

Compton College

Time to Degree and Certificate Completion



2016-2017

Executive Summary

- This report covers data tracking time to completion for first-time degree and certificate recipients during the 2016-2017 year, utilizing a new methodology. Previous versions of this report tracked all degree and certificate completions, including those earned after a prior award. These secondary awards skewed average time to completion to appear longer, so the current report focuses only on the first award received. Because of this, this report should not be compared to previous versions. Award counts will also differ from the Degree and Certificate report, which does include all awards earned.
- The median time to completion for first-time degree or certificate recipients during the 2016-17 school year was 4.0 years. The average time to completion was 5.6 years, but that includes outliers, some of whom took more than 20 years to complete their first award.
- Nine percent of students complete a degree or certificate within the expected completion time of two years, although half of the 2016-17 graduates were able to complete their degrees or certificates within four years.
- The median time to completion for females is one-half of a year longer (4.4 years) for degrees than the median time to completion for males (3.8 years). Female median time to completion for certificates is one and a half years longer (4.4 years) than the male median time to completion (3.0 years).
- The median time to completion for African Americans is one year longer (4.8 years) for degrees than the median time to completion for Latinos (3.8 years). African American median time to completion for certificates is ½ year longer (4.3 years) than the Latino median time to completion (3.8 years).
- A third of the degree recipients are earning more degree applicable units than are necessary to complete their programs.
- Students enrolled at least full-time (24 units) during their first year at the college tend to have higher 4-year completion rates than students who started less than full-time.

Introduction

This report examines the time to completion rates for students receiving an award from Compton College during the 2016-17 school year. Time to completion refers to the length of time required for a student to achieve their educational goal at Compton College. While a student can have a number of goals, including personal enrichment or transfer to a four-year institution, this report focuses on the length of time taken for students to complete their first degree or certificate during the 2016-17 school year. This report excludes students who have not completed a degree or certificate.

During the 2016-17 academic year, Compton College¹ students received 488 AA/AS degrees and 195 Certificates totaling 683 program awards. This report only considers students who were receiving their first award from Compton in order to provide a truer sense of the time required for completion. Students who returned to Compton for an additional award are excluded from this report.

Time to completion is a focal point in the [Chancellor's Vision for Success \(2017\)](#). Reducing the time taken for students to achieve their goal moves them forward in their education as well as allowing them greater and earlier opportunities in the workforce.

Methodology

After degree and certificate recipients for the 2016-17 school year were identified, students who were previously awarded a degree or certificate before Fall 2016 were removed from the sample in order to determine time to completion for first-time recipients.

Time to completion is calculated by number of years required to finish from start of the first term to award date. Rates are demonstrated two ways in this report. *Normal time to completion* is based on the expected length of time needed to complete the award. For degrees, normal time to completion is two years. Although most certificates are indicated as requiring three years to complete for Federal Gainful Employment reporting purposes, this report calculates normal time to completion for certificates as two years, also. Rates for completion are shown as the percent of award recipients who receive their award within two years (100% of *normal time to completion*), three years (150% of *normal time to completion*), and four years (200% of *normal time to completion*). *Median time to completion* is the amount of time needed for at least half of the students to achieve their first award. In the past, the average (mean) time to completion was also used, but this metric skews the average longer because there are some students who take an extraordinary number of years to earn their first award.

¹ During the majority of the 2016-17 school year, Compton College operated as "El Camino College Compton Center" but became an accredited college at the end of the year. This document will refer to it only as Compton College.

Demographic data is disaggregated by the status of the student during their first term enrolled rather than status at graduation.

Results

Altogether, Compton students earned 683 awards during the 2016-17 school year. There were 599 awards earned by 431 first time degree recipients. This report will only examine the students receiving their first award.

Time to Completion

During the 2016-17 school year, 7% of degree earners were able to complete their educational goal within the 2-year normal time (Table 1). Fifty percent of degree earners were able to complete their educational goal within four years (200% of normal time). For certificate earners, 13% were able to complete within two years and 59% earned their award within four years. The median times to completion are 4.0 years for degrees and 3.8 years for certificates.

