

Section 3

Student Effort and Educational Progress





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This List of Indicators includes all the indicators in Section 3 that appear on *The Condition of Education* website (<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe>), drawn from the 2000–2007 print volumes. The list is organized by subject area. The indicator numbers and the years in which the indicators were published are not necessarily sequential.

Introduction: Student Effort and Educational Progress

The indicators in this section of *The Condition of Education* report on the progress students make through the education system. There are 23 indicators in this section: 8, prepared for this year's volume, appear on the following pages, and all 23, including selected indicators from previous volumes, appear on the Web (see Website Contents on the facing page for a full list of the indicators). Particular attention is paid to how various subgroups in the population proceed through school and attain different levels of education and what factors are associated with their success along the way.

The first two subsections consider students' academic aspirations and effort. The indicators include student measures of time spent on homework, preparedness for academic activities, postsecondary expectations, and patterns of school attendance.

The third subsection traces the progress of students through elementary and secondary education to graduation from high school or some alternate form of completion. Measures include the percentage of students who leave high school (drop out) before completion and the percentage who graduate high school on time, in 4 years. Dropouts are measured by event rates (the percentage of students in an age range who leave school in a given year) and status rates (the percentage of students in an age range who are not enrolled in school and who have not completed high school). Indicators on the following pages show the status dropout rate by race/ethnicity and characteristics of students in the spring of their sophomore year in 2002 who had dropped out 2 years later. In

addition, the averaged freshman graduation rate estimates the on-time graduation rate for each state.

The fourth subsection examines the transition to college. An important measure is the percentage of students who make the transition to college within 1 year of completing high school. An indicator on the website compares the rate of first-time enrollment in postsecondary education in the United States with the rates in other countries.

The fifth subsection concerns the percentage of students who enter postsecondary education who complete a credential and how much time they take to do so. This subsection also includes relationships between the qualifications and characteristics of students who enter postsecondary education and their success in completing a credential.

An overall measure of the progress of the population through the education system is attainment, which is the highest level of education completed by a certain age. *The Condition of Education* annually examines the level of attainment by those ages 24–29. Other indicators examine factors related to the level of attainment and the number of undergraduate and graduate degrees earned over time by particular cohorts of students and by race/ethnicity.

The indicators on student effort and educational progress from previous editions of *The Condition of Education*, which are not included in this volume, are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/list/i3.asp>.

Student Attitudes and Aspirations

Time Spent on Homework

Between 1980 and 2002, the percentage of sophomores spending more than 10 hours per week on homework increased from 7 to 37 percent.

Homework are tasks given to students by teachers as a means to review, practice, and learn material outside of the classroom. This indicator examines 1980 and 2002 high school sophomores' reports of how much time they spend on homework per week. In 1980 and 2002, high school sophomores were asked, "What is the average time per week you spend on homework?"¹

Between 1980 and 2002, the average amount of time per week that sophomores reported spending on homework increased (see supplemental table 21-1). During this period, the percentage of sophomores who reported spending less than 1 hour per week on homework declined from 17 to 2 percent. At the same time, the percentage who reported spending less than 5 hours per week on homework decreased from 71 to 37 percent. These declines were accompanied by an increase in the percentage of sophomores who reported spending between 5 and 10 hours per week on homework (from 22 to 26 percent) and a fivefold increase in the percentage who

reported spending more than 10 hours per week on homework (from 7 to 37 percent).

This general increase between 1980 and 2002 in the number of hours sophomores reported spending on homework was apparent for both males and females. The percentage of males who reported spending more than 10 hours per week on homework increased from 6 to 33 percent. For females, this percentage increased from 8 to 41 percent.

Among the 1980 and 2002 sophomores, females generally reported spending more time on homework than males. For example, 41 percent of females in 2002 compared with 33 percent of males reported spending more than 10 hours per week on homework. That same year, 19 percent of females compared with 26 percent of males reported spending 3 hours or less per week on homework. No measurable differences were detected by sex in the percentage who reported spending between 3 to 10 hours per week on homework.

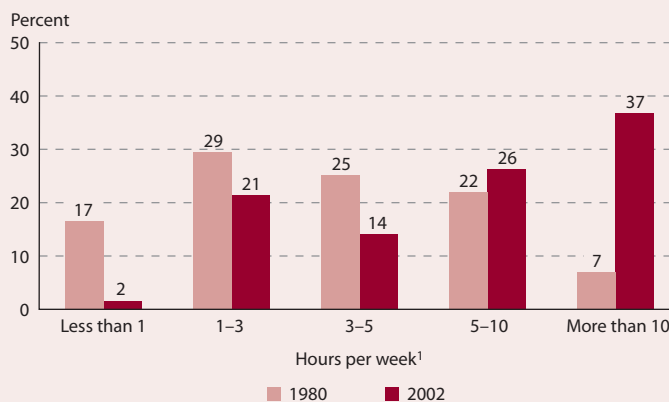
¹ Caution must be used when interpreting the estimates reported here because the survey method used to ask about time spent on homework per week differed in 1980 and 2002. The 1980 survey asked about "homework" without differentiating between homework completed in school and out of school; it also used the categories reported here as predefined response categories. The 2002 survey asked students to report both in-school and out-of-school homework and used an open-ended response format. The 2002 responses were then grouped into the 1980 response categories.

