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Academic and Student Affairs

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# Degree and Certificate Completion Report to the Legislature

Minnesota State

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minnesota legislature has passed three recent pieces of legislation related to credential completion and developmental education:

- **Completion Plan:** The 2015 Minnesota legislature passed legislation related to degree completion. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Minnesota State) submitted a report in January 2016 detailing the system's plan to encourage and assist students to complete credentials.
- **Completion Measures:** The 2015 Higher Education Appropriations Act (2015 Minnesota Session Law, Chapter 3, Article 3, Section 16) requires the Minnesota State Board of Trustees, beginning in January of 2018, to submit a report on its activities and achievements related to improving timely completion, including reporting on seven specific completion measures.
- **Developmental Education Plan:** The 2017 Minnesota legislature passed legislation that required the Minnesota State Board of Trustees to prepare a plan that reforms developmental education offerings. The Developmental Education Plan report was submitted to the legislature in February 2018.

This Degree and Certificate Completion report fulfills the second reporting requirement listed above and provides an update to the initial annual report submitted to the Legislature in January 2018. The report includes updated data on the progress made on the seven completion measures outlined in the legislation and also serves as a supplement to the 2016 College Completion Plan report and the 2018 Developmental Education Plan. The specific measures reported are: Developmental Education Enrollment, Developmental Education Completion, College Level Course Completion, Credit Completion, Student Persistence and Completion, Completion Rates and Credits Earned at Graduation.

## Completion Goals and Plan

One of the core commitments of the 37 colleges and universities of Minnesota State is to provide access to higher education for all Minnesotans. The system has been very successful in providing this access, while acknowledging that there is still work to be done. However, many students leave our colleges and universities without earning a credential. Degree and certificate completion is important not only for the individual student and his or her family, but also for the state to meet its talent needs. Minnesota State has implemented a number of efforts to improve completion rates.

While Minnesota State is committed to improving degree and certificate completion rates, we recognize that there are several challenges as we seek to assist more students in reaching their educational goals in a timely manner. The challenges include Minnesota State's open door mission, college affordability and the state's low unemployment rate. The system's open access mission means that it enrolls substantial numbers of students who face financial and academic challenges that are associated with lower rates of college completion.

Minnesota State has been actively working to improve completion rates through a variety of initiatives that have demonstrated promising outcomes. The initiatives include systemwide and local partnerships with K-12 school district associations, adult basic education, business and industries, and non-profit organizations, as well as a variety of campus based initiatives. The system's completion plan capitalizes on the initiatives that are demonstrating success and promotes practices and policies that have been shown to have a positive impact on completion.

## Developmental Education

Since many of our students come to college with readiness gaps, they require additional academic preparation to be successful in college. Minnesota State colleges and universities offer developmental education, including precollege-level courses in reading, writing, and mathematics, and courses for English Language Learners (ELL), as well as academic support services and interventions designed to develop students' skills and prepare them for college-level coursework. Throughout this report, the term *developmental education*, rather than *remedial education*, is used because it is a broader term that encompasses coursework and support services.

Minnesota State is the primary provider of developmental education in the state. While the system is committed to meeting students where they are in terms of their level of academic preparation and helping them to achieve their educational goals, challenges associated with open admissions policies, assessment testing and course placement, traditional developmental education curriculum, and the need for holistic student support impact our developmental education programs in complex ways.

Minnesota State institutions are currently implementing innovations in developmental education to increase student retention, persistence, and completion rates. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities have created a Developmental Education Strategic Roadmap (DESR) to guide our systemwide work on developmental education redesign with clearly identified strategic goals, key action steps, targeted timelines for implementation, and measurable outcomes. The details of the developmental education plan are outlined in the 2018 Developmental Education Plan report.

## Opportunity Gap and Equity

National, state, and Minnesota State data show the opportunity and outcome gaps that exist between underrepresented and majority students in higher education. Minnesota State is deeply committed to addressing the gaps evident in our colleges and universities. Our data show that gaps are evident and persistent by race and ethnicity and by income. There are gaps between students of color and American Indian students in comparison to white and nonresident alien students and between students who are Pell eligible in comparison to students who are not Pell eligible.

Students of color and American Indian students are compared throughout this report to white students and nonresident alien students. The nonresident alien category consists primarily of international students and students who are not permanent residents of the United States. Federal, state and Minnesota State systemwide reporting standards specify that these students should not be included in a racial-ethnic group, but rather reported as nonresident students.

Since addressing the opportunity gaps is a key priority for Minnesota State, the system has been collecting and reporting data with disaggregations by student demographics. Minnesota State colleges and universities and the system office have been engaging in collective discussions, strategic planning, and implementation of evidence-based policies, programs and practices toward eliminating the gaps. These discussions, strategic planning, and implementations have also occurred in our developmental education work and redesign.

## Minnesota State Completion Measures

The completion measures presented in this report were generated from a longitudinal analysis of fall entering undergraduate students who were pursuing a degree, diploma or certificate. The student records used to prepare the completion measures are classified as private educational data under both the U. S. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) and consequently, may not be disclosed. The prohibition on disclosure extends to summary data prepared from the student records when the number of students reported is small and it may be possible to identify individual students. Data suppression was used to minimize the risk of disclosing data about individual students.

The measures included in the January 2018 Degree and Certificate Completion report have been updated with the most recent information from the system's student record system and developmental education data mart, and an additional cohort of students is now included in the analysis. Although recent updates and improvements to the data mart have resulted in some data points changing slightly from the data reported last year, the general trends and patterns observed in the earlier report remain unchanged.

The Minnesota State colleges and universities have made progress on all seven of the legislative completion measures. Summaries of key points on each of the measures are presented below. For each measure, descriptions of any differences between students of color and American Indian students compared to white students and nonresident students and differences between Pell grant eligible students and students who are not eligible for Pell grants are also included.

### **Developmental Education Enrollment Rate:**

- The number of fall entering undergraduate degree, diploma and certificate seeking students who took developmental courses during their first two years decreased by 39.9 percent between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016.
- The percent of students enrolled in developmental courses in their first two years decreased from 41.8 percent to 32.1 percent between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016.
- The percent of students of color and American Indian students who took developmental courses decreased by 10.9 percentage points and the percent of Pell grant eligible students who took developmental courses also decreased by 10.5 points since Fall 2009, but both groups continued to have higher developmental course taking rates relative to their comparison groups of white and nonresident students and students who are not eligible for Pell grants.

Much of this developmental education enrollment decline is due to the curricular and support innovations that have been implemented across our campuses. It is anticipated that with the implementation of the DESR, Minnesota State will see continued enrollment declines in developmental education courses.

### **Developmental Completion Rate:**

- The percentage of students completing their developmental education requirements in their first year increased in math, reading and writing between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016.
- The percentage of students of color and American Indian students who completed all of their developmental courses by the end of the first year has increased in all three subjects since Fall 2009, but they had lower course completion rates relative to white and nonresident students.
- Gaps between students of color and American Indian students relative to white and nonresident students in developmental course completion remain, but have decreased in all three subject areas since Fall 2009.
- The percentage of Pell grant eligible students who completed their developmental courses in the first year increased in all three subjects between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016 and the gap with students who were not eligible decreased in all three subjects.

Across Minnesota State, faculty members, departments, and academic and student affairs divisions have been innovating both within and beyond the classroom to better support students enrolled in developmental education. As campuses improve, scale, and/or add new innovative practices and programs across campuses, it is anticipated that there will be additional increases of student completion of developmental education courses by the end of their first year.

### **College Level Course Completion Rate:**

- The percentage of students completing a college level math course or a college level writing course by the end of their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017.

- The percentage of students of color and American Indian students and of Pell grant eligible students who completed a college level course by the end of their first year has increased in both subjects since Fall 2009, but both groups had lower college level course completion rates relative to their comparison groups of white and nonresident students and of students who are not eligible for Pell grants.
- The gap between students of color and American Indian students as compared to white and nonresident students in completion of college level writing decreased substantially between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017 (from a gap of 12.6 percentage points to 5.2 points). Similarly the gap in completion of college writing for Pell grant eligible students as compared to students who were not eligible decreased from 10.5 percentage points for Fall 2009 to 5.6 points for Fall 2017.

As innovations in developmental education and college-level gateway courses have been underway across Minnesota State colleges and universities, the impact of these innovations is seen in increased student completion of college-level mathematics and writing courses. The increases in college-level course completion rates for students of color and American Indian students and for Pell eligible students also reflect the innovations in curricular and student supports that have been implemented at Minnesota State campuses.

#### **Credit Completion Rate:**

- The percentage of fall full-time entering students who completed 20 and 30 semester credits during their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017.
- The percentage of students of color and American Indian students who earned 20 credits and 30 credits within their first year increased, but remains below the rates for white and nonresident students.

Since less than one-third of Minnesota State degree and certificate seeking students take 15 credits each semester, the percentage of students completing 20 credits during the first year has been much higher than the percentage who completed 30 credits. Many students have financial constraints or work and family commitments which impact their ability to take a full course load each semester.

