

EL CAMINO COLLEGE



Study of Puente Program

**Office of Institutional Research
Carolyn Pineda**

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Introduction

The Puente Program was initially designed to increase the number of Mexican American/Latino students transferring to four-year colleges and universities. The Puente Program is a two semester program that offers counseling, mentoring and a one-year English program that is now open to all students.

The purpose of this study is to track Puente Program participants from their initial participation term to compare enrollment persistence rates and goal achievement (transfer and/or degree receipt) over time. Students were tracked by cohort to determine numbers and rates of persistence from Fall 2000 through Fall 2004 cohorts.

Method

Students in the Puente program were divided into five cohorts based on the academic year they participated in the program. The cohorts are as follows: Puente 15 (2000-01 academic year), Puente 16 (2001-02 academic year), Puente 17 (2002-03 academic year), Puente 18 (2003-04 academic year) and Puente 19 (2004-05 academic year).

Demographic and enrollment data on these students were extracted from the college's MIS files. In addition, Puente participants' names were submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse who then provided transfer and degree attainment data. A comprehensive analysis was conducted on each of the five cohorts.

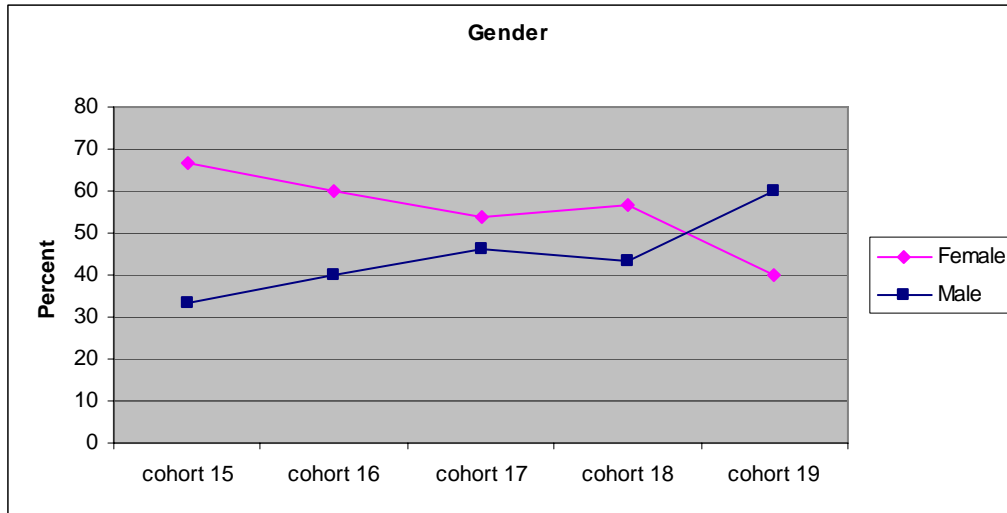
Results

The following is a summary of the demographic and enrollment characteristics of Puente students in each of the five cohorts. Pages 2 through 8 provide more detailed information and analysis by topic.

