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Education and Employment Research Center
School of Management and Labor Relations

Constructing the State Noncredit Data Infrastructure: A How-To for State Leaders

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Michelle Van Noy, Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center
Mark D'Amico, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Chris Tingle, Tennessee Board of Regents
David Troutman, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Increasing Relevance of Noncredit Education

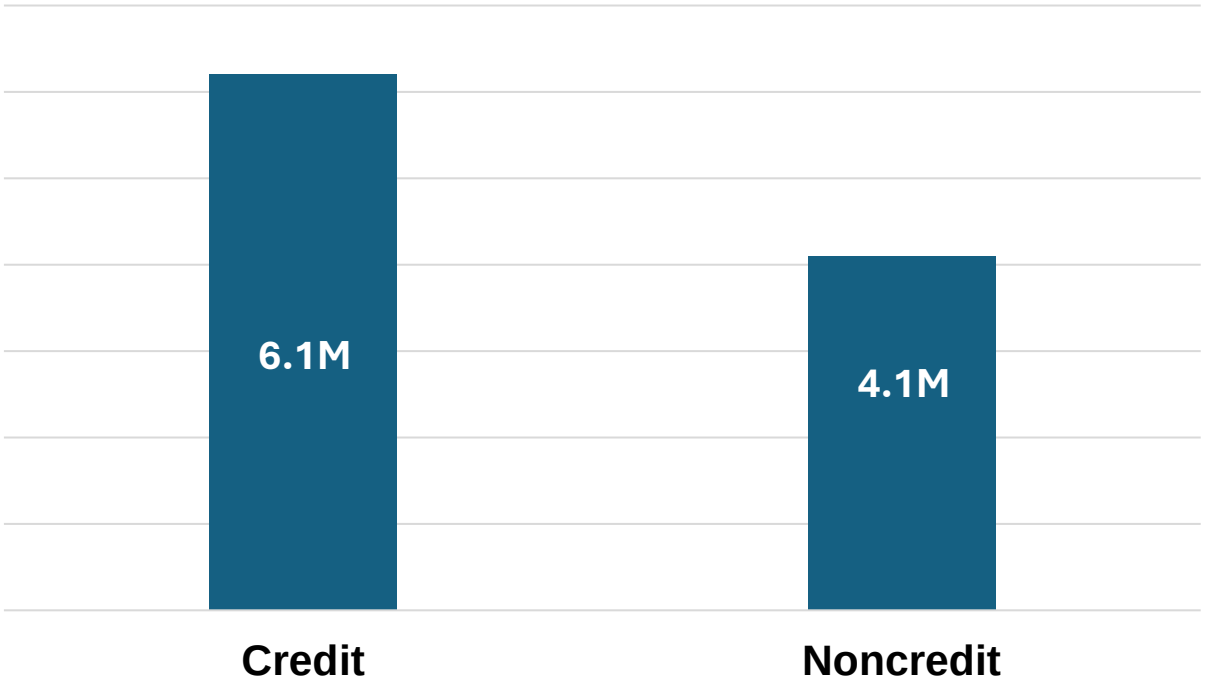
- Increasing individual interest
  - More than 2/3 of adults considering further education prefer a nondegree option, up from about 1/2 before the pandemic (Strada, 2020)
  - 72% of community college noncredit enrollees are 25+ (Jacoby, 2021)

- Increasing state funding investments
  - E.g.: Get There FL, IN Next Level Jobs, NJ Pay It Forward, LA MJ Foster, VA Fast Forward, and others

Why Collect and Analyze Noncredit Data? Tell a More Complete Story of CCs

- **Prevalence of noncredit headcount enrollments** even if low FTEs as compared with credit
  (e.g., AACC, 2023; Erwin, 2019; Jacoby, 2021; Voorhees & Milam, 2005, Xu & Ran, 2015)

Community College Headcount Enrollment (AACC, 2023)



Why Collect and Analyze Noncredit Data? Inform Policy and Practice

- **Short-Term/Workforce Pell** makes data collection on outcomes important especially for making the case for state/federal funding
- **Better represent CC funding levels…** Data quality issues and addressing measurement error when calculating financial and human resource/staff indicators by FTE with IPEDS data (Erwin, 2019; Romano & D'Amico, 2021a,b)
- **Explain sources of funding** for noncredit (D'Amico et al., 2017; Jacoby, 2021)
- **Facilitating opportunities** for students such as noncredit-to-credit articulation (D'Amico et al., 2019; Jacoby, 2021; Xu & Ran, 2015), though few make the transition (Bailey & Belfield, 2017)

