

Rancho  
Santiago  
Community  
College  
District



**Pathways of Student Persistence  
and Performance at  
Santa Ana College**

**June 2014**



# Pathways of Student Persistence and Performance at Santa Ana College

June 2014

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# Introduction

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The RSCCD Research Department publishes this report annually which shows students' semester-to-semester persistence and course completion rates.

There were 3074 first-time freshmen enrolled in classes at Santa Ana College in Fall 2013. This includes all students who enrolled for the first time at SAC during the Fall 2013 semester (end of term). This group, or “cohort,” was tracked to subsequent semesters (active third week of class), resulting in a calculated persistence rate. Persistence rates are also displayed by ethnicity and for those in the cohort who have declared that they intend to pursue a degree (AA or BA)—a group that comprises 72% of the Fall 2013 first-time freshmen.

The purpose of this report is to identify trends over time. Typically, there are relatively few significant changes. Observed changes are usually gradual and result from shifting composition of the student population, shifting economic conditions, and/or changing program offerings. The addition or expansion of programs can cause fluctuations in student demographics and educational goal distributions of the student population and, therefore, can also cause changes in persistence rates (proportion of students persisting to the next semester) and course success rates.

## Summary

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### Persistence

- Second-semester persistence rates for the first-time freshmen Fall 2013 cohort (72%) rose slightly from prior year (70%) while third- and fourth-semester rates decreased slightly.
- Second semester persistence rates were comparable to prior years for Asian and Latino groups; rates for Whites increased significantly (+8 percentage points).
- Degree-directed students (declaring goals of earning an AA degree and/or transferring to a four-year college) comprise nearly three-quarters of the first-time freshman cohort in Fall 2013 (72%)—a trend that has steadily risen across all years included in this study.
- At 81%, degree-directed student persistence has held steady and significantly exceeds SAC first-time freshmen persistence at large (72%). Third and 4<sup>th</sup> semester persistence rates fell slightly over prior year, but 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> semester rates continue an upward trend.

### Course Success

- Across all subject area courses at SAC, course success rate has increased two percentage points over that of the prior year's cohort to 73%.
- Students traditionally succeed in non-traditional subject areas (Criminal Justice and Fire Academies and Business Seminars) at high rates (Table 4), up slightly in Fall 2013 to 99%.
- Course success rates in traditional subject areas has been constant (64% to 65%) in four prior years included in this report; Fall 2013 saw an increase of two percentage points (67%).

# Persistence

## Overall Persistence

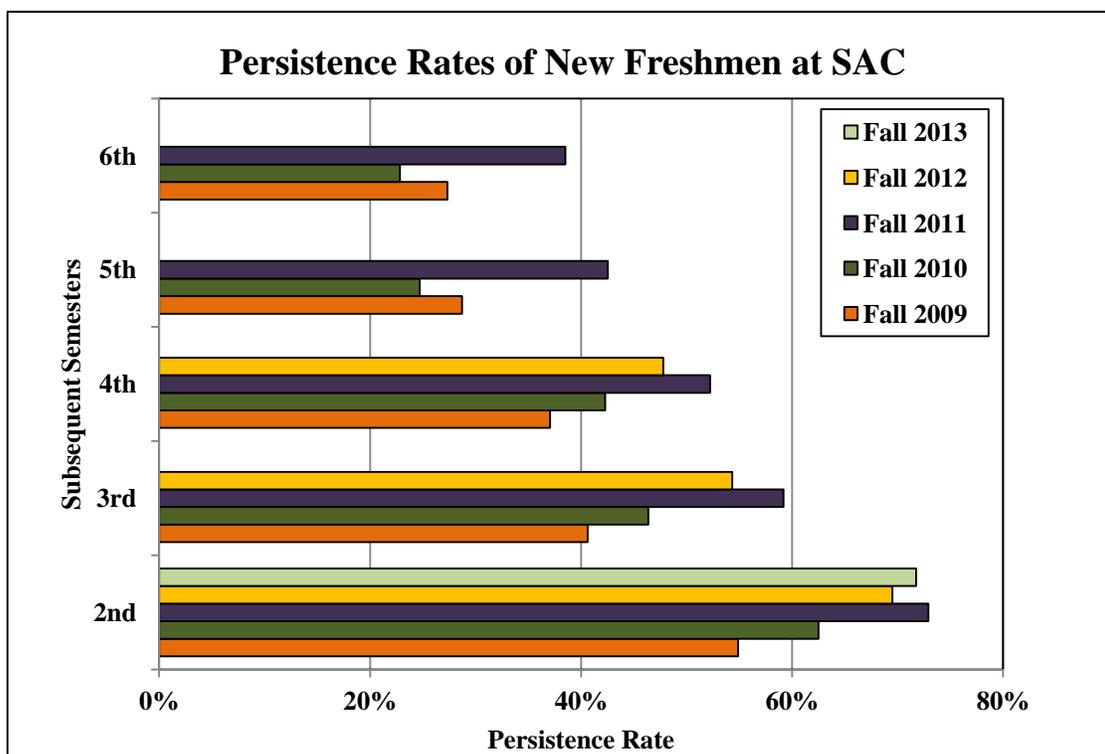
Second-semester persistence rates for the first-time freshmen Fall 2013 cohort (72%) rose from prior year (70%). Third- and fourth-semester rates, however, decreased significantly while 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> semester rates increased sharply.

