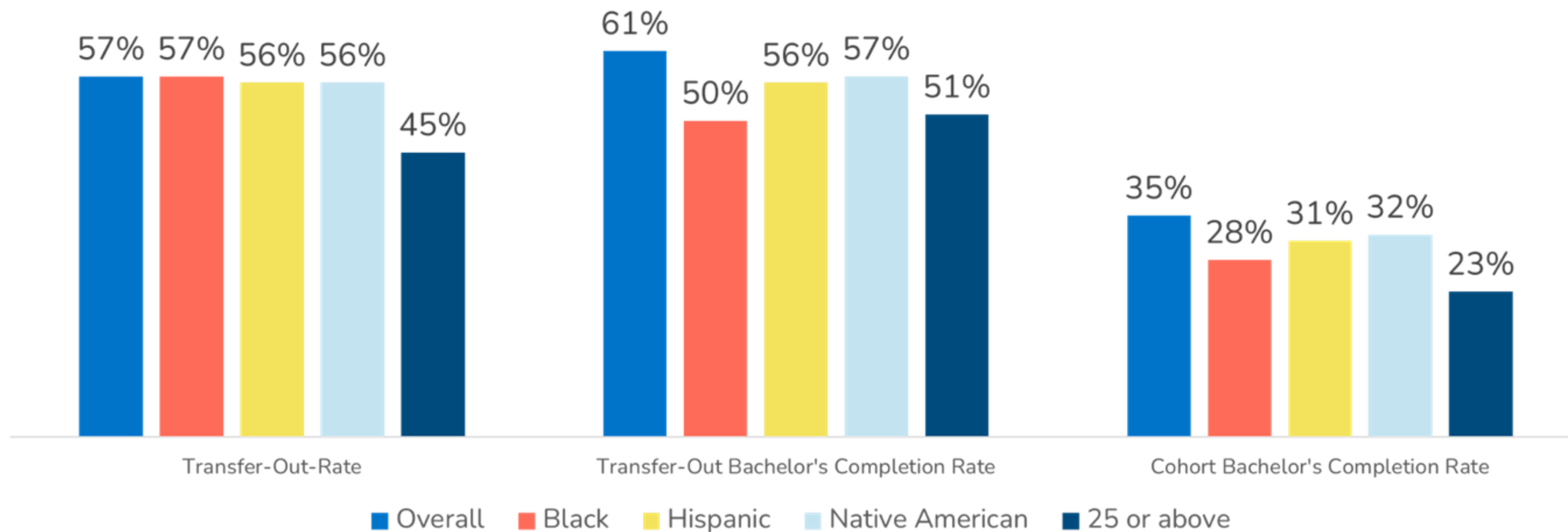


Nationally, only **41%** of community college transfers have a prior award

(Velasco et al., 2024)

Prior Dual Enrollment Is Associated with Stronger Outcomes and Smaller Disparities

