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Degree Completion:
10 Year Trend 2010-11 through 2019-20
Research Brief #215

College of the Canyons

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COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

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Introduction & Background

As part of the Student Equity plan and the *Canyon's Completes* initiative, the office of Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness conducted a trend analysis of degree completion over a 10-year period.

Specifically, this research is intended to answer the following questions:

- How has the number of degrees awarded changed?
- How has the number of students completing degrees changed?
- How has the racial/ethnic composition of students completing degrees changed?
- How does the trend in degree earners compare to the trend in general student population growth?

Method

To conduct the analyses, informer reports on awards was merged with student demographics data. Each academic year includes Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) degrees awarded either during the summer in the beginning of the year, the fall term, and/or the spring term (e.g. 2016-17 includes summer and fall 2016 and spring 2017). For comparison, overall student population growth was compared during this time period. These data were obtained from CCCCO: Data Mart and local 320 files were used to back out Instructional Service Agreement student headcounts from the total.

Results

Degrees Awarded

Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, the total number of degrees awarded over the 10-year period increased by 207% (1,036 to 3,184) (Figure 1). This is a duplicated count of awards due to some students earning more than one degree in a given year.

*Figure 1. Number of Degrees (AA/AS/ADT) awarded by academic year**
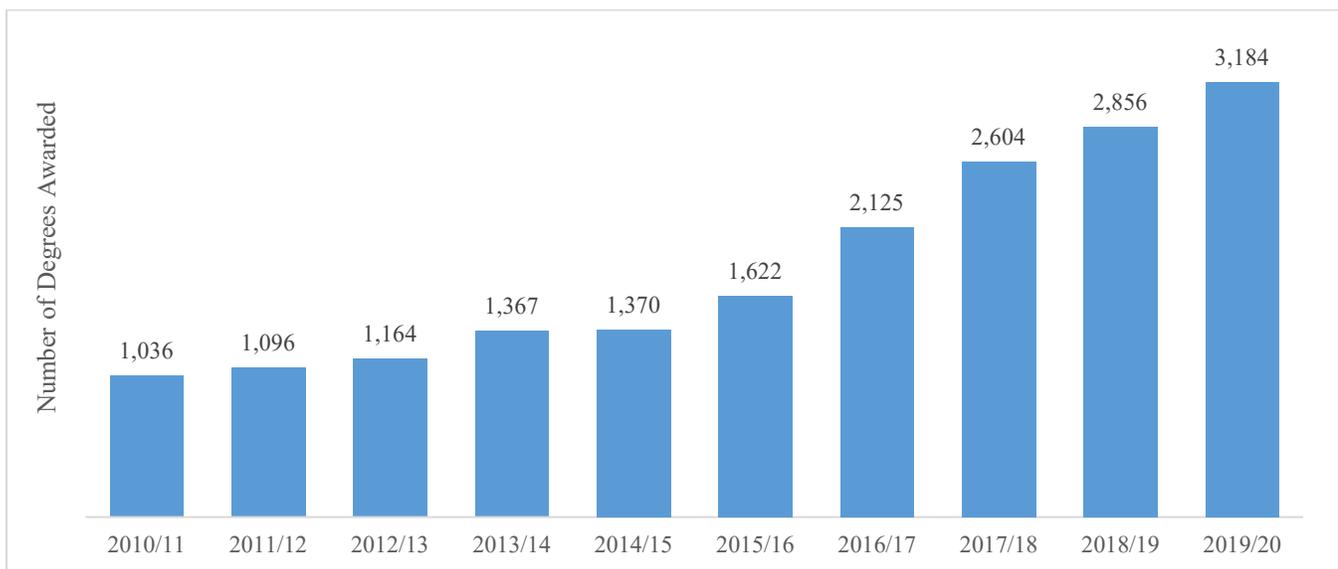
*Includes Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT)

Degree Earners

Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, the total number of students earning at least one degree over the 10-year period increased by 118% (1,001 to 2,190) (Figure 2). The largest increase in a 1-year time-frame was between 2015-16 and 2016-17 years where there was a 23% increase in the number of students earning a degree.

