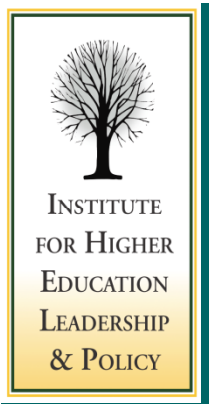

Monitoring and Using Milestones to Increase Student Success: An Overview

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What are Milestones?

- Intermediate student outcomes
  - Getting beyond the standard items (e.g. retention)
  - Language varies, but similar concept
  - Some mixing of achievements and time dimension (e.g. enrollment behaviors) – more clarity needed
- Key uses of milestones
  - Identify where student progress stalls
  - Disaggregate by groups to show different patterns
  - Dig deeper to point towards solutions
  - Highlight achievements short of completion
  - Use milestone achievement in funding models

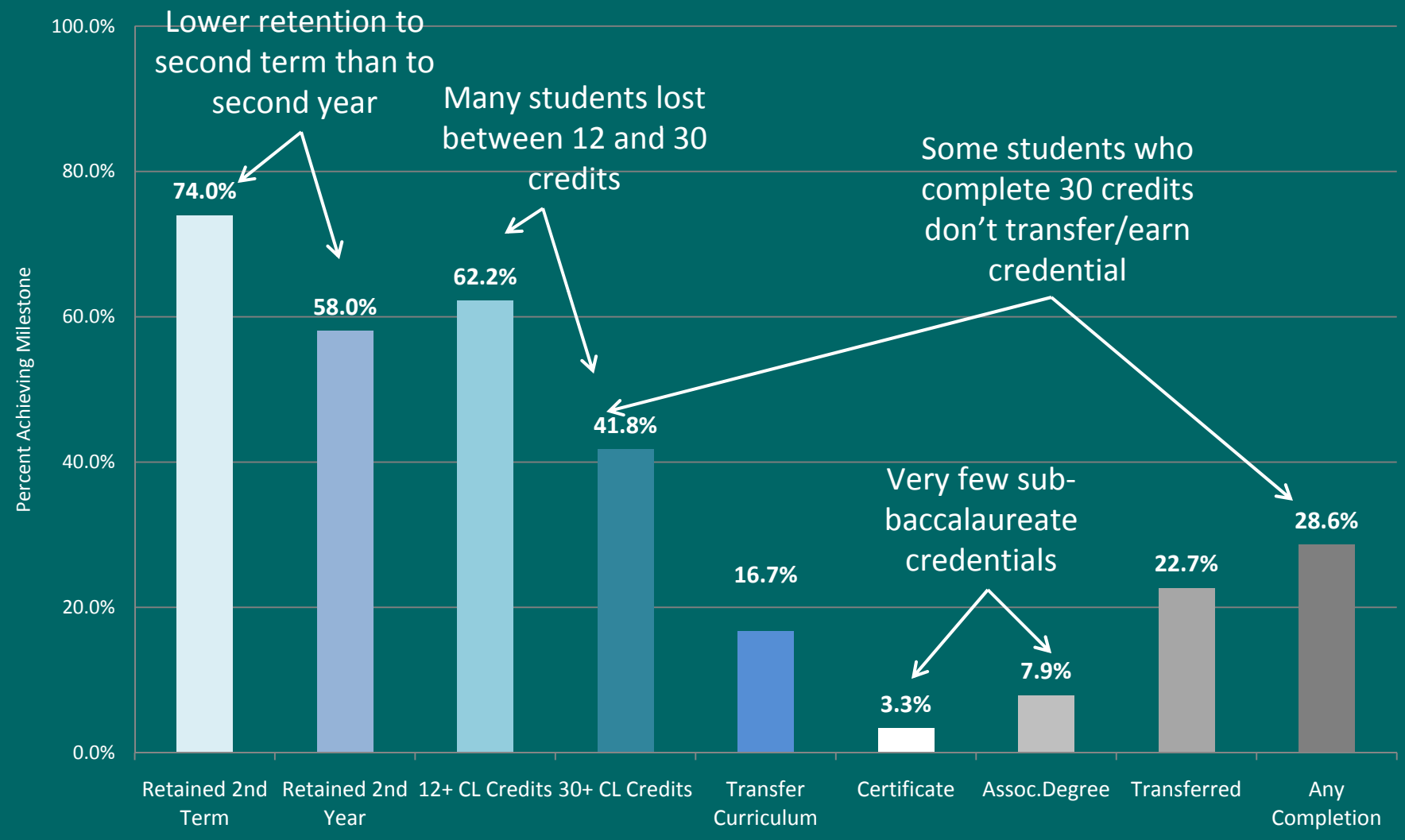
Steps to Success

IHELP Report, October 2009

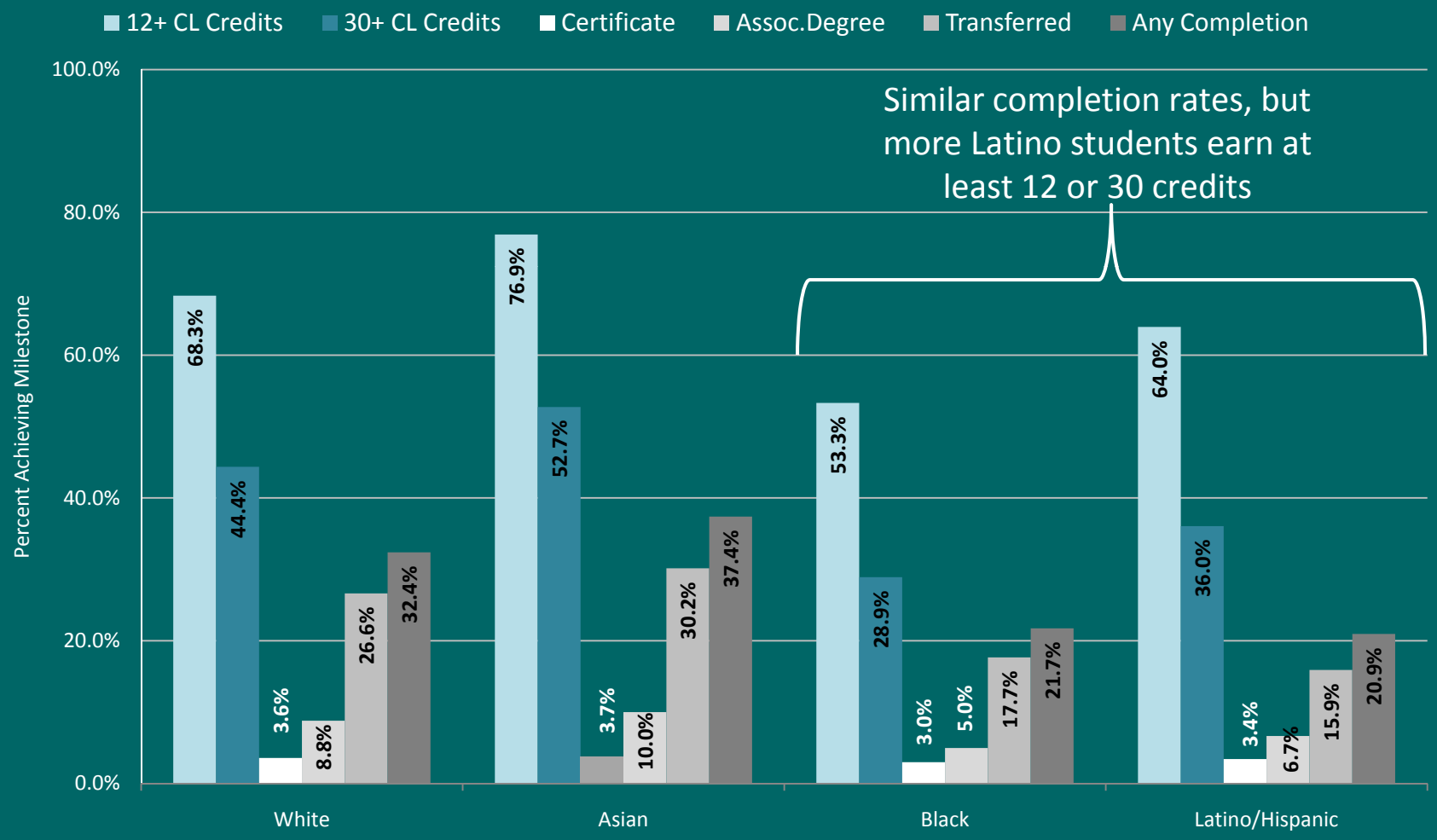
- Two components in our framework (based on literature review)
  - Milestones – to better understand the problem
    - ***intermediate educational achievements that students reach along the path to degree completion***
  - Success Indicators – to point to solutions
    - ***academic patterns that predict the likelihood that students will reach milestones***
- Analysis of a cohort of California Community College students tracked for seven years

Milestones	Success Indicators
• Retention • Complete needed remediation • Transition to college-level coursework • Earn one year of college-level credits •Complete a community college transfer curriculum • Transfer from community college to university • Without completing curriculum • After completing curriculum • Complete certificate or degree	**Remediation:** • Begin coursework in first term **Gateway Courses:** • Complete college-level math/English in the first year or two • Complete a college success course **Credit Accumulation and Related Academic Behaviors:** • High rate of course completion • Complete 20-30 credits in first year • Earn summer credits • Enroll full time • Enroll continuously, without stopouts • On-time registration for courses • Maintain adequate academic performance

