



RESOURCES

# Postsecondary Student Factsheets

**JUNE 2025**

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## Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

To craft policies that are best positioned to help students meet challenges and succeed, we need to understand all students—and to understand them, we need high-quality data. Ten years ago, PNPI began developing student-centered factsheets so that thinkers, doers, advocates, and researchers in our space would have a more complete picture of the students that they serve.

The data in our factsheets have been meticulously compiled from trusted federal data sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics, and each data point is regularly updated to ensure that the information we provide is timely and relevant. Still, we acknowledge that each student population brings with it a wealth of history and context that goes beyond the data we present. For this reason, we encourage you to do additional reading to better understand each student group.

Whether you're writing an article, research report, speech, or piece of legislation, we hope that you find these factsheets useful for your work, and that they help you better understand the students we all serve.

Cheers,

*MaryEllen McGuire*

**MaryEllen McGuire, Ph.D.**

President & Founder,  
Postsecondary National Policy Institute

# Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023 20.7 million (6.2%) of the U.S. population were Asian American or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AAPI).<sup>1</sup> Of the approximately 20.1 million Asian Americans, the largest ethnic groups were Asian Indian (4.7 million), Chinese (4.5 million), Filipino (3.1 million), Vietnamese (1.9 million), Korean (1.5 million), and Japanese (726,000).<sup>1</sup> Of the 662,417 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander residents, 176,000 were Native Hawaiian, 126,000 were Samoan, and 84,000 were Chamorro.<sup>1</sup> Among Asian American residents aged 25 or over, 57.8% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> Among Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander residents aged 25 or over, 19.1% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, the shares of bachelor's degree or higher recipients for Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders were 51.3% and 16.0%, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, AAPI students made up 7.6% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2022, 60.8% of the Asian and 27.4% of the Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 18–24-year-old population were enrolled in college compared to 39% of the overall U.S. population.<sup>3</sup>
- Since fall 2012, AAPI student enrollment has increased from 1.26 million to 1.42 million, a 12.5% increase:
  - Undergraduate enrollment increased from 1.06 million to 1.16 million, an 8.6% increase.<sup>3</sup>
  - Graduate enrollment increased from 195,400 to 261,100, a 33.6% increase.<sup>3</sup>
- Disaggregating data shows a mixed result:
  - Asian American student enrollment increased from 1.19 million to 1.37 million between fall 2012 and fall 2022.<sup>3</sup>
  - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander enrollment decreased from 63,500 to 44,400 between fall 2012 and fall 2022.<sup>3</sup>
- AAPI students are much more likely to attend public versus private institutions of higher education.<sup>3</sup>
  - In fall 2022, 73.9% of AAPI students attended public institutions:
    - 53.1% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
    - 20.8% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
- 20.7% of the fall 2022 enrollment at Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) were AAPI students.<sup>3</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- Forty-seven percent of AAPI students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid in the 2019-20 academic year, compared to 55% of all students.<sup>4</sup>
  - 34% of AAPI students received a Pell Grant, compared to 40% of all students.<sup>4</sup>
    - 34% of Asian American students received a Pell Grant, while 39% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students received a Pell Grant.<sup>4</sup>
  - 26% of AAPI students received a federal student loan, compared to 35% of all students.<sup>4</sup>
    - 25% of Asian American students received a federal student loan, while 34% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students received a federal student loan.<sup>4</sup>
- Among AAPI students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$8,959.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for AAPI students was \$4,651.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for AAPI students was \$9,375.<sup>4</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 78% of first-time, full-time Asian American students attending four-year institutions beginning in 2015 graduated within six years, while 51.6% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students graduated within six years, compared to 64.5% of all students.<sup>3</sup>
- At two-year institutions, among first-time, full-time students beginning in 2019, 44.1% of Asian students and 27.8% of Pacific Islander students graduated within three years, compared to 34.1% of all students.<sup>3</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor's degrees conferred in the 2021–22 academic year, 174,601 (8.7%) went to AAPI students.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, AAPI graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$89,947, compared to the national average of \$76,370.<sup>2</sup>
  - Asian American graduates reported an average gross income of \$91,282, while Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander graduates reported an average gross income of \$69,634.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>5</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 53% of AAPI graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 82% of AAPI graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 87% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>

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## NOTE

Collectively, the AAPI umbrella represents over 50 different ethnic groups that vary greatly in terms of languages, English proficiency, colonial history, immigration patterns, and socioeconomic and first-generation college-going status. For federal data sources, AAPI includes Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander populations.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
4. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
5. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Black Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, 12.1% of the total U.S. population identified as Black or African American.<sup>1</sup> Among Black residents aged 25 or over, 26.2% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> This rate is up from 19.3% in 2013, but falls short of the national rate of 34.8%.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, Black students made up 12.5% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2022, 36.0% of the 18–24-year-old Black population were enrolled in college compared to 39.0% of the overall U.S. population.<sup>3</sup>
- Between fall 2012 and fall 2022, Black student enrollment declined from 2.96 million to 2.32 million, a 22% decrease:
  - Undergraduate enrollment declined from 2.59 million to 1.95 million, a 25% decrease.<sup>3</sup>
  - Despite the overall enrollment decline, graduate enrollment for Black students remained steady at 369,200.<sup>3</sup>
- Black students are much more likely to attend public versus private institutions of higher education.<sup>3</sup> In fall 2022, 67.5% of Black students attended public institutions:
  - 41.9% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
  - 25.6% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
- 75.8% of the fall 2022 enrollment at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) were Black students.<sup>3</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- In the 2019–20 academic year, 71% of Black students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid, compared to 55% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 60% of Black students received a Pell Grant, compared to 40% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 48% of Black students received a federal student loan, compared to 35% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
- Among Black students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$9,642.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for Black students was \$4,172.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for Black students was \$8,641.<sup>5</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 46.0% of first-time, full-time Black students attending four-year institutions beginning in 2016 graduated within six years, compared to 64.6% for all students.<sup>3</sup>

- At two-year institutions, among first-time, full-time students beginning in 2019, 25.3% of Black students graduated within three years, compared to 34.1% overall.<sup>3</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor's degrees conferred in the 2021–22 academic year, 199,962 (9.9%) went to Black students.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, Black graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$59,100, compared to the national average of \$76,370.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>8</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 47% of Black graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 80% of Black graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 87% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Black students carry the largest student loan debt burden, which can greatly affect mental health.<sup>7</sup> Compounding this issue, Black people are much less likely to receive help for mental health-related issues.<sup>7</sup>
- Black students are less likely to enroll in Advanced Placement or college prep courses in high school.<sup>6</sup>
- Black students are also less likely to have family members that have attended college.
  - In 2022, 32.4% of Black children under 18 years of age lived in a household with a parent who completed a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 57.0% of white children.<sup>3</sup>
- Black graduates of HBCUs report greater well-being, a sense of purpose, and a feeling of support while enrolled. Institutional context and a sense of belonging play important roles in student success.<sup>4</sup>

## NOTE

“Black” will be used for the remainder of this factsheet to include individuals identifying as “Black” or “African American.”

