



Tennessee's Transfer Students: What Do We Know? What Can We Do Better?

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Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Tennessee Transfer Summit
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Doing transfer well: Why it matters

- **It's the reality of how our students attend**
- **The Drive to 55 depends on it**
- **It can be costly if not done well**
 - Costly for students
 - Costly for institutions



Doing transfer well: Why it matters

- **It's the reality of how our students attend**
- From National Student Clearinghouse *Transfer & Mobility* study (July 2015):
 - 55% of freshmen entering in fall 2008 transferred once; 25% twice; and 17% transferred three times or more.
 - About 4/5 of TN's transfer activity was in-state; true of universities and community colleges



Doing transfer well: Why it matters

- **The Drive to 55 depends on it**
- In TN most recent cohort of bachelor's degree earners:
 - 45% changed colleges at least once
 - 1/3 had been to a community college
- TN Promise, TN Reconnect, and outcomes-based funding raise the stakes around transfer



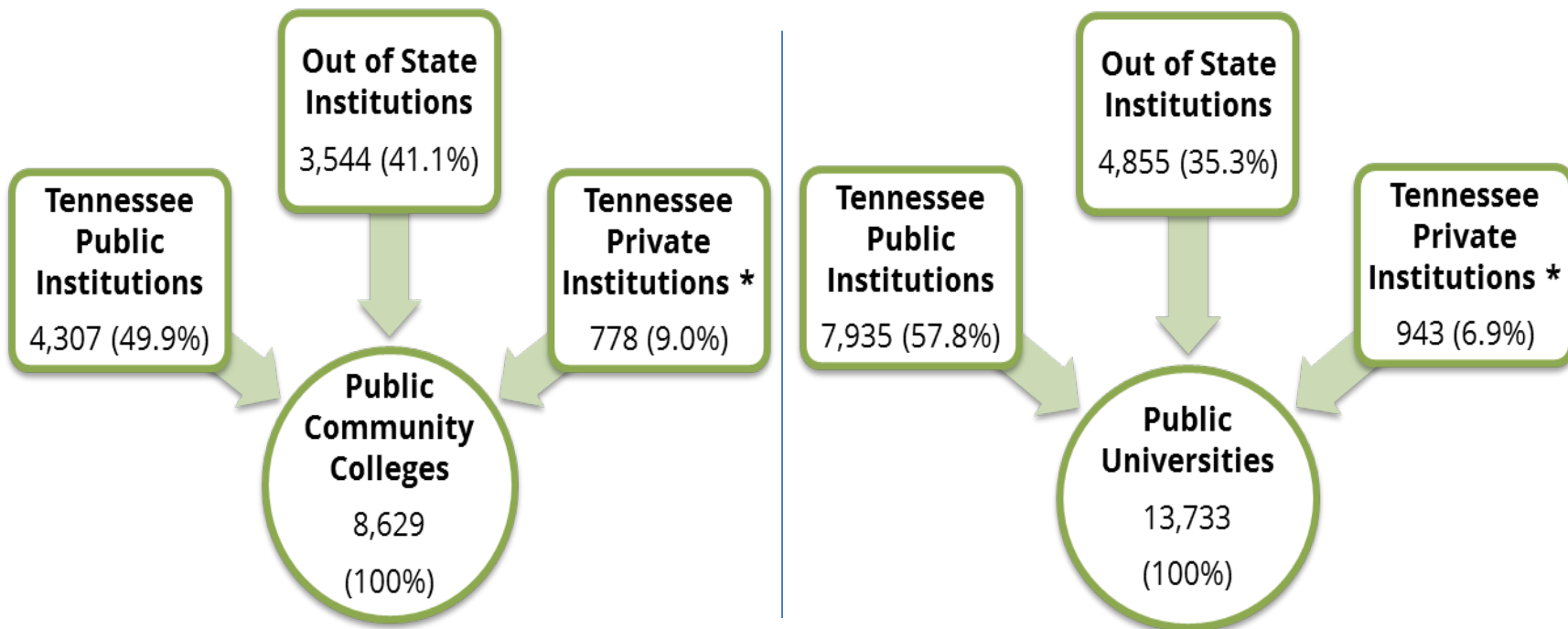
Doing transfer well: Why it matters

- **Costly if not done well**
- Costly to students: lost credits, increased time to degree, increased degree cost
 - In particular... transferring late, changing majors late, and changing across meta-majors cause delays
- Costly to institutions: outcomes funding allocation



The TN transfer landscape

- Most transfers into TN public colleges come from other in-state publics, followed by out-of-state schools, then in-state independents...

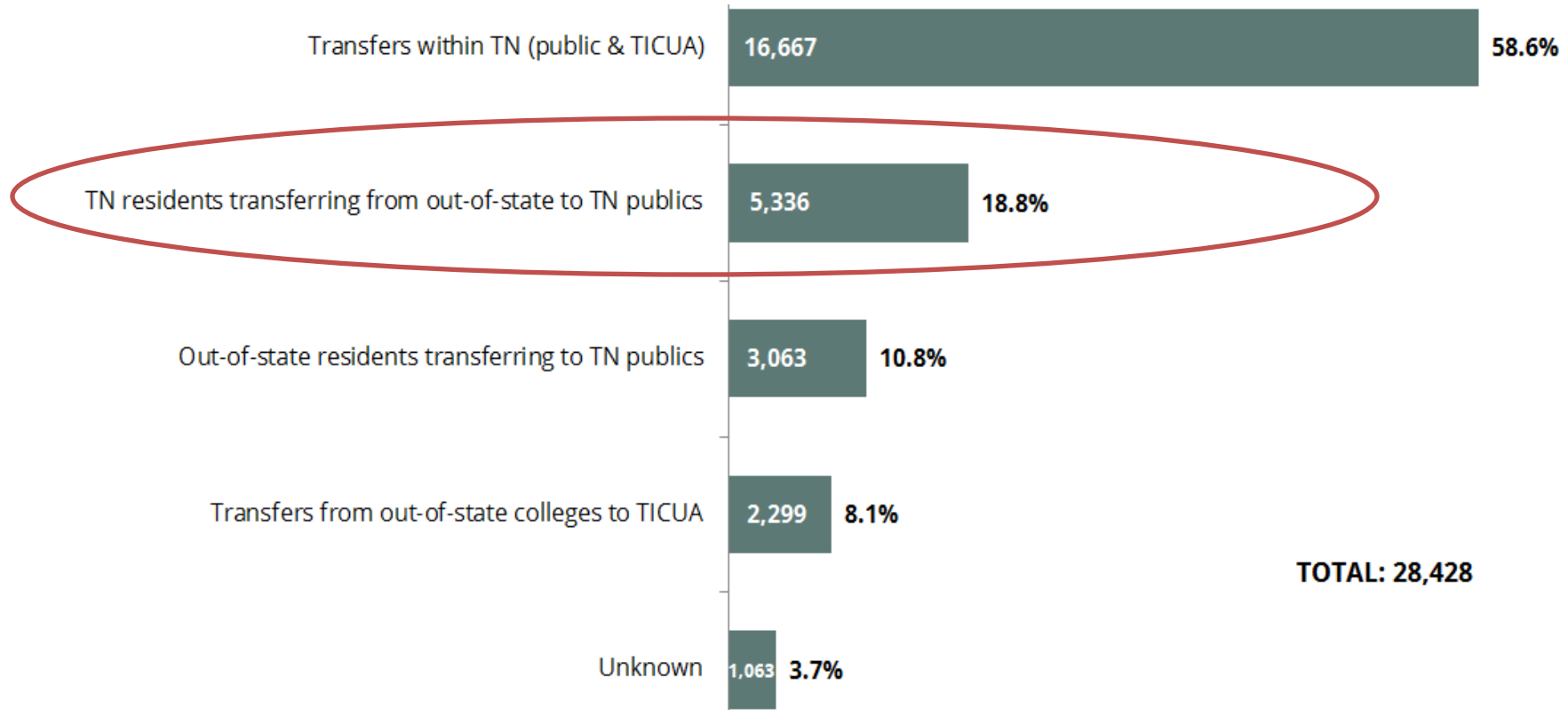


* Includes TICUA, non-TICUA, and private for-profit institutions.



