

## Highlights and Issues

### Cohort Tracking by Successful First Year Program Entry

#### Bottom Line:

- The graph and table on the page 1 indicates that beginning a program of study within the first year has a HUGE impact on completion and transfer. Students doing so are three to four times more likely to earn a degree, certificate or to transfer within a six year period than those who enter a program later or never enter a program. While only 10% of those not entering a program in the first year ultimately earn a degree or certificate or transfer (referred to as “completing” hereafter), 35% of those entering a program in their first year do so.
- Findings from the analysis of additional Laney cohorts and cohorts at the College of Alameda and in a very recent study by the Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Teachers College, Columbia University, show exactly the same pattern.
- When analyzed for Latino students (see the Latino results starting on page 6), the same pattern is displayed except that the completion rates for both those who enter a program and those who do not are lower and the difference is greater. While only 3% of those not entering a program complete, 26% of those who do complete. This is more than an *eightfold* difference.
- Somewhat surprisingly, about 30% of the fall entering students do enter a program in their first year. About 70% enter later or never enter before leaving Laney.
- Analysis of student choices indicates that Social and Behavioral Sciences and English and Humanities are the two most popular programs entered during the first year for both the entire cohort and for the subset of Latino students.
- As you can see within this study, and as we showed with another tracking study, stated student goals at entrance (e.g., to get a degree, to transfer, to advance in a career, undecided) has no relation to program completion. Those who are undecided are just as likely to enter a program of study and just as likely to complete as those who say their goal is to earn a degree or certificate or to transfer.
- Gender is not a large factor. Females tend to enter a program in slightly higher proportions than males in the first year and females who do are more likely to complete than males who do.
- Age, however, is a factor in program entrance and later completion. Younger students are more likely to enter a program in the first year than older first-time college students and more likely to complete than older students who enter a program.

#### A word about definitions and methods:

- Theoretically, these are students entirely new to college as well as to Laney. There are, however, some students (as many as 200 or so out of about 2,300) in the cohort who have taken a class or two in the Peralta District prior to their presumptive first semester at Laney and at college. In many years of tracking cohorts, I have found this fact has no material effect on the major findings of the study. The major findings are exactly the same whether those taking some classes prior to the cohort term are left in or out of the cohort.

- This study used a very low bar for successfully entering a program of study. Twenty-one programs were identified based upon a strong coherence or similarity of courses. Some programs are fairly broad such as Social and Behavioral Sciences or Math and Science, mostly reflecting associate degree and transfer courses of study, which explains to a great extent their popularity. Others are quite narrow, such as Culinary Services, mostly reflecting courses related CTE certificates. (See the full list on page 2.) To be considered as having entered a program a student need only pass (D grade or better) any three courses in the program anywhere within the District within the first year. This includes below-college level classes prevalent in the Math and Science and English and Humanities programs (as defined here).
- If a higher bar were used, I'm certain that the difference between those entering and those not entering a program in the first year would be even greater.
- The first year is narrowly defined as including only the summer prior to the fall, the fall, and the spring following the entering fall. If we included as well (as we easily could) the summer after the first fall and spring, no doubt the number having entered a program would be somewhat higher. But the major finding would not be materially affected.

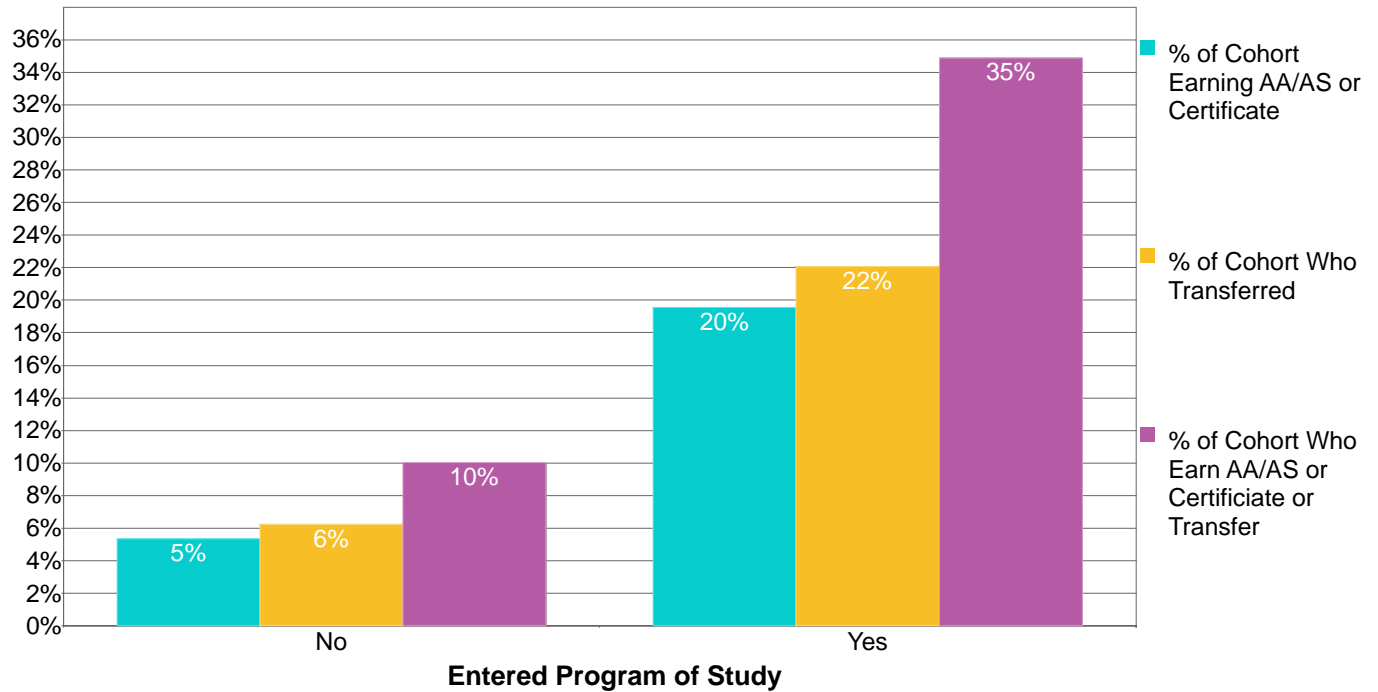
### **What Might We Conclude?**

- Given these results at Laney and similar results at College of Alameda and in the CCRC study, it seems clear that students who enter a program early on in their academic career are three to five times more likely to complete than those who enter later or do not enter.
- Entering a program of study implies many factors that are associated with achieving a goal and student success. For example, it expresses (in a reversible way) a commitment to a specific course of study. It exposes the student to the faculty and fellow students of the program who may provide valuable support when the going gets tough. It provides a meaningful direction in a way in which just taking courses or working on basic skills does not.
- Perhaps we should remove barriers to entering programs early and guide and encourage students to enter a program very early on (with assurances that they can change to another program without great penalty). Thus, requiring completion of basic skills courses prior to program entry may actually be counterproductive to ultimate student success.
- Latinos follow the same general pattern as the cohort as a whole but with somewhat lower completion rates but greater difference between those entering a program early and those entering later or never.

RBB – 4/20/11; minor revisions – 4/21/11

## Laney College

**Percentages of the Fall 2003 First-Time College Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate or Transfer within Six Years by Entry to Program of Study within First Year**



