

# DATA POINT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NCES 2016-109 JULY 2016

## Career and Technical Education Coursetaking and Postsecondary Enrollment and Attainment: High School Classes of 1992 and 2004

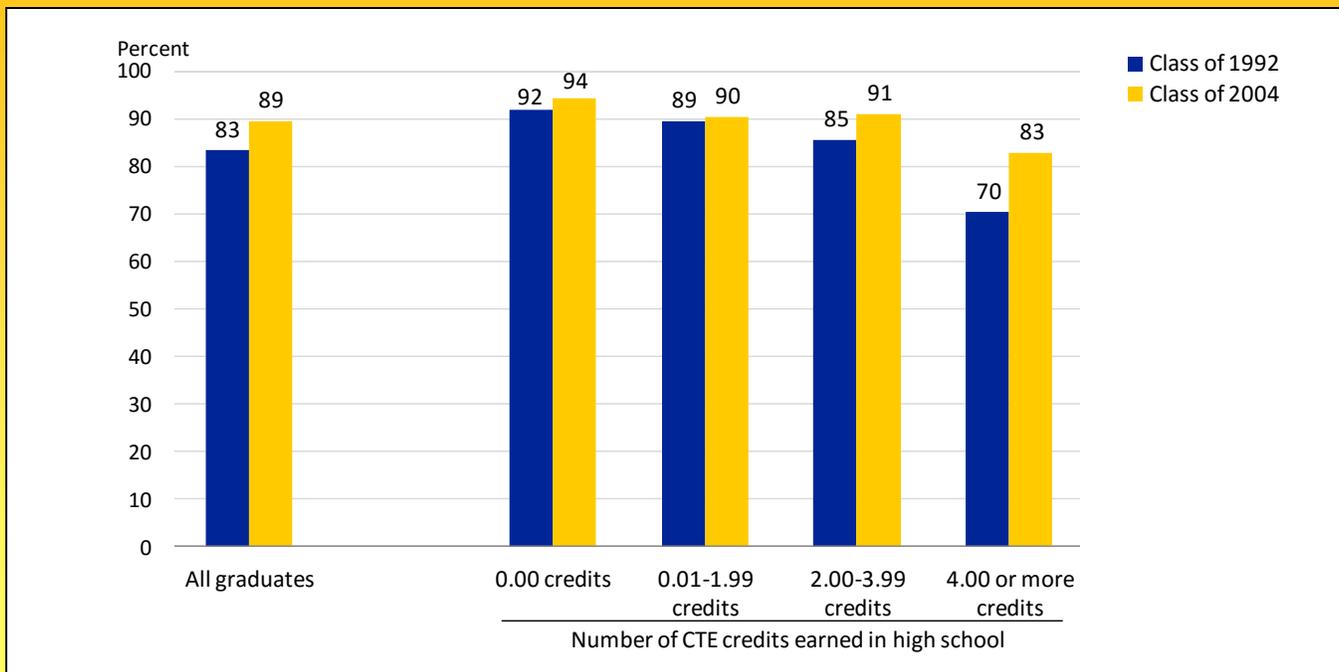
This Data Point uses data from two nationally representative studies of public and private high school students: the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), which began with a sample of over 24,000 eighth-grade students, and the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), which began with a sample of over 15,000 tenth-grade students, and their associated High School Transcript Studies. The Data Point reports data from these studies' public high school graduates. Causal inferences should not be made from these correlational data.

This Data Point examines public high school graduates' postsecondary enrollment and attainment (at any type of postsecondary institution, at any level), for the class of 1992 as of 2000, and for the class of 2004 as of 2012.<sup>1</sup> Changes in postsecondary enrollment and attainment are examined for all public school graduates and for those who earned different numbers of career and technical education (CTE) credits in high school (**figure 1**).<sup>2</sup>

### Enrollment rates were higher in the more recent cohort, particularly among graduates who earned more CTE credits.

The postsecondary enrollment rate within 8 years of high school graduation was higher for the class of 2004 than for the class of 1992 (89 percent versus 83 percent, respectively) (**figure 1**).

**FIGURE 1. Percentage of public high school graduates who enrolled in postsecondary education within 8 years of graduation, overall and by high school career and technical education (CTE) credits: High school classes of 1992 and 2004**

