

Early Transfers vs. Post-graduate Transfers from LaGCC to CUNY Baccalaureate: What Do We Know?

Nathan Dickmeyer
Jenny Zhu
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We looked at three cohorts of new LaGCC students, beginning Fall 2007, Fall 2008 and Fall 2009, who transferred to CUNY BA/BS programs. The total number of BA/BS transfer students in the cohorts for whom we had matching data in the CUNY IRDB system was 2,546. We gave each cohort six years from their initial semester at LaGCC to achieve a CUNY BA/BS degree. This is a very short time and represents a compromise between wanting to allow more students to finish the four-year degree and getting the most current data. Clearly, this method gives an advantage to students who began at LaGCC as new transfers. Most tables below show first-time LaGCC students separately from new transfers into the cohort at LaGCC.

Figure 1 shows the advantage that finishing an LaGCC degree gives a student before transferring to a CUNY four-year program. For all transfer students from these cohorts we see a 14% improvement in six-year graduation probability. For students who began college for the first time as freshmen at LaGCC, the advantage is 19% and for those who began as transfers to LaGCC, the advantage is 10%.

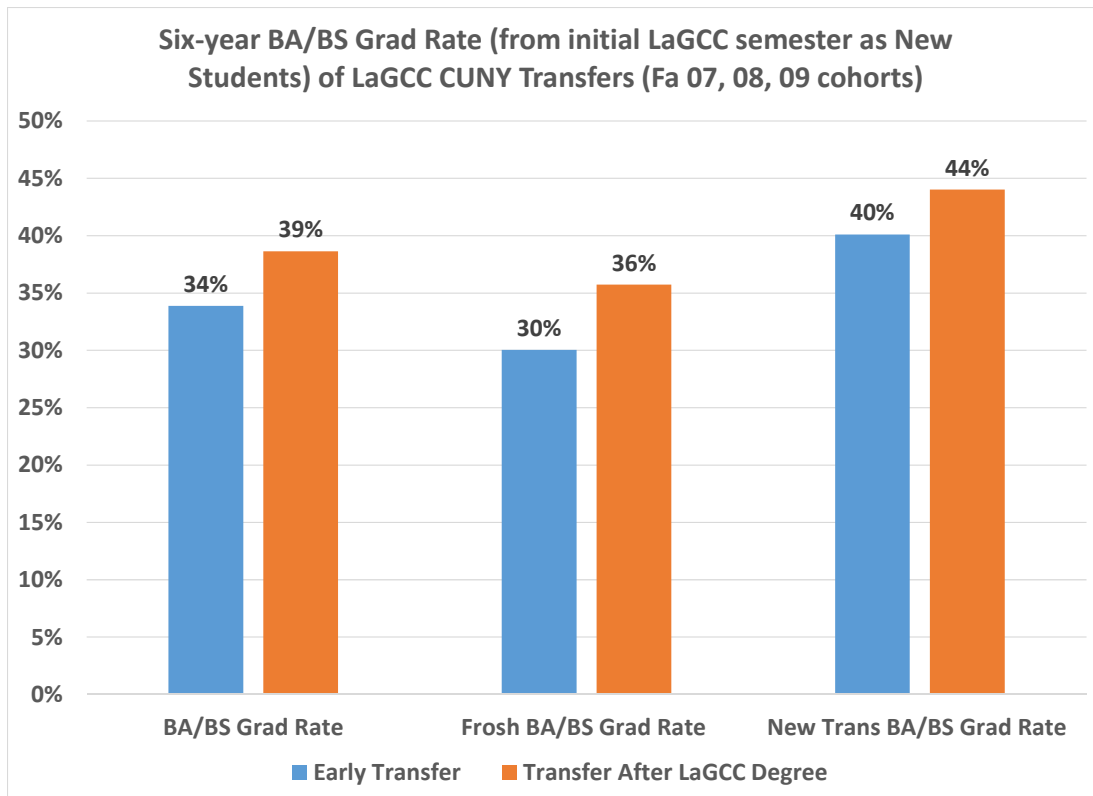


Figure 1

Figure 2 shows the comparison by CUNY college. Not all receiving colleges offer an advantage to LaGCC students who complete their degrees. Brooklyn, City, Hunter and Lehman provide advantages in six-year graduation rates to freshmen students who transfer early. John Jay, on the other hand, provides a large advantage to students who transfer with an LaGCC degree.

