



SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT **ANNUAL REPORT** 2024-2025



www.swccd.edu

900 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista, CA 91910-7299





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MISSION STATEMENT

Southwestern Community College District is the premier public institution of higher education in Southern San Diego County that serves a diverse community of students by providing quality academic programs, comprehensive student support services that ensure equitable access, and clear pathways to student success.

Southwestern Community College District promotes learning and success to prepare students to become critical thinkers and engaged life-long learners/global citizens. The District is committed to continuous improvements through the use of data-informed planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Southwestern Community College District utilizes a variety of instructional modalities to provide educational and career opportunities in the following areas: Associate degree and certificate programs, transfer, professional, technical and career advancement, foundational skills, personal enrichment, and continuing education.

Governing Board approved August 12, 2024

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GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENT'S & SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



SOUTHWESTERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DISTRICT, GOVERNING
BOARD PRESIDENT

DON DUMAS



SOUTHWESTERN
COLLEGE,
SUPERINTENDENT/
PRESIDENT

MARK SANCHEZ, ED.D.

Dear Friends of Southwestern College,

This year has been a powerful reminder of what happens when innovation, opportunity, and community come together. At Southwestern College (SWC), we are more than an institution of higher education, we are the foundation of South County's workforce, a bridge across cultures and borders, and a home where learners from all backgrounds and stages of life can thrive.

Our students come to us with diverse experiences, ambitions, and dreams. Some are just beginning their academic journeys, others are retraining for new careers, and many are balancing work, family, and school all at once. At SWC, every one of them belongs. We remain committed to meeting students where they are and equipping them with the tools, confidence, and support they need to succeed.

Over the past year, we have embraced bold partnerships and forward-thinking initiatives that reflect the future of our region. From expanding pathways to four-year degrees right here in South County, to strengthening cross-border collaboration, to reimagining our spaces for hands-on learning, we are creating opportunities that prepare students for the jobs of today and the industries of tomorrow.

What sets SWC apart is our unwavering focus on equity and inclusion. We know that talent is everywhere, and our role is to open doors to education, to careers, and to possibility. Whether through scholarships, workforce training, or accessible programs that honor our binational identity, we are building a community where every student can see themselves in a brighter future.

This annual report reflects not only our milestones, but also our mission in action: transforming lives through education, strengthening our economy, and shaping the next generation of leaders. As we look ahead, we will continue to pursue partnerships that align with the needs of our students and our community. Together, we are laying the groundwork for a more resilient, innovative, and inclusive South County.

Thank you for joining us in this journey of growth and transformation. With your support, SWC will continue to be a place where dreams take root, opportunities flourish, and every learner has the chance to thrive.

With gratitude and Jaguar pride,

Don Dumas *Mark Sanchez*

Don Dumas

Governing Board President

Mark Sanchez, Ed.D.

Superintendent/President



BLOOMING AGAIN: BOTANICAL GARDEN REOPENS

Southwestern College (SWC) hosted an official ribbon-cutting ceremony for its newly renovated 4-acre Botanical Garden and Tennis Center in November 2024.

The garden's aging structures have been replaced with upgrades, including modern classrooms, new greenhouses, a floral laboratory, a maintenance and construction room, and administrative offices.



The completion of the project marks the Botanical Garden as a “premier learning and teaching center” and home to SWC’s Landscape Architecture and Landscape and Nursery Technology programs. The department offers over 40 courses in landscape architecture, nursery production, sustainable landscape practices, and more. The garden is open to the public free of charge.

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE’S CONSTRUCTION TRADES PROGRAM EMPOWERS THROUGH SKILL

Southwestern College’s (SWC) Trades Program continues to transform lives through its Apprenticeship Readiness Program, a pre-apprenticeship initiative designed to connect job seekers with high-demand careers in the construction industry. The program combined hands-on training with industry-recognized certifications, helping students from diverse backgrounds access sustainable career pathways.

Among the program’s many success stories is Jose Luis Pereda who, after being laid off from the tech industry following a 20-year career, found a new direction through SWC’s Continuing Education department. Seeking evening and weekend classes that aligned with his schedule, Jose enrolled in the Trades Program and rekindled his long-standing interest in electrical engineering. The experience not only offered job opportunities but reignited his professional passion.

Maria Ramirez, another program participant, initially approached SWC to inquire about forklift certification. Instead, she discovered the broader opportunities available within the construction trades. Inspired by the program’s structure and support, Maria pivoted toward a new career and is now encouraging her children to consider similar paths. As a mother of three, she emphasized the program’s potential to build a secure future, citing the industry’s strong wages, benefits, and steady demand across San Diego County.

