

# Significant Data Trends, Observations, and Recommendations of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee 2022-2023 March 2023

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) is the systematic and continuous process of measuring the extent to which a college achieves its mission, as expressed through the goals and strategic objectives developed in an education master plan. The Academic Senate Joint Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IE Committee) provides input in the IE process, engages in activities to support the College’s assessment of IE each year, and reports to the District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC) on the areas of college needing attention based on the College’s performance on the IE metrics. This report provides a summary of the activities of the IE Committee during the current academic year as well as significant data trends and observations based on SMC’s performance on the IE dashboards to inform the development of the 2023-2024 Master Plan for Education action plans.

The IE Committee analyzed the institution’s performance on dozens of metrics on the approved [2022-2023 IE Metrics Framework](#). The Committee presents four recommendations to the DPAC for consideration as it identifies action plans and goals for the Master Plan for Education. These four recommendations are informed by significant trends observed in the college data related to institutional effectiveness and **relate to degree/certificate completion**.

## **Recommendation #1: Create System to Improve Noncredit Certificate Completion**

The first noncredit certificate program at Santa Monica College was approved on September 2017. As of March 2023, the College offers 20 total noncredit certificates. The table below describes the total number of noncredit certificates awarded since 2018-2019 (first year awarded).

**Table 1. Number of Noncredit Certificates Awarded**

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Increase
Noncredit Certificates	38	78	156	143	276%

*Data Source: Institutional Research (Based on the Chancellor’s Office Management Information System)*

The numbers of noncredit certificates awarded have increased by 276% over the last four years, including 156 awarded in 2020-2021, the most in SMC’s history. However, unlike the credit certificates and degrees, no systematic process exists to ensure all eligible students petition for and are awarded the noncredit certificate.

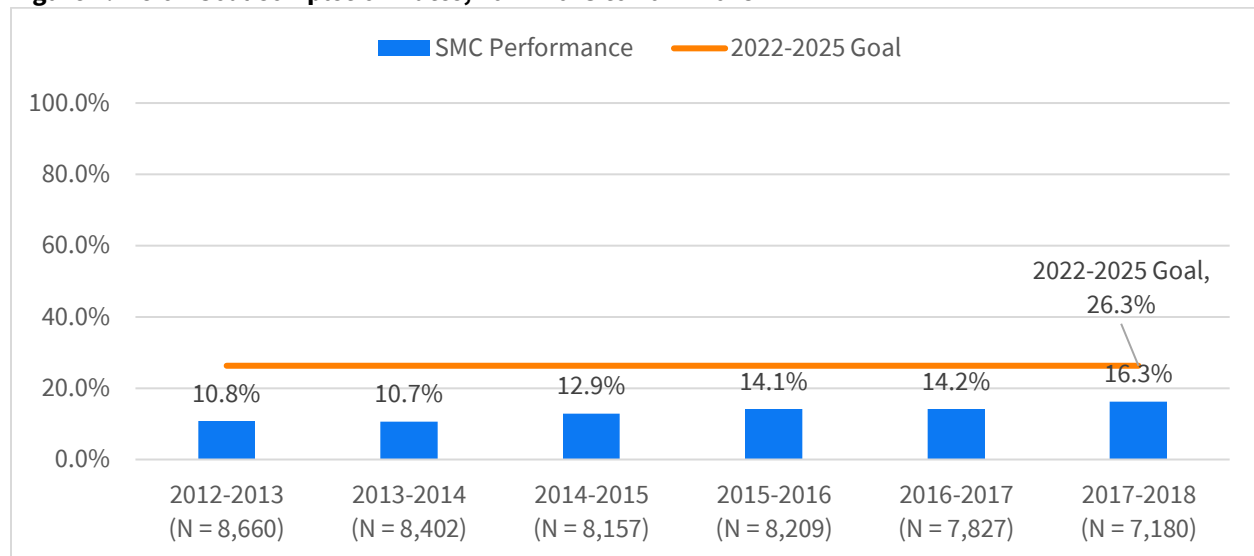
**Recommendation #1:** The IE Committee recommends that the College develop and implement a similar process to proactively outreach to existing students to inform them of their eligibility for a noncredit certificate and encourage them to petition for the award.

