



# **CUNY Pell Receipt and Graduation Rates: 2001-2012**

April 2015

CUNY Office of Policy Research

# Overview of Pell Grant program

- Grant details
  - Federally funded, non-repayable
  - Partial or full, maximum \$5,730
  - Six years
  - Degree-seeking students of eligible citizenship status
- Income eligibility
  - FAFSA EFC formula: parent income, student income, family size, number in college, parent employment, etc.
  - EFC eligibility ceiling for receiving Pell: \$5,157
  - EFC, cost of attendance, and enrollment status determine grant amount
  - It's hard to say what underlying income Pell receipt represents.
  - Below \$23,000 automatically qualifies for maximum Pell.
  - Below \$50,000 allows simplified application.

# Pell receipt as indicator of low-income status

- Pell receipt is commonly used as an indicator of low-income status, e.g.:
  - Institutional reporting
  - Higher education research
  - White House initiative for Postsecondary Institution Ratings System (PIRS)
  - Washington Monthly rankings of economic value
  - Education Trust report rankings of service to low-income students
  - 2009 Higher Education Opportunity Act: Schools are required to disclose Pell graduation rate.

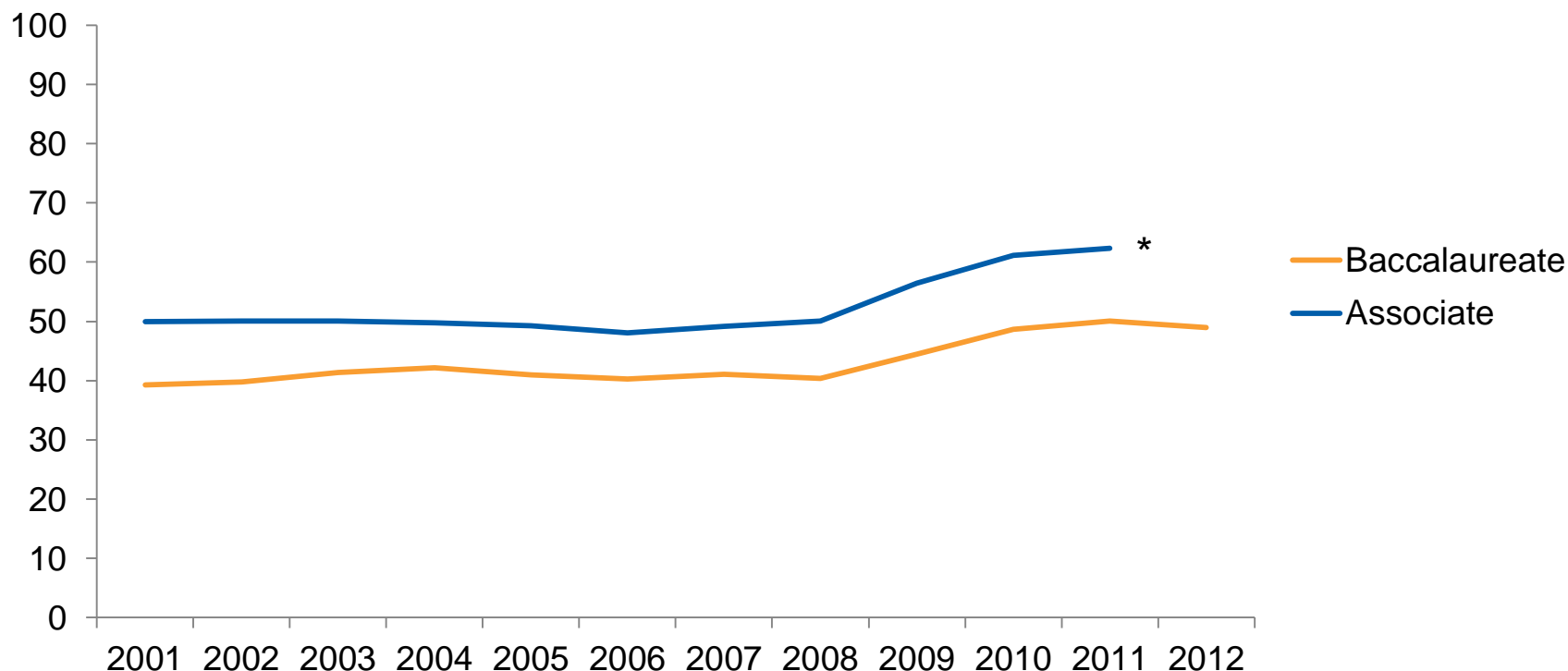
# Presentation overview

- Motivating question: Given how common the measure of Pell receipt is, how does CUNY fare and how good is the measure?
  - Part 1: Trends in Pell receipt
  - Part 2: Outcomes for Pell recipients

## Part 1: Trends in CUNY Pell receipt

Pell receipt at CUNY has increased since 2008:  
almost half of Baccalaureate and more than 60% of  
Associate students receive Pell.

## PERCENTAGE OF UNDERGRADUATES RECEIVING PELL BY DEGREE PROGRAM



Source: IRDB

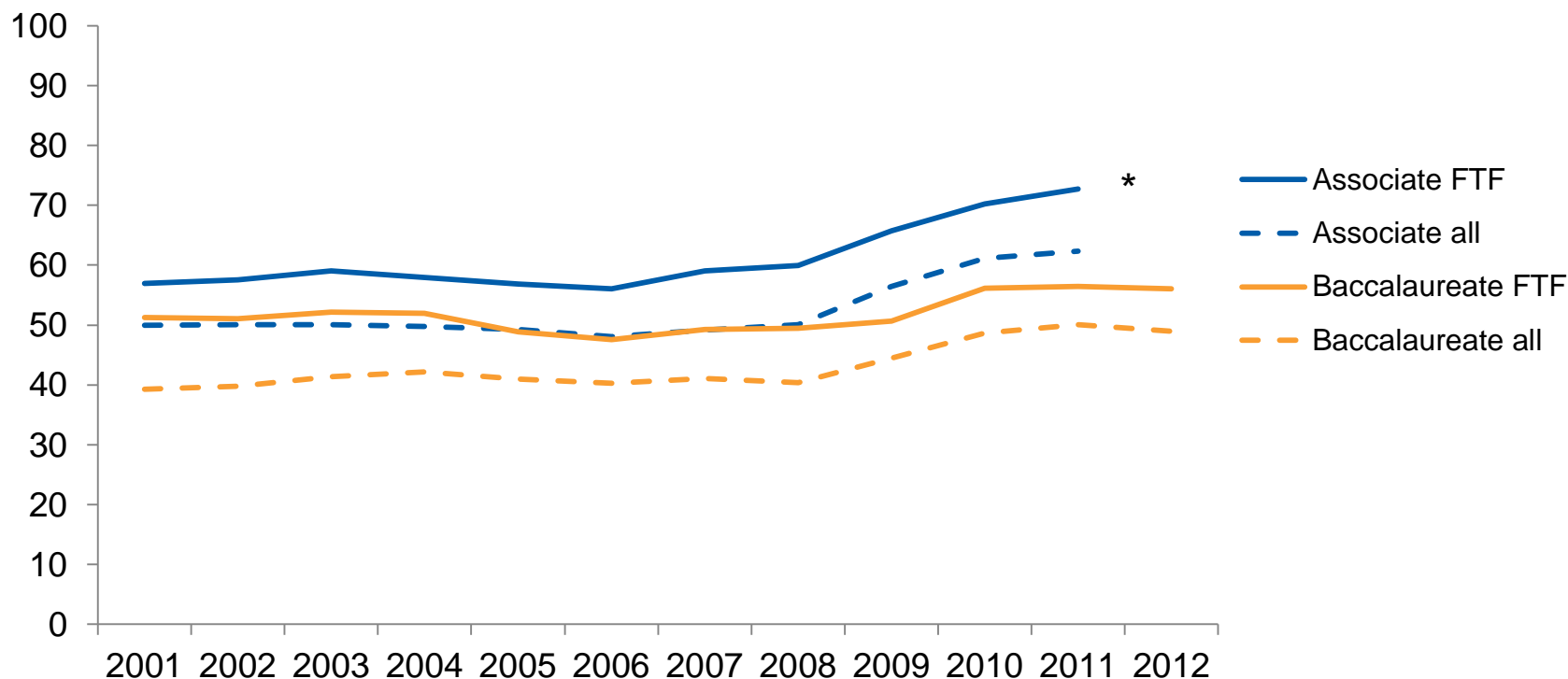
\* 2012 figure not available for Associate programs because of data quality issue.

# Pell receipt measurement issues

- Eligibility restrictions: degree-seeking citizens
  - At some institutions Pell receipt underrepresents low-income access.
  - OIRA denominator includes only eligible.
  - This analysis includes all for comparability.
- Time of measurement: fall or year-round
  - Some students are not there in fall, but receive Pell in spring.
  - Our figures are conservative.
  - Institutions might have different practices.
- Reported population: all undergraduates or FTF
  - Pell receipt among all UG has access and success components.
  - Pell receipt among FTF may be better measure of access alone.

# Pell receipt among FTF is higher than among all undergraduates.

## PERCENTAGE OF FTF RECEIVING PELL BY DEGREE PROGRAM



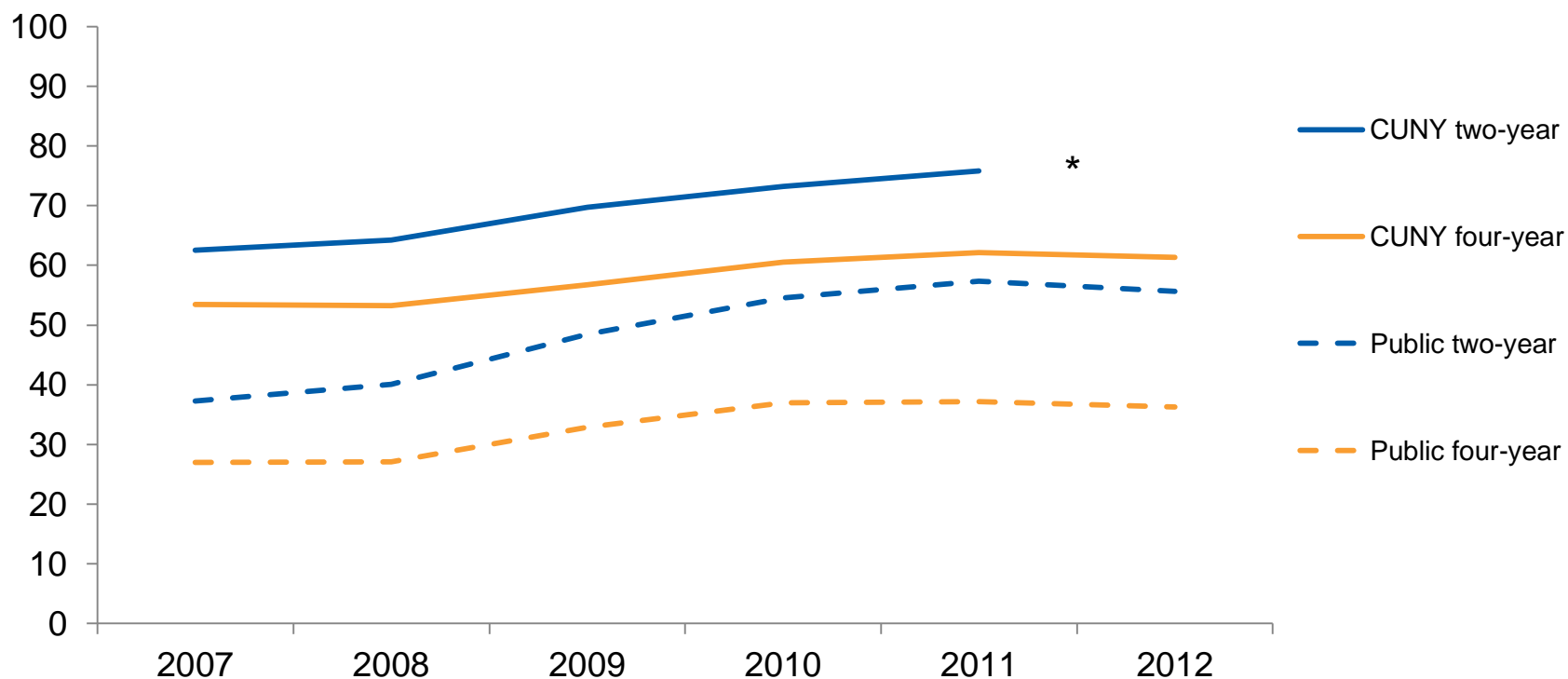
Source: IRDB

\* 2012 figure not available for Associate programs because of data quality issue.



# Pell receipt rates at CUNY are much higher than at public institutions nationally.

## PERCENTAGE OF FTF RECEIVING PELL BY INSTITUTION LEVEL, CUNY V. NATIONAL PUBLIC

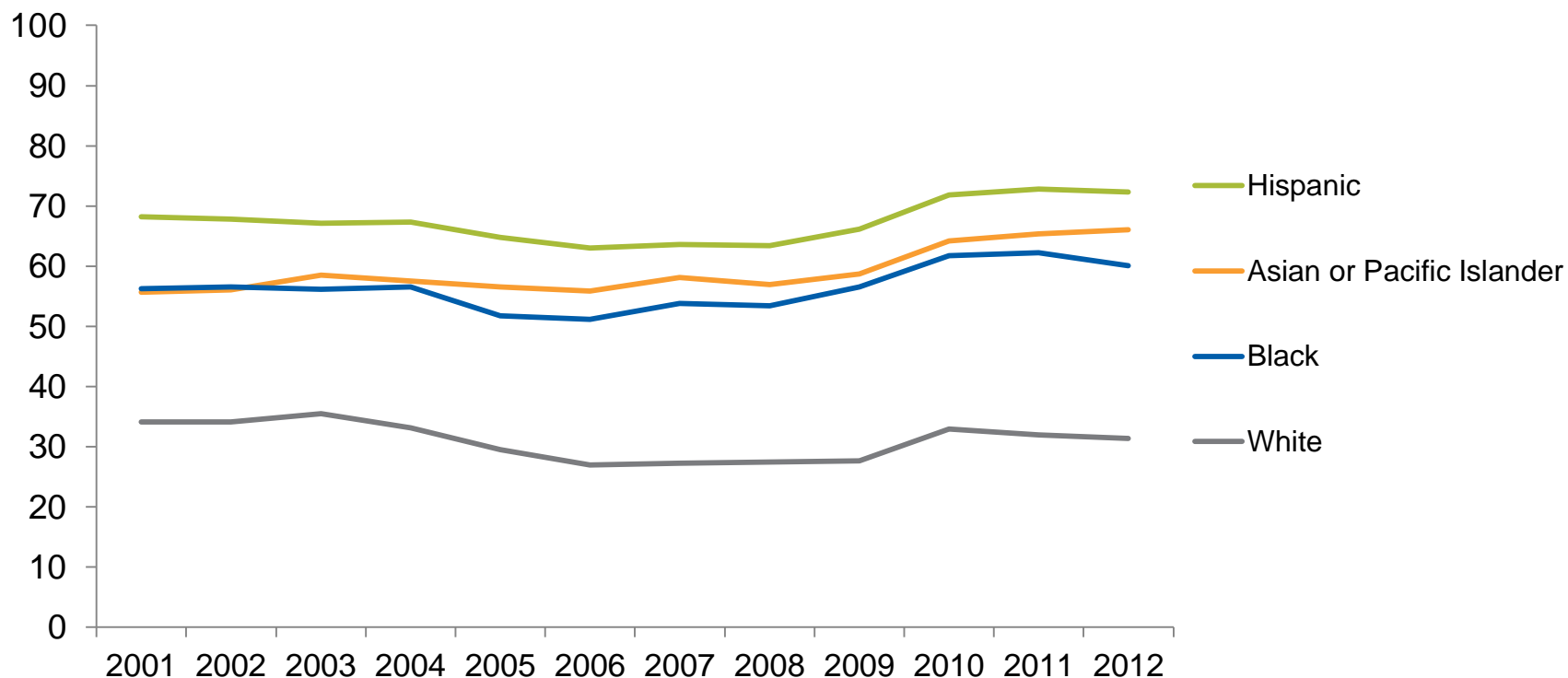


Sources: IRDB (CUNY), IPEDS (national)

\* 2012 figure not available for Associate programs because of data quality issue.

# Pell receipt is highest among Hispanics and lowest among whites.

## PERCENTAGE OF BACCALAUREATE FTF RECEIVING PELL BY RACE



Source: IRDB

# Hypotheses on increase in Pell receipt

## *Change in underlying measure of interest*

1. Increase in low-income students

## *Change independent of underlying measure of interest*

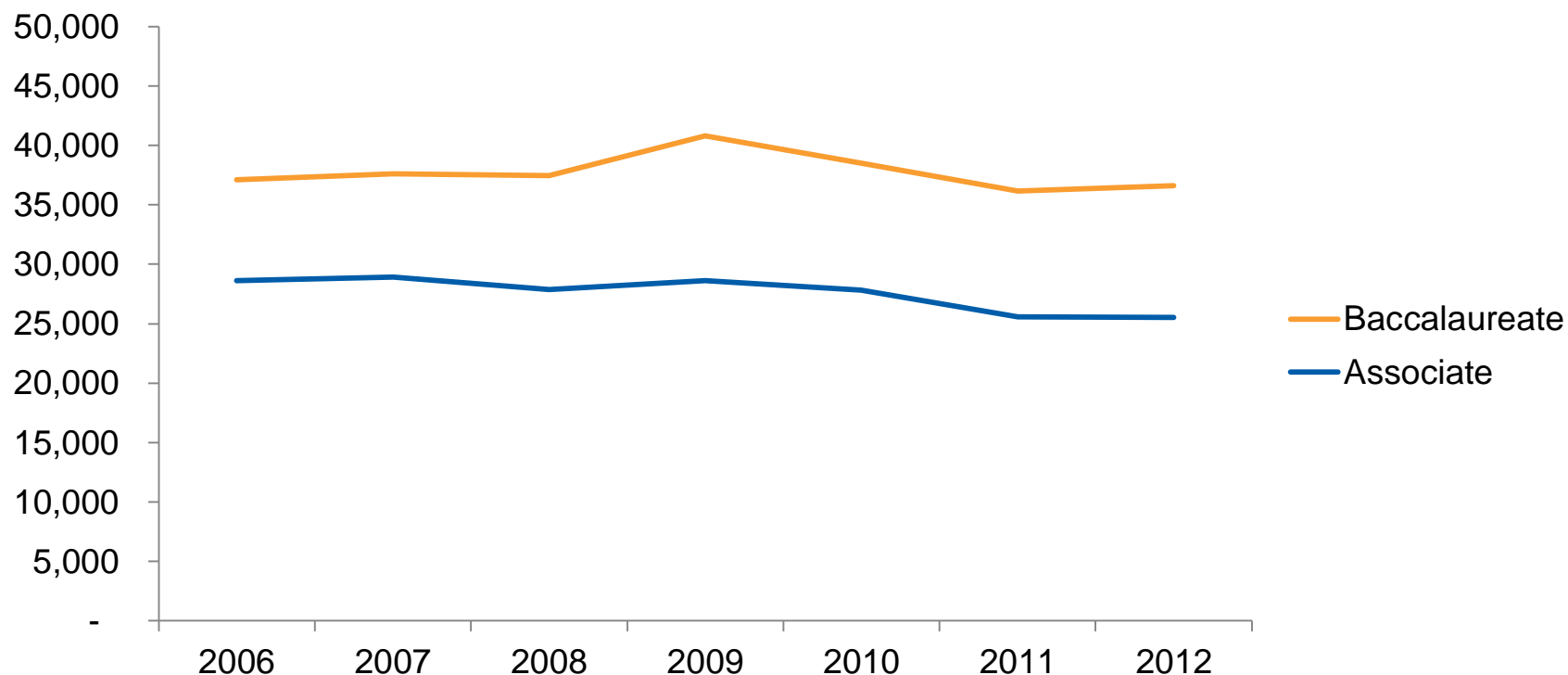
2. Changes in Pell program
3. Increase in eligible population
4. Increase in applying

## *Also possible:*

- Interactions
- Changes in reporting? E.g. SIMS to CUNYfirst

Median income decreased during our time period of interest.