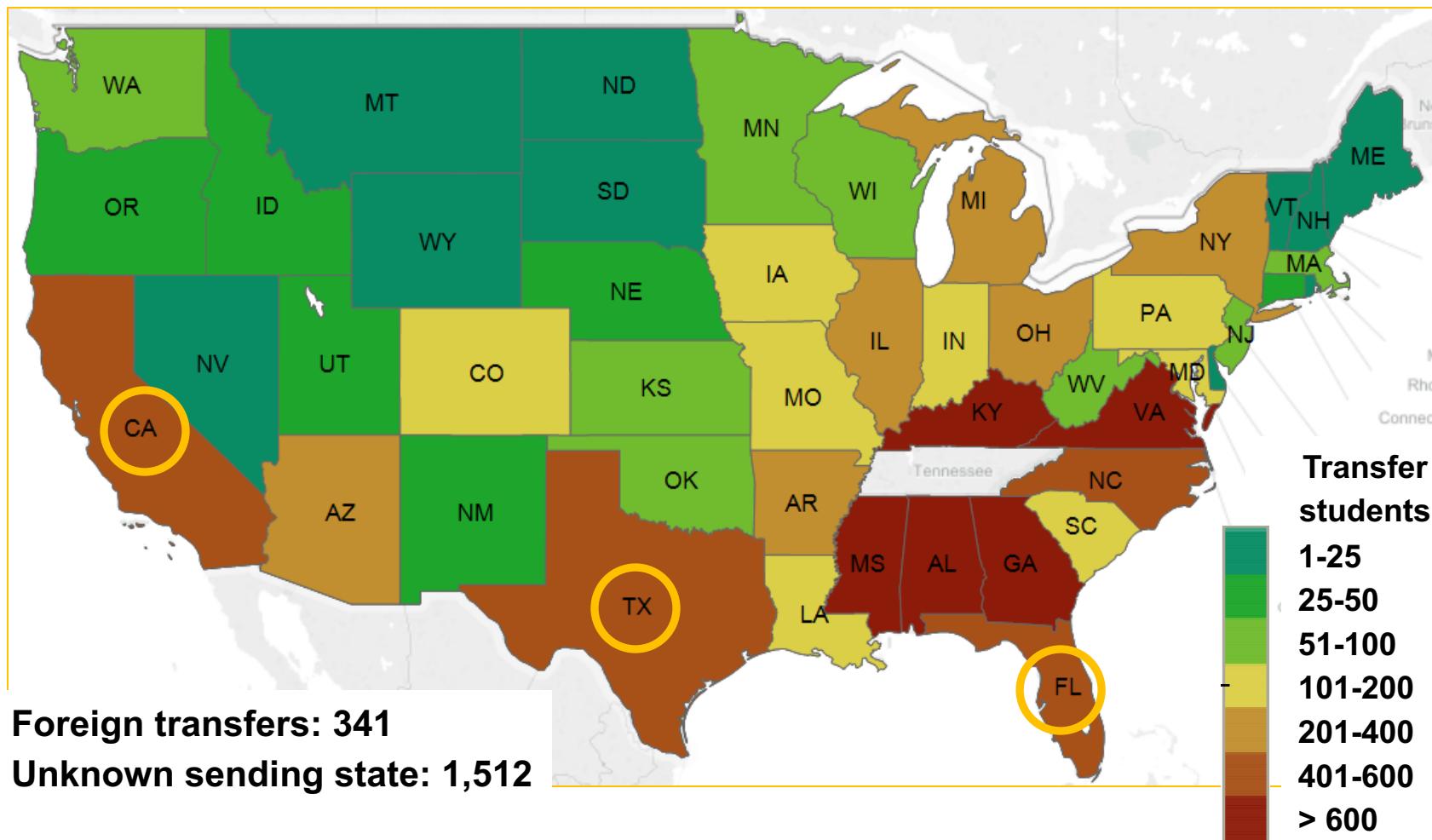
The TN transfer landscape

- ... but nearly 1 in 5 “out of state” transfers is actually a TN high school grad returning to TN





The TN transfer landscape

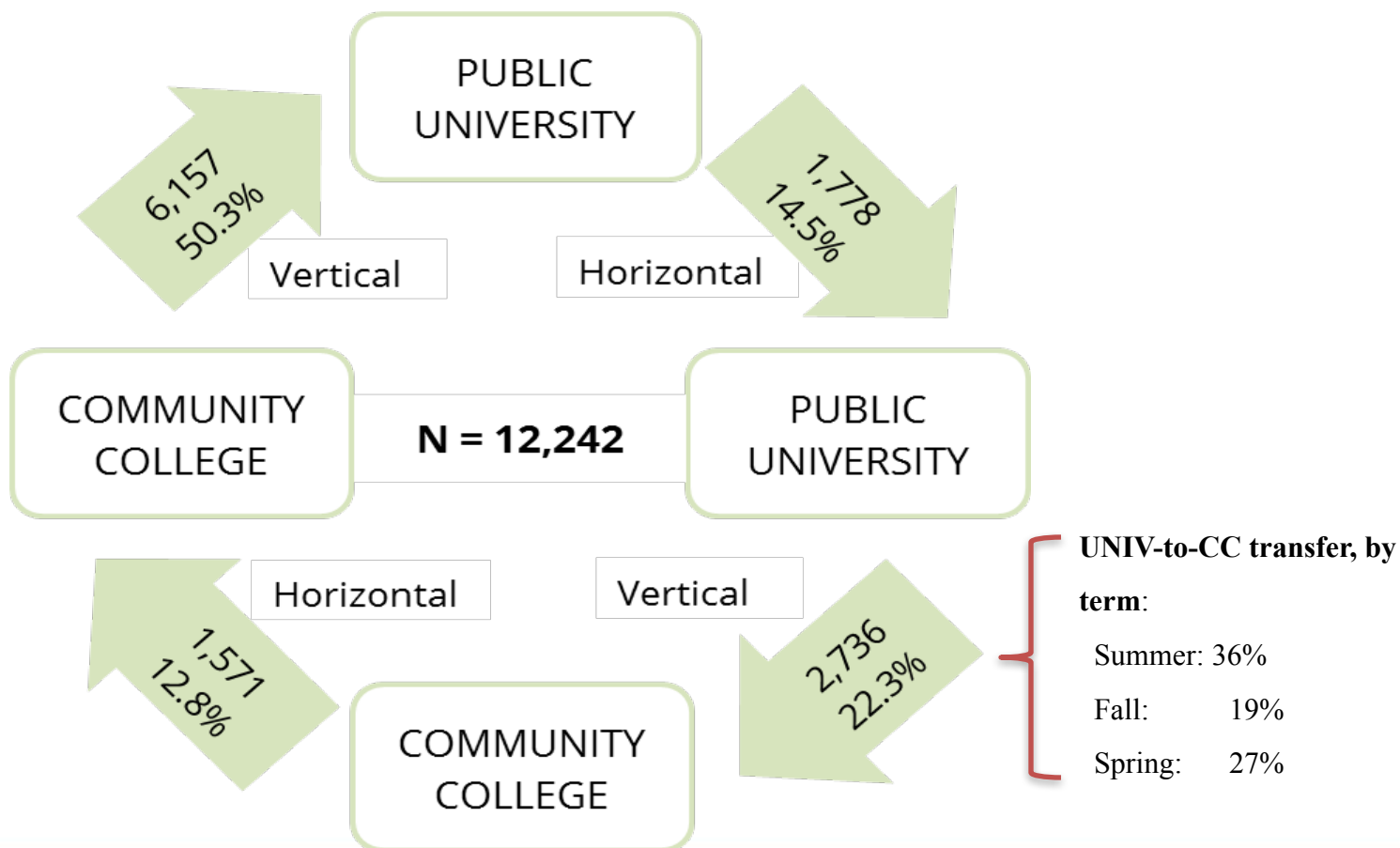




The TN transfer landscape

- The tradition 2+2 model accounts for only half of all transfer activity in the public sector