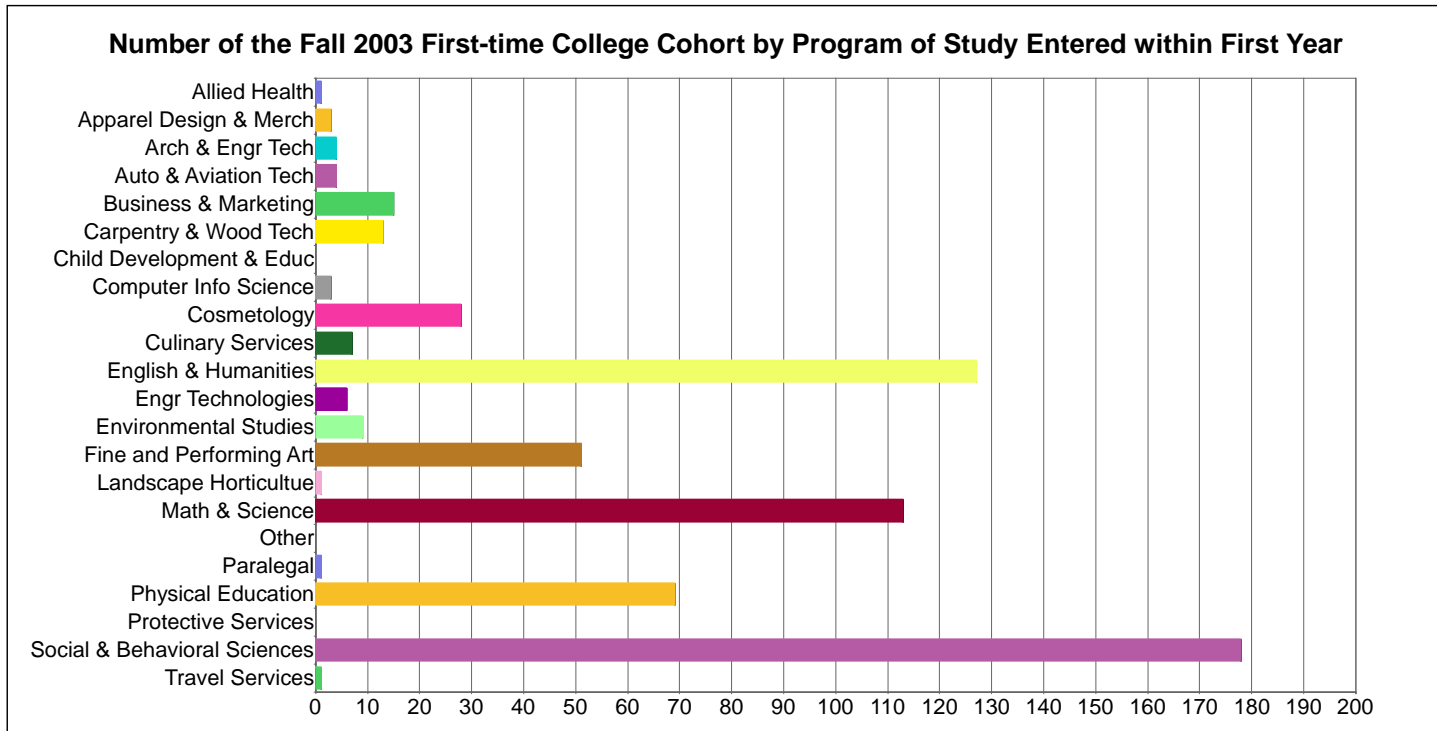
**Count and Percentage Tracking of the Fall 2003 Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate or Transfer within Six Years by Entry to Program of Study within First Year**

Entered a Program of Study	Count of Cohort	Percent of Cohort	Count of Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate	Percent of Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate	Count of Cohort Who Transfer to 4-yr College	Percent of Cohort Who Transfer to 4-yr College	Count of Cohort Who Earn a Deg/ Cert or Transfer	Percent of Cohort Who Earn a Deg/ Cert or Transfer
Yes	634	29%	124	20%	140	22%	221	35%
No	1,682	71%	90	5%	105	6%	169	10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,316</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>17%</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

Source: Transfer figures derived from state Chancellor's Office ARCC files for Student Progress and Achievement by matching student ID's of ARCC cohort data (all available cohorts simultaneously) with those of the indicated College's fall entering cohort. ARCC data includes transfers to CSU, UC, and private and out-of-state colleges whose data is available in the National Student Clearinghouse. ARCC data does not specify the institution to which the student transferred nor periods less than six years.

