

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND RESEARCH ON APPLIED BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

Debra D. Bragg

Office of Community College Research and Leadership

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

November 4, 2014

Today's Talk

- Applied Learners and Applied Baccalaureate Degrees (Lumina Foundation)
 - ▣ <http://ocrl.illinois.edu/projects/lumina>
- The Applied Baccalaureate Degree: An Emerging Pathway to Technician Education (National Science Foundation, Advanced Technological Education)
 - ▣ http://ocrl.illinois.edu/projects/nsf_applied_baccalaureate

Transfer

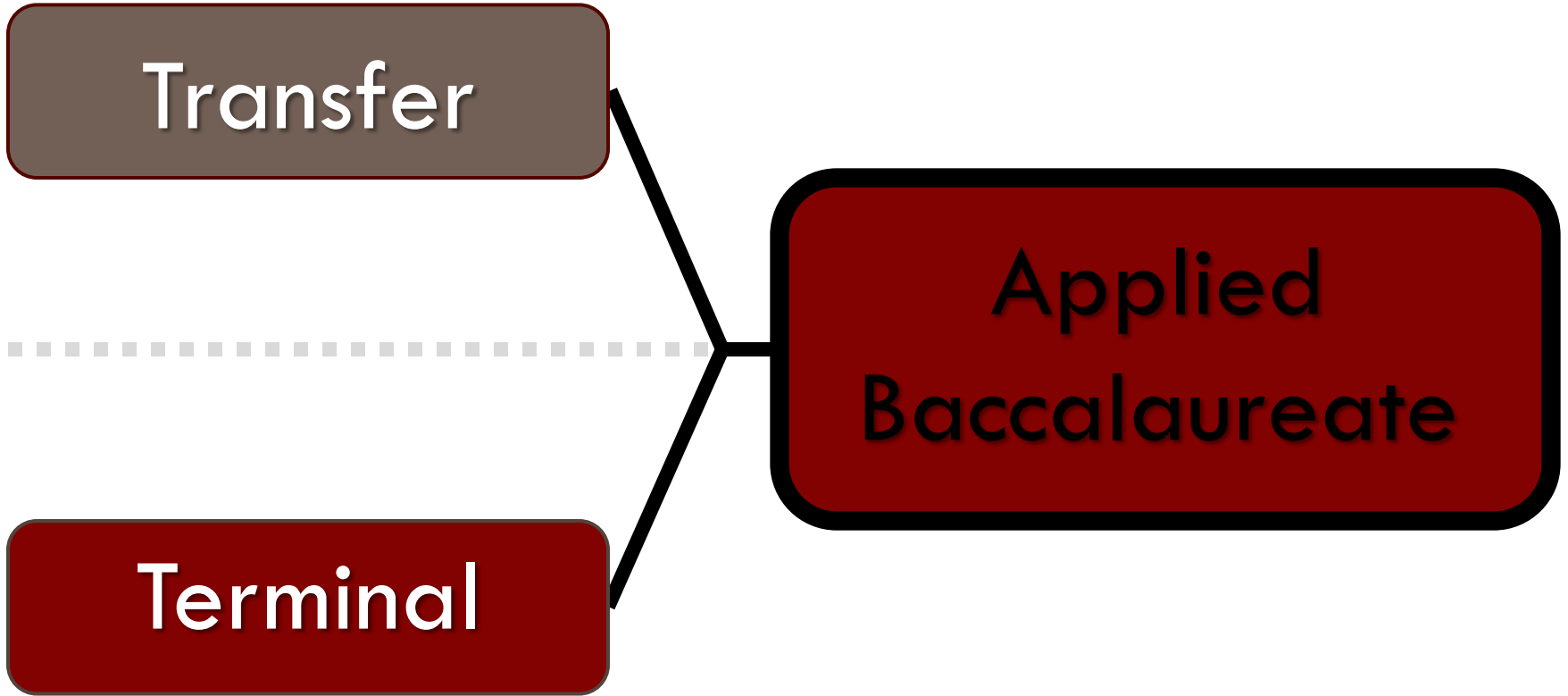
Baccalaureate

Terminal

Transfer

Applied
Baccalaureate

Terminal

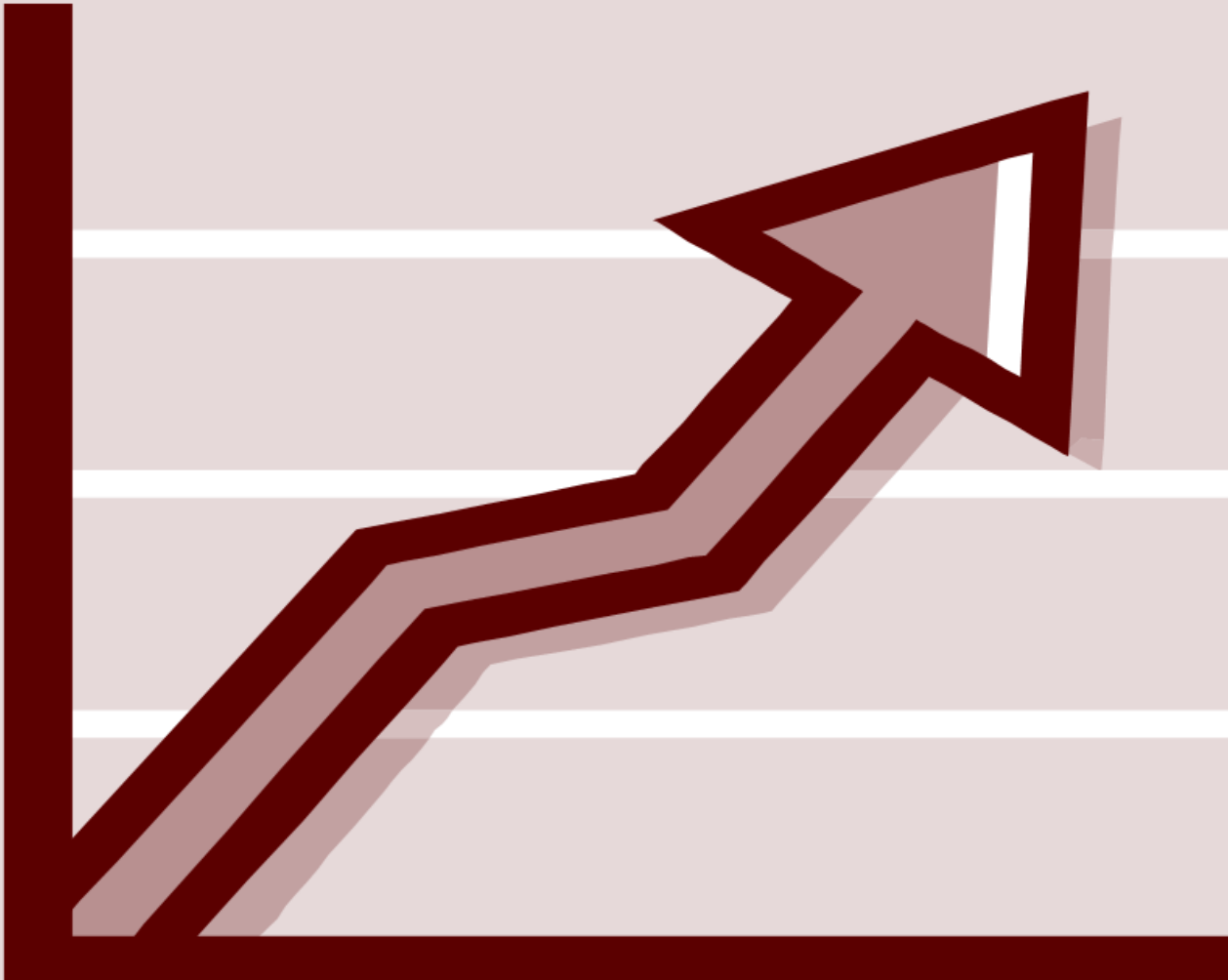


The Applied Baccalaureate is.....

