Getting to the Goal: Increasing Bachelor’s Degrees Among Black and Latino Students in Illinois | 2018
Meegan Dugan Bassett

Introduction
Around one in three Illinoisans hails from a racial or ethnic group that has historically lacked access to the high-quality education that students from more affluent backgrounds enjoy. The largest of these groups are Blacks and Latinos.1 Despite positive gains since the Civil Rights Movement, Black and Latino Illinoisans continue to be underrepresented in the institutions that are most likely to lead to the highest levels of economic prosperity. Illinois’ large community college system provides open access to a number of useful credentials. However, the lack of Black and Latino Illinoisans with a bachelor’s or more advanced degree has implications for which professions are available to these students, as well as their long-term income. The problem mirrors the challenges faced by more White, rural populations which may lack physical and financial access to bachelor’s degree programs, particularly if they are unable to move due to family needs or finances. The data continues to show that individuals who have a bachelor’s degree earn considerably more on average than associate degree holders, who in turn earn

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more than high school graduates.\textsuperscript{2} As long as inequities in degree completion persist, the entire state will feel the effects of a third of the populace earning less.

Around 140,000 students per year are projected to graduate from high school in Illinois.\textsuperscript{3} Around 20,000 Black students and 30,000 Latino students of any race are estimated to graduate from Illinois high schools each year, with expectations that the number of Blacks will decrease while the number of Latinos will rise.\textsuperscript{4} Given these numbers, inequities in access to all levels of higher education are an issue that is not likely to go away without focused efforts by higher education and community leaders. If these students are able to graduate with a bachelor’s degree, instead of leaving without a degree and thousands of dollars in debt, they have much to offer their communities as leaders, professionals, and future parents.

Yet, getting a bachelor’s degree without breaking the bank poses a formidable challenge for both low- and middle-income students of color. Between 2000 and 2016, weighted annual mean tuition and fees rose by $8,737, or 151 percent, in Illinois public universities, making the option of a transfer an important pathway to a bachelor’s degree for low-income and middle-income students.\textsuperscript{5} In 2017, the average Illinois public university annual published tuition and fees were $13,621 with the top public universities coming in much higher.\textsuperscript{6} The schools have worked to increase financial aid as tuition rates have risen higher than most other states.\textsuperscript{7} However, even after aid, the total net price the average low-income family pays varies considerably across campuses, with the University of Illinois at Chicago ($9,576) coming in much higher than the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign ($6,906) and close to triple the University of Michigan ($3,414).\textsuperscript{8}

With poverty rates at 26.5 percent in the Black community and 17.2 percent in the Latino community, compared to 8.8 percent among Whites, access to higher education and the higher wages it brings continues to be extremely important to communities of color in Illinois.\textsuperscript{9} The large community college system and credit transfer system in Illinois offers a lower-cost path for those who seek a bachelor’s

\textsuperscript{7} Boelscher, et al. (2017). \textit{Illinois Postsecondary Investments}.
degree. When money is tight, having a smooth transition from a community college to a four-year university is more important than ever for Blacks and Latinos looking for a prosperous future.

However, despite one of the highest transfer graduation rates nationally, fewer than two in ten Illinois transfer students (19 percent) complete a bachelor’s degree. And the gap between low-income and high-income students is high. Among students at four-year institutions, overall graduation rates for Black and Latino students at most of Illinois’ public universities are poor. Only two of Illinois’ twelve public universities graduate more than 50 percent of the Black and Latino students who come through their doors as freshmen. Statistics are often worse for students who transfer to nonprofit, four-year colleges. Only a fraction of the many independent, nonprofit colleges and universities in Illinois can compete with the top public universities. Completion rates for Black and Latino students are poor at most. There simply aren’t nearly enough seats at the leading schools to meet the need.

Skeptics, who assume this is an intractable problem, fail to note that among universities serving similar populations with similar preparation levels, graduation rates among students of color can vary substantially. Numerous universities have drastically improved student success rates among students of color without changing their standards or the population of students they serve, even when those students are less prepared and/or low-income. Leaders who believe it is possible have found ways to ensure more Black and Latino students get the same high-quality education as their peers.

Two common themes among institutions that have successfully reduced or eliminated these gaps in degree attainment are a robust review of data to identify areas for improvement and a commitment at every level of the institution to address the problem. It’s time for the higher education community in Illinois to take the challenge on in a cohesive, coordinated approach.

**Current Attainment Goal**

Overall, Illinois has made slow but steady progress towards the 60 by 2025 goal. As of 2016, Illinois had reached 51 percent of the population aged 25-64 holding some postsecondary credential with single digit gains among Blacks and Latinos. However, Blacks, and especially Latinos, both still considerably lag behind the state average for bachelor’s degree attainment. While Illinois has made gains, given large gaps in attainment across racial and ethnic groups, closing these gaps will require major annual

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11 Email with John Fink, June 28, 2018.
increases for Blacks and Latinos. In addition, recent developments have threatened the state’s ability to meet the 60 by 2025 goal. When the state failed to pass a budget for public higher education for two years, many students were unable to access the main state need-based aid program, the Monetary Award Program (MAP). Public universities covered the cost of MAP grants in the interim to keep students in school.15 A number of other institutions were financially unable to cover the grants, leaving many students without a major source of financial aid they depended on. Applications for MAP grants dropped by 98,491 between 2015 and 2017.16 Large institutions serving low-income and minority populations were also forced to slash budgets. Patterns in Black enrollment particularly suggest we may soon see a slowdown in Black attainment progress while Latinos try to catch up with Asians, Blacks, and Whites.

Where Can We Impact Attainment?
Aggressively increasing the degree attainment levels among African-Americans and Latinos will improve lives, the state income base, and state revenue. To close attainment gaps of this size, small campus pilots won’t meet the scale of the problem. Illinois needs statewide policies and resources to accelerate progress.

Increasing baccalaureate degree attainment is a big goal that takes at minimum four years of work and investment for each new class. Illinois cannot graduate more people of color with bachelor’s degrees unless more of such students enroll and see increased progress towards a degree each year. Understanding where students are in the pipeline and where students fall through is essential to helping institutions and policymakers plan targeted approaches.

