

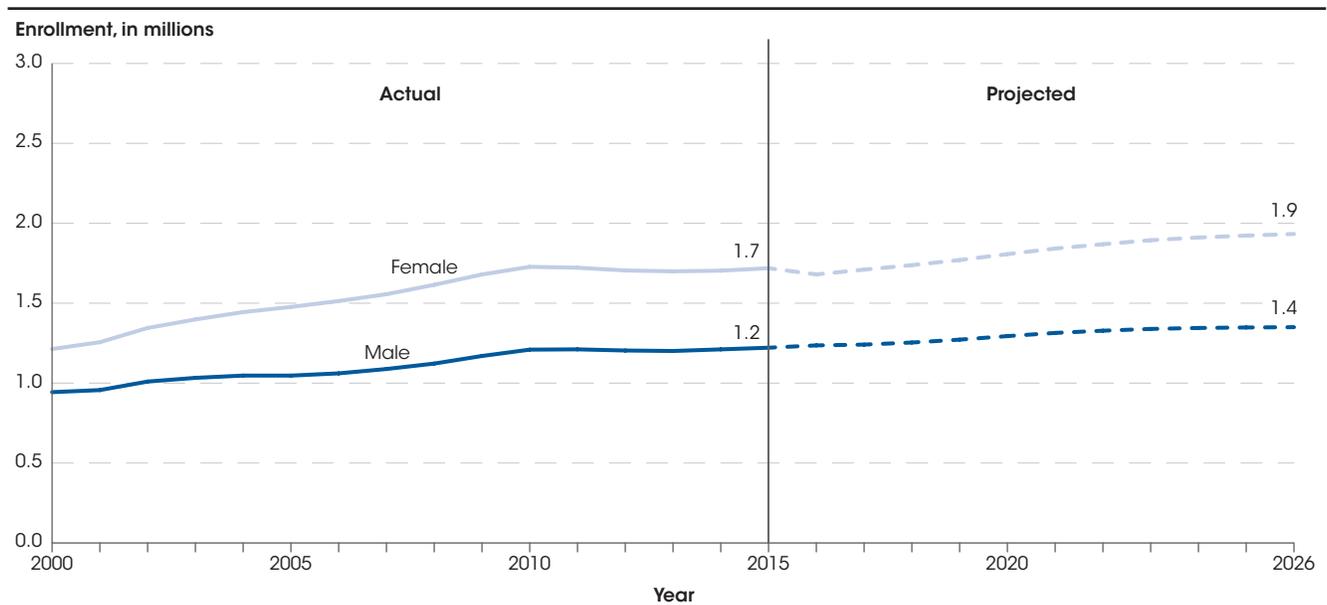
Postbaccalaureate Enrollment

Total enrollment in postbaccalaureate degree programs was 2.9 million students in fall 2015. Between 2015 and 2026, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase by 12 percent (from 2.9 million to 3.3 million students).

In fall 2015, there were 2.9 million students enrolled in postbaccalaureate degree programs. Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, as well as programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Between 2000 and 2010, postbaccalaureate enrollment increased by 36 percent. More recently, between 2010 and

2015, postbaccalaureate enrollment has remained relatively unchanged since 2010, when enrollment was 2.9 million students. Between 2015 and 2026, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase by 12 percent (from 2.9 million to 3.3 million students).

Figure 1. Actual and projected postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by sex: Fall 2000–2026

