



**15**

**CREDITS A SEMESTER  
TO GRADUATE ON TIME**

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**#15TOFINISH**

# COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

## Launching 15 To Finish Alabama

**Dhanfu E. Elston, Ph.D. (*dah-nee-foo*)**  
***Vice President for Strategy***



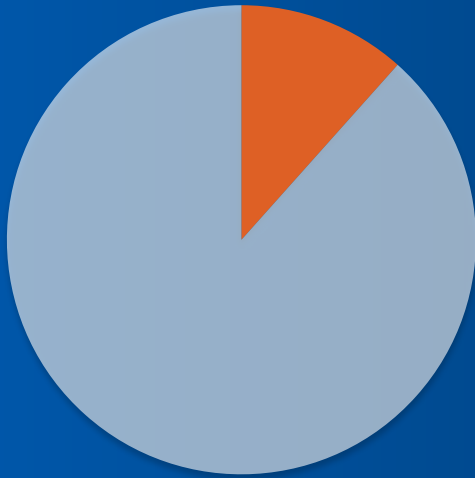
**@CompleteCollege**  
**@DrElston**

**#15ToFinish**  
**#CompleteCollegeAL**

# On-Time Graduation Rates

(Full-Time Students)

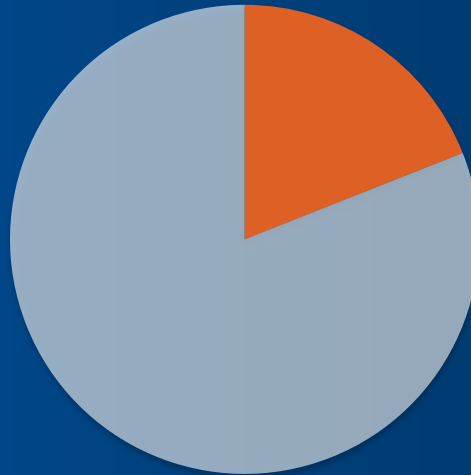
2-Year  
Associate



**5%**

ON TIME

4-Year  
Bachelor's  
(non-flagship)



**19%**

ON TIME

4-Year  
Bachelor's  
(flagship/  
very high research)



**36%**

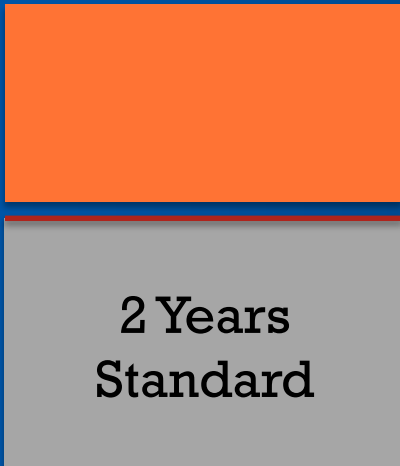
ON TIME

# Time to Degree

(Full-Time Students)

2-Year  
Associate

3.6



4-Year  
Bachelor's  
(non-flagship)

4.9



4-Year  
Bachelor's  
(flagship/  
very high research)

4.4



# Excess Credits

(Full-Time Students)

2-Year  
Associate

80.9



60 Credits  
Standard

4-Year  
Bachelor's  
(non-flagship)

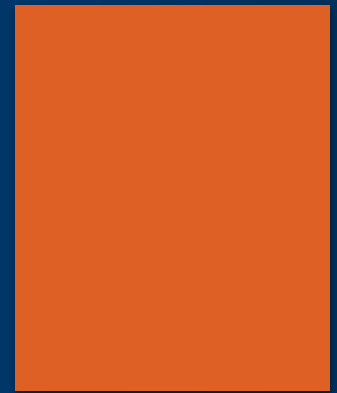
133.5



120 Credits  
Standard

4-Year  
Bachelor's  
(flagship/  
very high research)

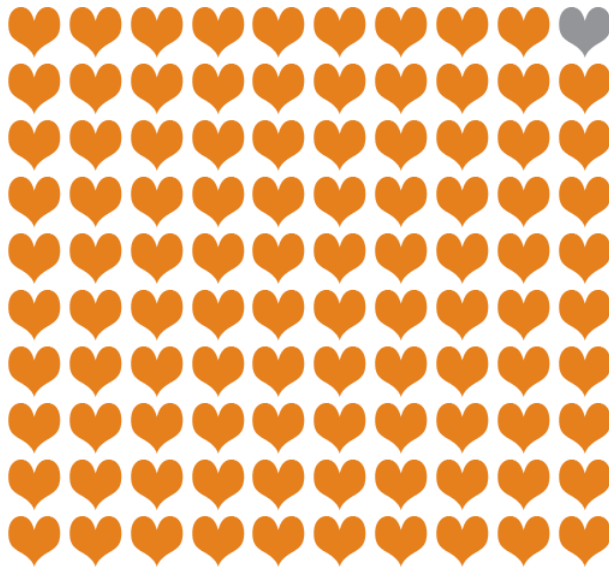
134.6



120 Credits  
Standard

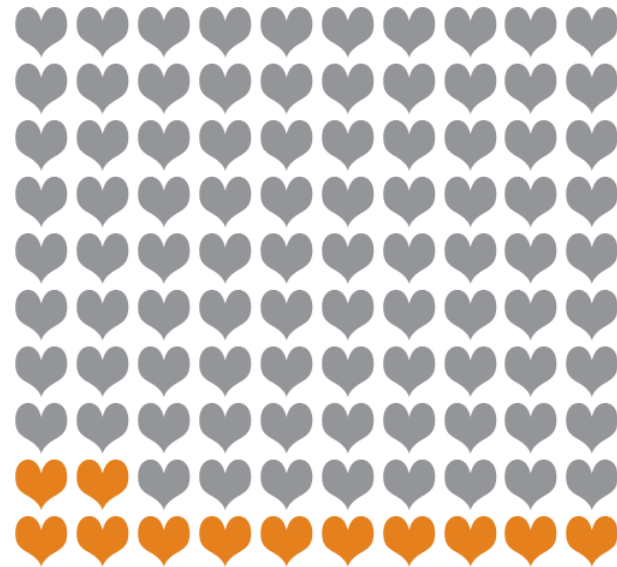
# Behavioral Economics: **Default**

## Organ Donation Rates



Austria (OPT-  
OUT)

