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### **III. Enrollment Trends**

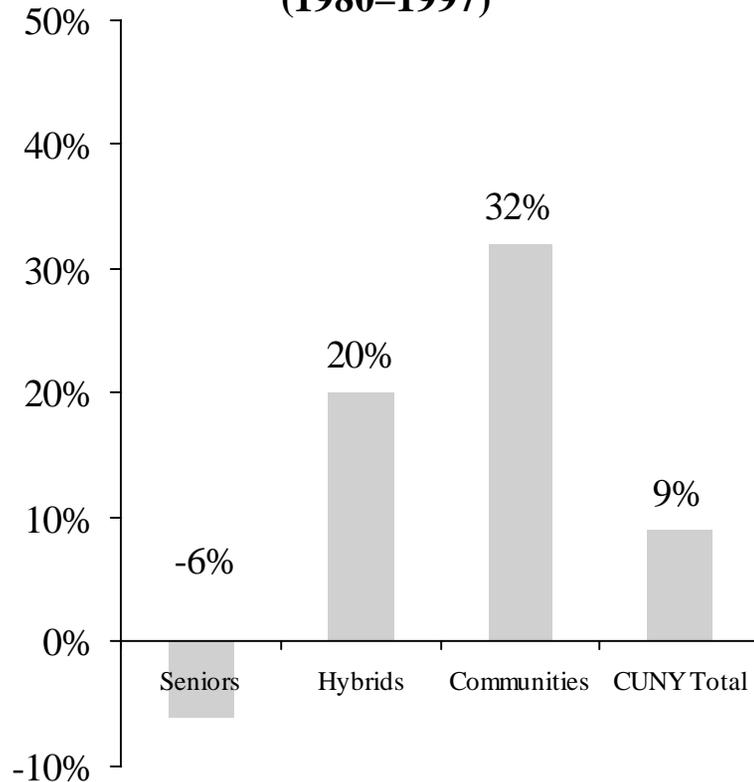
**An understanding of enrollment changes predicates any discussion of CUNY's financial experience: decreasing enrollments in the senior colleges and increasing enrollment in the community and hybrid colleges have had a significant effect on the funding levels at the colleges, as well as the composition of CUNY's student population.**

### Key Findings

- Enrollment at the senior colleges has been slowly decreasing since 1980, while the community and hybrid colleges have experienced significant increases.
- Trends in operating budgets closely resemble enrollment trends due to increases in tuition revenue seen by communities and hybrids.
- These enrollment trends have led to an overall level of instruction at CUNY that is heavily weighted in lower level education. Currently, two-thirds of all students are taking lower baccalaureate, associate, remedial or certificate courses; this does not include adult and continuing education enrollments.
- The impact of these shifts has been to change the internal focus and the external perception of the CUNY colleges to associate level study. This shift has been further influenced by the remedial education issue, as well as by the significant outreach programs offered by continuing education to special needs populations.
- While the shift may be appropriate given the university's core constituency, its effects on the financial and academic health of the senior colleges must be examined.

**Community and hybrid colleges have experienced significant growth in enrollment, while senior college enrollments have decreased (see Figure 21).**

**Figure 21**  
**Percentage Change in Enrollment\***  
**(1980–1997)**



Source: CUNY

\*Enrollment numbers do not include Adult and Continuing Education FTEs.

- In total CUNY enrollment has grown by 9.4% since 1980, an average of .6% per year.
- Community colleges have experienced the most rapid growth rate (32%), averaging 4.6% per year.
- The four hybrid colleges, which bear more resemblance to the community colleges than to the senior colleges in terms of their student composition, have grown 20%, or an average of 1.2% per year.

**Enrollment trends have also led to a high proportion of CUNY instruction being taught at the lower level.**

*Figure 22*

| <b>CUNY Student FTEs by Instruction Level*<br/>1997</b> |                   |                   |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
|   | <i>Total FTEs</i> | <i>% of Total</i> |
| <i>Upper and Graduate Level</i>                         |                   |                   |
| Graduate  | 14,517            | 10%               |
| Upper Baccalaureate                                     | 32,083            | 22%               |
| <b>Total Upper and Graduate</b>                         | <b>46,600</b>     | <b>32%</b>        |
| <i>Lower Level</i>                                      |                   |                   |
| Lower Baccalaureate                                     | 28,405            | 19%               |
| Associate   | 48,158            | 33%               |
| Remedial  | 19,278            | 13%               |
| Certificate/Non-degree                                  | 5,255             | 3%                |
| <b>Total Lower</b>                                      | <b>101,096</b>    | <b>68%</b>        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>147,696</b>    | <b>100%</b>       |

Source: CUNY

\*Enrollment numbers do not include Adult and Continuing Education FTEs.

- Less than one third of CUNY instruction is provided at the upper division or graduate level (see Figure 22).
- Yet the portion of graduate FTEs at CUNY senior colleges is on par with its peer institutions (see Appendix D), indicating that CUNY's graduate programs are successfully attracting a significant group of students.
- Lower level instruction accounts for 100% of all instruction at the community colleges, 74% of all instruction at the hybrid colleges and 43% at the senior colleges (see Figure 23).

*Figure 23*

