

# Preliminary Impacts of COVID-19 and California Shelter-In-Place Order on Columbia College Enrollment

Columbia College Research and Planning

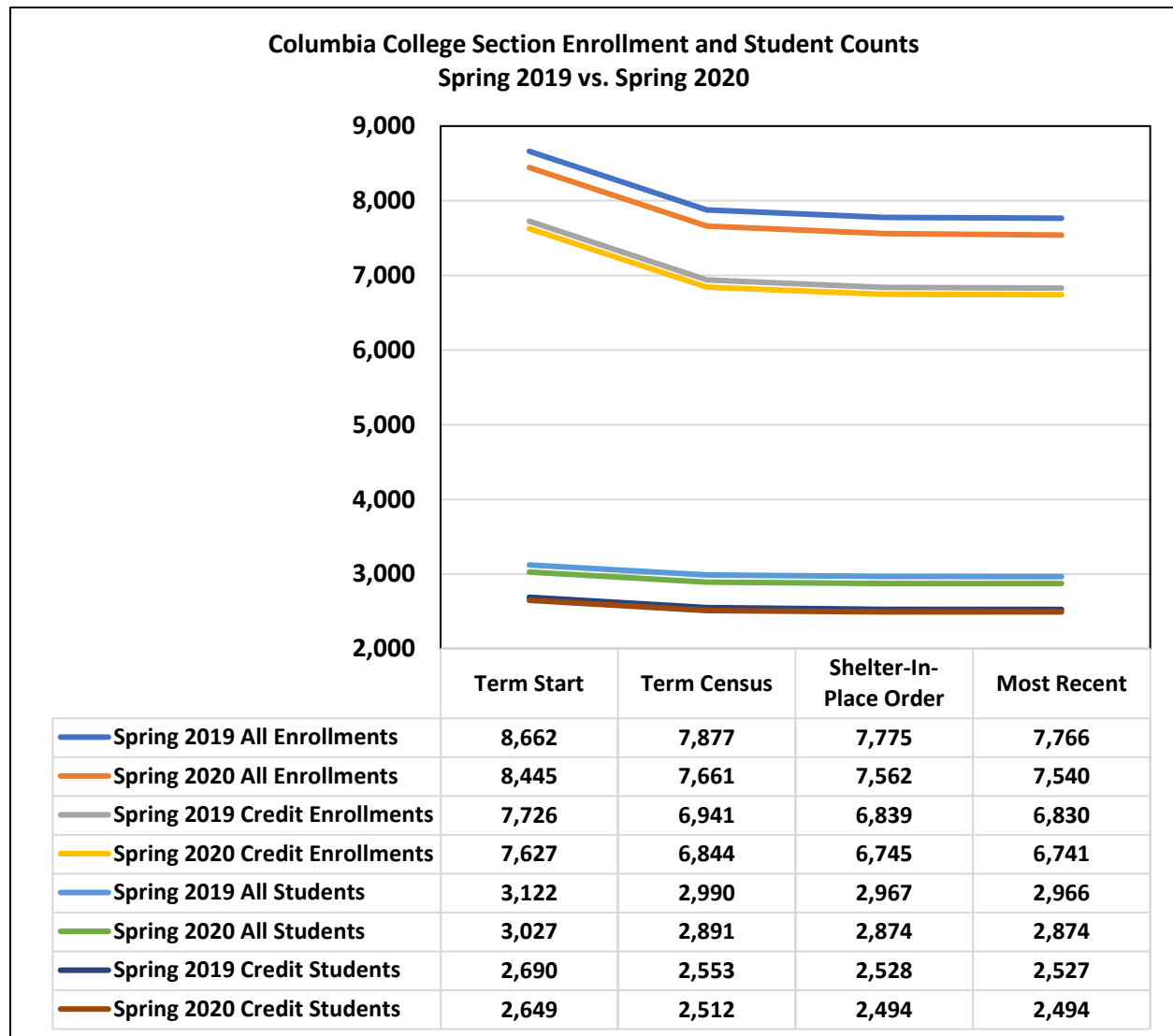
Thursday, April 23, 2020

## General Outcomes

- Columbia College did not experience a notable drop in Spring 2020 section or student enrollment as a result of COVID-19 and the shelter-in-place order of March 19, 2020
  - The college managed to move most of its face-to-face sections online, and found creative solutions for courses and labs that could not be taught online
  - The rapid transition to predominantly online learning reflects a massive shift in capacity, both in terms of preparedness and culture, and will likely affect the college's future regardless of the extent of the current shelter-in-place order
- However, this should not imply that there were no impacts to Columbia College students or their learning outcomes
  - Columbia College has also encouraged its students not to withdraw from their classes despite challenges faced as a result of the shelter-in-place order
  - Rather, the college has promoted the use of incomplete grading (e.g., IA/IB/IC) and excused withdrawals (EW)
  - **As such, the true impacts of COVID-19 and the shelter-in-place order on Columbia College Students likely will not become apparent until after the term ends and final grades have been processed**