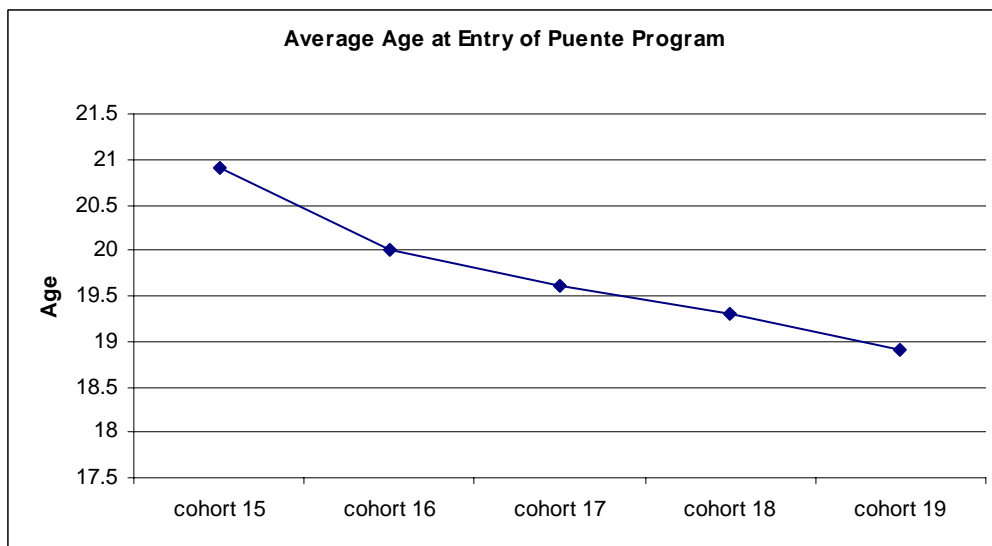
Category	Characteristic	Cohort 15 (2000-01)		Cohort 16 (2001-02)		Cohort 17 (2002-03)		Cohort 18 (2003-04)		Cohort 19 (2004-05)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>All Students</i>		30	100.0	35	100.0	28	100.0	30	100.0	35	100.0
Gender	Female	20	66.7	21	60.0	15	53.6	17	56.7	14	40.0
	Male	10	33.3	14	40.0	13	46.4	13	43.3	21	60.0
Ethnicity	African-American	3	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Latino	25	83.3	34	97.1	27	96.4	27	90.0	31	88.6
	White	1	3.3	0	0.0	1	3.6	1	3.3	0	0.0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.9
	Unknown or Declined	1	3.3	1	2.9	0	0	2	6.7	3	8.6
Age	Average @ Entry	20.9		20.0		19.6		19.3		18.9	
Unit Load	Average with Puente	13.72		11.65		12.83		11.76		12.07	
	Average after Puente	8.26		7.76		9.77		9.03		8.83	
GPA	Average before Puente	2.24		2.56		2.51		2.11		2.27	
	Average In Puente	2.30		2.79		2.55		2.47		2.42	
	Average after Puente	2.29		2.90		2.50		2.51		2.62	
Persistence Rates	Fall to Spring	25	83.3	34	97.1	28	100.0	30	100.0	35	100.0
	Fall to Fall	26	86.7	30	85.7	26	92.9	28	93.3	33	94.3
Retention Rates	During Puente	88.3		87.8		87.1		94.1		89.9	
	After Puente	75.7		71.5		79.1		72.0		70.0	
Success Rates	During Puente	79.8		76.9		81.5		86.7		83.7	
	After Puente	59.8		63.5		63.6		54.6		54.1	
Transfer Rates	4 yr Institutions	5	16.7	10	28.6	12	42.9	3	10.0	1	2.9
Degree Attainment	Associates degree	6	20.0	8	22.9	7	25.0				
	Bachelors degree	3	10.0	2	5.7	4	14.3				

Demographics

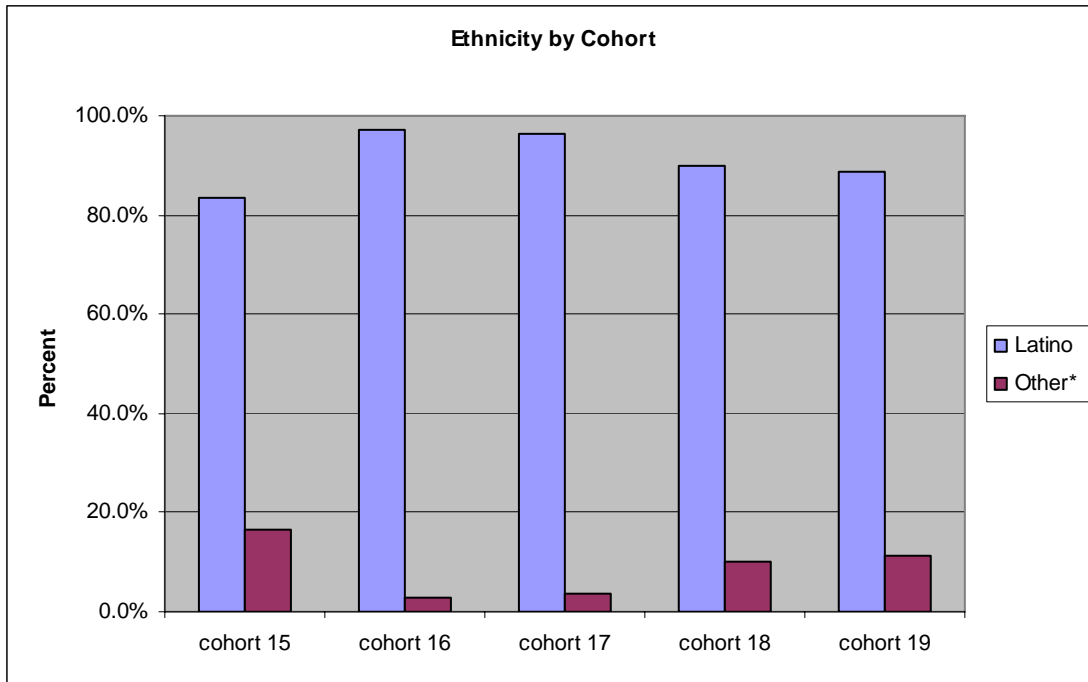
The gender breakdown for the Puente students has changed over the years. Cohort 15 and cohort 16 had more women (67% and 60%, respectively) than men. In recent years, the gap between men and women has begun to decrease. Cohort 17 was 54% female and 46% male while cohort 18 was 57% female and 43% male. Interestingly, cohort 19 had more males (60%) than females (40%).