SOURCE: Cahalan, M., Ingels, S., Burns, L., Planty, M., and Daniel, B. (2006). *United States High School Sophomores: A Twenty-Two Year Comparison, 1980–2002* (NCES 2006-327), data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&B-So:80) and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002, Base Year (ELS:2002).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Note 3
Supplemental Table 21-1



HOMEWORK: Percentage of 10th-graders reporting time spent on homework, by hours spent on homework per week: 1980 and 2002



Student Attitudes and Aspirations

Student Preparedness

In 2002, a quarter of 10th-graders reported that they “usually” or “often” came to school without their homework.

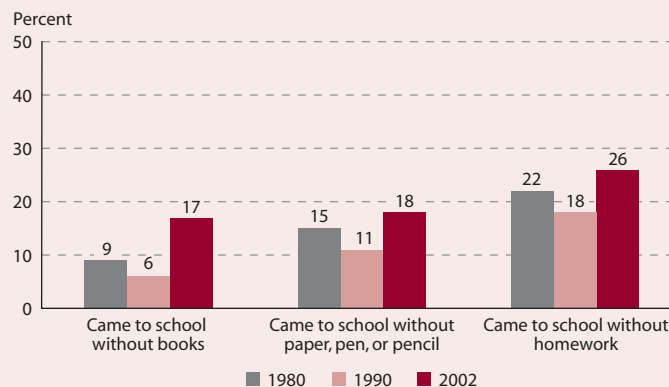
Student academic preparedness is a demonstration of the extent to which students are actively engaged in education and is crucial to the learning process (Newmann 1992; Ryan and Deci 2000; Pintrich 2003). This indicator examines student preparedness by looking at high school students’ reports of how often they came to school without books; without paper, pen, or pencil; and without their homework. For each of these three measures, the percentage of students who reported being chronically unprepared for school (i.e., “usually” or “often”) was larger in 2002 than in 1980. However, percentages were lower in 1990 than in 1980 or 2002. For example, the percentage who reported coming to school usually or often without their homework in 2002 was 26 percent, compared with 22 percent in 1980 and 18 percent in 1990. The percentage who reported coming to school usually or often without paper, pen, or pencil or without their books followed a similar pattern.

Across all three years, males reported coming to school unprepared more often than females. For example, in 2002, about 30 percent of males came to school usually or often without their homework, compared with 21 percent of females. Similar patterns held for the two other measures.

Across all three years, students in the lowest test score quarter reported coming to school unprepared more often than students in the highest test score quarter. In 2002, about 38 percent of students with the lowest test scores came to school usually or often without their homework, compared with 18 percent of students with the highest test scores.

SOURCE: Cahalan, M., Ingels, S., Burns, L., Planty, M., and Daniel, B. (2006). *United States High School Sophomores: A Twenty-Two Year Comparison, 1980–2002* (NCES 2006-327), data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&B-So:80); National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/90), “First Follow-up, 1990”; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002, Base Year (ELS:2002).

EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS: Percentage of 10th-graders who usually or often came to school unprepared without school books, supplies, or homework, by selected student characteristics: 1980, 1990, and 2002



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
 Supplemental Note 3
 Supplemental Table 22-1
 Newmann 1992
 Ryan and Deci 2000
 Pintrich 2003

Elementary/Secondary Persistence and Progress

Status Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Status dropout rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics ages 16–24 have each generally declined since 1972, but in 2005, status dropout rates for Whites remained lower than rates for Hispanics and Blacks.

High school dropouts are more likely than high school completers to be unemployed and earn less when they are employed (U.S. Department of Commerce 2006, tables 261 and 686). In addition, among adults age 25 or older, regardless of income, dropouts reported worse health than high school completers (Pleis and Lethbridge-Çejku 2006, table 21).

