

Examining Racial and Ethnic Diversity in American Higher Education:

A Public Policy Talking Points Memo

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by

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Abstract

Most higher education scholars associate access to higher education with the Associate Colleges sector. While Associate College (ACs), better known to the public as community colleges have a long standing and well documented relationship with access, regional universities are also agents of access. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching terms these “regional” institutions as Master’s Colleges and Universities (MCUs). From the data presented in this work, we argue that the ambitious goals of the American Graduation Initiative cannot be reached without the collaboration of these two institutional types.

Introduction

It is rather well-established and accepted that Associate's Colleges (community colleges) are access-oriented institutions. President Barack Obama recently spoke to the need of dramatically expanding bachelor's degree attainment among U. S. adults (Obama, 2009). In order to achieve this ambitious goal, the American Graduation Initiative (AGI) seeks to update community college facilities, increase graduation rates, and help increase revenue sources for community colleges (AGI Fact Sheet, 2009). While Associate's Colleges are the focus of the Obama administration's American Graduation Initiative plan, it is important to realize that Associate's Colleges (ACs) are not the only sector of American higher education that are access-oriented institutions. Katsinas (2009) has recently argued that enrollment caps at large public flagship institutions are forcing minority and first-generation populations to seek access from other types of institutions. Simply put, to significantly expand access to higher education in the four year sector for the underserved low income, minority, and first-generation students will likely not occur without the active, if not increased participation of America's 265 publicly-controlled Carnegie-classified Master's Colleges and Universities.

Master's Colleges and Universities (MCUs) represent a classification of institutions that are classified by the Carnegie Foundation on the basis of master's degree production (CFAT, 2009). Institutions granting between 50-99 degrees are considered Smaller-Programs, while institutions granting 100-199 are Medium-Programs, and institutions granting 200 or more Master's degrees are Larger-Programs. Throughout the years, these institutions have been referenced by many different names to include comprehensive universities, regional universities, and state colleges. While Carnegie has not used the "comprehensive universities" label since 1994, many still reference these institutions by this name.

Katsinas, Kinkead, and Hagedorn (2011) argued that between 2000-01 and 2006-07 enrollments at ACs increased by more than 2 million students, a 31 % increase and enrollments at MCUs increased by 690,000 or 38%. The data indicated that "three out of every four African American, and four out of every five Hispanic students enrolled in public institutions are using these two sectors for access to higher education" (pg. 1).

Data

Data for this project were collected from NCES/IPEDS. The data presented in the tables look at undergraduate unduplicated headcount enrollments at public, private-not-for-profit, and private-for-profit institutions by major Carnegie class (Doctoral Granting, Master's Colleges and Universities, Baccalaureate Colleges, and Associate's Colleges). The data clearly indicate that institutions belonging to the Carnegie classes of Associate's Colleges and Master's Colleges and Universities are serving as access institutions and serving a diverse student body. Furthermore, the data indicate that the publicly controlled ACs and MCUs serve significantly more students than their private and proprietary counterparts.

Major Findings

- Public Associate's Colleges serve 9.6 million students, while private-not-for-profit and private-for-profit serve 40,255 and 351,656 respectively—meaning that 96% of community college students attend a public institution
- Public community colleges serve approximately 239 times the number of students as the private-not-for-profit sector and 26 times the number of students as do the proprietary institutions, a finding that has enormous implications for public policy
- Within the public sector, 60% of the total undergraduate enrollment is at Associate's Colleges, with 20% at Doctoral institutions, and 16 % at Master's Colleges and Universities
- Within the public sector, racial diversity is heavily tilted toward Associate's Colleges and Master's Colleges and Universities. In total, 64% of the total Black/African American enrollment is at community colleges, with 17 % at MCUs. Further, 70% of the total Hispanic enrollment is at community colleges, with 13 % at MCUs. Taken together, public ACs and MCUs serve 81% of the Black/African-American enrollments and 83% of the Hispanic enrollments
- Among private institutions, MCUs account for 41% of the total enrollment and also enroll 41 % and 42 % of the total Black/African-American and Hispanic students, respectively

Conclusions and Discussion

At first glance, the proprietary sector appears to be more racial diverse than either the private or public sectors. Proprietary MCUs are 39% white, 25% Black, and 12% Hispanic, while proprietary ACs are 43% white, 24% Black, and 17% Hispanic. By contrast, the public sector of MCUs have enrollments that are 61% white, 13% Black, and 11% Hispanic while public ACs have enrollments that are 57% white, 13% Black, and 14% Hispanic. If, however, we examine total enrollments, we find that public ACs serve 26 times as many students as do proprietary ACs and public MCUs serve 12 times the number of students as do their proprietary counterparts. In short, PUBLIC ACs and MCUs serve far MORE students and taken together account for 76% of ALL public enrollments, 81% of Black/African American public enrollments, and 83% of all public Hispanic enrollment. I believe these data clearly indicate that these two sectors of American higher education should be considered together when researching and analyzing access. Clearly, further study is warranted.

Data Tables

Table 1

Undergraduate Unduplicated Credit Student Headcount Enrollment at Public Institutions of Higher Education in the United States by Major Carnegie Sector and Race & Ethnicity, 2006-2007

Major Carnegie Classes	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Race Unknown	Non- Resident Alien
Doctoral Granting	3,252,883	2,150,353	312,794	257,705	258,166	29,288	160,306	84,271
Master's Colleges and Univ.	2,507,879	1,536,464	333,461	264,802	137,508	26,401	149,547	59,696
Baccalaureate Colleges	589,259	377,225	75,920	66,722	21,044	8,761	26,128	13,459
Associate's Colleges	9,665,283	5,525,379	1,257,880	1,393,112	619,886	98,421	644,570	126,035
Total	16,015,304	9,589,421	1,980,055	1,982,341	1,036,604	162,871	980,551	283,461
By Percentage <i>within</i> each Carnegie type								
Doctoral Granting	100%	66%	10%	8%	8%	1%	5%	3%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	100%	61%	13%	11%	5%	1%	6%	2%
Baccalaureate Colleges	100%	64%	13%	11%	4%	1%	4%	2%
Associate's Colleges	100%	57%	13%	14%	6%	1%	7%	1%
Total	100%	60%	12%	12%	6%	1%	6%	2%
By Percentage of the Total <i>Across</i> all Carnegie types								
Doctoral Granting	20%	22%	16%	13%	25%	18%	16%	30%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	16%	16%	17%	13%	13%	16%	15%	21%
Baccalaureate Colleges	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	3%	5%
Associate's Colleges	60%	58%	64%	70%	60%	60%	66%	44%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data Source: NCES/IPEDS 2008 Collection Year

Compiled by Kinkead & Katsinas (2009)

Table 2

Undergraduate Unduplicated Credit Student Headcount Enrollment at Private Not-for-Profit Institutions of Higher Education in the United States by Major Carnegie Sector and Race & Ethnicity, 2006-2007

Major Carnegie Classes	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Race Unknown	Non- Resident Alien
Doctoral Granting	709,720	401,018	58,688	60,290	64,797	3,476	85,738	35,713
Master's Colleges and Univ.	1,143,028	705,331	130,022	114,994	38,255	6,154	122,814	25,458
Baccalaureate Colleges	913,124	587,340	120,786	90,599	23,760	5,084	63,519	22,036
Associate's Colleges	40,225	21,684	7,488	7,154	1,002	207	1,835	855
Total	2,806,097	1,715,373	316,984	273,037	127,814	14,921	273,906	84,062
By Percentage <i>within</i> each Carnegie type								
Doctoral Granting	100%	57%	8%	8%	9%	0%	12%	5%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	100%	62%	11%	10%	3%	1%	11%	2%
Baccalaureate Colleges	100%	64%	13%	10%	3%	1%	7%	2%
Associate's Colleges	100%	54%	19%	18%	2%	1%	5%	2%
Total	100%	61%	11%	10%	5%	1%	10%	3%
By Percentage of the Total <i>Across</i> all Carnegie types								
Doctoral Granting	25%	23%	19%	22%	51%	23%	31%	42%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	41%	41%	41%	42%	30%	41%	45%	30%
Baccalaureate Colleges	33%	34%	38%	33%	19%	34%	23%	26%
Associate's Colleges	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data Source: NCES/IPEDS 2008 Collection Year

Compiled by Kinkead & Katsinas (2009)

Table 3

Undergraduate Unduplicated Credit Student Headcount Enrollment at Private For Profit Institutions of Higher Education in the United States by Major Carnegie Sector and Race & Ethnicity, 2006-2007

Major Carnegie Classes	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Race Unknown	Non- Resident Alien
Doctoral Granting	189,393	72,483	22,338	10,036	3,677	1,555	70,180	9,124
Master's Colleges and Univ.	191,841	73,891	47,842	22,075	7,476	1,630	31,924	7,003
Baccalaureate Colleges	177,832	58,983	26,624	18,740	3,750	1,356	67,642	737
Associate's Colleges	351,656	151,146	84,929	61,267	10,471	3,046	39,450	1,347
Total	910,722	356,503	181,733	112,118	25,374	7,587	209,196	18,211
By Percentage <i>within</i> each Carnegie type								
Doctoral Granting	100%	38%	12%	5%	2%	1%	37%	5%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	100%	39%	25%	12%	4%	1%	17%	4%
Baccalaureate Colleges	100%	33%	15%	11%	2%	1%	38%	0%
Associate's Colleges	100%	43%	24%	17%	3%	1%	11%	0%
Total	100%	39%	20%	12%	3%	1%	23%	2%
By Percentage of the Total <i>Across</i> all Carnegie types								
Doctoral Granting	21%	20%	12%	9%	14%	20%	34%	50%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	21%	21%	26%	20%	29%	21%	15%	38%
Baccalaureate Colleges	20%	17%	15%	17%	15%	18%	32%	4%
Associate's Colleges	39%	42%	47%	55%	41%	40%	19%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data Source: NCES/IPEDS 2008 Collection Year

Compiled by Kinkead & Katsinas (2009)

Table 4*Enrollment Growth Across Major Carnegie Classes, 2000-01 and 2006-07*

2005 Carnegie Basic Classification	Annual Undupl. Headcount		Change from 2001-2007		
	2000-01	2006-07	Number	% growth	% of all growth
Doctoral Granting	2,500,937	3,252,883	751,946	30%	18%
Master's Colleges and Univ.	1,815,162	2,507,879	692,717	38%	17%
Baccalaureate Colleges	394,787	589,259	194,472	49%	5%
Associate's Colleges	7,234,849	9,665,283	2,430,434	34%	60%
TOTAL	11,945,735	16,015,304	4,069,569	34%	100%

Data Source: NCES/IPEDS 2008 Collection Year

Compiled by Kinkead & Katsinas (2009)

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