



# School and Student Characteristics & Student Achievement Outcomes

FY 2016 Commission Activities

**ACCSC**

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

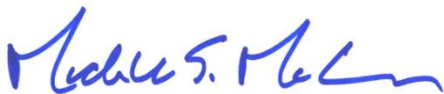
## School and Student Characteristics and Student Achievement Outcomes

One of the many ways that ACCSC verifies the effectiveness of its work and that of the programs and services offered by ACCSC-accredited institutions is through detailed analysis of school characteristics and performance data. The Commission recently completed its analysis of the 2015 Annual Report and found once again that its accredited institutions continue to demonstrate significant institutional and student success through their rates of student graduation and graduate employment attainment.

These data are important indicators and are used by ACCSC to better understand its accredited institutions and the trends associated with career education, as well as to develop the Commission's accountability standards.

The information contained in this report is a summary of the key data points from the 2015 ACCSC Annual Report and provides detailed information pertaining to ACCSC school characteristics, student characteristics, program characteristics, and student achievement rates and trends.

Sincerely,



Michale S. McComis, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

## Student Demographics

Overall, the analysis of the 2015 Annual Report data shows that student enrollment continues to decline. Although the student population has decreased, student demographics remain consistent. Based upon data submitted in the Annual Report, ACCSC-accredited institutions and their students show the following characteristics:

- **77%** of the schools had 300 or fewer students as of June 30, 2015. Average enrollment as of June 30, 2015 was 245 students.
- The majority of institutions are in metropolitan areas with populations of at least 250,000.
- **48%** of the students are under the age 25 and **33%** of the students are in the age group 25-34.
- Student population is evenly distributed with regard to gender, although the percentage of male students enrolled continues to increase slightly.
- **59%** of classified students represent ethnic minority groups.
- **100%** of enrolled students have a high school diploma or equivalent and/or some postsecondary education.

These figures show that ACCSC-accredited institutions continue to provide training in small school formats and serve a large percentage of non-traditional and ethnic minority students in urban and suburban settings.

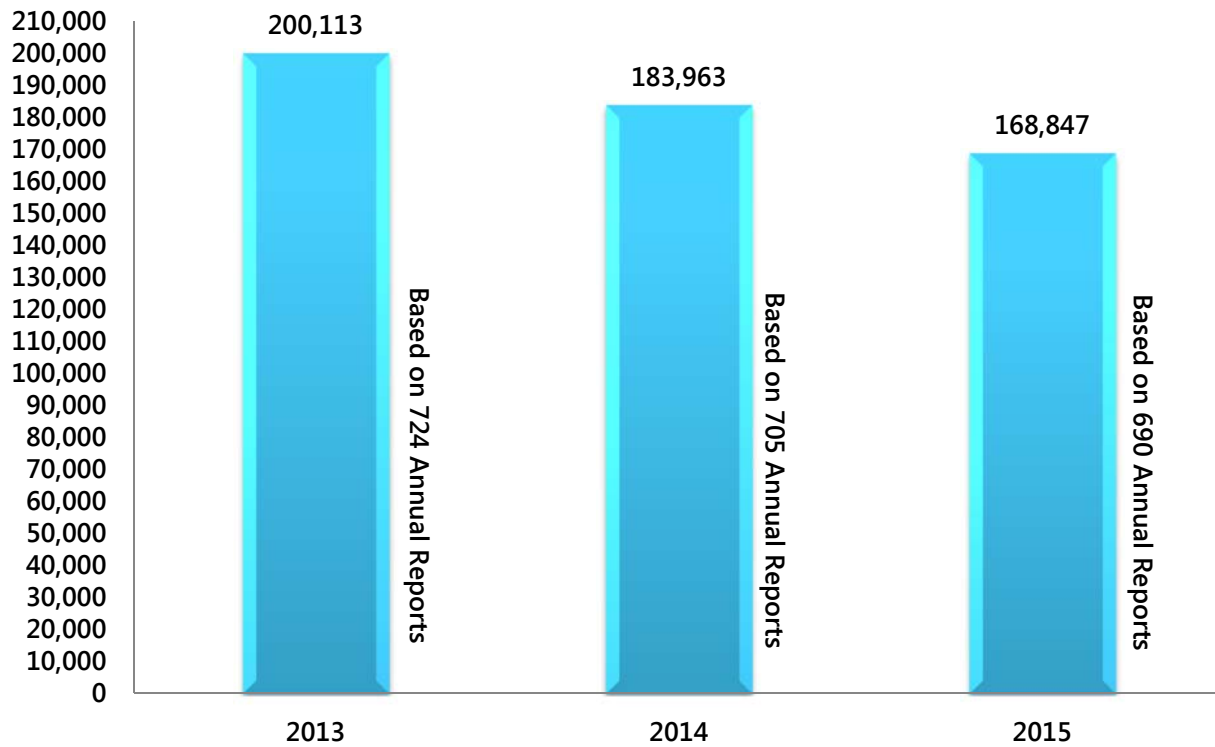
## Program Characteristics

With respect to the types of programs offered by ACCSC-accredited institutions, schools submitted summary information for 5,296 programs in over 120 different occupational areas. Key characteristics include the following:

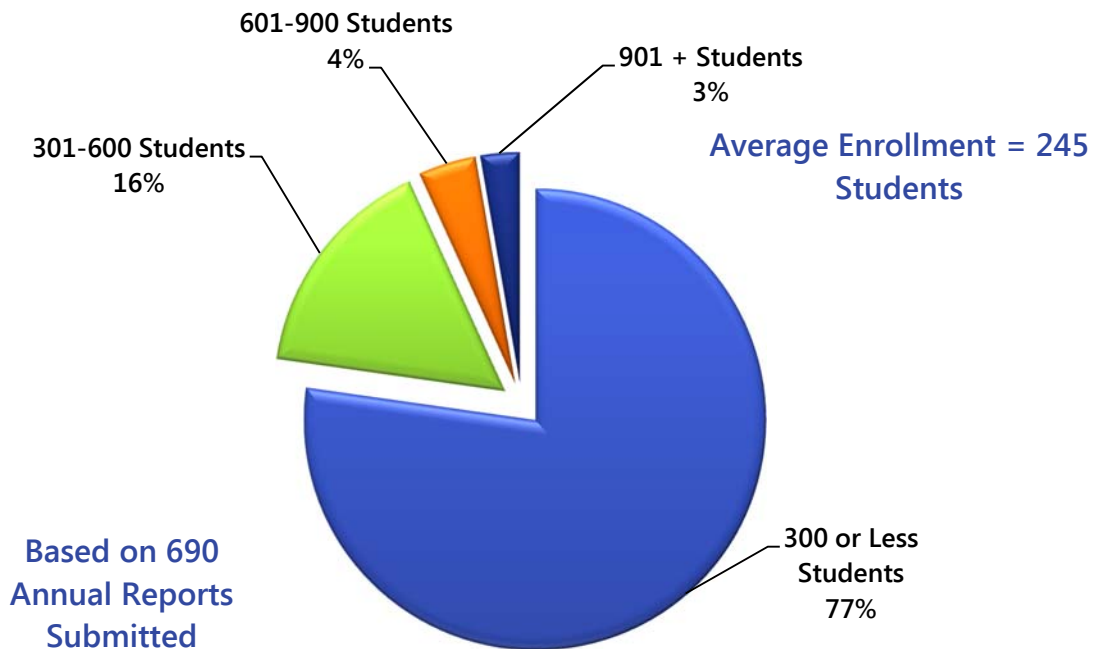
- **40%** of ACCSC-accredited institutions offer a degree program;
  - **31%** of all programs offered at ACCSC-accredited institutions are degree programs.
- Of the 1,517 reported degree programs, 1,119 are associate degrees (**74%**), 360 are baccalaureate degrees (**24%**), and 38 are master's degrees (**2%**).
- **61%** of students are enrolled in non-degree programs, **25%** of students are enrolled in associate degree programs, **13%** of students are enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs and **1%** of students are enrolled in master's degree programs.

With fewer schools reporting data for the 2015 Annual Report, the total number of programs reported represents a **3%** decrease over the prior year. Member institutions continue to assess program offerings and adapt to the changing needs of prospective students and to meet the needs of community employers. The overall percentage of ACCSC degree granting institutions decreased to **40%**, a decrease of **1%**. Although the graduate programs continue to represent a small portion of the degree offerings (**2%**), the number of Master's degrees decreased over the past year.

## Enrollment as of June 30, 2015



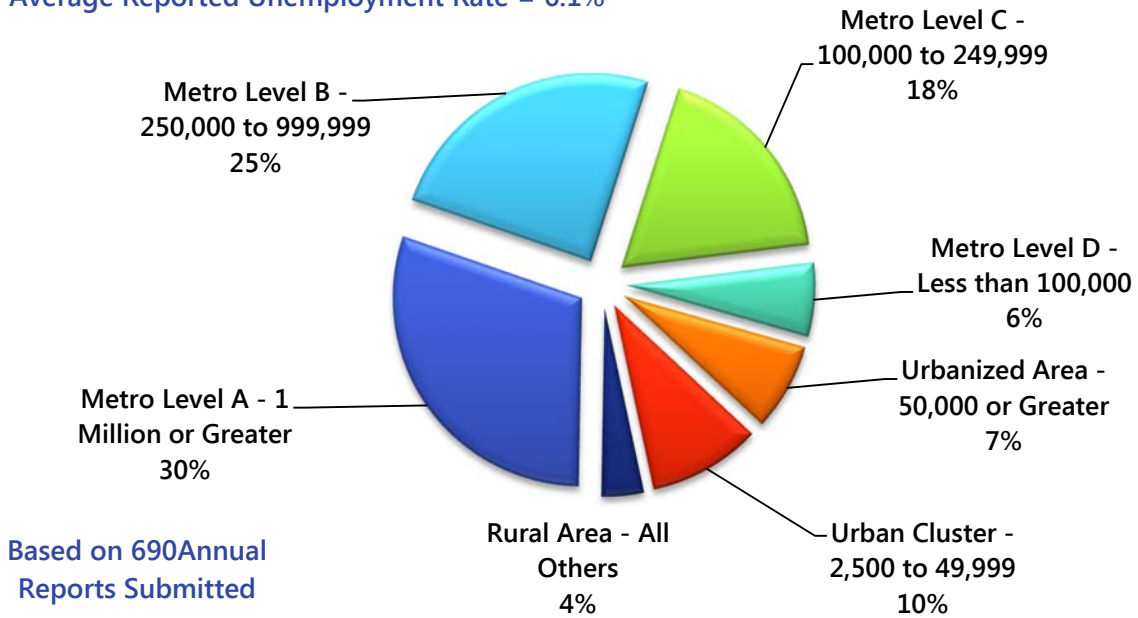
## Institution Size By Student Enrollment - All Schools



