

# Pathways to College and Career Success

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## Topics to be Discussed

- What do we mean by college success? -- Obtaining credentials.
- What determines college success? -- High grades in HS.
- What determines high HS grades? -- Mentors, engagement, strong academic and executive functioning skills.
- What do we mean by career success? -- Obtaining high paying, interesting, jobs.
- What determines career success? -- Having marketable skills.
- How do most students get marketable skills? -- Completing high-return college courses.
- Does college success equal career success? -- No! Completing high-return courses is much more important than getting advanced degrees.

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## Why is Distinguishing Career Success from College Success Important?

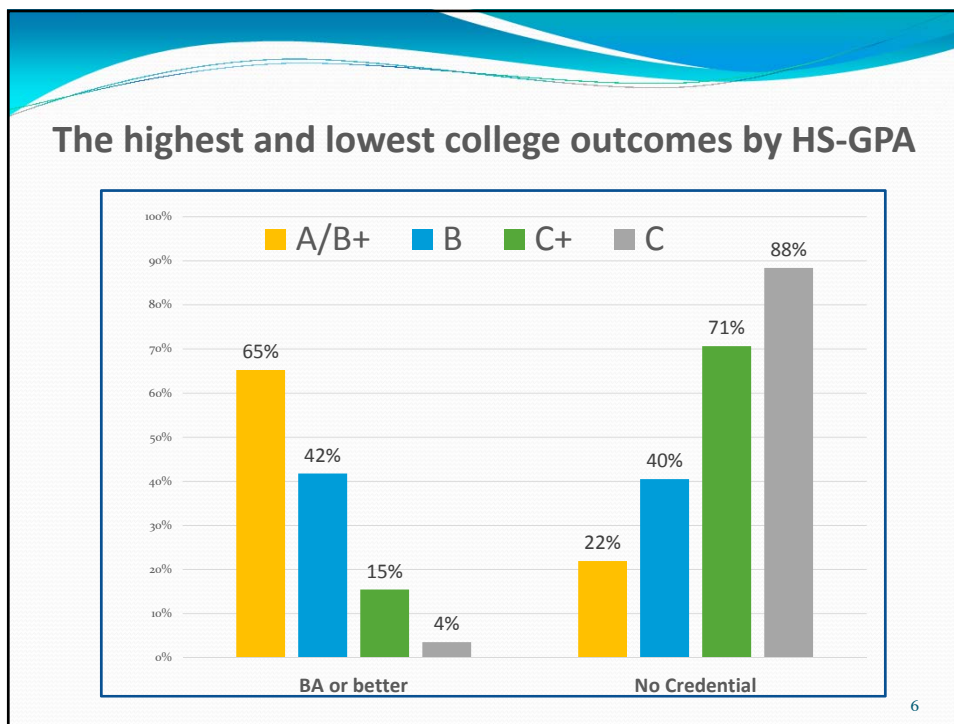
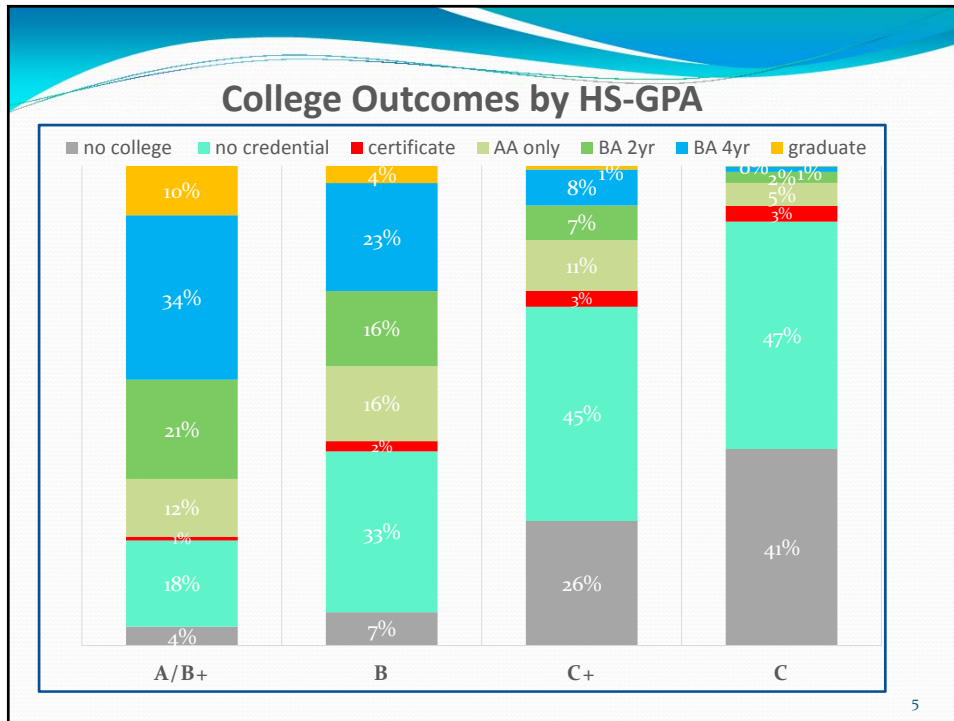
- Many students are disengaged from high school because they believe that there is little point in working hard in HS, if they do not have the grades needed to get BAs.
- If HS students with low grades knew that, regardless of their HS grades, there are high-return programs at TCC that they can complete in a year or two, they might:
  - Become more engaged in HS.
  - Develop realistic plans for attending college.
  - Complete college programs leading to high earnings.

