

FCS Graduates Transfer and Perform Successfully in the SUS

Summary

Florida's comprehensive statewide articulation agreement guarantees admission to students who earn Associate in Arts (AA) degrees to one of the eleven public state universities or one of the baccalaureate degree granting FCS institutions for upper division work to earn a baccalaureate degree. The statewide articulation agreement was established in 1971 and codified in Section 1007.23, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 6A-10.024, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)/Board of Governors (BOG) Articulation Regulation from "Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual" by the Florida Department of Education Office of K-20 Articulation.¹ According to statute, the statewide articulation agreement "must specifically provide that every associate in arts graduate of a Florida college shall have met all general education requirements and must be granted admission to the upper division of a: (1) State university, except for a limited access or teacher certification program or a major program requiring an audition; (2) Florida college if it offers baccalaureate degree programs, except for a limited access or teacher certification program or a major program requiring an audition."²

The purpose of this brief is to provide continued details on the progress AA graduates who transfer from The Florida College System (FCS) make in the State University System (SUS). For consistency with previous studies³, the following areas comparing FCS transfers with SUS native students are examined with updated data:

- Admission rates of FCS applicants into the SUS
- Composition of SUS upper division student body, by admission status
- Trends in SUS upper division enrollment, FCS transfers vs. SUS natives
- Average cumulative GPA for SUS upper division students (Performance)

¹ <http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/pdf/statewide-postsecondary-articulation-manual.pdf>

² <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?Mode=View%20Statutes&Submenu=1&Tab=statutes&CFID=177783314&CFTOKEN=12800046>

³ "Statewide Articulation Agreement—Effective and Comprehensive," Zoom Edition 2009-01

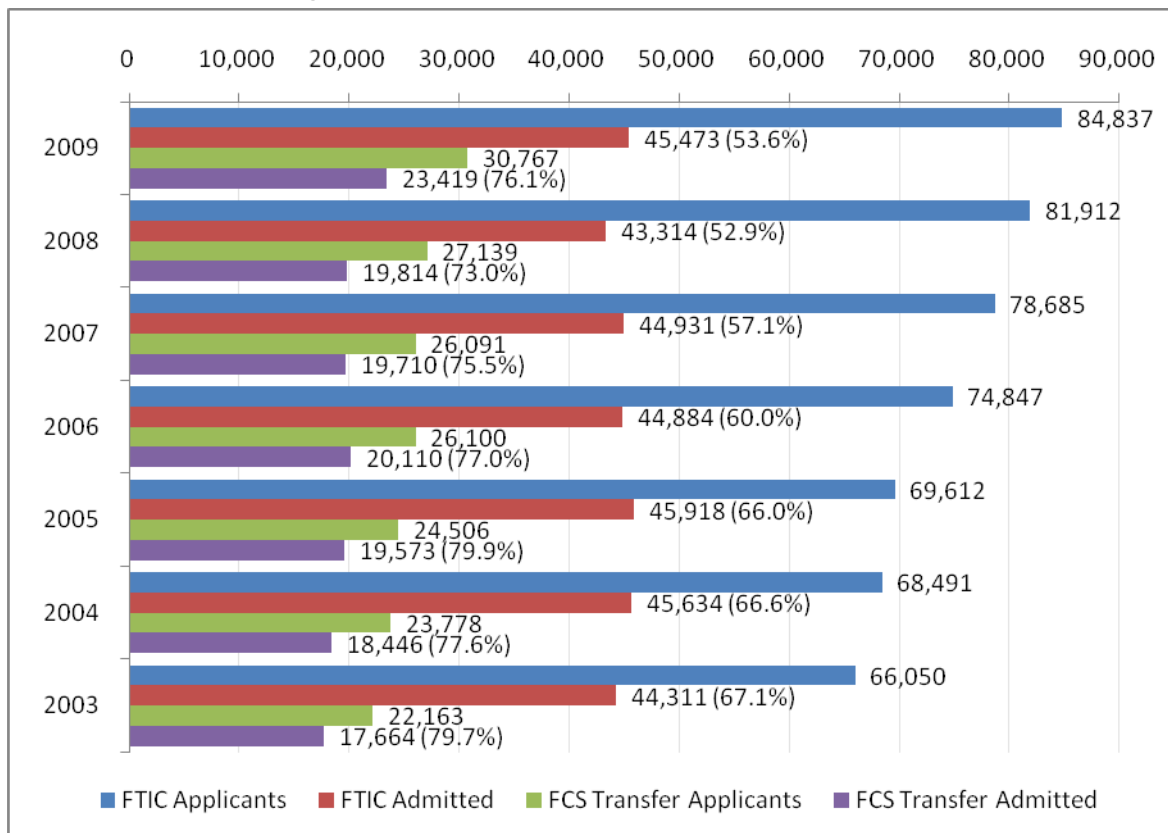


- Average student semester hours per term for SUS upper division students
- Average total semester hours to degree
- Four-year graduation rate for full- and part-time students
- Four-year graduation rate for full-time students only