Figure 2. Number of students earning a Degree over 10 years
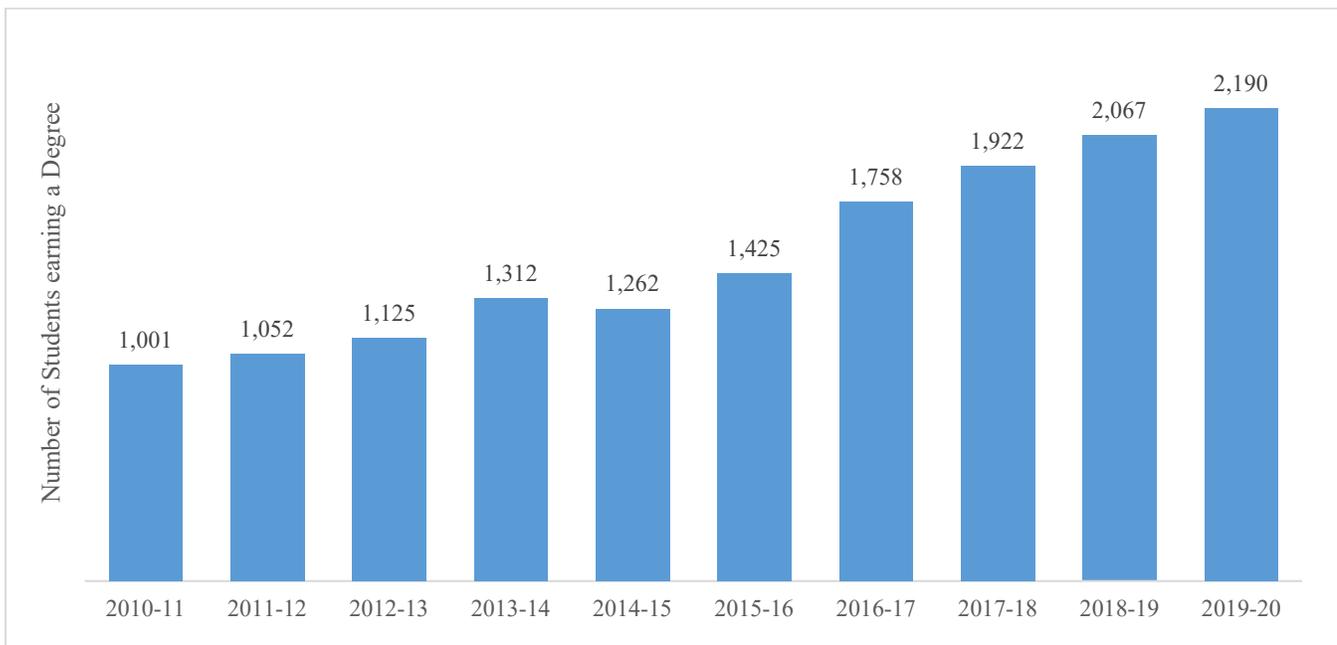

Degree Earners by Race/Ethnicity

Degree recipients' race/ethnicity was examined to assess the difference in demographics of students graduating with a degree over time (Figure 3)[1]. The groups with the highest increase were Latinx students whose representation among degree recipients increased by 257% (290 to 1036) and African-American/Black students whose representation increased by 144% (25 to 61). Although the rate in number of African-American/Black students increased substantially, the number increased by 36 students over 10 years. Asian students' numbers increased by 134% (112 to 263) and White students' number increased by 48% (484 to 720).

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[1] Race/Ethnicity coding is based on groups established by CCCCO and IPEDs. Asian includes Filipino, other groups were excluded from the chart due to small group sizes (i.e. Native American/Alaska Native, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Two or more Races and Unknown).

