California Community Colleges

Comprised of 72 districts and 114 colleges, the California Community Colleges make up the largest higher education system in the nation—providing a gateway to higher education for over 2 million students per year. Community Colleges offer associate’s degrees, prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions, provide opportunities for lifelong learning, and train the workforce that sustains California’s economy.

California’s largest workforce training provider
- Serving over two million students annually, Community Colleges offer associate degrees and short-term job training certificates in more than 175 fields.
- More than 100,000 individuals are trained each year in industry-specific workforce skills.
- California Community Colleges train 80 percent of all California firefighters, law enforcement personnel, and emergency medical technicians.
- Seventy percent of California nurses received their education at a California Community College.

A pathway to four-year universities
- Almost 51 percent of graduates of the California State University system and 29 percent of the University of California system transferred from a California Community College.
- California Community Colleges are a cost-effective alternative for students who cannot afford to go to a four-year university all four years.
- Transfer students from the California Community Colleges to the University of California system currently account for 48 percent of UC bachelor’s degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

A good investment
- For every dollar California invests to get students in and through college, the state’s economy receives a $4.50 net return on investment.
- The California Community College system is the state’s most cost-effective system of education—the revenue needed to support one full-time student is slightly more than $5,000 per year.
- Students receiving a degree or certificate from a California Community College nearly double their earnings within three years.
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that occupations that require an associate degree will grow by 18 percent through 2020—faster than the new job growth for those with a bachelor’s degree.

The largest system of higher education in the country
- California Community Colleges have the highest rate of public attendance of all community college systems in the nation.
- One-fifth of community college students nationwide are enrolled in a California Community College.
- Three out of every ten Californians age 18–24 are currently enrolled in a California Community College.

The primary gateway to higher education, serving all Californians
- Over 55 percent of California Community College students are people of diverse ethnic back-grounds and over 53 percent are female.
- Nearly 42 percent of California veterans receiving GI Bill educational benefits attend a California Community College.
- Over 40 percent of California Community College students are age 25 or older and are already working adults.

Credit: Dustin Peterson, Allan Hancock College

The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official foundation to the California Community Colleges’ Board of Governors and Chancellor’s Office. The Foundation’s mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community College system, the largest higher education system in the nation. Incorporated in 1998, the Foundation works with Community Colleges and partner organizations to manage donations, grants, programs, and services that drive excellence in education. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation and receives no direct state support.

For more information, visit www.foundationccc.org.