



Fast Facts Report for the Student Support Services Program

Contents

What Is the Student Support Services Program?	1
What Are the Characteristics of Institutions of Higher Education That Have Student Support Services Grants?	9
Who Are the Student Support Services Program Participants?	11
What Are the Student Support Services Program Outcomes?	13

What Is the Student Support Services Program?

Background

The Student Support Services (SSS) program—one of the federal TRIO programs—was authorized in 1968 by the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (20 U.S.C. 1101a), as amended. The goal of SSS is to increase the postsecondary persistence and graduation rates of low-income students, first-generation college students (i.e., students whose parents have not received a bachelor's degree), and students with disabilities. All students in the SSS program are enrolled in postsecondary education, meet at least one of these eligibility criteria (low-income status, first-generation status, or disability status), and exhibit academic need.

The required services of the SSS program include

- academic tutoring;
- guidance in selecting postsecondary academic courses;
- information for students regarding public and private scholarships and financial aid programs;
- assistance with completing financial aid applications;
- counseling services to improve students' financial and economic literacy;
- assistance with students' applications to graduate and professional programs (for four-year grantees); and
- assistance with students' applications to, and obtaining financial assistance from, four-year programs (for two-year grantees).

Grantees also provide a variety of personalized counseling services, expose students to cultural events and academic or mentoring programs, provide grant aid during their first two years of postsecondary education to SSS participants who receive Federal Pell Grants, and secure temporary housing for students who need a place to live (e.g., homeless youths and youths who have aged out of the foster care system).

Program services are provided by degree-granting postsecondary institutions that receive grants awarded through a competitive process every five years. Historically, postsecondary institutions could receive more than one SSS grant if each separate grant served a different campus or specifically served students with disabilities.

Beginning in the 2010–15 funding cycle, additional types of grants were created to provide SSS program services to other populations of students (i.e., students studying in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics [STEM] fields; students studying in the health sciences fields; students preparing to teach [Teacher Preparation]; and students who speak English as a second language [ESL]).

Taking into consideration these changes in the types of SSS grants between funding cycles, this report examines program characteristics and outcomes from the last year of the 2005–10 grant cycle through the fourth year of the 2010–15 funding cycle (2009–10 through 2013–14).

Data Sources

The information in this report comes from three main sources: grantees’ annual performance reports (APRs); the U.S. Department of Education Federal TRIO Programs Funded Projects Database; and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Each reporting period, grantees are required to submit an APR that details the background characteristics and academic progress of all participants who have ever received program services. Reporting periods correspond to academic years and (for most grantees) run from September through the following August. Participant-level data are linked from year to year to create a longitudinal APR data file, which is used to conduct analyses, such as trends in student academic achievements.

Information regarding the characteristics of “grantee institutions” (i.e., institutions of higher education that have at least one SSS grant) is drawn from two data sources: information about grantee funding and minority-serving institutions came from the U.S. Department of Education Federal TRIO Programs Funded Projects Database; and additional institutional information was obtained from the NCES IPEDS.

Results in this report are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in the given reporting year. In 2009–10 and 2013–14, three grantees did not submit APR data. In 2010–11, one grantee did not submit APR data.

Program Funding

During the 2005–10 grant cycle, institutions could receive “regular” SSS grants (i.e., grants that target the traditionally served SSS population), as well as grants that focused specifically on students with disabilities. Beginning in the 2010–15 grant cycle, however, institutions were allowed to submit multiple grant applications to support the following special populations: ESL students, students studying in a STEM field, students studying in a health science field, and students interested in the teaching profession. The amount of funding awarded to grantees and the minimum number of program participants that grantees are required to serve vary across grant types. Table 1 presents the number of grantees by type of grant in the most recent reporting year (2013–14), as well as the amount of funding, the number of program participants, and the average cost per participant within each type of grant.

- Of the 1,024 grantees that submitted APR data in 2013–14, 949 held regular SSS grants, 36 held grants specifically for students with disabilities, and 20 held grants for students studying in STEM fields. Fewer than 10 grantees held grants within each of the ESL, health sciences, and Teacher Preparation categories.
- The total number of participants that grantees were funded to serve in 2013–14 was 196,588; however, SSS grantees served a total of 204,756 participants (see table 2).

Grantees that have regular SSS grants and grants that focus services on ESL students and Teacher Preparation students are required to serve a minimum of 140 participants each funding year. For STEM and health science grants, a minimum of 120 participants is required. For grants that exclusively serve students with disabilities, a minimum of 100 participants is required.



- In general, grants that focused services on special populations were expected to serve a smaller number of participants (with averages ranging between 118 and 139 participants) than regular SSS grants (with an average of 197 participants).
- The total funding in 2013–14 was \$275.2 million (see table 2). Generally, regular SSS grants and grants that focused on students with disabilities received more funding per grantee than grants that focused services on other special populations because it usually costs more to serve students with disabilities than it does to serve students without disabilities.
- Because it is more costly to provide services for students within the STEM and Health Sciences fields as well as students with disabilities, the average cost per participant was larger within these special population grants (with averages ranging from \$1,507 to \$1,658), compared with regular, ESL, and Teacher Preparation grants (averaging from \$1,333 to \$1,371).

Table 1. Number of Student Support Services (SSS) grants, number of program participants, and amount of program funding, by type of grant: 2013–14

SSS program funding characteristics	Type of grant					
	Regular	Disabled	STEM	ESL	Health sciences	Teacher preparation
Total number of grants	949	36	20	7	6	6
Total funding	\$259,109,187	\$8,334,726	\$4,020,151	\$1,414,215	\$1,101,671	\$1,193,819
Average funding per grantee	\$273,034	\$231,520	\$201,008	\$202,031	\$183,612	\$198,970
Total number of participants funded to serve	186,829	4,862	2,361	973	744	819
Average number of participants funded to serve per grantee	197	135	118	139	124	137
Total number of program participants	194,438	5,028	2,635	1,053	731	871
Average number of program participants per grantee	205	140	132	150	122	145
Average cost per program participant	\$1,333	\$1,658	\$1,526	\$1,343	\$1,507	\$1,371

NOTE: STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. ESL stands for English as a second language. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.



Table 2 shows SSS program characteristics related to the total number of SSS grantees, program funding, and the number of program participants in each reporting year between the last year of the 2005–10 funding cycle (2009–10) and the fourth year of the 2010–15 funding cycle (2013–14).

- At the end of the 2005–10 grant cycle (2009–10), 943 grantees received funding and submitted APR data. In 2010–11, the first year of the 2010–15 grant cycle, 1,031 grantees received funding and submitted APR data. Among grantees that submitted APR data, the total amount of funding increased from \$300,501,410 to \$301,746,383 during this time.
- Between 2010–11 and 2013–14, the number of grantees that received funding and submitted APR data decreased from 1,031 to 1,024 because five of the grantees that submitted an APR in 2010–11 were not funded under the 2010–15 grant cycle, but their grants from the previous funding cycle extended into the 2010–11 reporting year. In addition, while only one grantee did not submit APR data in 2010–11, three grantees did not submit APR data in 2013–14.
- The average amount of funding per grantee decreased from \$282,418 to \$268,724 between 2012–13 and 2013–14 due to the budget sequestration in fall 2013.¹
- The average number of participants that grantees were funded to serve declined between funding cycles from 209 in 2009–10 to 197 in 2010–11. This was due in part to new grantees that served special populations, because the required number of participants for many of these grants was lower than the required number of participants for regular grants.
- The average number of participants that grantees were funded to serve remained constant between 2010–11 and 2012–13 (197). In 2013–14, the average number of participants that grantees were funded to serve declined to 192 participants due to the budget sequestration in fall 2013.
- Notably, in each reporting year between 2009–10 and 2013–14, the total number of program participants exceeded the total number of participants that grantees were funded to serve.

Table 2. Student Support Services (SSS) program funding characteristics, by reporting year: 2009–10 through 2013–14

SSS program funding characteristics	Reporting year				
	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Total number of grantees	943	1,031	1,028	1,028	1,024
Total funding	\$300,501,410	\$301,746,383	\$290,572,673	\$290,325,810	\$275,173,769
Average funding per grantee	\$318,665	\$292,674	\$282,658	\$282,418	\$268,724
Total number of participants funded to serve	197,407	203,352	202,666	202,633	196,588
Average number of participants funded to serve per grantee	209	197	197	197	192
Total number of program participants	208,956	206,411	210,361	209,668	204,756
Average number of program participants per grantee	222	200	205	204	200
Average cost per program participant	\$1,438	\$1,462	\$1,381	\$1,385	\$1,344

NOTE: This table reflects the last year of the 2005–10 funding cycle (i.e., 2009–10) and the first four years of the 2010–2015 funding cycle. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in the given reporting year. In reporting years 2009–10 and 2013–14, three grantees did not submit APR data. In 2010–11, one grantee did not submit APR data. Due to the budget sequestration in fall 2013, there was a decrease in funding between 2012–13 and 2013–14 of approximately 5.2 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2009–10 through 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.

¹ Budget sequestration refers to the automatic cuts to United States federal government spending in particular categories of outlays (including education) in fall 2013. Each TRIO program's funding was reduced by 5.2 percent in 2013–14 due to the budget sequestration.



Table 3 presents the number of grantees, the number of participants, the average number of program participants per grantee, the total amount of funding, and the average cost per program participant by type of grantee.

- In each reporting year, there was a larger number of grantees at two-year institutions than at four-year institutions.
- On average, four-year institutions had between 20 and 25 more participants per grantee within each reporting year than two-year institutions.
- In 2009–10, four-year institutions received slightly more funding than two-year institutions. However, beginning in 2010–11 (the first year of the 2010–15 funding cycle), two-year institutions received slightly more funding than four-year institutions.
- Between 2010–11 and 2013–14, the average cost per program participant was lower at four-year institutions than at two-year institutions because four-year institutions had a larger number of program participants and received a slightly smaller amount of funding than two-year institutions.

Table 3. Number of Student Support Services (SSS) grantees, total number of program participants, average number of program participants per grantee, amount of program funding, and average cost per program participant, by reporting year and type of grantee: 2009–10 through 2013–14

SSS program funding characteristics and type of grantee	Reporting year				
	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Total grantees	943	1,031	1,028	1,028	1,024
Four-year institutions	459	490	490	490	486
Two-year institutions	484	541	538	538	538
Total number of program participants	208,956	206,411	210,361	209,668	204,756
Four-year institutions	106,714	104,338	106,264	106,266	103,691
Two-year institutions	102,242	102,073	104,097	103,402	101,065
Average number of program participants per grantee	222	200	205	204	200
Four-year institutions	232	213	217	217	213
Two-year institutions	211	189	193	192	188
Total funding	\$300,501,410	\$301,746,383	\$290,572,673	\$290,325,810	\$275,173,769
Four-year institutions	\$150,820,787	\$148,692,247	\$143,608,051	\$143,284,482	\$135,471,587
Two-year institutions	\$149,680,623	\$153,054,136	\$146,964,622	\$147,041,328	\$139,702,182
Average cost per program participant	\$1,438	\$1,462	\$1,381	\$1,385	\$1,344
Four-year institutions	\$1,413	\$1,425	\$1,351	\$1,348	\$1,306
Two-year institutions	\$1,464	\$1,499	\$1,412	\$1,422	\$1,382

NOTE: This table reflects the last year of the 2005–10 funding cycle (i.e., 2009–10) and the first four years of the 2010–15 funding cycle. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in the given reporting year. Due to the sequestration in fall 2013, there was a decrease in funding between 2012–13 and 2013–14 of approximately 5.2 percent, and the number of participants that grantees were funded to serve also declined.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2009–10 through 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.



Summer Bridge Programs, Grant Aid, and Supplemental Institutional and Other Non-Federal Funds

Each year, grantees provide information about summer bridge programs, grant aid provided to program participants, and institutional and other non-federal funds used to supplement SSS grants. This information, which is reported at the grantee level, is displayed by type of grantee in table 4.

To reduce the gap in persistence and completion rates between economically advantaged and disadvantaged students, SSS programs may include summer bridge programs or opportunities for grant aid. Although summer bridge programs vary in intensity and length (e.g., from a few days to six weeks), the goal is the same—to support students’ transition from high school to college.

The goal of grant aid is to help reduce program participants’ unmet financial need or loans so that they are more inclined to stay in school and graduate. Participants who are in their first two years of postsecondary education and who are receiving Federal Pell Grants are eligible to receive grant aid. Grantees that use SSS funds to provide grant aid must match at least 33 percent of these funds with funding from other sources.²

- Over one-fifth (22 percent) of four-year institutions and 16 percent of two-year institutions operated a summer bridge program.
- Over three-quarters (79 percent) of four-year institutions used SSS funds to provide grant aid to participants, compared with over two-thirds (69 percent) of two-year institutions.
- Thirty-one percent of four-year institutions and 6 percent of two-year institutions were required to provide matching funds for grant aid.
- Forty-seven percent of four-year institutions received institutional or other non-federal funds to supplement SSS grant funds, compared with 27 percent of two-year institutions.