Figure 3.Number of students earning a Degree over 10 years by Race/Ethnicity
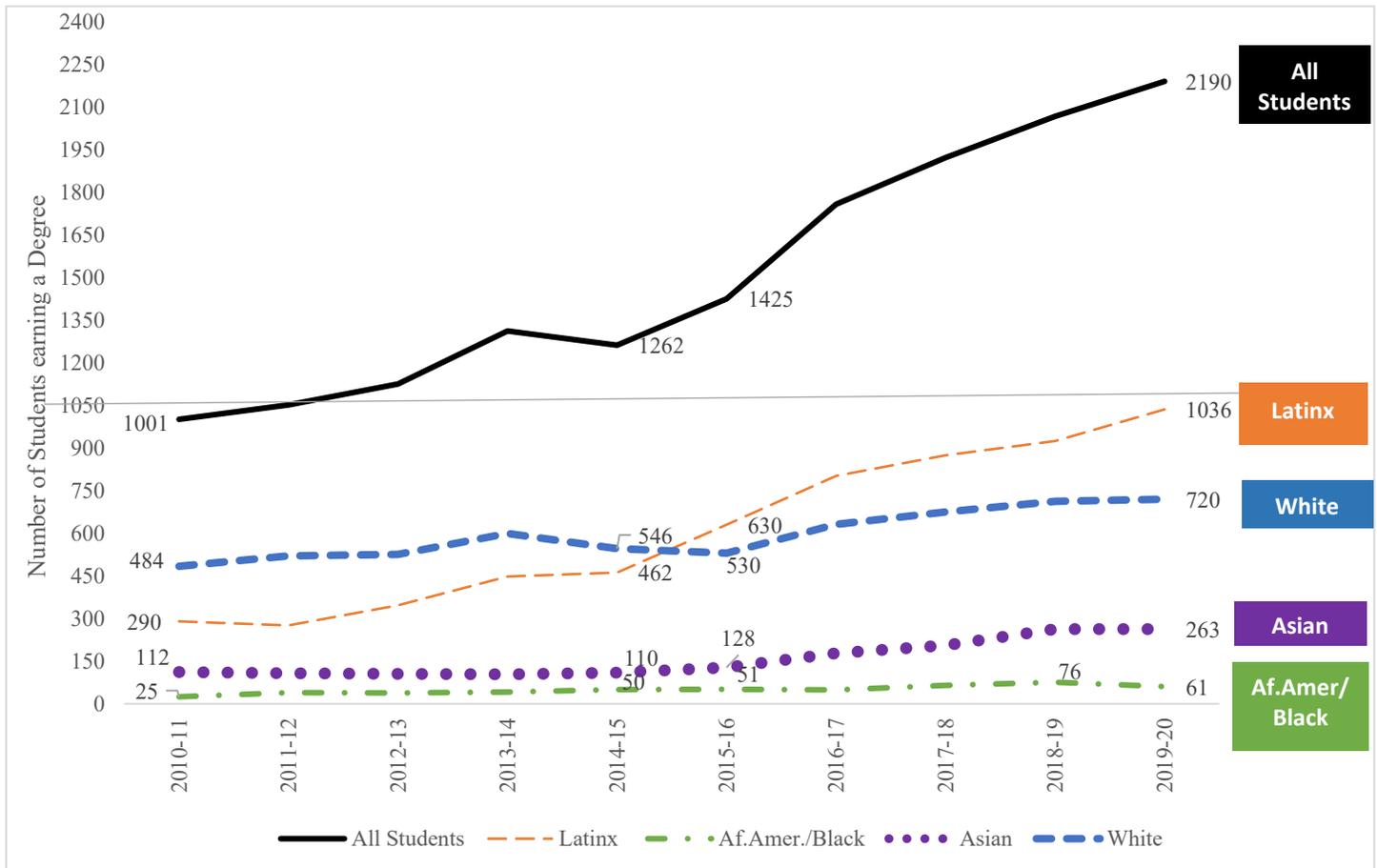
Population Growth

