

First-generation College Students

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

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%

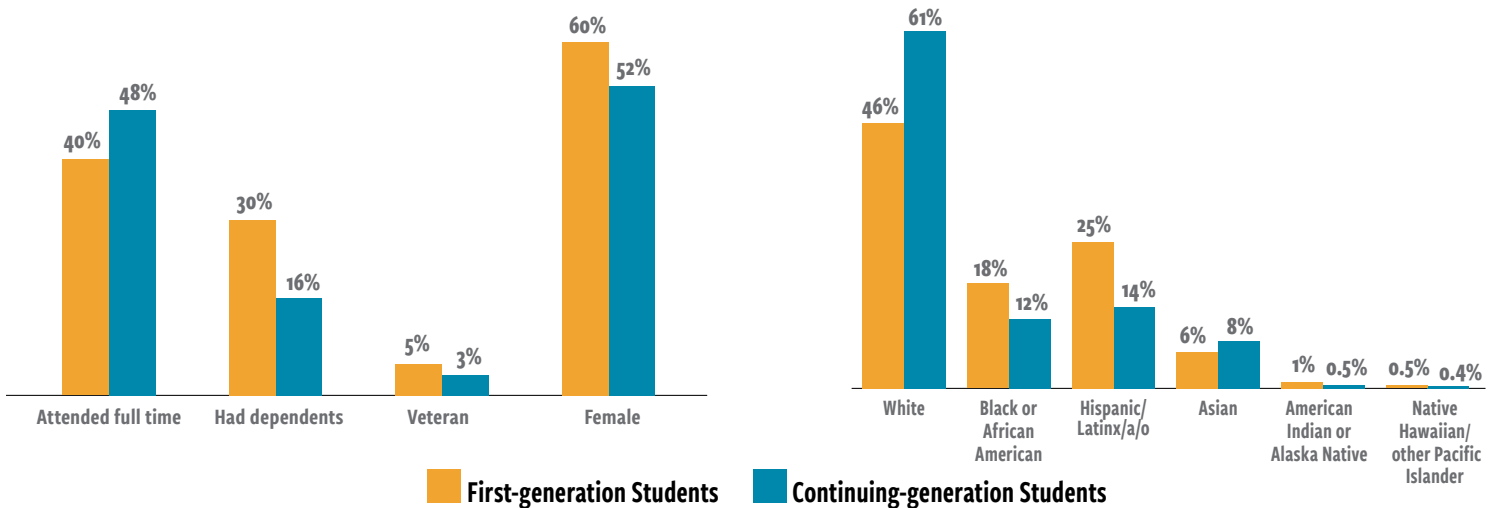
of students whose parents did not have a bachelor's degree **were also the first sibling in their family** to go to college.

PERCENTAGE WHO WERE AGE 30 OR ABOVE

28% of **first-generation** students

16% of **continuing-generation** students

Distribution of Characteristics Among First-generation and Continuing-generation Students



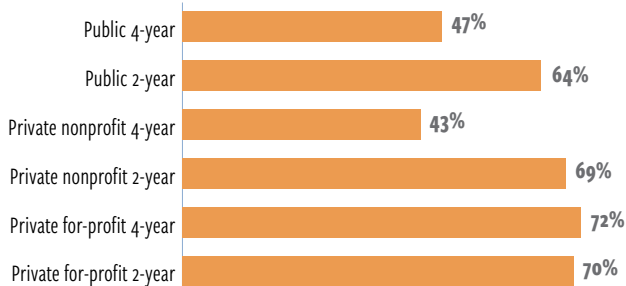
MEDIAN PARENTAL INCOME AMONG DEPENDENT STUDENTS



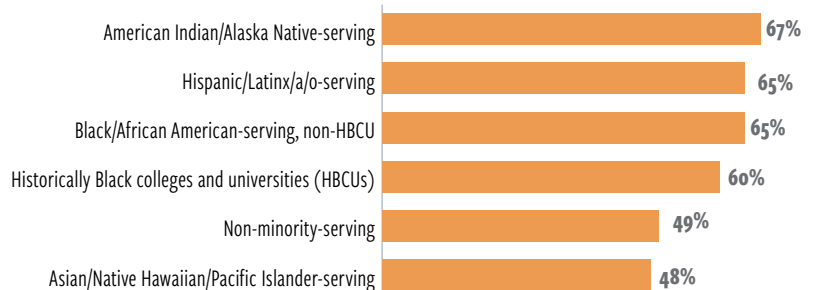
\$41,000 for **first-generation** students

\$90,000 for **continuing-generation** students

Percentage of Undergraduates Who Were First-generation, by Sector



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



**CENTER FOR
FIRST-GENERATION
STUDENT SUCCESS**

AN INITIATIVE OF NASPA AND THE SUDER FOUNDATION



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, 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 89,000. Weighted sample size (population size) is 19.5 million. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.

firstgen.naspa.org

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First-generation College Students' Employment

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.

1

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

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



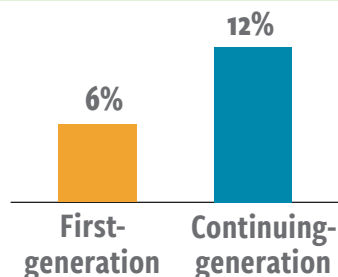
JOB RELATED TO MAJOR

Among those who were employed while enrolled: **35%** of **first-generation** students & **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**.



Use of Student Services among Freshman First-generation College Students

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



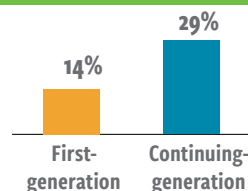
A **higher percentage** of **first-generation** than **continuing-generation** students used financial aid services.



HEALTH SERVICES



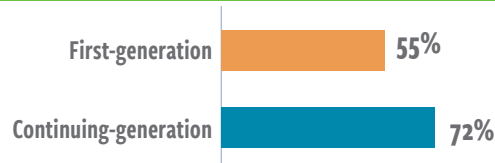
First-generation students used student health services at a **lower rate** than **continuing-generation** students.



ACADEMIC ADVISING



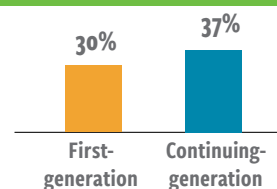
A **lower percentage** of **first-generation** students made use of academic advising services than **continuing-generation** students.



ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES



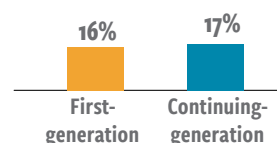
Fewer first-generation students sought academic support services than **continuing-generation** students.



CAREER SERVICES



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



First Year Experience, Persistence, and Attainment of First-generation College Students

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**

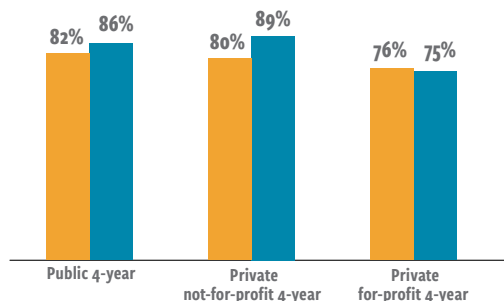
23% of **first-generation** students
24% of **continuing-generation** students



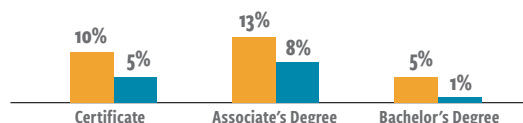
Completed an **advanced-level** math course such as **calculus**

6% of **first-generation** students
18% of **continuing-generation** students

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

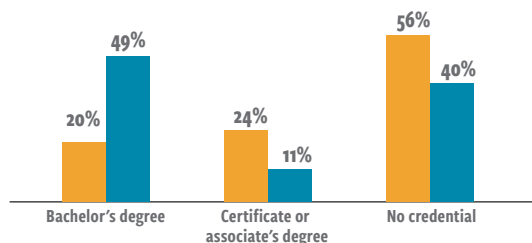


Percentage Who Departed from Postsecondary Education Without a Credential After the First Year and Did not Enroll Again, by Level of Degree Program



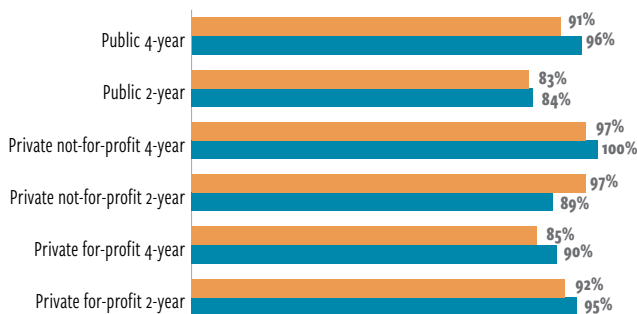
■ First-generation students ■ Continuing-generation students

Attainment 6 Years After Entering Postsecondary Education*



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

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



■ First-generation students ■ Continuing-generation students

