2019 Higher Education Government Relations Conference

Making the Case for Higher Education Amid Scarcity and Division

AACC • AASCU • APLU • CASE
Advancing the Equity Agenda at the Institution- and System-Level
Massachusetts is the first state to elevate equity to the top-level performance & policy priority for all of its public higher education institutions
Equity Strategic Framework Vision Statement

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education aims to sustain and expand on Massachusetts’ unique leadership position in higher education as defined by the strength and reputation of our private and public postsecondary institutions and our nation-leading level of attainment among our adult citizens.

To further realize those goals and to ensure that public higher education opens doors of opportunity and fulfilment for traditionally underserved populations...

We elect to make our top statewide policy and performance priority:

Significantly raise the enrollment, attainment and long-term success outcomes among under-represented student populations.

We intend this equity lens priority to guide campus and system performance measurement and promote initiatives and policies that collectively expand success for residents and for our economy and society.
Decision Was Informed By Critically Examining Performance Outcomes
The rates vary significantly by race/ethnicity and gender

MA Key Education Indicators: By Race/Ethnicity & Gender
The disparities are large

MA Key Education Indicators: By Race/Ethnicity & Gender

- High School Graduation: 2017
- College Enrollment: 2016
- Public College Graduation: 2017
- Overall College Attainment: 2018
Even among students of similar SES, racial disparities remain
Within the Pell-eligible and non-Pell populations, there are significant racial disparities between subgroups.

**Overall Six-Year Graduation Rate of Students Who Initially Enroll in Massachusetts Public Higher Education (2017)**

*Within six years after enrolling at a Massachusetts community college, state university or UMass campus, what percentage of students earn a degree anywhere (at initial or at another institution)?*

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<th>White</th>
<th>Latinx</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Non Pell</strong></td>
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<td>(Known Non-Pell plus Pell Unknown)</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<td>African American</td>
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<td><strong>Received Pell</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American</td>
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<td>35%</td>
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<td>Latinx</td>
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<td>29%</td>
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Degree Attainment by Race/Ethnicity & Unmet Need Status

Systemwide, white students with need met have the highest degree attainment rate, followed by white students with unmet need. Students of color have substantially lower degree attainment rates, even if all of their need is met, suggesting that addressing affordability gaps alone will not be sufficient to achieve racial equity in success outcomes. Filter by Segment to see how the trend differs among students who initially enrolled at community colleges, state universities or UMass.

What percentage of first-time, full-time students who initially enrolled at a Massachusetts public college or university in fall 2011 earned a degree anywhere within six years?

- White with Need Met: 65%
- White with Unmet Need: 56%
- African American with Need Met: 45%
- Latinx with Need Met: 41%
- African American with Unmet Need: 38%
- Latinx with Unmet Need: 36%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and National Student Clearinghouse. Cohort: First-time, full-time students who initially enrolled in a Massachusetts public college or university in fall 2011. Student is categorized as "With Need Met" or "With Some Unmet Need" based on their ability to pay during their first semester.
Moving Forward
A Critical Shift

Deficit Model
- Students Are Underprepared

Asset Based Model
- Student-Ready Colleges and Universities
Elements of Student Success

- Offer Wraparound Support Services
- Implement Policy Innovations
- Improve Campus Climate
- Examine Evidence Critically
- Improve Affordability
- Use Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy