



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: An Overview of Student Debt, Completion Rates, and Student Success Strategies in SACSCOC Institutions

Alexei G. Matveev, Ph.D.

Director of Training & Research, SACSCOC

amatveev@sacscoc.org



Overview: Selected Student Achievement Indicators

- I. Student Debt
- II. Student Completion
- III. Student Success Strategies

Purpose: General Reference Context



Data Sources

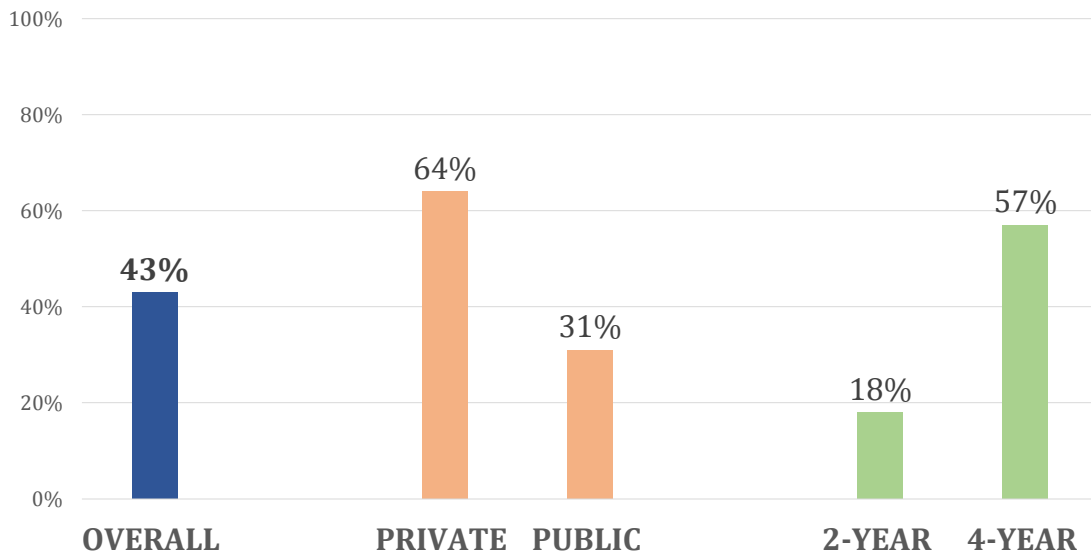
- **College Scorecard dataset** (Spring 2018) (retrieved Summer 2018)
 - % of students receiving federal loans | median debt | repayment rate
- **Federal Student Aid (FSA) data** (Fall 2017) (retrieved Summer 2018)
 - loan default rate
- **Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)** (2016-2017) (provisional data, retrieved Summer 2018)
 - overall graduation rate | outcome measure
- **National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) report for SACSCOC schools** (Fall 2016)
 - total completion rate
- **Survey of SACSCOC Member Institutions (2017)**
 - student success strategies