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
4. [HBCU Well-Being Report](#). Gallup, October 2015.
5. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
6. [Office of Civil Rights](#). Department of Education, October 2022.
7. [Student Debt is Harming The Mental Health of Black Borrowers](#). The Education Trust, July 2022.
8. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# First-Generation Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

Predominantly non-white and from low-income backgrounds, first-generation students are often the first in their families to navigate college admissions, financial aid, and postsecondary coursework. In 2023, 36.2% of the population aged 25 and over had never enrolled in college and 55.0% had no college degree.<sup>1</sup> In 2022, 23.1% of children under the age of 18 lived in a household where their parent or guardian had never enrolled in college and 42.5% lived in a household where their parent or guardian did not have a college degree.<sup>4</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In the academic year 2019-2020, 25.8% of undergraduates were first-generation.<sup>7</sup>
  - 21.7% of public four-year, 16.8% of nonprofit four-year, 32.7% of public two-year, and 39.9% of for-profit institutions enrollment were first-generation students.<sup>7</sup>
- First-generation students were more likely to attend public two-year institutions or for-profit institutions than the national average.<sup>7</sup>
  - 37.1% attended public two-year institutions, compared to 29.3% of all students.<sup>7</sup>
  - 9.6% attended for-profit institutions, compared to 6.2% of all students.<sup>7</sup>
- 33.3% of students enrolled at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) were first-generation, while 19.7% of students enrolled at non-MSIs were first-generation.<sup>7</sup>
  - 26.1% of students enrolled at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were first-generation.<sup>7</sup>
  - 34.7% of students enrolled at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) were first-generation.<sup>7</sup>
- 45.8% of Latino, 28.2% of Native American, 32.1% of Black, 27.2% of Asian, and 16.7% of white students were first-generation.<sup>7</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- In the 2019–20 academic year, 63.1% of first-generation students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid compared to 52% of continuing-generation students.<sup>7</sup>
  - 55.2% of first-generation students received a Pell Grant, compared to 35% of continuing-generation students.<sup>7</sup>
  - 33.3% of first-generation students received a federal student loan, compared to 35% of continuing-generation students.<sup>7</sup>

- Among first-generation students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$7,891, compared to \$9,070 for continuing-generation students.<sup>7</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for first-generation students was \$4,143, compared to \$4,107 for continuing-generation students.<sup>7</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for first-generation students was \$7,582, compared to \$8,886 for continuing-generation students.<sup>7</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- Among students who first enrolled in the 2011–12 academic year, 19% of first-generation students had attained a bachelor's degree by 2017, compared to 46.6% of continuing-generation students.<sup>3</sup>
  - 56.2% of first-generation students had attained no degree or certificate, compared to 37% of continuing-generation students.<sup>3</sup>
- Among students who had attained a bachelor's degree by 2017, 16.2% were first-generation students.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, first-generation graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$68,278, compared to the average of \$78,720 for continuing-generation students.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>9</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 66% of first-generation graduates reported owning a home, compared to 62% of continuing-generation graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 84% of first-generation graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 87% of continuing-generation graduates.<sup>2</sup>
- First-generation graduates accumulate less wealth over a lifetime than continuing-generation graduates.<sup>5</sup>
  - The median household wealth of first-generation college graduates is \$152,000 compared to \$244,500 for continuing-generation college graduates.<sup>5</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- 30% of first-generation bachelor's degree recipients had difficulty with student loan repayment (e.g., deferments, forbearances, delinquencies).<sup>8</sup>
  - 46% of first-generation borrowers attended institutions in the bottom quartile of default rates.<sup>8</sup>
- First-generation college graduates incurred more debt paying for their education.<sup>5</sup>
  - 65% of first-generation college graduates owed \$25,000 or more in student loans, compared to 57% of continuing-generation college graduates.<sup>5</sup>

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## NOTE

For this fact sheet, “first-generation” will be used to describe “students enrolled in postsecondary education whose parents had not attended college.”<sup>6</sup>

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
4. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
5. [First-Generation Student Economic Outcomes](#). Pew Research Center, 2021.
6. [First-Generation Students: Stats in Brief](#). National Center for Education Statistics, February 2018.
7. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
8. [Student Debt and the Class of 2019](#). The Institute for College Access and Success, October 2020.
9. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Immigrant Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, immigrants made up 14.3% of the overall population in the United States, a slight increase from 13.1% in 2013.<sup>1</sup> In 2023, 14.8 million U.S. adults aged 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or higher were born abroad, comprising 17.6% of all U.S. adults with a bachelor's degree or higher. College attainment rates for immigrants in the U.S. increased 6.4 percentage points between 2013 and 2023.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In 2019–20, first-generation immigrant students made up 11.4% of all undergraduates, compared to 8.8% in 1999–2000.<sup>5</sup>
  - In the same time period, the proportion of second-generation immigrant students enrolled as undergraduates increased from 10.3% to 22.7%, and the proportion of third-generation or higher students declined from 81% to 65.9%.<sup>5</sup>
- In 2023, 38.1% of the foreign-born resident 18–24-year-old population were enrolled in college compared to 37.9% of the population overall.<sup>1</sup>
- First-generation immigrant students are overrepresented in the public two-year sector.<sup>5</sup>
  - In 2019-20, 34.8% of first-generation, 30.3% of second-generation, and 28.4% of third-generation immigrant students attended public two-year institutions.<sup>5</sup>
- First- and second-generation immigrant students are much more likely to enroll at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) than other students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 35.9% of first-generation and 38.5% of second-generation students enroll at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), compared to 19.6% of third-generation students.<sup>5</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- According to the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), 53.4% of first-generation, 56.6% of second-generation, and 56.7% of third-generation or more immigrant students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid in the 2019–20 academic year.<sup>5</sup>
  - 44.9% of first-generation, 44.3% of second-generation, and 39.6% of third-generation or more immigrant students received a Pell Grant in the 2019–20 academic year.<sup>5</sup>
  - 25.6% of first-generation, 29.6% of second-generation, and 39.1% of third-generation or more immigrant students received a federal student loan in the 2019-20 academic year.<sup>5</sup>
- Among students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received in 2019–20 by first-generation immigrant students was \$7,805, compared to \$8,305 for second-generation and \$9,014 for third-generation immigrant students.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant received in 2019–20 was \$4,257 for first-generation immigrant students, compared to \$4,329 for second-generation and \$4,012 for third-generation.<sup>5</sup>

