



Beyond Enrollment Rates: The Gaping Disparity in *Where* Black, Latino, and White Students Enroll

Because of the persistent and large racial and ethnic gaps in college graduation rates, Blacks and Latinos are more likely to enter adulthood with student debt but no degree.

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This report and searchable tables with the graduation rates of more than 1,800 colleges and universities are available at EdTalkProject.org/graduationrates

Beyond Enrollment Rates

Black and Latino college enrollment is at an all-time high. From 1996 to 2012, college enrollment among Latinos aged 18-24 increased by 240 percent, and it increased by 72 percent among Blacks. Whites, in contrast, saw only a 12 percent increase.¹ Although enrollment is rising, graduation is not. Gaping disparities persist in the percentage of young adults with bachelor's degrees. In 2014, according to the Digest of Education Statistics, 41 percent of Whites aged 25-29 had a college degree compared with 22 percent of Blacks and 15 percent of Latinos. Thus, enrollment rates alone distort the story of broadening access to higher education.

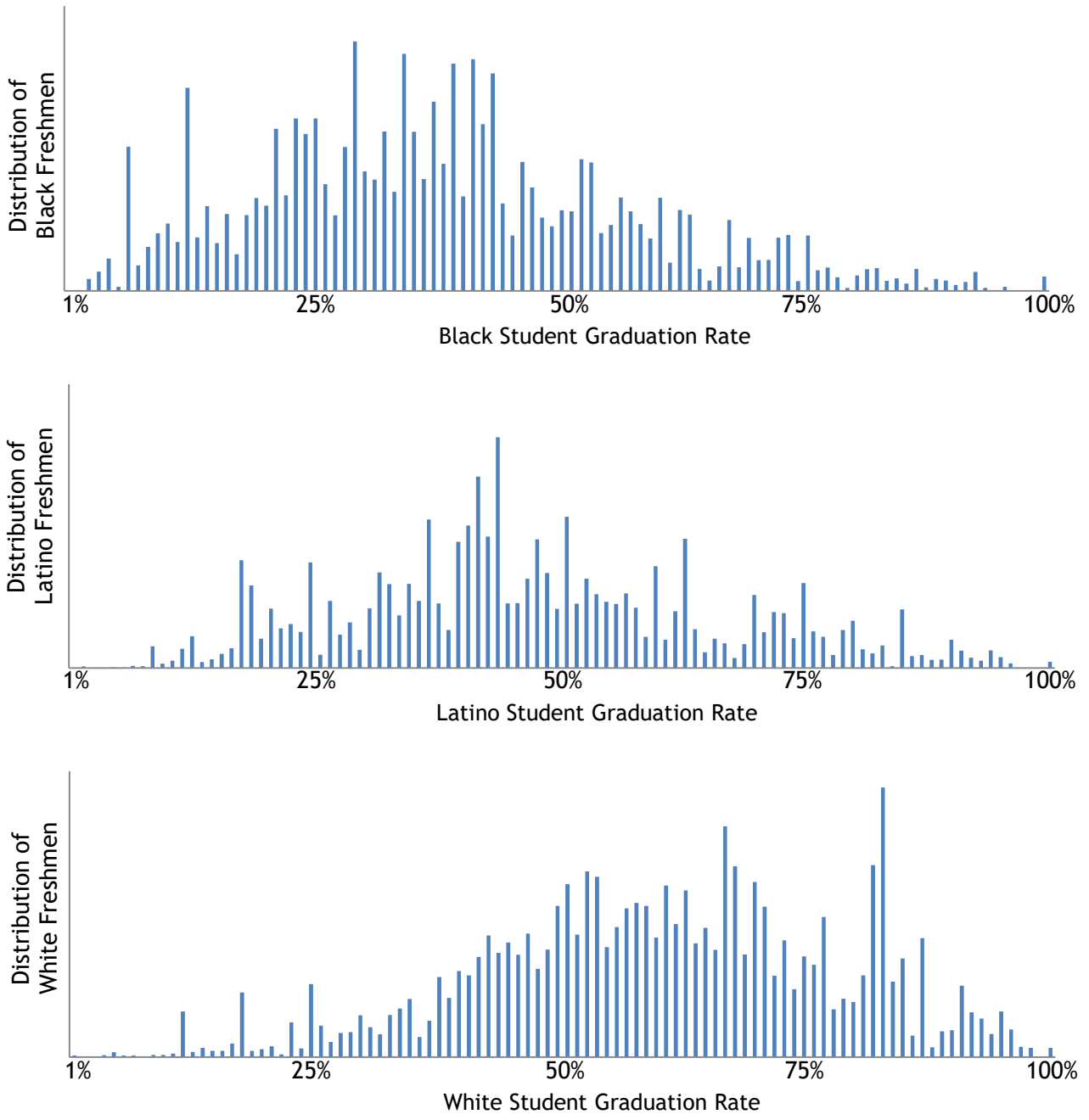
Despite the growing college enrollment among Blacks and Latinos, the disparity in bachelor's degrees remains because the American postsecondary system is one of divergent enrollment pathways based on race and ethnicity.² Black and Latino students are more likely than Whites to enroll in the lowest ranked colleges, with the lowest graduation rates, and the highest likelihood of defaulting on student loans.

Figure 1 shows the historical graduation rates of the schools where the 2013 and 2014 freshmen cohorts enrolled. Approximately 23 percent of White freshmen had enrolled in colleges where more than two-thirds of past White students graduated within six years. Latino and Black freshmen were much less likely to enroll in higher-performing schools. Only 10 percent of Latino freshmen enrolled in schools where more than two-thirds of past Latino students graduated, and an even smaller 4 percent of Black freshmen enrolled in higher-performing schools. On the other side of the coin, only 4 percent of White freshmen enrolled in schools that graduated fewer than one-quarter of White students, while 12 percent of Latino freshmen and 24 percent of Black freshmen did.

¹ J.M. Krogstad and R. Fry, "More Hispanics, Blacks Enrolling in College, but Lag in Bachelor's Degrees" (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2014).

² S. Goldrick-Rab, "Following Their Every Move: An Investigation of Social-Class Differences in College Pathways," *Sociology of Education*, 79 (1) (2006): 61-79.

Figure 1. Distribution of the 2013 and 2014 freshmen cohorts based on the historical graduation rates of the schools where they enrolled.



WHERE BLACK FRESHMEN ENROLLED

Tables 1 through 4 show more detail on where the 2013 and 2014 freshmen cohorts of full-time, degree-seeking, Black, Latino, and White freshmen enrolled. Graduation rates are based on the six-year graduation rates of the 2004–2008 freshman cohorts.

The top panel of Table 1 shows that 14 percent of Black freshmen enrolled in schools that graduated fewer than one-quarter of all students within six years. It also shows that 48 percent of Black freshmen enrolled in schools that graduated 25-49 percent of students, 29 percent enrolled in schools that graduated 50-74 percent of students, and only 9 percent enrolled in schools that graduated more than three-quarters of students.

Although a school’s overall graduation rate is important, the graduation rate of one’s same race and ethnicity peers is more important, particularly for Black freshmen. The second panel of Table 1 shows that the share of Black students in low-performing schools nearly doubles when examining the past graduation rates of their Black peers. Correspondingly, the fraction enrolled in schools with the highest graduation rates declines to only 4 percent of freshmen.

Table 1. Distribution of Black freshmen by graduation rates of past cohorts.

	Graduation Rate				Total
	1% - 24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% - 100%	
DISTRIBUTION BASED ON OVERALL GRADUATION RATE					
Percent of Freshmen	14%	48%	29%	9%	100%
Number of Schools	255	712	644	219	1,830
Number of Freshmen	230,718	814,372	493,730	146,973	1,685,793
DISTRIBUTION BASED ON BLACK STUDENT GRADUATION RATE					
Percent of Freshmen	24%	51%	21%	4%	100%
Number of Schools	502	820	371	137	1,830
Number of Freshmen	396,632	853,897	359,767	75,497	1,685,793

WHERE LATINO FRESHMEN ENROLLED

Latinos face slightly better odds of graduating than Black freshmen. Eleven percent of Latino freshmen enrolled in schools that graduated fewer than one-quarter of all students within six years. Fifteen percent enrolled in schools that graduated more than three-quarters of students. However, as the second panel shows, when the graduation rate for Latino students is used, the fraction that enrolled in schools with the highest graduation rates declines to 10 percent of freshmen.

Table 2. Distribution of Latino freshmen by graduation rates of past cohorts.

	Graduation Rate				Total
	1% - 24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% - 100%	
DISTRIBUTION BASED ON OVERALL GRADUATION RATE					
Percent of Freshmen	11%	42%	32%	15%	100%
Number of Schools	223	713	659	220	1,815
Number of Freshmen	227,405	859,290	649,077	302,684	2,038,456
DISTRIBUTION BASED ON LATINO STUDENT GRADUATION RATE					
Percent of Freshmen	12%	48%	31%	10%	100%
Number of Schools	282	819	519	195	1,815
Number of Freshmen	235,451	969,533	626,411	207,061	2,038,456

WHERE WHITE FRESHMEN ENROLLED

The contrast to White graduation rates is notable. Table 5 shows that only 5 percent of White freshmen enrolled in schools that graduated fewer than one-quarter of all students within six years. About one in five (21 percent) enrolled in schools that graduated more than three-quarters of students.

Table 3. Distribution of White freshmen by graduation rates of past cohorts.

	Graduation Rate				Total
	1% - 24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% - 100%	
DISTRIBUTION BASED ON OVERALL GRADUATION RATE					
Percent of Freshmen	5%	27%	47%	21%	100%
Number of Schools	348	821	717	236	2,122
Number of Freshmen	441,167	2,335,459	4,102,943	1,794,571	8,674,140
DISTRIBUTION BASED ON WHITE STUDENT GRADUATION RATE					
Percent of Freshmen	4%	23%	49%	23%	100%
Number of Schools	304	748	798	272	2,122
Number of Freshmen	354,899	2,032,082	4,281,637	2,005,522	8,674,140

WHAT IF FOR-PROFIT SCHOOLS WERE EXCLUDED?

Much has been written about for-profit colleges because of their status as the fastest-growing postsecondary schools in the nation, their very low graduation rates, and disproportionate enrollment of minority and lower-income students.³ One might therefore expect that excluding these schools would improve the outcomes. However, that was not the case (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of freshmen by *racial/ethnic group specific* graduation rates of past cohorts, excluding for-profit schools.

	Racial/Ethnic Group Specific Graduation Rate			
	1% - 24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% - 100%
BLACK FRESHMEN				
Percent of Students	17%	56%	23%	5%
Number of Schools	324	752	349	128
Number of Students	251,538	829,234	338,226	72,083
LATINO FRESHMEN				
Percent of Students	9%	49%	32%	11%
Number of Schools	179	717	487	178
Number of Students	171,471	927,945	603,665	203,693
WHITE FRESHMEN				
Percent of Students	2%	23%	51%	24%
Number of Schools	138	598	749	257
Number of Students	206,443	1,927,856	4,245,846	1,981,316

³ D. Deming, C. Goldin, and L. Katz, "For-Profit Colleges," *Future of Children*, 23(1)(2013): 137-63.

Helping Families Make Better Decisions

These divergent enrollment patterns perpetuate and likely exacerbate inequality. Colleges differ markedly in the resources they spend on instruction, small class sizes, financial aid, advising, and many other factors that matter for the student experience, creating large differences in student success.⁴ Schools with low graduation rates often claim that the problem lies with students' limited preparation for college, but under-resourced colleges and universities are not fulfilling their mission by enrolling large numbers of students they cannot support through graduation.

The large gap in graduation rates between Blacks, Whites, and Latinos is not new news. However, this report is a timely reminder for families and students as they eagerly await admissions decisions. Tables 5-8 offer a list of graduation rates at various colleges and universities, which can help families in their college decision-making.

Red tables list schools that graduate fewer than 25 percent of Black and Latino students, and green tables list schools that graduate more than 75 percent. Schools in bold are those where the graduation rate for Black and Latino students is 10 percentage points or more below the institution's average. The full list of more than 1,800 colleges and universities is available at EdTalkProject.org/graduationrates.

Freshmen should enroll at the school with the highest graduation rate for their racial or ethnic group to which they have been admitted. If all of the schools to which they have been admitted have very low graduation rates, they should think twice about the amount of debt they will need to incur.⁵

In their report, "What Parents Don't Know about College Graduation Rates Can Hurt," American Enterprise researchers P. Kelly and M. Schneider find that supplementing basic information such as cost and selectively with graduation rates substantially changed parents' preferences. Moreover, they find that graduation rates had the strongest effects among parents with relatively low incomes and who were less savvy about the admissions process.

The continued growth in high school graduates entering college clearly indicates that students of all racial and ethnic groups have been convinced of the importance of going to college. We now need to make them aware of the factors that affect the likelihood of earning a degree. For many, enrolling in college is a route to a middle class income, but for far too many, it leads to the burden of student debt without the benefit of a degree.⁶ More emphasis on the likelihood of attaining a degree will help freshmen and their families make more informed decisions about which college is the best investment.

⁴ J. Bound, M.F. Lovenheim, and S. Turner, "Why Have College Completion Rates Declined? An Analysis of Changing Student Preparation and Collegiate Resources." *Applied Economics*, 2(3)(2010): 129; W. G. Bowen, M.M. Chingos, and M.S. McPherson, *Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

⁵ L. Gladieux and L. Perna, "Borrowers Who Drop Out: A Neglected Aspect of the College Student Loan Trend." Report 05-2. (Washington, DC: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2005).

⁶ M. Huelsman, "The Debt Divide: The Racial and Class Bias Behind the 'New Normal' of Student Borrowing" (New York: Demos, 2015).

Table 5. Largest 50 schools, based on number of Black freshmen

Rank by Freshman Enrollment	Institution	State	% of Freshmen that are Black	Avg. Number Black Freshmen	Black Student Graduation Rate	Overall Graduation Rate	Graduation Rate Gap
1	Texas Southern University	TX	83	4,638	13	14	-1
2	Western Governors University	UT	9	3,507	5	15	-10
3	CUNY Medgar Evers College	NY	81	3,439	15	16	-1
4	Liberty University	VA	12	3,066	22	49	-27
5	Eastern Michigan University	MI	21	2,697	22	38	-16
6	Wayne State University	MI	18	2,180	10	30	-20
7	Columbia College	MO	23	2,120	17	39	-22
8	Georgia Gwinnett College	GA	30	2,118	21	27	-6
9	Lamar University	TX	31	2,005	22	32	-9
10	University of Maryland-University College	MD	28	1,985	4	6	-3
11	Chicago State University	IL	73	1,957	17	19	-1
12	University of Akron Main Campus	OH	12	1,867	14	39	-25
13	University of Toledo	OH	14	1,779	20	46	-25
14	Coppin State University	MD	82	1,759	15	16	-1
15	Langston University	OK	88	1,631	20	21	-1
16	Central State University	OH	95	1,630	24	23	1
17	Middle Georgia State College	GA	35	1,610	11	23	-12
18	Miles College	AL	97	1,596	19	21	-1
19	University of Houston-Downtown	TX	23	1,589	10	14	-4
20	University of Central Arkansas	AR	19	1,537	24	41	-17
21	Cleveland State University	OH	17	1,482	16	33	-17
22	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	WI	8	1,442	19	42	-23
23	Mercy College	NY	27	1,419	23	32	-9
24	Jacksonville State University	AL	25	1,403	22	31	-8
25	Bethel University	TN	36	1,343	20	32	-12
26	Columbia College-Chicago	IL	16	1,335	25	41	-16
27	California State University-Dominguez Hills	CA	15	1,322	22	29	-7
28	College of Staten Island CUNY	NY	13	1,296	22	48	-26
29	LIU Brooklyn	NY	31	1,285	17	22	-5
30	University of Arkansas at Little Rock	AR	26	1,273	12	21	-9
31	Wright State University-Main Campus	OH	13	1,246	23	41	-18
32	Livingstone College	NC	89	1,097	24	25	-1
33	Wiley College	TX	85	1,095	19	16	3
34	University of the District of Columbia	DC	56	1,090	13	12	0
35	Georgia Regents University	GA	26	1,071	24	30	-6
36	Youngstown State University	OH	11	1,028	9	34	-25
37	Kentucky State University	KY	63	1,013	18	19	-1
38	Auburn University at Montgomery	AL	33	1,013	20	28	-8
39	Southern University at New Orleans	LA	83	1,002	12	10	3
40	Oakland University	MI	8	1,000	21	42	-21
41	New Jersey City University	NJ	21	991	24	35	-10
42	Lincoln University	MO	52	975	16	23	-6
43	Chowan University	NC	71	952	22	26	-4
44	Cheyney University of Pennsylvania	PA	87	887	24	24	0
45	Le Moyne-Owen College	TN	98	865	15	16	-1
46	Rust College	MS	96	844	22	24	-2
47	Delta State University	MS	38	844	25	37	-12
48	University of New Orleans	LA	16	843	24	29	-5
49	Faulkner University	AL	46	837	21	30	-10
50	Saginaw Valley State University	MI	11	821	16	40	-23

