SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS RE: POSTSECONDARY (Higher Education)

NOTE: All of the highlights quoted below are direct quotes from the report. HEPC has not included all categories or all text. For complementary charts for most of the textual data, please refer to the complete report. HEPC has identified selected terms or sections in bold print to facilitate easier identification of items of potential interest to policy makers.

The indicators in this section of The Condition of Education measure aspects of elementary and secondary education in the United States. The indicators examine school characteristics and climate; principals, teachers and staff; elementary and secondary financial resources; student assessments; and other measures of the progress students make as they move through the education system, such as graduation rates.


Financing Postsecondary Education in the United States

In 2011, the federal government provided $146 billion in student financial aid in grants and loans. The total amount, in constant 2011 dollars, disbursed in grant aid increased almost fourfold, from $10 billion in 2000 to $38 billion in 2010. The total annual amount disbursed to students as loans (Direct and Federal Family Education Loans) increased 2 1/2 times—from $43 billion in 2000 to $109 billion in 2010.

Students are increasingly relying on loans as a funding source, affecting the balance sheets of current students, prior students, and those who loan money to them, including the federal government.

In 2000, some 45 percent of 18- and 19-year-olds and 32 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in postsecondary education. By 2011, these numbers had increased to 50 percent of 18- and 19-year-olds and 40 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds. In addition, in 2011, some 15 percent of 25- to 29-year-olds and 8 percent of 30- to 34-year-olds were enrolled in school.

Overall, between 2000 and 2010, fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions increased by 37 percent, from 15 million students to 21 million students (see Digest of Education Statistics 2012, table 222). Of these 21 million students in 2010, about 18 million were in undergraduate programs and 3 million were in graduate, or postbaccalaureate, programs (see Digest of Education Statistics 2012, table 228).

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From: The Condition of Education 2013

these 21 million students in 2010, about 18 million were in undergraduate programs and 3 million were in graduate, or postbaccalaureate, programs (see Digest of Education Statistics 2012, table 228).

The primary federal grant program is the Pell Grant Program. These grants are needs based and are usually only awarded to undergraduate students who have not yet earned a bachelor’s degree. In the last decade, the total annual amount, in constant 2011–12 dollars, that was disbursed by the federal government in grant aid increased almost fourfold, from $10 billion in 2000 (when 100 percent of federal grants were Pell Grants) to nearly $38 billion in 2010 (when 97 percent of federal grants were Pell Grants). During this same time period, the number of recipients of federal grants increased from 4 million students to 11 million students.

The William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program is the largest federal student loan program. Direct Loans can be awarded to undergraduate students, either with the interest subsidized (DL Subsidized) or unsubsidized (DL Unsubsidized); to parents of undergraduate students (DL PLUS); or to graduate students (DL GRAD PLUS). The U.S. Department of Education is the lender for these loans. Prior to 2010, the federal government also offered the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program. Under this program, private lenders loaned money to students and the federal government insured the loans. In 2010, it was decided that the U.S. Department of Education would become the lender for all federal student loans, and the FFEL program was ended. As a result, no new FFEL loans have been made since July 2010. The total annual amount disbursed to students as loans (Direct and FFEL) increased by 150 percent (in constant 2011–12 dollars) in the last decade, from $43 billion in 2000 to $109 billion in 2010. The number of loan recipients increased from 8 million students to 19 million students. However, it is possible for a student to be the recipient of multiple loans in a given year.

In its monthly G-19 statistical report on consumer credit, the Federal Reserve Bank provides data on the total amount of student loans owned by the federal government. According to the report, the federal government originates consumer credit solely in the form of nonrevolving student loans through the Department of Education. The G-19 quarterly report includes data on federal government balances on loans issued through the Direct Loan Program, as well as the FFEL program loans purchased from depository institutions and finance companies. Between October 2000 and October 2009, the total outstanding amount of student loans owned by the federal government, in constant 2011 dollars, remained between approximately $100 and $150 billion. A combination of the federal student loan policy change and a growing demand for student loans resulted in a balance of over $500 billion by October of 2012.

In addition to loans originated by the federal government, students can obtain private student loans from financial institutions, nonprofit lenders, and certain schools that elect to fund or guarantee loans. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s Quarterly Report on Household Debt and Credit, total student loan debt, across all age groups, stood at nearly $1 trillion ($956 billion) in the fall of 2012. By comparison, in fall 2003, total student loan debt outstanding was $304 billion (in constant 2011 dollars), meaning that it has more than tripled in the last 9 years. Further, student loan debt is the only form of consumer debt that has grown since the peak of consumer debt in 2008, and balances of student loans have eclipsed both auto loans and credit cards, making student loan debt the largest form of consumer debt outside of mortgages.
According to the federal government, a federal student loan is in default if there has been no payment on the loan in 270 days. The Department of Education calculates a 2-year cohort default rate, which is the percentage of students who entered repayment in a given fiscal year within the following 2 fiscal years. In 2010, the national 2-year cohort default rate was 9.1 percent, meaning that of those students who entered repayment during fiscal year 2008, some 9.1 percent had not made a payment on their loans for at least 270 consecutive days during fiscal years 2009 and 2010. The 2-year cohort default rate has been increasing since 2005, when it was 4.6 percent. (from October 1 to September 30) and then defaulted.