15 Email with Eric Lichtenberger, October 19, 2018.
In some cases, there is substantial evidence; in others it is scant. The rest of this brief will look at where we have evidence of areas in which we can influence college attainment outcomes. The final section addresses policies that may be helpful in Illinois.

**Enrollment**

Students cannot graduate if they do not enroll, so parsing out enrollment is the first step in estimating potential bachelor’s degrees among Blacks and Latinos. Overall enrollment in Illinois has dropped in recent years within the community college and public university systems.\(^1\) Many believe the most recent drops are a direct consequence of the two-year budget impasse that saw community colleges, public universities, and independent nonprofits continue to operate without millions of dollars in operating funds, and in the case of the latter, Monetary Award Program grants.\(^2\) This is particularly important because some of the schools with the largest populations of Black and Latino students are also the schools with fewer financial resources to draw on when the state doesn’t meet its obligation.

**Student Progress**

In other states, data has been harnessed to better understand where students of color are progressing and where there may be areas for improvement. Measures like average credits completed in the first year by race/ethnicity and income, completion of gateway courses, or when students are most likely to drop out can help identify where interventions would have the most impact on bachelor’s degree attainment. Unfortunately, in Illinois there is little readily available public data to assess where Black and Latino students may be falling out of the pipeline. Despite participation in Complete

Nearly half (47%) of Illinois community college students enrolled in a transfer program in 2016. But despite the highest completion rate in the country, barely 2 in 10 will complete their bachelor's degree. Increasing the transfer out and bachelor’s completion rates could substantially cut costs and improve attainment in Illinois.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>35%</th>
<th>Community college transfer-out rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>complete their bachelor’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>in transfer programs complete a bachelor’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NSCRC, Tracking Transfer, 2017

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College America, in recent years Illinois has not produced some of the most useful leading indicators of student progress towards a degree. As a result, basic baccalaureate transfer data is the most readily available leading indicator.

**Transfer**

With a large community college system but only twelve public universities, saving money at a community college is a particularly important low-cost pathway for Illinoisans who need a bachelor’s degree for their career path. Despite decreasing overall enrollments, Illinois community college transfer program enrollments have barely budged (minus one percent) and increased from 40 to 47 percent of all community college enrollments between 2013 and 2016. 19

Illinois has a substantial gap in bachelor’s completion rates between high-income and low-income transfer students. However, Illinois’ low-income transfer students are more likely to earn a bachelor’s degree when they transfer to a public university compared to a nonprofit institution.

Illinois’ transfer system ranks among the best nationally in bachelor’s completion by students who transfer from a community college. 20 Despite drops nationally, transfer completion rates continued to climb from 17 percent to 19 percent between 2015 and 2016 in Illinois. 21 The state now leads the nation. 22 This may be due to consistent efforts by the colleges, statewide transfer initiative staff, and state agencies to increase student information and the number of courses students can transfer. Recent legislation intended to improve transfer may also have helped support the upward trajectory of student completion results, although it is difficult to make a direct correlation.

With barely two in ten students making it from transfer enrollment to bachelor’s degree completion statewide, there is still much room for improvement. However, gains made by the transfer system have been threatened by a lack of funding in the past few years. This has slowed the work of the major panels to

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22 Ibid.
approve courses and required individual institutions, including in large part the University of Illinois, to foot the bill normally covered by the state. Without consistent funding, improving the system further may prove difficult.\(^{23}\)

**Who Students Are and Where They End Up Matters**

A major area for improvement is the remaining gaps in transfer bachelor’s completion rates between lower- and higher-income students.\(^{24}\) Studies have also suggested that where students end up can be more important than where they transfer from in predicting degree completion. Transfer students have a better chance of graduating from more selective public universities than any other four-year institution.\(^{25}\) While there is still a significant gap in completion for low-income transfer students in Illinois, all students regardless of income have a better chance of completing their bachelor’s when they transfer to a public university. Yet, this is not where most Black and Latino transfer students end up.

**Graduation**

Ultimately, enrollment and transfer rates have diminished importance without successful degree completion. This picture is somewhat complicated for Illinois’ Black and Latino students. However, it is consistent with national research suggesting that going to the most selective school possible increases the chance of completing a bachelor’s degree even for average students.\(^{26}\)

Only a handful of Illinois’ public universities and a shockingly small number of nonprofit institutions graduate more than half of the Black and Latino students that come through their doors as freshmen. Just two Illinois public universities, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and Illinois State University (ISU) can make this claim. Despite an unusually large number of independent colleges in Illinois, only 11 independent, nonprofit schools receiving MAP funding graduate more than five in ten of their Black or Latino first-time students.\(^{27}\) In most cases, completion rates are appallingly low. Too often, Black and Latino students find themselves in debt without a degree.\(^{28}\)

Students’ options are also limited by geography for low-income students that have to support their families. This can be true for both low-income Black and Latino students, in particular Latinas who may

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\(^{24}\) Jenkins and Fink. (2016). Tracking Transfer; Email with John Fink, June 28, 2018.


be expected to stay close to home.\textsuperscript{29} Students may need to remain physically close to help with family care or help financially, making it more difficult to move away and straining their finances.

Chart B: Nonprofit, Four-year Illinois Institutions with 6 Year Degree Completion Rates for Over Half of Black or Latino Undergraduates, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>INSTITUTIONS</th>
<th>BLACK</th>
<th>LATINO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Augustana College (N)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Lake Forest College (R)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Wheaton College (N)</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Knox College (R)</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Northwestern University (N)</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>University of Chicago (N)</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>DePaul University</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Loyola University Chicago</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Bradley University</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Illinois Wesleyan University (N)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Illinois College</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N) indicates not part of Illinois Articulation Initiative and (R) indicates the institution is a receiving-only institution in IAI. Source: College Scorecard

Black Progress in the Bachelor’s Degree Pipeline
In Illinois, drops in Black enrollment at public universities and nonprofit institutions suggest bachelor’s degree attainment may soon also decline, although there have been positive gains in transfer program enrollment in Chicago. In addition, Black students, particularly Black women, are taking the potentially expensive transfer route to a for-profit school. Black students are also more likely to enroll at the public universities with fewer resources and the lowest completion rates. Combined with their enrollment in for-profit schools and transfer patterns, Black students are at a higher risk of leaving with debt but no degree.

