

OVERVIEW

The Colorado Community College System (CCCS) educates a diverse population of students who represent a wide range of backgrounds and expectations. Many are underserved and have special educational and personal needs that must be met in order for them to succeed. People seek a community college education for a variety of reasons:

- Large numbers of students come to CCCS colleges to improve their basic skills and get ready for college-level work. Approximately 27% of our students come to us for basic skills training.
- Some start at a community college and transfer on to a four-year college to earn a bachelor’s degree. Roughly 5,000 of our students will transfer to four-year public schools each year.
- Many students come to community colleges for career and technical education programs that help them acquire the certification and essential skills they need for employment. The community college system provided certificates or degrees to 9,501 career and technical students and educated 42,777 high school students in career and technical programs in FY 05. One third of our college students are in a career and technical education program.
- The community colleges provide work force training for more than 10,000 workers annually.
- Some community college students are interested in continuing education and are looking for special programs designed to meet specific needs.

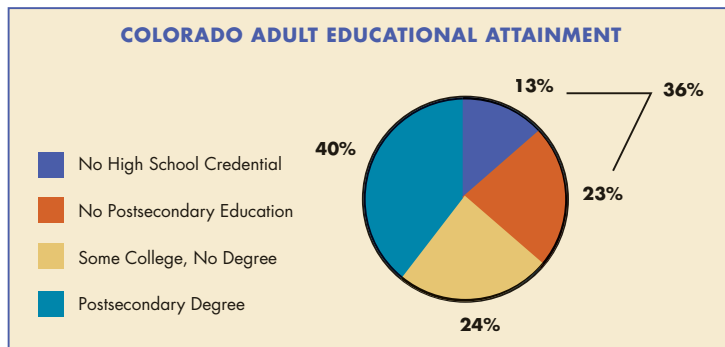
Community colleges not only train students for careers, but also prepare them as citizens and community members who have obligations to public life. With our open access admissions, CCCS colleges provide a democracy of education to every citizen age 16 and older in our State.

Community colleges provide affordable access to higher education so citizens can make a living wage

More than a million Colorado adults lack any form of postsecondary education – including more than 300,000 adults who have no high school credential. New technologies and new business strategies affect all occupations and have increased the skills needed even for lower-level jobs. The economy requires that current and future workers have some postsecondary education.

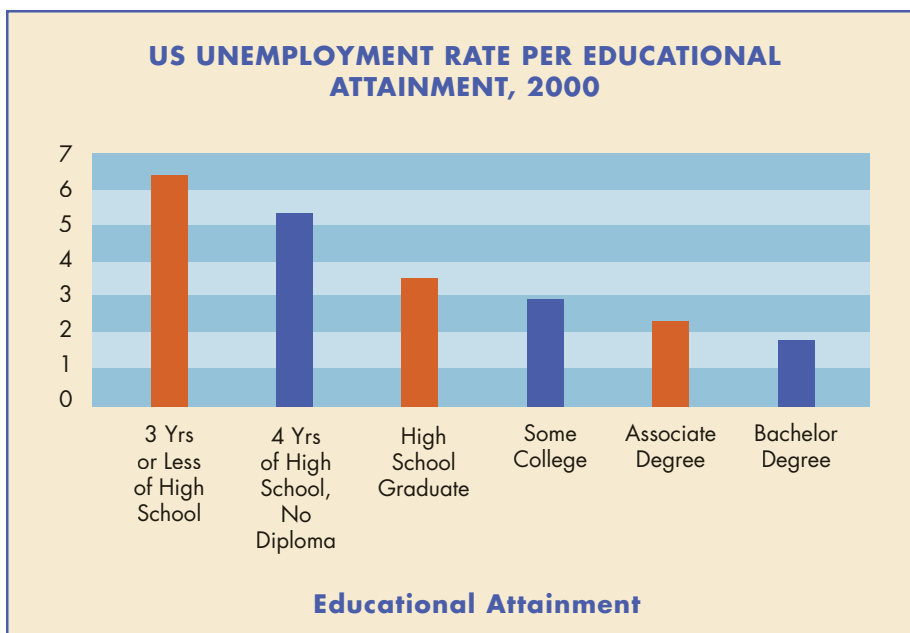
GRAPH 1-1
One Million Colorado Adults do not have the Training they need to Compete in Today’s Work Force

