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## Graduation Rates Increase Steadily

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
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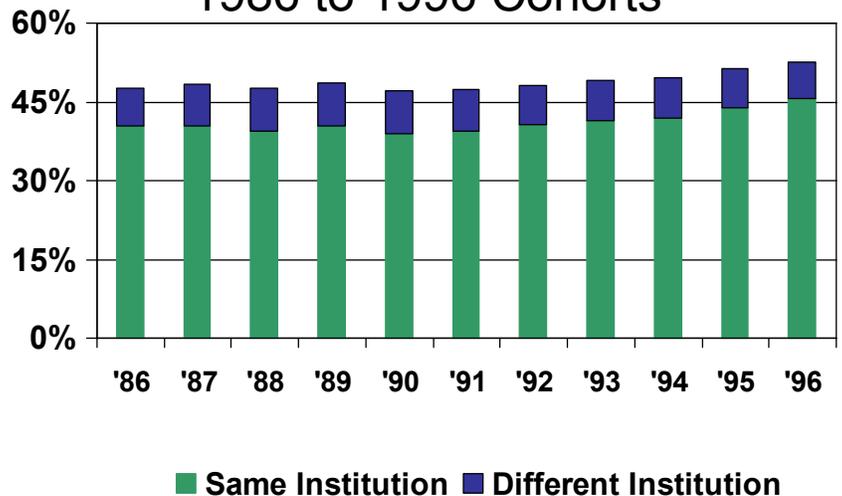
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Six-year graduation rates at Texas public universities increased steadily over the past five years, following several years of little improvement. Six-year graduation rates are defined as the percentage of first-time students who enroll in at least 12 semester credit hours their first semester in college and earn a baccalaureate degree within six years of enrolling at a higher education institution.<sup>1</sup> For Texas' public universities, these figures have been compiled beginning with students entering a public university in summer/fall 1986 (referred to as the 1986 cohort). The graduation rate for a particular cohort includes data for students who graduate from the institution in which they first enroll and students who transfer and graduate from another Texas public university.

- Statewide, the average six-year graduation rate for the 1996 cohort (most recent available) is 52.5 percent. This figure includes an average "same institution" graduation rate of 45.5 percent and an additional 7 percent rate for students who earned degrees at institutions other than those in which they first enrolled.

### Baccalaureate Graduation Rates, 1986 to 1996 Cohorts



- The graduation rate among students who earn degrees from the same institution at which they first enroll has increased from 39 percent (for the 1990 cohort) to 45.5 percent (for the 1996 cohort).

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<sup>1</sup> Students enrolled for at least 12 semester credit hours (SCH) are considered full-time. For this report, students initially enrolled in two-year colleges, health-related institutions, or independent institutions are excluded (other reports in this topic are available). Baccalaureate degrees awarded by a public university or health science center, if different from the initial university of record, are included in determining cohort graduation rates. Students are tracked as long as they are enrolled in a public institution in Texas, including fall, spring and summer sessions. Student data is gathered and reported according to standards identified for IPEDS by the National Center of Educational Statistics.

- The graduation rate among students transferring to a different institution has remained relatively constant.
  - The number of first-time freshmen in each cohort increased from 36,716 students in 1986 (the lowest in 11 years) to 41,925 students in the 1996 (the highest in 11 years).
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- ▶ For information<sup>2</sup> regarding this report or to suggest topics for future reports, contact Rissa S. Potter, Ph.D., (512) 427-6124, or [Rissa.Potter@thecb.state.tx.us](mailto:Rissa.Potter@thecb.state.tx.us) .
  - ▶ This Special Interest Brief, and other related reports, are available at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/DataAndStatistics/> .

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<sup>2</sup> Division of Planning and Information Resources contacts: **David W. Gardner**, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner; **Susan E. Brown**, Director-Planning; **John R. Cox**, Director-Information Resources; **Casey M. Kennedy**, Director-Web Services; **Kathy M. Benson**, Assistant Director for the Education Data Analysis Support Center.