

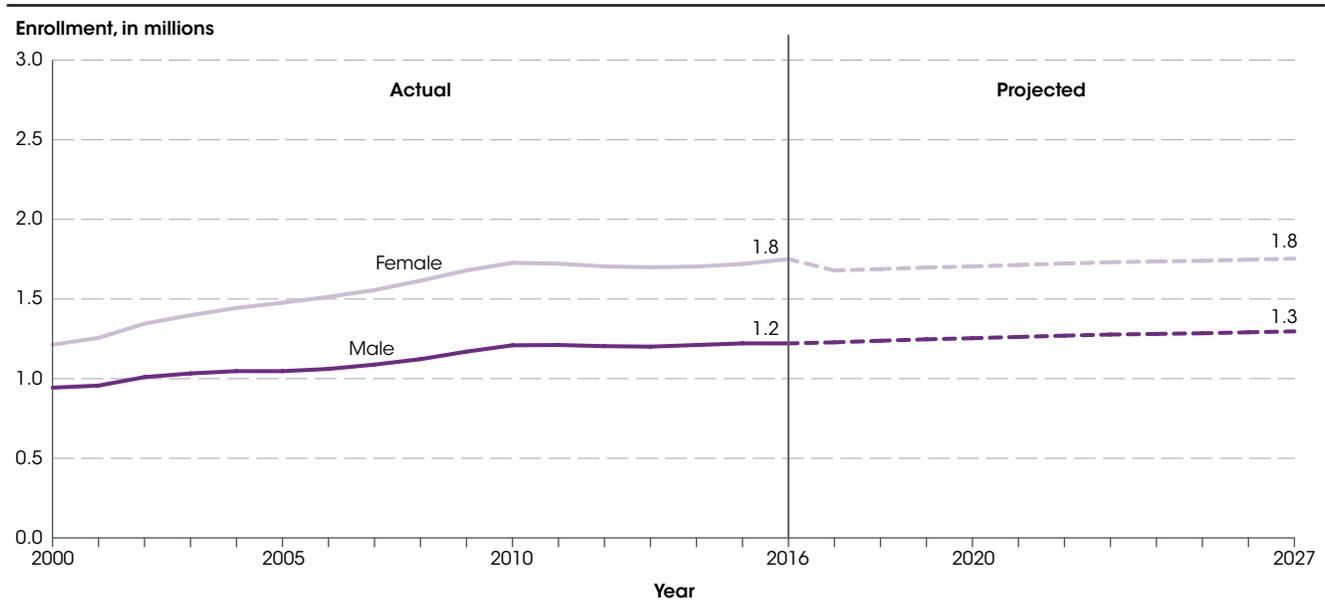
## Postbaccalaureate Enrollment

*Between 2000 and 2016, total postbaccalaureate enrollment increased by 38 percent (from 2.2 million to 3.0 million students). By 2027, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase to 3.1 million students.*

In fall 2016, some 3.0 million students were enrolled in postbaccalaureate degree programs. Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Total postbaccalaureate enrollment increased by 36 percent between 2000 and

2010 (from 2.2 million to 2.9 million students) and was 1 percent higher in 2016 than in 2010 (3.0 million vs. 2.9 million students). Between 2016 and 2027, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 3.0 million to 3.1 million students).

**Figure 1. Actual and projected postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by sex: Fall 2000 through 2027**