Table 6. Largest 50 schools, based on number of Black freshmen

Rank by Freshman Enrollment	Institution	State	% of Freshmen that are Black	Avg. Number Black Freshmen	Black Student Graduation Rate	Overall Graduation Rate	Graduation Rate Gap
1	University of Maryland-College Park	MD	13	3,103	76	83	-7
2	University of Florida	FL	7	2,096	76	85	-9
3	University of Georgia	GA	8	1,878	78	82	-4
4	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	NC	8	1,444	83	89	-6
5	University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	MI	4	1,157	79	90	-11
6	New York University	NY	5	1,039	77	85	-8
7	University of Virginia-Main Campus	VA	6	904	85	93	-8
8	Cornell University	NY	6	844	87	93	-6
9	University of Southern California	CA	4	775	82	90	-8
10	University of California-Los Angeles	CA	3	772	81	91	-10
11	James Madison University	VA	4	718	77	82	-5
12	University of Pennsylvania	PA	7	715	93	96	-3
13	Emory University	GA	9	704	91	90	1
14	SUNY at Binghamton	NY	5	658	76	79	-3
15	Duke University	NC	10	651	92	94	-2
16	Columbia University in the City of New York	NY	7	556	89	94	-4
17	Vanderbilt University	TN	8	545	87	92	-5
18	University of California-Berkeley	CA	2	540	75	91	-16
19	Apex School of Theology	NC	94	519	82	81	1
20	Boston University	MA	3	505	82	84	-3
21	Northwestern University	IL	6	473	90	94	-3
22	Harvard University	MA	7	467	96	97	-1
23	College of William and Mary	VA	7	448	84	90	-6
24	University of California-Irvine	CA	2	433	78	85	-7
25	Georgetown University	DC	6	430	89	94	-5
26	Stanford University	CA	6	428	93	95	-3
27	Brown University	RI	7	406	92	95	-3
28	Princeton University	NJ	8	403	93	96	-3
29	Boston College	MA	4	382	83	91	-9
30	Yale University	CT	7	368	94	97	-2
31	Elon University	NC	6	335	82	82	0
32	Washington University in St Louis	MO	5	334	93	94	-1
33	SUNY College of Technology at Alfred	NY	10	319	83	55	29
34	Johns Hopkins University	MD	5	314	87	92	-5
35	Wake Forest University	NC	6	309	81	88	-7
36	University of Notre Dame	IN	4	305	90	95	-5
37	Carnegie Mellon University	PA	5	291	75	87	-12
38	Quinnipiac University	CT	5	288	77	76	1
39	University of California-San Diego	CA	1	279	82	86	-4
40	Dartmouth College	NH	7	278	89	95	-7
41	Villanova University	PA	4	272	84	90	-5
42	University of Chicago	IL	5	262	86	92	-7
43	Rice University	TX	7	253	87	92	-4
44	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	MA	5	242	83	93	-10
45	United States Air Force Academy	CO	6	232	81	83	-2
46	Amherst College	MA	12	215	90	95	-5
47	Wesleyan University	CT	7	207	86	92	-7
48	Tufts University	MA	4	204	85	92	-7
49	Pepperdine University	CA	6	203	79	81	-2
50	University of Richmond	VA	7	196	87	84	3

Table 7. Largest 50 schools, based on number of Latino freshmen

Rank by Freshman Enrollment	Institution	State	% of Freshmen that are Latino	Avg. Number Latino Freshmen	Latino Student Graduation Rate	Overall Graduation Rate	Graduation Rate Gap
1	Universidad Del Turabo	PR	100	10,834	18	17	1
2	Universidad Metropolitana	PR	100	9,137	21	20	1
3	Universidad Del Este	PR	100	9,009	19	18	1
4	The University of Texas at Brownsville	TX	89	4,890	23	23	0
5	CUNY New York City College of Technology	NY	33	3,448	18	23	-5
6	Western Governors University	UT	8	3,014	9	15	-6
7	University of Houston-Downtown	TX	41	2,889	18	14	3
8	Metropolitan State University of Denver	CO	21	2,688	21	23	-3
9	Universidad Politecnica de Puerto Rico	PR	100	1,820	18	18	0
10	Inter American Univ. Puerto Rico-Fajardo	PR	100	1,795	25	24	1
11	Northeastern Illinois University	IL	37	1,781	18	21	-3
12	Utah Valley University	UT	10	1,493	23	21	2
13	Angelo State University	TX	31	1,423	24	31	-6
14	Universidad Central de Bayamon	PR	99	1,256	17	18	-1
15	CUNY York College	NY	24	1,227	22	24	-3
16	Caribbean University-Bayamon	PR	100	1,220	24	24	0
17	Boise State University	ID	10	1,189	24	33	-9
18	Pontifical Catholic Univ. Puerto Rico-Mayaguez	PR	98	1,185	19	19	0
19	Colorado Mesa University	CO	15	1,069	24	29	-5
20	Georgia Gwinnett College	GA	15	1,061	20	27	-7
21	Eastern New Mexico University-Main Campus	NM	38	1,042	22	27	-5
22	New Mexico Highlands University	NM	57	887	19	18	1
23	EDP Univeristy of Puerto Rico Inc-San Juan	PR	100	850	20	19	2
24	Western New Mexico University	NM	55	842	16	17	-2
25	University of Puerto Rico-Utuado	PR	57	784	16	14	2
26	University of Maryland-University College	MD	10	706	9	6	3
27	LIU Brooklyn	NY	15	637	19	22	-3
28	Adams State University	CO	31	577	17	25	-7
29	Dalton State College	GA	19	577	23	18	5
30	University of Alaska Anchorage	AK	7	523	19	26	-7
31	Northern New Mexico College	NM	71	505	13	10	3
32	Pontifical Catholic Univ. Puerto Rico-Arecibo	PR	90	503	20	22	-2
33	CUNY Medgar Evers College	NY	12	491	9	16	-7
34	Wayne State University	MI	4	487	23	30	-8
35	SUNY Empire State College	NY	11	470	20	20	0
36	Cleveland State University	OH	5	468	20	33	-13
37	Dixie State University	UT	9	452	11	27	-16
38	Hodges University	FL	36	434	22	14	8
39	Heritage University	WA	61	420	16	15	1
40	SUNY College of Technology at Delhi	NY	16	407	20	52	-32
41	Cameron University	OK	12	407	22	19	3
42	University of Arkansas-Fort Smith	AR	8	404	24	25	-1
43	Indiana University-Purdue Univ.-Fort Wayne	IN	5	372	20	24	-5
44	Texas Southern University	TX	6	349	16	14	3
45	Wayland Baptist University	TX	30	337	20	36	-16
46	Indiana University-South Bend	IN	8	319	23	25	-1
47	Ferris State University	MI	3	313	23	48	-25
48	Nevada State College	NV	25	302	7	16	-8
49	Hallmark University	TX	53	286	14	8	6
50	Southwestern Oklahoma State University	OK	8	269	20	32	-12

Table 8. Largest 50 schools, based on number of Latino freshmen

Rank by Freshman Enrollment	Institution	State	% of Freshmen that are Latino	Avg. Number Latino Freshmen	Latino Student Graduation Rate	Overall Graduation Rate	Graduation Rate Gap
1	University of Florida	FL	19	5,797	85	85	0
2	University of California-Los Angeles	CA	19	5,466	85	91	-5
3	University of California-Irvine	CA	23	5,431	80	85	-6
4	University of California-Santa Barbara	CA	25	4,909	75	80	-5
5	University of California-San Diego	CA	16	3,802	76	86	-10
6	University of California-Berkeley	CA	13	3,430	83	91	-8
7	New York University	NY	11	2,457	80	85	-4
8	University of Southern California	CA	14	2,412	90	90	0
9	University of Maryland-College Park	MD	9	2,219	77	83	-5
10	Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus	PA	6	2,143	75	86	-10
11	University of Miami	FL	20	2,114	82	80	2
12	University of Washington-Seattle Campus	WA	7	1,921	75	81	-6
13	Cornell University	NY	11	1,616	90	93	-3
14	Boston University	MA	10	1,526	81	84	-3
15	University of Connecticut	CT	8	1,418	76	82	-6
16	Ohio State University-Main Campus	OH	3	1,387	79	81	-2
17	Loyola Marymount University	CA	22	1,304	81	77	4
18	University of Georgia	GA	5	1,298	79	82	-3
19	SUNY at Binghamton	NY	10	1,277	75	79	-4
20	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	NC	7	1,268	86	89	-4
21	University of Delaware	DE	7	1,234	77	80	-3
22	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	VA	5	1,233	79	82	-3
23	Stanford University	CA	16	1,153	94	95	-2
24	University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	MI	4	1,151	87	90	-4
25	University of San Diego	CA	19	1,039	76	75	1
26	University of Pennsylvania	PA	10	1,035	94	96	-1
27	Columbia University in the City of New York	NY	13	1,002	92	94	-2
28	Boston College	MA	10	970	91	91	0
29	Santa Clara University	CA	17	927	88	86	2
30	James Madison University	VA	5	883	79	82	-2
31	University of Notre Dame	IN	10	871	95	95	0
32	University of Virginia-Main Campus	VA	6	866	95	93	1
33	Northwestern University	IL	10	865	92	94	-1
34	Georgia Institute of Technology-Main Campus	GA	6	850	77	80	-3
35	Chapman University	CA	14	841	75	73	2
36	Robert Morris University Illinois	IL	28	749	78	78	0
37	The College of New Jersey	NJ	12	731	79	86	-8
38	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	MA	16	724	87	93	-6
39	Southern Methodist University	TX	12	714	77	77	0
40	George Washington University	DC	7	710	79	80	-1
41	Brown University	RI	11	687	93	95	-2
42	Harvard University	MA	10	666	96	97	-1
43	Johns Hopkins University	MD	11	652	93	92	2
44	Rice University	TX	15	582	90	92	-1
45	Yale University	CT	11	576	95	97	-2
46	College of William and Mary	VA	9	570	91	90	1
47	Georgetown University	DC	8	549	91	94	-3
48	Vanderbilt University	TN	8	539	90	92	-2
49	Emory University	GA	7	510	91	90	1
50	Miami University-Oxford	OH	3	508	78	80	-2

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This report relies on data from the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) (<https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/login.aspx>). More information on individual colleges is available at <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Home/FindYourCollege>.

Graduation rates are based on the six-year graduation rates of five freshmen cohorts (2004–2008) that were expected to graduate by 2010–2014.

$$\text{Graduation rate} = \frac{\text{\# who obtain a degree within six years}}{\text{\# of degree-seeking freshmen}}$$

Graduation rates were calculated for all students, and separately for Black, Latino, and White students. Analyses for Black students excluded colleges that enrolled fewer than 20 Black students. A similar exclusion process was used for Latino students. The number of students in a freshman cohort is averaged across the 2013 and 2014 cohorts. Exclusively online schools such as University of Phoenix Online were excluded from the sample.

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