

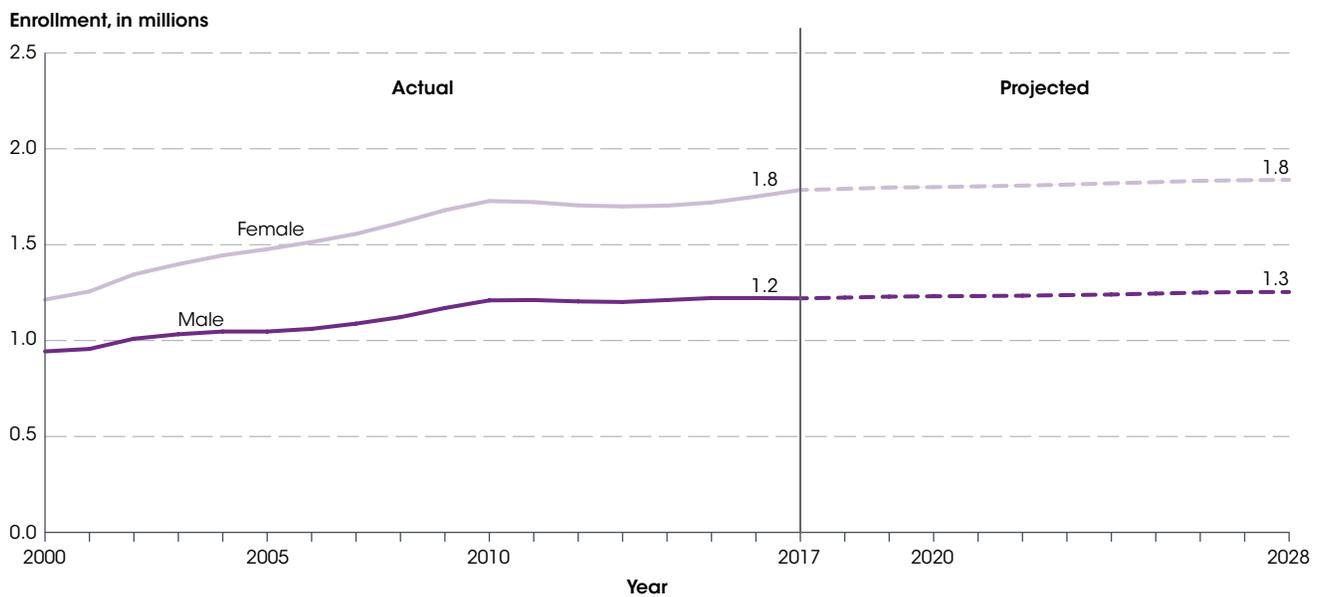
## Postbaccalaureate Enrollment

*Between 2000 and 2017, total postbaccalaureate enrollment increased by 39 percent (from 2.2 million to 3.0 million students). By 2028, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase to 3.1 million students.*

In fall 2017, some 3.0 million students were enrolled in postbaccalaureate degree programs. Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, as well as 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 2 percent higher in 2017 than in 2010 (3.0 million vs. 2.9 million students). Between 2017 and 2028, 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 2028**

