

Time and Credits to Degree- Revised 1/10/01

Question: How much time and how many credits does it take to get a college degree in Ohio? Does the time or credits it takes to get a college degree vary by sector or by institution?

Why look at time and credits to degree? Prospective students and their families pursuing an associate degree anticipate that they will earn sixty semester hours in two-years of full-time study. Prospective students and their families pursuing a baccalaureate degree anticipate that they will earn 120 semester hours in four years of full-time study, unless a degree program is specifically advertised to take longer than four years. In 1999 the Ohio General Assembly created "Success Challenge" which is funding provided to university main campuses to encourage campuses to help baccalaureate students graduate within four years and to encourage economically at-risk students to complete their baccalaureate degrees. This funding has resulted in campuses modifying their curriculums, increasing their counseling support to students, and clarifying the steps that students must take to graduate in a timely and successful fashion.

Note: There are university programs advertised as taking longer than four years to complete a baccalaureate degree. For example, an architecture program may require six years to complete and all architecture students are aware of this. In this report, students graduated from such extended baccalaureate degree programs four percent of the time. The university with the greatest percentage of extended degree programs is the University of Cincinnati (twenty-five percent of baccalaureate graduates are in extended degree programs at the University of Cincinnati).

Many factors beyond the control of a college or university influence the time that it takes to get a college degree:

- Students who work full-time may pursue their degree on a part-time basis for many years.
- Students may begin study on a full-time basis but move to part-time status after one or more quarters, thus lengthening the time that it takes to get a college degree.
- Students may transfer from one college to another and discover that not all of their coursework counts toward their degree at the second (or third) institution.
- Students may pursue a dual major or choose to extend their study through a work study experience.

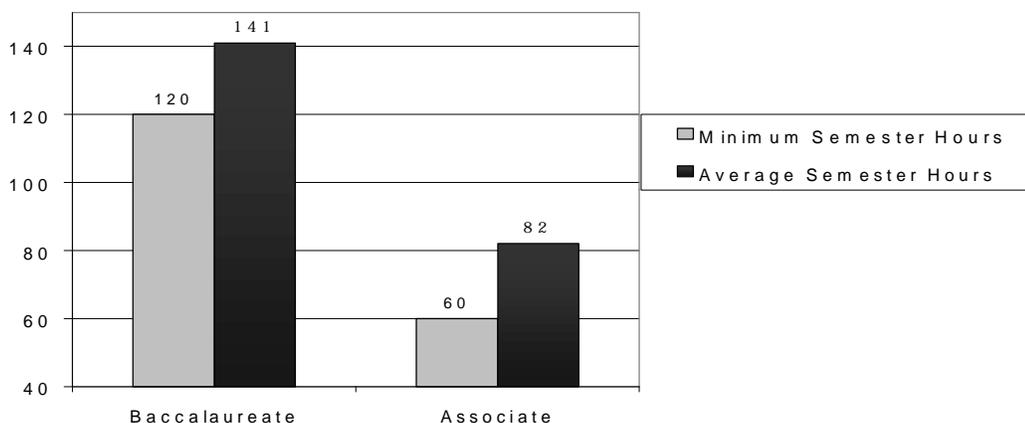
Other factors that influence time to degree may be in the control of a college or university:

- Scheduling of prerequisite classes.
- Setting minimum credits to degree requirements.
- Counseling provided to students regarding course scheduling.

National Answers: *There are no known time and credits to graduation data available. The Federal data is currently collecting graduation rate data and these will be available in subsequent years.*

Statewide Answers: *The median associate degree awarded in 1998-1999 was earned in 3.8 years and accomplished in 82 semester credit hours. The median baccalaureate was earned in 4.5 years and accomplished in 141 semester credit hours. Statewide, fifty percent of first-time students who began their study as full-time degree-seeking students completed their baccalaureate degrees within six years. The significance of this finding is greatly minimized by the fact that students who transfer to another institution are included in this analysis as students who fail to graduate within six years. The HEI system of the Ohio Board of Regents will be used in subsequent years to identify students who transfer elsewhere and record their subsequent degree attainment.*

Comparison of Actual and Minimum Hours to Graduation
1998-1999 Graduates



- One-hundred forty-one semester hour average for a baccalaureate degree is seventeen percent above a minimum expectation of one-hundred twenty semester hours for a baccalaureate degree.
- Eighty-two semester hours to an associate degree is twenty-seven percent above a minimum expectation of sixty semester hours for an associate degree.