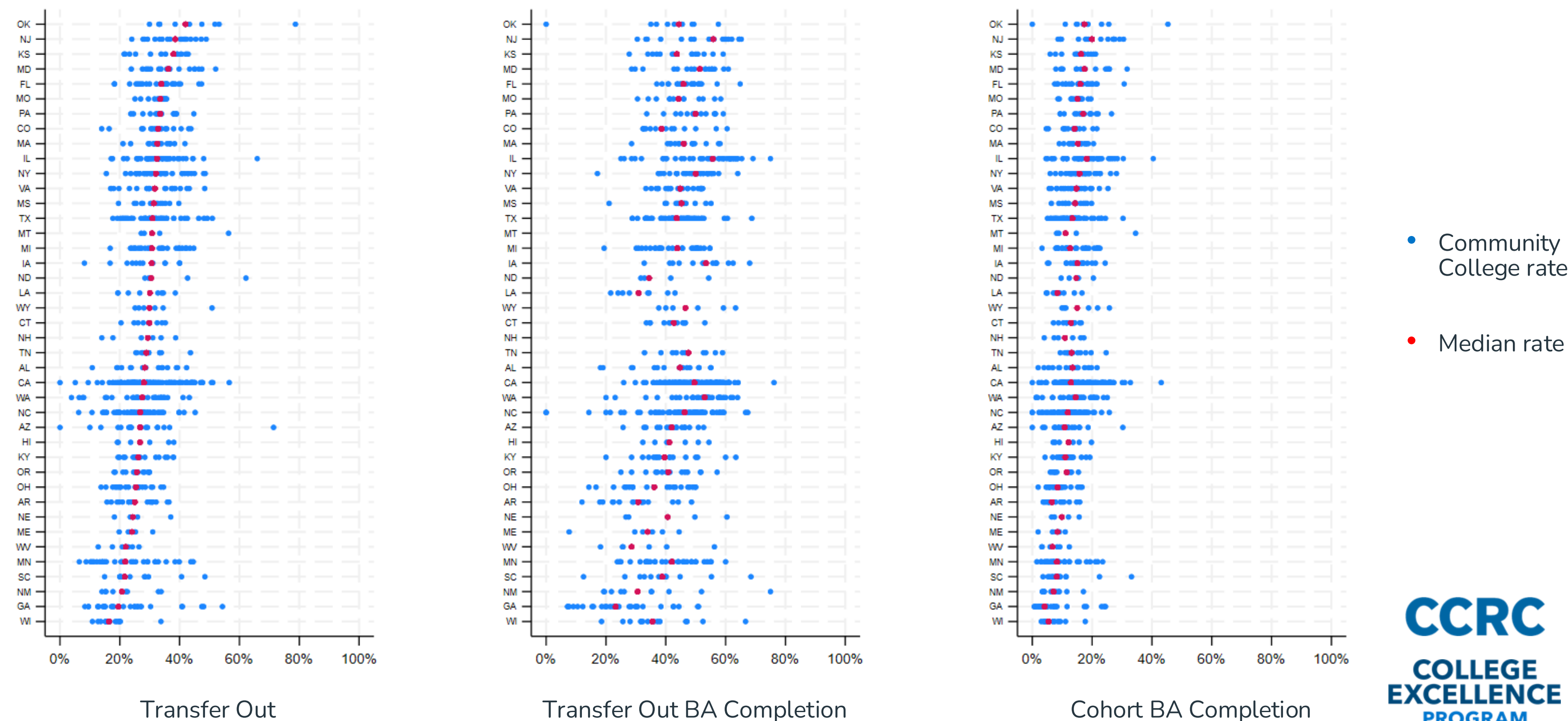
National Six-Year Transfer Outcomes Rates:
Fall 2015 Prior Dual Enrollment Students



(Velasco et al., 2024)

Institutional Variation is Substantial Everywhere

Community College Transfer Outcomes by State (All FTIC Students)



There are some schools and partnerships with stronger and more equitable bachelor's completion outcomes.

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Transfer Playbook 2.0 Framework

Practical Guidance from Our Fieldwork



Prioritize Transfer at the Executive Level to Achieve Sustainable Success at Scale



Align Program Pathways and High-Quality Instruction to Promote Timely Bachelor's Completion within a Major



Tailor Transfer Advising & Non-Academic Supports to Foster Trust and Engagement

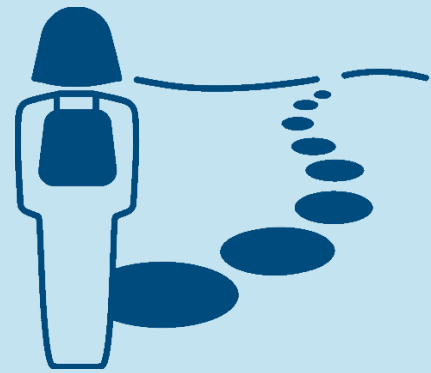
Strategy 1



Prioritize Transfer at the Presidential Level to Achieve Sustainable Success at Scale

- Essential Practice 1: President-led, team-based and well-resourced partnerships
- Essential Practice 2: End-to-end (re)design of the transfer student experience
- Essential Practice 3: Transfer student-centered systems and processes

Strategy 2



Align Program Pathways and High-Quality Instruction to Promote Timely Bachelor's Completion within a Major

- Essential Practice 1: Clear four-year sequences that promote learning and major progression
- Essential Practice 2: Systematized translation of maps into tailored educational plans
- Essential Practice 3: Strengthened instruction, academic support, and curricular alignment

Strategy 3



Tailor Transfer Advising & Non-Academic Supports to Foster Trust and Engagement

- Essential Practice 1: Early, sustained, and inevitable advising systems
- Essential Practice 2: A trained, knowledgeable, and caring advising corps
- Essential Practice 3: A transfer-specific approach to holistic success

Transformational Transfer Models

College Plans for High Schoolers (Imperial Valley College): HS seniors complete an IVC application & FAFSA, develop an initial educational plan with college counselor in spring of senior year that can link to transfer.