- The average federal loan amount received in 2019–20 was \$8,136 for first-generation immigrant students, compared to \$8,741 for second-generation and \$8,563 for third-generation.<sup>5</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- According to the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS), 32.8% of first-generation, 34.8% of second-generation, and 37.4% of third-generation immigrant students who entered postsecondary education in 2011–12 attained a bachelor’s degree by June 2017.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2023, 18.3% of foreign-born residents aged 25 and older had obtained an associate degree or attended some college, compared to 29.8% of their peers born in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2023, 34.9% of foreign-born residents aged 25 and older had obtained a bachelor’s or higher, compared to 36.4% of their peers born in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- According to the Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B), ten years after receiving a bachelor’s degree, first-generation immigrant graduates who reported income averaged a gross income of \$80,224, compared to \$75,923 for second-generation and \$76,110 for third-generation or more immigrant graduates.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>7</sup> Ten years after graduating, 56% of first-generation immigrant graduates reported owning a home, compared to 56% of second-generation and 65% of third-generation immigrant graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Age of arrival to the U.S. plays a role in educational outcomes of immigrant students: the earlier an individual immigrates, the greater their chance of degree attainment.<sup>4</sup>
  - 47% of all full-time undergraduate students who immigrated to the U.S. prior to age 12 went on to earn a degree, compared to 44% of students who immigrated between the ages of 12 and 17, and 35% of students who immigrated after the age of 18.<sup>4</sup>
- Language can be a barrier for immigrant students. In 2023, 26.8% of the foreign-born population in the U.S. over age 25 reported that they spoke English “not well” or “not at all,” including 8.9% of college-educated foreign-born residents.<sup>1</sup>
- While there is no federal or state law prohibiting an undocumented student from applying to or being admitted to college, undocumented students face challenges in pursuing higher education.<sup>6</sup>
  - Undocumented students are prohibited from receiving federal student financial aid for higher education and in most states they are ineligible to receive state-based financial aid.<sup>6</sup>
  - Undocumented students are eligible for emergency financial aid grants under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.<sup>6</sup>

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## NOTE

The U.S. Census Bureau obtains immigration data from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS defines immigrants as individuals not born in the United States with permanent legal residence in the United States. In the NPSAS, first-generation immigrant means the student was born outside of the U.S.; second-generation immigrant means one or both parents were born outside the U.S.; third-generation or more includes all other students.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
4. [New American Undergraduates: Stats in Brief](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2016.
5. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
6. [Tip Sheet for Undocumented Students](#). National Association for Student Financial Aid Administrators, May 2024.
7. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Latino Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023 19.4% of the total U.S. population identified as Hispanic or Latino (of any race).<sup>1</sup> Among Latino residents aged 25 or over, 20.8% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> This rate is up from 14.0% in 2013, but falls short of the national rate of 36.2%.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, Latino students made up 20.3% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2022, 32.8% of the 18–24-year-old Latino population were enrolled in college compared to 39.0% of the overall U.S. population.<sup>3</sup>
- Since fall 2012, Latino student enrollment has increased from 2.98 million to 3.78 million, a 27% increase:
  - Undergraduate enrollment increased from 2.77 million to 3.42 million, a 23% increase.<sup>3</sup>
  - Graduate enrollment increased from 212,600 to 358,300, an 69% increase.<sup>3</sup>
- Latino students are much more likely to attend public versus private institutions of higher education.<sup>3</sup>
  - In fall 2022, 80.4% of Latino students attended public institutions:
    - 48.1% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
    - 32.3% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
- 54.8% of all Hispanic undergraduates were enrolled in Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in fall 2022.<sup>3</sup>
- 46.7% of the fall 2022 enrollment at HSIs were Hispanic students.<sup>3</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- In the 2019–20 academic year, 57.8% of Latino students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid, compared to 54.9% of all students.<sup>4</sup>
  - 49.5% of Latino students received a Pell Grant, compared to 40.2% of all students.<sup>4</sup>
  - 25.9% of Latino students received a federal student loan, compared to 34.5% of all students.<sup>4</sup>
- Among Latino students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$7,508.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for Latino students was \$4,246.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for Latino students was \$8,014.<sup>4</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 59.3% of first-time, full-time Hispanic students attending four-year institutions beginning in 2016 graduated within six years, compared to 64.6% for all students.<sup>3</sup>
- At two-year institutions, among first-time, full-time students beginning in 2019, 31.3% of Hispanic students graduated within three years, compared to 34.1% overall.<sup>3</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor's degrees conferred in the 2021–22 academic year, 324,901 (15.7%) went to Hispanic students.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, Latino graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$66,830, compared to the national average of \$76,370.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>5</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 53% of Latino graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 80% of Latino graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 87% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Latinos are much more likely to be first-generation college students than other racial/ethnic groups.<sup>4</sup>
  - In the 2019–20 academic year, more than half of Latinos (51%) were the first in their family to attend college, compared to Black (38%), Asian (30%), and White (22%) students.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2022, 22.3% of Hispanic children under age 18 lived in households where no parent had completed high school, a higher rate than other racial/ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup>
- In the 2019–20 academic year, a significant percentage of Latino students entered college as low-income students.<sup>4</sup>
- Despite increased completion rates for Latino people overall, foreign-born Latino people are less likely to have earned a bachelor's degree or higher than Latino people born in the United States.<sup>1</sup>
  - As of 2022, 17.3% of the immigrant Latino population aged 25 or higher had earned a bachelor's degree or higher compared with 17.6% of U.S.-born Latino people.<sup>1</sup>
    - 9% of Mexican immigrants have a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup>
    - 11.6% of immigrants from other Central American countries have a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup>
    - 24.3% of Caribbean immigrants have a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup>
    - 37.2% of South American immigrants have a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup>

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## NOTE

Terms used in this report (Latino, Hispanic) reflect the terms found in the data source material, defaulting to “Latino.”

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
4. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
5. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# LGBTQ+ Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

Historically, sexual orientation and gender identity (beyond birth sex) have not been documented by the U.S. Census in any products beyond reporting on same-sex couples residing in the same household, which began in 1990.<sup>5</sup> In 2021, the U.S. Census began including questions of sexual orientation and gender identity on the Household Pulse Survey (HPS), a survey begun in 2020 to monitor the effects of COVID-19.<sup>4</sup> According to the September 2024 HPS, 8.3% of the population aged 18 or older identified as LGBT, with 2.9% identifying as gay or lesbian, 4.9% bisexual, 3.6% as an orientation not listed, and 0.7% transgender.<sup>4</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

Though postsecondary enrollment by sexual orientation and gender identity is not recorded by traditional postsecondary federal data sources, it is asked by the High School Longitudinal Survey (HSLs). The following enrollment data are based on respondents to the HSLs that were high school freshmen in 2009 and responded to the follow-up surveys in 2013 and 2016.