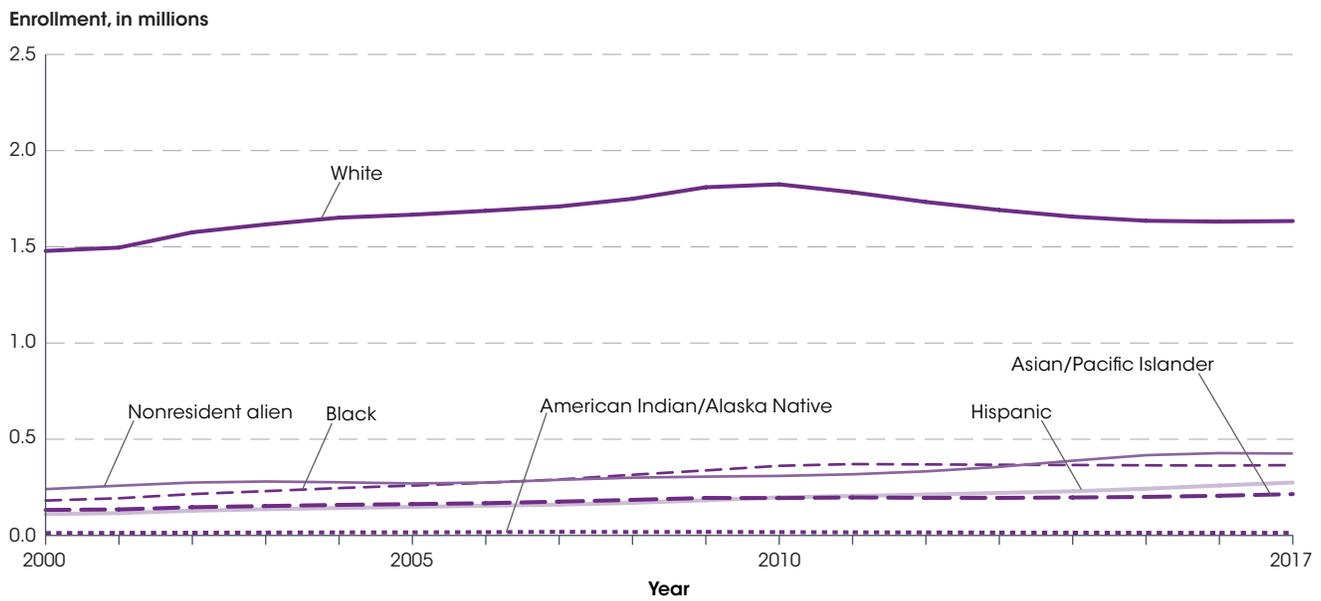


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, as well as professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 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 303.80.

In fall 2017, 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, female enrollment was 3 percent higher in 2017 than in 2010 (1.8 million

vs. 1.7 million students), whereas male enrollment was 1 percent higher (1.22 million vs. 1.21 million students). Between 2017 and 2028, however, male enrollment is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 1.2 million to 1.3 million students) and female enrollment is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 1.79 million to 1.84 million students).