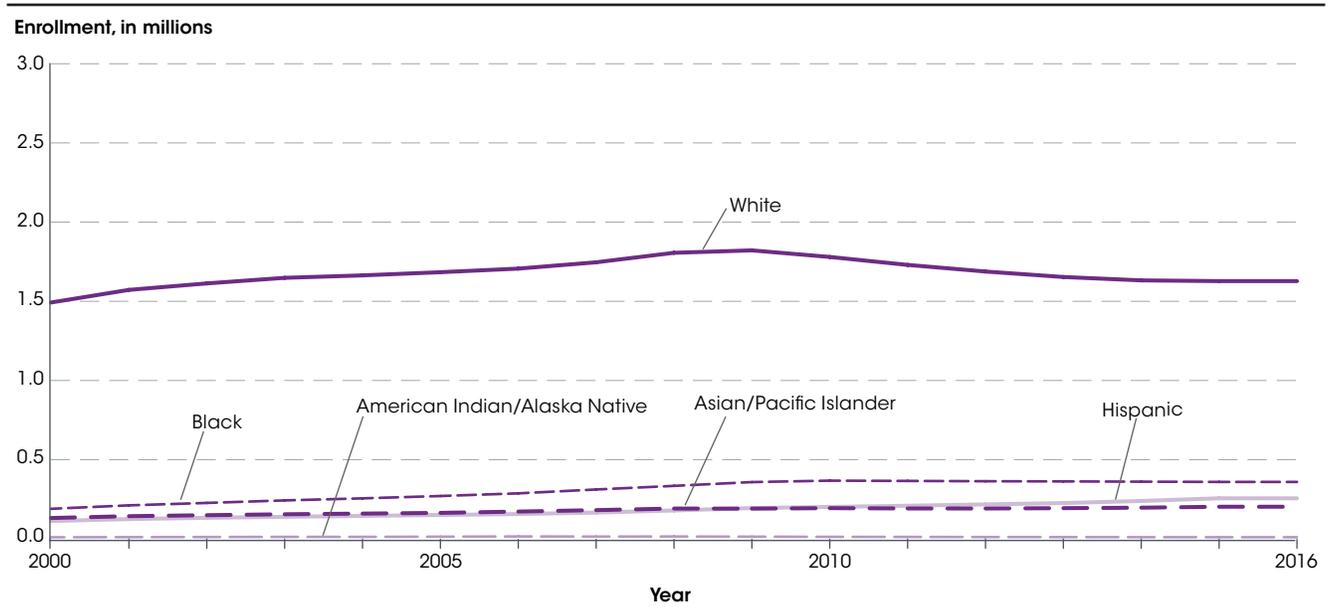


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2016. 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 2017, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 2000 through 2027. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 303.80.

In fall 2016, female students made up 59 percent of total postbaccalaureate enrollment (1.8 million students), and male students made up 41 percent (1.2 million students). Between 2000 and 2010, female enrollment increased by 42 percent, a faster increase than that observed for male enrollment (28 percent). In addition, both female and

male postbaccalaureate enrollments were 1 percent higher in 2016 than in 2010. Between 2016 and 2027, however, male enrollment is projected to increase by 6 percent (from 1.2 million to 1.3 million students) whereas female enrollment is projected to remain relatively unchanged (at 1.8 million students).

Figure 2. Postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2000 through 2016