## Laney College



**Count of the Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Entry/Non-Entry to Program of Study within First Year**

Program	Did Not Enter in First Year	Entered in First Year	Total
Allied Health	9	1	10
Apparel Design & Merch	2	3	5
Arch & Engr Tech	3	4	7
Auto & Aviation Tech	7	4	11
Business & Marketing	76	15	91
Carpentry & Wood Tech	31	13	44
Child Development & Educ	3	0	3
Computer Info Science	29	3	32
Cosmetology	20	28	48
Culinary Services	18	7	25
English & Humanities	276	127	403
Engr Technologies	27	6	33
Environmental Studies	3	9	12
Fine and Performing Art	100	51	151
Landscape Horticultue	0	1	1
Math & Science	156	113	269
Paralegal	4	1	5
Physical Education	74	69	143
Protective Services	3	0	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	273	178	451
Travel Services	0	1	1
Other	568	0	568
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>2,316</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

### Number of the Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Whether Program of Study Entered within First Year and by Initial College Goal

Program	AA/Cert/Tnsfr		Undecided		Other		Total
	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	
Allied Health	1	3	0	5	0	1	10
Apparel Design & Merch	2	0	0	1	1	1	5
Arch & Engr Tech	0	0	2	2	2	1	7
Auto & Aviation Tech	0	3	3	2	1	2	11
Business & Marketing	4	35	6	21	5	20	91
Carpentry & Wood Tech	4	2	5	19	4	10	44
Child Development & Educ	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
Computer Info Science	1	13	2	12	0	4	32
Cosmetology	4	8	11	9	13	3	48
Culinary Services	1	7	4	9	2	2	25
English & Humanities	57	108	46	113	24	55	403
Engr Technologies	0	10	5	9	1	8	33
Environmental Studies	3	1	2	0	4	2	12
Fine and Performing Art	22	30	18	51	11	19	151
Landscape Horticultue	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Math & Science	56	80	41	53	16	23	269
Other	0	169	0	231	0	168	568
Paralegal	0	2	1	1	0	1	5
Physical Education	30	24	22	35	17	15	143
Protective Services	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	69	122	68	112	41	39	451
Travel Services	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>2,316</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

### Number of the Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Whether Program of Study Entered within First Year and by Gender

	Female		Male		Unkwn		Total
	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	
Allied Health	1	6	0	3	0	0	10
Apparel Design & Merch	3	1	0	1	0	0	5
Arch & Engr Tech	1	0	3	3	0	0	7
Auto & Aviation Tech	0	0	4	5	0	2	11
Business & Marketing	9	41	6	32	0	3	91
Carpentry & Wood Tech	2	5	11	26	0	0	44
Child Development & Educ	0	1	0	2	0	0	3
Computer Info Science	1	11	2	18	0	0	32
Cosmetology	25	19	2	1	1	0	48
Culinary Services	4	6	3	11	0	1	25
English & Humanities	60	150	64	117	3	9	403
Engr Technologies	1	0	5	25	0	2	33
Environmental Studies	0	0	8	3	1	0	12
Fine and Performing Art	30	58	21	38	0	4	151
Landscape Horticultue	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Math & Science	50	84	59	67	4	5	269
Other	0	323	0	232	0	13	568
Paralegal	1	1	0	2	0	1	5
Physical Education	16	33	52	40	1	1	143
Protective Services	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	104	154	72	106	2	13	451
Travel Services	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2,316</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

