

# BROKEN MIRRORS

Black Student Representation at Public State Colleges and Universities



The Education Trust

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## State of Higher Education Equity

This report is part of a broader body of state-focused research and policy analysis aimed at advancing educational equity and justice for students of color and students from low-income families by engaging issues that affect public colleges and universities. We place a specific emphasis on public institutions, since they educate more than 75 percent of undergraduate students; produce roughly 70 percent of undergraduate degrees; and provide state leaders with greater opportunities to examine, influence, and develop legislation and policies that influence the postsecondary experiences of students of color and students from low-income families.

Visit [edtrust.org](http://edtrust.org) to learn more about this report. To access the grades and data in this report, visit the State Equity Report Card ([www.stateequity.org](http://www.stateequity.org)), an Education Trust web tool that assesses states' commitment to equitable college opportunity and success for Black Americans. Later in 2019, The Education Trust will release *Broken Mirrors II*, which explores Latino student representation at public state colleges and universities.

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# BROKEN MIRRORS

Black Student Representation at Public State Colleges and Universities

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If America's public colleges and universities are supposed to be true democratic engines of opportunity and social mobility, their student body and graduates should mirror the racial and ethnic demographics of the states in which they reside. Public institutions should reduce — rather than exacerbate — race-based inequities and advance the public interest by ensuring all Americans, regardless of race, are able to seek and earn a college degree. Although these expectations of public colleges and universities are more than sensible, they reflect more of an idealistic aspiration than a current reality.

It is well known that Black students continue to be underrepresented at the public flagship institutions in most states. But much less attention has focused on Black student representation at other public institutions or at all public institutions in states across the country — [until recently](#). In this report, The Education Trust examines Black representation among undergraduates and degree earners in 41 states to see which states have public colleges and universities (both two-year and four-year) that reflect the public they were designed to serve. Our findings make clear that, with few exceptions, Black representation in public postsecondary education is anything but a mirror image of states' racial and ethnic composition.

Without question, systemic racism throughout the P-12 educational pipeline and broader society contribute to Black underrepresentation, but postsecondary leaders are also culpable for enacting their own policies and practices that further reinforce racial inequities. This must change if postsecondary education is going to be a true democratic engine of opportunity and social mobility, and higher education leaders must do more to counteract the racist structures in society and our education system that prevent Black Americans from having equal access to postsecondary education and the resources needed to complete their degrees at higher rates.

Such action is critical because colleges and universities stop being democratic engines of educational opportunity and become sorting mechanisms that worsen social inequities when access to postsecondary education, and the requisite support needed to complete a college degree, are withheld systemically from groups within our society. America's public institutions, which are tax-exempt and taxpayer-supported, must play a critical role in advancing educational opportunity, since they educate more than 75 percent of undergraduates and produce roughly 70 percent of undergraduate degrees. Moreover, the taxpayer support these colleges receive enables public institutions to offer relatively affordable access to a postsecondary education that is less likely to require taking on as much crippling debt.

For Black Americans, attending college — and ultimately earning a degree — is the most promising pathway toward economic security and upward social mobility. And just like everyone else, nearly 80 percent of Black students aspire to earn a college degree. But state leaders have failed to ensure their public institutions provide Black students with the opportunity and support needed to complete college.



In this report, we examine how well each state's public colleges and universities are serving Black students. Specifically, we pose the following six questions related to Black student representation among undergraduates and degree earners in 41 states:

1

How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public community and technical colleges in each state compare to the state's share of residents who are Black?

4

How does the share of associate degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents who are Black?

2

How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public four-year postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents who are Black?

5

How does the share of bachelor's degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents who are Black?

3

Do Black and White students have equal access to selective public four-year institutions in each state?

6

Are Black and White graduates awarded a similar share of bachelor's degrees from public institutions in their state?



**Our answers to these six questions clearly illustrate that the public institutions in too many states are falling short of their obligation to enroll and graduate Black students.** Below are key high-level findings related to each of our six questions:

## **Black students are underrepresented at public colleges and universities, especially at four-year colleges and universities.**

- In roughly half of the 41 states, Black enrollment at community and technical colleges fails to reflect the state's racial composition of Black residents.
- Black students are underrepresented at four-year public institutions in 37 of the 41 states we examined.
- Wisconsin would need to almost triple their enrollment of Black students at public four-year institutions to reflect the state's demographics.

## **The vast majority of states\* fail to provide Black college students with the same access to selective public four-year institutions as their White peers. (\*only examined 36 states)**

- Roughly three-quarters of states have gaps exceeding 10 percentage points in the enrollment of Black and White students at four-year selective institutions.
- Black students at four-year institutions are 15 percentage points less likely to attend selective institutions than their White peers in roughly half of states.
- Nine of the 10 states with the largest enrollment gaps at selective institutions are located in the South. These nine states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia) are where more than 40 percent of the nation's Black Americans reside.

## **Nearly all states have severe underrepresentation of Black graduates among associate and bachelor's degree earners.**

- Black graduates are underrepresented among associate degree earners in 33 of the 41 states we examined.
- Only three of 41 states we examined have an equitable share of Black bachelor's degree earners compared to the state's demography.
- California, Hawaii, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina, and Wisconsin would need to more than double the number of Black students earning bachelor's degrees to match their state's demographics.

## **Black graduates are less likely to be awarded bachelor's degrees than their White peers and more likely to receive associate degrees or certificates.**

- Roughly half of 41 states have double-digit gaps between the shares of Black and White graduates who are awarded a bachelor's degree.
- Six states have severe gaps that are greater than 15 percentage points: Arizona, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, South Carolina, and Wisconsin.

More state-specific results can be found in the full report and by using our web tool, [The State Equity Report Card](#).

Also contained within the report are benchmarks for each state that specify what percentage of undergraduates and degree earners would be Black if their a) community and technical colleges; and b) four-year institutions mirrored the state's racial and ethnic composition. At the end of the report, we also provide state higher education leaders and advocates with a set of additional questions that will help focus their efforts on areas of need while pursuing educational justice.





# Broken Mirrors: Black Student Representation at Public State Colleges and Universities

## INTRODUCTION

As tax-exempt, taxpayer-supported institutions, U.S. public colleges and universities should advance the public interest by ensuring all Americans — regardless of race — have a legitimate opportunity to get a postsecondary education. This has been a longstanding value of The Education Trust and is grounded in the belief that public higher education should reduce — rather than exacerbate — race-based inequities.<sup>1</sup> Part of achieving this goal requires that our nation’s public colleges and universities reflect a racially representative image of the public they were designed to educate. The undergraduates served and graduates produced by our public institutions should mirror the racial and ethnic mix of the state.

For Black Americans, attending college and earning a degree from a public institution might be the most promising pathway toward economic security and upward social mobility. The numerous individual and social benefits of degree attainment are well documented,<sup>2</sup> and public institutions play a major role in providing college opportunity, enrolling more than 75 percent of undergraduates and producing roughly 70 percent of undergraduate degrees. Plus, the taxpayer support these colleges receive enables public institutions to offer relatively affordable access to a postsecondary education that is less likely to require assuming as much crippling debt. Given the income and wealth disparities facing Black Americans,<sup>3</sup> public higher education is likely the best chance at the American dream for the vast majority of Black Americans. Even though larger numbers of Black students are attending public colleges now compared to decades ago, the national data show that Black students are still severely underserved in public higher education despite having

relatively identical college-going aspirations as their peers from different racial and ethnic groups.<sup>4</sup>

Without question, systemic racism throughout the P-12 educational pipeline and broader society contributes to Black underrepresentation in higher education. (See “Black Underrepresentation Is About Systemic Inequities,” page 17.) But postsecondary leaders are also culpable for enacting policies and practices that further contribute to racial inequity. However, if U.S. public colleges and universities are going to be true democratic engines of opportunity and social mobility, postsecondary leaders must find ways to ensure the student body and graduates of their institutions more closely mirror the racial and ethnic composition of the states in which their colleges reside. When access to postsecondary education — and the requisite support needed to complete a college degree — is withheld systemically from groups within our society, colleges and universities become sorting mechanisms that worsen social inequalities.

This danger was articulated more than 70 years ago in the Truman Commission’s report on higher education, which presented a vision for how higher education could strengthen the nation’s democracy and economy in the wake of World War II. The report included many recommendations and ideas, but most importantly, it called for the expansion of postsecondary opportunity for all, “without regard to race, creed, sex or national origin”:

“If the ladder of educational opportunity rises high at the doors of some youth and scarcely rises at all at the doors of others, while at the same time formal education is made a prerequisite to occupational and





social advance, then education may become the means, not of eliminating race and class distinctions, but of deepening and solidifying them.” — *Higher Education for Democracy: A Report of the President’s Commission on Higher Education, 1947*<sup>5</sup>

Today, as two-thirds or more of all jobs now require some college education,<sup>6</sup> the danger expressed in the Truman Commission’s report is still an unresolved threat to our democracy. In this report, Ed Trust digs into the data to examine whether states are enrolling and graduating enough Black students. Specifically, we pose six critical questions: The first three questions examine **Black undergraduate enrollment representation**, while the last three questions assess **Black undergraduate degree earner representation**. For each question, we created a metric that measures each state’s performance.