## **Recommendation #2: Intervention for Students Predicted Not to Complete Degree/Certificate**

The second recommendation was informed by SMC’s performance on one of the five metrics included in the 2022-2025 Student Equity Plan: Vision Goal Completion. Vision Goal Completion measures the percentage of first-time in college students (FTIC) in an academic year who earned a Chancellor’s Office approved credit certificate (excludes departmental certificates), associate degree, and/or bachelor’s degree at SMC **within three years** of first enrolling. Only students who were enrolled in the same academic year as being awarded a degree or certificate were counted as successfully completing a vision goal.

On average, the percentage of FTIC students who completed a degree or certificate within three years improved by more than 5% over the last six years, from 10.8% among FTIC in 2012-2013, to 16.3% among FTIC in 2017-2018. The IE Committee has set an improvement goal of 26.3% to be achieved by 2022-2025. The goal represents the performance of the highest performing group (Asian) in the most recently reported year. Among FTIC in 2017-2018, Santa Monica College (SMC) fell below its 2022-2025 goal by 10%.

**Figure 2. Vision Goal Completion Rates, 2012-2013 to 2017-2018**

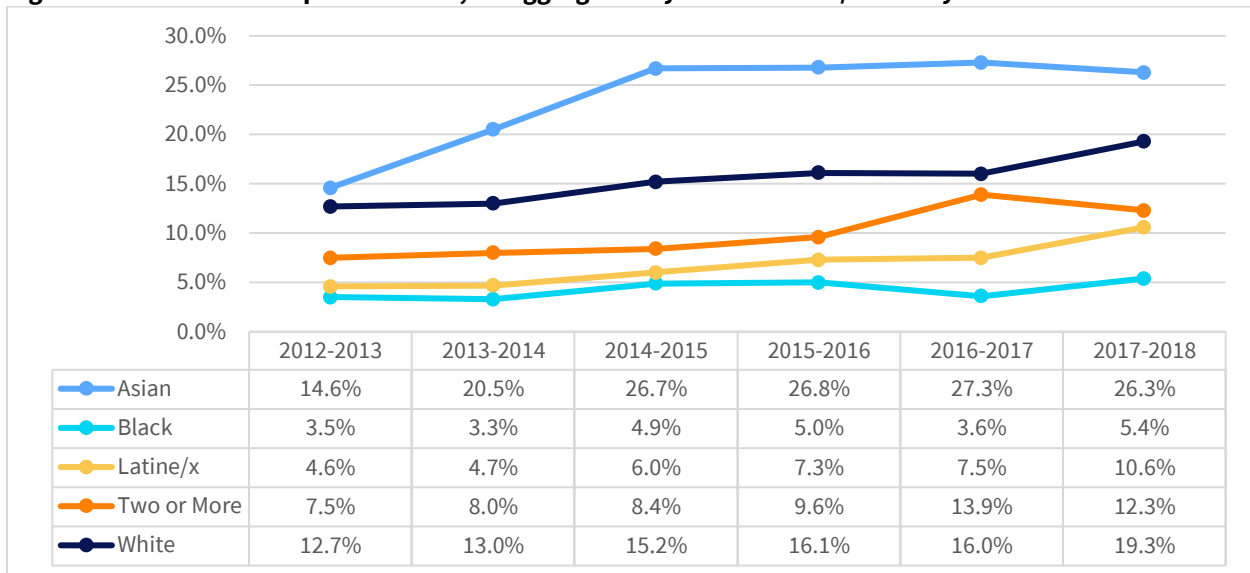


Data Source: Chancellor's Office Student Success Metrics

Over the last six cohorts, Asian FTIC students completed a degree or certificate (vision goal) within their first three years at the highest rates. When compared to Asian students, SMC consistently produced the largest equity gaps for Black, Latine/x, and multi-racial students. Among the 2017-2018 cohort, Asian students completed a vision goal at a rate of 26.3%. In comparison, Black students completed at a rate of 5.4%, Latine/x students completed at a rate of 10.6%, and multi-racial students completed at a rate of 12.3%, producing equity gaps of 20.9%, 15.7%, and 14.0%, respectively. See Figure 3.