During this time-period the annual count for the general student population increased by 10% (Figure 4.), with 19,124 students in 2010-11 to 21,015 students in 2019-20. These counts exclude Instructional Service Agreement (ISA) students and students who were concurrently enrolled during the academic year since they would not yet have started their degree-seeking college path. This implies that the substantial increase in students earning awards is driven by factors beyond the student population growth over the last 10 years.
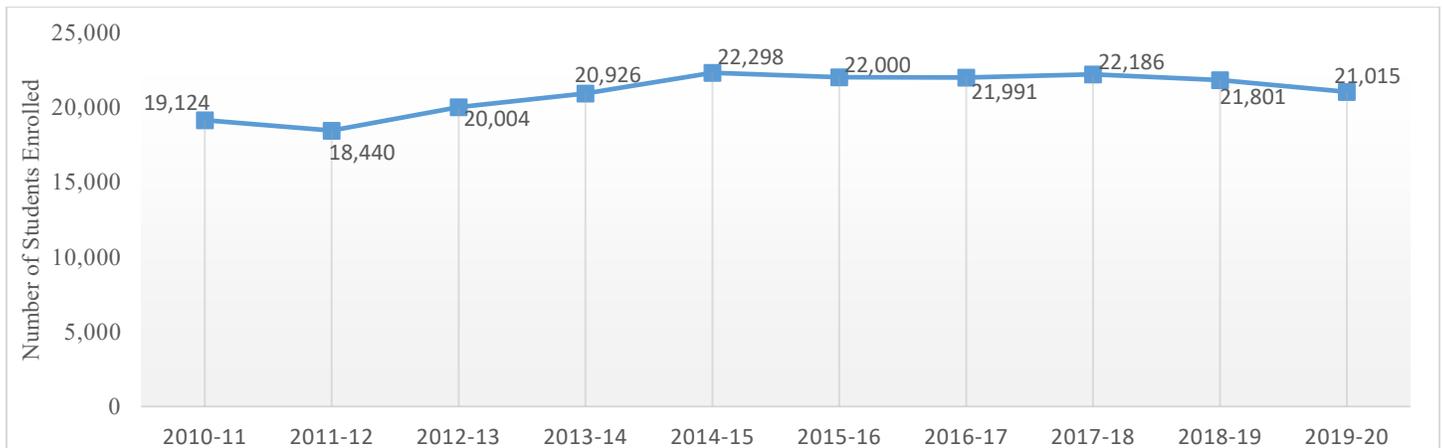
Figure 4. Student Population Growth 10 years

Table 1. Annual Student Headcount over 10-years

	2010 11	2011 12	2012 13	2013 14	2014 15	2015 16	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20
Total Headcount[1]	33,568	27,535	27,176	31,068	30,648	30,733	32,144	32,860	35,182	33,478
ISA [2]	13,476	8,165	6,126	8,701	7,018	6,970	8,328	8,321	10,426	9,176
Concurrent [3]	968	930	1,046	1,441	1,332	1,763	1,825	2,353	2,955	3,287
Excluding ISA/Concurrent	**19,124**	**18,440**	**20,004**	**20,926**	**22,298**	**22,000**	**21,991**	**22,186**	**21,801**	**21,015**

1. Annual Headcount is the unduplicated count of students enrolled in units greater than or equal to 0.5 or positive attendance hours greater than or equal to 8 in summer, fall, winter, spring
2. ISA headcount estimated using Fiscal Year 320 files.
3. Concurrently enrolled students are high school students who enroll at the college during the academic year.

Recommendations

Upon review of the 10-year trend in degree completion and demographic data of degree earners, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- Use the results to inform planning and decision-making processes for the $(IE)^2$ Committee.
- Discuss and identify contributing factors to the increase in number of completions.

For questions, or more information on this research brief, contact Preeta Saxena, Ph.D., Senior Research Analyst or Daylene Meuschke, Ed.D., Associate Vice President Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness