Most traditional-age college students whose first credential is an associate degree later earn a baccalaureate.

About 41 percent of college students who earned an associate degree in 2008-09 as their first credential subsequently earned a bachelor’s degree within six years. Sixty percent of those students completed their baccalaureate within three years of earning an associate degree. When comparing data by age groups, students age 20 or younger had the highest attainment (61 percent), followed by the age group 20 to 24, where 43 percent earned a bachelor’s degree within six years. Certificates also are a stepping stone for further degree attainment. Of students who earned a certificate as their first credential, 26 percent attained an associate or bachelor’s degree within six years of their certificate completion in 2008-09. Students 24 or younger had higher degree attainment, around 30 percent.

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For more information, contact Kent Phillippe, associate vice president for research and student success at the American Association of Community Colleges, at (202) 416-4505 or kphillippe@aacc.nche.edu, or Rahel Tekle, AACC research associate, at (202) 416-4508 or rtekle@aacc.nche.edu


Data limitation

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