**Table 1**

Santa Ana College								
Persistence Rates of New Freshmen at SAC								
New Freshman Cohort		Semesters After Initial Enrollment						
Cohort	# in Cohort	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Fall 2009	3737	55%	41%	37%	29%	27%	22%	19%
Fall 2010	2670	63%	46%	42%	25%	23%	17%	14%
Fall 2011	2688	73%	59%	52%	43%	39%		
Fall 2012	3208	70%	54%	48%				
Fall 2013	3074	72%						

source: Research Department Data Warehouse

**Chart 1**



## Persistence by Ethnicity

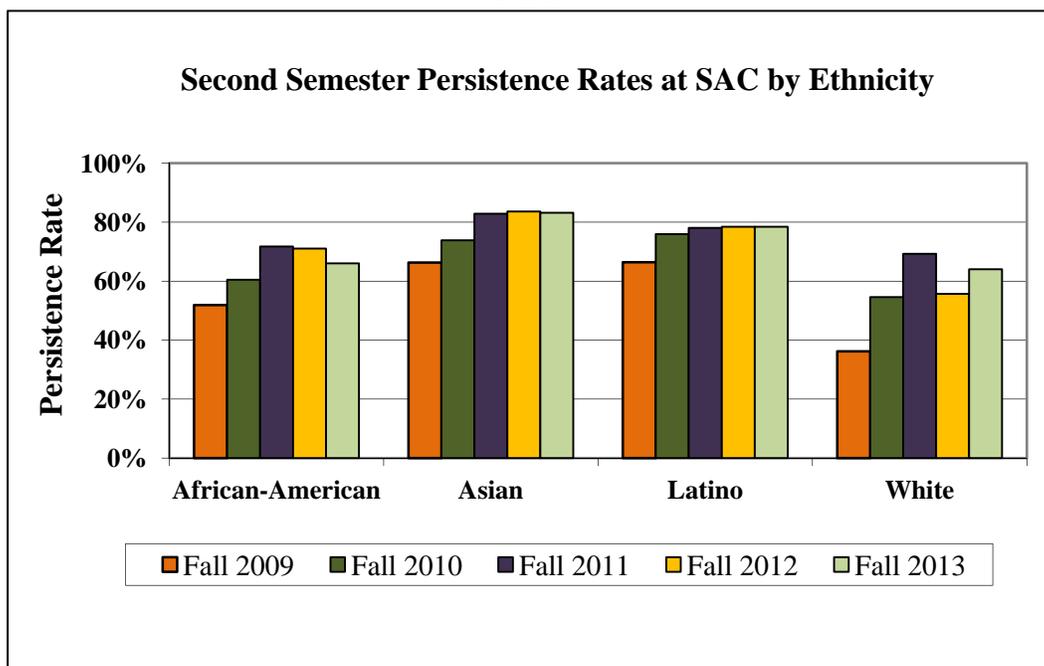
Second semester persistence rates were comparable to prior years for Asian and Latino groups; rates for Whites rebounded significantly from drop in the prior year (+8 percentage points). The historically high variance in rates for African-American students is largely due to the very small cohort size.

