

RESEARCH BRIEF

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Characteristics of First-Generation Students at NOVA and VCCS: 2011-12 to 2012-13

This Research Brief identifies characteristics of first-generation (FG) students. A first-generation student is defined as a student whose parents have not completed a Bachelor's degree. FG students are identified as a special group requiring supportive strategies to improve their college readiness and academic achievement within the college setting due to their families' lack of familiarity with the post-secondary experience.

Data presented in this Research Brief compare FG students to non-FG students at two levels:

- Across groups (NOVA vs. All other VCCS¹)
- Across years (2011-12 to 2012-13)

The data indicate that at NOVA and in the rest of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), FG students are more likely than their non-FG counterparts to be female, belong to a minority ethnicity group, and, as a group, have a higher mean age. FG students are less likely to have had dual-enrollment status while attending high school. At NOVA and in the VCCS, FG and non-FG students show a similar distribution by full-time/part-time enrollment status and day/night status. At NOVA, a higher percentage of FG students are on the college transfer program track compared to FG students in the rest of the VCCS. There were not many significant changes within groups from 2011-12 to 2012-13.

As shown in Table 1 (below) and Figure 1 (next page), in 2012-13 at NOVA, the number of FG students (13,670) represented 17% of the total student headcount (78,413). In the rest of the VCCS, the number of FG students (45,665) represented 23% of the total student headcount (201,557). From 2011-12 to 2012-13, there were one percentage point increases in FG students relative to non-FG students at both NOVA and in the rest of the VCCS; however the actual FG headcount increased at NOVA and decreased in the VCCS.

Table 1. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and within the VCCS: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	2011-12				2012-13			
	FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	12,168	15.9	64,384	84.1	13,670	17.4	64,743	82.6
All other VCCS	45,987	21.7	166,295	78.3	45,665	22.7	155,892	77.3

¹ The 'All other VCCS' group was constructed by subtracting NOVA totals from VCCS totals.

Figure 1. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and within the VCCS: 2011-12 to 2012-13

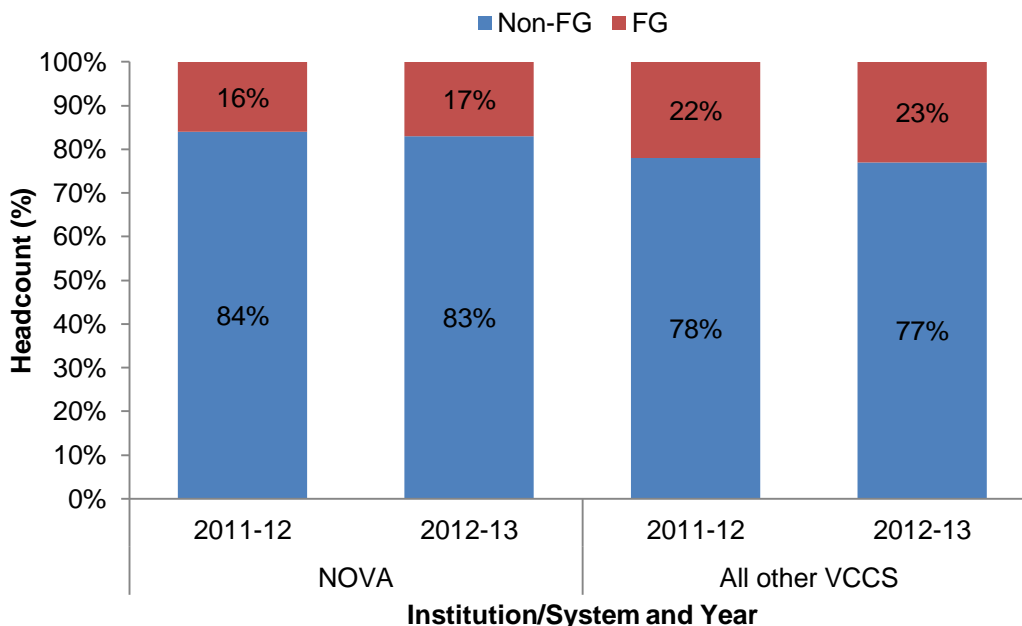


Table 2 shows the distribution of FG and non-FG students by gender. The data indicate that female students have a higher representation among FG students than non-FG students. Specifically, in 2012-13 at NOVA, the FG female population was 56% while it was 51% in the non-FG group. In the VCCS (excluding NOVA) in the same academic year, the FG female population was 64% while it was 58% in the non-FG group. There were no major changes from 2011-12 to 2012-13 in the composition of FG students by gender.