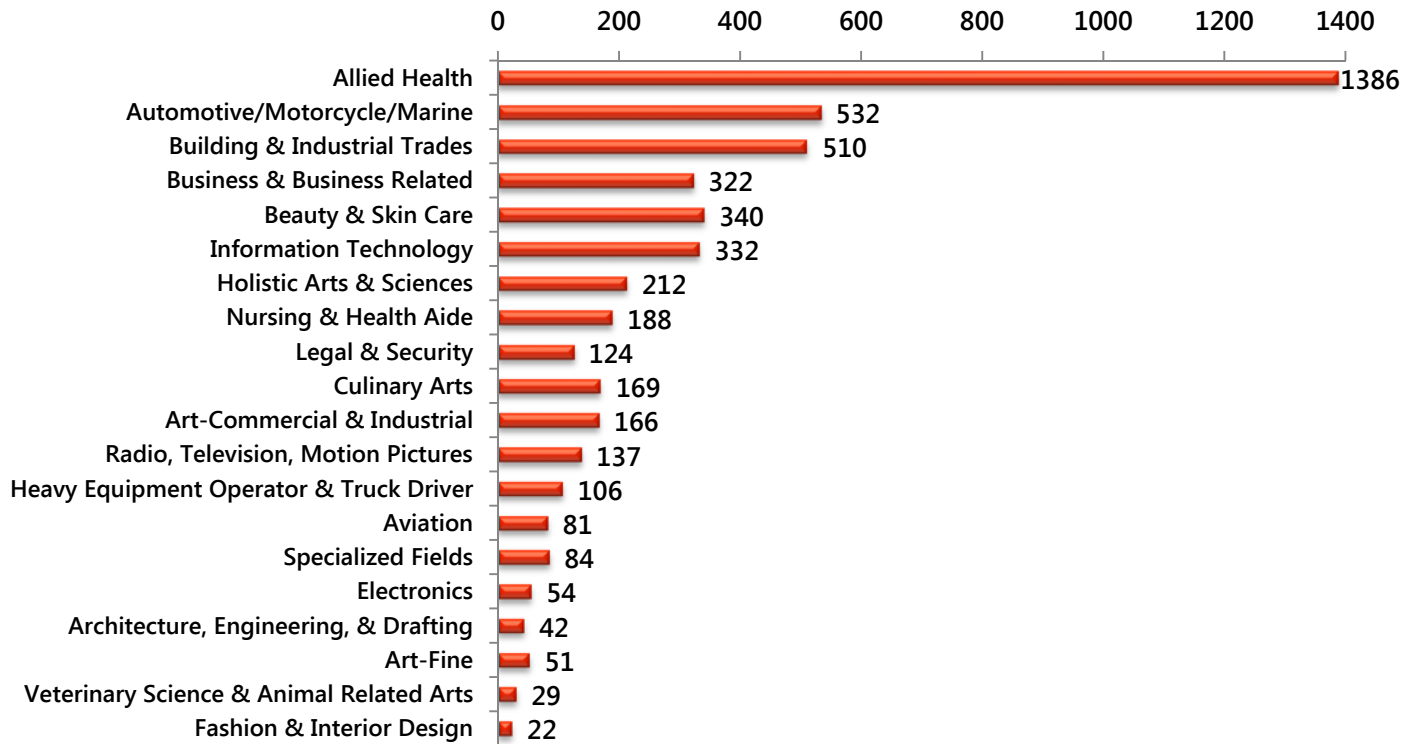
# Distribution of All Schools by Population Area

Average Reported Household Median Income = \$51,463

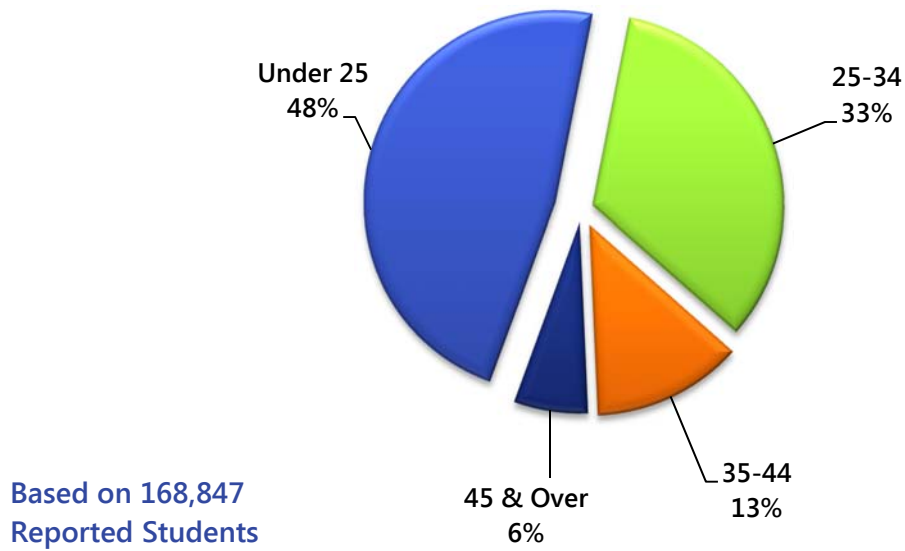
Average Reported Unemployment Rate = 6.1%



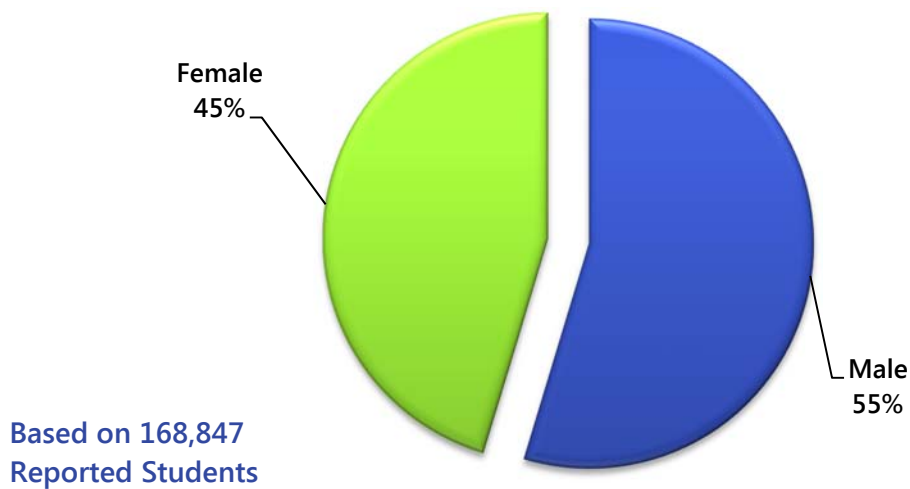
# Distribution of Programs by Program Area



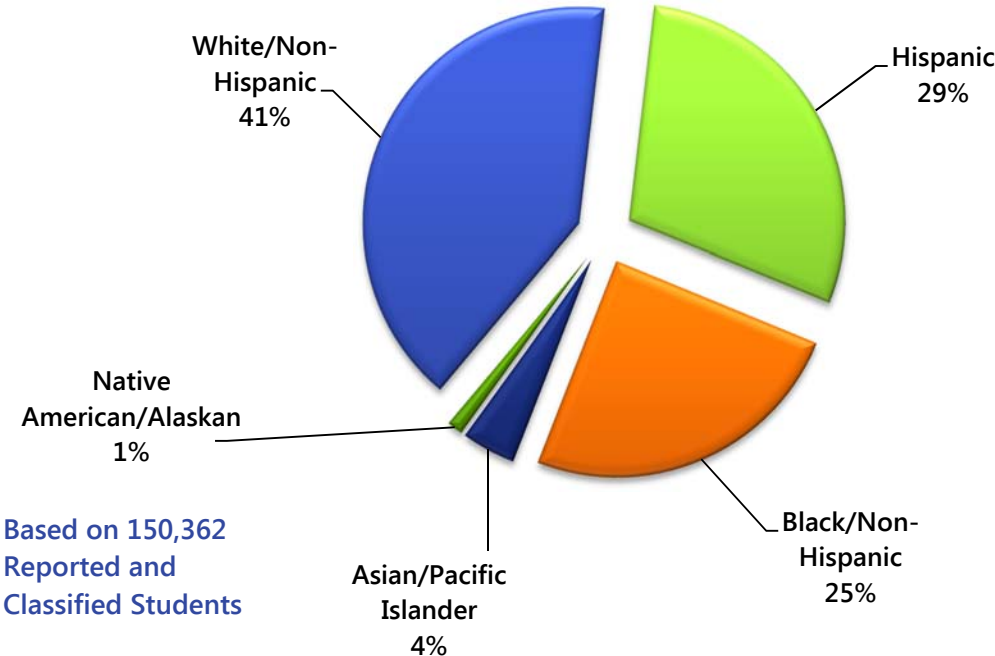
## Distribution of All Students By Age



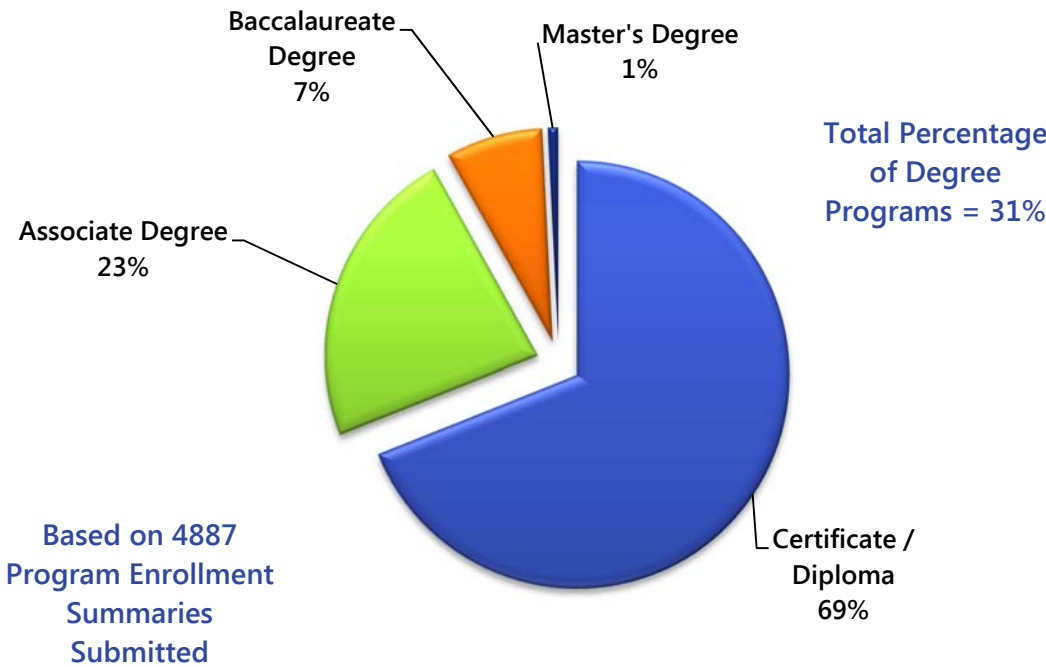
## Distribution of All Students By Gender