**Table 2**

<b>Santa Ana College</b>							
<b>Persistence Rates of New Freshmen at SAC by Ethnicity</b>							
<b>New Freshman Cohort</b>		<b>Semesters After Initial Enrollment</b>					
<b>Cohort</b>	<b># in Cohort</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fall 2009	3737	52%	66%	66%	36%	34%	56%
Fall 2010	2670	60%	74%	76%	55%	54%	63%
Fall 2011	2688	72%	83%	78%	69%	45%	73%
Fall 2012	3208	71%	84%	78%	56%	49%	70%
Fall 2013	3074	66%	83%	78%	64%	81%	72%

source: Research Department Data Warehouse

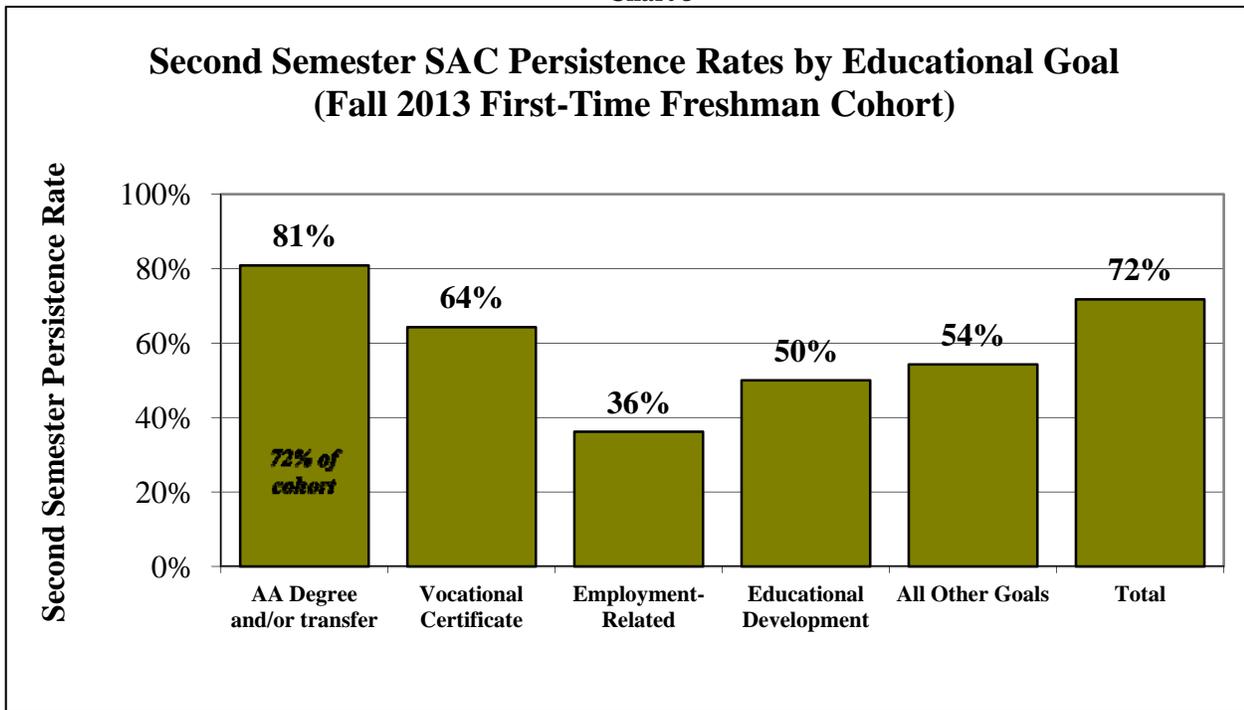
**Chart 2**



**Persistence by Educational Goal**

Degree-directed students (declaring goals of earning an AA degree and/or transferring to a four-year college) comprise over two-thirds of the first-time freshman cohort in Fall 2012 (68%)—a trend that has steadily risen over the last six cohort years. At 81%, degree-directed student persistence has held steady and significantly exceeds SAC first-time freshmen persistence at large (72%). Third and 4<sup>th</sup> semester persistence rates fell slightly over prior year, but 5<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> semesters continue an upward trend.

**Chart 3**



**Table 3**

Santa Ana College								
Persistence Rates of Degree-Seeking First-Time Freshmen								