Table 4. Number and percentage of Student Support Services (SSS) grantees with summer bridge programs, grant aid for program participants, and institutional or other non-federal funds, by type of grantee: 2013-14

Summer bridge programs, grant aid for program participants, and institutional or other non-federal funds	Four-year institutions		Two-year institutions	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total number of grantees	486	100.0	538	100.0
Has a summer bridge program	108	22.2	86	16.0
Used SSS funds to provide grant aid	386	79.4	369	68.6
Required to provide matching funds for grant aid	152	31.3	31	5.8
Received institutional or other non-federal funds	226	46.5	144	26.8

NOTE: Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013-14. Information about summer bridge programs, grant aid, matching funds, and institutional or other non-federal funds was collected at the grantee level.

SOURCE : U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013-14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Reports, 2013-14.

² Grantees may be exempt from the matching requirement if they are eligible to receive funds under Part A or B of Title III or Title V (e.g., strengthening institutions program) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.



Table 5 provides more detailed information about the amount of matching funds and institutional or other non-federal funds that grantees received in 2013–14. Typically, institutional and other non-federal funds are monetary contributions such as cash and do not include in-kind support (e.g., supplies or equipment).

- Among the institutions that were required to provide matching funds (183), nearly \$3.5 million were at four-year institutions, which was six times larger than the amount at two-year institutions (under \$0.5 million).
- The median amount of matching funds provided by grantees that were required to provide matching funds was larger at four-year institutions (\$12,000) than at two-year institutions (\$8,465), likely reflecting the higher costs associated with attending a four-year institution.
- The total amount of institutional or other non-federal funds at four-year institutions (over \$16 million) was more than twice as large as the amount at two-year institutions (approximately \$7.3 million). The median value of institutional or other non-federal funds was also higher at four-year institutions than at two-year institutions.

Table 5. Total and median value of matching funds for grant aid and total and median value of institutional or other non-federal funds, by type of grantee: 2013–14

	Four-year institutions	Two-year institutions
Matching funds for grant aid and institutional or other non-federal funds		
Matching funds for grant aid		
Total amount	\$3,452,486	\$448,231
Median value	\$12,000	\$8,465
Institutional or other non-federal funds		
Total amount	\$16,391,164	\$7,358,497
Median value	\$34,552	\$27,781

NOTE: Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14. Information about matching funds and institutional or other non-federal funds was collected at the grantee level. The median value of matching funds was calculated among grantees that were required to provide matching funds. Among four-year institutions, 152 grantees were required to provide matching funds, and among two-year institutions, 31 grantees were required to provide matching funds.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Reports, 2013–14.

Program Services

Each year, grantees report the number of participants that received the required SSS program services. Grantees may offer services directly to participants, or they may refer participants to another service provider. While participants’ background information and outcomes are collected at the individual level, grantees report information about program services at the grantee level.

Table 6 shows the number and percentage of participants who received specific program services during the 2013–14 academic year. Percentages in table 6 do not sum to 100 percent because (1) it is not required that all participants receive all services, (2) some participants may both receive specific services from the grantee and be referred to another service provider, and (3) participants may receive multiple services during the reporting year.

- At both four-year and two-year institutions, the most common services that grantees provided participants were guidance related to course selection (75 percent and 84 percent, respectively) and information related to federal financial aid (61 percent and 70 percent, respectively).
- With the exception of academic tutoring, the percentage of participants who received program services from grantees was larger at two-year institutions than at four-year institutions for each of the specified services. Almost half of the participants received academic tutoring from grantees within both two-year and four-year institutions.



- At four-year institutions, approximately one-fifth of participants received assistance with applying to graduate or professional programs from grantees. (This service is applicable only to four-year institutions.)
- At two-year institutions, approximately one-third of participants received assistance with applying to four-year institutions from grantees. (This service is applicable only to two-year institutions.)
- With the exception of assistance in completing forms and applying for federal financial aid at four-year institutions, for each of the required program services, the percentage of participants who received services from their grantee was larger than the percentage of participants who were referred to another service provider.

Table 6. Number and percentage of Student Support Services (SSS) participants who received specific program services, by type of grantee and service provider: 2013–14

Type of program service and provider	Four-year institutions		Two-year institutions	
	Number of participants	Percent	Number of participants	Percent
Total number of participants	98,492	100.0	98,096	100.0
Academic tutoring				
Provided by grantee	47,696	48.4	47,978	48.9
Referred to another service provider	30,232	30.7	31,801	32.4
Advice and assistance in postsecondary course selection				
Provided by grantee	73,847	75.0	82,406	84.0
Referred to another service provider	37,071	37.6	22,380	22.8
Education/counseling to improve financial and economic literacy				
Provided by grantee	56,478	57.3	61,865	63.1
Referred to another service provider	25,532	25.9	22,538	23.0
Information on applying for federal student aid				
Provided by grantee	60,043	61.0	68,436	69.8
Referred to another service provider	31,169	31.6	28,522	29.1
Assistance in completing forms and applying for federal student aid				
Provided by grantee	30,600	31.1	34,205	34.9
Referred to another service provider	31,833	32.3	27,013	27.5
Assistance in applying for admission to a four-year institution and obtaining federal student aid				
Provided by grantee	†	†	32,207	32.8
Referred to another service provider	†	†	14,133	14.4
Assistance in applying for admission to graduate school and obtaining federal student aid				
Provided by grantee	20,070	20.4	†	†
Referred to another service provider	14,881	15.1	†	†

† Not applicable.

NOTE: Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14. Information about participation in program services was collected at the grantee level. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent because (1) it is not required that all participants receive all services, (2) some participants may both receive specific services from the grantee and be referred to another service provider, and (3) participants may receive multiple services during the reporting year.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Reports, 2013–14.



What Are the Characteristics of Institutions of Higher Education That Have Student Support Services Grants?