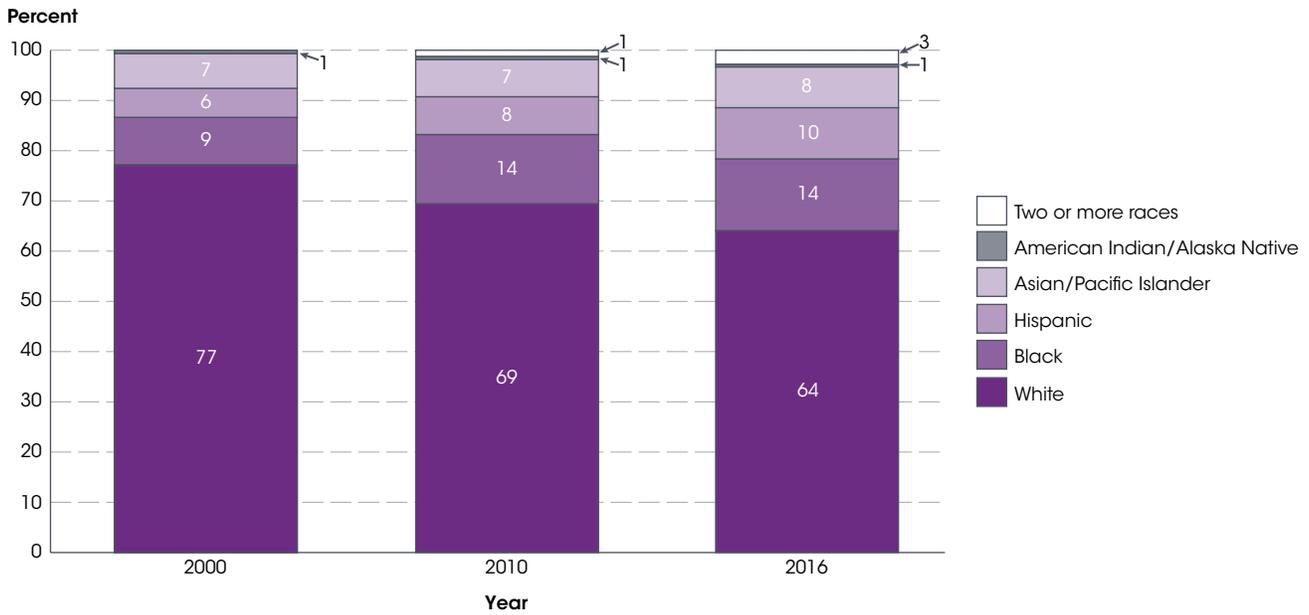


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been revised from previously published figures. Race/ethnicity categories exclude nonresident aliens. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2017, 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 2017*, table 306.10.

Of the 3.0 million postbaccalaureate students enrolled in fall 2016, some 1.6 million were White, 363,000 were Black, 260,000 were Hispanic, 206,000 were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 13,700 were American Indian/Alaska Native. Between 2000 and 2010, enrollments for all racial/ethnic groups increased: Black enrollment increased by 99 percent (from 181,000 to 362,000 students), Hispanic enrollment increased by 79 percent (from 111,000 to 198,000 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 12,600 to 17,100 students), and White enrollment increased by 23 percent (from 1.5 million to 1.8 million students). However, between 2010 and 2016, changes in enrollment for racial/ethnic groups varied. During this period,

White and American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment decreased by 11 percent (from 1.8 million to 1.6 million students) and 20 percent (from 17,100 to 13,700 students), respectively, while Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment increased by 31 percent (from 198,000 to 260,000 students) and 6 percent (from 194,000 to 206,000 students), respectively. Black enrollment remained relatively unchanged during this period (at 362,000 in 2010 and 363,000 in 2016). Overall, postbaccalaureate enrollment for each racial/ethnic group was higher in 2016 than in 2010. For example, between 2000 and 2016, enrollment doubled for Black students (from 181,000 to 363,000, an increase of 100 percent), and more than doubled for Hispanic students (from 111,000 to 260,000, an increase of 134 percent).

**Figure 3. Percentage distribution of postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2000, fall 2010, and fall 2016**