The age of students who enter the Puente Program is also changing. The earliest cohort, Cohort 15, had an average age at entry of 21. Students are now coming into the program at a younger age. The latest cohort, cohort 19, had an average age at entry of 19.



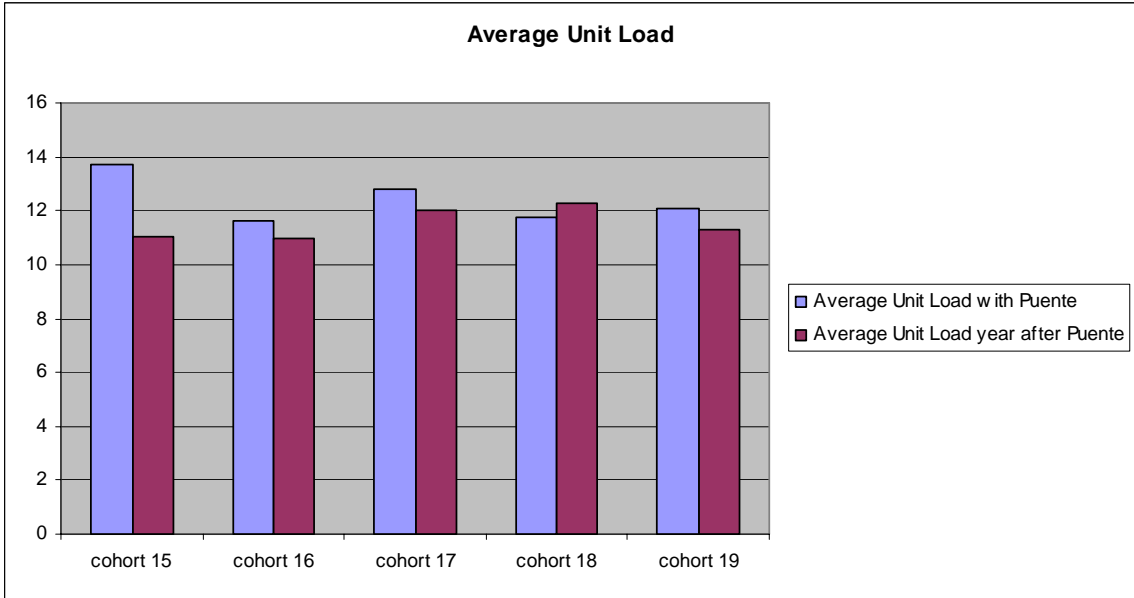
Although the Puente Program is open to all students, it is made up primarily of Latino students. The five cohorts combined have 91% Latino students. Cohort 16 had the highest percent of Latino students (97%).