The data in this report show that FCS AA graduates have been successfully transferring into and completing their programs in the SUS. Their performance in the SUS using the above measures have been consistent over the years, and in cases such as average cumulative GPA and four-year graduation rates for full-time students, FCS transfers perform just as well as their SUS native peers.⁴

Transferring to the State University System

Exhibit 1. SUS Undergraduate Admissions*: FCS Transfers vs. SUS FTIC Students



Source: Division of Florida Colleges' analysis of data provided by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors

*"FCS Transfer" includes Florida college transfers from all categories (AA, AS, and no Associate degree transfer). "FTIC" includes first time students and students who transfer within the SUS. These are unduplicated numbers.

⁴ Throughout this brief, the terms "FTIC" (First Time in College) and "SUS natives" refer to generally the same group of students. The students referred to as "FTIC" upon admission the as "SUS native" after enrollment.



Exhibit 1 shows the number and proportion of students admitted to the SUS since 2003, based on student type (i.e., First Time in College or “FTIC” or FCS Transfer). FTIC applications have grown significantly while transfers have been stable. These data show that the proportion of FCS transfer applicants who applied and who were accepted into a state university were larger than the number of FTIC students who applied and were accepted, although the number of transfers admitted is stagnant. This shows that statewide articulation is functioning in terms of helping a large number of students to transfer from the FCS to the SUS, however access is not expanding.

Exhibit 2. 2009-10 Acceptance Rates* by Student Type

	FAMU	FAU	FGCU	FIU	FSU	NCF	UCF	UF	UNF	USF	UWF	SUS
FTICs	61%	45%	65%	37%	58%	53%	46%	42%	62%	41%	67%	49%
FCS AA Transfers	87%	85%	93%	92%	57%	52%	92%	46%	76%	91%	90%	77%
FCS Transfers, No Degree	47%	58%	66%	69%	40%	11%	43%	35%	56%	56%	73%	54%

*Data are based on applications of AA degree recipients, not headcounts. AS degree recipients are not included.

Source: State University System of Florida Board of Governors (SUS/BOG)

Exhibit 2 shows SUS acceptance rates by student type: FCS AA transfers, FCS Transfers without AA degrees, and those who were FTIC. Overall, AA transfers have very high acceptance rates into SUS institutions, especially when compared to FCS transfers without associate degrees. For every university, AA transfers have a higher acceptance rate than FTICs. In 2009-10, 77% of AA transfers were accepted into the SUS, compared to 54% of FCS transfers without a degree and 49% of FTIC students. For AA transfers, the University of Florida had the lowest acceptance rate at 46% and Florida Gulf Coast University had the highest at 93%. FAU, FIU, UCF and USF have much higher acceptance rates for AA transfers than other state universities.



Exhibit 3. Number of Students (Unduplicated Headcount) Applying to Multiple Universities*

		Number of Universities To Which Each Applicant Applied								Total #	Total %
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
Number of Universities To Which Each Applicant Was Admitted	0	3,935	207	8	2	0	0	0	4,152	14%	
	1	22,248	1,478	130	13	0	0	0	23,869	81%	
	2	0	1,066	235	22	7	0	0	1,330	5%	
	3	0	0	100	47	9	1	1	158	1%	
	4	0	0	0	11	9	0	0	20	0%	
	5	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0%	
	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0%	
	Total #	26,183	2,751	473	95	27	2	1	29,532	100%	
	Total %	89%	9%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%		

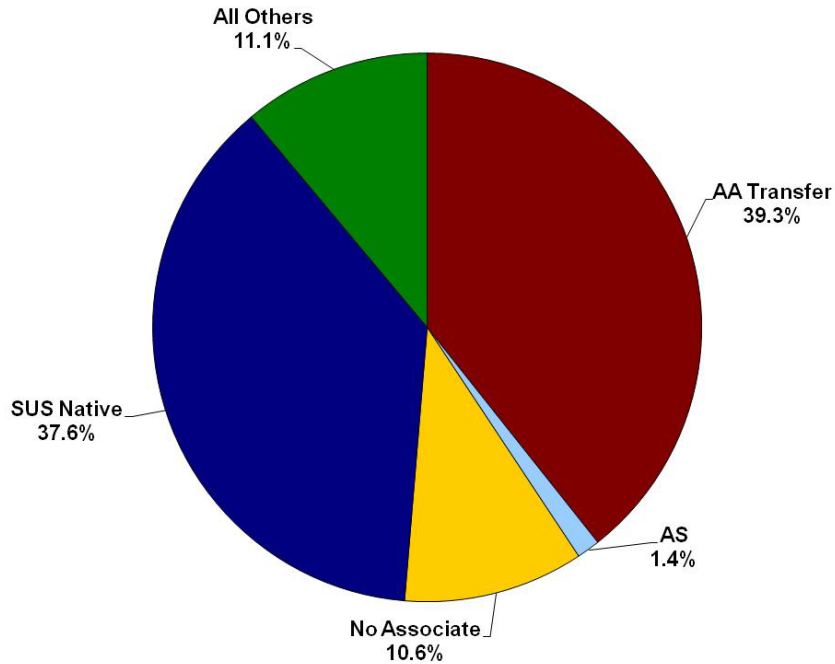
*Figures represent only those applicants with an AA degree who transferred from the FCS. Source: SUS/BOG

