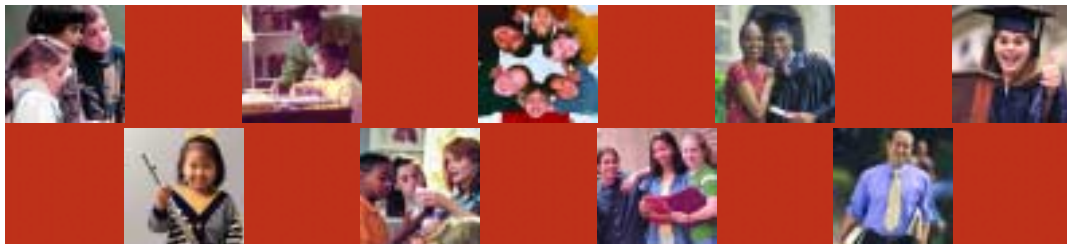


# the condition of education 2003



## INDICATOR 21

# Time to Bachelor's Degree Completion

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2003*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2003*, visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003067>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

**Suggested Citation:**

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2003*, NCES 2003-067, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003.

# Postsecondary Persistence and Progress

## Time to Bachelor's Degree Completion

*First-time recipients of bachelor's degrees in 1999–2000 who had not stopped out of college took about 55 months from first enrollment to degree completion.*

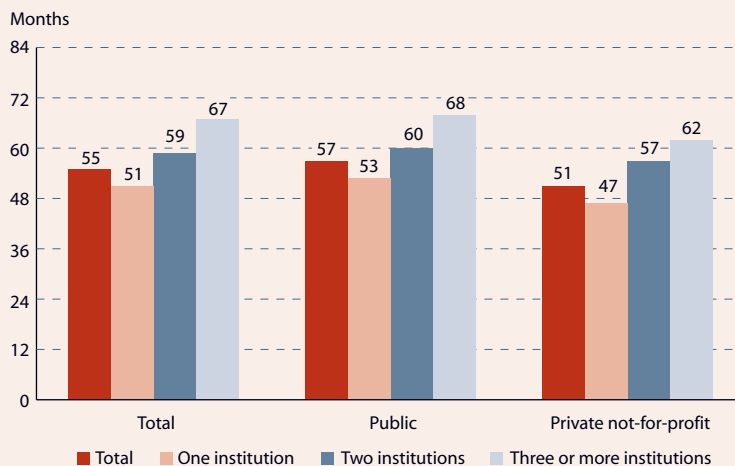
On average, first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees in 1999–2000 who had not stopped out of college for 6 months or more took about 55 months from first enrollment to degree completion. Graduates who had attended multiple institutions took longer to complete a degree. For example, those who attended only one institution averaged 51 months between postsecondary entry and completion of a bachelor's degree, compared with 59 months for those who attended two institutions and 67 months for those who attended three or more institutions. This pattern was found among graduates of both public and private not-for-profit institutions.

Students who begin at public 2-year institutions must transfer to another institution in order to complete a 4-year degree. Students who did so took about a year and one-half longer to complete a bachelor's degree than students who began at public 4-year institutions (71

versus 55 months), and almost 2 years longer than those who began at private not-for-profit 4-year institutions (50 months). The type of institution from which graduates received a degree was also related to time to degree: graduates of public institutions averaged about 6 months longer to complete a degree than graduates of private not-for-profit institutions (57 vs. 51 months; see supplemental table 21-1).

Other factors are also related to time to degree completion. As parents' education increases, the average time to degree completion decreases. In addition, as age and length of time between high school graduation and postsecondary entry increases, time to degree completion also increases. Higher grade-point averages were associated with a shorter time to degree completion among graduates of public institutions but not among graduates of private not-for-profit institutions.

**COMPLETION OF BACHELOR'S DEGREE:** Average number of months between postsecondary entry and degree completion among 1999–2000 first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees who did not stop out of college for 6 months or more, by control of degree-granting institution and number of institutions attended



NOTE: Sixty-nine percent of first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees had not stopped out of college for 6 months or more. Included in the total but not shown separately are those who graduated from private for-profit institutions.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2000/01 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:2000/01).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Supplemental Notes 1, 8  
Supplemental Table 21-1  
NCES 2002–130



## Time to Bachelor's Degree Completion

Table 21-1. Average number of months between postsecondary entry and degree completion among 1999–2000 first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees who did not stop out of college for 6 months or more, by control of degree-granting institution and selected characteristics