In addition to providing data on the total student loan debt outstanding, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s Quarterly Report on Household Debt and Credit contains data on those student loans that are delinquent in a given month, meaning that they are at least 30 days past due, as well as those that are “seriously” delinquent, meaning that they are at least 90 days past due. In the first quarter of 2003, approximately 6 percent of all outstanding student loans were at least 90 days delinquent. By the third quarter of 2012, that rate had increased to 11 percent.

Characteristics of Postsecondary Institutions

In 2011–12, some 25 percent of 4-year institutions had open admissions policies, 25 percent accepted three-quarters or more of their applicants, 35 percent accepted one-half to less than three-quarters of their applicants, and the remaining 15 percent accepted less than one-half of their applicants.

In 2011–12, there were 4,280 degree-granting institutions, including 2,560 4-year institutions offering programs at the bachelor’s or higher degree level and 1,730 2-year institutions offering associate’s degrees. These institutions may be governed by publicly appointed or elected officials, with major support from public funds (publicly controlled), or by privately elected or appointed officials, with major support from private sources (private control). Privately controlled institutions may be operated on a nonprofit or for-profit basis. The number of private nonprofit institutions in 2011–12 (1,340) was 3 percent lower than in 2000–01 (1,380), and the number of public institutions in 2011–12 (1,610) was 2 percent lower than in 2000–01 (1,650). In contrast, the number of private for-profit institutions increased by 95 percent between 2000–01 and 2011–12 (from 690 to 1,340).

In 2011–12, some 25 percent of 4-year institutions had open admissions policies (accepted all applicants), 25 percent accepted three-quarters or more of their applicants, 35 percent accepted one-half to less than three-quarters of their applicants, and 15 percent accepted less than one-half of their applicants. Among 4-year institutions, a higher percentage of private for-profit institutions (53 percent) than public (18 percent) and private nonprofit institutions (14 percent) had open admissions policies in 2011–12. Some 22 percent of private for-profit 4-year institutions accepted three-quarters or more of their applicants, whereas 28 percent of public 4-year institutions and 25 percent of private 4-year nonprofit institutions did so.

In 2011–12 some 88 percent of 2-year institutions had open admissions, 8 percent accepted three-quarters or more of their applicants, 3 percent accepted one-half to less than three-quarters of
applicants, and 1 percent accepted less than one-half of their applicants. Among 2-year institutions, almost all public institutions had open admissions (97 percent), while 79 percent of private for-profit institutions and 50 percent of private nonprofit ones had open admissions.

In 2011–12, some 74 percent of 4-year and 11 percent of 2-year institutions had admissions criteria for their applicants. A small percentage of 4-year (1 percent) and 2-year institutions (2 percent) had no admissions requirements, only suggested admissions criteria. Admissions criteria are requirements for all applicants to an institution to submit specific information, such as secondary school administrative records, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores, secondary school grades, admission tests (such as the SAT or ACT), recommendations, and college preparatory programs (i.e., International Baccalaureate). Among 4-year institutions, 75 percent of public institutions had a requirement for admission tests such as the SAT or ACT, compared with 63 percent of private nonprofit and 1 percent of private for-profit institutions.

The percentage of 4-year private nonprofit institutions (53 percent) that required recommendations for admission was higher than the percentages for public (9 percent) and private for-profit 4-year institutions (2 percent). The percentage of 4-year public and private nonprofit institutions requiring TOEFL scores (71 percent and 69 percent, respectively) was higher than the percentage for 4-year private for-profit institutions (35 percent). Among 2-year institutions, 31 percent of private nonprofit and 15 percent of private for-profit institutions had a requirement for secondary school records, compared with 3 percent of public institutions.

**Characteristics of Postsecondary Students**

In fall 2011, there were 18.1 million undergraduate students and 2.9 million postbaccalaureate students attending degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States. Undergraduate students can attend either 4-year institutions that can award a bachelor’s or higher degree or 2-year institutions that can award associate’s degrees but may also award certificates in 2-year and less than 2-year programs. Some 10.6 million undergraduate students (58 percent of the total) attended 4-year institutions in fall 2011, while 7.5 million (42 percent of the total) attended 2-year institutions. Of undergraduate students at 4-year institutions that year, 8.2 million, or 78 percent, attended full time. Of undergraduate students at 2-year institutions that year, 3.2 million (42 percent) were full-time students and 4.3 million (58 percent) were part-time students.

At public and private nonprofit 4-year institutions in 2011, most of the full-time students (88 percent and 86 percent, respectively) were young adults under the age of 25. However, at private for-profit 4-year institutions in 2011 just 29 percent of full-time students were young adults; 39 percent were between the ages of 25 and 34, and 32 percent were age 35 and older.

Of full-time students at 2-year institutions in 2011, young adults accounted for 71 percent of enrollment at public institutions, 59 percent of enrollment at private nonprofit institutions, and 47 percent of enrollment at private for-profit institutions. Regarding the remaining age groups of full-time students in 2011, at public 2-year institutions some 18 percent were between 25 and 34 years old, and 11 percent were 35 and older; at private nonprofit institutions 25 percent were between 25 and 34, and 16 percent were 35 and older; and at private for-profit institutions 31 percent were between 25 and 34, and 21 percent were 35 and older.
Of undergraduate students enrolled part time in 4-year institutions in 2011, young adults made up 50 percent of the enrollment at public institutions, 32 percent of the enrollment at private nonprofit institutions, and 21 percent of the enrollment at private for-profit institutions. Thus, students ages 25–34 and 35 and older accounted for the other half of the part-time enrollment at public 4-year institutions (29 percent and 21 percent, respectively), two-thirds of the part-time enrollment at private nonprofit 4-year institutions (30 percent and 36 percent, respectively), and over three-quarters of the part-time enrollment at private for-profit 4-year institutions (39 percent each).

In 2011, some 52 percent of part-time students at public 2-year institutions were young adults, while 25 percent were between the ages of 25 and 34, and 23 percent were 35 and older. At private nonprofit 2-year institutions, some 40 percent of part-time students were young adults, 32 percent were between the ages of 25 and 34, and 27 percent were 35 and older. At private for-profit 2-year institutions, 39 percent of part-time students were young adults, 35 percent were between the ages of 25 and 34, and 26 percent were age 35 and older.

Sixty-nine percent of all undergraduate students (full-time and part-time) at private nonprofit 4-year institutions in 2011 were White, which was higher than the percentage of White students at either public or private for-profit 4-year institutions. For Asian undergraduate students at 4-year institutions that year, the highest percentage was at public institutions (7 percent). Higher percentages of Black (28 percent) and Hispanic (14 percent) undergraduates attended private for-profit 4-year institutions than public (12 percent and 13 percent, respectively) and private nonprofit (14 and 9 percent, respectively) 4-year institutions.

At 2-year institutions in 2011, the highest percentages of White and Asian undergraduate students were at public institutions, at 56 percent and 6 percent, respectively, and the highest percentage of Black students was at private nonprofit institutions, at 30 percent. The highest percentage of Hispanic students at 2-year institutions in 2011 was at private for-profit institutions, at 26 percent.

In 2011, some 48 percent of postbaccalaureate (graduate) students attended public institutions, 41 percent attended private nonprofit institutions, and 10 percent attended private for-profit institutions. There were differences in attendance patterns by race/ethnicity, however. At public institutions in 2011, some 72 percent of graduate students were White, compared with 69 percent at private nonprofit institutions and 49 percent at private for-profit institutions. Thirty-six percent of graduate students at private for-profit institutions were Black, compared with 12 percent of students at private nonprofit institutions and 11 percent of students at public institutions. Hispanics accounted for 8 percent of graduate enrollment at public and private for-profit institutions and 7 percent of graduate enrollment at private nonprofit institutions, while Asians accounted for 9 percent of graduate enrollment at private nonprofit institutions, 7 percent of graduate enrollment at public institutions, and 4 percent of graduate enrollment at private for-profit institutions.

According to the Current Population Survey (CPS), in 2011 about 41 percent of full-time undergraduate students and 74 percent of part-time undergraduate students ages 16 to 24 years old worked in addition to being enrolled in a postsecondary institution. Of full-time undergraduate students, 16 percent of college students who were employed reported working less than 20 hours per week, 18 percent reported working 20 to 34 hours per week, and 6 percent reported working 35 hours or more
per week. By comparison, 11 percent of part-time undergraduate students who were employed reported working less than 20 hours per week while they attended school, another 28 percent reported working 20 to 34 hours per week, and 33 percent reported working 35 or more hours per week.

In general, smaller percentages of all postsecondary students ages 16 to 24 years old were working in 2011 than had been working a decade prior. For full-time students, the decline in the percentage of all students who worked was from 52 percent in 2000 to 41 percent in 2011. For part-time students, the decline was from 85 percent to 75 percent. Further, for full-time students who were employed, the percentage of all students who worked less than 20 hours per week decreased from 20 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2011. Those full-time students who were working 20 to 34 hours per week decreased from 22 percent to 17 percent, and those who were working 35 or more hours per week decreased from 9 percent to 7 percent over the same period.

Meanwhile, nearly half (47 percent) of all part-time students worked 35 hours or more per week in 2000, while in 2011 just 35 percent did. The percentages of part-time students who worked less than 20 hours per week or between 20 and 34 hours per week did not change measurably between 2000 and 2011.

Undergraduate Fields of Study

About two-thirds of the 942,000 associate’s degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in academic year 2010–11 were in three broad fields of study: liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities (33 percent); health professions and related programs (21 percent); and business, management, marketing, and support services (13 percent). These are the same three fields in which the largest numbers of associate’s degrees were awarded in 2000–01.

Overall, the number of associate’s degrees awarded from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11 increased by 363,000 degrees, or 63 percent. Of the 20 major fields of study in which the most associate’s degrees were awarded in 2010–11, the field of homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting had the largest percentage increase (174 percent, from 16,400 to 44,900 degrees). Additionally, the number of associate’s degrees awarded more than doubled in the following fields: psychology (it increased 149 percent), social sciences and history (it increased 149 percent), health professions and related programs (138 percent), multi/interdisciplinary studies (127 percent), public administration and social service professions (124 percent), physical sciences and science technologies (116 percent), education (115 percent), and construction trades (101 percent). In contrast, the number of degrees conferred declined in two fields from 2000–01 to 2010–11: Some 6,800 fewer associate’s degrees were awarded in engineering technologies and engineering-related fields (a decrease of 16 percent), and 220 fewer degrees were awarded in agriculture and natural resources (a decrease of 3 percent).

Of the 1.7 million bachelor’s degrees awarded in academic year 2010–11, almost one-third were concentrated in two fields: business (21 percent) and social sciences and history (10 percent). Five other fields each accounted for 5 percent or more of all bachelor’s degrees awarded. These were health professions and related programs, education, psychology, visual and performing arts, and biological and
biomedical sciences. These are the same seven fields in which the largest numbers of bachelor’s degrees were awarded in 2000–01.

