Transferring to TBR Colleges
Examining Inbound Transfer Student Trends and Success

Summary

- More than 50,000 students transferred into TBR community colleges from Fall 2010 to Summer 2016.
- Twenty-five percent of these students were previously enrolled as first-time, full-time freshmen at Tennessee public universities.
- Graduation rates for transfer students have risen over time. Of the students who transferred to a community college in 2015-16, 20% graduated from a TBR college within three years. However, equity gaps were present across student subgroups.

Inbound Transfer Students at TBR Colleges

Who are inbound transfers students? Between Fall 2010 and Summer 2016, over 50,000 students transferred into TBR community colleges from outside the system. Inbound students were similar to the overall student body with one exception— inbounds transfers were more likely to be adult students than other students enrolled at community colleges.

From which institutions are inbound students transferring? Most students transferred from universities and in-state institutions. About 75% of in-state transfers were from Tennessee’s public universities.

How many prior credits do inbound transfer students bring to TBR colleges? Most inbound students transferred 22 or fewer credits. Black students, students with ACT scores below 19, and adult students deviated the greatest from the median.

How successful are inbound transfer students at community colleges? Three-year graduation rates rose for each successive cohort, reaching 20% for the 2015-16 cohort. Six-year graduation rates saw a similar rise, reaching 22% for the 2012-13 cohort. The most successful students were female, White, age 25 or older, full-time in their first term, and had ACT scores of 19 or higher. Equity gaps were present across student subgroups and often expanded from three- to six-year rates.

Transfers from Tennessee’s Public Universities

Who are inbound transfers students? From Fall 2010 to Summer 2016, 25% of all transfers to TBR community colleges were by students who were previously first-time, full-time freshman (FTFT) at Tennessee’s public universities, with 63% coming from the locally governed institutions (LGIs) and 37% from University of Tennessee (UT) institutions.

How quickly do former FTFT students transfer to community colleges? Most university students transferred into community colleges within two years of their initial FTFT university term.

How many prior credits do inbound students bring to TBR colleges? Over 60% of former university students transferred into community colleges with 24 credits or less. The median number of transferred credits was slightly higher for students from UT institutions than from LGIs.

How successful are inbound transfer students at community colleges? Three-year graduation rates rose over time for both former LGI and UT students, reaching 20% and 24% respectively for 2015-16 transfers. Likewise, six-year graduation rates rose, reaching 20% for former LGI students and 30% for former UT students transferring in 2012-13.

Early research indicates that six-year graduation rates for former FTFT university students who transfer to a community college reach 39%, when including awards from other institutions attended after transfer to a community college.

How does success vary by institution? At three years after transfer, students transferring from East Tennessee State University (22%) and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (21%) and students transferring into Roane State (29%) and Walters State (27%) had the highest award rates.

About the Research

See TBR’s working paper Transferring to TBR Colleges: Examining Inbound Transfer Student Trends and Success for more information about inbound transfer student success.
One project, two similar analyses

• Section I: Inbound Transfer Students to TBR Community Colleges
  • All inbound transfers from any non-TBR institution from Fall 2010 to Summer 2016

• Section II: Inbound transfers and former first-time, full-time students from Tennessee's 4-year public institutions
  • Fall 2010 to Summer 2016
Section I:
Inbound Transfer Students to TBR Community Colleges
About the data in Section I

- First instance of transfer into TBR community college
  - Data limited to Summer 2009 and beyond

- Sending institutions and prior credits earned are based on information and transcripts provided by students at the time of registration at receiving institutions

- 6 cohorts explored
  - Fall 2010 to Spring 2011 through Fall 2015 to Spring 2016
Who are TBR’s inbound transfer students?

- **Total Students:**
  - 52,600

- **Gender**
  - Female – 59%
  - Male – 41%

- **Race/Ethnicity**
  - Black – 22%
  - Hispanic – 4%
  - White – 67%
  - Other – 8%

- **Student Age**
  - 24 or younger – 60%
  - 25 or older – 40%
  - Median Age: 22

- **Composite ACT**
  - 18 or lower – 8%
  - 19 or higher – 22%
  - None on record – 69%
  - Median ACT: 21

- **Enrollment Status in First Term**
  - Full-time – 54%
  - Part-time – 45%
  - Median first-term credit load – 10 credits
From which institutions are inbound students transferring?

• 21% 2-year; 72% 4-year
• 54% in-state; 37% out-of-state
  • 75% of in-state transfers from LGIs or UTs
• 27% LGIs; 14% UTs; 60% other institutions

• 55% transferring into colleges that serve state’s most populous regions (Nashville, Southwest, Chattanooga, and Pellissippi)
How many prior credits do inbound transfer students bring to TBR Colleges?

Distribution of Credits Received at Prior Institutions, 2010-11 to 2015-16

- Median inbound credits – 22
- Largest divergence from median:
  - Black students (15)
  - ACT below 19 (13)
  - Adult students (29)
  - Former UT students (25)
How successful are inbound transfer students at TBR?

3- and 6-Year Award Rates, 2010-11 to 2015-16

3-Year Rate

- 2010-11: 15%
- 2011-12: 15%
- 2012-13: 15%
- 2013-14: 15%
- 2014-15: 15%
- 2015-16: 20%

6-Year Rate

- 2010-11: 20%
- 2011-12: 20%
- 2012-13: 25%
How successful are inbound transfer students at TBR?

