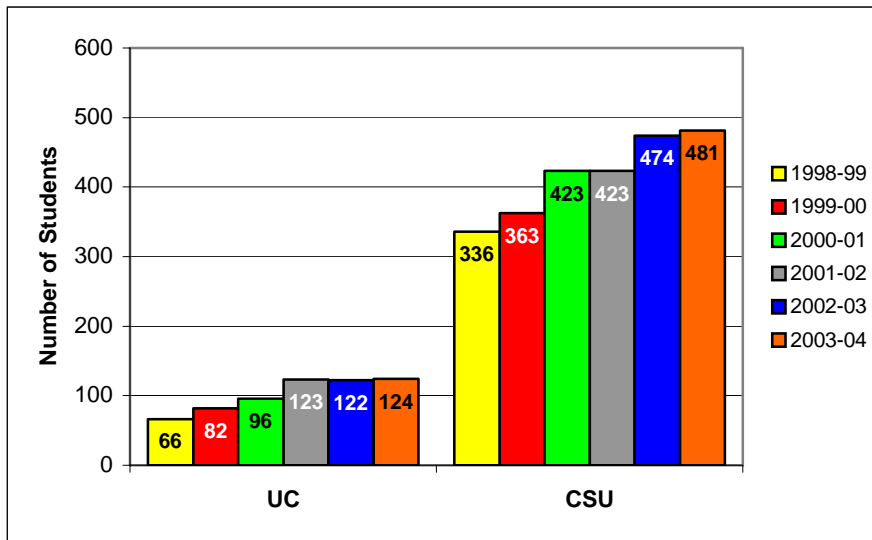


Transfer Rates, Higher Education Fees, and UC/CSU Transfer Information

A major component of California’s Master Plan for Higher Education is for students to be able to begin their college education at a community college and transfer to a four-year college or university. For College of the



Canyons, the numbers of transfers to both CSU and UC have been growing over the past six years, as is depicted in Figure 1 (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2005). **The number of COC students who transferred to UC and CSU has increased 88 percent and 43 percent, respectively.** The top three UC transfer institutions for COC in 2003/04 were UC Los Angeles (UCLA), followed by UC Santa Barbara (UCSB) and UC San Diego (UCSD). The top three CSU transfer

Figure 1. Number of COC Transfers to UC and CSU

institutions for COC students in 2003/04 were CSU Northridge (CSUN), followed by San Diego State University (SDSU) and CSU Long Beach (CSULB) (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2005). COC students have also been identified as transfer students at a variety of private and out-of-state institutions including the University of Southern California, Loyola Marymount University, University of Phoenix, Pepperdine University, Master’s College, California Lutheran University, Woodbury University, Azusa Pacific University, and Mount St. Mary’s College (see Research Briefs #13 and 17 for more detail).

Difference in Transfer Rate Definitions. One of the most commonly asked questions for community colleges is, “What is the transfer rate to four-year institutions?” Answering this question is not as straight forward as it might seem on the surface. In reality, it all depends on how you define transfer. There are no widely agreed upon transfer definitions in the California Community College (CCC) system. The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of two methods by which transfer rates have been examined (Student-Right-To-Know Rates and Chancellor’s Office “Intent to Transfer” definition).

Student-Right-To-Know Rates are just one method for looking at transfer rates for COC compared to the state (California Community College System as a whole). As specified by the Student-Right-to-Know (SRTK) and Campus Security Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-542), COC publishes completion and transfer rates for students who meet the SRTK cohort definitions (certificate-, degree-, or transfer-seeking, full-time, first-time freshmen, who began in Fall 2001). Completion is defined as completing a certificate or degree or becoming “transfer prepared” by completing 56 transferable units with a GPA of 2.0 or better. The transfer rate reflects students who transfer to another postsecondary institution, (UC, CSU, or California Community College) prior to attaining a degree, certificate, or becoming transfer prepared. After the three-year period students were tracked, the *combined completion and transfer rates* for COC was **65 percent** compared to the State’s **57 percent**. It is important to note that these rates only reflect a subgroup at COC as defined by the SRTK cohort definition and do not account for

students graduating or transferring after this three-year tracking period, nor do they account for students transferring to private institutions.