Black Enrollments Declining
Breaking with the national trend, Black and White students are enrolled at Illinois public universities and community colleges in similar proportions.\textsuperscript{30} However, Black enrollment in two- and four-year Illinois postsecondary institutions declined considerably between 2011 and 2016, after an increase in


\textsuperscript{30}Ibid.
enrollment following the Recession. This trend is larger than Illinois trends in population, but may be partially related to cyclical changes due to unemployment trends.

While around half of Illinois’ Black undergraduate students enrolled in lower-priced community colleges in 2016, the number declined by 36 percent to 38,762 between 2011 and 2016, dropping below pre-Recession levels. Although Black students have stronger representation at public universities in Illinois than the national trend, they continue to be overrepresented at public institutions with lower resources, and their numbers are declining. Black undergraduate enrollment in Illinois’ public universities dropped by just under 15 percent between 2011 and 2016 to 18,255.

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**Chart C: Black Undergraduate Fall Enrollment and MAP Appropriations, 2011-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public Universities</th>
<th>Community Colleges</th>
<th>Nonprofit Four-Years</th>
<th>For-Profit Four-Years</th>
<th>For-Profit Two-Years</th>
<th>MAP Appropriations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>60,927</td>
<td>56,169</td>
<td>13,835</td>
<td>21,156</td>
<td>13,489</td>
<td>5,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>53,183</td>
<td>20,211</td>
<td>12,970</td>
<td>21,156</td>
<td>10,751</td>
<td>19,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>48,354</td>
<td>19,797</td>
<td>12,528</td>
<td>11,760</td>
<td>11,760</td>
<td>19,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>42,109</td>
<td>11,944</td>
<td>11,615</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>38,762</td>
<td>10,751</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>38,762</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td>11,760</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,555</td>
<td>11,760</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In 2017, MAP appropriations jumped to $515.8 m to compensate for the drop during the budget impasse. Source: IPEDS, ISAC DataBook

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33 IPEDS.


35 IPEDS.
Black representation is particularly low at the top public universities. Most importantly, Black students are particularly absent at those campuses where they have the best chance of graduating. Just under 20 percent of Black public university students in Illinois were enrolled at one of the two schools with Black six-year completion rates over 50 percent. By far, the majority of Black public university students are at schools where they have less than a 50 percent chance of graduating. 36

Despite the high number of nonprofit, four-year colleges and universities in Illinois, Black students are poorly represented, and the number is declining. Despite representing nearly 15 percent of the population of Illinois, they represent just under nine percent of all students at these schools. 37 Between 2011 and 2016, Black enrollment at Illinois’ nonprofit, four-year schools declined 16 percent to 11,555. 38

National research has shown that at for-profit colleges, student debt loads are higher and over half of Black students leave without completing a degree. 39 In Illinois, Black students are overrepresented at both for-profit, four-year and two-year colleges. Nearly as many are enrolled at for-profit bachelor’s degree-granting institutions as at nonprofit, four-year institutions. In 2016, 9,500 Black undergraduates were enrolled at for-profit, four-year programs, representing 21 percent of those enrolled at these schools. Over half (61 percent) were enrolled part-time in 2016, suggesting this may be an attractive option for students who work full-time. While the numbers are much smaller, 28 percent of students at for-profit two-year schools were Black (1,995). 40

Trends are mixed for Black students at these for-profit schools. Black enrollment at for-profit, four-year institutions increased by 15 percent between 2011 and 2016, even with a substantial decline between 2015 and 2016. Enrollment in for-profit, two-year schools decreased by 27 percent in the same period. 41

Black Transfer Program Enrollments Differ By Region
Illinois Black community college transfer program enrollment dropped three percent between 2013 and 2016, slightly higher than the system-wide drop of one percent. 42 However, this trend masks regional differences in the bachelor’s degree pipeline. Outside of Chicago, transfer program enrollment trends suggest that the number of new Black bachelor’s degree graduates is likely to decline. Most community colleges outside of Chicago saw considerable drops in Black transfer program enrollment between 2013 and 2016. 43 As four-year

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38 IPEDS.
39 Huelsman, The Debt Divide.
40 IPEDS.
41 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
enrollment also decreased during this time, it is unlikely that these drops resulted from students choosing four-year options instead.

However, these drops of anywhere from eight to 40 percent were offset by considerable increases in transfer enrollment among Blacks within the City Colleges of Chicago system, which grew 65 percent from 2013 to 2016. Most notably, Black transfer enrollments grew 236 percent at Harold Washington and 134 percent at Malcolm X, leading the district. Only Truman saw a drop (-10 percent). More Black students are entering the bachelor’s degree pipeline in Chicago.

System-wide, Blacks are underrepresented at the schools with the highest transfer enrollments. One Chicago and several suburban and outer suburban community colleges lead the state with 41 percent of all bachelor’s transfer program enrollments. With the exception of Harold Washington College, Black students are noticeably underrepresented at these schools. Although Blacks are around 13 percent of transfer program enrollees statewide, in these schools they represent between six and 10 percent. This is also true at colleges where transfer students are more than 50 percent of enrollments, bringing into question whether Black students are receiving the same level of transfer support as students at leading transfer institutions.

**Black Students Often Take Alternate Transfer Routes**

Most Illinois transfer students don’t take the cost-saving route from a community college to a public university. This is even truer among Black students. Statewide, nearly 18 percent of transfers in 2016 went from a community college to a public university. However, only one in 10 (10 percent) Black transfers took the same path. Less than 1 in 5 of all Black transfer students (1,521 or 17 percent) transferred from a community college to any public or nonprofit four-year program.

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44 Ibid.

