

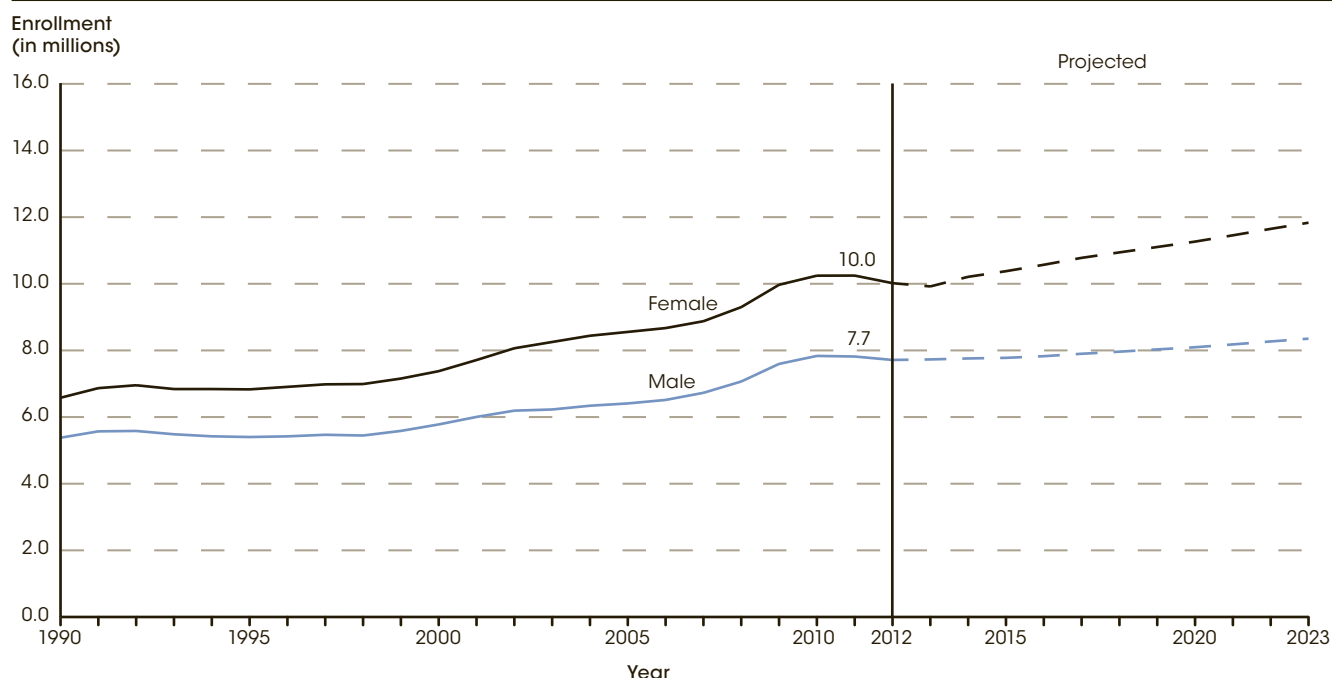
# Undergraduate Enrollment

*Total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 17.7 million in fall 2012, an increase of 48 percent from 1990 when total undergraduate enrollment was 12.0 million students. By 2023, undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase to 20.2 million.*

In fall 2012, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 17.7 million students, an increase of 48 percent from 1990 when enrollment was 12.0 million students. The rate of growth was 10 percent between 1990 and 2000 and 37 percent

between 2000 and 2010. While total enrollment increased overall between 1990 and 2012, enrollment in 2012 was nearly 2 percent lower than in 2010. Undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase from 17.7 million to 20.2 million students between 2012 and 2023.