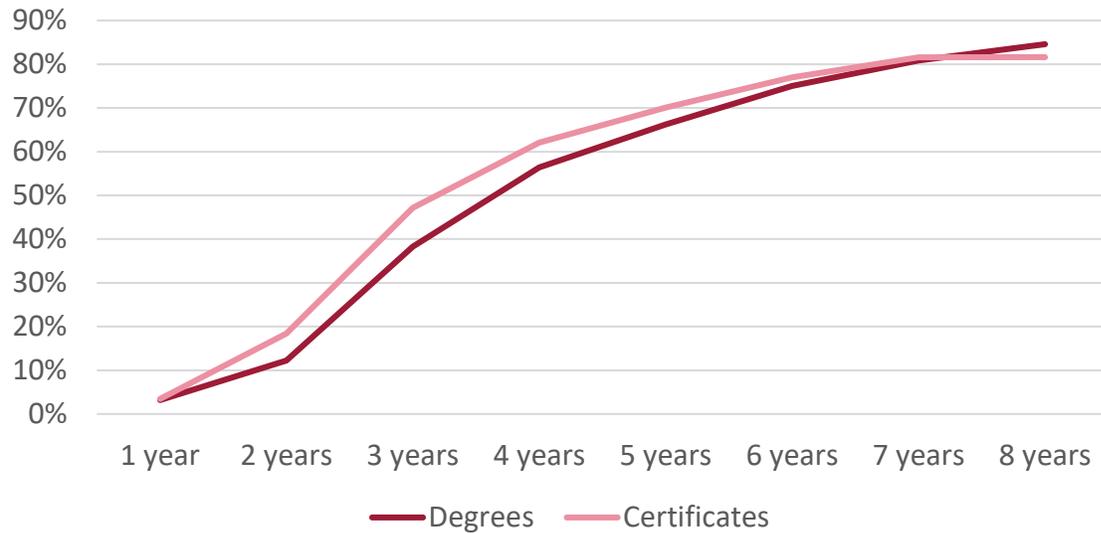
Table 1: Time to Completion by Award Type

Award Type	Total Awards	Students	Normal Time to Completion			Median Years
			100%	150%	200%	
Degrees	447	376	7%	31%	50%	4.0
Certificates	152	87	13%	33%	59%	3.8
Total	599	431	9%	31%	52%	4.0

Note: Students earning Degrees and Certificates may not add up to total students because several students earned a Degree and Certificate.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of degree and certificates completed as a function of years enrolled. A greater proportion of certificate earners complete their awards within six years. By the fourth year, 62% of certificate earners and 56% of degree earners had completed their award. The percentages are comparable by the seventh year, when 80% of both groups complete their awards.

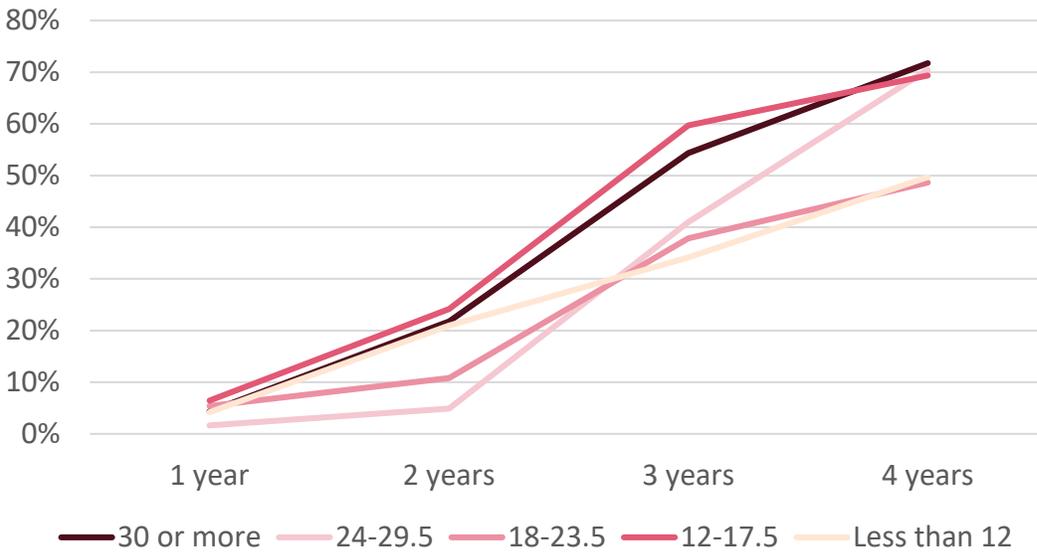
Figure 1: Cumulative Time to Completion



Early enrollment patterns are associated with on-time completion for degree recipients (Figure 2). Over 70% of degree earners who enrolled full-time in their first year, enrolling in at least 24 units, complete their degree within four years. More than half of degree earners who enrolled in 30 units during their first year complete within three years. Conversely, only 50% of degree earners enrolled in less than 24 units in their first year were able to complete their degree within four years. One exception is the group of students who enrolled in 12 to 17.5 units in their first year. These graduates have rates similar to those enrolled full-time in their first year.

