

Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: A Status Report

CHAPTER 5



Undergraduate Persistence and Completion



Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: A Status Report

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

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

Visit www.equityinhighered.org to learn more about the project and to download the full report containing more than 200 indicators on race and ethnicity. Also available on the site are downloadable figures, detailed data, and other resources on race and ethnicity in higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of postsecondary credentials for the twenty-first-century workforce, and indeed for societal health and progress at large, cannot be overstated. Importantly, individuals who earn postsecondary credentials earn higher wages over their lifetimes and are more financially resilient during economic downturns. According to Carnevale, Jayasundera, and Gulish (2016), by 2016 the economy had added 11.6 million jobs since the height of the Great Recession, and 99 percent of them had gone to those with some college education.

The power of the postsecondary credential holds promise for those in our society who seek to move up the socioeconomic ladder and contribute to the economy and to the well-being of their families and communities. Of course, one has to complete a credential in order to fully realize this potential, and it is here that we see disparities by race and ethnicity. Beyond the individual benefits of postsecondary credentials, supporting high rates of completion for all groups in society is critical for creating a strong workforce and a healthy society.

Gaps in educational attainment levels across racial and ethnic groups deprive some Americans of meaningful participation in the economy. Disparities in postsecondary credential attainment also interfere with achieving the many attainment goals set in the past decade, including goals set by individual states, by the federal government, and by major philanthropies that invest in education and educational attainment efforts. Research in fact shows that Black,¹ Hispanic, and American Indian or Alaska Native students will not meet the nation's two most prominent college attainment goals (Nettles 2017). Such findings also bring to light a host of questions on just how we measure completion, especially when used for accountability purposes and in state funding models.

KEY FINDINGS

- Between 1996 and 2016, the total number of undergraduate credentials awarded increased from 1.9 million to 3.7 million. While there was an increase across all credential types, the share of bachelor's degrees declined, as the total number of sub-baccalaureate credentials increased at a faster rate.
- Within each racial and ethnic group, more than 90 percent of bachelor's degree-seeking students who first enrolled in a public or private nonprofit four-year institution² in 2011–12 persisted through that academic year and returned in 2012–13. Persistence rates were lower in for-profit and public two-year institutions.
- Students of all backgrounds, at all institution types, who enrolled in college exclusively full time in fall 2011 were more likely to complete a credential in six years than were students overall.
- Black students who started college in fall 2011 had the lowest completion rates and highest dropout rates across all sectors of higher education.
- More than half of all American Indian or Alaska Native, Black, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students who completed credentials in 2016 earned sub-baccalaureate credentials, whereas more than half of all international,³ Asian, and White graduates earned bachelor's degrees.

1 The terms Black and African American are used interchangeably.

2 Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. For more information, please refer to the report's methods section.

3 The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) defines a nonresident alien as "a person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely." In this report, nonresident aliens are labeled as international students.

- Among short-term certificate recipients, health care was the most common field of study for Asian (30.3 percent), Black (35.8 percent), Hispanic (34.8 percent), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (42.0 percent) students. For American Indian or Alaska Native (36.4 percent) and White (32.2 percent) students, manufacturing, military technology, and other applied fields was the most common. Business and personal and consumer services was the most common field of study for international (30.4 percent) short-term certificate recipients.
- One in five Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students who completed a degree or certificate in 2016 completed their credentials at a for-profit institution—the highest of any group. Over one in 10 Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Hispanic students completed their undergraduate education at these institutions. Although predominant bachelor's degree fields in 2016 were STEM,⁴ business, and the social sciences, there were great differences by race and ethnicity. For example, depending on institution type, Asian students were two to three times more likely to graduate in the STEM fields than were Black students.

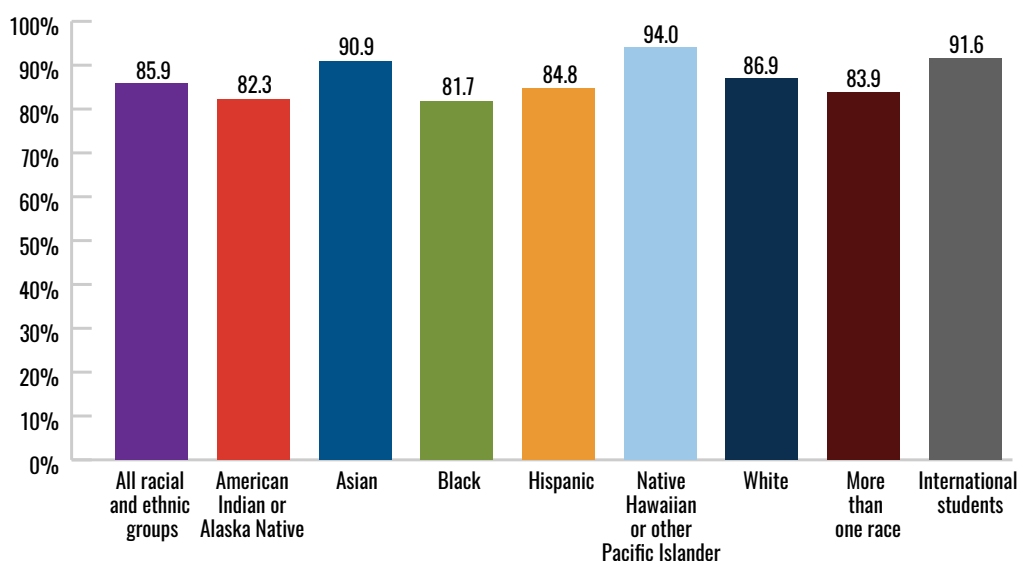
⁴ STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture.

FIRST-YEAR PERSISTENCE RATES FOR BACHELOR'S DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS

First-year persistence measures the percent of bachelor's degree-seeking students who first enrolled in postsecondary education in the 2011–12 academic year and remained enrolled in at least one month in 2012–13. Data come from the U.S. Department of Education's Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study, which follows a cohort of students enrolled in their first year of higher education. The data here reflect the cohort of bachelor's degree-seeking students who first enrolled in 2011–12.

The majority of students remained enrolled in college in year two of their studies (85.9 percent). Three groups had first-year persistence rates of over 90 percent: Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students (94.0 percent), international students (91.6 percent), and Asian students (90.9 percent).

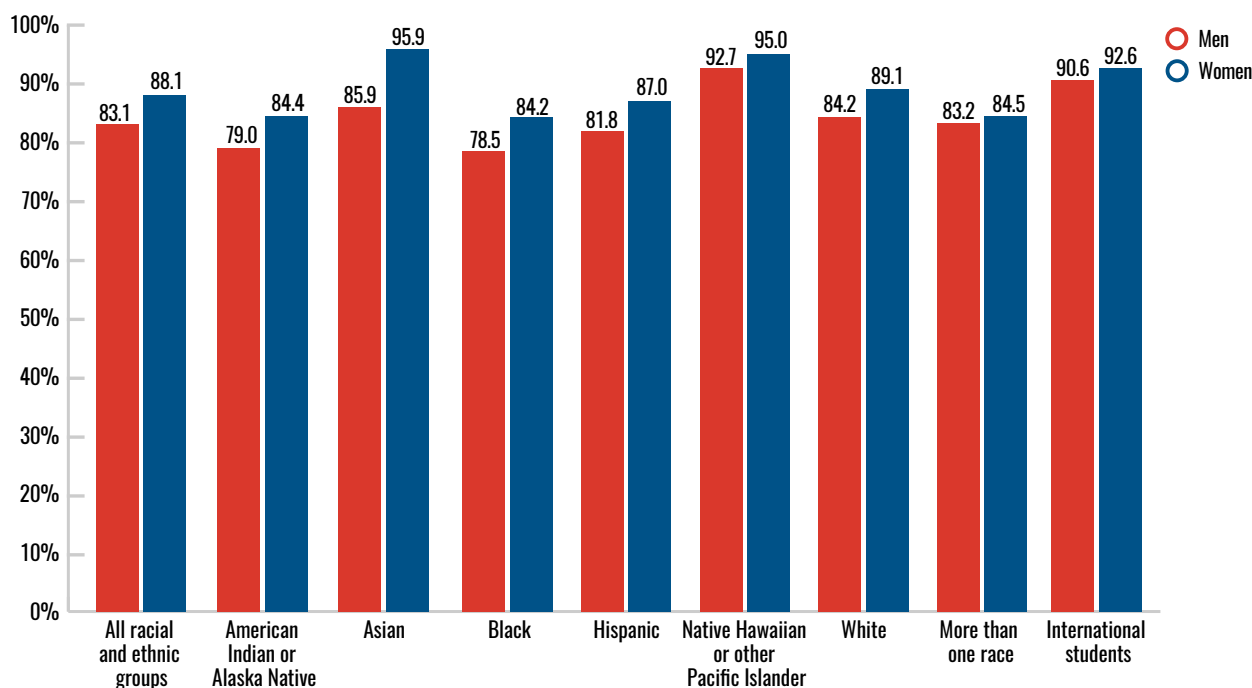
Figure 5.1: First-Year Persistence Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students, by Race and Ethnicity: Fall 2011 Cohort



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, BPS: 12/14

The majority of all men and women persisted through to their second year; however, women had a slightly higher persistence rate than men (88.1 percent compared with 83.1 percent). This pattern occurred within all student groups.

Figure 5.2: First-Year Persistence Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity: Fall 2011 Cohort

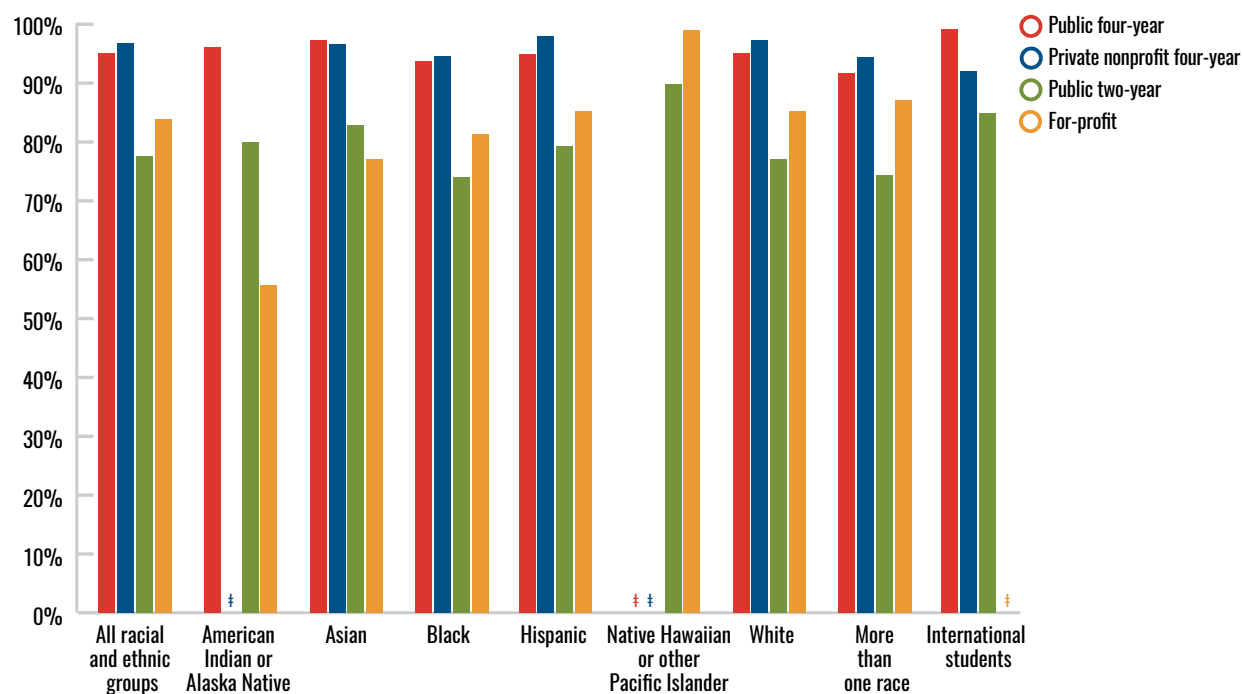


Source: U.S. Department of Education, Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, BPS: 12/14

- Asian students had the largest gender gap in first-year persistence rates, with Asian women 10 percentage points more likely to have persisted through to their second year than Asian men—95.9 percent compared with 85.9 percent.
- Students of more than one race had the smallest gender gap among all groups, with 84.5 percent of women and 83.2 percent of men persisting through to their second year.

By sector, first-year persistence rates were highest among public and private nonprofit four-year institutions, where over 90 percent of all students persisted through their first year (94.9 percent and 96.6 percent, respectively). Persistence rates of bachelor's degree-seeking students at public two-year and for-profit institutions were much lower.

Figure 5.3: First-Year Persistence Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students, by Sector and Race and Ethnicity: Fall 2011 Cohort



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, BPS: 12/14

Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | † Estimate suppressed. Reporting standards not met.