#### **Student Persistence and Completion Rate:**

- The second fall persistence and completion rate for fall entering full-time students decreased during the recession but has increased by 2.1 percentage points since the low observed for students entering in Fall 2012.
- The persistence and completion rate for students of color and American Indian students has increased by 4.8 percentage points since the low observed for Fall 2010 entering students, but is lower than the rate for white and nonresident students.

Student success (i.e., persistence and completion rate and completion rate) is the primary focus of all Minnesota State colleges and universities. Minnesota State campuses have been actively working to improve completion rates through a variety of initiatives that have demonstrated



promising outcomes. In addition to expanding evidence-based programs, practices, and initiatives, campuses are focusing on increasing students' engagement and their sense of belonging and creating positive campus climates.

### **Completion Rate:**

- The state college completion rate among the full-time entering cohorts decreased during the recession, but then increased by 3.1 percentage points since the low observed for Fall 2011 entering students.
- The state college completion rates for students of color and American Indian students and for Pell eligible students also increased, but are lower than the rates for comparison groups of White and nonresident students and students who are not eligible for a Pell grant and gaps have not narrowed.
- The completion rate for the state universities increased 2.8 percentage points for entering students between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012.
- Completion rates for students of color and American Indian students at the state universities are lower than the completion rates for white and nonresident students and gaps have not narrowed. The rates decreased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011, but the completion rate for students entering in Fall 2012 increased and was higher as compared to the rate for those entering in Fall 2009.
- The completion rates for Pell eligible students at the state universities also decreased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011 and then increased for Fall 2012 entering students. The rate for Pell eligible students remains lower than the rate for students who are not Pell eligible.

Degree and certificate completion continues to be an imperative and a primary commitment of Minnesota State. While completion rates did increase in recent years, gaps remain between the rates for students of color and American Indian students and white and nonresident students and between Pell eligible students and students who are not Pell eligible. Eliminating these gaps is one of the most important priorities of Minnesota State.

### **Credits Earned at Graduation**

- The average cumulative credits at graduation decreased for certificate, and associate and bachelor's degree graduates.
- Students of color and American Indian students who earn Minnesota State certificates or degrees complete with similar or fewer credits than their comparison group of white and nonresident students. This pattern also holds true for Pell eligible students as compared to students who are not eligible for Pell grants.

# BACKGROUND

## Legislation

The Minnesota legislature passed three recent pieces of legislation relating to completion and developmental education.

The 2015 Minnesota legislature passed legislation to address completion rates for all of Minnesota's public colleges and universities (see Appendix A). Minnesota State submitted a report on January 15, 2016 detailing the system's comprehensive plan to encourage students to complete degrees, diplomas, or certificates in their chosen field of study. The report is available at <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2016/mandated/160011.pdf>.

The 2015 Higher Education Appropriations Act (2015 Minnesota Session Law, Chapter 69, Article 3, Section 16) includes the following requirement:

*Beginning in 2018, the Board (of Trustees), report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over higher education on its activities and achievements related to the goal of improving timely completion of degrees and certificates. The report must, at a minimum, include for the previous academic year:*

- (1) the percent of students placed in remedial education;*
  - (2) the percent of students who complete remediation within one academic year;*
  - (3) the percent of students that complete college-level gateway courses in one academic year;*
  - (4) the percent of students who complete 30 semester credits per academic year;*
  - (5) the student retention rate;*
  - (6) time to complete a degree or certificate; and*
  - (7) credits earned by those completing a degree or certificate or other program.*
- The report must disaggregate data for each college and university by race and ethnicity, Pell Grant eligibility, and age and provide aggregate data.*

The 2017 Minnesota legislature passed legislation requiring that the Board of Trustees of Minnesota State prepare a plan that reforms developmental education offerings at system campuses aimed at reducing the number of students placed into developmental education (see Appendix A). The Developmental Education Plan report submitted to the Minnesota legislature in February, 2018 is available at <http://www.minnstate.edu/system/asa/index.html>.

This Degree and Certificate Completion report meets the second legislative requirement and includes comprehensive reporting and discussion of the seven completion measures and updates the initial report submitted in January 2018. The Degree and Completion report also serves as a supplement to the 2016 College Completion Plan and the 2018 Developmental

Education Plan but does not provide the detailed context that are included in those two reports.

Appendix B of this report presents data on the seven measures for each college and university. The data are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, Pell Grant eligibility, and age. Trends for up to five years are reported for the measures.

# MINNESOTA STATE DEGREE COMPLETION AND DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

## Completion Goals

One of the core commitments of the 37 colleges and universities of Minnesota State is providing access to higher education for all Minnesotans. As stated in the 2016 College Completion Plan, Minnesota State has been very successful in providing this access, with acknowledgement that there is still work to be done. In fiscal year 2018, over 245,000 students enrolled in credit courses at Minnesota State College and University campuses. Minnesota State institutions continue to be the first choice in higher education for the majority of Minnesotans and especially students of color, low-income students, adult learners, and those pursuing technical careers. Minnesota State educates more college graduates than any other provider of higher education in the state, and its graduates include the majority of the state's K-12 school teachers, law enforcement professionals, and healthcare professionals.

Although Minnesota State continues to provide widespread access to higher education, there is also recognition that many students leave the colleges and universities without earning a credential. Approximately half of degree and certificate seeking students in the Minnesota State system (53.9 percent at the colleges and 54.8 percent at the universities) complete a credential and/or transfer within the 150 percent benchmark timeframe of three years for an associate degree and six years for a bachelor's degree.

The lack of a credential has significant negative consequences for the student, the college where the student enrolled, and our economy (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2015). Degree and certificate attainment increases average earnings over the course of a lifetime, decreases likelihood of unemployment, and increases contributions to communities and our society (Trostel, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Estimates indicate that 74 percent of the jobs in Minnesota will require some postsecondary education by 2020 (Georgetown University, 2014). Thus degree and certificate completion is important not only for the individual student and his or her family, but also for the state to meet its talent needs. With a commitment to providing access and degree attainment, Minnesota State has implemented efforts to improve completion rates, at every level of award from certificates and diplomas to associate, bachelors and graduate degrees.

## Challenges Related to Degree and Certificate Completion

While Minnesota State is committed to improving degree and certificate completion rates, we recognize that there are several challenges as we seek to assist more students in reaching their educational goals in a timely manner. National trends and the existing literature indicate that these challenges are not unique to Minnesota, but are significant factors across all institutions that must be addressed in order for a comprehensive completion plan to be successful.

A detailed discussion of these challenges can be found in the 2016 Degree Completion Plan and are summarized briefly here:

- **Open Door Mission:** Minnesota State's mission as the public-serving post-secondary education system for the state of Minnesota plays a critical role in this context. Minnesota State colleges have open admission policies and admit all students with a high school diploma, regardless of academic preparation levels, which results in attracting students with a broad range of preparedness. Consequently, Minnesota State institutions enroll many students who require more intentional and expansive levels of academic support. Thirty percent of Minnesota high school graduates who took the ACT in 2017-2018 had a college ready score (ACT, 2018).
- **Affordability:** The cost of obtaining a college credential continues to be a barrier for many students. Thirty-one percent of Minnesota State students were Pell grant eligible in fiscal year 2018 and fully 57 percent received some form of financial aid. In addition, over half of Minnesota State graduates complete their credentials with some modest debt.
- **Low Unemployment:** Finally, the comparative strength of Minnesota's economy and lower than average unemployment rates is good news for the state but a challenge to increasing college completion rates. Given that many Minnesota State students are working adults, many with families, the ability to find gainful employment can mean that they will opt to take fewer credit hours or stop-out entirely because they have found a job.

The access and inclusiveness that Minnesota State provides to Minnesota residents means that we enroll a substantial population of students who face financial and academic challenges that can lead to lower rates of college completion. Data on students enrolled in FY2017-2018 indicate that among the Minnesota State student population:

- Thirty-one percent are Pell grant eligible, a rate that has increased from 24 percent 10 years ago;
- Fifty-two percent of students are enrolled on a part-time basis, up from 44 percent in Fall 2007;
- The average age of our students is 25 and 33 percent are age 25 or older;
- Half of our students (51 percent) are first-generation by the federal definition that the student's parents have not earned a bachelor's degree;
- Twenty-seven percent of our students are American Indian or students of color, up from 18 percent in 2009;
- Forty-nine percent are from underrepresented groups, including students of color or American Indian students, first generation students, and/or low income students;
- Over 9,000 students seek educational accommodations related to a physical or cognitive disability.

## Ongoing Completion Efforts and Completion Plan

Minnesota State has been actively working to improve completion rates through a variety of initiatives that demonstrate promising outcomes. Initiatives include a variety of campus-based activities and both systemwide and local partnerships with K-12 school district associations, Minnesota Adult Basic Education, business and industries, and non-profit organizations. A

summary list of ongoing completion efforts is provided in the 2016 Degree Completion Plan. Examples include, learning communities, emergency grant programs, early alerts systems, advising programs, first-year-experience courses, cohort models, grants to parenting students, and intrusive support services. Minnesota State's comprehensive completion plan capitalizes on the initiatives that are already demonstrating success while also promoting practices and policies that have been shown on a national level to have a positive impact on completion rates.