State-Level Noncredit Data Reporting is Mixed

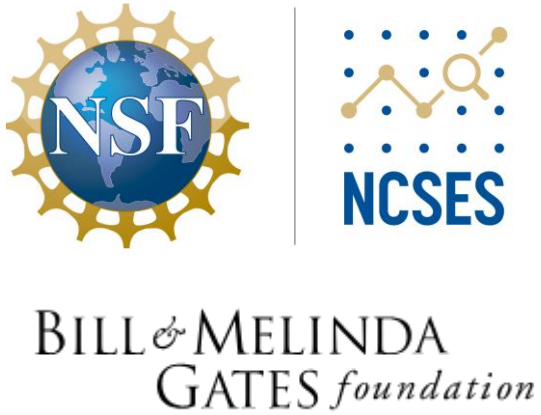
- 53% of state systems responding captured noncredit data (Milam, 2005)
- 38 states mandated some noncredit data reporting (Van Noy et al., 2008)
- Study of 29 states with data systems—23 document enrollment, 9 demographics, 19 on workforce preparation courses (US DOE, OCTAE, 2014)
- 34 of 47 surveyed states indicated some state-level data reporting (D'Amico et al., 2017)

Challenges in Collecting Noncredit Data

- **Lack of consistent definitions** across states in both practice and research
  (Van Noy et al., 2008; D'Amico et al., 2014; D'Amico, 2017)
- **Inconsistent data collection** at the state level and limited data on outcomes
  (D'Amico et al., 2017; Van Noy et al., 2008)

Exploring the Noncredit Data Infrastructure

- With support from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center is partnering with states to examine their state-level noncredit data.
- Phase 1: IA, LA, VA
  - Noncredit data inventory
  - Capturing course/program level data
  - Develop noncredit data taxonomy across states
- Phase 2: Expand to other states
  - Established and emerging states: MD, NJ, OR, SC, TN
  - National learning community
- Future phases: Student-level analyses, national policy scan, student experiences, program quality



Foundational Elements:
Motivations for the Collection and Use of Noncredit Data

- Mandatory Reporting
- Pell Grant Implications
- Making the Case
- Noncredit-to-Credit Transitions
- Measuring Quality

Foundational Elements: Data Infrastructure and Policy

- Data platforms enable consistency
- Standard definitions in policy and practice
- Credentials of value drive funding and structure
- State-level verification ensures quality data and consistent allocation of funding
- The data infrastructure builds over time – Noncredit Data Journey

Exploring the Noncredit Data Infrastructure

Courses/Programs

- Field of Study (name, CIP, SOC, Career Cluster)
- Type (occupational, sponsored, pre-college, personal interest)

Outcomes

- Non-degree Credentials (industry certification, occupational license, college-issued certificate, micro-credential, apprenticeship)
- Noncredit-to-credit articulation
- Student Outcomes (continue to credit, completion, employment, salary/wages)

Instructional Characteristics

- Length (number of classes for program, contact hours)
- Admission Requirements (prerequisites, tests, age)
- Delivery (F2F, location, online, blended, competency-based)
- Work-based learning requirement
- Faculty (FT credit/noncredit, FT noncredit, PT/adjunct, external/contract)

Finance

- Tuition
- Government Funding (state reimbursement, WIOA eligible, econ development incentive, other federal and state grants)

Enrollment

- Headcount
- Demographics (race/ethnicity, age, sex/gender)
- Prior Educational Attainment

Student Services

- Academic Advising
- Career Advising
- Nonacademic Support

Identifiers

- ID types (SS#, institutional ID, consistent ID, student names, birth dates)