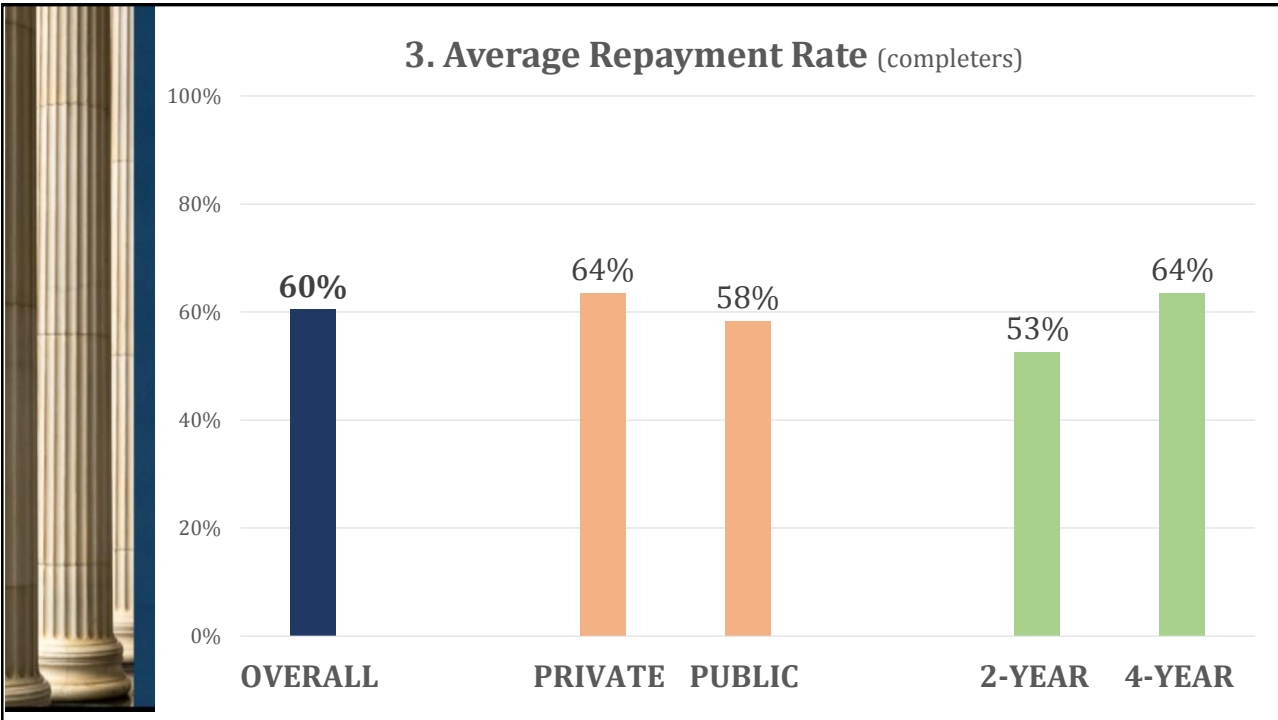
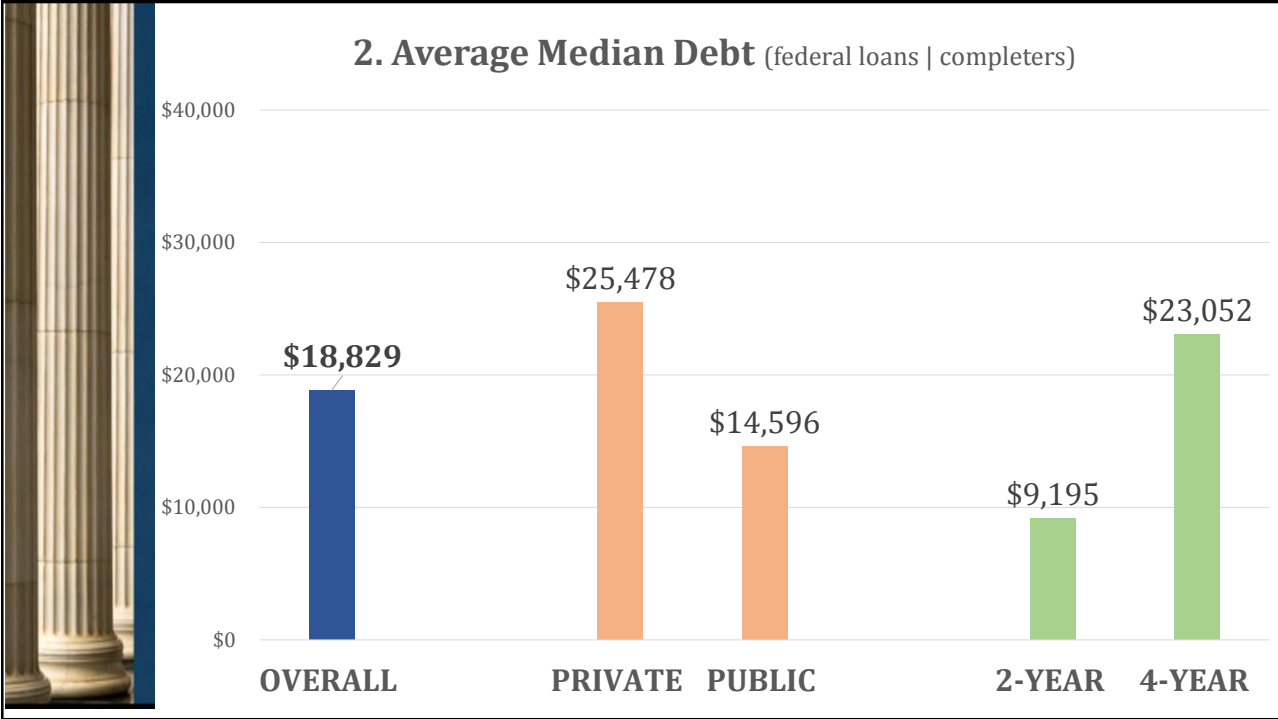
I. STUDENT DEBT INDICATORS