Table 7 shows the characteristics of SSS grantee institutions (i.e., institutions of higher education that have at least one SSS grant) that submitted an APR in 2013–14.³ To provide context, table 7 also contains information about all public and private, not-for-profit two-year and four-year institutions of higher education included in the 2013–14 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

- In general, SSS grantee institutions had a higher representation of Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) than two-year and four-year institutions nationally. Ten percent of four-year grantee institutions and 1 percent of two-year grantee institutions were HBCUs, compared with 4 percent of four-year institutions and less than 1 percent of two-year institutions nationally.
- Ten percent of four-year grantee institutions and 13 percent of two-year grantee institutions were Hispanic-serving institutions.⁴
- Four-year SSS grantee institutions were more likely to be located in rural areas (30 percent) than four-year institutions nationally (23 percent). They were also less likely to be located in suburban areas (17 percent) than four-year institutions nationally (26 percent).
- The distribution of institutions across geographic locales (e.g., urban, suburban, rural) was similar between two-year SSS grantee institutions and two-year institutions nationally.
- SSS grantee institutions had a higher representation of public institutions than the national sample. Seventy percent of four-year grantee institutions were public institutions, compared with 28 percent of four-year institutions nationally. Nearly all of the two-year grantee institutions were public institutions (97 percent), compared with 83 percent of two-year institutions nationally.
- SSS grantee institutions enrolled more undergraduate students on average (9,595 students at four-year institutions and 8,155 students at two-year institutions) than the national average (3,875 students at four-year institutions and 5,663 students at two-year institutions).
- Among SSS grantee institutions, 50 percent of students in four-year institutions and 23 percent of students in two-year institutions on average received federal student loans. This was similar to the national average, where 52 percent of students in four-year institutions and 22 percent of students in two-year institutions received federal student loans.
- The six-year graduation rate at four-year institutions was 48 percent for SSS grantee institutions, which was slightly lower than the national average of 52 percent.⁵
- The three-year graduation rate at SSS two-year grantee institutions was 21 percent, while the three-year graduation rate was 31 percent for two-year institutions nationally.⁵

³ Among SSS grantee institutions that submitted APR data in the 2013–14 reporting year, 59 had two grants, 10 had three grants, and one had four grants.

⁴ Information about Hispanic-serving institutions was not available in the IPEDS.

⁵ Graduation rates in table 7 represent the graduation rates at two-year and four-year SSS grantee institutions as reported in the IPEDS; they are not the graduation rates for SSS participants.



Table 7. Number and percentage distribution of two- and four-year SSS grantee institutions and institutions in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) subpopulation, by selected characteristics: 2013–14

Institutional characteristics	SSS grantee institutions		IPEDS sample	
	Four-year institutions	Two-year institutions	Four-year institutions	Two-year institutions
Total number of institutions	450	492	2,270	1,366
Percentage distribution of grantees by minority serving status				
Historically Black Colleges and Universities	9.6%	1.2%	3.9%	0.8%
Hispanic-serving institutions	10.0%	13.2%	—	—
Tribally controlled colleges and universities	0.4%	2.4%	0.6%	1.5%
Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions	3.6%	5.5%	—	—
Institutions classified as serving multiple minority populations	3.8%	3.3%	—	—
Predominantly black institutions	0.7%	3.5%	—	—
Percentage distribution of grantees by degree of urbanization				
Urban	52.4%	34.4%	50.6%	35.5%
Suburban	17.3%	18.6%	26.0%	21.0%
Rural	30.2%	46.9%	23.4%	43.5%
Percentage distribution by institutional control				
Public	69.8%	96.5%	28.0%	83.1%
Private, not-for-profit	30.2%	2.6%	72.0%	16.9%
Additional institutional characteristics				
Average total enrollment	9,595	8,155	3,875	5,663
Percent of undergraduate students receiving federal student loans	50.2%	22.7%	51.5%	21.5%
Average amount of federal student loan aid received by undergraduate students	\$6,997	\$5,117	\$7,257	\$5,492
Average amount of Pell Grants received by undergraduate students	\$4,093	\$3,729	\$3,998	\$3,725
Graduation rate within 150 percent of normal time (bachelor's degree for four-year institutions and certificate or associate degree for two-year institutions)	48.2%	21.4%	52.4%	30.5%

— Not available.

NOTE: Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14. In this table, grantee institutions that have more than one Student Support Services (SSS) grant are only counted once. In the 2013–14 reporting year, 59 institutions that submitted APR data had two grants, 10 had three grants, and one had four grants. SSS grantee information about minority-serving institutions and institutional control was obtained from the Funded Projects Database. Information about enrollment, student loans, Pell Grants, degree of urbanization, and graduation rates was obtained from IPEDS. Graduation data were not available in IPEDS for a total of 37 grantee institutions. SSS grantee institutions were classified as two-year or four-year institutions based on the primary degree awarded at the institution; institutions in IPEDS were classified as two-year or four-year institutions based on the highest degree awarded at the institution. Institutions in IPEDS that awarded bachelor's degrees and had the Carnegie classification of "Associate's college" were re-classified as two-year institutions. For-profit institutions and institutions where the highest degree awarded was less than an associate degree are excluded from this table because zero SSS grantee institutions fall into these categories. In IPEDS, information on degree of urbanization is reported in four major groupings (city, suburb, town, and rural) based on schools' locations relative to urbanized areas. The three town and rural codes (fringe, distant, and remote) constitute the "rural" grouping. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2013.



Who Are the Student Support Services Program Participants?

Table 8 shows selected demographic characteristics of SSS participants during the 2013–14 academic year.

- Approximately two-thirds of SSS participants were female (65 percent at four-year institutions and 68 percent at two-year institutions).
- Thirty percent of participants at four-year institutions and 27 percent of participants at two-year institutions were African American. Twenty-five percent of participants at four-year institutions and 21 percent of participants at two-year institutions were Hispanic. Thirty-four percent of participants at four-year institutions and 43 percent of participants at two-year institutions were white.⁶
- Some observed differences between the characteristics of participants who received services at two-year and four-year institutions follow conventional expectations. In 2013–14, 74 percent of participants at four-year institutions were between 17 and 22 years of age, compared with 50 percent of participants at two-year institutions. In contrast, 8 percent of participants at four-year institutions and 29 percent of participants at two-year institutions were over 30 years old.⁷
- The distribution of participants by eligibility status was similar at two-year and four-year institutions. Sixty-six percent of participants at four-year institutions and 69 percent of participants at two-year institutions were both low-income and first-generation students, fulfilling the SSS program requirement that two-thirds of participants at each grantee meet both of these eligibility criteria.

