

ASSOCIATE DEGREE FOR TRANSFER STATUS REPORT 2021

**ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT CALIFORNIA
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**



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ABOUT AICCU

The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of over 80 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, which make up the Independent California Colleges and Universities (ICCU) sector. The ICCU sector plays a pivotal role in the development of the state's model higher education offerings and in making California a symbol of innovation across the globe. Within California, ICCU institutions award 20 percent of all undergraduate degrees and 55 percent of graduate degrees, making them the largest preparers of California's advanced workforce.

Independent California Colleges and Universities are recognized in the state's Master Plan for Higher Education as a provider of affordable college access and a partner with other sectors and the state in the preparation of future leaders and the state's workforce. Independent colleges and universities are defined in California Education Code 66010 (b): As used, "independent institutions of higher education" are those nonpublic higher education institutions that grant undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, and that are formed as nonprofit corporations in this state and are accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This report to the Legislature and Department of Finance, submitted by the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) on behalf of California independent, nonprofit higher education institutions, provides an annual status update on the implementation of the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) Commitment between AICCU and the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO).

In 2018-19, AICCU signed an agreement with the Brown Administration to articulate ADT transfer pathways. Following that agreement, AICCU worked quickly to expand the ADT program among its member institutions through the creation of transparent transfer pathways from the CCC to the AICCU institutions.

AICCU institutions have a strong commitment to California transfer students and are actively working to simplify transfer pathways, break down barriers with community colleges, and create new transfer options with the goal of increasing opportunities and, ultimately, transfers to independent California colleges and universities. Currently, 61 of 76 undergraduate serving institutions have at least one articulation agreement with a California community college.

2020-2021 UPDATE

A total of 2,175 unduplicated ADT students were admitted to 29 AICCU participating institutions for the 2020-2021 academic year. There were 3 institutions that reported 0 ADT applications, and 6 institutions were unable to meet the required submission date. *Table 1* presents the number of ADT students admitted to participating AICCU institutions since ADT collection began. It also contains the number of institutions reporting during a given time period. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted enrollment at both community colleges and many four-year independent institutions, accounting for a decrease in transfers, broadly, and the ADT, specifically.

Table 1: ADT Students Admitted Since Collection Began

	Institutions Reporting	De-duplicated ADT Students Admitted	Percentage Change over Prior Year
2018-19	34	869	N/A
2019-20	36	2,372	73.8%
2020-21	29	2,175	-8.3%

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

PLANNING

In January 2018 AICCU met regularly with the CCCCCO on the AICCU ADT Commitment, leading to the development of a sector-to-sector “master” memorandum of understanding (MOU). The master MOU was signed on July 25, 2018, by AICCU President Kristen Soares and California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley.¹

AICCU maintains a webpage² to provide up-to-date information to the public on the AICCU ADT Commitment, including which ADT majors articulated to degrees at each participating institution. Additionally, as AICCU institutions accept new majors or articulate new pathways, AICCU updates its online matrix³ of participating institutions, list of accepted majors, and timeline for when applicants will begin to be accepted.

Finally, AICCU distributes a *Transfer Guide*⁴ to all 114 CCC Transfer Centers at the end of every summer. This guide provides a profile for each AICCU institution that accepts transfers, with ADT transfer pathways noted on each institutional profile page and information on accepted majors and when they would be accepted.

¹ <https://bit.ly/2ywKUwK>

² aiccu.edu/transferstudents

³ <https://bit.ly/2xBu14g>

⁴ aiccu.edu/resources

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

COLLECTION PROCESS

Each institution was provided a generic Excel workbook containing basic fields for each student record. Institutional representatives were instructed to work across departments to collect relevant student admit records, sign an MOU for data sharing between AICCU and the institution, encrypt the student record workbook and upload to an assigned OneDrive folder. Once records were submitted, AICCU decrypted workbooks and conducted analysis in Microsoft Excel. This included de-duplicating records and aggregating total ADT students admitted to the regional level.

After the initial data collection cycle, AICCU shifted collection and analysis to RStudio, allowing for the creation of reproducible scripts to manage 38 institutional OneDrive folders, cleaning and importing encrypted workbooks, and analyzing records at the institutional and aggregate level.

Figure 1: 2020-21 Collection Landing Page Visual

Reporting Process



For this year's data collection, AICCU shifted from conducting two data collection periods (one for Fall and one for Spring/Summer) to a single data collection process that captured all ADT admit data for the academic year. This data collection took place between the months of March and early April. This change was made to reduce collection and reporting burdens for institutional research staff, and also to better align data collection timelines with the statutorily-mandated reporting deadline of April 15.