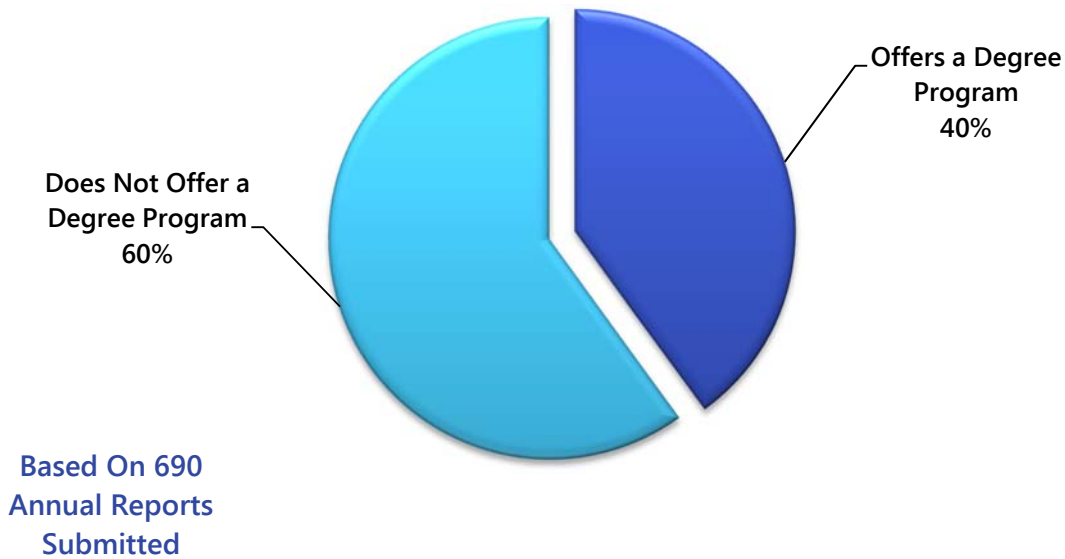
# Distribution of All Students By Ethnicity



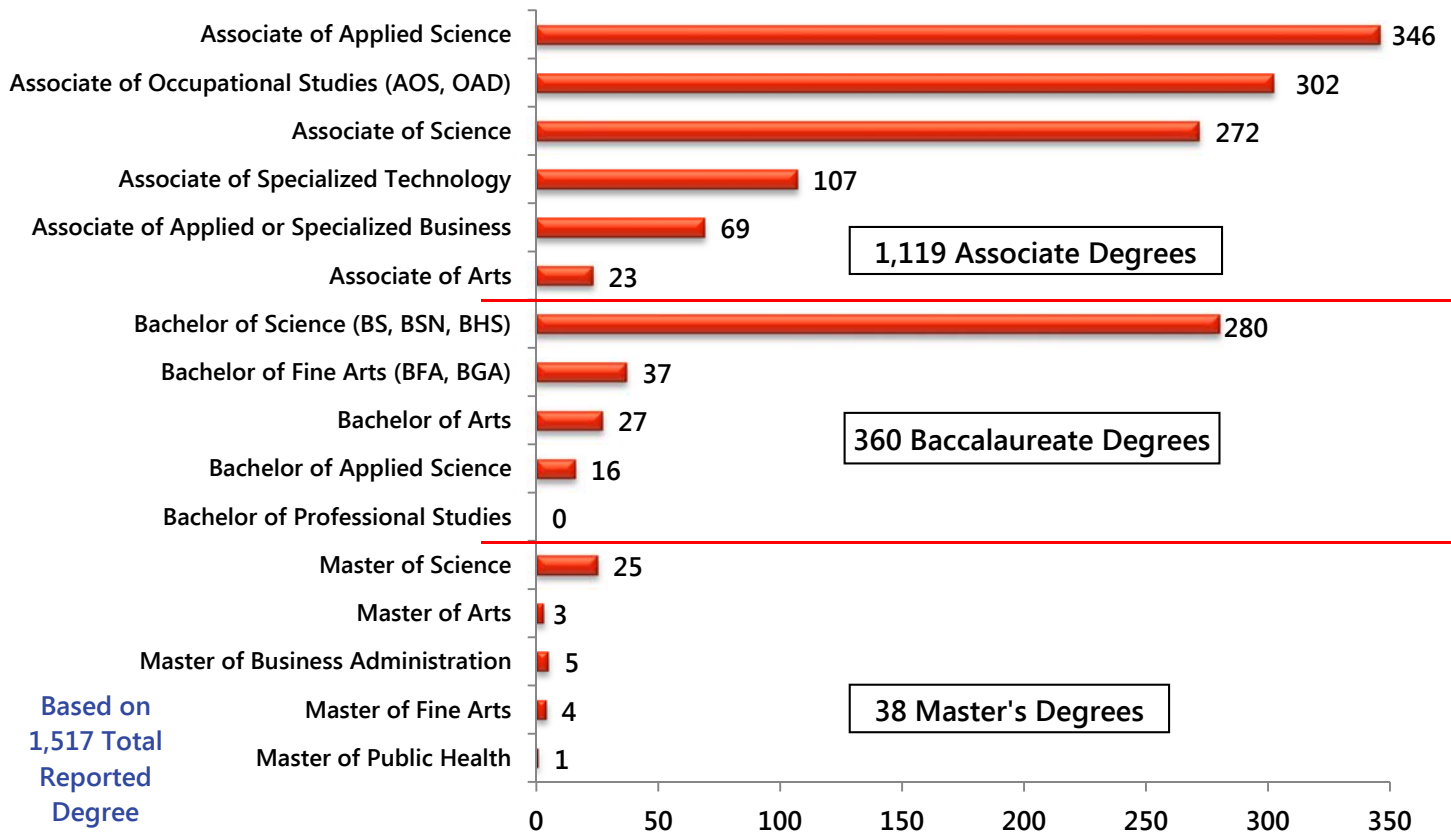
# Distribution of Programs By Credential



## Percentage of Schools Which Offer Degree Programs

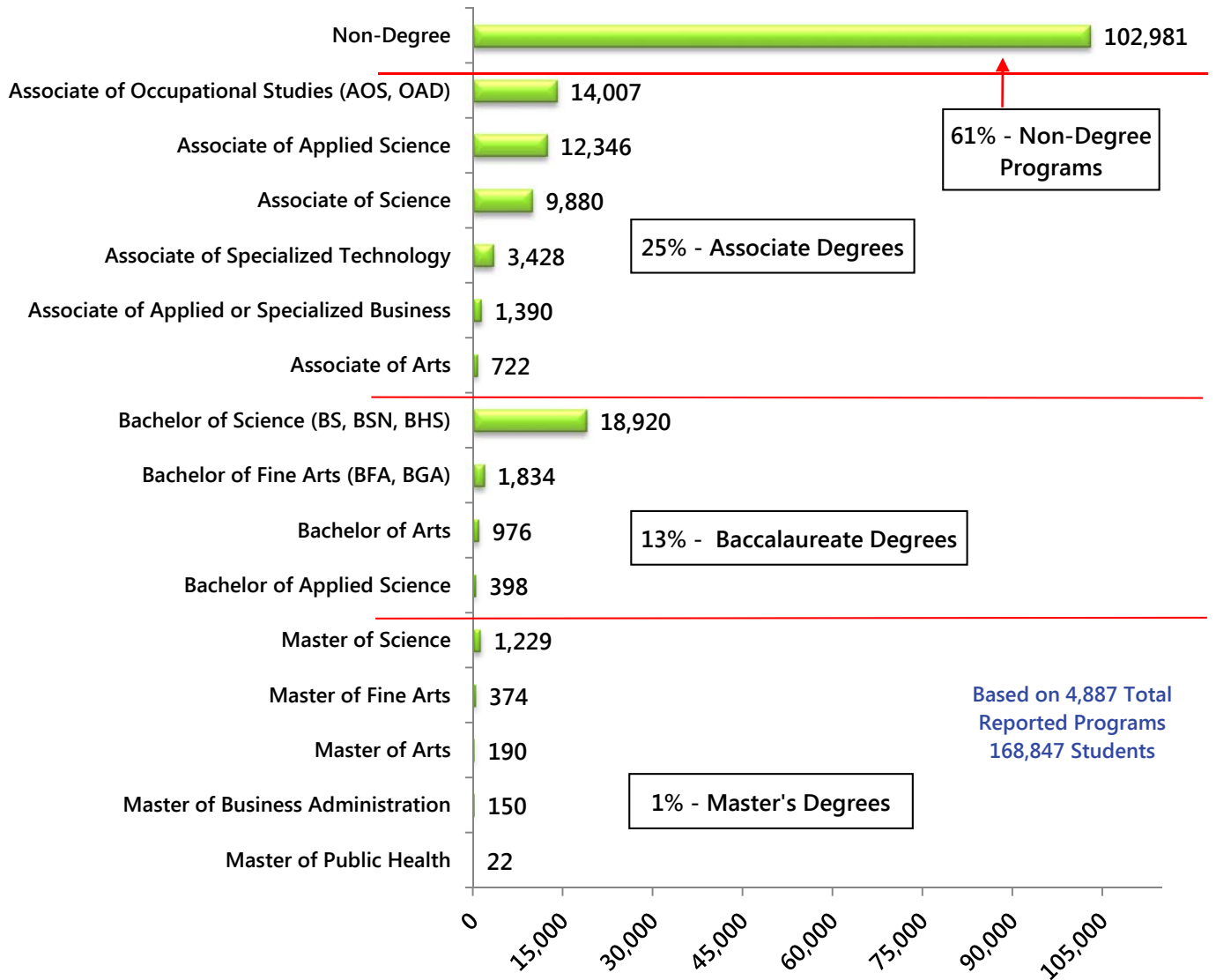


## Distribution of Degree Programs By Credential





# Distribution of Student Enrollment By Program Credential



## Student Achievement Outcomes

The Commission first promulgated the quantitative student achievement standards in 1998 based upon several studies conducted by the Center on Education and Training for Employment at the Ohio State University. During 2002, the Commission engaged in a comprehensive study of the student achievement requirements promulgated in 1998 and the associated processes of data collection and verification. The Commission continues to review comparative data and make adjustments to the methodology for the analysis of student achievement outcomes in order to ensure sound data collection and analysis.