Note: Colleges and universities make a distinction between hours earned and hours required. This report focuses on the earning of hours by students. These time and credits to degree figures are based upon the time from beginning of each student's study to the time the degree was granted for all students who have completed their degrees who appear by their total hours earned to have completed their entire degree at one institution.

Note: Statewide, sector, and campus data make no provision for whether students have pursued their degrees full-time or part-time.

Baccalaureate Degrees–Graduation Rates -First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Who Began Study in 1993*

# Students	Percent Students who graduate this institution within 4 years or less	Percent Students who graduate this institution within 5 years or less	Percent of students who graduate this institution within 6 years or less
30,093	24%	44%	50%

***Note:** The significance of these statewide findings are greatly minimized by the fact that students who transfer to another institution are included in this analysis as students who fail to graduate within six years. The HEI system of the Ohio Board of Regents will be used in subsequent years to identify students who transfer elsewhere and record their subsequent degree attainment.

Sector Answers: *Although the time to degree for associate degrees varies considerably by sector, the average credits to degree are quite similar across the two-year college sector.*

- Associate Degree, 1998-1999 Average Credit Hours and Median Time to Degree:
 - Community college students took 5.0 years and eighty-two semester hours.
 - State community college students took approximately 3.5 years and seventy-eight semester hours.
 - Technical college students took 2.8 years and eighty-one semester hours.
 - University branch campus students took approximately 3.7 years and eighty-two semester credit hours.
 - University main campus students took 4.0 years and ninety-three semester hours.
- Baccalaureate degree, 1998-1999 average non-transfer student facts:
 - University main campus students took 4.5 years and one hundred forty-one semester hours.

Time and Credits to Degree for 1998-1999 Graduates

Sector	Level of Degree	Median time to Degree (in Years) For 1998-1999 Non-Transfer Graduates	Average Credits to Degree (in Semester Hours) For 1998-1999 Non-Transfer Graduates
Community Colleges	Associate	5.0	82
State Community Colleges	Associate	3.5	78
Technical Colleges	Associate	2.8	81
University Branches	Associate	3.7	82
University Main Campuses	Associate	4.0	93
University Main Campuses	Baccalaureate	4.5	141

***Students in programs specifically designated to take longer than four years earned four percent of 1998-1999 baccalaureate degrees.**

Campus Answers: The length of time and credits toward degrees that 1998-1999 non-transfer students took to complete their associate degrees and their baccalaureate at Ohio's state-supported colleges and universities varied greatly, although the variation in time to degree are heavily related to the institution's percentage of full-time students and in the case of university campuses and baccalaureate degrees to the selectivity institutions' of admissions policies.