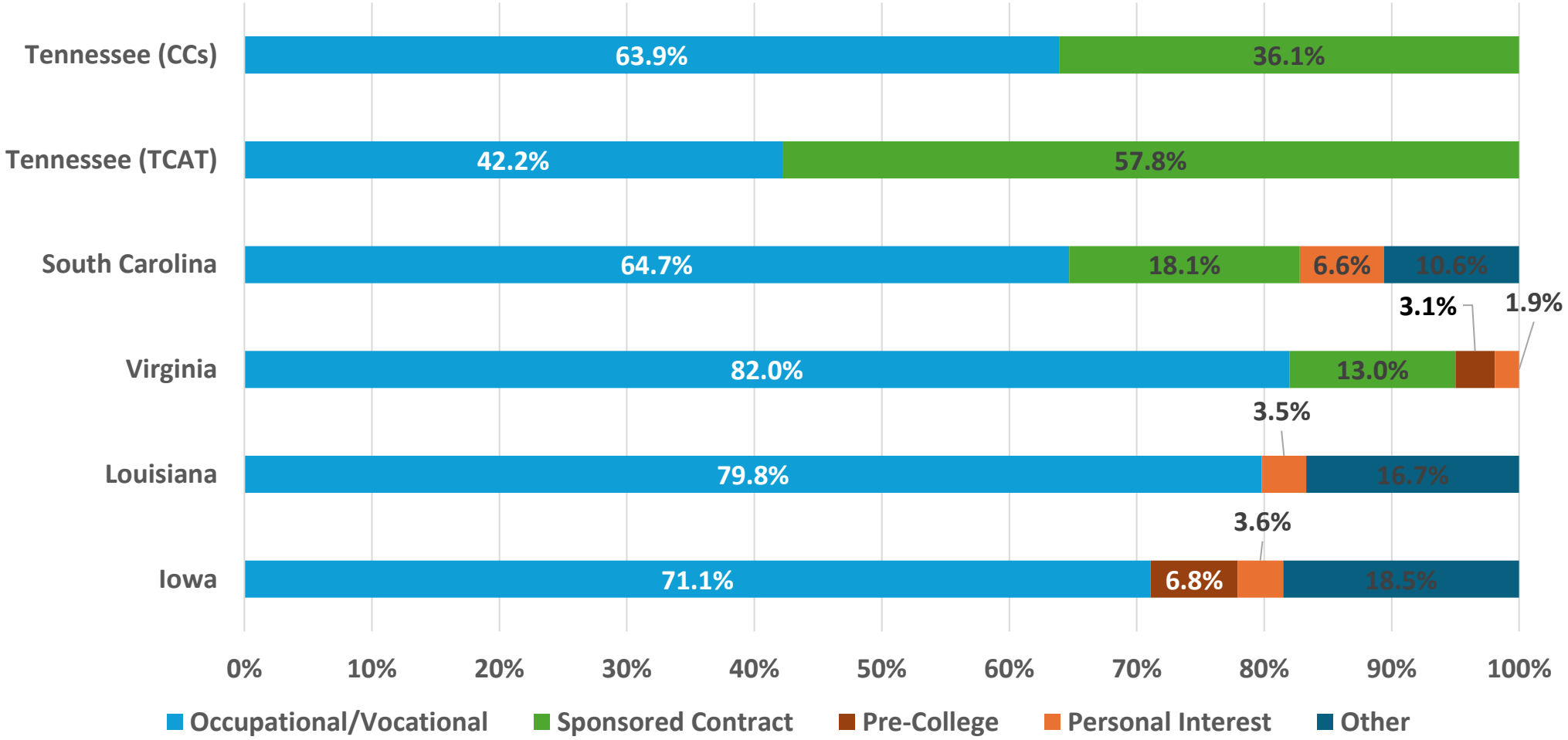
Noncredit Data Taxonomy

- Based on inventory & analysis of first 3 partner states (IA, LA, VA)
- Addresses realities & aspirations
- Data availability dependent on data systems, mandates, and partnerships
- Full taxonomy includes complete list of data elements and operational definitions

Purpose and Design:
Noncredit Types

CC Noncredit Types (D'Amico et al., 2014)	**Description** (D'Amico et al., 2017)	**IPEDS Categories for IC-Header**
Occupational Training	"geared toward individuals seeking to gain or improve job skills leading to initial or better employment …most often available through an open registration process, do not follow a typical semester schedule, and are paid for by individuals through either their own resources or through third-party funding for which they are eligible" (p. 59)	•Workforce Education
Sponsored Occupational (Contract) Training	"similar to occupational training … arranged by special contract with organizations … can be specific training developed for an organization, or it can lead to some particular industry-based standard … delivered in a way most convenient for the contracting organization … responds directly to local area needs" (p. 61)	•Contract Training/Customized Training
Personal Interest	"common examples include ballroom dancing, cake decorating, and the like … are demand driven, because students likely self-pay, and often reflect the needs, interests, and priorities of local communities" (pp. 61-62)	•Recreational/Avocational/ Leisure/Personal Enrichment
Pre-College	"primary programs delivered include ABE, ESL instruction, GED preparation, and even some aspects of developmental studies. These are typically offered at no charge to the student other than testing fees, supplies, etc." (p. 62)	•Developmental Education •Adult Basic Education •Adult High School Diploma or Equivalent •English as Second Language
[University Focused]		•Continuing Professional Education