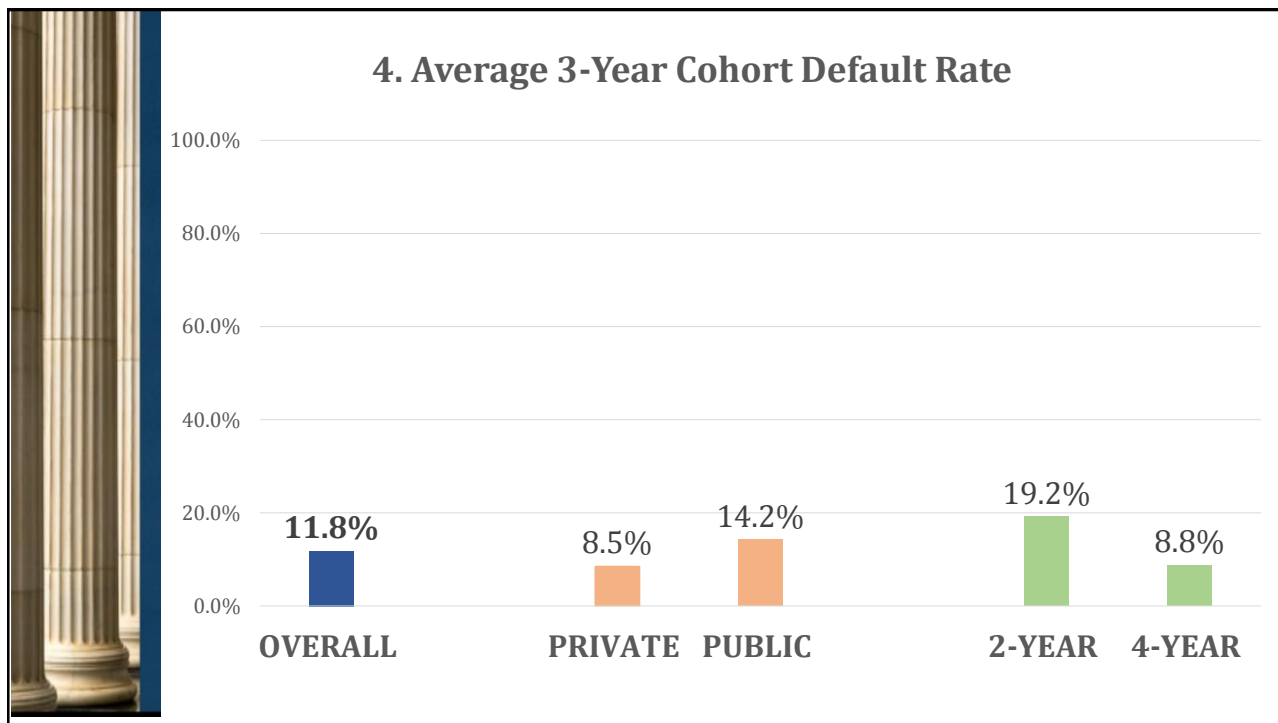
- % of Students Receiving Federal Loans
 - Amount of Debt
 - Repayment Rate
 - Default Rate