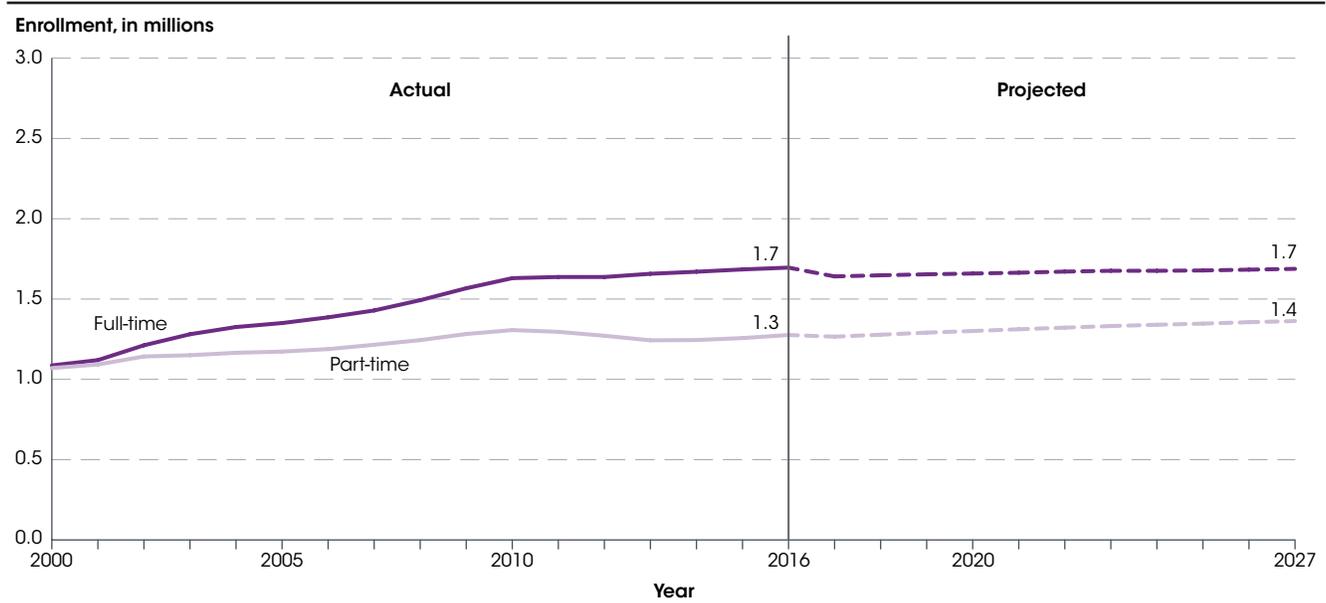


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Data for students of Two or more races were unavailable for 2000. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Race/ethnicity categories exclude nonresident aliens. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), IPEDS Spring 2017, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 306.10.

The percentage distribution of postbaccalaureate students by race/ethnicity shifted between 2000, 2010, and 2016. The percentage of postbaccalaureate students who were White was lower in 2016 (64 percent) than in 2010 (69 percent) and 2000 (77 percent). The percentage of postbaccalaureate students who were Black was higher in 2010 and 2016 (14 percent in both years) than in 2000 (9 percent). The percentage who were Hispanic

was higher in 2016 (10 percent) than in 2010 (8 percent) and 2000 (6 percent). In all 3 years, the percentage of postbaccalaureate students who were Asian/Pacific Islander was between 7 and 8 percent and the percentage who were American Indian/Alaska Native was 1 percent. The percentage who were of Two or more races was 3 percent in 2016 and 1 percent in 2010. Data for students of Two or more races were unavailable for 2000.

**Figure 4. Actual and projected postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status: Fall 2000 through 2027**