Cohort	# in Cohort	Semesters After Initial Enrollment						
		2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Fall 2009	1974	70%	54%	49%	38%	36%	29%	24%
Fall 2010	1509	78%	60%	54%	44%	40%	32%	25%
Fall 2011	1878	82%	67%	60%	48%	44%		
Fall 2012	2194	81%	65%	57%				
Fall 2013	2206	81%						

source: Research Department Data Warehouse

# Course Success

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## Success in Non-Traditional Subject Areas

The proportion of enrollments in non-traditional programs (Fire and Criminal Justice Academies and Business Seminars for the purposes of this study) has, historically, contributed significantly to the number of grades received at SAC (comprising one-quarter of total enrollments in Fall 2007). Separating this group from the total course success calculation results in a more accurate snapshot of course success for students in both traditional and non-traditional programs.

- Fall 2013 non-traditional enrollments comprise 18% of SAC’s total (Chart 4).
- Students traditionally succeed in these subject areas at high rates (Table 4), up slightly in Fall 2013 at 99%.

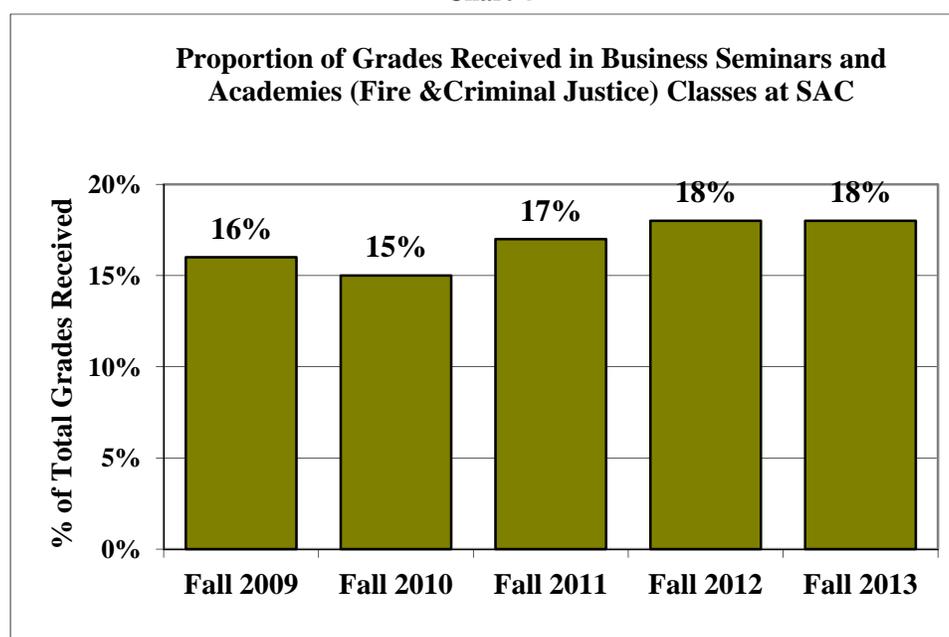
## Success in Traditional Subject Areas

- The Fall 2013 course success rate in traditional subject areas increased two percentage points from the prior year (65% to 67%).