## Developmental Education

Since many students arrive at college with readiness gaps, they require more academic support and preparation to be successful in their college-level gateway courses and academic programs. Minnesota State colleges and universities offer developmental education to support the success of these students by delivering pre-collegiate courses and providing a variety of optional and/or mandatory student support services. Given that academic preparation is a significant predictor of persistence and completion, we must effectively bridge the gap between the academic readiness of our new entering students and the skills needed for college success. Developmental education serves as that critical bridge.

Developmental education consists of precollege-level courses in reading, writing, mathematics, and courses for English Language Learners (ELL), as well as academic support services and interventions, offered by postsecondary institutions designed to develop students' skills and prepare them for college-level coursework. Throughout this report, the term *developmental education*, rather than *remedial education*, is used because it is a broader term that encompasses precollege-level coursework and other academic support services that prepare students for success in college. *Remedial education* or *remediation*, the term used in 2015 Minnesota Session Law, Chapter 3, Article 3, Section 16, can imply courses that repeat material taught earlier that the student did not learn adequately the first time.

Although developmental education courses are offered for credit, the credits do not count toward the requirements of degrees, diplomas or certificates. Students who are eligible for need-based financial aid can use that aid for developmental ELL courses and for up to thirty credits of developmental reading, writing, and mathematics coursework.

Although postsecondary institutions typically assess the academic readiness of new entering students for college level academic coursework, students can enroll in a variety of technical programs that do not require college-level skills in reading, writing and/or math. Many students are able to graduate with postsecondary occupational certificates or diplomas and obtain a living wage job without taking developmental courses.

Twenty-four percent of Minnesota's 2014 public high school graduates enrolled in one or more developmental courses within two years of graduating high school, as presented by the Getting Prepared 2017 report (Fergus, 2017). Across all Minnesota postsecondary institutions, the percent of recent high school graduates who enrolled in developmental education within two

years of graduating has decreased from 30 to 24 percent between 2008 and 2014. As a result of our colleges' open-door mission, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities enroll 98 percent of the public high school graduates who take developmental education courses within two years of graduating high school.

## Challenges of College Readiness and Developmental Education

While Minnesota State is committed to meeting students at their level of academic preparation and helping them to achieve their educational goals in a timely manner, there is acknowledgement that challenges persist. These challenges are consistent with national trends and the existing literature and many of them are currently being addressed by the system and campuses. Some of the challenges are significant and must be addressed systemically.

A detailed discussion of these challenges can be found in the 2018 Developmental Education report and summarized briefly here:

- **Open Admissions:** The open admissions policies of Minnesota State mean that many of the students admitted to our colleges and universities are not academically prepared for college and need options for developmental education. The type and availability of offerings of developmental education often reflect an institution's student demographics and selectivity. Nationally, 80 percent of public colleges and 98 percent of community colleges offer developmental courses (Bettinger & Long, 2006).
- **Assessment Testing and Course Placement:** Course placement practices have traditionally utilized single, high-stake tests to identify students' knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics and to place them into college-level or developmental-level courses based on those levels of college readiness. There is concern that the use of a single placement test results in some students being placed into courses that are not well matched to their needs or academic abilities. Minnesota State is working to increase the accuracy and effectiveness of the course placement process by implementing a comprehensive multiple measures program that includes the use of more than one measure for placement, as well as full pre- and post-assessment processes.
- **Developmental Education Curriculum:** Traditional developmental-level curricula is offered in a sequential fashion in which students with the highest levels of under-preparedness may enroll in two or three semesters of coursework before being able to take a college-level course in the corresponding subject area. Studies have illustrated that the more courses students are required to take before beginning their college-level coursework, the less likely they are to persist and complete. Minnesota State is working to implement multiple options for students that can include the traditional model and accelerated model(s) that addresses students' needs and reduce the time to completion of developmental coursework
- **Holistic Student Support:** When considering how to best support students, postsecondary institutions must address students holistically. In addition to academic knowledge and skills, factors that more often impact the college readiness of recent high school graduates are prior college-knowledge and college-going high school environments. In addition, factors that more often impact student persistence are outside of curricular factors, such as financial and college affordability, external commitments such as work and family

obligations, and other factors such as health and poverty. Current efforts are focusing on supporting students through a comprehensive and integrated academic and student support model.

## Ongoing Innovations and Developmental Education Plan

Most Minnesota State colleges and universities are currently implementing innovations in developmental education to increase student retention, persistence and completion rates. These innovations vary from institution to institution as programs are customized to meet the needs of students within their local context. Developmental education innovations have been implemented in the areas of reading, English, and mathematics.

**Reading:** The majority of campuses offering reading curriculum have one or more innovations in place including:

- Integrated reading and writing curriculum that provides students a more comprehensive learning of reading and writing.
- Reading courses offered as paired courses or in learning communities, where a cohort of students take two or more courses which allow them to learn within a community, experience an integrated learning environment, and apply knowledge and learning across disciplines.

**English:** Most campuses have implemented one or more innovations in their English curriculum. In addition to integrated reading and writing curriculum and learning communities or paired courses, campuses are offering:

- Accelerated models designed to increase students' progress through developmental education over a shorter period of time and include:
  - Enrolling students immediately into college-level courses while providing supplemental supports and co-requisite models such as the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP).
  - Combining content from multiple developmental education levels into a single course that students can complete within one semester.
  - Compressing the course content over a shorter period of time, allowing students to complete two fast-track or compressed courses within one semester.

**Mathematics:** Likewise, most campuses have one or more mathematics innovations in place, including:

- Accelerated models similar to those described for reading and English.
- Multiple pathways in math provide different developmental course sequences for students pursuing different degree pathways. While one pathway may lead to college-level courses in algebra, others focus on preparing students for statistics and/or quantitative reasoning.
- Technical program mathematics requirements are tailored to needs of the program and may not require college-level mathematics.



**Wrap-Around Strategies:** Campuses have implemented wrap-around academic and student support strategies that are critical to increasing the success of students in developmental education courses, including:

- Early alert systems,
- Academic advising,
- Academic support centers,
- Tutors embedded into courses (supplemental academic instruction),
- Targeted support options addressing students’ basic needs, and/or
- Peer and professional tutoring.

**Developmental Education Roadmap:** The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities have created a Developmental Education Strategic Roadmap (DESR) to guide our systemwide work on developmental education redesign. The DESR includes clearly identified strategic goals, key action steps, targeted timelines for implementation, and measureable outcomes. The Developmental Education Workgroup, comprised of Minnesota State faculty, staff, students, administrators, and system office leadership, led the creation of the DESR. The Workgroup has been reviewing and promoting national, systemwide, and campus efforts to redesign developmental education. In 2016-2017, to advance the collective work of Minnesota State on developmental education redesign, the Workgroup developed a draft strategic roadmap. Campus stakeholders had opportunities to provide input on the draft DESR during 2017. The Minnesota State DESR was finalized in January 2018 and provides our redesign “roadmap” for the next four years. The details of the developmental education plan are outlined in the 2018 Developmental Education Plan report.

The DESR includes the seven strategic goals:

- **Strategic Goal 1:** Improve student completion of developmental education and entry into college-level courses by redesigning developmental education curricula to include an acceleration option.
- **Strategic Goal 2:** Improve the accuracy of course placement by implementing a multiple measures placement program at all colleges and universities.
- **Strategic Goal 3:** Improve student success in developmental education by developing a comprehensive student support system for students in developmental education programs.
- **Strategic Goal 4:** Increase college readiness of high school graduates attending Minnesota State campuses by partnering with secondary partners.
- **Strategic Goal 5:** Increase college affordability for students by implementing student-cost-saving approaches.
- **Strategic Goal 6:** Improve student success in developmental education by expanding and strengthening professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators.
- **Strategic Goal 7:** Improve student success in developmental education by strengthening evaluation and continuous improvement efforts.

## Opportunity Gaps and Equity

National, state, and Minnesota State data show the opportunity gaps that exist between underrepresented and majority students in higher education, and Minnesota State is deeply committed to addressing the gaps evident in our colleges and universities. Our data show that gaps are evident and persistent by race and ethnicity and by income, between students of color and American Indian students in comparison to white and nonresident students and between students who are Pell eligible in comparison to students who are not Pell eligible. These gaps are illustrated in financial resources, as measured by median income of students and Pell-Eligibility, and in academic preparation, as measured by student enrollment in developmental education courses and assessment test scores. The gaps also are evident in second fall persistence and completion rates and subsequent completion rates.

Students of color and American Indian students are compared throughout this report to white students and nonresident alien students. The nonresident alien category consists primarily of international students and students who are not permanent residents of the United States. Federal, state and system reporting standards specify that these students should not be included in a racial-ethnic group, but rather reported as nonresident students.

Since addressing the opportunity gaps is a key priority for Minnesota State, the system has been collecting and reporting data with disaggregations by student demographics. Minnesota State colleges and universities and the system office have been engaging in collective discussions, strategic planning, and implementation of evidence-based policies, programs and practices toward eliminating the gaps. These discussions, strategic planning, and implementations have also occurred in our developmental education work and redesign.