Table 8. Number and percentage distribution of Student Support Services (SSS) participants by gender, race/ethnicity, age, eligibility status, and type of grantee: 2013–14

Participant characteristics	Four-year institutions		Two-year institutions	
	Number of participants	Percent	Number of participants	Percent
Total number of participants	103,691	100.0	101,065	100.0
Gender				
Female	67,403	65.0	68,148	67.5
Male	36,263	35.0	32,869	32.5
Race/ethnicity				
White	34,866	33.8	43,055	42.7
Black/African American	31,076	30.1	26,768	26.6
Hispanic	26,125	25.3	20,803	20.7
Asian	6,576	6.4	3,425	3.4
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	632	0.6	1,294	1.3
American Indian/Native Alaskan	1,760	1.7	3,485	3.5
More than one race	2,269	2.2	1,910	1.9
Age				
17–22 years old	76,724	74.3	50,300	50.0
23–30 years old	17,996	17.4	20,703	20.6
Over 30 years old	8,494	8.2	29,542	29.4
Eligibility status				
Low-income and first-generation	68,314	65.9	69,271	68.5
Low-income only	9,878	9.5	6,832	6.8
First-generation only	14,263	13.8	14,107	14.0
Disabled	5,370	5.2	4,141	4.1
Disabled and low-income	5,866	5.7	6,714	6.6

NOTE: Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14. All SSS participants of Hispanic ethnicity were classified as Hispanic and were not classified into other race categories. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.

⁶ All SSS participants of Hispanic ethnicity were classified as Hispanic and were not classified into other race categories.

⁷ The median age of new (and summer bridge) participants was 19 years of age at four-year grantees and 21 years of age at two-year grantees; and the median age for continuing participants (i.e., participants who received services in a previous reporting year) was 21 years of age at four-year grantees and 24 years of age at two-year grantees (not shown in table 8).



Table 9 shows characteristics of SSS participants that are related to their participation in the SSS program and their college enrollment.

- In 2013–14, 32 percent of participants at four-year institutions and 39 percent of participants at two-year institutions were new participants, receiving program services for the first time during the reporting year. In addition, a small percentage (2 to 3 percent) of participants at both two-year and four-year institutions received program services for the first time during the summer prior to their freshman year (i.e., summer bridge participants).
- A larger percentage of participants at four-year institutions (65 percent) were continuing participants—meaning that they received services in a previous reporting year as well—than at two-year institutions (59 percent).
- Similar to national trends in postsecondary enrollment, SSS participants at four-year institutions were more likely to be enrolled full-time (79 percent) than participants at two-year institutions (52 percent).
- At both two-year and four-year institutions, most SSS participants (85 and 74 percent, respectively) entered the program during their freshman year. Approximately 62 percent of participants at four-year institutions and 50 percent of participants at two-year institutions received program services for the first time during the first year they attended college. An additional 12 percent of participants at four-year institutions and 36 percent of participants at two-year institutions received program services for the first time as freshmen but had attended another institution in the past.

Table 9. Number and percentage distribution of Student Support Services (SSS) participants by participant status, enrollment status, grade level at program entry, and type of grantee: 2013–14

Participant characteristics	Four-year institutions		Two-year institutions	
	Number of participants	Percent	Number of participants	Percent
Total number of participants	103,691	100.0	101,065	100.0
Participant status				
New	32,834	31.7	39,697	39.3
Continuing	67,563	65.2	59,392	58.8
Summer bridge (earning credits)	1,062	1.0	579	0.6
Summer bridge (not earning credits)	2,232	2.2	1,397	1.4
Enrollment status in 2013–14				
Full-time	82,241	79.4	52,716	52.2
Part-time	19,157	18.5	46,879	46.4
Summer bridge (not earning credits)	2,232	2.2	1,397	1.4
Grade level at program entry				
First year (never attended college before)	64,026	62.0	50,231	49.7
First year (attended college before)	12,741	12.3	35,982	35.6
Second year	13,317	12.9	14,632	14.5
Third year	10,089	9.8	113	0.1
Fourth year	2,933	2.8	22	#
Fifth year/other undergraduate	158	0.2	4	#

Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.



What Are the Student Support Services Program Outcomes?

The *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)* mandates reporting on the performance of each TRIO program. Program-level and grantee-level performance measures are calculated and reported annually on the TRIO website. (For additional information regarding performance data, please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/triostudsupp/performance.html>.) For the SSS program, participant success is measured using two outcomes: persistence to the second year of college and degree completion. Each of these outcomes is measured separately for four-year and two-year institutions and is described in more detail below.

Each outcome in the GPRA report focuses on a different cohort of full-time, first-time freshmen because the length of time necessary to observe student outcomes differs across the measures of persistence (by the fall of the second year of college); completion at four-year institutions (by the end of the sixth year of college); and completion at two-year institutions (by the end of the third year of college). For example, in the 2013–14 reporting year, persistence was measured among participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen in 2013–14, completion at two-year institutions was measured among participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen in 2011–12, and completion at four-year institutions was measured among participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen in 2008–09.

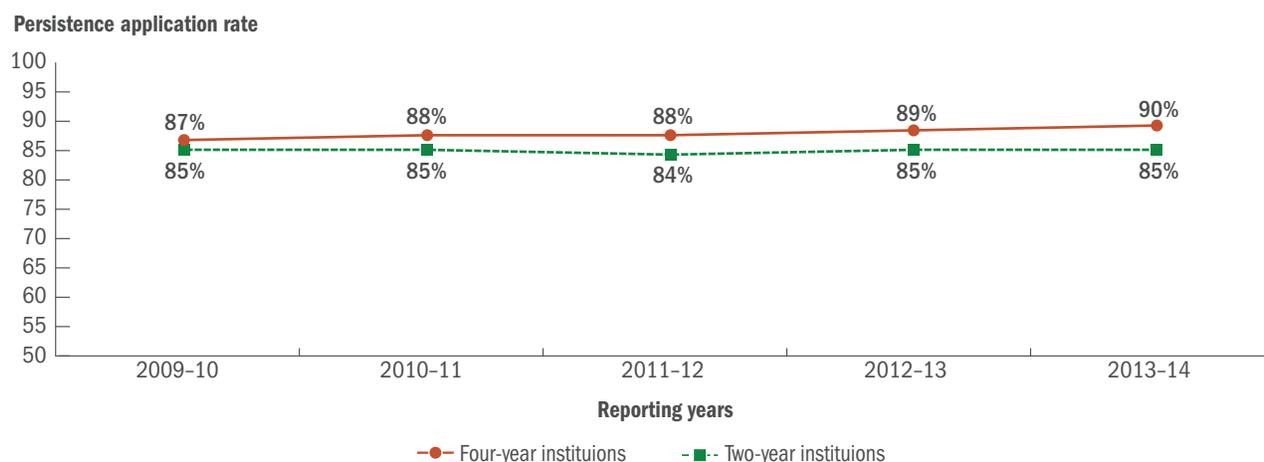
Persistence

Figure 1 displays SSS program-level persistence rates by type of grantee for reporting years between 2009–10 and 2013–14. At both four-year and two-year institutions, persistence is measured among new participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen during the reporting year.