**Recommendation #2:** To improve the overall Vision Goal Completion rates and reduce the gaps in the metric experienced by Black, Latine/x, and multi-racial students, the IE Committee recommends that the College design and implement a strategy/intervention to proactively support racially minoritized students who are predicted not to complete a degree/certificate based on a statistical model developed by the Office of Institutional Research.

**Figure 3. Vision Goal Completion Rates, Disaggregated by Student Race/Ethnicity**



Data Source: Chancellor’s Office Student Success Metrics

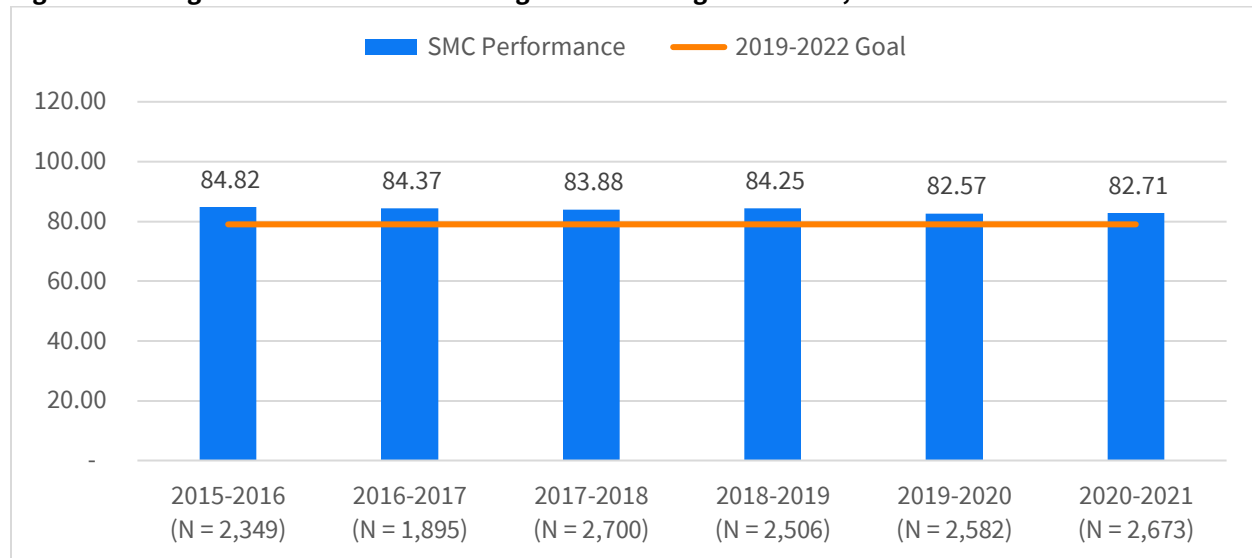
### **Recommendation #3: Conduct Inquiry Related to High Units Accumulated Among Degree Completers**

A critical indicator of whether the College is meeting the Chancellor’s Office [Vision for Success](#) is the number of units accumulated by associate degree completers. In addition to improving the number of students who graduate, the *Vision for Success* also strives to reduce excess unit accumulation by students who complete an associate degree. As cited in the [Vision for Success](#) report (p. 18),