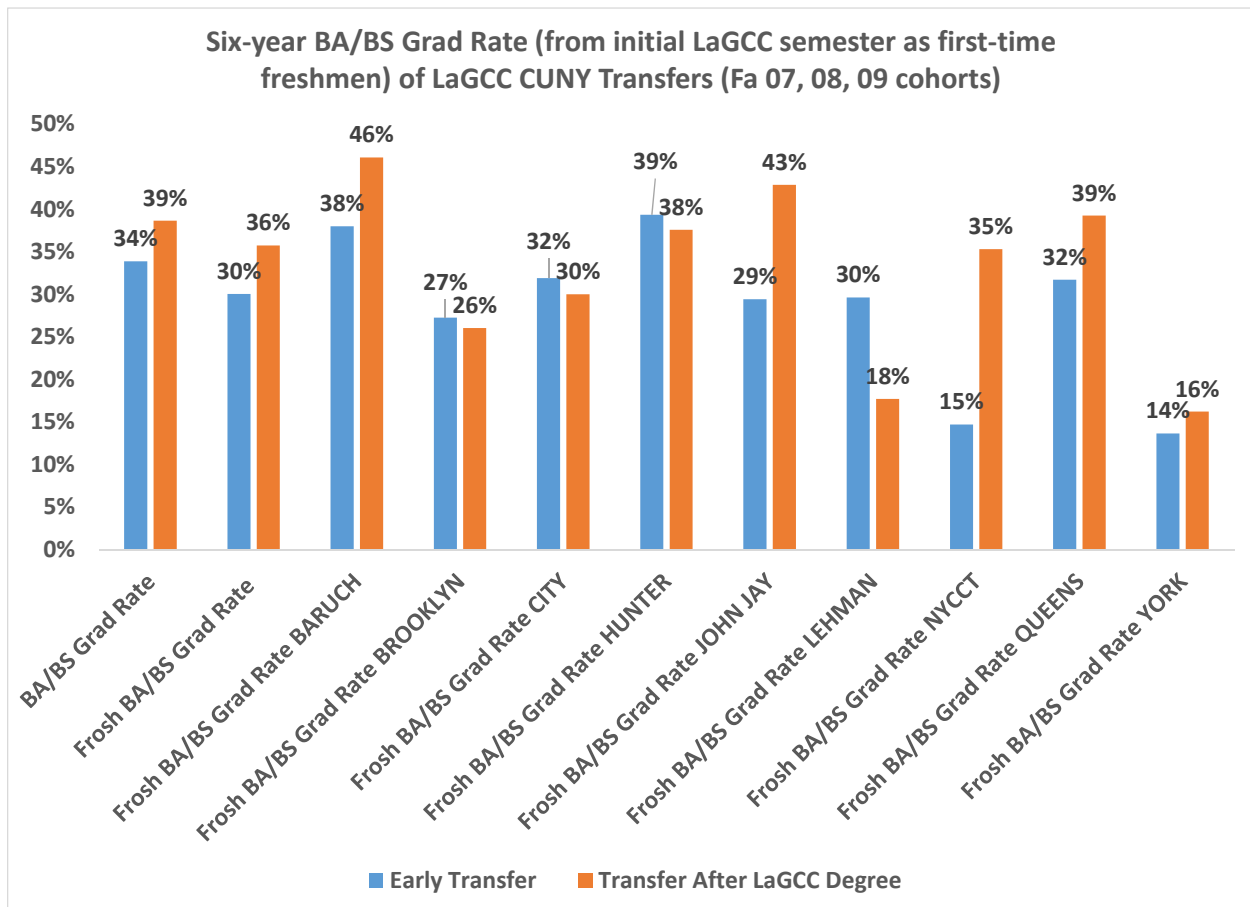


Figure 2

Figure 3 compares the six-year BA/BS grad rates for those students who began at LaGCC as new transfers. City and Hunter still give advantage to early transfers. York is also on the list of early transfer advantage, but only for those students who began at LaGCC as new transfers.