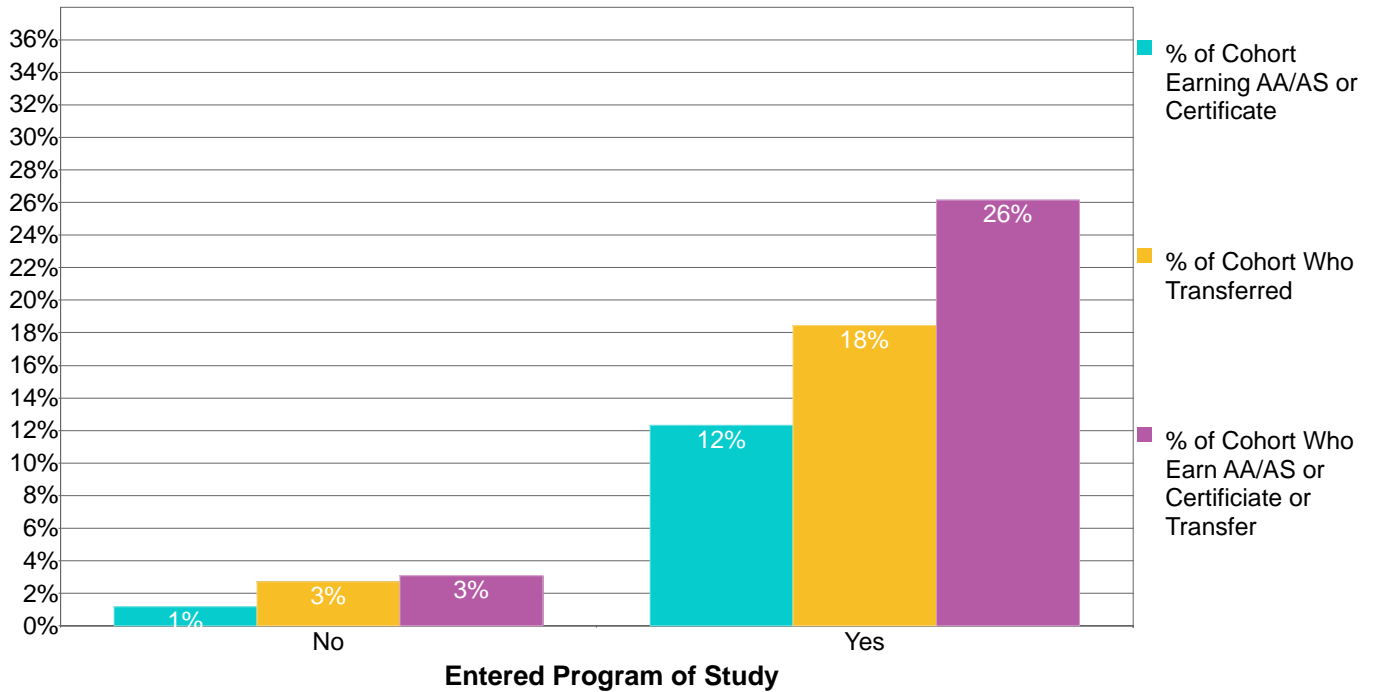
### Number of the Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Whether Program of Study Entered within First Year and by Age Group

	16 - 18		19 - 24		25 - 29		30 - 34		35 - 54		55 & Up		Total
	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No	
Allied Health	1	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
Apparel Design & Merch	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	5
Arch & Engr Tech	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	7
Auto & Aviation Tech	3	2	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	11
Business & Marketing	1	13	5	39	1	6	2	6	4	12	2	0	91
Carpentry & Wood Tech	1	0	3	19	0	2	2	4	7	5	0	1	44
Child Development & Educ	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Computer Info Science	0	4	1	12	2	6	0	1	0	5	0	1	32
Cosmetology	7	3	9	6	6	3	3	3	3	5	0	0	48
Culinary Services	2	2	2	9	0	1	1	2	2	4	0	0	25
English & Humanities	49	82	54	137	15	27	3	7	5	18	1	5	403
Engr Technologies	0	2	2	7	1	4	0	4	2	8	1	2	33
Environmental Studies	0	1	2	0	4	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	12
Fine and Performing Art	15	14	18	47	8	16	3	7	5	8	2	8	151
Landscape Horticultue	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Math & Science	43	36	48	75	12	17	5	12	5	16	0	0	269
Other	0	95	0	213	0	84	0	66	0	98	0	12	568
Paralegal	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	5
Physical Education	43	21	18	31	1	8	1	5	4	9	2	0	143
Protective Services	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	91	103	70	126	8	30	4	4	5	8	0	2	451
Travel Services	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2,316</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

**Percentages of the Fall 2003 Latino First-Time College Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate or Transfer within Six Years by Entry to Program of Study within First Year**



**Count and Percentage Tracking of the Latino Fall 2003 Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate or Transfer within Six Years by Entry to Program of Study within First Year**