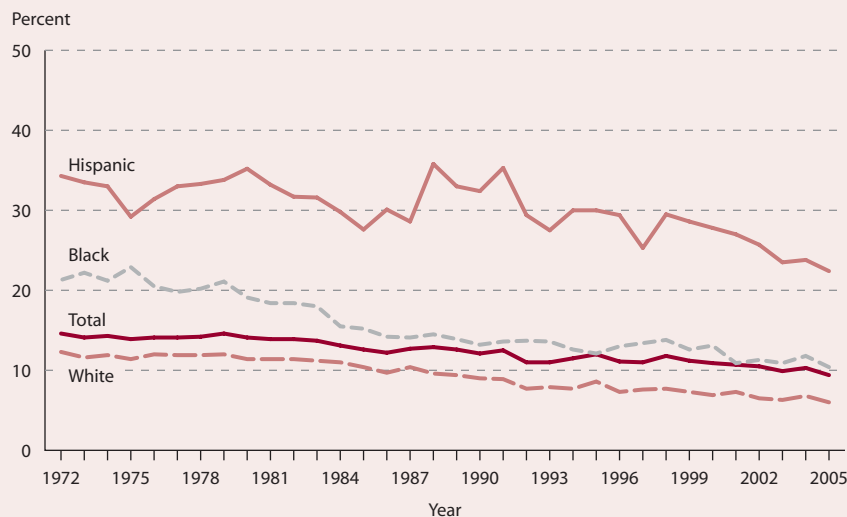
The *status dropout rate* represents the percentage of an age group that is not enrolled in school and has not earned a high school credential (i.e., diploma or equivalent, such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). For this indicator, status dropout rates are reported for 16- through 24-year-olds. The status dropout rate for this age group declined from 15 percent in 1972 to 9 percent in 2005 (see supplemental table 23-1). A decline was also seen between 2000 and 2005, the more recent years of this time span (11 vs. 9 percent).

Status dropout rates and changes in these rates over time differ by race/ethnicity. The status dropout rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics each generally declined between 1972 and 2005. However, for each year between 1972 and 2005,

the status dropout rate was lowest for Whites and highest for Hispanics. Although the gaps between the rates of Blacks and Whites and Hispanics and Whites have decreased, the patterns have not been consistent. The Black-White gap narrowed during the 1980s, with no measurable change during the 1970s or between 1990 and 2005. In contrast, the Hispanic-White gap narrowed between 1990 and 2005, with no measurable change in the gap during the 1970s and 1980s.

In 2005, Hispanics who were born outside of the United States¹ represented 7 percent of the 16- through 24-year-old population and 27 percent of all status dropouts in this age group (see supplemental table 23-2). Higher dropout rates among these Hispanic immigrants partially account for the persistently high dropout rates for all Hispanic young adults. Among Hispanic 16- through 24-year-olds who were born outside the United States, the status dropout rate was 36 percent in 2005—more than double the rates for Hispanics in this age group who were born in the United States (14 and 12 percent, respectively). Nevertheless, Hispanics born in the United States were more likely to be status dropouts than their non-Hispanic counterparts.

STATUS DROPOUTS: Dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: October 1972–2005



¹The United States refers to the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

NOTE: The *status dropout rate* discussed in this indicator is one of a number of rates reporting on high school dropout and completion behavior in the United States. See *supplemental note 7* for more information about the rate reported here. Total includes other race/ethnicity categories not separately shown. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Some estimates are revised from previous publications.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supplemental Notes 1,2,7

Supplemental Tables 23-1, 23-2

U.S. Department of Commerce 2006

Pleis and Lethbridge-Çejku 2006



Elementary/Secondary Persistence and Progress

Public High School Graduation Rates by State

About three-quarters of the freshman class graduated from high school on time with a regular diploma in 2003–04.

This indicator examines the percentage of public high school students who graduate on time with a regular diploma. To do so, it uses the *averaged freshman graduation rate*—an estimate of the percentage of an incoming freshman class that graduates 4 years later. The averaged freshman enrollment count is the sum of the number of 8th-graders 5 years earlier, the number of 9th-graders 4 years earlier (because this is when current year seniors were freshmen), and the number of 10th-graders 3 years earlier, divided by 3. The intent of this averaging is to account for the high rate of grade retention in the freshman year, which adds 9th-grade repeaters from the previous year to the number of students in the incoming freshman class each year.

Among public high school students in the class of 2003–04, the averaged freshman graduation rate was 75.0 percent in the 48 reporting states and the District of Columbia (see supplemental table 24-1). New York and Wisconsin did not report 2003–04 graduation counts. Among the states that reported 2003–04 graduation

counts, Nebraska had the highest averaged freshman graduation rate at 87.6 percent; Nevada had the lowest rate at 57.4 percent.

In order to compare across years, the number of graduates for the two states that did not report in 2003–04 was estimated.¹ When these estimates are included with the reported 2003–04 data, the estimated rate for the nation was 74.3 percent. Using these estimates, the overall averaged freshman graduation rate among public school students increased from 71.7 percent for the class of 2000–01 to 74.3 percent for the class of 2003–04. Between these years, there was an increase in the graduation rate in 44 states and the District of Columbia; 9 states (Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Washington) and the District of Columbia had an increase of greater than 5 percentage points. The graduation rate decreased in 5 states [Alaska, Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, and New York (2002–03 data)], with Arizona and Nevada experiencing declines of greater than 5 percentage points.