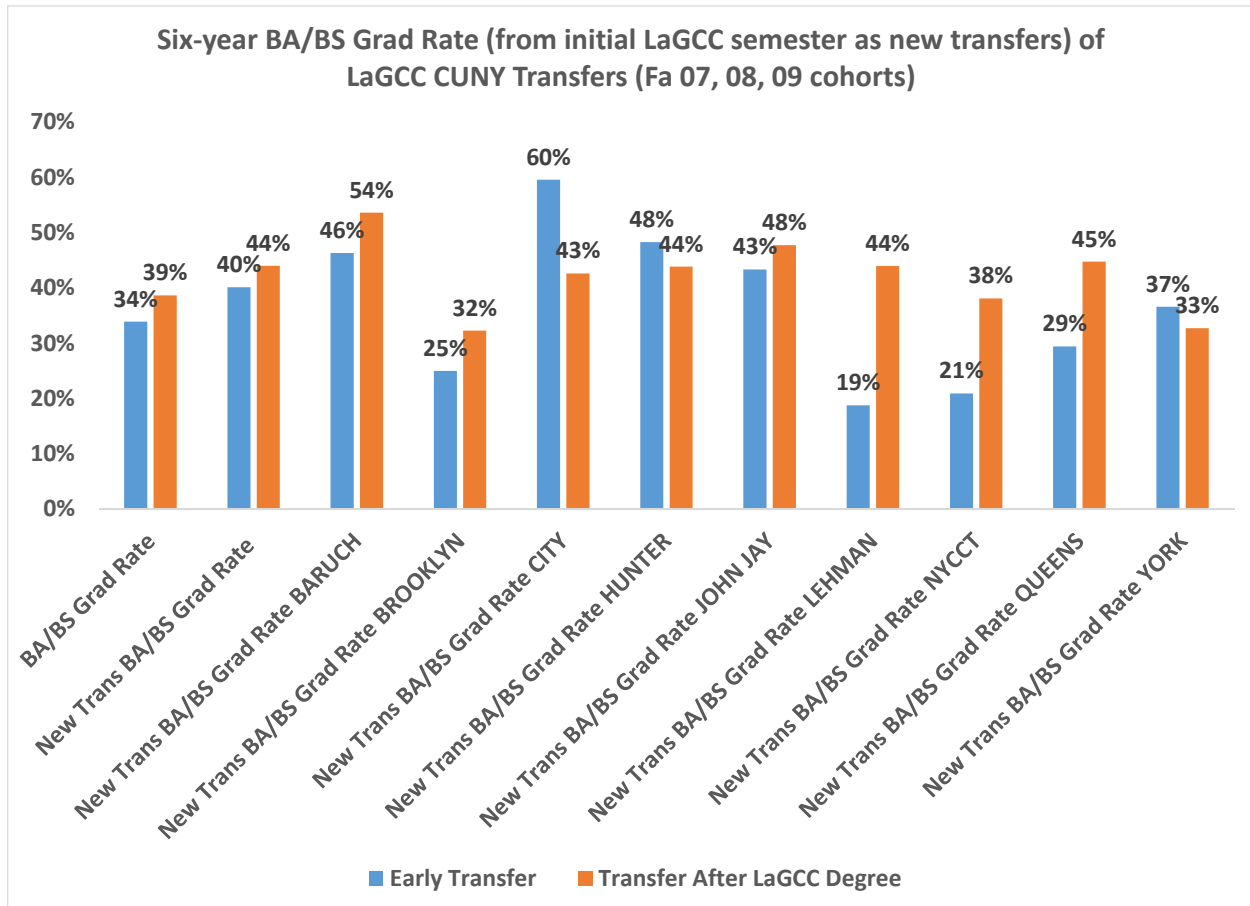


Figure 3

Figures 2 and 3 tell us that students might be better off transferring to City or Hunter before they receive their degree. This might be because early transfers to those colleges just happen to be super students, or it might be because lower level preparation at those colleges is easier to get through than here.

Let's see if we notice any other clues. First, are early transfer students different in some way that we can measure than students who complete an LaGCC degree?

There is very little gender difference, for example, 39% of early transfer students are male; and 41% of LaGCC grad transfers are male. Likewise, there is only a slight difference in pre-LaGuardia math readiness: 43% of the early transfers were placed into developmental math; and 39% of LaGCC grad transfers were placed into developmental math. Students who complete the degree and then transfer are slightly better prepared in math to begin with.

Early transfer rates (the percentage of all transfers to CUNY BA/BS programs from those cohorts who had not received an LaGCC degree), however, vary greatly by last major at LaGuardia. Figure 4 shows that nearly all transfers from PTA and Practical Nursing were early. In fact, most of the candidacy programs sent a majority of transfers out early.

The dots in Figure 4 indicate the number of transfers from the program, starting with the largest transfer out numbers on the left from Business Administration of over 450. The engineering majors also show fairly high proportions of early transfers.