As part of its ongoing commitment to assessing student achievement in its accredited schools and the tools used to do so, during the 2015 Annual Report year, the Commission conducted an 11-year longitudinal study of the graduation and employment rates report from 2005 to 2015 in the ACCSC Annual Report. In so doing, the Commission hoped to discern the stability, predictability, and reliability of the rates used in establishing ACCSC's benchmark rates. The Commission was particularly interested in whether there were significant year-over-year variations in the data reported. The longitudinal study applied the same formula to the 11-year data set as it has applied to the three-year data sets used to establish ACCSC's benchmark student achievement rates.

Overall, the Commission found that the data collected and the resulting benchmarking established from that data is both stable and reliable. In fact, there is little variation from ACCSC's current benchmarks compared to the results of the 11-year longitudinal study. Also, as part of its systematic program of review, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems reviewed ACCSC's student achievement standards, practices, and the longitudinal study and found that "[t]aken together, these features provide considerable confidence in the soundness and appropriateness of ACCSC's general approach to establishing quantitative performance criteria on selected student outcomes measures."

Previously, the Commission re-calculated student achievement benchmark rates every three years using a rolling average. Because the longitudinal data and study show no significant variation from the current benchmarks (with one exception), the Commission established the results of the 11-year longitudinal study as the basis for its new student achievement rates. The one exception is in programs 24 months in length or longer. This group of programs exhibits the largest variability and range of graduation rate outcomes. Once that variability was controlled for, the rate stabilized at 40%, which the Commission believes is an appropriate trigger for further monitoring in these longer programs. The established rates are semi-permanent meaning that while the Commission will continue to study and assess the reported rates of student achievement regularly, the Commission does not intend to adjust the rates unless the data suggest that an adjustment is warranted.

With regard to the employment rate, the Commission's 11-year longitudinal data and study yielded a 70% benchmark, which the Commission adopted. The employment rate for all programs was previously 70% and was only lowered due to the impact of the economic recession. The data show that employment rates overall have risen and thus found resetting the employment rate benchmark at 70% to be appropriate.

While graduation and employment rates play an integral role in an institution’s on-going programmatic and institutional assessment plan, an additional area that demonstrates student learning outcomes includes pass rates on licensing/certification examinations required for employment. The Commission has collected licensure/certification examination pass rate data through the Annual Report over the 11-year period and now requires schools to demonstrate a minimum 70% pass rate on licensure/certification examinations for those programs where a governmental entity requires students to pass the examination as a condition of employment. The Commission continues to refine protocols intended to give both schools and the Commission a framework for the review and assessment of student achievement rates and to provide a framework for assessing rates that are above benchmarks and above average as well as below benchmark rates.

**ESTABLISHED BENCHMARK GRADUATION RATES**

Program Length in Months	Average Rates of Graduation Demonstrates Acceptable Student Achievement	Standard Deviation	Established Benchmark Graduation Rates
1-3	92%	8%	84%
4-6	84%	11%	73%
7-9	72%	12%	60%
10-12	69%	14%	55%
13-15	64%	14%	50%
16-18	62%	15%	47%
19-23	61%	18%	43%
24+	53%	13%	40%

**ESTABLISHED BENCHMARK EMPLOYMENT RATE**

Program Length in Months	Average Rate of Employment Demonstrates Acceptable Student Achievement	Standard Deviation	Established Benchmark Employment Rate
All Programs	78%	8%	70%

## Analysis of the 2015 Annual Report Data

The graduation rates reported by ACCSC-accredited institutions in the 2015 Annual Report are consistent with the data reported for previous years. For the Period 2013-2015, the annual average rate of graduation remained steady at **66%** for 2013-2014; however, in 2015, the average rate of graduation increased moderately to **69%**. Analysis of the three-year data found that the slight upturn seen in 2013 (75%) that was not maintained in 2014 as the employment rate dropped slightly to 74% was regained in 2015 (75%) as the average reported unemployment rate continues to decline. As noted above, the longitudinal study found that over the 11-year period, the employment rate is trending upward since its 11-year low in 2012.

The analysis of graduation rates continues to show that program length has a strong influence on program graduation, i.e., as length increases graduation rates decline. This correlation is consistently the most substantial and significant relationship found in the Commission's student achievement data and allows the Commission to evaluate programmatic performance within a context of program length comparability.

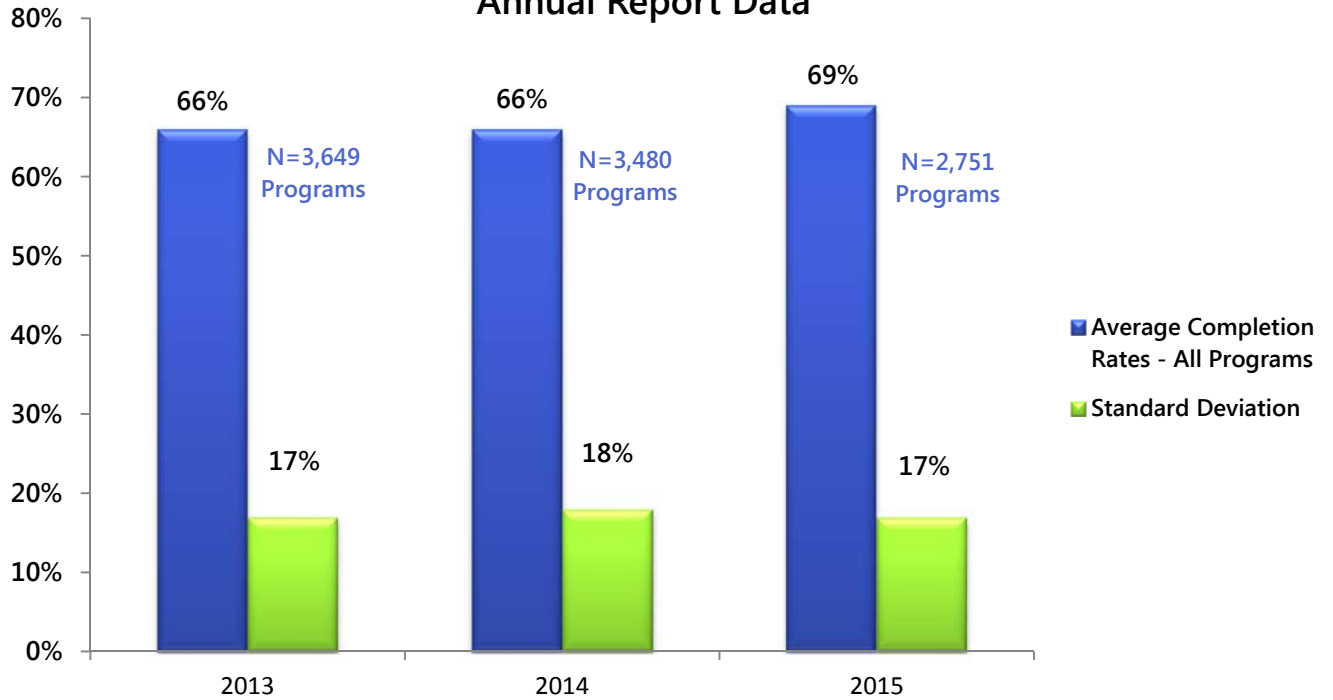
The number of programs reported in the Commission's recent review of student achievement data for the three-year period of 2013-2015 found that the total reported number of shorter programs (3 months or less) increased slightly in 2015. The reported number of programs 4-6 months in length increased approximately 19% over the three-year period. The number of programs greater than 6 months in length continue to decrease in all groupings of programs longer than 6 months. As the number of schools reporting decreases, the number of reported programs has decreased by approximately 25% over the last three years. Review of graduation rates for the three-year period of 2013-2015 found little to no variations over the three-year period in all program length groupings, although in all groupings, the 2015 graduation rate in each grouping was slightly higher than the previous years. Review of the revised groupings of programs of 19-23 months in length and 24 months and longer found that the graduation rates are consistent for the three-year period, supporting the determination that the revised groupings are a more natural breakpoint. However, the standard deviation continues to remain high, indicating a more heterogeneous distribution of graduation rates. The student achievement outcomes for longer programs are an area that the Commission intends to monitor with keen interest.

While graduation and employment rates play an integral role in an institution's on-going programmatic and institutional assessment plan, an additional area that demonstrates student learning outcomes includes pass rates on licensing/certification examinations required for employment. The Commission collects licensure/certification examination pass rate data through the Annual Report and implemented, effective July 1, 2015, the requirement that schools demonstrate a minimum 70% pass rate on licensure/certification examinations for those programs where a governmental entity requires students to pass the examination as a condition of employment. Review of the major areas requiring licensure such as allied health, nursing, cosmetology, massage therapy, and truck driving found the average pass rate has consistently exceeded 70% for the past three years.

