The following presentation was given at the 20th Annual Conference for the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students. In some cases, photos have been removed to avoid possible copyright infringement. Please cite responsibly and direct questions to the original presenter(s).

Sponsored Session - Facilitated Discussion

2382 - Transfer Trends at Common App
Diversity and Inclusion, Matriculation Trends and Issues

Based on data submitted by transfer applicants, Common App will present a profile of transfer students over the three-year period since the Common Application for transfer was introduced. Special focus will be given to the effect of COVID-19 on underrepresented transfer student populations. Common App will provide recommendations on how institutions can address these issues in their application process.

Batanya Gipson, Program Director, Transfer and Community College
Meredith Lombardi, Associate Director, Education and Outreach
Ariana Ortega, Product Manager
Trent Kajikawa, Data Scientist

Common App
Transfer trends at Common App

February 23, 2022

Batanya Gipson, Program Director - Transfer and Community College
Trent Kajikawa, Data Scientist, Data Analytics and Research
Objectives

After attending this session, participants will be able to:

- Explore how Common App transfer student data compares to national trends
- Identify how COVID-19 has affected Common App for transfer students
- Understand how Common App for transfer is working to decrease barriers to education and provide paths to academic success
- Connect and collaborate with Common App to help promote access and equity for transfer students
Agenda

- Who we are
- Exploring the data
- Addressing the barriers
- Connect with us
- Your questions
Who we are
Common App is a nonprofit membership organization committed to the pursuit of access, equity, and integrity in the college admission process.
VISION

Be the trusted source to access, afford, and attain opportunity for all.
# Common App membership

**2020–2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member institutions</td>
<td>979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public members</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept Common App for transfer</td>
<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US states, DC, and Puerto Rico</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International members</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries outside the United States</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common App for transfer

Launched August 2018

- Built in partnership with Liaison International
- Program based
- Extended profile
- Expanded and centralized document collection
- Applicant account rollover (re-apply)

apply.transfer.commonapp.org
Exploring the data
# National COVID impacts on transfer, 2020–21

Higher education lost about 191,500 transfer students, nearly 3 times previous year’s losses (-69,300)

## Pathways impacted differently

- Lateral transfer was more significantly (-11.9%) impacted than upward (-7.5%).
- Lateral transfers between 2-year institutions fell more significantly (-15.2%) than 4-year (-7.5%).

## Demographic disparities

- Male students fell at higher rates (-12.1%) than female (-5.8%)
- Black students fell at higher numbers (-12.9%) than all other racial groups. Followed by Native Americans (-9.9%)

## Edge to selectives

- Highly selective institutions expanded their total transfer enrollment throughout the entire year.

## Growing number of stop-outs

- Significant spring to fall increase in stop out students.
- Stop-outs were on the decline pre-pandemic.
- Most significant in the Latinx population

---

National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, August 31, 2020
Transfer application seasons in review
Overall trends exhibited a U-shaped curve
Applicant demographic composition
The demographic composition of transfer applicants has remained unchanged over 3 years.

Racial and Ethnic Composition of Transfer Applicants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First-generation Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First generation</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing generation</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The gender composition of transfer applicants has remained steady

The proportion of female applicants remained constant across the 3 prior application seasons.
Transfer applicants largely came from CA, NY, and other mid-Atlantic and Southern states.
The typical domestic transfer applicant comes from the highest-income ZIP code

Similar to our first-year applicant composition, we find our domestic transfer applicants largely come from highest-income ZIP codes.

We separate ZIP codes by quintile in the chart at right, and by fee waiver receipt.
Over ⅓ of applications are submitted with a fee waiver

Over ⅓ of applications are submitted with a fee waiver — Common App or member fee waiver. This is a larger proportion compared to Common App’s first-year application (~23%).
The average applicant is a little over 21 years old and reported attending 1 institution.
The majority of applicants expected to transfer at least a year’s worth of credits

Applicants who self-reported 60 credits or greater represented the largest group of all Common App transfer applicants in the past 3 seasons. College credit information was collected from the extended profile section of the transfer platform.
Vertical transfer comprised the largest activity of applicants who reported prior attendance.
Anticipated credits varied depending on applicants’ academic histories

Distribution of Credits by Prior Academic Attendance (2020-21)

- Associates / other: 60% (60-99), 27% (30-59), 9% (0-14)
- Doctoral: 37% (60 or greater), 38% (30-59), 19% (0-14)
- Masters: 41% (60 or greater), 34% (30-59), 18% (0-14)
- Bachelors: 38% (60 or greater), 30% (30-59), 18% (0-14), 14% (15-29)
In-state application behavior remained stable
Applicants with a military background comprised ~13% of the applicant pool, and were more likely to apply to only 1 member
The military status of said applicants was evenly distributed.
Underrepresented minority applicants comprised a larger share of military applicants than the rest of the pool.