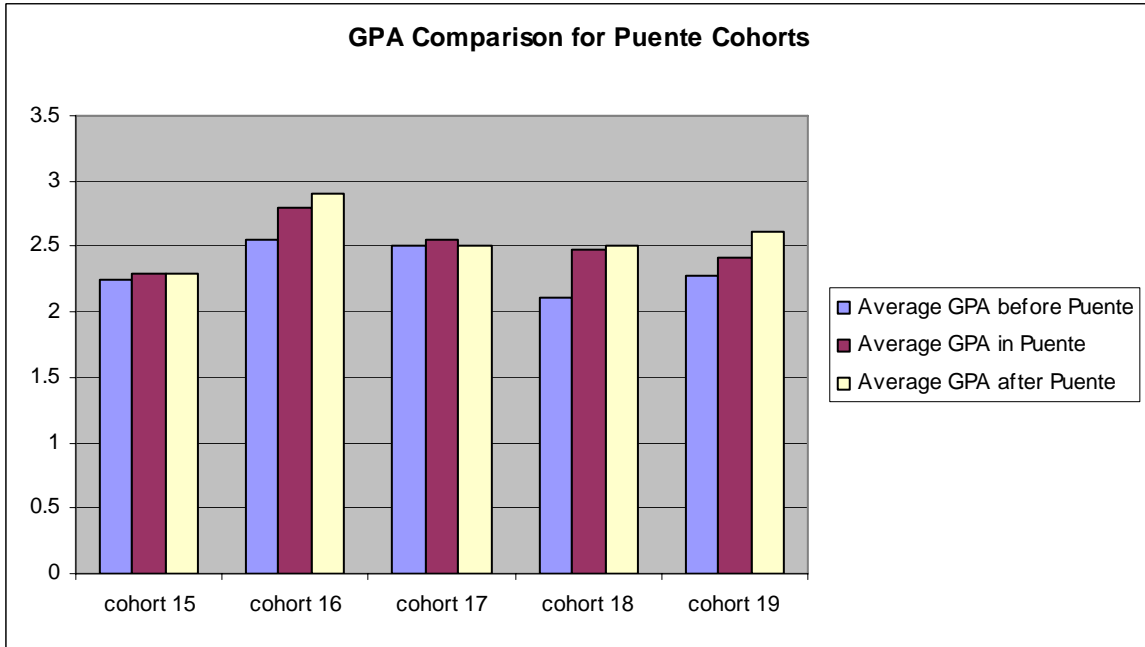
*includes the following ethnicities: African American, White, Other and Unknown

Enrollment and Persistence

While in the Puente program, students maintained full time status by carrying an average unit load of 12.41. The academic year following their participation in the program, students had a slightly lower unit load of 11.52. This pattern holds true for each individual cohort group with the exception of cohort 18. Students in this cohort had a slightly higher unit load (12.27) after their participation in Puente than during the program (11.76).

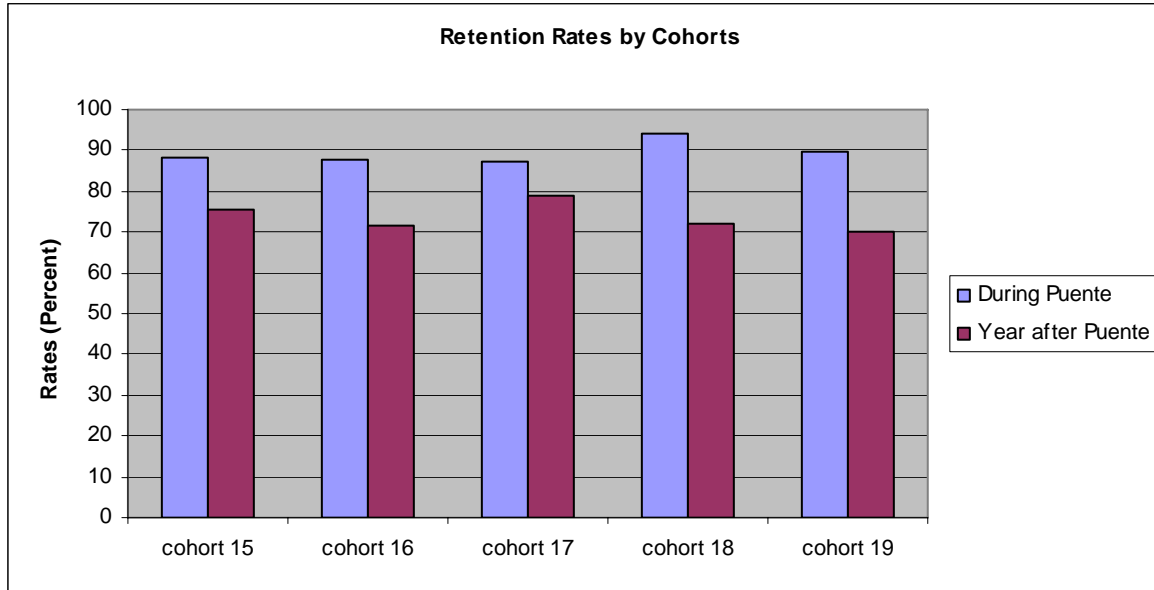


The cohorts exhibit different patterns when comparing college GPAs before, during and after participating in Puente. Cohorts 15 and 17 did not show much variation in GPAs. On the other hand, cohorts 16, 18 and 19 GPAs improved while in Puente and after their participation in the program.