Exhibit 3 shows the number of state universities to which a FCS transfer students applied and the number of universities to which each applicant was admitted. In 2009-10, over 29,000 FCS AA degree holders applied to the SUS. Eighty-nine percent (89% or 26,183) of these individuals applied to only one university and 75% of those students were admitted. Only 11% (3,349) of AA recipients cast a wider net by applying to 2 or more universities; 94% of those individuals were admitted to at least one institution. Fourteen percent (4,152) of AA recipients who applied were not admitted to any university. However, the guarantee of admission for transfer students only applies if a student seeks admission to all 11 universities.



AA Transfers Comprise a Large Portion of SUS Upper Division Students

Exhibit 4. 2009-10 SUS Upper Division Student Body, FCS Preparation and SUS Native Status



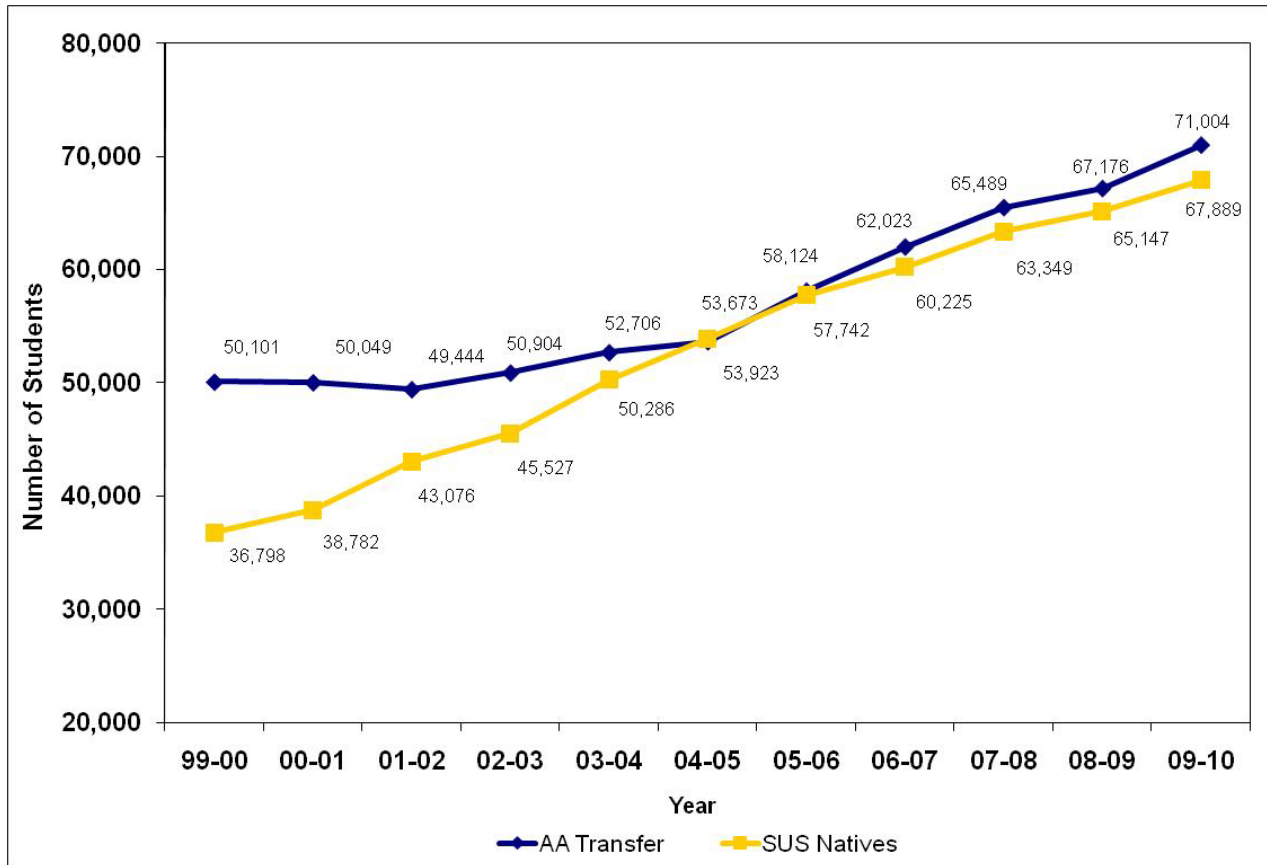
Source: Division of Florida Colleges' analysis of data provided by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors

Exhibit 4 shows the composition of the 2009-10 SUS upper division student body. Over half (51.3%) was made up of AA transfers, AS transfers, and students who transferred from the FCS before earning an associates degree. The remaining 48.7% was made up of SUS native students and other types of transfer students, including those who transferred between SUS institutions.



AA Transfer Student Enrollment in the SUS

Exhibit 5. Trend in SUS Upper Division Enrollment



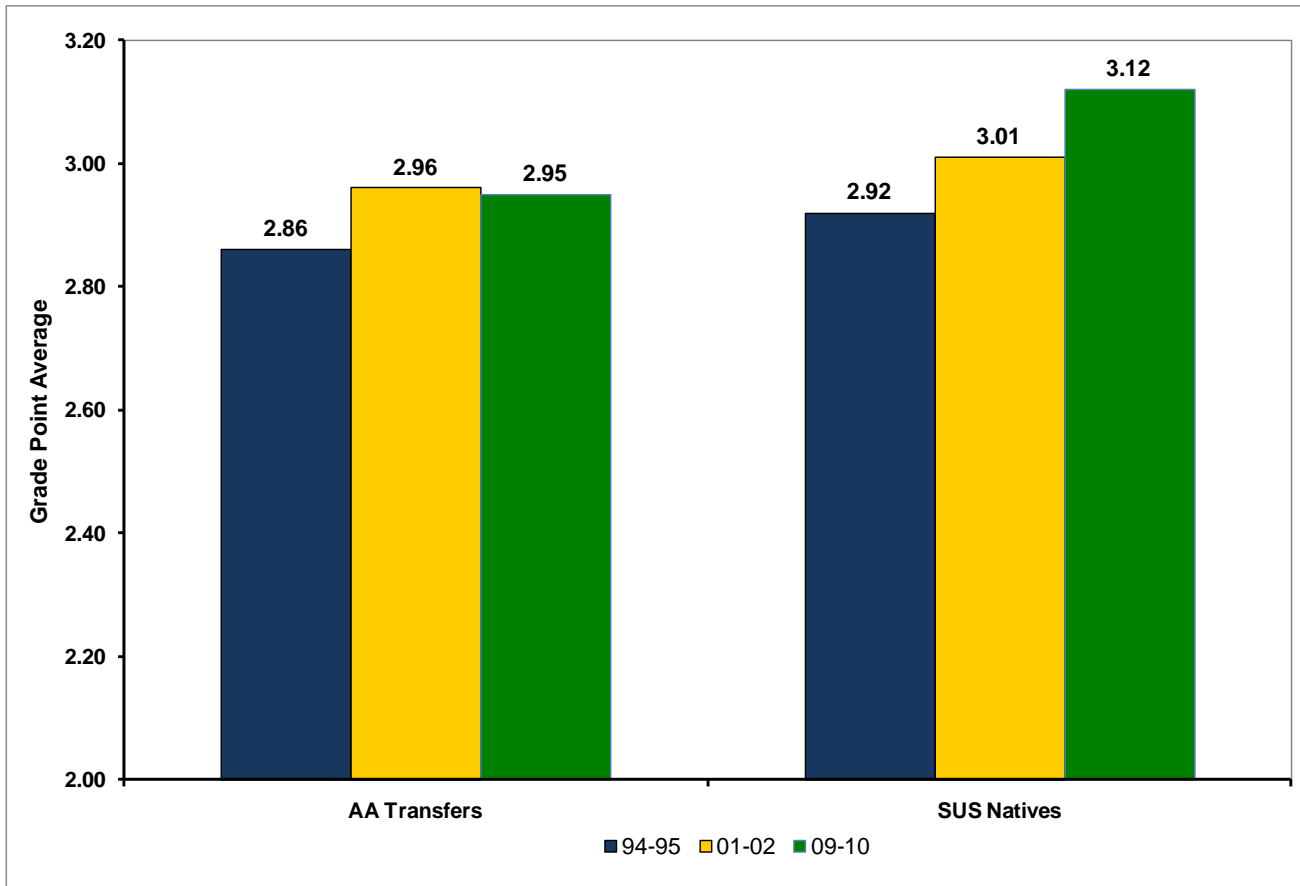
Source: Division of Florida Colleges' analysis of data provided by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors

Exhibit 5 shows SUS upper division enrollments since 1999-2000, by student type.