- As of 2016, 31.6% respondents identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexuality not listed had never enrolled in postsecondary education.<sup>3</sup>
- As of 2016, 40% of respondents identifying as transgender, genderqueer, or nonconforming had never enrolled in postsecondary education.<sup>3</sup>
- Among the students that had ever enrolled in postsecondary education by 2016, 8.2% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexuality not listed.<sup>3</sup>
  - 1.4% identified as transgender, genderqueer, or nonconforming.<sup>3</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- In the HSLs, respondents identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexuality not listed were more likely to be offered grant aid in 2013, including Pell, than respondents identifying as straight.<sup>3</sup>
  - 48.2% of lesbian or gay respondents were offered grant aid.<sup>3</sup>
  - 50.1% of bisexual respondents were offered grant aid.<sup>3</sup>
  - 44.8% of respondents who identified as a sexuality not listed were offered grant aid.<sup>3</sup>
  - 43.4% of straight respondents were offered grant aid.<sup>3</sup>
- Transgender, genderqueer, or gender nonconforming respondents were less likely to be offered grant aid than respondents who were cisgender (37.5% vs. 43.7%).<sup>3</sup>
- Respondents identifying as lesbian or gay were more likely to be offered student loans than other sexual orientations (42.9% compared to 37.1% overall).<sup>3</sup>
- Transgender, genderqueer, or gender nonconforming respondents were less likely to be offered student loans in 2013 than respondents who were cisgender (31.6% vs. 37.3%).<sup>3</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- The Williams Institute at UCLA and Gallup found that 30% of LGBT people held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 32% of non-LGBT people.<sup>6</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Gay and lesbian respondents earned less than their straight counterparts, and the gender wage gap increased among bisexual respondents.<sup>7</sup>
  - Lesbian female respondents reported an average wage of \$45,606.<sup>7</sup>
  - Gay male respondents reported an average wage of \$56,936.<sup>7</sup>
  - Bisexual female respondents reported an average wage of \$35,980.<sup>7</sup>
  - Bisexual male respondents reported an average wage of \$85,084.<sup>7</sup>
  - Heterosexual female respondents reported an average wage of \$51,461.<sup>7</sup>
  - Heterosexual male respondents reported an average wage of \$83,469.<sup>7</sup>
- LGBT respondents also were less likely to have savings accounts, employer sponsored retirement accounts, or individual retirement accounts (IRA).<sup>7</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- In 2021, sexual orientation was the second most motivating bias for hate crimes at postsecondary institutions.<sup>8</sup>
- In a survey by the Association of American Universities (AAU), 60% of transgender college students reported that they feared for their physical safety due to their gender identity or their perceived sexual orientation.<sup>9</sup>
  - 65% of transgender students reported experiencing harassing behavior since they first enrolled in school.<sup>9</sup>
  - Transgender students (both undergraduate and graduate) were more likely to experience intimate partner violence and stalking than their peers.<sup>9</sup>
- 30.9% of LGBTQ students surveyed in 2021 experienced housing disruption during the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to 16.9% of their non-LGBTQ peers.<sup>1</sup>
- LGBTQ college students disproportionately struggled with their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>2</sup>
  - 74% of LGBTQ+ college students reported struggling with their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to 64% of heterosexual students.<sup>2</sup>
  - 69% of LGBTQ+ college students reported feelings of loneliness or isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to 59% of heterosexual students.<sup>2</sup>

## NOTES

While the title of this factsheet is LGBTQ+, reported statistics mirror the terms used in each referenced study (e.g., LGBTQ+, LGBT, gay, lesbian, etc.).

The HSLS does not disaggregate grant types, so we cannot determine the share of LGBTQ students who received a Pell Grant, nor identify federal loans apart from their total loan amount. It also lists being offered grant aid, rather than receiving grant aid.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [COVID-19 and Students in Higher Education](#). The Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, May 2021.
2. [Education in a Pandemic](#). Department of Education, June 2021.
3. [High School Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2024.
4. [Household Pulse Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, December 2024.
5. [How Accurate Are Counts of Same-Sex Couples?](#) Pew Research Center, August 2011
6. [LGBT Data & Demographics](#). The Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, 2019.
7. [Married LGBTQ+ Couples and Money](#). Prudential, June 2020.
8. [Office of Civil Rights](#). Department of Education, July 2024.
9. [Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey](#). Association of American Universities, 2020.

# Men of Color in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, 18.7% of the total U.S. population identified as a man of color.<sup>1</sup> In total, 9.8% of the population were Hispanic or Latino men, 5.7% were Black men, 2.8% were Asian men, 0.3% were American Indian/Alaska Native men, and 0.1% were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander men.<sup>1</sup> Among men of color aged 25 or over, 27% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> The rate for Asian men is 59.5%, for Black men it is 22.8%, for Hispanic or Latino men it is 18.9%, for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander men it is 17.3%, and for American Indian/Alaska Native men it is 13.6%.<sup>1</sup> Bachelor's degree or higher attainment is up from 20.7% in 2013 for men of color, with an average increase of 2.9 percentage points for all included racial/ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> American Indian/Alaska Native men were the only population whose attainment decreased from 2013 to 2023, decreasing by 1.9 percentage points.<sup>1</sup> Despite the overall increase, educational attainment for men of color in 2023 fell short of the national rate of 34.9% for all men.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, men of color made up 16.3% of all postsecondary enrollment and 38.9% of all male student enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
  - Hispanic or Latino men represented 8.2%, Black men represented 4.5%, Asian men represented 3.5%, and American Indian/Alaska Native men represented 0.2% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2022, 31.4% of 18–24-year-old men of color were enrolled in college, a similar share as all 18–24-year-old men.<sup>3</sup>
  - This share varies considerably across race/ethnicity: 60% of Asian men, 36.8% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander men, 28.9% of Black men, 26% of Hispanic or Latino men, and 19.9% of American Indian/Alaska Native men were enrolled.<sup>3</sup>
- Since fall 2010, overall enrollment of men of color has increased slightly from 2.93 million to 2.96 million, a 0.7% increase:
  - Undergraduate enrollment declined from 2.65 million to 2.59 million, a 2.1% decrease.
  - Graduate enrollment for men of color increased considerably from 274,444 to 349,324, a 27.2% increase.<sup>3</sup>
  - The overall enrollment increase is largely driven by Hispanic or Latino men, who increased by 24.8%; Black men enrollment, however, declined by 24.3% and American Indian/Alaska Native men declined in enrollment by 44.5%.<sup>3</sup>
- Men of color are much more likely to attend public versus private institutions of higher education.<sup>5</sup> In 2019–20, 70.7% of men of color attended public institutions:
  - 38.7% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>5</sup>
  - 32% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>5</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- According to the NPSAS, 53.5% of men of color received some form of federal Title IV financial aid in the 2019-20 academic year, compared to 45.1% of white male students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 43.3% of men of color received a Pell Grant, compared to 26.9% of white male students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 28.8% of men of color received a federal student loan, compared to 32.2% of white male students.<sup>5</sup>
- Among men of color who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$8,319.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for men of color was \$4,263.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for men of color was \$8,517.<sup>5</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 54.0% of first-time, full-time men of color attending four-year institutions beginning in 2015 graduated within six years, compared to 61.3% for all men.<sup>4</sup> There is considerable variation, however:
  - 75.1% of Asian men graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 54.0% of Hispanic or Latino men graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 51.4% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander men graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 39.1% of Black men graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 38.9% of American Indian/Alaska Native graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor's degrees conferred in the 2020–21 academic year, 273,532 (13.6%) went to men of color.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- According to the Baccalaureate & Beyond study, ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, men of color graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$76,358, similar to the national average.<sup>2</sup>
  - Men of color tend to earn \$10,000 more on average than women of color, but around \$16,000 less than white men, indicating persistent intersectional discrepancies in earnings.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>6</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 51.5% of men of color graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 79% of men of color graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 86.5% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## NOTES

“Man” in this fact sheet will denote the sex or gender designation of the data source. Therefore, in the Census, “man” includes all individuals listed as “male.” Men of color estimates do not include those individuals included in “Other” racial/ethnic category or those who listed two or more races.

IPEDS reports nonresident students as a single racial category. These students are not included in the men of color classification.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
4. [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#). National Center for Education Statistics, August 2023.
5. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
6. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Native American Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, one percent of the total U.S. population identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native.<sup>1</sup> Among American Indian or Alaskan Native residents aged 25 or over, 16.8% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> This rate is up from 13.9% in 2013, but falls short of the 2023 national rate of 36.2%.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, Native American students made up 0.7% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2022, 25.8% of the 18–24-year-old Native American population were enrolled in college compared to 39% of the overall U.S. population.<sup>4</sup>
- From fall 2010 to fall 2022, Native American enrollment has declined from 196,200 to 121,100, a 38% decrease.<sup>4</sup>
  - Undergraduate enrollment declined from 179,000 to 107,000, a 40% decrease.<sup>4</sup>
  - Graduate enrollment declined from 17,000 to 14,000, a nearly 18% decrease.<sup>4</sup>
- Native American students are much more likely to attend public versus private institutions of higher education.
  - In fall 2022, 77.4% of Native American students attended public institutions:
    - 44.3% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>4</sup>
    - 33.0% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>4</sup>
- 78.3% of the fall 2022 enrollment at Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) were Native American students.<sup>4</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- Fifty-four percent of Native American students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid in the 2019–20 academic year, compared to 55% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 45% of Native American students received a Pell Grant, compared to 40% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 26% of Native American students received a federal student loan, compared to 35% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
- Among Native American students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$6,985, which is the lowest of any racial/ethnic group.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for Native American students was \$4,144.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for Native American students was \$6,908.<sup>5</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- Forty-four percent of first-time, full-time Native American students attending four-year institutions beginning in 2016 graduated within six years, compared to 64.6% for all students.<sup>4</sup>
- At two-year institutions, Native American students tend to graduate within three years at a similar rate as other racial/ethnic groups, 28.5% for Native American students compared to 34.1% overall in the 2019 cohort.<sup>4</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor's degrees conferred in the 2021–22 academic year, 9,542 (0.5%) went to Native American students.<sup>4</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, Native American graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$76,602, similar to the national average of \$76,370.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>7</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 70% of Native American graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 84% of Native American graduates had some form of a retirement account, similar to the 87% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Native American students are often excluded from postsecondary data and research due to their small sample size.<sup>3</sup>
- Native American students are less likely to enroll in Advanced Placement or college prep courses in high school.<sup>6</sup>
- Native American students are also less likely to have family members that have attended college.
  - In 2022, 25.9% of Native American children under 18 years of age lived in a household with a parent who completed a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 56% of white children.<sup>4</sup>
  - Native American children were the least likely out of all racial/ethnic groups to live in a household with a parent who has a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>4</sup>

## NOTE

Terms used in this report reflect terms found in the data source material.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Creating Visibility and Healthy Learning Environments for Native Americans in Higher Education](#). American Indian College Fund, 2019.
4. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
5. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
6. [Office of Civil Rights](#). Department of Education, October 2022.
7. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Post-Traditional Students in Higher Education

## OVERVIEW

Post-traditional students are over the age of 24 when they enter higher education; the “traditional” age range of college-goers is typically defined as 18-24. In general, post-traditional students have one or more of the following characteristics: they delayed enrollment in college after high school, they attend part-time for at least part of an academic year, they work full-time while also enrolled in school, they are financially independent, or they have dependents (spouse and/or children).

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2021, post-traditional students made up 33.5% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
  - Male post-traditional students made up 12.7% of all postsecondary enrollment and 30.5% of all male postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
  - Female post-traditional students made up 20.8% of all postsecondary enrollment and 35.7% of all female postsecondary enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
- Since fall 2011, overall post-traditional student enrollment has declined from 8.3 million to 6.3 million, a 21.2% decrease.<sup>3</sup>
  - Full-time post-traditional enrollment declined from 3.4 million to 2.6 million, a 21.2% decrease.<sup>3</sup>
  - Part-time post-traditional enrollment declined from 4.6 million to 3.6 million, a 20.4% decrease.<sup>3</sup>
- Though post-traditional students are much more likely to attend public institutions of higher education versus private, they are overrepresented in the for-profit sector.<sup>3</sup>
  - In fall 2021, 71.0% of post-traditional undergraduate students attended public institutions: 34.5% attended public four-year institutions and 36.5% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>3</sup>
  - In fall 2021, post-traditional students made up 68.9% of all for-profit enrollment and 79.9% of all for-profit part-time enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
- Post-traditional students are much more likely to enroll exclusively in online courses than traditionally aged students.<sup>3</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID AND STUDENT DEBT

- In the 2019–20 academic year, 52% of post-traditional students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid compared to 56.3% of traditionally aged students.<sup>4</sup>
  - 42.7% of post-traditional students received a Pell Grant, compared to 39% of traditionally aged students.<sup>4</sup>

- 32.8% of post-traditional students received a federal student loan, compared to 35.4% of traditionally aged students.<sup>4</sup>
- Among post-traditional students who received federal Title IV aid in 2019–20, the average amount received was \$7,913.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for post-traditional students was \$3,662.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average federal loan amount for post-traditional students was \$7,545.<sup>4</sup>
- Post-traditional students who first entered postsecondary education in 2003–04 and had not paid their student loans off still owed an average of \$18,476, compared to \$24,952 for traditionally aged students 12 years after entering.<sup>2</sup>
- However, post-traditional students owed on average 80% of their total amount borrowed, compared to 68% for traditionally aged students.<sup>2</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- Among post-traditional students who entered postsecondary education in fall 2011, 6.5% had attained a bachelor’s degree, 15.3% had attained an associate degree, 16.6% had attained a certificate, and 61.6% had not attained a degree or certificate by June 2017.<sup>2</sup>
  - Among traditionally aged students, 40.8% had attained a bachelor’s degree, 10.3% had attained an associate degree, 7.4% had attained a certificate, and 41.5% had not attained a degree or certificate.<sup>2</sup>
- Post-traditional students represented 28.9% of all bachelor’s degree completions in the 2019–20 academic year.<sup>4</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor’s degree, post-traditional graduates reported having an average gross income of \$71,823, compared to \$78,013 for traditionally aged graduates.<sup>1</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>5</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 67% of post-traditional graduates reported owning a home, compared to 61% of traditionally aged graduates.<sup>1</sup>
  - 84% of post-traditional graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 88% of traditionally aged graduates.<sup>1</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- 47.6% of post-traditional students reported having dependent children, compared to just 3.4% of traditionally aged students.<sup>4</sup>
- Post-traditional students are more likely to be low-income and require financial assistance.<sup>4</sup>
- Post-traditional students are more likely to work and work longer hours while enrolled than traditionally aged students.<sup>4</sup>
  - 41.9% of post-traditional students worked full-time while enrolled, compared to 17.7% of traditionally aged students.<sup>4</sup>