**99%**

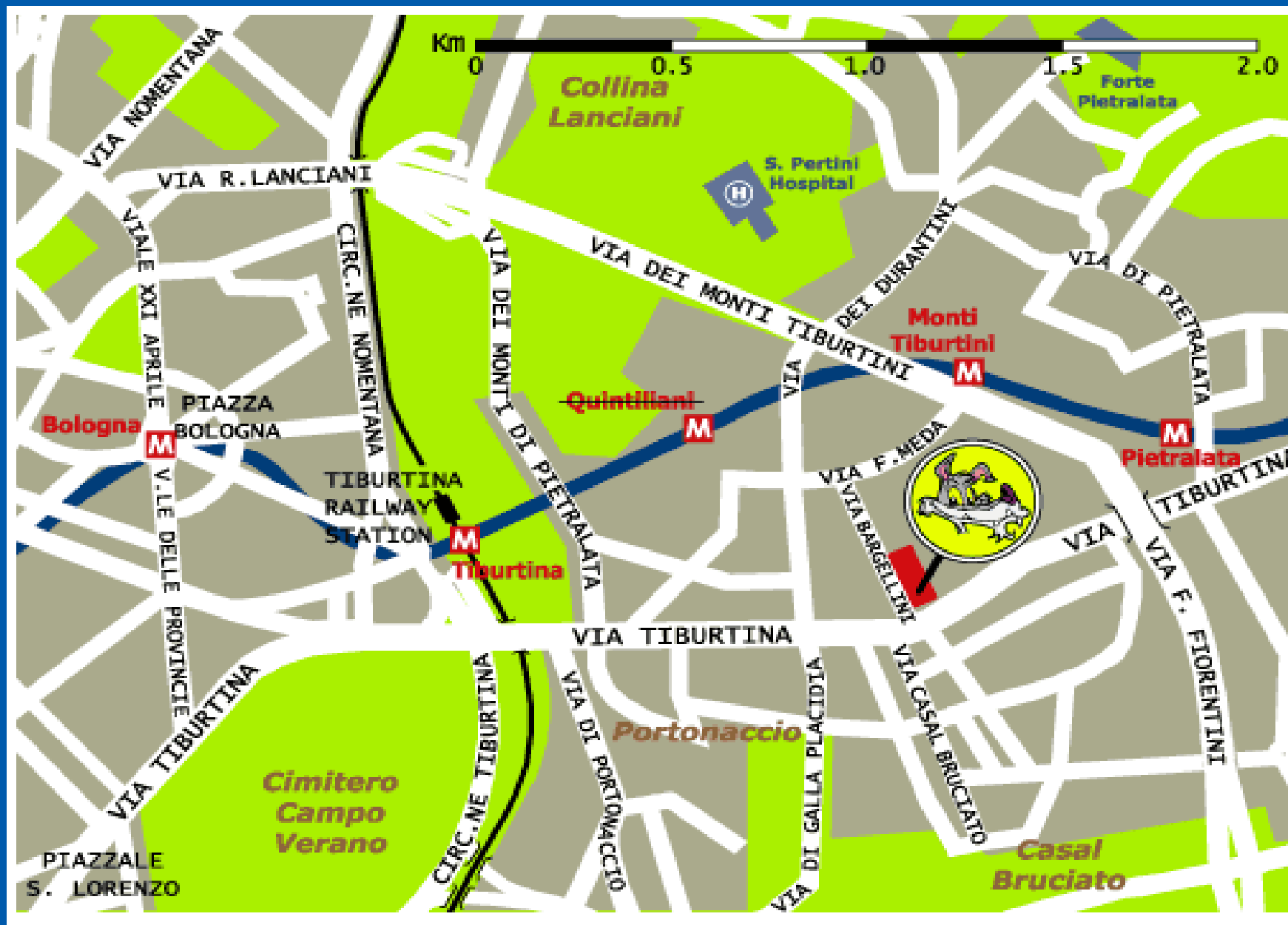


Germany (OPT-  
IN)

**12%**

# Guided Pathways to Success (GPS)???



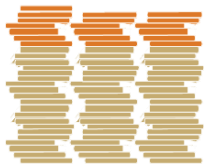


# GPS Direct (Guided Pathways to Success)

## The BIG Issues



- Uniformed major decisions
- Taking too much time



- Inability to access required courses
- Difficulty with registration



- Excess credits
- Not enough guardrails to prevent poor choices



- Spending too much money
- Not graduating



**GAME CHANGER**

**15 To Finish**

15<sup>to</sup>   
FINISH



2+2

THINK

Finish  
in 4

EDUCATE • INNOVATE



## INSIDE HIGHER ED

### Credits Up With 15 to Finish

By [Ashley A. Smith](#) // May 23, 2017

### Incentives for Completion in Chicago

By [Ashley A. Smith](#) // April 10, 2018

### Tennessee Lawmakers Reject Full-Time Completion Plan

By [Ashley A. Smith](#) // April 26, 2018

# 200% Graduation Rate

(Part-Time Students)