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

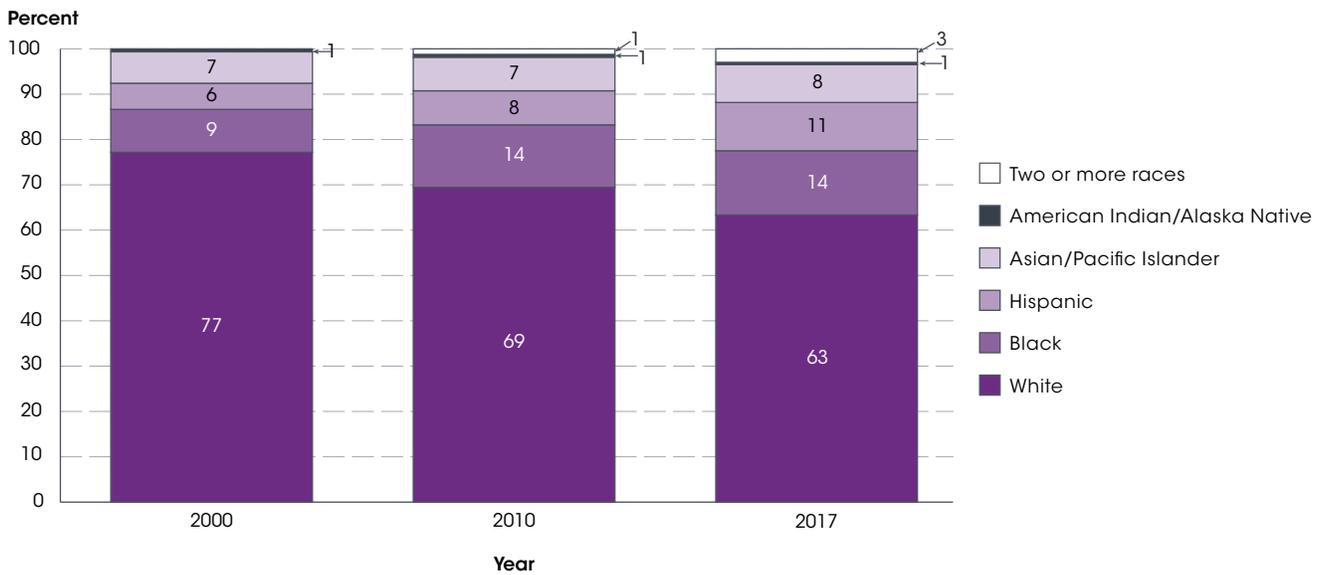


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title 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), 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 3.0 million postbaccalaureate students enrolled in fall 2017, some 1.6 million were White, 365,000 were Black, 275,000 were Hispanic, 215,000 were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 13,600 were American Indian/Alaska Native. Overall, postbaccalaureate enrollment for each racial/ethnic group was higher in 2017 than in 2000. For example, between 2000 and 2017, Black enrollment doubled (from 181,000 to 365,000, an increase of 101 percent) and Hispanic enrollment more than doubled (from 111,000 to 275,000, an increase of 148 percent). 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 2017, changes in enrollment for racial/ethnic groups varied. During this period, American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment decreased by 21 percent (from 17,100 to 13,600 students) and White enrollment decreased by 10 percent (from 1.8 million to 1.6 million students), respectively. Hispanic enrollment increased by 39 percent (from 198,000 to 275,000 students) and Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment increased by 11 percent (from 194,000 to 215,000 students). Black enrollment was 1 percent higher in 2017 than in 2010 (365,000 vs. 362,000 students). In fall 2017, degree-granting postsecondary institutions enrolled 426,000 nonresident alien postbaccalaureate students. The number of nonresident alien<sup>1</sup> postbaccalaureate students increased by 28 percent between 2000 and 2010 (from 240,000 to 309,000 students) and increased by 38 percent between 2010 and 2017 (from 309,000 to 426,000 students).

**Figure 3. Percentage distribution of postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2000, fall 2010, and fall 2017**

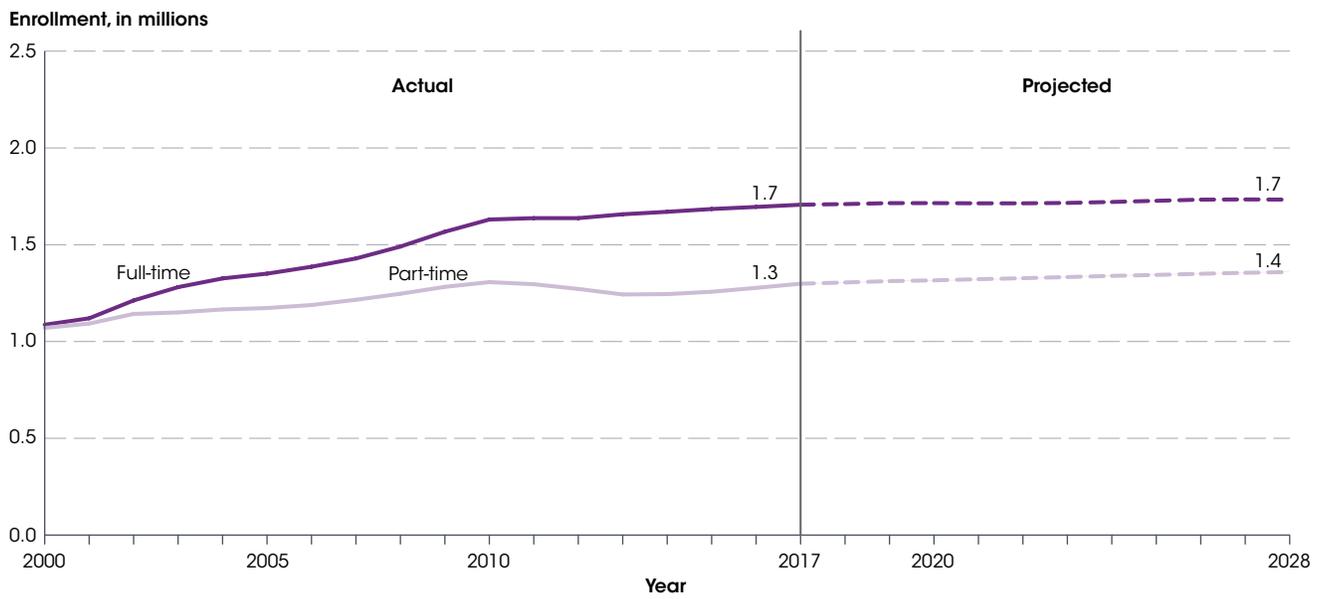


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master's and doctoral programs, as well as professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Data for students of Two or more races were unavailable for 2000. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Race/ethnicity categories exclude nonresident aliens. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figure is based on unrounded data.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2001, 2011, and 2018, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 306.10.