Preliminary Data

1. Average Proportion of UG Students Receiving Federal Loans







Student Debt: General Observations

- Significant variability by institutional segments
 - Students in private and 4-year schools borrow at higher rates and higher amounts
 - Borrowers in public and 2-year schools experience more challenges in managing/repaying the debt
- Integration of multiple indicators in the context of specific student populations
- Tracking debt
 - non-federal sources
 - non-completers
 - graduate students



II. STUDENT COMPLETION INDICATORS

1. “Traditional” IPEDS Graduation Rate
2. New IPEDS Outcomes Measure
3. National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) Completion Rate

Preliminary Data



Student Success Measures: Completion Cohorts and Reporting Periods (max time)

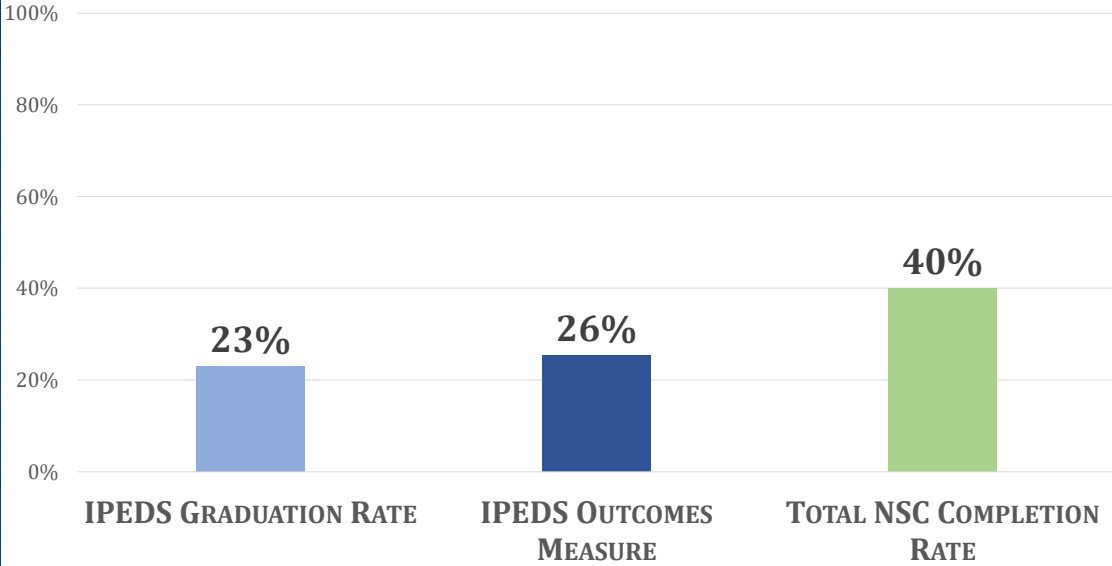
- “Traditional” IPEDS Overall Graduation Rate || **3/6** years
 - First-Time
 - Full-Time
- New IPEDS Overall Outcomes Measure || **8** years
 - First-Time + *Transfer-In*
 - Full-Time + *Part-Time*
- NSC Total Completion Rate || **6** years
 - First-Time
 - Full-Time + *Part-Time*
 - Success of *Transfer-Outs*