The Apprenticeship Readiness Program introduces students to trades such as carpentry, sheet metal, and electrical work. Professor Jenifer Arce, who leads the program, underscored its unique ability to open doors for all participants, especially women pursuing careers in traditionally male-dominated fields.



NURSING STUDENTS ACHIEVE 100% SUCCESS AND A FULLY FUNDED PATH MOVING FORWARD



120

Students received
their Certified Nursing
Assistant (CNA) license



100%

Certification student
pass rate of the CDPH
certification exam

Southwestern College's Vocational Nursing (VN) Program has been ranked No. 1 in the United States for four of the past five years, according to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). The ranking, based on national exam pass rates, reflects the program's excellence in preparing students for careers in patient care.

Students entering the VN Program were greeted with an incredible surprise on their first day of class: a fully funded education, courtesy of a generous donation from the Guy and Olive Lookabaugh Foundation. Dianne and Tom Lookabaugh made the announcement, revealing the foundation's contribution would cover the tuition for all 30 students in the program, as well as providing each student with their first monogrammed stethoscope.

UNIVERSITY NOW INITIATIVE

A joint City of Chula Vista, Southwestern College (SWC), and San Diego Regional Policy & Innovation Center-led task force released a research white paper outlining next steps for attracting higher education partners and developing the city's 383-acre University and Innovation District on October 25, 2024.

The research paper culminated a year-long process funded by Chula Vista and state legislative dollars and builds upon efforts dating back to 1993, to expand higher education and workforce opportunities in South County.



Drawing on the 2023 Workforce and Education Needs Assessment conducted by the same partners, the paper highlighted business, healthcare, technology, cybersecurity, and information systems as high-priority fields for new bachelor's degree programs in South County. The assessment also identified 147 priority occupations, many requiring bachelor's degrees in healthcare and wellness-related fields such as bilingual speech-language pathology and wellness coaching. Notably, 73% of the region's priority occupations are projected to require a bachelor's degree at entry, yet the region remains underserved in terms of degree-granting institutions.

In response, the white paper outlined nine academic disciplines that could be established at the University and Innovation District to attract binational higher education partners. These disciplines are designed to address current and future workforce needs, reflect binational, regional, and academic demands, and align with existing transfer programs at SWC that lead into the California State University and University of California systems, as well as university programs in Tijuana. A result of this partnership was a groundbreaking partnership between Southwestern College (SWC) and California State University San Marcos (CSUSM). On May 29, 2025, we hosted a ceremonial signing that brought new bachelor's degree

programs directly to San Diego's South County. This marked the first time CSUSM offered degree pathways in the region, through a collaboration based at the newly established SWC University Center.

This partnership introduced accessible, high-demand bachelor's degree programs to the heart of South County, enabling local students to complete their four-year degrees close to home. CSUSM @ SWC plans to launch programs in Business Administration, Computer Information Systems, and Cybersecurity in Fall 2026, followed by Human Development with emphasis on Wellness Coaching and Bilingual Speech Language Pathology in Fall 2027.



JAGUAR INNOVATION EARNS NATIONAL RECOGNITION IN ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING

Southwestern College (SWC) made history this spring as students from two dynamic academic programs stepped into the national spotlight to compete against top-tier universities from across North America. In an impressive display of innovation, grit, and Jaguar pride, teams from SWC's automotive, engineering and architecture departments represented the only community college in two highly competitive design-based challenges.



Just days later, SWC's Jag Racing team traveled to Marana, Arizona, to compete in the prestigious Baja SAE off-road engineering competition becoming the only community college among 72 registered collegiate teams from institutions such as Cornell, UCLA, Virginia Tech, and Purdue. Composed of 34 students from the college's automotive technology, engineering, and business programs, the Jag Racing team designed, built, and tested their own all-terrain vehicle, gaining hands-on experience in engineering design, manufacturing, and project management.



Three teams of architecture students from SWC participated in the prestigious 2025 Design Village Competition at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Twenty-one students designed, built, and inhabited temporary structures, transported by hand to Cal Poly's Architectural Experimental Laboratory, during a 48-hour immersive experience. The competition challenged students to bring their designs to life, testing both structural ingenuity and livability, all in line with Cal Poly's renowned "Learn-by-Doing" philosophy.