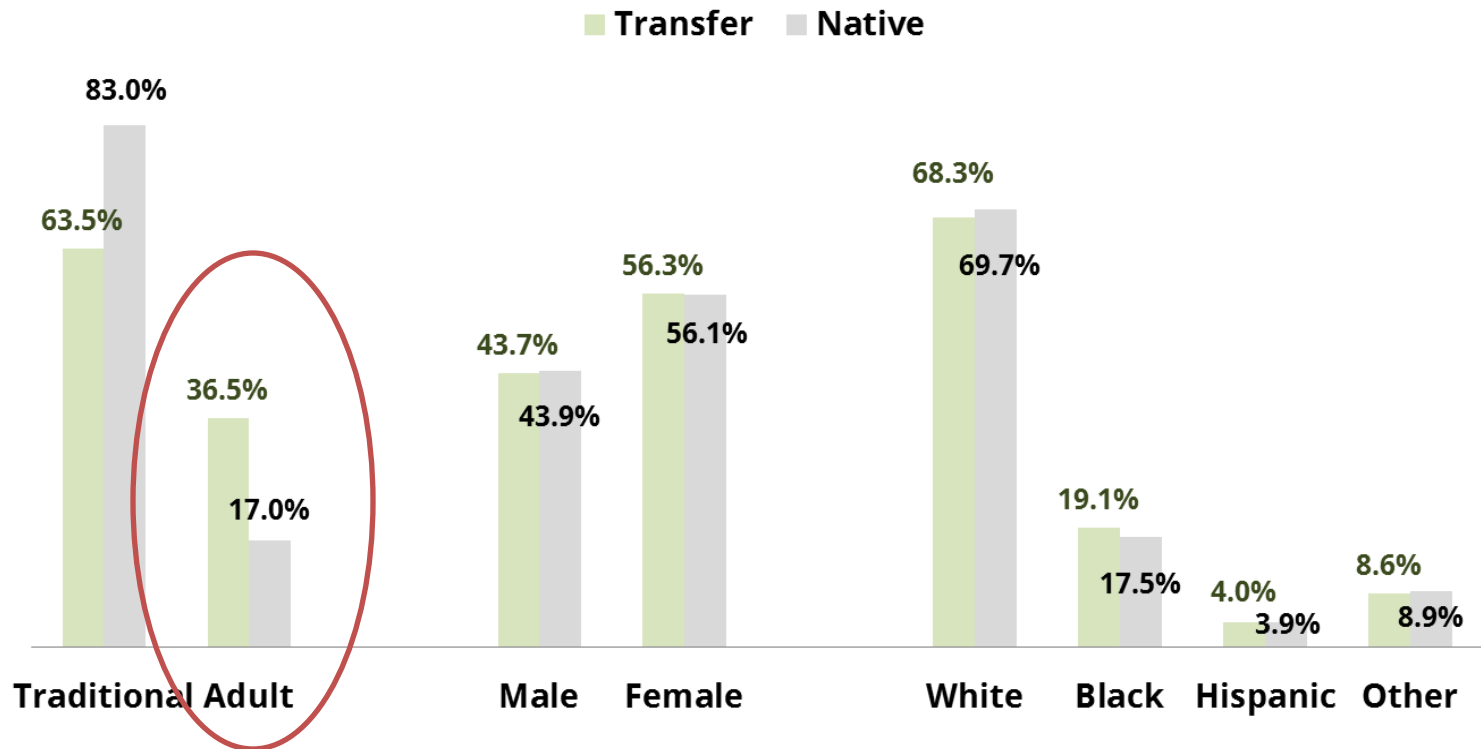
**Public
Transfer
Activity,
AY 2015-16**





Who are our transfer students?

- **Adult learners are much more well-represented among transfers than in the native student population**

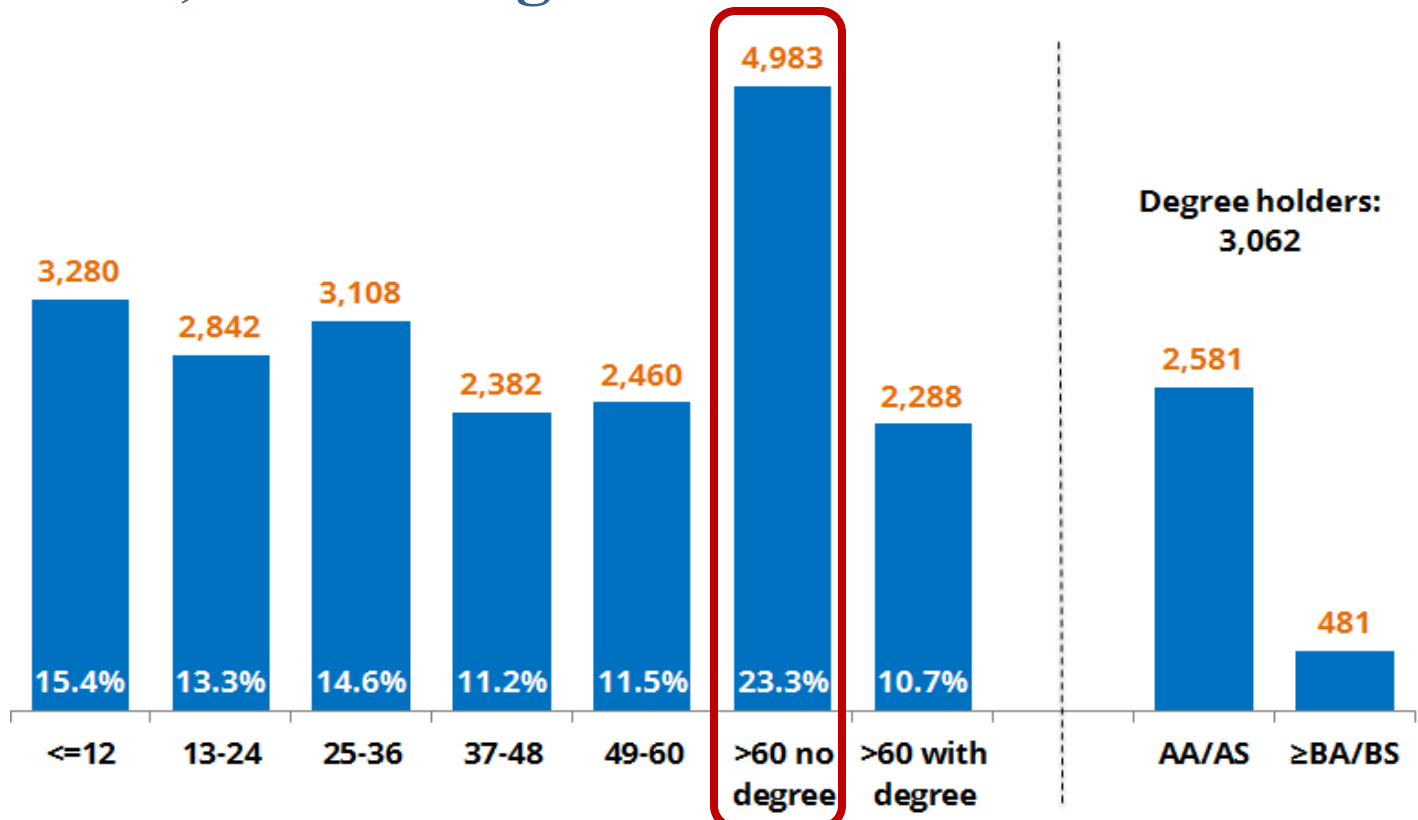




Who are our transfer students?