Milestones Point to Where Student Progress Stalls



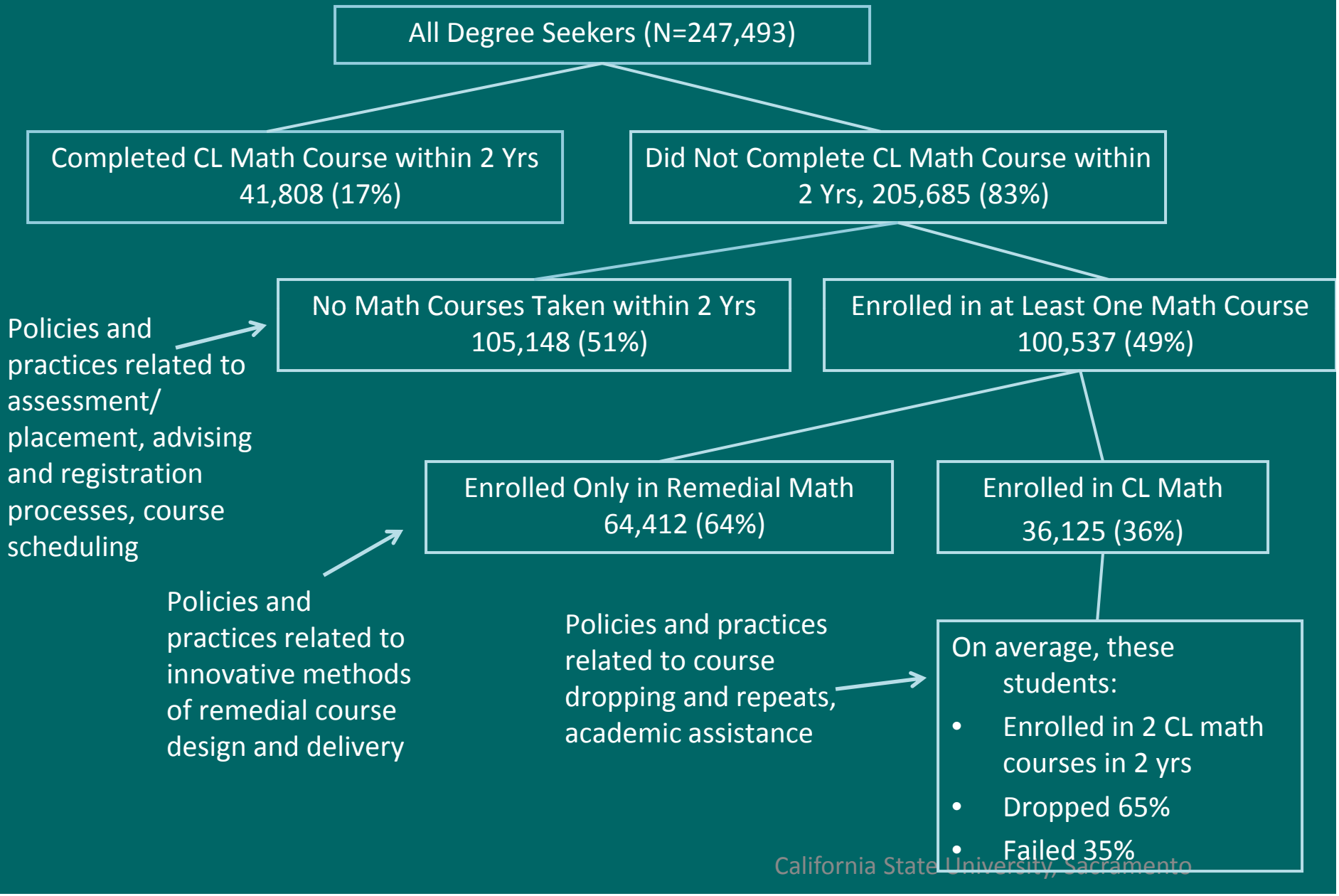
Disaggregation by Groups Points to Differences in Achievements Among Groups



Success Indicators are Validated in the Data (See Appendix on p. 17)

- For example, students were more likely to complete if they:
  - Complete CL Math in first 2 years (61% vs. 22%)
  - Earned 20+ Credits in first year (58% vs. 19%)
  - Completed 80%+ of courses in first year (39% vs. 15%)

Digging Deeper into Problems Can Point to Solutions



Making Use of Milestone Analysis: what will it take?

- Robust data system
  - Student level transcript data
  - Demographic variables (income data often missing)
  - Assessment info (who *needs* remediation)
- Willingness (courage) to use it
  - For accountability – risks & benefits for institutions
  - For funding – can address some concerns about performance funding
- Potential extensions (could increase support)
  - Track transfers through public universities
  - Track students into workforce