2-Year  
Associate

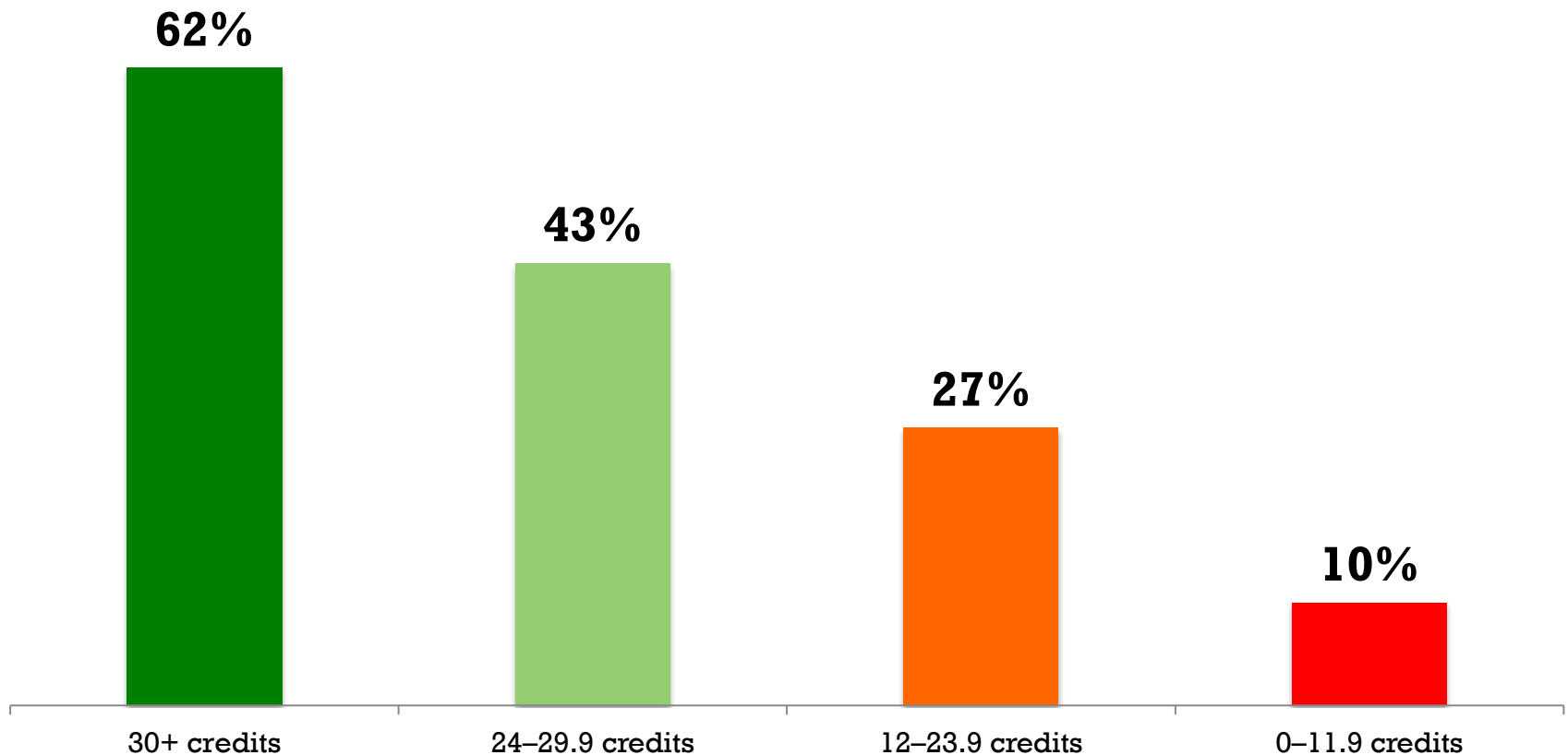


7%

IN 4 YEARS

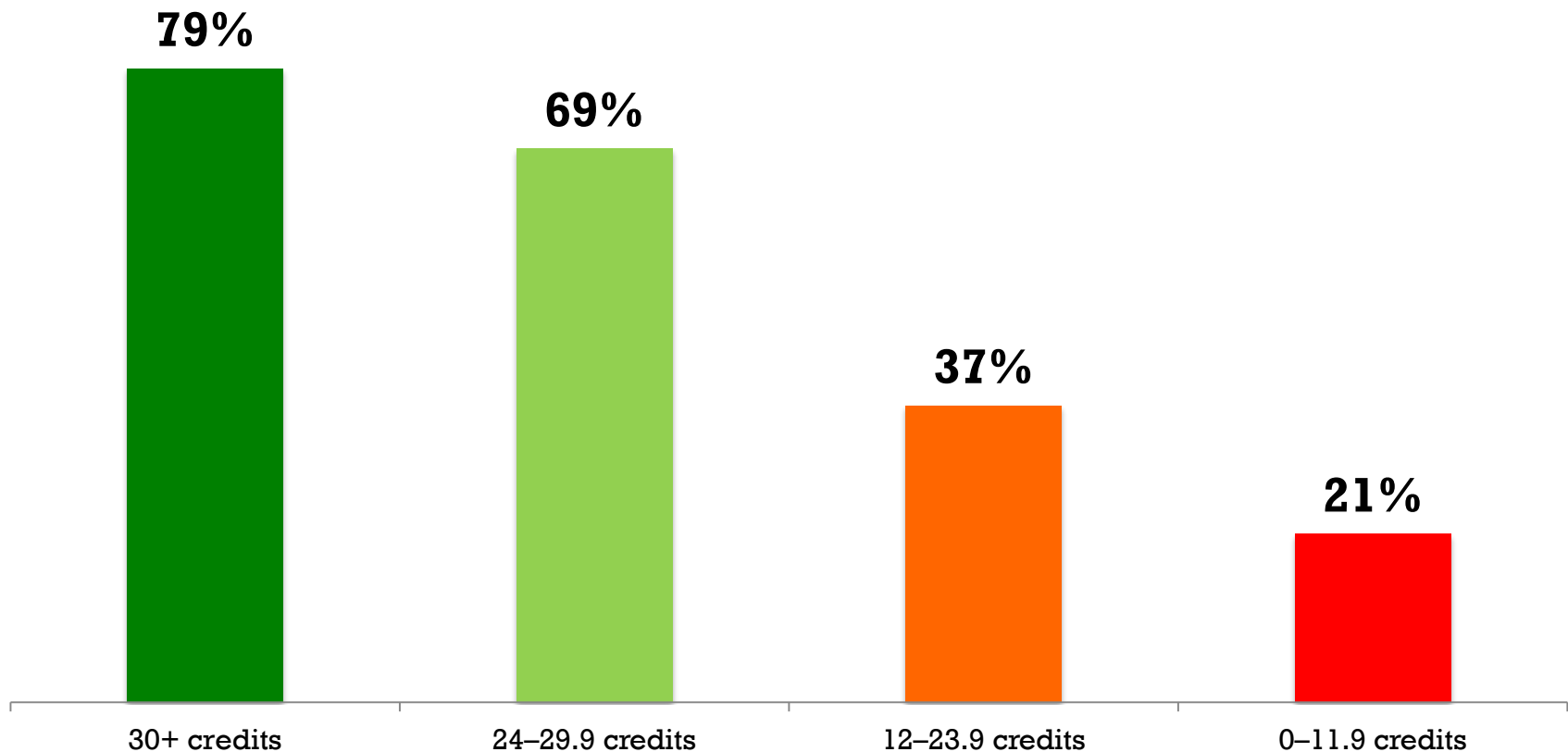
**The Power of 15 Credits: More students graduate when they complete 30+ credits in their first year.**

## **Associate Degrees**



**The Power of 15 Credits: More students graduate when they complete 30+ credits in their first year.**

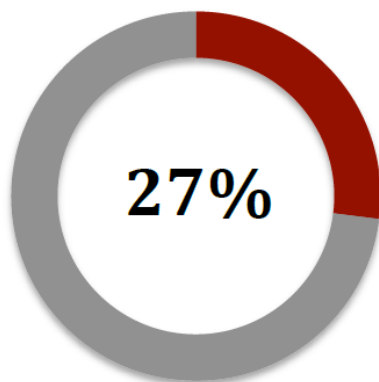
## **Bachelor's degree**



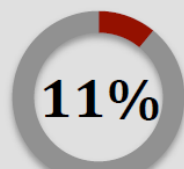
**Half of American college students need just one more course per semester to be on track for on-time graduation.**

Percent of Students  
Completing 30 Credits Per Year  
(*On-Time* Students)

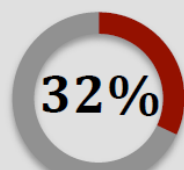
All Students



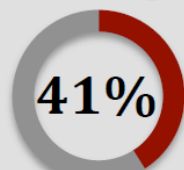
2-Year



4-Year NF

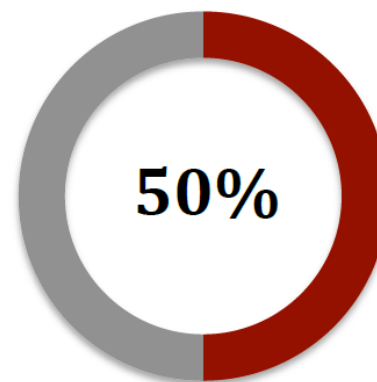


4-Year Flagship

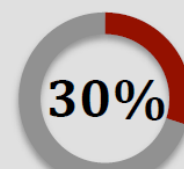


Percent of Students  
Completing 24 Credits Per Year  
(Full-Time but Not *On-Time*)