The percentage of postbaccalaureate students who were White was lower in 2017 (63 percent) than in 2010 (69 percent) and 2000 (77 percent). The percentage of postbaccalaureate students who were Black was higher in 2010 and 2017 (14 percent in both years) than in 2000 (9 percent). The percentage who were Hispanic was higher in 2017 (11 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 either 7 or 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 2017 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 2028**

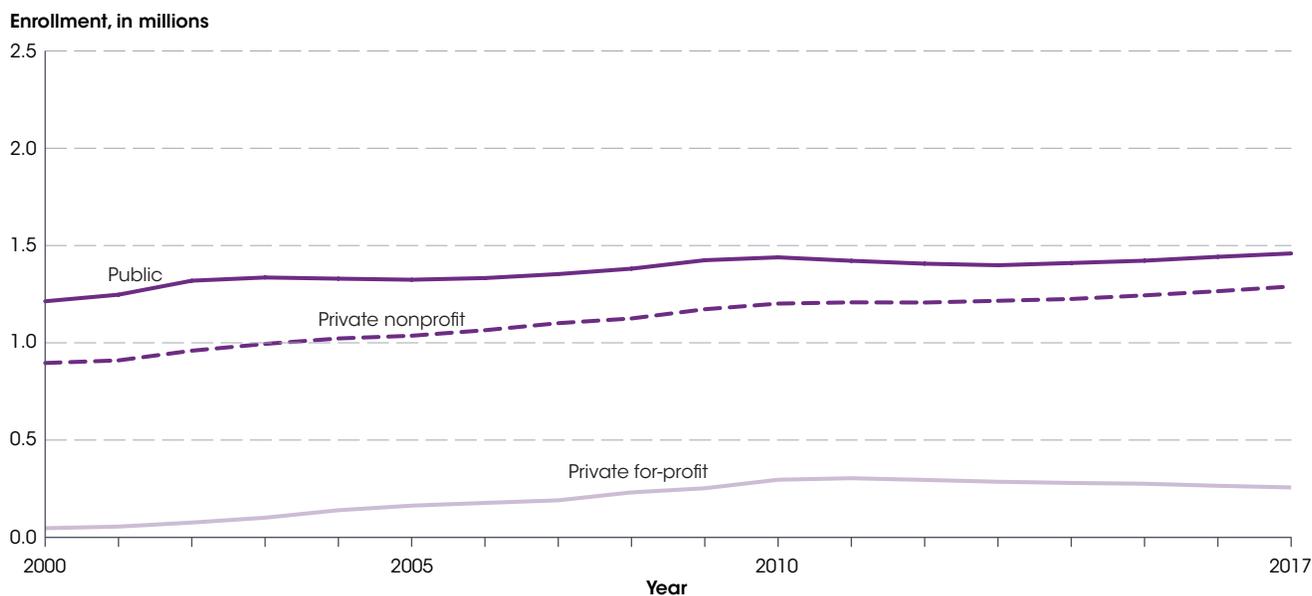


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Projections are based on data through 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 303.80.

In fall 2017, there were 1.7 million full-time postbaccalaureate students and 1.3 million part-time postbaccalaureate students. Between 2000 and 2017, full-time enrollment increased at a faster rate (57 percent, from 1.1 million to 1.7 million students) than part-time enrollment (21 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).

More recently, between 2010 and 2017, full-time enrollment increased by 5 percent (from 1.6 million to 1.7 million students), while part-time enrollment was 1 percent lower (1.31 million vs. 1.30 million students). Between 2017 and 2028, however, part-time enrollment is projected to increase by 5 percent (from 1.3 million to 1.4 million students), whereas full-time enrollment is projected to increase by 2 percent (from 1.71 million to 1.73 million students).

