

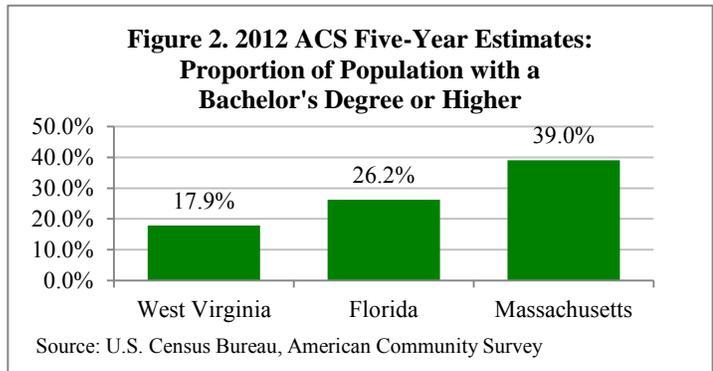
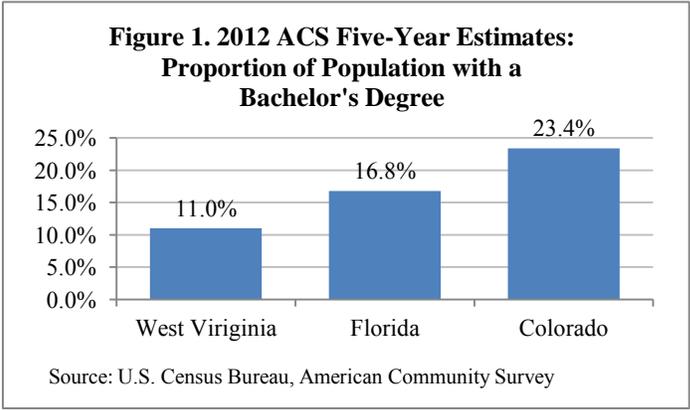
# The Florida College System Transparency, Accountability, Progress, and Performance

What are the baccalaureate degree attainment levels in Florida College System service regions?

How do they compare to the Florida statewide and national baccalaureate attainment levels?

Earning a postsecondary degree or credential is widely recognized as an important pathway to employment and increased earnings for individuals. An educated workforce helps create an environment to attract and retain business and industry in Florida. Careers with wages and benefits that can support a family typically require at least some postsecondary education. The national [education agenda](#) includes the goals of having every American complete one year of higher education or postsecondary training and for the United States to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by the year 2020.

To position Florida and its citizens to compete in an increasingly global marketplace, the state has been striving to provide Floridians with expanded access to baccalaureate degree programs. The Commission on Higher Education Access and Attainment [final report](#) (November, 2013) identifies the Florida College System as part of the solution to meeting the demand for baccalaureate graduates in Florida. “To increase the number of Floridians who go to college within the state, it makes sense to expand baccalaureate capacity in the Florida College System (p. 14).” “If additional growth should also occur within the Florida College System, the ability of the state to produce the bachelor’s degrees it needs for high demand occupations would be assured. Although not every Florida College System institution is interested in ramping up baccalaureate production, it may be good public policy for the right institutions to get into the business of baccalaureate expansion in an organized, sustainable manner to meet Florida’s needs (p. 16).” The Florida College System (FCS) has 24 institutions that are approved to offer 175 baccalaureate degrees that are designed to meet



the workforce needs of each college’s service region.

**Baccalaureate degrees.** According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau’s [American Community Survey](#) (ACS) 2012 Five-Year Estimates of Educational Attainment, which are based on 60 months of data, **Florida ranks 33<sup>rd</sup>** out of the 50 states in baccalaureate degree attainment. ACS data show that 16.8 percent of Florida’s population has earned a baccalaureate degree. This is 5.8 percentage points higher than West Virginia, which has the lowest baccalaureate degree production in the country. Florida trails the leading state – Colorado – by 6.6 percentage points (see Figure 1). **Baccalaureate and Above.** Figure 2 shows the proportion of the population with a baccalaureate degree or higher. **Florida is 31<sup>st</sup>** in the country at

26.2 percent, which is 8.3 percentage points higher than West Virginia, which has the lowest proportion of its population with a baccalaureate degree or higher, and trails Massachusetts, the leading, state by 12.8 percentage points.

The Florida College System provides workforce baccalaureate degree programs offering affordable four-year degree options to Floridians who choose to remain in their local community to gain skills based on career and/or family commitments. Generally, students who are enrolled in an FCS baccalaureate program are “non-traditional” age, averaging 32.7 years (2012-13). Table 1 provides examples of county-level baccalaureate degree attainment – FCS service regions are county based. The table shows sample 2012 county bachelor degree attainment proportions compared to bachelor’s attainment levels from the 2000 U.S. Census and ACS based Florida statewide level, national level and the highest performing state (Colorado). The accompanying spreadsheet provides these data for all 67 counties in Florida and the name of the FCS institution that serves the region. Results vary substantially by region.

Table 1. Examples of County-Level Florida College System Baccalaureate Degree Attainment Comparisons  
Complete Data Appear in the Attachments (Note that Service Regions Encompass Multiple Counties for 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Colleges)

County (Co)\College	2012 Baccalaureate Degree Attainment	Percentage Point Difference from 2000 Census Data	Percentage Point Difference vs. Florida Statewide Attainment (16.8%)	Percentage Point Difference vs. Nationwide Attainment (17.9%)	Percentage Point Difference vs. Highest Performing State (CO, 23.4%)
St. Lucie Co\Indian River State College	12.2%	2.4%	-4.6%	-5.7%	-11.2%
Pinellas Co\St. Petersburg College	18.0%	2.9%	1.2%	0.1%	-5.4%
St. Johns Co\St. Johns River College	27.3%	5.5%	10.5%	9.4%	3.9%

For assistance, contact the Florida College System Research & Analytics  
Scott J. Parke, Ph.D. or Kathryn L. Scheuch, Ed.D. at 850-245-0407