

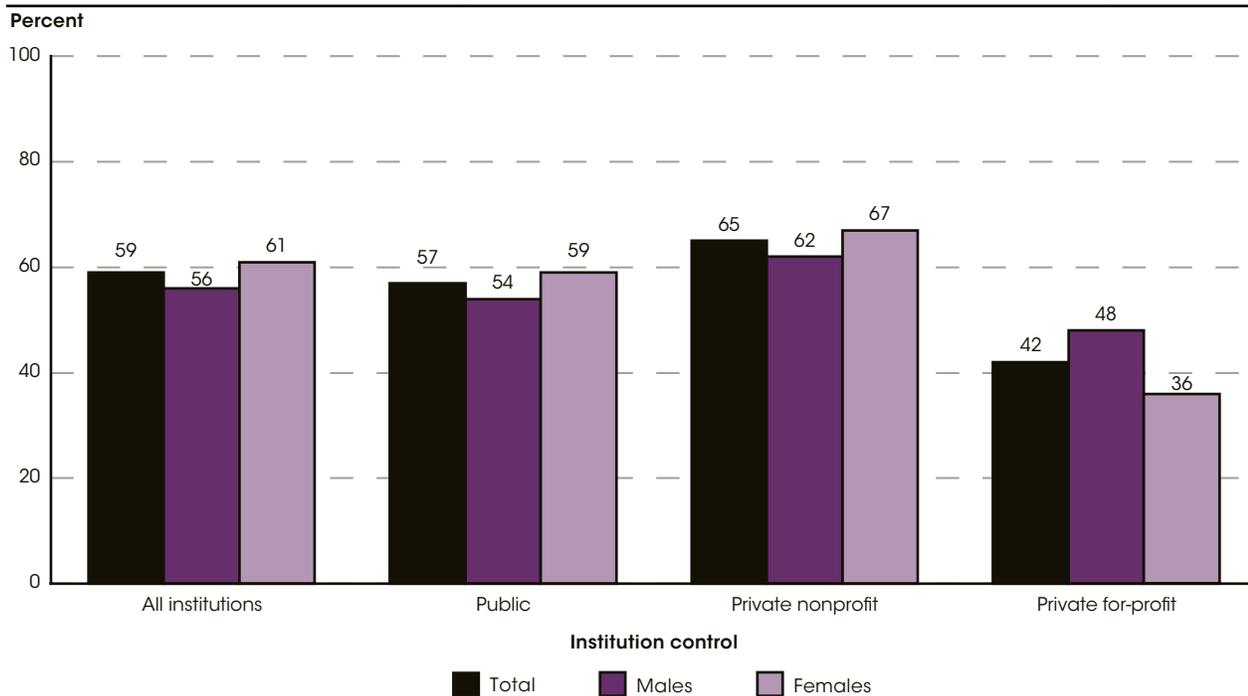
Institutional Retention and Graduation Rates for Undergraduate Students

About 59 percent of full-time, first-time students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2005 completed that degree within 6 years. The graduation rate for females (61 percent) was higher than the rate for males (56 percent).

The 2011 graduation rate for full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a bachelor's degree at a 4-year degree-granting institution in fall 2005 was 59 percent. That is, 59 percent of full-time, first-time students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2005 completed the degree at that institution within 6 years. Graduation rates are calculated to meet requirements of the 1990 Student

Right to Know Act, which directed postsecondary institutions to report the percentage of students that complete their program within 150 percent of the normal time for completion (that is, within 6 years for students pursuing a bachelor's degree). Students who transfer and complete a degree at another institution are not included as completers in these rates.

Figure 1. Percentage of students seeking a bachelor's degree at 4-year degree-granting institutions who completed a bachelor's degree within 6 years, by control of institution and sex: Starting cohort year 2005



NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Graduation rates apply to full-time, first-time undergraduates seeking a bachelor's or equivalent degree. Students who transferred to another institution and graduated are not counted as completers at their initial institution.