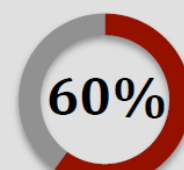
All Students



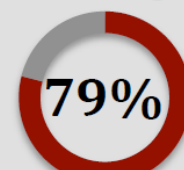
2-Year



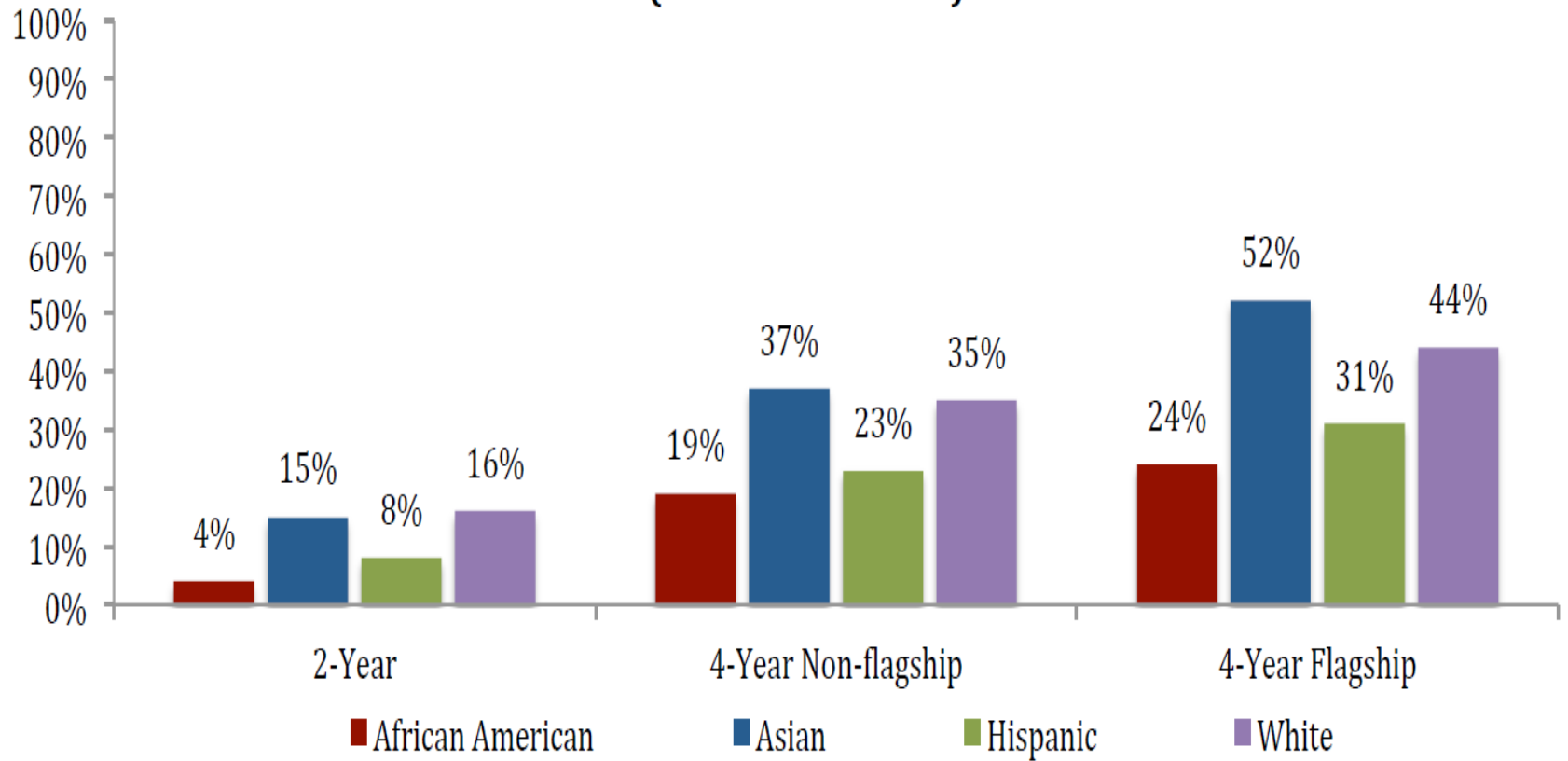
4-Year NF



4-Year Flagship

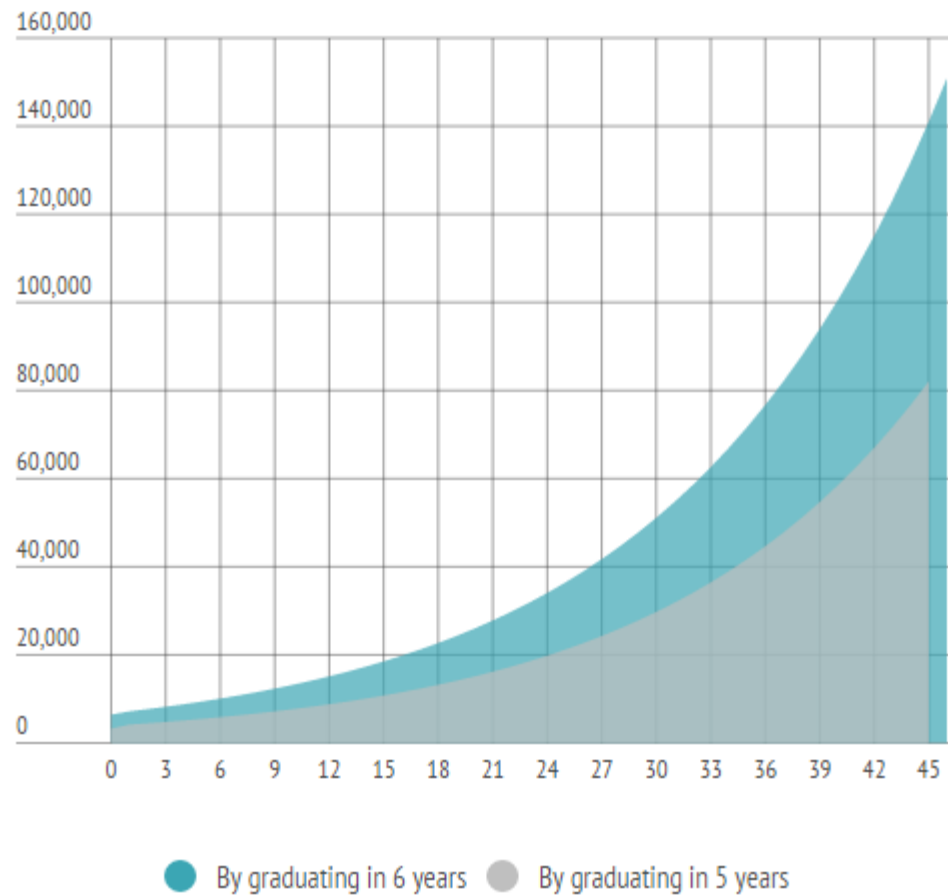


## Percent of Students Completing 30 Credits Per Year (*On-Time* Students)



<b>TUITION AND LOAN COSTS</b>	<b>ONE EXTRA YEAR, PUBLIC COLLEGE</b>	<b>ONE EXTRA YEAR, PRIVATE COLLEGE</b>	<b>TWO EXTRA YEARS, PUBLIC COLLEGE</b>	<b>TWO EXTRA YEARS, PRIVATE COLLEGE</b>
Portion of tuition paid out of pocket	\$12,557	\$18,992	\$25,375	\$38,115
Cost of a loan, with interest, over 10 years	\$6,040	\$7,823	\$12,080	\$15,645
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>\$18,598</b>	<b>\$26,815</b>	<b>\$37,456</b>	<b>\$53,760</b>

## Retirement savings forgone



	ONE EXTRA YEAR, PUBLIC COLLEGE	ONE EXTRA YEAR, PRIVATE COLLEGE	TWO EXTRA YEARS, PUBLIC COLLEGE	TWO EXTRA YEARS, PRIVATE COLLEGE
<b>Tuition and loans</b>	\$18,598	\$26,815	\$37,456	\$53,760
<b>Opportunity costs</b>	\$128,429	\$128,429	\$245,253	\$245,253
<b>Total cost for not graduating in four years</b>	<b>\$147,026</b>	<b>\$155,244</b>	<b>\$282,691</b>	<b>\$298,995</b>

**“The best strategy for reducing the cost of college is to ensure more students take the credits needed to graduate on time.”**

**(Complete College America, 2016)**





**NACADA**

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY  
FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

**ADVISING IS  
TEACHING**

# COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

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## SHARED PRINCIPLES

Far too few full-time students graduate on time.

Graduating late or “taking an extra year” comes at great cost for students and their families.

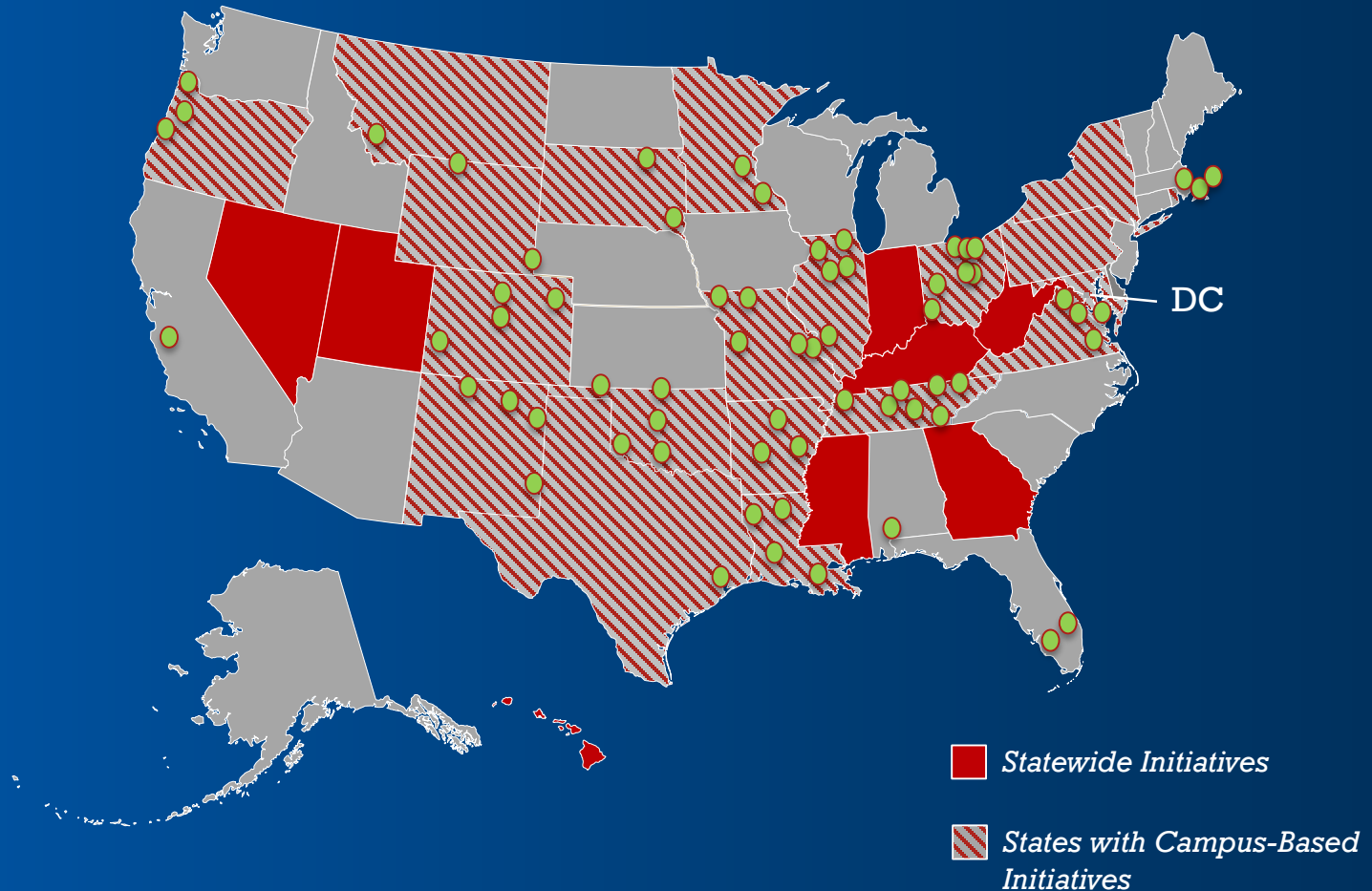
Advisors play a critical role in boosting student success.

Many more students can take 15 credits per semester or term, greatly increasing their likelihood of on-time completion.

#15toFinish informs students of their choices and ensures they know what it takes to graduate on time.