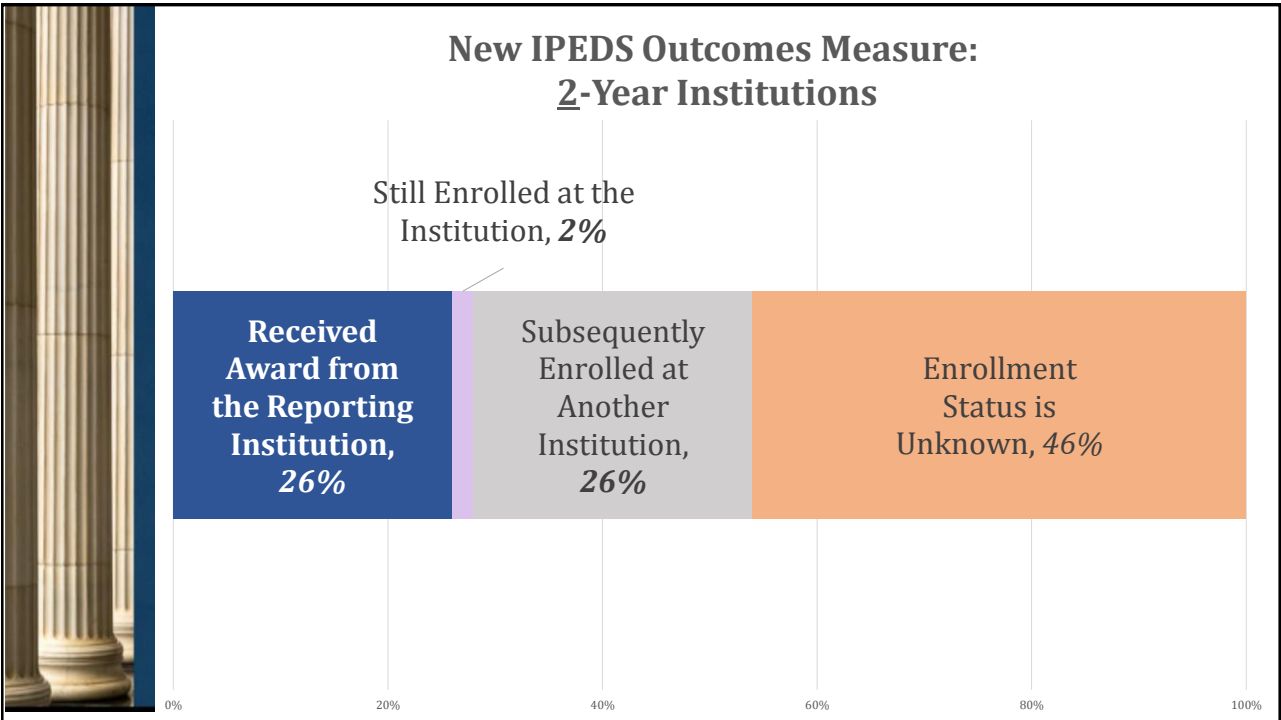
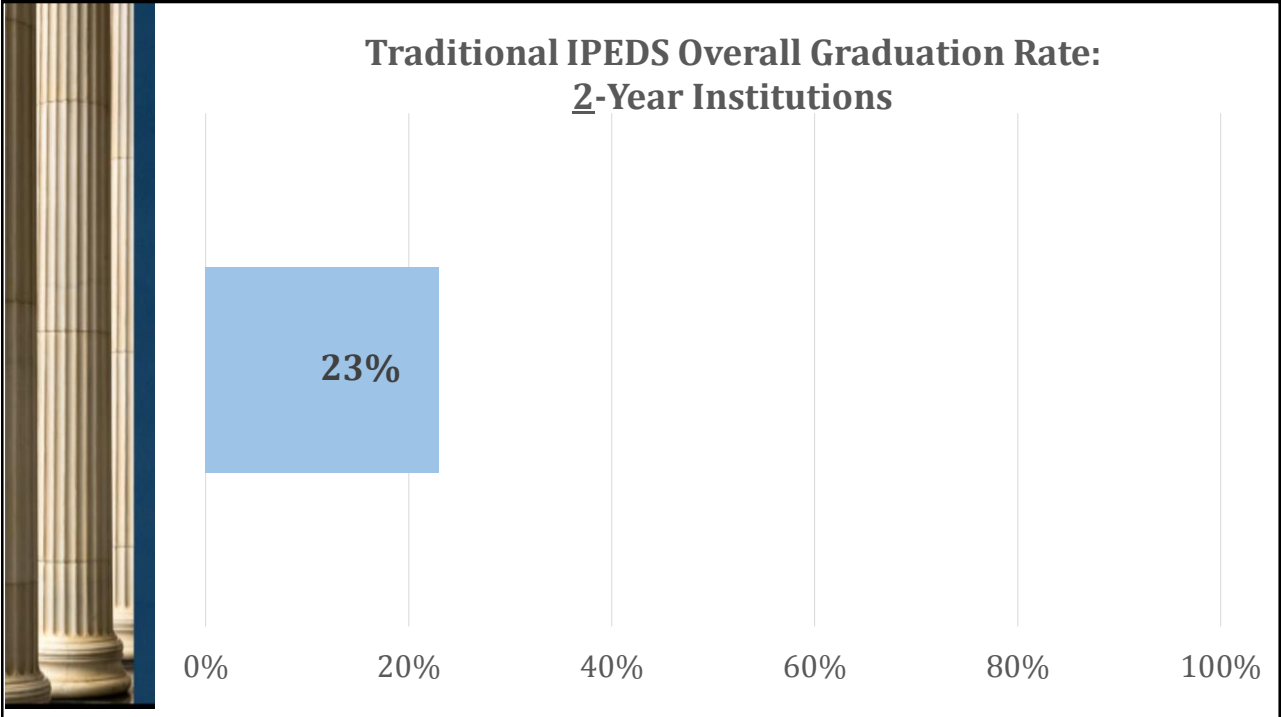


