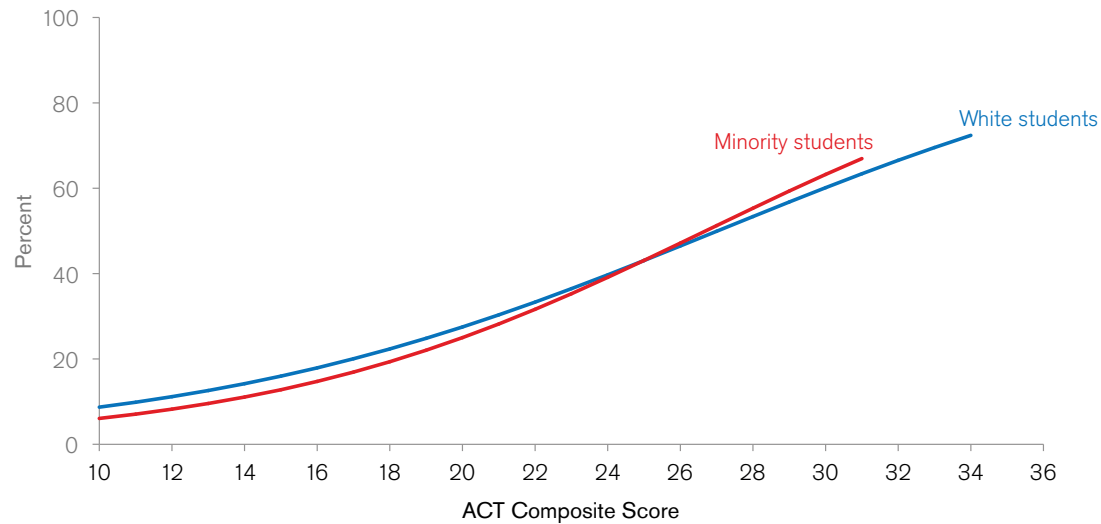


Degree Completion or Transfer by ACT Composite Score and Race/Ethnicity

Among Students Enrolled in a Two-Year Postsecondary Institution

JUSTINE RADUNZEL

Students' Chances of Completing an Associate's Degree or Transferring to an In-State Four-Year Postsecondary Institution within Three Years of Enrolling in a Two-Year Postsecondary Institution by ACT Composite Score and Race/Ethnicity



Note: Underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students included African American, American Indian, and Hispanic students. Results based on data from nearly 66,000 ACT-tested students who enrolled in a two-year postsecondary institution as new students in fall 2000 through 2006. Forty institutions from two state systems were represented. Degree completion from initial institution was tracked. For a more detailed description of the study, see [ACT Research Report 2013-5](#).

A recent ACT study¹ that included data from 40 two-year postsecondary institutions from two state systems found that the typical chances of completing an associate's degree or transferring to an in-state four-year postsecondary institution within three years was 9 percentage points higher for White students than for underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students (24% versus 15%, respectively).

However, when students' academic achievement levels (as measured by Composite score on the ACT® college readiness assessment) were taken into account, degree completion or transfer rates were more similar between White and racial/ethnic minority students.

For example, for students with an ACT Composite score of 22, White students had a 33% chance of degree completion or transfer, compared to a 32% chance for minority students.

For students with ACT Composite scores of 25 or above, chances of completing an associate's degree or transferring to a four-year postsecondary institution for minority students were the same as or slightly higher than those for White students. ■

¹ Justine Radunzel and Julie Noble, *Differential Effects on Student Demographic Groups of Using ACT College Readiness Assessment Composite Score, ACT Benchmarks, and High School Grade Point Average for Predicting Long-Term College Success through Degree Completion*, ACT Research Report 2013-5 (Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc., 2013). http://www.act.org/research/researchers/reports/pdf/ACT_RR2013-5.pdf.

For both White and underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students enrolling in a two-year postsecondary institution, students' chances of completing an associate's degree or transferring to a four-year postsecondary institution within three years increased with higher ACT Composite scores.

Racial/ethnic gaps in three-year rates of degree completion or transfer were reduced when students' academic achievement levels were taken into account.