**Table 4**

Santa Ana College						
Course Success						
Fall Cohort	non-traditional subject areas				% Non-Academy/ Bus. Sem.	Total % All Courses
	criminal justice academy	fire academy	business seminars	Total		
2009	99%	89%	89%	98%	64%	69%
2010	99%	92%	97%	98%	65%	70%
2011	99%	90%	97%	98%	69%	73%
2012	99%	88%	96%	98%	65%	71%
2013	100%	90%	96%	99%	67%	73%

**Chart 4**



<b>SAC Course Success Rates by Subject, Fall 2013</b>		
	<b># grades rec'd</b>	<b>% A,B,C,P</b>
<b>Total SAC</b>	<b>57235</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Academies/Bus. Sem. Total</b>	<b>10183</b>	<b>99%</b>
Business Seminar	386	96%
Criminal Justice Academy	9473	100%
Fire Academy	324	90%
<b>Non-Academy/Bus. Sem. Total</b>	<b>47052</b>	<b>67%</b>
Accounting	968	69%
Anthropology	687	64%
Art	1672	71%
Astronomy	411	66%
Automotive	357	77%
Banking	63	78%
Biology	2243	54%
Business	1460	71%
Business Applications	666	64%
Chemistry	529	65%
Chicano Studies	144	60%
Chinese	29	79%
Comm & Media Studies	81	79%
Communication Studies	1367	79%
Computer Science	758	60%
Counseling	2028	75%
Criminal Justice	1232	57%
Dance	473	67%
Diesel	87	71%
Earth Science	439	53%
Economics	570	68%
Education	101	71%
Emergency Medical Tech	237	72%
Engineering	470	72%
English	3067	63%
English/Multilingual Stud.	658	77%
Entrepreneurship	198	68%
Environmental Studies	99	61%
Ethnic Studies	82	76%
Fashion Design Merchandising	195	64%
Fire Officer Training	245	97%
Fire Technology	1532	76%
French	148	68%
Geography	412	62%
Geology	409	51%
History	1363	58%
Human Development	1162	77%
Interdisciplinary Studies	333	52%
Kinesiology Activities	195	82%

<b>SAC Course Success Rates by Subject, Fall 2013</b>		
	<b># grades rec'd</b>	<b>% A,B,C,P</b>
Kinesiology Adapted	34	71%
Kinesiology Aerobic Fitness	257	70%
Kinesiology Aquatics	67	61%
Kinesiology Fitness	558	55%
Kinesiology Health	516	58%
Kinesiology Intercollegiate	571	88%
Kinesiology Professional	411	71%
Kinesiology Sports Medicine	59	61%
Library Studies	42	64%
Library Technology	20	60%
Management	164	74%
Manufacturing Technology	518	86%
Marketing	210	60%
Math	4878	54%
Medical Assistant	590	82%
Music	1350	66%
Nursing RN	754	88%
Nutrition	136	76%
Occupational Therapy Assist	392	96%
Paralegal	433	71%
Pharmacy	424	47%
Philosophy	740	71%
Photography	139	79%
Physical Science	16	94%
Physics	188	80%
Political Science	1131	62%
Psychology	1345	61%
Reading	667	59%
Science	10	70%
Sign Language	200	81%
Social Science	15	47%
Sociology	593	68%
Spanish	588	79%
Special Services	96	64%
Speech/Lang Pathology	158	81%
Study Skills	246	55%
Theatre Arts	301	74%
TV Video Communication	646	87%
Vietnamese	61	98%
Welding	283	71%
Women's Studies	75	73%