**Impacts to Enrollment**

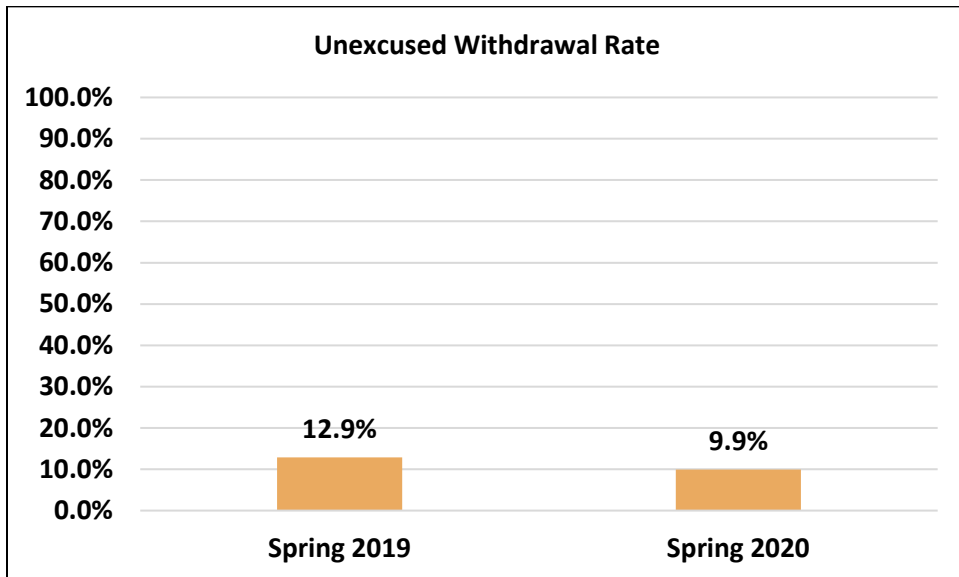
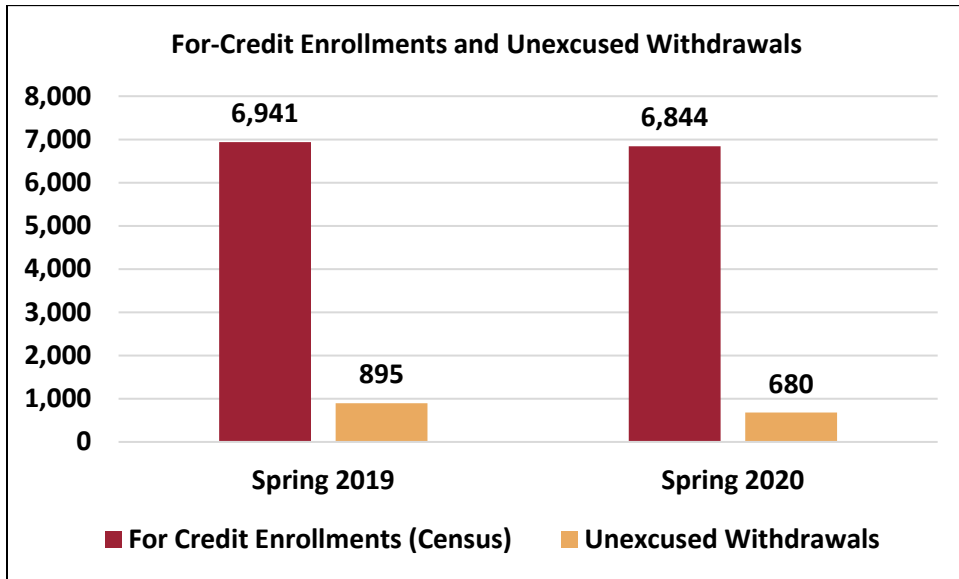
- Although enrollment has been trending slightly lower in Spring 2020 compared to Spring 2019, enrollment has been relatively stable since term census and the shelter-in-place order, and has not decreased at a greater rate across the same time period last year when no shelter-in-place order occurred



*Notes.* Critical dates for Spring 2020 are the term start (January 13, 2020), term census (January 27, 2020), the California State shelter-in-place order as a result of COVID-19 (March 19, 2020), and the most recent enrollment data available (April 22, 2020). For comparison, Spring 2019 dates include the term start (January 14, 2019), term census (January 29, 2019), the approximate day-in-term of the shelter in place order if it had occurred in 2019 (March 21, 2019), and the approximate day-in-term for which data would be available at this time last year (April 25, 2019).

**Unexcused Withdrawals**

- Unexcused withdrawals (a grade of 'W') are given when students choose to drop out of a class after the census date. So far, Columbia College has given fewer unexcused withdrawals in Spring 2020 compared to all of Spring 2019, and at a lower rate of all section enrollments.



**Excused Withdrawals and Incompletes**

- In some circumstances, students can petition for an incomplete grade or an excused withdrawal, which allows them to complete a course at a later time or withdraw without penalty beyond the normal census cutoff
- Because of the extenuating circumstances, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office has removed the normal census cutoff date and is allowing students to petition for excused withdrawals even after the term ends – something of which Columbia College is encouraging its students to take advantage
- So far, the college has given only a handful of excused withdrawals and incompletes in Spring 2020, and fewer than in Spring 2019
- **However, this outcome is likely to change after the term ends, and it is generally expected that the number of excused withdrawals and incompletes given in Spring 2020 will greatly exceed those given in Spring 2019 as a result of COVID-19 and the shelter-in-place order**