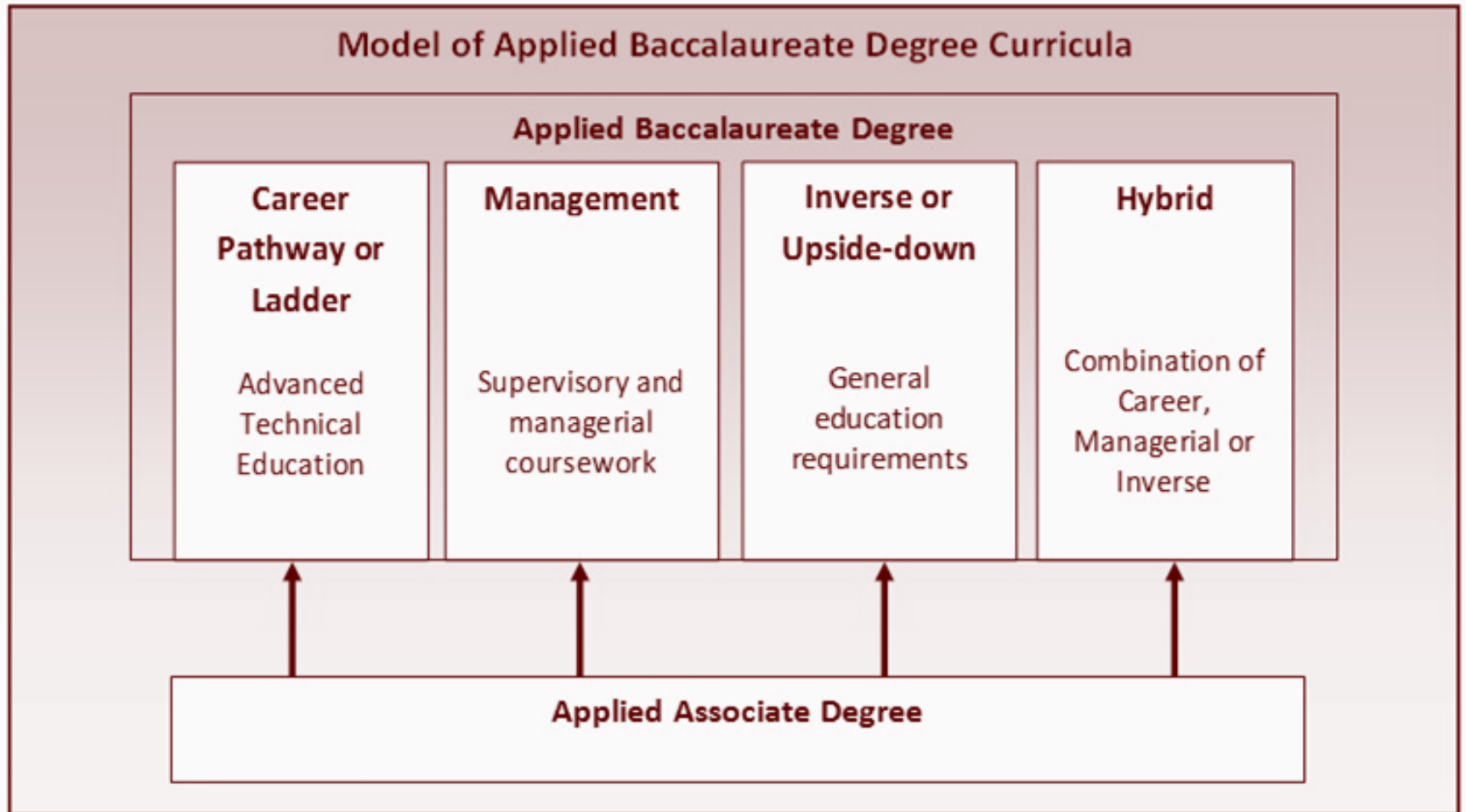
“...a bachelor’s degree designed to incorporate applied associate courses and degrees once considered as ‘terminal’ or non-baccalaureate level while providing students with the higher-order thinking skills and advanced technical knowledge and skills so desired in today’s job market.”