**Figure 1. Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by sex: Fall 1990–2023**

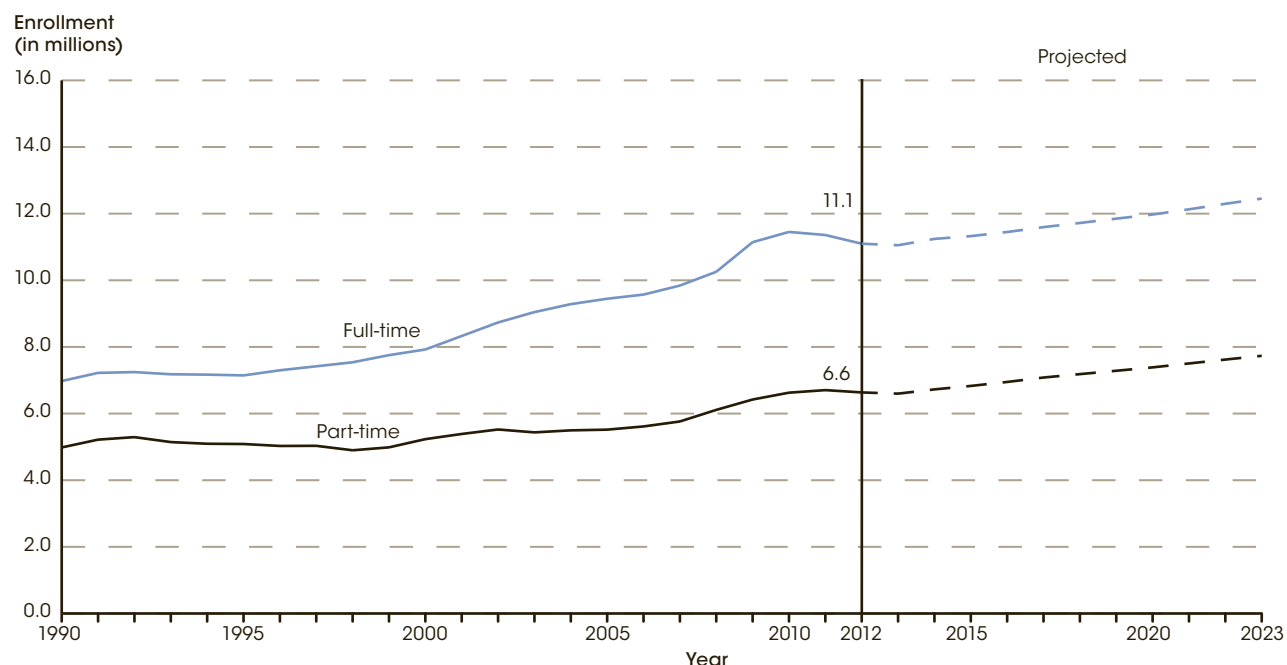


NOTE: Data include unclassified undergraduate students. Data through 1995 are for institutions of higher education, while later data are for degree-granting institutions. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The degree-granting classification is very similar to the earlier higher education classification, but it includes more 2-year colleges and excludes a few higher education institutions that did not grant degrees. Projections are based on data through 2012. 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), "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF:90-99); IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2013, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, tables 105.20 and 303.70.

In fall 2012, there were 10.0 million female undergraduate students (56 percent of total enrollment) and 7.7 million male undergraduate students (44 percent of total enrollment). Since 1990, female enrollment increased by 52 percent (from 6.6 million to 10.0 million students), while male enrollment increased by 43 percent (from 5.4 million to 7.7 million students). Between 1990 and 2000, female enrollment increased by 12 percent and male enrollment increased by 7 percent. Most of the increase

in enrollment occurred between 2000 and 2010, when female enrollment increased by 39 percent and male enrollment increased by 36 percent. However, both female and male enrollments were 2 percent lower in 2012 than in 2010. Between 2012 and 2023, female enrollment is projected to increase by 18 percent (from 10.0 million to 11.8 million students), while male enrollment is projected to increase by 8 percent (from 7.7 million to 8.4 million students).