Characteristic	Percent in category	Control of degree-granting institution		
		Total <sup>1</sup>	Public	Private not-for-profit
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>51.5</b>
Number of institutions attended				
One	53.8	50.7	52.9	47.0
Two	33.7	58.9	59.5	56.7
Three or more	12.6	66.7	67.6	61.8
Type of first institution <sup>2</sup>				
Public 2-year	14.0	71.1	68.7	74.5
Public 4-year	53.5	54.5	54.2	65.3
Private not-for-profit 4-year	31.6	49.7	66.1	48.1
Parents' educational attainment				
High school or less	22.6	61.8	62.7	58.3
Some college, including vocational/technical	20.0	55.7	57.6	51.8
Bachelor's degree	26.2	53.6	54.8	50.9
Master's degree or equivalent	18.6	51.4	52.9	48.7
Doctoral/professional degree	12.5	49.6	51.2	47.1
Age as of 12/31/99				
22 or younger	68.1	47.4	48.5	45.9
23–24	21.8	60.7	61.0	59.9
25–29	6.2	82.5	82.2	82.9
30 or older	3.9	123.3	127.5	118.3
Time between high school graduation and postsecondary entry				
Less than 12 months	89.3	54.3	56.3	50.4
12–23 months	4.6	57.2	58.4	51.6
24–59 months	3.1	72.5	74.0	70.2
60 months or more	3.0	69.6	66.8	71.9
Cumulative undergraduate GPA				
Less than 2.50	9.1	61.2	63.6	54.1
2.50–2.99	26.2	57.1	59.0	51.8
3.00–3.49	37.6	54.2	56.1	50.0
3.50 or higher	27.0	53.8	53.8	52.7

<sup>1</sup>Included in the total but not shown separately are graduates of private for-profit institutions.

<sup>2</sup>Included in the total but not shown separately are graduates who began at other types of institutions.

NOTE: Sixty-nine percent of first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees had not stopped out of college for 6 months or more. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2000/01 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:2000/01).

## Time to Bachelor's Degree Completion

**Table S21.** Standard errors for the average number of months between postsecondary entry and degree completion among 1999–2000 first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees who did not stop out of college for 6 months or more, by control of degree-granting institution and number of institutions attended

Number of institutions attended	Total	Public	Private not-for-profit
Total	0.5	0.6	0.7
One	0.4	0.5	0.3
Two	0.9	1.1	1.6
Three or more	1.9	2.2	2.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2000/01 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:2000/01).

## Time to Bachelor's Degree Completion

Table S21-1. Standard errors for the average number of months between postsecondary entry and degree completion among 1999–2000 first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees who did not stop out of college for 6 months or more, by control of degree-granting institution and selected characteristics

Characteristic	Percent in category	Control of degree-granting institution		
		Total	Public	Private not-for-profit
Total	†	0.45	0.58	0.65
Number of institutions attended				
One	0.86	0.35	0.52	0.27
Two	0.74	0.92	1.14	1.60
Three or more	0.49	1.85	2.17	2.92
Type of first institution				
Public 2-year	0.56	1.63	1.85	3.06
Public 4-year	0.88	0.54	0.54	4.93
Private not-for-profit 4-year	0.85	0.68	5.21	0.51
Parents' educational attainment				
High school or less	0.70	1.41	1.67	2.23
Some college, including vocational/technical	0.65	0.87	1.19	1.07
Bachelor's degree	0.70	0.76	0.83	1.58
Master's degree or equivalent	0.60	0.52	0.62	0.93
Doctoral/professional degree	0.50	0.57	0.71	0.48
Age as of 12/31/99				
22 or younger	0.85	0.11	0.16	0.12
23–24	0.78	0.31	0.33	0.77
25–29	0.38	1.55	1.73	3.87
30 or older	0.33	7.69	10.63	11.51
Time between high school graduation and postsecondary entry				
Less than 12 months	0.51	0.44	0.58	0.62
12–23 months	0.37	1.79	1.99	2.43
24–59 months	0.28	5.67	7.48	7.97
60 months or more	0.30	3.21	3.59	6.63
Cumulative undergraduate GPA				
Less than 2.50	0.51	1.28	1.58	2.10
2.50–2.99	0.69	0.89	1.12	1.24
3.00–3.49	0.73	0.74	1.04	0.62
3.50 or higher	0.69	0.79	0.79	1.47

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2000/01 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:2000/01).