We hope this analysis will impress upon governors and state higher education leaders, legislators, and policymakers — who are responsible for ensuring public colleges and universities equitably serve all residents in their states — the need for public colleges and universities to expand higher education opportunity and success for Black residents in their states. The state-specific benchmarks that we developed for this report can serve as minimum targets for state leaders who seek to improve the representation of Black students among undergraduates and degree earners in their states. Additionally, we hope this report will alert our fellow equity advocates in communities and states across the country to the severity of Black student underrepresentation at their public colleges and universities. Hopefully, these data, which are included in our web tool ([The State Equity Report Card](#)) will help focus their efforts on areas of need while pursuing educational justice.

## Black Undergraduate Enrollment Representation

- 1 How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public community and technical colleges in each state compare to the state’s share of residents (ages 18 to 49 with no college degree) who are Black? (See page 10.)
- 2 How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public four-year postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state’s share of residents (ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor’s degree) who are Black? (See page 12.)
- 3 Do Black and White students have equal access to selective public four-year institutions in each state? (See page 14.)

## Black Undergraduate Degree Earner Representation

- 4 How does the share of associate degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state’s share of residents (ages 18 to 49 with no college degree) who are Black? (See page 20.)
- 5 How does the share of bachelor’s degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state’s share of residents (ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor’s degree) who are Black? (See page 22.)
- 6 Are Black and White graduates awarded similar shares of bachelor’s degrees from public institutions in their state? (See page 24.)



## What Is Equitable Representation?: Identifying State Benchmarks

It is difficult to determine how racially or ethnically diverse a public college and its graduates should be. While some say the racial demographics of the state's graduating high school cohort should be a guiding benchmark, others suggest the overall racial or ethnic mix of the state in which the institution resides is a credible standard. Each solution has its benefits as well as its challenges, but in this report we define equitable representation as the racial and ethnic mix of the state's population (ages 18 to 49) that could potentially benefit from attending college and receiving an undergraduate degree. This approach led us to develop two enrollment and degree earner benchmarks for each state: one for community and technical colleges and another for four-year institutions. The specific benchmarks for each state can be found in the Appendix (*Table 3*).

For community and technical colleges, the enrollment and degree earner benchmark is the percentage of Black state residents ages 18 to 49 with no college degree. Since a high school diploma or GED is not required in all states for community college enrollment, we exclude it from our criteria. The benchmark for four-year institutions is slightly different. It is the percentage of Black state residents ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma (or GED) and no bachelor's degree. In this instance, we include a high school diploma (or GED) in the criteria because it is generally required for enrollment at a four-year institution. We identified an age range of 18 to 49 because improving Black representation among undergraduates and degree earners will require an emphasis on engaging non-college-aged adults who could benefit from a college degree as well as

improving college-going and completion rates for recent high school graduates.

In most instances, the community and technical college benchmarks and the four-year institution benchmarks are very similar, but in some cases the differences represent hundreds or thousands of students, especially in large states or states with higher percentages of Black residents. For example, in Georgia, the benchmark for public four-year institutions is 37.1 percent, compared with a 35.9 percent benchmark for community and technical colleges. The difference between the two percentages might appear small, but to meet the higher benchmark as opposed to the lower one, four-year institutions would need to enroll roughly 2,600 more Black students and produce nearly 450 additional Black bachelor's degree recipients.

Finally, it is important to note that these enrollment and degree earner benchmarks are minimum performance thresholds. Over time, achieving these benchmarks will improve degree attainment rates for Black residents and close the Black-White degree attainment gap. But, we hope states will work to exceed these thresholds, which would help improve rates and close gaps much faster. Also, in states with few Black residents (e.g., Utah), it may be prudent to significantly exceed these benchmarks to create a racially diverse learning environment. Research indicates more racially diverse campuses are associated with more welcoming campus climates for students of color and lead to a wide array of positive learning outcomes for all students.<sup>7</sup>



# BLACK UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT REPRESENTATION

We developed three metrics to examine the questions related to undergraduate enrollment representation for Black students in the states in our analysis. Two of these metrics capture how well enrollment at public colleges and universities reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the state. The first metric compares the percentage of a state's community and technical college students who are Black to that state's benchmark for community and technical colleges. The second metric compares the percentage of undergraduates at a state's four-year public institutions who are Black to that state's benchmark for four-year public colleges and universities. (For a more detailed discussion of data and methods, see page 29.)

The third metric does not use a benchmark. Instead, we measured the percentage point gap between the shares of Black and White students at public four-year institutions in each state who are able to attend selective public institutions. For our analysis, selective institutions include institutions that are either public flagship universities or institutions that mostly accept students with relatively high SAT/ACT scores. We understand that the percentage of students who have the opportunity to enroll at selective public colleges and universities may be higher or lower, depending on the state context and needs. However, this metric focuses on whether Black students have the same opportunity to enroll at selective public institutions as their White peers, which is best communicated by a gap score. Prior research by The Education Trust shows that Black students are severely underrepresented at selective institutions.<sup>8</sup>

Ideally, states' scores on the first two metrics would approximate or exceed 100, meaning the share of Black enrollment (at community and technical colleges

or four-year institutions) either equals or exceeds the percentage of Black state residents who meet our criteria. In most instances, scores over 100 should be viewed as positive outcomes, since all states have large gaps in degree attainment between Black and White adults<sup>9</sup> and closing gaps will require enrolling more Black students, and, ultimately, awarding a disproportionate share of degrees to Black residents. However, scores well above 100 on community and technical college representation could signal that access to four-year institutions is restricted due to failure to academically prepare students in P-12, affordability considerations, or stagnation in progress toward degree or transfer goals.

An ideal score on the third metric should be close to or less than zero. This means that the percentage of Black students attending selective public institutions is equivalent to or higher than the share of their White peers attending these institutions. Like the first two metrics, instances in which Black students have more favorable outcomes than their White peers (i.e., negative gaps or scores below zero) should not be viewed negatively given the historical and current underrepresentation of Black students at selective institutions.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, we assigned grades that correspond to states' scores on each metric. The grades for the first two metrics are based on a traditional grading scale (e.g., 75 = C). All numbers exceeding 100 received A+ grades. The grading scheme for the third metric is on a different scale that is based on the size of the gap. Smaller gaps received higher grades (A's and B's), while larger gaps received lower grades (C's and D's). Gaps greater than or equal to 15 received F grades.



# Metric 1

## Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges

*How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public community and technical colleges in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with no college degree — who are Black?*

With an ideal score approaching or exceeding 100, Black enrollment representation at community and technical colleges is close to or exceeds the benchmark in roughly half of the 41 states we examined. More specifically, 22 states received at least an A (score above 90) on this metric (*Figure 1*), which means the percentage of community and technical college students who are Black is relatively close to or exceeds the percentage of state residents that fit our benchmark criteria. Despite these positive results, 15 out of 41 states (37 percent) have scores between 75 and 90, suggesting an increase in Black enrollment is needed in these states to achieve better enrollment representation.

Several states stand out for having fairly low scores on this metric: Illinois, Tennessee, and Wisconsin have enrollment representation scores in the high 60s and low 70s. Of these three states, Illinois has the largest population of Black residents who meet our criteria. In Illinois, Black residents compose 18.5 percent of the state population, compared with only 12.8 percent of undergraduates at public two-year institutions  $[(12.8 \text{ percent} \div 18.5 \text{ percent}) \times 100 = 69]$ . New York and Florida, which also have large numbers of Black residents, have scores on this metric that trail the state average by 8 points. Although Hawaii has the lowest score on this metric (44), the state has a very small percentage of Black residents.

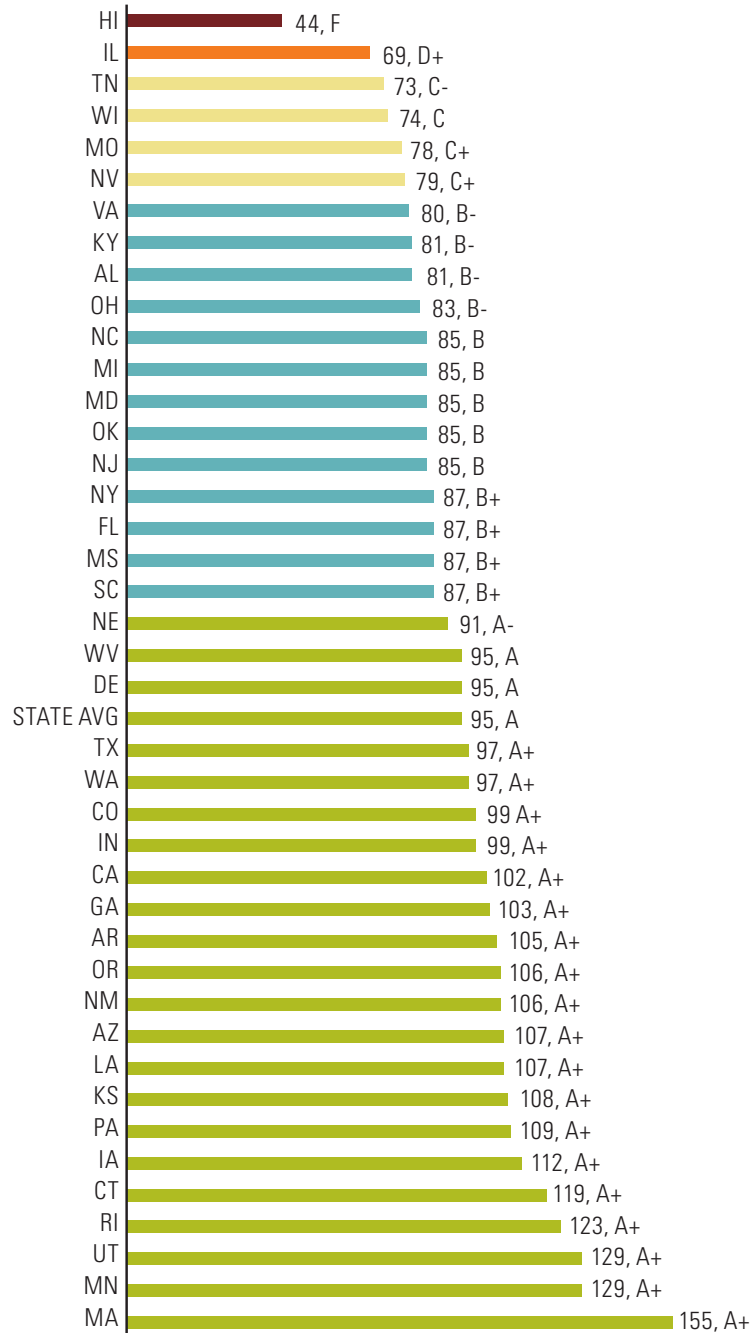
Several states with large Black populations have community and technical college enrollment that matches or exceeds their benchmarks. Texas, California, and Georgia all received an A+ for scores near or over 100. These three states account for slightly more than 20 percent of all Black residents who fit our criteria in the 41 states we examined. With a high percentage of Black residents (nearly 38 percent), Louisiana also stands out with an enrollment representation score of 107. However, among the 10 states with the highest performance scores, only in Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut does the share of Black residents exceed 10 percent.