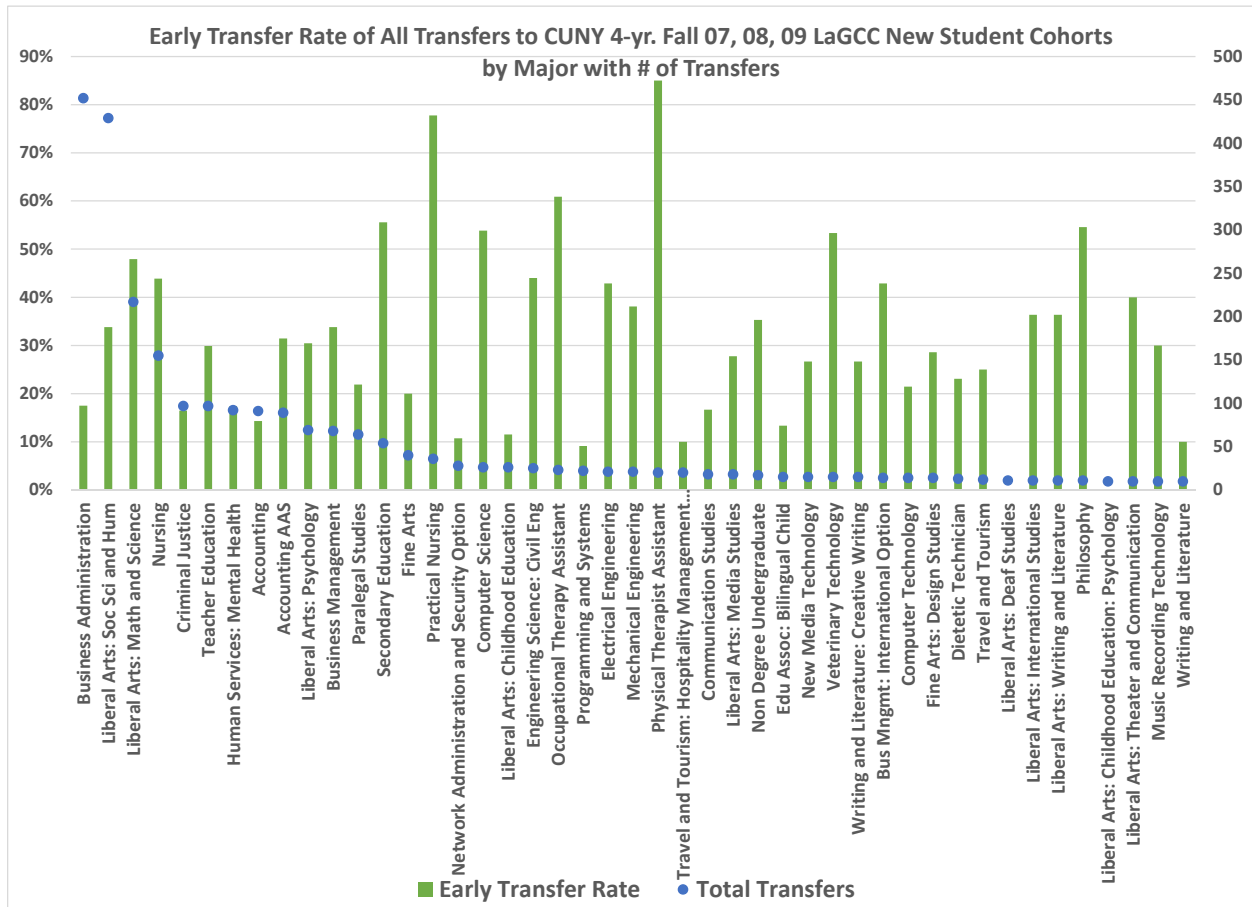


Figure 4

The top ten majors by number of early transfers from these cohorts are given in Table 1. Two health sciences programs show up in the top ten, as well as, three liberal arts majors and three business programs. The final two are education programs.

**Number of Early Transfers by New Student LaGCC Cohorts of Fall 2007, Fall 2008 and Fall 2009
By Major**

Final LaGCC Major	Number of Early Transfers
Liberal Arts: Soc Sci and Hum	145
Liberal Arts: Math and Science	104
Business Administration	79
Nursing	68
Secondary Education	30
Teacher Education	29
Accounting AAS	28
Practical Nursing	28
Business Management	23
Liberal Arts: Psychology	21

Table 1

CUNY seems to be moving toward giving colleges credit for graduation anywhere by students who start at LaGuardia and is testing the feasibility of reverse transfer degrees, where students can still earn an AA, if they take the right courses after early transfer. In that case, LaGuardia's central concern should not be reducing the number of early graduates, but preparing them so that they graduate with a four-year degree in a timely fashion. The next two tables examine the question of early transfer preparedness.