**Figure 5. Postbaccalaureate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Fall 2000 through 2017**

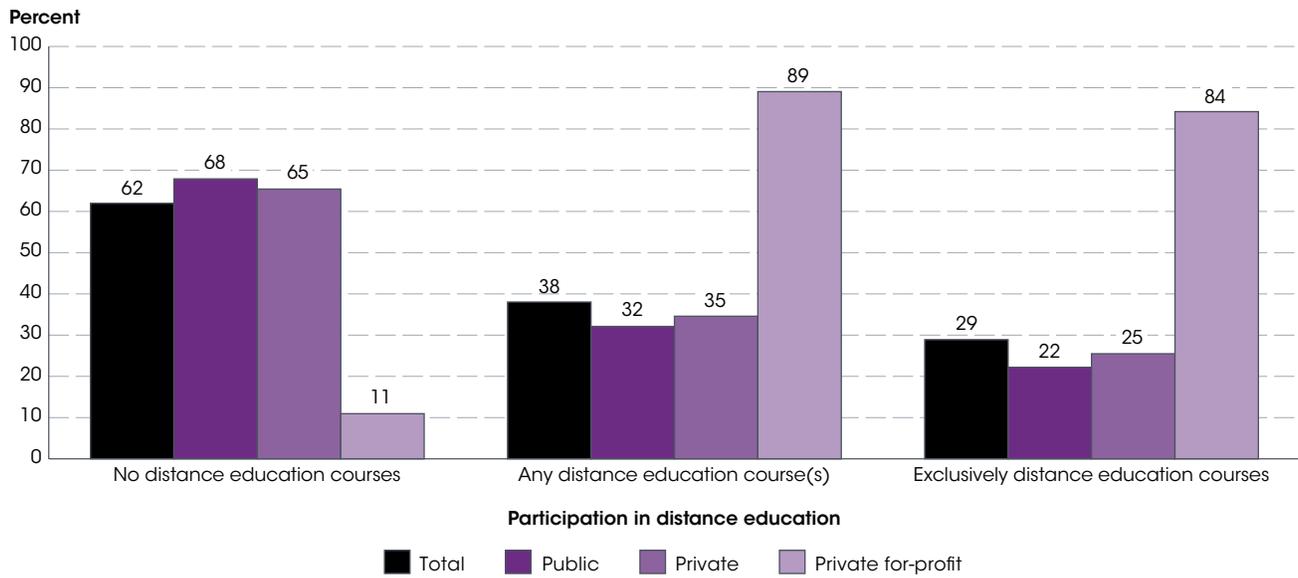


NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as professional doctoral programs such as law, medicine, and dentistry. Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some data have been 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 2018, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 303.80.

From fall 2000 to fall 2017, postbaccalaureate enrollment grew at a faster rate at private for-profit institutions (444 percent, from 47,200 to 257,000 students) than at private nonprofit institutions (44 percent, from 896,000 to 1.3 million students) and public institutions (20 percent, from 1.2 million to 1.5 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 2017, enrollment at private for-profit institutions decreased by 13 percent (from 296,000 to 257,000 students), while enrollment at private nonprofit institutions increased by 7 percent (from 1.2 million to 1.3 million students). Enrollment at public institutions was 1 percent higher in 2017 than in 2010 (1.5 million vs. 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 2017**



NOTE: Postbaccalaureate degree programs include master’s and doctoral programs, as well as 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 2018, Fall Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, table 311.15.

Distance education<sup>2</sup> courses and programs provide flexible learning opportunities to postbaccalaureate students. In fall 2017, more than one-third of total postbaccalaureate students (1.1 million) participated in distance education, with 869,000 students, or 29 percent of total postbaccalaureate enrollment, exclusively taking distance education courses.<sup>3</sup> Of the 869,000 students who exclusively took distance education courses, 377,000 were enrolled at institutions located in the same state in which they resided, and 438,000 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 2017, the percentage of students at private for-profit institutions who exclusively took distance education courses (84 percent) was more than three times higher than that of students at private nonprofit (25 percent) and public (22 percent) institutions. The percentage of students who did not take any distance education courses was higher for those enrolled at public (68 percent) and private nonprofit (65 percent) institutions than for those at private for-profit institutions (11 percent).

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</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>3</sup> In comparison, 13 percent of undergraduate students exclusively took distance education courses. See indicator on [Undergraduate Enrollment](#).

**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 303.80, 306.10, and 311.15

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