**Figure 2.** Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status: Fall 1990–2023

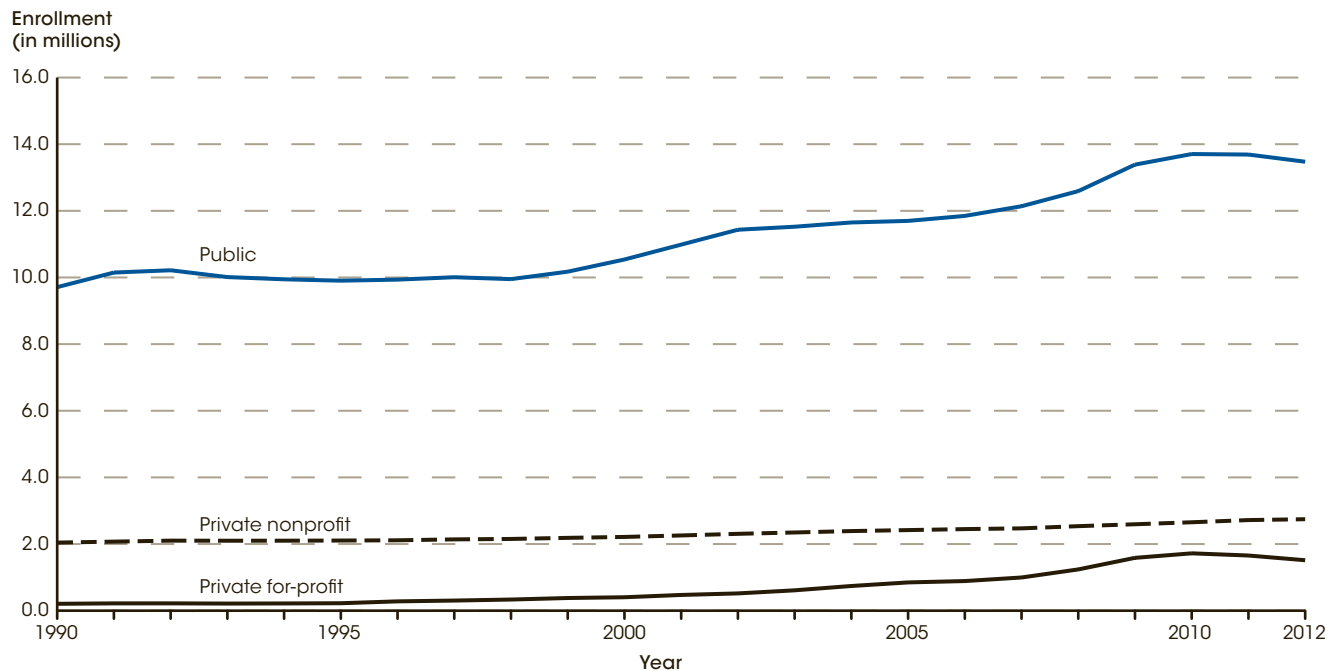


NOTE: Data include unclassified undergraduate students. Data through 1995 are for institutions of higher education, while later data are for degree-granting institutions. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The degree-granting classification is very similar to the earlier higher education classification, but it includes more 2-year colleges and excludes a few higher education institutions that did not grant degrees. Projections are based on data through 2012. 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), "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF:90-99); IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2013, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, tables 105.20 and 303.70.

In fall 2012, there were 11.1 million full-time undergraduate students and 6.6 million part-time undergraduate students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Between 1990 and 2000, full-time undergraduate enrollment increased by 14 percent, while part-time enrollment increased by 5 percent. Between 2000 and 2010, full-time undergraduate enrollment increased by 45 percent, whereas part-time undergraduate enrollment increased by 27 percent. Full-time under-

graduate enrollment was 3 percent lower in 2012 than in 2010, and part-time enrollment was less than 1 percent higher in 2012 than in 2010. Between 2012 and 2023, part-time undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase by 17 percent (from 6.6 million to 7.7 million students), a faster increase than the 12-percent increase (from 11.1 million to 12.5 million students) projected for full-time undergraduate enrollment.