Start Transfer in High School

Mason Virginia Promise: Pell-eligible ADVANCE students qualify for a last-dollar scholarship that covers tuition and fees.

Arkansas Transfer Achievement Scholarship: Associate degree completers pay the same tuition rate at U of A four-year campuses.

Simplify Admissions

ADVANCE (Northern Virginia Community College & George Mason University): Dual admissions, dedicated advising, four-year maps, co-enrollment.

CUNY Justice Academy (CJA) (John Jay College of Criminal Justice & six CUNY community colleges): Automatic enrollment in CJA for specific CC majors results in guaranteed admission to JJ upon associate degree completion.

Guarantee Affordability

Arizona Western College + Northern Arizona University—Yuma: Co-located campus with programs designed to meet local workforce needs.

Link Transfer to Careers

Virginia Commonwealth University's Mellon Pathways to the Arts and Humanities; HHMI STEM Pathways: Career exploration and specialized advising, defined pathways, community building events, and financial guidance for prospective transfer students from **Reynolds and Brightpoint Community Colleges**.

Develop Local Talent

Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason University



The ADVANCE Program:

- Scaling, dual-admission, guided-transfer program designed to guarantee 60+60 credits = bachelor's degree
- Maps are built, advising is shared, and scholarships are jointly raised
- 3,300 students enrolled, 40% low-income and majority are students of color

Annual ADVANCE Academic Summit

- Full day meeting with GMU and NOVA leaders and faculty
- Plenary sessions include:
 - Grounding in ADVANCE goals
 - Sharing student feedback and outcomes data
 - Highlighting success stories (e.g., student success, faculty collaboration)
- Facilitated faculty breakout groups by discipline, includes GMU and NOVA faculty focused on curricular and instructional alignment

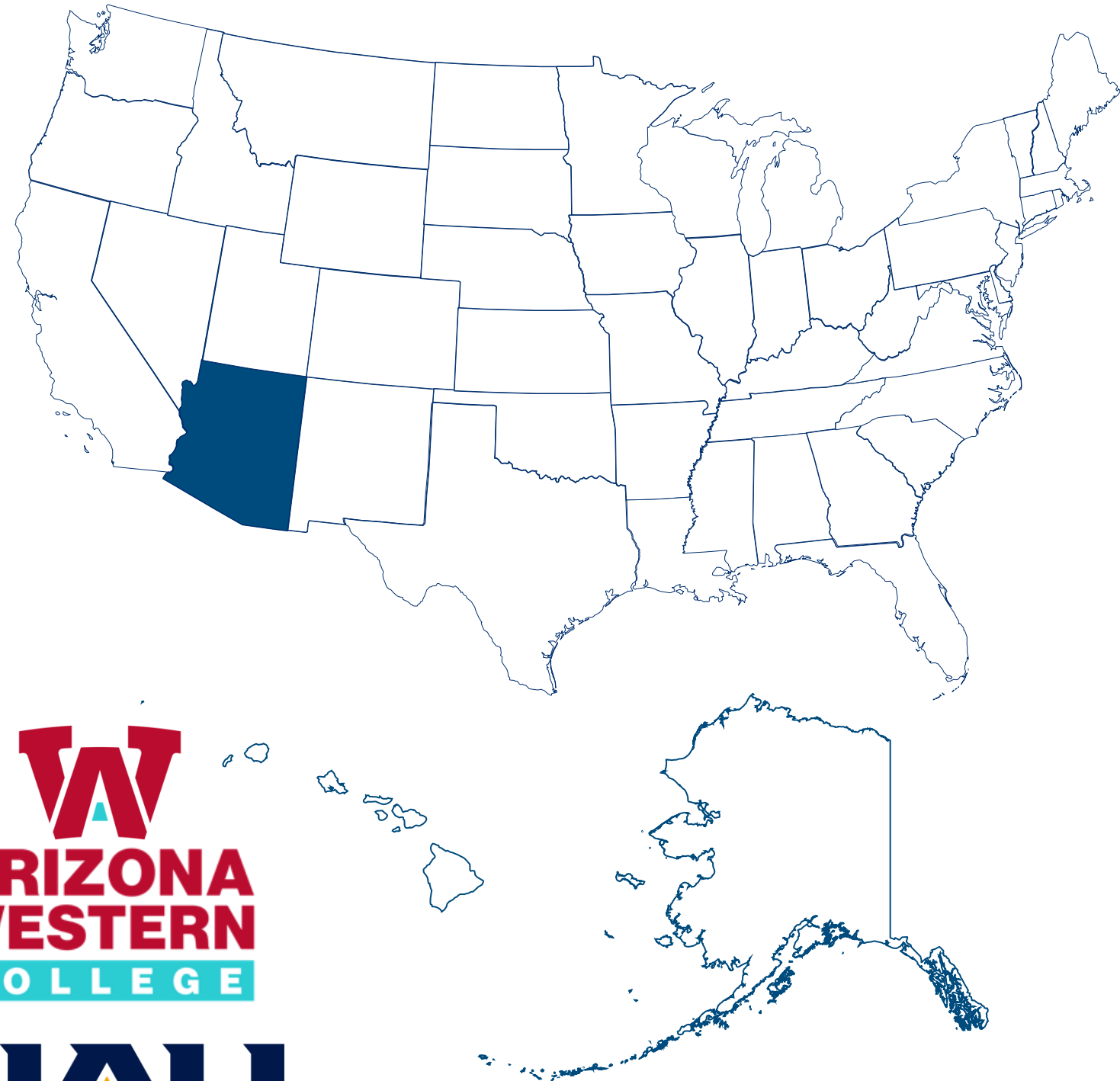
Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason University