45 ICCB Data Book Table III-2, 2013 and 2016, and Table III-13, 2016.
Just over one in five (1,843) Black students made a transfer back to a community college from another community college or public or nonprofit four-year. Black students were slightly more likely (11 percent) than other students (eight percent) to transfer out of a public university in 2016. While transferring from a public university to a community college is fairly common for students of all groups, Black students are slightly more likely to do so. Among students transferring from a public university, 68 percent of Blacks moved to a community college compared to 52 percent of Asians and 59 percent of White students. Both of those groups were more likely to transfer to another public university than Blacks. Black students may be facing financial challenges, cultural factors, or family emergencies that 

\[\text{Note: All numbers represent the most recent year available for simple comparison and do not track actual student progress.}\]
lead them to transfer to a community college.\textsuperscript{49} This has a direct impact on the types of degrees Blacks receive in Illinois.

Another concerning trend impacts Black students: a high proportion, especially women, are following a potentially high-cost, low-graduation alternative pathway that ends at for-profit schools. Nearly half of all transfers statewide in 2016 (24,067) came from outside (“other”) schools.\textsuperscript{50} Of those, nearly half (47 percent or 11,266) transferred to private, for-profit institutions. These numbers are particularly high among Black women. Among Blacks, half of all transfers (50 percent or 4,378) were from one of these schools, 2,966 of which were women. One in four of all Black transfers (25 percent or 2,237) in 2016 followed this path to a private, for-profit college, higher than White students (18 percent).\textsuperscript{51} While not all of these institutions are created equal, their students are more likely to run up high debts. With limited school participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative, many Black students may receive little or no credit for their time and money in college coursework.\textsuperscript{52}

Although the numbers need improvement for all students, small numbers of Black students transfer with enough credits to ensure sophomore status at their new college. Just 11 percent of Black first-time, full-time students transferred with thirty credits or more. Only three percent of Black part-time students did.\textsuperscript{53} This may be partially due to students being placed in multiple levels of remedial coursework for which they cannot receive credit. This would certainly be in keeping with national trends that show Black and Latino students are more likely to be placed in remedial courses than other students.\textsuperscript{54} Expansion of recent efforts in Illinois to implement improvements to remedial education could prove extremely important in improving transfer program and degree completion among Black students.

**Black Graduation Patterns**

The numbers continue to erode through graduation, although there is a small upward trend in degree completion at some of the top public universities. In 2017, the largest number of bachelor’s degrees (3,249) earned by Blacks in Illinois came from public universities, representing just 10 percent of degrees that year, down from 3,433 the year before. Across 62 nonprofit colleges and universities only 2,218 Black students received bachelor’s degrees in 2017, representing seven percent of all bachelor’s degrees that year, a decrease from 2,324 in 2016. Conversely, Blacks are slightly overrepresented among 2017 graduates of four-year, for-profit schools with 16 percent of bachelor’s degrees conferred (1,895), a slight decline from 1,903 in 2016.\textsuperscript{55}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{49} Kuh, et al. *What Matters to Student Success.*
\textsuperscript{50} IBHE Dynamic Data Book Tables I-3 and I-12, 2016.
\textsuperscript{51} IBHE Dynamic Data Book Table I-12, 2016.
\textsuperscript{55} IPEDS.
But, when Blacks follow conventional wisdom and enroll at nonprofit or public four-year institutions, the schools graduating the most Black students have not always been those where students have the best chance of graduating. While Blacks continue to be underrepresented at Illinois’ selective public universities, less prestigious public universities have served as an access point for thousands of Blacks each year. A high proportion of Illinois’ Black students are enrolled in the public institutions with fewer external resources and the poorest graduation rates. This means many more never graduate.

As of 2016, among public universities, Northern Illinois University led in enrolling Black students with 2,209. They were followed closely by Southern Illinois University-Carbondale (SIUC) with 2,094 enrolled and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1,975). Chicago State University came in fourth with 1,753. That same year, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale led in the number of bachelor’s degrees earned by Black students, with Chicago State University coming in second, trailed by Northern Illinois University and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. However, Black completion rates at the first three schools are appalling. Just over 11 percent complete a bachelor’s degree in six years at Chicago State, while rates at the other two hover around 30 percent. Conversely, over seven in ten (73 percent) Blacks at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign received a degree, despite the university’s
In 2017, this pattern shifted slightly. In that year, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign edged out Chicago State University and Northern Illinois University for the number-two spot in Black degrees conferred. This reflects an increase in degrees earned by Black students of nearly seven percent at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a 23 percent decrease at Chicago State University, most likely due to massive cut-backs at Chicago State University and drops in enrollment during the budget impasse. Illinois State University, which only graduated 257 Black students in 2017, nevertheless saw a 10 percent increase in degrees.\textsuperscript{58}

\[\text{Chart F: Illinois Public University Undergraduate Degrees Awarded to Blacks and Latinos, 2017}\]

Source: IPEDS


\textsuperscript{58} IPEDS.
While this shows some forward movement, with so few Black students enrolled in the top institutions, they are still less likely to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in Illinois than other groups. Just under 20 percent of Black public university students enrolled at the two public universities with Black completion rates over 50 percent. Including Eastern Illinois University, which has a 49 percent Black completion rate, slightly over 25 percent of Illinois’ Black public university students enroll in the schools they are most likely to graduate from. Nearly half (47 percent) attend public universities where only seven to 32 percent of Black students complete a bachelor’s degree in six years. 59

Nonprofit, four-year schools don’t do much better. Six-year completion rates are poor at most, and students outside of the Chicago region have extremely limited options. 60 Some of the institutions with the highest completion rates, such as Northwestern University and the University of Chicago, are also the most selective and most expensive, albeit with substantial aid. A handful such as Illinois Wesleyan University and Illinois College are available in the central part of the state and none are available in southern Illinois. 61 Full participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative is also rare, making it more difficult for students to save money at a community college first. 62

**Latino Progress in the Bachelor’s Degree Pipeline**

Now the largest minority group in Illinois, Latinos are much less likely to have a bachelor’s degree than the state average, lagging Asians, Blacks, and Whites. 63 While Latinos continue to be overrepresented at community colleges and underrepresented at public universities in Illinois, growing transfer program enrollment and enrollment at bachelor’s degree-granting institutions, including the top public universities, suggest bachelor’s degree completion may trend higher for Latinos.

