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Information Brief

Degree completion rates vary greatly across four-year postsecondary institutions, ranging from 17% to 79%.

Bachelor's Degree Completion Rates

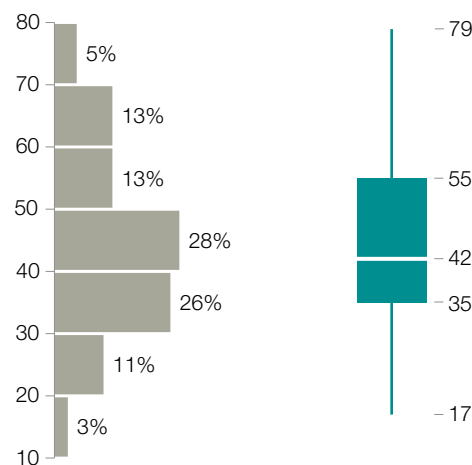
for a sample of four-year postsecondary institutions

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A recent ACT study (Radunzel & Noble, 2012) based on over 60 four-year postsecondary institutions found that degree completion rates varied substantially across institutions. The six-year bachelor's degree completion rate for incoming, first-time, ACT-tested freshmen ranged from 17% to 79% across institutions. The typical rate was 42%.

The middle fifty percent of the institutional rates ranged from 35% to 55% (25th and 75th percentiles shown in the figure below). Fewer than one-third (31%) of the institutions had a rate of 50% or higher. These findings illustrate the great variability in institutional degree completion rates and admission requirements across four-year institutions.

Institutional Six-Year Bachelor's Degree Completion Rates



Note: Based on data from over 60 four-year postsecondary institutions and nearly 126,000 ACT-tested students who enrolled in one of these institutions as a first-time entering student in fall, 2000 through 2003. The sample used in the study may not be representative of all US four-year postsecondary institutions. The five parts to the boxplot include the minimum, the 25th percentile, the 50th percentile (median), the 75th percentile, and the maximum. For a more detailed description of the study, including characteristics of the institutions included, see the full ACT Research Report numbered 2012-5 at http://media.act.org/documents/ACT_RR2012-5.pdf.

Radunzel, J., & Noble, J. (2012). *Predicting long-term college success through degree completion using ACT Composite score, ACT Benchmarks, and high school grade point average*. (ACT Research Report No. 2012-5). Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

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