### MEDIAN ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME\* FOR FTF BY DEGREE PROGRAM

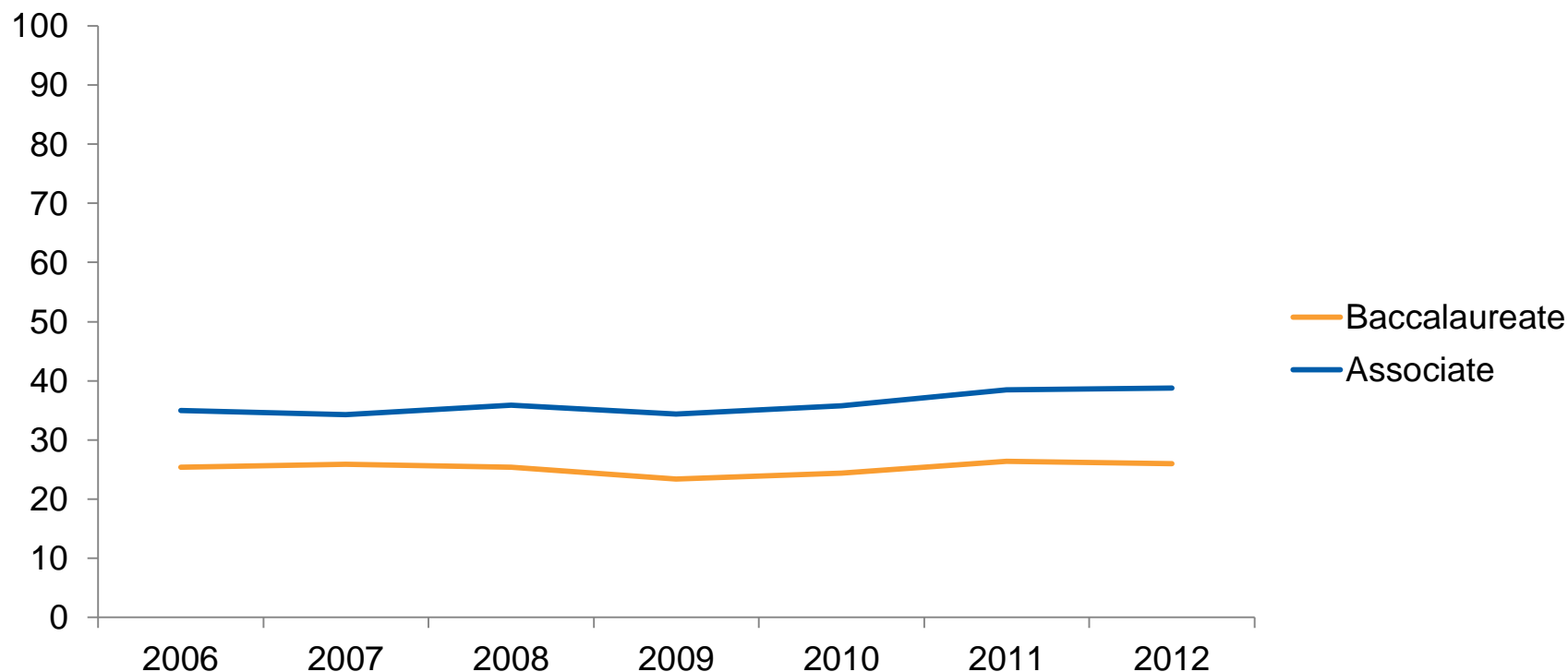


Source: FAFSA

\*Inflation-adjusted

The share of students with income below \$20,000 increased slightly.

# PERCENTAGE OF FTF WITH ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME\* BELOW \$20,000 BY DEGREE PROGRAM



Source: FAFSA

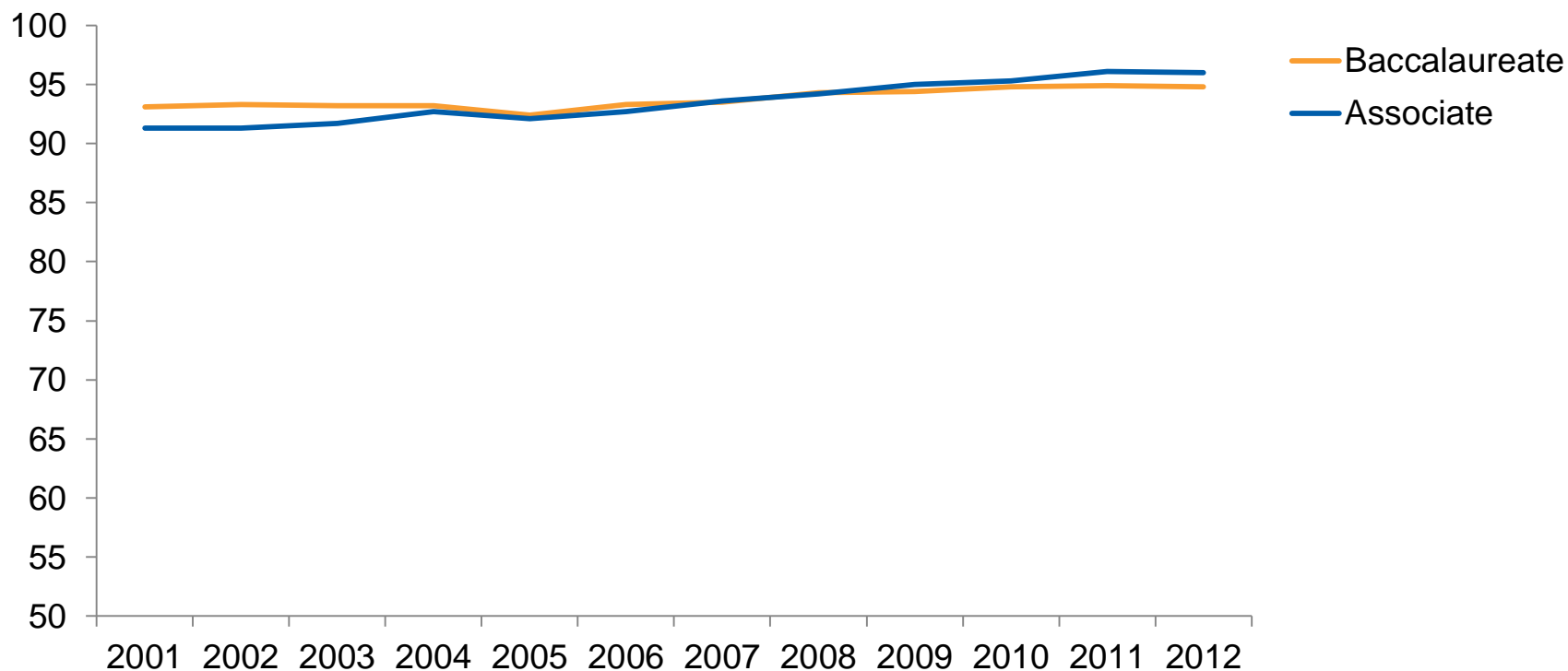
\*Inflation-adjusted

# There were several changes to the Pell program.

- 2006 to 2010: Increases in maximum grant
  - Raises of EFC eligibility ceiling, which is a fixed proportion of maximum grant
  - Increases the eligibility income range
- 2009: Changes to EFC formula reducing EFC
  - Exclusion of certain means-tested transfers from income
  - Increase in income protection allowance
  - More students fall under eligibility ceiling
- 2009: Increase in maximum income automatically qualifying
- 2009: IRS Data Retrieval Tool
- 2010: Redesign of web-based FAFSA
  - Fewer pages and questions

# The share of freshmen with Pell-eligible citizenship status increased.

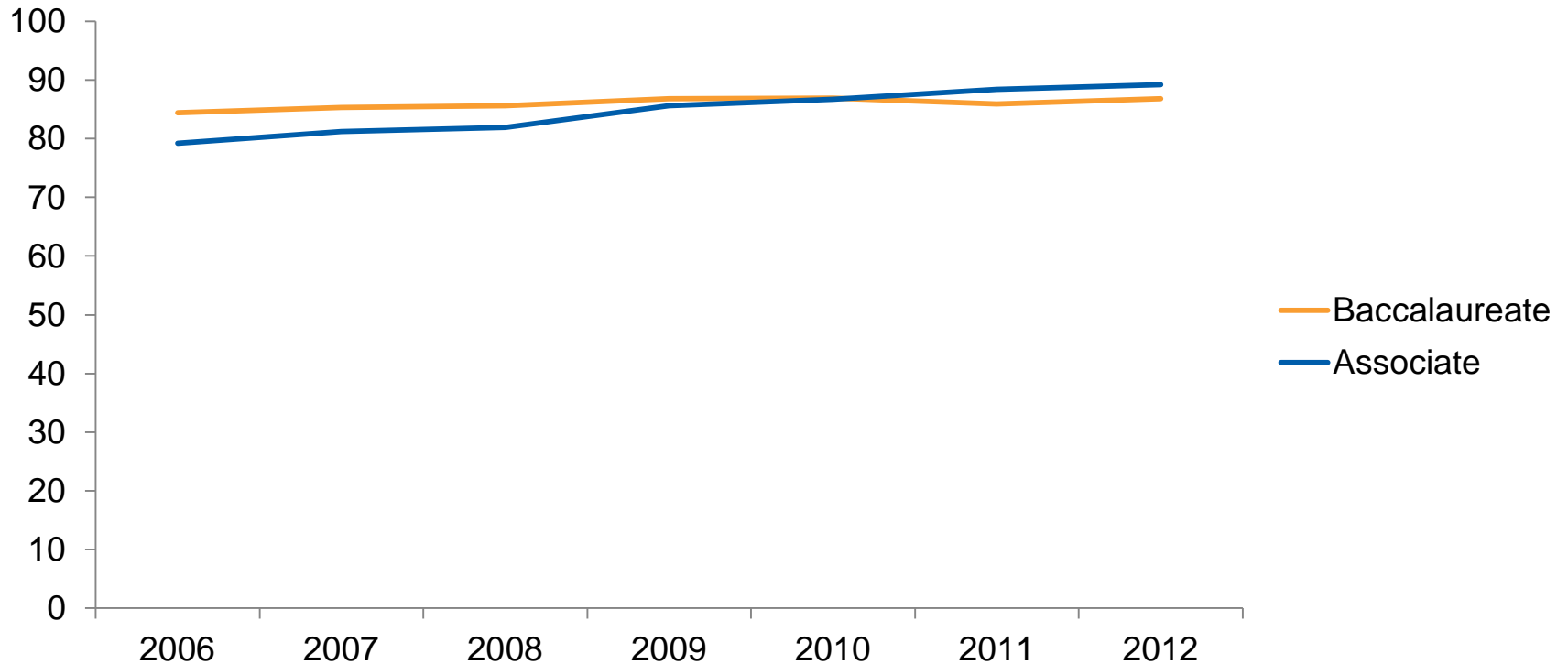
## PERCENTAGE OF FTF WHO HAVE PELL-ELIGIBLE CITIZENSHIP STATUS BY DEGREE PROGRAM



Source: IRDB

# The share of freshmen who applied for financial aid increased.

## PERCENTAGE OF DEGREE-SEEKING FTF WHO FILLED OUT FAFSA BY DEGREE PROGRAM



Sources: IRDB, FAFSA



# Summary of Part 1: Trends in Pell receipt

- Over 50% of Baccalaureate and over 70% of Associate freshmen receive Pell.
- Pell receipt rates at CUNY are much higher than nationally.
- Pell receipt rose after 2008 for both Baccalaureate and Associate students.
- During this time period, student median income decreased, the Pell program changed, the share of Pell-eligible students increased, and financial aid application rates increased.