- International (99.0 percent) and Asian (97.1 percent) students had the highest first-year persistence rates at public four-year institutions.
- Hispanic and White students had the highest first-year persistence rates at private nonprofit four-year institutions (97.8 percent and 97.2 percent, respectively).
- Nearly 90 percent of all Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students (89.6 percent) at public two-year institutions persisted through to their second year, compared with about three-quarters of students of more than one race (74.3 percent) and African American students (73.9 percent).
- Nearly all Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students at for-profit institutions persisted from their first to second year (98.8 percent), compared with 76.9 percent of Asian students and slightly more than half of all American Indian or Alaska Native (55.6 percent) students.

UNDERGRADUATE COMPLETION RATES: STUDENTS WHO BEGAN COLLEGE IN 2011

The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is a national nonprofit organization that works with postsecondary institutions to provide educational reporting, verification, and research services (NSCRC 2018). Eighty-four percent of all Title IV degree-granting colleges and universities voluntarily participate in the Clearinghouse, providing NSC the ability to analyze data for 97 percent of all students enrolled in these institutions (Dundar and Shapiro 2016).

Given their ability to follow students as they move through American higher education, including when they transfer from one institution to another, the NSC data provide a robust collection of student enrollment, persistence, transfer, and completion information. For this reason, NSC data provide a more complete picture of student completion than federal data has historically been able to.⁵

This section analyzes student completion rates for the fall 2011 cohort who first enrolled in public two-year, public four-year, and private nonprofit four-year institutions. Completion rates were calculated within six years of first enrollment, following students through spring 2017. Six years represents 300 percent of normal time at public two-year institutions and 150 percent of normal time at four-year institutions.

We share data on students overall, as well as students who enrolled in college exclusively full time. Looking at students who enrolled full time is important for two reasons. First, examining the outcomes of exclusively full-time students most closely approximates the Student Right-to-Know or federal graduation rate. However, unlike the federal graduation rate, data from NSC allow us to capture students who complete at an institution other than their starting college or university. Second, we know from decades of research that students who enroll in college full time are more likely to complete. While the proportion of students who enroll exclusively full time is diminishing (Bombardieri 2017; CCSSE 2017; Shapiro et al. 2017), these students are the most likely to complete their programs of study on time, making their completion rates the most straightforward to interpret and compare. Although the data here present six-year outcomes, many students who remain enrolled, regardless of enrollment pattern, will complete a credential outside of this six-year window.

Across all racial and ethnic groups,⁶ regardless of where students first enrolled, a larger share of students who attended exclusively full time than of the overall student cohort completed within six years of first enrolling. Completion rates varied, however, by race and ethnicity and where students first enrolled.

Public Two-Year Institutions: Completion Rates for All Students

Nearly 40 percent of students who started at a public two-year college in fall 2011 completed a certificate or degree within six years—26.5 percent did so at their starting institution, 3.4 percent at another two-year institution, and 7.7 percent at a four-year institution. Slightly less than half (47.3 percent) of all students did not complete and were no longer enrolled in any institution six years later.

Slightly less than half of all Asian (46.8 percent) and White (46.7 percent) students completed a credential within six years, while more than one-third of all students of more than one race (38.5 percent) and Hispanic students (35.0 percent) completed within six years. Comparatively, roughly one-quarter of all Black students (26.0 percent) completed a credential within six years—the lowest completion rate of all racial and ethnic groups.

5 In 2017, the U.S. Department of Education introduced new outcome measures in an effort to provide a broader picture of student success, particularly for non-first-time, full-time students (Jones 2017), although limitations still exist.

6 Race and ethnicity unknown is included among the racial and ethnic categories within National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS) data, which are used in this chapter of the report. As a result, tables and figures include this group alongside other racial and ethnic categories.

Table 5.1: Six-Year Outcomes (300% of Normal Time) for Students Who Started at Public Two-Year Institutions: Fall 2011 Cohort

	Total Completion Rate	1st Completion at Starting Institution	1st Completion at Different Institution: Two-Year	1st Completion at Different Institution: Four-Year	Subsequent Completion at a Four-Year	Still Enrolled (at Any Institution)	Not Enrolled (at Any Institution)
All racial and ethnic groups (n=766,297)	37.5%	26.5%	3.4%	7.7%	7.0%	15.2%	47.3%
Asian (n=24,403)	46.8%	29.1%	3.8%	13.9%	10.3%	24.5%	28.7%
Black (n=91,067)	26.0%	17.6%	3.4%	5.0%	3.6%	19.1%	54.9%
Hispanic (n=99,974)	35.0%	25.0%	4.1%	6.0%	6.7%	23.3%	41.7%
White (n=310,771)	46.7%	32.6%	3.9%	10.3%	9.7%	13.8%	39.5%
More than one race (n=17,222)	38.5%	26.8%	3.5%	8.3%	8.2%	23.9%	37.6%
Other race or ethnicity (n=15,039)	41.8%	26.3%	3.3%	12.2%	8.6%	19.4%	38.8%
Race or ethnicity unknown or missing (n=207,822)	28.6%	21.7%	2.2%	4.8%	4.0%	9.6%	61.8%

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

First Completion at Starting Institution

Slightly less than one-third of White (32.6 percent) and Asian (29.1 percent) students completed at their starting institution, compared with around one-quarter of students of more than one race (26.8 percent) and Hispanic students (25.0 percent). The lowest completion rate occurred for Black students, among whom 17.6 percent completed a credential at their starting institution.

Transfer and Completion

About 11 percent of students completed their degrees at another institution within six years of first enrolling: 3.4 percent did so at another two-year institution and 7.7 percent transferred and completed at a four-year institution. Asian students were the most likely to complete at another institution (17.7 percent), followed by White students (14.1 percent). The lowest rates of transfer and completion occurred for Black students (8.3 percent). This pattern held for students who completed a subsequent degree at a four-year institution, where Asian students (10.3 percent) and White students (9.7 percent) were more likely to have completed a subsequent degree than Black students (3.6 percent).

Non-completion

Slightly less than one-quarter of all Asian students (24.5 percent), students of more than one race (23.9 percent), and Hispanic students (23.3 percent) were still enrolled and pursuing their first certificate or degree in the sixth year following college entry. Nearly one in five Black students (19.1 percent) remained enrolled in the sixth year, as did 13.8 percent of White students.

More than half of Black students had not earned a credential after six years and were no longer enrolled (54.9 percent), compared with 47.3 percent of students overall. Asian students were the least likely to have left without completing a credential (28.7 percent).

Public Two-Year Institutions: Completion for Full-Time Students

Among exclusively full-time students who started college at a public two-year institution in fall 2011, nearly 60 percent completed a certificate or degree within six years—43.9 percent did so at their starting institution, 3.1 percent at another two-year institution, and 11.4 percent did so at a four-year institution. Only about 2 percent were still enrolled in spring 2017, and roughly 40 percent of students were not enrolled in any institution.

Over three-quarters of all Asian exclusively full-time students completed a credential within six years (78.8 percent)—the highest total completion rate of any racial and ethnic group. Among exclusively full-time students, more than half of all White students (69.2 percent), students of more than one race (68.1 percent), and Hispanic students (62.5 percent) completed a credential within six years. Comparatively, less than half of all Black students enrolled exclusively full time completed within six years (43.2 percent), the lowest total completion rate of any group.

Table 5.2: Six-Year Outcomes (300% of Normal Time) for Exclusively Full-Time Students Who Started at Public Two-Year Institutions: Fall 2011 Cohort

	Total Completion Rate	1st Completion at Starting Institution	1st Completion at Different Institution: Two-Year	1st Completion at Different Institution: Four-Year	Subsequent Completion at a Four-Year	Still Enrolled (at Any Institution)	Not Enrolled (at Any Institution)
All racial and ethnic groups (n=188,855)	58.5%	43.9%	3.1%	11.4%	17.0%	2.2%	39.4%
Asian (n=4,220)	78.8%	52.3%	3.5%	23.0%	29.2%	2.8%	18.5%
Black (n=17,344)	43.2%	31.3%	3.5%	8.4%	10.4%	3.8%	53.1%
Hispanic (n=15,861)	62.5%	45.5%	4.8%	12.2%	20.0%	3.0%	34.5%
White (n=88,029)	69.2%	51.3%	3.6%	14.3%	22.0%	2.1%	28.7%
More than one race (n=3,374)	68.1%	51.0%	3.3%	13.8%	22.7%	2.9%	29.0%
Other race or ethnicity (n=3,622)	65.7%	44.3%	2.5%	18.9%	20.4%	2.7%	31.6%
Race or ethnicity unknown or missing (n=56,404)	42.7%	34.7%	1.8%	6.1%	8.8%	1.3%	56.0%

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

First Completion at Starting Institution

Over half of all Asian students (52.3 percent), White students (51.3 percent), and students of more than one race (51.0 percent) completed a credential at their starting institution, compared with Hispanic students (45.5 percent) and Black students (31.3 percent).

Transfer and Completion

Slightly less than one-quarter of Asian students (23.0 percent) enrolled exclusively full time transferred and completed at a four-year institution—the highest rate of any group. Black students were the least likely to transfer and complete at a four-year institution (8.4 percent). Hispanic students were the most likely to transfer and complete at another two-year institution (4.8 percent). Nearly three in 10 Asian students completed a subsequent degree at a four-year institution (29.2 percent), compared with only 10.4 percent of Black students.

Non-completion

A very small fraction of all exclusively full-time students remained enrolled at any institution in the sixth year (2.2 percent). Over half of full-time Black students (53.1 percent) left without completing a credential, a much higher percentage than Hispanic (34.5 percent), White (28.7 percent), and Asian (18.5 percent) students.

Public Four-Year Institutions: Completion Rates for All Students

More than six in 10 students who began college at public four-year institutions in fall 2011 finished a degree within six years—53.5 percent did so at their starting institution, 3.4 percent at a two-year institution, and 7.8 percent at another four-year institution. Nearly one-quarter of students did not complete and were no longer enrolled in any institution in the sixth year (24.2 percent).

By race and ethnicity, more than seven in 10 Asian (75.8 percent) and White (71.1 percent) students completed a credential within six years of first enrolling. The total completion rate for Hispanic students was 55.7 percent, while that of students of more than one race was 62.3 percent. Black students had the lowest total completion rate of any group, with less than half completing a credential within six years (46.0 percent).

Table 5.3: Six-Year Outcomes (150% of Normal Time) for Students Who Started at Public Four-Year Institutions: Fall 2011 Cohort

	Total Completion Rate	1st Completion at Starting Institution	1st Completion at Different Institution: Two-Year	1st Completion at Different Institution: Four-Year	Still Enrolled (at Any Institution)	Not Enrolled (at Any Institution)
All racial and ethnic groups (n=1,011,318)	64.7%	53.5%	3.4%	7.8%	11.1%	24.2%
Asian (n=41,937)	75.8%	66.8%	2.4%	6.6%	11.7%	12.5%
Black (n=98,393)	46.0%	35.5%	3.8%	6.7%	17.5%	36.5%
Hispanic (n=99,009)	55.7%	45.9%	3.6%	6.2%	16.4%	27.9%
White (n=523,444)	71.1%	57.9%	3.9%	9.3%	9.9%	19.1%
More than one race (n=21,853)	62.3%	49.9%	3.9%	8.5%	15.7%	22.0%
Other race or ethnicity (n=45,908)	69.3%	60.6%	1.8%	6.9%	9.0%	21.8%
Race or ethnicity unknown or missing (n=180,774)	58.0%	50.2%	2.3%	5.4%	8.1%	33.9%

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

First Completion at Starting Institution

Two-thirds of all Asian students (66.8 percent) completed their degrees at their starting public four-year institutions, compared with White students (57.9 percent), students of more than one race (49.9 percent), Hispanic students (45.9 percent), and Black students (35.5 percent).

Transfer and Completion

The share of students who transferred to a two-year college or to a different four-year institution and completed a credential within six years of their original enrollment ranged from 9.0 percent of Asian students to 13.2 percent of White students.

Non-completion

Blacks (17.5 percent), Hispanics (16.4 percent), and students of more than one race (15.7 percent) were the most likely to still be enrolled in the sixth year, compared with Asian (11.7 percent) and White (9.9 percent) students. Over one-third of Black students (36.5 percent), and over one-quarter of Hispanic students (27.9 percent) had not completed a degree and were no longer enrolled in the sixth year—the highest rates of all groups. In contrast, 12.5 percent of Asian students had left college without a credential.

Public Four-Year Institutions: Completion Rates for Full-Time Students

Of exclusively full-time students who started a public four-year college in fall 2011, 84.1 percent completed a certificate or degree by spring 2017, either at their starting institution (74.2 percent), or at another four-year (7.9 percent) or two-year (2.0 percent) institution. About 2 percent were still enrolled in college and 13.6 percent of students were not enrolled in any institution in the sixth year.

The majority of students across all racial and ethnic groups completed a credential within six years. The total completion rate was highest among Asian (91.0 percent) and White (88.8 percent) students, followed by students of more than one race (85.1 percent). Although the majority of Hispanic (81.9 percent) and Black (72.5 percent) students completed within six years, they were much less likely to do so than their peers.

Table 5.4: Six-Year Outcomes (150% of Normal Time) for Exclusively Full-Time Students Who Started at Public Four-Year Institutions: Fall 2011 Cohort

	Total Completion Rate	1st Completion at Starting Institution	1st Completion at Different Institution: Two-Year	1st Completion at Different Institution: Four-Year	Still Enrolled (at Any Institution)	Not Enrolled (at Any Institution)
All racial and ethnic groups (n=529,995)	84.1%	74.2%	2.0%	7.9%	2.3%	13.6%
Asian (n=23,170)	91.0%	83.9%	1.2%	5.9%	2.8%	6.2%
Black (n=38,748)	72.5%	61.8%	2.5%	8.3%	4.6%	22.9%
Hispanic (n=38,222)	81.9%	72.9%	2.2%	6.9%	3.4%	14.7%
White (n=293,427)	88.8%	77.6%	2.2%	9.0%	1.7%	9.5%
More than one race (n=10,824)	85.1%	74.0%	2.2%	8.8%	2.7%	12.2%
Other race or ethnicity (n=28,074)	80.3%	73.2%	0.9%	6.2%	3.3%	16.5%
Race or ethnicity unknown or missing (n=97,530)	74.6%	67.5%	1.6%	5.5%	2.4%	23.0%

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

First Completion at Starting Institution

Asian students were the most likely to complete at their starting institution (83.9 percent), while Black students were the least likely (61.8 percent). Hispanic and White students completed at rates of 72.9 percent and 77.6 percent, respectively.

Transfer and Completion

As with students overall, transfer and completion rates were similar across racial or ethnic groups. Asian students were the least likely of all to transfer and complete at a different institution (7.1 percent). White students were most likely to follow this path (11.2 percent).

Non-completion

Overall, 2.3 percent of exclusively full-time students who started at a public four-year institution remained enrolled in the sixth year. More than one in five Black students (22.9 percent) who enrolled exclusively full time had not earned a degree and were no longer enrolled in any institution in the sixth year, compared with only 6.2 percent of Asian students—the highest and lowest persistence rates among all racial or ethnic groups.

Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Completion Rates for All Students

About three-quarters of students who started at a private nonprofit four-year institution in fall 2011 completed their degrees within six years—63.7 percent did so at their starting institution, 10.0 percent at another four-year institution, and 2.3 percent did so at a two-year institution.

Although the majority of all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, completed a credential within six years, Black students had the lowest total completion rate among all groups (57.3 percent). Comparatively, 85.9 percent of Asian students, 81.9 percent of White students, and 72.3 percent of Hispanic students completed within six years.

Table 5.5: Six-Year Outcomes (150% of Normal Time) for Students Who Started at Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Fall 2011 Cohort

	Total Completion Rate	1st Completion at Starting Institution	1st Completion at Different Institution: Two-Year	1st Completion at Different Institution: Four-Year	Still Enrolled (at Any Institution)	Not Enrolled (at Any Institution)
All racial and ethnic groups (n=423,091)	76.0%	63.7%	2.3%	10.0%	7.2%	16.7%
Asian (n=15,010)	85.9%	75.4%	1.6%	8.9%	6.7%	7.5%
Black (n=34,763)	57.3%	44.5%	3.0%	9.8%	13.6%	29.1%
Hispanic (n=28,297)	72.3%	59.6%	3.3%	9.4%	10.3%	17.5%
White (n=229,370)	81.9%	68.3%	2.5%	11.1%	6.5%	11.7%
More than one race (n=8,186)	75.1%	60.9%	3.3%	10.9%	10.2%	14.7%
Other race or ethnicity (n=20,541)	81.5%	73.4%	0.9%	7.2%	5.0%	13.5%
Race or ethnicity unknown or missing (n=86,923)	66.6%	56.6%	1.6%	8.4%	6.0%	27.4%

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

First Completion at Starting Institution

The majority of Asian students (75.4 percent), White students (68.3 percent), students of more than one race (60.9 percent), and Hispanic students (59.6 percent) completed at their starting institution within six years, compared with less than half of Black students (44.5 percent).

Transfer and Completion

The share of students beginning at a private nonprofit four-year college or university in fall 2011 who transferred and earned a degree at another institution ranged from 10.4 percent of Asian students to 14.2 percent of those of more than one race.

Non-completion

Black students were the most likely to remain enrolled at any institution in the sixth year (13.6 percent), followed by Hispanic students (10.3 percent) and students of more than one race (10.2 percent). As with completion rates, there were substantial differences in the rates at which students from different racial and ethnic groups left college without completing. More than one-quarter of all Black students left college without completing (29.1 percent), compared with 17.5 percent of Hispanics, 11.7 percent of Whites, and 7.5 percent of Asians.

Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Completion Rates for Full-Time Students

Among exclusively full-time students who started at a private nonprofit four-year institution in fall 2011, 88.5 percent completed a degree by 2017, either at their starting institution (78.2 percent), or at another four-year (9.2 percent) or two-year (1.1 percent) institution. Less than 2 percent were still enrolled, and 9.8 percent of students had not completed a degree and were not enrolled in any institution in the sixth year.

The majority of full-time students, across all racial and ethnic groups, completed within six years, although the total completion rate of some groups was substantially higher than that of others. Roughly nine in 10 Asian students (94.2 percent), White students (92.5 percent), and students of more than one race (90.0 percent) completed a credential within six years. The total completion rate declined to 87.6 percent for Hispanic students and 77.6 percent of Black students.

Table 5.6: Six-Year Outcomes (150% of Normal Time) for Exclusively Full-Time Students Who Started at Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Fall 2011 Cohort

	Total Completion Rate	1st Completion at Starting Institution	1st Completion at Different Institution: Two-Year	1st Completion at Different Institution: Four-Year	Still Enrolled (at Any Institution)	Not Enrolled (at Any Institution)
All racial and ethnic groups (n=293,818)	88.5%	78.2%	1.1%	9.2%	1.7%	9.8%
Asian (n=11,248)	94.2%	85.7%	0.7%	7.8%	1.7%	4.2%
Black (n=19,651)	77.6%	65.8%	1.6%	10.3%	3.5%	19.0%
Hispanic (n=18,444)	87.6%	77.4%	1.5%	8.7%	1.9%	10.5%
White (n=167,415)	92.5%	81.6%	1.2%	9.7%	1.3%	6.2%
More than one race (n=5,458)	90.0%	78.8%	1.4%	9.9%	1.9%	8.1%
Other race or ethnicity (n=15,939)	88.1%	81.5%	0.4%	6.2%	2.2%	9.8%
Race or ethnicity unknown or missing (n=55,663)	79.6%	70.4%	0.9%	8.3%	1.9%	18.5%

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

First Completion at Starting Institution

Asian students were the most likely to complete at their starting institution within six years (85.7 percent), compared with 81.6 percent of White students, 78.8 percent of students of more than one race, 77.4 percent of Hispanic students, and 65.8 percent of Black students.

Transfer and Completion

The vast majority of students who transferred and completed elsewhere did so at another four-year institution. The shares of students who earned a credential at a different institution were similar across all racial and ethnic groups, ranging from 8.5 percent of Asian students to 11.8 percent of Black students.

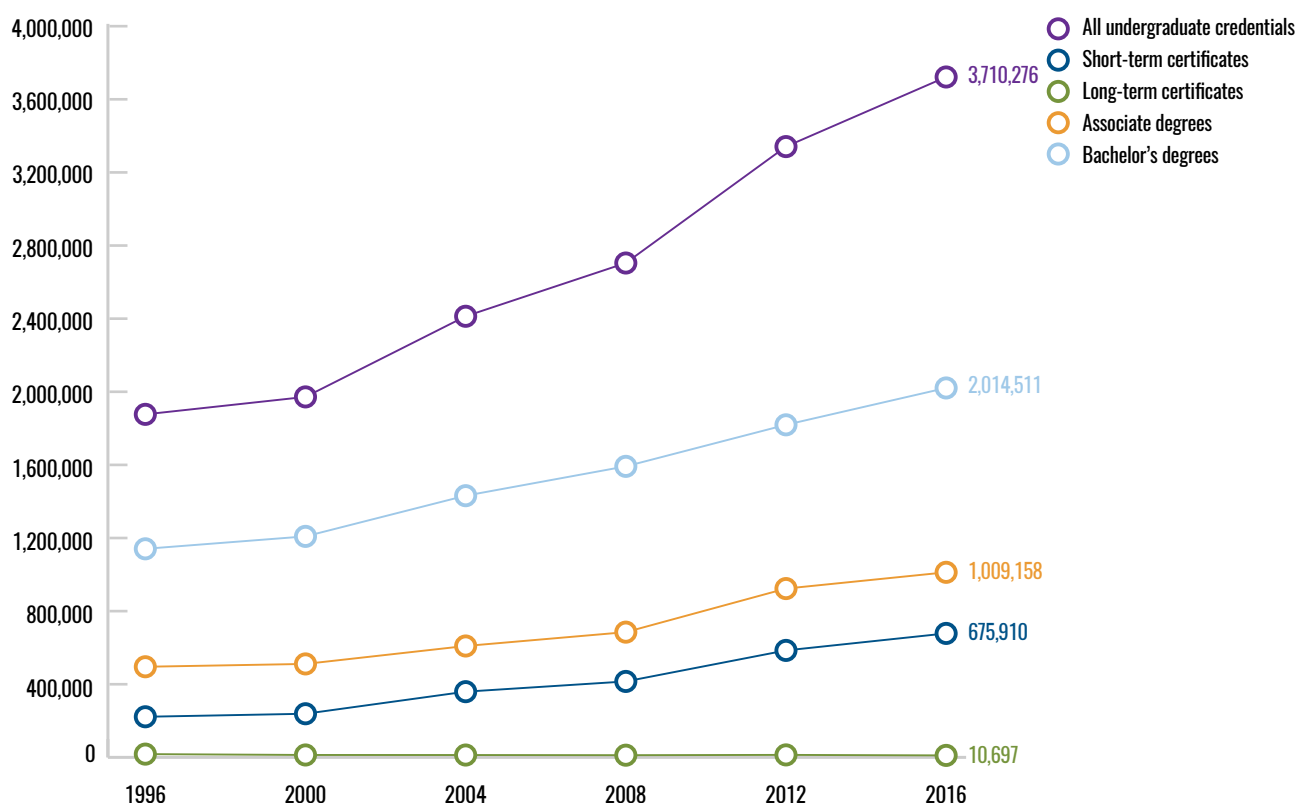
Non-completion

Only 1.7 percent of students who started at a private nonprofit four-year institution and enrolled exclusively full time remained enrolled in the sixth year. However, there were large differences across groups in the share who left college without a degree—nearly one in five Black students (19.0 percent) left without finishing, compared with 4.2 percent of Asian, 6.2 percent of White, and 10.5 percent of Hispanic students.

UNDERGRADUATE COMPLETIONS: 1996 TO 2016

Between 1996 and 2016, the total number of undergraduate credentials awarded increased from about 1.9 million to over 3.7 million. The total number of bachelor's degrees increased from 1.1 million in 1996 to 2 million in 2016. During this time, bachelor's degrees as a share of all undergraduate credentials completed decreased from 60.8 percent in 1996 to 54.3 percent in 2016, as the number of sub-baccalaureate credentials awarded, including short- and long-term certificates,⁷ increased more rapidly.

Figure 5.4: Undergraduate Completions, by Award Level, Select Years: 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016

Notes: Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length. | Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

Consistent with this overall trend, the proportion of undergraduate students who earned certificates increased between 1996 and 2016 across nearly all student groups. The total share of certificates among all credentials completed increased the most for Black students (6.1 percentage points), while the share of bachelor's degrees declined by 9.2 percentage points, the largest decrease of any group. Hispanics followed a similar trajectory, with a 4.3 percentage point increase in certificates as a share of all credentials, and an 8.2 percentage point decline in the share that were bachelor's degrees.

⁷ Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length. Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

Table 5.7: Undergraduate Completions, by Award Level and Race and Ethnicity: 1996 and 2016

		Short-Term Certificates	Long-Term Certificates	Associate Degrees	Bachelor's Degrees
1996	All racial and ethnic groups	11.8%	0.9%	26.4%	60.8%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	21.8%	0.9%	33.7%	43.6%
	Asian	9.3%	1.2%	22.4%	67.0%
	Black	18.3%	1.0%	27.0%	53.7%
	Hispanic	18.1%	0.9%	30.3%	50.8%
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	White	10.8%	0.9%	26.6%	61.7%
	More than one race	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Race or ethnicity unknown	15.2%	2.4%	22.1%	60.3%
	International students	5.1%	1.2%	19.6%	74.1%
2016	All racial and ethnic groups	18.2%	0.3%	27.2%	54.3%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	27.4%	0.4%	35.2%	37.1%
	Asian	13.0%	0.3%	23.0%	63.7%
	Black	25.1%	0.3%	30.1%	44.5%
	Hispanic	23.1%	0.2%	34.1%	42.5%
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	20.5%	0.3%	32.3%	46.9%
	White	16.7%	0.3%	25.8%	57.2%
	More than one race	15.3%	0.3%	26.2%	58.3%
	Race or ethnicity unknown	18.8%	0.4%	26.9%	53.9%
	International students	6.6%	0.2%	16.4%	76.8%

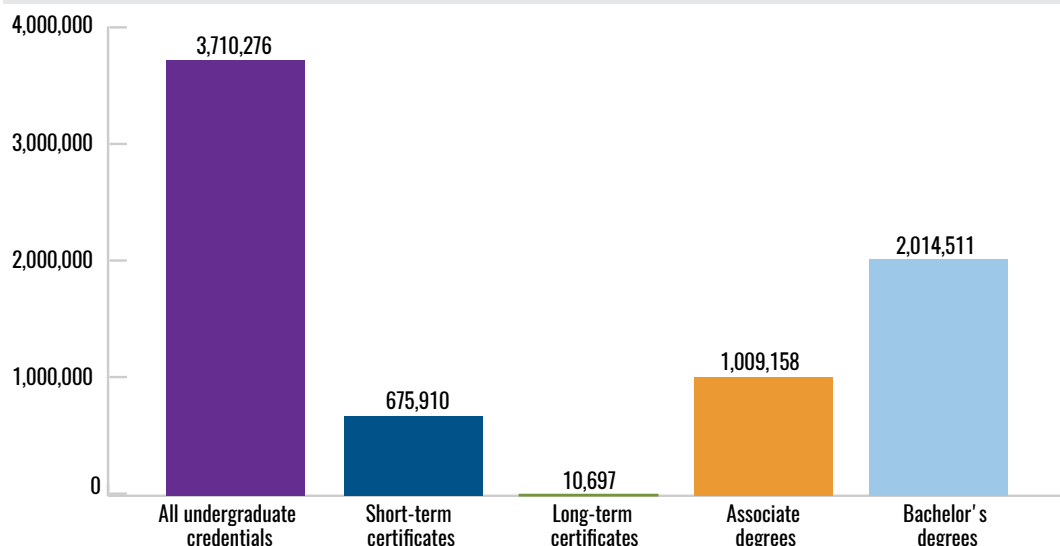
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 1996 and 2016

Notes: In 1996, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students was not an available category. These students were included in the category "Asian." | In 1996, data on students of more than one race were not collected separately. | Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length. | Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

UNDERGRADUATE COMPLETIONS: 2016

Over 3.7 million undergraduate credentials were awarded in 2016. Of these, approximately 1.7 million were sub-baccalaureate credentials—1 million were associate degrees, over 675,000 were short-term certificates, and over 10,600 were long-term certificates. The number of bachelor's degrees earned was 2 million.

Figure 5.5: Undergraduate Completions, by Award Level: 2016

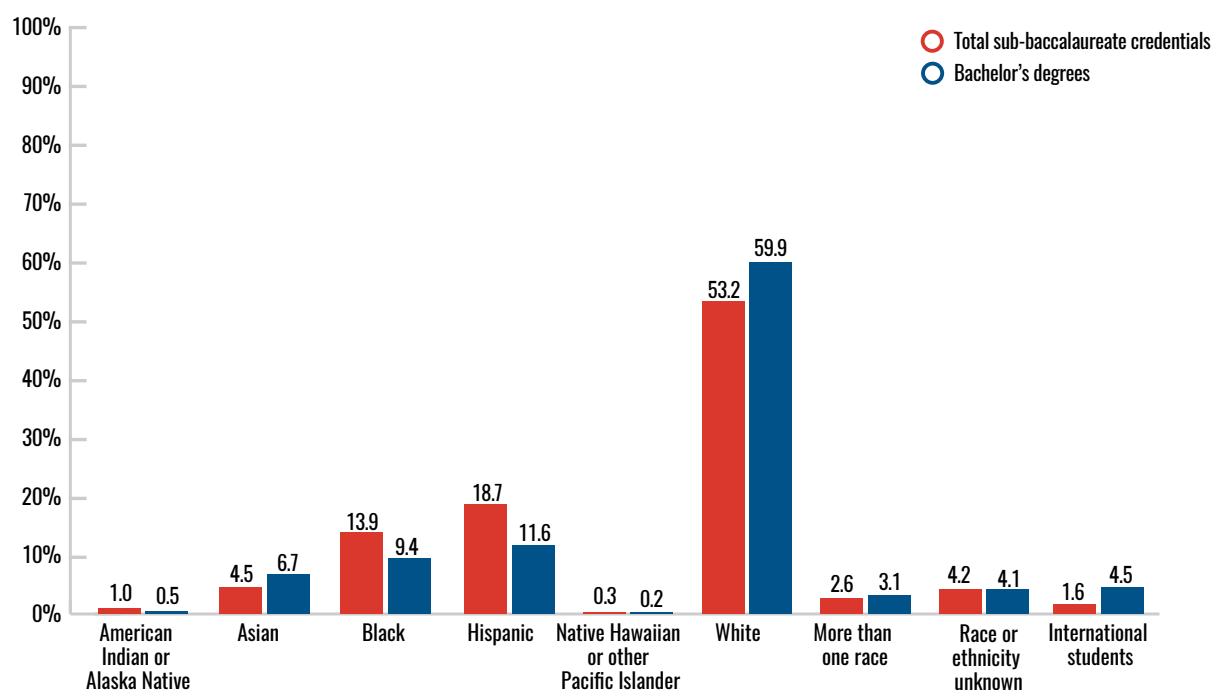


Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length. | Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

White students earned the majority of all sub-baccalaureate credentials awarded in 2016 (53.2 percent), followed by Hispanic students (18.7 percent) and Black students (13.9 percent). Whites also earned the largest share of all bachelor's degrees awarded in 2016 (59.9 percent), followed by Hispanics (11.6 percent) and African Americans (9.4 percent).

Figure 5.6: Bachelor's Degrees and Sub-baccalaureate Credentials, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016

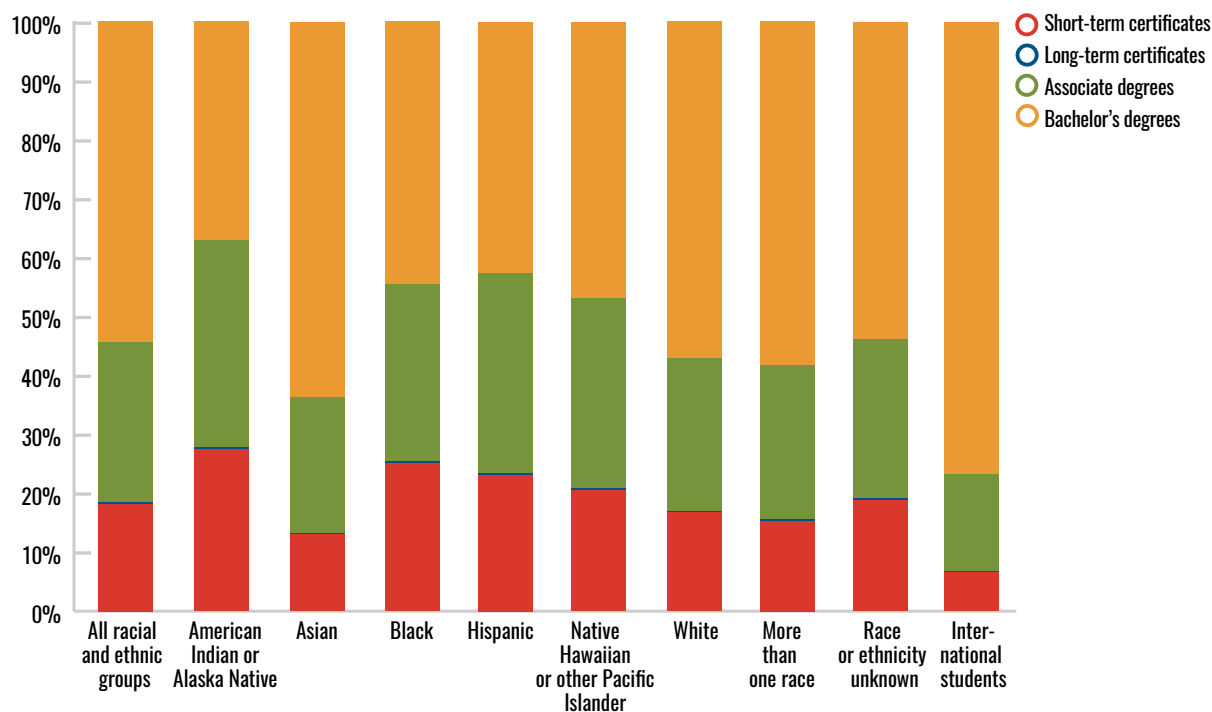


Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Completions Within Student Groups

In 2016, the majority of undergraduate credentials awarded were bachelor's degrees (54.3 percent), followed by associate degrees (27.2 percent), short-term certificates (18.2 percent), and long-term certificates (0.3 percent). There were large differences across student groups when considering the types of credentials students complete; namely, when examining sub-baccalaureate credentials as compared with bachelor's degrees.

Figure 5.7: Undergraduate Completions, by Award Level and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 1996 and 2016

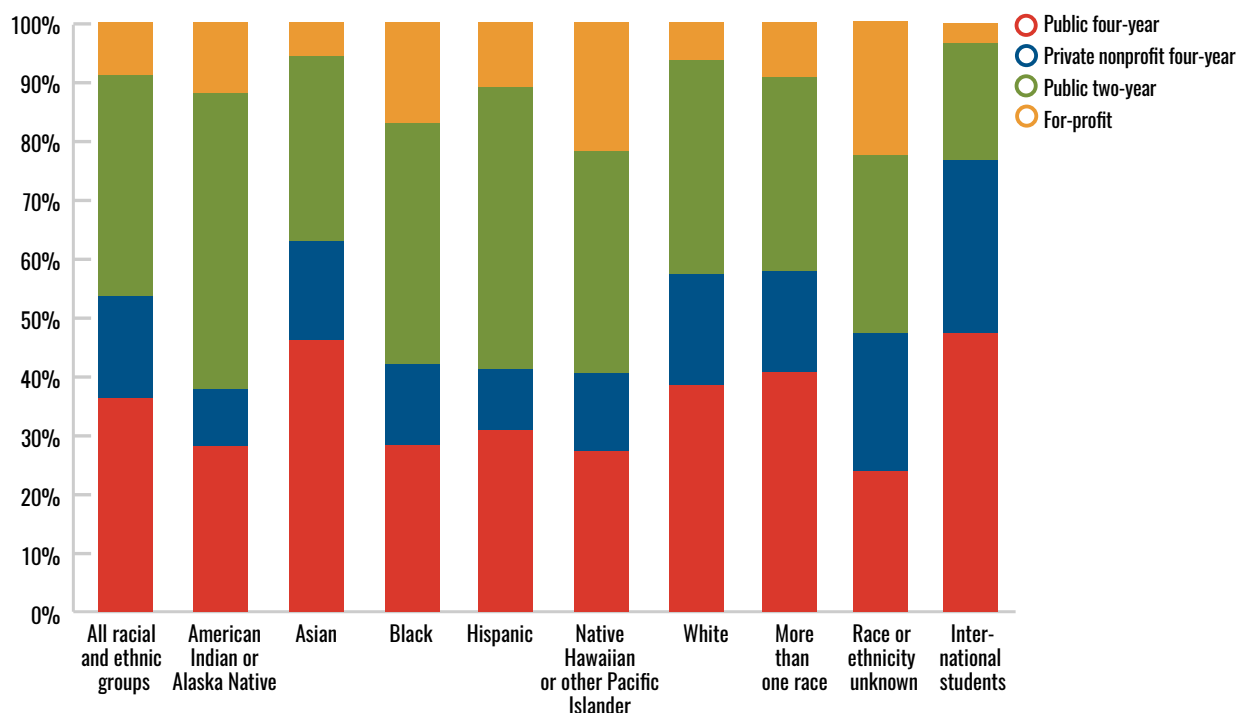
Notes: Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length. | Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

- More than half of the undergraduate credentials earned by American Indian or Alaska Native (62.9 percent), Hispanic (57.5 percent), Black (55.5 percent), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (53.1 percent) students were certificates or associate degrees. The share of Whites, Asians, and students of more than one race awarded these degrees ranged from 36.3 percent to 42.8 percent.
- By degree type, all students earning a sub-baccalaureate credential were most likely to earn an associate degree; however, some groups were more likely than others to earn a short-term certificate, including American Indian or Alaska Native (27.4 percent), Black (25.1 percent), Hispanic (23.1 percent), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (20.5 percent) students. In contrast, 16.7 percent of Whites and 13.0 percent of Asians earned these credentials.
- Among undergraduate credential completers, the groups most likely to earn a bachelor's degree were international students (76.8 percent), Asian students (63.7 percent), students of more than one race (58.3 percent), and White students (57.2 percent); the groups least likely to earn a bachelor's were American Indian or Alaska Native (37.1 percent), Hispanic (42.5 percent), and Black (44.5 percent) students.

Completions by Higher Education Sector and Field

In 2016, public two-year institutions awarded 37.4 percent of all undergraduate credentials, public and private nonprofit four-year institutions awarded 53.5 percent (36.3 percent and 17.3 percent, respectively), and for-profits awarded 9.0 percent.