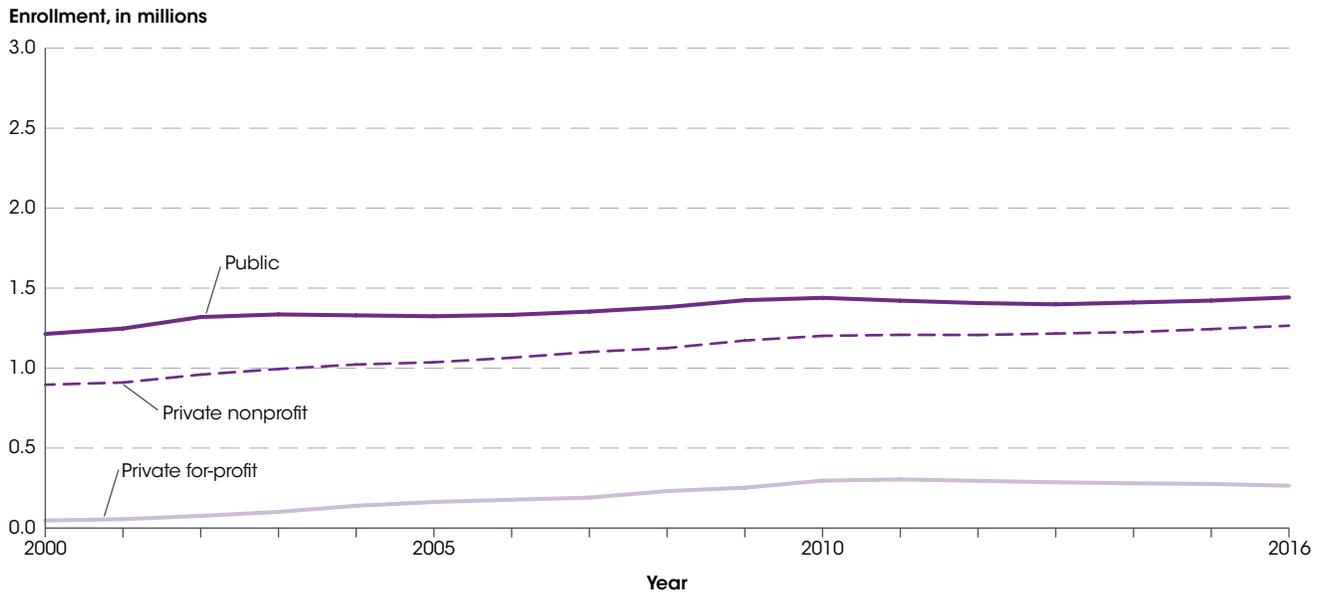


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 2016. 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 2017, Fall Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Projection Model, 2000 through 2027. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 303.80.

In fall 2016, there were 1.7 million full-time postbaccalaureate students and 1.3 million part-time postbaccalaureate students. Between 2000 and 2016, full-time enrollment increased at a faster rate (56 percent, from 1.1 million to 1.7 million students) than part-time enrollment (19 percent, from 1.1 million to 1.3 million students). Between 2000 and 2010, full-time enrollment increased by 50 percent (from 1.1 million to 1.6 million students), while part-time enrollment increased by 22 percent (from 1.1 million to 1.3 million students).

However, more recently, the pattern of postbaccalaureate enrollment has changed: in 2016, full-time enrollment was 4 percent higher than in 2010 (1.7 million vs. 1.6 million students), while part-time enrollment was 2 percent lower (1.31 million vs. 1.28 million students). Between 2016 and 2027, however, part-time enrollment is projected to increase by 7 percent (from 1.3 million to 1.4 million students), whereas full-time enrollment is projected to remain relatively unchanged (at 1.7 million students).