- The persistence rate at four-year institutions increased across the five reporting years, beginning with a rate of 87 percent in 2009–10 and increasing to a rate of 90 percent in 2013–14.
- The persistence rate at two-year institutions remained relatively constant at approximately 85 percent during the same time period.

At four-year institutions, the persistence rate is calculated as the percentage of full-time, first-time freshmen who continue to be enrolled in the institution in the fall of the second year of college. At two-year institutions, the persistence rate is calculated as the percentage of full-time, first-time freshmen who continue to be enrolled in the institution or transfer to a four-year institution in the fall of the second year of college, or complete an associate degree by the end of the academic year.

Figure 1. Persistence rates for Student Support Services (SSS) participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen, by reporting year and type of grantee: 2009–10 through 2013–14



NOTE: This figure reflects the last year of the 2005–10 funding cycle (i.e., 2009–10) and the first four years of the 2010–15 funding cycle. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in the given reporting year. Persistence at four-year institutions is defined as enrollment in the grantee institution in the fall of the second year of college. At two-year institutions, persistence is defined as enrollment in the grantee institution in the fall of the second year of college, transfer to a four-year institution by the fall of the second year of college, or completion of an associate degree by the end of the academic year. Persistence was measured among full-time, first-time freshmen who entered the program during the reporting year.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2009–10 through 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.



Completion

This section presents information on the degree completion outcomes separately for four-year grantees and two-year grantees.⁸

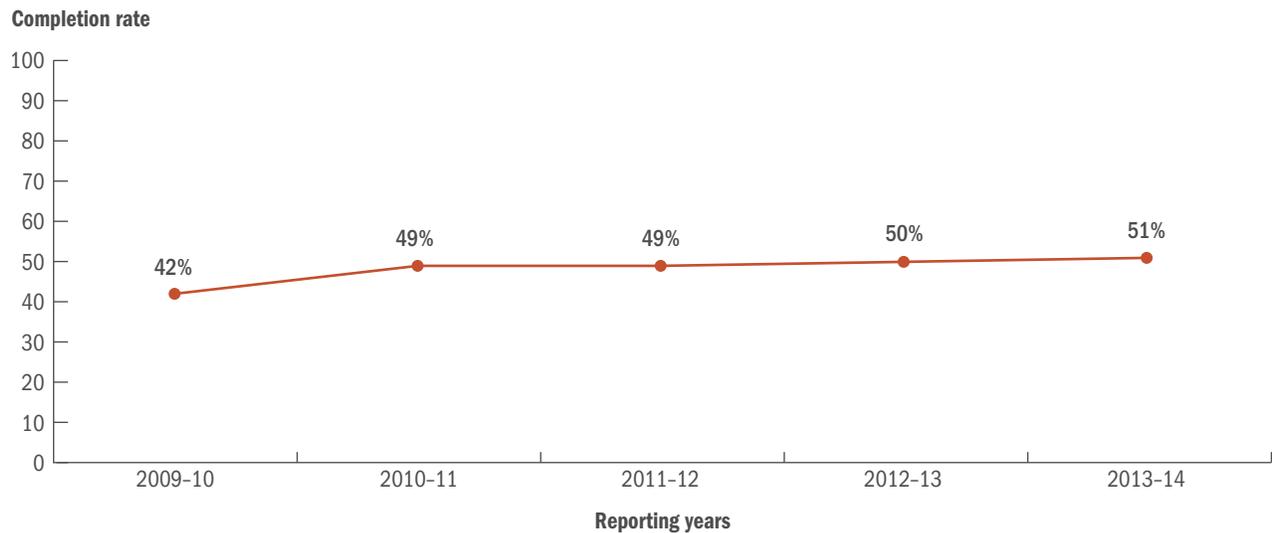
At four-year institutions, completion is defined as earning a bachelor's degree or the equivalent of a bachelor's degree within six years of college entry.

Completion at Four-Year Institutions

Each reporting year, completion rates at four-year institutions are calculated using the cohort of full-time, first-time freshmen who received program services for the first time five years prior to the reporting year. Figure 2 displays the completion rates at four-year institutions between 2009–10 and 2013–14.

- Between 2009–10 and 2010–11, the completion rate increased from 42 percent to 49 percent.⁹
- The completion rate at four-year institutions increased from 49 percent to 51 percent between 2010–11 and 2013–14.

Figure 2. Bachelor's degree completion rates for Student Support Services (SSS) participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen at four-year institutions, by reporting year: 2009–10 through 2013–14



NOTE: This figure reflects the last year of the 2005–10 funding cycle (i.e., 2009–10) and the first four years of the 2010–15 funding cycle. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in the given reporting year. Completion at four-year institutions is defined as completing a bachelor's degree (or the equivalent of a bachelor's degree) at the institution within six years of college entry. In each reporting year, only grantees that had received SSS funding for at least six years were included in the calculation of completion rates. Completion rates were calculated among full-time, first-time freshmen who entered the program five years prior to the reporting year.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2009–10 through 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.

⁸ To measure degree completion, grantees who are four-year institutions follow full-time, first-time freshmen for six years and grantees who are two-year institutions follow full-time, first-time freshmen for three years. Grantees that were funded for the first time during the 2010–15 grant cycle were not included in the calculation of completion rates until they followed a group of full-time, first-time freshmen for the requisite number of years (i.e., 2012–13 for two-year grantees and 2015–16 for four-year grantees).