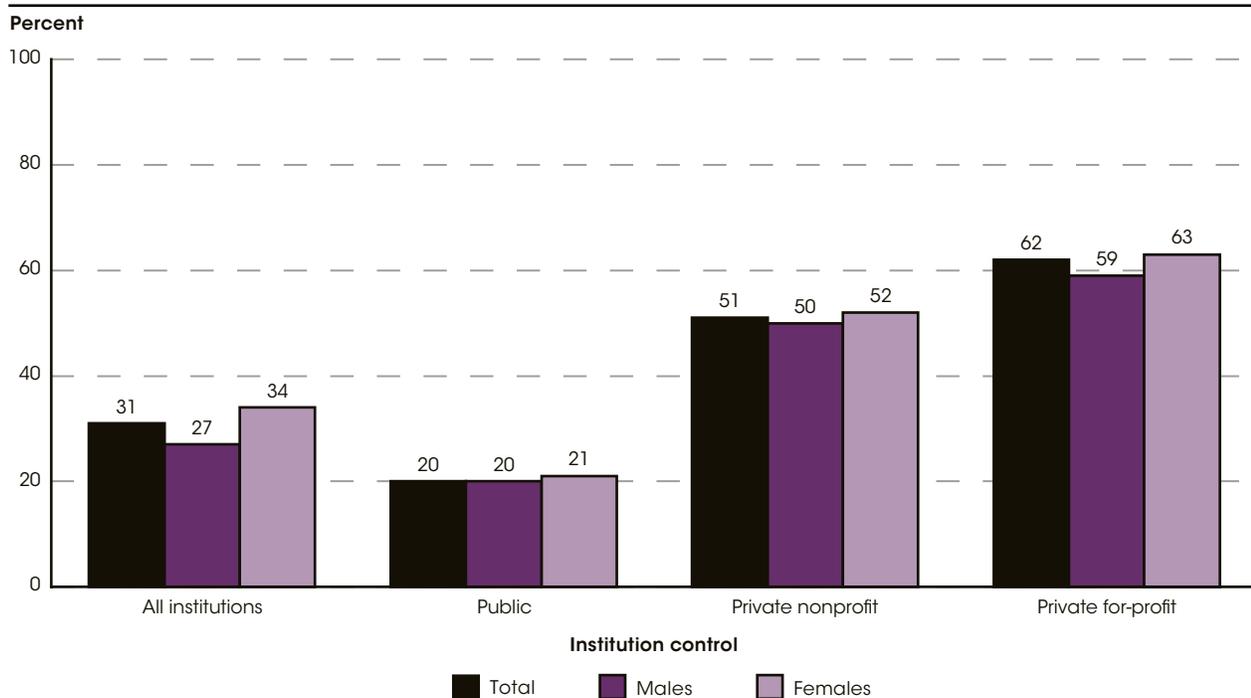
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2012, Graduation Rates component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 376.

Among full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year degree-granting institution in fall 2005, the 6-year graduation rate was 57 percent at public institutions, 65 percent at private nonprofit institutions, and 42 percent at private for-profit institutions. This graduation rate was 56 percent for males and 61 percent for females; it was

higher for females than for males at both public (59 percent vs. 54 percent) and private nonprofit institutions (67 percent vs. 62 percent). At private for-profit institutions, however, males had a higher graduation rate than females; the rate was 48 percent for males and 36 percent for females.

For more information, see the Reader's Guide and the Guide to Sources.

Figure 2. Percentage of students seeking a certificate or degree at 2-year degree-granting institutions who completed a credential within 150 percent of the normal time required to do so (for example, 3 years for a 2-year degree), by control of institution and sex: Starting cohort year 2008