SUCCESS

CHANGES IN REPORTED ADMITS REMAIN RELATIVELY STABLE

Since beginning collection in the Fall 2018 period, AICCU has observed changes in ADT participation at both the student and sector level. Reported AICCU ADT admits have increased from 869 unduplicated admitted ADT students in 2018-19 to 2,175 unduplicated admitted ADT students in 2020-21—an overall increase of over 50%. However, from 2019-20 to 2020-21 AICCU ADT admits experienced an 8.3% decrease, from 2,372 to 2,175. While growth in the number of ADT admits remains the goal, the relatively small decrease amidst other challenges (discussed in the next section) is somewhat encouraging.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

When the “master” MOU was signed between AICCU and CCCCCO, 36 AICCU institutions had agreed to be a participating institution in the ADT Commitment. Since the “master” MOU was signed, an additional two AICCU institutions have signed on to participate, and several others have expressed interest and begun reviewing majors with their faculty senates. There are 76 AICCU undergraduate-serving institutions, and this positive response from half of them to adopt the ADT shows the strong commitment to serve and provide more access to the ADT student population specifically, and CCC transfer students broadly.

ADDITIONAL TRANSFER PATHWAYS

Many AICCU institutions have long standing transfer agreements with their local community colleges, and in some cases local CSU. Of AICCU’s 76 undergraduate serving institutions, 61 have at least one articulation agreement⁵ with a CCC, and the additional 13 institutions have a webpage dedicated for transfer students to learn more about transfer options.

⁵ <https://bit.ly/3tqCsXu>

CHALLENGES

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON ENROLLMENT

While the first two completed collection cycles showed a positive growth of ADT students admitted to California independent institutions, the COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented disruption to the education pipeline.

For example, research by the Public Policy Institute of California reported that in 2020, California Community Colleges saw a 6% drop in student headcount compared to the previous spring, and that course withdrawals increased by 54%.⁶ Recent reporting noted that systemwide, more than 260,000 fewer students enrolled at California Community Colleges in Fall 2020 than Fall 2019.⁷ AICCU's survey of admission officers, released in a November 2020 research brief, indicated that the overwhelming proportion of institutions were experiencing enrollment declines among new students, continuing students, and transfer students.

Given these disruptions and indicators, it is not entirely surprising to see modest decreases in the number of ADT admits for the 2020-21 academic year.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DATA REPORTING

In addition to enrollment impacts, the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic also led to delayed deadlines for institutions of higher education to report data to the Federal IPEDS system. This created overlapping reporting timelines and deadlines for institutional research staff to submit IPEDS data as well as ADT data, both of which are time-intensive processes.

This has potentially contributed to the non-responses of several ADT participating institutions. AICCU will continue to update the figures contained in this report as additional information and data is received.

⁶ https://www.ppic.org/blog/the-pandemics-effect-on-community-college-enrollment/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=the-pandemics-effect-on-community-college-enrollment?utm_source=ppic&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=blog_subscriber

⁷ <https://edsources.org/2021/californias-community-colleges-at-critical-crossroads-as-more-students-opt-not-to-attend/652637>

LACK OF AWARENESS AND VISIBILITY OF AICCU INSTITUTIONS

There continues to be a lack of visibility for AICCU institutions that have adopted the ADT on adegreeewithaguarantee.com, the main ADT website. Only the 12 AICCU participating institutions that have signed the MOU are listed on the website, and the list is difficult to find, excluding the remaining 26 that are accepting ADT students but have not signed the MOU.⁸ Even as the CCCCCO develops a new ADT website, the inclusion of participating AICCU institutions will take place after it launches. Additionally, as the CCCCCO maintains marketing and outreach efforts, ADT-accepting AICCU participating institutions that have not signed the campus MOU cannot conduct their own marketing.

CONCLUSION

AICCU institutions are strongly committed to their students, including California's transfer students. The growth in the number of unduplicated admitted ADT students accepted from 869 in 2018-19 to 2,175 in 2020-21 indicates progress among the independent, nonprofit university sector. Despite a global pandemic that has created massive disruption, ADT admit numbers remained relatively stable, compared to the prior year. The Cal Grant program represents a significant public-private partnership with the state that has endured for 65 years to help California students from all backgrounds achieve their academic and college goals. AICCU ADT participating institutions remain committed to increasing access to higher education for California's transfer students and growing the ADT pathway. AICCU remains firm in its commitment to California community college students and strengthening our partnership with the CCCCCO, the Department of Finance, and the Legislature.

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⁸<https://adegreeewithaguarantee.com/Portals/0/ADA%20PDF%20Files/ADT%20AICCU%20Social%20Media%20Flat%20File%20V9.pdf?ver=2020-05-19-231341-833×tamp=1589930042736>

ABOUT THIS REPORT

AICCU has completed this status reporting requirement to provide policymakers and the public a clearer understanding of its member institutions and the students they serve. AICCU is not a system office (such as found with the public segments); rather, it is the organizational voice for California's independent, nonprofit colleges and universities. The completion of this survey is a testament to our interest in and commitment to all our students.