Source: US Census, 2000 for adults 25yrs and older



Postsecondary education increasingly is required for workers to earn a stable, self-sustaining income. In Colorado, the average hourly wage in 2005 for all occupations requiring some form of postsecondary education was \$28.58 – 80 percent higher than jobs that do not require higher education training. The average wage for those jobs that do not require some form of postsecondary training is \$15.89 per hour – an insufficient wage for supporting a family in most areas of the state. Unemployment data indicate that individuals with no postsecondary education are much more likely to be unemployed than those with a college credential (Graph 1-2).

Graph 1-2
Unemployment Rates are Lower for Individuals with Higher Education Training



Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity

Adults with no postsecondary education tend to come from lower income families, with low parental educational attainment, and often are minority. These demographics describe the very population that – as open access institutions – community colleges strive to serve.

Benefits to the State

While a college degree greatly benefits the individual, the contribution of postsecondary education to society may be just as significant. Individuals with postsecondary education contribute positively to the economy. A recent economic study – conducted by CCBenefits, an organization affiliated with the Association of Community College Trustees – shows that for every \$1 invested by the government in community colleges, an additional \$7 is generated in economic activity. Meanwhile, degree holders pay more in taxes, consume more goods and services, and require less government assistance in the form of social services and unemployment benefits than those without degrees (Williams, A.W. and W.S. Swail, 2005).

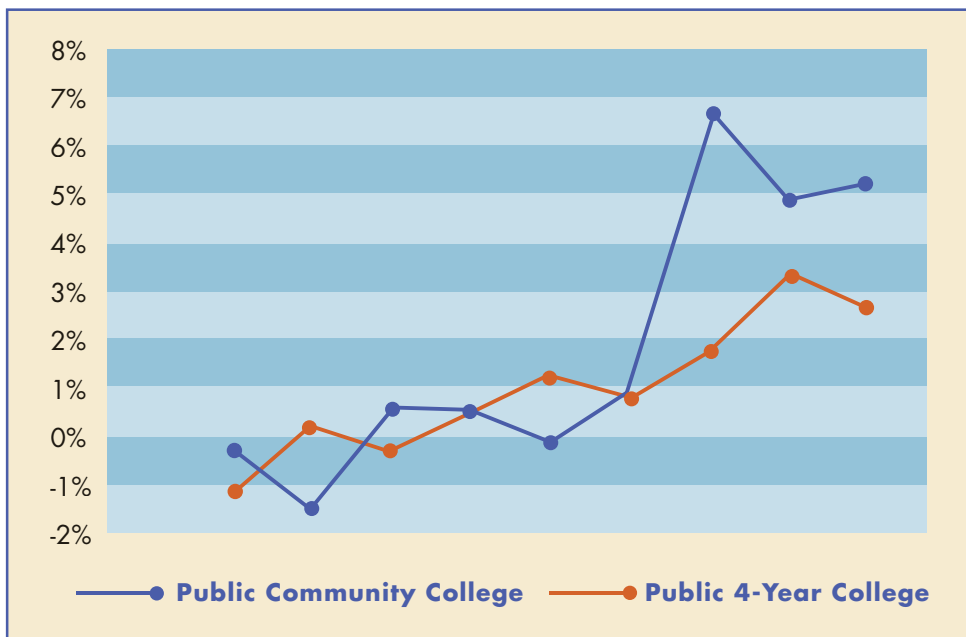
COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENROLLMENT TRENDS

National Community College Enrollment Growth has been Strong

According to Occupational Outlook Quarterly (Winter 2002-03), enrollment at community colleges nationally surged 413 percent from 1965 to 1999, while public four-year college enrollment increased 104 percent. The enrollment in public community colleges continued to increase from 2000 to 2002, compared with public four-year colleges. This growth trend at community colleges is expected to continue based on the following:

- Increases in tuition at competitor institutions;
- Selective enrollment procedures at four-year institutions;
- The large growth in jobs that require postsecondary education including certificates and degrees;
- Community colleges offer open access that allows opportunity for under-prepared students, young and old, to complete their basic skills and continue on to postsecondary education.