**Figure 3. Undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by control of institution: Fall 1990–2012**

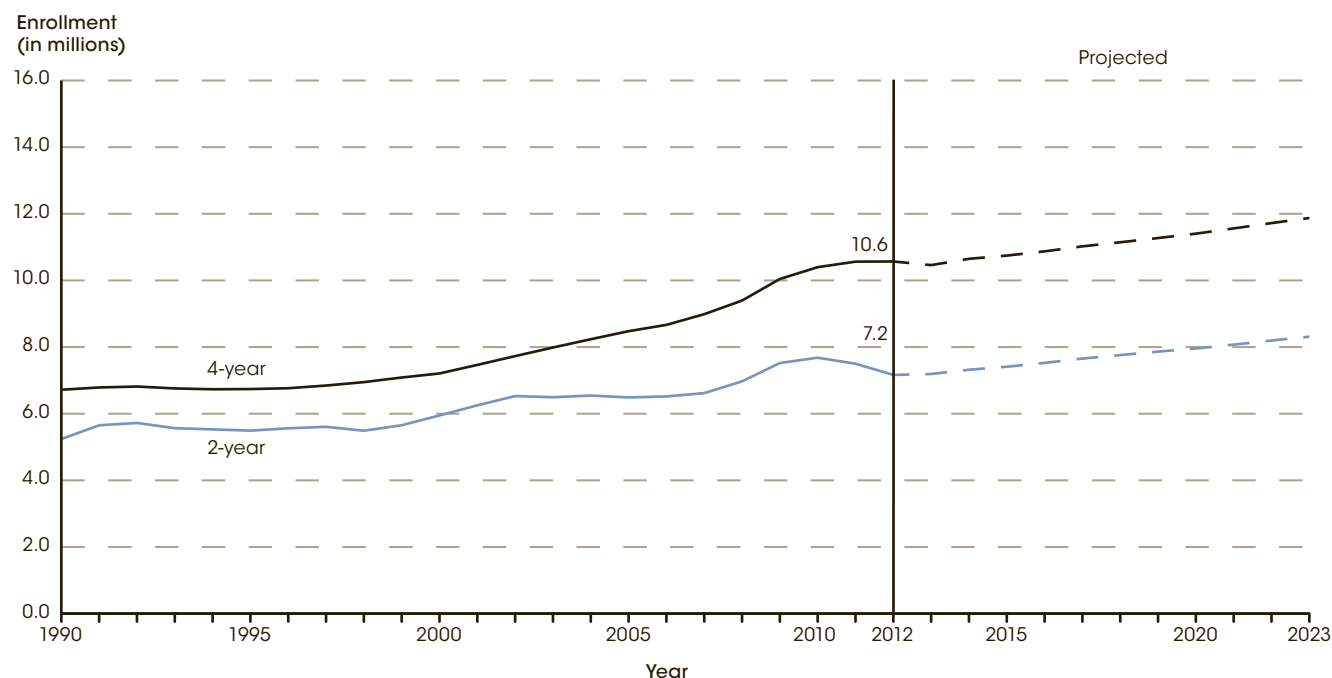


NOTE: Data include unclassified undergraduate students. Data through 1995 are for institutions of higher education, while later data are for degree-granting institutions. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The degree-granting classification is very similar to the earlier higher education classification, but it includes more 2-year colleges and excludes a few higher education institutions that did not grant degrees. 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), "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF:90-99); and IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2013, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 303.70.