FCS Transfer Student Success in the SUS

Exhibit 6. Average Cumulative GPA for SUS Upper Division Students

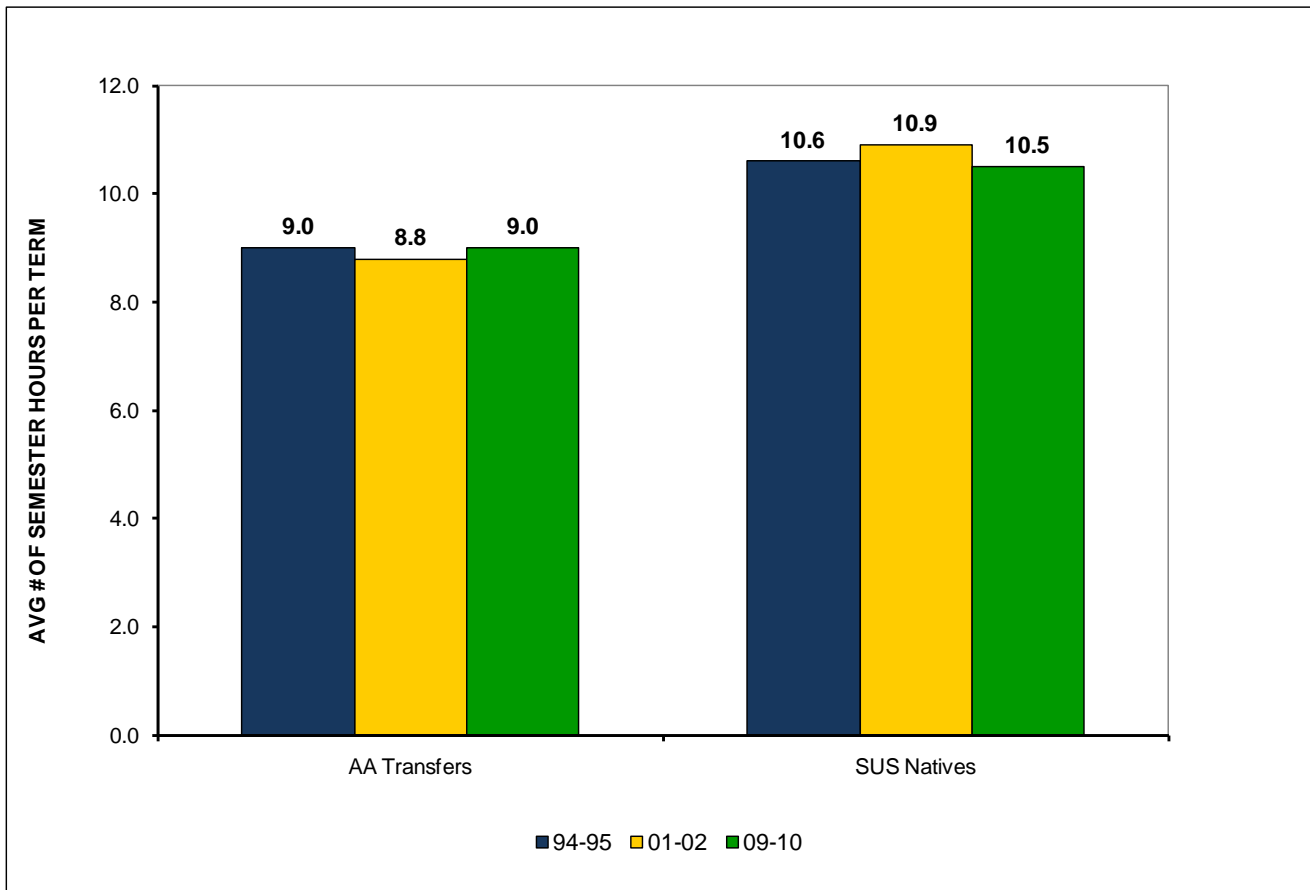


Source: Division of Florida Colleges

Exhibit 6 compares average cumulative GPA for upper division students—AA transfers and SUS natives. For the selected years, the bar charts show that AA transfer performance, as measured by GPA, has been relatively stable over the years while cumulative GPAs for SUS natives have increased. For both FCS transfer students and SUS native students, the average cumulative GPA hovers around 3.0, with only minor variations over time.



