

NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE®

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National Student Clearinghouse Releases Updated State-Level Higher Education Attainment Numbers *College Students Increasingly on the Move While on the Road to Graduation*

Herndon, Virginia, March 20, 2014 – College students continue to take different pathways prior to attaining a degree. This student mobility phenomenon includes not only movement from institution to institution but also state to state, according to the newly released [Signature Report 6: State Supplement, Completing College: A State Level View of Student Attainment Rates](#), which includes completions through May 2013.

In the study, the [National Student Clearinghouse™ Research Center®](#) found a significant increase in the number of states where more than 10 percent of students who started at a four-year public institution and received a degree ended up receiving that degree in a different state; the number of states increased from 9 to 12, compared to [last year's state-level report](#). (Nationally, 6 percent of students who started at a four-year public institution and received a degree ended up graduating in a different state.) Additionally, traditional-age students starting at four-year public institutions had higher completion rates than older students. The completion rate for women was higher than that of men in almost every state.

The Signature Report 6: State Supplement supports the findings of the national report, [Signature Report 6: Completing College](#), released last December, revealing that many students are completing at institutions other than the one in which they started. The national Signature Report 6 and its state supplement are based on student-level data made available to the Clearinghouse by its more than 3,500 participating colleges and universities, which enroll 98 percent of students attending public and private nonprofit postsecondary institutions. In return, the Clearinghouse provides institutions with cost-saving education verification and reporting services. As a result, the Clearinghouse is uniquely able to perform analyses using student-level data, which overcomes the limitations of institution-based research, while still respecting student privacy.

The State Supplement focuses on first-time degree-seeking students who entered colleges and universities in fall 2007, following them through May 31, 2013. It highlights six-year student outcomes, including degree/certificate completion and continuing enrollment. Nontraditional student pathways are included, providing a fuller picture of actual student behavior. As in the national study with the same cohort former dual enrollment students are included. These are students who enrolled in college courses while still in high school. Inclusion of these students increased in almost all states irrespective of the starting institution type.

Other findings include:

- Nationally, 13% of students who started at four-year public institutions completed at an institution other than the starting institution. In 18 states, students who started at four-year

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public institutions had a higher completion rate elsewhere, with Minnesota having the highest rate at 26 percent followed by Missouri and Nebraska each with 19 percent.

- 3.6 percent of all students who started at a four-year public institution received their first degree/certificate at a two-year institution. The rate was over five percent in Arkansas, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
- In seven states, more than 20 percent of the students who started in two-year public institutions completed at a four-year institution (with or without first receiving a credential at a two-year institution) within six years, with Kansas having the highest rate at 26 percent followed by Virginia at 23 percent.
- In 14 states, at least one in every five women who started at two-year public institutions completed at a four-year institution. Only in three states did at least 20 percent of men who started in a two-year public institution complete at a four-year institution.
- In four states (Connecticut, Maryland, Rhode Island, Washington), the completion rate at the starting institution was over 70 percent for students who started in four-year private nonprofit institutions. In each of these states the total completion rate for students who started in four-year private nonprofit institutions was over 80 percent.
- In 15 states, the percent of students starting in a two-year public institution and completing a credential who graduated at an out-of-state institution was higher than the 6 percent national average with the highest being in Kansas and Wyoming (10 percent).
- In most states, traditional-age students starting at four-year public institutions had higher completion rates than the delayed entry (age 21-24) and adult learner (over age 24) groups. In five states (Arizona, California, Illinois, Michigan, Texas), delayed entry students had a higher completion rate than traditional-age students. In Arizona, adult learners had a 4 percentage point higher completion rate than traditional-age students.
- In seven states, at least one in three exclusively part-time students at four-year public institutions received a credential (compared to 20 percent nationally). In 18 states, more than 70 percent of students in this category had not received a credential and were not enrolled at the end of six years (compared to 69 percent nationally).

“Our data gives us the ability to provide a unique and timely perspective on attainment based on student educational pathway choices that reflect the realities of higher education today. Many students are graduating from a state different from that in which they started,” stated Dr. Doug Shapiro, Executive Research Director, National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. “The continued growth in student mobility and diverse student pathways to an education outcome highlights the opportunity to open discussions on new completion metrics to measure the value institutions provide to their students.”

About the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center is the research arm of the National Student Clearinghouse. The Research Center collaborates with higher education institutions, states, school districts, high schools, and educational organizations as part of a national effort to better inform education leaders and policymakers. Through accurate longitudinal data outcomes reporting, the Research Center enables better educational policy decisions leading to improved student outcomes.

To learn more, visit <http://nscresearchcenter.org/>.