

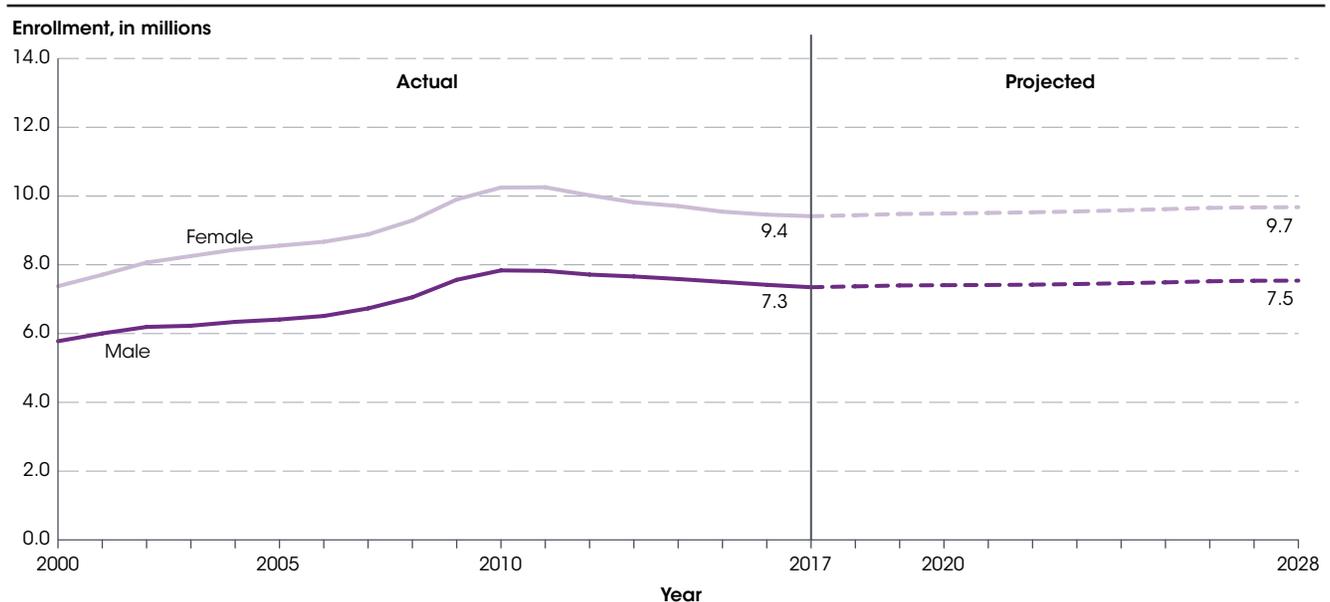
Undergraduate Enrollment

Between 2000 and 2017, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 27 percent (from 13.2 million to 16.8 million students). By 2028, total undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase to 17.2 million students.

In fall 2017, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 16.8 million students, an increase of 27 percent from 2000, when enrollment was 13.2 million students. While total undergraduate enrollment increased by 37 percent between 2000 and 2010 (from 13.2 million to

18.1 million students), enrollment decreased by 7 percent between 2010 and 2017 (from 18.1 million to 16.8 million students). Undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 16.8 million to 17.2 million students) between 2017 and 2028.