- The largest student share transfers in with 60 or more credits, but no degree...

New transfers by credits and degrees transferred in, AY 2015-16



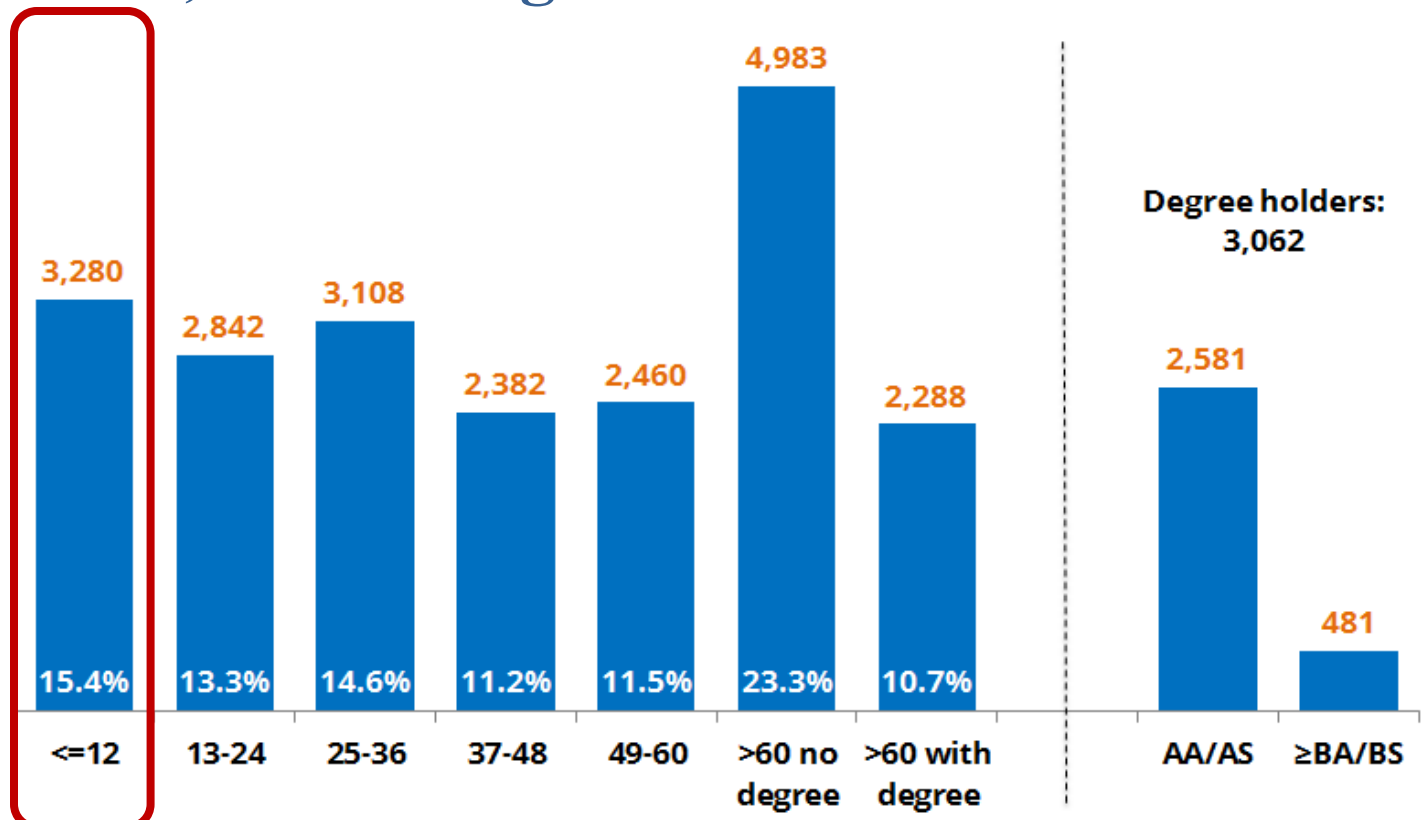
* Graph and percentage exclude 1,019 students with missing data on credits.