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## Descriptions of actual Florida student outcomes from various education paths – the database

- The database covers all 8<sup>th</sup> graders attending Florida public school in the 1994-95 academic year.
- For each student it includes information for 1994-2007:
  - Demographics (age, gender, low family income).
  - Attendance and special needs.
  - HS transcripts (course ID, grade, and institution).
  - College transcripts (course ID, grade, credits, institution).
  - Quarterly wage records (earnings, employer ID, industry code).
- The following slides are based on the outcomes of 122,000 students who reached the 12th grade by 2000-01 and had some earnings in each year after leaving school.

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## What does slide 6 tell us?

- High HS-GPAs are associated with:
  - Attending college.
  - Success in obtaining BAs.
- Low HS-GPAs are associated with:
  - Not attending college.
  - Not obtaining BAs.
- HS students with low grades are correct about the low chances of being successful at 4-Year universities.

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## Fields-of-Study by Level of Earnings Return

Level of Return	Field-of-Study	Sample Professions	Earnings Differential
Very High	Healthcare	Nurse	45%
High	Agriculture, business, computer science, education, marketing, math	Computer Programmer, accountant, teacher	29%
Medium	Building trades, legal services, machinery repair, protective services, technical support	Paralegal, police, carpenter	17%
Low	Consumer services, fine arts, humanities, personal services	sales, restaurant worker	--

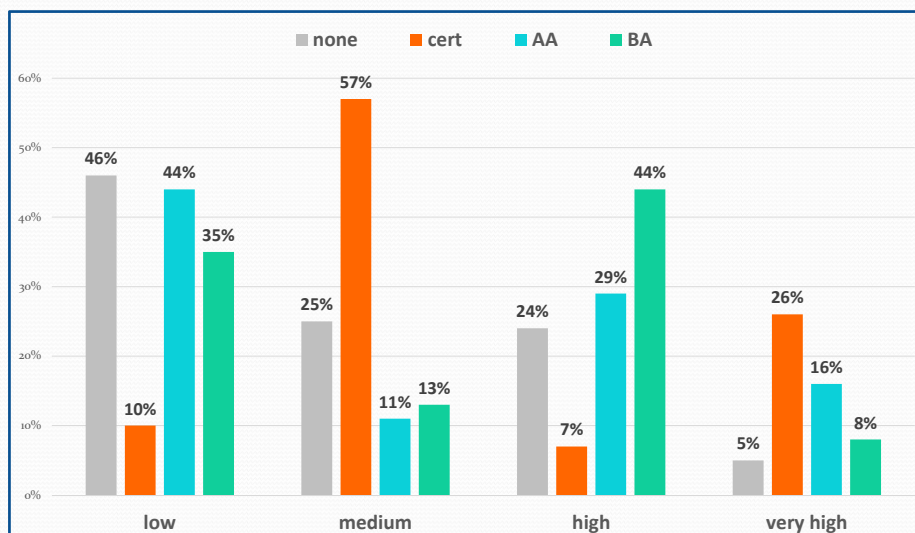
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## What does slide 8 tell us?

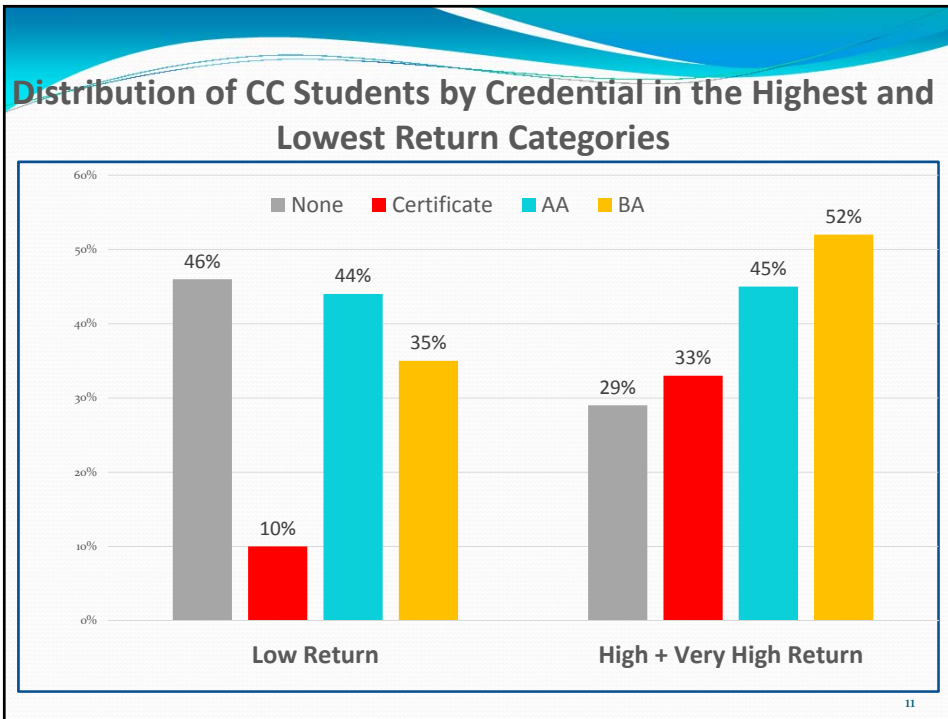
- There are large differences in earnings across fields-of-study.
- Healthcare has by far the highest returns.
- Many technical fields, especially those requiring the most education, have high returns.
- There are many mid-level skill fields with respectable returns.
- There are some fields that do not provide much earnings enhancement.
- HS students' views are not correct that, without a BA, the chances of substantially enhancing earnings are slim.