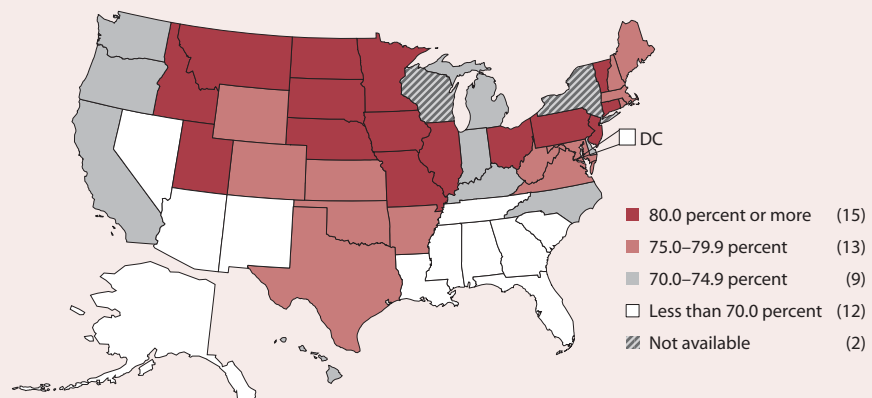
¹ In order to compare across years, the number of graduates in New York and Wisconsin was imputed. To impute the number of graduates in these states in 2003–04, the 2002–03 averaged freshman graduation rates for Wisconsin and New York were applied to the average of the grade specific enrollment data in the state for grade 8 in 1999–2000, grade 9 in 2000–01, and grade 10 in 2001–02. This approach yielded estimates of 142,526 and 62,784 regular diploma recipients in 2003–04 in New York and Wisconsin, respectively. Thus, assuming no change in the graduation rates in these two states, the estimated count of graduates for the nation was 2,753,438, and the corresponding averaged number of public school freshmen was 3,704,001.

SOURCE: Laird, J., DeBell, M., and Chapman, C. (2006). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2004* (NCES 2007-024), table 12, and Laird, J., Lew, S., DeBell, M., and Chapman, C. (2006). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2002 and 2003* (NCES 2006-062), tables 12-A and 12-B, data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Non-Fiscal Data Files," 1997–2005.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 3,7
Supplemental Table 24-1
NCES 2006-604
NCES 2006-605

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION: Averaged freshman graduation rate for public high school students, by state: School year 2003–04



Transition to College

Immediate Transition to College

The rate of college enrollment immediately after high school increased from 49 percent in 1972 to 69 percent in 2005.

The percentage of high school completers¹ who enroll in college in the fall immediately after high school reflects the accessibility and perceived value of college education. The immediate college (2- or 4-year) enrollment rate for all high school completers ages 16–24 increased between 1972 and 1997 from 49 to 67 percent. Then, the enrollment rate declined to 62 percent by 2001, before rising to 69 percent in 2005 (see supplemental table 25-1).

Between 1972 and 1980, approximately half of White high school completers immediately enrolled in college. This immediate enrollment rate increased from the late 1970s through 1998 to 69 percent, but decreased to 64 percent by 2001 before increasing again to an all-time high of 73 percent in 2005. The annual Black immediate enrollment rate fluctuated between 1972 and 1977, but then decreased between 1978 and 1982, widening the gap between Blacks and Whites. The rate for Blacks then increased generally between 1983 and 2005, so that the gap narrowed between Blacks and Whites between 1999 and 2001. However, the gap has widened again since 2002. For Hispanics, the immediate college enrollment rate fluctuated over time, but increased overall between 1972 and 2005;

nonetheless, the gap between Hispanics and Whites widened between 1979 and 1998, and then again between 2002 and 2005.

From 1972 to 2005, the immediate enrollment rate of high school completers increased faster for females than for males (see supplemental table 25-2). Much of the growth in the overall rate for females was due to increases between 1981 and 1997 in the rate of attending 4-year institutions. During this period, the rate at which females enrolled at 4-year institutions increased faster than it did for their male counterparts and for either males or females at 2-year institutions.

Differences in immediate enrollment rates by family income and parents' education have persisted. In each year between 1972 and 2005, the immediate college enrollment rate was higher for high school completers from high-income families than for their low-income peers (see supplemental table 25-1).² Likewise, compared with completers whose parents had a bachelor's or higher degree, those whose parents had less education had lower rates of immediate college enrollment in each year between 1992 and 2005 (see supplemental table 25-3).³

¹ Refers to those who completed 12 years of school for survey years 1972–1991 and to those who earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (e.g., a General Educational Development [GED] certificate) for all years since 1992. See supplemental note 2 for more information.

² Low income refers to the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes, high income refers to the top 20 percent of all family incomes, and middle income refers to the 60 percent in between. See supplemental note 2 for further information.

³ The earliest year with comparable data available for parents' educational attainment is 1992.