There were not enough certificate recipients to disaggregate data by units enrolled in the first year to conduct a meaningful analysis of time to completion.

Figure 2: Cumulative Time to Degree by First-year Units Enrolled

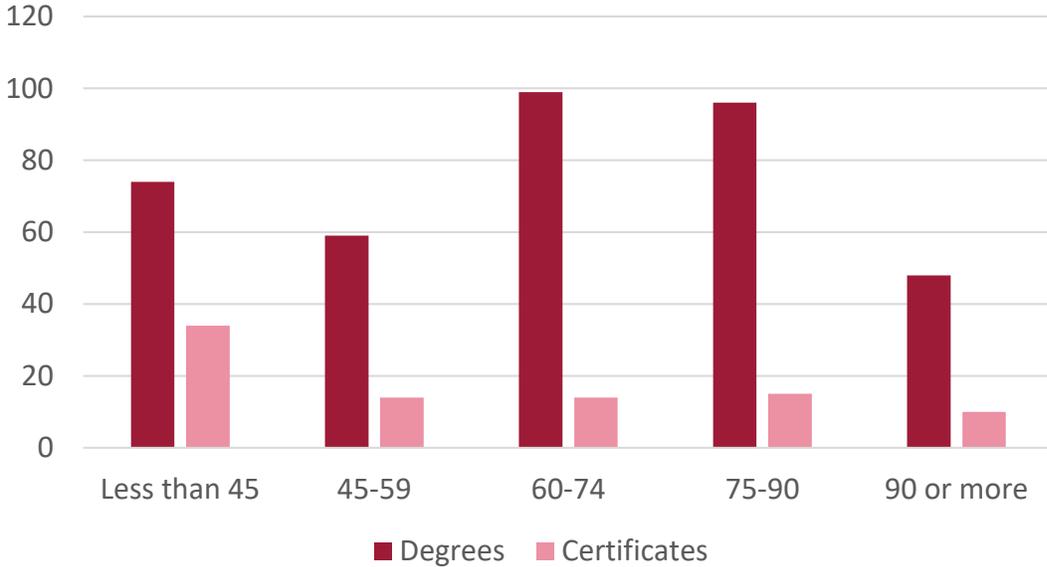


Units Earned

Compton College degrees require a minimum of 60 completed degree applicable units. Some of these units can be earned at other institutions, but at least 12 units must come from Compton. Most Compton certificates require 18 to 30 units, but some require 30 to 60 units. Figure 3 shows the number of units earned by increments for degree and certificate earners. Degree earners with less than 60 units accumulated have likely fulfilled additional requirements elsewhere². Thirty-five percent of degree recipients earn less than 60 units at Compton. Almost 40% of degree recipients earn at least 15 units more than is necessary to graduate. Twenty-nine percent of the certificate earners completed at least 75 units before earning their award.

² Total units earned at Compton include units earned at El Camino College as part of the El Camino College-Compton College relationship. Units earned elsewhere indicates credit from other institutions.

Figure 3: Degree Applicable Units Earned by Awardees



Demographic Outcomes

In terms of gender, females take longer to complete both degrees and certificates. Only 6% of female degree recipients and none of the female certificate recipients complete in two years (Table 2). For males, the rates are 13% and 28%, respectively. Less than half of the female award earners complete within four years, while males complete at rates faster than the institution average. The median time to completion for certificates in 2016-17 was 3 years for males. Among males, 70% of certificate recipients and 59% of degree recipients complete programs within four years.

Table 2: Time to Completion by Gender

Gender	Type	Total Awards	Students	Normal Time			Median Years
				100%	150%	200%	
Female	Degree	329	271	6%	27%	47%	4.4
	Certificate	54	47	0%	17%	49%	4.4
Male	Degree	118	105	13%	39%	59%	3.8
	Certificate	98	40	28%	53%	70%	3.0
Total		599	431	9%	31%	52%	4.0

There are differences in time-to-completion outcomes among different racial and ethnic groups, and particularly in comparison to African American students (Table 3). White and Asian student outcomes are shown in Table 3, but the number of award recipients is too small to disaggregate by award type or to make meaningful comparisons. The two groups large enough to compare are African American and Latino students. African Americans have higher than

average two year completion rates. Thirteen percent of African American degree recipients and 20% of certificate recipients complete programs in two years, whereas 5% of Latino degree earners and 10% of those earning certificates complete in the same period. By the end of four years, 43% of African American degree and 50% of certificate earners complete. For Latinos, those rates are 57% and 61%, respectively. African Americans have a median time to completion of 4.8 years, compared to 3.8 years for Latinos.