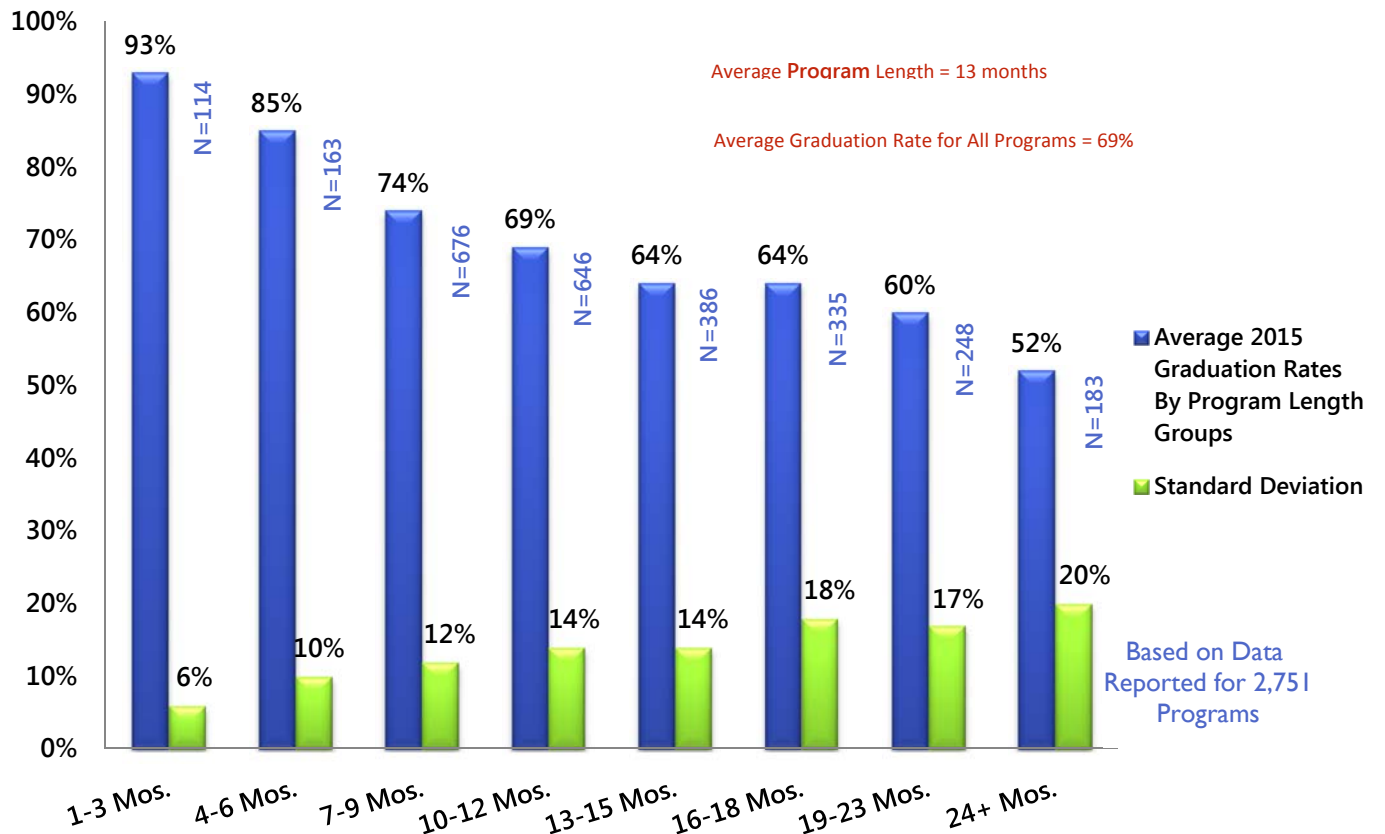
Overall, the student graduation and graduate employment attainment rates demonstrate that ACCSC-accredited institutions graduate a significant number of students and that a significant number of students attain training-related employment after graduation. The Commission

encourages its institutions to avoid using the benchmark rates as a goal for graduation and employment but as an assessment starting point and goal setting baseline. Institutions should continue to set the highest attainable goals with regard to student success and the rates of graduation and employment.

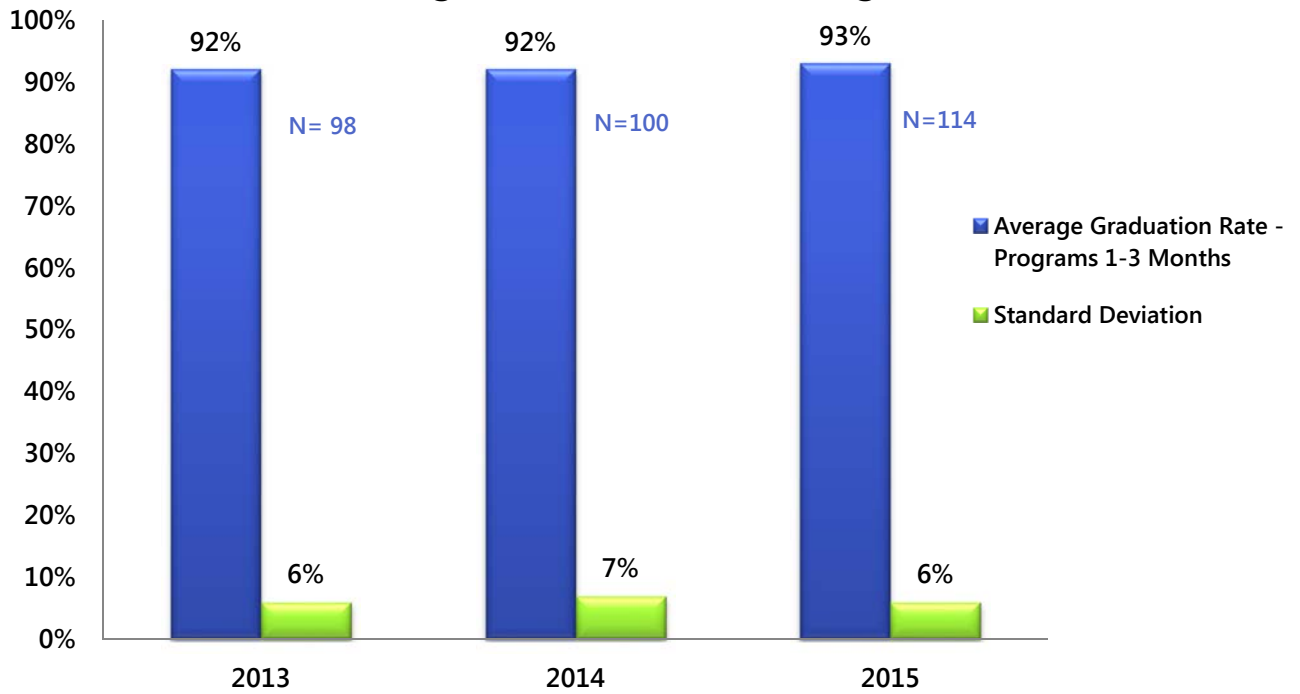
## 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates - All Programs Annual Report Data



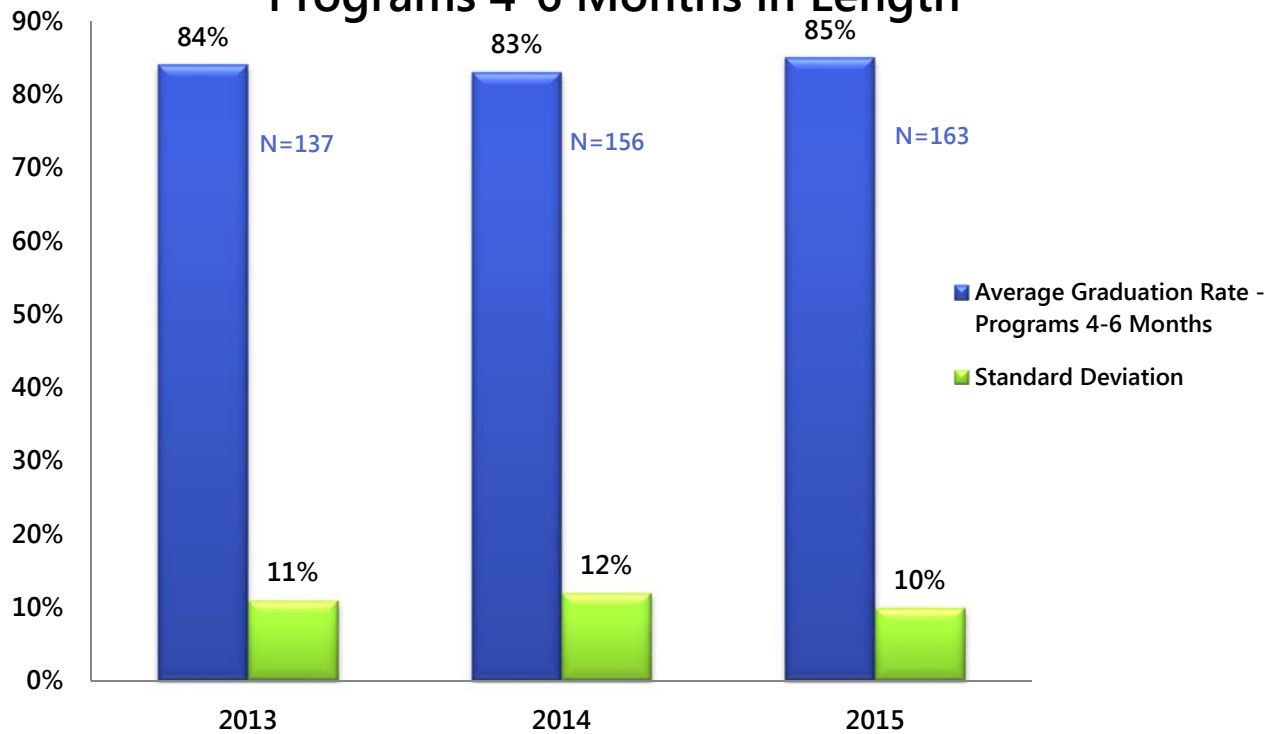
## Average Graduation Rates By Program Length Groups- 2015



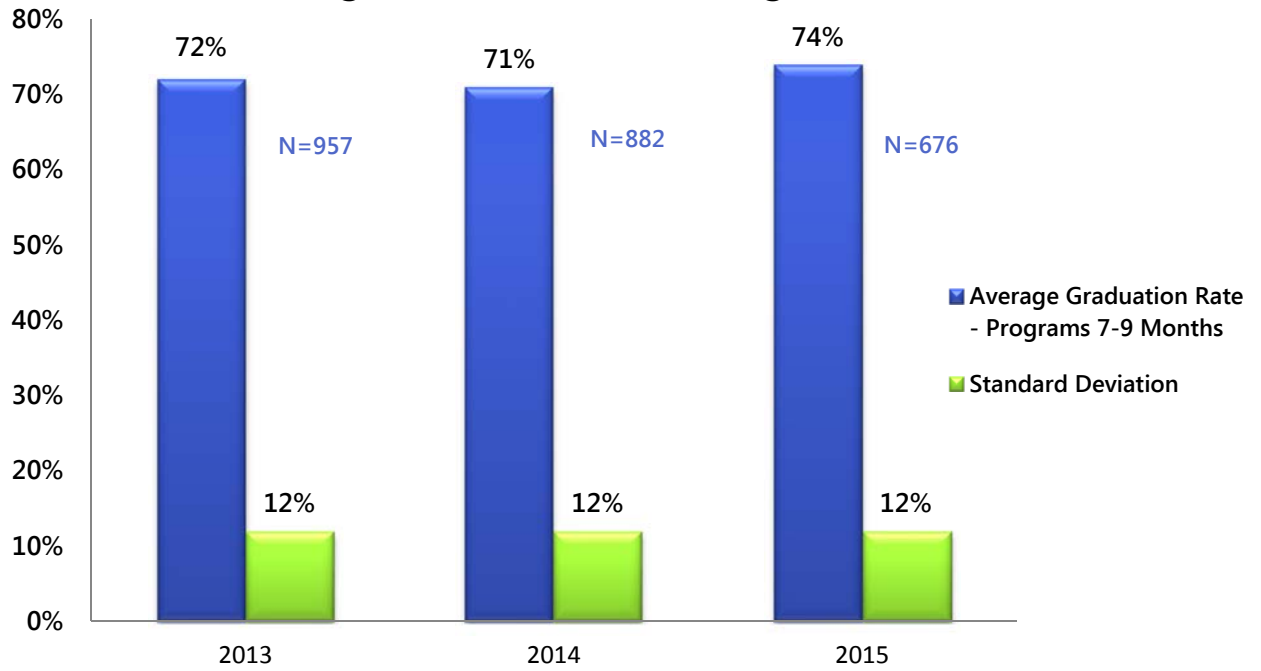
### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 1-3 Months in Length