- Associate Degree, 1998-1999 Average Non-transfer Student Campus facts:
 - Time to degree for community college students ranged from 7.7 years to 2.8 years and the average credits to degree ranged from ninety-six semester hours to seventy-seven semester hours.
 - It is worth noting that the community college with the greatest credits to degree (95) was also the campus with the shortest time to degree (2.8 years). This results from their unique partnership with a private four-year university that allows students to pay community college tuition for their associate degree, even if some courses will eventually apply toward a second degree. Most of these students attend full-time with few stops, so time to graduation is low, compared to other community colleges.
 - Time to degree for state community college students varied from 4.8 years to 2.9 years and the credits to degree ranged from eighty-three semester hours to sixty-six semester hours.
 - Technical college students took from 3.8 years to 2.5 years to complete their degrees and they took on average from eighty-six semester hours to seventy-four semester hours to complete their degrees.
 - University branch students ranged from 5.0 years to 2.3 years and the typical credits to degree averaged from ninety-three semester hours to seventy-four semester hours.
 - The one campus demonstrating such a low time to degree (2.3 years) offers a highly specialized technical associate degree in contrast to the other university branch campuses who offer a greater range of associate degrees, and where students are taking considerably longer to graduate.
 - University main campus students ranged from 4.8 years to 3.5 years, with average credits to degree ranging from one hundred thirteen semester hours to eighty-five semester hours.
- Baccalaureate Degree, 1998-1999 Average Non-transfer Student Campus facts:
 - University main campus students took from 5.3 years to 3.7 years to earn baccalaureate degrees. The average credits to degree for baccalaureate degrees ranged from 165 semester hours to 135 semester hours.
- Baccalaureate Degree, entering class of first-time full-time first year students in 1993 graduation rate facts:
 - Graduation rates vary greatly from sixty percent four year graduation to eight percent four year graduation rates, with the selective admissions universities recording the highest graduation rates and the open admissions universities recording the lowest graduation rates.

*Note: The significance of these campus findings are greatly minimized by the fact that students who transfer to another institution are included in this analysis as students who fail to graduate within six-years. The HEI system of the Ohio Board of Regents will be used in subsequent years to identify students who transfer elsewhere and record their subsequent degree attainment. Several campuses were able to provide statewide six year graduation data and these campuses record impressive gains in their reported six year graduation rates when the impact of transfer students is eliminated.

**Associate Degrees - Community Colleges - Non-Transfer Students
Time and Credits to Degree**

Institution	Campus	Median Time to Degree (in Years) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Average Credits to Degree (in Semester Hours) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Percent of First-Time First-Year Students Who are Degree-Seeking and Full-Time
Cuyahoga Community College	Eastern	7.7	80	17%
	Metro	6.7	87	31%
	Western	6.0	81	23%
Jefferson Community College		3.0	78	39%
Lakeland Community College		4.8	77	32%
Lorain County Community College		5.0	81	23%
Rio Grande Community College		2.8	95	68%
Sinclair Community College		5.0	83	31%

**Associate Degrees - State Community Colleges - Non-Transfer Students
Time and Credits to Degree**

Institution	Campus	Median Time to Degree (in Years) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Average Credits to Degree (in semester hours) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Percent of First-Time First-Year Students Who are Degree-Seeking and Full-Time
Cincinnati State Technical & Community College		4.8	79	16%
Clark State Community College		3.5	66	37%
Columbus State Community College		4.0	80	39%
Edison State Community College		3.7	76	25%
Northwest State Community College		2.7	72	49%
Owens State Community College	Findlay	3.7	76	25%
	Toledo	3.7	78	24%
Southern State Community College	Central	3.0	76	28%
	North	2.8	69	26%
	South	2.8	70	32%
Terra State Community College		2.8	76	23%
Washington State Community College		2.8	83	39%

**Associate Degrees- Technical Colleges - Non-Transfer Students
Time and Credits to Degree**

Belmont Technical College		2.8	84	39%
Central Ohio Technical College		3.3	78	32%
Hocking Technical College		2.5	85	52%
Lima Technical College		2.9	78	60%
Marion Technical College		3.5	74	26%
Muskingum Area Technical College		2.8	76	37%
North Central State College		3.8	86	28%
Stark State College of Technology		3.7	78	40%