Table 3: Time to Completion by Race/Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Type	Total Awards	Students	Normal Time			Median Years
				100%	150%	200%	
African American	Deg	119	100	13%	26%	43%	4.8
	Cert	32	20	20%	30%	50%	4.3
Asian	D&C	27	22	4%	25%	33%	4.8
Latino	Deg	278	231	5%	34%	57%	3.8
	Cert	104	59	10%	32%	61%	3.8
White (Non-Hispanic)	D&C	20	13	38%	62%	77%	3.4
Total		599	431	9%	31%	52%	4.0

Note: "Deg" = Degrees; "Cert" = Certificate; "D&C" = Degrees and Certificates.

Four-year outcomes disaggregated by age group are similar to each other (Table 4). Students who began as special admit students took longer than other groups, but that may be expected for students who still have to finish other programs before completing the college program. Graduates who started when they were 20 to 24 years old have the high two-year completion rates compared to other age groups, with 15% of degree earners and 13% of certificate earners completing within normal time. The 17 to 19 year old group had 6% of their degree recipients complete in two years. Within four years, the 17 to 19 group rates are comparable to the 20 to 24 year old group, having 56% of their graduates complete. Degree recipients in the 25 to 29 and 30 to 49 age groups have lower time to completion rates than the institution average. However, these groups perform at or better than the institution average for certificate recipients.

Table 4: Time to Completion by Age Group

Award Type	Type	Total Awards	Students	Normal Time			Median Years
				100%	150%	200%	

17 to 19	Deg	179	151	6%	33%	56%	4.0
	Cert	50	27	19%	30%	56%	3.4
20 to 24	Deg	117	101	15%	37%	57%	3.8
	Cert	22	16	13%	31%	56%	3.8
25 to 29	Deg	50	41	5%	27%	39%	4.8
	Cert	22	13	8%	23%	54%	3.4
30 to 49	Deg	51	46	2%	22%	46%	4.4
	Cert	41	20	5%	40%	65%	3.6
Special Admit	D&C	53	33	0%	6%	19%	7.9
Total		599	431*	9%	31%	52%	4.0

Note: "Deg" = Degrees; "Cert" = Certificates; "D&C" = Degrees and Certificates.

Initiative Programs

Compton College maintains robust Career Technical Education (CTE) programs and is initiating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs. These are parts of special initiatives designed to produce graduates with a set of marketable skills. Currently there are not enough Compton graduates in STEM programs to include data here. However, outcomes for CTE programs demonstrate relatively high two-year completion rates. Ten percent of CTE award recipients complete in two years.

Table 5: Time to Completion for CTE Programs

Initiative	Total Awards	Students	Normal Time			Median Years
			100%	150%	200%	
CTE	191	85	10%	30%	58%	3.8

Conclusions

Half of the 2016-17 graduates were able to complete their degree or certificate within 4 years. Overall, only 9% of graduates were able to complete their degree or certificate within the two-year timeframe associated with community college attendance. The time it took a student to complete is possibly associated with the student's initial behaviors on campus. Regardless of the final number of units earned, degree earners who attempted 24 or more units in the first year at the college tended to complete their programs at faster rates than did students who enrolled in fewer units during their first year.

There is a disproportionate impact in terms of outcome for females relative to males, and for African Americans relative to Latinos. The median time to completion for females is half a year longer for degrees and one and a half years longer for certificates, when compared to males. Less than half of the female award recipients in 2016-17 were able to complete their programs within four years.

African Americans have a median time to completion which is a year longer than the median for Latinos. For certificates, the difference is a half year. This occurs despite the high two-year completion rates for African Americans. Nonetheless, 43% of the African American degree earners and half of the African American certificate earners complete programs in four years.

Compton College may consider looking further into the different patterns of completion among those who receive program awards within the normal amount of time and those who tend to take longer, in order to address the potential group differences in time to completion.