**Latino Enrollment Growing**

As Latinos try to catch up with other groups, enrollment has grown particularly at bachelor’s degree-granting institutions, bringing more Latinos into the bachelor’s degree pipeline. 64 This increase is greater than the growth in population. 65

Unlike Blacks and Whites, Latinos have seen fairly steady gains in the community college system, with increasing enrollment of nearly nine percent between 2011 and 2016 (74,320). Growth was faster at public, non-profit, and for-profit, bachelor’s degree-granting institutions. Latino public university enrollment increased 34 percent to 19,956 by 2016, unlike downward trends among Blacks and Whites.

59 Ibid; IBHE, Dynamic Data Book I-3. Note: six-year graduation rates are not available for Governors’ State University.
61 Ibid.
64 IPEDS.
65 Huelsman, *The Debt Divide*.
At nonprofit, four-year institutions, Latino enrollment grew by 34 percent to 21,167 in 2016. Latino enrollment also grew at pricier, for-profit, four-year schools by 56 percent to 4,876, growing at a faster rate than Blacks. Sixty-four percent of these students attended part-time suggesting these institutions may be attractive for students working full-time. Enrollment at for-profit, two-year schools dropped faster among Latinos than among Blacks (-43 percent to 1,081). While performance of these schools varies, this suggests that while the trend is changing, more Latino students may have left school in the last several years with loan debt and no degree.

Latinos, who represent 17 percent of the Illinois population, are overrepresented at Illinois’ community colleges (24 percent of all students) and underrepresented at public universities (14 percent). Despite a strong upward trend in public university enrollment among Latinos, they are still more likely to attend community college and less likely to attend a public university than both Black and White students. However, when they do enroll in Illinois public universities, over half of Latino students enroll at the most selective public institutions with the highest graduation rates for Latinos, increasing their chances of graduating.

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66 IPEDS.  
67 Ibid.  
69 IPEDS.  
Latino Transfer Program Enrollment Rapidly Growing

Between 2013 and 2016, statewide enrollments in community college baccalaureate transfer programs dropped about one percent. Conversely, Latino transfer program enrollment grew rapidly, rising 59 percent to 53,159 with a few drops among colleges in southern Illinois. The sheer numbers involved across most of the state suggest that bachelor’s degree attainment among Latinos could rise with continued improvement to the transfer system.

Within the community college system, Latino transfer program enrollment has grown almost across the board. Latino enrollments grew at all eight leading transfer community colleges. Latino transfer enrollment at these schools varies widely, but at two of them Latinos make up nearly 30 percent of the undergraduates and at another Latinos make up 40 percent. Gains in transfer program enrollment among Latinos were highest by far at the City Colleges where they rose by 188 percent between 2013 and 2016. Enrollments by Latinos in that system were up between 173 percent at Wright College and 392 percent at Harold Washington College in the same period. Truman College trailed the other colleges with a 33 percent increase in Latino transfer enrollment.

Most drops in transfer program enrollments among Latinos were in southern Illinois, presaging a potential drop in attainment there. Seven community colleges in this region saw decreases between two and 23 percent among their small Latino populations. One Hispanic-serving, suburban Chicago school, Morton College, also saw a drop in transfer program enrollments among Latinos of 17 percent.

Latinos Often End Up Back in Community Colleges

Like most Illinoisans, the money-saving route from a community college to a public university isn’t the path most Latinos take. However, Latinos were more likely than any other group to start at a community college. Nearly half of all Latino transfers (48 percent or 4,102) in 2016 started out at a community college. Unfortunately, Latinos were somewhat less likely than Asians or Whites to continue on to a

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71 ICCB Data Book Table III-2, 2013 and 2016, and Table III-13, 2016.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
public university. Only 38 percent of Latino community college transfers took this path compared to 40 percent of Asians and 46 percent of Whites. As a result, only 18 percent (1,556) of all Latino transfers in Illinois moved from a community college to a public university. Including nonprofits, 32 percent of Latinos transfers (2,759) went from a community college to a four-year public or nonprofit.\(^7\)

Latinos are also more likely to end up transferring to a community college than Blacks and most other groups. In 2016, nearly one in four Latino transfer students (23 percent or 2,004) transferred to a community college from a public university, nonprofit, or other community college. About half of these

In Illinois, Latinos are a growing part of the population, but only 15% of Latinos have a bachelor’s degree or higher in Illinois, lagging most other groups. Latinos are more likely to attend community colleges than other ethnic groups, but enrollment at all public and nonprofit colleges and universities is on the rise. While Latinos are often in schools with fewer resources, over half of public university students now attend the three universities with the leading completion rates.

Around 99,000 Latinos of all ages enrolled in programs that lead to a bachelor’s (2016)

- 254,385 Latinos 18-24 in Illinois
- 53,159 Latinos enrolled in a community college transfer program
- 8,584 Latinos transferred in 2016
  - But, only 3 in 10 transferred from a community college to a public or nonprofit 4 year
  - 17% FT/FT Latinos transferred with more than 30 credits
- 41,123 Latino undergraduates in a public or nonprofit 4 year
- 4,876 Latino undergraduates in a for-profit 4 year
- $500 Less than the state average, weighted per pupil public university state appropriation (2014/15)

- 3,828 Graduated from a public university
- 4,166 Graduated from a nonprofit 4 year
- 1,218 Graduated from a for-profit 4 year

Note: All numbers represent the most recent year available for simple comparison and do not track actual student progress.

\(^7\)IBHE Dynamic Data Book Table I-12, 2016.
were from a four-year school. Given what we know about the challenges and demands faced by many of these students, inadequate financial aid, family emergencies, or a mismatch between high school preparation and college coursework could be the reason. This has a direct impact on the attainment of bachelor’s degrees by Latinos in Illinois.

Across all groups, Latinos came second in the number of community college students making a lateral move to another community college (1,012 or 25 percent). Latinos tend to be underrepresented in public universities, and accordingly those transfers are less common. Those who do transfer from a public university are also more likely to transfer to a community college (554 or 68 percent) than other groups, tying with Blacks. This is common across all groups, but more pronounced among Latinos.  