Exhibit 7. Average Student Semester Hours per Term for SUS Upper Division Students

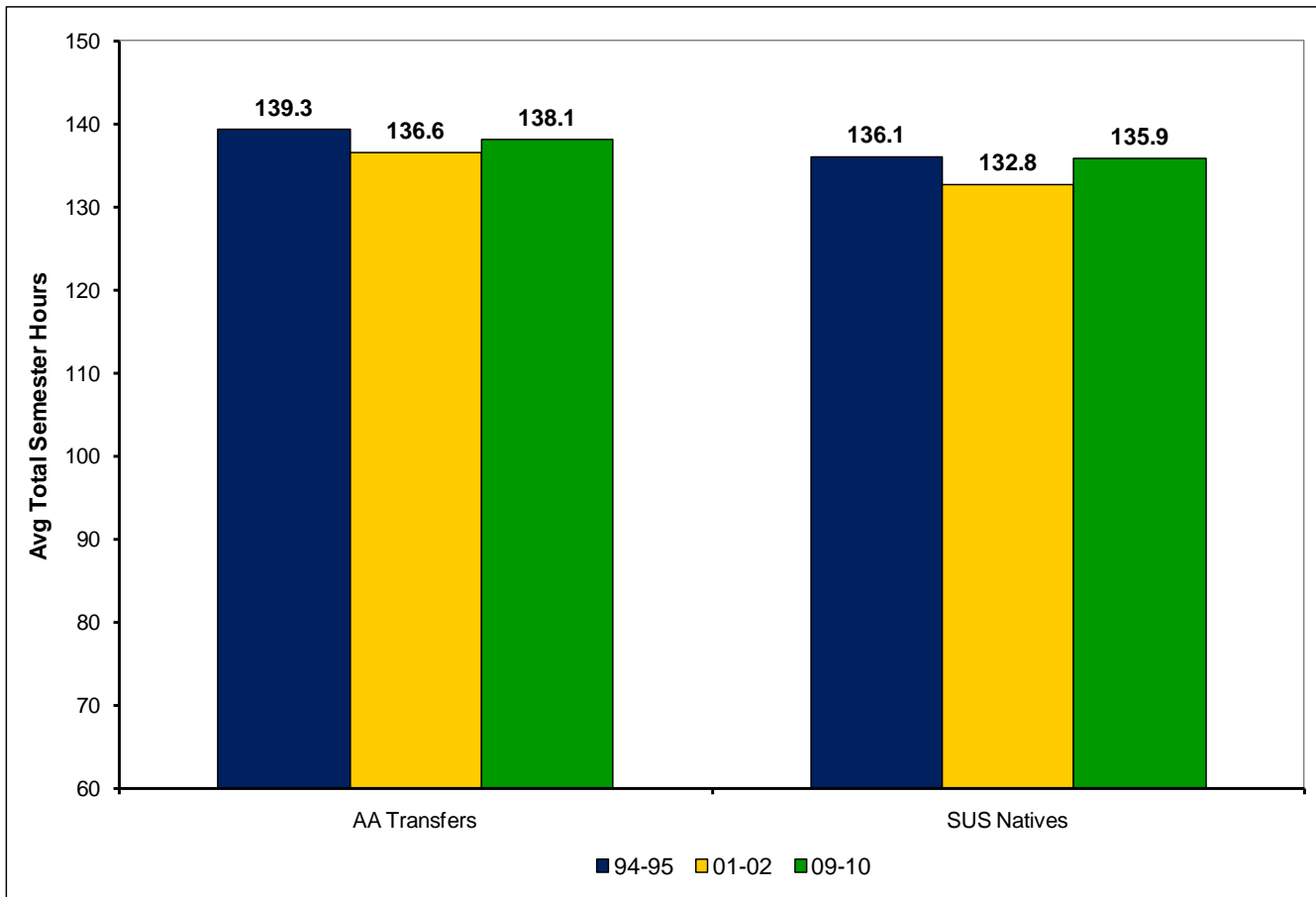


Source: Division of Florida Colleges

Exhibit 7 shows the average student semester hours taken per term by student type. The chart illustrates that, among their respective groups, both AA transfers and SUS natives have been consistent over the years in the average number of semester hours taken per term as upper division students. Compared to SUS natives, AA transfers take slightly fewer hours, approximately one less course per academic year.