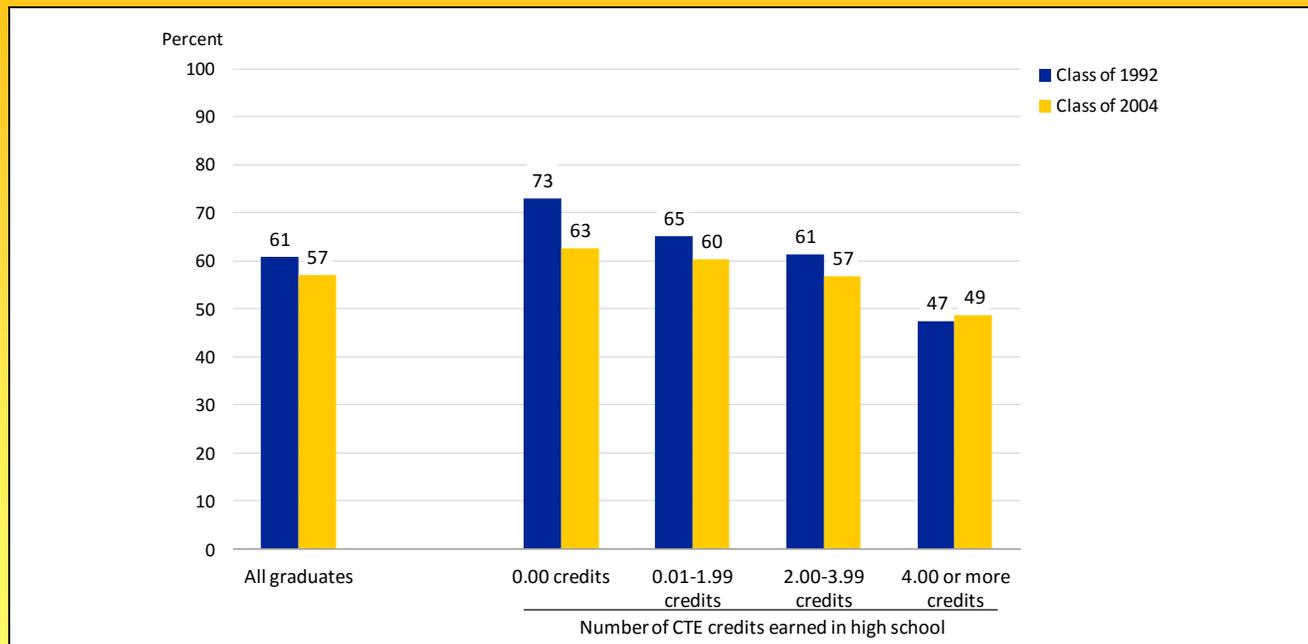


NOTE: Standard errors for estimates can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/h147.asp>.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), Fourth Follow-up, 2000, and its High School Transcript Public-Use File; Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), Third Follow-up, 2012, and its High School Transcript Public-Use File.

To learn more about NELS:88, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/nels88/>. To learn more about ELS:2002, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/els2002/>. For questions about content or to view this report online, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2015014>.

**FIGURE 2. Percentage of public high school graduates who earned a postsecondary credential within 8 years of graduation, overall and by high school career and technical education (CTE) credits: High school classes of 1992 and 2004**



NOTE: Standard errors for estimates can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/h147.asp>.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), Fourth Follow-up, 2000, and its High School Transcript Public-Use File; Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2012), Third Follow-up, 2012, and its High School Transcript Public-Use File.

This increase in enrollment rate was found for graduates who earned 2.00–3.99 CTE credits and 4.00 or more CTE credits. The largest enrollment increase, from 70 percent for the class of 1992 to 83 percent for the class of 2004, was among graduates who earned 4.00 or more CTE credits; however, these graduates had the lowest enrollment rate of the four CTE participation groups in both cohorts.

### Attainment rates were lower in the more recent cohort than in the earlier cohort.

Although the postsecondary enrollment rate was higher for the class of 2004 than for the class of 1992, the 8-year postsecondary attainment rate was lower in the more recent cohort than in the earlier cohort, with 57 percent of the class of 2004 earning a postsecondary credential compared to 61 percent of the class of 1992 (figure 2). This change in attainment rate across cohorts varied by the number of CTE credits earned, but there was no consistent pattern. Attainment rates were lower for the more recent cohort than for the earlier cohort only among

graduates who earned 0.00 CTE credits and who earned 2.00–3.99 CTE credits. The attainment rate of graduates who earned 4.00 or more CTE credits was not measurably different in the two cohorts, but their attainment rate remained the lowest of the four CTE participation groups.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Postsecondary enrollment includes graduates who enrolled in postsecondary education (college, technical, or trade school) at any time during the 8 year period following high school graduation; postsecondary attainment includes graduates who earned a postsecondary credential (certificate or degree) during the same 8 year period.

<sup>2</sup> A credit is equivalent to a one-year course taken for an hour each day. Students can earn less than 1 credit by taking a class that meets for less than an hour per day or for less than a full-year. CTE credits include credits in the following occupational subject areas: Agriculture and natural resources; business; communications and design; computer and information sciences; construction and architecture; consumer and culinary services; engineering technologies; health sciences; manufacturing; marketing; public services; and repair and transportation.

This National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Data Point presents information of education topics of current interest. It was authored by Lisa Hudson and Sharon Boivin of NCES. Estimates based on samples are subject to sampling variability, and apparent differences may not be statistically

significant. All stated differences are statistically significant at the .05 level. In the design, conduct, and data processing of NCES surveys, efforts are made to minimize effects of non-sampling errors, such as item response, measurement error, data processing error, or other systematic error.