Overall, the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded increased by 472,000 degrees from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, reflecting an increase of 38 percent. During this period, the two largest fields of study, business and social sciences, had increases of 39 percent and 38 percent, respectively. Of the 20 major fields of study in which the most bachelor’s degrees were awarded in 2010–11, the largest percentage increase in the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded occurred in the field of parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies (from 17,900 to 35,900 degrees, an increase of more than 100 percent). In contrast, the number of degrees conferred declined in two fields from 2000–01 to 2010–11: Some 1,500 fewer bachelor’s degrees were awarded in education (a decrease of 1 percent), and 1,100 fewer degrees were awarded in computer and information sciences (a decrease of 2 percent).

Graduate Fields of Study

Of the 731,000 master’s degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in academic year 2010–11, over 50 percent were concentrated in two fields: business (26 percent) and education (25 percent). Three other fields each accounted for 5 percent or more of all master’s degrees awarded. These were health professions and related programs, engineering, and public administration and social services. These are the same five fields in which the largest numbers of master’s degrees were awarded in 2000–01.

Overall, the number of master’s degrees awarded increased by 257,000 degrees between academic years 2000–01 and 2010–11, reflecting an increase of 54 percent. During this period, the two largest fields of study, business and education, had increases of 62 percent and 45 percent, respectively. In each of the 20 major fields of study in which the most master’s degrees were awarded in 2010–11, the number of master’s degrees awarded was higher in 2010–11 than in 2000–01. Master’s degrees awarded in the field of homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting exhibited the largest percentage increase of all fields (from 2,500 to 7,400 degrees, a 196 percent increase). The next largest percentage increase was in the field of parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies (from 2,400 to 6,600 degrees, a 178 percent increase). The field of computer and information sciences saw the smallest percentage increase (15 percent) in the number of master’s degrees awarded over this period (from 16,900 to 19,400 degrees).

Almost two-thirds of the 164,000 doctor’s degrees awarded in academic year 2010–11 were awarded in health professions and related programs degrees (37 percent) and legal professions and studies degrees (27 percent). Three other fields each accounted for 4 percent or more of all doctor’s degrees awarded. These were education, engineering, and biological and biomedical sciences. These are the same five fields in which the largest numbers of doctor’s degrees were awarded in 2000–01.

Overall, the number of doctor’s degrees awarded from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11 increased by 44,200 degrees, or 37 percent. During this period, the two largest fields of study, health professions and related programs and legal professions and studies, had increases of 54 percent and 18 percent, respectively. In all of the 20 major fields of study in which the most doctor’s degrees were awarded in
2010–11, the numbers of doctor’s degrees awarded increased from 2000–01 to 2010–11. The field of computer and information sciences had the largest percentage increase (107 percent) in the numbers of doctor’s degrees awarded (from 770 to 1,600 degrees). The field of English language and literature/letters had the smallest percentage increase (1 percent) in the number of doctor’s degrees awarded (about 1,300 degrees in both years).

Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution

The average total cost of attendance in 2011–12 for first-time, full-time students living on campus and paying in-state tuition was $21,000 at public 4-year institutions, $41,420 at private nonprofit 4-year institutions, and $30,840 at private for-profit 4-year institutions.

The total cost of attending a postsecondary institution is the sum of published tuition and required fees, books and supplies, and the weighted average for room, board, and other expenses. In 2011–12, the total cost of attendance differed by institution level and control and by student living arrangements. At 4-year institutions, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time students living on campus and paying in-state tuition was $21,000 at public institutions, $41,420 at private nonprofit institutions, and $30,840 at private for-profit institutions. All averages are weighted by the number of students at the institution receiving Title IV aid including grant aid, work-study aid, and loan aid.

At 2-year institutions, the average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time students living on campus and paying in-state tuition was $12,820 at public institutions, $26,840 at private nonprofit institutions, and $27,710 at private for-profit institutions. Across institution levels and controls, the average total cost of attendance was lowest for students living with family. For example, the average total cost of attendance for students paying in-state tuition at public 2-year institutions and living with family was $8,150, compared with $12,820 for students living on campus and $15,530 for students living off campus but not with family.

Out of these total costs, the cost of room and board differed by institution level and control and by student living arrangements. In 2011–12, the average cost of room and board was higher for students at 4-year institutions than for students at 2-year institutions. For example, the average cost of room and board for students living on campus and paying in-state tuition at public institutions was $8,830 at 4-year institutions, compared with $5,550 at 2-year institutions; the average cost for students living off campus but not with family was $9,260 at 4-year institutions, compared with $7,470 at 2-year institutions. The average cost of room and board was also lower for students paying in-state tuition at public institutions than for students at private nonprofit and private for-profit institutions. For example, the average cost of room and board for students living on campus and paying in-state tuition at 4-year public institutions was $8,830, compared with $9,850 at private nonprofit institutions and $9,530 at private for-profit institutions.

The cost of books and supplies also varied by institution level and control. The average cost of books and supplies ranged from $1,230 for students paying in-state tuition at public 4-year institutions to $1,420 at private for-profit 4-year institutions.
Many students and their families do not pay the full price of attendance because they receive financial aid to help cover their expenses. The primary types of financial aid are grants, which do not have to be repaid, and loans, which must be repaid. Grants, which include scholarships, may be awarded on the basis of financial need, merit, or both and may include tuition aid from employers. In 2010–11, first-time, full-time students who received grants received an average of $9,660 at 4-year institutions and $4,630 at 2-year institutions.