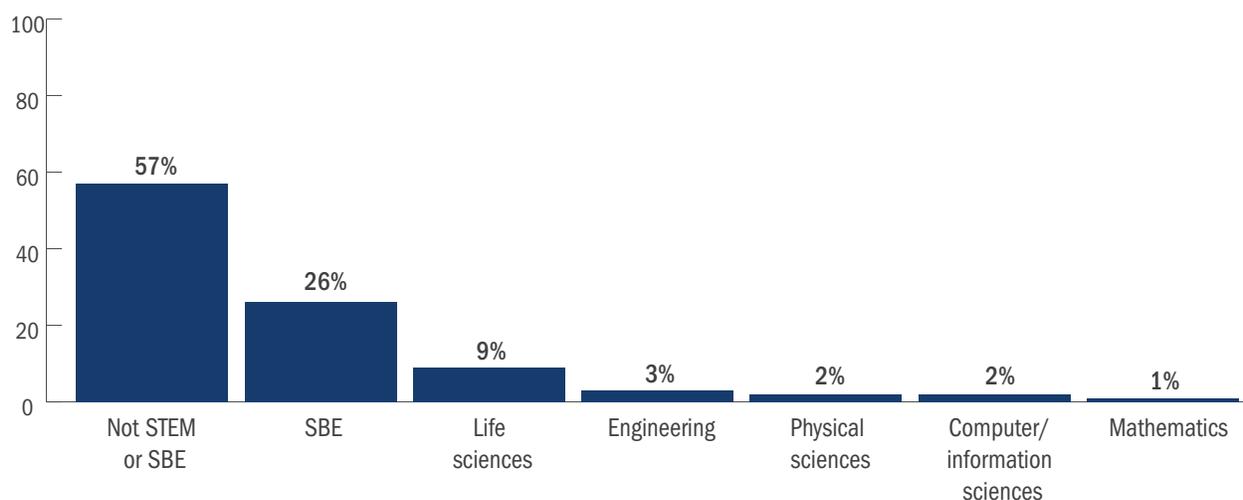
⁹ In 2005–06, a web-based data collection system was initiated that included data checks to improve data quality. Therefore, the bachelor's degree completion rate in 2010–11 was based on higher-quality data than the rate calculated in 2009–10, which included participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen before the web-based data collection system started. In 2010–11, the TRIO office performed a data quality check with all SSS grantees. During this process, grantees verified the list of participants who were identified as full-time, first-time freshmen during each reporting year, improving the quality of the data. When comparing completion rates between 2009–10 and 2010–11, it is important to consider how improvements in data quality between reporting years may have affected the completion rates.



Figure 3 provides information about the fields of study in which SSS participants completed their bachelor’s degrees. Specifically, the figure presents the fields of study in which participants who received program services for the first time as full-time, first-time freshmen in 2008–09 received their bachelor’s degrees: science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields (e.g., life sciences, engineering, physical sciences, computer/information sciences, and mathematics); social, behavioral, and economic sciences (SBE) fields (e.g., psychology, sociology, economics); or other fields that are not classified as STEM or SBE fields.

- Fifty-seven percent of bachelor’s degree recipients received their degree in a field that was not classified as a STEM or SBE field.
- Twenty-six percent of bachelor’s degree recipients received a degree in an SBE field.
- Relative to the SBE fields, a smaller percentage (17 percent) of bachelor’s degree recipients received degrees in a STEM field, which includes the life sciences (9 percent of degrees), engineering (3 percent of degrees), physical sciences (2 percent of degrees), computer/information sciences (2 percent of degrees), and mathematics (less than 1 percent of degrees).

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of field of study for Student Support Services (SSS) participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen in the 2008–09 reporting year and who received a bachelor’s degree between 2009–10 and 2013–14



NOTE: STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. SBE stands for social, behavioral, and economic sciences. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.

Completion at Two-Year Institutions

Figure 4 displays the overall completion rates, as well as rates for the different types of completion (i.e., completion of an associate degree and transfer to a four-year institution, completion of an associate degree without transfer to a four-year institution, and transfer to a four-year institution without completion of an associate degree) for two-year institutions between 2009–10 and 2013–14.

- The overall completion rate at two-year institutions increased by 5 percentage points, from 36 percent to 41 percent, between the 2009–10 and 2010–11 reporting years.¹⁰ The same rate declined from 41 percent to 39 percent between 2010–11 and 2013–14.

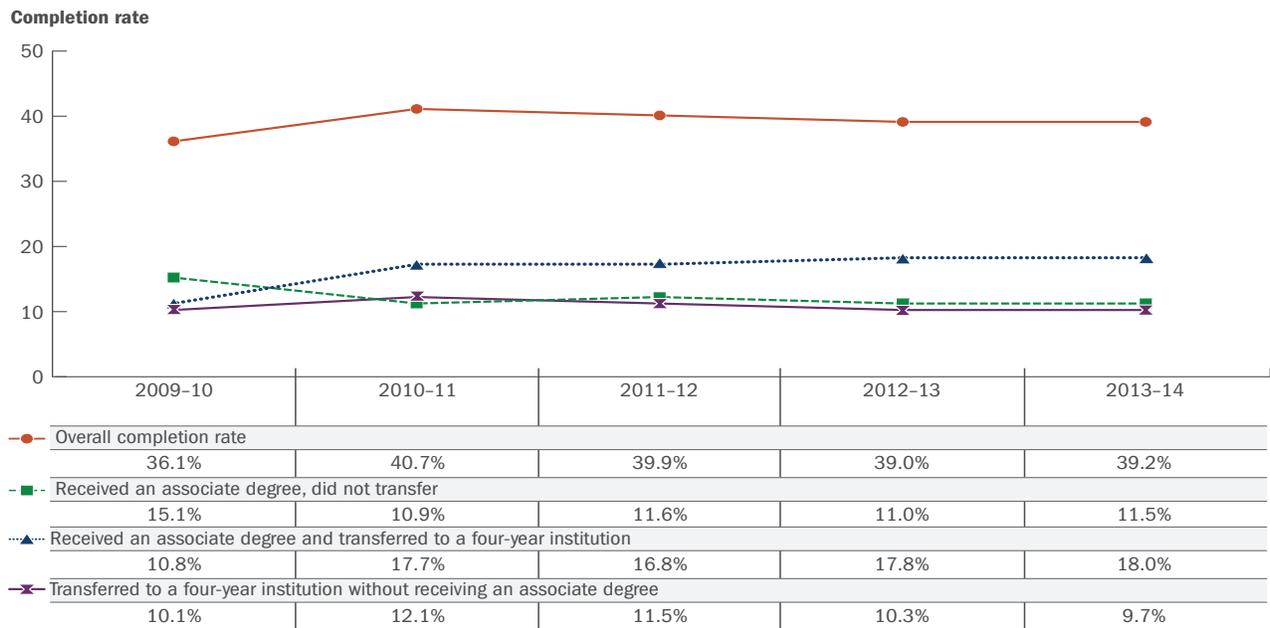
¹⁰ The increase in completions between 2009–10 and 2010–11 may be due to data quality improvements. In 2010–11, the APR data field that measures degree completion was changed so that “received an associate degree and transferred to a four-year institution” was measured using a single data field. In 2009–10, “received an associate degree and transferred to a four-year institution” required information from two separate data fields (referring to degree completion and transfers). Additionally, in 2010–11, the TRIO office performed a data quality check with all SSS grantees. During this process, grantees verified the list of participants who were identified as full-time, first-time freshmen during each reporting year, improving the quality of the data. When comparing completion rates between 2009–10 and 2010–11, it is important to consider how improvements in data quality between reporting years may have affected the calculated completion rates.



