

March 26, 2014

Higher Education Performance Metrics

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented to:
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance
Hon. Al Muratsuchi, Chair





University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) Performance Measures

Adopted in Chapter 50, Statutes of 2013 (AB 94, Committee on Budget)

Segments Report Annually by March 1

Performance Metrics for UC and CSU	
Metric	Definition
CCC transfers	(1) Number of CCC transfers enrolled. (2) CCC transfers as a percent of undergraduate population.
Low-income students	(1) Number of Pell Grant recipients enrolled. (2) Pell Grant recipients as a percent of total student population.
Graduation rates ^a	(1) Four- and six-year graduation rates for freshmen entrants. (2) Two- and three-year graduation rates for CCC transfers. Both of these measures also calculated separately for low-income students.
Degree completions	Number of degrees awarded annually in total and for: (1) Freshman entrants. (2) Transfers. (3) Graduate students. (4) Low-income students.
First-year students on track to degree	Percentage of first-year undergraduates earning enough credits to graduate within four years.
Funding per degree	(1) Total core funding divided by total degrees. (2) Core funding for undergraduate education divided by total undergraduate degrees.
Units per degree	Average course units earned at graduation for: (1) Freshman entrants. (2) Transfers.
Degree completions in STEM fields	Number of STEM degrees awarded annually to: (1) Undergraduate students. (2) Graduate students. (3) Low-income students.
^a Six- and three-year graduation rates apply only for CSU. STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.	



Segments Interpreted Some Measures Differently



Enrollment Measures

- Chapter 50 specifies enrollment measures should be based on all students.
- UC met requirement.
- CSU reported only new enrollment (students entering CSU in 2012-13).



Graduation Rates

- Chapter 50 specifies segments should report performance for the preceding academic year.
- UC met requirement.
 - Reported four-year graduation rates for freshmen entering UC in fall 2009 and graduating in spring 2013.
 - Reported two-year graduation rates for transfer students entering UC in fall 2011 and graduating in spring 2013.
- CSU did not meet requirement.
 - Reported four- and six-year graduation rates for freshmen entering CSU in fall 2006 and graduating in spring 2010 and spring 2012, respectively.
 - Reported two- and three-year graduation rates for transfer students entering CSU in fall 2006 and graduating in spring 2008 and spring 2009, respectively.



Segments Interpreted Some Measures Differently

(Continued)



Funding Per Degree

- Chapter 50 specifies measure should include total funds received from specified sources divided by number of degrees awarded.
- UC met requirement.
- CSU excluded funding for certain categories of spending.



UC Exceeded Some Performance Reporting Requirements



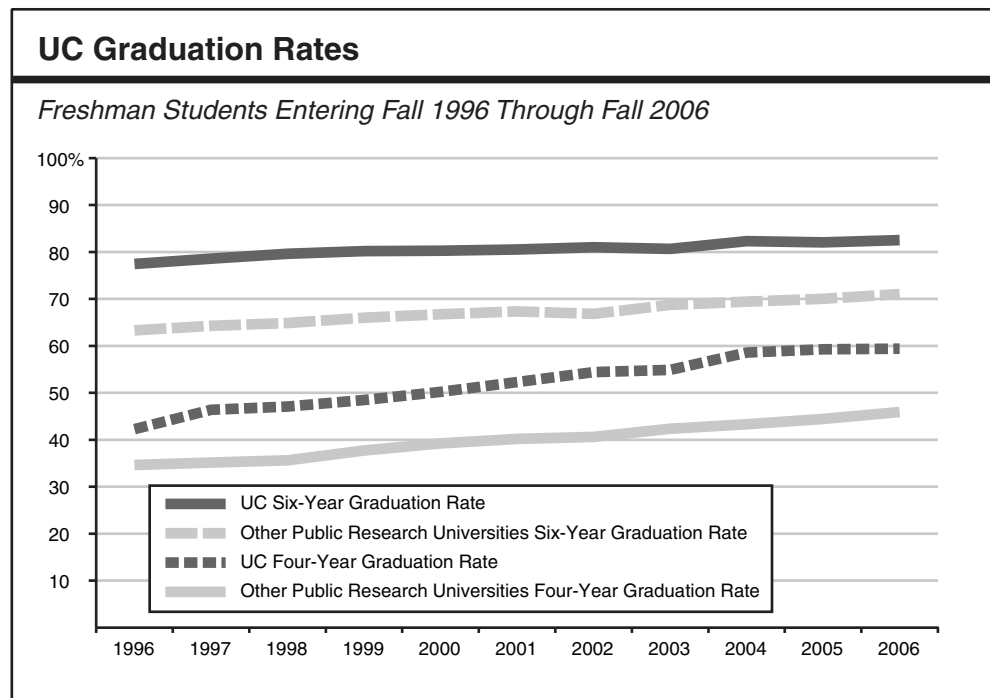
UC Provided Useful Information Beyond Chapter 50 Requirements:

- Data on performance over ten or more years for several measures.
- Comparison institution data for several measures.
- Graphs to highlight trends and comparisons.
- Supplemental information for historical or other context.



Assessment of Performance: UC Graduation Rates

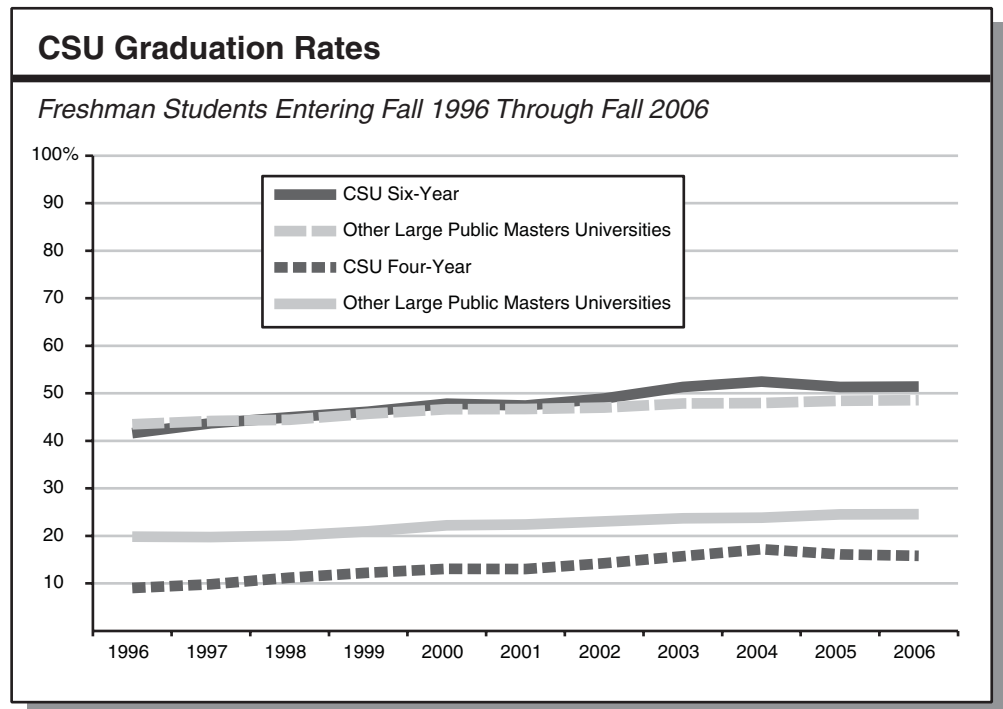
- ✓ **UC Graduation Rates Have Been Increasing**
- ✓ **Six-Year Rates Are Well Above Those of Other Public Research Universities**
- ✓ **Four-Year Rates Are Well Above Those of Other Public Research Universities**
 - Comparison is to public universities with the same classification as UC: those with a very high level of research activity.