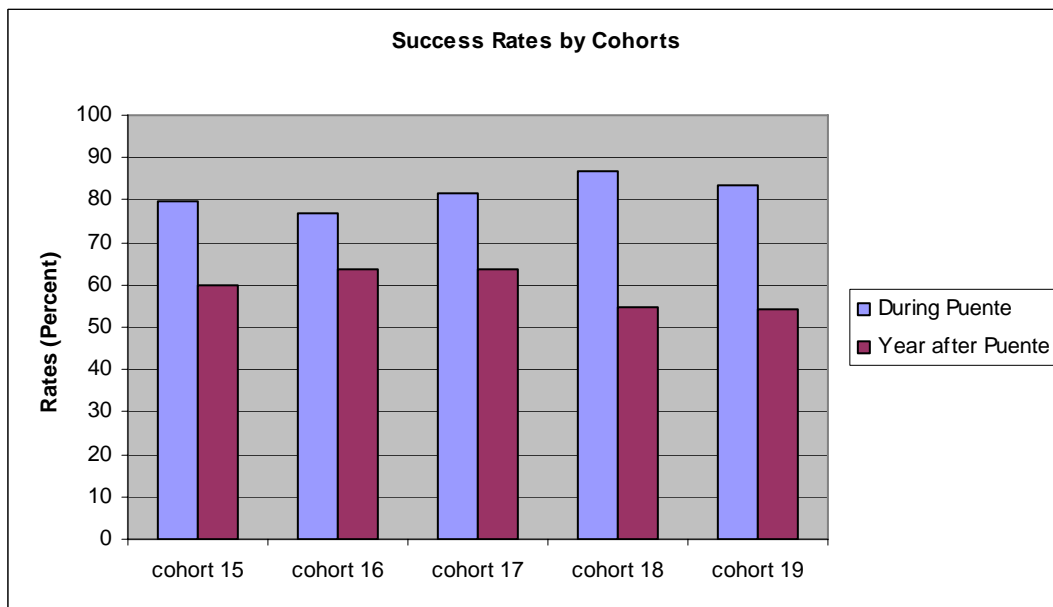


Student academic performance was measured in two ways: student *retention* (completing a course, regardless of final grade) and *success* (completing a course with a C/CR or better).

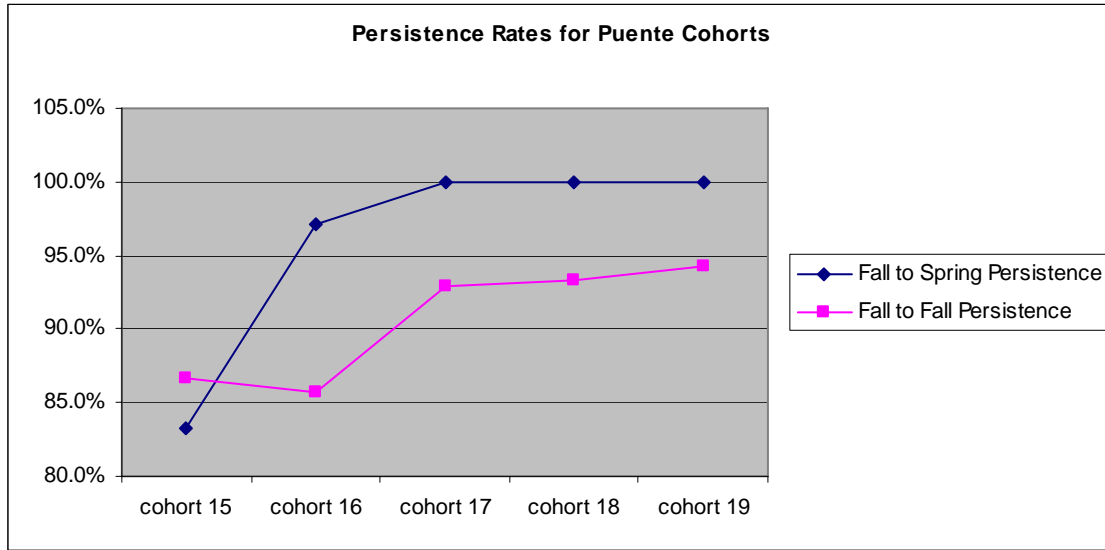
During their participation in the program, Puente students were retained at a rate of about 89%. The retention rate slipped to 73% the academic year following participation in Puente.