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## NOTE

While the U.S. Department of Education uses the term “nontraditional,” many researchers prefer the term “post-traditional” since it recognizes these students for the value they bring to their colleges. In this brief, terms used reflect their data sources.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
2. [Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
4. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
5. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Rural Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, there were 45.8 million people (13.8% of the entire U.S. population) living in rural areas.<sup>1</sup> Among the population aged 25 or over, 21.4% of the rural population had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> This rate is up from 17.7% in 2013, but falls well below the rate of 36.4% for the non-rural population.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- The number of rural students filling out the FAFSA increased by 3% from 2022 to 2023.<sup>2</sup>
- 54.8% of rural high school graduates in the graduating class of 2023 enrolled immediately in college compared to 63.9% of suburban and 59.3% of urban high school graduates from that year.<sup>3</sup>
- 71% of rural high school students had attended college at some point four years after high school, compared to 73% of suburban, 71% of city, and 65% of town-based students.<sup>4</sup>
- Based on the first institution attended, 42.3% of rural students attended public four-year institutions, 37.1% attended public two-year institutions, 15.8% attended nonprofit institutions, and 4.7% attended for-profit institutions.<sup>4</sup>
  - Compared to the national estimates, rural students are overrepresented in public four-year institutions and underrepresented in for-profit institutions.<sup>4</sup>
- Rural students were 67.6% white, 11.5% Hispanic or Latino, 10.7% Black, 7.4% more than one race, 2% Asian, 0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native, and 0.4% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.<sup>4</sup>
  - National estimates from the HSLs, for comparison, show that students overall were 52.9% white, 21.5% Hispanic or Latino, 12.5% Black, 7.7% more than one race, 4.6% Asian, 0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native, and 0.4% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.<sup>4</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- 46.3% of rural students reported being offered a Pell Grant or some other scholarship or grant aid, compared to 45% of the overall student population.<sup>4</sup>
- 40.5% of rural students reported being offered any type of loan for postsecondary expenses, compared to 39.5% of the overall student population.<sup>4</sup>
- On average, among students who borrowed any loan, rural students borrowed \$7,005 in their first year compared to \$6,354 nationally.<sup>4</sup>
- On average, among students who received any grant aid, rural students received \$7,864 in their first year compared to \$8,460 nationally.<sup>4</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 38.6% of surveyed rural high school graduates in the class of 2017 completed a college degree within six years of graduation compared to 37.6% of urban high school graduates and 47.0% of suburban high school graduates.<sup>3</sup>
- Rural students were less likely to graduate with a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) within six years than students from urban or suburban high schools.<sup>3</sup>
  - 11.1% of rural students, 14.3% of urban students, and 16.8% of suburban students graduated with STEM degrees within six years.<sup>3</sup>
- Among STEM graduates, rural students (29.1%) and suburban students (24.0%) were most likely to major in biological and agricultural sciences, while urban students (23.9%) were most likely to major in social science fields.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- In 2022, bachelor's degree recipients in rural areas earned a median of \$50,815, compared to \$58,565 for non-rural bachelor's degree recipients.<sup>1</sup>
- Rural bachelor's degree recipients earned a median of \$16,045 more than rural high school graduates, while the difference for non-rural earners was \$21,186.<sup>1</sup>

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## NOTE

Rural areas are defined by the Economic Research Service (ERS). Using Rural-Urban Continuum Codes (RUCC) from 2013, the ERS defines rural as all non-metropolitan counties.<sup>5</sup>

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [FAFSA Tracker](#). National College Attainment Network, January 2025.
3. [High School Benchmarks 2023](#). National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, September 2024.
4. [High School Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
5. [Rural-Urban Continuum Codes](#). U.S. Department of Agriculture, January 2025.

# Students with Disabilities in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, 13.6% of the civilian population reported having some form of disability.<sup>2</sup> There are considerable differences in disability reporting by race/ethnicity, with American Indian and Alaska Native (15.9%), Black (15.0%), and non-Hispanic White (14.6%) populations the most likely to report having a disability.<sup>2</sup> Asian (8.4%) people are the least likely to report having one.<sup>2</sup> Among the 40.5 million people who are 25 or older and report having a disability, 8.6 million (21.2%) held a bachelor's degree or higher in 2023, up from 15.1% in 2013.<sup>2</sup> However, this is considerably lower than the rate of 38.7% among the population of 195 million people who did not report a disability in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

The National Center for Education Statistics defines students with disabilities as those who report deafness or serious difficulty hearing; blindness or serious difficulty seeing; serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition; or serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.<sup>7</sup>

- In the 2019–20 academic year, the following groups reported having a disability:
  - 21% of all enrolled undergraduates and 11% of all enrolled graduate students.<sup>6</sup>
  - 28% of undergraduate student veterans and 20% of graduate student veterans.<sup>6</sup>
  - 24% of Native American, 23% of Pacific Islander, 21% of white, 22% of Hispanic, 18% of Black, and 14% of Asian undergraduates.<sup>6</sup>
- There is a discrepancy between the rate of students reporting having a disability, and the rate of students registering with their campus disability center.<sup>6</sup>
  - In 2019–20, 8% of students registered as having a disability with their institution.<sup>6</sup>
    - This rate was 10% at nonprofit institutions, 7% at for-profit institutions, and 7% of students at public institutions.<sup>6</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- 58% of students who reported having a disability received some form of Title IV financial aid in the 2019–20 academic year, compared to 54% of students who did not report having a disability.<sup>6</sup>
  - 45% of students with a disability received a Pell Grant, compared to 39% of students who did not report having a disability.<sup>6</sup>
  - 36% of students with a disability received a federal student loan, similar to all students.<sup>6</sup>
- Among students with a disability who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount received was \$8,499, and \$8,782 for students without a disability.<sup>6</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for students with a disability was \$4,035.<sup>6</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for students with a disability was \$8,181.<sup>6</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 23% of undergraduates who reported having a disability in 2012 graduated with a bachelor's degree by 2017, compared to 38% of undergraduates who did not report a disability.<sup>4</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, graduates with a disability who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$69,064, compared to an average gross income of \$77,008 for graduates who did not report a disability.<sup>3</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>10</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 55% of graduates with a disability and 63% of graduates without a disability reported owning a home.<sup>3</sup>
  - 80% of graduates with a disability and 87% of graduates without a disability had some form of a retirement account.<sup>3</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Students with disabilities identified these barriers to access and participation on campus:
  - Being unaware of their campus disability resource office and its services, challenges navigating campus procedures, and inadequate accommodations.<sup>1</sup>
  - Classroom and instructional environment barriers including faculty unaware of disability accommodations, faculty who push back against accommodations, and instructors who do not respond to requests for accommodations.<sup>1</sup>
  - Campus access and support issues including uneven, poorly marked walkways, buildings with external stairs but no ramp, and gaps in programs and services.<sup>1</sup>
  - Students with disabilities were less likely to feel welcome on campus or supported by their institution than students without disabilities.<sup>8</sup>
- Students with disabilities were more likely to experience financial hardships and food and housing insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic than students without disabilities.<sup>9</sup>
- 70% of students with mental health disabilities were not registered to receive accommodations on campus.<sup>5</sup>
  - One-third of students with mental health disabilities stated they were not aware they were eligible for accommodations.<sup>5</sup>

## DATA SOURCES

1. [Access & Participation in Higher Education](#). National Center for College Students with Disabilities, April 2019.
2. [American Community Survey](#) & [Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
3. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
4. [Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
5. [Inaccessible Accessibility](#). Mental Health America, 2021
6. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
7. [Students With Disabilities: Fast Facts](#). National Center for Education Statistics, December 2023.

8. [Supporting Undergraduate Students with Disabilities](#). National Center for College Students with Disabilities, June 2021.
9. [The Experiences of Undergraduate Students with Disabilities During the Pandemic](#). SERU Consortium, October 2020.
10. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Veteran Students in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023 6.1% of the population aged 18 and over were veterans of the U.S. military.<sup>1</sup> Of those veterans, 28% served September 2001 or later, 24.8% served between August 1990 and September 2001, 33% are veterans of the Vietnam War era, 3.5% were veterans of the Korean War era, and 0.6% were veterans of World War II.<sup>1</sup> Females constitute 10.9% of veterans.<sup>1</sup> White non-Hispanic people were the most represented racial/ethnic group among veterans at 74.1%, compared to 12.6% Black or African American, 8.6% Hispanic or Latino of any race, 7.5% reporting two or more races, and 2.8% reporting a race/ethnicity not listed.<sup>1</sup> For individuals aged 25 or over, 32.4% of veterans held a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 36.4% of non-veterans.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In the academic year 2019–20, 3.7% of undergraduates were veterans.<sup>5</sup>
  - 2.8% of public four-year, 2.9% of private nonprofit four-year, 4.3% of public two-year, and 7.5% of for-profit institution enrollments were veterans.<sup>5</sup>
- Veteran students were twice as likely to attend for-profit institutions and slightly more likely to attend public two-year institutions than the national average.<sup>5</sup>
  - 12.6% of veterans attended for-profit institutions, compared to 6.2% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 33.7% attended public two-year institutions, compared to 29.3% of all students.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.8% of students enrolled at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) were veterans, while 3.6% of students enrolled at non-MSIs were veterans.<sup>5</sup>
  - While 1% of veteran students enrolled at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), a similar rate as non-veterans, 15.5% of veterans attended Black-serving non-HBCU institutions compared to 9.5% of non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
- 63% of veteran students were aged 30 or older, compared to 19% of non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
- 7.5% of Native American, 4.4% of students reporting more than one race, 4.6% of Black, 4.2% of white, 3.8% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2.4% of Hispanic or Latino, and 1.7% of Asian students were veterans.<sup>5</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- In the 2021–22 academic year, 492,136 students received Post-9/11 GI Bill Financial Benefits, while 226,441 students received Department of Defense (DOD) Tuition Assistance Program benefits.<sup>4</sup>
  - The average Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit was \$10,358 and the average DOD Tuition Assistance was \$2,169.<sup>4</sup>

- 44.3% of veteran students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid in the 2019–20 academic year other than GI Bill or DOD benefits, compared to 55.4% of non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 38.2% of veteran students received a Pell Grant, compared to 40.3% of non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 20.9% of veteran students received a federal student loan, compared to 35% of non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
- Among veteran students who received federal Title IV aid, the average amount of all federal aid received was \$7,394, compared to \$8,761 for non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount was \$3,904 for veteran students, compared to \$4,128 for non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for veteran students was \$8,026, compared to \$8,574 for non-veteran students.<sup>5</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- Among students who first enrolled in the 2011–12 academic year, 16.9% of veteran students had attained a bachelor’s degree by 2017, compared to 37.1% of non-veteran students.<sup>3</sup>
  - 52% of veteran students had attained no degree or certificate, compared to 43.7% of non-veteran students.<sup>3</sup>
- Among all students who had attained a bachelor’s degree by 2017, less than 1% were veterans.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor’s degree, veteran graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$79,371, compared to \$76,293 for non-veteran students.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>7</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 73.7% of veteran graduates reported owning a home, compared to 62.4% of non-veteran graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 87.3% of veteran graduates had some form of a retirement account, similar to non-veteran graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- In 2013, student veterans reported investing less time outside of the classroom on activities not essential to the completion of their coursework due to parenting responsibilities or work.<sup>6</sup>

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
4. [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
5. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.

6. [Student Veterans/Service Members' Engagement in College and University Life and Education](#). American Council on Education, December 2013.
7. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Women in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, 50.5% of the total U.S. population were female.<sup>1</sup> Among females aged 25 or over, 37.4% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>1</sup> This rate is up from 29.7% in 2013 and is 2.6 percentage points higher than the rate for males.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, female students made up 57.9% of all postsecondary enrollment.<sup>4</sup>
  - White female students made up 28.4% of all postsecondary enrollment, while Hispanic or Latina female students made up 12.2%, Black female students made up 8%, Asian female students made up 4%, female students of two or more races made up 2.4%, non-resident female students made up 2.4%, American Indian/Alaska Native female students made up 0.4%, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander female students made up 0.1%.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2022, 43.8% of the 18–24-year-old female population were enrolled in college compared to 34.2% of the male population.<sup>4</sup>
- Since fall 2012, overall female student enrollment has declined from 11.73 million to 10.77 million, an 8.2% decrease:
  - Undergraduate female enrollment declined from 10.02 million to 8.82 million, an 11.9% decrease.<sup>4</sup>
  - Despite the overall enrollment decline, graduate enrollment for female students increased from 1.71 million to 1.94 million, a 13.9% increase.<sup>4</sup>
- Female students are more likely to attend public versus private institutions of higher education.<sup>4</sup> In fall 2022, 71.4% of female students attended public institutions:
  - 47.6% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>4</sup>
  - 23.8% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>4</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID AND STUDENT DEBT

