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## **Study finds low graduation rates among part-time college students**

**More students are attending college part time, and they face a tougher time getting to graduation day, according to a new report from the nonprofit Complete College America.**

By Carla Rivera, Los Angeles Times

Growing numbers of college students are in school part time, and they face increasingly long odds of ever graduating, according to a report released Tuesday.

The report, *Time is the Enemy*, by the nonprofit group Complete College America, includes data on full- and part-time students at public colleges and universities in 33 states, including California. It was funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Lumina Foundation and others.

"There is a new generation of students who are poorer, more likely to be a minority, working and with families," said Stan Jones, the organization's president. "The graduation rates are very low, so that even though more people are going to college looking to better themselves and better their economic circumstances, those goals are not being realized because the system is failing them."

Among the report's key findings:

- There is a new majority on U.S. college campuses, with 75% of students balancing jobs and schools and commuting to class. Only one-quarter of students attend full-time, live on campus and have few work obligations.
- Part-time students rarely graduate: Only one-quarter of them complete a degree, even when taking twice as long as the traditional four years.
- Minority students and those who are poor or older are attending college in greater numbers, but fewer than one in five earn a bachelor's degree within six years.
- In California, 14.8% of full-time and 6.1% of part-time students seeking bachelor's degrees finished in four years. After eight years, about 60% of full-time and 41.6% of part-time students had earned a degree.

The report, however, includes data only from the California State University system and not from the University of California or the state's community colleges. That information may be included in an updated study next year, officials said.

A Cal State spokesman said the school system is trying to address the issues raised in the report.

"The data in this report is nothing shocking to us; it identifies our specific student demographic of part-time, underserved students needing remediation," spokesman Mike Uhlenkamp said. "There are a host of programs we've initiated and are going to initiate more. We're trying to fix it."

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