Success rates when students were in the Puente program was about 82%. But the year after participating in Puente, the success rate went down to 59%. This sharp decline may be the result of students taking less credit only courses once they are no longer in the program.

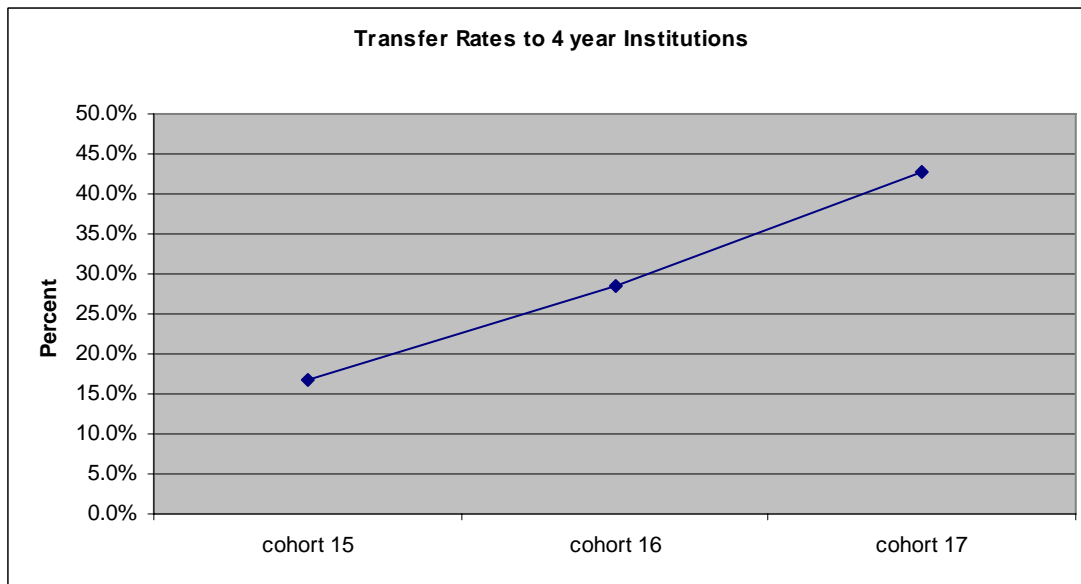


Puente students demonstrate a high fall to spring persistence rate. Cohort 15 has a persistence rate of 83%. The rate increased to 100% for cohorts 17, 18 and 19. Puente students also persisted from fall to fall at a high rate. Cohort 16 had a persistence rate of about 86% while the rate for cohort 17 increased to 93%. Cohorts 18 and 19 also averaged a 93% fall to fall persistence rate.