Exhibit 8. Average Total Semester Hours to Degree

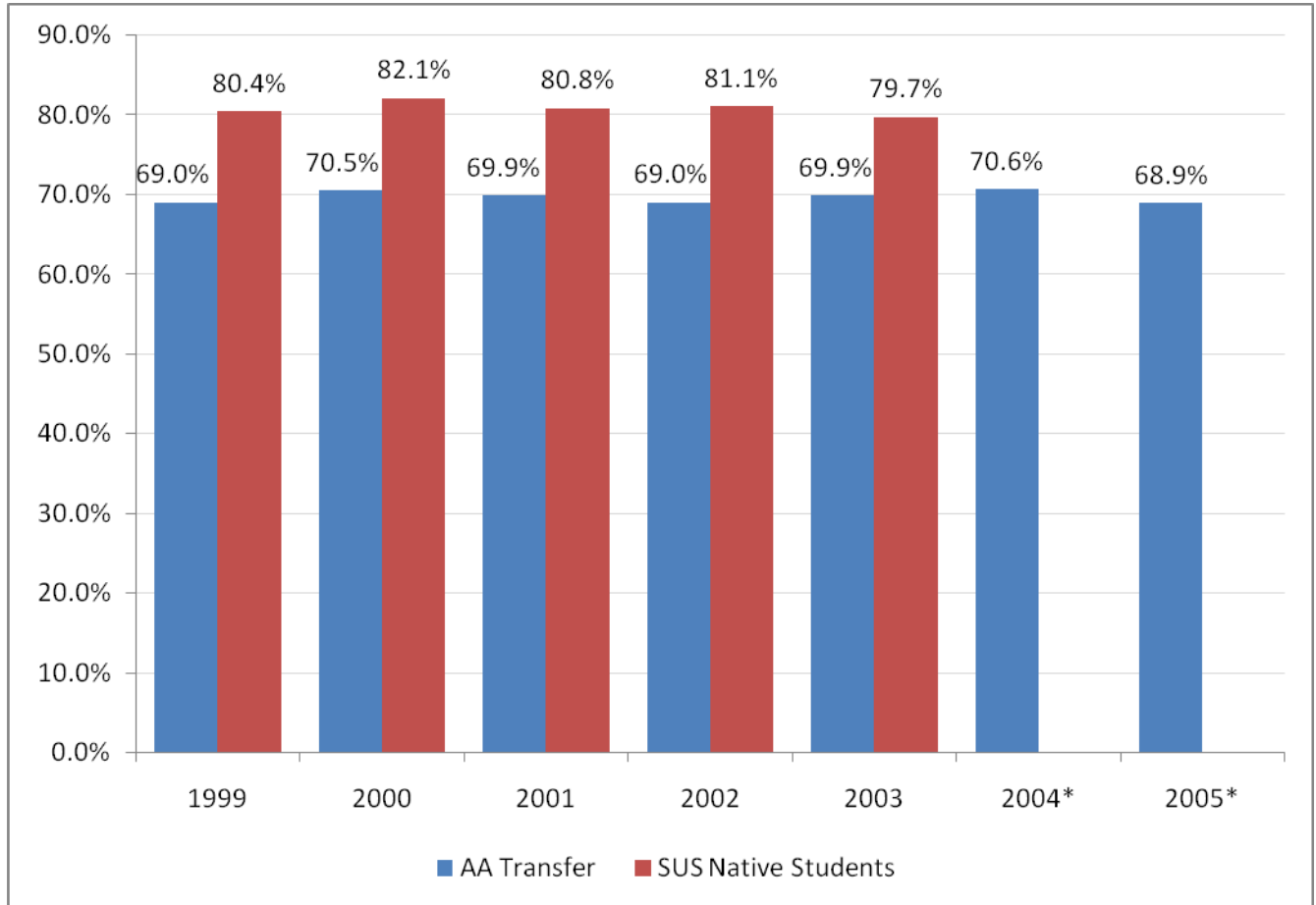


Source: Division of Florida Colleges

Exhibit 8 provides the average total semester hours to degree. The average number of hours to degree taken by AA transfers and SUS natives is comparable with a difference of just one course. This suggests that common course numbering and other transfer pipeline “tools” such as FACTS.org as well as a strong statewide commitment to “2+2”, is working well in Florida.



Exhibit 9. Four-Year Graduation Rate for Full- and Part-time AA Transfer and SUS Native Upper Division Students