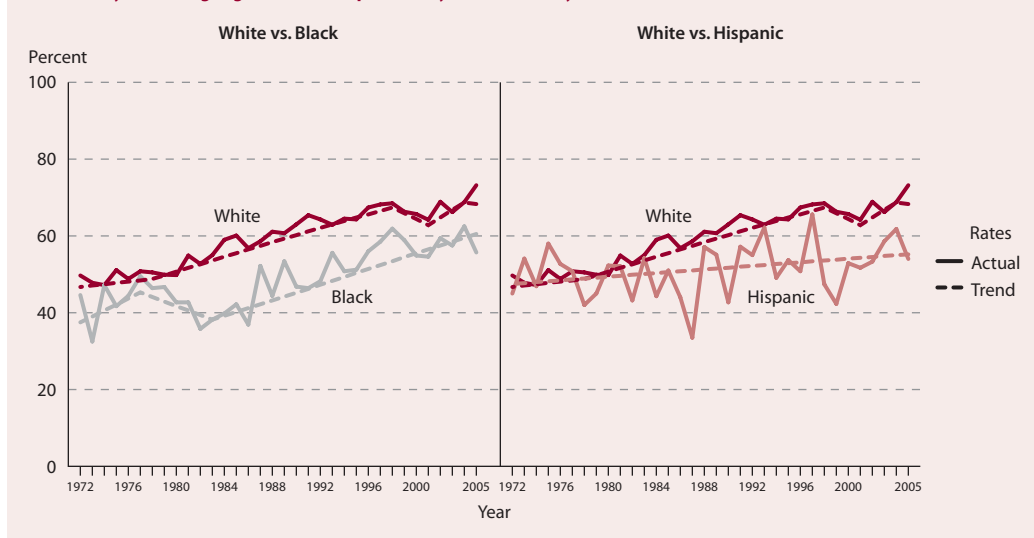
NOTE: Includes those ages 16–24 completing high school in a given year. Actual rates are annual estimates; trend rates show the splined linear trend of these annual values over the period shown. Trend rates were obtained through splined regression that determines breakpoints (for years) empirically by searching for statistically significant linear adjustment knots from all possible knots. The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions used to obtain educational attainment were changed in 1992. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. See supplemental note 2 for further information. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. The erratic nature of the Hispanic rate reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanic high school completers.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2005.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 1,2
Supplemental Tables 25-1,
25-2, 25-3



COLLEGE ENROLLMENT RATES: Actual and trend rates of high school completers who were enrolled in college the October immediately following high school completion, by race/ethnicity: 1972–2005



Completions

Degrees Earned

Minority students have accounted for about half of the growth in the number of associate's and bachelor's degrees and 73 percent of the growth in first-professional degrees earned since 1976–77, while nonresident aliens have accounted for the majority of growth in doctoral degrees.

Between 1976–77 and 2004–05, enrollments in postsecondary degree-granting institutions increased by 57 percent (NCES 2006-030, table 3). This growth in enrollment has been accompanied by increases in the number of degrees earned, with the number of associate's degrees increasing by 72 percent, bachelor's degrees by 57 percent, master's degrees by 81 percent, first-professional degrees by 36 percent, and doctoral degrees by 59 percent (see supplemental table 26-1). For example, the annual number of bachelor's degrees earned increased from 918,000 in 1976–77 to 1,439,000 in 2004–05.

During this period, minority students accounted for roughly half of the increase in the number of associate's and bachelor's degrees earned (see supplemental tables 26-2 and 26-3). For example, while the number of bachelor's degrees earned by Whites increased 241,000 (from 808,000 to 1,049,000), the number of bachelor's degrees earned by minority students increased 250,000 (from 95,000 to 345,000). Minority students accounted for 34 percent of the increase in the number of master's degrees, 73 percent of the increase in the number of first-professional degrees, and 28 percent of the increase in the number of doctoral degrees earned (see supple-

mental tables 26-4, 26-5, and 26-6). Nonresident aliens (foreign students) accounted for 22 percent of the increase in the number of master's degrees earned and 54 percent of the increase in doctoral degrees earned. As a result, the ratio of doctoral degrees earned by nonresident aliens to doctoral degrees earned by White and minority students in 2004–05 was 1 to 3, whereas it was 1 to 8 in 1976–77.

Among minority students, Asian/Pacific Islander students experienced the greatest rates of growth in the number of degrees earned during this period. The number of first-professional degrees earned by Asian/Pacific Islander students grew by 930 percent, bachelor's degrees by 600 percent, master's degrees by 540 percent, associate's degrees by 380 percent, and doctoral degrees by 340 percent.

White students experienced slower growth in the number of degrees earned than minority or nonresident alien students over this period: among Whites, the number of associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees earned grew between 30 and 43 percent, while the number of doctoral degrees earned grew by 13 percent. Despite slower growth, however, White students still earned the majority of all degrees conferred every year.