Table 6

Santa Ana College Grade Distribution by Subject Area, Fall 2013												
Subject Area	# Grades Rec'd	Successful					Non-Successful				Non-Completer	
		A	B	C	P	TOTAL	D	F	NP	TOTAL	I	W
<b>Total SAC</b>	<b>57235</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Academies/Bus. Sem. Total</b>	<b>10183</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>		<b>99%</b>	<b>99%</b>			<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>		<b>0%</b>
Business Seminar	386				96%	96%			3%	3%		1%
Criminal Justice Academy	9473				100%	100%			0%	0%		0%
Fire Academy	324	5%	7%		78%	90%			8%	8%		2%
<b>Non-Academy/Bus. Sem. Total</b>	<b>47052</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Accounting	968	27%	26%	15%	0%	69%	3%	5%		8%		24%
Anthropology	687	17%	25%	22%		64%	11%	10%		22%	0%	14%
Art	1672	31%	25%	11%	3%	71%	3%	7%	2%	13%	0%	16%
Astronomy	411	20%	28%	18%	0%	66%	7%	9%		15%		19%
Automotive	357	23%	25%	24%	6%	77%	5%	7%	1%	13%		10%
Banking	63	30%	32%	14%	2%	78%	3%	2%		5%		17%
Biology	2243	18%	18%	19%	0%	54%	7%	12%	0%	19%	0%	26%
Business	1460	35%	22%	12%	2%	71%	3%	8%	0%	11%	0%	18%
Business Applications	666	32%	20%	10%	3%	64%	3%	11%	3%	16%	0%	19%
Chemistry	529	26%	18%	21%	0%	65%	7%	4%		11%		25%
Chicano Studies	144	33%	17%	10%		60%	3%	17%		19%		21%
Chinese	29	66%	7%	7%		79%		3%		3%		17%
Communication & Media Studies	81	37%	22%	20%		79%	1%	2%		4%		17%
Communication Studies	1367	27%	28%	17%	7%	79%	4%	5%	1%	11%	0%	10%
Computer Science	758	23%	22%	14%	1%	60%	2%	7%	0%	9%	0%	30%
Counseling	2028	25%	15%	11%	24%	75%	4%	6%	4%	14%	0%	11%
Criminal Justice	1232	13%	19%	24%		57%	9%	17%		26%	0%	17%
Dance	473	22%	19%	14%	12%	67%	4%	12%	1%	17%	0%	15%
Diesel	87	24%	25%	22%		71%	11%	5%		16%		13%
Earth Science	439	5%	14%	34%	0%	53%	15%	12%		27%	2%	19%
Economics	570	16%	29%	22%		68%	3%	5%		8%		24%
Education	101	46%	18%	8%		71%	1%	4%		5%		24%
Emergency Medical Tech	237	19%	26%	6%	22%	72%	2%	5%	7%	14%		14%
Engineering	470	37%	21%	13%	1%	72%	2%	7%	0%	10%	1%	17%