The net price is the estimate of the actual amount of money that students and their families need to pay in a given year to cover educational expenses. Net price is calculated here as the total cost of attendance minus grants. Net price provides an indication of what the actual financial burden is upon students and their families. In 2010–11, first-time, full-time students paid an average net price of $16,820 at 4-year institutions and $9,370 at 2-year institutions.

The average amount of grant aid received and net price paid differed by family income level. In general, the lower the income, the greater the total amount of grant aid received. At public 4-year institutions, the average amount of grant aid received by first-time, full-time students paying in-state tuition was highest for those with incomes of $30,000 or less ($9,530 in 2010–11) and lowest for those with incomes of $110,001 or more ($1,640). Accordingly, the lowest average net price was for those with incomes of $30,000 or less ($8,050), and the highest average net price was for those with incomes of $110,001 or more ($18,730).

At private for-profit 4-year institutions, the same pattern was observed. The average amount of grant aid received by first-time, full-time students was highest for those with family incomes of $30,000 or less ($5,470 in 2010–11) and lowest for those with incomes of $110,001 or more ($1,410). Accordingly, the lowest average net price was for those with incomes of $30,000 or less ($22,280), and the highest average net price was for those with incomes of $110,001 or more ($31,280).

The pattern of average net price increasing with family income was also observed for private nonprofit 4-year institutions. However, the average amount of grant aid received was highest for those with incomes between $30,001 and $48,000 ($19,340 in 2010–11), followed by those with incomes of $30,000 or less ($17,740), those with incomes between $48,001 and $75,000 ($17,590), those with incomes between $75,001 and $110,000 ($15,560), and those with incomes of $110,001 or more ($12,390).

The average amount of grant aid received and average net price of attendance also varied by institution control. Across family income levels, the average amount of grant aid was generally highest for students at private nonprofit institutions and lowest for students at private for-profit institutions; the average net price was highest for students at private for-profit institutions and lowest for students paying in-state tuition at public institutions. For example, the average amount of grant aid received by students with family incomes between $30,001 and $48,000 at private for-profit 4-year institutions was $5,070, compared with $8,810 for students paying in-state tuition at public 4-year institutions; the average net price of attendance was $23,520 for students at this income level attending private for-profit institutions, compared with $9,660 for students paying in-state tuition at public institutions.

Grants and Loan Aid to Undergraduate Students
From academic years 2006–07 to 2010–11, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 4-year degree-granting institutions receiving any financial aid increased from 75 to 85 percent. Grants and loans are the major forms of federal financial aid for degree-seeking undergraduate students.

The largest federal grant program available to undergraduate students is the Pell Grant program. In order to qualify for a Pell Grant, a student must demonstrate financial need. Federal loans, on the other hand, are available to all students. In addition to federal financial aid, there are also grants from state and local governments, institutions, and private sources, as well as private loans.

From academic years 2006–07 to 2010–11, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 4-year degree-granting institutions receiving any financial aid increased from 75 to 85 percent. During this time, the largest percentage increase in first-time, full-time students receiving aid was at private for-profit institutions, from 55 to 90 percent. The percentage of students receiving aid at 4-year public institutions increased from 75 to 83 percent, while the percentage of students at private nonprofit institutions had the smallest increase, from 85 to 89 percent. For 2-year institutions, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving aid increased from 67 percent in 2006–07 to 77 percent in 2010–11. For 2-year institutions, the largest percentage increase in first-time, full-time students receiving aid was at public institutions, from 61 to 74 percent. The percentage of students receiving aid at private nonprofit institutions increased from 83 to 90 percent. For students attending private for-profit institutions, the percentage receiving any financial aid was higher in 2010–11 than in 2006–07 (90 vs. 89 percent).

From academic years 2006–07 to 2010–11, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 4-year degree-granting institutions receiving any financial aid increased from 75 to 85 percent. During this time, the largest percentage increase in first-time, full-time students receiving aid was at private for-profit institutions, from 55 to 90 percent. The percentage of students receiving aid at 4-year public institutions increased from 75 to 83 percent, while the percentage of students at private nonprofit institutions had the smallest increase, from 85 to 89 percent. For 2-year institutions, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving aid increased from 67 percent in 2006–07 to 77 percent in 2010–11. For 2-year institutions, the largest percentage increase in first-time, full-time students receiving aid was at public institutions, from 61 to 74 percent. The percentage of students receiving aid at private nonprofit institutions increased from 83 to 90 percent. For students attending private for-profit institutions, the percentage receiving any financial aid was higher in 2010–11 than in 2006–07 (90 vs. 89 percent).

In 2010–11, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving federal grants at 4-year institutions was highest at private for-profit institutions (73 percent), followed by 39 percent of students at public institutions and 35 percent at private nonprofit institutions. In the same year, the percentage of students at 4-year institutions receiving state or local grants was highest at public institutions (38 percent), followed by 28 percent at private nonprofit institutions and 11 percent at private for-profit institutions.
institutions. The percentage of students receiving institutional grants was highest at 4-year private nonprofit institutions (80 percent), followed by 40 percent at public institutions and 24 percent at private for-profit institutions. The percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 4-year institutions receiving student loan aid was highest at private for-profit institutions (83 percent). In comparison, 64 percent of students at 4-year private nonprofit institutions and 51 percent of students at public institutions received student loan aid.