DREAMS WITHOUT BORDERS: SWC BREAKS NEW GROUND IN BINATIONAL EDUCATION

BINATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM IMPACT:



388

AB-91
STUDENTS
SINCE LAUNCH



60

SPRING 2025
BINATIONAL
GRADUATES



337

GLOBAL
ENTRY PASSES
DISTRIBUTED

Southwestern College (SWC) broke new ground by offering its first in-person college course at Tijuana's CETYS Universidad campus, which began on September 25, 2024. Launched as part of a strategic partnership formalized in November 2023, this initiative marked a major step forward in cross-border educational collaboration.



In a landmark moment for binational education, leaders from California and Mexico gathered at SWC for the ceremonial signing of the Memorandum of Understanding finalizing Assembly Bill 91 (AB-91) on December 19, 2024. This pivotal legislation officially enabled community colleges in San Diego and Imperial Valley to implement AB-91, allowing students residing in Mexico, within 45 miles of the California-Mexico border, to attend these colleges at in-state tuition rates.

On June 12, 2025, SWC proudly hosted its Third Annual Binational Graduation Ceremony at CETYS Universidad in Tijuana, offering 60 students a meaningful opportunity to celebrate their academic achievements with more than 500+ family and friends who could not attend the main commencement ceremony in Chula Vista. The event reflected the college's ongoing commitment to building educational bridges across the U.S.-Mexico border and supporting students from economically and educationally disadvantaged communities.



"A la clase binacional del 2025, les dejo con esto: Hoy sembramos en tierra firme lo que otros sembraron en tierra dura. Que vivan los sueños, y los soñadores. Y que nunca dejemos de cruzar fronteras. El mundo está en mi birrete — pero mis raíces siguen colgando de mi cuello. Y si algo he aprendido, es esto: Para mover el mundo, nunca hay que soltar de dónde venimos."

"To the binational class of 2025, I leave you with this: Today we sow in solid ground what others sowed in hard soil. Long live dreams, and dreamers. And may we never stop crossing borders. The world is in my mortarboard—but my roots still hang around my neck. And if I've learned anything, it's this: To move the world, you must never let go of where you come from."

— Alicia Gan, Student Keynote Speaker
Binational Commencement Ceremony
Associated Student Organization, President 2024–2025

A MILESTONE OF PRIDE AND PROGRESS: CELEBRATING DISABILITY, IDENTITY AND ADVOCACY

Southwestern College (SWC) Disability Support Services (DSS) provides academic accommodations, advocacy, and support to ensure students with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities. The program served more than 2,000 students this academic year and formed the Disability Employee Affinity Group in July 2024 to support staff and students.

SWC proudly hosted its inaugural Disability Pride Flag Raising on June 30, 2025, in recognition of Disability Pride Month and the 35th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This historic event celebrated disability identity, culture, advocacy, and reaffirmed the college's ongoing commitment to inclusion, accessibility, and the visibility of all members of its diverse community.

The event marked a significant milestone for the college, as it raised the Disability Pride Flag for the first time in campus history. The ceremony served as a powerful statement of empowerment, solidarity, and pride, honoring the contributions of individuals with disabilities and promoting awareness throughout the community.



STUDENT TRUSTEE RISES WITH CARES SUPPORT

When Mercedes Robles and her family moved from Mexico to Chula Vista, she was determined to pursue her education and build a bright future. But the reality of high housing costs quickly turned her dream into a daily struggle. As she began her first year at Southwestern College (SWC), she, her mother and her siblings found themselves living out of their car. “We found the rent here was very high and my mother, three siblings and I had to live in our car,” Mercedes recalled.

Despite the difficult circumstances and instability, Mercedes showed up on campus ready to learn. Encouraged by fellow students, she connected with SWC Cares, a campus-wide initiative supported by the SWC Foundation that brings together vital resources to support students in need.

The JAG Kitchen became a daily source of support, providing Mercedes with food, clothing, blankets, and other essential items. SWC Cares also stepped in with an emergency grant covering six nights in a hotel offering her safety, privacy, and a sense of peace. Later, their resources helped her family secure more stable housing with rental assistance.

Mercedes also received support from Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) and Associated Student Organization (ASO), receiving aid for an iPad and books. These resources have allowed her to continue her studies while taking care of her siblings, ages 14 and 8, of whom she is now the legal guardian.



Through every challenge, Mercedes remained committed to her education and to giving back. Today, she serves as Student Trustee on the Governing Board, representing the voices of thousands of students.