Results:

- 87% fall-to-fall retention rate (2019 cohort)
- Average of 3.5 semesters to graduation (compared to 4.36 semesters for non-ADVANCE students)
- 124 average credits at graduation (compared to 131 for non-ADVANCE students)
- ADVANCE students save about \$15,000 in tuition costs compared to students who spent four years at GMU
- High visibility in community, substantial investments from corporations with talent needs

Arizona Western College and Northern Arizona University



Context:

Despite a co-located campus since 1988, the two institutions remained organizationally separate.

Reforms:

- Both presidents and their leadership teams met in person to create a shared North Star vision and devise a partnership structure
- Set a “Big Hairy Audacious Goal”: double the rate of earned baccalaureate degrees in La Paz and Yuma counties by 2035
- Yuma Educational Success (YES) program offers \$1000/semester scholarship for up to four semesters at AWC to encourage college going, completion, and transfer to NAU

Results:

- Jointly lobbied AZ legislature for \$5 Million for a mechanical engineering program
- Enduring partnership structure—leadership teams regularly communicate and collaborate

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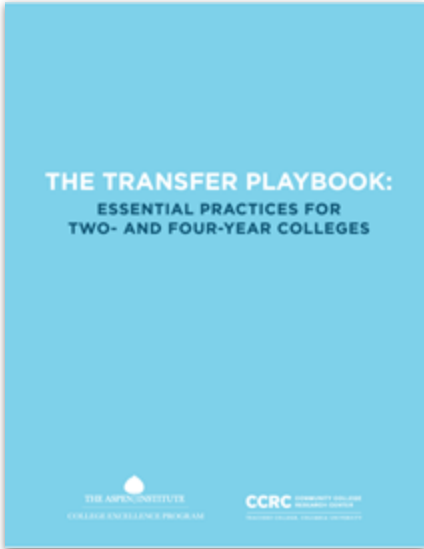
Q & A



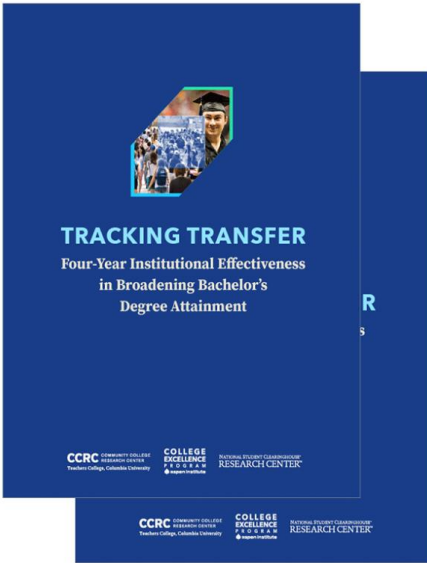
What questions do you have?

Additional Resources

The Transfer Playbook ([Link](#))



Tracking Transfer 2024 ([Link](#))



Coming Soon:

Be the first to access the Transfer Playbook 2.0!



College Excellence Program Website ([Link](#))



Community College Research Center Website ([Link](#))