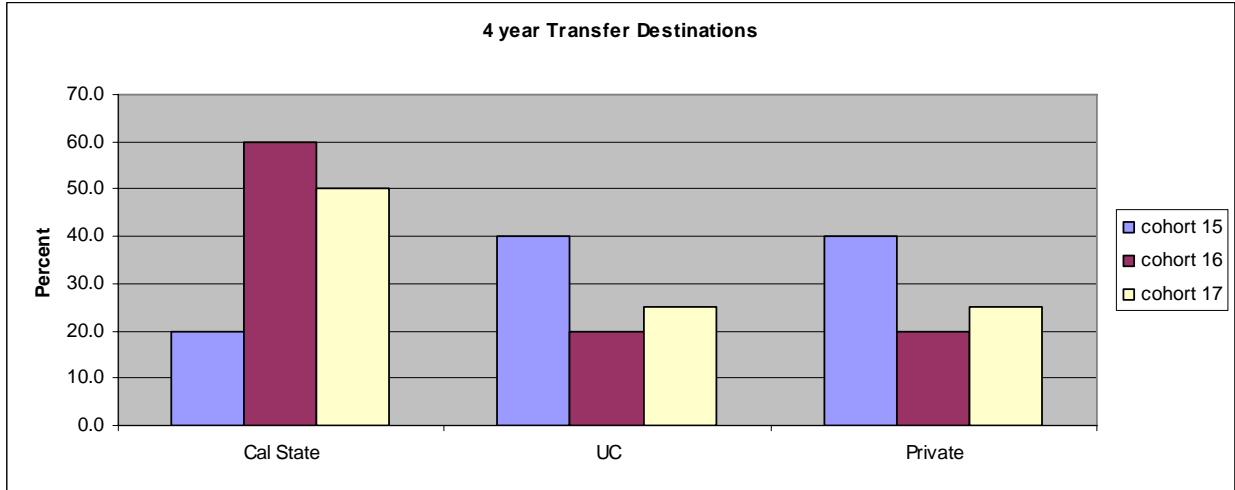


Transfer Rates and Degree Attainment

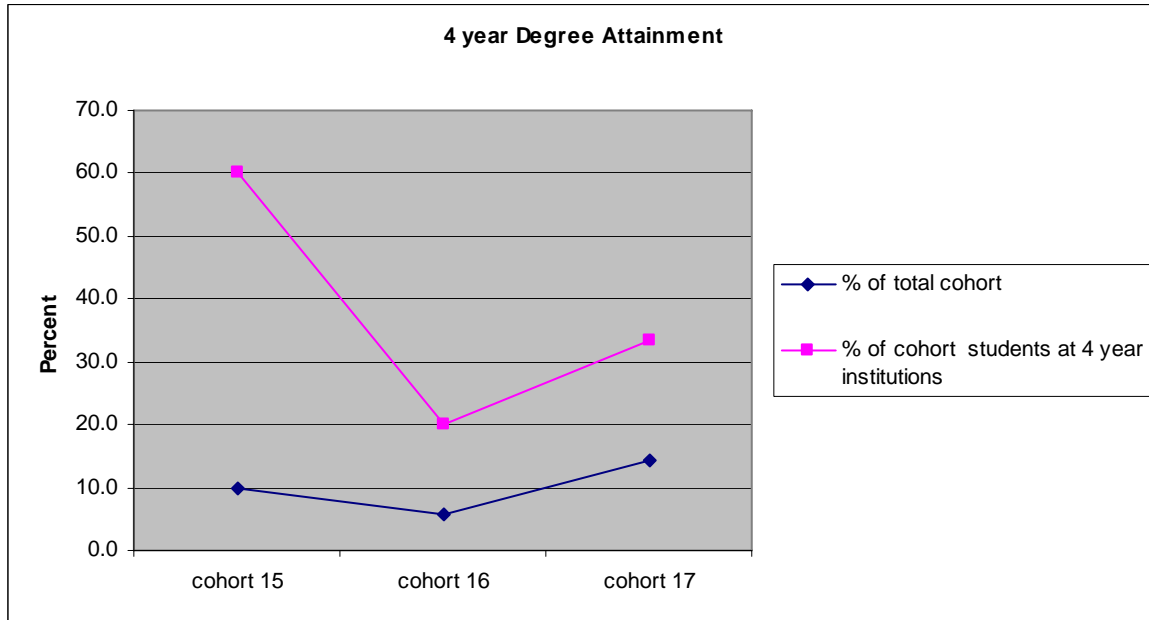
Looking at the early cohorts, transfer rates into 4 year universities have been steadily increasing. Cohort 15 had a 17% transfer rate while cohort 16 saw a higher rate of 29%. The transfer rate for cohort 17 increased by 14 points to 43%.



Of those students who transferred, their destination schools vary by cohort. An equal percent (40%) of cohort 15 entered either a UC or private university. Cohort 16 and cohort 17 had the majority of their transfer students attend a California State University (60% and 50%, respectively).



Looking at all participants in cohorts 15, 16, and 17, only 10% received a four-year degree. Thirty-eight percent of cohort students who did transfer to a university went on to attain their degree. Degree attainment counts are very small. This is partially due to the fact that the data provided by the National Student Clearinghouse did not include information for all students. Given the small numbers in each cohort, percentages can vary widely on a handful of students.



Conclusion

The data on Puente students shows some interesting trends. Recent cohorts are showing improvement in persistence and transfer rates. While college GPAs tend to stay consist or increase once a student has completed the program. Also, students in Puente have a healthy retention rate while in the program.

In future studies, it may be beneficial to have a control group of non-Puente students who have similar characteristics to Puente students. Having a comparison group will demonstrate if Puente students have better enrollment persistence, transfer rates and degree attainment than their counterparts. This would provide additional evidence of the impact the Puente Program has on its students.