Assessment of Performance: CSU Graduation Rates

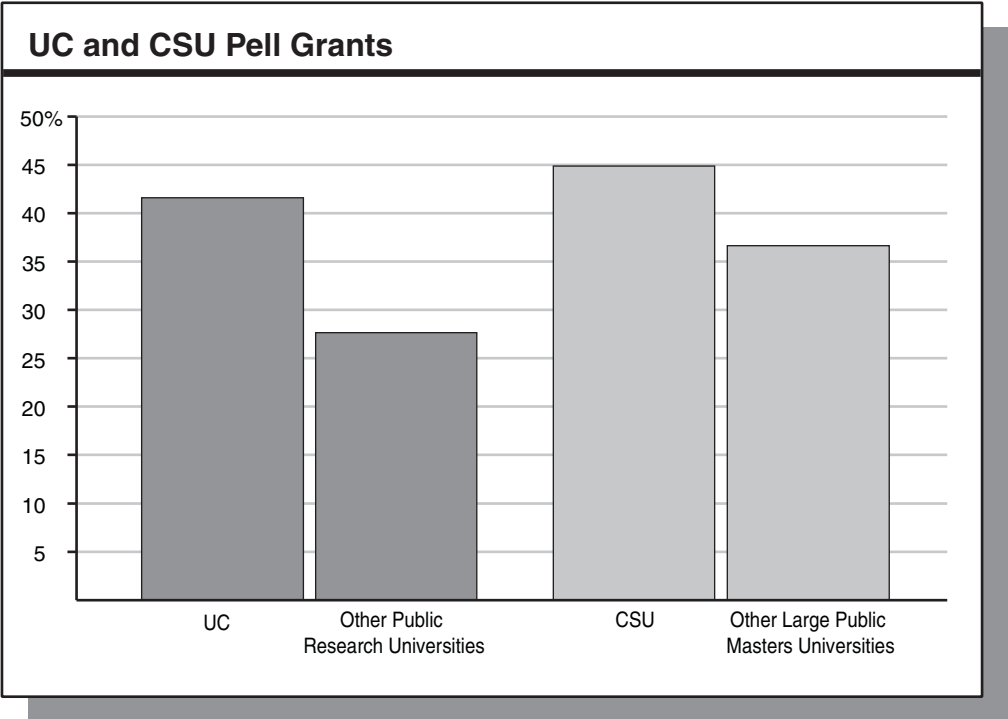
- ✓ **CSU Graduation Rates Have Been Increasing**
- ✓ **Six-Year Rates Are Similar to Those of Other Large Public Masters Universities**
- ✓ **Four-Year Rates Are Significantly Below Those of Other Large Public Masters Universities**





Assessment of Performance: Enrollment of Pell Recipients

Enrollment of Low-Income Students Is High at Both UC and CSU





Assessment of Performance: Credit Unit Accumulation



Many Students Not on Track After One Year

- Upon completing their first year, about 51 percent of UC students and 40 percent of CSU students are on track to graduate within four years.
- Early credit accumulation is associated with college completion.



Excess Units a Concern for UC Transfer Students and All CSU Students

- UC transfer students accumulate an average of seven quarter units (about two courses) of UC credit beyond the typical number required for a transfer student to earn a degree (90 units).
- CSU freshman and transfer students accumulate about 20 semester units of total credit (including California Community College units transferred), nearly seven courses more than required for a typical CSU degree (120 units).



LAO Recommendations



Consider Performance Results in Budget Decisions

- Explore reasons for results that diverge from expectations or benchmarks.
 - Why are more than half of students not on track to graduate within four years by the end of their first year?
 - Why are CSU students graduating with an average of about 20 excess units?
 - Why are CSU four-year graduation rates significantly below those of other large public masters universities?
- Consider potential impact of budget proposals on performance.
 - Could targeted funding improve performance in certain areas? Could unallocated funding achieve similar results?
 - How should the state and the universities prioritize serving more students versus improving student success at current enrollment levels?



Improve Consistency of Information

- Legislature could amend statute to specify measures in greater detail or require segments to work with legislative staff and administration to agree on common data sources, dates, and definitions.