

Calculating the Associate Degree/Certificate-Seeking Cohort Metric

SAM provides a common measure for student achievement for nearly all institutions. This document describes the methodology for calculating the **associate degree-seeking and certificate-seeking model**.

The SAM associate degree and certificate model outcomes are calculated using data from a variety of sources—the National Student Clearinghouse, state longitudinal data systems, system data, and/or institutional data. Therefore, data to create the associate/certificate model will be collected and entered by participating institutions into the web interface and the graphic display will be automatically created. **For institutions that participate in the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA), the data for SAM is easily aggregated from the the VFA’s Student Progress and Outcomes measures.**

It is important to note that, although similar, the SAM associate degree and certificate model will not match graduation and retention rates calculated using the federal methodology (e.g. Student Right to Know/IPEDS) nor are they intended to match.

The **associate degree-seeking and certificate-seeking model** reports outcomes for the cohort of students who are new to the reporting institution (including first-time in college and students who transfer from another institution). This cohort is disaggregated by (1) full- time students and (2) part-time students.

The **associate degree-seeking and certificate-seeking model** reports the following metrics:

- % of students who received an associate degree or a certificate from the reporting institution within 6 years
- % who are still enrolled at the reporting institution after 6 years, even if their enrollment was not continuous
- % who transferred out to another institution
- Have unknown transfer, enrollment, or graduation status

The **associate degree- and certificate-seeking model** will report the following outcomes after 6 years

SAM Institution Example: Students Seeking an Associate Degree or Certificate