**Santa Ana College Grade Distribution by Subject Area, Fall 2013**

Subject Area	# Grades Rec'd	Successful					Non-Successful				Non-Completer	
		A	B	C	P	TOTAL	D	F	NP	TOTAL	I	W
English	3067	14%	26%	22%	1%	63%	8%	10%	0%	18%	1%	18%
English For Multilingual Students	658	10%	26%	27%	14%	77%	10%	2%	2%	14%		9%
Entrepreneurship	198	47%	12%	9%		68%	3%	13%		16%		16%
Environmental Studies	99	9%	23%	28%		61%	9%	12%		21%		18%
Ethnic Studies	82	50%	17%	9%		76%	4%	12%		16%		9%
Fashion Design Merchandising	195	35%	12%	10%	7%	64%	3%	13%	3%	19%		17%
Fire Officer Training	245	67%	15%	6%	10%	97%		1%		1%		2%
Fire Technology	1532	33%	25%	11%	8%	76%	2%	10%	1%	14%	0%	10%
French	148	25%	27%	16%		68%	2%	8%		10%	1%	22%
Geography	412	21%	17%	25%		62%	8%	13%		22%		16%
Geology	409	12%	17%	22%	0%	51%	10%	14%		24%		25%
History	1363	15%	22%	21%	0%	58%	12%	12%		23%		18%
Human Development	1162	40%	25%	12%		77%	3%	8%		12%	0%	11%
Interdisciplinary Studies	333	23%	16%	14%		52%	9%	15%		25%		23%
Kinesiology Activities	195	48%	17%	11%	6%	82%	2%	2%	1%	4%		14%
Kinesiology Adapted	34	15%	3%	6%	47%	71%			18%	18%		12%
Kinesiology Aerobic Fitness	257	51%	9%	7%	3%	70%	4%	8%	1%	13%		17%
Kinesiology Aquatics	67	21%	13%	13%	13%	61%	1%	4%	6%	12%		27%
Kinesiology Fitness	558	18%	3%	1%	33%	55%	1%	2%	22%	25%		19%
Kinesiology Health	516	22%	22%	14%		58%	5%	13%		18%	0%	24%
Kinesiology Intercollegiate Athl.	571	80%	6%	2%		88%	1%	1%		2%		10%
Kinesiology Professional	411	51%	14%	6%		71%	3%	11%		14%	0%	14%
Kinesiology Sports Medicine	59	27%	20%	14%		61%	2%	27%		29%		10%
Library Studies	42	19%	29%	17%		64%	12%	10%		21%		14%
Library Technology	20	20%	25%		15%	60%	5%		5%	10%		30%
Management	164	48%	20%	6%		74%	2%	8%		10%		15%
Manufacturing Technology	518	35%	36%	15%	0%	86%	2%	6%		8%	0%	6%
Marketing	210	29%	23%	8%	0%	60%	2%	14%		17%		23%
Math	4878	14%	19%	21%	0%	54%	10%	13%	0%	23%	0%	23%
Medical Assistant	590	43%	24%	13%	2%	82%	3%	4%		8%	1%	10%
Music	1350	36%	16%	9%	5%	66%	5%	9%	2%	16%	0%	18%

**Santa Ana College Grade Distribution by Subject Area, Fall 2013**

Subject Area	# Grades Rec'd	Successful					Non-Successful				Non-Completer	
		A	B	C	P	TOTAL	D	F	NP	TOTAL	I	W
Nursing RN	754	2%	14%	15%	56%	88%	3%	1%	3%	6%	0%	6%
Nutrition	136	40%	25%	11%		76%	4%	10%		14%		10%
Occupational Therapy Assist	392	26%	46%	10%	14%	96%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Paralegal	433	41%	17%	8%	6%	71%	3%	11%	1%	15%	0%	14%
Pharmacy	424	10%	18%	10%	9%	47%	9%	13%	2%	25%		28%
Philosophy	740	23%	23%	25%	0%	71%	3%	13%		15%	0%	13%
Photography	139	35%	19%	15%	11%	79%	2%	7%	1%	10%		11%
Physical Science	16	31%	44%	19%		94%		6%		6%		0%
Physics	188	34%	28%	19%	1%	80%	4%	7%		11%		9%
Political Science	1131	14%	26%	22%	0%	62%	8%	12%		20%	0%	18%
Psychology	1345	15%	25%	21%	0%	61%	7%	13%		20%	0%	19%
Reading	667	4%	5%	6%	44%	59%	2%	6%	16%	25%		16%
Science	10	30%	20%	20%		70%	20%	10%		30%		0%
Sign Language	200	29%	35%	17%		81%	3%	5%		8%		12%
Social Science	15	7%	27%	13%		47%		27%		27%		27%
Sociology	593	19%	27%	22%		68%	7%	9%	0%	17%		15%
Spanish	588	34%	28%	17%		79%	4%	5%	0%	9%	0%	12%
Special Services	96				64%	64%			28%	28%		8%
Speech And Language Pathology	158	46%	29%	6%		81%	3%	5%		8%		11%
Study Skills	246	14%	13%	14%	15%	55%	7%	13%	1%	22%		23%
Theatre Arts	301	46%	14%	14%		74%	4%	11%		15%	0%	11%
TV Video Communication	646	35%	38%	9%	5%	87%	1%	1%	0%	3%		10%
Vietnamese	61	84%	13%	2%		98%		2%		2%		0%
Welding	283	23%	32%	9%	7%	71%	1%	1%	17%	19%		10%
Women's Studies	75	39%	24%	11%		73%	4%	13%		17%		9%