Fifteen states have scores above 100, and six have scores that exceed 110. The grades in some of these states raise questions about Black overrepresentation at community and technical colleges. Are some public community colleges enrolling too many Black students? Should some of these students be enrolled at four-year institutions where, on average, there are more resources and higher completion rates? This may be less of a concern for Massachusetts, Utah, and Rhode Island, which perform well on Black student representation at four-year institutions (metric 2). However, this question seems worth exploring for Minnesota, Connecticut, and Iowa, which perform relatively poorly on metric 2.



## FIGURE 1

*Share of Black Undergraduates at Community Colleges Relative to Share of Black Residents  
(ages 18 to 49 with no college degree)*



Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State Score =  $100 \times [(\% \text{ of undergraduates who are Black at public community and technical colleges}) \div (\% \text{ of residents, ages 18-49 with no college degree, who are Black})]$ . The Appendix has more data on states' scores.



## Metric 2

### Black Enrollment Representation at Public Four-Year Institutions

*How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public four-year postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree — who are Black?*

In 37 out of 41 states in our analysis (85 percent), Black undergraduate students at four-year public universities are substantially underrepresented compared with the states' benchmarks (*Figure 2*). The score is below 65 in 13 — or nearly one-third — of the states analyzed. Roughly 25 percent of all Black residents live in these 13 states, indicating considerable underrepresentation of Black Americans at four-year public institutions nationally.

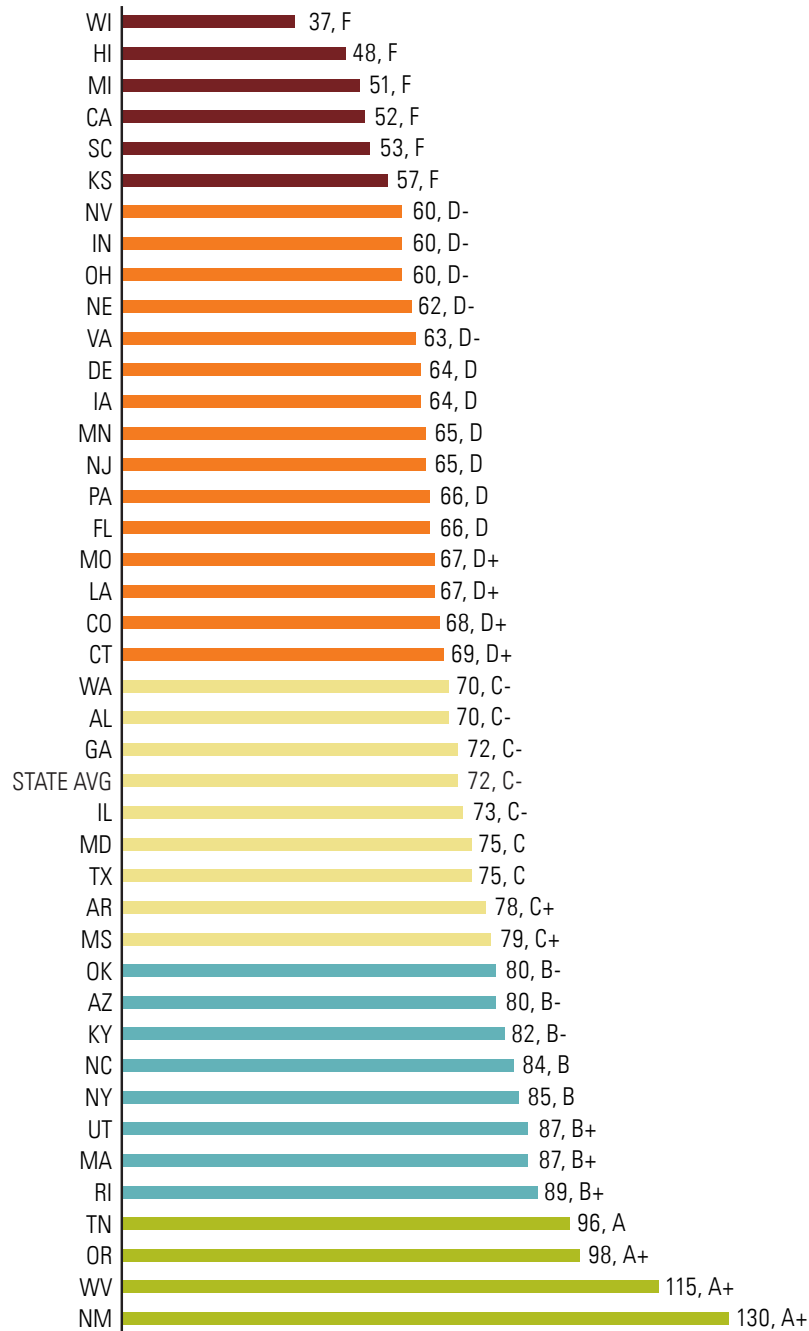
Black students at four-year public institutions are extremely underrepresented in Wisconsin, Hawaii, Michigan, California, South Carolina, Kansas, Nevada, Indiana, and Ohio. These nine states have enrollment representation scores near or below 60 on this metric, and account for roughly 20 percent of the Black population in the 41 states we examined. Another key state with a low score is Virginia. With a grade of D- and a score of 63, roughly 15 percent of undergraduates are Black at public four-year institutions in Virginia, even though nearly 1 in 4 state residents is Black  $[(14.9\% \div 23.8\% \times 100 = 63)]$ . Among states with less extreme underrepresentation and larger Black populations are Florida, Georgia, Illinois, and Texas. Each of these states has a score between 65 and 75 on this metric.

The highest performing states are Tennessee, Oregon, West Virginia, and New Mexico. These states have a percentage of Black students at public four-year institutions that approaches or exceeds the benchmark in those states. Notable states in the top 10, where the percentage of Black residents surpasses 15 percent, are North Carolina, New York, and Tennessee. These three states account for 15 percent of the Black residents included in this analysis.



## FIGURE 2

*Share of Black Undergraduates at Public Four-Year Institutions Relative to Share of Black Residents (ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree)*



Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State Score =  $100 \times [(\% \text{ of undergraduates who are Black at public four-year colleges and universities}) \div (\% \text{ of residents, ages 18-49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree, who are Black})]$ .

The Appendix has more data on states' scores.



## Metric 3

### Gap Between Black and White Undergraduates Attending Selective Public Institutions

*Do Black and White students have equal access to selective public four-year institutions in each state?*

Among undergraduates at four-year public institutions, a higher percentage of White students attend selective public institutions than their Black peers in the 36 states we examined (Figure 3). Roughly half of the states received F grades because their share of White students at selective public universities is at least 15 percentage points greater than their share of Black students at selective public universities. In Texas, for instance, only 10.6 percent of Black undergraduates who attend one of the state's four-year public institutions attend one of the state's four selective public institutions, compared with 35.9 percent of White students, which means Texas' score equals 25.3 (35.9 percent - 10.6 percent = a 25.3 percentage point gap).

Nine out of the bottom 10 states are located in the South: North Carolina, Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Florida, and Georgia. Colorado is the only non-Southern state in this group. Because nearly all these states have substantial shares of Black residents, these bottom 10 states are home to slightly more than 40 percent of all Black residents in the states we examined. Several other states with large Black populations have extreme enrollment stratification between Black and White students. New York and California, for example, account for more than 70,000 Black undergraduates at public four-year institutions and have gaps between 15 and 20 percentage points.