Between fall 1990 and fall 2012, undergraduate enrollment at private nonprofit institutions increased by 34 percent (from 2.0 million to 2.7 million students) and undergraduate enrollment at public institutions increased by 39 percent (from 9.7 million to 13.5 million students). Since 1990, undergraduate enrollment at private for-profit institutions grew at a faster rate than did enrollments at private nonprofit and public institutions, but there was a relatively small number of undergraduate students enrolled at private for-profit institutions in 1990. Between 1990 and 2012, undergraduate enrollment at private for-profit institutions increased by 634 percent, from 0.2 million students in 1990 to 1.5 million in 2012. Most of this growth occurred between 2000 and 2010 when undergraduate enrollment at private for-profit institutions quadrupled (from 0.4 million to 1.7 million students);

in comparison, enrollment increased by 20 percent at private nonprofit institutions and by 30 percent at public institutions during this period. As a result of these different rates of enrollment growth, the proportion of all undergraduate students enrolled at private for-profit institutions increased from 3 percent in 2000 to 10 percent in 2010, while the proportion of all undergraduate students enrolled at private nonprofit institutions and public institutions decreased from 17 to 15 percent and from 80 to 76 percent, respectively. More recently, the pattern of undergraduate enrollment at private for-profit institutions changed. Enrollment at private for-profit institutions was 12 percent lower in 2012 than in 2010 and enrollment at public institutions was 2 percent lower, while enrollment at private nonprofit institutions was 3 percent higher.

**Figure 4.** Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level of institution: Fall 1990–2023



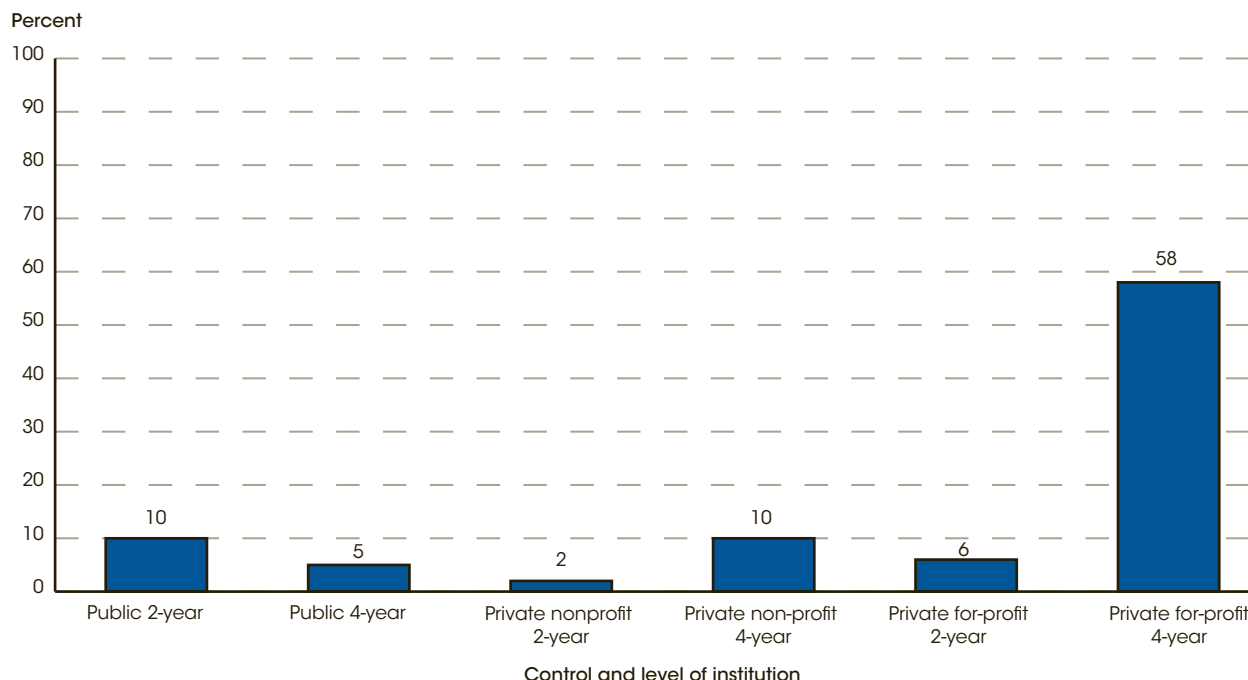
NOTE: Data include unclassified undergraduate students. Data through 1995 are for institutions of higher education, while later data are for degree-granting institutions. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The degree-granting classification is very similar to the earlier higher education classification, but it includes more 2-year colleges and excludes a few higher education institutions that did not grant degrees. Projections are based on data through 2012. 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), "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF:90-99); IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2013, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, tables 105.20 and 303.70.

