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## The Total Number of Higher Education Institutions Decreases by 2 Percent

**August 21, 2024**

*NCES data also show around 2.5 million high school students are enrolled in college courses for credit*

WASHINGTON (August 21, 2024) — The number of postsecondary institutions eligible to participate in federal student financial assistance programs (Title IV institutions) in the United States and other jurisdictions in the 2023–24 academic year showed a decrease of approximately 2 percent from the previous academic year, according to data released today from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the statistical center within the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. The 4-year public sector was the only sector to see an increase in institutions. That increase included 16 institutions that were 2-year in 2022–2023 and became 4-year for 2023–24. The new data also shed light on tuition and fees in 2023–24, as well as unduplicated enrollment head counts. Additionally, new data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), show around 2.5 million high school students were enrolled in college courses for credit during the 2022–23 academic year.

"Previous releases from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) have established that 2-year institutions are an educational resource for students who do not fit the profile of a "traditional" undergraduate student," said NCES Commissioner Peggy G. Carr. "The new data released today improve our understanding of the role of 2-year institutions in educating such students, with information about their providing advanced coursework to high school students."

Below are a few highlights from the data released today by NCES's [IPEDS program](#).

- The number of Title IV institutions in the U.S. and other jurisdictions decreased from 5,918 in 2022–23 to 5,819 in 2023–24.
- Between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 academic years, adjusting for inflation, average tuition and fees for full-time, first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduates decreased across all sectors.
- Of the roughly 3.6 million students receiving degrees or certificates at 4-year Title IV degree-granting institutions in 2023–24, about 54 percent received a bachelor's degree.

IPEDS is a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by NCES. IPEDS gathers information from U.S. colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions eligible to participate in any of the Title IV federal student financial aid programs.

The provisional fall collection release for 2023–24 includes data from 5,819 Title IV institutions and 70 administrative offices. Institutions that complete IPEDS surveys each year include research universities, state colleges and universities, private religious and liberal arts colleges, for-profit institutions, community and technical colleges, non-degree-granting institutions such as cosmetology schools, and others.

To access the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data released today, please visit the [IPEDS Data Explorer](#).

**Key Findings:****Institutional Characteristics**

- During the 2023–24 academic year, the number of Title IV institutions in the United States and other jurisdictions decreased approximately 2 percent from 5,918 in 2022–23 to 5,819. The 4-year public sector was the only sector to see an increase in institutions, which included 16 institutions that were 2-year in 2022–23 and became 4-year for 2023–24. Of this total,
  - 2,691 were classified as 4-year institutions;
  - 1,496 were 2-year institutions; and
  - 1,632 were less-than-2-year institutions.

**Tuition and Fees**

- Between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 academic years, adjusting for inflation, average tuition and fees for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates decreased across all sectors.
  - Public 4-year institutions reported a 7 percent decrease for in-state students (to approximately \$9,000) and an 8 percent decrease for out-of-state students to approximately \$19,300.
  - Private nonprofit 4-year institutions reported a decrease of approximately 5 percent to approximately \$32,600.
  - Private for-profit institutions reported a decrease of approximately 8 percent to approximately \$18,700.

### Completions

- Of the roughly 3.6 million students receiving degrees or certificates at 4-year Title IV degree-granting institutions in 2023–24,
  - about 54 percent overall received a bachelor's degree, though the percentage varied by institutional control
    - Approximately 58 percent of the 2.2 million students at public 4-year institutions received a bachelor's degree
    - Approximately 49 percent of the 1.1 million students at private nonprofit 4-year institutions received a bachelor's degree
    - Approximately 40 percent of the 246,000 students at private for-profit 4-year institutions received a bachelor's degree.

### Unduplicated Enrollment

- The 12-month unduplicated head count enrollment of undergraduate students increased between the 12-month periods of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, and July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. This was the first increase in this head count since 2010–11.
- The 12-month unduplicated head count enrollment of students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 varied by institutional control. Of the approximately 5.8 million undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education,
  - around 4.1 million were enrolled at public institutions;
  - around 935,000 were enrolled at private nonprofit institutions; and
  - around 755,000 were enrolled at private for-profit institutions.
- About 2.5 million students reported in the unduplicated head count enrollment were high school students enrolled in college courses for credit, with approximately 1.1 million of them enrolled at 4-year institutions, around 1.4 million enrolled at 2-year institutions, and 11,000 enrolled at less-than-2-year institutions.
  - Public 2-year institutions enrolled the most high school students for credit.
  - Approximately 57 percent of high school students enrolled for credit were women.
  - White students made up the majority of high school students enrolled for credit at approximately 52 percent, followed by Hispanic or Latino students at 19.6 percent.

### Technical Note

Title IV institutions are those with a written agreement with the U.S. Department of Education that allows the institution to participate in any of the Title IV federal student financial assistance programs. The U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Air Force Academy are not Title IV eligible but are included in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System universe because they are federally funded and open to the public.

The data products released today are provisional. NCES completes an extensive quality control process when the provisional data is released to the public. Along with additional follow-up with institutions, blank data are imputed, using the Nearest Neighbor method to estimate missing data. NCES plans to forecast the final national results in the summer 2025, after some institutions revise their data.

Additional information regarding these data may be found in the [IPEDS release memo](#).

*The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), a principal agency of the U.S. Federal Statistical System, is the statistical center of the U.S. Department of Education and the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. NCES fulfills a congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report complete statistics on the condition and progress of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally.*

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