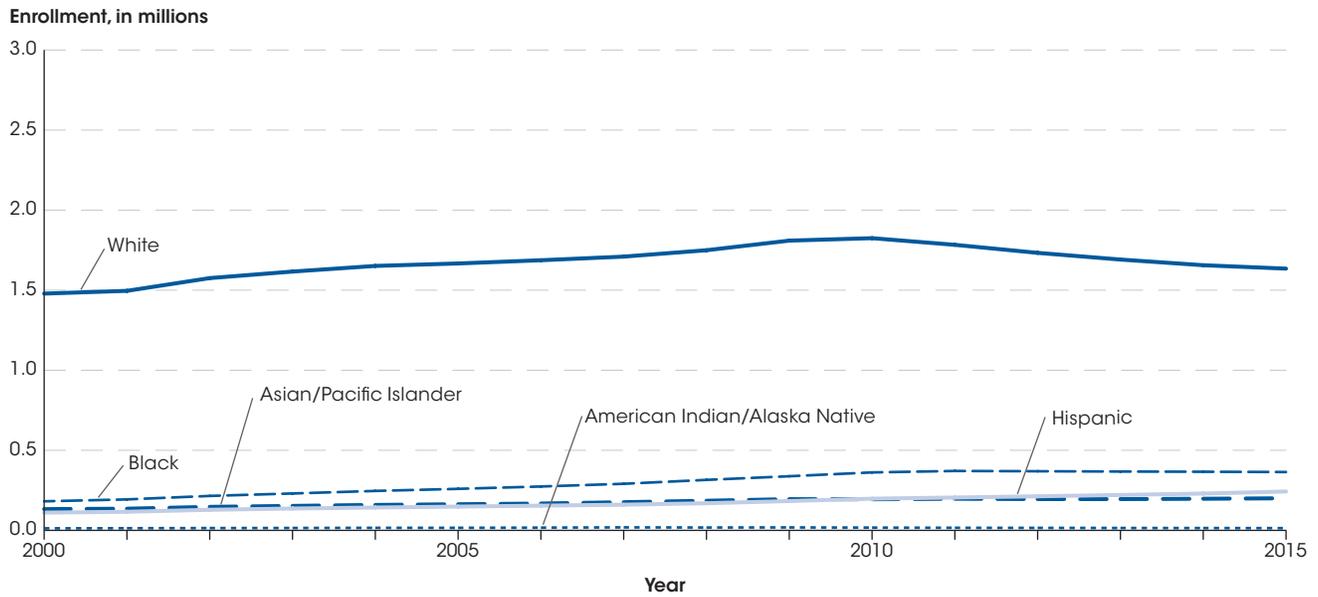


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, as well as programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Data include unclassified graduate students. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2015. 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 2016, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 1980 through 2026. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 303.80.

In fall 2015, female students made up 58 percent of total postbaccalaureate enrollment at 1.7 million, and male students made up 42 percent at 1.2 million. Female enrollment has generally increased at a faster rate than male enrollment since 2000. For example, between 2000 and 2010, female enrollment increased by 42 percent, while male enrollment increased by 28 percent. However, more recently the pattern of postbaccalaureate enrollment

has changed: in 2015, male enrollment was 1 percent higher than in 2010, while female enrollment was less than one-half of 1 percent lower than in 2010. Between 2015 and 2026, female enrollment is projected to increase by 12 percent (from 1.7 million to 1.9 million students) and male enrollment is projected to increase by 11 percent (from 1.2 million to 1.4 million students).

Figure 2. Postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2000–2015

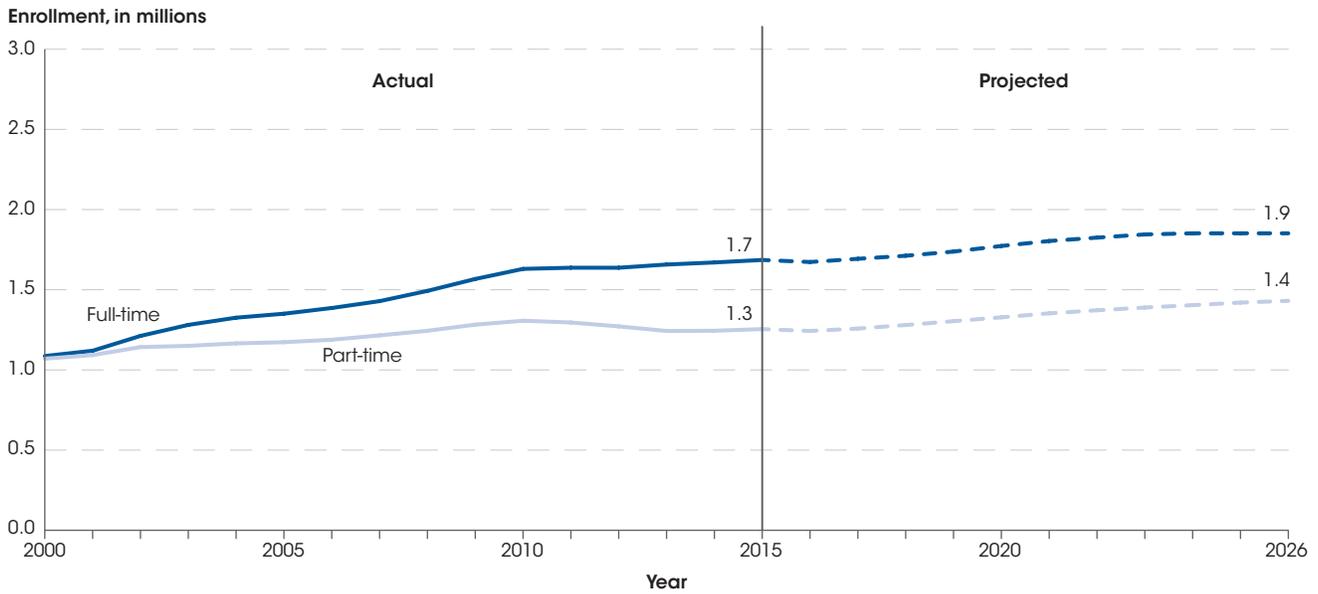


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, as well as programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2016, 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; and *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 306.10.