Entered a Program of Study	Count of Cohort	Percent of Cohort	Count of Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate	Percent of Cohort Who Earn an AA/AS or Certificate	Count of Cohort Who Transfer to 4-yr College	Percent of Cohort Who Transfer to 4-yr College	Count of Cohort Who Earn a Deg/ Cert or Transfer	Percent of Cohort Who Earn a Deg/ Cert or Transfer
Yes	65	20%	8	12%	12	18%	17	26%
No	260	80%	3	1%	7	3%	8	3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8%</b>

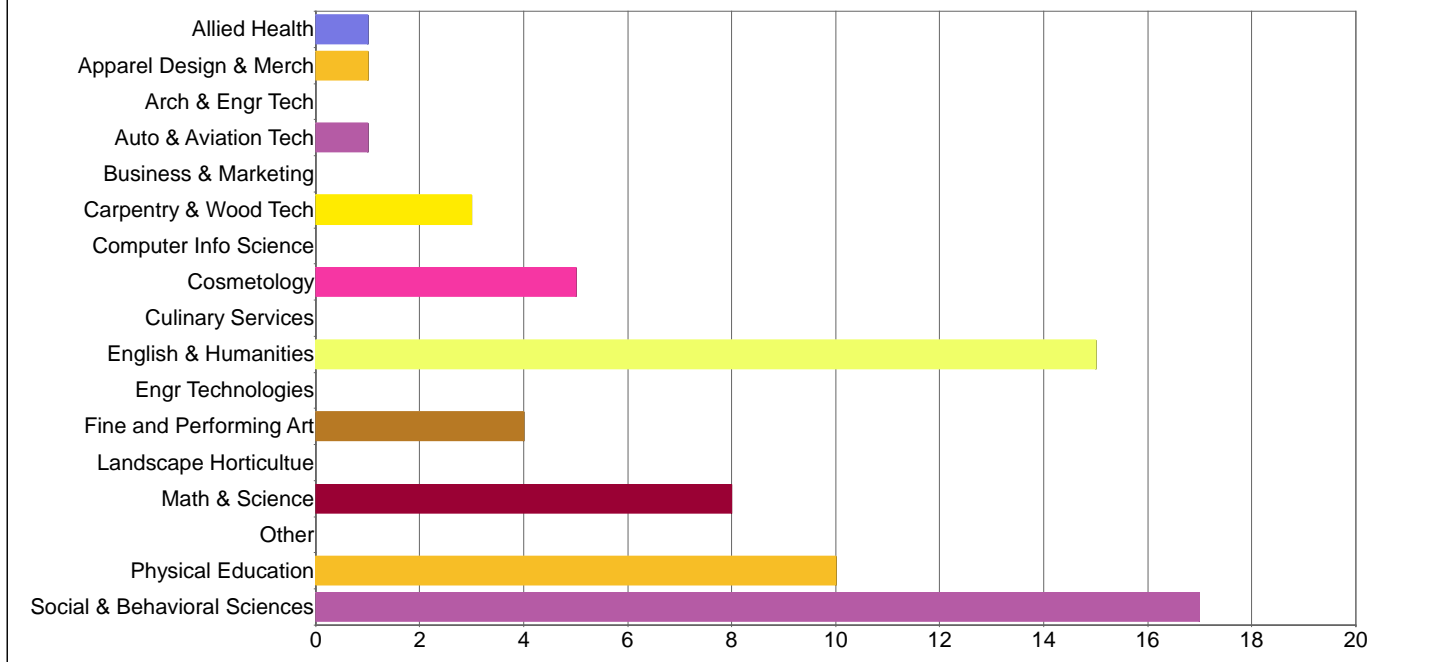
Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

Source: Transfer figures derived from state Chancellor's Office ARCC files for Student Progress and Achievement by matching student ID's of ARCC cohort data (all available cohorts simultaneously) with those of the indicated College's fall entering cohort. ARCC data includes transfers to CSU, UC, and private and out-of-state colleges whose data is available in the National Student Clearinghouse. ARCC data does not specify the institution to which the student transferred nor periods less than six years.