Table 2. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Gender: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	Gender	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	Male	5,366	44.1	31,010	48.2	6,050	44.3	31,726	49.0
	Female	6,802	55.9	33,374	51.8	7,620	55.7	33,017	51.0
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
All other VCCS	Male	16,408	35.7	69,179	41.6	16,410	35.9	65,933	42.3
	Female	29,579	64.3	97,116	58.4	29,255	64.1	89,959	57.7
	Total	45,987	100.0	166,295	100.0	45,665	100.0	155,892	100.0

Table 3 presents the distributions of the FG group versus the non-FG group for NOVA and for VCCS by race/ethnicity. At NOVA among the FG group, there was a two percentage point increase in the representation of minority students from 2011-12 to 2012-13 (65% to 67%); this is the highest percentage of minority students across groups in this table. This trend is particularly pronounced among Hispanic students; Hispanics accounted for 27% of the FG group while they accounted for 15% of the non-FG group at NOVA in 2012-13. Within the VCCS, the FG group had a higher percentage of Black students and Hispanic students compared to the non-FG group (in 2012-13, 25% vs. 22% and 7% vs. 5%, respectively).

Table 3. First -Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Race/Ethnicity: 2011-2012 to 2012-13

Institution	Race/Ethnicity	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	White	4,234	34.8	30,180	46.9	4,493	32.9	30,115	46.5
	Black	2,445	20.1	10,569	16.4	2,822	20.6	10,832	16.7
	Asian	1,855	15.2	9,341	14.5	2,074	15.2	9,430	14.6
	Hispanic	3,052	25.1	9,243	14.4	3,657	26.8	9,565	14.8
	Native American	33	0.3	288	0.4	30	0.2	249	0.4
	Hawaiian/Pacific	217	1.8	2,276	3.5	153	1.1	1,552	2.4
	Multi	218	1.8	1,532	2.4	291	2.1	1,950	3.0
	Not Specified	41	0.3	414	0.6	50	0.4	402	0.6
	Unknown	73	0.6	541	0.8	100	0.7	648	1.0
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
VCCS*	White	35,096	60.3	145,207	62.9	35,822	60.4	141,631	64.2
	Black	14,881	25.6	51,092	22.1	15,044	25.4	47,861	21.7
	Asian	3,077	5.3	15,369	6.7	3,339	5.6	15,158	6.9
	Hispanic	4,061	7.0	12,263	5.3	4,298	7.2	10,746	4.9
	Native American	321	0.6	1,166	0.5	251	0.4	942	0.4
	Unknown	719	1.2	5,582	2.4	581	1.0	4,297	1.9
	Total	58,155	100.0	230,679	100.0	59,335	100.0	220,635	100.0

*Due to inconsistent categories, it was not possible to extract NOVA from VCCS data. In this table only, VCCS figures include NOVA students.

Table 4 presents the distribution of the FG group versus the non-FG group by age group. In 2012-13 at NOVA, 33% of FG students were age 30 years or older compared to 24% of non-FG students. In the rest of the VCCS in 2012-13, 39% of FG students were age 30 years or older compared to 24% of non-FG students. This indicates that FG students have a higher representation among older age groups. There were no major changes from 2011-12 to 2012-13 within these groups.

Table 4. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Age Group: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	Age Group	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	Under 18	235	1.9	1,815	2.8	260	1.9	2,128	3.3
	18-21	4,734	38.9	25,322	39.3	5,289	38.7	25,733	39.7
	22-24	1,374	11.3	11,169	17.3	1,696	12.4	11,289	17.4
	25-29	1,657	13.6	10,138	15.7	1,887	13.8	9,885	15.3
	30-39	2,070	17.0	8,737	13.6	2,256	16.5	8,718	13.5
	40-49	1,308	10.7	4,374	6.8	1,361	10.0	4,170	6.4
	50-64	701	5.8	2,385	3.7	791	5.8	2,342	3.6
	65 & Older	89	0.7	444	0.7	130	1.0	478	0.7
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
All other VCCS	Under 18	3,807	8.3	22,303	13.4	3,936	8.6	22,601	14.5
	18-21	13,518	29.4	58,482	35.2	13,521	29.6	54,990	35.3
	22-24	4,526	9.8	22,103	13.3	4,791	10.5	21,004	13.5
	25-29	5,953	12.9	21,296	12.8	5,751	12.6	19,458	12.5
	30-39	8,080	17.6	21,744	13.1	7,987	17.5	19,619	12.6
	40-49	6,156	13.4	12,802	7.7	5,822	12.7	11,196	7.2
	50-64	3,746	8.1	7,123	4.3	3,676	8.0	6,566	4.2
	65 & Older	201	0.4	442	0.3	181	0.4	458	0.3
	Total	45,987	100.0	166,295	100.0	45,665	100.0	155,892	100.0