Chancellor’s Office Transfer Rate Analysis. The California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) conducted an analysis of transfer rates for several first-time student cohorts (Fall 1993, Fall 1994, and Fall 1995) who were tracked over six years. The transfer rate found in the CCCCCO’s *Transfer Capacity and Readiness in the*

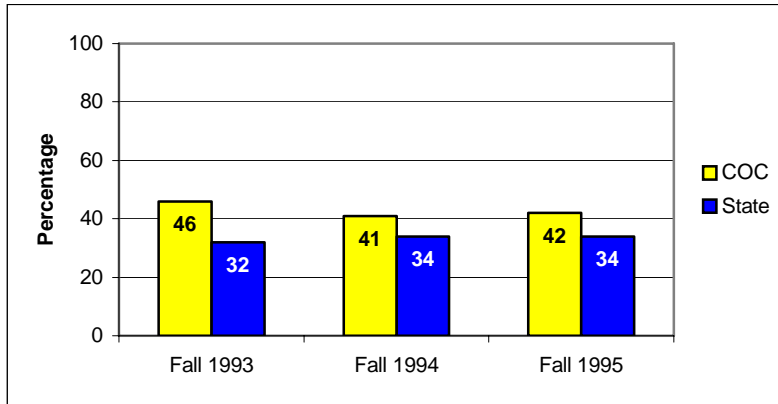


Figure 2. Transfer Rates: COC compared to the State

California Community Colleges progress report to the legislature (2002) used a new definition. The new definition defined a cohort as students with an “intent to transfer,” which included first-time freshmen in a fall term, who within six years attempted transfer-level math or English and completed at least 12 units in the California Community College system. Prior to this new definition based on behavior measures, transfer rates calculated by outside entities often used the number of transfers for a given year (e.g., 2003) based on

current year enrollment at a community college. This assumes that all students who attend a community college intend to transfer, which is a false assumption. Community colleges serve a diverse student body with educational goals ranging from gaining new knowledge or skills required for employment, obtaining a vocational certificate, earning an Associate degree, transferring, and for personal growth.

Figure 2 illustrates COC’s transfer rate compared to the state for the Fall 1993, Fall 1994, and Fall 1995 cohorts. Across all three cohorts, **COC consistently had higher transfer rates compared to the state!** Transfer rates for the Fall 1993, Fall 1994, and Fall 1995 cohorts were **46, 41, and 42 percent**, respectively compared to the state (**32, 34, and 34 percent**, respectively). Transfer rates in Figure 2 are defined as the percentage of first-time students (Fall 1994) who attempted transfer-level math or English and completed at least 12 units (any) at any CCC who transferred. This definition includes **all educational goals**, not just students who have a transfer goal. Furthermore, in a recent report **COC was found to have the highest transfer rate compared to any other community college in Los Angeles County** (Hayward et al., 2004).

College of the Canyons helps students achieve their transfer goals by establishing articulation agreements with four-year institutions to provide a seamless transition from COC to four-year institutions, hosting the annual Transfer Day on campus so students can visit with university representatives, providing detailed educational plans for students to ensure they are enrolling in the appropriate coursework for transfer, and inviting students to meet with college and university representatives for one-on-one advisement throughout the year. COC’s Transfer Center also supports students by counseling them on the coursework needed to transfer, completing transfer agreements, and providing various transfer related workshops (e.g., how to complete an application for admissions, how to write a personal statement, general transfer information new students, etc).

Los Angeles County Community Colleges	Transfer Rates
College of the Canyons	42%
Pasadena City College	40%
L.A. Pierce College	40%
Glendale Community College	33%
Mt. San Antonio College	32%
L.A. Valley College	32%
El Camino College	31%
Cerritos College	30%
L.A. Harbor College	27%
Antelope Valley College	26%
L.A. Mission College	26%
Citrus College	26%
Long Beach City College	26%
East L.A. College	24%
L.A. City College	24%
Santa Monica College	23%
Rio Hondo College	22%
West L.A. College	22%
L.A. Southwest College	19%
L.A. Trade-Tech College	17%
Compton College	9%

Table 1. Transfer Rates: Los Angeles County Community Colleges-1st Time Students Who Started in Fall 1995

Community College Transfer Success at UC and CSU. Data available on the performance of transfer students from California Community Colleges show that *transfer students perform well academically compared to native UC and CSU students* who entered as freshmen. In 2002/03 nearly one-third of all UC bachelor's degrees were awarded to students who began their education at a community college (University of California Admissions, 2005). Of the CCC students who transferred to a UC campus in 1997 (N=7,146), 80 percent completed a bachelor's degree within four years (Studier & Perry, 2005). The percentage of students completing a bachelor's degree within three years after transferring to a CSU campus in 2000 was 50 percent, which is an increase from 44 percent of the 1997 cohort (Studier & Perry, 2005). According to a recent report by EdSOURCE® (Studier & Perry, 2005), grade point averages (GPA) of CCC transfers at CSU are slightly higher than those of native CSU students and comparable to native UC students. The *average GPA of COC students* who enrolled at CSUs in Fall 2002 was *slightly higher compared to other community college transfers* (2.99 vs. 2.91, respectively) (California State University Analytic Studies, 2005).