Although 32 percent of Latino transfers (2,808) came from outside or “other” institutions, this is less common among Latinos than other groups (50 percent of Black transfers and 41 percent of White transfers). Thirty-nine percent (1,084) of Latinos coming from these schools went on to community colleges and 37 percent (1,036) transferred to for-profit schools. Only 10 percent (272) transferred to a public university. With limited school participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative, many of these students may have transferred with little or no credit for college coursework.

It is important to note how few credits many Latino students have accumulated when they do transfer. Although the numbers need improvement for all students, Latinos are less likely than White or Asian students to transfer with enough credits to ensure sophomore status at their new college. Only 17 percent of Latino full-time students and five percent of part-time students have more than 30 credits when they transfer. This may be due in part to higher rates of remedial coursework among Latinos.

**Latino Graduation Patterns**

Overall numbers drop further closer to graduation, although degrees earned by Latinos are on the rise. As of 2017, nonprofit, four-year institutions led in the number of bachelor’s degrees conferred (4,166), up from 3,751 in 2016. Latinos now represent 13 percent of undergraduate degrees at these schools. Relative to their share of the population (17 percent), Latinos are underrepresented in public universities with 12 percent of bachelor’s degrees in 2017 (3,828), up from 3,519 in 2016. Statewide, 1,218 Latinos received bachelor’s degrees at pricier, for-profit, four-year schools in 2017, an increase from 1,153 the year before.

For Latinos at public or nonprofit four-year institutions, graduation numbers and rates vary widely across institutions. Only a handful of schools graduate more than 50 percent of their Latino students. However, there is one promising trend. While Latinos are less likely to enroll in a public university in Illinois than Blacks or Whites, enrollment is growing, and when they do, over half enroll in the institutions they are most likely to graduate from. As a result, these students have a higher likelihood of earning a degree than those attending other public universities.

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75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
78 Complete College America Data Dashboard, retrieved from https://completecollege.org/data-dashboard/
79 IPEDS.
In 2016, 54 percent of Latino public university students enrolled at the three universities with over 50 percent six-year Latino completion rates. This trend is driven largely from the fact that nearly 28 percent (5,508) of these students attended the University of Illinois at Chicago, which comes in third with a 54 percent Latino six-year completion rate. In 2017, the Chicago-based institution graduated the largest number of Latinos by far with 975 students earning bachelor’s degrees. Latino students were also more likely to enroll at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (3,480), where 82 percent graduate. UIUC was the second producer of Latino bachelor’s degrees in 2017 with 699. In 2016, Illinois State University came in third in Latino enrollees (1,883), and 66 percent of first-time Latino students graduate in six years.80

![Chart I: Latino Undergraduate 6-Year Degree Completion Rate, 2016](chart)

However, despite much lower graduation rates, Northeastern Illinois University (494) and Northern Illinois University (489) came in third and fourth in bachelor’s degrees conferred on Latino students in 2017, pushing Illinois State University to fifth (380). In 2016, nearly 15 percent (2,900) of Latino public university undergraduates were enrolled at Northeastern Illinois which only has an 18 percent six-year completion rate for Latinos. The numbers are better for Northern Illinois University, where 12 percent (2,352) attended, but only 41 percent of Latinos complete. Nearly one in four Latinos (25 percent) attended those Illinois public universities where between 10 and 38 percent of Latinos graduate.81

81 Ibid. Note: six-year graduation rates are not available for Governors’ State University.
The handful of leading nonprofit four-years that graduate more than 50 percent of both Black and Latino students are clustered in the northern region of the state, although there are a few that have better rates for Latinos than Blacks and a few that have the reverse. Unfortunately, for students who cannot move far from family supports, a very small number of nonprofit colleges or universities in central Illinois have completion rates above 50 percent for Latinos. Southern Illinois has no nonprofit or public institutions that graduate at least 50 percent of Latino students. Low participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative further hinders students who wish to start at a community college from saving thousands of dollars in tuition.

Policies from Other States
Over the last few decades, a handful of U.S. states have taken a proactive approach to improving bachelor’s degree attainment among underrepresented students statewide. The focus has often been on increasing enrollment of low-income students in top institutions as a way to increase attainment for both rural and minority populations. In California and Texas, these efforts have been initiated statewide by legislative pressure. In Virginia, public opinion, the threat of possible legislation, and leadership by the state higher education agency led to internal efforts to increase in-state and Pell student enrollment at public universities. Other systems such as the University of Georgia increased graduation rates by looking at where underrepresented students fail to make progress and putting system-wide practices into place to help students avoid those pitfalls.

Increasing Enrollment at Top Public Universities
In Illinois, questions often arise about how many seats at the top public universities are going to Illinois students and how many are going to out-of-state or foreign students. This question is the subject of debate and legislation elsewhere as well. Following changes in affirmative action, both California and Texas instituted policies aimed at opening doors to flagship universities especially for low-income and minority students. Both have incorporated guaranteed enrollment for students within a certain percentage of class rank, although there have been a variety of initiatives in both states.

In California, until the mid- to late-2000s the University of California offered an enrollment guarantee to high school students who completed in the top 12.5 percent of high school graduates. Even students who don’t apply but graduate in the top 12.5 percent receive a letter informing them they have been accepted. By 2014, only the rural Merced campus had remaining seats. However, the campus is the most rural and possibly least well-known, which presents challenges for low-income students, who many not be able to move away from family. As of 2014, only two percent of California students took the offer.