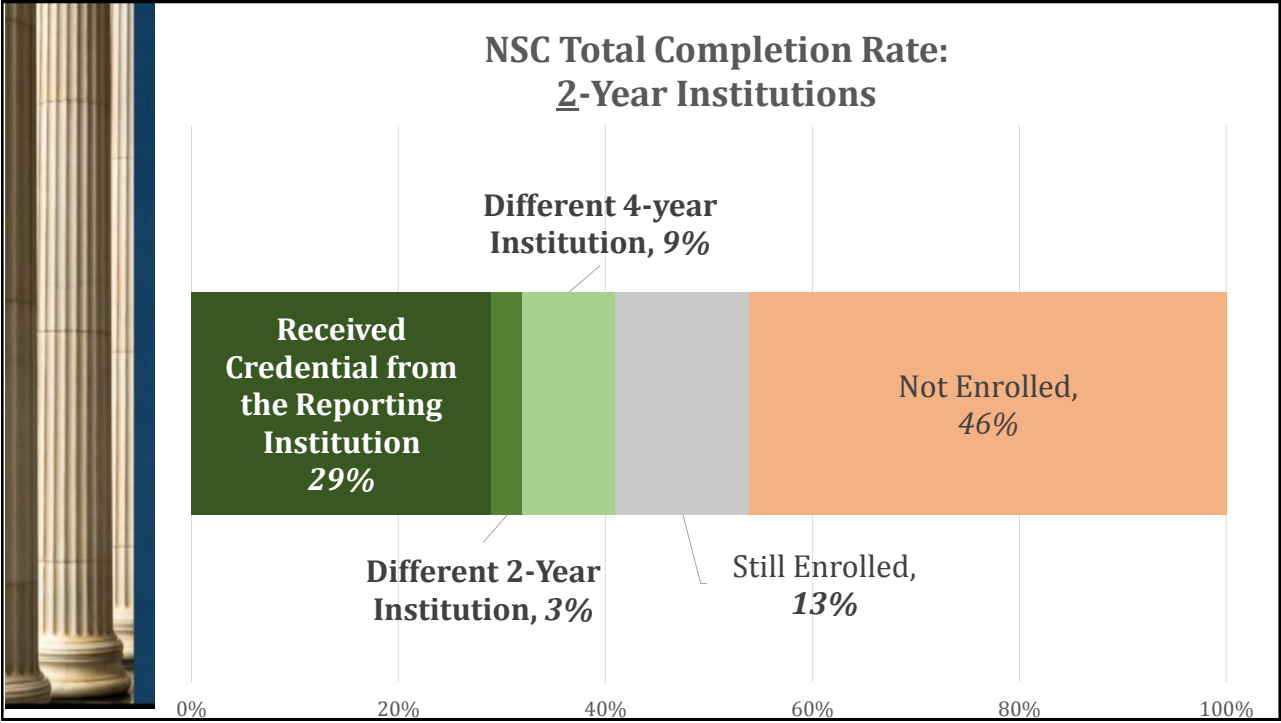
2-Year Schools



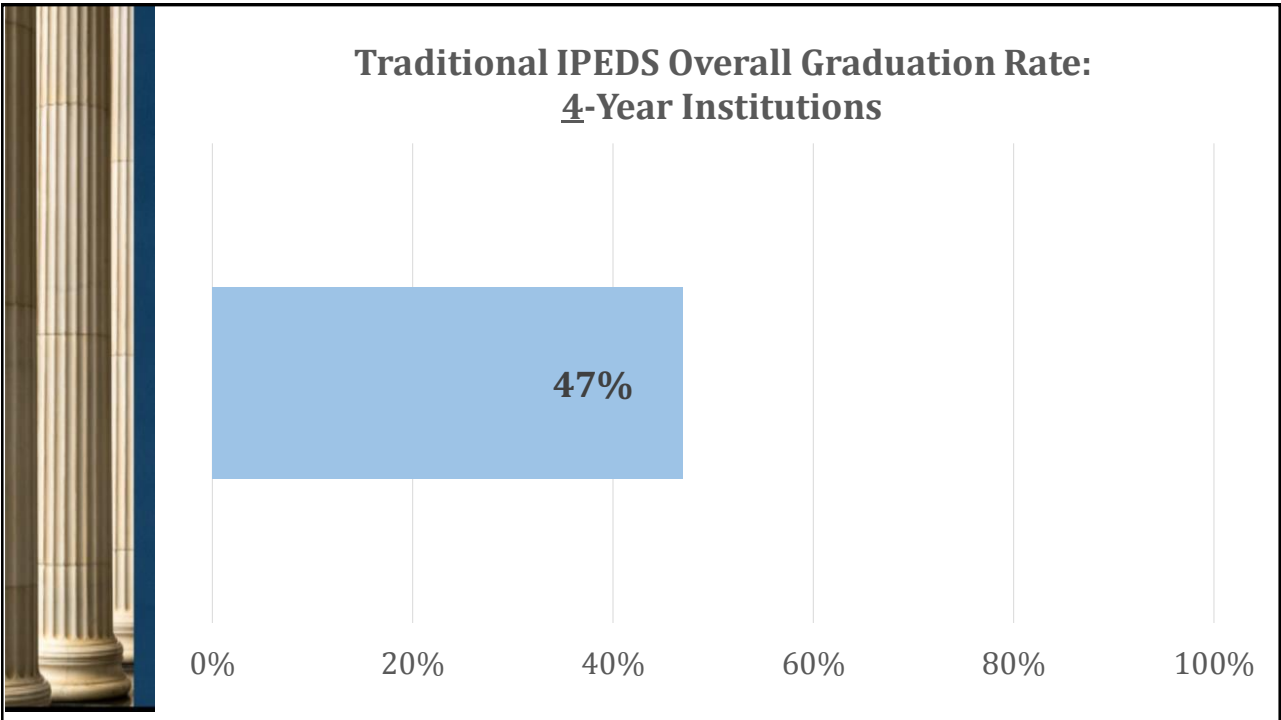
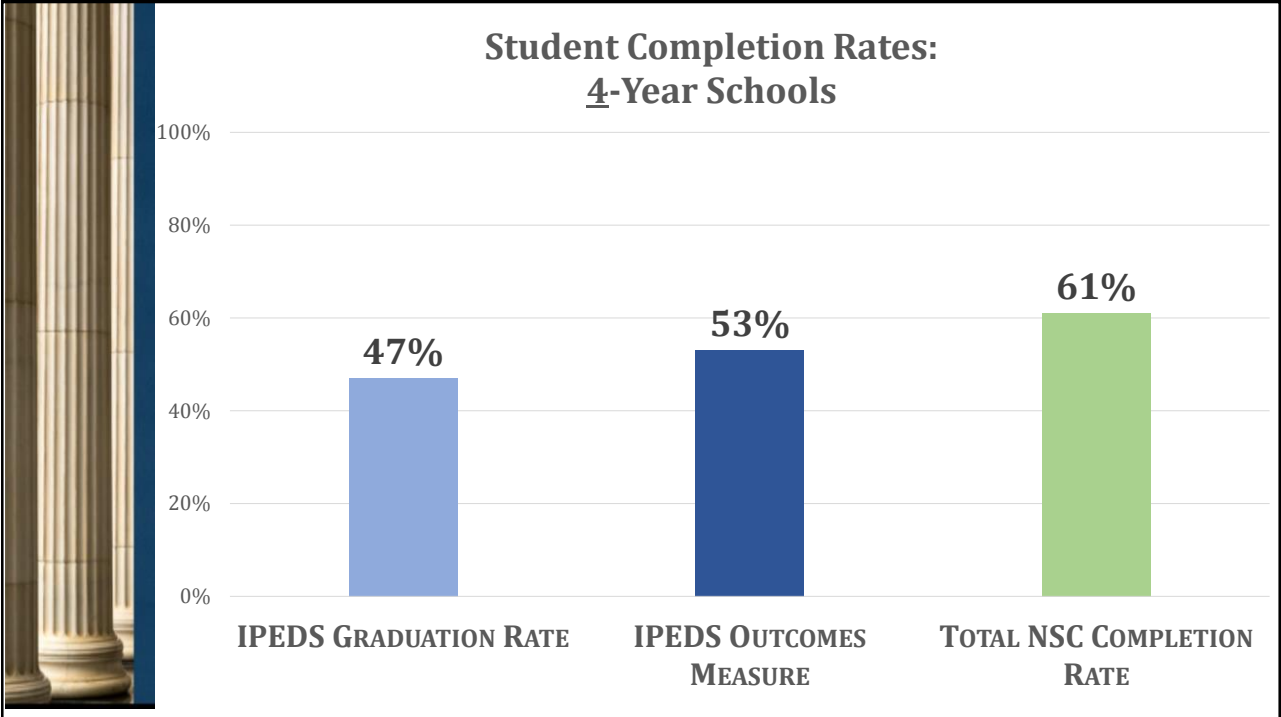
Student Completion Rates : 2-Year Schools