Figure 3. Students and University Representatives at COC's Annual Transfer Day

Increase in Fees. Students' decisions about where they will pursue higher education, including transferring, will continue to be affected by ongoing changes in all three of California's higher education systems: University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges (CCC). Budget cuts in California and across the nation have had a profound impact on access to higher education for students. Figure 4 illustrates the fee increases at CCCs, CSUs, and UCs from 2003/04 to 2004/05. Despite the increases, *California community college and CSU fees continue to be lower than*

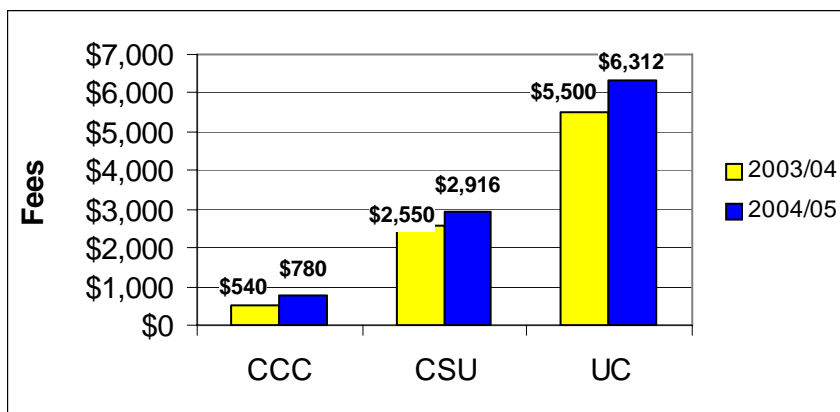


Figure 4. Enrollment Fees from 2003/04 to 2004/05 for California Community Colleges, California State University System, and the University of California System

the nationwide averages for public two- and four-year institutions in the nation. The fees at CCCs in 2004/05 are \$780 compared to the nationwide average \$2,076. Similarly, the CSU fees for the same time period (\$2,916) are lower than the nationwide average (\$5,132) (Hoover, 2004).

Changing Eligibility Requirements. Effective with Fall 2005, transfer students will be required to transfer with a minimum of 60 semester units for the CSU. UC currently requires 60 semester units for admission consideration. At the freshmen level the following campuses currently have impacted status and are allowed to implement supplemental criteria for admissions: Chico, Fullerton, Long Beach, Cal Poly Pomona, San Diego, San Marcos, San Luis Obispo, and Sonoma. Currently, transfer students will face campus impactions at San Diego, Long Beach, and San Luis Obispo.

Transfer Agreements. In response to enrollment caps at the UC and CSU systems, some community colleges are advising students to complete a transfer agreement with the university they want to attend on the assumption that the contract requires the university to enroll these students based upon completion of the specifications in the

agreement. While the agreement is intended to ensure admission to the university of choice, not all CSU and UC campuses have transfer agreements with all community colleges.

Implications for Students. Students planning to transfer to UC and CSU schools should:

- ✓ Complete 60 transferable semester units,
- ✓ Have the required preparation for the major,
- ✓ Complete lower division general education (GE) requirements,
- ✓ Have a competitive GPA, and
- ✓ Apply to more than one campus for transfer.



Figure 5. COC student and a university representative at COC's Annual Transfer Day

These criteria mean students will need to work closely with a counselor to develop an educational plan that will prepare them for transfer to more than one campus, especially since major preparation is campus specific.

Students planning to apply to both the California State University and University of California systems in Fall 2005 will be required to submit their applications online. More than 70 percent of students applying to both systems in the 2002/03 academic year submitted their applications online. Online applications are reported to be more accurate because of computer prompts and error checks and they will enable the campuses to complete evaluations more efficiently (University of California Office of the President, 2003). Students who do not have access to a computer at home can apply by using a computer at school or at their local library. An exception will be made for those students who cannot gain access to a computer and whose only option is to submit a paper application.

Students can access timely information about transfer from system sponsored web sites such as:

- ❖ ASSIST at <http://www2.assist.org/Welcome.do> (explore UC and CSU transfer major requirements for CCs)
- ❖ CSU Mentor at <http://www.csumentor.edu/>
- ❖ UC Pathways at <http://www.ucop.edu/pathways/>
- ❖ California Colleges.edu at <http://www.californiacolleges.edu/>
- ❖ Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) at <http://igetc.org/>

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For more detailed information on this research brief, stop by the Institutional Development and Technology office located in R-215, or call Senior Research Analyst Daylene Meuschke at 661.362.5329. **For more information on transferring, visit COC's Counseling Services Center, located in the "A" building, or Transfer Center, located in S-123.**