Systemwide strategies to close the opportunity gaps include:

- **Affordability:** Addressing financial barriers by increasing need-based scholarships, increasing the use of Open Education Resources, and committing to affordability in tuition and fees for students.
- **Academic Preparation:** Addressing academic preparedness by redesigning developmental education, enhancing the course placement process, increasing summer bridge programs and other pre-college experiences to ensure academic preparedness, and expanding our K-12 partnerships to ensure more students graduate high school ready for college-level coursework.
- **System Strategies:** Other system strategies include:
  - Enhancing predictive analytics to identify what works to enable scaling of best practices;
  - Supporting the work of faculty members who are taking measures to revise curriculum and pedagogy;
  - Assessing and addressing campus climate; and
  - Strengthening non-academic support services.

- **Campus Strategies:** Many campuses have implemented additional policies, practices, and programs aimed to support the success of students of color, American Indian students and Pell eligible or low-income students, as indicated in campus diversity and inclusion plans:
  - Redesign first year experience for all students;
  - Deploy best practices on culturally responsive pedagogy;
  - Complete PACE climate survey and act upon the results;
  - Provide the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and unconscious bias training for search advisory committees; and
  - Provide professional development around equity and inclusion.

# MINNESOTA STATE COMPLETION MEASURES

The 2015 Higher Education Appropriations Act requires Minnesota State to report data on seven completion measures for each college and university with disaggregations by race-ethnicity, Pell grant eligibility and age. Trends are presented for each measure in order to illustrate any changes during the last several years. The detailed reports on the measures for each college and university, with the disaggregations, are presented in Appendix B.

## Students, Measures, Disaggregations and Data Suppression

This section of the report describes the student population for whom the measures are reported, defines the measures, describes the measure disaggregations, and outlines the data suppression that was used in the detailed reports to address data privacy issues when measures included small numbers of students.

### Students Reported

Since the measures focus on completion of credentials, only undergraduate students who were pursuing a degree, certificate or diploma when they entered the college or university are included in the cohorts. Students who were not pursuing a degree, were taking courses while in high school or who had previously earned a degree are not included. The number of fall entering undergraduate credential seeking students decreased by 24.7 percent between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate-Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

Sector	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Change
System	56,657	55,371	52,146	51,609	48,670	46,436	44,872	44,251	42,675	-24.7%
Colleges	42,030	40,190	37,002	36,957	34,511	32,763	31,064	30,338	29,682	-29.4%
Universities	14,627	15,181	15,144	14,652	14,159	13,673	13,808	13,913	12,993	-11.2%

### Measures

The 2015 legislation requires Minnesota State to report on seven completion measures. The legislative measures, the measure names and definitions and, where appropriate, the subject disaggregations are shown in Table 2. The developmental education enrollment rates and completion rates are reported separately for Mathematics, Reading and Writing or English. A few colleges and universities do not offer developmental reading and/or developmental writing and consequently will not have the developmental enrollment or completion rates reported. Although a few Minnesota State colleges and universities offer developmental courses in English as a Second Language and in other disciplines, the numbers of students taking these courses is very small, and consequently, measures are not reported separately for these disciplines, but the students are included in the overall rates.

**Table 2: Measures and Definitions  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Legislative Measure</b>	<b>Measure Name</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Percent of Students Placed in Remedial Education	Developmental Education Enrollment Rate	Percent of entering students who took any Developmental Education course (Math, Reading, Writing, ESL, Other) in the first two years
	Developmental Education Enrollment Rate: Math	Percent of entering students who took Developmental Math courses in the first two years
	Developmental Education Enrollment Rate: Reading	Percent of entering students who took Developmental Reading courses in the first two years
	Developmental Education Enrollment Rate: Writing	Percent of entering students who took Developmental Writing courses in the first two years
Percent of Students Completing Remediation in One Year	One-Year Developmental Completion Rate: Math	Percent of students who took Developmental Math who completed all required Developmental Math courses by the end of the first year
	One-Year Developmental Completion Rate: Reading	Percent of students who took Developmental Reading who completed all required Developmental Reading courses by the end of the first year
	One-Year Developmental Completion Rate: Writing	Percent of students who took Developmental Writing who completed all required Developmental Writing courses by the end of the first year
Percent of Students that Complete College-Level Gateway Courses in One Year	One-Year College Level Course Completion Rate: Math	Percent of entering students who completed a College-Level Math course by the end of the first year
	One-Year College Level Course Completion Rate: Writing	Percent of entering students who completed a College-Level Writing course by the end of the first year
Percent of Students Who Complete 30 Credits per Year	Thirty Credit Completion Rate in First Year	Percent of full-time entering students who completed 30 credit hours in the first year
	Twenty Credit Completion Rate in First Year	Percent of full-time entering students who completed 20 credit hours in the first year

**Table 2: Measures and Definitions - Continued  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Legislative Measure</b>	<b>Measure Name</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Student Retention Rate	Student Persistence and Completion Rate	Percent of full-time entering students that were either Retained, Transferred, or Graduated as of the second fall term one year after entry
Time to Completion of a Degree or Certificate	Completion Rate	<u>Colleges</u> : The percent of full-time entering State College students that Transferred or Graduated by the third spring term after entry <u>Universities</u> : The percent of the full-time entering State University students that Graduated by the sixth spring term after entry
Credits Earned by Those Completing a Degree or Certificate	Average Credits Earned by Graduation	Average number of credits students had earned at graduation with their first award for a Certificate or an Associate degree at the colleges and a Bachelor’s degree at the universities (reported by entering cohort).

**Disaggregations**

The legislation specifies that the measures should be disaggregated on several dimensions:

- **Institution:** The measures are reported for each of the 37 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, as well as for all colleges, all universities and the system.
- **Age:** The measures are reported for the following three student age groups
  - o 24 and Under
  - o 25 and Over
  - o Unknown age
- **Race-Ethnicity:** The measures are reported for the following nine race and ethnicity groups
  - o American Indian
  - o Asian and Pacific Islander
  - o Black or African American
  - o Hispanic of any race
  - o Two or more races
  - o All Students of Color and American Indian Students: Includes the five categories above
  - o White
  - o Nonresident Alien: A student who is not a permanent resident of the U. S. and, consequently, is not reported within a racial or ethnic group.
  - o Unknown race and ethnicity
- **Pell Eligibility:** Eligibility for a federal Pell grant is used a proxy for low income status and includes three reporting categories
  - o Pell Eligible: A student who applied for a Pell Grant and was determined to be eligible.
  - o Not Pell Eligible: A student who applied for a Pell Grant and was determined not to be eligible.
  - o Unknown Pell Eligibility: A student who did not apply for a Pell Grant.

## Data Mart Updates

The measures included in the January 2018 Degree and Certificate Completion report have been updated with the most recent information from the Minnesota State student record system and the system's developmental education and completion data mart. The data mart was created to allow reporting of the legislatively required measures and to allow colleges and universities to more easily analyze data on their students to support efforts to increase student success.

Updates to the developmental education data mart during the last year included the addition of a new cohort of entering students and modifications to increase the accuracy and the completeness of the data reported on developmental and college level course completion. The modifications include: 1) for a few campuses, the classification of the highest developmental education course in a sequence was updated; and 2) for the measures related to completion of college level courses by the end of the first year, the data mart now incorporates courses taken at the college or university by the student while they were still in high school. Although the improvements to the data mart have resulted in some specific data points changing as compared to the data reported last year, the general trends and patterns observed in the earlier report remain unchanged.

## Data Suppression

The student records and data elements that were used to prepare the completion measures presented in this report are classified as private educational data under both the U. S. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) and consequently, may not be disclosed. The prohibition on disclosure extends to summary data prepared from the student records when the number of students reported is small and it therefore may be possible to identify individual students from the summary data.

Data suppression is a method used to minimize the risk of disclosing data about individual students. Suppression takes the form of removing data from cells rather than reporting the actual number of students. The goals of suppression are to ensure that reporting does not reveal, directly or indirectly, personally identifiable private data about an individual student and to ensure that cells are of sufficient size to yield statistically reliable information.

The data suppression method used for the completion measures in this report is based on a technical brief published by the U. S. Department of Education in 2012 (NCES). The approach includes the following three components:

- **First-Order Suppression:** Suppress any numerator, denominator and rate where the denominator is less than 10 students.
- **Second-Order Suppression:** Suppress very high and low rates when the denominator is small enough or the rates are high or low enough to reveal something about all of the students in the cell.

- **Complementary Suppression:** Suppress a second cell in the same column at the same institution and at another institution to prevent the calculation of the first suppressed cell.

## Completion Measures

This section of the report presents data on each of the seven legislative completion measures. Each section describes the measure, presents system level trends in the measure, and describes any differences between students of color and American Indian students compared to white and nonresident alien students and differences between Pell grant eligible students and students who are not eligible for Pell grants.

### Developmental Education Enrollment Rate

The developmental education enrollment rate was measured by student enrollment in one or more courses that are identified as developmental-level during the first two years after entry. The developmental education enrollment rate is reported for full and part-time fall entering undergraduate degree, diploma and certificate seeking students.

