

Entering Students in Fall 1999: Students' Achievements by Age at Entry

In The August 2004 In the Abstract we presented some basic information about the 3210 students who first entered Oakton in fall 1999, and we invited the Oakton community to ask questions about the cohort by emailing the Office of Research at research@oakton.edu. Several people asked us about the relationship between age at entry and these variables: number of terms, credits earned, degrees awarded and transfer after Oakton. Recall that the cohort was distributed by age as follows: 37% below age 20, 20% 20-24, 10% 25-29, 30% 30-59, 2% 60 or older.

This month's *In the Abstract* provides some answers to the questions posed. For purposes of this analysis we created four age categories: below age 20, 20-24, 25-29 and 30and older. We looked at data for students who did or did not have a bachelor's degree before entering Oakton, including those who said they had an "other" degree or for whom we have no information in the "No bachelor's degree" group. Recall that we use students' self-reports about their highest degrees earned before Oakton. In looking at the data it is important to keep in mind the total number of students in each category; for example, only 5 students in the cohort had a bachelor's degree before entering Oakton and were below the age of 20 upon entry. Indeed, this number may be an anomaly since it is difficult, though not impossible, to imagine a student less than 20 years old who already has a bachelor's degree.

First, what is the breakdown, by age, of those who had a bachelor's degree before Oakton?

	Age at Entry	Below 20	20-24	25-29	30 +
Bachelor's degree before Oakton					
Yes		<1%	9%	41%	38%
No		100%	91%	59%	62%

	Bachelor's before Oakton (N = 592)				No bachelor's before Oakton (N = 2618)			
	Below 20 N=5	20-24 N=61	25-29 N=135	30 + N=391	Below 20 N=1,187	20-24 N=589	25-29 N=196	30 + N=646
Mean number terms at Oakton	3.8	2.2	2.1	2.4	4.7	3.3	2.8	2.6
Mean credits earned at Oakton*	39.8	12.2	10.2	10.4	35.5	22.6	15.6	11.9
Oakton degrees**								
Associate	40%	2%	1%	1%	10%	5%	4%	2%
Certificate	0%	5%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	6%
None	60%	93%	97%	96%	88%	92%	93%	92%
Transfer***								
4-year school					25%	21%	16%	5%
2-year school					12%	11%	17%	8%
No transfer					63%	68%	67%	87%

* College-level courses

** Highest degree (student who earned certificate and associate degree is counted as associate degree)

*** First school after Oakton; data from National Student Clearinghouse; "no transfer" means the Clearinghouse did not find a record of transfer for the student.