**Associate Degrees- University Branch Campuses - Non-Transfer Students
Time and Credits to Degree**

Bowling Green State University	Firelands	3.7	78	43%
Kent State University	Ashtabula	4.0	87	49%
	East Liverpool	4.0	85	69%
	Geauga	5.0	87	39%
	Salem	3.7	92	56%
	Stark	4.7	84	64%
	Trumbull	4.7	83	57%
	Tuscarawas	3.7	80	66%
The Ohio State University	Agricultural Technical Institute	2.3	74	97%
Ohio University	Chillicothe	3.8	86	60%
	Eastern	4.5	93	75%
	Lancaster	3.8	82	70%
	Southern	3.5	83	24%
	Zanesville	3.0	84	73%
University of Akron	Wayne	4.7	77	28%
University of Cincinnati	Clermont	3.0	76	53%
	Raymond Walters	4.8	83	58%
Wright State University	Lake	3.3	84	69%

**Associate Degrees- University Main Campuses - Non-Transfer Students
Time and Credits to Degree**

Institution	Median Time to Degree (in Years) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Average Credits to Degree (in semester hours) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Percent of First-Time First-Year Students Who are Degree-Seeking and Full-Time
Miami University	4.3	87	100%
The Ohio State University	2.8	85	99%
Ohio University	3.8	93	97%
Shawnee State University	3.5	90	75%
University of Akron	4.7	88	77%
University of Cincinnati	3.9	88	89%
University of Toledo	4.7	113	84%
Youngstown State University	4.8	94	88%

**Baccalaureate Degrees – University Main Campuses - Non-Transfer Students
Time and Credits to Degree**

Admissions Policy	Campus	Median Time to Degree (in Years) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Average Credits to Degree (in Semester Hours) for 1998-1999 Graduates	Percent of First-Year, Degree-Seeking, Full-Time Students	Percent of Baccalaureate Grads in Extended Programs
Selective	Bowling Green State University	4.3	135	94%	1%
Open	Central State University	4.8	165	99%	0%
Open	Cleveland State University	5.3	139	58%	2%
Selective	Kent State University	4.7	140	95%	0%
Selective	Miami University	3.7	135	100%	0%
Selective	The Ohio State University	4.5	141	99%	0%
Selective	Ohio University	4.0	137	97%	8%
Open	Shawnee State University	4.8	142	75%	0%
Open	University of Akron	5.3	143	77%	7%
Selective	University of Cincinnati	4.8	140	89%	25%
Open	University of Toledo	4.7	151	84%	11%
Open	Wright State University	4.8	139	94%	0%
Open	Youngstown State University	5.3	142	88%	0%

*Note: Certain campuses (e.g. Youngstown State University) which offer both an associate degree and a baccalaureate degree may report longer time to graduation for baccalaureate degrees if a student begins and completes an associate degree, stops out of enrollment for a number of years and then returns to the same campus to study for the baccalaureate degree. In such cases, the first-year and term of study may be recorded by the campus as the beginning of study for the associate degree, thus artificially inflating the recorded total time to degree for the baccalaureate degree.

**Baccalaureate Degrees – University Main Campuses
First-Time Full Time Freshmen Who Began Study in 1993- Graduation Rates**

Admissions Policy	Campus	# Students	Percent Students who graduate this institution within 4 years or less	Percent Students who graduate this institution within 5 years or less	Percent Students who graduate this institution within 6 years or less	Percent Students who graduate any public institution in state within 6 years or less
Selective	Bowling Green State University	3,076	28%	54%	59%	82%
Open	Central State University	613	11%	21%	27%	N/A
Open	Cleveland State University	942	8%	20%	25%	N/A
Selective	Kent State University	2,371	23%	41%	43%	64%
Selective	Miami University	3,264	60%	77%	79%	N/A
Selective	The Ohio State University	5,283	20%	48%	56%	76%
Selective	Ohio University	3,138	41%	66%	70%	86%
Open	Shawnee State University	214	17%	24%	30%	45%
Open	University of Akron	2,005	10%	27%	35%	N/A
Selective	University of Cincinnati	2,482	14%	41.5%	49%	59%
Open	University of Toledo	2,899	13%	29%	36%	NA
Open	Wright State University	2,005	9%	24%	31%	38%
Open	Youngstown State University	1,801	10%	25%	34%	NA