Perhaps in response to the lack of seats, attention has turned to the out-of-state students enrolled in the University of California system. A recent report by the state auditor reprimanded the school for

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enrolling too many out-of-state students. State legislators offered $25 million if the system increased resident student enrollment by 10 percent or 5,000 by fall of 2017. With a system-wide average of 15.5 percent enrollment by non-Californians, and higher percentages at the most coveted schools, legislators discussed a 10 percent cap on out-of-state students system-wide. However, the governor decided to leave the decision to the schools. As of 2016, if the system enrolled 2,500 additional California students by 2018-19 and set a university-wide cap on outside enrollment, the system would receive a bonus of $18.5 million dollars.⁸⁵

In response, the system president put an internal cap into place. The Board of Regents approved an 18.5 percent cap system-wide with different goals for the campuses at Irvine, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and San Diego. The system exceeded expectations to increase in-state enrollment by 7,400 in fall 2016 and was on track to meet the goal for fall 2017.⁸⁶

Given the high demand, rigorous admissions requirements, and limited seats within the most coveted institutions, policymakers also created an incentive to increase graduation rates at schools that serve a broader population. Legislators offered a $35 million incentive for California State University (CSU) to increase completion rates, with clear expectations for both Pell and non-Pell students. The system was tasked with taking an aggressive approach to increase the four-year graduation rate to 19 percent (12 percent for Pell, 25 percent for non-Pell). The system is also expected to increase the six-year completion rate to 57 percent, with a 73 percent goal for transfer students.⁸⁷ Following the lead of the UC system, in 2017 the CSU system began an initiative to increase admissions options. While around 480,000 are enrolled annually, around 30,000 eligible students are denied admission. With new state funding for that purpose, eligible students will be offered a space at one of 23 CSU campuses. Eligibility requirements vary depending in part on campus demand. However, students who have a 3.0 or lower GPA and the required SAT or ACT scores may be admitted.⁸⁸

In 1997, after affirmative action was ruled unconstitutional, Texas put in place guaranteed enrollment policies designed for both rural and urban students. The Texas 10 Percent Plan provides that students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school class are automatically admitted into any public university in Texas. Ideally, this would allow hard-working students from poorer resourced schools the

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opportunity to attend a state university. This was intended to serve rural Whites as well as students of color in lower resourced high schools.\textsuperscript{89}

The policy had an immediate impact on Black and Latino enrollment. Black enrollment went up by 44 percent and Latino enrollment increased by 10 percent. The GPA of students under the new policy were also higher than those of general admissions students.

However, results have been mixed. Some feel as though the policy has not increased diversity as much as hoped. For example, only 25 percent of Texas public university students are Latino compared to 50 percent of the college population overall.\textsuperscript{90} One large study found that while Top 10 Percent students were 60 percent more likely to enroll in a flagship than those just under the cut-off, they primarily came from high schools that already had high college enrollment rates. The study also found that this simply redirected students who otherwise would have attended a more expensive private university. Using a sample of 17,000 students from a large urban district, the study found that students in the top 10 percent were more likely to be female and White (43 percent White; 18 percent Black; 30 percent Latino), more likely to enroll in college, and somewhat more likely to enroll in a public flagship compared to other students (58 percent enrolled in college compared to 30 percent district-wide; 21 percent enrolled in public flagship, compared to four percent district-wide). However, students were less likely to be low-income (41 percent vs. 54 percent in the district). In a positive turn, the study also found that Top 10 Percent students enrolled in a flagship were not more likely than other traditionally admitted students to transfer to a less-selective institution or drop out of the flagship.\textsuperscript{91}

The policy seems to have had the biggest impact at the University of Texas at Austin.\textsuperscript{92} When first enacted, less than half of the entering classes were affected. After five years, that had grown to 70 percent and some worried it was pushing out other students. In 2009, the Texas legislature tweaked the rule, allowing UT Austin to cap automatic admissions.\textsuperscript{93} The school capped Top 10 percent admissions to 75 percent of all admissions. As of 2017, the institution accepted the top eight percent of Texas students automatically, accounting for 75 percent of new freshman classes. The remaining 25 percent of students have a more complex admissions process and includes a higher number of Whites.\textsuperscript{94}

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\textsuperscript{91} Daugherty, Martorell, and McFarlin. (2014). The Texas Ten Percent Plan’s Impact on Enrollment.


\textsuperscript{93} Watkins and Satija. (2016). The Price of Admission Part I.

\textsuperscript{94} Satija. (2017). Has the Top Ten Percent Rule impacted diversity at UT-Austin?
Opponents at the campus argue that the policy has lowered graduation rates and SAT scores. The school has spent millions trying to help students from poorer schools get up to speed and complete. By 2016, the school had reached a 60 percent graduation rate, up from 52 percent in 2012. The goal was to reach 70 percent by 2017.\textsuperscript{95}

Internally, the university has launched a highly successful effort to improve performance among struggling students from poor areas. Latino students from the border, rural Whites, and Vietnamese immigrants were struggling most. All were automatic admission, most were first generation, lower-income, and from underperforming schools. To address the problem, a professor from the College of Natural Sciences created the TIP program.

The program includes smaller classes, additional information, and peer advising. Students are tracked closely to see how they progress and the results have been astounding. One of the most important aspects has been changing the culture of the school from sink-or-swim to recognizing that students come with very, very different levels of preparation. The program costs about $500 per student or $250,000 per year and is now being expanded to other parts of the campus.\textsuperscript{96} The University Leadership Network works with about 500 new freshmen each year. Students don’t apply but are selected based on adversity factor. The university has committed $10 million in scholarships with $500,000 per year to run the program. Students meet weekly, are enrolled in a monthly-payment scholarship program based on attendance and GPA, and are engaged in the campus community in various activities, including providing on-campus jobs related to their program of study. Following development of the program, between 2011 and 2015 the persistence rate gap between the most at-risk and least at-risk students shrank by more than half.\textsuperscript{97}

**Addressing the Challenge at Scale**

Each year in Illinois, tens of thousands of Black and Latino students are projected to graduate from high school. Yet only two public universities graduate more than five in ten of their Black and Latino students. At the last enrollment peak, there were just over 49,000 undergraduate seats at the two top public universities. While Illinois’ numerous nonprofit institutions can enroll many more, a scant eleven graduate more than 50 percent of Blacks and Latinos. Illinois must do better if we are to ensure that our entire populace has the opportunity to fully participate at the highest levels of our economy.

A further challenge is that Black and Latino students have often been concentrated in high schools that are simply not funded as well. Often these students do not have access to the same advanced coursework or programs that would give them the same level of preparation as students in more affluent schools. Based on PARCC results, both Latinos and Blacks lag Asian and White students in


\textsuperscript{96} Watkins and Satija. (2016). The Price of Admission Part III.