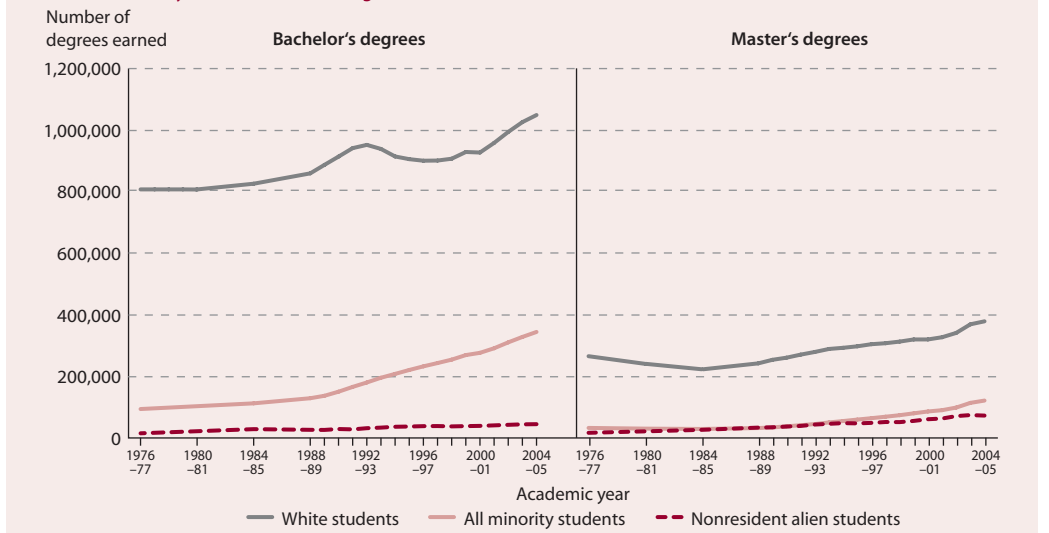
NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1976–77 through 1984–85 Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), "Degrees and Other Formal Awards Conferred" surveys; and 1988–89 through 2004–05 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:89–99), and Fall 2000 through Fall 2005.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 3, 10
Supplemental Tables 26-1, 26-2, 26-3, 26-4, 26-5, 26-6

DEGREES CONFERRED: Number of bachelor's and master's degrees earned by White, minority, and nonresident alien students: Selected years, 1976–77 through 2004–05



Completions

Educational Attainment

In 2006, some 86 percent of 25- to 29-year-olds had received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. This rate has remained between 85 and 88 percent over the last 30 years.

In 2006, some 86 percent of all 25- to 29-year-olds had received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (see supplemental table 27-1). Although this percentage increased 7 percentage points between 1971 and 1976, the high school completion rate has remained between 85 and 88 percent over the last 30 years.

In 1971, a lower percentage of Blacks than Whites completed high school (59 vs. 82 percent). Although the gap between Blacks and Whites decreased 15 percentage points between 1971 and 1982, the gap has been between 4 and 10 percentage points since 1982. In 2006, the high school completion rate for Blacks was still below that of Whites (86 vs. 93 percent). The high school completion rate for Hispanics increased between 1971 and 2006 (48 vs. 63 percent). Unlike the gap between Blacks and Whites, the gap between Hispanics and Whites did not change measurably between 1971 and 2006.

The rate at which 25- to 29-year-olds completed at least some college education increased from 34 to 58 percent between 1971 and 2006 (see supplemental table 27-2). However, increases in the rate

were not consistent throughout the entire period. The rate increased during the 1970s, leveled off during the 1980s, and increased in the early and mid-1990s. Since the mid-1990s, the rate has leveled off again. For each racial/ethnic group, the percentage completing at least some college was higher in 2006 than in 1971. However, the rate of increase was less for Hispanics than for Whites or Blacks. In 2006, about 66 percent of White 25- to 29-year-olds had completed at least some college, compared with 50 percent of their Black peers and 32 percent of their Hispanic peers.

In most years, the rate for completing a bachelor's degree or higher was roughly half the rate for completing at least some college. Between 1971 and 1996, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 17 to 27 percent (see supplemental table 27-3). Although this represents an increase of 10 percentage points, the rate has remained between 27 and 29 percent since 1996. While the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds with a bachelor's degree or higher increased for all three racial/ethnic groups, the gaps between Whites and their Black and Hispanic peers widened during this period.

¹ Included in the totals but not shown separately are estimates for those from other racial/ethnic categories.

