

Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: 2020 Supplement

METHODS



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This chapter is part of a larger report by the American Council on Education (ACE) titled *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: 2020 Supplement*, which follows ACE's 2019 release of *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: A Status Report*. These reports, along with their accompanying microsite, provide a data-informed foundation for those working to close persistent equity gaps by providing a comprehensive review of the educational pathways of today's college students and the educators who serve them.

Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: 2020 Supplement and the microsite were made possible through the generous support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Visit www.equityinhighered.org to learn more about the project and to download the full report, figures, detailed data tables, and other resources on race and ethnicity in higher education.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the ACE website. At the top left is the ACE logo with the text "American Council on Education" and "RACE AND ETHNICITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION". To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT, INDICATORS, DATA SOURCES, DATA TABLES, and RESOURCES. Further right are social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and a search icon. The main content area features a large image of a smiling Black woman with a backpack. Overlaid on the image is a "Featured Findings" box with two statistics: "40.1% of Associate Degrees were Earned by Students of Color" and "31.5% of Bachelor's Degrees were Earned by Students of Color". Below the image are two buttons: "EXPLORE THE FINDINGS" and "DOWNLOAD THE REPORT". At the bottom left, there is a section titled "Explore the Findings" with a paragraph of text and a link to "Download Reports". At the bottom right, there is a blue box titled "NEW: IDEAS AND INSIGHTS" with the text "View essays, videos, podcasts, and more >" and a speech bubble icon.

About the American Council on Education

ACE is a membership organization that mobilizes the higher education community to shape effective public policy and foster innovative, high-quality practice. As the major coordinating body for the nation's colleges and universities, our strength lies in our diverse membership of more than 1,700 colleges and universities, related associations, and other organizations in America and abroad. ACE is the only major higher education association to represent all types of U.S. accredited, degree-granting institutions: two-year and four-year, public and private. For more information, please visit www.acenet.edu.

METHODS

The Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education project aims to provide a data-informed foundation from which the higher education community and its many stakeholders can examine racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes, draw insights, raise new questions, and make the case for why we must talk about racial equity gaps present in American higher education. This 2020 supplement dives into specific topic areas and includes new indicators on the academic experiences of students prior to college, graduate and professional education, student loan debt and repayment, and postsecondary faculty and staff. It also seeks to address the dearth of data available for Native populations by highlighting the role that Tribal Colleges and Universities play in serving Native students and communities. To tell these stories, this report presents over 150 indicators drawn from 16 principal data sources. Many of the report's indicators present a snapshot of data, drawn from the most current data source.

The purpose of this section is threefold: first, to familiarize the reader with the various data sources used throughout the report; second, to clarify how key concepts were defined; and finally, to provide guidance on how to interpret the findings contained in this report. Additionally, helpful methodological notes are included throughout the report both in the text and in table and figure notes.

Principal Data Sources

Data for this report were drawn from 16 principal sources. Many of these data were collected as part of studies managed by the U.S. Department of Education. When federally collected data were insufficient to address a particular indicator, non-federally collected data were sought and included. Each of the principal data sources used in this report is described below with notes indicating the chapters where data were presented.

ACT

The ACT, administered by the organization of the same name, is an exam designed for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders, measuring what students have learned in high school and the skills that are important indicators for college and career readiness. The ACT includes four components: English, reading, math, and science. The ACT is used by many colleges and universities as a criteria of undergraduate admission. Data from the 2019 edition of the *Condition of College and Career Readiness* report and ACT's U.S. High School Graduating Class Trends data visualization tool are presented in Chapter 1.

High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs)

The High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs) is a nationally representative longitudinal study of 23,000 ninth-grade students in 2009. Designed to examine the pathways of students through secondary education into postsecondary education and the workforce, the study utilizes surveys of students, their families, and school staff during students' ninth-grade, 11th-grade, and 12th-grade years, a follow-up survey three years following high school completion, and high school transcripts. Once completed, HSLs will also include data from postsecondary transcripts and a final follow-up survey of participants scheduled for 2025. Data from HSLs are presented in Chapter 1.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Also known as the Nation's Report Card, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative assessment that measures fourth-grade, eighth-grade, and 12th-grade students' knowledge, educational achievement, and progress in a range of subjects. A congressionally mandated project administered through the U.S. Department of Education, NAEP has been used to measure students' progress in subjects since 1969. Unlike the various assessments offered

by each state, NAEP assessments are the same across states, allowing a common measure of student achievement and performance across the nation. Data from the 2015 NAEP Mathematics Assessment and the 2015 NAEP Reading Assessment are presented in Chapter 1.

SAT

The *SAT Suite of Assessments Annual Report*, produced by the College Board, reports information on the graduating cohort of high school seniors who took the new SAT (as of March 2016) during their high school career, as well as the number of students who took related PSAT assessments (PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and PSAT 8/9) in a given school year. Used by many colleges and universities as a criteria of undergraduate admission, the SAT suite of assessments includes exams for students in eighth grade through 12th grade, and can help identify readiness for AP courses, as well as college and career readiness. Data from the *2019 SAT Suite of Assessments Annual Report* are presented in Chapter 1.

American Indian Higher Education Consortium American Indian Measures of Success (AIHEC AIMS)

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium launched the American Indian Measures of Success (AIHEC AIMS) in 2004 to define measures for success that are relevant to Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and the communities they serve. AIHEC AIMS seeks to build data collection capacity and accountability of TCUs to measure success and increase participation and success of American Indian students in postsecondary education. Qualitative data provide stories and narratives around the many types of quantitative data collected through AIHEC AIMS, such as enrollment, cost of attendance, TCU funding, and curricular programs. AIHEC AIMS data were provided upon request for this report and are presented in Chapter 2.

American Dental Association (ADA)

The Survey of Dental Education, administered by the Health Policy Institute of the American Dental Association (ADA), is an annual survey of all U.S. dental schools and 10 dental schools in Canada. Survey data collection includes information on demographic characteristics of dentists, dental fees, dentists' earnings, and pre-doctoral, advanced, and allied dental education programs in U.S. dental schools. Data from the ADA are presented in Chapter 3.

American Dental Education Association (ADEA)

The American Dental Education Association (ADEA), the membership organization for all U.S. and Canadian dental schools, conducts annual surveys and research reports on trends in dental education. ADEA's annual surveys capture information on applicants, enrollees, graduates, and employment characteristics of faculty in dental education. Data from the ADEA are presented in Chapter 3.

Analytix by AccessLex

The AccessLex Institute works with nearly 200 American Bar Association-approved nonprofit and state-affiliated law schools throughout the United States. AccessLex provides data on law schools, law school applicants, enrollees, and graduates through Analytix by AccessLex, which allows law school leaders and those who research the landscape of law school education to access the crucial data they need to make informed decisions. Data from the Analytix by AccessLex 2018 Enrollment Database and 2018 Degrees Dataset are presented in Chapter 3.

Association of American Medical Colleges

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the membership association for U.S. and Canadian medical schools, collects data on students applying to, enrolling in, and graduating from U.S. medical schools. The collection of surveys focuses on the demographic characteristics, test scores, and grade point averages of medical school applicants, matriculants, and graduates, as well as MD-PhD students and residency applicants. These data provide a base from which AAMC produces research related to gender and racial and ethnic diversity among individuals who practice medicine. Data from the AAMC *Diversity in Medicine: Facts and Figures 2019* report are presented in Chapter 3.

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is the primary source for information on U.S. colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions. IPEDS is a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). IPEDS gathers information from more than 7,500 colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions that participate in the federal student aid programs in fundamental areas such as enrollment, program completion and graduation rates, institutional costs, student financial aid, and human resources. Data collected through IPEDS are publicly released and can be accessed through the IPEDS Data Center. Data from IPEDS are presented in Chapters 3, 4, and 6.

Law School Admission Council (LSAC)

The Law School Admission Council (LSAC), the nonprofit organization that administers the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), promotes quality, access, and equity in law school admissions. LSAC collects data from LSAT test takers, law school applicants, and law schools to produce reports on applicant trends and demographic characteristics. The data LSAC produces are available to member law schools, who can use the data to better inform their admissions processes. LSAC data were provided upon request for this report and are presented in Chapter 3.

Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)

The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) is an annual census of all individuals who received a research doctorate from accredited U.S. institutions in a given year. The SED identifies characteristics and trends in doctoral education through the collection of doctoral degree recipients' demographic information, educational history, and post-graduation plans and outcomes. It also includes a follow-up survey designed to identify characteristics and trends of the population of doctoral recipients. A joint product of the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Education, and National Endowment for the Humanities, the SED has been administered annually since 1957. Data from the 2017 SED are presented in Chapter 3.

Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES)

The Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) collects information on work experience programs, non-degree work certifications and licenses, and postsecondary educational certificates of adults ages 16 to 65 who are not enrolled in high school. The ATES survey also collects information on respondents' demographic characteristics, educational attainment, labor force participation, earnings, and occupational field. Data from ATES are presented in Chapter 4.

Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS)

The Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS) currently surveys cohorts of first-time, beginning students at three points in time: at the end of their first year, and then three and six years after first starting in postsecondary education. The study draws its cohorts from NPSAS and collects data on a variety of topics, including student demographic characteristics, school and work experiences, financial aid, persistence, transfer, and degree attainment. The BPS tracks students' paths through postsecondary education to allow for a more in-depth exploration of what academic fields students pursue, how financial aid influences their persistence and completion, and in some cases, why students leave higher education without an award. Data on student loan repayment outcomes were collected as part of the 2015 Federal Student Aid Supplement and appended to the BPS: 04/09 data. Data from the BPS: 12/17 study are presented in Chapter 1 and Chapter 5. Data from the BPS: 04/09 study are presented in Chapter 5.

National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)

The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) examines the characteristics of students in postsecondary education, with special focus on how they finance their education. NPSAS sample surveys provide access to nationally representative data for undergraduate and graduate students. NPSAS is a comprehensive research dataset, based on student-level records and financial aid provided by the federal government, the states, postsecondary institutions, employers, and private agencies, along with student demographic and enrollment data. NPSAS is the primary source of information used by the federal government (and others, such as researchers and higher education associations) to analyze student financial aid and to inform public policy on such programs as the Pell Grants and Direct/Stafford loans. Data from NPSAS: 16 are presented in Chapter 5.

College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR)

With the most reliable and comprehensive higher education salary and benefits data available, CUPA-HR collects data on salaries for administrators, faculty, professionals, and staff, as well as on healthcare and other benefits. Additionally, benchmarking data on voluntary and involuntary turnover rates; student, staff, faculty ratios; collective bargaining for faculty, staff, and graduate students; the chief human resource officer reporting relationship; diversity data and comparison groups are available to assist leaders in planning for budgets; salary increases; and creating equity in the hiring and human resources processes. Data from the 2019 *Faculty in Higher Education Annual Report*, the 2019 *Administrators in Higher Education Annual Report*, and the 2019 *Professionals in Higher Education Annual Report* are presented in Chapter 6.

Key Definitions

With various data sources, it is important to be clear about how key terms were defined throughout the report. The following section provides an overview as well as definitions of some of the key terms used throughout the report.

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity are complex social constructions. As the United States has grown more diverse, the language and methods used to identify groups of people have changed substantially. This is perhaps most evident in the changes made over time in the collection of race, ethnicity, and origin data by the U.S. Census Bureau.¹ These changes include new racial categories, the collection of information on ethnicity (defined as whether an individual is of Hispanic origin or not), and allowing individuals to self-identify their race and ethnicity, as well as to identify as being of more than one race. These changes made by Census have informed the data collection efforts of other federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education.

1 http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/06/ST_15.06.11_MultiRacial-Timeline.pdf

While the language used to identify race and ethnicity varies by data source, this report primarily uses the race and ethnicity categories as currently defined by IPEDS. In doing so, the report identifies individuals as “Hispanic or Latino” if they reported being of Hispanic or Latino origin, regardless of race. We also refer to students identified as nonresident aliens as “international students and faculty.” The racial and ethnic categories used throughout the report are defined below:

American Indian or Alaska Native: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

Hispanic or Latino: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Two or more races: Category used by institutions to report persons who selected more than one race.

International students and faculty: A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely. This is the IPEDS category “nonresident alien.”

Gender

Throughout this report data are disaggregated by gender. This report uses the gender terms of “men” and “women” rather than the sex terms of “male” and “female.” While the authors recognize gender to be a complex construct with psychological, social, and behavioral dimensions, the analysis presented in this report is bound by the limitations in the data collected by federal agencies such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education. As a result, many other identities associated with gender, including transgender and gender non-conforming, could not be addressed in this report.

