

2025 Survey of Community College Outcomes (SCCO)

Data and Source Notes

IPEDS Data

Graduation Rate (GR)

Source: NCES IPEDS (2023, 2024) Winter component; authors' calculations

To construct a representative traditional graduation rate for each institution, we use a modified [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#) (IPEDS) 150% expected time to completion graduation rate from the Department of Education's [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES).

Cohort and Completer Counts

For IPEDS 2023 and 2024 data, adjusted cohort and completer counts were aggregated using an average of the 2023 and 2024 years.

We take a two-year average for a few reasons:

- The cohort entry window for a single IPEDS year will not align with the Richmond Fed SCCO. If we picked one IPEDS graduation year for comparison, it would not represent the same cohort as the cohort captured in the SCCO.
- Individual year cohort sizes and graduation rates can fluctuate wildly for small schools year-over-year.
- We present the IPEDS graduation rate as a reference point rather than a value to be compared directly with the SCCO graduation rate.

When decimals occur in aggregated counts, we round up to the nearest integer to avoid underreporting students. Rounding applies to cohort and completer counts only, not to the final graduation rate.

Formulas

- **Aggregate Completers (2023–2024):**

$$\text{Aggregate Completers} = \text{Completers}_{2023} + \text{Completers}_{2024}$$

- **Aggregate Cohort (2023–2024):**

$$\text{Aggregate Cohort} = \text{Cohort}_{2023} + \text{Cohort}_{2024}$$

- **Aggregate Graduation Rate (2023–2024):**

$$\text{Grad Rate} = \frac{\text{Completers}_{2023} + \text{Completers}_{2024}}{\text{Cohort}_{2023} + \text{Cohort}_{2024}}$$

Institution Locale and Detailed Locale

Source: NCES IPEDS 2024; Institutional Characteristics (IC) component

To classify institutions by their geographic locations, we use NCES urban-centric locale classifications codes for each institution provided in the 2024 IPEDS survey. Locale codes identify the geographic status of a school on an urban continuum ranging from “large city” to “rural.” They are based on a school’s physical address. The urban-centric locale codes introduced in this file are assigned through a methodology developed by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Population Division. Locale codes are based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 TIGER/Line Shapefiles For further documentation on the locale framework, read this [document](#).

Locale Category Aggregates

For broader analysis, we occasionally group locales into four categories:

- **Rural** is defined as a territory outside a Census-designated urban area.
- **Town** is defined as a territory inside an urban area with population less than 50,000
- **Suburban** is defined as a territory outside a principal city and inside an urban area
- **City** is defined as a territory inside an urban area with population of 50,000 or more and inside a principal city

Locale - Detailed

NCES includes [further subclassifications](#) with the rural, town, suburban, and city categories to account for population size and proximity to larger areas.

Due to small sample size, the “Suburban – Small” and “Suburban – Midsize” institutions are combined into a single category for our reporting. As a result, we use 10 of the 12 locale distinctions (which we call locale – detailed) and one combination locale in our results release.

Institution Size

Source: NCES IPEDS 2024 Institutional Characteristics (IC) component

Institutions are assigned one of six size categories based on fall credit enrollment.

Data Providers

When possible, we collect institution-level data from a state entity (often the data office in a higher education agency or system). In some instances, we collect data from individual institutions in states in which a single entity cannot provide the data. We could not do this

work without the collaboration of our state and institution partners. Listed below are the entities that provided data for the 2025 SCCO.

- Arkansas: Arkansas Division of Higher Education
- Iowa: Iowa Department of Education (Higher Education and Postsecondary Readiness Division)
- Massachusetts
 - Berkshire Community College
 - Bristol Community College
 - Bunker Hill Community College
 - Cape Cod Community College
 - Greenfield Community College
 - Holyoke Community College
 - Massasoit Community College
 - MassBay Community College
 - Middlesex Community College
 - Mount Wachusett Community College
 - North Shore Community College
 - Northern Essex Community College
 - Quinsigamond Community College
 - Roxbury Community College
 - Springfield Technical Community College
- Maryland
 - Allegany College of Maryland
 - Anne Arundel Community College
 - Carroll Community College
 - Cecil College
 - Chesapeake College
 - College of Southern Maryland
 - Community College of Baltimore County
 - Frederick Community College *
 - Garrett College
 - Hagerstown Community College
 - Harford Community College
 - Howard Community College
 - Montgomery College
 - Prince George's Community College
 - Wor-Wic Community College
- North Carolina: North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS)
- New Jersey
 - Atlantic Cape Community College
 - Brookdale Community College
 - Camden County College
 - County College of Morris

- Essex County College
- Hudson County Community College
- Mercer County Community College
- Middlesex College
- Ocean County College
- Passaic County Community College
- Raritan Valley Community College
- Rowan College at Burlington County *
- Rowan College of South Jersey-Cumberland Campus
- Rowan College of South Jersey-Gloucester Campus
- Salem Community College
- UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ
- South Carolina: South Carolina Technical College System (SCTCS)
- Texas
 - Dallas College
 - Odessa College
- Virginia: Virginia Community College System (VCCS)
- West Virginia: West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC)

* Denotes an institution for whom data are partially or fully omitted in the February 2026 release.

Institution Notes

Iowa Valley Community College District (IVCCD)

To align with Iowa's reporting, we created a single institution representation for the Iowa Valley Community College District by aggregating IPEDS data from its member colleges: Marshalltown Community College and Ellsworth Community College.

Aggregation Logic:

- Added 2023 and 2024 IPEDS cohort counts together.
- Added 2023 and 2024 IPEDS completer counts together.
- Calculated a pooled IPEDS graduation rate using methodology above

Institution Size: Assigned size category **1,000–4,999** based on combined full-time enrollment of both colleges.

Locale Assignment: IVCCD is classified under **Town: Distant**, weighted toward Marshalltown's classification.