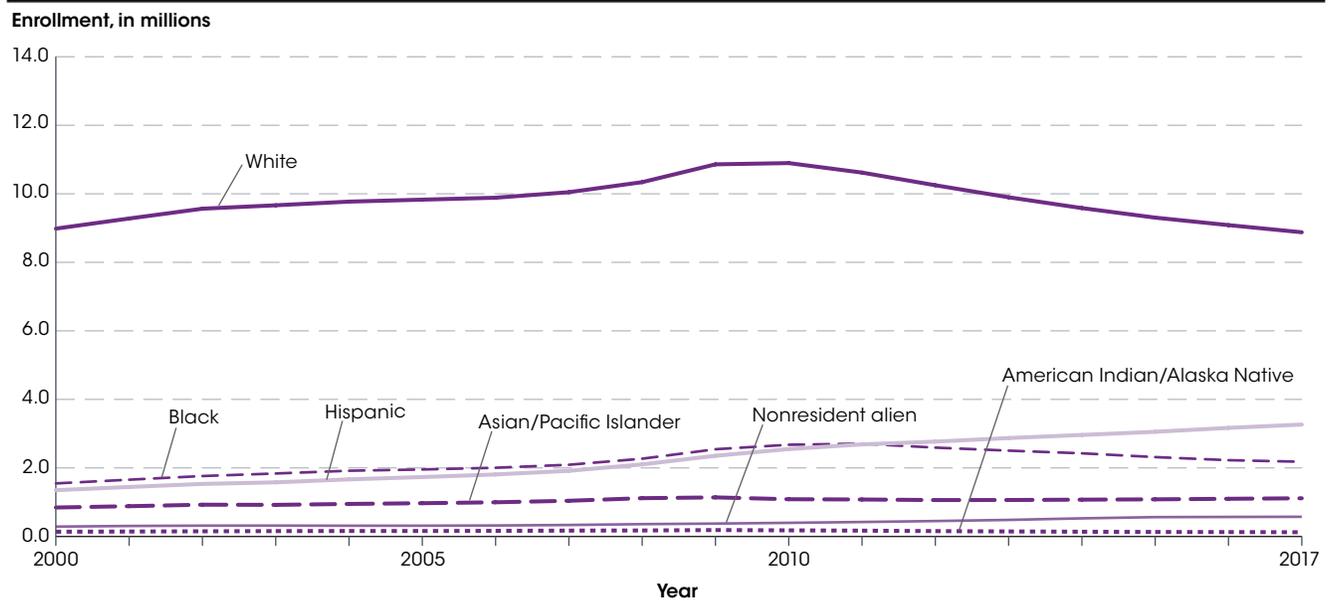
Figure 1. Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by sex: Fall 2000 through 2028



NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2017. 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 2001 through Spring 2018, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 2000 through 2028. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 303.70.

In fall 2017, female students made up 56 percent of total undergraduate enrollment (9.4 million students), and male students made up 44 percent (7.3 million students). Between 2000 and 2017, enrollment for both groups showed similar patterns of change: both female and male enrollments increased between 2000 and

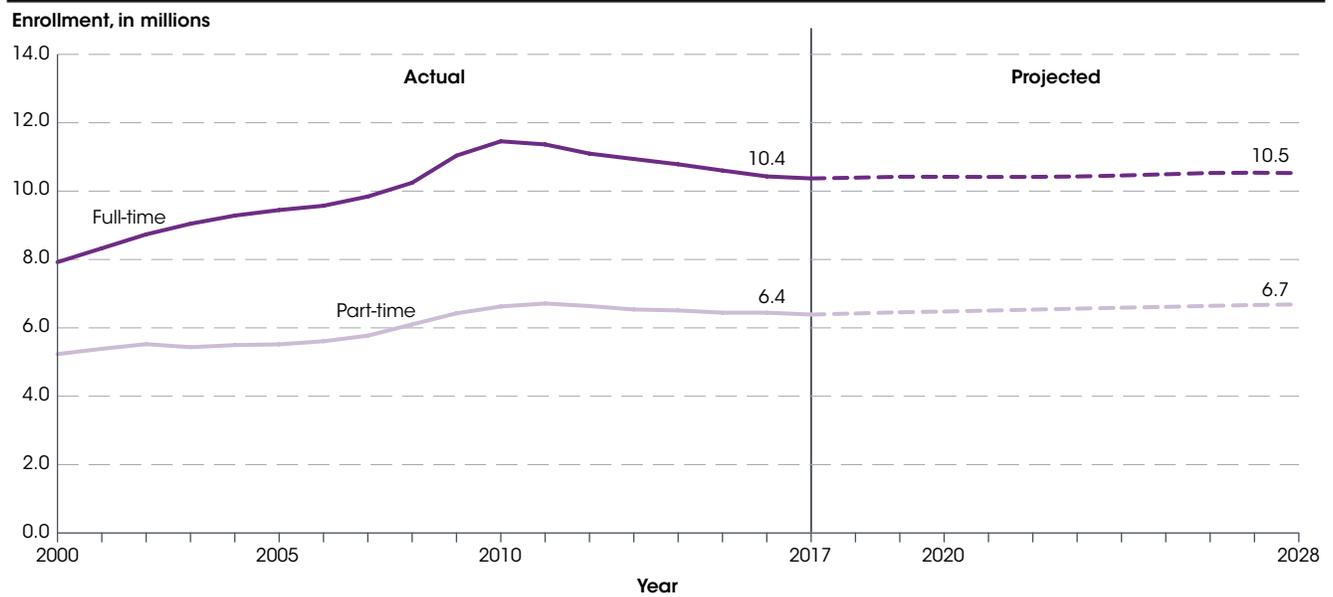
2010 (by 39 percent and 36 percent, respectively) and then decreased between 2010 and 2017 (by 8 percent and 6 percent, respectively). Between 2017 and 2028, female and male enrollments are projected to increase by 3 percent each (from 9.4 million to 9.7 million students and from 7.3 million to 7.5 million students, respectively).

Figure 2. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity or nonresident alien status: Fall 2000 through 2017

NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. 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. Race/ethnicity categories exclude nonresident aliens. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2001 through Spring 2018, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2005*, table 205; *Digest of Education Statistics 2009*, table 226; *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 306.10; *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 306.10; and *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 306.10.

Of the 16.8 million undergraduate students in fall 2017, some 8.9 million were White, 3.3 million were Hispanic, 2.2 million were Black, 1.1 million were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 124,000 were American Indian/Alaska Native. Hispanic enrollment increased in each year between 2000 and 2017, more than doubling during this period (from 1.4 million to 3.3 million students, a 142 percent increase). In contrast, enrollment trends for other racial/ethnic groups varied over time. Between 2000 and 2010, White enrollment increased by 21 percent (from 9.0 million to 10.9 million students), Black enrollment increased by 73 percent (from 1.5 million to 2.7 million students), Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment increased by 29 percent (from 846,000 to 1.1 million

students), and American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment increased by 29 percent (from 139,000 to 179,000 students). However, between 2010 and 2017, White enrollment decreased by 19 percent (from 10.9 million to 8.9 million students); Black enrollment decreased by 19 percent (from 2.7 million to 2.2 million students); and American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment decreased by 31 percent (from 179,000 to 124,000 students). Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment remained unchanged (at 1.1 million students). In fall 2017, degree-granting postsecondary institutions enrolled 575,000 nonresident alien¹ undergraduate students, which was double the number enrolled in 2000 (288,000).

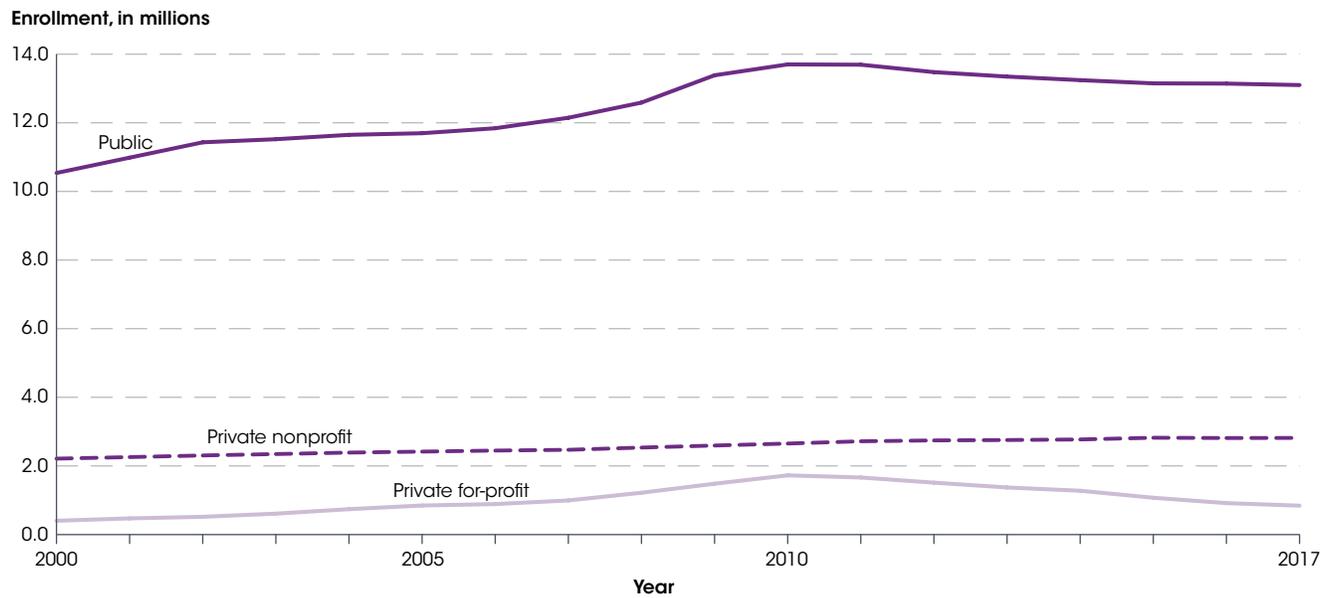
Figure 3. Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status: Fall 2000 through 2028

NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2017. 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 2001 through Spring 2018, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 2000 through 2028. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 303.70.

In fall 2017, there were 10.4 million full-time and 6.4 million part-time undergraduate students. Enrollment for both full- and part-time students has increased overall since 2000, specifically between 2000 and 2010, when full-time enrollment increased by 45 percent (from 7.9 million to 11.5 million students) and part-time enrollment increased by 27 percent (from 5.2 million to 6.6 million students). More recently, between 2010 and

2017, full-time enrollment decreased by 9 percent (from 11.5 million to 10.4 million students) and part-time enrollment decreased by 4 percent (from 6.6 million to 6.4 million students). Between 2017 and 2028, full-time enrollment is projected to increase by 2 percent (from 10.4 million to 10.5 million students) and part-time enrollment is projected to increase by 5 percent (from 6.4 million to 6.7 million students).

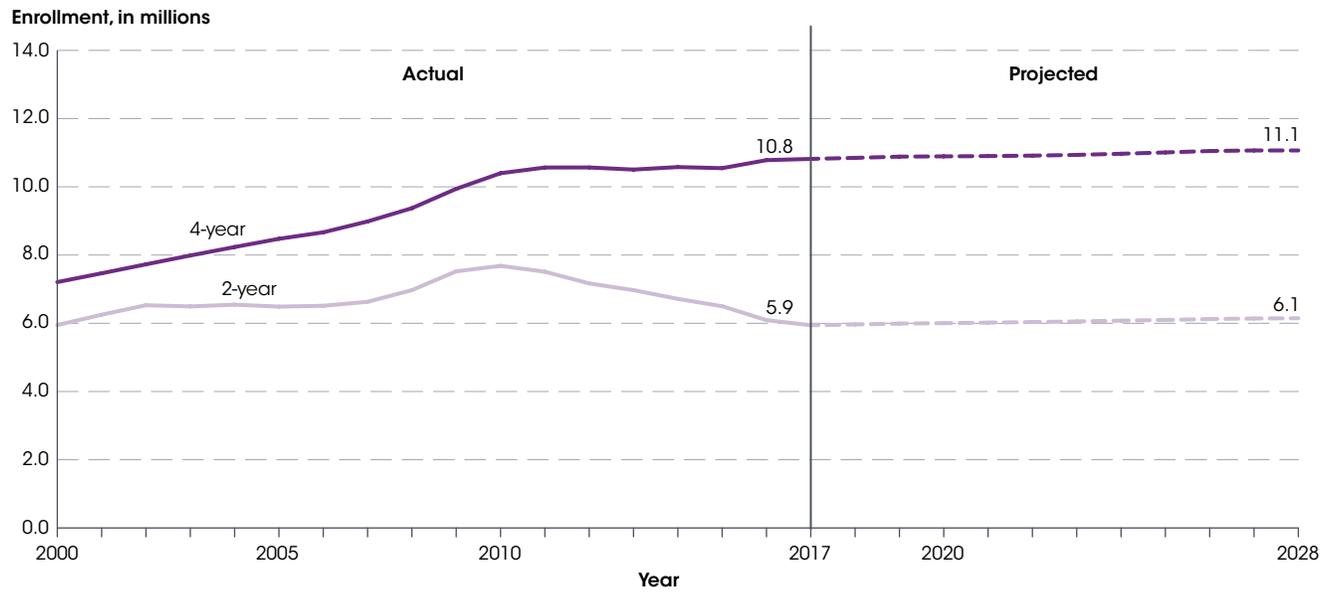
Figure 4. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Fall 2000 through 2017

NOTE: 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 2001 through Spring 2018, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 303.70.

Between fall 2000 and fall 2017, undergraduate enrollment increased at a greater rate at private for-profit institutions (109 percent) than at private nonprofit institutions (27 percent) and at public institutions (24 percent), although in 2000, undergraduate enrollment in private for-profit institutions was relatively small (403,000 students). From 2000 to 2010, enrollment in private for-profit institutions increased by 329 percent (from 403,000 to 1.7 million students). In comparison, enrollment increased by 30 percent at public institutions (from 10.5 million to 13.7 million students) and by

20 percent at private nonprofit institutions (from 2.2 million to 2.7 million students) during this period. However, after peaking in 2010, enrollment in private for-profit institutions decreased by 51 percent (from 1.7 million to 842,000 students) between 2010 and 2017. During this period, enrollment in public institutions decreased by 4 percent (from 13.7 million to 13.1 million students), while enrollment in private nonprofit institutions increased by 6 percent (from 2.7 million to 2.8 million students).²

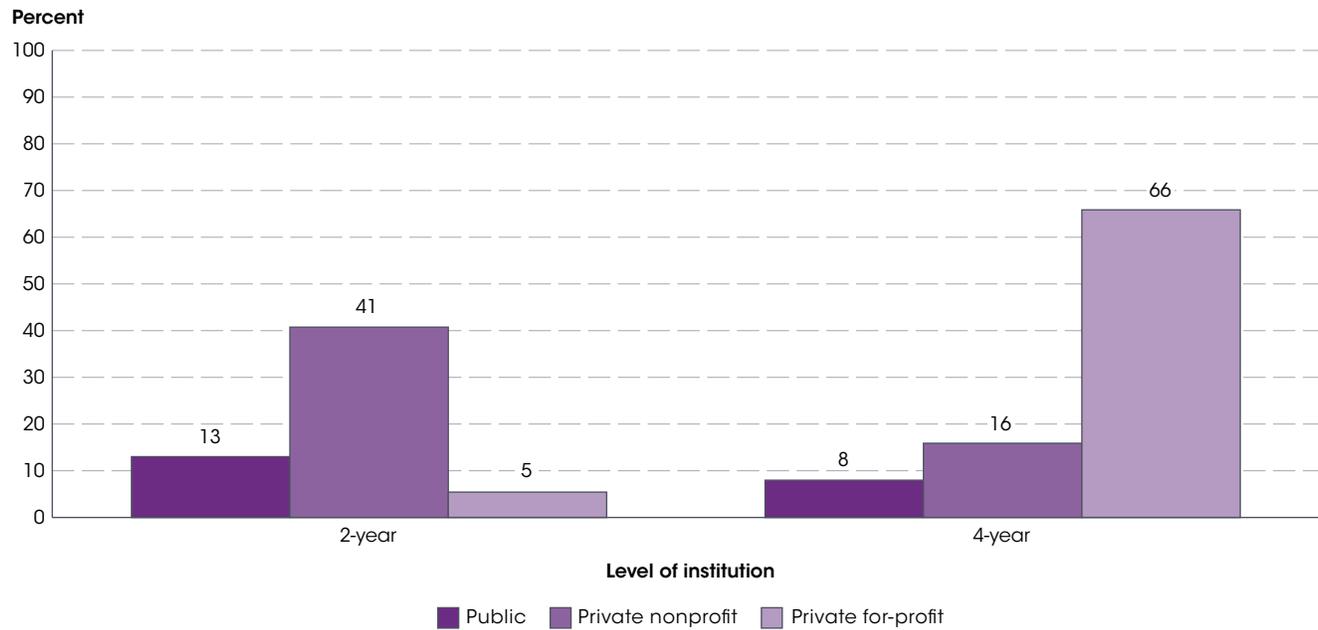
Figure 5. Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level of institution: Fall 2000 through 2028

NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2017. 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 2001 through Spring 2018, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 2000 through 2028. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 303.70.

In fall 2017, the 10.8 million students at 4-year institutions made up 65 percent of total undergraduate enrollment; the remaining 35 percent (5.9 million students) were enrolled in 2-year institutions. Between 2000 and 2010, enrollment increased by 44 percent at 4-year institutions (from 7.2 million to 10.4 million students) and by 29 percent at 2-year institutions (from 5.9 million to 7.7 million students). However, between 2010 and 2017, enrollment increased by 4 percent at 4-year institutions (from 10.4 million to 10.8 million students) and decreased by 23 percent at 2-year institutions (from 7.7 million to 5.9 million students).

Between 2017 and 2028, undergraduate enrollment in 4-year institutions is projected to increase by 2 percent (from 10.8 to 11.1 million students) and enrollment in 2-year institutions is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 5.9 million to 6.1 million students). Some of the shift in enrollment patterns for 2-year and 4-year institutions between 2010 and 2017 were affected by 2-year institutions' beginning to offer 4-year programs, which caused their classification to change. In 2017, some 617,000 undergraduate students were enrolled in 4-year institutions that were classified as 2-year institutions in 2010.

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 2017

NOTE: 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 2018, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 311.15.

Distance education³ courses and programs provide students with flexible learning opportunities. In fall 2017, nearly one-third of undergraduate students (5.5 million) participated in distance education, with 2.2 million students, or 13 percent of total undergraduate enrollment, exclusively taking distance education courses. Of the 2.2 million undergraduate students who exclusively took distance education courses, 1.4 million were enrolled in institutions located in the same state in which they resided, and 717,000 were enrolled in institutions in a different state.

The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses varied by institutional control and level. In fall 2017, the percentage of students at private for-profit institutions who exclusively

took distance education courses (52 percent) was more than three times that of students at private nonprofit institutions (16 percent) and more than five times that of students at public institutions (10 percent). In particular, the percentage of students at private for-profit 4-year institutions who exclusively took distance education courses (66 percent) was larger than the percentages of students at 2-year institutions who exclusively took distance education courses (percentages at these institutions ranged from 5 percent at private for-profit 2-year institutions to 41 percent at private nonprofit 2-year institutions) and also larger than the percentages of students at public 4-year institutions (8 percent) and private nonprofit 4-year institutions (16 percent) who exclusively took distance education courses.

Endnotes:

¹ In the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), data for the nonresident alien category are collected alongside data for racial/ethnic categories. Racial/ethnic designations are requested only for United States citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible noncitizens.

² In addition, in 2017, some 56,000 undergraduate students were enrolled in nonprofit institutions that were classified as for-profit institutions in 2010.

³ 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.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2005*, table 205; *Digest of Education Statistics 2009*, table 226; *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 306.10; *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 306.10; and *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, tables 303.70, 306.10, and 311.15

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