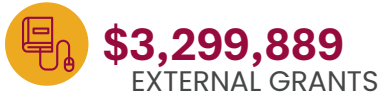
“Students are the heartbeat of the college,” she says. “I want to be a voice for others in my community and to help make greater change whenever I can.”

She wishes to pursue a degree in political science as Mercedes is passionate about advocating for equity and community resources. She credits her success to the network of support at SWC.

“I’m deeply grateful to the SWC Foundation, CARES, EOPS, ASO, and the Governing Board for being so helpful and receptive,” she said.

Mercedes Robles’ journey from homelessness to leadership is a testament to resilience, and a powerful reminder that when we invest in students, we transform lives.

STUDENT SUPPORT & FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Joseph Martinez, Chair
- Daniel Guillen, Vice Chair
- Kathy Tyner, Secretary
- Sally Preston, Treasurer
- Gustavo Perez, Past President

-
- Melyn Acasio
 - Jeff Bettger
 - Mora de Murguia
 - Patti Finnegan
 - Carlos Gomez
 - Ben Green
 - Susan Guerra
 - Lisa Johnson
 - Ricardo A. Macedo
 - Kevin Marshall
 - Jade Martinez
 - Karmin Noar
 - Carra Rhamy
 - Halé Richardson
 - Ricardo Ruffo
 - Mauricio Torre
 - Rich Yumul

**Unaudited*

SUPPORTING NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS IN HERITAGE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

In celebration of Native American Heritage Month, Southwestern College proudly reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Native American students, honoring Indigenous cultures and promoting cultural understanding. This dedication was embodied through clubs and programs like the Native American Student Alliance (NASA) club and the Native American & Indigenous Studies (NAIS) program, both of which provided crucial support, empowerment, and educational opportunities for Native American and Indigenous students.



On March 1, 2025, the college also hosted its 2nd Annual Pow Wow, a vibrant celebration of Native American culture that brought together students, families, and community members to honor traditions through song, dance, art, and storytelling.

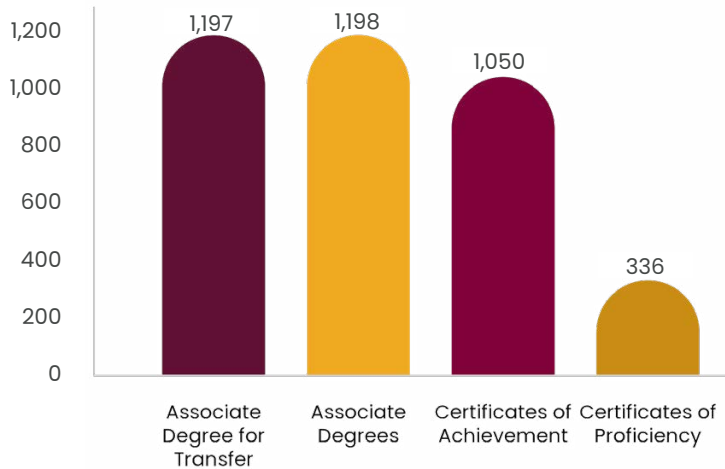
“The Native American Student Alliance gave me a space where I felt connected and understood,” explained Tyra Muggins, a Native American SWC student. “It’s more than just a club—it’s a community where we share our culture, support each other, and find purpose in celebrating who we are and where we come from.”



SWC FAST FACTS



DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES AWARDED 2024–2025



- Associate Degree for Transfer
- Certificates of Achievement
- Associate Degrees
- Certificates of Proficiency

Southwestern Community College District
Data Warehouse
(Degrees and Certificates Dashboard)



3,781

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES AWARDED 2024–2025



ANNUAL HEADCOUNT 2024–2025



CCC Chancellor's Office MIS Data
Mart, [https://datamart.cccco.edu/
DataMart.aspx](https://datamart.cccco.edu/DataMart.aspx) (Students: Annual/
Term Student Count Report)



FALL HEADCOUNT 2024



CCC Chancellor's Office MIS Data
Mart (Students: Annual/Term Student
Count Report)