Table 5 (see next page) presents the distribution of FG and non-FG students by program area. At NOVA in 2012-13, FG students were slightly more likely than non-FG students to be on the college transfer track (62% and 58%, respectively) and on the technical career track (23% and 19%, respectively). FG students were less likely than non-FG students to be listed as program unclassified (15% and 23%, respectively). The representation of college transfer FG students at NOVA, relative to other program areas, increased by 2 percentage points from 2011-12 to 2012-13. In 2012-13 in the rest of the VCCS, placement in the college transfer track was slightly lower for FG students compared to non-FG students (34% and 36%, respectively), while placement in the technical career track was higher (44% for FG and 33% for non-FG). Other VCCS students in the FG group were less likely to be program unclassified than those in the non-FG group (23% and 31%, respectively).

Table 5. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Program Area: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	Program Area	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	College Transfer	7,285	59.9	36,632	56.9	8,498	62.2	37,423	57.8
	Career Technical	2,856	23.5	13,041	20.3	3,115	22.8	12,308	19.0
	Program Unclassified	2,027	16.7	14,711	22.8	2,057	15.0	15,012	23.2
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
All other VCCS	College Transfer	14,975	32.6	59,656	35.9	15,517	34.0	56,245	36.1
	Career Technical	20,442	44.5	55,992	33.7	19,869	43.5	50,891	32.6
	Program Unclassified	10,570	23.0	50,647	30.5	10,279	22.5	48,756	31.3
	Total	45,987	100.0	166,295	100.0	45,665	100.0	155,892	100.0

Table 6 shows the distribution of FG and non-FG students by full-time/part-time enrollment status. At NOVA in 2012-13, 24% of FG students were enrolled full-time compared to 20% of non-FG students. In the rest of the VCCS, the distribution of FG and non-FG students is fairly similar across enrollment status and did not change significantly between years.

Table 6. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Enrollment Status: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	Enrollment Status	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	Full-time	3,027	24.9	13,775	21.4	3,223	23.6	13,164	20.3
	Part-time	9,141	75.1	50,609	78.6	10,447	76.4	51,579	79.7
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
All other VCCS	Full-time	9,022	19.6	31,676	19.0	8,578	18.8	28,682	18.4
	Part-time	36,965	80.4	134,619	81.0	37,087	81.2	127,210	81.6
	Total	45,987	100.0	166,295	100.0	45,665	100.0	155,892	100.0

Table 7 (next page) shows the distribution of FG and non-FG students by day/night status. At NOVA in 2011-12 and 2012-13, the distribution is similar across the FG and non-FG group with the majority of students (71% and 70%, respectively) enrolled in day classes only. Similarly, in the VCCS, 71% of FG students are enrolled in day classes only compared to 74% of non-FG students.

Table 7. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Day/Night Status: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	Day-Night	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	Day Only	8,627	70.9	44,645	69.3	9,662	70.7	44,910	69.4
	Night Only	1,868	15.4	10,311	16.0	1,977	14.5	9,505	14.7
	Both	1,673	13.7	9,428	14.6	2,031	14.9	10,328	16.0
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
All other VCCS	Day Only	32,528	70.7	122,529	73.7	32,183	70.5	114,864	73.7
	Night Only	5,841	12.7	18,913	11.4	5,450	11.9	16,125	10.3
	Both	7,618	16.6	24,853	14.9	8,032	17.6	24,903	16.0
	Total	45,987	100.0	166,295	100.0	45,665	100.0	155,892	100.0

Table 8 presents the distribution of the FG group versus the non-FG group by former dual enrollment status. At NOVA in 2011-12 and 2012-13, the percentage of FG students who had been dual enrolled at NOVA while attending high school was 2% compared to 3% for non-FG students. Within the VCCS, 10% of FG students had been dual enrolled compared to 16% of non-FG students in 2012-13. There were no significant changes, across years, in the composition of dual enrollment.

Table 8. First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students at NOVA and Within the VCCS by Dual Enrollment: 2011-12 to 2012-13

Institution	Dual Enrolled	2011-12				2012-13			
		FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NOVA	Dual	244	2.0	1,987	3.1	257	1.9	2,221	3.4
	Non-Dual	11,924	98.0	62,397	96.9	13,413	98.1	62,522	96.6
	Total	12,168	100.0	64,384	100.0	13,670	100.0	64,743	100.0
All other VCCS	Dual	4,224	9.2	24,617	14.8	4,344	9.5	24,798	15.9
	Non-Dual	41,763	90.8	141,678	85.2	41,321	90.5	131,094	84.1
	Total	45,987	100.0	166,295	100.0	45,665	100.0	155,892	100.0