- In 2009–10, participants were more likely to receive an associate degree without transferring to a four-year institution (15 percent) than to receive an associate degree and transfer to a four-year institution (11 percent) or to transfer to a four-year institution without receiving an associate degree (10 percent).
- Between 2010–11 and 2013–14, the rate of completing an associate degree and transferring to a four-year institution remained relatively stable at between 17 and 18 percent. During this same time, participants were more likely to complete a degree and transfer to a four-year institution (between 11 percent and 12 percent) or to transfer to a four-year institution without receiving an associate degree (between 10 percent and 12 percent).

At two-year institutions, the completion rate is calculated as the percentage of full-time, first-time freshmen who completed an associate degree and transferred to a four-year institution, completed an associate degree without transferring to a four-year institution, or transferred to a four-year institution without receiving an associate degree within three years of college entry.

Figure 4. Completion rates for Student Support Services (SSS) participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen at two-year institutions, by reporting year: 2009–10 through 2013–14



NOTE: This figure reflects the last year of the 2005–10 funding cycle (i.e., 2009–10) and the first four years of the 2010–15 funding cycle. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in the given reporting year. Overall completion at two-year institutions includes (1) completion of an associate degree and transfer to a four-year institution within three years of college entry, (2) completion of an associate degree without transfer to a four-year institution within three years of college entry, and (3) transfer to a four-year institution without receiving an associate degree within three years of college entry. In each reporting year, only grantees that had received SSS funding for at least three years were included in the calculation of completion rates. Completion rates were calculated among full-time, first-time freshmen who entered the program two years prior to the reporting year.

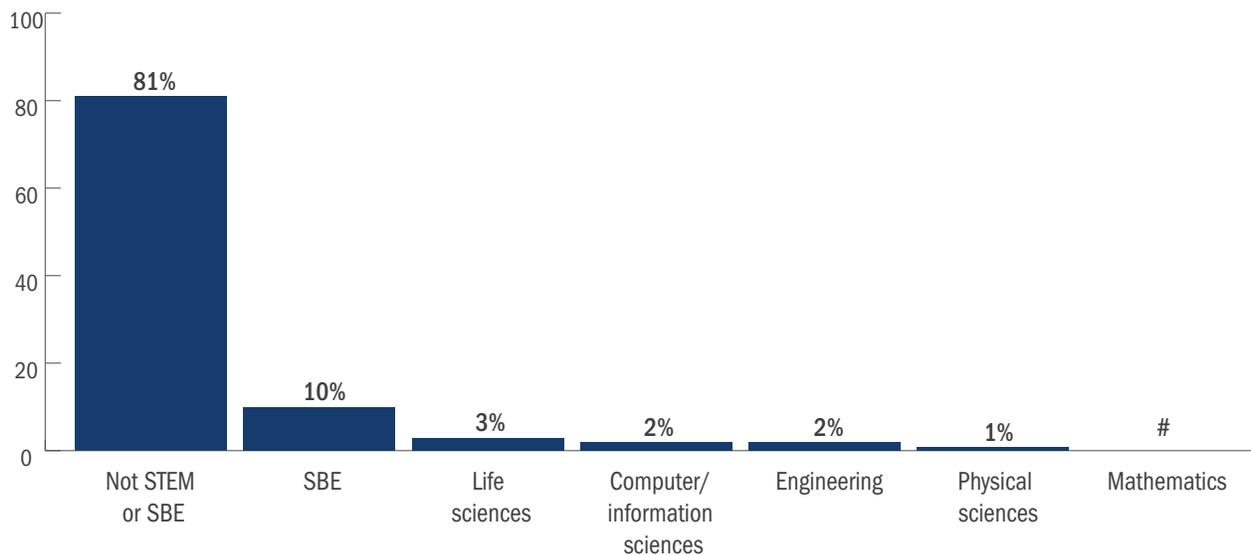
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2009–10 through 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.



Figure 5 provides information about the fields of study in which SSS participants completed their associate degrees, including participants who did and did not transfer to four-year institutions. Specifically, the figure presents the fields of study in which participants who entered the SSS program as full-time, first-time freshmen in 2011–12 received their associate degrees: STEM fields, SBE fields, or other fields that are not classified as STEM or SBE fields.

- Eighty-one percent of associate degree recipients received their degrees in a field that was not classified as a STEM or SBE field.
- Ten percent of associate degree recipients received degrees in an SBE field.
- Relative to the SBE fields, a smaller percentage of associate degree recipients received degrees in a STEM field (8 percent). Three percent of degree recipients earned an associate degree in life sciences, 2 percent of degree recipients earned an associate degree in computer/information sciences, 2 percent of degree recipients earned an associate degree in engineering, less than 1 percent of degree recipients earned an associate degree in physical sciences, and less than 1 percent of degree recipients earned an associate degree in mathematics.

Figure 5. Percentage distribution of field of study for Student Support Services (SSS) participants who were full-time, first-time freshmen in the 2011–12 reporting year and who received an associate degree between 2011–12 and 2013–14



Rounds to zero.

NOTE: STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. SBE stands for social, behavioral, and economic sciences. Results are based on grantees that submitted annual performance reports (APRs) in 2013–14.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Funded Projects Database, 2013–14; and U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Student Support Services Annual Performance Report Longitudinal Data File, 1999–2014.



This report was produced under U.S. Department of Education (Department) Contract No. ED-OPE-12-C-0066. Daveta Brown served as the contracting officer's representative. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department. No official endorsement by the Department of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred.

U.S. Department of Education

John King, Jr.
Secretary

Office of Postsecondary Education

Lynn Mahaffie
Deputy Under Secretary Delegated Duties of Assistant Secretary

Office of Postsecondary Education

Higher Education Programs

James T. Minor
Deputy Assistant Secretary

Office of Postsecondary Education

Higher Education Programs

Student Service

Linda Byrd-Johnson
Senior Director

September 2016

This report is in the public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, Student Service, *Fast Facts Report for the Student Support Services Program*, Washington, D.C., 2016.

This report is available only online. To download, view, and print the report as a PDF file, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/triostudsupp/resources.html>.

Availability of Alternate Formats

Requests for documents in alternate formats such as Braille or large print should be submitted to the Alternate Format Center by calling 202-260-0852 or by contacting the 504 coordinator via e-mail at om_eeos@ed.gov.

Notice to Limited English Proficient Persons

If you have difficulty understanding English, you may request language assistance services for Department information that is available to the public. These language assistance services are available free of charge. If you need more information about interpretation or translation services, please call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (TTY: 1-800-437-0833), or e-mail us at ed.language.assistance@ed.gov. Or write to U.S. Department of Education, Information Resource Center, LBJ Education Building, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202.