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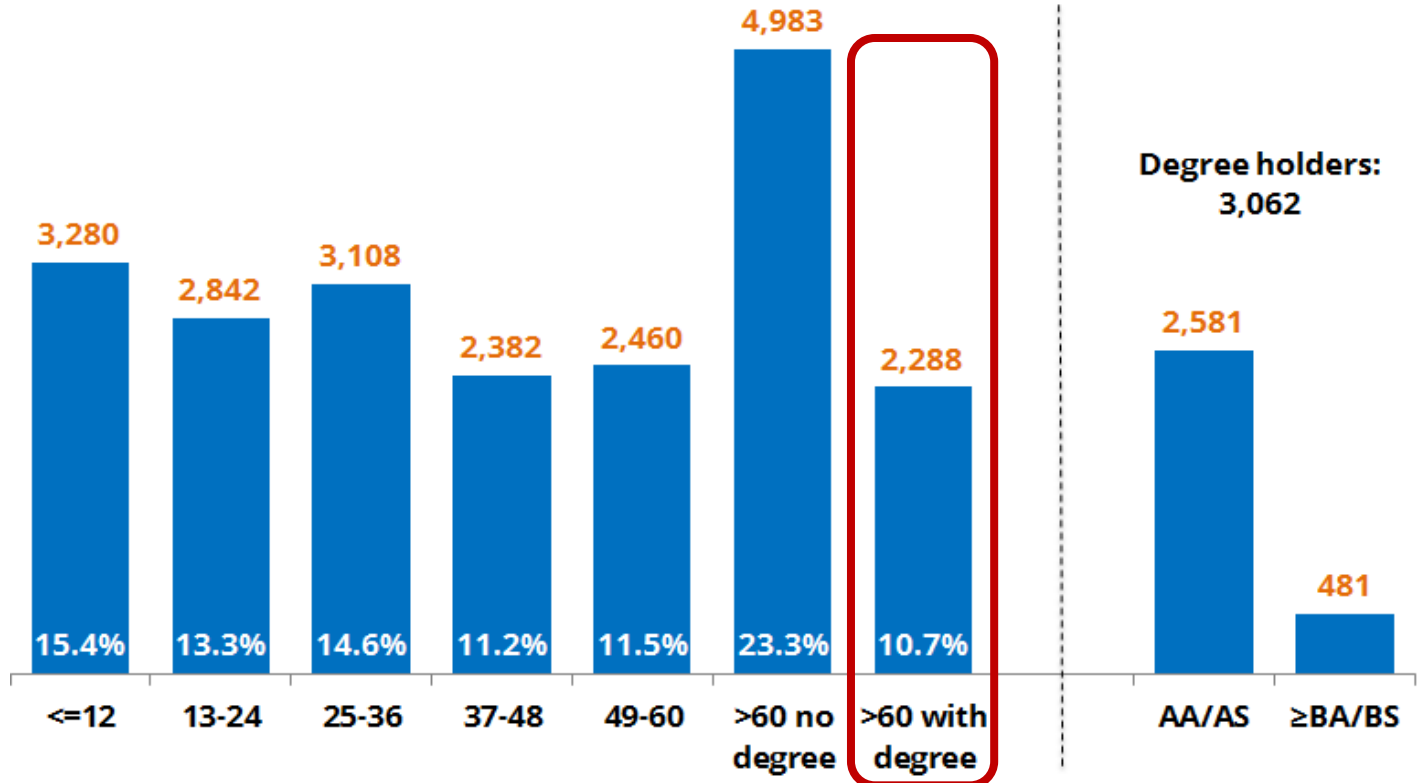
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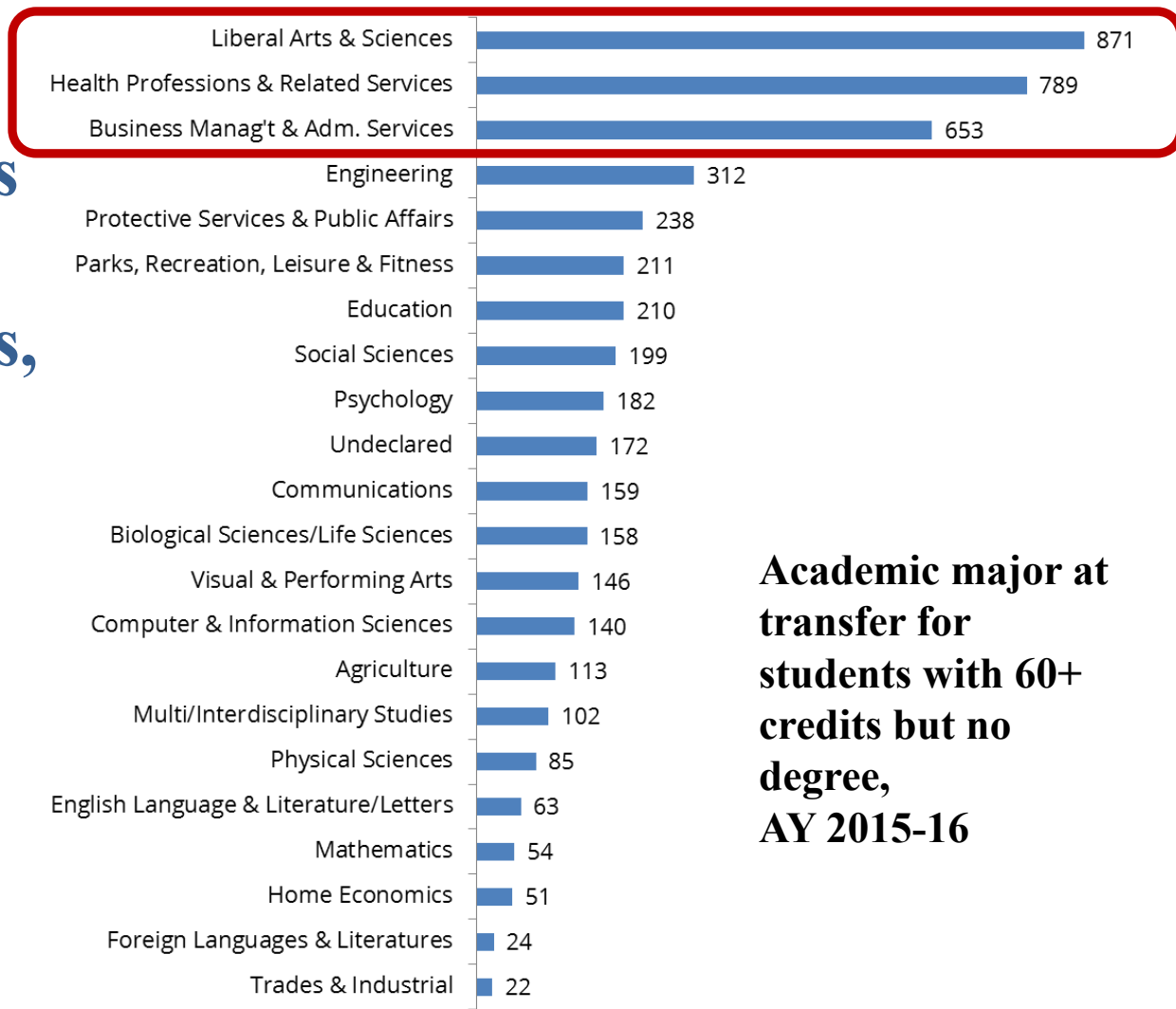


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Who are our transfer students?

- ... these students are congregated in Arts / Sciences, Health, and Business



Academic major at transfer for students with 60+ credits but no degree, AY 2015-16



Transfer student success: What makes a difference?

- **The TBR Gen Ed Transcript study (2012)**
- The most important transfer research you never heard about
- Questions answered: (How) does gen ed curriculum completion prior to transfer affect:
 - Likelihood of graduation?
 - Time to degree?
 - Cumulative GPA?



Transfer student success: What makes a difference?

- **The TBR Gen Ed Transcript study (2012)**
- *Total sample:* 18,527 transfer students
- *Data:* THEC student information system + academic histories from 5 TBR universities
- *3 cohorts:* 2006, 2007, 2008
- *Tracking period:* Fall 2006 – Spring 2011
- *Method:* propensity score matching:
 - Compares similar students



Transfer student success: What makes a difference?

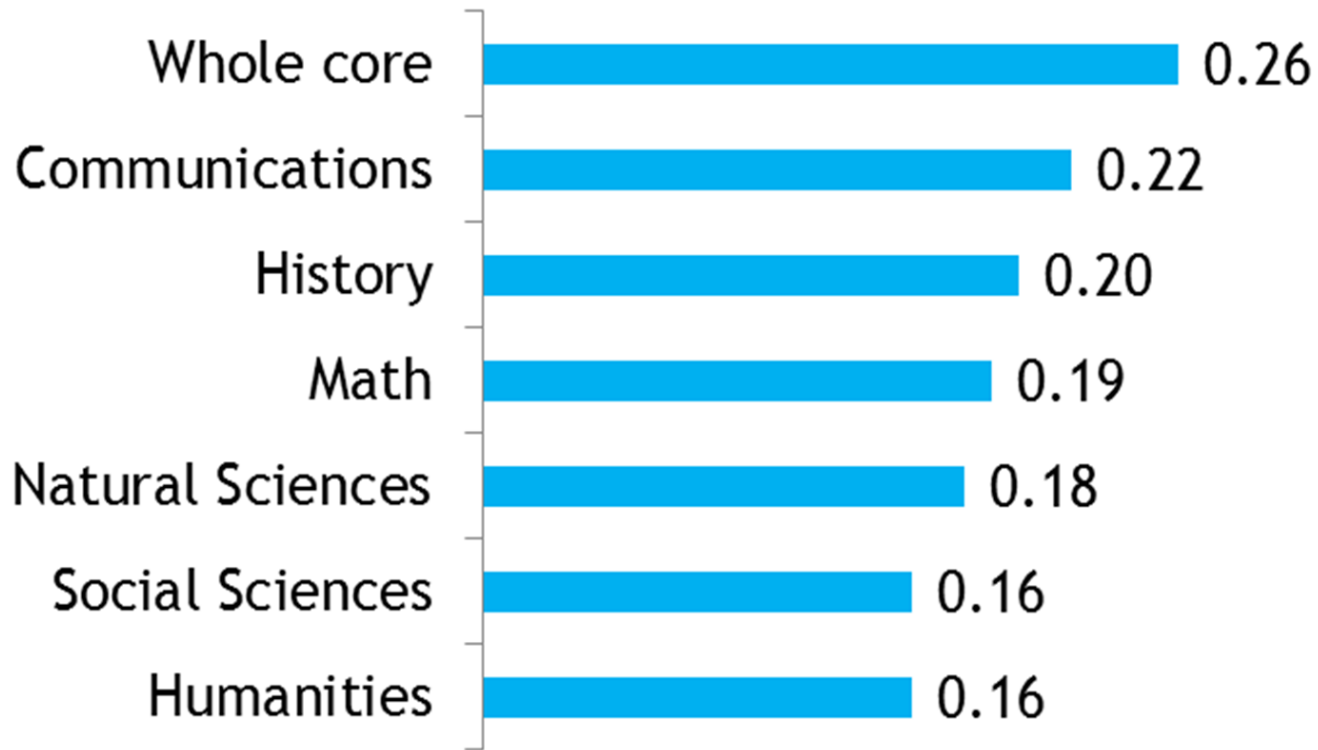
- **The TBR Gen Ed Transcript study (2012)**
- TBR general education core

Communications	9 hrs	Humanities	9 hrs
History	6 hrs	Social Sciences	6 hrs
Natural Sciences	8 hrs	Mathematics	3 hrs



Transfer student success: What makes a difference?

