

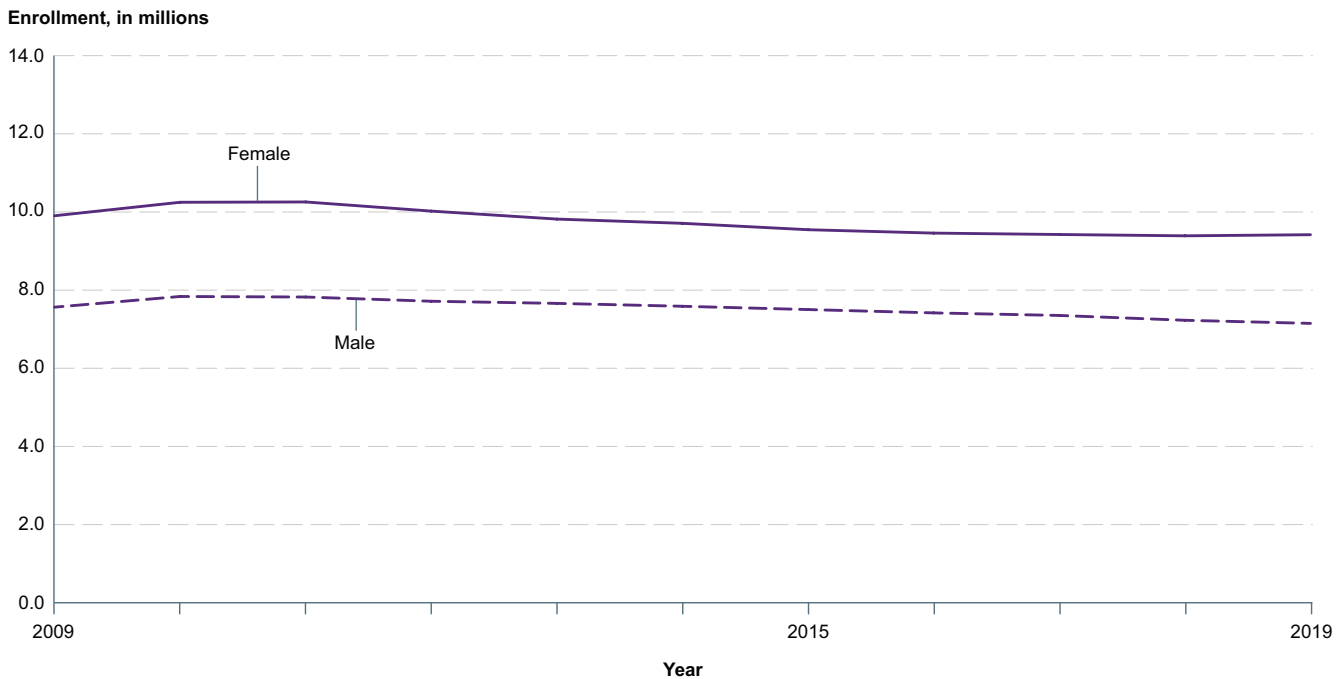
Undergraduate Enrollment

Between fall 2009 and fall 2019, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions decreased by 5 percent (from 17.5 million to 16.6 million students). However, enrollment of Hispanic students increased by 48 percent (from 2.4 million to 3.5 million students).

In fall 2019, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States¹ was 16.6 million students. Between 2009 and 2019, total

undergraduate enrollment decreased by 5 percent (from 17.5 million to 16.6 million students).

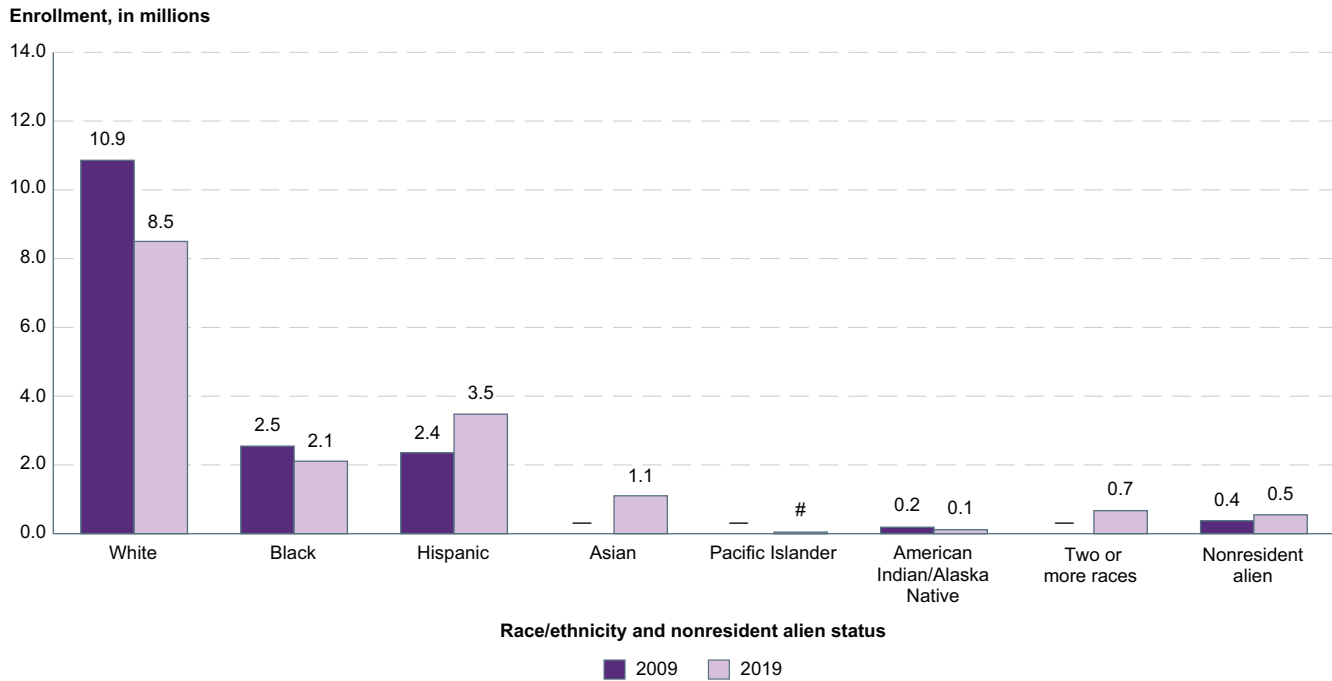
Figure 1. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by sex: Fall 2009 through fall 2019



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2010 through Spring 2020, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 303.70.

In fall 2019, female students made up 57 percent of total undergraduate enrollment (9.4 million students), and male students made up 43 percent (7.1 million students). Enrollment patterns for female and male students

exhibited similar trends between 2009 and 2019. During this period, female and male enrollments both decreased by 5 percent (from 9.9 million to 9.4 million female students and from 7.6 million to 7.1 million male students).

Figure 2. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity and nonresident alien status: Fall 2009 and fall 2019

— Not available.

Rounds to zero.

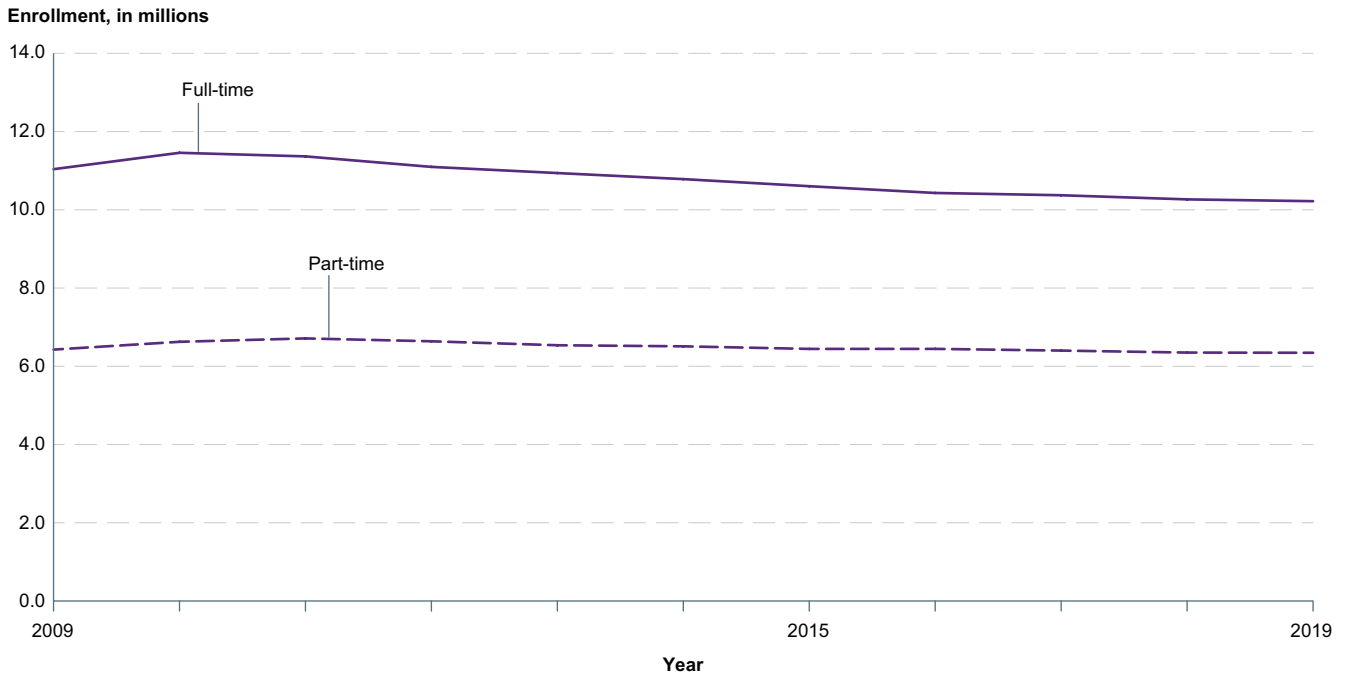
NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Disaggregated data on undergraduate students who were Asian, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races were not collected in 2009. In 2009, data for undergraduate students who were Asian included students who were Pacific Islander. In 2009, students of Two or more races were required to select a single category from among the offered race/ethnicity categories (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian/Alaska Native). Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Race/ethnicity categories exclude nonresident aliens. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2010 and Spring 2020, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 306.10; and *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 306.10.

Of the 16.6 million undergraduate students enrolled in fall 2019, some 8.5 million were White, 3.5 million were Hispanic, 2.1 million were Black, 1.1 million were Asian, 670,100 were of Two or more races, 116,400 were American Indian/Alaska Native, and 45,000 were Pacific Islander. Among those with available data between 2009 and 2019, trends in undergraduate enrollment varied across racial/ethnic groups.² During this period, American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment decreased by 38 percent (from 187,600 to 116,400 students), White enrollment

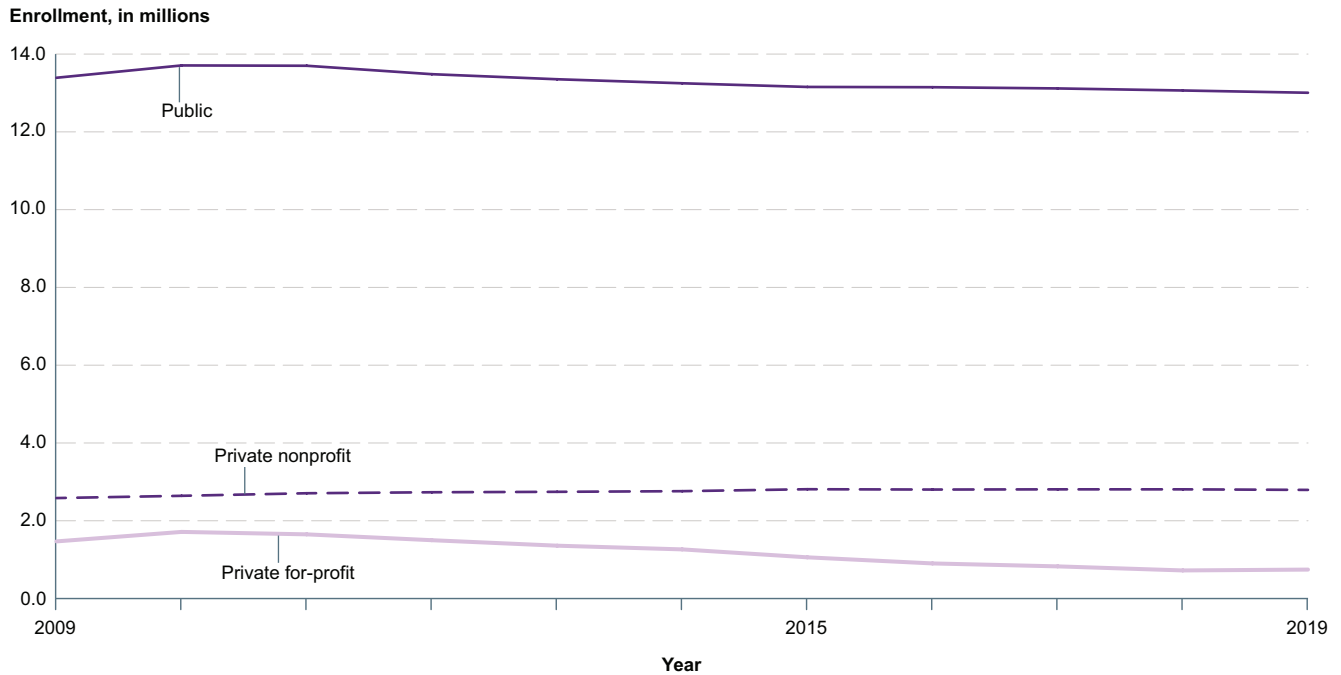
decreased by 22 percent (from 10.9 million to 8.5 million students), and Black enrollment decreased by 17 percent (from 2.5 million to 2.1 million students). By contrast, between 2009 and 2019, Hispanic enrollment increased by 48 percent (from 2.4 million to 3.5 million students).

In fall 2019, degree-granting postsecondary institutions enrolled 548,200 nonresident alien³ undergraduate students, a 46 percent increase from 376,500 students in 2009.

Figure 3. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status: Fall 2009 through fall 2019

NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2010 through Spring 2020, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 303.70.

In fall 2019, degree-granting postsecondary institutions enrolled 10.2 million full-time and 6.3 million part-time undergraduate students. Between 2009 and 2019, full-time enrollment decreased by 7 percent (from 11.0 million to 10.2 million students) and part-time enrollment decreased by 1 percent (from 6.4 million to 6.3 million students).

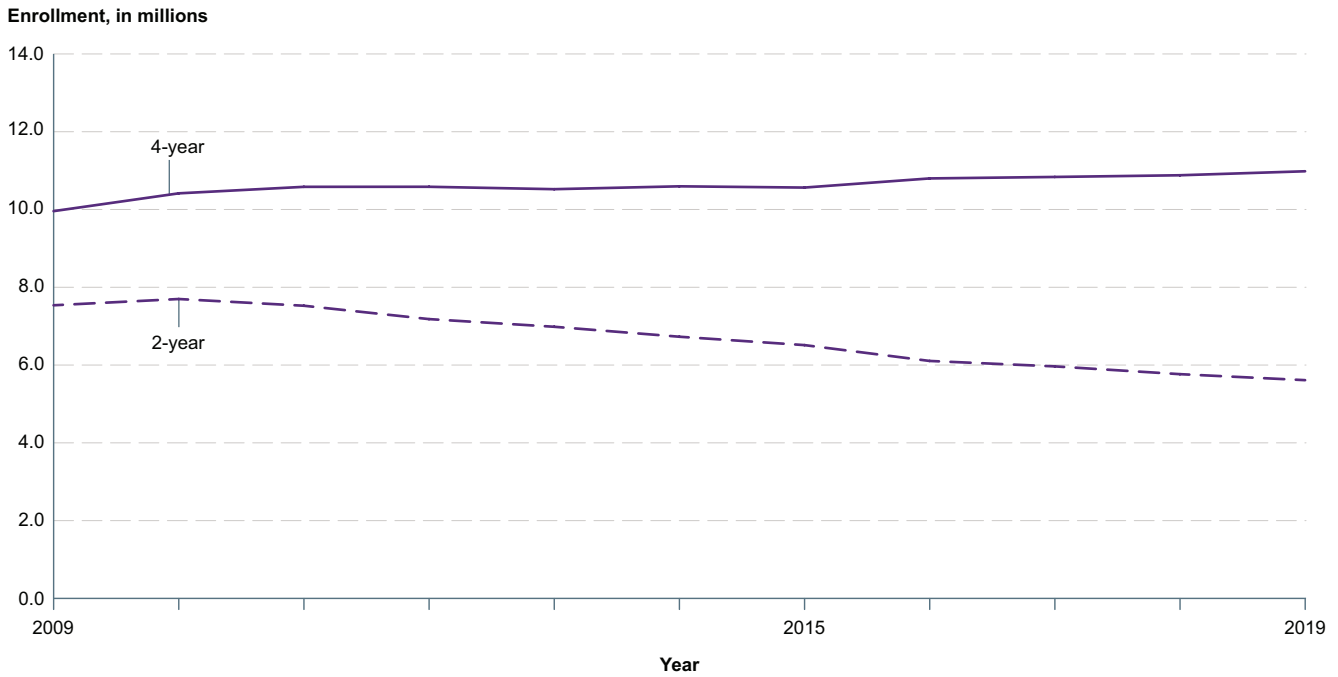
Figure 4. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Fall 2009 through fall 2019

NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2010 through Spring 2020, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 303.70.

In fall 2019, undergraduate enrollment was higher at public institutions (13.0 million students) than at private nonprofit institutions (2.8 million students) and private for-profit institutions (758,600 students). Between fall 2009 and 2019, enrollment in private for-profit institutions decreased by 49 percent (from 1.5 million to

758,600 students), and enrollment in public institutions decreased by 3 percent (from 13.4 million to 13.0 million students). By contrast, enrollment in private nonprofit institutions increased by 8 percent (from 2.6 million to 2.8 million students).⁴

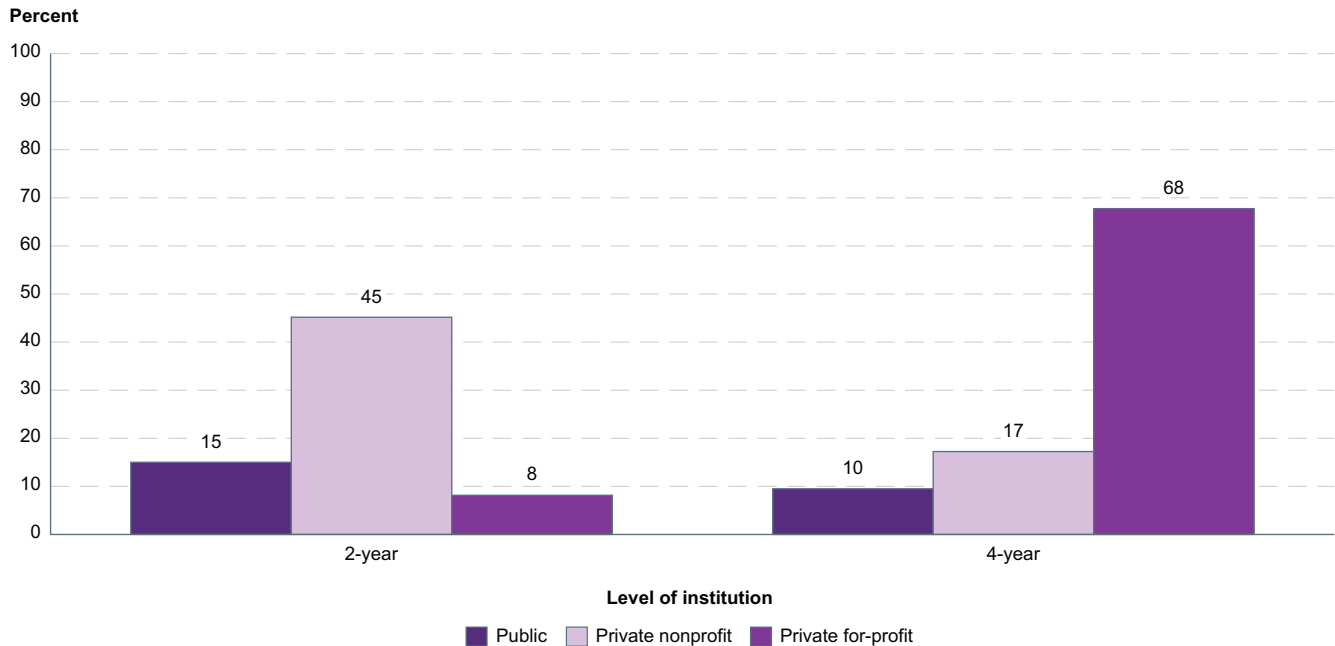
Figure 5. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level of institution: Fall 2009 through fall 2019



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2010 through Spring 2020, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 303.70.

In fall 2019, the 11.0 million students enrolled in 4-year institutions made up 66 percent of total undergraduate enrollment; the remaining 34 percent (5.6 million students) were enrolled in 2-year institutions. Between 2009 and 2019, enrollment increased by

10 percent at 4-year institutions (from 9.9 million to 11.0 million students) and decreased by 26 percent at 2-year institutions (from 7.5 million to 5.6 million students).⁵

Figure 6. Percentage of undergraduate students at degree-granting postsecondary institutions who enrolled exclusively in distance education courses, by level and control of institution: Fall 2019

NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Distance education uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the student and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used for instruction may include the following: the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; and videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, only if the videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with the technologies listed above.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2020, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 311.15.

Distance education⁶ courses and programs provide students with flexible learning opportunities. In fall 2019, some 36 percent (6.0 million) of all undergraduate students enrolled in at least one distance education course, and 2.4 million students, or 15 percent of total undergraduate enrollment, exclusively took distance education courses. Among undergraduate students who took distance education courses exclusively, 1.5 million were enrolled in institutions located in the same state in which they resided and 849,500 were enrolled in institutions in a different state.⁷

The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses varied by control of institution (i.e., public, private nonprofit, or

private for-profit). In fall 2019, the percentage of students at private for-profit institutions who took distance education courses exclusively (55 percent) was higher than that of students at private nonprofit institutions (18 percent) and public institutions (12 percent). In particular, the percentage of students at private for-profit 4-year institutions who took distance education courses exclusively (68 percent) was higher than the percentages of students at 2-year institutions (ranging from 8 percent at private for-profit 2-year institutions to 45 percent at private nonprofit 2-year institutions) and also higher than the percentages of students at public 4-year institutions (10 percent) and private nonprofit 4-year institutions (17 percent).

Endnotes:

¹ Data in this indicator represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

² Disaggregated data on undergraduate students who were Asian, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races were not collected in 2009. In 2009, data for undergraduate students who were Asian included students who were Pacific Islander. In 2009, students of Two or more races were required to select a single category from among the offered race/ethnicity categories (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian/Alaska Native).

³ In the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), racial/ethnic data were not collected for nonresident alien students, and their data were compiled as a separate group. Race/ethnicity categories exclude nonresident aliens.

⁴ Some of the decrease in for-profit and increase in nonprofit private enrollments can be attributed to a change in the control of some institutions. In 2019, some 31,100 undergraduate students were enrolled in nonprofit institutions that were classified as for-profit institutions in 2009.

⁵ Some of the shift in enrollment patterns for 2-year and 4-year institutions during this period is likely explained by 2-year institutions' beginning to offer 4-year degree programs,

which caused their institutional level to change to the 4-year classification. In 2019, some 893,300 undergraduate students were enrolled in 4-year institutions that were classified as 2-year institutions in 2009

⁶ Distance education uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the student and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used for instruction may include the following: the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; and videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, only if the videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with the technologies listed above.

⁷ Not all students taking distance education courses exclusively are specified separately in this comparison; for instance, students residing outside the United States or those whose location is unknown are not specified separately. Percentages were based on all students who took distance education courses exclusively, regardless of their location.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, tables 303.70, 306.10, and 311.15; *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 306.10; *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 306.10

Related indicators and resources: [Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions](#); [College Enrollment Rates; Differences in Postsecondary Enrollment Among Recent High School Completers](#) [*The Condition of Education 2016 Spotlight*]; [Immediate College Enrollment Rate](#); [Postbaccalaureate Enrollment](#); [STEM Degrees](#) [*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*]; [Undergraduate Enrollment](#) [*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*]; [Young Adult Educational and Employment Outcomes by Family Socioeconomic Status](#) [*The Condition of Education 2019 Spotlight*]

Glossary: Control of institutions; Degree-granting institutions; Distance education; Enrollment; Full-time enrollment; Part-time enrollment; Postsecondary institutions (basic classification by level); Private institution; Public school or institution; Racial/ethnic group; Undergraduate students