

Calculating the Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Cohort Metric

SAM provides a common measure for student achievement for all types of institutions: public and private, nonprofit universities, colleges, and community colleges. This document describes the methodology for calculating the bachelor's degree-seeking model. The SAM bachelor's degree model outcomes are calculated using data from the National Student Clearinghouse to StudentTracker Cohort Query.

More details about the Cohort Query can be found at [StudentTracker Cohort Query Guide.pdf](#).

Although similar, the SAM bachelor's degree model may not match IPEDS graduation and retention rates.

Below are some key differences

- The SAM bachelor's degree-seeking model retention/enrollment rates are based on enrollment in any term during the academic year.
- The SAM bachelor's degree-seeking model calculations are based on "end of term" data rather than "census" data.
- The SAM bachelor's degree-seeking model enrollment rates include students from the cohort who are enrolled in other institutions during academic year.
- The denominator used in the SAM bachelor's degree-seeking model graduation rate will include only the students from the cohort who have a matching record at the Clearinghouse. For most institutions about 95% of the cohort that can be matched. However, institutions are not "penalized" for unmatched records.
- The SAM bachelor's degree-seeking model counts both 2-year and 4-year degrees as a completion.
- Students who graduate with a 2-year degree and re-enroll will be counted in the enrollment rate until graduation with a 4-year degree.

The **bachelor's degree-seeking model** will report outcomes for the following cohorts

- first-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students; and
- transfer, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students who transferred into the reporting institution;
- first-time, part-time bachelor's degree-seeking students; and
- transfer, part-time bachelor's degree-seeking students who transferred into the reporting institution.

Additional Cohort Reporting. SAM institutions have the option to report outcomes for Pell students, Veteran students, and students of color. These sub cohorts help institutions demonstrate their commitment to closing achievement gaps and ensuring all students succeed. Using the cohort defined by the model, students must also meet the criteria listed below to be included in any of these 3 sub cohorts.

- **Pell students:** Students who received a Pell Grant in their first term of enrollment at the institution.
- **Veteran Students:** Students who reported to the institution that they received veterans' benefits at any point during their enrollment at the institution.
- **Students of color:** Students who identify all or in part with a race and/or ethnicity that is non-white. Students who are international/nonresident aliens or for whom race/ethnicity is unknown should not be included in the cohort.

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The **bachelor’s degree-seeking model** will report on the percentage of students who:

- Graduated from the reporting institution
- Are still enrolled at the reporting institution
- Transferred and graduated from another institution
- Transferred and are still enrolled at another institution
- Have an unknown status

The **bachelor’s degree-seeking model** will report outcomes for three time periods for each cohort.

- For full-time cohorts:
 - At the end of 4 years
 - At the end of 5 years
 - At the end of 6 years
- For part-time cohorts:
 - At the end of 6 years
 - At the end of 8 years
 - At the end of 10 years

SAM Institution Example: Full-time Students Seeking a Bachelor’s Degree