**Figure 5. Postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Fall 2000 through 2016**



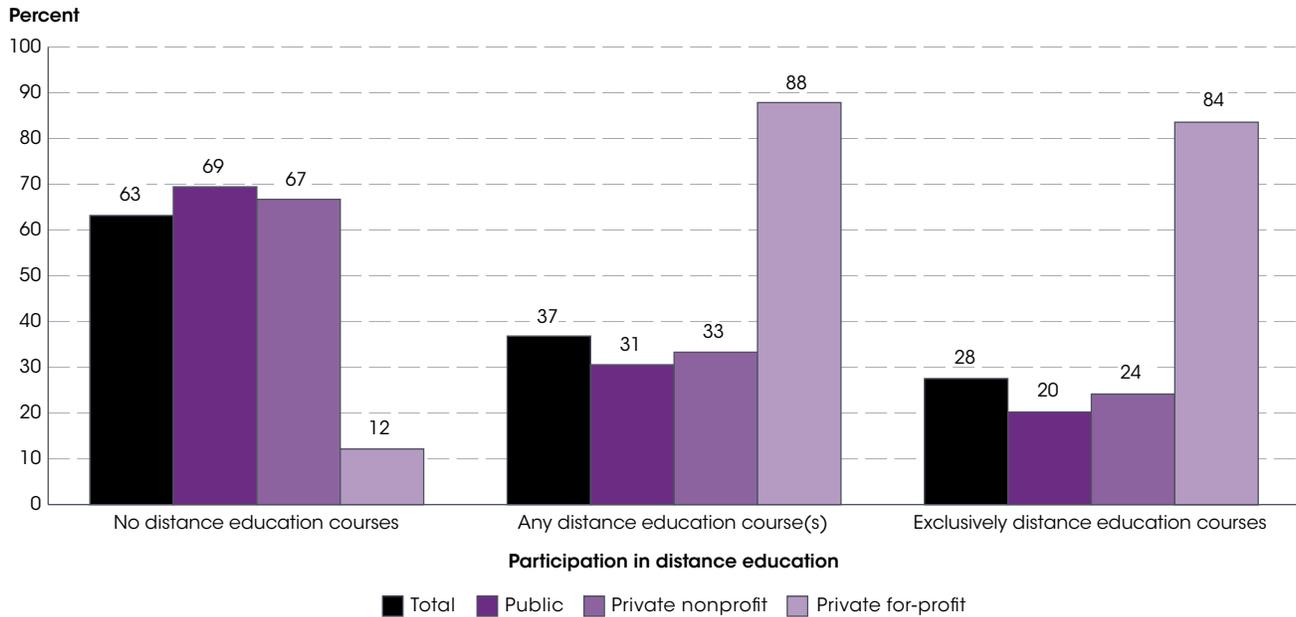
NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been 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 2017, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 303.80.

From fall 2000 to fall 2016, postbaccalaureate enrollment grew at a faster rate at private for-profit institutions (461 percent, from 47,200 to 265,000 students) than at private nonprofit institutions (41 percent, from 896,000 to 1.3 million students) and public institutions (19 percent, from 1.2 million to 1.4 million students). Between 2000 and 2010, postbaccalaureate enrollment increased by 528 percent (from 47,200 to 296,000 students) at private for-profit institutions, while it increased by 34 percent (from 896,000 to 1.2 million students) at

private nonprofit institutions and by 19 percent (from 1.2 million to 1.4 million students) at public institutions. More recently, between 2010 and 2016, enrollment at private for-profit institutions decreased by 11 percent (from 296,000 to 265,000 students), while enrollment at private nonprofit institutions increased by 5 percent (from 1.2 million to 1.3 million students). Enrollment at public institutions remained relatively unchanged during this period (at 1.4 million students).

**Figure 6. Percentage of postbaccalaureate students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by participation in distance education and control of institution: Fall 2016**



NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, including professional doctoral 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 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. 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 2017, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 311.15.

Distance education<sup>1</sup> courses and programs provide flexible learning opportunities to postbaccalaureate students. In fall 2016, more than one-third of total postbaccalaureate students (1.1 million) participated in distance education, with 819,000 students, or 28 percent of total postbaccalaureate enrollment, exclusively taking distance education courses.<sup>2</sup> Of the 819,000 students who exclusively took distance education courses, 350,000 were enrolled at institutions located in the same state in which they resided, and 440,000 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 2016, the percentage of students at private for-profit institutions who exclusively took distance education courses (84 percent) was higher than that of students at private nonprofit (24 percent) and public (20 percent) institutions. The percentage of students who did not take any distance education courses was higher for those enrolled at public (69 percent) and private nonprofit (67 percent) institutions than for those at private for-profit institutions (12 percent).

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> In comparison, 13 percent of undergraduate students exclusively took distance education courses. See indicator on [Undergraduate Enrollment](#).

**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, tables 303.80, 306.10, and 311.15

**Related indicators and resources:** [Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions](#); [Undergraduate and Postbaccalaureate Enrollment](#) [*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*]; [Trends in Student Loan Debt for Graduate School Completers](#); [Undergraduate Enrollment](#)

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