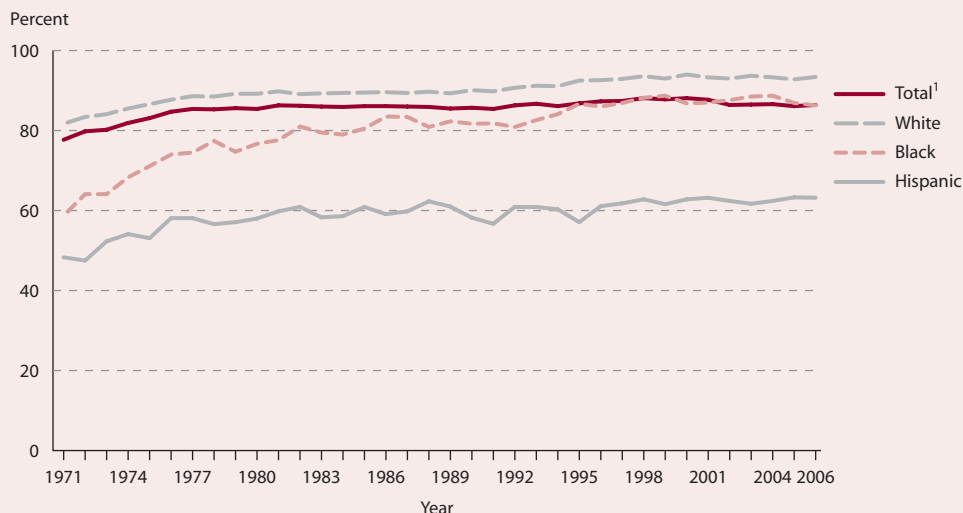
NOTE: Prior to 1992, *high school completers* referred to those who completed 12 years of schooling, and *some college* meant completing 1 or more years of college; beginning in 1992, high school completers referred to those who received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, and *some college* meant completing any college at all. In 1994, the survey instrument for the Current Population Survey (CPS) was changed and weights were adjusted. See *supplemental note 2* for further discussion. Some estimates are revised from previous publications. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), March and Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 1971–2006.

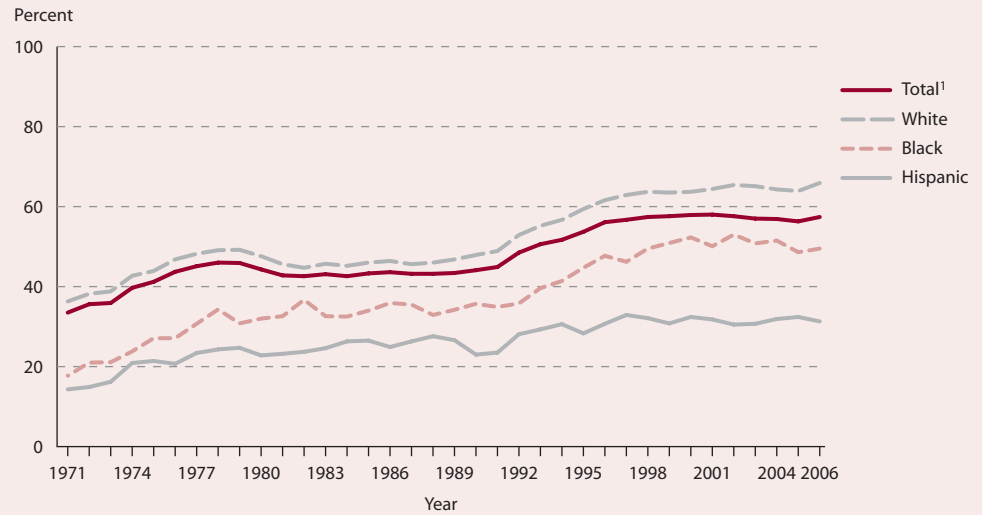
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 1,2,7
Supplemental Tables 27-1,
27-2,27-3



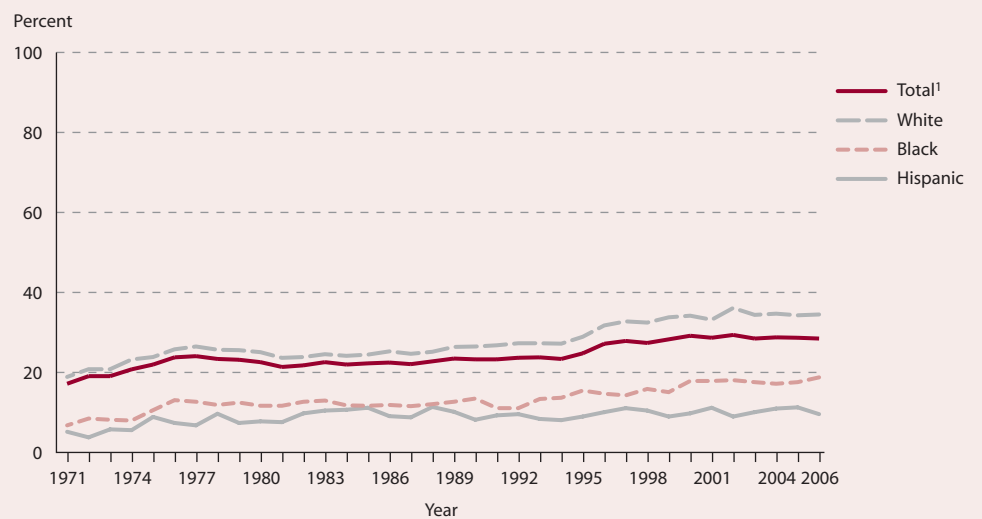
HIGH SCHOOL: Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who completed high school, by race/ethnicity: March 1971–2006



SOME COLLEGE: Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who completed at least some college, by race/ethnicity: March 1971–2006



BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER: Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds with a bachelor's degree or higher, by race/ethnicity: March 1971–2006



¹ Included in the totals but not shown separately are estimates for those from other racial/ethnic categories.