For 2-year institutions in 2010–11, the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving federal grants was highest at private for-profit institutions (76 percent), compared with 74 percent at private non-profit institutions and 56 percent of students at public institutions. In the same year, 33 percent of students at 2-year public institutions received state or local grants, compared with 27 percent at private nonprofit institutions and 8 percent at private for-profit institutions. About 28 percent of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 2-year private nonprofit institutions received institutional grants, compared with 11 percent at private for-profit institutions and 10 percent at public institutions. The percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 2-year institutions receiving student loan aid was highest at private for-profit institutions (82 percent), compared with 65 percent of students at private nonprofit institutions and 25 percent of students at public institutions.

Average grant amounts are reported in constant 2011–12 dollars. The average institutional grant award for students receiving institutional grants at 4-year institutions was highest at private nonprofit institutions ($14,826), compared with the average institutional grant award for those at public institutions ($4,765) and for those at private for-profit institutions ($2,872). The average federal grant award for students receiving federal grants at 4-year institutions was higher for students attending private nonprofit institutions ($5,248) than for students attending public institutions ($5,134) and for students attending private for-profit institutions ($4,875).

Among 2-year institutions, the average institutional grant award for students receiving institutional grants was highest at private nonprofit institutions ($5,289), compared with the average institutional grant amount awarded to those at public institutions ($1,730) and to those at private for-profit institutions ($902). The average federal grant award for first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving federal grants in 2010–11 was higher for students attending public institutions ($4,691) than for those attending private nonprofit institutions ($4,601) and for those attending private for-profit institutions ($4,478).

Expenses of Postsecondary Institutions
In 2010–11, total expenses were $296 billion (in current dollars) at public postsecondary institutions, $153 billion at private nonprofit institutions, and $23 billion at private for-profit institutions. Some financial data may not be comparable across institutions by control categories because of differences in accounting standards. Comparisons by institutional level (i.e., between 2-year and 4-year institutions) may also be limited because of different institutional missions.

Instruction, including faculty salaries and benefits, is the largest expense category at public and private nonprofit postsecondary institutions and the second largest category at private for-profit institutions. In 2010–11, the percentage of total expenses spent on instruction was 27 percent at public institutions and 33 percent at private nonprofit institutions. At private for-profit institutions, instruction constituted 25 percent of total expenses; but student services, academic support, and institutional support, which
includes expenses associated with admissions, student activities, libraries, and administrative and executive activities, was the largest category, at 66 percent. At public and private nonprofit institutions, expenses on student services, academic support, and institutional support are available as separate categories.

Combined expenses on student services, academic support, and institutional support made up 19 percent of total expenses at public institutions and 30 percent at private nonprofit institutions. Other relatively large categories at public institutions (i.e., those accounting for 8–10 percent of expenses) were research, hospitals, and institutional support. At private nonprofit institutions, some of the other large categories (i.e., those accounting for 8–13 percent of expenses) were institutional support, research, auxiliary enterprises (i.e., self-supporting operations, such as residence halls), hospitals, academic support, and student services.

In 2010–11, across all levels of postsecondary institutional control, 2-year institutions spent a greater share of their total expenses on instruction than 4-year institutions did. The percentage of total expenses at public institutions for instruction was 35 percent at 2-year institutions, compared with 25 percent at 4-year institutions. At private nonprofit institutions, instruction accounted for 34 percent of total expenses at 2-year institutions and 33 percent at 4-year institutions; at private for-profit institutions, the percentage of total expenses on instruction at 2-year and 4-year institutions were 32 and 23 percent, respectively.

In 2010–11, total expenses per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student were much higher at private nonprofit postsecondary institutions ($47,779) than at public institutions ($27,656) and private for-profit institutions ($14,111). Expenses per FTE student are reported in constant 2011–12 dollars, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Private nonprofit institutions spent more than twice as much per student on instruction ($15,568) as public institutions did ($7,413). A similar pattern was found for most other expense classifications, such as student services, academic support, and institutional support (a total of $14,437 for private nonprofit institutions vs. $5,302 for public institutions). Expenses per FTE student for public service, such as expenses for public broadcasting and community services, were an exception to this pattern, with public institutions spending more than private nonprofit institutions ($1,108 vs. $706). Expenses per student for instruction were more than twice as high at public institutions as at private for-profit institutions ($7,413 vs. $3,534), but expenses per student for student services, academic support, and institutional support were higher at private for-profit institutions ($9,279) than at public institutions ($5,302).

Expenses per FTE student for instruction have shown varying patterns of change between 2005–06 and 2010–11 at the different postsecondary institution types, after adjusting for inflation. At public 4-year institutions, instruction expenses per FTE student were less than 1 percent lower in 2010–11 than they were in 2005–06, and these expenses were 10 percent lower at public 2-year institutions. At private nonprofit institutions, instruction expenses per FTE increased by 3 percent at 4-year institutions but decreased by 22 percent at 2-year institutions. At private for-profit institutions, expenses per FTE student for instruction in 2010–11 were higher than they were in 2005–06 for both 4-year and 2-year institutions (11 and 4 percent higher, respectively).

Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty
In fall 2011, there were 1.5 million faculty in degree-granting institutions—approximately half were full time and half were part time. Full-time faculty include professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, assisting professors, adjunct professors, or interim professors (or the equivalent). From fall 1991 to fall 2011, the number of faculty in degree-granting institutions increased by 84 percent. The number of full-time faculty in degree-granting institutions increased by 42 percent from fall 1991 to fall 2011, compared with an increase of 162 percent in the number of part-time faculty. As a result of the faster increase in the number of part-time faculty, the percentage of faculty who were part time increased from 35 percent to 50 percent during this period. Additionally, the percentage of all faculty who were female increased from 36 percent in 1991 to 48 percent in 2011.

The number of faculty increased at institutions of each control type during this period; the percentage increases in faculty were smaller for public and private nonprofit institutions than for private for-profit institutions. From fall 1991 to fall 2011, the number of faculty increased by 64 percent at public institutions, by 83 percent at private nonprofit institutions, and by almost 1,400 percent at private for-profit institutions. Despite the faster growth in the number of faculty at private for-profit institutions over this period, approximately 9 percent of all faculty were employed by private for-profit institutions in fall 2011, while 63 percent were employed by public institutions and 28 percent by private nonprofit institutions.

In 2011, of those full-time faculty whose race/ethnicity was known, 79 percent were White (44 percent were White males and 35 percent were White females), 6 percent were Black, 4 percent were Hispanic, 9 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander, and less than 1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native or two or more races. Among full-time professors, 84 percent were White (60 percent were White males and 25 percent were White females), 4 percent were Black, 3 percent were Hispanic, 8 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander, and less than 1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native.

In academic year 2011–12, the average salary for full-time instructional faculty on 9- and 10-month contracts at degree-granting institutions was $76,600; average salaries ranged from $53,400 for lecturers to $107,100 for professors. The average salary (adjusted for inflation) for all full-time instructional faculty on 9- and 10-month contracts increased by 9 percent from 1991–92 to 2009–10, but decreased by 2 percent from 2009–10 to 2011–12. Average salaries for specific academic ranks also increased between 1991–92 and 2009–10: Average salary increases were 15 percent for professors, 10 percent for associate professors, 11 percent for assistant professors, 19 percent for instructors, and 9 percent for lecturers. From 2009–10 to 2011–12, however, average salaries across academic ranks decreased: the decreases ranged from 2 percent to 4 percent.

*The average salary for all full-time instructional faculty was higher for males than for females in all years for which data were available. In academic year 2011–12, the average salary was 21 percent higher for males than for females ($83,200 versus $68,500 in current dollars). Between 1991–92 and 2011–12, the average salary increased by 8 percent for males and by 11 percent for females, after adjusting for inflation. Due to the faster increase in salary for females, the salary gap between male and female instructional faculty overall decreased from $15,300 in 1991–92 to $14,700 in 2011–12. However, the gender gap in salary for professors increased from $11,300 to $16,200 during this period.*
In academic year 2011–12, the average salary for full-time instructional faculty at private nonprofit institutions ($83,800) was higher than for instructional faculty at public institutions ($73,500) or private for-profit institutions ($54,400). Among the specific institutional types, average instructional faculty salaries were highest at private nonprofit doctoral institutions ($96,100) and public doctoral institutions ($82,500).

The average salaries were lowest for instructional faculty at private nonprofit 2-year institutions ($49,000) and private for-profit institutions ($54,400). From 1999–2000 to 2011–12, average instructional faculty salaries decreased by 1 percent at public institutions, but increased by 7 percent at private nonprofit institutions and by 37 percent at private for-profit institutions, after adjusting for inflation.

In academic year 2011–12, approximately 45 percent of institutions had tenure systems. The percentage of institutions with tenure systems ranged from 1 percent at private for-profit institutions to almost 100 percent at public doctoral institutions. Of those faculty at institutions with tenure systems, 49 percent of full-time faculty had tenure in 2011–12, compared with 54 percent in 1999–2000. From 1999–2000 to 2011–12, the percentage of full-time faculty having tenure decreased 5 percentage points at public institutions, 4 percentage points at private nonprofit institutions, and 46 percentage points at private for-profit institutions. At institutions with tenure systems, the percentage of full-time faculty having tenure was generally higher for males than for females. In 2011–12, some 54 percent of males had tenure, compared with 41 percent of females.

**Institutional Retention and Graduation Rates for Undergraduate Students**

The 2011 graduation rate for full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a bachelor’s degree at a 4-year degree-granting institution in fall 2005 was 59 percent. That is, 59 percent of full-time, first-time students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2005 completed the degree at that institution within 6 years. Graduation rates are calculated to meet requirements of the 1990 Student Right to Know Act, which directed postsecondary institutions to report the percentage of students that complete their program within 150 percent of the normal time for completion (that is, within 6 years for students pursuing a bachelor’s degree). Students who transfer and complete a degree at another institution are not included as completers in these rates.

Among full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree at a 4-year degree-granting institution in fall 2005, the 6-year graduation rate was 57 percent at public institutions, 65 percent at private nonprofit institutions, and 42 percent at private for-profit institutions. This graduation rate was 56 percent for males and 61 percent for females; it was higher for females than for males at both public (59 percent vs. 54 percent) and private nonprofit institutions (67 percent vs. 62 percent). At private for-profit institutions, however, males had a higher graduation rate than females; the rate was 48 percent for males and 36 percent for females.