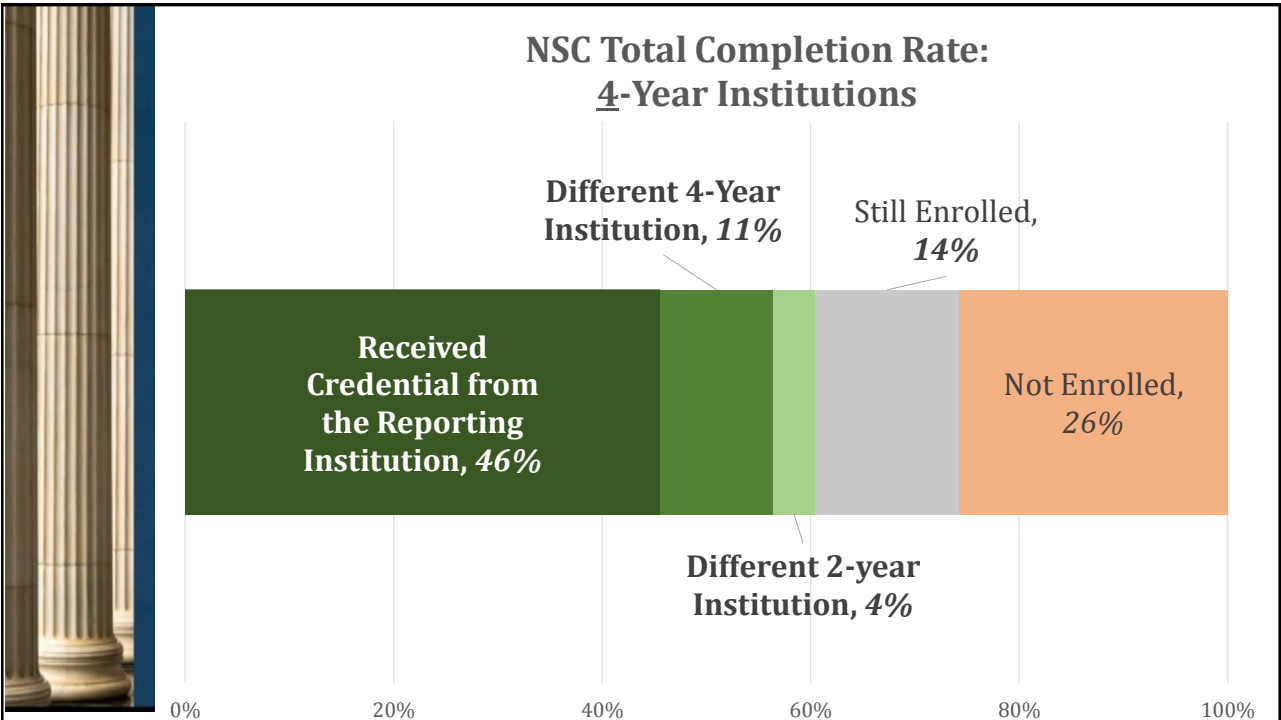
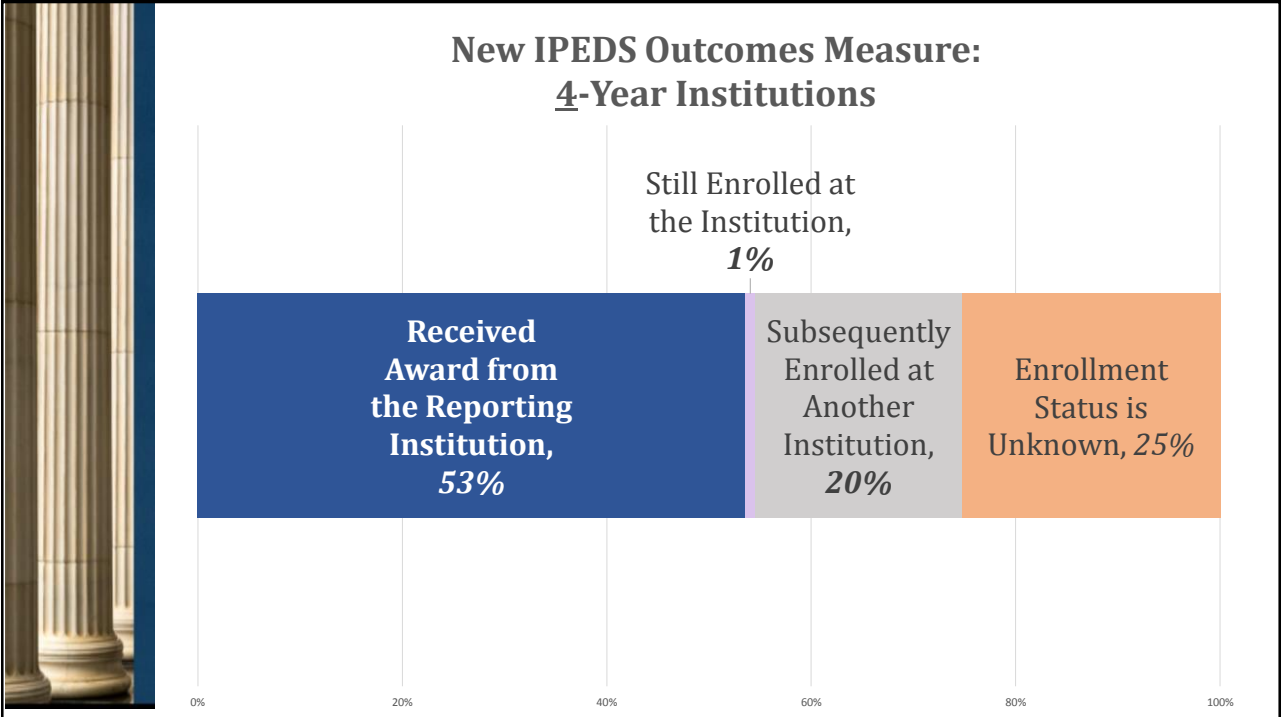






4-Year Schools







Key Indicator? It Depends...

- PR/Political Frame
- Perspective/Unit of Analysis
 - Institution = IPEDS Grad Rate / Outcomes Measure
 - Student / System = NSC Overall Completion Rate
- Best Fit/Student Population
 - Full-time with few transfer in/out = IPEDS Grad Rate
 - Part-time/Transfer
 - Large % of part-time = IPEDS Outcomes Measure
 - Large % transfer-ins = IPEDS Outcomes Measure
 - Large % transfer-outs = NSC Overall Completion Rate



Student Completion Indicators: General Observations

- Significant room for improvement
- Variability across and within institutional segments
- Challenges in telling the student success story
 - Choosing from “imperfect” indicators
 - Enrollment intensity (FT/PT) and progression pathways (native/transfer) cohorts
 - Reference
 - Points = internal baseline/trends, peer performance, regression/DEA-based benchmarks...
 - Contexts = description and explanation