Purpose and Design:
Percent of Noncredit Offerings by Type



Purpose & Design:
Instructional Characteristics/Credentials by Noncredit Type

Noncredit Type	N	Contact Hours		Delivery			Associated Credential			
		Median	Mean	% F2F	% Hybrid	% Online	N for College Cert	College Awarded Certificate	N for Industry Cert	Industry Awarded Certification
Occupational Training (not including Sponsored)										
South Carolina	4,298	**24**	**66**	83%	0%	17%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Iowa	657	**26**	**51**	75%	7%	46%	280	80%	280	54%
Louisiana*	316	**40**	**114**	97%	6%	33%	364	75%	233	93%
Virginia										
FastForward	2,006	**100**	**112**	92%	5%	3%	2006	NA	2,006	100%
Non-FastForward	2,952	**15**	**35**	61%	4%	35%	2952	NA	2,952	0%
Tennessee										
TCAT**	33	**1,512**	**1,498**	100%	0%	0%	12	18%	NA	NA
CCs	1,232	**20**	**45**	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	314	25%
Personal Interest										
South Carolina	439	**3**	**31**	98%	0%	2%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Iowa	33	**11**	**16**	73%	0%	61%	4	100%	4	75%
Louisiana*	14	**30**	**29**	100%	0%	29%	364	56%	233	89%
Virginia	117	**6**	**9**	65%	1%	34%	117	NA	117	0%
Tennessee	NA	**NA**	**NA**	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

*Data for Louisiana is 8 of 12 colleges

** TCAT contact hours/delivery data is for 33 of 65 offerings

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Purpose & Design: Instructional Characteristics/Credentials by Noncredit Type

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Purpose & Design/Outcomes: Instructional Characteristics/Credentials by Noncredit Type

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FastForward	2,006	100	112	92%	5%	3%	**2,006**	**NA**	**2,006**	**100%**
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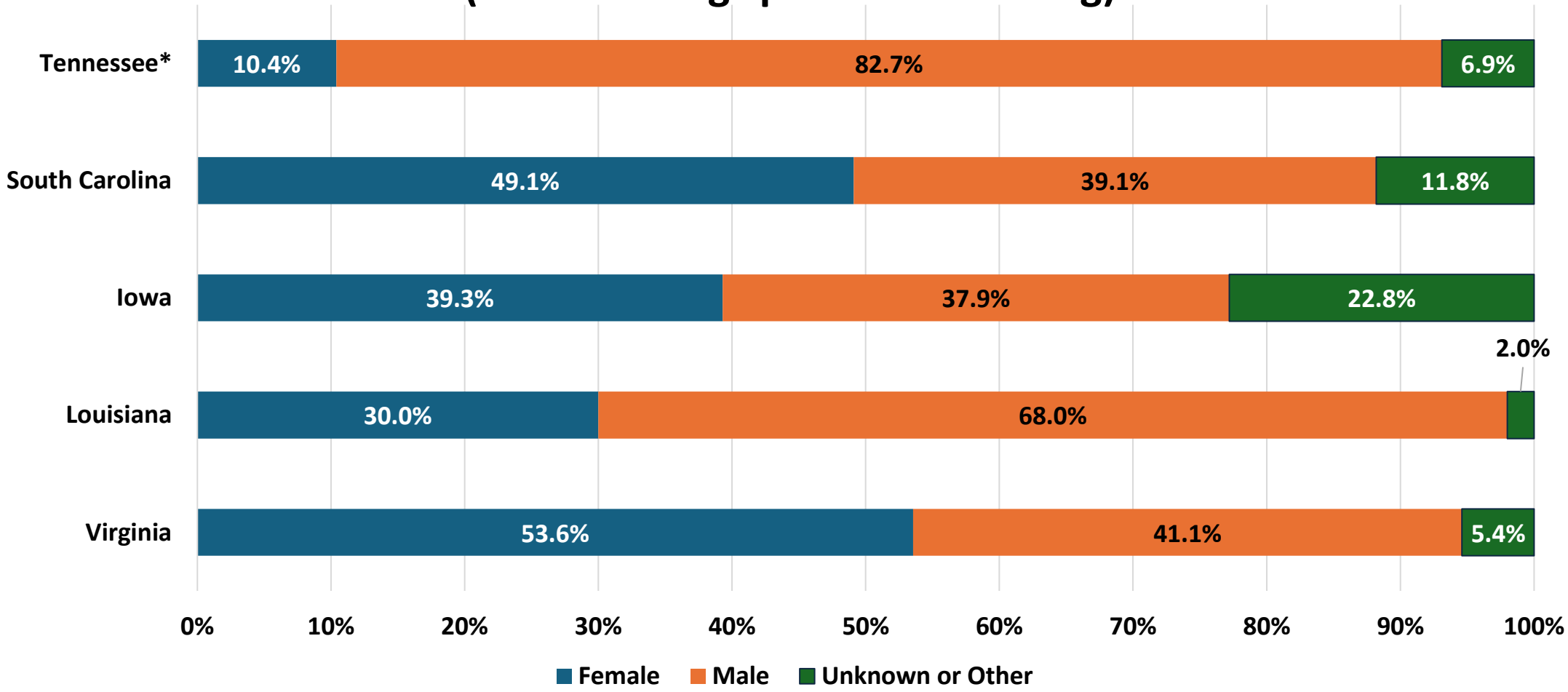
Outcomes: Data Partners and Types of Data Matched to Noncredit

IOWA	LOUISIANA	VIRGINIA
• Department of Corrections (data on students in incarceration and comparison groups) • Department of Education (high school students/graduates) • Department of Inspection and Appeals (Certified Nurse Assistant licensing – CNA) • Department of Public Health (health occupational and related licenses other than CNA) • Department of Transportation (commercial driver's licenses) • Workforce Development (employment and wages) • National Student Clearinghouse (postsecondary enrollment)	• Workforce Commission (employment and wages) • Board of Regents (enrollments and completers) • Department of Children and Family Services – SNAP Employment and Training (enrollments and completers) • National Student Clearinghouse (post-secondary enrollment)	• Employment Commission (employment and wages) • Department of Health Professions (Nursing and other health occupational and related licenses, including CNA) • Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (skilled trades, cosmetology, athletics, and other regulated occupational licenses) • Department of Social Services (as a SNAP 50/50 provider and for special research and collaborative projects) • National Student Clearinghouse (postsecondary enrollment)

Demographics & Enrollment:
Percent Enrollment in Occupational/Vocational Noncredit by Sex (not including sponsored training)



*TCAT data only

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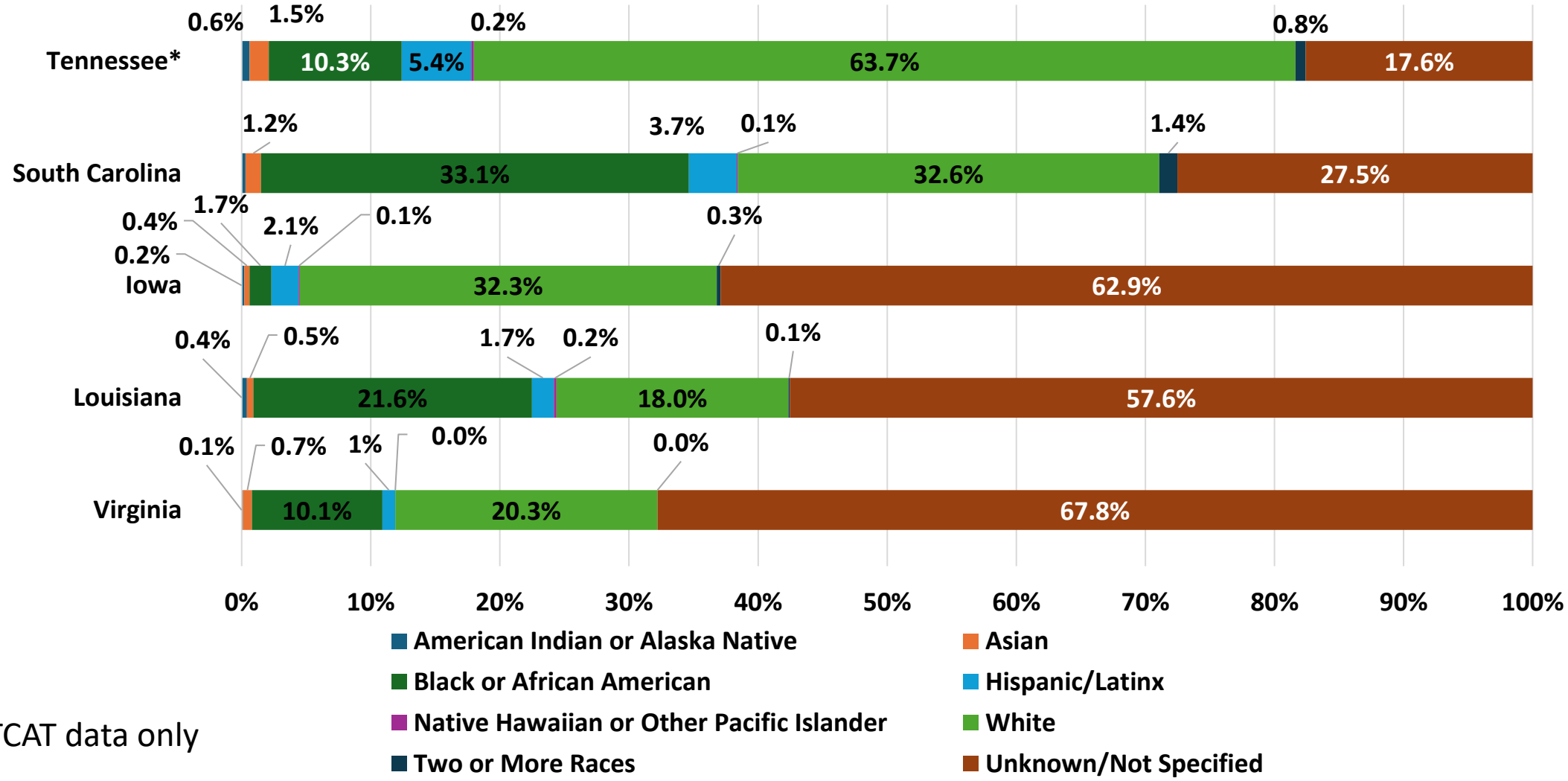
Demographics & Enrollment:
Percent Enrollment in Occupational/Vocational Noncredit by Race (not including sponsored/contract training)



*TCAT data only

Finance: Noncredit Funding Mechanisms across States

FUNDING TYPES/STATE	IOWA	LOUISIANA	VIRGINIA
State Enrollment-Based Funding Formula	✓		
Special Initiative Funding for Occupational Training in Workforce Priority Areas	✓	✓	✓
Need-Based Funding for Occupational Training	✓		✓
Need-Based Funding for Wraparound Student Support	✓		✓

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Noncredit Data Journey

HOW-TOs FOR STATES

Roadmap for Building a Noncredit Data Infrastructure

If your state has begun collecting noncredit data:

Step 1: Take an inventory of current noncredit data elements and the data being collected.

Whether or not your state has begun data collection:

Step 2: Begin with essentials and build over time.

Step 3: Ensure that your mission or multiple missions are captured and differentiated.

Step 4: Choose a data platform that allows for interconnectivity.

Step 5: Build partnerships over time for credentials and labor market outcomes.

Step 6: Develop organizational systems that allow for growth and refinement.

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Recent Publications from our State Noncredit Data Project
Data Dictionary; State Reports; Cross-State Report

State Noncredit Education Data Project Journey: Two Year Project Summary
https://go.rutgers.edu/nve3vftu

Collecting and Understanding Noncredit Community College Data: A Taxonomy and How-To Guide for States
https://go.rutgers.edu/ndec61gy

The State Community College Noncredit Data Infrastructure: Lessons from Iowa, Louisiana, and Virginia
https://go.rutgers.edu/fkg5ni15

To learn more about our *State Noncredit Data Project*, scan the QR code or visit
https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/

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Join the State Noncredit Data Project Learning Community

https://go.rutgers.edu/learningcommunitysignup

Join our next meeting on September 16 at 4:00pm Eastern – Perspectives on state governance structures related to noncredit data from a panel of state partners, with commentary from Amanda Winters, National Governors Association.

Save the date for our December 16 meeting at 4:00pm Eastern.

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