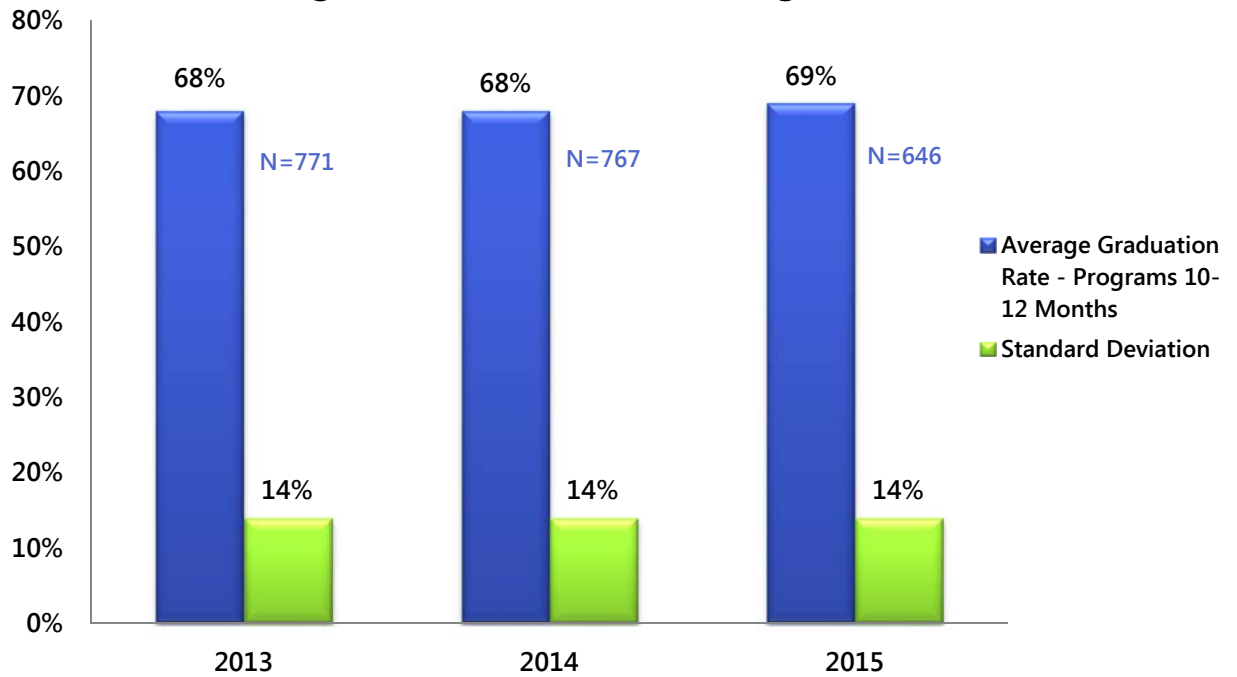
### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 4-6 Months in Length



### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 7-9 Months in Length

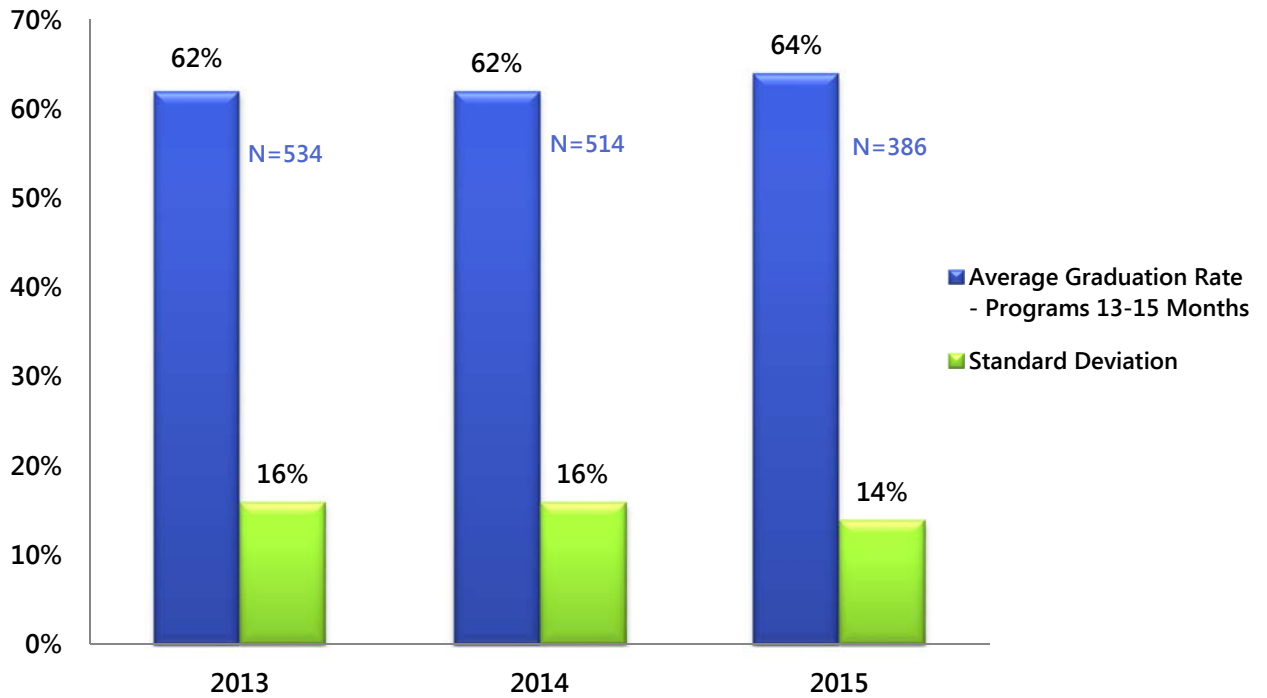


### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 10-12 Months in Length

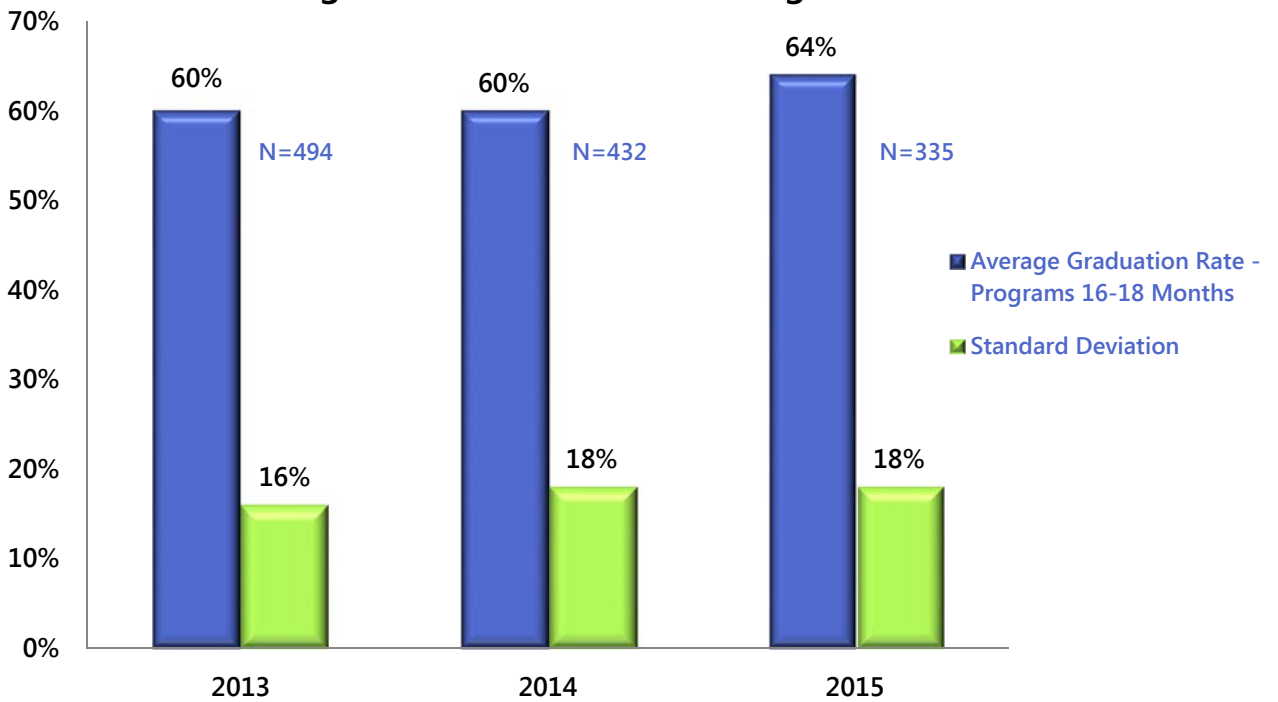




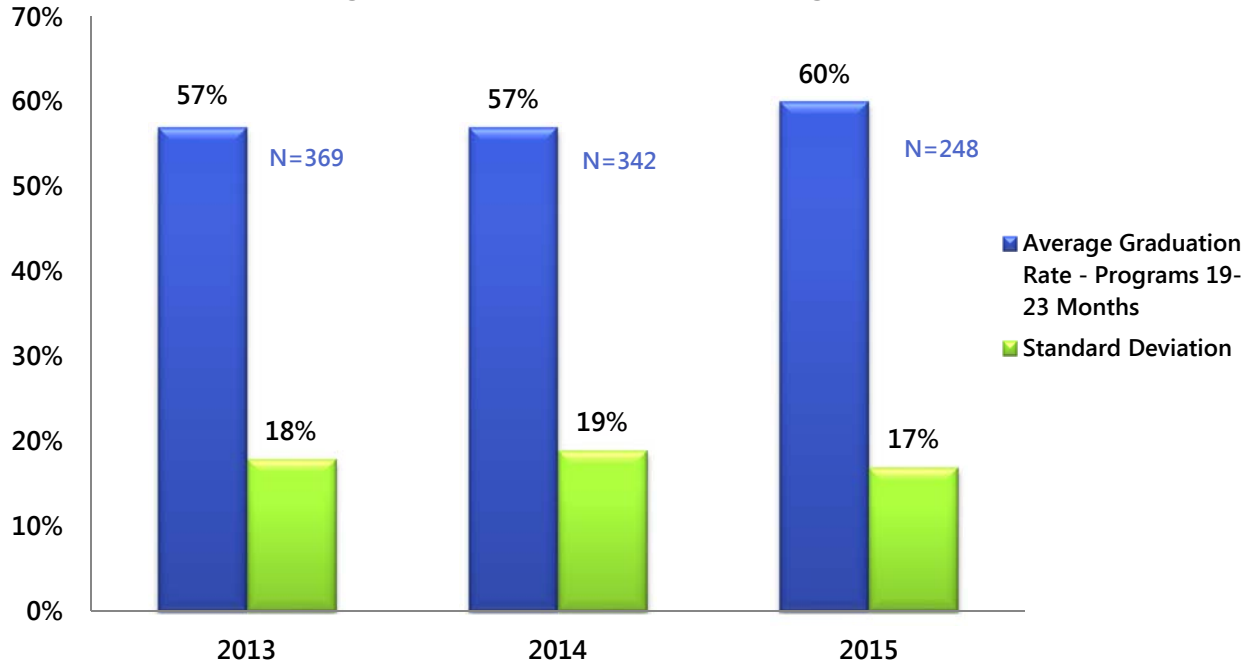
### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 13-15 Months in Length



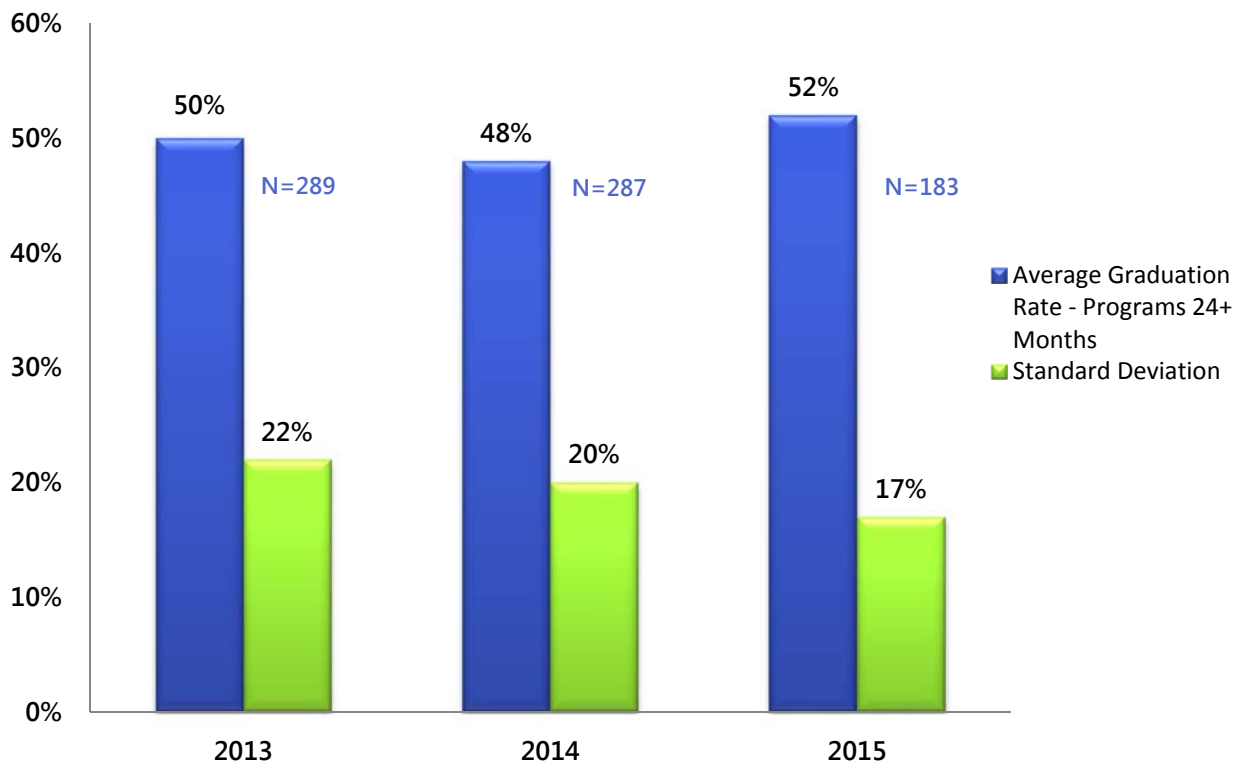
### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 16-18 Months in Length



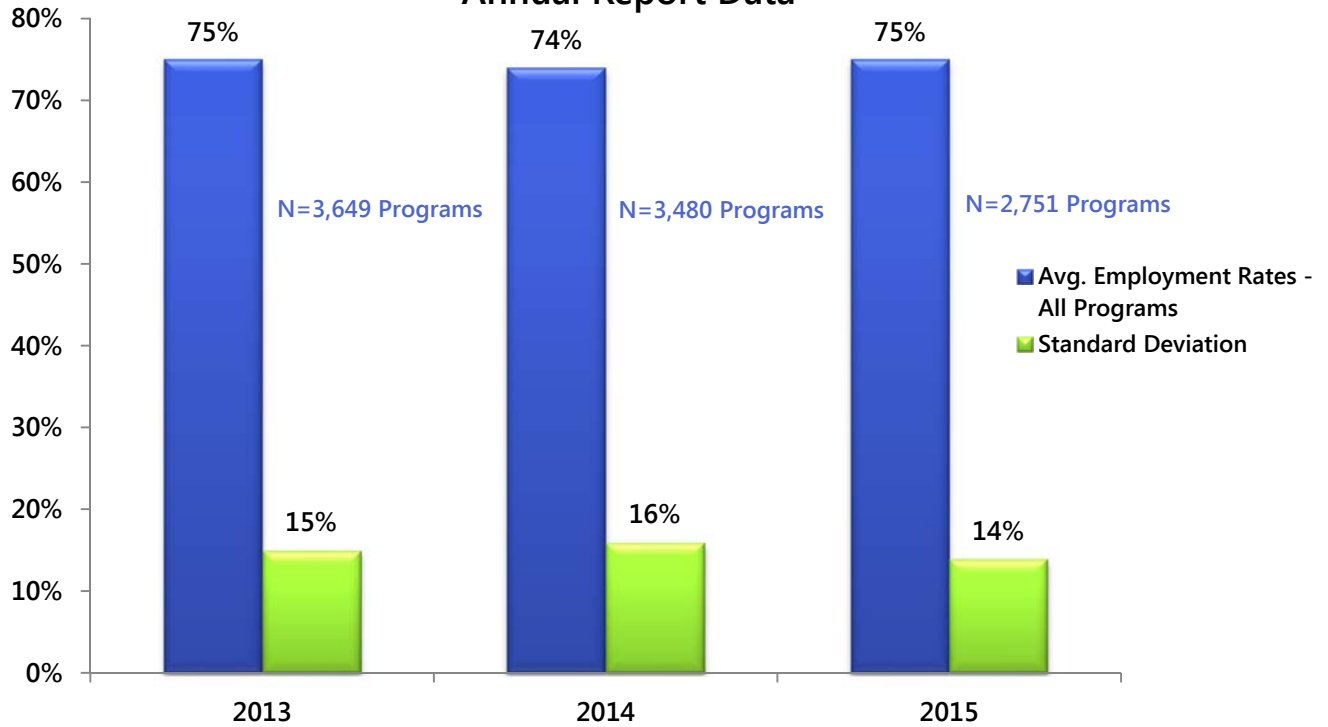
### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 19-23 Months in Length



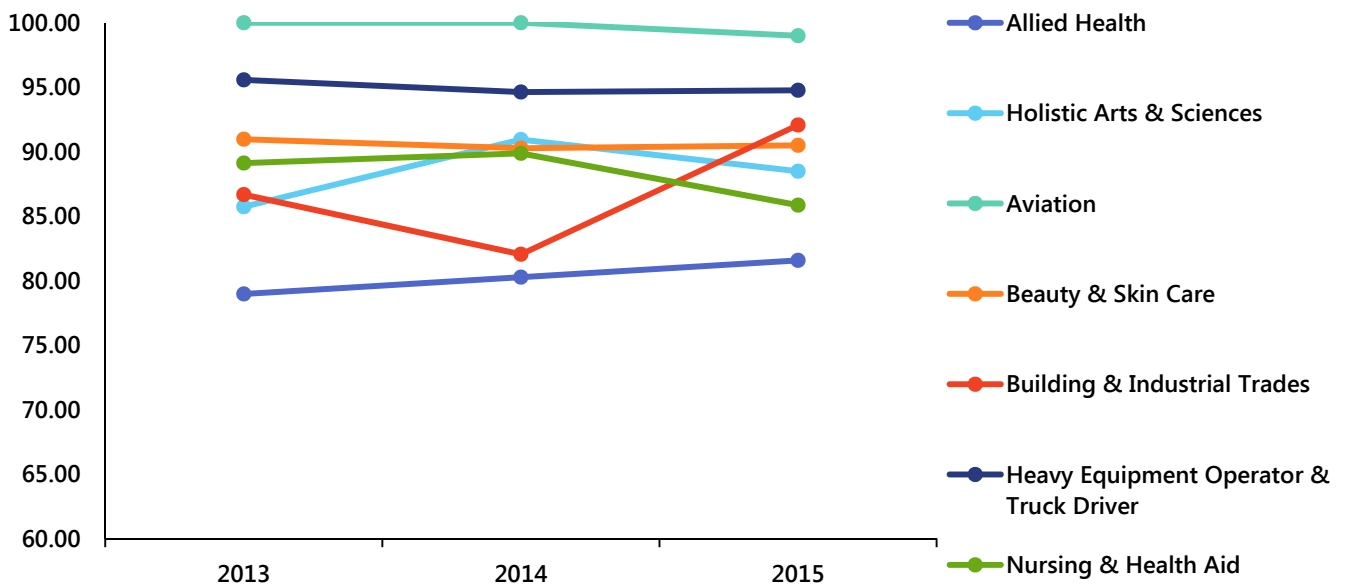
### 2013-2015 Average Graduation Rates Programs 24 Months and Greater in Length