- In the 2019–20 academic year, 59% of female students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid compared to 49% of male students.<sup>6</sup>
  - 45% of female students received a Pell Grant, compared to 34% of male students.<sup>6</sup>
  - 37% of female students received a federal student loan, compared to 31% of male students.<sup>6</sup>
- Among female students who received federal Title IV aid in 2019–20, the average amount received was \$8,744.<sup>6</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for female students was \$4,123.<sup>6</sup>
  - The average federal loan amount for female students was \$8,477.<sup>6</sup>

- Women bachelor’s degree recipients who were first-generation college students borrowed, on average, \$4,145 more in total cumulative loans than women bachelor’s degree recipients whose parents held a bachelor’s degree.<sup>3</sup>
- Outstanding student loan balances are disproportionately held by women.<sup>3</sup>
  - As of 2020, women held nearly two-thirds of outstanding student loan debt, totaling more than \$929 million.<sup>3</sup>
  - Black women held over \$41,000, Pacific Islander/Hawaiian women held over \$38,000, American Indian/Alaska Native women held over \$36,000, white women held over \$33,000, Hispanic women held over \$29,000, and Asian women held over \$27,000 in debt.<sup>3</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 67.6% of first-time, full-time female students attending four-year institutions graduated within six years, compared to 61.1% of male students.<sup>4</sup>
- At two-year institutions, among first-time, full-time students, 35.7% of female students graduated within three years, compared to 32.3% of male students.<sup>4</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor’s degrees conferred in the 2021–22 academic year, 1,179,719 (58.5%) went to female students.<sup>4</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor’s degree, female graduates reported having an average gross income of \$66,445, compared to \$89,204 for male graduates.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>7</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 63% of female graduates reported owning a home, compared to 62% of male graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 86% of female graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 87% of male graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Female students were more than three times as likely (15% versus 4%) to be single parents as male students.<sup>6</sup>
  - Despite the growth of student parents in higher education, campuses that provide childcare are declining, particularly among community colleges. Less than half of all public institutions offered childcare in 2019.<sup>5</sup>

## NOTE

“Woman” and “female” will both be used in this fact sheet, depending on the terminology of the source.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Deeper in Debt: Women and Student Loans](#). The American Association of University Women, 2021.

4. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
5. [Evaluating the Role of Campus Child Care in Student Parent Success](#). The Institute for Women's Policy Research, October 2021.
6. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
7. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.

# Women of Color in Higher Education

## CENSUS OVERVIEW

In 2023, 19.2% of the total U.S. population identified as a woman of color.<sup>1</sup> In total, 9.6% of the population were Hispanic or Latina women, 6.1% were Black women, 3.1% were Asian women, 0.3% were American Indian/Alaska Native women, and 0.1% were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women.<sup>1</sup> Among women of color aged 25 or over, 31.2% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, which is up from 23.5% in 2013.<sup>1</sup> 56.7% of Asian women had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 29.3% of Black women, 22.9% of Hispanic or Latina women, 21.9% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women, and 18.4% of American Indian/Alaska Native women.<sup>1</sup> In 2023, the percentage of women of color with a bachelor's degree or higher was below the national rate of 37.5% for all women.<sup>1</sup>

## ENROLLMENT

- In fall 2022, women of color made up 24.8% of all postsecondary enrollment and 42.8% of all female student enrollment.<sup>3</sup>
  - Hispanic or Latina women comprised 12.2% of all postsecondary enrollment, while Black women comprised 8%, Asian women comprised 4%, American Indian/Alaska Native women comprised 0.4%, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women comprised 0.1%.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2023, 38.7% of 18–24-year-old women of color were enrolled in college, a similar share as 18–24-year-old women of all races.<sup>3</sup>
  - This share varies considerably across race/ethnicity: 60.2% of Asian women, 36.2% of Black women, 35.4% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women, 35.1% of Hispanic or Latina women, and 20.9% of American Indian/Alaska Native women were enrolled.<sup>3</sup>
- Since fall 2012, overall enrollment of women of color has increased from 4.38 million to 4.6 million, a 5.1% increase:
  - Undergraduate enrollment increased from 3.87 million to 3.94 million, a 1.9% increase.<sup>3</sup>
  - Graduate enrollment for women of color increased considerably from 508,700 to 660,138, a 29.8% increase.<sup>3</sup>
  - The overall enrollment increase is largely driven by Hispanic or Latina women, which increased by 31.2%, and Asian women enrollment, which increased by 18.1%; Black women enrollment, however, declined by 20.8%, and American Indian/Alaska Native women enrollment decreased by 26.3%.<sup>3</sup>
- Women of color are much more likely to attend public versus private institutions.<sup>5</sup>
  - In 2019–20, 64.9% of women of color attended public institutions:
    - 34% attended public four-year institutions.<sup>5</sup>
    - 30.9% attended public two-year institutions.<sup>5</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

- In the 2019–20 academic year, 63.2% of women of color received some form of federal Title IV financial aid, compared to 55.9% of white female students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 53.4% of women of color received a Pell Grant, compared to 36.2% of white female students.<sup>5</sup>
  - 34.7% of women of color received a federal student loan, compared to 39.8% of white female students.<sup>5</sup>
- The average amount of federal Title IV aid women of color received was \$8,573.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average Pell Grant amount for women of color was \$4,276.<sup>5</sup>
  - The average federal student loan amount for women of color was \$8,473.<sup>5</sup>

## COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- 61.8% of first-time, full-time women of color attending four-year institutions beginning in 2017 graduated within six years, compared to 67.5% for all women.<sup>4</sup> There is considerable variation, however:
  - 81.1% of Asian women graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 62.2% of Hispanic or Latina women graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 51.2% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 50.3% of Black women graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
  - 43.7% of American Indian/Alaska Native women graduated within six years.<sup>4</sup>
- Of the more than two million bachelor’s degrees conferred in the 2021–22 academic year, 435,872 (21.6%) went to women of color.<sup>3</sup>

## EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- Ten years after receiving a bachelor’s degree, women of color graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of \$66,632, nearly \$10,000 less than the national average.<sup>2</sup>
  - Women of color tend to earn \$10,000 less on average than men of color, but the same as white women, indicating persistent intersectional discrepancies in earnings.<sup>2</sup>
- Wealth accumulation can be measured differently from income.<sup>6</sup> Ten years after graduating:
  - 50.6% of women of color graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>
  - 81.4% of women of color graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 86.5% of all graduates.<sup>2</sup>

## NOTE

“Woman” in this fact sheet will denote the sex or gender designation of the data source. Therefore, in the Census, “woman” includes all individuals listed as “female.” Women of color estimates do not include those individuals included in “Other” racial/ethnic category or those who listed two or more races.

## DATA SOURCES

1. [American Community Survey & Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, April 2025.
2. [Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
3. [Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
4. [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#). National Center for Education Statistics, April 2025.
5. [National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#). National Center for Education Statistics, November 2023.
6. [Wealth Analysis FAQ](#). Urban Institute, 2021.



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