Of the 2.9 million postbaccalaureate students enrolled in fall 2015, some 1.6 million were White, 364,000 were Black, 243,000 were Hispanic, 200,000 were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 14,000 were American Indian/Alaska Native. Between 2000 and 2015, Hispanic enrollment more than doubled (a 119 percent increase, from 111,000 to 243,000 students). In contrast, enrollment for other racial/ethnic groups fluctuated during this period. Between 2000 and 2010, Black enrollment increased by 99 percent (from 181,000 to 362,000 students), Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment increased by 46 percent

(from 133,000 to 194,000 students), American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment increased by 36 percent (from 13,000 to 17,000 students), and White enrollment increased by 23 percent (from 1.5 million to 1.8 million students). However, after peaking in 2010, White enrollment decreased by 10 percent (from 1.8 million to 1.6 million students) between 2010 and 2015. American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment was 19 percent lower in 2015 than in 2010, while Asian/Pacific Islander and Black enrollments were slightly higher (3 percent and 1 percent, respectively).

Figure 3. Actual and projected postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status: Fall 2000–2026

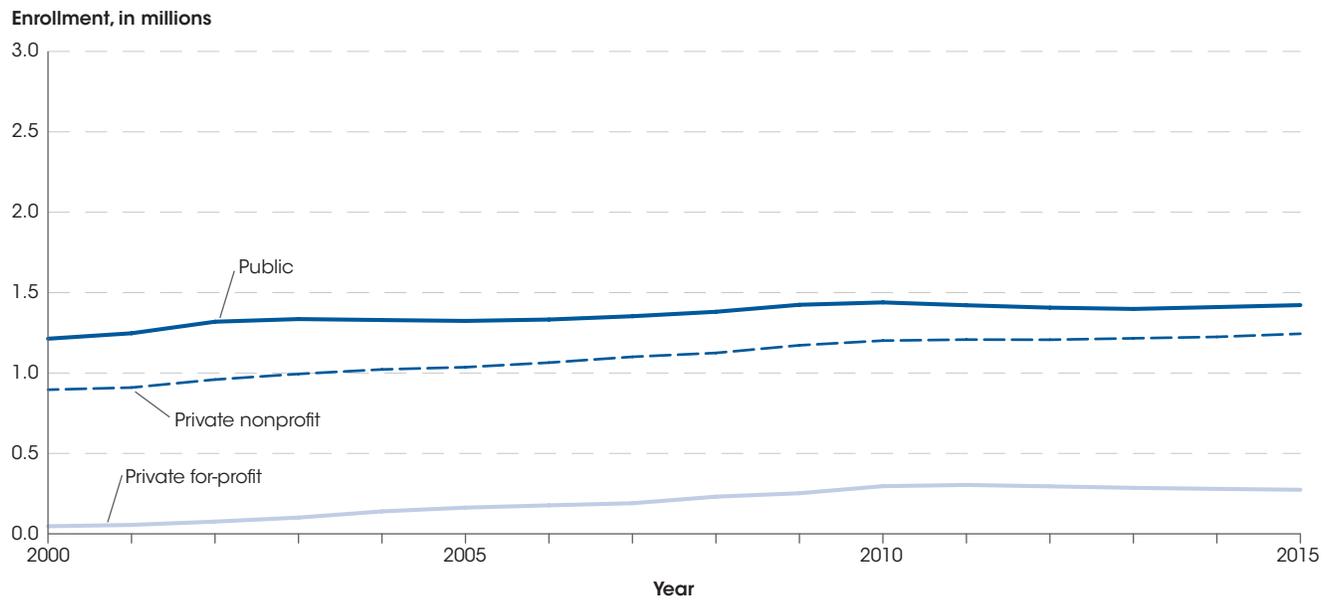


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Data include unclassified graduate students. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2015. 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), IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2016, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 1980 through 2026. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 303.80.

In fall 2015, there were 1.7 million full-time postbaccalaureate students and 1.3 million part-time postbaccalaureate students. Between 2000 and 2015, full-time enrollment increased at a faster rate (55 percent) than part-time enrollment (17 percent). Between 2000 and 2010, full-time enrollment increased by 50 percent,

while part-time enrollment increased by 22 percent. More recently, between 2010 and 2015, full-time enrollment increased by 3 percent, but part-time enrollment decreased by 4 percent. Between 2015 and 2026, however, part-time enrollment is projected to increase at a faster rate (14 percent) than full-time enrollment (10 percent).