IV. STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGIES

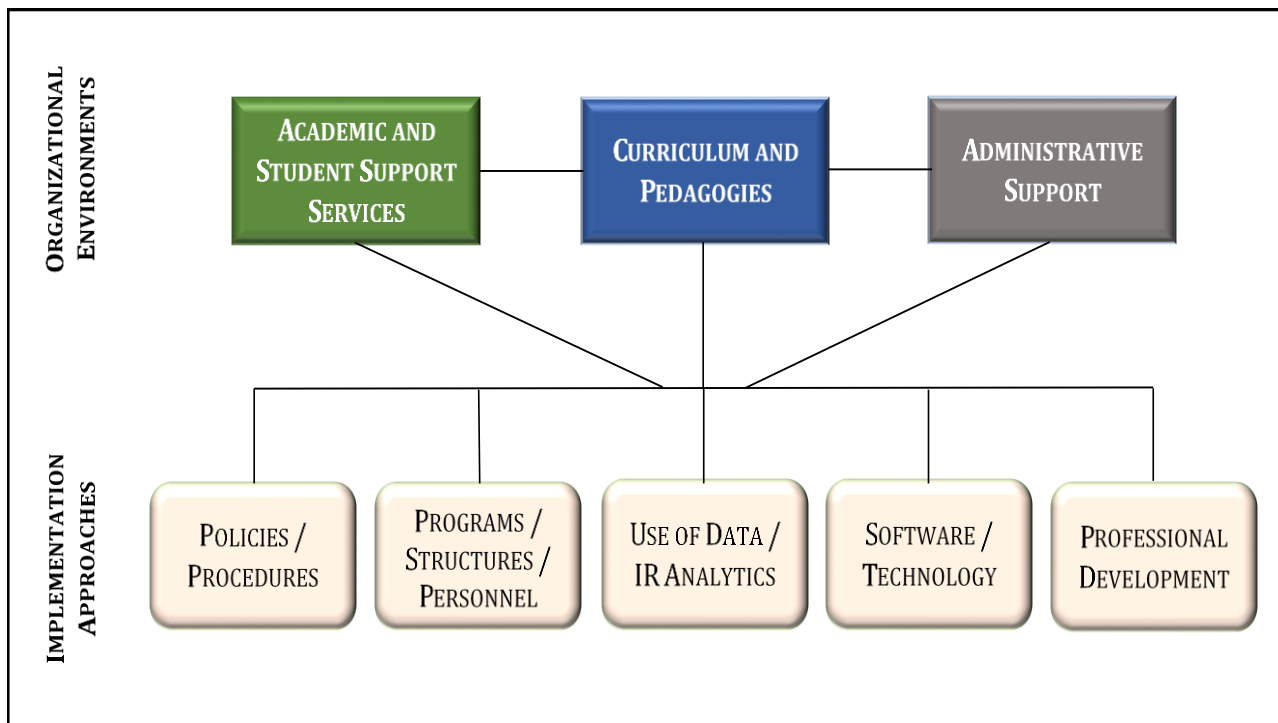
Preliminary Data



5,344

Student Completion
Strategies (n=707)

15
categories



Policies | Procedures

- **Co-Requisite** requirement to ensure that students simultaneously complete the *learning support* course and the *gatekeeper* course in their majors.
- **Meta-Majors** or Areas of Interest to add curricular *structure* to student course taking and bring a *project management*-like approach to academic advising.
- **Block Tuition** plan that allows students to take up to 36 hours per year for a block price, provided they enroll as full-time students in the long semesters thus helping students *accrue more hours* each year and to shorten time to completion while *reducing costs*.



Programs | Structures

- **One-Stop Center** to consolidate and *centralize student services* so that students will more easily find answers to their registration, financial aid, and bill payment questions.
- Curricular **Learning Communities** in which a cohort of students enroll in two or more intentionally *linked STEM courses* that create a *community* among the FY STEM students, and instigate *study groups* which would offer support through the gateway mathematics, science and engineering courses.
- **Summer Opportunities Fund** to provide stipends for *low-income* students to take low- or unpaid *internships* and research positions during the summer.



Technology

- **Financial Aid Literacy Labs** with staff to offer computers and software to help students search for internal and external scholarships and learn how to manage debt.
- **Flex Courses** that allow students to determine whether or not they attend their course *online* or *face to face* on a daily basis. This arrangement allows students whose schedules are in flux take advantage of the face-to-face option whenever they can or whenever they need to.
- **Early Warning System** to “*flag*” students who appear to be falling behind in their academic work or exhibiting behaviors that may lead to failure.



IR/Data Analytics

- **Advising Campaigns** to identify and reach students: (Grad Prep) - with *60+ hours* make sure they're on track to graduate; (Teach-Out) - *legacy students* to ensure they're on track to graduate before their catalogs expire; and (Stop-Out) students who are in good standing and who are close to completing graduation requirements, but have *stopped out* for some reason.
- **Predictive Analytics** reports to explore *major changing patterns* and identify *success marker courses* or courses that are predictive of a student's chances of graduating in their major.



Professional Development

- **Cross-Training** of professional advising staffs in the Office of *Student Success* and *Student Financial Aid* to ensure accessible and culturally sensitive financial aid advising for low-income students, from pre-matriculation to graduation.
- **New Faculty Academy** to offer mandatory sessions to all new faculty: Who is an **** Student?*; "Nuts and Bolts" of Teaching at *****; Learning-Centered Methodology; Instructional Strategies; Empathy/Ethic of Care; and Faculty Roundtable.
- **Classroom Assessment Workshop** series to familiarize gen ed faculty with diagnostic testing and focused small-stake assignments to predict, identify, and address student success issues in gateway courses.

Student Success Strategies: General Observations

- Remarkable richness of student success strategies.
- Some variability in approaches appears to be present across institutional segments.
- Web of initiatives - most institutions appear to report strategies that fall in at least 5 categories.

General Reference Context





STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: **An Overview of Student Debt, Completion Rates, and Student Success Strategies in SACSCOC Institutions**

Alexei G. Matveev, Ph.D.

Director of Training & Research, SACSCOC

amatveev@sacscoc.org