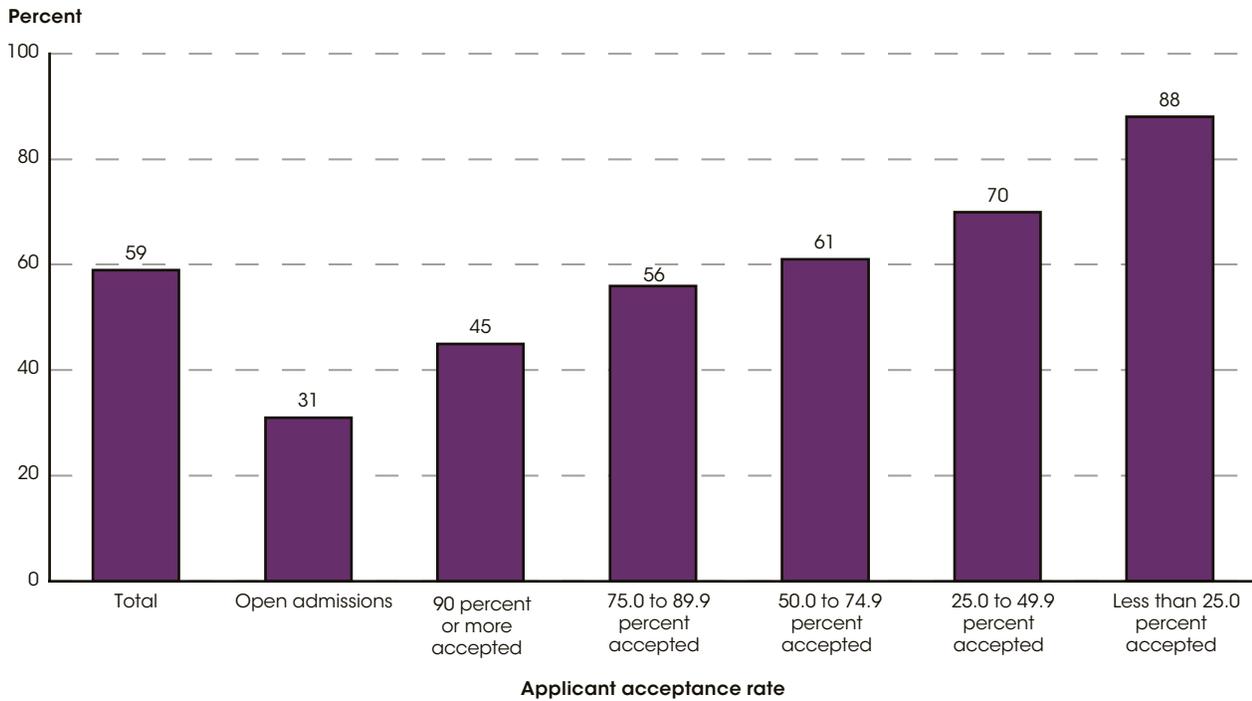
NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Completion rates refer to full-time, first-time students receiving associate's degrees or certificates from their initial institutions of attendance only. Students who transferred to another institution and graduated are not counted as completers at their initial institution.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2012, Graduation Rates component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 377.

At 2-year degree-granting institutions, 31 percent of full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a certificate or associate's degree in fall 2008 attained it within 150 percent of the normal time required to do so. For example, this measure refers to students who were seeking a 2-year associate's degree and completed the degree within 3 years. This graduation rate was 20 percent at public 2-year institutions, 51 percent

at private nonprofit 2-year institutions, and 62 percent at private for-profit 2-year institutions. At 2-year institutions overall, as well as at each type of 2-year institution, the completion rate was higher for females than for males. At 2-year private for-profit institutions, for example, 63 percent of females versus 59 percent of males completed a certificate or associate's degree within 150 percent of the normal time required.

For more information, see the Reader's Guide and the Guide to Sources.

Figure 3. Percentage of students seeking a bachelor’s degree at 4-year degree-granting institutions who completed a bachelor’s degree within 6 years, by applicant acceptance rate: Starting cohort year 2005