EXHIBIT 1-3 National Enrollment Growth



Note: Public community colleges and public four-year colleges only

Source: Table 2.2, National Profile of Community Colleges, fourth edition: American Association of Community Colleges

Colorado Community Colleges Enrollment Growth (FY2001-2006)

Colorado Community College enrollment increased at a rapid rate as well. Exhibit 1-4 shows that CCCS enrollment increased 18 percent from 2001 to 2006 while other public institutions in the state increased between 7 percent and 15 percent. Our colleges typically serve more than 105,000 students annually. Since FY 2005, enrollment at Colorado community colleges slowed because students typically enter the workforce when the economy improves.

EXHIBIT 1-4: Student FTE Enrollment: FY 2001 and FY 2006

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	FY01	FY06	Increase	Percent Increase
Colorado Community College System	37,718	44,619	6,901	18%
University of Colorado Regents	38,186	44,104	5,918	15%
Colorado State University Board of Governors	24,316	25,956	1,640	7%
University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees	10,309	10,984	675	7%
Trustees of State Colleges	20,807	23,971	3,164	15%

Source: Final FTE Student Enrollment Report: The Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Women account for an increasing share of community college enrollment

Female enrollment has been increasing in community colleges and remains higher than men. More women attend community colleges and four-year colleges. In Colorado, 59 percent of community college students are female. Nationally, women make up 58 percent of community college students.

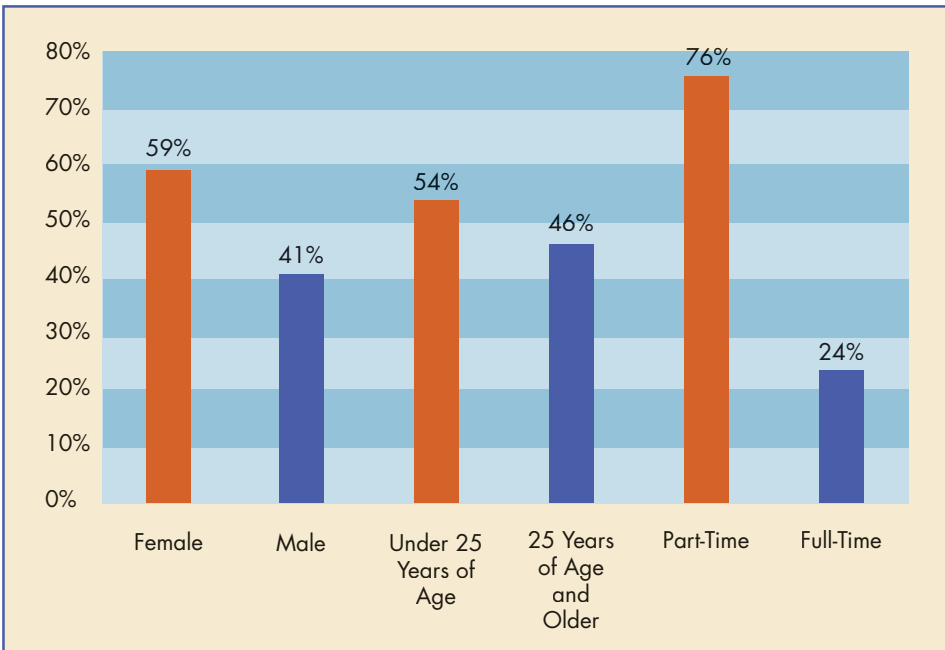
Community college students are older

Nationally, the average age of community college students is 28 and the median is 23, consistent with Colorado's Community College average age of 28. Students younger than 25 comprise 54 percent of Colorado community college enrollment.

Most community college students work while attending college

According to the American Association of Community Colleges, 64 percent of all community and technical college students attend part time, compared to 22 percent of four-year students. Part-time students account for three-fourths of the Colorado Community Colleges' student body. Part-time community college students typically are non-traditional, working full or part time while attending college. CCCS accommodates the needs of working students by offering courses at night, on weekends, and online.