Figure 5.8: Total Undergraduate Completions, by Sector and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

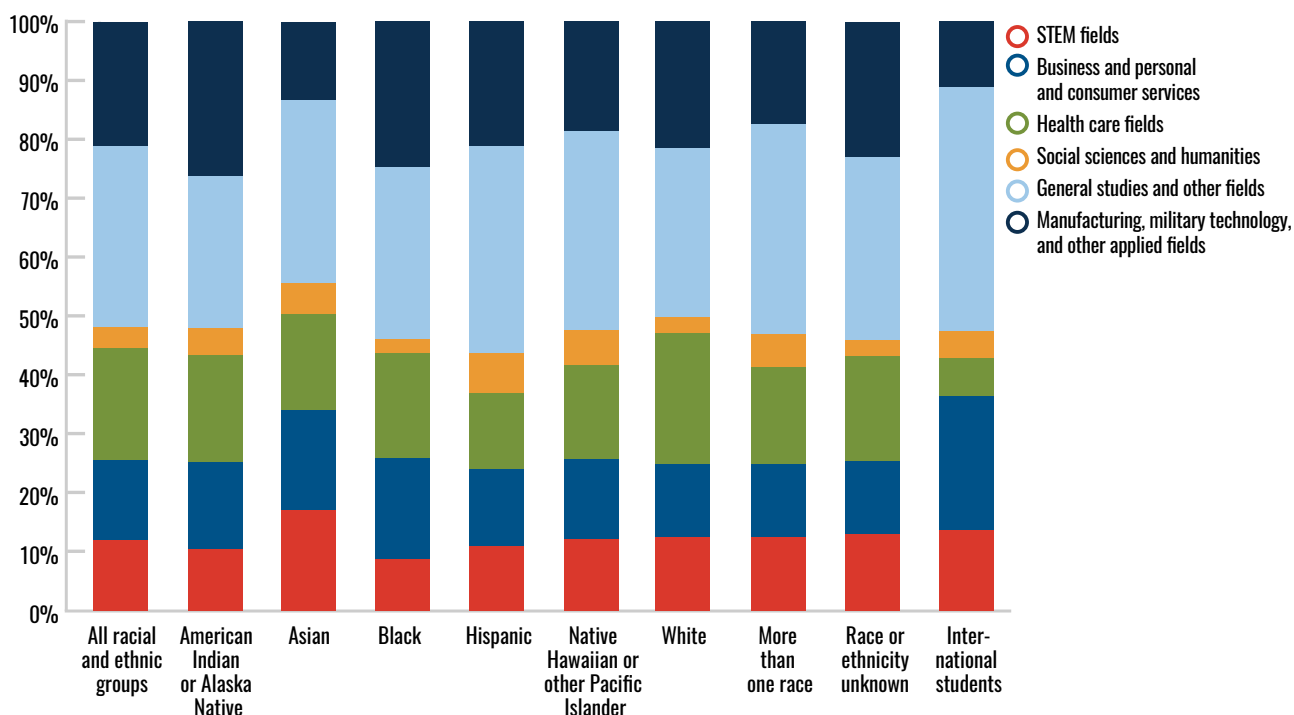
Note: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted.

- More than one-third of all international (47.3 percent), Asian (46.1 percent), and White (38.5 percent) students completed their undergraduate credentials at a public four-year institution, compared with just over one-quarter of all Black (28.2 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native (28.0 percent), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (27.3 percent) students.
- More than one-quarter of all international students completed at a private nonprofit four-year institution (29.2 percent)—the largest percentage of any group.
- Half of all American Indian or Alaska Native students (50.1 percent) completed at a public two-year institution—the highest percentage of any group. Almost half of all Hispanic students (47.7 percent), and about 40 percent of Black (40.9 percent), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (37.6 percent), and White (36.3 percent) students completed at these institutions.
- One in five Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students completed their undergraduate credentials at a for-profit institution (21.9 percent)—the highest of any group. Over 10 percent of all Black (17.1 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native (12.1 percent), and Hispanic (11.1 percent) students completed their undergraduate education at these institutions.

Public Two-Year Institutions: Sub-baccalaureate Credentials

The most credentialed fields at public two-year institutions were in general studies and other programs⁸ (30.6 percent), health care fields (18.9 percent), business and personal and consumer services (13.6 percent), and STEM fields (12.0 percent).

Figure 5.9: Total Sub-baccalaureate Credentials Completed at Public Two-Year Institutions, by Field and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for sub-baccalaureate credentials include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- General studies and other programs were the top credentialed fields for most students; however, the total share of students earning credentials in these fields ranged from 25.7 percent of American Indian or Alaska Native students to 41.4 percent of international students.
- A larger share of White students completed a sub-baccalaureate credential in health care fields (22.1 percent) than any other group. International students were the least likely to complete a credential in these fields (6.3 percent).
- Asian students were nearly twice as likely as Black students to complete a sub-baccalaureate credential in STEM (17.1 percent and 8.8 percent, respectively).
- American Indian or Alaska Native students were twice as likely to complete a sub-baccalaureate credential in manufacturing, military technology, and other applied fields⁹ as Asian students (26.4 percent and 13.4 percent, respectively).

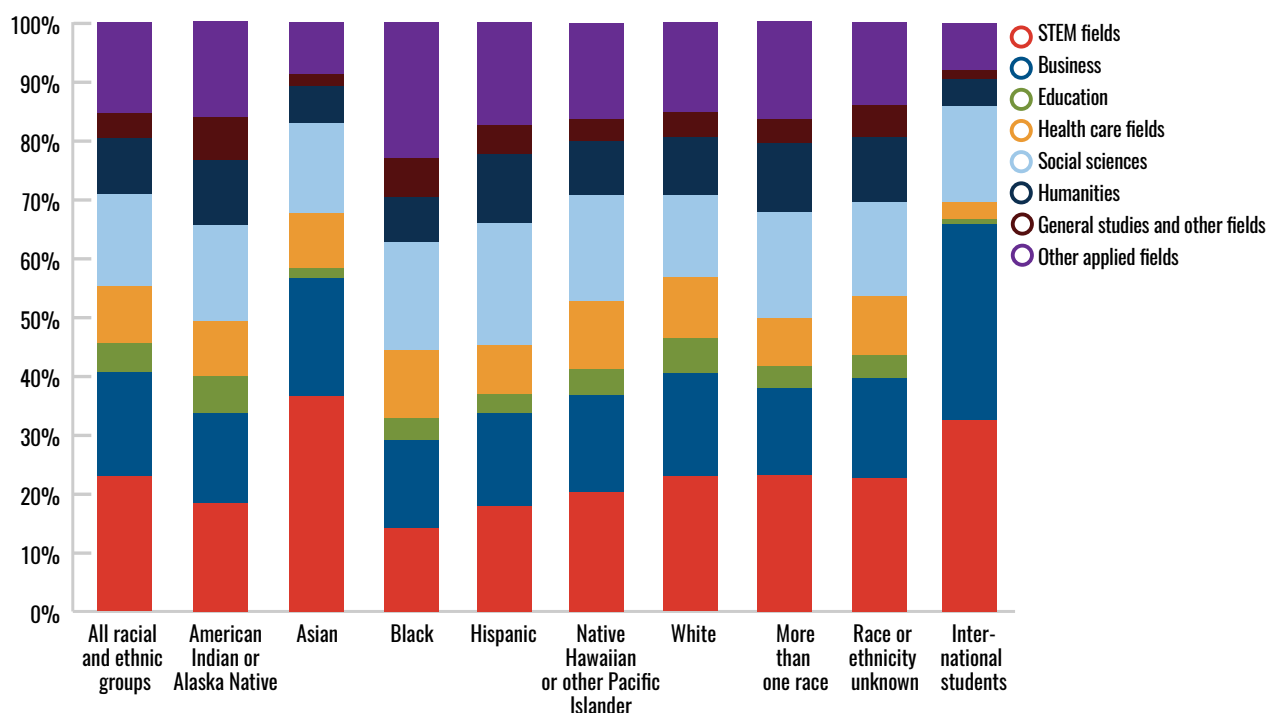
⁸ General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others.

⁹ Other applied fields for sub-baccalaureate credentials include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

Public Four-Year Institutions: Bachelor's Degrees

Three disciplinary areas represented over half of all bachelor's degrees completed at public four-year institutions in 2016: STEM (22.9 percent), business (17.8 percent), and the social sciences (15.6 percent).

Figure 5.10: Bachelor's Degrees Completed at Public Four-Year Institutions, by Field and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for bachelor's degrees include personal and consumer services; manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

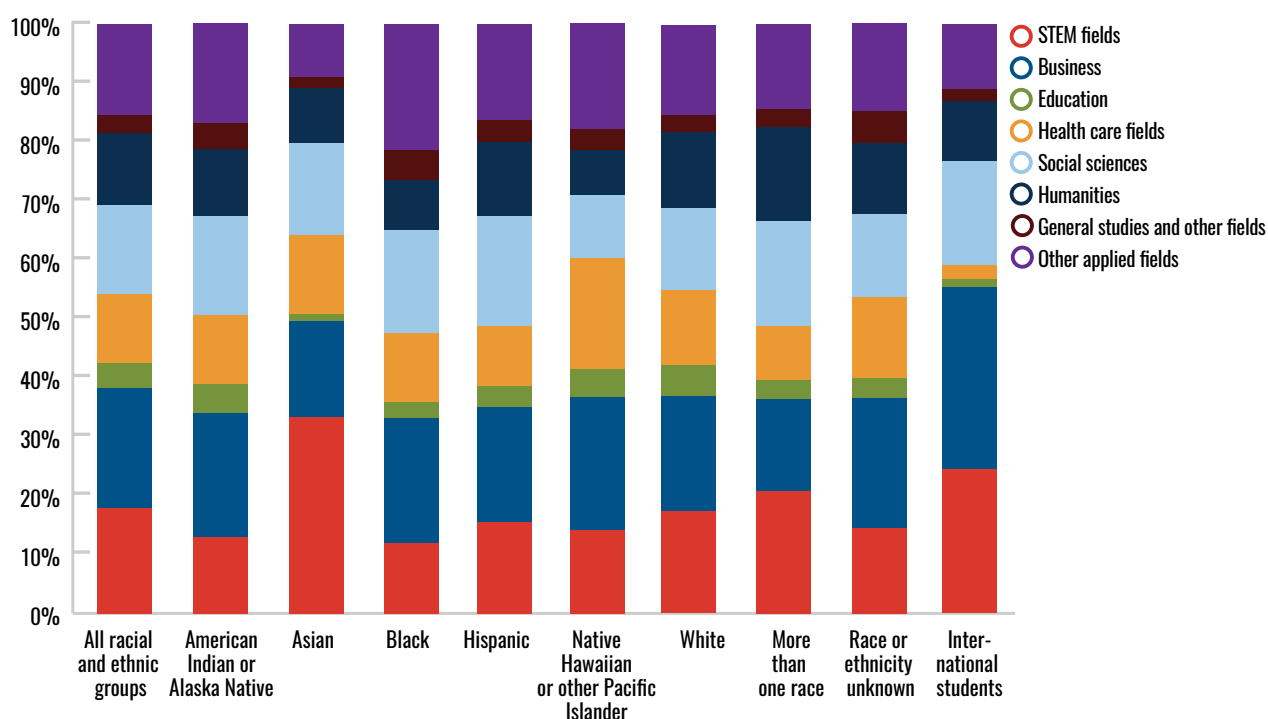
- Within the STEM fields, there existed great variation by race and ethnicity. More than twice as many Asian students (36.5 percent) as Black students (14.1 percent) earned bachelor's degrees in STEM fields.
- Slightly less than one-quarter of all Black students (23.0 percent) completed a bachelor's degree in other applied fields,¹⁰ compared with 8.8 percent of Asian students and 8.1 percent of international students.
- Roughly one-third of Hispanic students earned bachelor's degrees in the humanities and social sciences (32.4 percent)—the highest percentage of any group.
- One-third of all international students completed a bachelor's degree in business—the highest percentage of any group.

¹⁰ Other applied fields for bachelor's degrees include personal and consumer services; manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions: Bachelor's Degrees

The share of bachelor's degrees at private nonprofit four-year institutions that were in STEM fields was smaller than the share at public four-year institutions (17.9 percent versus 22.9 percent). This pattern was similar across all racial and ethnic groups. Business, health care, and humanities were larger shares of the degrees awarded by private nonprofit four-year than public four-year institutions.

Figure 5.11: Bachelor's Degrees Completed at Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions, by Field and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for bachelor's degrees include personal and consumer services; manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- International students were nearly twice as likely as students of more than one race to have completed a bachelor's degree in business (31.0 percent and 15.6 percent, respectively).
- One-third of Asian students completed a bachelor's degree in STEM fields (33.3 percent), more than twice the share of Black undergraduates (12.0 percent).
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students were more than twice as likely as students of more than one race to have completed a bachelor's degree in health care fields (18.8 percent and 9.1 percent, respectively). International students were the least likely to complete a credential in these fields (2.3 percent).
- For most student groups, the share of all bachelor's degrees completed at private nonprofit four-year institutions in the humanities and social sciences was over one-quarter of students, with the exception of Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students (18.3 percent).

For-Profit Institutions: Sub-baccalaureate Credentials and Bachelor's Degrees

Over half of sub-baccalaureate credentials awarded at for-profit institutions in 2016 were in health care fields (55.3 percent). Business and health care together accounted for over half (56.8 percent) of bachelor's degrees awarded.

Table 5.8: Sub-baccalaureate Credentials and Bachelor's Degrees Completed at For-Profit Institutions, by Field and Race and Ethnicity: 2016

SUB-BACCALAUREATE CREDENTIALS						
	STEM Fields	Business and Personal and Consumer Services	Health Care Fields	Social Sciences and Humanities	General Studies and Other Fields	Manufacturing, Military Technology, and Other Applied Fields
All racial and ethnic groups	6.9%	17.1%	55.3%	1.9%	1.0%	17.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5.6%	12.9%	59.4%	0.9%	0.4%	20.8%
Asian	6.0%	14.6%	66.0%	3.4%	0.7%	9.3%
Black	6.8%	19.6%	54.7%	1.2%	0.8%	16.9%
Hispanic	4.8%	10.9%	67.3%	1.0%	0.6%	15.4%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	5.3%	14.8%	62.2%	1.0%	0.9%	15.9%
White	7.2%	16.1%	53.2%	1.7%	1.2%	20.6%
More than one race	9.6%	19.6%	48.4%	3.9%	1.3%	17.2%
Race or ethnicity unknown	9.8%	28.7%	37.3%	4.3%	1.3%	18.7%
International students	13.4%	36.6%	11.5%	17.6%	0.7%	20.1%

BACHELOR'S DEGREES								
	STEM Fields	Business	Education	Health Care Fields	Social Sciences	Humanities	General Studies and Other Fields	Other Applied Fields
All racial and ethnic groups	9.7%	31.3%	3.3%	25.5%	6.3%	4.3%	0.4%	19.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	10.0%	32.5%	2.9%	20.9%	7.5%	3.6%	0.7%	22.0%
Asian	10.5%	27.9%	0.3%	45.3%	1.5%	3.7%	0.1%	10.5%
Black	7.8%	36.3%	3.6%	24.1%	7.0%	2.9%	0.4%	17.9%
Hispanic	9.0%	31.0%	3.0%	22.7%	5.7%	4.4%	0.4%	23.7%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	9.6%	33.6%	1.8%	23.2%	7.7%	4.3%	1.9%	17.9%
White	11.1%	28.7%	4.0%	26.5%	6.6%	4.4%	0.5%	18.2%
More than one race	10.6%	29.4%	2.6%	19.9%	9.0%	8.2%	0.2%	20.1%
Race or ethnicity unknown	8.5%	34.5%	2.1%	24.1%	5.9%	4.2%	0.4%	20.4%
International students	8.6%	32.1%	0.5%	10.9%	3.3%	11.1%	0.2%	33.2%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for bachelor's degrees include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations. | Other applied fields for sub-baccalaureate credentials include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- Over one-third (36.6 percent) of the sub-baccalaureate credentials completed by international students at for-profit institutions were in business and personal and consumer services—a much larger percentage than any other student group.
- Other than international students, of whom only 11.5 percent graduated with sub-baccalaureate credentials in health care, nearly every other student group earned more than half of their sub-baccalaureate credentials in these fields, including 67.3 percent of Hispanics, 66.0 percent of Asians, 59.4 percent of American Indians or Alaska Natives, 54.7 percent of African Americans, and 53.2 percent of Whites.
- International students were also more than four times as likely as every other group to complete a sub-baccalaureate credential in social sciences and the humanities (17.6 percent). They were also more than twice as likely as nearly all other groups to complete a bachelor's degree in the humanities (11.1 percent).
- Asian students were the most likely to have earned bachelor's degrees in health care fields (45.3 percent), while international students were the least likely to do so (10.9 percent).

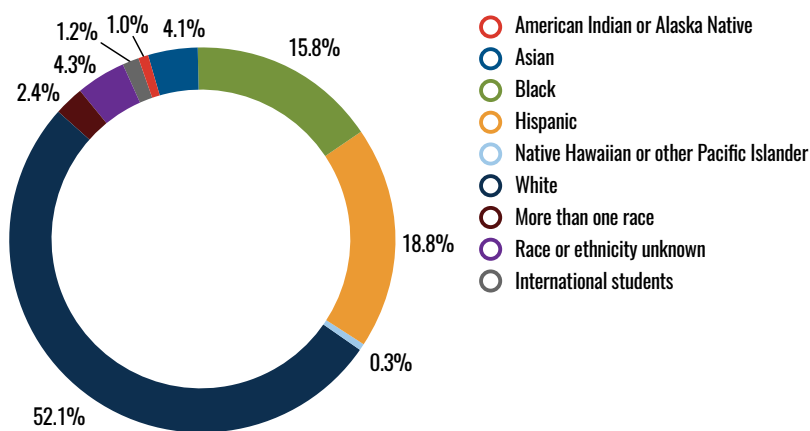
Completions by Credential Type

Students from different racial and ethnic groups attend different types of institutions and earn different types of undergraduate degrees in different fields. (As Chapter 6 of this report, “Graduate School Completion,” indicates, there is similar variation in graduate degrees earned.)

Short-Term Certificates

In 2016, undergraduate students completed nearly 676,000 short-term certificates. Among students who completed short-term certificates, 52.1 percent were White and 42.4 percent were students of color.¹¹ International students made up 1.2 percent of short-term certificate completers, and 4.3 percent were of unknown race and ethnicity.¹²

Figure 5.12: Short-Term Certificates, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

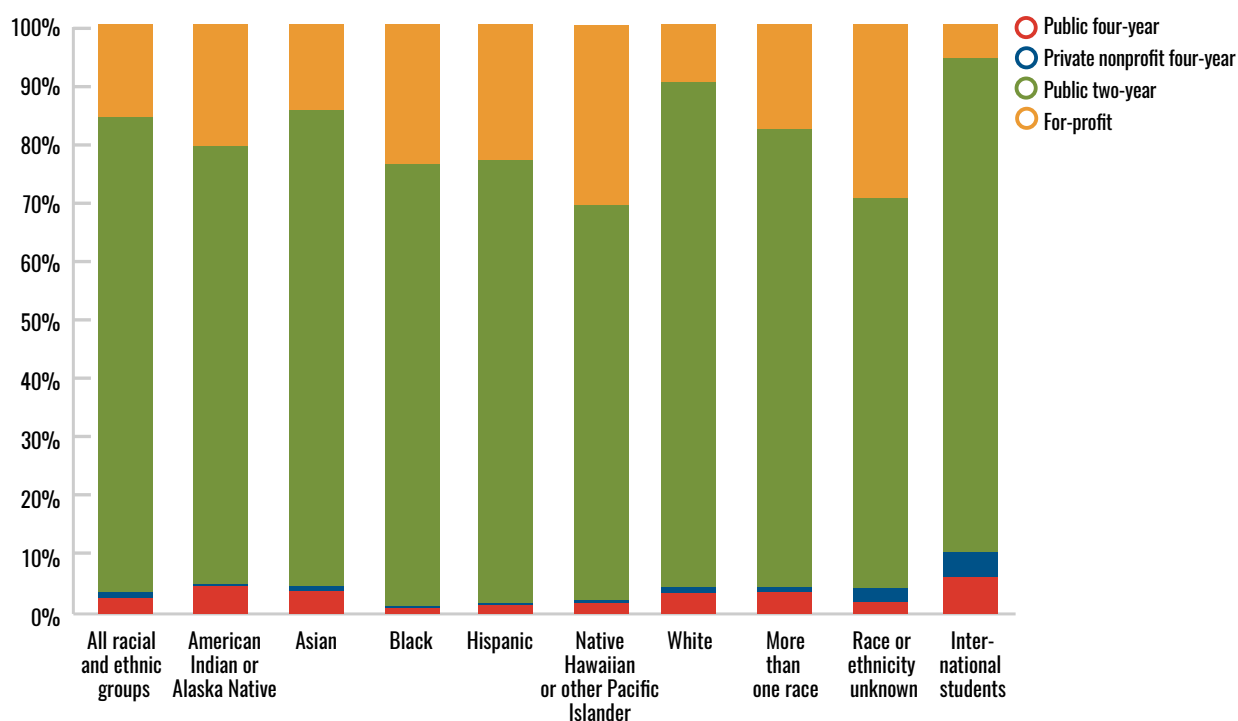
Note: Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length.

¹¹ The group students of color includes American Indians or Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, and students of more than one race.

¹² Race and ethnicity unknown is included among the racial and ethnic categories within IPEDS data, which are used in this chapter of the report. As a result, tables and figures include this group alongside other racial and ethnic categories.

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

Figure 5.13: Short-Term Certificates, by Sector and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



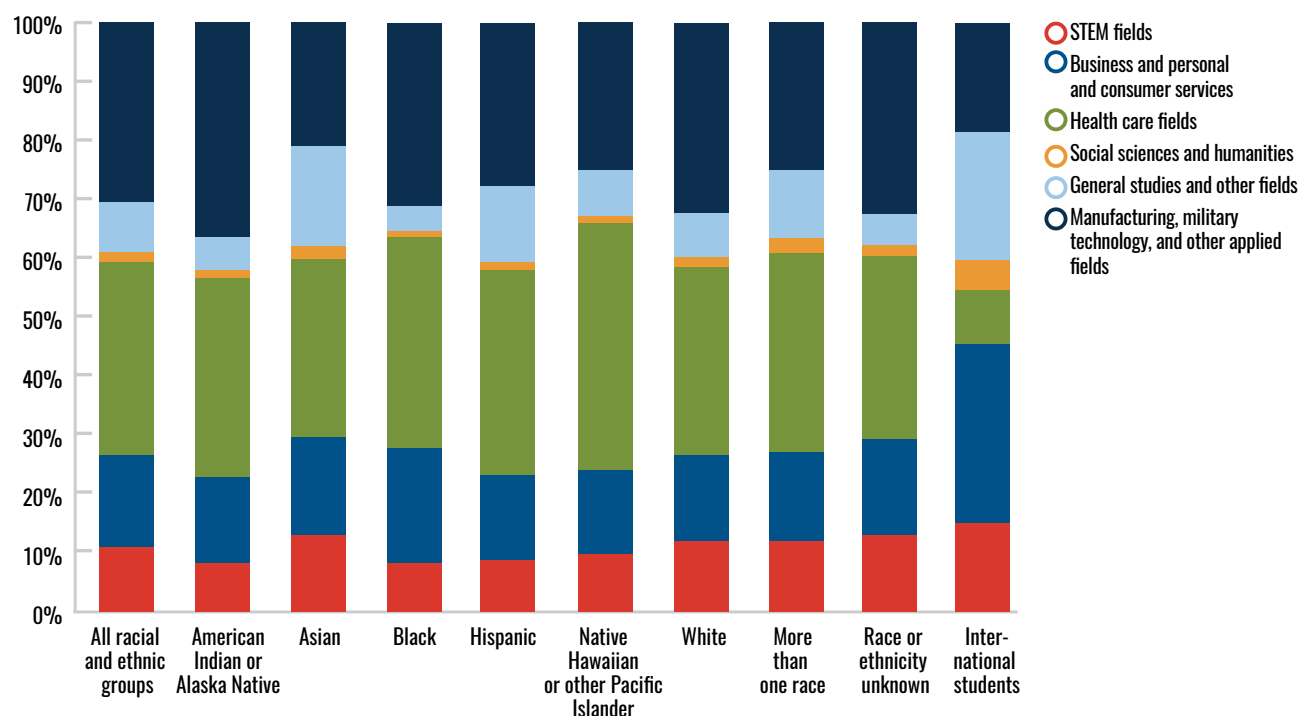
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length.

- The majority of short-term certificates earned in 2016 were completed at public two-year institutions (80.7 percent), followed by for-profit (15.7 percent), public four-year (2.7 percent), and private nonprofit four-year (0.9 percent) institutions.
- Nearly one in four Black and Hispanic students (23.6 percent and 23.0 percent, respectively), and over one-quarter of Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students (30.7 percent) completed their short-term certificates at for-profit institutions. By contrast, only 9.7 percent of White students and 14.5 percent of Asian students who completed short-term certificates graduated from these institutions.
- International students were much more likely than all other groups to have completed their certificates at a private nonprofit four-year institution (4.3 percent).

FIELD OF STUDY

Figure 5.14: Field of Study for Short-Term Certificate Recipients, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

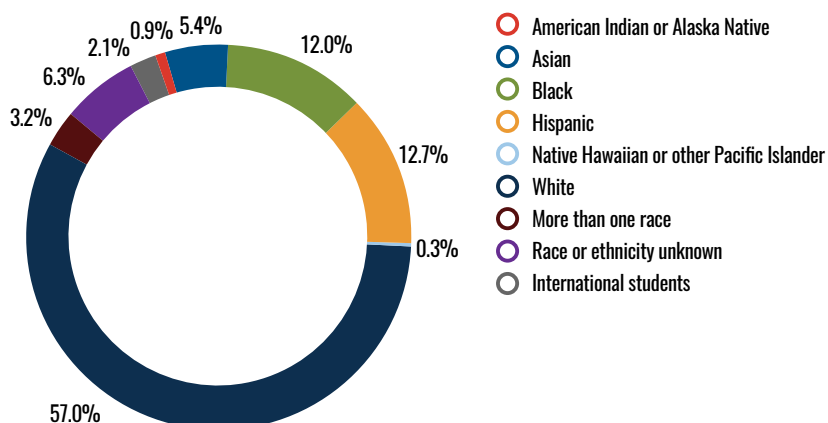
Short-term certificates include those that are less than two academic years in length. | STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for sub-baccalaureate credentials include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- Over one-third of Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders (42.0 percent), Blacks (35.8 percent), Hispanics (34.8 percent), individuals of more than one race (33.8 percent), and American Indians or Alaska Natives (33.7 percent) completed their short-term credentials in health care fields, compared with only 9.2 percent of international students.
- A larger share of international students earned their short-term certificates in business and personal and consumer services (30.4 percent)—more than double that of most other groups.
- A larger share of American Indian or Alaska Native students than of any other group completed their certificates in manufacturing, military technology, or other applied fields (36.4 percent)

Long-Term Certificates

A small fraction of undergraduate credentials awarded in 2016 were long-term certificates. Of the nearly 11,000 students that earned these certificates, 57.0 percent were White and 34.6 percent were students of color. International students made up 2.1 percent of long-term certificate completers, and 6.3 percent were of unknown race and ethnicity.

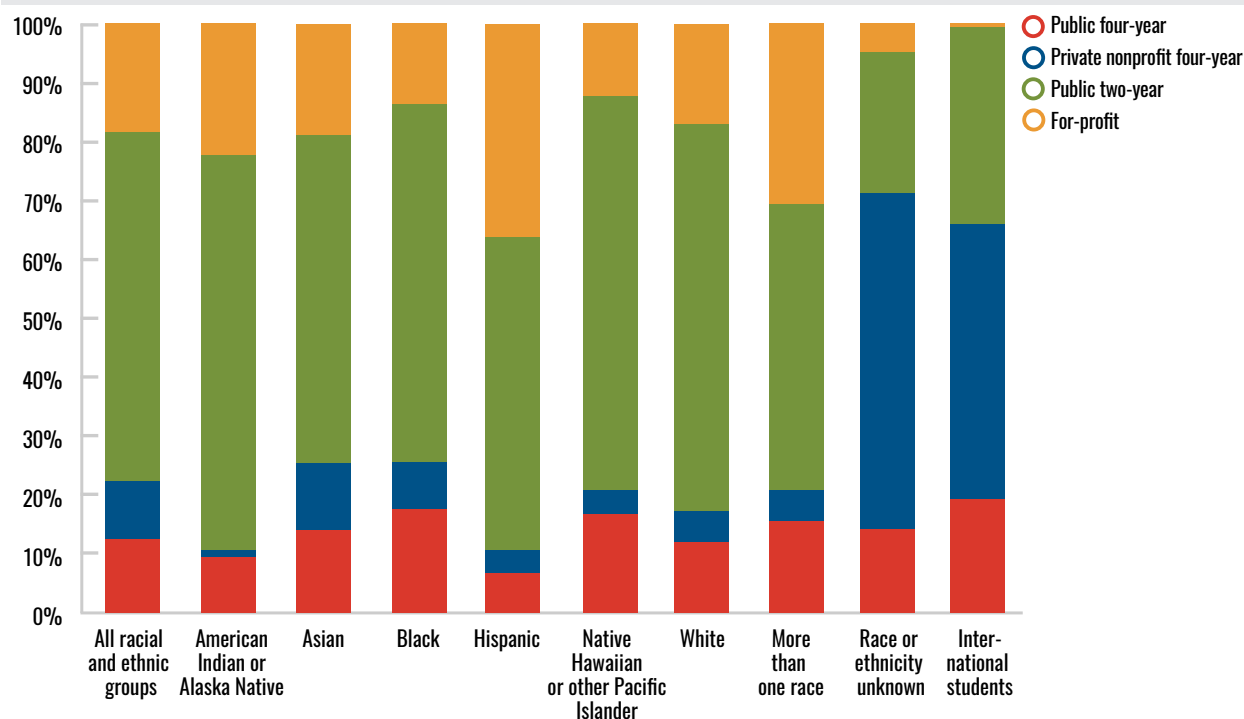
Figure 5.15: Long-Term Certificates, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016
 Note: Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

Figure 5.16: Long-Term Certificates, by Sector and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



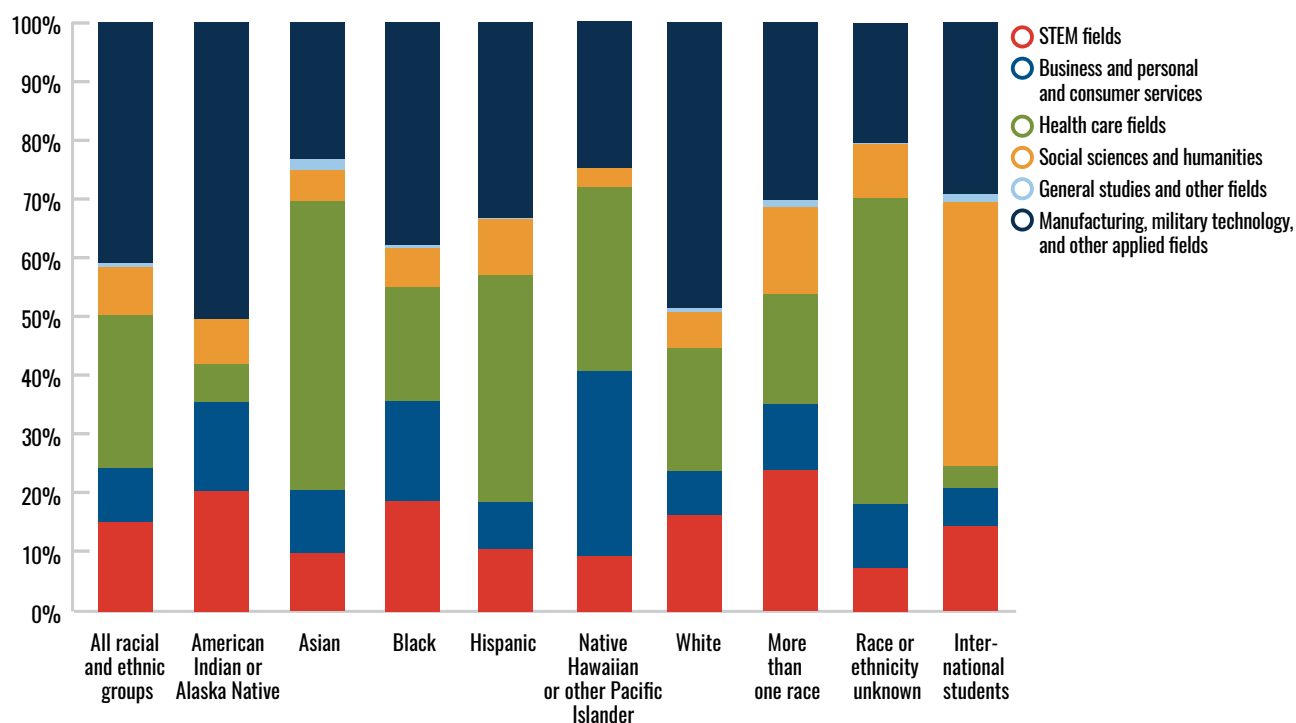
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016
 Notes: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted. | Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length.

- The majority of long-term certificates were completed at public two-year institutions (59.1 percent), followed by for-profit (18.5 percent), public four-year (12.5 percent), and private nonprofit four-year (9.9 percent) institutions.
- Nearly half of all international students who completed long-term certificates earned them at private nonprofit four-year institutions (46.7 percent), the most of any group by far.

- About one in five American Indian or Alaska Native students (22.4 percent) and Asian students (19.0 percent) earned their long-term certificates at a for-profit institution. This share was more than one-third for Hispanic students (36.1 percent) and close to one-third of students of more than one race (30.6 percent) who earned long-term certificates.

FIELD OF STUDY

Figure 5.17: Field of Study for Long-Term Certificate Recipients, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

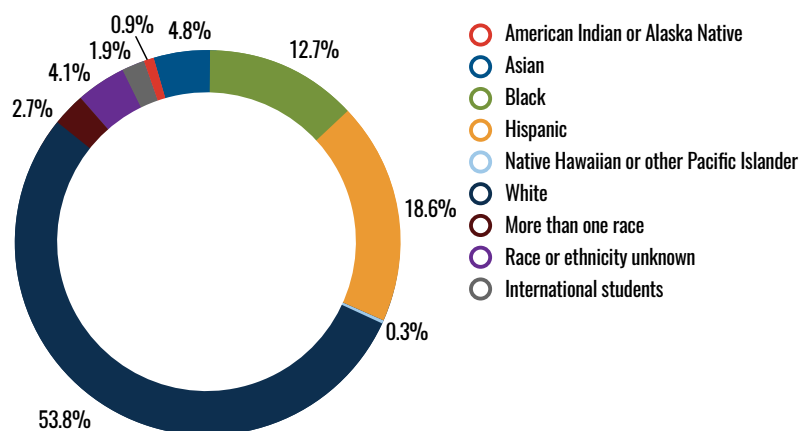
Notes: Long-term certificates include those that are at least two, but less than four, academic years in length. | STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for sub-baccalaureate credentials include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- Half of all American Indian or Alaska Native students completed a long-term certificate in manufacturing, military technology, and other applied fields (50.5 percent), compared with 23.4 percent of Asian students.
- A larger share of international students completed long-term certificates in social sciences and humanities (44.9 percent) than any other group.
- Just under half of all Asian students who completed a long-term certificate were in health care fields (49.1 percent), compared with 38.5 percent of all Hispanic, 21.0 percent of all White, and 19.5 percent of all Black long-term certificate recipients.

Associate Degrees

Of the over 1 million students who received associate degrees in 2016, 53.8 percent were White and 40.1 percent were students of color. International students made up 1.9 percent of associate degree completers, and 4.1 percent were of unknown race and ethnicity.

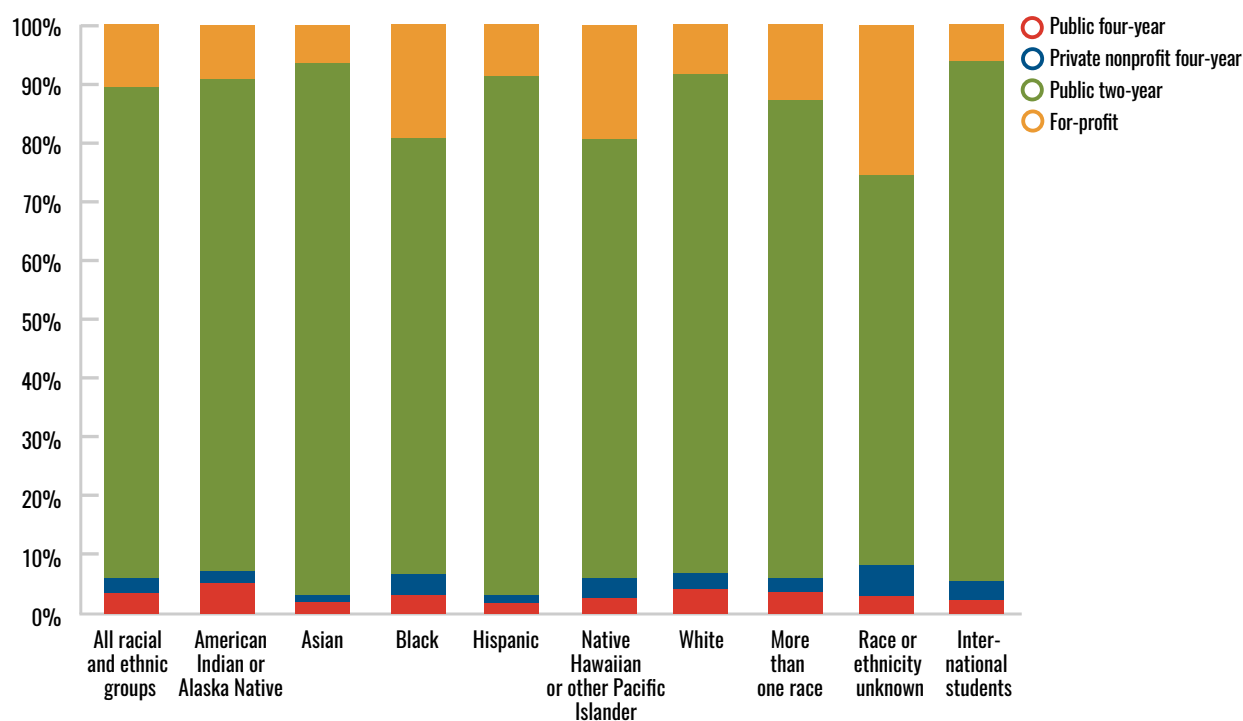
Figure 5.18: Associate Degrees, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

Figure 5.19: Associate Degrees, by Sector and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



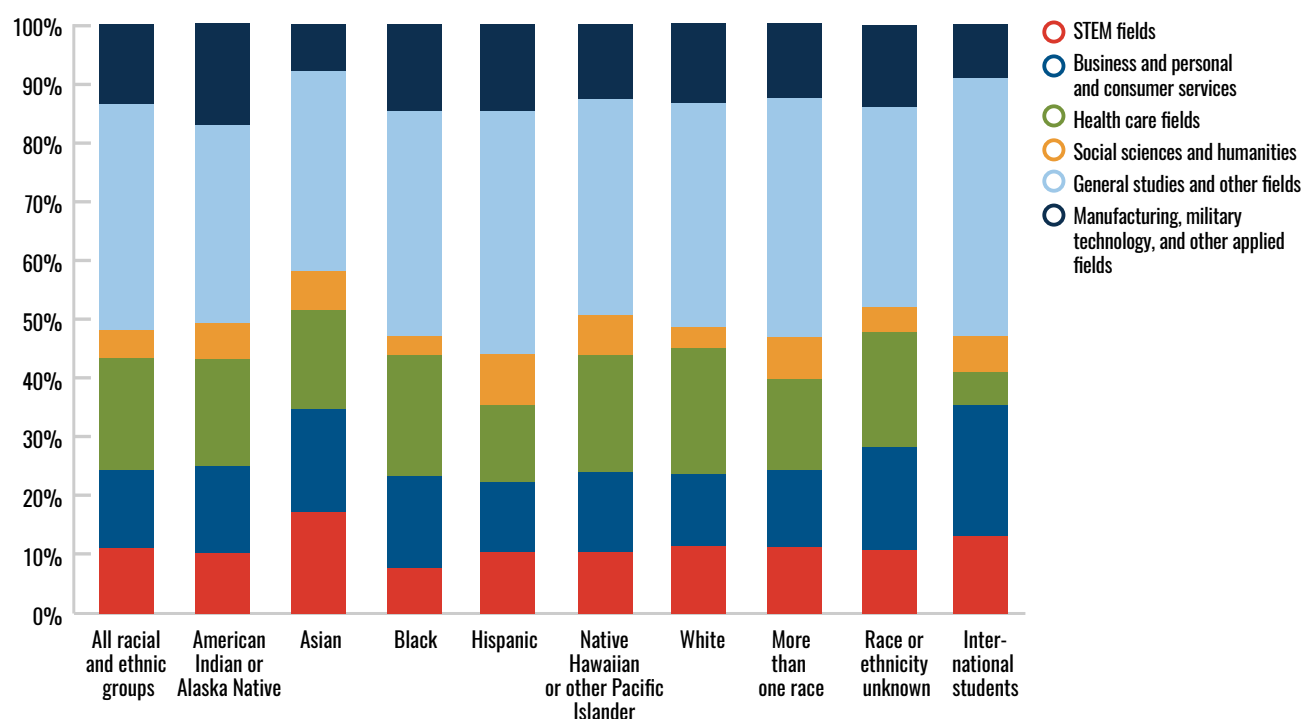
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Note: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted.

- The majority of associate degrees were completed at public two-year institutions (83.4 percent), followed by for-profit (10.6 percent), public four-year (3.4 percent), and private nonprofit four-year (2.6 percent) institutions.
- Nearly 20 percent of Black and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander associate degree recipients completed their degrees at a for-profit institution (19.3 percent and 19.5 percent, respectively), compared with 6.6 percent of Asian students and 6.3 percent of international students who earned associate degrees.

FIELD OF STUDY

Figure 5.20: Field of Study for Associate Degree Recipients, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

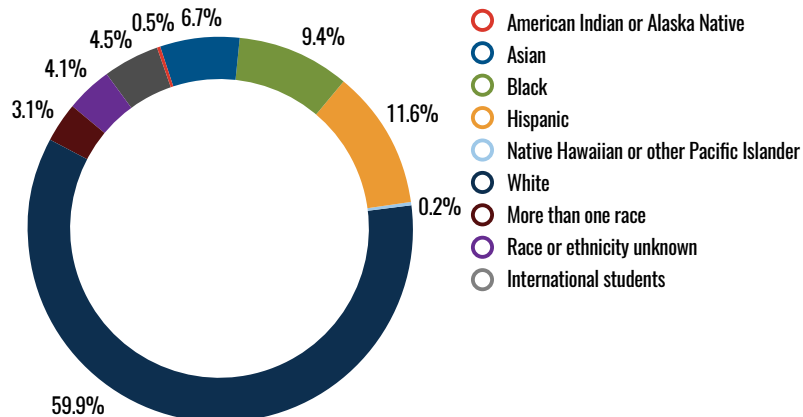
Notes: STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for sub-baccalaureate credentials include the following fields of study: manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; education; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- Asian associate degree recipients were more than twice as likely to have completed their degrees in STEM as Black students (17.3 percent and 7.8 percent, respectively).
- A larger share of international (43.7 percent) and Hispanic (41.2 percent) associate degree recipients than of other groups completed their degrees in general studies.
- About one in five White students (21.5 percent), Black students (20.5 percent), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students (19.9 percent) completed their associate degrees in health care fields, compared with only 5.7 percent of international students.

Bachelor's Degrees

Over 2 million bachelor's degrees were awarded in 2016. Of those earning these credentials, 59.9 percent were White and 31.5 percent were students of color. International students made up 4.5 percent of associate degree completers, and 4.1 percent were of unknown race and ethnicity.

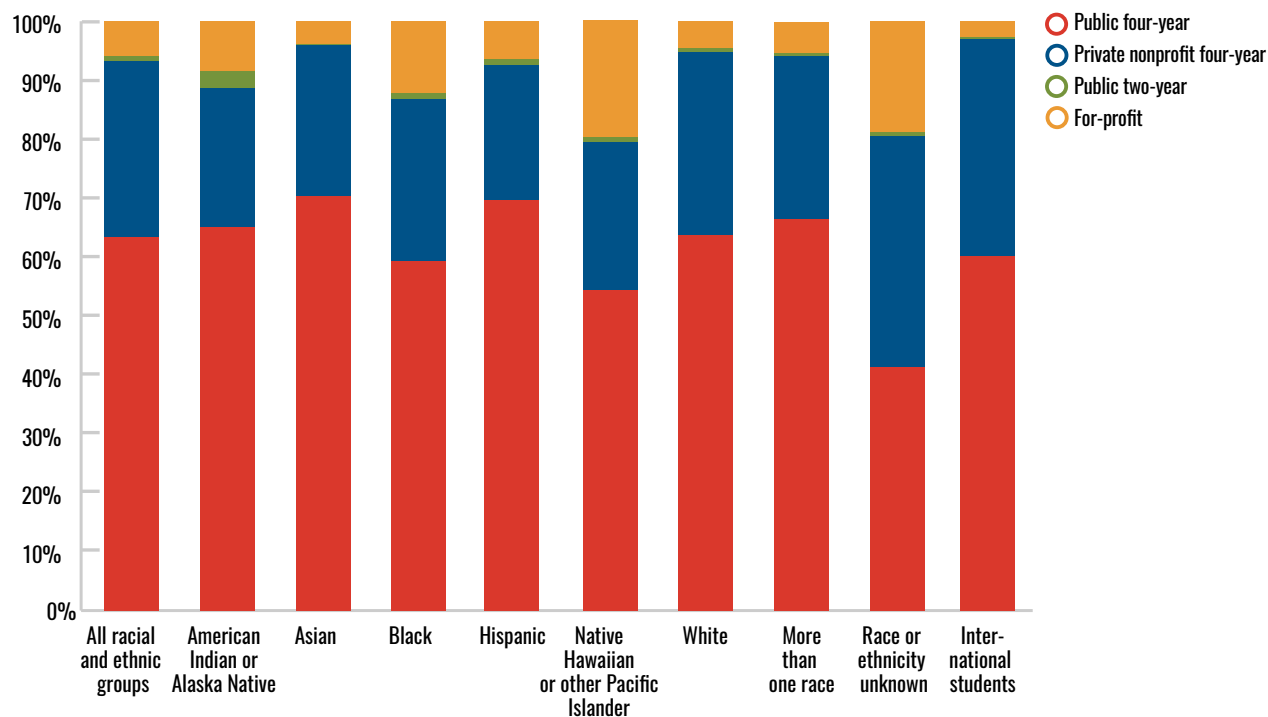
Figure 5.21: Bachelor's Degrees, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

Figure 5.22: Bachelor's Degrees, by Sector and Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

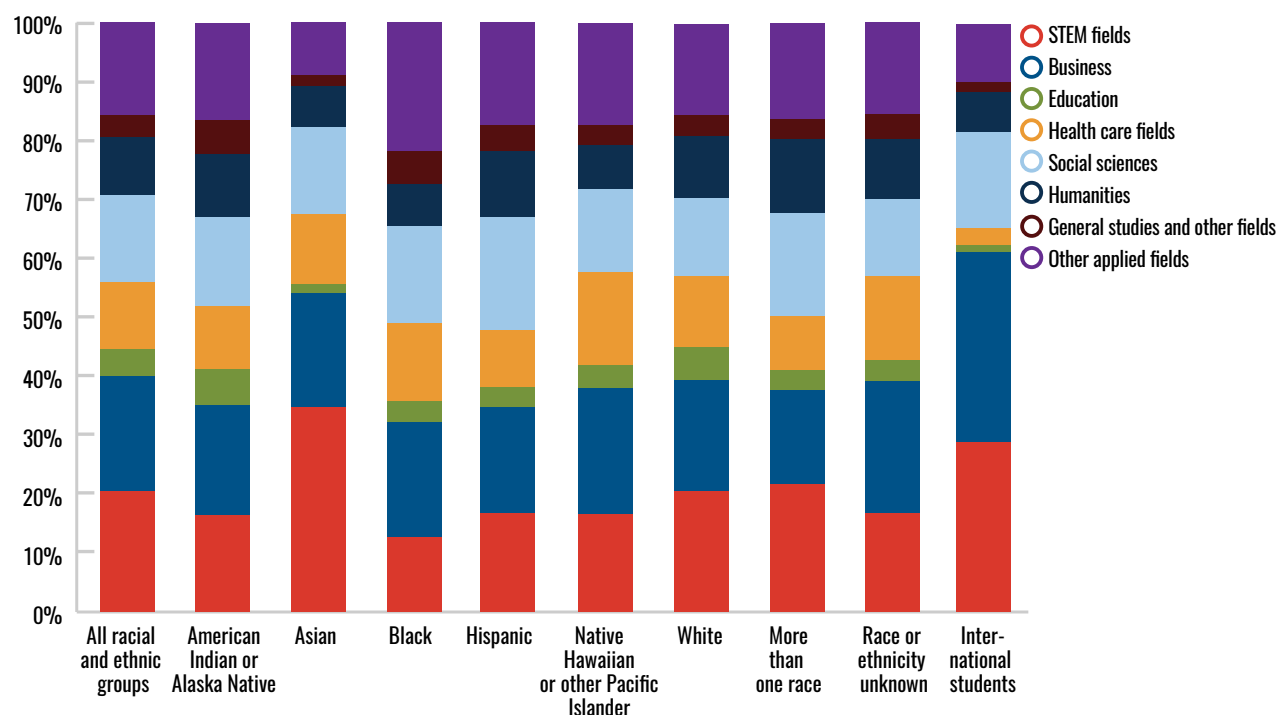
Note: Institutions were categorized into sectors based upon control of the institution and the length of the predominant award granted.

- The majority of bachelor's degrees earned in 2016 were completed at public four-year institutions (63.4 percent), followed by private nonprofit four-year (29.8 percent), for-profit (6.0 percent), and public two-year (0.8 percent) institutions.
- Over one-third of international students who completed their bachelor's degrees earned them at a private nonprofit four-year institution (36.7 percent), compared with 22.9 percent of Hispanic students.

- Larger shares of Asian students (70.4 percent) and Hispanic students (69.6 percent) than of Black students (59.3 percent) and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students (54.4 percent) who earned bachelor's degrees in 2016 graduated from a public four-year institution.
- About one in five Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander students (19.9 percent) and more than one in 10 Black bachelor's degree recipients (12.2 percent) earned their degrees at a for-profit institution, a much higher percentage than White (4.5 percent), Asian (3.8 percent), and international (2.6 percent) students.

FIELD OF STUDY

Figure 5.23: Field of Study for Bachelor's Degree Recipients, by Race and Ethnicity: 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016

Notes: STEM fields include computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technology, biological and physical sciences, science technology, math, and agriculture. | General studies and other programs include fields such as liberal arts and sciences, interpersonal and social skills, personal awareness and self-improvement, and multi- or interdisciplinary studies, among others. | Other applied fields for bachelor's degrees include personal and consumer services; manufacturing, construction, repair, and transportation; military technology and protective services; architecture; communications; public administration and human services; design and applied arts; law and legal studies; library sciences; and theology and religious vocations.

- Over one-third of Asian bachelor's degree recipients in 2016 completed their degrees in STEM fields (34.7 percent)—the highest percentage of any group—compared with 12.6 percent of Black students, who were the least likely to complete their degrees in STEM.
- Nearly one-third of international students earned their bachelor's degrees in business (32.4 percent)—the highest of any group.
- More than one in five Black students completed their bachelor's degrees in other applied fields (21.9 percent), a much larger share than that of Asian students (9.0 percent).
- Roughly one in 10 students of more than one race (12.6 percent), Hispanic (11.2 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native (10.8 percent), and White (10.5 percent) students earned their bachelor's degrees in the humanities. International students were the least likely to complete their bachelor's degrees in the humanities (6.7 percent).

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