Figure 5 compares the six-year BA/BS grad rates for students who began as freshmen from the three cohorts by early transfer and post-grad transfer rates by final major at LaGCC.

Many majors appear to have only grad transfers (only have rust-colored bars). Engineering, accounting and nursing stand out as areas that have provided an advantage for transferring early. Accounting, computer science, paralegal and the education majors appear to give large advantages to students who begin as freshmen and transfer with a LaGuardia degree.

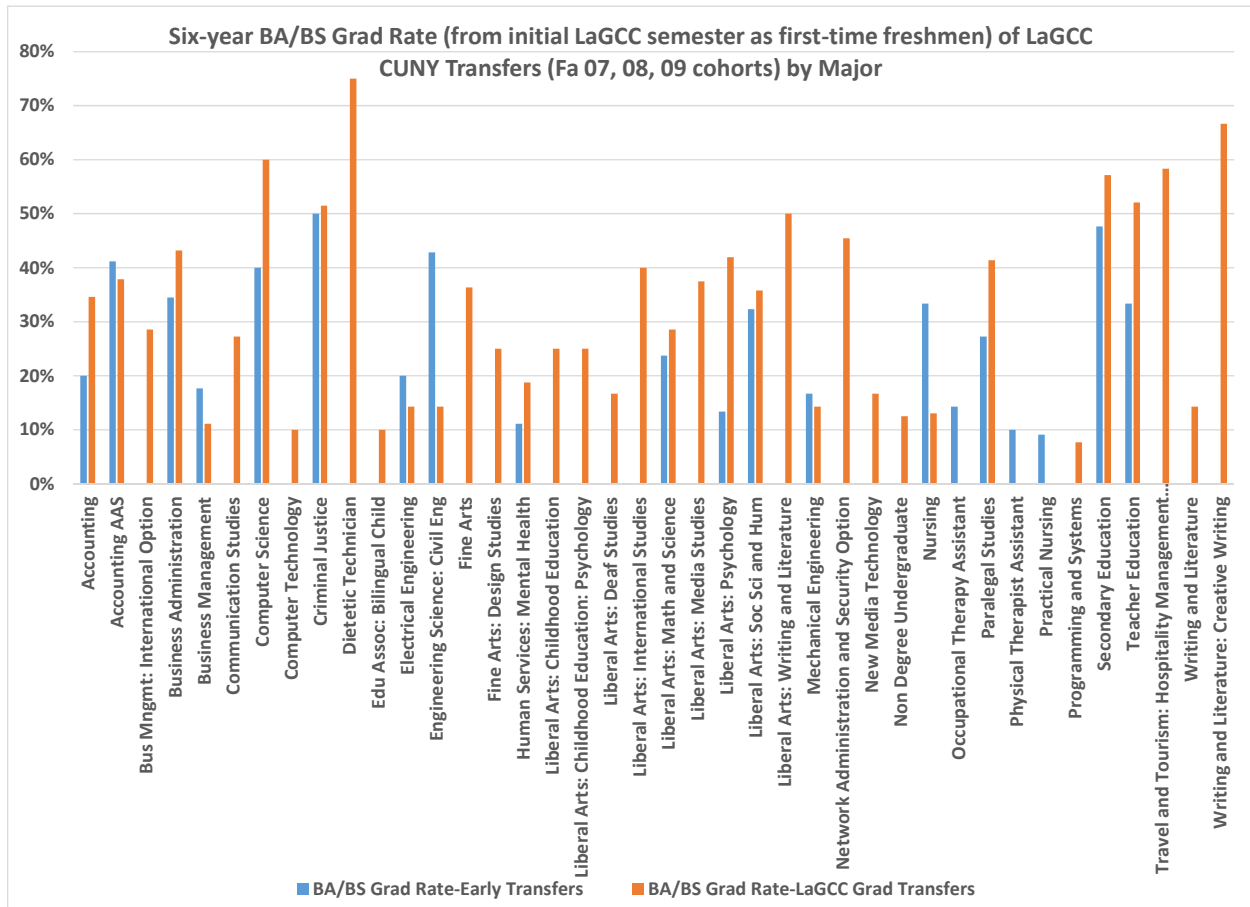


Figure 5

Figure 6 repeats Figure 5, but for students who began at LaGCC as new transfers. Here, the engineering areas did not provide sufficient numbers of early transfers to give data. Business Management and Secondary Education, however, appear to give significant advantage to early transfers. Unlike freshmen, new transfer students in nursing and OTA should complete their degree before transferring.