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid.
college readiness. For the thousands of students who fall below readiness levels, enrolling in one of Illinois’ top public universities is unlikely.

This trend doesn’t end when Blacks and Latinos attend college. While this varies widely by institution, on average the public four-year universities attended by these students received less state funding than the state average. When Illinois has made across-the-board percentage cuts, these inequities have largely continued (cp. Chart J).

Furthermore, for students who take the transfer route, opportunities are limited. Perhaps one of the most underestimated challenges is that while the transfer system in Illinois is designed to help all students, it works best when students already know where they will transfer when they first begin at a community college. Yet, students may have no idea which university will accept them when they start at a community college and may not know how early they need to start the process.

A small number of nonprofit colleges and universities in Illinois are successful at graduating Black and Latino students, and more than half of those have no or limited involvement in the IAI transfer system. The number of transfers accepted at the top public universities doesn’t come anywhere near meeting the numbers in transfer programs. One of the most successful at graduating students of color, Illinois State University, accepted 2,049 transfer students in 2016. The University of Illinois at Chicago, which does better at graduating their Latino students than Black students, came in second with 1,958 transfer students. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign tied for third with 1,727 transfer students in

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100 Prepared by Nate Johnson of Postsecondary Analytics for Strategy Labs using IPEDS data.
101 Conversation with Dena Lawrence, May 21, 2018.
the same year. Northern Illinois University, which only graduates just over three in ten Black students and four in ten Latino students over six years, tied for third.\textsuperscript{102} This doesn’t come close to meeting the need or the variety of preparation and skill levels among students. Even those students who are well prepared are less likely to graduate from less selective or open access schools.\textsuperscript{103}

There are a smattering of university-based Black and Latino student initiatives. For example, Northern Illinois recently started a promising new minority student completion initiative. Eastern Illinois has a successful transition program for underrepresented students who enroll early in the year. The program is credited with improving student outcomes considerably. Students who participate have a higher GPA and higher graduation rate on average than the overall population.\textsuperscript{104} However, there simply isn’t enough funding for all the students who could use the program. After years of underrepresentation among Black students, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has begun earlier outreach to applicants to encourage more Black enrollment.

Unfortunately, the size, scope, and quality of these types of programs varies and there are more students than program spots. This scattershot approach isn’t helping enough students. Digging in to see where improvements are needed and putting funding behind proactive, large-scale initiatives is the only way to meet this challenge head-on, at the scale of the problem.

**Policy Recommendations**

Thoughtful changes to state policy have the potential to increase bachelor’s attainment among Black and Latino students, and low-income students of all backgrounds. For example, aligning MAP and other funding with student success efforts could have a major impact. And, while top 10 percent policies haven’t always had the expected results, setting aside a specific number of spots for Pell-eligible, top 10 percent students is one small way to expand opportunity for students who need it. Including a cap on out-of-state students such as 18 percent could open up around 2,700 spots over four years to low-income, talented, underrepresented students at UIUC alone.\textsuperscript{105}

However, Illinois is coming back from a multiple year budget impasse and a wave of students leaving to go to college in other states. The success of these policies will be contingent on Illinois finding a solution for the structural budget issues that continue to plague the state and a stable funding environment where students and institutions are not worried they will be left holding the bag mid-year.

Furthermore, there are thousands more students who are not the top students in their class but also need access to the economic opportunity higher education brings. To meet the scale of the challenge,

\textsuperscript{102} MyCredits Transfer chart “2016 Illinois Student Transfers to Public Universities.” Retrieved April 2018 from http://www.mycreditstransfer.org/transferready/default.html


\textsuperscript{104} Conversation with Dr. Mona Davenport, Eastern Illinois University, May 1, 2018.

\textsuperscript{105} Calculated using out-of-state percentages and total undergraduate enrollment retrieved from https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/554610 and https://today.uic.edu/university-proposes-new-financial-aid-commitment
any strategy to increase baccalaureate attainment has to consider: 1.) How to increase the number of students in the places they are most likely to graduate, and 2.) How to improve student outcomes at the affordable universities most accessible to underrepresented students? Policies to consider follow.

**Improve Low-Cost Pathways**

- Consider requiring participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative for MAP institutions.
- Protect or increase funding for MyCreditsTransfer, including funding for Transferology licenses for schools serving lower income students.
- Protect or increase funding for the Illinois Articulation Initiative, particularly for major panels.
- Create a public awareness campaign and outreach to help students with choosing an institution and planning for college. Similar to 15 to Finish campaigns, educate students on completing gatekeeper courses early on and needed credits in the first and second years of a transfer program. Help high school counselors and students select a transfer-receiving institution early.
- Create new flexible, low-cost pathways focused on high demand careers to provide an alternative to costly for-profit institutions, particularly marketed to women.

**Align Funding with State Needs**

- Reevaluate current higher education funding to develop a rational funding formula that supports increased attainment among students from rural and urban low-income areas.
- Create a separate fund to help regional comprehensive public universities improve graduation and completion rates among students of color. Fund technical assistance to support these schools in their efforts to create or expand programs similar to the programs at Eastern Illinois University or the University of Texas at Austin.
- Require schools receiving MAP or other state funding to create campus-wide assessments and plans to increase graduation rates among low-income, Black, and Latino students.
- Prioritize MAP grants in zip codes with low attainment, balancing rural and urban areas.
- Increase MAP dollar limits for any school that increases their graduation rates for underrepresented students above 65 percent or reduces graduation gaps significantly.
- Consider how to improve access to more selective schools, such as creating a MAP bonus for community college students with remaining need who transfer to one of the public universities with completion rates over 65 percent for Black and Latino students.

**Focus on Improving Graduation Rates**

- Create a statewide recruitment and advising initiative focused on increasing Black and Latino enrollment at more selective institutions. Educate high school counselors and youth workers about which colleges have the best completion rates for Black and Latino students.
- Require top public universities to set stretch enrollment goals over the next five years to increase in-state enrollments by students in the top 10 percent of their high school class with a special emphasis on Pell recipients. Suggest a cap on out-of-state students at 18 percent.
- Create incentives for regional public universities to increase graduation and completion rates.
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