# Fifteen to Finish



2017 COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA ANNUAL CONVENING

# ACCESS TO THE AMERICAN DREAM

NEW ORLEANS | NOV 29 - DEC 1

- Delaware State University
- Grambling St. University
- Harris-Stowe St. University
- Jackson St. University
- Langston University
- Mississippi Valley St. University
- Norfolk St. University
- Texas Southern University
- West Virginia St. University
- Benedict College
- Clark Atlanta University
- Dillard University
- Lawson State Community College
- GateWay Community College
- Houston GPS
- Merced College
- Mercy College
- Phoenix College
- Pima Community College
- San Joaquin College



## Implementation of 15 to Finish

**Bishop State Community College**

Dr. Reginald Sykes, President

**Mobile Area Education Foundation**

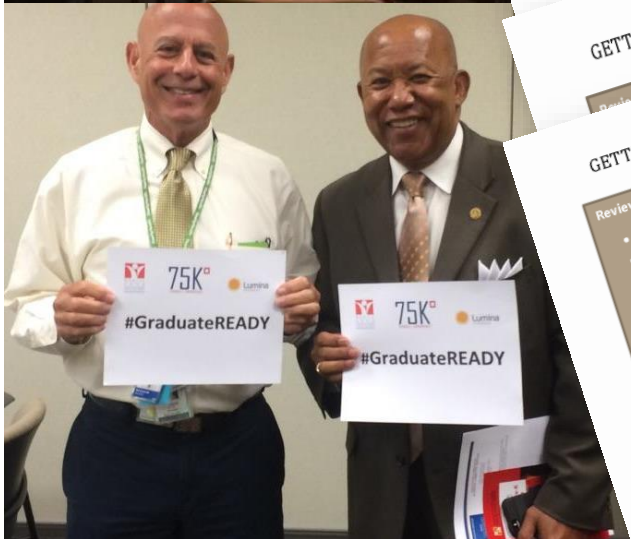
Mrs. Chandra Scott



[www.bishop.edu](http://www.bishop.edu)

@BishopState





Getting Through

- ID the ~~ways~~ (redouble that matter and separate them)
- Are businesses hiring for these with cohorts?
- Find the data
- Earn & Learn Models
- 4-Year plans in each degree
- Early mentorship w/ coaches to major
- 1st Year advisors center
- Business Interest/10-ers
- Youth Voice (1-2 years)

Getting THROUGH Recommendations

- Change social misalignment to social interaction
- add strategy for on-campus engagement and outcome measurement



GETTING THROUGH: Improvement Plan At-a-Glance

Reviewed key data to identify

- Implications

IMPLICATIONS:  
Data reviewed indicates a disconnect between high school graduation rates and student ACT scores.

GETTING READY: Improvement Plan At-a-Glance

Reviewed key data to identify

- Implications


IMPLICATIONS:

GETTING IN: Improvement Plan At-a-Glance

Reviewed key data to identify


- Implications
- missing data
- areas of focus

AREAS OF FOCUS:  
Rigor, Relevance and Real-world Learning  
Provide whole-child support  
Grow the number of schools by creating

  
**The Equity Project**  
2016 Student Report

The 2016 Equity Project is the third iteration of the student-led project that is facilitated by the Mobile Area Education Foundation comprised of two components: (1) High School Master Schedule Analysis and (2) High School Student Surveying.

Funded by the  
Greater Gulf State Fairgrounds



2016

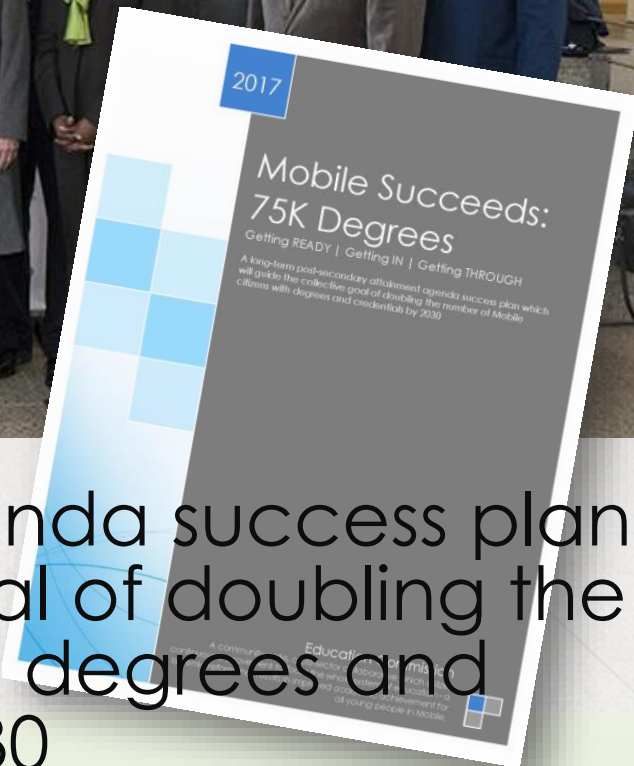
Getting THROUGH

Getting IN

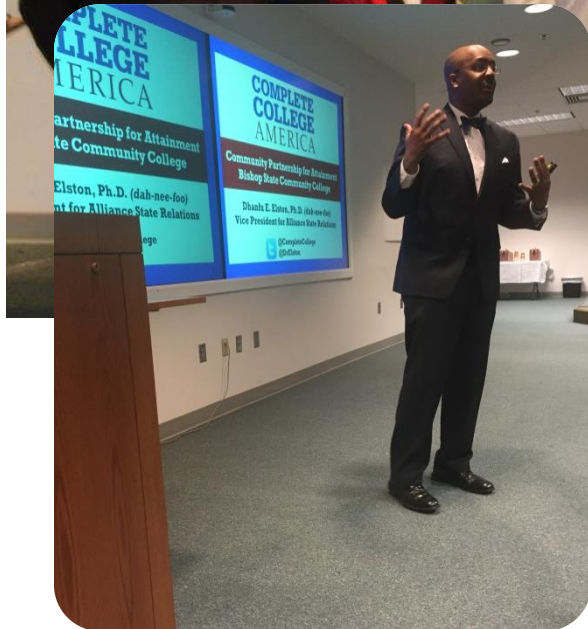
Getting READY

- Inform parents on how to develop Ready kids before kindergarten
- Build on WOO for 9th graders (WOO2), track students
- Increase First Class sites
- Student involvement in local community/activities (work ethic /community service)
- Focus on middle school (pathway planning) and grow exposure (career/college)
- Develop Ready kids before kindergarten (WOO2); track students
- "can be anything I/we want to be but..."
- community/activities (work ethic and community service)
- to put in effort on tests
- options planning and grow exposure (career/college)

Chart Notes



A post-secondary attainment agenda success plan which will guide the collective goal of doubling the number of Mobile citizens with degrees and credentials by 2030



# Background on Implementation of 15 to Finish

- We have a STEM Learning Community that has a tradition of graduating 100% of its participants in two years.
- Used STEM model to align with CCA game-changers to have an impact campus-wide.

# BISHOP STATE's STEM Learning Community

- Summer Bridge for Seniors
- Scholarships
- Faculty Mentor
- Instructors collaborate
- Must take 15 or more hours
- Took all courses together

# Creation of STEM Learning Community

Funded by  
Bedsole  
Foundation

Support from  
Bishop State  
Foundation

Funded by NASA  
and Department  
of Homeland  
Security

Partnership with  
the University of  
South Alabama

# Bishop State Community College's Implementation of Structured Schedules

- Partnered with **Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF)**
- Received Partnership Attainment Grant April 2015
- Faculty selected **Structured Schedules** as our Game Changer
- Dr. Dhanfu Elston appointed by CCA to assist with implementation of 15 to Finish campus-wide
- Faculty champion appointed August 2015
- Faculty champion worked with faculty to create **Curriculum Maps**
- Nov. 2015 Dr. Dhanfu Elston trained Bishop State's Department Chairs, Directors, and Student Support Service Staff
- Launched **15 to Finish Campaign** Fall 2016





# Approach to Implementation of Structured Schedules

Faculty wanted a more **student friendly** class schedule

Faculty shared **absenteeism** problem in MWF classes

Division chairs convened April 2016 and voted to have a **block schedule** with MW and TTH classes

Increase **mini-term** course offerings



Retention: **82%** passed  
(STEM Cohort)



**Surveyed** students  
enrolled in mini-term  
courses



**Learning communities**  
emerged from one -term  
to the next



**Surveyed** students  
enrolled in mini-term  
STEM cohort courses

# Progress to Date

91%

- Prefer mini-term courses over full-time courses

89%

- Like attending classes less than 4 days a week

47%

- Enrolled in 15 or more hours

# Progress to Date



**Learning communities**  
emerged from one mini-term to the next

## **MINI TERM ENROLLMENT DATA STEM COURSES BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY CIS, ELT, MATH FA2015 TO FA2017**

*Source: Campus Key>ICUPTS, FA2015 to FA2017, course number, term 1, term 2*

**The College has increased STEM mini-term  
course offerings over 23% since FA2015**

# Progress to Date

## **MINI TERM ENROLLMENT DATA (COLLEGE WIDE) FA2015 TO FA2017**

*Source: Campus Key>ICUPTS, FA2015 to FA2017, course number, term 1, term 2*

	<b>FA2015</b>	<b>FA2016</b>	<b>FA2017</b>
<b>Mini Term 1</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>890</b>
<b>Mini Term 2</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>817</b>
<b>Total Registrations</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1513</b>	<b>1707</b>

# Financial Impact

- Bishop State's Financial Aid Director noticed an increase in number of students taking mini-term classes which allowed them to complete more courses in a year that allowed them to earn their degree faster and **not** put their Pell eligibility at risk.