Teacher education is perhaps ideal with high six-year BA/BS graduation rates regardless of whether students finished their associate’s degree or not.

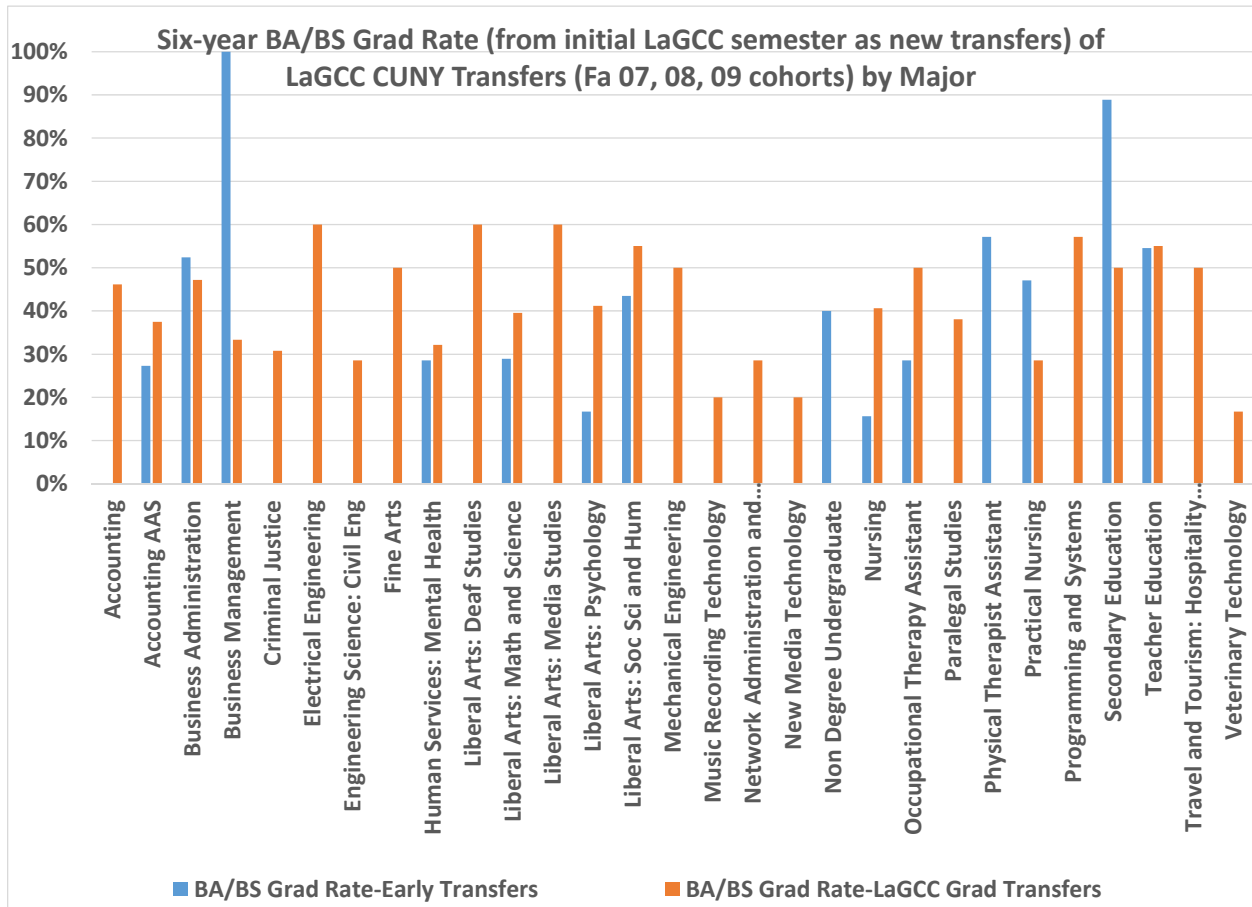


Figure 6

Conclusion

While in general students who complete a degree at LaGuardia are more likely to complete a BA/BS program at a CUNY college in six-years from start at LaGCC than students who transfer early, the results are not even. The college may find it worthwhile to compare the experience of lower division students at City and Hunter with our own in certain programs.