In fall 2012, there were 7.2 million undergraduate students, or 40 percent, enrolled in 2-year institutions and 10.6 million students, or 60 percent, enrolled in 4-year institutions. The growth rate of undergraduate enrollment at 2-year institutions (14 percent) outpaced the rate at 4-year institutions (7 percent) between 1990 and 2000. However, the pattern shifted between 2000 and 2010, when 4-year institutions had a larger percentage increase in undergraduate enrollment (44 percent) than did 2-year institutions (29 percent). Between 2000 and 2010, private for-profit 4-year institutions had the highest percentage increase in undergraduate enrollment among all types of institutions (513 percent, from 0.2 million to 1.3 million students). Undergraduate enrollment increased by 34 percent at public 4-year institutions and by 22 percent at private nonprofit 4-year institutions. Private for-profit 2-year institutions had the second largest increase in undergraduate enrollment (124 percent, from 0.2 million to 0.4 million students) among all types of institutions after private for-profit 4-year institutions. Undergraduate

enrollment increased by 27 percent at public 2-year institutions. In contrast, undergraduate enrollment at private nonprofit 2-year institutions decreased by 44 percent during the same period.

Enrollment at 2-year institutions in 2012 was 7 percent lower than in 2010, while enrollment at 4-year institutions was 2 percent higher. In 2012, enrollment was 21 percent lower at private for-profit 2-year institutions and 6 percent lower at public 2-year institutions than in 2010; however, enrollment at private nonprofit 2-year institutions was 15 percent higher in 2012 than in 2010. At 4-year institutions, enrollment was 3 percent higher in 2012 than in 2010 at both public and private nonprofit institutions, while enrollment at private for-profit institutions was 9 percent lower. Between 2012 and 2023, undergraduate enrollment at 4-year institutions is projected to increase by 12 percent to 11.9 million students, while enrollment at 2-year institutions is projected to increase by 16 percent to 8.3 million students.

**Figure 5.** Percentage of undergraduate students at degree-granting postsecondary institutions who participated exclusively in distance education courses, by control and level of institution: Fall 2012



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2013, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 311.15.

Distance education<sup>1</sup> courses and programs provide flexible learning opportunities to undergraduate students. In fall 2012, about 4.6 million undergraduate students participated in distance education, with 2.0 million students (11 percent of total undergraduate enrollment) exclusively taking distance education courses. Of the 2.0 million undergraduate students that exclusively took distance education courses, 1.1 million students (6 percent of all undergraduate students) were enrolled in programs located in the same state in which they resided, and 0.8 million (5 percent of all undergraduate students) were enrolled in a different state.

<sup>1</sup> Distance education is education that 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 students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used for instruction may include the following: 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, if the videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with the technologies listed above.

There were differences by institutional control and level in the percentage of undergraduate students participating exclusively in distance education programs. In 2012, a higher percentage of students at private for-profit institutions (46 percent) exclusively took distance education courses than did students at public institutions (8 percent) and private nonprofit institutions (10 percent). Additionally, a higher percentage of students at private for-profit 4-year institutions exclusively took distance education courses (58 percent) than did students at any other control and level of institution (percentages at these institutions ranged from 2 percent at private nonprofit 2-year institutions to 10 percent at both public 2-year and private nonprofit 4-year institutions).

**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, tables 105.20, 303.70, and 311.15

**Glossary:** For-profit institution, Full-time enrollment, Higher education institutions, Nonprofit institution, Part-time enrollment, Private institution, Public school or institution, Undergraduate students