Almost 16% increase in students taking 15 or more credit hours

# Progress to Date

## ENROLLMENT DATA ON 15 TO FINISH (COLLEGE WIDE) FA2014 TO FA2017

**SOURCE:** AS400 SHUHC BY TERM FA2014, FA2015, FA2016, FA2017 BY LOAD

TERM	ENROLLMENT- 15 CREDIT HOURS OR MORE PER TERM	PERCENTAGE CHANGE FALL TO FALL
FA2014	378	-
FA2015	397	5%
FA2016	455	14.6%
FA2017	526	15.6%



Nearly 50% College Wide  
Retention Rate

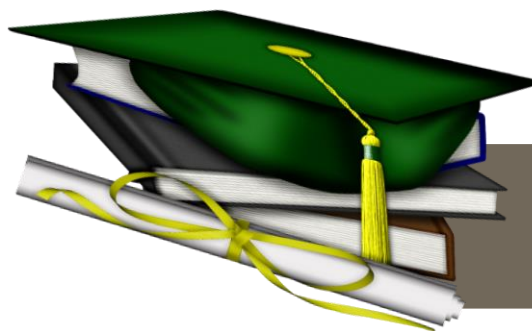
## BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE RETENTION TRENDS (COLLEGE WIDE) FA2014 TO FA2017

*SOURCE: ACCS DAX*

	2014 - 2015			2015 - 2016			2016 - 2017		
	Cohort	Retained	Rate	Cohort	Retained	Rate	Cohort	Retained	Rate
Bishop	684	258	37.72%	624	295	47.28%	597	295	49.41%

**Cohort: First-time, full-time degree-seeking students**

**Retention Rate: Number of students returning the following fall**



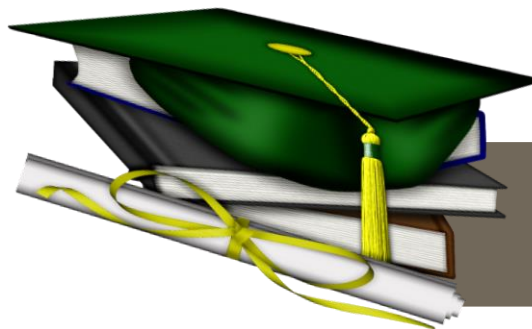
Graduation Rate up  
nearly 4 percentage  
points

## **Bishop State Community College- Graduation Rate (College Wide)**

*SOURCE: ACCS DAX*

	<b>Previous Cohort (2012 – 2013)</b>		
	<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Rate</b>
<b>Bishop</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>11.4%</b>

**Cohort: Completed program within 150% of normal time as first-time,  
degree/certificate-seeking students**



Graduation Rate up  
nearly 4 percentage  
points

## Bishop State Community College- Graduation Rate (College Wide)

*SOURCE: ACCS DAX*

	Current Cohort Rate (2014-15)		
	Cohort	Graduates	Rate
<b>Bishop</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>14.8%</b>

**Graduation Rate: Completed program within 150% of normal time as  
degree/certificate-seeking students**



Alan Dailey

All-USA Academic Team

New Century Transfer  
Pathway Scholar





# Questions and Answers

**Bishop State Community College**

*Dr. Reginald Sykes*

President

**rsykes@bishop.edu**

**TAKE**  
*more*  


**SAVE**  
*more*  


[www.bishop.edu](http://www.bishop.edu)

[@BishopState](https://twitter.com/BishopState)

**EARN**  
*more*  




**Analyze the Data**

## **Assessing the Current Situation**

At most campuses, the majority of FT Freshmen took 12 to 14 credits

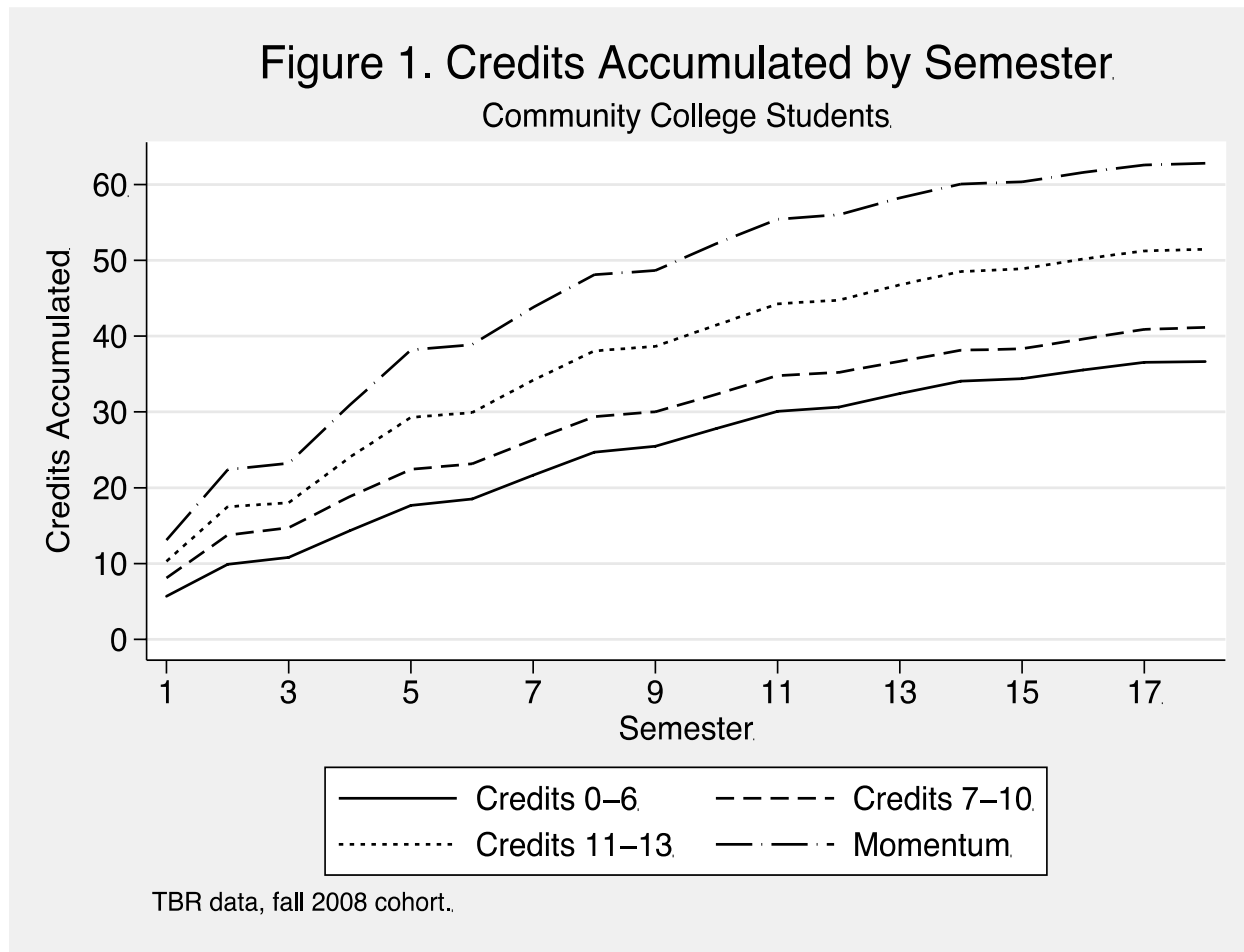
# Freshmen Completing 30 or More Credits within First Academic Year, UH Mānoa