NOTE: Prior to 1992, *high school completers* referred to those who completed 12 years of schooling, and *some college* meant completing 1 or more years of college; beginning in 1992, high school completers referred to those who received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, and *some college* meant completing any college at all. In 1994, the survey instrument for the Current Population Survey (CPS) was changed and weights were adjusted. See *supplemental note 2* for further discussion. Some estimates are revised from previous publications. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), March and Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 1971–2006.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
 Supplemental Notes 1, 2, 7
 Supplemental Tables 27-1,
 27-2, 27-3

Completions

Degrees Earned by Women

Women have earned a greater percentage of bachelor's degrees than men since the early 1980s overall, but men still earn a greater percentage in some fields, including computer and information sciences and engineering.

Women earn a greater number and proportion of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees than they did 25 years ago. Between 1979–80 and 2004–05, the percentage of bachelor's degrees earned by women increased from 49 to 57 percent. This indicator examines the change in the percentage of degrees earned by women between 1979–80 and 2004–05, by selected fields of study.

While women have earned more than half of all bachelor's degrees awarded since 1981–82 (NCES 2007-017, table 246), the percentage of bachelor's degrees awarded in particular fields of study has varied. For example, although women earned 87 percent of the degrees awarded in health professions in 2004–05, they earned less than a quarter of the bachelor's degrees awarded in the fields of computer/information sciences (22 percent) and engineering and engineering technologies (18 percent). Women also earned fewer degrees than men in the fields of agriculture/natural resources (48 percent), mathematics and statistics (45 percent), and physical sciences and science technologies (42 percent).

Between 1979–80 and 2004–05, the percentage of master's degrees earned by women increased from 49 to 59 percent (see supplemental table 28-1). The percentage of master's degrees awarded to women in particular fields of study has also varied, and there are still fields with large differences by sex. For example, in 2004–05, while women earned 79 percent of the master's degrees awarded in psychology, they earned 23 percent of the master's degrees awarded in engineering and engineering technologies.

Women earned just under half of the doctoral degrees awarded in 2004–05 (49 percent), an increase from the 30 percent of doctoral degrees awarded to women in 1979–80. At the doctoral level in 2004–05, men earned more degrees than women in more fields than they did at the bachelor's and master's levels. Women earned less than 30 percent of the doctoral degrees awarded in 2004–05 in mathematics and statistics, physical sciences and science technologies, computer/information sciences, and engineering and engineering technologies.

¹ Includes other fields not shown separately.

NOTE: Based on data from Title IV degree-granting institutions. See *supplemental note 9* for more detail. The shaded section shows fields in which women earned at least 50 percent of the degrees in 2004–05. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some estimates were revised from previous publications.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2006* (NCES 2007-017), tables 258, 279, 281, 283–287, 289, 292–294, 296, 298, and 300; data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1979–80 Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), “Degrees and Other Formal Awards Conferred”; and 1989–90, 1999–2000, and 2004–05 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, “Completions Survey” (IPEDS-C:87 and Fall 2000 and 2005), and Fall 2005.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 3, 9, 10
Supplemental Table 28-1
NCES 2007-017



BACHELOR'S DEGREES: Percentage of bachelor's degrees earned by women and change in the percentage earned by women, by field of study: Selected years, 1979–80 through 2004–05

Field of study	1999–				Change in percentage points between 1979–80 and 2004–05
	1979–80	1989–90	2000	2004–05	
Total¹	49.0	53.2	57.2	57.4	8.4
Health professions and related clinical sciences	82.3	84.6	83.5	86.5	4.3
Education	73.8	78.1	75.8	78.7	4.8
Psychology	63.3	71.6	76.5	77.8	14.5
English language/literature/letters	65.1	67.0	67.8	68.5	3.4
Communication, journalism, and related programs	52.3	60.5	61.2	64.2	11.9
Biological and biomedical sciences	42.1	50.8	58.2	61.9	19.8
Visual and performing arts	63.2	62.0	59.2	61.3	-1.9
Social sciences and history	43.6	44.2	51.2	50.5	6.9
Business	33.6	46.8	49.8	50.0	16.3
Agriculture/natural resources	29.6	31.6	42.9	47.9	18.3
Mathematics and statistics	42.3	46.2	47.8	44.7	2.4
Physical sciences and science technologies	23.7	31.3	40.3	42.2	18.5
Computer/information sciences	30.2	29.9	28.1	22.2	-8.1
Engineering and engineering technologies	9.4	14.1	18.6	18.3	8.9

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