## 2013-2015 Average Employment Attainment Rates Annual Report Data



## Licensure Pass Rate by Program Area



COMMISSION ACTIVITY REPORT FY2016	Total
<b>ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS</b>	
Main Schools	432
Branch Schools	242
<b>TOTAL ACCREDITED SCHOOLS</b>	<b>674</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF SCHOOL CLOSURES, VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWALS, AND REMOVALS</b>	
Closures	20
Voluntary Withdrawals	15
Removals from accredited list	13
<b>TOTAL CLOSURES, VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWALS AND REMOVALS</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>ACCREDITATION</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF INITIAL APPLICATION ACTIVITIES</b>	
Initial Applications Received	24
Initial Applications Accepted	16
Initial Applications Deferred	14
Initial Applications Rejected	5
<b>SUMMARY OF RENEWAL APPLICATION ACTIVITIES</b>	
Renewal Applications Received	101
Renewal Applications Accepted	135
Renewal Applications Deferred	3
<b>SUMMARY OF ON-SITE EVALUATIONS/REVIEWS</b>	
Branch (Part I or Part II)	12
Change of Location	21
Change of Ownership	25
Commission Directed Visits (Announced and Unannounced)	2
Corporate	0
Degree	28
Distance Education	5
Distance Education Facility	3
Initials	8
Masters Degree	1
Orientation	13
Other	14
Renewals	146
Re-Visits	1
Satellites	4
Unrelated New Program	27
Unannounced Visits	32

<b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS/MEMBERSHIP</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS ACTIVITIES/MEMBERSHIP SERVICES</b>	
Accreditation Workshop Attendance	334
Webinar Attendance	961
Representatives from Potential Applicants	81
Representatives from Accredited Schools	253
Team Leader Training	47
Education Specialist Training	4
Professional Development Conference	150
<b>COMMISSION MEETINGS</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING ACTIONS - INITIAL APPLICANTS</b>	
Accredited for Maximum Term of 3 Years	3
Accredited for Less than the Maximum Term of 3 Years	0
Deferred	6
Denied	0
<b>TOTAL INITIAL APPLICANTS CONSIDERED</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING ACTIONS - RENEWAL</b>	
Accredited for Maximum Term of 5 Years	80
Short-Cycled	13
Deferred	57
Warning	11
Warning - Continued	4
Warning - Vacated	5
Probation	4
Probation - Continued	4
Probation - Vacated	5
Removal	2
Fail-To-Grant	1
<b>TOTAL RENEWALS CONSIDERED</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING ACTIONS - SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES</b>	
Accept Report	65
Deferred	6
Denied	1
Warning	1
Warning - Continued	0
Warning - Vacated	0
Probation	0
Probation - Continued	0
Probation - Vacated	0
Removal	0
Fail-To-Grant	0
<b>TOTAL SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES CONSIDERED</b>	<b>73</b>

<b>SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING ACTIONS - OTHER ACTIONS</b>	
Accept Report	34
Deferred	5
Denied	0
Continued Reporting	27
Heightened Monitoring	5
Warning	26
Warning - Continued	5
Warning - Vacated	3
Probation	2
Probation - Continued	0
Probation - Vacated	2
Removal	1
Fail-To-Grant	0
<b>TOTAL OTHER ACTIONS CONSIDERED</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING ACTIONS – UNNANOUNCED ON-SITE EVALUATIONS</b>	
Accept Report	0
Deferred	1
Warning	0
<b>TOTAL UNANNOUNCED ON-SITE EVALUATION ACTIONS CONSIDERED</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW &amp; DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE ACTIVITY - APPLICATION RECEIVED</b>	
Application for a Substantive Program Modification	51
Application for a New Program-Related Program	40
Application for a New Program-Unrelated Program	44
Application for Approval of an Occupational Associate Degree Program	26
Application for Approval of an Academic Associate Degree Program	41
Application for Approval of a Baccalaureate Degree Program	26
Application for Approval of a Master's Degree Program	4
Application for Initial Distance Education Approval	12
Application for Expansion of Distance Education Approval	25
Application for a Distance Education Facility	0
Application for a Change of Location-Part I	32
Application for a Change of Location-Part II	19
Application for a Change of Ownership-Part I	13
Application for a Change of Ownership-Part II	13
Application for a Change of Name - Part I	19
Application for a Change of Name - Part II	17
Application for a Branch Campus-Part I	11
Application for a Branch Campus-Part II	6
Application for a Satellite Location	5
Application for a Change of Mission	3

Application for Clock Hour to Credit Hour Conversion	63
Facility Expansion Report	15
Program Modification Report (Non-substantive)	466
Application for Continuing Education and Avocational Programs	47
<b>TOTAL SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED</b>	<b>998</b>
<b>SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE ACTIVITY - APPLICATION APPROVED</b>	
Application for a Substantive Program Modification	49
Application for a New Program-Related Program	45
Application for a New Program-Unrelated Program	48
Application for Approval of an Occupational Associate Degree Program	25
Application for Approval of an Academic Associate Degree Program	43
Application for Approval of a Baccalaureate Degree Program	18
Application for Approval of a Master's Degree Program	4
Application for Initial Distance Education Approval	3
Application for Expansion of Distance Education Approval	26
Application for a Distance Education Facility	0
Application for a Change of Location-Part I	29
Application for a Change of Location-Part II	20
Application for a Change of Ownership-Part I	2
Application for a Change of Ownership-Part II	14
Application for a Change of Name - Part I	20
Application for a Change of Name - Part II	20
Application for a Branch Campus-Part I	5
Application for a Branch Campus-Part II	5
Application for a Satellite Location	8
Application for a Change of Mission	1
Application for Clock Hour to Credit Hour Conversion	37
Facility Expansion Report	18
Program Modification Report (Non-substantive)	474
Application for Continuing Education and Avocational Programs	38
<b>TOTAL SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE APPLICATIONS APPROVED</b>	<b>952</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT ACTIVITIES</b>	
Complaints - Received	49
Complaints - Closed	49
Complaints - Forward to Committee/Panel	42
Complaints - Process Anonymous Complaint	5
Complaints - Forward to On-Site Evaluation Team	0
Complaints - No Action	25
Complaints - Accept Report/Close Complaint	4
Complaints - Place on Reporting	0
Complaints - Continued Reporting	5
Complaints - Deferred	1

Complaints - Warning	1
Complaints - Probation	0
<b>TOTAL COMPLAINT ACTIONS</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF MEDIA REPORT ACTIVITIES</b>	
Media Reports - Received	0
Media Reports - Forwarded to Committee/Panel	4
Media Reports - Accept Report	2
Media Reports - Place on Reporting	0
Media Reports - Continued Reporting	0
Media Reports - Deferred	2
Media Reports - Warning	0
Media Reports - Probation	0
<b>TOTAL MEDIA REPORT ACTIONS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF AGENCY NOTICE ACTIVITIES</b>	
Agency Notices - Received	205
Agency Notices - Forwarded to Committee/Panel	127
Agency Notices - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	45
Agency Notices - Place on Reporting	20
Agency Notices - Continued Reporting	39
Agency Notices - Forwarded to On-Site Evaluation Team	1
Agency Notices - Deferred	5
Agency Notices - Warning	15
Agency Notices - Probation	2
Agency Notices - Revocation	1
<b>TOTAL AGENCY NOTICE ACTIONS</b>	<b>460</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT GROWTH ACTIONS (All Forwarded to Commission)</b>	
Significant Growth - Information Requested	8
Significant Growth - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	5
Significant Growth - Place on Reporting	0
Significant Growth - Continued Reporting	0
Significant Growth - Place on Heightened Monitoring	5
Significant Growth - Deferred	1
Significant Growth - Warning	0
Significant Growth - Probation	0
<b>TOTAL SIGNIFICANT GROWTH ACTIONS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF COHORT DEFAULT RATE ACTIONS (All Forwarded to Commission)</b>	
CDR - Information Requested	5
CDR - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	9
CDR - Continued Reporting	3
CDR - Place on Reporting	1
CDR - Warning	1
CDR - Deferred	1



CDR - Tabled	0
CDR - Probation	1
<b>TOTAL COHORT DEFAULT RATE ACTIONS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION ACTIONS</b>	
EV - Information Requested	97
EV - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	19
EV - Continued Reporting	6
EV - Place on Reporting	14
EV - Placed on Heightening Monitoring	3
EV - Warning	1
EV - Deferred	2
EV - Probation	1
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION ACTIONS</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>PROGRESS REVIEW COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACTIONS (OUTCOMES)</b>	
Outcomes - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	47
Outcomes - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting/Heightened Monitoring	9
Outcomes - Continued Reporting	66
Outcomes - Warning	23
Outcomes - Vacate Warning (Continue on Reporting)	5
Outcomes - Probation	0
Outcomes - Deferred	13
Outcomes - Tabled	0
Outcomes - Resubmit	1
Outcomes - Revocation	0
<b>TOTAL OUTCOMES REPORTING</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACTIONS (REFUND)</b>	
Refund - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	7
Refund - Continued Reporting	5
Refund - Warning	2
Refund - Vacate Warning (Continue on Reporting)	0
Refund - Probation	0
Refund - Deferred	0
Refund - Resubmit	0
Refund - Revocation	1
<b>TOTAL REFUND REPORTING</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACTIONS (ANNUAL REPORT)</b>	
AR - Monitoring AR Data/Information Letters Sent	185
AR - Placed on Outcomes Reporting	50
AR - Accept Report	45
AR - Placed on Heightened Monitoring	18
AR - Warning	7

AR - Deferred	6
AR - Tabled	0
AR - Probation	1
AR - Revocation	1
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL REPORT REPORTING</b>	<b>313</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACTIONS (PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE)</b>	
PAC - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	14
PAC - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting/Heightened Monitoring	2
PAC - Continued Reporting	6
PAC - Warning	0
PAC - Deferred	2
PAC - Probation	0
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTING</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACTIONS (HEIGHTENED MONITORING)</b>	
HM - Accept Report/Remove from Heightened Monitoring	12
HM - Continued Heightened Monitoring	1
HM - Moved to Reporting	5
HM - Deferred	8
HM - Warning	2
HM - Probation	0
<b>TOTAL HEIGHTENED MONITORING</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACTIONS (OTHER REPORTING)</b>	
OTH - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting	32
OTH - Accept Report/Remove from Reporting/Heightened Monitoring	0
OTH - Continued Reporting	28
OTH - Warning	2
OTH - Deferred	1
OTH - Probation	0
<b>TOTAL OTHER REPORTING</b>	<b>63</b>



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