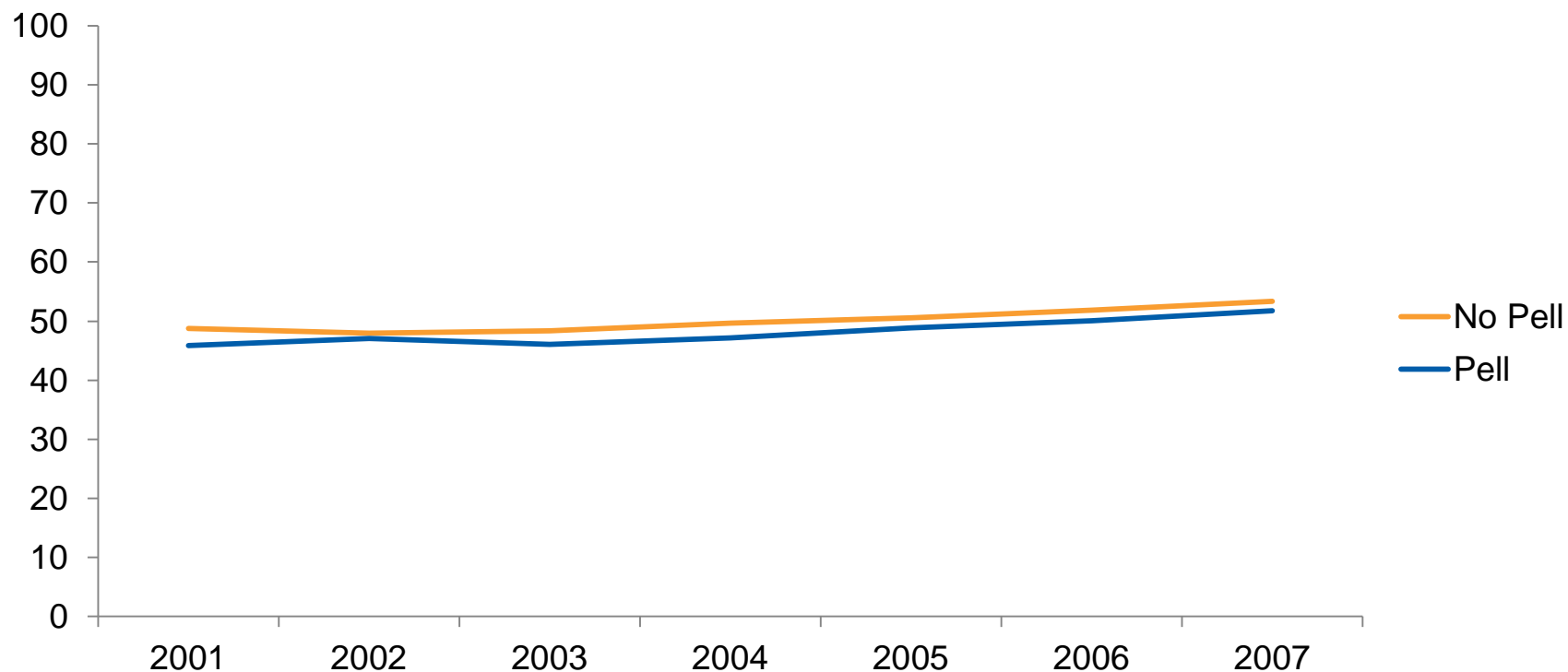
## Part 2: Outcomes for CUNY Pell recipients

# Pell graduation measurement issues

- This analysis does not examine impact of Pell receipt on graduation.
  - Pell receipt is both a marker of low-income status and the result of an intervention.
  - This analysis is not multivariate and does not “isolate” Pell receipt.
  - Pell receipt is treated as a marker and we compare outcomes for students with and without Pell.
- The length of the tracking period matters.
  - OIRA calculates graduation rates up to ten years.
  - It is important to look at different tracking periods when comparing graduation rates for students with and without Pell.

There is a small gap in graduation rates between non-Pell and Pell students and it remained similar over time.

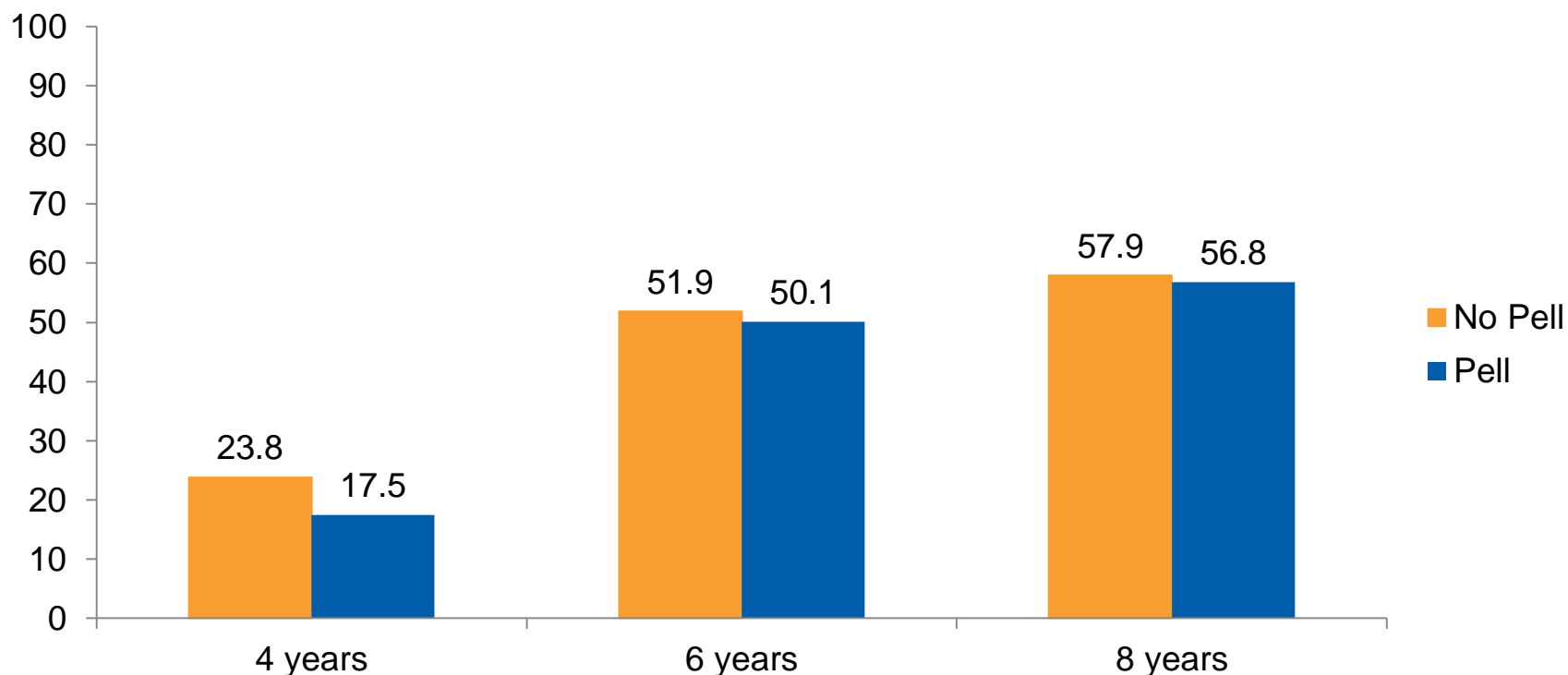
### SIX-YEAR SYSTEM GRADUATION RATES FOR BACCALAUREATE COHORTS BY PELL RECEIPT



Source: IRDB

The graduation rate gap between non-Pell and Pell students decreases for longer tracking periods.

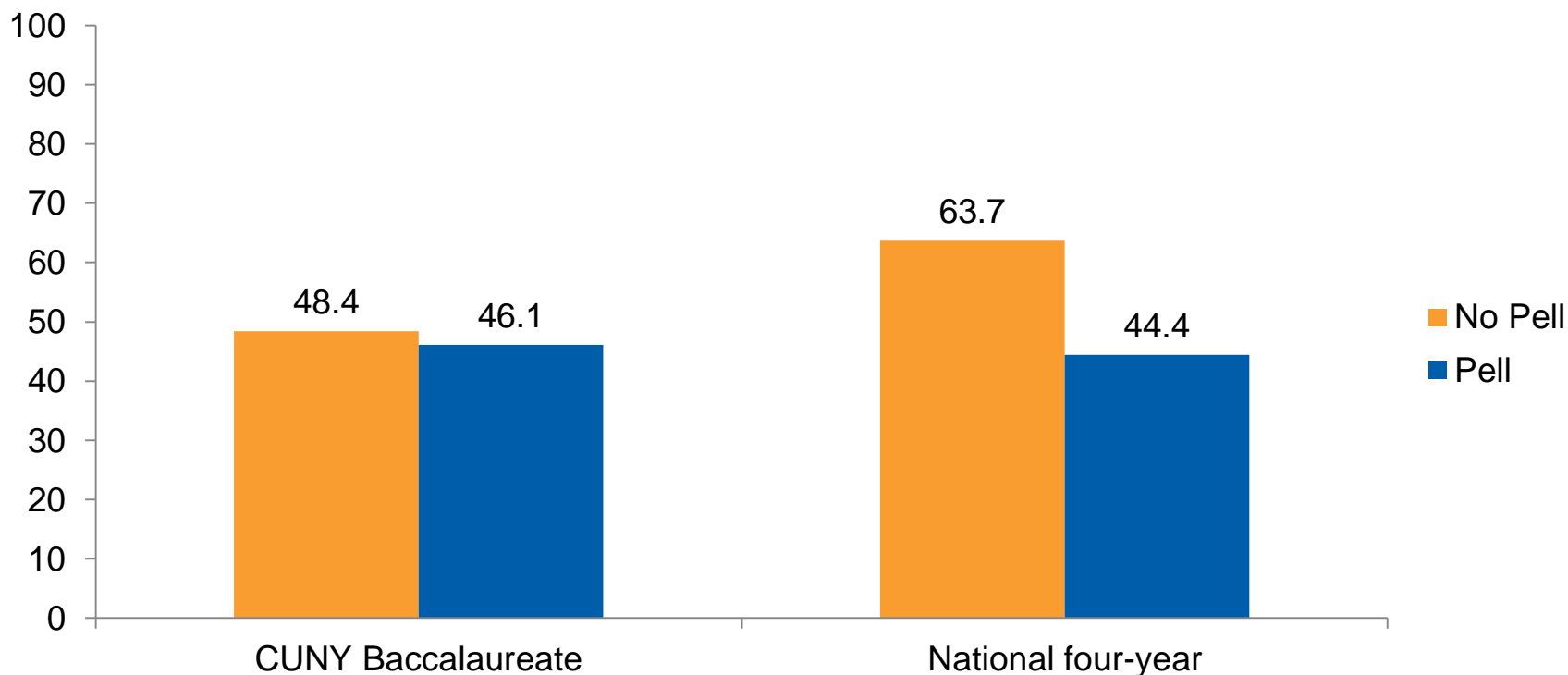
## SYSTEM GRADUATION RATES FOR 2006 BACCALAUREATE COHORT BY TRACKING PERIOD AND PELL RECEIPT



Source: IRDB

The graduation rate gap between non-Pell and Pell students at CUNY is small compared to nationally.

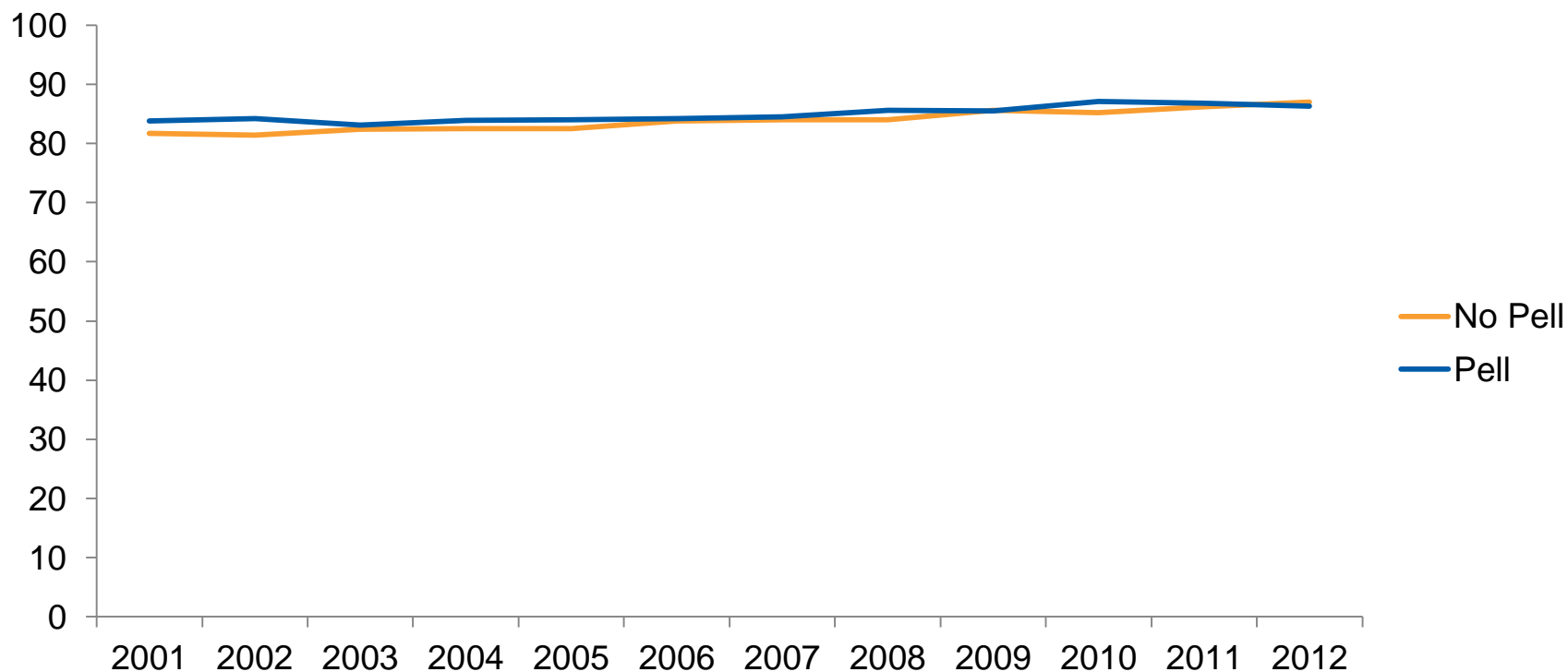
### SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATES FOR 2003 COHORT BY CUNY/NATIONAL AND PELL RECEIPT



