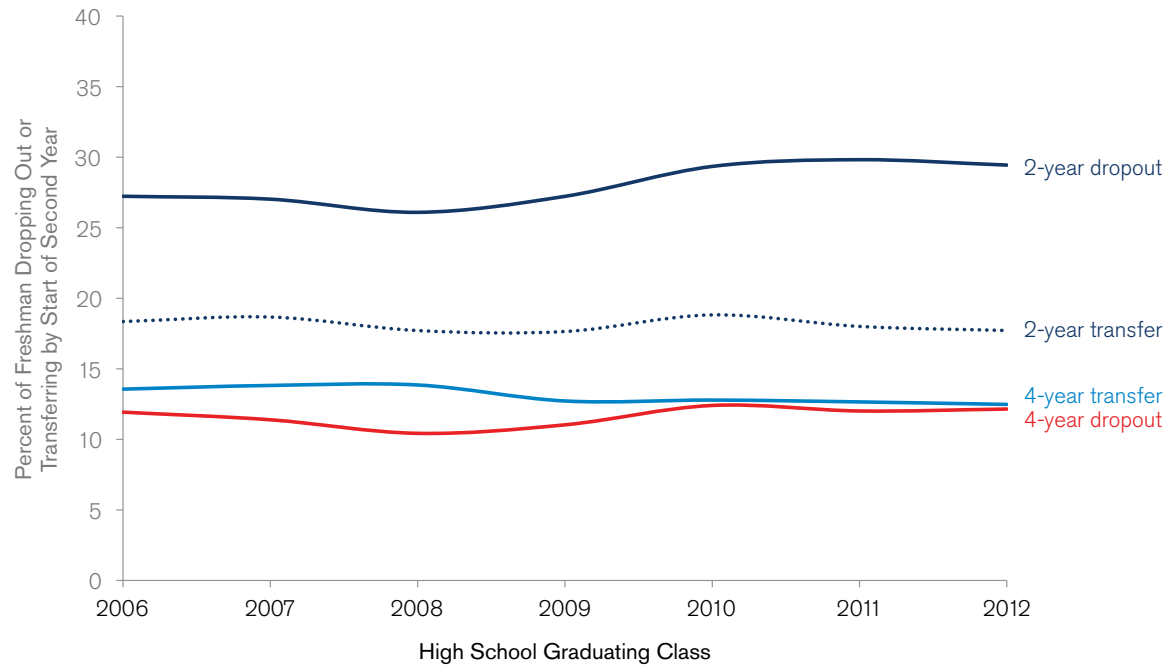


Students who enroll at two-year colleges immediately after high school graduation are more likely to drop out of college by the start of their second year than students who immediately enroll at four-year colleges.

## Trends in Freshman Dropouts and Transfers: 2006–2012

RICHARD BUDDIN

Percent of ACT-Tested High School Graduates Who Immediately Enrolled in College and Dropped Out or Transferred by Their Second Year by College Type and Year



Note: Data come from 6,848,429 high school graduates who took the ACT between 2006 and 2012 and immediately enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college the fall following their graduation.

Many college freshmen leave college or transfer to another college within their first year of postsecondary education. As shown in the chart above, dropout rates are much higher at two-year colleges than four-year colleges.

Among students who took the ACT® college readiness assessment between 2006 and 2012, the dropout rate was about 27% at two-year colleges in 2006 and had risen by about 2 percentage points by 2009. The four-year college dropout rate was about 12%

in both 2006 and 2012. Dropout rates fell for both college groups for 2008 high school graduates. Limited employment prospects during the Great Recession is one possible explanation for this trend.

At both two- and four-year colleges, fewer students are transferring between schools. Between 2006 and 2012, transfers from two-year colleges decreased from 18.3% to 17.7%. Similarly, transfers from four-year colleges decreased from 13.6% in 2006 to 12.5% in 2012. ■