Townsend, Bragg, & Ruud (2008, p. 4)

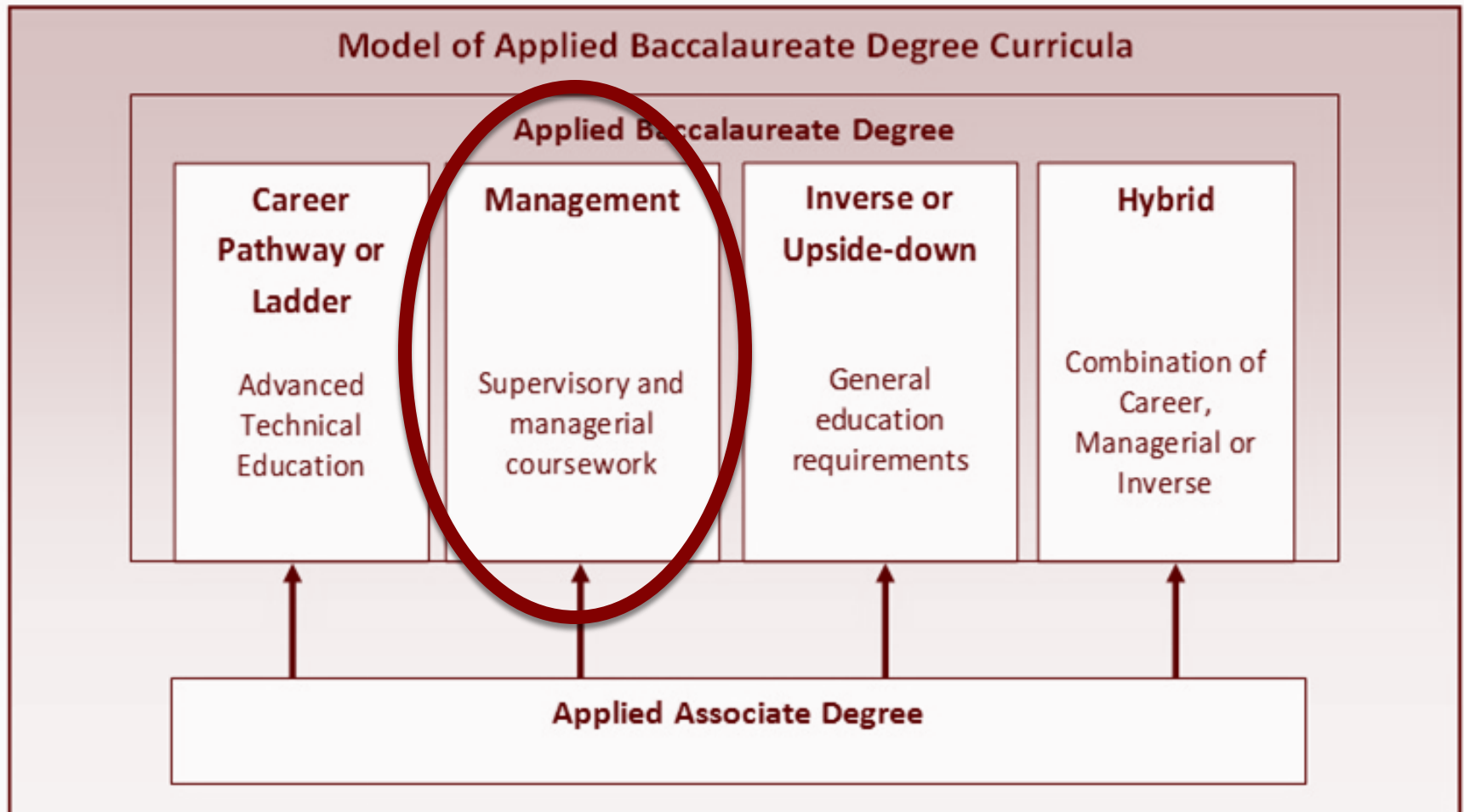
Upward Trend



Applied Baccalaureate Models



Management Model Fastest Growth



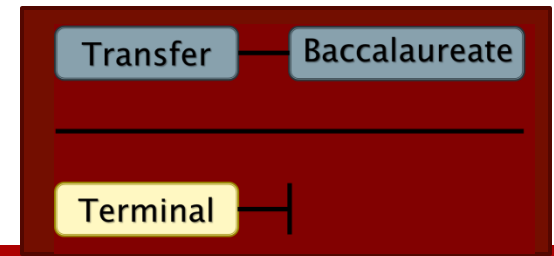
2011 AB Convening

- Defining the Applied Baccalaureate (AB)
- Differences in degrees by state
- Shifting “terminality”
- AB as Community College Baccalaureate (CCB) – mission creep
- Defining a baccalaureate education
- Accrediting the AB

NSF-ATE Study (2010-2015)

- Online Survey examined:
 - ▣ Types of degrees awarded
 - ▣ Fields of study
 - ▣ Retention and recruitment of underrepresented students at the baccalaureate-level
 - ▣ Access to student-level data for baccalaureate degrees
- All Principal Investigators from 1992 to 2011 (~700 grants)
 - ▣ Received 234 responses (36% response rate)

What We Learned

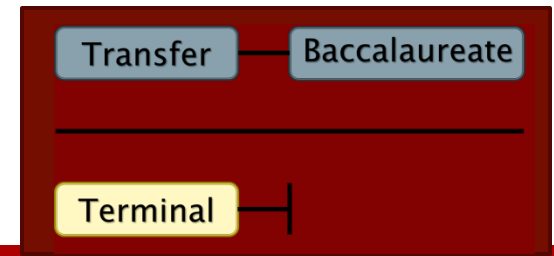


- 42% (98) respondents – “Associate degrees have established formal baccalaureate pathways”
- 20% (47) respondents – “At least one baccalaureate pathway associated with AAS degree”

But...

- 24% (56) respondents – “Associate degrees have no pathway to the baccalaureate.”