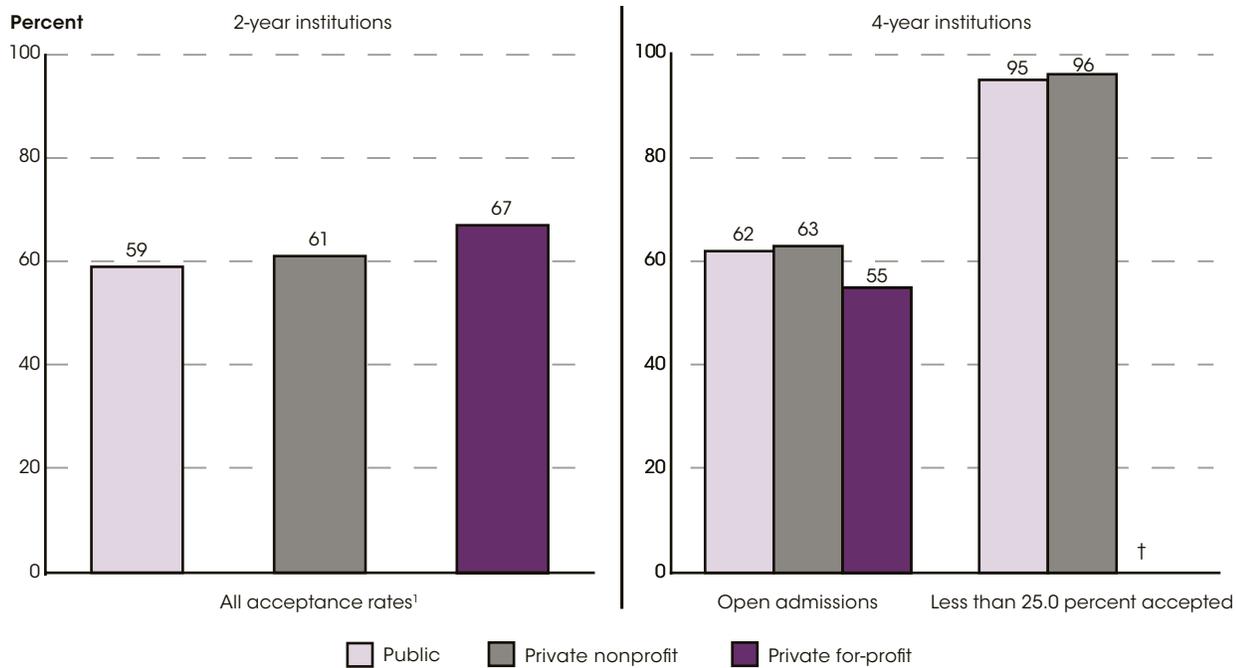


NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The graduation rate is the percentage of full-time, first-time bachelor’s degree-seeking students who completed their degree from their initial institution within 6 years. Students who transferred to another institution and graduated are not counted as completers at their initial institution.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2012, Graduation Rates component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 376.

Differences in 6-year graduation rates for full-time, first-time students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree in fall 2005 varied according to institutions’ level of selectivity. In particular, graduation rates were highest at postsecondary degree-granting institutions that were the most selective (i.e., had the lowest admissions acceptance

rates). For example, at 4-year institutions with open admissions policies, 31 percent of students completed a bachelor’s degree within 6 years. At 4-year institutions where the acceptance rate was less than 25 percent of applicants, the 6-year graduation rate was 88 percent.

Figure 4. Annual full-time student retention rates at 2- and 4-year degree-granting institutions, by institution level, acceptance rate, and institution control: 2011



† Not applicable.

¹ All acceptance rates includes open admissions, all percentages of applications accepted, and information not available.

NOTE: Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The retention rate is the percentage of first-time degree-seeking students who return to the institution to continue their studies the following fall.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2011, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 378.

In terms of student retention, among full-time, first-time students who enrolled in a postsecondary degree-granting institution in 2010, about 79 percent returned to 4-year institutions and 60 percent to 2-year institutions in the following fall. At public 4-year institutions, the retention rate was 79 percent, with a range of 62 percent at the least selective institutions (those with open admissions) to 95 percent at the most selective institutions (those where less than 25 percent of students are accepted). Retention rates for private nonprofit 4-year institutions followed a

similar pattern: the overall retention rate was 80 percent, ranging from 63 percent at the least selective institutions to 96 percent at the most selective. The retention rate at private for-profit institutions was 54 percent; it differed little (2 percent or less) in terms of institution selectivity level. At 2-year institutions overall, the retention rate was 60 percent. The retention rate for 2-year institutions was highest at private for-profit institutions (67 percent), followed by private nonprofit institutions (61 percent) and public institutions (59 percent).

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, tables 376, 377, 378

Glossary: Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Doctor's degree, Master's degree, Private institution, Public school or institution