At 2-year degree-granting institutions, 31 percent of full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a certificate or associate’s degree in fall 2008 attained it within 150 percent of the normal time required to do so. For example, this measure refers to students who were seeking a 2-year associate’s degree and completed the degree within 3 years. This graduation rate was 20 percent at public 2-year institutions, 51 percent at private nonprofit 2-year institutions, and 62 percent at private for-profit 2-year institutions. At 2-year institutions overall, as well as at each type of 2-year institution, the completion rate was higher for females than for males. At 2-year private for-profit institutions, for
example, 63 percent of females versus 59 percent of males completed a certificate or associate’s degree within 150 percent of the normal time required.

**Differences in 6-year graduation rates** for full-time, first-time students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree in fall 2005 varied according to institutions’ level of selectivity. In particular, graduation rates were highest at postsecondary degree-granting institutions that were the most selective (i.e., had the lowest admissions acceptance rates). For example, at 4-year institutions with open admissions policies, 31 percent of students completed a bachelor’s degree within 6 years. At 4-year institutions where the acceptance rate was less than 25 percent of applicants, the 6-year graduation rate was 88 percent.

**In terms of student retention,** among full-time, first-time students who enrolled in a postsecondary degree-granting institution in 2010, about 79 percent returned to 4-year institutions and 60 percent to 2-year institutions in the following fall. At public 4-year institutions, the retention rate was 79 percent, with a range of 62 percent at the least selective institutions (those with open admissions) to 95 percent at the most selective institutions (those where less than 25 percent of students are accepted). Retention rates for private nonprofit 4-year institutions followed a similar pattern: the overall retention rate was 80 percent, ranging from 63 percent at the least selective institutions to 96 percent at the most selective. The retention rate at private for-profit institutions was 54 percent; it differed little (2 percent or less) in terms of institution selectivity level. At 2-year institutions overall, the retention rate was 60 percent. The retention rate for 2-year institutions was highest at private for-profit institutions (67 percent), followed by private nonprofit institutions (61 percent) and public institutions (59 percent).

**Degrees Conferred by Public and Private Institutions**
*From academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, the number of postsecondary degrees conferred by private for-profit institutions increased by a larger percentage than the number conferred by public institutions and private nonprofit institutions; this was true for all levels of degrees.*

From academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, the number of postsecondary degrees conferred by public, private for-profit, and private nonprofit institutions increased for each level of degree. For all Title IV institutions, the total number of certificates awarded increased by 86 percent, associate’s degrees increased by 63 percent, bachelor’s degrees increased by 38 percent, master’s degrees increased by 54 percent, and doctor’s degrees increased by 37 percent. For all postsecondary degree levels, the percentage increases from 2000–01 to 2010–11 were smaller for public and private nonprofit institutions than for private for-profit institutions.

From academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, the number of certificates awarded by public institutions increased by 68 percent (from 310,000 to 520,000 certificates), by 24 percent for private nonprofit institutions (from 29,300 to 36,500 certificates), and by 122 percent for private for-profit institutions (from 214,000 to 473,000 certificates). As a result of these changes, the share of all certificates awarded by private for-profit institutions increased from 39 percent in academic year 2000–01 to 46 percent in 2010–11 while the share conferred by public and private nonprofit institutions decreased during this period (from 56 to 50 percent and from 5 to 4 percent, respectively).

**The number of associate’s degrees** awarded from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11 increased by 53 percent for public institutions (from 456,000 to 697,000 degrees), by 14 percent for private nonprofit institutions (from 45,700 to 52,000 degrees), and by 152 percent for private for-profit institutions (from
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76,700 to 194,000 degrees). Due to these changes, the share of all associate’s degrees conferred by private for-profit institutions increased from 13 percent in 2000–01 to 21 percent in 2010–11, while the share conferred by public and private nonprofit institutions decreased during this period (from 79 to 74 percent and from 8 to 6 percent, respectively).

From academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded by public institutions increased by 34 percent (from 812,000 to 1.1 million degrees), the number awarded by private nonprofit institutions increased by 26 percent (from 409,000 to 513,000 degrees), and the number awarded by private for-profit institutions increased by 397 percent (from 23,000 to 115,000 degrees). Despite the gain made by private for-profit institutions, they awarded 7 percent of all bachelor’s degrees conferred in 2010–11, while public institutions awarded 63 percent and private nonprofit institutions awarded 30 percent.

The number of master’s degrees awarded by public institutions increased 38 percent (from 246,000 to 339,000 degrees) from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, yet the percentage of all master’s degrees conferred by these institutions declined from 52 to 46 percent. The number of master’s degrees conferred by private nonprofit institutions increased 45 percent (from 216,000 to 313,000 degrees) from 2000–01 to 2010–11, resulting in a decrease in their share of all master’s degrees (from 46 to 43 percent). In contrast, the number of master’s degrees conferred by private for-profit institutions increased by 572 percent (from 11,600 to 78,200 degrees) from 2000–01 to 2010–11, resulting in an increase in their share of total master’s degrees conferred. The percentage of all master’s degrees conferred by private for-profit colleges increased from 2 percent to 11 percent between 2000–01 and 2010–11.

From academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, the number of doctor’s degrees conferred increased by 35 percent at public institutions (from 60,800 to 81,900 degrees), by 33 percent at private nonprofit institutions (from 57,700 to 76,600 degrees), and by 400 percent at private for-profit institutions (from 1,000 to 5,200 degrees). In 2010–11, public institutions awarded 50 percent of all doctor’s degrees, private nonprofit institutions awarded 47 percent, and private for-profit institutions awarded 3 percent.