

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

To what extent are Florida College System baccalaureate programs educating underserved student populations?

Across the country, variations exist in the characteristics of higher education students who are considered underserved. Students of color, low income, and first generation students are mentioned frequently (e.g., [NCAT](#) 2005, [NPEC](#) 2006, [AACU](#) 2013, [Diverse](#) 2013). Others add individuals with disabilities or English language learners as underserved populations (e.g., [IHEP](#) 2005, [NECC](#) 2008, [NEA](#) 2014). **Reporting on underserved populations by the Florida College System (FCS) follows the more inclusive model and consists of need based financial aid recipients, minority students, individuals with disabilities, and non-native English speaking students.**

Information about the characteristics of Florida’s adult working age population is available from the Bureau of Census via the latest American Community Survey (ACS) and Current Population Survey (CPS) one year estimates:

- 2,254,700 or 19.0% of Florida adults 19 to 64 live below the poverty level ([CPS](#) 2012).
- 7,708,000 or 41.0% of Florida adults 19 to 64 are minorities\non-white ([CPS](#) 2012).
- 1,888,515 or 10.0% of Florida’s population 18 to 64 years have a disability ([ACS](#) 2012).
- 1,359,731 or 7.2% of Floridians 18 to 64 years do not speak English “very well” ([ACS](#) 2012).

Florida’s working age citizens include sizable populations of individuals from groups that have been traditionally underserved by postsecondary education.

**Table 1: Florida College System 2008-09 to 2012-13
Baccalaureate Underserved Population Enrollments**

Population	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Unduplicated Underserved	<u>4,802</u> 8,048	59.7%	<u>8,483</u> 13,171	64.4%	<u>13,491</u> 19,366	69.7%	<u>18,608</u> 25,389	73.3%	<u>22,695</u> 30,515	74.4%
Need Based Financial Aid	3,094	38.4%	5,741	43.6%	9,531	49.2%	13,387	52.7%	16,233	53.2%
Minority Student Enrollments	2,979	37.0%	5,251	39.9%	8,425	43.5%	11,579	45.6%	14,053	46.1%
Students with Disabilities	219	2.7%	403	3.1%	616	3.2%	815	3.2%	1,007	3.3%
Non-native English speakers	176	2.2%	321	2.4%	532	2.7%	988	3.9%	1,146	3.8%

Source: 2009-2013 Florida College System Student Database, CCTCMIS, FCS Research & Analytics.

The FCS mission is to provide higher education access and deliver workforce education to Floridians. **Consistent with the system’s mission, FCS baccalaureate programs educate substantial underserved populations in programs that lead to employment.** Table 1 contains a combined unduplicated baccalaureate student underserved population count and percentage as well as the counts and percentages of each underserved student sub-group. The sub-population counts contain some duplication (e.g., a minority student who is receiving need-based financial aid would be counted once in the overall figure and in each separate sub-category). **The unduplicated count of underserved students has more than tripled compared to five years ago as additional FCS baccalaureate programs have become operational (3.7 times greater). Overall, in the latest 2012-13 data, nearly three-quarters of the baccalaureate students (N = 22,695) enrolled in FCS institutions are from underserved populations.** Baccalaureate level higher education access has improved for Floridian’s as the unduplicated count of underserved students being educated by FCS baccalaureate programs has increased substantially for the last five years.

Figure 1 illustrates that need based financial aid recipients and minority students account for the largest groups of underserved students in FCS baccalaureate programs. Just over one-half of FCS baccalaureate students (16,233 in 2012-13) received need-based financial aid to help fund their college attendance. Since last year, the number of financial aid recipients in FCS baccalaureate programs increased 21.3 percent. As FCS baccalaureate offerings have grown, the number of students attending with need-based financial aid has more than quadrupled compared to five years ago.

In 2012-13 nearly one-half of the students in FCS baccalaureate programs identified themselves as minorities (46.1 percent or 14,053 individuals). Minority student enrollment by students in the Florida College System increased 21.4 percent compared to last year. Minority student FCS baccalaureate participation has more than tripled compared to five years ago (3.7 times greater).