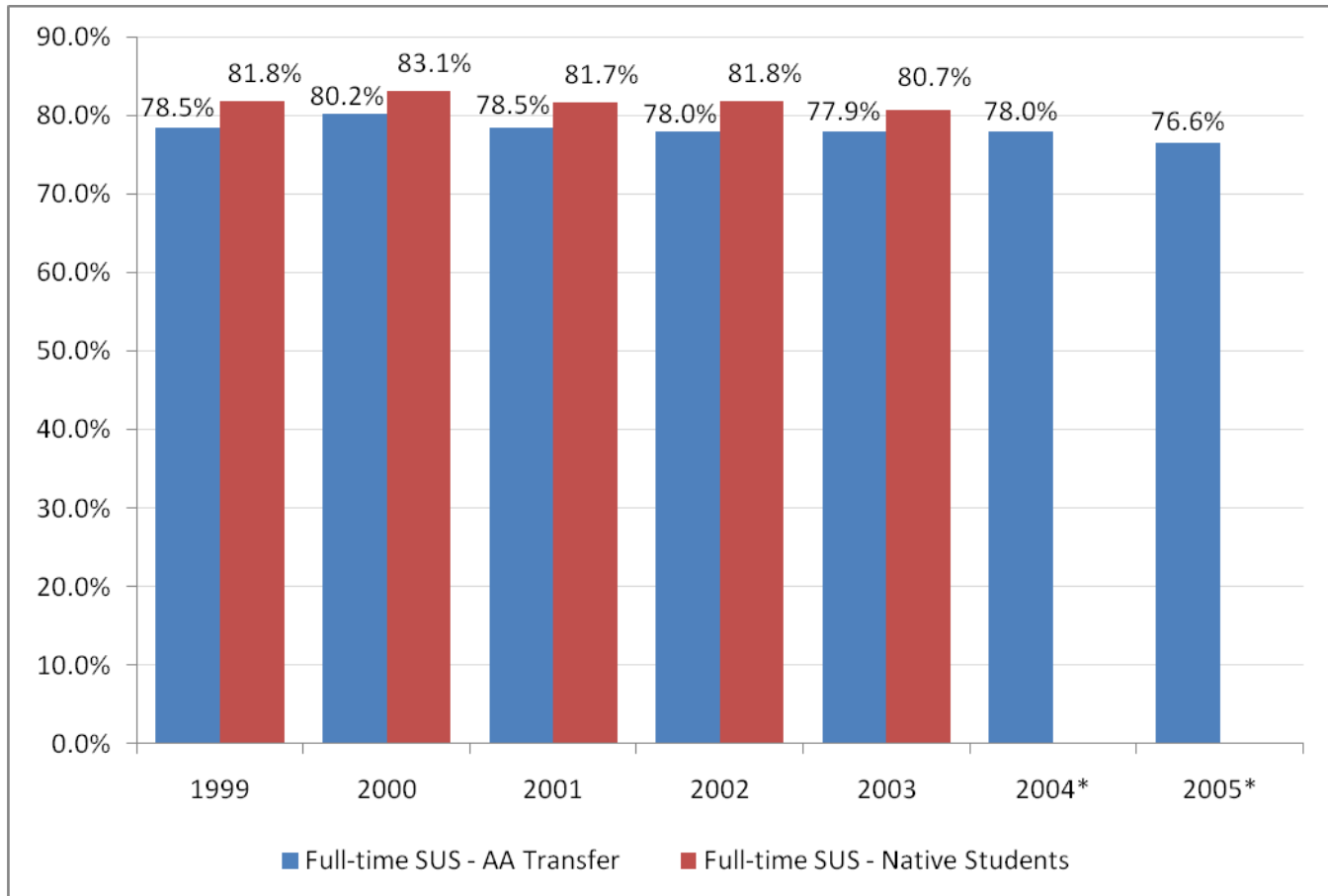
*Four-year graduation rates for SUS native students were not available for 2004 and 2005 at the time of this publication.

Source: Division of Florida Colleges' analysis of data provided by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors

Exhibit 9 provides the four-year graduation rate for full- and part-time upper division students in the SUS. The bar chart above shows graduation rates for AA transfer students and SUS native students. Four-year graduation rates for FCS AA transfer students have been largely stable at around 70%. Graduation rates for SUS natives have also been steady at around 80%, about 10 percentage points higher than AA transfer students. It is expected that transfer students will take slightly longer to graduate than native SUS students due to carrying less semester hours per term as noted in Exhibit 7, and in Exhibit 10 that follows.



Exhibit 10. Four-Year Graduate Rate for Full-Time AA Transfer and SUS Native Upper Division Students



*Four-year graduation rates for SUS native students were not available for 2004 and 2005 at the time of this publication.

Source: Division of Florida Colleges' analysis of data provided by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors

When only full-time students are considered, the difference shrinks considerably. **Exhibit 10** provides the four-year graduation rates of full-time upper division students in the SUS. The graduation rates for FCS AA transfers who attended full-time were higher than those graduation rates shown in Exhibit 9, which was a mix between full- and part-time students. This also shows that the graduation rates for AA transfer students resemble more closely the graduation rates of SUS native students. Graduation rates for SUS natives were not different from those shown in Exhibit 9, probably because SUS native students are more likely to attend college on a full-time basis.

Conclusion

While some state universities tend to admit more FCS transfers than others, transfer rates have remained relatively stable. The proportion of FTIC or SUS native enrollments has steadily risen since 1999-2000, closing the gap between FTIC and FCS transfer enrollment. Full-time completion patterns are similar



among the groups. As the FCS associate degree enrollment rises and the number of FCS students seeking baccalaureate degrees increase, it is imperative to continue to secure access to upper division slots for these students, for the state to increase baccalaureate production.

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