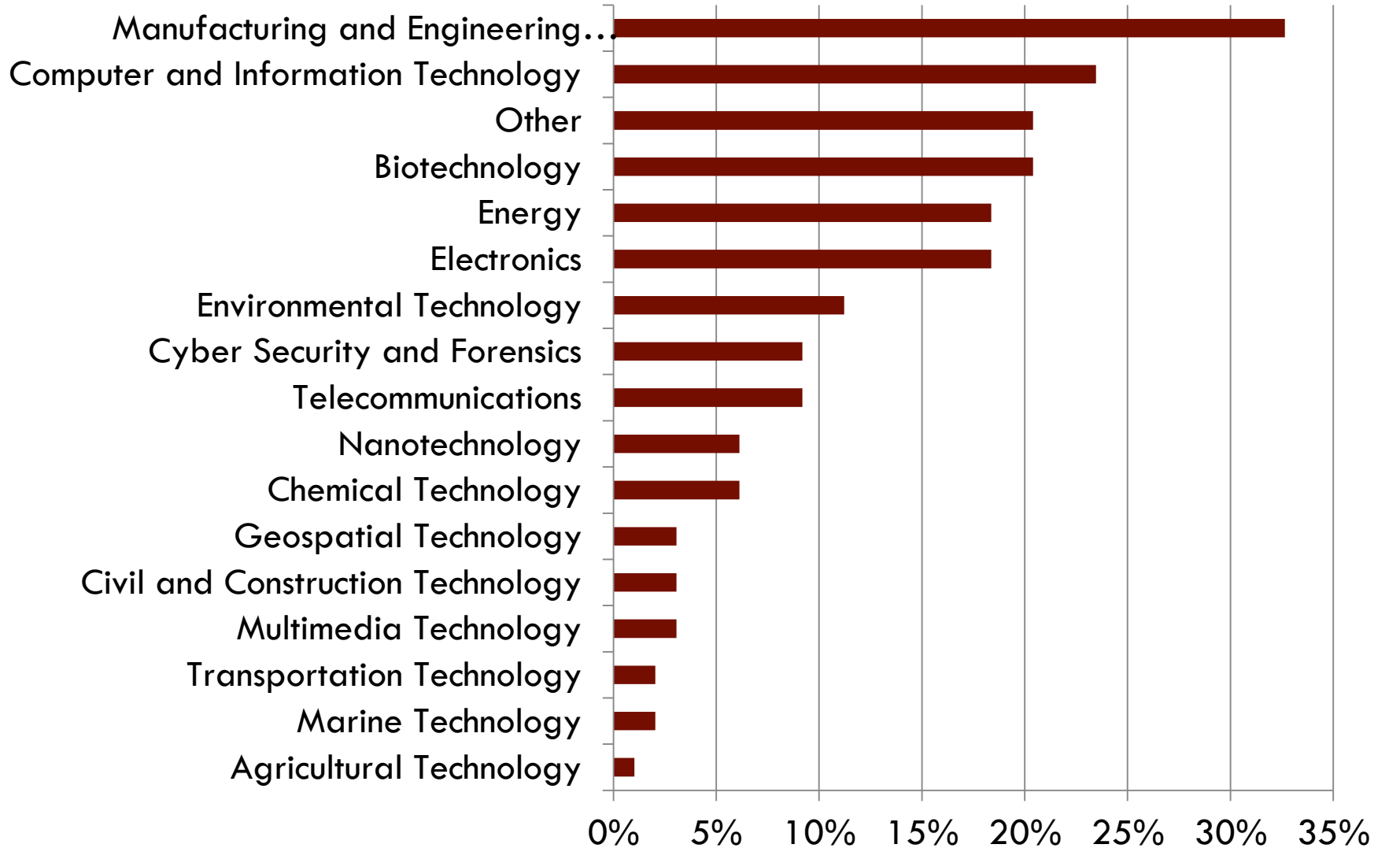
What We Learned



- 42% (98) respondents said associate degree programs had established formal baccalaureate degree pathways
- 20% (47) respondents said at least one pathway began from an associate of applied science (AAS) degree
- 24% (56) respondents said associate degrees had no pathway to the baccalaureate

“Our Civil Engineering Practitioner Degree is an AAS and therefore is a ***terminal degree***. Our participation in the survey is probably not warranted.”

STEM Fields of Study



Percent of Respondents Indicating Baccalaureate Degree Pathways

Degree Disarray

- Analysis of 87 Degree pathways
 - Applied Associate → Technical Baccalaureate (22)
 - Applied Associate → Traditional Baccalaureate (32)
 - Transfer Associate → Technical Baccalaureate (11)
 - Transfer Associate → Traditional Baccalaureate (47)

Degree Examples

Applied Associate	AAA, AAS, AAAS, AAT, AET, AT
Transfer Associate	AA, AS
Technical Baccalaureate	BAA, BAS, BAAS, BAT, BT
Transfer Baccalaureate	BA, BS

Emerging Themes

- Applied and transfer degrees strikingly similar
- Impetus for degree varies, but mostly linked to workforce and political forces
- Limited outcomes and impact data
- Mixed perceptions

Perceptions - Pro

Student

- Convenient, flexible & affordable

Community
College

- Meets workforce & community need, accessible, improves image & status

University

- Relatively painless, “no threat”

Employer

- Prepares a qualified workforce, “community builders”

Perceptions - Con

Student

- Convenient, but are there tangible benefits? Are they credible?

Community College

- Faculty perceive status inequity, too expensive, change identity

University

- Mission creep, degree duplication, & increased cost

Employer

- What does “applied baccalaureate” mean? What does it cost?

Contact:

Debra D. Bragg

Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

113 Children's Research Center, 51 W Gerty Drive, Champaign, IL 61821

(Seattle address: 4320 Phinney Ave No, Seattle, WA)

Email: dbragg@illinois.edu

PH: 217-377-3100

Website: <http://occrll.illinois.edu>

Twitter: twitter.com/occrll

Facebook: www.facebook.com/occrll