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## Distribution of CC Students by Return-Category & Credential

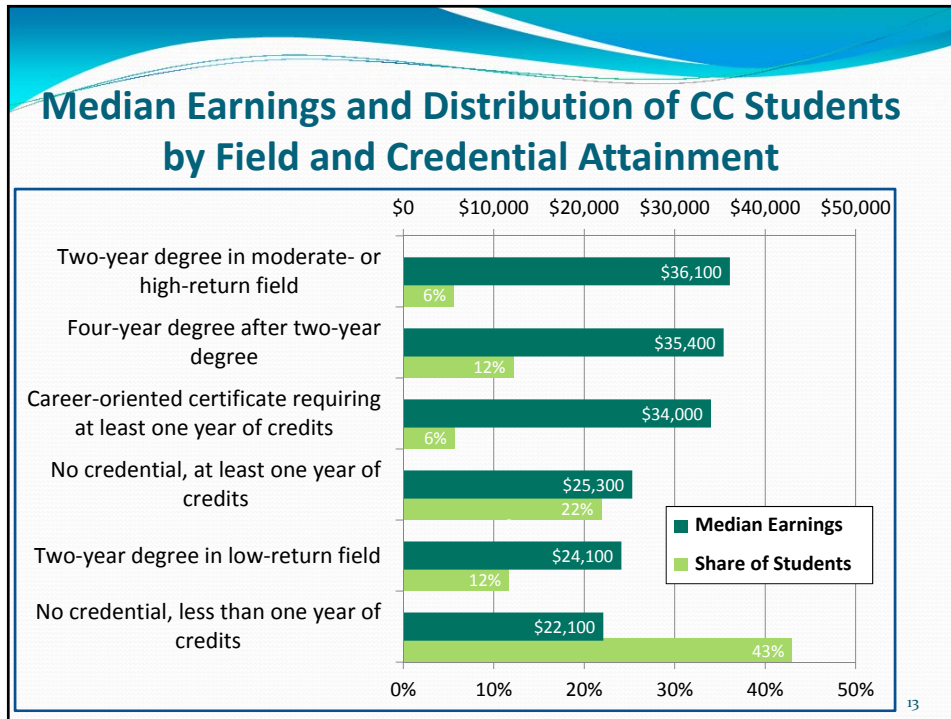


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## What does slide 11 tell us?

- Higher degrees (and more time in college):
  - Increase the chances of having high or very high earnings.
  - But many students with higher degrees end-up with low earnings.
- Students with certificates are most likely to boost earnings after only one year of course work, and have a reasonably high chance of having high or very high earnings.
- HS students' views are not correct that:
  - Only BAs substantially enhance earnings.
  - Getting a BA is a guarantee of high earnings



### What does slide 13 tell us about earnings gains?

- 3 field-credential combos have average earnings of about \$35,000.
  - These fields differ markedly in the number of courses required.
  - AAs in some fields, but not others, offer the same pay as BAs.
  - Certificates offer about the same pay as BAs.
- 3 field-credential combos yield average earnings of about \$24,000.
  - Earnings are not much higher after taking a year or two of low return courses than completing only a few courses.
- HS students' views are not correct that:
  - Only BAs substantially enhance earnings.
  - Getting a BA is a guarantee of high earnings

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### What does slide 13 tell us about the chances of boosting earnings?

- 24% of CC students end up with large earnings gains from attending college.
- Half of these students went on to obtain a BA after an AA.
  - 80% of these students had a B or better HS-GPA.
- One-quarter of these students obtained a certificate.
  - 67% of these students had below a B HS-GPA.
- 34% of CC students earn a year or more worth of credits, but leave college without enhancing their earnings.
- 43% of CC students earn only a few credits, and also do not enhance earnings.
  - Would these students, especially those with lower HS-GPAs, take more high return courses, if better informed about high-return programs they are likely to complete?

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### What are your reactions and questions?

- Do any of these findings surprise you?
- Do you think that correcting misconceptions among high school students would lead to higher levels of engagement and better college and career outcomes?
- Do you think you might provide the information presented here to your students?

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