	Fall 07 Cohort	
<b>Cumulative Credits 1st AY</b>		Cohort
<12 credits	114	6.4%
12-23 credits	351	19.7%
24-29 credits	691	38.8%
<b>≥30 credits</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>35.1%</b>
TOTAL	1,780	100.0%
<b>Graduate in 4 Years</b>	Graduates	Grad Rate
<24 credits	6	1.3%
24-29 credits	311	23.7%
<b>≥30 credits</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>32.2%</b>
TOTAL	317	17.8%

# **Analysis of $<15$ & $\geq 15$ Credits**

- 15+ credits tended to be more prepared & have better academic success
- Students in 15+ credits had more academic success
- Similar success for Pell & underrepresented students

# Momentum Benefits: CC Students





# SKEPTIC

## **“I DOUBT IT”**

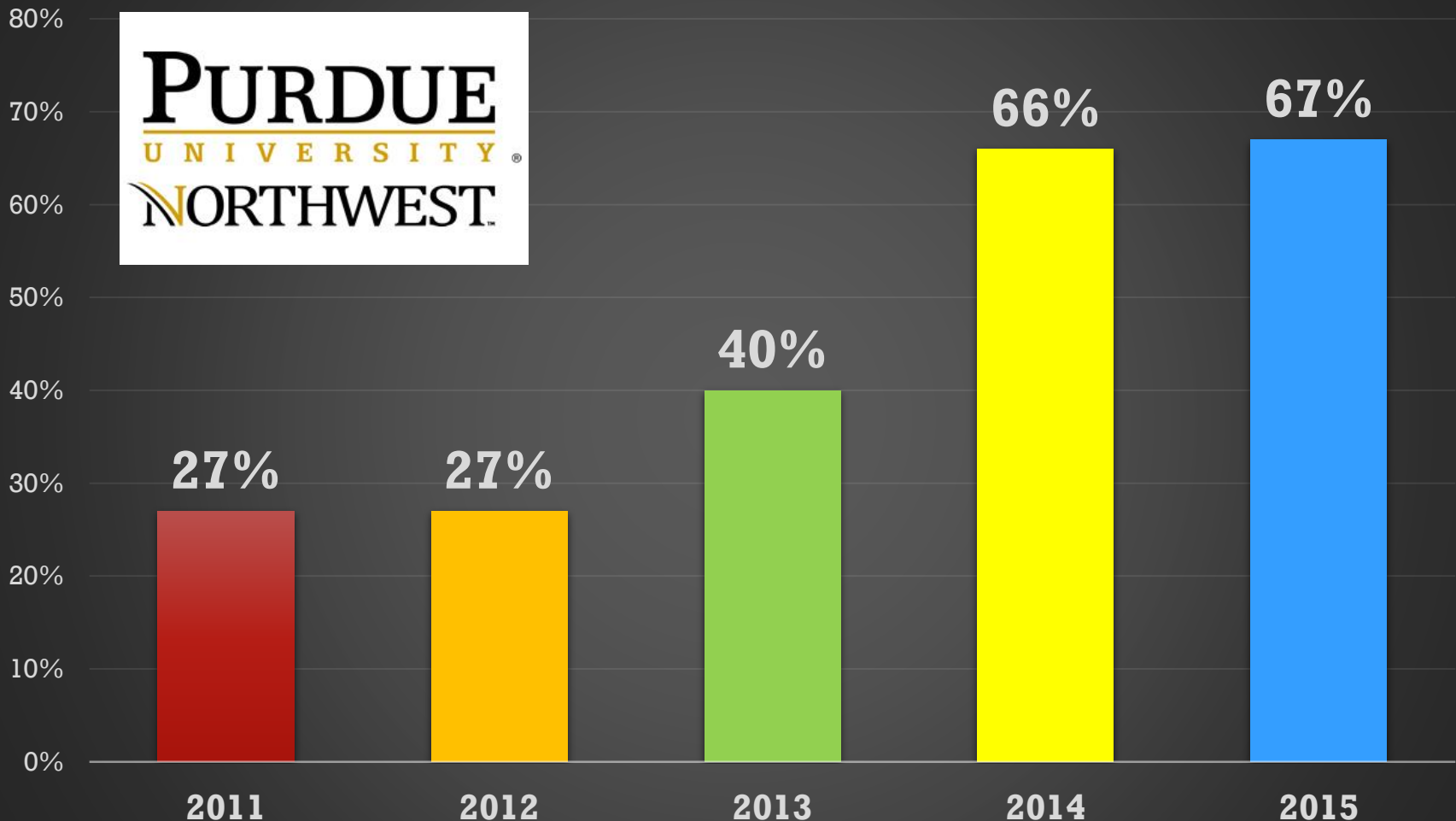
**THIS CARD ENTITLES THE BEARER  
TO EVIDENCE UPON DEMAND**

VOID WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW

# Why Don't We Do It?



# **% First-Time, Full-Time Students Enrolled in 15+ Credit Hours (1<sup>st</sup> semester)**





# Projected Enrollment Revenue Opportunity

## Estimated Impact for Purdue University - Calumet

### Revenue Gains vs. Baseline

#### Model Inputs:

**Total**

**Enrollment:** 8,639

#### **Net Revenue**

**Per Student:** \$10,565

(net tuition and fees plus state appropriations)

#### **Retention Improvement**

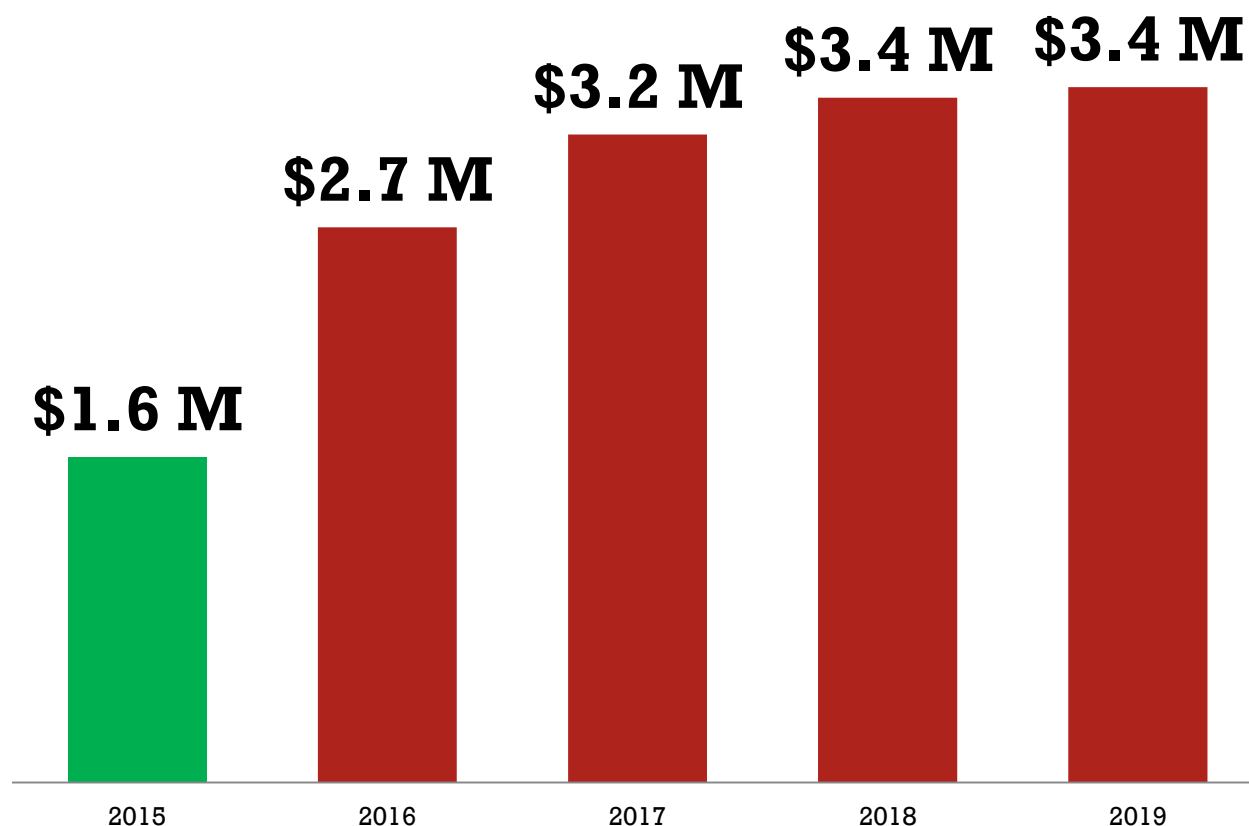
0-29 credits 4.7% total over 1 year

30-59 credits 0% total over 1 year

60-89 credits 0% total over 1 year


90-119 credits 0% total over 1 year

120+ credits 0% total over 1 year





COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
system of New Hampshire

A large, thick blue arrow that starts from the left edge of the frame and curves upwards and to the right, pointing towards the text.