The number of fall entering students taking developmental courses during their first two years decreased by 39.9 percent between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016, as shown in Table 3. The decrease was 43.0 percent at the colleges and 18.9 percent at the universities during this time. The total number of fall entering students taking developmental courses declined from 23,675 to 14,217 from Fall 2009 to Fall 2016.

**Table 3: Fall Entering Students Who took Developmental Courses Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
System	23,675	23,395	21,555	21,283	19,025	16,392	14,827	14,217	-39.9%
Colleges	20,697	20,305	18,763	18,491	16,525	13,966	12,376	11,801	-43.0%
Universities	2,978	3,090	2,792	2,792	2,500	2,426	2,451	2,416	-18.9%

The percentage of the system’s fall entering undergraduate students enrolled in developmental education courses in their first two years decreased in all subjects between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016. The system percent of students who took any developmental courses decreased from 41.8 percent to 32.1 percent, as shown in Table 4. The largest decrease occurred among students taking developmental math courses, dropping 10.3 points from 32.9 percent for Fall 2009 to 22.6 percent for Fall 2016.



**Table 4: Developmental Education (DE) Enrollment Rate by Subject  
Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
Any DE	41.8%	42.3%	41.3%	41.2%	39.1%	35.3%	33.0%	32.1%	-9.7
DE Math	32.9%	33.0%	32.3%	31.5%	30.2%	24.9%	23.2%	22.6%	-10.3
DE Reading	14.3%	14.8%	14.5%	14.9%	14.1%	12.5%	10.5%	9.8%	-4.5
DE Writing	16.3%	17.1%	17.4%	17.4%	16.0%	13.8%	12.9%	12.9%	-3.4

We attribute much of this decline in enrollment in developmental education to the curricular and support innovations that have been implemented across our campuses, as outlined in the previous section. In addition, as Minnesota State continues to enhance the course placement process, more and more students are being placed into the appropriate course that addresses their academic needs, with more students being placed into college-level courses and provided the academic and student support curriculum to support their success. It is anticipated that with the implementation of the DESR, Minnesota State will see continued enrollment declines in developmental education.

We cannot address academic preparation alone, so our system is working closely with our external partners to increase the career and college readiness of students arriving at our colleges and universities. Minnesota State colleges and universities are collaborating with their K-12 partners to improve practice and curriculum alignment so that we can ensure that more high school students graduate career and college-ready. In addition, campuses continue to partner with their local adult basic education, workforce centers, businesses and industries to build seamless transitions into Minnesota State institutions. The system also continues to collaborate with the Minnesota Department of Education Adult Basic Education, the Department of Employment and Economic Development, other state agencies, and community-based organizations to improve students' college transitions.

The percentage of students of color and American Indian students and of Pell grant eligible students who took developmental courses has decreased substantially since Fall 2009, but both groups continue to have higher developmental course taking rates relative to their comparison groups. Forty-seven percent of Fall 2016 entering students of color and American Indian students took developmental courses compared to 25.6 percent of white and nonresident students, as shown in Table 5. Nearly 41 percent of Fall 2016 entering Pell grant eligible students took developmental education courses, compared to 25.7 percent of students that were not eligible for a Pell grant.

**Table 5: Developmental Education (DE) Enrollment Rate by Student Group  
Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
Any DE-White/NR	37.0%	37.1%	35.6%	34.8%	32.4%	28.7%	26.3%	25.6%	-11.4
Any DE-SOC & AI	58.0%	58.8%	58.6%	59.0%	56.6%	51.3%	48.5%	47.1%	-10.9
Any DE-No Pell	36.7%	35.5%	33.6%	33.0%	30.8%	27.9%	26.5%	25.7%	-11.0
Any DE-Pell	51.0%	50.7%	50.1%	50.1%	48.1%	43.2%	41.2%	40.5%	-10.5

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students                      No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

Addressing the gaps between students of color and American Indian students as compared to white and nonresident students is a key strategy in terms of our partnerships with our K-12 partners, adult basic education, workforce centers, businesses and industries. As these gaps are even more prevalent in the K-12 system, the partnerships with our local high schools and the Minnesota Department of Education are taking a broad account of identifying career and college readiness early on and providing early interventions for students who are not on track to graduate.

### **Developmental Education Completion Rate**

Student completion of developmental education courses was measured by passing the last course in a sequence (e.g., Intermediate Algebra), passing their last developmental mathematics or English course and taking a college-level mathematics or English course, or earning a credential within the first academic year after entry. The developmental education completion rate is reported for full and part-time fall entering undergraduate credential seeking students who had enrolled in developmental education courses.

The percentage of fall entering students completing their developmental education requirements by the end of their first year increased in all subjects between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016. The percent of students completing developmental mathematics increased by 13.8 percentage points, going from 30 percent for Fall 2009 to 43.8 percent for Fall 2016, as shown in Table 6. Completion of developmental writing increased from 59.2 percent to 64.4 percent and completion of developmental reading increased from 54.9 percent to 61.5 percent.

**Table 6: Developmental Education (DE) Completion Rate by Subject  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
DE Math-1st Year	30.0%	30.3%	30.8%	31.2%	33.6%	40.8%	42.3%	43.8%	13.8
DE Writing-1st Year	59.2%	59.3%	59.6%	60.1%	59.7%	61.3%	62.9%	64.4%	5.2
DE Reading-1st Year	54.9%	55.7%	56.0%	55.8%	55.5%	60.3%	60.6%	61.5%	6.6

Across Minnesota State campuses, faculty, departments and academic and student affairs divisions have been innovating both in and out of the classroom to support students enrolled in developmental education, as highlighted in the innovations previously described. As campuses improve, scale, and add new innovative practices and programs, it is anticipated that the percentage of students completing developmental education courses in their first year will continue to increase. Many campuses have also instituted campus-level policies that require or highly encourage students to enroll in developmental education courses their first semester or first year. These policies help ensure that students receive the academic and student support they need to be successful in completing their degree or certificate.

The percentage of students of color and American Indian students who completed their developmental courses by the end of their first year has increased in all subjects since Fall 2009, but they had lower developmental course completion rates relative to white and nonresident students. The largest increases in completion occurred in math with students of color and American Indian students going from 21.5 percent in Fall 2009 to 36.8 percent for Fall 2016 and students who were eligible for Pell grants going from 25.2 percent in Fall 2009 to 39.4 percent for Fall 2016, as shown in Table 7. Thirty-seven percent of Fall 2016 entering students of color and American Indian students completed developmental math courses by the end of the first year compared to 48.3 percent of white and nonresident students. There were similar gaps between students of color and American Indian students compared to white and nonresident students in the developmental writing and reading completion rates. Similar gaps remain for students who are eligible for Pell grants and those who are not eligible.

Innovations implemented at Minnesota State campuses have positively impacted both students of color and American Indian students and have impacted white and nonresident students in that the completion rates for both groups have increased over the last seven years. Nonetheless, work needs to continue to address the gaps between the two groups of students to ensure that all students can be successful in developmental education courses. Campuses will continue to examine how programs, practices, and initiatives impact students of color and American Indian students, Pell eligible students, and other groups of students traditionally underrepresented in higher education and scale the programs that have resulted in narrowing or eliminating the gaps in academic achievement.

**Table 7: Developmental Education (DE) Completion Rate by Student Group and Subject  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Subject &amp; Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
DE Math-White/NR	33.3%	34.1%	35.2%	35.3%	37.8%	43.7%	46.2%	48.3%	15.0
DE Math-SOC & AI	21.5%	21.3%	22.0%	23.4%	26.0%	35.4%	35.7%	36.8%	15.3
DE Writing-White/NR	64.1%	64.7%	64.9%	66.6%	66.8%	66.6%	69.3%	69.2%	5.1
DE Writing-SOC & AI	52.4%	52.6%	53.6%	53.3%	52.9%	56.9%	57.5%	60.4%	8.0
DE Reading-White/NR	60.9%	61.8%	61.5%	63.4%	62.4%	67.1%	67.4%	67.0%	6.1
DE Reading-SOC & AI	47.9%	49.5%	50.9%	49.4%	50.2%	55.7%	56.6%	58.2%	10.3
DE Math-No Pell	35.6%	38.2%	39.1%	39.1%	39.8%	47.0%	47.9%	49.4%	13.8
DE Math-Pell	25.2%	25.4%	25.7%	26.1%	28.9%	36.7%	38.0%	39.4%	14.2
DE Writing-No Pell	65.2%	66.9%	68.8%	69.1%	68.9%	68.6%	69.5%	68.7%	3.5
DE Writing-Pell	55.5%	56.0%	55.6%	56.2%	55.9%	58.0%	59.0%	61.6%	6.1
DE Reading-No Pell	62.6%	64.4%	64.4%	65.5%	64.7%	67.1%	67.5%	65.5%	2.9
DE Reading-Pell	50.0%	52.3%	52.1%	52.3%	51.7%	57.7%	58.0%	60.2%	10.2

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students                      No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

## College Level Course Completion Rate

Student completion of college-level gateway courses was measured by a student passing a college-level mathematics or English course during the first year. College level Mathematics and English courses were identified by their Classification of Instructional Programs code. The college level course completion rate is reported for full and part-time fall entering undergraduate degree, diploma and certificate seeking students.