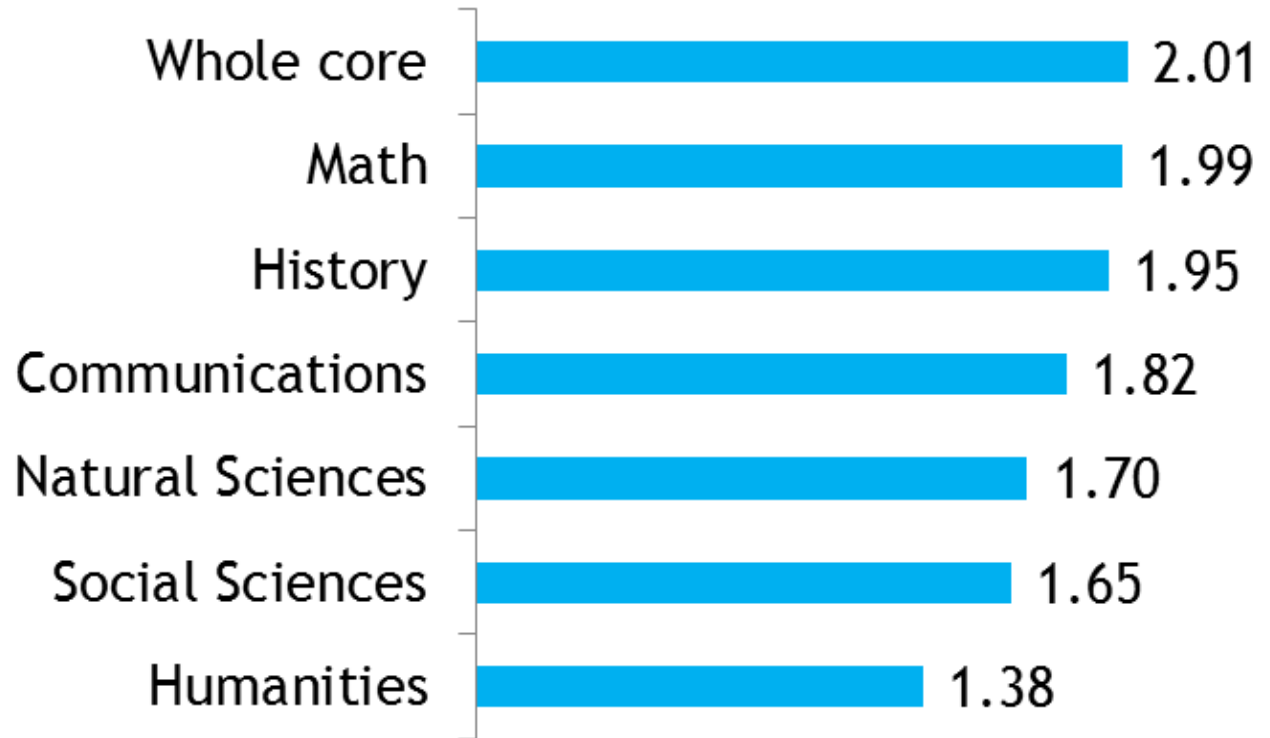
- Increase in graduation probability
- Percentage point change, 2008 cohort





Transfer student success: What makes a difference?

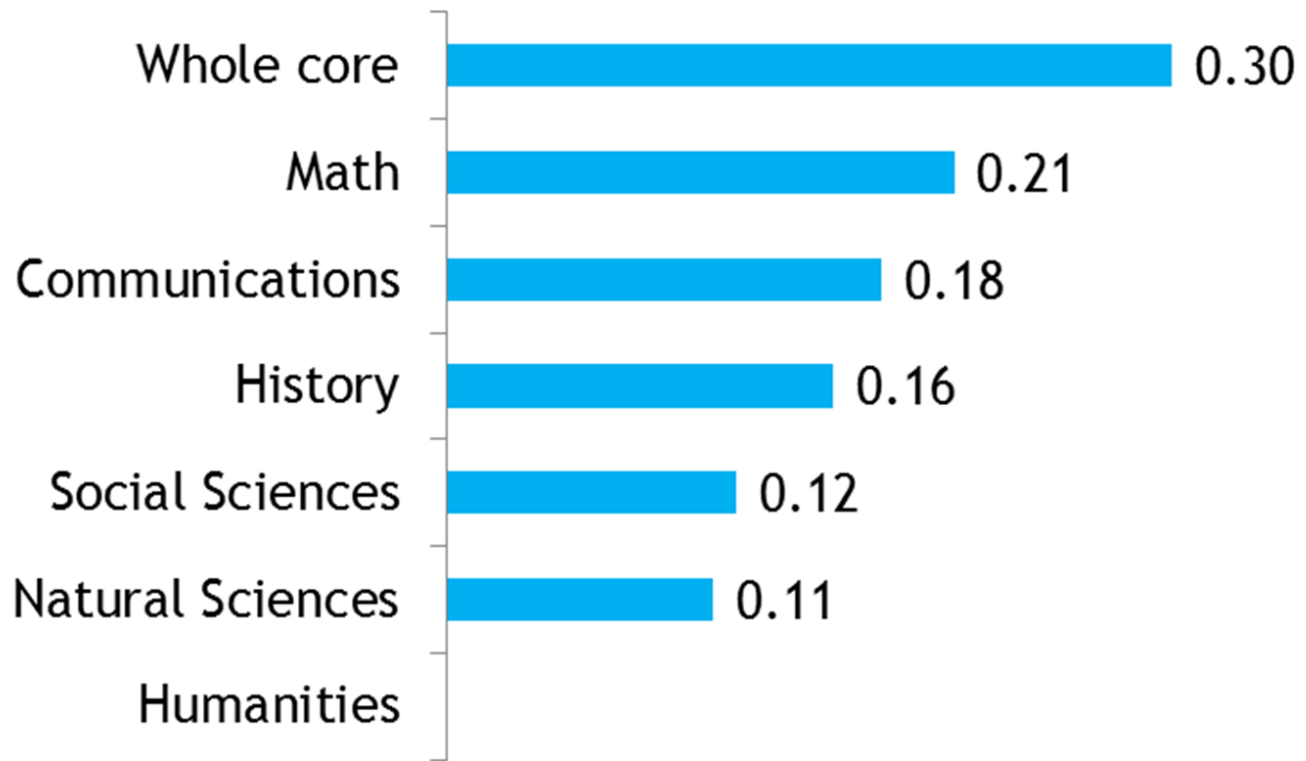
- **Decrease in time-to-degree**
- # semesters reduced, 2006 cohort





Transfer student success: What makes a difference?