Racial and Ethnic Composition of Military Applicants

- **2020-21**: 46% White, 19% Hispanic, 19% Black/African American, 6% Asian, 5% Two or More, 3% Unknown
- **2019-20**: 49% White, 20% Hispanic, 15% Black/African American, 6% Asian, 5% Two or More, 3% Unknown
- **2018-19**: 47% White, 19% Hispanic, 16% Black/African American, 6% Asian, 5% Two or More, 5% Unknown
Membership composition
Bachelor-granting (Carnegie Classification) members constituted the largest group on the platform
Private, northeastern and western institutions received the most applications in 2020–21
The majority of application volume went to selective members

### Representation of Member First-Year Selectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submissions</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **First-year selectivity**
  - Blue: <50%
  - Light green: 50%-75%
  - Orange: >75%

© 2022 The Common Application, Inc.
Minority-serving membership also exhibited a U-shape trend
Minority-serving application volume also exhibited a U-shape trend
Members located in large cities and enrolled over 20K students received the most applications.
Summary
Key data findings

Top receiving members appear to play a role in attracting applicants who have been traditionally well-served in higher education.

COVID-19 does not appear to be associated with increases or decreases in applicant and application volume.

Proportions of applicants by demographics — race, gender, first-generation status, and socioeconomic status — have remained stable in the 1st 3 years of Common App for transfer.

More than 40% of applicants report having more than 60 credits prior to applying to colleges via the transfer platform.

The composition of members who use the transfer platform has remained consistent since our 1st full year.

More selective members as a group, while underrepresented on the platform, accounted for the most applications.
Addressing the barriers
Moving closer to the vision

Despite major fluctuations in national transfer enrollment during the pandemic, Common App for transfer has seen little effect. Why?

Membership diversity
Further diversify our institutional membership including community colleges and Minority Serving Institutions (MSI)

Student base
Increase support for non-traditional and underserved student populations:
- Adult
- Military
- Minority
- Low-income

Outreach efforts
Provide resources to the counseling community focused on transfer articulation
Community College engagement

Seek internal and external input to review community college engagement with the Common App and identify areas where Common App can strengthen our membership and student impact.

**Research**

Worked with Berkeley Haas School of Business team to research the needs of community colleges and students, including over 600 surveys and 80 stakeholder interviews.

**Collaborate**

Formed Community College Work Group to address and verify barriers to community college membership at Common App. Identify ways to better support community colleges, students, and advisors.

**Inform**

Conduct webinars to introduce and update transfer advisors about the Common App for transfer, benefits of using the application, and other resources we offer to ease the transfer process.
Common App developed our MSI Program to recognize the importance of MSIs and systemic inequities they face.

Common App is committed to helping MSIs gain access to a larger applicant pool and streamlined application system.
Common App has prioritized inclusion of MSIs in recent efforts

Common App members as proportion of total 4-year institutions, by MSI status

- MSI membership more than doubled since 2014, increasing from 42 to 115
- HBCU membership has more than tripled since 2014
- Common App aims to support 50% of MSIs within 3 years to achieve equal representation of MSIs and non-MSIs

Source: IPEDS
Note: excludes for-profit institutions, institutions without NTR data available, non-degree granting institutions, and institutions where the highest degree granted is an Associate's.
Cohort 22: texting intervention

Helping low income, MSI, and community college students enroll in a school that meets their needs, and be prepared to succeed there academically, financially, and emotionally.

Enrollment tasks and college preparedness  Completing the application process  College decision making  Socio-emotional support  Financial aid

“These texts have honestly been more supportive than most of my teachers. It's been a tough year and you guys have really done your best to care about the students.”
Evolving the Application

Evolving the App is an initiative that examines categories within the common portion of the application, as part of Common App’s ongoing effort to create an inclusive application for all students.

The inaugural project ran from March 2020–February 2021.

We will repeat this process on an annual basis.

commonapp.org/evolvingtheapp

Summary of 2021–22 changes

**Sex and gender**
- Revised questions that deal with gender identity
- Added pronouns and preferred first name
- Changed “Sex” to “Legal sex”

**Citizenship**
- Renamed Citizenship section to Nationality Information
- Revised, made optional, or removed questions that may create barriers for undocumented/DACA students

**Biographic Information**
- Made optional or removed questions that may create barriers for undocumented/DACA students

**Military discharge**
- Removed the question

**School discipline**
- Removed the question
We envision a transformed application that facilitates higher education access for all students.

Our work will center around 4 key aspirations.

- Proactively recruiting a representative applicant pool
- Shifting information and choice to the hands of students
  - Recognizing finances and wellbeing as integral to application and enrollment
- Promoting a joyful, inclusive experience
Common Transfer Guarantee pilot

Goal: nudge students to submit a college application

- Launched October 2021
- Matches students to pilot participants’ guaranteed admissions criteria
- Students receive an email with a list of institutions that might offer them guaranteed admission
- Emails are sent monthly beginning October 2021—July 2022
- Students will be emailed no more than 3 times
Explore colleges

- Expanded filter options
- Map and list views of colleges
- PDF export of college lists
- College details
  - Application requirements
  - Virtual tours and image galleries
  - Programs and student experience

(commonapp.org/explore)

New for 2021–22: Guaranteed admissions filter for transfer students
Connect with us
Common App social media

@commonapp
@reachhigher
@bettermakeroom

@commonapp
@reachhigher
@bettermakeroom

@commonapp
@reachhigher
@bettermakeroom

@bettermakeroom

Common App
Better Make Room
Request a free 2021–22 map

commonapp.org/map

Your future starts here
More than one million students each year trust Common App to explore and apply to over 900 member colleges and universities worldwide.
Share your ideas!

ideas.commonapp.org
Questions?
Thank you

Batanya Gipson
bgipson@commonapp.org

Trent Kajikawa
tkajikawa@commonapp.org