The percentage of students completing a college level math or writing course in their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017. The percent of students completing college-level mathematics in their first year increased from 18.7 percent for Fall 2009 entering students to 24.5 percent for Fall 2017 entering students, as shown in Table 8. Completion of college level writing in the first year increased from 36.2 percent to 39.4 percent during the same timeframe and have remained fairly stable at 39 to 40 percent in recent years.

**Table 8: First Year College Level (CL) Course Completion Rate by Subject  
Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Change</b>
CL Math	18.7%	19.6%	20.6%	20.7%	21.2%	22.8%	23.5%	24.5%	24.5%	5.8
CL Writing	36.2%	38.1%	38.7%	38.0%	38.8%	39.2%	40.1%	39.9%	39.4%	3.2

As innovations in developmental education and college-level gateway courses have been underway across Minnesota State colleges and universities, the impact of these innovations is seen in increased student completion of college-level mathematics and writing courses. Many campuses have implemented first-year-experience courses in which new-entering students are required or highly encouraged to enroll. Campuses also are focusing on increasing students' engagement and sense of belonging, and creating positive campus climates. Research has shown high levels of engagement and completion of the first year increases the likelihood of persistence to the second year and completion of a degree or certificate (Engle and Tinto, 2008; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, 2005). Consequently, many campuses have implemented strategic programs and practices and invested resources into supporting student success in their first year of college in both developmental education courses and college-level gateway courses.

The lower completion rates for college-level mathematics compared to college-level writing courses is due to several factors. Some students are still enrolled in and are completing their developmental mathematics courses in their first year. Other students opt not to take college-level mathematics courses the first year of college. Students at the state colleges may be enrolled in career or technical programs that do not require a college-level mathematics course for certificate, diploma, or degree completion. As many campuses scale the developmental mathematics offerings that are increasing student enrollment in college-level mathematics during the first year, these college completion rates in college-level mathematics are anticipated to increase.

The percentage of students of color and American Indian students and the percentage of Pell grant eligible students who completed a college level course has increased in both math and writing since Fall 2009. Both groups, however, had lower college level course completion rates relative to the comparison groups of white and nonresident alien students and students who are not eligible for Pell grants.

For students entering in Fall 2017, 16.7 percent of students of color and American Indian students completed a college-level math course in the first year compared to 28.2 percent of white and nonresident students, as shown in Table 9. For the same entering terms, Pell eligible students completed a college-level math course at a rate of 19.5 percent compared to 31.2 percent for students who were not eligible for a Pell grant. The gaps observed for college level math completion have fluctuated over time but have not narrowed.

The completion rates of college-level writing courses for students of color and American Indian students and for Pell eligible students increased much more than the rates for white and nonresident students and those who are not Pell eligible, substantially reducing the gaps between these groups.

**Table 9: First Year College Level (CL) Course Completion Rate by Student Group and Subject  
Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Subject and Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Change</b>
CL Math-White/NR	21.2%	22.2%	23.5%	23.7%	24.2%	26.1%	26.8%	27.8%	28.2%	7.0
CL Math-SOC & AI	10.8%	11.4%	12.0%	12.6%	13.4%	14.8%	15.7%	16.8%	16.7%	5.9
CL Writing-White/NR	39.2%	41.1%	41.9%	41.1%	41.5%	41.8%	42.3%	41.8%	41.1%	1.9
CL Writing-SOC & AI	26.6%	29.2%	29.5%	29.8%	32.0%	33.1%	35.2%	35.6%	35.9%	9.3
CL Math-No Pell	24.8%	26.6%	28.4%	28.6%	28.0%	29.8%	30.2%	30.4%	31.2%	6.4
CL Math-Pell	13.9%	15.0%	15.0%	15.4%	16.1%	17.6%	18.1%	19.2%	19.5%	5.6
CL Writing-No Pell	42.9%	44.2%	45.7%	45.2%	44.9%	44.9%	45.4%	44.1%	43.3%	0.4
CL Writing-Pell	32.4%	35.4%	34.7%	34.0%	35.0%	35.9%	37.0%	37.3%	37.7%	5.3

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students                      No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

The increases in college-level course completion rates for students of color and American Indian students and for Pell eligible students reflect the innovations in curricular and student supports that have been implemented at Minnesota State campuses. It is especially notable that the gaps in college-level writing course completion rates have narrowed substantially. Campuses will keep enhancing models to ensure that these completion rates continue to increase and that the gaps continue to narrow or are eliminated.

### **Credit Completion Rate**

Student completion of semester credits was measured by the total number of credits completed during the first year. Credit completion means that the student received a passing grade and earned the credits for the course. The first year credit completion rate is reported for full-time fall entering undergraduate degree, diploma and certificate seeking students. Part-time students are not included in this measure, since by virtue of their credit load, few of them could complete 30 credits in their first year.

The percentage of students who completed 20 and 30 semester credits during their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017. Nearly sixty-seven percent of Fall 2017 entering students completed 20 in their first year, up from 65.7 percent for Fall 2009 entering students, as shown in Table 10. Almost thirty-three percent of Fall 2017 entering students completed 30 credits in the first year, up from 29.9 percent for Fall 2009 students.

**Table 10: Twenty and Thirty Credit Completion Rates  
Full-Time Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate-Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Credit Category</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Change</b>
20 credits	65.7%	64.8%	65.2%	65.1%	65.6%	66.5%	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%	1.0
30 credits	29.9%	29.3%	28.9%	29.3%	29.1%	29.5%	30.6%	30.9%	32.5%	2.6

Since less than one-third of Minnesota State degree and certificate seeking students take 15 credits each semester, it was important to also examine the percentage of students completing 20 credits during their first year. The percentage of students completing 20 credits has been much higher than the percent who completed 30 credits, illustrating the high percentage of part-time students or full-time students taking partial-loads.

Some researchers and practitioners have suggested that one of the ways to increase student success and degree completion is to encourage more students to take a full-load of courses. A full load of courses at 30 credits each year enables students to complete an associate degree within two years or a baccalaureate degree within four years. Some students, however, to have financial constraints or have external commitments, such as work and family, which impact their ability to take a full load of courses each semester.

The percentage of students of color and American Indian students and of Pell eligible students that earned twenty credits in their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017, but both groups had lower percentages than their comparison groups of white and nonresident students and students who were not eligible for a Pell grant. Almost fifty-six percent of Fall 2017 entering students of color and American Indian students earned 20 credits in their first year, up from 53.1 percent for Fall 2009 entering students, as shown in Table 11. The percentage of students of color and American Indian students who earned 30 credits in their first year decreased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012, but then increased 1.8 percentage points by Fall 2017. The percent of Pell eligible students who earned 30 credits in their first year decreased by 2.8 percentage points between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016 but in Fall 2017 the percent completing 30 credits increased to a value close to the Fall 2009 levels.

**Table 11: Twenty and Thirty Credit Completion Rates by Student Group  
Full-Time Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Change</b>
20 Credits-White/NR	68.8%	68.3%	68.9%	69.0%	69.6%	70.5%	70.9%	70.7%	71.1%	2.3
20 Credits-SOC & AI	53.1%	51.3%	51.8%	51.9%	53.2%	54.6%	54.5%	55.6%	55.7%	2.6
20 Credits-No Pell	71.4%	70.8%	72.4%	72.4%	72.4%	72.9%	73.6%	72.9%	73.2%	1.8
20 Credits-Pell	60.3%	59.6%	58.7%	58.3%	58.8%	60.2%	59.7%	60.1%	59.9%	-0.4
30 Credits-White/NR	32.6%	31.9%	32.1%	33.0%	32.7%	33.3%	34.9%	35.3%	37.1%	4.5
30 Credits-SOC & AI	19.2%	19.0%	17.3%	16.8%	17.4%	18.1%	17.9%	19.0%	21.0%	1.8
30 Credits-No Pell	33.0%	32.8%	33.7%	35.2%	34.1%	34.2%	36.1%	36.7%	37.5%	4.5
30 Credits-Pell	27.3%	26.5%	24.3%	23.8%	24.0%	24.3%	24.2%	24.5%	27.2%	-0.1

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students                      No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

## **Student Persistence and Completion Rate**

The student persistence and completion rate (persistence rate) was reported for Fall entering full-time undergraduate degree, diploma and certificate seeking students and includes students who were retained, transferred or graduated. The rate is measured one year after entry (at the student’s second Fall semester). National, state and system standards call for reporting persistence and completion rates for full-time entering students.

The second fall persistence rates decreased during the recession and have increased since then. The overall rate decreased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012 and increased by 2.1 percentage points between Fall 2012 and Fall 2016, as shown in Table 12. The persistence rate for students of color and American Indian students decreased by 2.2 percentage points between Fall 2009 and Fall 2010 and increased by 4.8 points between Fall 2010 and Fall 2016. The rate for Pell eligible students decreased by 1.3 percentage points between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012 and had increased by 2.2 points by Fall 2016. The persistence rates for students of color and American Indian students are lower than the rates for white and nonresident students and the rates for Pell eligible students are lower than the rates for students who are not Pell eligible.

Student success (i.e., retention, transfer and graduation) is the primary focus of all Minnesota State colleges and universities. As highlighted in the previous section on ongoing completion efforts, student success efforts have been implemented throughout Minnesota State campuses to ensure that students are making effective progress and meeting their educational goals. Minnesota State campuses have been actively working to improve persistence and completion rates through a variety of initiatives that have demonstrated promising outcomes.



**Table 12: Second Fall Persistence and Completion Rate by Student Group  
Full-Time Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
Total	75.7%	75.0%	75.2%	74.8%	75.4%	77.1%	76.9%	76.9%	1.2
White/NR	77.6%	77.5%	77.8%	77.3%	77.9%	79.6%	79.8%	79.4%	1.8
SOC & AI	67.5%	65.3%	66.0%	66.7%	67.4%	69.4%	68.5%	70.1%	2.6
No Pell	80.4%	80.1%	81.6%	81.0%	81.4%	82.6%	82.6%	81.9%	1.5
Pell	70.4%	70.3%	69.4%	69.1%	69.4%	71.5%	70.7%	71.3%	0.9

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students      No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

Although efforts have been aimed to address the opportunity gaps and increase students of color and American Indian and Pell eligible students’ persistence rates, it is evident that there is still much work to do. In addition to expanding evidence-based programs, practices, and initiatives, campuses are focusing on increasing student engagement and sense of belonging and creating positive campus climates.

### **Completion Rate**

Time to complete a degree or certificate was measured as a completion rate, which is the percentage of Fall entering full-time undergraduate degree, diploma or certificate seeking students that complete within 150 percent of “normal” time. National, state and system standards call for reporting persistence and completion rates for full-time entering students. Completion is measured at the state colleges three years after entry and includes students who graduate or transfer. Completion is measured at the state universities six years after entry and includes students who graduate. The rates are reported separately for colleges and universities because of the difference in timeframe.

The completion rate for the state colleges decreased during the recession and has increased in the years since then. The rate decreased from 52.1 percent for Fall 2009 entering students to 50.8 percent for Fall 2011 students and then increased by 2.9 percentage points between Fall 2012 and Fall 2015, as shown in Table 13. The state college completion rate for students of color and American Indian students remains lower than the rate for white and nonresident students. The rate decreased by 3.2 percentage points between Fall 2009 and Fall 2010 and increased by 5.2 points between Fall 2010 and Fall 2015. The completion rate for Pell eligible students at the state colleges decreased by 2.2 percentage points between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011 and increased 3.0 points by Fall 2015.

**Table 13: Completion Rate by Sector and Student Group  
Full-Time Fall Entering Undergraduate Degree, Diploma and Certificate Seeking Students  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Sector and Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Change</b>
Colleges: Completion Rate	52.1%	51.0%	50.8%	51.0%	52.5%	53.7%	53.9%	1.8
Colleges: Completion-White/NR	55.1%	54.7%	54.7%	54.9%	56.7%	57.9%	58.2%	3.1
Colleges: Completion-SOC & AI	42.2%	39.0%	39.4%	40.5%	41.9%	43.4%	44.2%	2.0
Colleges: Completion-No Pell	57.9%	57.5%	59.3%	58.8%	60.9%	61.0%	61.2%	3.3
Colleges: Completion-Pell	46.7%	45.9%	44.5%	44.8%	45.8%	47.5%	47.5%	0.8
Universities: Completion Rate	52.0%	53.4%	53.7%	54.8%				2.8
Universities: Completion-White/NR	53.3%	55.2%	55.7%	56.9%				3.6
Universities: Completion-SOC & AI	42.8%	42.3%	41.6%	43.4%				0.6
Universities: Completion-No Pell	53.4%	56.2%	57.6%	58.7%				5.3
Universities: Completion-Pell	47.1%	48.1%	46.6%	48.1%				1.0

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students          No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

The completion rate for the state universities increased from 52.0 percent for Fall 2009 entering students to 54.8 percent for those entering in Fall 2012, as shown in Table 13. The state university completion rate for students of color and American Indian students is lower than the rate for white and nonresident students and it decreased by 1.2 percentage points between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011, but then increased by 1.8 to 43.4 percent for those entering in Fall 2012. The completion rate for Pell eligible students at the state universities decreased by half a percentage point between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011 but then increased 1.5 percentage points to 48.1 percent for Fall 2012 entering students.

Credential completion continues to be an imperative and a primary commitment of Minnesota State. Despite more recent increases in completion rates, gaps have not decreased. Eliminating the opportunity gaps between students of color and American Indian completion rates and white and nonresident student completion rates, as well as the gaps between Pell eligible students and students who are not Pell eligible, is one of the most important priorities of Minnesota State. The strategies and approaches listed previously will need to be applied strategically, systemically, and comprehensively to ensure that students' completion rates increase and Minnesota State addresses these critical gaps.

### **Credits Earned at Graduation**

Credits earned at graduation was measured by averaging graduates' total number of credits earned and transfer credits accepted at the time a degree or certificate was awarded. The measure is reported for graduates that earn certificates and associate degrees at the state colleges and for graduates that earn bachelor's degrees at the state universities.

The average cumulative credits at graduation has decreased for certificates, and associate and bachelor's degrees. The average cumulative credits for state college certificate graduates decreased from 42.7 credits for Fall 2009 entering students to 40.2 credits for Fall 2015 entering students, as shown in Table 14. The average cumulative credits for state college associate degree graduates decreased from 80.5 credits for Fall 2009 entering students to 79.2 credits for Fall 2015 entering students. Average cumulative credits for state university bachelor's degree graduates decreased from 140.5 credits for Fall 2009 entering students to 139.6 credits for Fall 2011 entering students.

The average cumulative credits at graduation are shown by the student's entering cohort. As additional students graduate over time, the average credits earned may change. Data are not shown for more recent cohorts as that data would only include students who completed in a shorter time frame and likely with fewer credits; this would understate the total credits earned and overstate changes over time.

**Table 14: Average Credits Earned at Graduation by Award and Student Group  
By Fall Entering Cohort  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**

<b>Sector and Student Group</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Change</b>
Colleges: Certificate	42.7	42.5	42.8	41.5	42.2	42.1	40.2	-2.5
Colleges: Certificate-White/NR	43.8	42.6	43.7	42.2	43.4	43.2	41.9	-1.9
Colleges: Certificate-SOC & AI	40.0	42.4	41.1	40.3	39.7	40.1	36.8	-3.2
Colleges: Certificate-No Pell	49.9	50.4	48.7	49.5	50.9	48.3	46.2	-3.7
Colleges: Certificate-Pell	41.4	41.6	41.4	39.7	39.6	39.9	38.3	-3.1
Colleges: Associate	80.5	79.8	79.5	79.5	80.2	80.0	79.2	-1.3
Colleges: Associate-White/NR	80.2	79.5	79.2	79.5	80.5	80.2	79.8	-0.4
Colleges: Associate-SOC & AI	82.0	81.0	80.6	79.7	79.1	79.3	77.0	-5.0
Colleges: Associate-No Pell	80.5	80.0	79.3	80.0	81.2	81.7	81.4	0.9
Colleges: Associate-Pell	80.3	79.1	79.2	78.5	78.6	78.0	76.6	-3.7
Universities: Bachelor's	140.5	139.8	139.6					-0.9
Universities: Bachelor's-White/NR	140.5	139.8	139.6					-0.9
Universities: Bachelor's-SOC & AI	139.8	140.3	139.8					-
Universities: Bachelor's-No Pell	140.0	139.6	138.8					-1.2
Universities: Bachelor's-Pell	141.1	139.5	139.9					-1.2

*SOC & AI: Students of color and American Indian students*

*White/NR: White and nonresident alien students*

*Pell: Pell eligible students*

*No Pell: Not Pell eligible*

As shown in Table 14, students of color and American Indian students who earn Minnesota State certificates or associate degrees complete with similar or fewer credits than their comparison group of white and nonresident students. This pattern also holds true for Pell

eligible students as compared to students who are not eligible for Pell grants. At the bachelor's degree level, there were virtually no differences among the student groups in total credits earned at graduation.

The declining number of credits at graduation reflects credit caps Minnesota State implemented for the vast majority of its programs during the last decade. The Minnesota Legislature enacted language in 2007 that required the Minnesota State system to implement credit caps of 60 for associate degrees and 120 for bachelor's degrees. The legislation granted the Board of Trustees the authority to grant waivers to the caps for specific programs. The vast majority of the college and university associate and bachelor's degree programs comply with the credit caps. There are many factors that impact cumulative credits at graduation including students taking additional courses due to personal interest and changing their major and having to meet new major or degree program requirements.

### **Institution Level Data**

Data on the seven measures for each college and university are presented in Appendix B. The data are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, Pell Grant eligibility, and age. Trends for up to five years are reported for the measures.

# CONCLUSIONS

Minnesota State has complied with three recent requirements enacted by the Legislature. The system submitted a Completion Plan to the legislature in January 2016 and a Developmental Education Plan in February 2018. This document constitutes the system's report to the legislature on its activities and achievements related to improving student completion and includes required reporting on the seven completion measures. The report provides an update to the initial annual report submitted to the legislature in January 2018.

Students of color and American Indian students are compared throughout this report to white and nonresident alien students. The nonresident alien category consists primarily of international students and students who are not permanent residents of the United States. Federal, state and system reporting standards specify that these students should not be included in a racial-ethnic group, but rather reported as nonresident students

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities have made substantial progress on all seven of the completion measures presented in this report. The key points of progress on each measure include:

## **Developmental Education Enrollment Rate:**

- The number of fall entering undergraduate degree and certificate seeking students who took developmental courses during their first two years decreased by 39.9 percent between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016.
- The percent of undergraduate students enrolled in developmental courses in their first two years decreased from 41.8 percent to 32.1 percent (Fall 2009 entering students as compared to those entering in 2016).
- The percent of students of color and American Indian students who took developmental courses decreased by 10.9 percentage points and the percent of Pell grant eligible students who took developmental courses also decreased by 10.5 points since Fall 2009, but both groups continue to have higher developmental course taking rates relative to their comparison groups of white and nonresident students and students who are not eligible for Pell grants.

Much of this developmental education enrollment decline is due to the curricular and support innovations our campuses implemented over the past several years. It is anticipated that with the implementation of the DESR, Minnesota State will see continued enrollment declines in developmental education courses.

## **Developmental Completion Rate:**

- The percent of students completing developmental education requirements in their first year increased in math, reading and writing between Fall 2009 and Fall 2016.

- The percent of students of color and American Indian students who completed their developmental courses in the first year increased in all three subjects since Fall 2009, but they had lower course completion rates relative to white and nonresident students.
- The gaps between students of color and American Indian students relative to white and nonresident students in course completion decreased in all three subject areas.
- The percent of Pell grant eligible students who completed their developmental courses in the first year has increased in all three subjects and the gap with students who were not eligible decreased in all three subjects.

Across Minnesota State, faculty members, departments, and academic and student affairs divisions have been innovating both in and out of the classroom to support students enrolled in developmental education. As campuses improve, scale, and/or add new innovative practices and programs across campuses, it is anticipated that there will be additional increases in student completion of developmental education courses in their first year.

#### **College Level Course Completion Rate:**

- The percentage of students completing a college level math course or a college level writing course by the end of their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017.
- The percentage of students of color and American Indian students and of Pell grant eligible students who completed a college level course by the end of their first year has increased in both subjects since Fall 2009, but both groups had lower college level course completion rates relative to their comparison groups of white and nonresident students and of students who are not eligible for Pell grants.
- The gap between students of color and American Indian students as compared to white and nonresident students in completion of college level writing decreased substantially between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017.

As innovations in developmental education and college-level gateway courses have been underway across Minnesota State colleges and universities, the impact of these innovations is seen in increased student completion of college-level mathematics and writing courses. The increases in college-level course completion rates for students of color and American Indian students and for Pell eligible students also reflect the innovations in curricular and student supports that have been implemented at Minnesota State campuses.

#### **Credit Completion Rate**

- The percent of students who completed 20 and 30 semester credits during their first year increased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2017.
- The percent of students of color and American Indian students who earned 20 credits and 30 credits within their first year increased, but remain below the rates for white and nonresident students.

Since less than one-third of Minnesota State degree and certificate seeking students take 15 credits each semester, the percentage of students completing 20 credits during the first year

has been much higher than the percentage who completed 30 credits. Many of our students have work and family commitments which impact their ability to take a full course load each semester.

### **Student Persistence and Completion Rate**

- The second fall persistence and completion rate decreased during the recession and has increased by 2.1 percentage points since the low for Fall 2012 entering students.
- The persistence and completion rate for students of color and American Indian students has increased by 4.8 percentage points since the low for Fall 2010 entering students, but is lower than the rate for white and nonresident students.

Student success (i.e., persistence and completion rate and completion rate) is the primary focus of all Minnesota State colleges and universities. Minnesota State campuses have been actively working to improve completion rates through a variety of initiatives that have demonstrated promising outcomes. In addition to expanding evidence-based programs, practices, and initiatives, campuses are focusing on increasing students' engagement and their sense of belonging and creating positive campus climates.

### **Completion Rate**

- The state college completion rate decreased among the full-time entering cohorts during the recession and has increased by 3.1 percentage points since the low for Fall 2011 entering students.
- The state college completion rates for students of color and American Indian students and for Pell eligible students also increased, but are lower than the rates for comparison groups of white and nonresident students and students who are not eligible for a Pell grant.
- The completion rate for the state universities increased by 2.8 percentage points for entering students between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012.
- Completion rates for students of color and American Indian students at the state universities are lower than the completion rates for white and nonresident students. The rates decreased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011, but the completion rate for students entering in Fall 2012 increased and was higher as compared to the rate for those entering in Fall 2009.
- The completion rates for Pell eligible students at the state universities also decreased between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011 and then increased for Fall 2012 entering students. The rate for Pell eligible students remains lower than the rate for students who are not Pell eligible.

Degree and certificate completion continues to be an imperative and a primary commitment of Minnesota State. While completion rates have increased in recent years, gaps remain between the rates for students of color and American Indian students and white and nonresident students and between Pell eligible students and students who are not Pell eligible. Eliminating these gaps is one of the most important priorities of Minnesota State.

### **Credits Earned at Graduation**

- The average cumulative credits at graduation has decreased for certificate, and associate and bachelor's degrees graduates.
- Students of color and American Indian students who earn Minnesota State certificates or degrees complete with similar or fewer credits than their comparison group of white and nonresident students. This pattern also holds true for Pell eligible students as compared to students who are not eligible for Pell grants.

The declining number of credits at graduation reflects credit caps Minnesota State implemented for the vast majority of its programs during the last decade. There are many factors that impact cumulative credits at graduation including students taking additional courses due to interest or changing their major and having to meet new major or degree program requirements.

### **Institution Level Data**

Data on the seven measures for each college and university are presented in Appendix B. The data are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, Pell Grant eligibility, and age. Trends for up to five years are reported for the measures.



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## APPENDIX A: RELATED LEGISLATION

### 2015 Minnesota Session Law Chapter 69, Senate File 5, Article 3, Section 23

Section 1. COLLEGE COMPLETION; MINNESOTA STATE.

The Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities shall develop a comprehensive plan to encourage students to complete degrees, diplomas, or certificates in their fields of study. The board must consult with students, faculty, and administrators of the state colleges and universities and the Office of Higher Education to create a plan that would increase program completion at each state college or university. Components of this plan may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) replacing developmental or remedial courses, when appropriate, with co-requisite courses in which students with academic deficiencies are placed into introductory credit-bearing coursework while receiving supplemental academic instruction on the same subject and during the same term;
- (2) expanding intrusive advising, including the use of early alert systems or requiring the approval of an advisor or counselor to register for certain classes;
- (3) developing meta-majors in broad academic disciplines as an alternative to undecided majors;
- (4) making available alternative mathematics curriculum, including curriculum most relevant to the student's chosen area of study;
- (5) implementing "opt-out scheduling" by automatically enrolling students in a schedule of courses chosen by the student's department but allowing students to disenroll from such courses if they wish;
- (6) facilitating the transfer of credits between state colleges and universities; and
- (7) strategies to encourage students to enroll full time, including the use of financial assistance to reduce a student's need to work.

The development of the plan required under this section shall not discourage the development or delay the implementation or expansion of existing programs to encourage college completion.

The Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities shall submit a report describing the plan developed under this section and an implementation schedule to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education policy no later than January 15, 2016. This report must include identification of the financial and other resources needed by state colleges or universities to implement the plan.

## 2017 Minnesota Session Law Chapter 89, Article 2, Section 25

### Sec. 25. DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION REFORM.

(a) The Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities shall create a plan to reform developmental education offerings on system campuses aimed at reducing the number of students placed into developmental education. The plan must include, but is not limited to:

- (1) a systemwide multiple measures placement plan to guide campuses in placement of students into developmental education courses;
- (2) uniform cut scores for student placement, where appropriate, which will lead to fewer students being placed into developmental education courses;
- (3) other identified system policy changes, including an appeals process, that will decrease the number of students being placed into developmental education courses;
- (4) accelerated pathways in mathematics, reading, and composition to ensure students can complete developmental education work in no more than one year, including allowing for students to complete college-level gateway courses in one year whenever possible;
- (5) a comprehensive examination of the cost structure of developmental education, including potential financial incentives for students or other mechanisms to lower the cost of developmental offerings for students; and
- (6) identified best practices and targeted support strategies such as the use of supplemental instruction, that may be used on every system campus around developmental education offerings.

(b) The plan must include deadlines for implementation of proposed changes and must be submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education finance and policy by February 15, 2018.

(c) The plan, in its entirety, shall be implemented by the start of the 2020-2021 academic term, with individual provisions being implemented earlier as dictated by the plan.

## **APPENDIX B: COMPLETION MEASURE REPORT BY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY**

See separate Appendix B document.

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