- Increase in cumulative GPA
- Point estimates, 2007 cohort





Takeaways

- 1) Transfer a way of life for TN college students
 - Robust and multi-directional
 - Include key out-of-state sending institutions in transfer agreements
- 2) Any issues are TN issues with TN solutions
- 3) Students gather momentum not by merely accumulating credits, but by completing general education blocks
 - Math and communication are key



Takeaways

- 4) Gen ed core completion prior to transfer crucial; associate's degree completion highly beneficial
- 5) Early declaration, meta-majors, and degree maps can help guard against the most detrimental student behaviors
 - Late transfer
 - Late major change
 - Change across meta-majors



Takeaways

- 6) Transfer issues may be compounded for adult learners (credit accumulation, PLA, scheduling)...
- 7) ... but adult completers benefit the institution almost 2:1
- 8) Leverage technology solutions to improve the experience – for students and institutions
 - Degree Compass
 - EduNav



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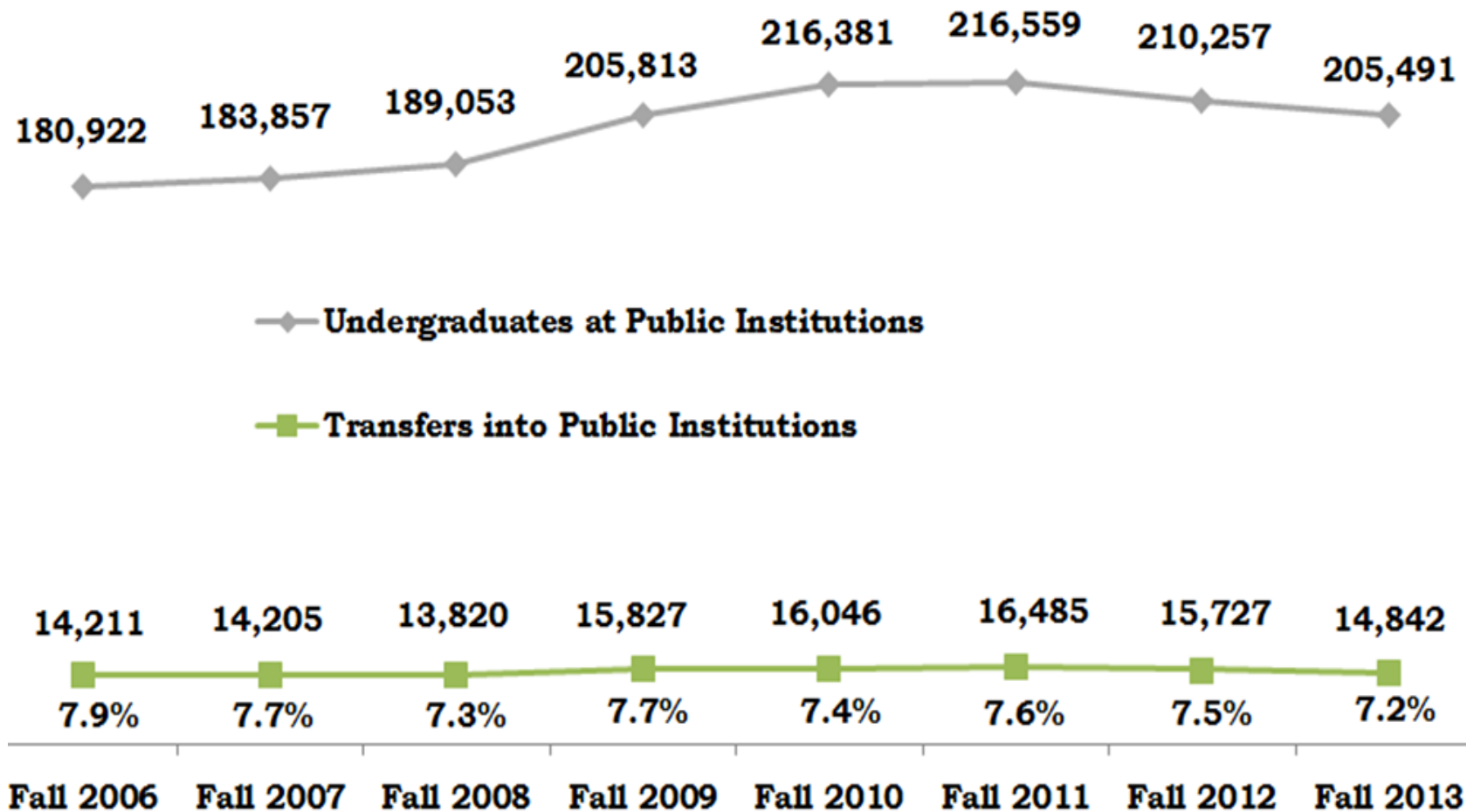
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UNUSED SLIDES

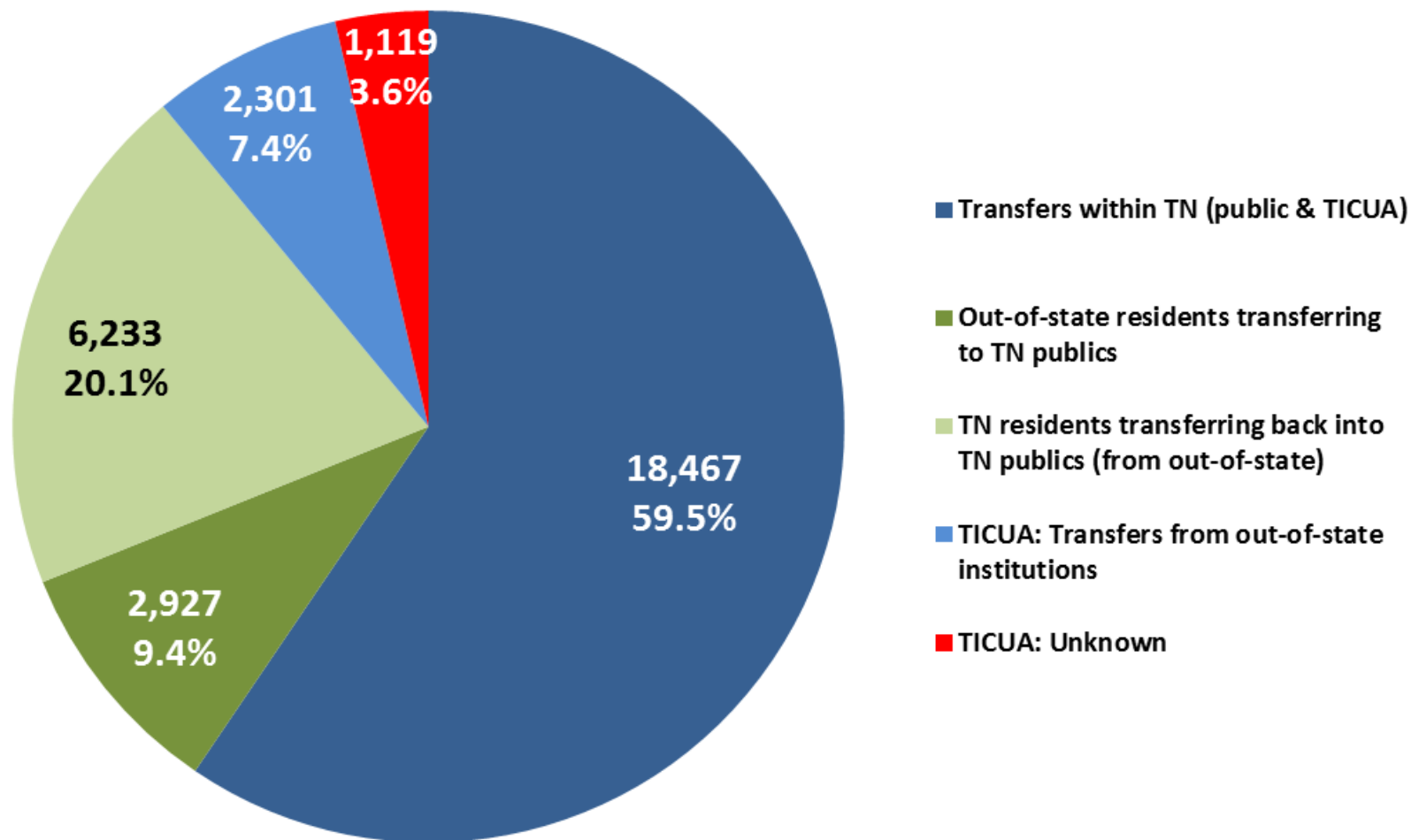


Consistent over time





Transferring to and from?