EXHIBIT 1-5
CCCS Enrollment by Age, Gender, and Attendance Status: FY 06-07



Roughly half of Colorado's minority higher education students attend community colleges

Community colleges serve students from diverse backgrounds. During the last two decades, racial and ethnic minorities have made up an increasing proportion of community college student enrollment nationally. In Colorado, 48 percent of the state's minority students enroll in community colleges.

EXHIBIT 1-6
Colorado Community College System Colleges Percent Minority Students

COLLEGE	PERCENT MINORITY
Arapahoe Community College	15%
Community College of Aurora	44%
Community College of Denver	55%
Colorado Northwestern CC	09%
Front Range Community College	18%
Lamar Community College	21%
Morgan Community College	15%
Northeastern Junior College	09%
Otero Junior College	35%
Pueblo Community College	36%
Pikes Peak Community College	26%
Red Rocks Community College	17%
Trinidad State Junior College	43%

In 2002, minority students in all postsecondary educational institutions in Colorado made up 22 percent of the total college population compared to the 2002 national average of 29 percent. Overall, 27 percent of community college enrollment is comprised of minorities in 2007. Exhibit 1-7 shows the percent of total enrollment in Colorado public two-year institutions based on race and ethnicity. The share of minority students in community colleges has risen steadily since 2002.

EXHIBIT 1-7
Student Headcount by Race/Ethnicity: Two Year Public Institutions in Colorado

RACE/ETHNICITY	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Asian	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	3.2%	3.7%
Black, Non-Hispanic	4.2%	5.1%	5.1%	5.8%	5.9%
Hispanic	13.9%	14.5%	15.0%	16.2%	18.1%
Native American	1.2%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%
Minority Total	22.2%	23.8%	24.6%	25.1%	26.8%
White/Alien/other	77.8%	76.2%	75.4%	74.9%	73.1%

Source: CCHE

COMMUNITY COLLEGES PROVIDE LOCAL ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In Colorado, 91 percent of CCCS students are Colorado residents. Community colleges provide local access to higher education, which helps them meet the diverse needs of their students. For students who are low income, who have young children, or who are working, having a college in their community provides an opportunity for higher education for many who otherwise would not have it. CCCS has 13 colleges throughout Colorado, including five with dormitories that provide a residential college experience close to home for recent high school graduates.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES SERVE STUDENTS AT RISK

According to the American Association of Community Colleges, approximately 86 percent of students in community colleges have one or more risk factors associated with decreased persistence in college, compared to 52 percent of students in four-year colleges. These risk factors are listed in Exhibit 1-8.

The average number of risk factors for community college students was 2.4 compared with only 1.1 for four-year college students. CCCS provides services to at-risk students and helps them to attain degrees or vocational training. It is critical that CCCS is funded at a level that ensures its colleges can provide wrap-around services to support at-risk students and help them succeed.

EXHIBIT 1-8 Percentage of Students with Risk Factors Associated With Decreased Persistence in College

Risk Factors	Public Community College	Public 4-Year College
Independent student	61.2%	34.3%
Delayed enrollment	50.3	23.3
Part-time	66.1	30.2
Has dependents	35.4	14.3
Single parent	17.2	6.3
Full-time/Work full time	40.8	21.6
GED or no HS diploma	11.6	3.6
At least one risk factor	85.7	51.4

Sources: Table 2.17, National Profile of Community Colleges: Trends and Statistics, fourth edition: American Association of Community Colleges

Colorado ranks 48th in funding for higher education

EXHIBIT 1-9
States' Ranking in Higher Education Funding

States	FY06	Rank	FY06	Rank
	State and Local Support for Higher Education per \$1,000 in Personal Income		State and Local Support for Higher Education per Capita	
Wyoming	\$17.06	1	\$628.97	1
New Mexico	\$16.77	2	\$461.93	2
U.S. Average	\$7.62		\$260.09	
Rhode Island	\$4.99	45	\$177.01	46
Colorado	\$3.67	49	\$134.90	48
Vermont	\$4.02	49	\$131.54	49
New Hampshire	\$2.33	50	\$87.74	50

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems