The percentage of undergraduates who were first-generation college students depends on the definition. As of academic year 2015–16:

- **24%** had parents with no postsecondary education.
- **56%** had parents who did not have a bachelor’s degree. The fact sheet uses this definition of first-generation student.
- **59%** of students whose parents did not have a bachelor’s degree were also the first sibling in their family to go to college.

### Percentage Who Were Age 30 or Above

- **28%** of first-generation students
- **16%** of continuing-generation students

### Median Parental Income Among Dependent Students

- **$41,000** for first-generation students
- **$90,000** for continuing-generation students

### Percentage of Undergraduates Who Were First-generation, by Sector

- **Public 4-year**: 47%
- **Public 2-year**: 64%
- **Private nonprofit 4-year**: 43%
- **Private nonprofit 2-year**: 69%
- **Private for-profit 4-year**: 72%
- **Private for-profit 2-year**: 70%

### Percentage of Undergraduates Who Were First-generation, by Type of Minority-Serving Institution

- American Indian/Alaska Native-serving: 67%
- Hispanic/Latinx/a/o-serving: 65%
- Black/African American-serving, non-HBCU: 65%
- Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs): 60%
- Non-minority-serving: 49%
- Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander-serving: 48%
Among both first-generation and continuing-generation college students in academic year 2015–16, most had a paid job, internship, or work-study award:

- 66% of first-generation students were employed.
- 61% of continuing-generation students were employed.

**MEDIAN NUMBER OF JOBS**

Neither first-generation nor continuing-generation students changed jobs frequently while enrolled, nor did they have many jobs at once: both had 1 job, on average, in academic year 2015–16.

**MEDIAN HOURS WORKED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First-generation students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours worked</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First-generation students worked more hours while enrolled than continuing-generation students.

**JOB RELATED TO MAJOR**

Among those who were employed while enrolled:

- 35% of first-generation students had a job related to their major.
- 34% of continuing-generation students had a job related to their major.

**ON-CAMPUS JOB**

Not including work-study jobs, a lower percentage of employed first-generation students worked on campus than continuing-generation students.

- 6% of first-generation students worked on campus.
- 12% of continuing-generation students worked on campus.

First-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate whose parents do not have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Continuing-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate who has at least one parent with a bachelor’s or higher degree. A student is considered “employed while enrolled” if they had a paid job, internship, or work-study award while taking classes. For median hours worked, the job in which the student worked the most hours per week was used if the student had more than one job. Data source is U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015–16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16). NPSAS:16 was released in 2018 and is the most recent iteration of NPSAS. Total number of study members is 88,000. Weighted sample size (population size) is 19.5 million. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.
In their first year in postsecondary education, a higher percentage of first-generation than continuing-generation students used financial aid services, but a lower percentage used health, academic advising, and academic support services.

**FINANCIAL AID SERVICES**

A higher percentage of first-generation than continuing-generation students used financial aid services.

- First-generation: 65%
- Continuing-generation: 49%

**HEALTH SERVICES**

First-generation students used student health services at a lower rate than continuing-generation students.

- First-generation: 14%
- Continuing-generation: 29%

**ACADEMIC ADVISING**

A lower percentage of first-generation students made use of academic advising services than continuing-generation students.

- First-generation: 55%
- Continuing-generation: 72%

**ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES**

Fewer first-generation students sought academic support services than continuing-generation students.

- First-generation: 30%
- Continuing-generation: 37%

**CAREER SERVICES**

Neither first-generation nor continuing-generation students made much use of career services in their first year.

- First-generation: 16%
- Continuing-generation: 17%

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First-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate whose parents do not have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Continuing-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate who has at least one parent with a bachelor’s or higher degree. Data source is U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2012/14 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS:12/14). Dataset represents students who entered postsecondary education for the first time in academic year 2011–12. Total number of study respondents is 25,000. Weighted sample size (population size) is 4.3 million. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.
First-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate whose parents do not have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Continuing-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate who has at least one parent with a bachelor’s or higher degree. Students are considered to have departed if they left postsecondary education without re-enrolling within the next 5 years. Data source is U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS:04/09). Dataset represents students who entered postsecondary education for the first time in academic year 2003–04. Total number of study respondents is 19,000. Weighted sample size (population size) is 3.7 million. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.

**IN THEIR FIRST YEAR IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION:**

- Enrolled full-time
  - 65% of first-generation students
  - 75% of continuing-generation students

- Completed a college-level (but not advanced-level) math course such as general statistics
  - 23% of first-generation students
  - 24% of continuing-generation students

- Completed an advanced-level math course such as calculus
  - 6% of first-generation students
  - 18% of continuing-generation students

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**Percentage of Bachelor’s Degree Students Who Persisted at Their First Institution After the First Year, by Institution Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Type</th>
<th>First-generation students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public 4-year</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private not-for-profit 4-year</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private for-profit 4-year</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage Who Departed from Postsecondary Education Without a Credential After the First Year and Did not Enroll Again, by Level of Degree Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Program</th>
<th>First-generation students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Median Percentage of Attempted Credits Completed 6 Years After Entering Postsecondary Education, by Sector**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>First-generation students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public 4-year</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 2-year</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private not-for-profit 4-year</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private not-for-profit 2-year</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private for-profit 4-year</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private for-profit 2-year</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Higher percentages of first-generation than continuing-generation students first enrolled in certificate and associate degree programs.*

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First-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate whose parents do not have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Continuing-generation college student is defined as an undergraduate who has at least one parent with a bachelor’s or higher degree. Students are considered to have departed if they left postsecondary education without re-enrolling within the next 5 years. Data source is U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS:04/09). Dataset represents students who entered postsecondary education for the first time in academic year 2003–04. Total number of study respondents is 19,000. Weighted sample size (population size) is 3.7 million. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.