*Students often accumulate far more course units than they need to reach their identified end goal of a degree, certificate, or transfer. While some amount of academic exploration is part of the education process, excessive accumulation of units is frequently a sign of trouble: it can mean that students could not enroll in the classes they needed for their degree or transfer, or that they lacked sufficient guidance to enroll in the right courses or find a clear academic direction in the first place. Excess units create inefficiencies and drive up costs for both the student and California taxpayers, the latter of which heavily subsidize all CCC enrollment. The more students take courses that do not move them closer to their desired degree, certificate, or transfer, the more they crowd out and slow down other students who need those same courses for reaching their own educational goals.*

Average Units Accumulated by First Time Associate Degree Earners is calculated by determining the average number of semester units in the California community college system earned (grade of D or better) up to and including the selected year among all students who were enrolled at SMC and earned an associate degree (local and/or transfer) for the first time in the selected year. On average, the number of units accumulated by first-time associate degree earners has decreased slightly, from 84.82 units in 2015-2016 to 82.71 units in 2020-2021. Among the 82 active associate degrees offered at SMC (as of March 2023), the average units required for a degree is 61.74 units. SMC’s goal is to reduce the average number of units earned by first-time degree earners to 79 or less.

**Figure 4. Average Units Accumulated Among First-Time Degree Earners, 2015-2016 to 2020-2021**



Data Source: Chancellor’s Office Student Success Metrics

**Recommendation #3:** To inform the most effective strategies to improve on the degree earners unit accumulation metric, the IE Committee recommends that the College conduct inquiry to better understand why so many students accumulate more units than needed.

**Recommendation #4: Equity-Centered and Culturally Response Professional Development for Faculty on Career Pathways/Careers**

**Recommendation #5: Maximize the Opportunities for Transfer Success for Black and Latinx Students, Including Examining the Role and Impact of Associate Degrees for Transfer (AD)**

In addition to Vision Goal Completion, the IE Committee monitors the SMC’s performance on total numbers of degrees and certificates awarded. The table below describes the total numbers of associate degrees awarded by degree type (local [A.A. or A.S.] or Associate Degree for Transfer or [ADT]). Over the last six years, the number of ADTs awarded increased by 104%. During the same period, the number of local degrees increased by 21%, disproportionately fewer than ADTs. The review of the degrees awarded and Vision Goal Completion data has produced two separate recommendations (#4 and #5).

**Figure 5. Associate Degrees Awarded, 2016-2017 to 2021-2022**

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Local Degrees	2,064	3,048	2,634	2,583	2,674	2,507
Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT)	572	775	902	1,154	1,260	1,165

**Recommendation #4:** To strengthen our performance on this metric, the IE Committee recommends that the College invest in ways to provide equity-centered and culturally responsive professional learning opportunities

for faculty to learn about diverse and emerging career pathways in their disciplines and programs, so that they can subsequently relay critical career opportunities in jobs outside of academia or traditional careers to their students. A critical tenet of Guided Pathways is foster students' career interests early in their education to improve their completion.

**Recommendation #5:** The IE Committee recommends that the institution examine strategies to strengthen and maximize the opportunities to increase completion of the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), associate degrees that are fully transferable to the CSU, by pursuing inquiry around questions like, but not limited to:

- What can SMC do to specifically improve transfer completion amongst Black and Latinx students, including exploration of the role of the ADT in the transfer pathway?
- Are ADTs effective in transferring students to the CSU for SMC students? Who is most effective, least effective for?
- What opportunities should SMC pursue to collaborate and consult with external stakeholders, including the CSU, to better align SMC ADTs and program requirements at the transfer institutions?
- Do we offer all programs that are eligible to be offered as an ADT? Have we maximized ADT offerings?
- What impact does the number of 5-unit classes required for a program affect its ability to be converted to an ADT?
- What support and resources does the college need to effectively convert local degrees to ADTs and departmental certificates to Chancellor's Approved certificates?
- What are students' understanding and perceptions of the value of an ADT? Improvement on the ADT metric also has implications for funding as the number of students who earn an ADT is a metric of the SCFF.