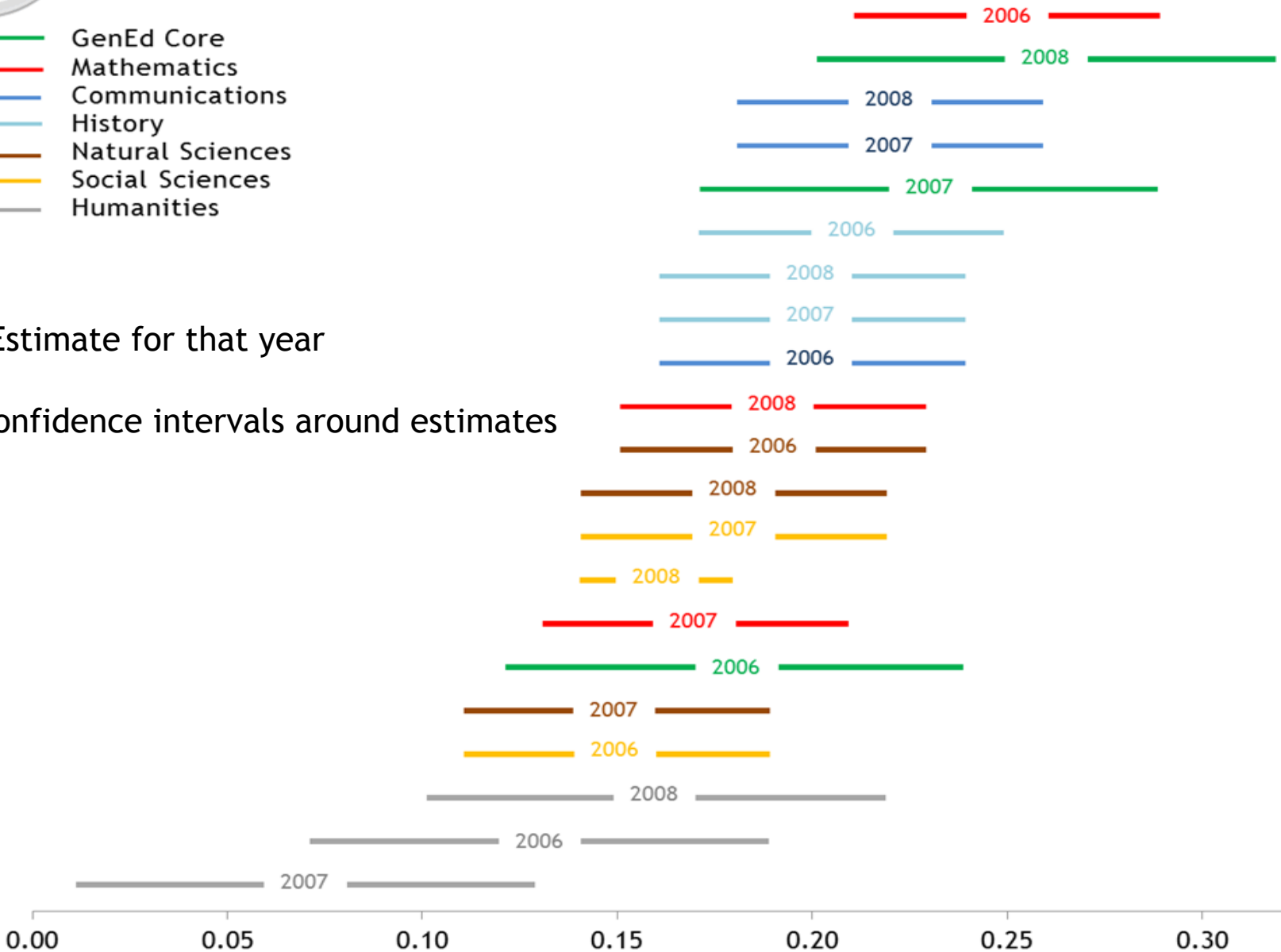


Impacts on probability of graduation

- GenEd Core
- Mathematics
- Communications
- History
- Natural Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Humanities

Years: Estimate for that year

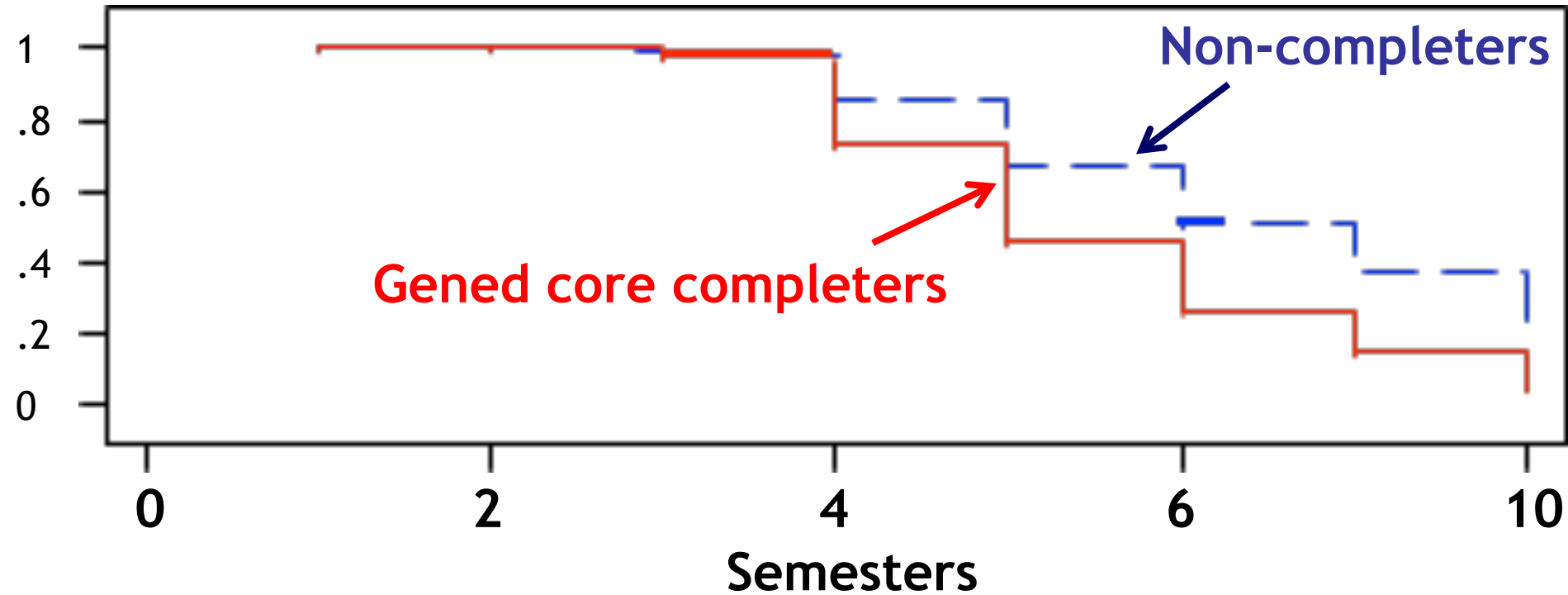
Bars: Confidence intervals around estimates





How rapidly graduation occurs

2008 cohort



GenEd completers show faster time to graduation