## Laney College

**Number of the Latino Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Program of Study Entered within First Year**



**Count of the Latino Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Entry/Non-Entry to Program of Study within First Year**

Program	Did Not Enter in First Year	Entered in First Year	Total
Allied Health	1	1	2
Apparel Design & Merch	1	1	2
Arch & Engr Tech	1	0	1
Auto & Aviation Tech	1	1	2
Business & Marketing	13	0	13
Carpentry & Wood Tech	7	3	10
Computer Info Science	3	0	3
Cosmetology	5	5	10
Culinary Services	1	0	1
English & Humanities	26	15	41
Engr Technologies	9	0	9
Fine and Performing Art	14	4	18
Landscape Horticultue	1	0	1
Math & Science	22	8	30
Other	115	0	115
Physical Education	13	10	23
Social & Behavioral Sciences	27	17	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>325</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

### Number of the Latino Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Whether Program of Study Entered within First Year and by Initial College Goal

Program	AA/Cert/Tnsfr		Undecided		Other		Total
	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	
Allied Health	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Apparel Design & Merch	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Arch & Engr Tech	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Auto & Aviation Tech	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Business & Marketing	0	8	0	3	0	0	11
Carpentry & Wood Tech	1	1	1	2	1	3	9
Computer Info Science	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
Cosmetology	1	2	1	4	3	0	11
Culinary Services	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
English & Humanities	9	4	2	20	4	3	42
Engr Technologies	0	3	0	3	0	4	10
Fine and Performing Art	2	2	0	5	2	6	17
Math & Science	3	7	4	8	1	1	24
Other	0	24	0	42	0	49	115
Physical Education	3	4	6	5	1	4	23
Social & Behavioral Sciences	7	18	9	14	1	3	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>325</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

### Number of the Latino Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Whether Program of Study Entered within First Year and by Gender

	Female		Male		Unkwn		Total
	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	Entered	Not Entered	
Allied Health	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Apparel Design & Merch	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Arch & Engr Tech	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Auto & Aviation Tech	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Business & Marketing	0	5	0	6	0	0	11
Carpentry & Wood Tech	0	0	3	6	0	0	9
Computer Info Science	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Cosmetology	5	5	0	1	0	0	11
Culinary Services	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
English & Humanities	7	12	8	15	0	0	42
Engr Technologies	0	0	0	10	0	0	10
Fine and Performing Art	3	7	1	5	0	1	17
Math & Science	2	10	5	6	1	0	24
Other	0	67	0	44	0	4	115
Physical Education	1	7	9	5	0	1	23
Social & Behavioral Sciences	12	20	5	12	0	3	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>325</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.

## Laney College

### Number of the Latino Fall 2003 First-time College Cohort by Whether Program of Study Entered within First Year and by Age Group

	16 - 18		19 - 24		25 - 29		30 - 34		35 - 54		55 & Up	Total
	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No	Entered	No		
Allied Health	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Apparel Design & Merch	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Arch & Engr Tech	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Auto & Aviation Tech	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Business & Marketing	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	2	0	3	0	11
Carpentry & Wood Tech	1	0	0	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	9
Computer Info Science	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
Cosmetology	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	11
Culinary Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
English & Humanities	7	7	3	13	3	4	1	0	1	3	0	42
Engr Technologies	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	10
Fine and Performing Art	2	2	1	8	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	17
Math & Science	6	2	1	4	1	3	0	2	0	5	0	24
Other	0	13	0	47	0	22	0	14	0	16	3	115
Physical Education	5	5	4	6	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	23
Social & Behavioral Sciences	8	13	9	16	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>325</b>

Note: Entry into a program is defined as passing three courses within a program of study with a grade of D or better within the indicated time period. Counts for Non-Entry reflect the program the student has taken the most courses in without entry during the indicated time period. Thus, where the time period for entry is the first year, the student may have entered a program in later semesters or years or may have taken courses in the program without ever achieving entry before leaving the college or district. Courses taken at any college within the district are included. The first year consists of the fall term of the cohort and the immediate prior summer and the immediate following spring terms.