5 MOST POPULAR MAJORS 2024-2025

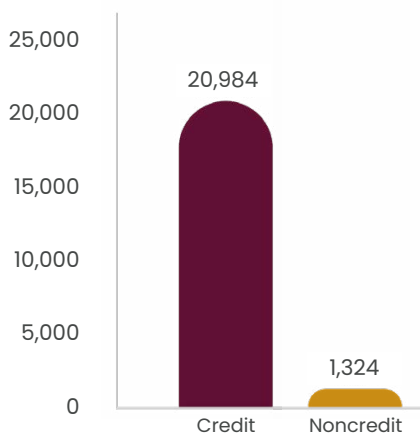


- 1. Nursing**
Associate in Science (Major Code: 02360)
- 2. Business Administration**
Associate in Arts (Major Code: 01100)
- 3. Psychology for Transfer**
Associate Degree for Transfer (Major Code: 01855)
- 4. Business Administration 2.0**
Associate Degree for Transfer (Major Code: 01106)
- 5. Biology**
Associate in Science (Major Code: 01510)

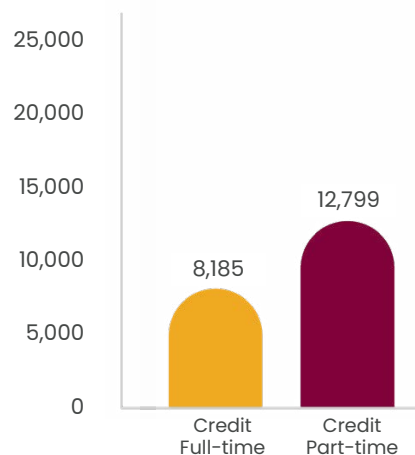
Southwestern Community College District Data Warehouse (Majors Dashboard)



HEADCOUNT BY FULL-TIME/PART-TIME/NONCREDIT FALL 2024



■ Credit: 94.1%
■ Noncredit: 5.9%
Total: 22,308

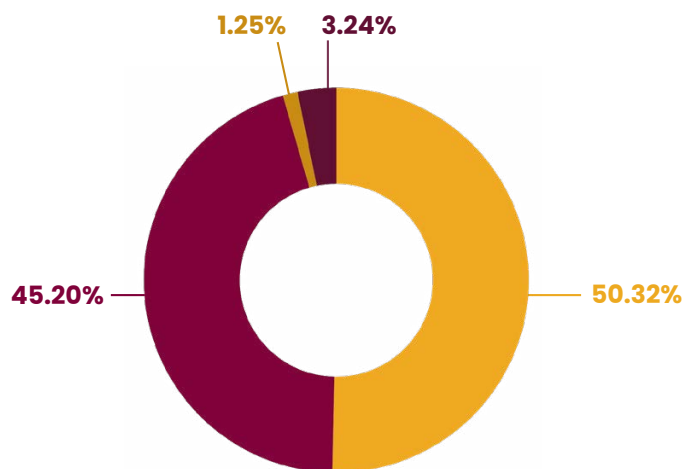


■ Credit Full-time: 39.0%
■ Credit Part-time: 61.0%
Total Credit: 20,984

*CCC Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart
(Students: Full-time/Part-Time (Unit Load))*



HEADCOUNT BY GENDER 2024–2025

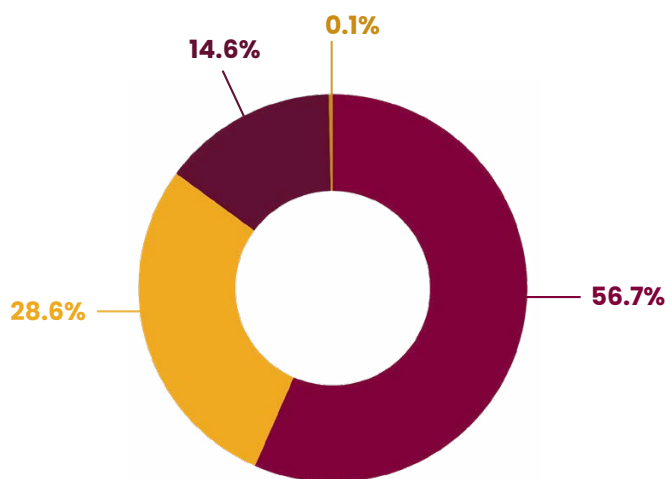


Female: 16,313
Male: 14,653
Non-Binary: 405
Unknown: 1,049
Total: 32,420

CCC Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart
(Students: Annual/Term Student Count Report)



HEADCOUNT BY AGE 2024–2025



*Average and Median based on Fall 2024 student age at start of term

CCC Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart (Students: Annual/Term Student Count Report); Mean and Median: Southwestern Community College District Data Warehouse