3- and 6-Year Percentage Point Gaps in Award Rate Between Subgroups, 2012-13 Inbound Transfers
How successful are inbound transfer students at TBR?

3-Year Award Rate by Inbound Credits, 2010-11 to 2015-16
How does success vary by sending and receiving institution?

3-year award rates for students from most commonly sending institutions system wide

1. MTSU (15%)
2. UT-Knoxville (19.8%)
3. UT-Chattanooga (18.2%)
4. Memphis (9.2%)
5. ETSU (21.5%)

3-year award rates among most common pairings for each TBR college

Most successful pairings:
- UT-K to Walters (28.5%)
- UT-K to Roane (27.9%)
- ETSU to Walters (27.1%)
- ETSU to Roane (27%)

Least successful pairings:
- TSU to Southwest (2.6%)
- MTSU to Dyersburg (4.5%)
Section II: Inbound Transfers Among Former First-time, Full-time Students from Tennessee's 4-year Public Institutions
About the data in Section II

• First instance of transfer into TBR community college
  • Identified beginning with Fall 2005 FTFT freshman cohorts

• Data is as reported by P20 partners/data originators

• 6 cohorts explored
  • Fall 2010 to Spring 2011 through Fall 2015 to Spring 2016
Who Transfers into TBR Colleges after Prior Enrollment as a FTFT Student at a Tennessee Public 4-Year? 

14,856 Former FTFT Inbound Transfers

- 63% from LGIs
- 37% from UTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LGIs</th>
<th>UTs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
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Who Transfers into TBR Colleges after Prior Enrollment as a FTFT Student at a Tennessee Public 4-Year?

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<tr>
<td>28% ACT 18 and Below</td>
<td>9% ACT 18 and Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69% ACT 19 and Above</td>
<td>89% ACT 19 and Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% No ACT</td>
<td>1% No ACT</td>
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<tr>
<td>52% Full-Time</td>
<td>54% Full-Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>47% Part-Time</td>
<td>44% Part-Time</td>
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How Quickly do Former FTFT Students Transfer into TBR Colleges?

Distribution of Inbound Transfers Previously FTFT Freshman by Time Between Initial FTFT Enrollment and Term of Transfer
How Many Prior Credits Do Former FTFT Transfer Students Bring to TBR Colleges?

Prior Earned Credits for Inbound Transfers Previously FTFT Freshman at Tennessee Public 4-year Institutions

LGIs UTs

How Successful are Former FTFT Freshman after Transferring into TBR Colleges?

3- and 6-Year Award Rates for Inbound Transfer Students Previously FTFT Freshman at Tennessee Public 4-year Institutions

![Graph showing 3- and 6-Year Award Rates for Inbound Transfer Students Previously FTFT Freshman at Tennessee Public 4-year Institutions]
How Successful are Former FTFT Freshman after Transferring into TBR Colleges?

3- and 6-Year Percentage Point Gaps Between Subgroups by Sector
How Successful are Former FTFT Freshman after Transferring into TBR Colleges?

- **Time between FTFT enrollment and transfer**
  - Students with the greatest timespan between initial FTFT term and inbound transfer term were the most successful
  - 6-year rates reach 36% for UTs, 24% for LGIs
  - Other timespans were more mixed

- **Inbound credits**
  - Students with more inbound credits were more successful than those with fewer credits; appear to largely plateau beyond 25-36 credit threshold
  - 6-year rates reach 45% for UTs, 33% for LGIs at highest credit totals
  - 6-year rates only 13% for UTs, 7% for LGIs for students bringing no prior credits
How Does Success Vary by Sending and Receiving Institution?

### 3-Year Award Rates
- **Sending Institutions:**
  - ETSU (21.7%)
  - UT-C (21%)
  - APSU (21%)
  - TSU (7.2%)
- **Receiving Institutions:**
  - Roane (29.1%)
  - Walters (27.2%)
  - Pellissippi (25.7%)
  - Southwest (6.2%)

### 6-Year Award Rates
- **Sending Institutions:**
  - ETSU (30%)
  - UT-C (27.3%)
  - UT-K (25%)
  - Memphis (11.0%)
- **Receiving Institutions:**
  - Pellissippi (33.9%)
  - Roane (33.2%)
  - Walters (31.7%)
  - Southwest (9.4%)
An early look at success beyond TBR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>3-Year Award Rate</th>
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<th>6-Year Award Rate</th>
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<td>TBR Colleges</td>
<td>All TN Inst.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGIs</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UTs</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Former FTFT Total</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
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Key Takeaways

• Award rates are relatively low albeit mostly inline with TBR grad rates

• Former FTFT freshman from TN 4-year institutions are more successful than other inbound students

• Equity gaps are a continuing challenge and follow familiar patterns

• Potential importance of relationships between institutions

• External forces and motivations driving students to transfer into TBR colleges are likely key factors in student success after inbound transfer
Continuing Questions

• How has TN Reconnect impacted inbound transfer both in terms of student makeup and student success? Has TN Reconnect shined an additional light on these students at campuses?

• How much credit loss do inbound students experience? What share of inbound credits apply toward student credentials?

• What are the goals of inbound transfer students? How much of student success is caused by differing goals of inbound transfer students? What is the primary role of TBR colleges for inbound transfer students based on their differing goals?
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