Figure 4. Postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Fall 2000–2015

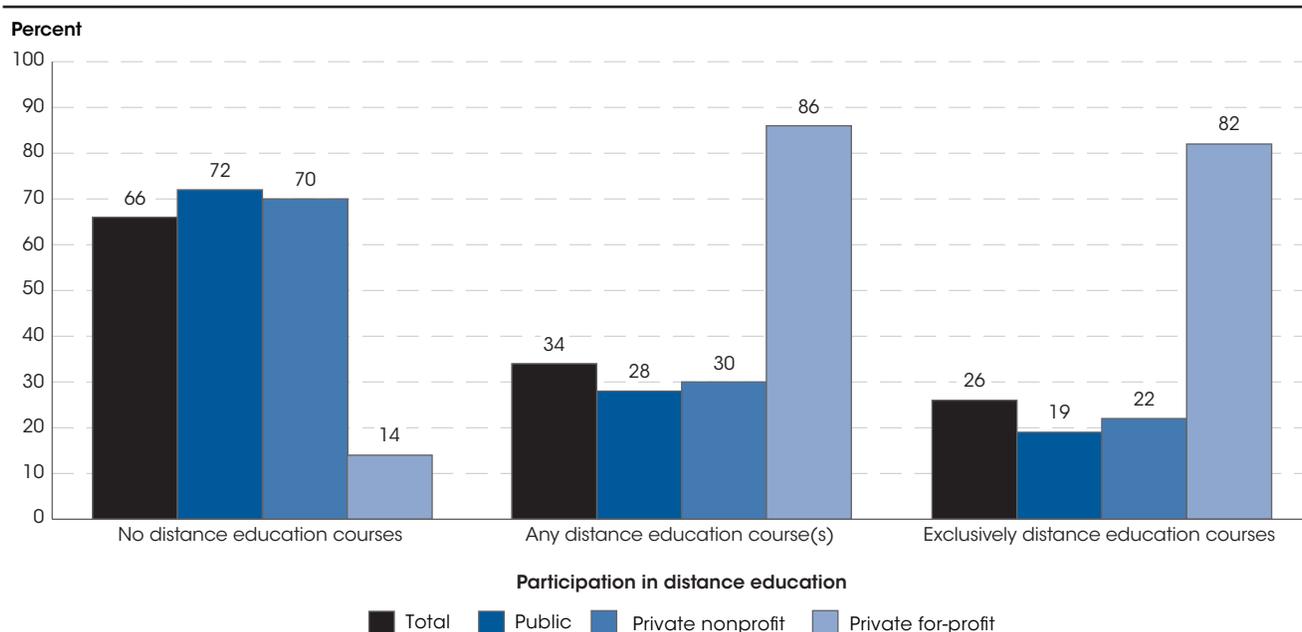


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Data include unclassified graduate students. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. 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 2016, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 303.80.

From fall 2000 to fall 2015, postbaccalaureate enrollment grew at a faster rate at private for-profit institutions (480 percent) than at private nonprofit institutions (39 percent) and public institutions (17 percent), although in 2000 postbaccalaureate enrollment at private for-profit institutions was relatively small, at 47,000 students. Between 2000 and 2010, postbaccalaureate enrollment increased by 528 percent at private for-profit institutions,

while enrollment increased by 34 percent at private nonprofit institutions and by 19 percent at public institutions. More recently, between 2010 and 2015, enrollment at private for-profit institutions decreased by 8 percent, while enrollment at private nonprofit institutions increased by 4 percent. Enrollment at public institutions remained relatively unchanged during this period.

Figure 5. Percentage of postbaccalaureate students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by participation in distance education and control of institution: Fall 2015



NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Distance education uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor as well as 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. 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 2016, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 311.15.

Distance education¹ courses and programs provide flexible learning opportunities to postbaccalaureate students. In fall 2015, more than one-third of total postbaccalaureate students (1.0 million) participated in distance education, with 769,000 students, or 26 percent of total postbaccalaureate enrollment, exclusively taking distance education courses.² Of the 769,000 students who exclusively took distance education courses, 322,000 were enrolled at institutions located in the same state in which they resided, and 414,000 were enrolled at institutions in a different state.

The percentage of postbaccalaureate students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses differed by institutional control. In fall 2015, the percentage of students at private for-profit institutions who exclusively took distance education courses (82 percent) was higher than that of students at private nonprofit (22 percent) and public (19 percent) institutions. The percentage of students who did not take any distance education courses was about five times higher for those enrolled at public (72 percent) and private nonprofit (70 percent) institutions than for those at private for-profit institutions (14 percent).

Endnotes:

¹ Distance education uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor as well as 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.

² In comparison, 12 percent of undergraduate students exclusively took distance education courses. See indicator on [Undergraduate Enrollment](#).

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, tables 303.80, 306.10, and 311.15

Related indicators and resources: Undergraduate Enrollment, Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, Distance Education in Postsecondary Institutions [*web-only*]

Glossary: Control of institutions, Distance education, Enrollment, Full-time enrollment, Part-time enrollment, Postbaccalaureate enrollment, Private institution, Public school or institution, Racial/ethnic group