<25: 18,383
25–39: 9,270
40+: 4,746
Unknown: 21
Total: 32,420

Average*: 27
Median*: 22



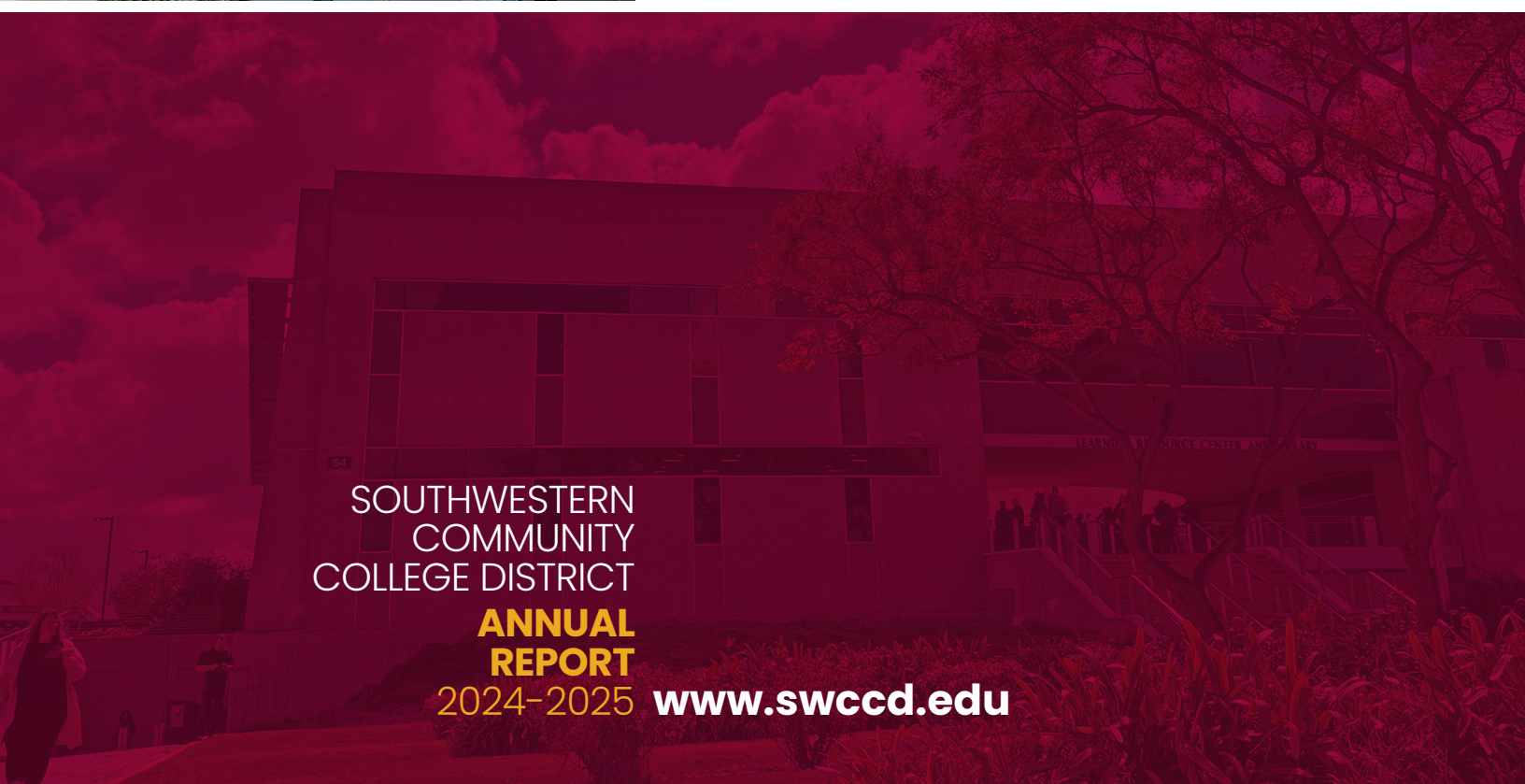
HEADCOUNT BY RACE ETHNICITY 2024–2025

African-American	5.2%	1,693
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0.2%	69
Asian	2.1%	675
Filipino	6.7%	2,169
Hispanic	58.3%	18,909
Multi-Ethnicity	3.1%	1,020
Pacific Islander	0.3%	105
Unknown	4.8%	1,565
White, Non-Hispanic	19.2%	6,215
Total	100.0%	32,420

Source: CCC Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart
(Students: Annual/Term Student Count Report)



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COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT**

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