



# **Profile of Transfer Students Admitted 1999-2003**

**Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment  
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The purpose of this analysis is to better understand characteristics of students who transfer to the University of South Alabama from community colleges and other four year universities.

The database used to profile transfer students was created from Banner. Selection criteria included students with Student Type = T and a first Admit Term between Fall 1999 and Fall 2003. To account for outliers in the transfer credit hours attempted, 79 outliers were brought to the "fence" at 172 credit hours (mean + 3 standard deviations). Rather than deleting outliers, this approach lessened the impact of outliers on the results, thereby enhancing the ability to generalize findings. Transfers from community colleges were coded so as to provide additional analysis about community college transfers. To calculate graduation rates, the students were placed in cohorts following the same approach used by NCAA. The last cohort year used to calculate graduation rates was 2001-02.

Overall Transfer Profile

- Students transfer an average of 58 credit hours. Community college students comprise 60% of transfer students and transfer an average of 54 credit hours.
- Nearly 35% of all transfer students earn more than 64 transfer hours while 32% of those transferring from community colleges earn more than 64 transfer hours.

**Table 1. Transfer Hours Earned**

Transfer Hours Earned	Overall Frequency	Overall Percent	Community College Frequency	Community College Percent
< 32	1857	26	1083	25
32-48	1171	16	728	17
48-64	1607	22	1124	26
65-95	1647	23	1051	25
96 +	878	12	280	7
Total	7160		4266	

- 73% of transfer students are Alabama residents while 9% originate from Mississippi and 5% are from Florida. For community college transfers, 72% are from Alabama, 12% are from Mississippi and 6% are from Florida.
- 12% of transfer students live in one of the service area counties and therefore pay instate tuition.
- 57% of transfer students originate from 15 feeder institutions while 75% of community college students transfer from schools within this group.
- Considering only the institution from which the most hours are transferred, the top feeder community colleges include: Faulkner State Community College (1205), Bishop State Community College (846), and Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (669). Rounding out the top ten community college feeders are Pensacola Junior College (235), Alabama Southern Community College (158), Jefferson Davis Community College (103), Wallace State Community College (89), Southern Union State

Community College (72), Calhoun State Community College (60), and Enterprise Ozark Community College (43).

- Students also transfer from other four year institutions with the most common universities being University of Mobile (203), Auburn (173), Alabama (149), Faulkner (98), Southern Miss (97), Spring Hill (88), and UAB (75).
- The average age of transfer students at the time of admission is 25 years with a standard deviation of 7 years.
- The average Composite ACT score is 20.6 with a standard deviation of 3.8.
- Approximately 35% of community college transfer students submit Composite ACT scores. Their mean score is 20 with a standard deviation of 3.6. Nearly 26% of those transfer students submitting ACT results have a score of 17 or less.
- The transfer GPA average is 2.9 while their average GPA at USA is 2.6. For those who graduate, the graduating GPA is 3.2. Community college transfers who graduate do so with an average GPA of 3.1 while those who haven't graduated have a 2.0 GPA with a standard deviation of 1.
- Overall, 37% of transfers receive financial aid while 40% of community college transfers receive financial aid. In comparison, 71% of first year, full time freshmen received financial aid during this same time period. There is a positive correlation between having financial aid and graduating. Likewise, there is a positive correlation between having financial aid and final GPA.
- The college of transfer students' latest major is as follows:

**Table 2. Percent of Transfer Students  
by College of Student's Last Major**

College	Percent of Transfer Students
Arts and Sciences	30
Business	18
Education	17
Nursing	12
Allied Health	8
Engineering	6
Continuing Education	4
Computer Science	4

- 39.7% of the transfer students graduated by Spring 2008, even if it took more than 6 years.
- Graduation rates are similar across groups of students

**Table 3. Graduation Rates (%) for All Transfer Students, Community College Transfers and Native Students**

Time Period	Transfer Graduation Rate (%)	CC Transfer Graduation Rate (%)	Native Graduation Rate (%)
4 years or less	11.6	12.5	12.6
5 years or less	26.7	28.1	26.2
6 years or less	34.7	35.8	33.0

- Graduation rates for transfer students from the three major feeder community colleges are as follows:

**Table 4. Graduation Rates (%) for Students from the Top Three Community Colleges**

	Graduated by Spring 2008	4 years or less	5 years or less	6 years or less
Faulkner State CC	41.9	13.5	28.8	36.8
Bishop State	29.4	6.9	18.2	25.1
MGCCC	42.5	12.9	28.7	36.8

### Implications

- The number of students transferring to the University of South Alabama is significant, justifying the need for student support services targeting transfer students.
- Graduation rates for transfer students and native students are similar even though transfer students enter the University with credit from a community college or another university.
- Students often earn more credits at community colleges than they can transfer, suggesting opportunities for pre-advising at the community college level.
- Awarding financial aid to transfer students may improve graduation rates.
- As with native students, there may be opportunities to improve transfer student retention and graduation rates through intrusive advising (early and frequent intervention) and student mentoring programs. In addition, student preparation may be improved by facilitating discussions regarding course objectives and content between USA faculty and faculty at Faulkner State and Bishop State.

Transfer Student Profile by College

**Table 5. Percent of Categorized Transfer Hours Earned  
by College of Student's Last Major**

<b>College</b>	<b>&lt; 32 Hrs</b>	<b>32-48 Hrs</b>	<b>48-64 Hrs</b>	<b>65-95 Hrs</b>	<b>96+ Hrs</b>
Allied Health	26.1	13.3	22.4	26.3	11.9
Arts & Sciences	31.1	20.6	20.1	20.2	7.9
Business	25.4	15.7	25.2	24.5	9.1
Continuing Ed	36.1	11.5	20.2	20.9	11.2
Computer Science	27.1	19.1	23.6	18.8	11.5
Education	20.4	16.5	30.1	21.2	11.8
Engineering	24.5	13.0	21.9	29.3	11.3

**Table 6. Graduation Rates (%) by College of Student's Last Major**

<b>College</b>	<b>By Spring 2008</b>	<b>≤ 4 years</b>	<b>≤ 5 years</b>	<b>≤ 6 years</b>
Allied Health	35.7	11.9	22.5	30.9
Arts & Sciences	35.7	11.3	24.1	31.3
Business	37.1	10.9	25.5	32.4
Continuing Ed	22.7	2.5	10.9	18.1
Computer Science	29.9	4.9	17.4	25.3
Education	48.8	17.9	35.4	43.9
Engineering	44.3	2.6	21.3	34.3
Nursing	51.2	14.9	38.0	46.0

**Table 7. Other Characteristics of Transfer Students  
by College of Student's Last Major**

<b>College</b>	<b>Mean Age at Admission</b>	<b>Mean ACT Score</b>	<b>Transfer GPA</b>	<b>Final GPA*</b>	<b>Graduating GPA</b>
Allied Health	23	21	3.1	2.6	3.2
Arts & Sciences	24	20	2.9	2.3	2.9
Business	23	20	2.9	2.2	2.8
Continuing Ed	30	18	2.9	2.7	3.1
Computer Science	24	20	3.0	2.2	3.1
Education	24	19	2.9	2.8	3.3
Engineering	24	21	3.0	2.3	3.0
Nursing	26	20	3.1	2.7	3.3

\* Final GPA is the graduating GPA if graduated; otherwise, the last GPA