Sources: IRDB (CUNY), BPS from Pell Institute (national)

There is no gap in one-year retention rates between non-Pell and Pell students.

PERCENTAGE OF BACCALAUREATE FTF WHO ARE STILL  
ENROLLED AFTER ONE YEAR BY PELL RECEIPT



Source: IRDB

## Summary of Part 2: Outcomes for Pell recipients

- The six-year graduation rate for Pell students is about two percentage points lower than for non-Pell students.
- The gap in non-Pell v. Pell graduation rates is larger for shorter tracking periods.
- The gap in non-Pell v. Pell graduation rates at CUNY is small relative to schools nationally.
- There is no gap in one-year retention rates between non-Pell and Pell students.












Next steps: outcomes for Associate Pell students, by-college Pell graduation rates



**Thank you!**

# Appendix: Pell receipt by college (Baccalaureate)

## PERCENTAGE OF BACCALAUREATE FTF RECEIVING PELL BY COLLEGE

|               | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | Trend 2001-2012   |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---|
| Baruch        | 50.1 | 50.9 | 50.8 | 52.3 | 46.3 | 45.8 | 45.8 | 44.2 | 44.2 | 50.6 | 51.7 | 46.0 |    |
| Brooklyn City | 47.0 | 51.7 | 53.6 | 50.0 | 50.9 | 48.0 | 55.3 | 53.2 | 54.5 | 59.6 | 57.8 | 51.5 |    |
| Hunter        | 58.7 | 56.0 | 54.4 | 54.5 | 56.7 | 53.7 | 53.4 | 54.5 | 53.6 | 59.2 | 61.8 | 62.3 |    |
| John Jay      | 48.3 | 46.9 | 48.8 | 45.4 | 41.6 | 39.0 | 40.1 | 41.3 | 42.7 | 46.1 | 48.5 | 48.9 |    |
| Lehman        | 57.7 | 52.5 | 52.5 | 54.1 | 53.1 | 52.1 | 54.3 | 54.9 | 57.6 | 64.2 | 62.8 | 63.4 |    |
| Medgar Evers  | 70.6 | 70.3 | 72.2 | 71.7 | 66.5 | 67.9 | 67.8 | 68.1 | 67.5 | 72.4 | 72.0 | 73.5 |    |
| NYCCT         | 56.9 | 45.9 | 61.9 | 51.5 | 57.1 | 60.5 | 61.6 | 62.1 | 70.9 | 74.8 | 81.7 | 79.5 |    |
| Queens        | 69.2 | 58.7 | 55.0 | 62.2 | 56.1 | 57.3 | 51.2 | 55.7 | 65.9 | 59.9 | 69.9 | 70.4 |    |
| Staten Island | 42.3 | 39.0 | 42.3 | 41.9 | 36.8 | 36.5 | 38.0 | 38.6 | 40.5 | 44.5 | 46.4 | 45.1 |   |
| York          | 25.5 | 27.5 | 23.1 | 24.5 | 24.7 | 20.5 | 26.4 | 28.3 | 32.5 | 38.4 | 40.8 | 46.8 |  |
| York          | 61.7 | 61.6 | 64.3 | 63.5 | 59.3 | 64.0 | 61.3 | 59.4 | 65.7 | 69.6 | 71.1 | 71.4 |  |

Source: IRDB

# Appendix: Pell receipt by college (Associate)

## PERCENTAGE OF ASSOCIATE FTF RECEIVING PELL BY COLLEGE

|               | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | Trend 2001-2012 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------------|
| John Jay      | 67.7 | 68.5 | 65.8 | 62.3 | 63.0 | 61.7 | 60.7 | 58.9 | 61.7 |      |      |      |                 |
| Medgar Evers  | 60.6 | 61.7 | 62.4 | 62.6 | 62.8 | 60.5 | 68.4 | 67.4 | 76.8 | 77.8 | 78.8 | 80.4 |                 |
| NYCCT         | 66.7 | 65.6 | 66.5 | 61.1 | 62.5 | 60.5 | 66.3 | 63.5 | 68.8 | 71.9 | 75.1 | 76.1 |                 |
| Staten Island | 40.7 | 40.8 | 43.4 | 42.5 | 36.8 | 37.8 | 40.7 | 42.9 | 48.6 | 54.3 | 58.6 | 55.2 |                 |
| BMCC          | 59.6 | 60.5 | 60.1 | 61.3 | 62.3 | 61.6 | 64.2 | 65.6 | 73.8 | 76.3 | 77.4 | 77.1 |                 |
| Bronx         | 71.1 | 71.7 | 73.0 | 72.3 | 70.6 | 72.4 | 77.0 | 78.1 | 81.0 | 86.0 | 88.8 | 85.9 |                 |
| Hostos        | 73.1 | 72.2 | 76.6 | 76.0 | 72.8 | 73.0 | 76.8 | 74.6 | 79.8 | 84.9 | 87.4 | 84.3 |                 |
| Kingsborough  | 51.7 | 53.1 | 57.4 | 56.3 | 54.5 | 51.9 | 54.8 | 56.1 | 63.0 | 64.8 | 67.2 | 69.2 |                 |
| LaGuardia     | 51.5 | 51.5 | 53.1 | 50.8 | 51.6 | 48.0 | 53.4 | 54.7 | 58.7 | 67.5 | 71.3 | 68.7 |                 |
| Queensborough | 46.6 | 48.0 | 52.6 | 51.9 | 48.5 | 47.4 | 47.5 | 49.6 | 55.3 | 58.1 | 60.1 |      |                 |

Source: IRDB