Figure 1. Florida College System 2008-09 to 2012-13 Baccalaureate Program Underserved Population Enrollments Overall Unduplicated, Need-Based Financial Aid Recipients, and Minority Students

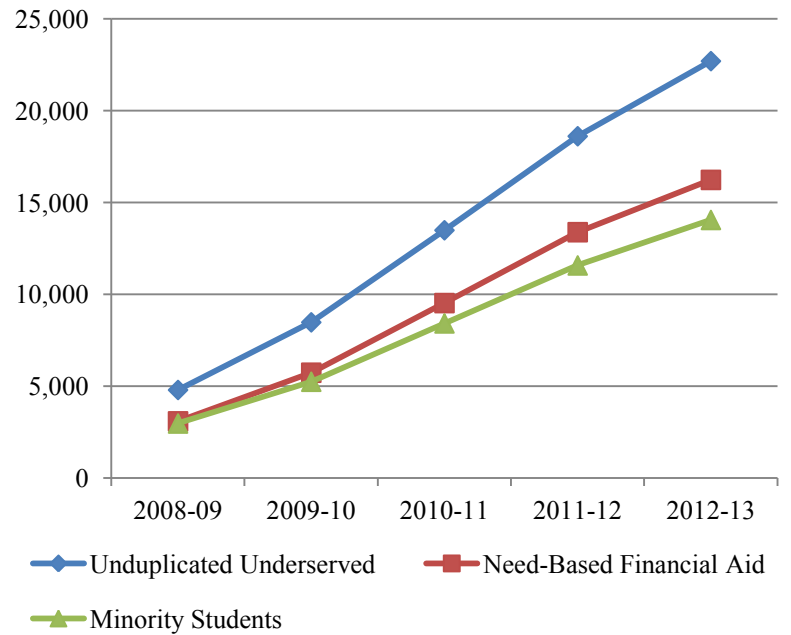


Figure 2. Florida College System 2008-09 to 2012-13 Baccalaureate Program Underserved Population Enrollments Students with Disabilities and Non-native English Speaking Students

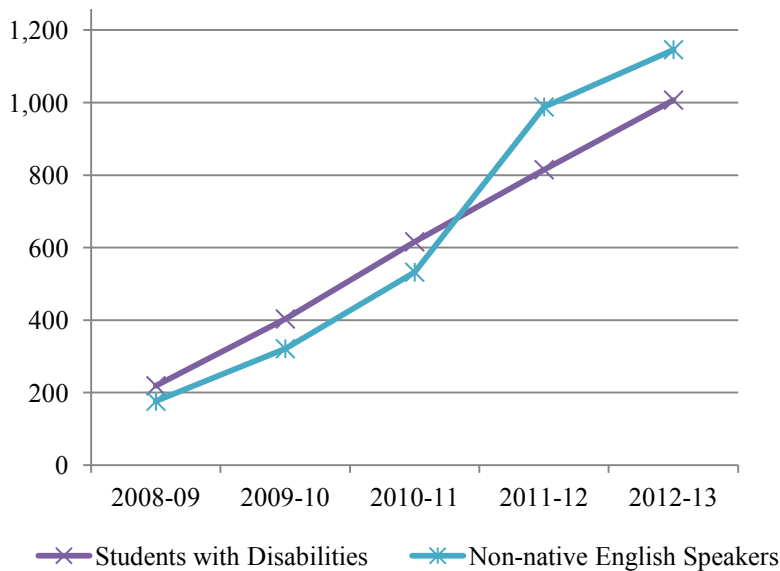


Figure 2 shows that during 2012-13 the number of individuals with disabilities participating in FCS baccalaureate programs exceeded 1,000 students for the first time. Enrollment of individuals with disabilities grew 23.6 percent from the prior year. Having access to baccalaureate programs close to home can be particularly beneficial to individuals with mobility limitations who are able to maintain ties with established support systems and services within their local community. Participation among individuals with disabilities has more than tripled over the last five years as FCS baccalaureate offerings have grown.

In 2012-13, FCS baccalaureate programs enrolled 1,146 students whose second language was English. In the latest data, first time Non-native English speaking student enrollments exceeded 1,100. The number of individuals with English as their second

language pursuing FCS baccalaureate programs more than doubled over the last two years and increased 5.5 times compared to five years ago. Since 2011-12 the number of Non-native English speaking students surpassed the number of students with disabilities in FCS baccalaureate programs.

To locate the closest Florida College System institution, please visit the [directory of colleges](#).