**11% Increase in First-time  
Full-time Students  
Enrolling in 15+ Credits  
Per Semester**



## **Establishing A Campaign**

# Alabama State-wide Plan



- **Collect & Share Campus-Level Data**
  - Partner w/ Institutional Research & Faculty Senate
- **New Student Orientation**
  - Clear, Introductory Messages to Students & Parents
- **Degree Maps (2 & 4-year)**
- **Block Scheduling**
  - (Opt-Out vs. Opt-In to 15 credit hours)
- **Reinforced Messages – Changing the Culture to 15 Credit Hours**
  - Academic Advisors
  - Marketing Campaign



Pathways to Achievement, Completion, Career & Transfer

# ACADEMIC MAP



718

## Business Accounting Associate in Science

**START here**

**1**

SEMESTER 1 – FALL	CREDITS	MILESTONE	COMPLETED
ENG 101 – English Composition I	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
BUS 110 – Introduction to Business	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
CAP 101 – Computer Applications	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
Behavioral Science elective – Recommended: PSY 101– Intro to Psychology	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
MAT 120, MAT 177, MAT 182 –or– higher level math	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
IDS 101 – First Year Experience	1		<input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL CREDITS 16

**2**

SEMESTER 2 – SPRING	CREDITS	MILESTONE	COMPLETED
---------------------	---------	-----------	-----------



**Milestone Courses**  
should be taken in the order shown. This will help you stay on track and graduate on time.



**Make Your Summer Matter.** Summer is a great time to take some elective courses and get ahead.

# Communications & Engagement Strategy

- Branding theme for consistency in messages
- Key messages by audience group
  - External
    - Students, parents, and the general public
  - Internal
    - Buy-In: Advisors, campus administrators, and faculty
- Media strategy – Utilize PR professionals to create and rollout
- Materials and website
- Maintain focus and a sense of urgency



**15**

**CREDITS A SEMESTER  
TO GRADUATE ON TIME**

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**#15TOFINISH**

## POSTERS



# BROCHURE



## TABLE TENT





Complete College America

5 hrs · 🌐

Extra years of college can cost you thousands, both in what you pay and what you lose from not having a job. So, taking 15 credits a semester (or 30 credits a year) saves you money and lets you make more. Cha-ching! Students who take 15 credits a semester (or 30 credits a year) tend to get higher GPAs. So when it comes to getting better grades, taking 15 is sort of a no-brainer...



👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

AT&T

4:55 PM

25% 🔋



Photo



👍 56 likes

**Complete College of America** Extra years of college can cost you thousands, both in what you pay and what you lose from not having a job. So, taking 15 credits a semester (or 30 credits a year) saves you money and lets you make more. Cha-ching!

# COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR ADVISORS

**“My students work and have complicated lives. How do I make the case?”**

- \ Incorporate “full-time vs. on-time” language into advising conversations.
- \ Emphasize that the cost of an extra year of college includes lost salary and retirement savings, additional loan debt, etc.
- \ Note that the longer students take to graduate, the more life gets in the way. The best way to graduate is to do it as quickly as possible.
- \ Remember that underrepresented student populations (racial minorities, low-income students, and first-generation students) enter college with less cultural capital and knowledge of what it takes to succeed. Sharing the credit hour requirements for on-time completion is critical to closing achievement gaps.





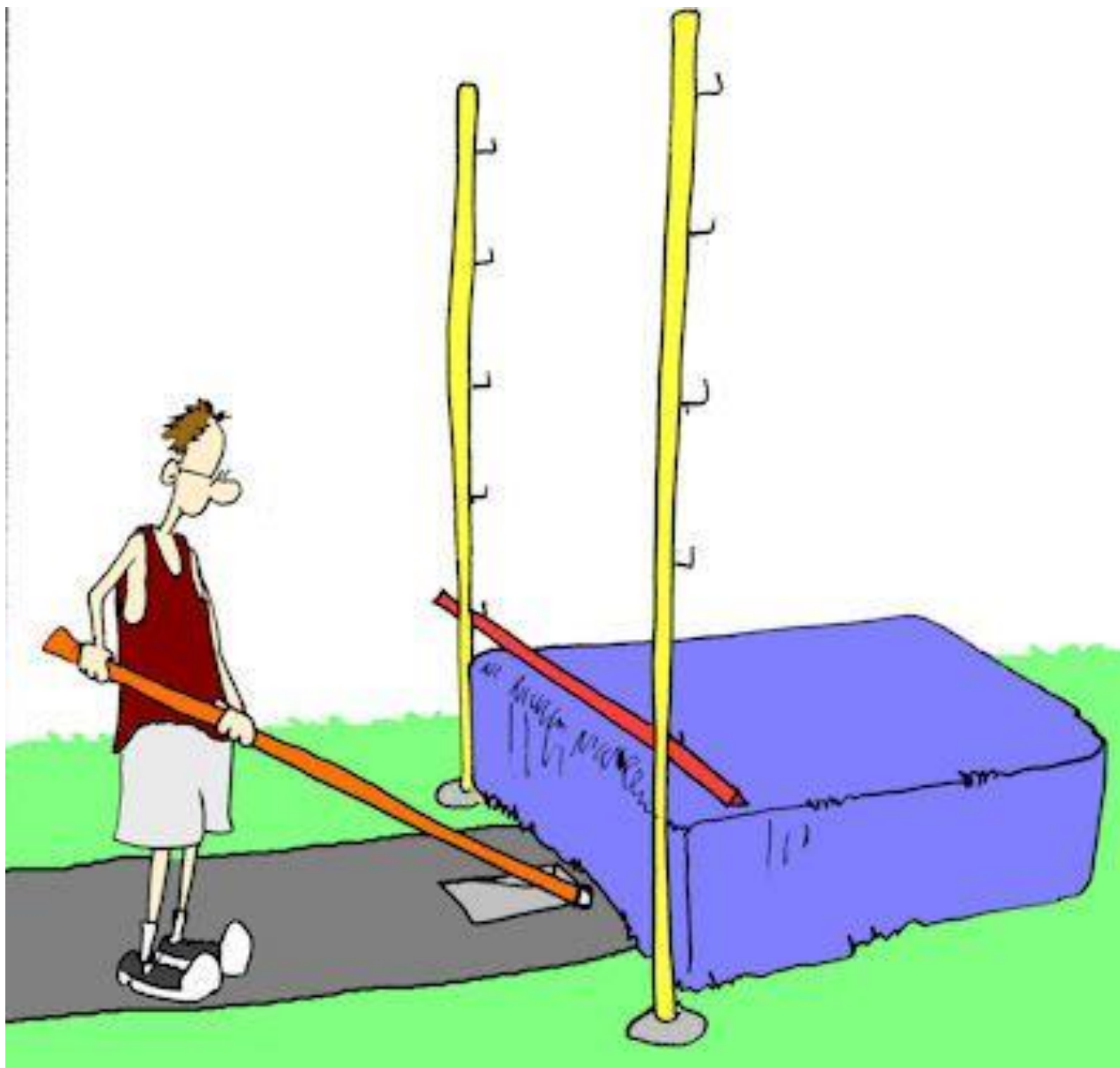
**Reinforce with Policies  
& Strategies**

# 15-Credit Strategies & Policies

Type of Strategy	Type of Policy
Communications campaigns	Banded tuition or aid to support 30-credit enrollment
Degree maps	Degree credit cap (60 or 120 credits)
structured schedules	Default scheduling
Financial incentives	

**“The best strategy for reducing the cost of college is to ensure more students take the credits needed to graduate on time.”**

**(Complete College America, 2016)**





SETTING  
THE BAR



# 15

**CREDITS A SEMESTER  
TO GRADUATE ON TIME**

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**#15TOFINISH**

# MOMENTUM PATHWAYS