Higher Education Institutions

In this report, higher education was broadly defined as any formal education beyond high school offered at public and private, nonprofit and for-profit colleges and universities. Higher education institutions were defined exclusively as colleges and universities that are degree-granting, located in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico, and eligible to receive Title IV federal funds. The term sector is used throughout the report to describe both the control of an institution and the most common type of award it confers.² Throughout this report, institutions were classified into one of four sectors based on their control and the length of the predominant credential awarded. Those categories are defined below:

Public Four-Year Institutions: Colleges or universities whose programs and activities are operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials and which are supported primarily by public funds. More than 50 percent of the total number of degrees and certificates awarded by these institutions are at or above the bachelor’s level. Institutions that confer only graduate degrees with no undergraduate programs were also included here.

² The choice to classify institutions this way, rather than by the length of the longest program offered, was made in order to more accurately classify community colleges that award a small number of bachelor’s degrees. Because these institutions award predominantly associate degrees and certificates, in this report, they are classified as two-year institutions and not four-year institutions.

Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Colleges or universities in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives no compensation, other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk. More than 50 percent of the total number of degrees and certificates awarded by these institutions are at or above the bachelor's level. Institutions that confer only graduate degrees with no undergraduate programs were also included here.

Public Two-Year Institutions: Colleges or universities whose programs and activities are operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials and which are supported primarily by public funds. A college or university was classified as being a two-year institution if it (1) offers only associate degrees and other postsecondary certificates, awards, or diplomas of less than four academic years or (2) less than 50 percent of the total number of degrees and certificates awarded by the institution are at or above the bachelor's level.

For-Profit Institutions: Colleges or universities in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives compensation other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk. These institutions are degree-granting and may offer both undergraduate and graduate credentials.

In addition to the categories above, Chapter 4's examination of sub-baccalaureate certificate completions also included non-degree-granting institutions. For inclusion in the analyses, the institutions had to also be located in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico, and be eligible to receive Title IV federal funds.

Postsecondary Credentials

This report examined completion and related outcomes for students who earned one of six different postsecondary awards. Drawing from the U.S. Department of Education's definitions, the six postsecondary credentials are:

Sub-baccalaureate Certificate: An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level, below the bachelor's degree. Program lengths vary but can range from those that are typically less than one year; those that are more than one year, but less than two years; and those that are more than two years, but less than four years.

Associate Degree: An award that normally requires at least two but less than four years of full-time equivalent college work.

Bachelor's Degree: An award that normally requires at least four but not more than five years of full-time equivalent college-level work.

Master's Degree: An award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of at least the full-time equivalent of one but not more than two academic years beyond the bachelor's degree.

Professional Degree: A doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. Some examples include law (JD), medicine (MD), veterinary medicine (DVM), pharmacy (PharmD), and others, as designated by the awarding institution.

Doctoral Degree: A PhD or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Some examples include doctor of education (EdD), doctor of business administration (DBA), doctor of science (DSc) and others, as designated by the awarding institution.

Fields of Study

The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity. CIP was originally developed by the U.S. Department of Education's NCES in 1980, with revisions occurring in 1985, 1990, 2000, and 2010. In this report, the 2010 CIP was used in two principal ways. First, CIP codes were used to organize the academic program completions data from IPEDS into fields of study. In Chapter 4, CIP codes were also used to organize sub-baccalaureate completions into one of 16 different career clusters using the National Career Clusters Framework and crosswalk. Additional details about fields of study can be found in Chapters 3 and 4.

Notes on Interpreting the Data

This study presents a descriptive analysis of key data to provide readers with an in-depth picture of the educational journeys of students disaggregated by race and ethnicity. Descriptive analysis is used to describe or summarize data and to identify meaningful patterns. While descriptive analysis can provide important insights into data, it cannot be used to explain why a pattern may or may not exist. It is important to note that this study **does not discuss causality and readers should not interpret our findings as being causal.**

Furthermore, much of the data analyzed in this study come from complex surveys that rely on complex survey weights to make the data representative of the populations of interest (e.g., the United States, all students enrolled in undergraduate education). Data derived and presented from ATEES, BPS, HSLS, NAEP, and NPSAS are weighted estimates. As a result, some estimates in the report were flagged as “unstable” and others could not be reported at all due to small sample sizes.³ Data were flagged or suppressed most frequently when multiple levels of disaggregation were presented, particularly among American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander groups.

³ Throughout the report, NCES data reporting guidelines were followed to suppress cases with too few respondents and to flag estimates as unstable when the standard error represented more than 30 percent of a given estimate.



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