

## **Six-year Graduation Rate of Students Testing into Developmental Education LaGuardia Community College**

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### **LaGuardia**

There were 3,080 new students at LaGuardia in Fall 2005 with usable admissions test scores. Over the next six years, 27.2% graduated from LaGuardia. Among the new students, 70% tested into basic skills courses, including ESL.

The six-year LaGuardia graduation rate among students requiring basic skills coursework was 23.1%. That rate for students who did not require basic skills courses was 36.6%.

Splitting the new students into first-time and new transfer did not change the results significantly. The graduation rate for first-time students with basic skills needs was 22.8%. The graduation rate for new transfer-in students was 24.2%.

### **National Data**

The National Center for Education Statistics has broad survey data, verified by transcript, of a random sample of students who began higher education in the academic year 2003-04 called the Beginning Postsecondary Longitudinal Study (BPS). The sample follows student through the end of 2009. Although the survey is fairly carefully done, comparisons are troubling because many more students begin as part-time students nationally than at LaGuardia.

Even more challenging is determining the group of students who need basic skills. The survey does ask whether the student took a remedial course in their first year. This was verified by transcript inspection. Nevertheless, the results indicate that taking a remedial course is much different than needing basic skills coursework to study at the college level. Many colleges do not require that students testing at levels below college take remedial courses. In addition, not all colleges indicate that a course is at the remedial level on the transcript.

While associate's median six-year graduation rate is slightly higher for those not taking remedial courses (21.0% vs. 19.4%) the difference is not statistically significant. Adding in certificates raises the rates higher and makes it somewhat more comparable to the LaGuardia rate, although many more certificates are awarded nationally than at LaGuardia. The combined associate's and certificate six-year graduation rate for those who did not report taking remedial courses in their first or second year is 24.7% and is 22.0% for those reporting taking remedial courses, but, once again, the difference is not statistically significant.