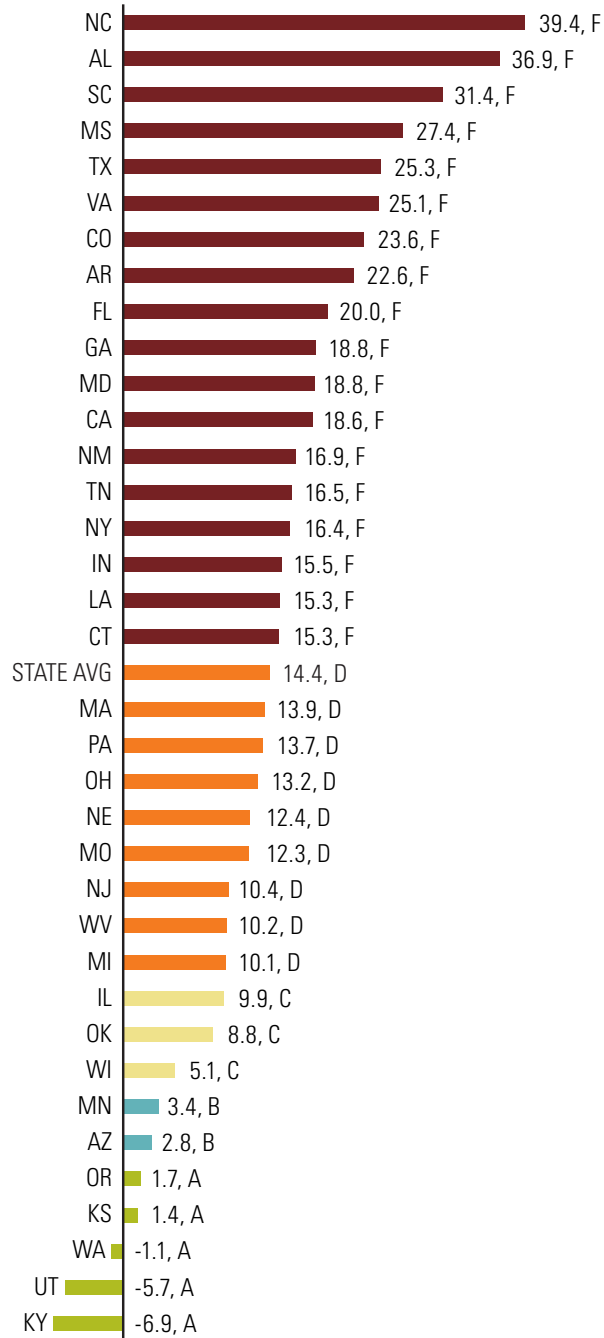
Several states — Kentucky, Utah, Washington, Kansas, and Oregon — received A grades for having very little or no gap between the shares of Black and White students attending selective public universities. In Minnesota, Arizona, and Wisconsin, the gap is in the low single digits, which indicates relative equality between Black and White undergraduate students within the public four-year university system. However, all these states have small Black populations that account for fewer than 10 percent of residents.





**FIGURE 3**

*Percentage Point Gap Between the Black and White Shares of Undergraduates at Public Four-Year Institutions Who Attend Selective Institutions*



Note: Excludes Delaware, Iowa, Hawaii, Nevada, and Rhode Island, since these states have fewer than four public four-year institutions; see methodology section for information on how we define selective public institutions. Analysis based on data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey. State Score = (% of public four-year White undergraduates going to selective institutions) – (% of public four-year Black undergraduates going to selective institutions). The Appendix has more data on states' scores.



## Undergraduate Enrollment Representation Summary

The three enrollment representation metrics indicate that Black residents are underrepresented at public institutions, especially at four-year colleges and universities. The average state score on enrollment representation at community and technical colleges is 95 (metric 1) compared to 72 for four-year institutions (metric 2). On metric 2, 21 states receive a D or an F, compared with only two states on metric 1. (Table 1 in the Appendix.)

Twenty-five states have scores on metric 2 that are at least 20 percentage points (two full letter grades) lower than the scores on metric 1. These differences are highest in states like Massachusetts, Minnesota, Kansas, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Louisiana, where the differences range from 68 points to 40 points. Very few states (New Mexico, Tennessee, and West Virginia) have much higher representation at public four-year colleges than public community and technical colleges.

Black student underrepresentation at public four-year colleges and universities isn't the only challenge facing this sector. Within the public four-year sector, there is also a tremendous amount of stratification in the enrollment patterns of Black and White students. On metric 3, 26 of 36 states received a grade of D or F, with gaps of at least 10 percentage points.

Fourteen received either a D or F on both metrics that focus on public four-year enrollment (metrics 2 and 3). These 14 states are home to nearly 45 percent of all Black residents in the states we examined. Many of the Black Americans in this group of states live in California and Florida, which are among the top five states with the greatest number of Black residents. Out of the 14 states receiving D's and F's on metrics 2 and 3, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Virginia are also notable given that their share of Black residents exceeds 20 percent.

The severe underrepresentation of Black Americans at four-year institutions, particularly those that are selective, poses several challenges. Namely, degree completion rates are much lower for students who initially enroll at community colleges compared with the completion rates at four-year institutions.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, stratified enrollment patterns (some of which are related to undermatching) between Black and White students contribute to lower completion rates and completion gaps.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, less racial diversity diminishes opportunities for cross-racial interactions among students, which are associated with many positive learning outcomes, while less diversity can create hostile racial climates for students of color.<sup>13</sup>

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# BLACK UNDERREPRESENTATION IS ABOUT SYSTEMIC INEQUITIES

The findings in this report reveal that Black Americans are underrepresented among undergraduate students and degree earners in most states. These racial inequities are not the result of deficits ascribed to Black students or their families. Rather, these inequities are the byproducts of systemic racism Black Americans encounter throughout the educational pipeline and society. The research is clear: We give Black students less and still expect them to succeed, effectively asking them to do more than their White peers.

For example, a recent Ed Trust report found that school districts serving large percentages of Black, Latino, and Native American students receive, on average, \$1,800 less per student than districts that are less racially diverse.<sup>14</sup> And funding disparities are just part of the problem. Black students are often segregated in high-poverty schools,<sup>15</sup> taught by less effective and experienced teachers,<sup>16</sup> given less access to rigorous coursework,<sup>17</sup> punished more frequently and harshly for similar offenses,<sup>18</sup> and expected to underachieve by their teachers.<sup>19</sup>

These barriers are only some of the challenges that prevent too many Black students from leaving high school with the academic preparation necessary to gain admission into four-year colleges and universities, particularly those that are selective. In addition, inadequate academic preparation — and cost considerations exacerbated by a tenfold wealth gap — may compel some Black people to either pass on higher education altogether or enroll at community colleges, where only 1 in 4 earns a degree in six years.<sup>20</sup>

To make matters worse, four-year colleges and universities aren't helping the situation. According to a 2016 survey of admissions officers, the top four factors used in admissions decisions are grades in college prep courses, grades in all courses, strength of high school curriculum, and admissions test scores.<sup>21</sup> With an over-emphasis on class- and race-biased standardized tests and participation and performance in high school courses that aren't equally available to

low-income students and students of color, colleges and universities are — at best — failing to deconstruct the systemic barriers that impede Black students. At worst, they are adding another systemic barrier that makes it more difficult for Black Americans to climb the socioeconomic ladder. Fewer than 10 percent of admissions officers who responded to the survey reported that race was used in a “considerable” or “moderate” way in admissions decisions, which would help ensure more Black students gain access and therefore mitigate disparities. Meanwhile, states like Arizona, Florida, Nebraska, Oklahoma, New Hampshire, Michigan, California, and Washington have banned the use of race in college admissions, severely limiting how effectively institutions can recruit, enroll, and financially support students of color.<sup>22</sup>

These systemic inequities not only create barriers to college attendance, they also make it harder for students to graduate once they enroll. Completion rates are higher for Black students who enroll at four-year institutions than for those who attend community colleges, but only 4 out of 10 Black students who attend four-year institutions complete a degree in six years.<sup>23</sup> Inadequate academic preparation prevents Black students from acquiring the skills necessary to immediately succeed in college, placing too many in noncredit, developmental courses that are costly and don't count toward a degree.<sup>24</sup> Income and wealth disparities within the Black community<sup>25</sup> make it difficult for Black students and their families to pay college costs, which have skyrocketed over the past several decades.<sup>26</sup> These financial stressors force Black students to disproportionately rely on debt to finance college, as access to merit-based academic scholarships is limited due to systemic disadvantages in schooling at the P-12 level and bias imbedded within standardized tests, which are used to assess academic achievement. Higher education reinforces these barriers by funneling fewer dollars and resources into the institutions where Black students enroll.<sup>27</sup>



# BLACK UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE EARNER REPRESENTATION

We created three additional metrics to examine the questions related to undergraduate degree earner representation for Black students in the states in our analysis. Metrics 4 and 5 capture how well the degrees awarded by public higher education institutions match the demographics of the state. Metric 4 compares the percentage of a state's associate degree earners who are Black to the state's benchmark for community and technical colleges. Metric 5 compares the percentage of a state's bachelor's degree earners who are Black to the state's benchmark for four-year public colleges and universities. (For a more detailed discussion of data and methods, see page 29.)

Metric 6 does not include a benchmark. Instead, we measured the percentage point gap in the shares of Black and White college graduates who earn bachelor's degrees. This metric addresses concerns about Black student underrepresentation among bachelor's degree earners and overrepresentation among associate degree and certificate earners, who generally have lower wages and employment rates than individuals with bachelor's or graduate degrees.<sup>28</sup> We understand that the need for various levels of postsecondary education varies across states, depending on labor market demands. In some states, the demand for certificates and associate degrees may be much higher than in others. Our concern is whether Black students are earning different types of credentials than their White peers, which is best communicated by a gap.

Ideally, states' scores on metrics 4 and 5 would approximate or exceed 100. A score of 100 means the share of degrees awarded to Black students either equals or exceeds the percentage of Black state residents who meet our criteria. Scores greater than 100 should be viewed as positive outcomes since all states have large gaps in degree attainment between Black and White adults<sup>29</sup> and closing gaps will require awarding a disproportionate share of degrees to Black residents.

For metric 6, the ideal score should be less than or equal to zero. This indicates that Black graduates earn an either equal or higher share of bachelor's degrees than White students. Like the prior two metrics, instances in which Black students have more favorable outcomes than their White peers (i.e., negative gaps or scores below zero) should not be viewed negatively since the largest gaps in degree attainment between Black and White adults are typically at the bachelor's degree level and, again, closing gaps will require awarding a disproportionate share of degrees to Black residents.

Finally, we assigned grades that correspond to states' scores on each metric. The grades for metrics 4 and 5 are based on a traditional grading scale (e.g., 75 = C). All numbers that exceeded 100 were given A+ grades. The grading scheme for metric 6 is on a different scale that is based on the size of the gap. Smaller gaps received higher grades (A's and B's), while larger gaps received lower grades (C's and D's). Gaps greater than or equal to 15 received F grades.





## Metric 4

### Black Representation Among Associate Degree Earners

*How does the share of associate degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with no college degree — who are Black?*

The scores for associate degree representation show that 33 of 41 states are below their state's benchmark for associate degree representation (Figure 4). With an ideal score approaching or exceeding 100, the average state has an associate degree representation score of only 77 (or a C+). Only eight states — Georgia, Connecticut, Texas, West Virginia, Arizona, Kansas, Massachusetts, and New Mexico — received A grades. With the exception of Texas and Georgia, most of these states have smaller numbers of Black residents. Together, Texas and Georgia account for slightly more than 16 percent of the Black residents in the 41 states we examined.

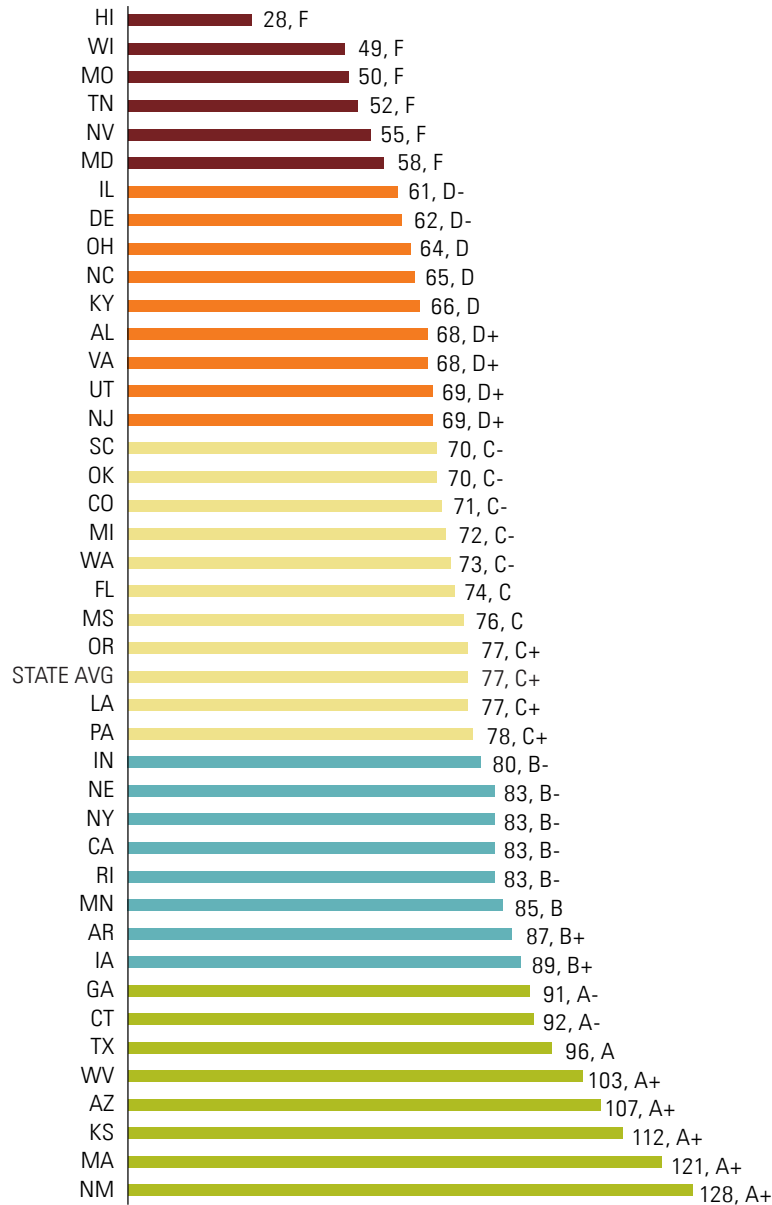
Other states of note are California, New York, and Florida. These three states account for slightly more than 20 percent of the Black residents who fit our criteria. California and New York received B- grades for associate degree representation. With performance scores of 83, California and New York stand out for above-average performance. Florida, on the other hand, has a score of 74, which falls below the average state score. Despite being much smaller, Connecticut and Arkansas are two states that have higher shares of Black residents and higher scores on this metric.

Even though Hawaii has a small number and percentage of Black residents, the state is among the lowest performing states on this metric — and by a large margin. Other states with low scores (and F grades) are Maryland, Nevada, Tennessee, Missouri, and Wisconsin. Among these states, Maryland, Tennessee, and Missouri have relatively high shares of Black residents. In Tennessee, Black residents account for 20.4 percent of the population, but only 10.7 percent of associate degree earners are Black  $[(10.7\% \div 20.4\%) \times 100 = 52]$ .

Other states with below-average scores of note are Alabama, Virginia, Ohio, New Jersey, North Carolina, Illinois, and Delaware. All these states received D's for associate degree representation and have shares of Black residents that exceed 15 percent. Collectively, they account for nearly one-quarter of Black residents with no college degree ages 18 to 49.

## FIGURE 4

*Share of Associate Degrees Earned by Black Students Relative to the Share of Black Residents  
(ages 18-49 with no college degree)*



Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State Score =  $100 \times [(\% \text{ of associate degree earners who are Black}) \div (\% \text{ of residents, ages 18-49 with no college degree, who are Black})]$ . The Appendix has more data on states' scores.



## Metric 5

### Black Representation Among Bachelor's Degree Earners

*How does the share of bachelor's degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree — who are Black?*

The scores for this metric show considerable underrepresentation of Black students among bachelor's degree earners. With performance scores below 60 on this metric, 21 states received F grades. Thirty-three states have scores below 70 and received D's and F's (Figure 5). The overwhelming majority of states have significant room for improvement; only 3 of 41 states (New Mexico, West Virginia, and Utah) approached or met the benchmark.

Most states have bachelor's representation scores between 50 and 80. However, in eight states, the share of Black bachelor's degree earners is less than half the state's composition of Black residents. Three states (Wisconsin, Hawaii, and Michigan) have extremely low scores, ranging from 26 to 40. In addition to Wisconsin, which has the lowest score among all states, Michigan, South Carolina, and California stand out among low-performing states, since both have large numbers of Black residents who meet our criteria. Wisconsin, with a bachelor's degree representation score of 26, awarded only 2.2 percent of all bachelor's degrees to Black students, even though the state's percentage of Black residents meeting our criteria is 8.3 percent  $[(2.2 \text{ percent} \div 8.3 \text{ percent}) \times 100 = 26]$ .

Besides Tennessee, the three other states with degree representation scores close to or above 80 have low numbers and shares of Black residents. North Carolina, with a score of 70, is the only other state among the top 10 that has a larger share of Black residents. Other states with above-average scores that are home to large shares and numbers of Black residents are Arkansas, New York, Mississippi, Florida, and Texas.

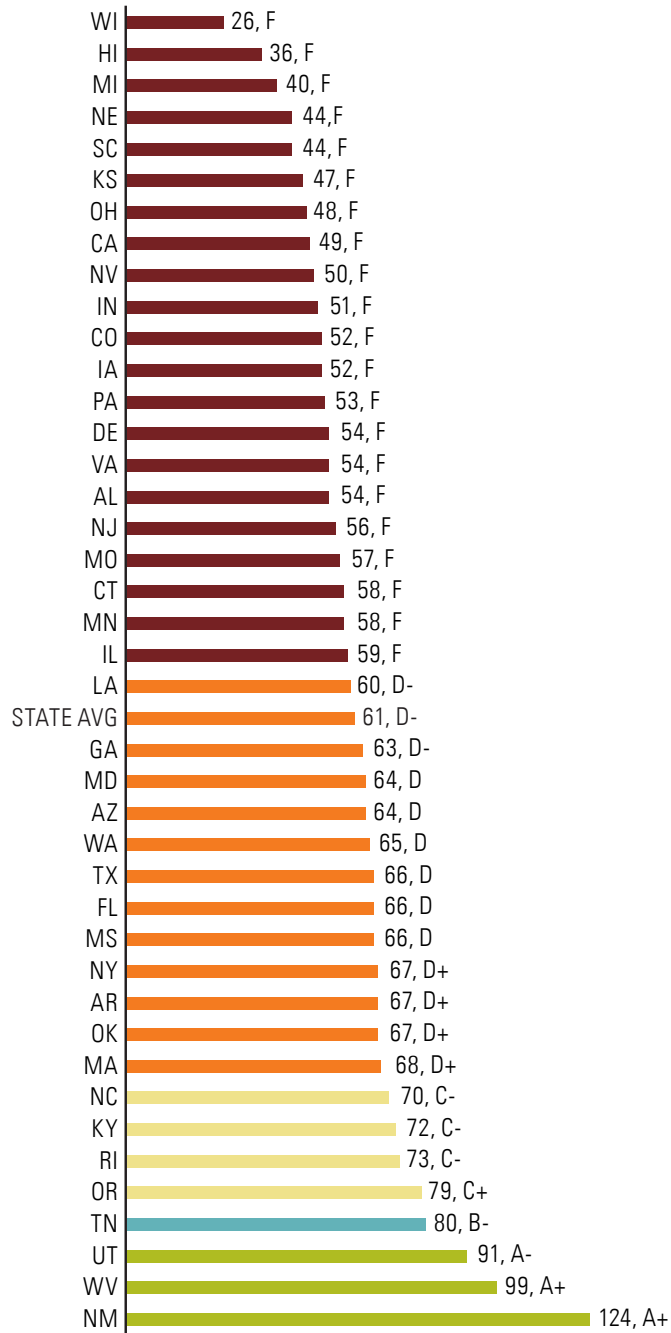
Several states with below-average scores should be mentioned. California, the state with the fifth-largest population of Black residents who met our criteria, has a score of 49, which is slightly more than 10 points below the average for all states. In addition, Alabama, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio have fairly low bachelor's degree representation scores despite having large numbers of Black residents. Although it has a much smaller population, Delaware's low bachelor's degree representation score is worth noting given that the state has the seventh-largest share of Black residents.





## FIGURE 5

*Share of Bachelor's Degrees Earned by Black Students Relative to the Share of Black Residents  
(ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree)*



Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State Score =  $100 \times [(\% \text{ of bachelor's degree earners who are Black}) \div (\% \text{ of residents, ages 18-49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree, who are Black})]$ . The Appendix has more data on states' scores.



## Metric 6

### Gap Between Shares of White and Black Graduates With Bachelor's Degrees

*Are Black and White graduates awarded similar shares of bachelor's degrees from public institutions in their state?*

The scores on this metric reveal that a good number of states have substantial gaps in their shares of Black and White graduates who are awarded a bachelor's degree. With an ideal score being close to or less than zero, the average gap among states is 7.7 percentage points (Figure 6). Twenty-one of the 41 states (about half) have gaps that equal or exceed 10 percentage points, and six states have gaps greater than 15 percentage points.

The eight states with no gaps between the shares of White and Black graduates earning a bachelor's degree are Tennessee, Utah, Maryland, New Mexico, Kentucky, Missouri, Oregon, and West Virginia. Among these states, Tennessee and Maryland have large shares of Black students. In addition, North Carolina, another state with a large number and share of Black students, has an extremely small gap. And New York, a state that is home to a large number of Black residents, has a gap that is well below the average gap in all states.

The states with the largest gaps are South Carolina, Kansas, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Arizona. All these states have gaps that are greater than or equal to 15 percentage points. South Carolina, the only Southern state in this group, has the largest

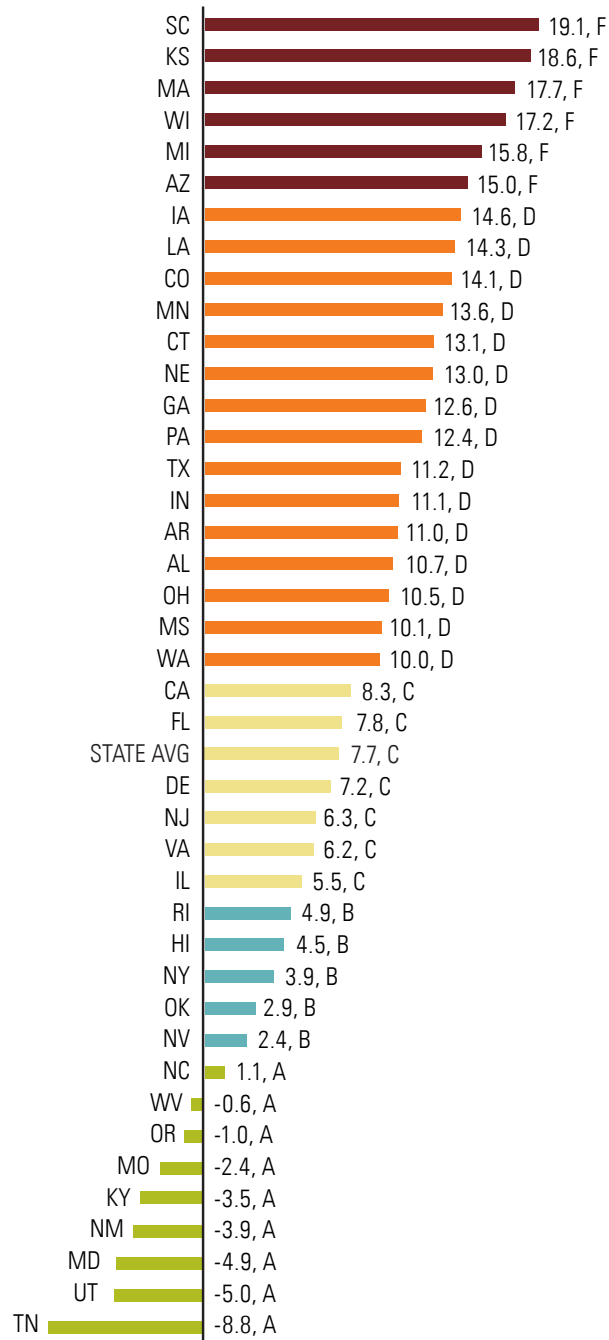
gap among the 41 states in our study. While 56.4 percent of South Carolina's White graduates earn a bachelor's degree, the percentage is much lower for Black graduates. Only 37.3 percent of the state's Black graduates earn a bachelor's degree from public institutions, and 62.7 percent walk away with certificates and associate degrees (56.4 percent – 37.3 percent = a 19.1 percentage point gap).

Slightly more than one-third of states have gaps between 10 and 15 percentage points, and several of these states are worth noting for either their large percentages or numbers of Black residents. Chief among these are Southern states like Georgia and Texas, which have large numbers of Black residents. These two states account for 1 out of every 6 Black residents in the United States. The other Southern states in this group are Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, and Louisiana.



**FIGURE 6**

*Percentage Point Gap Between the Shares of Black and White Graduates Who Earn a Bachelor's Degree*



Note: Analysis based on data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey.

State Score = (% of White graduates who received a bachelor's degree) – (% of Black graduates who received a bachelor's degree).

The Appendix has more data on states' scores.



## Undergraduate Degree Earner Representation Summary

The findings in this analysis demonstrate that Black students in most states are underrepresented among degree earners compared with the states' benchmarks. Although Black underrepresentation is prevalent among both associate and bachelor's degree earners, it is most severe among bachelor's degree recipients. The average state score for associate degree earner representation is 77 (metric 4) compared with 61 for bachelor's degree earner representation (metric 5). As shown in Table 2 (see Appendix), more than twice as many states received D and F grades on bachelor's degree representation compared to associate degree representation.

Roughly 6 out of 10 states have bachelor's degree representation scores that are at least 10 percentage points (a full letter grade) lower than their associate degree representation scores. These differences are highest in states like Kansas, Massachusetts, Arizona, Nebraska, Iowa, California, Connecticut, Michigan, Texas, and Indiana, where they range from 65 points to 29 points. On the other hand, Utah and Tennessee have much higher representation at

the bachelor's degree level, but these states have extremely low representation for associate degrees.

What's more, Black graduates are less likely to be awarded bachelor's degrees than their White peers in nearly every state. Collectively, these findings raise concerns since bachelor's degrees are the predominant credential awarded both nationally and in the overwhelming majority of states. Bachelor's degrees account for nearly 50 percent of undergraduate credentials awarded by public institutions in the states we examined, but this percentage varies from nearly 70 percent to little more than one-third, depending on the state. Furthermore, bachelor's degree completers, on average, earn more and are less likely to be unemployed.<sup>30</sup> Black women with only an associate degree earn \$10,000 less than Black women with bachelor's degrees. Among Black men, this earnings disparity is \$12,000.

*What's more, Black graduates are less likely to be awarded bachelor's degrees than their White peers in nearly every state. Collectively, these findings raise concerns since bachelor's degrees are the predominant credential awarded both nationally and in the overwhelming majority of states.*



## CONCLUSION

This report examines the representation of Black Americans among undergraduates and degree earners at public institutions in 41 states. Public institutions should reduce — rather than exacerbate — race-based inequities and advance the public interest by ensuring all Americans — regardless of race — are able to seek and earn a postsecondary education. To achieve this end, our nation’s public colleges and universities must reflect a racially-representative image of the residents they were designed to educate. More directly, the undergraduates served and graduates produced by public institutions should mirror the racial and ethnic mix of the state. In this report, we posed and answered six questions related to Black representation in higher education, and our findings make clear that, with few exceptions, Black representation in public colleges and universities is anything but a mirror image of states’ racial and ethnic composition.

Our findings show that Black students are significantly underrepresented at public four-year institutions in almost every state, particularly at selective colleges, where they are virtually excluded. We also found that Black students were severely underrepresented among associate and bachelor’s degree earners in nearly all states. Although Black student representation was low among associate degree earners, representation among bachelor’s degree earners was much worse. In sum, these findings suggest that public institutions in the vast majority of states are broken mirrors that fail to accurately reflect America’s rich racial and ethnic makeup.

State leaders must do more to ensure public colleges and universities serve and support all state residents. This requires taking aggressive measures to enroll and graduate more Black residents, so they can equally benefit from the increased earnings, economic stability, and employment opportunities a college degree affords. This is particularly crucial at four-year institutions, where our findings show that enrollment and degree earner representation is lowest — and benefits to earning a degree are the greatest. Postsecondary opportunity for Black Americans cannot be disproportionately ascribed to community colleges, where the resources necessary to adequately serve students are sparse and completion rates are lower.

A stronger commitment to serving higher numbers of Black residents will not only economically empower the states Black residents, but it will also bolster states. When residents have higher levels of degree attainment and degree holders reflect the diversity within their states, economies become more dynamic, tax revenue increases, and reliance on social safety-net programs diminishes. These are just some of the reasons why more than 40 states have adopted goals to increase the share of college-educated citizens in their states. But, in many states, especially those in the South, where many Black Americans reside, these goals will not be reached without a deliberate and focused effort to get more Black students into and through college. Hence, these statewide attainment goals should include an explicit focus on closing racial equity gaps in degree attainment and direction on how states can meet these goals. On the next page are questions for state and postsecondary education leaders and advocates that can help them focus their efforts on areas of need while pursuing educational justice.



## Questions State and Postsecondary Education Leaders and Advocates Should Ask

- 1** To what extent are Black students in your state attending equitably funded P-12 schools with the requisite resources, effective teachers, and rigorous curricular options that are needed to ensure they leave high school prepared to immediately succeed in credit-bearing college courses at all public institutions in your state?
- 2** What is happening in your state to ensure Black students are guided seamlessly through the traditional high school to college pipeline? Are students receiving adequate pre-college advising and support with college and financial aid applications. And are recruitment and outreach practices reaching every potential Black student at their schools and in their communities?
- 3** Are public institutions in your state using unbiased and equitable criteria to assess student talent and ability, and how can systemic social and educational inequities — which more frequently affect Black Americans — receive more consideration in college admissions decisions?
- 4** What actions are required to ensure that selective public institutions with severe underrepresentation of Black students are committed to and financially capable of increasing their numbers of Black students while ensuring they receive sufficient financial support?
- 5** Are the public institutions in your state providing accessible and affordable degree pathways for adults without college degrees, and what measures are being taken to ensure that Black adults are able to participate in and fully benefit from these programs?
- 6** Do the public institutions in your state provide enough wraparound services that address the social and educational inequities that prevent many Black students from earning their college degree? These services include adequate financial support for tuition, fees, books, and living expenses; emergency financial support; childcare; food banks; transportation; intrusive advising and academic support; counseling; and more.
- 7** Are there disparities in per-student funding that result in fewer dollars going to institutions that serve large shares of Black students, and how have prior cuts to state support for higher education disproportionately hurt these institutions? How much additional money do these institutions need to provide the support required to improve completion rates and help increase the representation of Black degree earners in your state?
- 8** What data and equity-minded accountability measures are needed to ensure that public institutions are effectively using their resources to graduate Black students at higher rates and ensure that Black residents are equitably represented among degree earners in your state?



# METHODS

In this report, we use six metrics to examine college enrollment and degree earner representation in public higher education for Black students in 41 states across the country. The first three metrics focus on Black undergraduate enrollment representation, while the last three metrics focus on Black undergraduate degree earner representation. Like our [report](#) on degree attainment for Black adults, we excluded Alaska, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming from the analysis because they have relatively few Black residents. Specifically, each of the excluded states has fewer than 15,000 Black adults ages 25 to 64, according to a three-year average of data from the 2014, 2015, and 2016 results of the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

We developed the state-level enrollment and degree earner representation metrics included in this report using data from the ACS and the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). We gathered racial and ethnic demographic data for each state from the ACS, while we collected college enrollment and degree completion data from IPEDS. We aggregated the data from IPEDS, which include institution-level data, into state-level measures. We included only public institutions that participate in the federal government's Title IV financial aid programs. We excluded graduate-only institutions, as all metrics are based on the enrollment and outcomes of undergraduate students.

For interpretation purposes, we transformed the scores for each metric into letter grades. For metrics 1, 2, 4, and 5, states received A grades for scores greater than or equal to 90. We assigned B grades to states that have scores of 80 to 89, and scores for C grades range from 70 to 79. States that received D grades have performance scores of 60 to 69, and scores below 60 received failing or F grades. Pluses and minuses are added for further delineation.

For metrics 3 and 6, states received A grades when gaps are below 2 percentage points. Gaps of 2.0 to 4.9 percentage points received B grades, and scores of 5.0 to 9.9 percentage points received C grades. We assigned D grades to states with grades of 10.0 to 14.9 percentage points, while assigning failing grades for gaps larger than 15 percentage points. Pluses and minuses are not added for further delineation since these raw scores for this metric are not aligned with a traditional grading scale, and the size of the ranges for the B, C, and D grades is small.

Metrics 1, 2, 4, and 5 use enrollment and degree earner benchmarks to compare the shares of Black undergraduate enrollees and Black degree earners in each state. We use the same demographic comparison (the percentage of residents ages 18 to 49 with no college degree in each state) for the metrics that measure Black community and technical college enrollment representation and Black associate degree representation (i.e., metrics 1 and 4). We identify this age range of 18 to 49 so that older adults are included. We exclude individuals who already earned a college degree, since prior graduates are hopefully less likely to need additional undergraduate education at a community college and are unlikely to re-enroll.

We used the same demographic comparisons (the percentage of state residents ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree) for the metrics that measure Black four-year enrollment representation and Black bachelor's degree representation (i.e., metrics 2 and 5). We do not include in the demographic comparison individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent because they are usually unable to enroll in bachelor's programs at four-year institutions. We also excluded individuals who have already earned a bachelor's or a higher degree, because they hopefully have less need for additional undergraduate education at four-year institutions and are unlikely to re-enroll.



# BLACK UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT REPRESENTATION METRICS

## Metric 1

Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges

**Research Question:** How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public community and technical colleges in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with no college degree — who are Black (*i.e., the state's benchmark*)?

This metric compares the share of undergraduate students enrolled at public two-year and less-than-two-year institutions in the state who are Black with the share of state residents ages 18 to 49 without a college degree who are Black. A performance score

of 100 on this metric means that the share of Black students is representative of the share of Black state residents. Scores greater than 100 indicate that Black students represent a larger share of undergraduate students attending public institutions compared with the state demographics, while scores of less than 100 indicate that Black students are underrepresented at state community and technical colleges.

Data on the shares of undergraduate students by race and ethnicity come from the IPEDS 2016 Fall Enrollment collection, while data on state racial demographics are from a three-year average of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014, 2015, and 2016 ACS surveys.





## Metric 2

### Black Enrollment Representation at Public Four-Year Institutions

**Research Question:** How does the enrollment of Black undergraduates at public four-year postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree — who are Black (*i.e., the state's benchmark*)?

This metric compares the share of undergraduate students enrolled at public, primarily four-year, institutions in the state who are Black with the share of state residents ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree who are Black. A performance score of 100 on this metric means that the share of Black students at four-year

public institutions is representative of the share of Black state residents. Scores greater than 100 indicate that Black students represent a larger share of undergraduate students attending four-year public institutions compared with the state demographics, while scores of less than 100 indicate that Black students are underrepresented at the state's public four-year institutions. Primarily, four-year institutions are schools in which greater than 50 percent of the degrees or certificates awarded are at the bachelor's level or higher.

Data on the shares of undergraduate students by race and ethnicity come from the IPEDS 2016 Fall Enrollment collection, while data on state racial demographics are from a three-year average of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014, 2015, and 2016 ACS surveys.

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## Metric 3

### Gap Between Black and White Undergraduates Attending Selective Public Institutions

**Research Question:** Do Black and White students have equal access to selective public four-year institutions in each state?

This metric examines the difference (gap) in the shares of Black and White undergraduate students enrolled at public four-year institutions in the state who go to one of its flagship or selective public universities. A score of close to zero on this metric indicates that White and Black undergraduates at four-year institutions have access to selective public four-year institutions in similar proportions. Scores of less than zero mean that a larger share of Black undergraduates enrolled at four-year institutions attend selective public universities at higher rates than their White peers, while scores greater than zero mean that Black undergraduates are disproportionately enrolled at less selective public four-year colleges.

Primarily four-year institutions are schools in which greater than 50 percent of the degrees or certificates

awarded are at the bachelor's level or higher. We excluded Delaware, Iowa, Hawaii, Nevada, and Rhode Island from this analysis, since these states have fewer than four public four-year institutions. The 88 institutions we considered selective fulfilled any of the following criteria:

1. The institution had a median SAT math and verbal score greater than 1,150 or an equivalent ACT score for 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 (three-year average).
2. The institution reported standardized test scores **AND** was classified as "more selective" in the Carnegie Foundation's 2015 Undergraduate Profile classification scheme **AND** as having the "highest research activity" in the Carnegie Foundation's 2015 basic classification scheme.
3. The institution was considered a state flagship institution.

Data on the shares of undergraduate students by race and ethnicity come from the IPEDS 2016 Fall Enrollment collection.



# BLACK UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE EARNER REPRESENTATION METRICS

## Metric 4

### Black Representation Among Associate Degree Earners

**Research Question:** How does the share of associate degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with no college degree — who are Black (*i.e., the state's benchmark*)?

This metric compares the share of associate degree completers from public institutions in the state who are Black with the share of state residents ages 18 to 49 who are Black. A performance score of 100 on this metric means that the share of Black associate degree completers is representative of the share of Black state residents. Scores greater than 100 indicate that Black students represent a larger share of associate degree earners compared with the percentage of Black state residents, while scores of less than 100 indicate that Black students are underrepresented among degree earners.

Data on the shares of associate degree completers by race and ethnicity come from the IPEDS 2016 Completions collection, while data on state racial demographics are from a three-year average of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014, 2015, and 2016 ACS surveys.

## Metric 5

### Black Representation Among Bachelor's Degree Earners

**Research Question:** How does the share of bachelor's degree completers who are Black at public postsecondary institutions in each state compare to the state's share of residents — ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree — who are Black (*i.e., the state's benchmark*)?

This metric compares the share of bachelor's degree completers from public institutions in the state who are

Black with the share of state residents ages 18 to 49 with a high school diploma and no bachelor's degree who are Black. A performance score of 100 on this metric means that the share of Black bachelor's degree completers is representative of the share of Black state residents. Scores greater than 100 indicate that Black students represent a larger share of bachelor's degree earners compared with the percentage of Black state residents, while scores of less than 100 indicate that Black students are underrepresented among bachelor's degree earners.

Data on the shares of bachelor's degree completers by race and ethnicity come from the IPEDS 2016 Completions collection, while data on state racial demographics are from a three-year average of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014, 2015, and 2016 ACS surveys.

## Metric 6

### Gap Between Shares of Black and White Graduates With Bachelor's Degrees

**Research Question:** Are Black and White graduates awarded similar shares of bachelor's degrees from public institutions in their state?

This metric compares the difference between the shares of Black and White graduates who receive bachelor's degrees in each state. We define graduates as students who earn one of the following postsecondary credentials: a bachelor's degree, an associate degree, or a certificate. An ideal score on this metric should be less than or equal to zero, which indicates that Black graduates earn either an equal or higher share of bachelor's degrees than White students. Scores greater than zero on this metric indicate that Black graduates earn considerably lower shares of bachelor's degrees than White students. Negative scores (*i.e., scores of less than zero*) indicate that higher proportions of Black graduates earn bachelor's degrees.

The data on degree completers come from the IPEDS 2016 Completions collection.





## WHAT ABOUT THE GRADUATION RATE?

Throughout the years, much of The Education Trust's higher education work has focused on analyzing the institutional graduation rates reported annually in the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which indicate how well a specific institution performs at graduating a new cohort of students who begin as full-time students. For four-year institutions, the metric measures the percentage of new bachelor's degree-seeking students who initially enroll full time and complete a bachelor's degree within six years at the institution in which they initially enrolled. Although this metric is valuable, it has some limitations that make it less informative for some institutions.

The IPEDS graduation rate does not include part-time students or account for the outcomes of students who transfer from one school to another. These limitations make the graduation rate less useful as a holistic measure of institutional success for four-year colleges and universities that serve a high percentage of students who are not "first-time, full-time" attendees, such as older adults who work and attend classes on a part-time basis, or students who transfer from another four-year institution or a community college. When outcomes for these students are not included, a significant piece of an institution's mission is not taken into account. For example, at Winston-Salem State University, which in 2016 had the highest Black graduation rate (48.3 percent) of any public historically Black college or university, the percentage of new students who were included in the graduation rate cohort was only 46.0 percent. Stated differently, more than half of the institution's new students were either transfer students or enrolled part time.

For many community colleges, the graduation rates metric — which measures first-time, full-time student completion in three years instead of

six — provides even less insight. In addition to excluding part-time students and students who aren't first-time students, the graduation rate does not account for the outcomes of students who transfer from community colleges and continue their education elsewhere. By not counting the outcomes of these students, the graduation rate metric does not capture or measure a core aspect of the community college mission: preparing students to transfer to four-year institutions.

Although The Education Trust still believes the graduation rate is a valuable institutional performance metric when presented and interpreted in the right context, we did not aggregate these institutional rates into statewide rates and include them in the core suite of metrics for this report. State policymakers may use the IPEDS institutional graduation rates to assess individual state performance, but at the macro level, which is the focus of this report, state policymakers are more interested in whether students finish their degrees and are less concerned with whether they complete their degrees at the institution of initial enrollment. Because the statewide IPEDS graduation rate aggregations do not capture transfer outcomes, these rates are much less useful in this context.

Even though we did not include the statewide IPEDS graduation rate aggregations in the report, we provide the rates for four-year institutions in the Appendix (see page 44). Despite the limitations, the data reveal a significant gap in bachelor's degree completion in the vast majority of states. All but one state have gaps of greater than 10 percentage points, and 33 states have gaps greater than 15 percentage points. We decided not to include the statewide graduation rates for community colleges given the significant limitations described above.



# WHY DIDN'T WE GRADE STATES ON BLACK CERTIFICATE REPRESENTATION?

Many states count certificates in their degree attainment rates in the hope that these certificates will translate into greater economic opportunity. However, the publicly available data we used for this project do not enable us to differentiate between certificates that do genuinely enhance mobility and those that do not. Broadly speaking, certificate holders earn only the same amount as individuals with some college experience and no degree, typically only \$5,750 more than a high school graduate.<sup>31</sup> Until better data allow us to be more discerning about certificate quality and economic utility, we remain much more confident about the economic returns in the labor market afforded to associate and bachelor's degree earners.

Moreover, an analysis from the Center for American Progress found that nearly 55 percent of Black certificate completers defaulted on their student loans within 12 years.<sup>32</sup> While the default rates were still quite high for bachelor's and associate degree earners (23 percent and 33 percent, respectively), the default rates were still much lower than they were for certificate completers. We find this troubling given the overrepresentation of Black students among certificate completers. While slightly less than 21 percent of White graduates earn a certificate, roughly 27 percent of Black credential earners are awarded a certificate each year.

Beyond our concerns about the value of certificates, especially as terminal credentials, we also know that the number certificates awarded varies greatly by state. In some states, like Georgia and Louisiana, certificates represent more than 40 percent of all credentials (degrees and certificates) awarded by public institutions. And, according to research from the Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce, certificates are more common in Southern states.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, in states like New Jersey, Rhode Island, Delaware, and New York, certificates are quite scarce, accounting for fewer than 5 percent of credentials awarded by public institutions. These stark differences in certificate awards across states, along with our concerns about the value of certificates, led us to exclude Black certificate representation from this analysis.



# APPENDIX

**Table 1:** Comparing Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges and Four-Year Institutions

	Metric 1: Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges	Metric 2: Black Enrollment Representation at Public Four-Year Institutions
Number of States Receiving A Grades	22	4
Number of States Receiving B Grades	13	8
Number of States Receiving C Grades	4	8
Number of States Receiving D Grades	1	15
Number of States Receiving F Grades	1	6

NOTE: The grades for metric 1 and metric 2 are based on data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey.

**Table 2:** Comparing Black Associate and Bachelor's Degree Representation

	Metric 4: Associate Degree Representation	Metric 5: Bachelor's Degree Representation
Number of States Receiving A Grades	8	3
Number of States Receiving B Grades	8	1
Number of States Receiving C Grades	10	4
Number of States Receiving D Grades	9	12
Number of States Receiving F Grades	6	21

NOTE: The grades for metric 4 and metric 5 are based on data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey.



**Table 3:** State Equity Benchmarks for Black Enrollment and Degree Earner Representation

State	Percentage of Public Community and Technical College Undergraduates and Associate Degree Earners Who Should Be Black	Percentage of Public Four-Year Undergraduates and Bachelor's Degree Earners Who Should Be Black
AL	32.4%	31.6%
AR	18.7%	18.4%
AZ	5.0%	5.4%
CA	6.2%	7.0%
CO	5.2%	5.3%
CT	14.2%	14.3%
DE	26.5%	26.4%
FL	20.6%	19.5%
GA	35.9%	37.1%
HI	3.1%	3.1%
IA	5.4%	4.5%
IL	18.5%	17.9%
IN	11.5%	11.1%
KS	7.7%	7.5%
KY	9.9%	9.9%
LA	37.8%	35.5%
MA	9.8%	9.6%
MD	36.1%	37.1%
MI	18.6%	17.1%
MN	9.1%	7.7%
MO	15.3%	14.5%
MS	44.5%	43.0%
NC	25.9%	26.0%
NE	6.7%	6.1%
NJ	17.7%	18.0%
NM	2.1%	2.4%
NV	9.9%	10.3%
NY	18.4%	18.2%
OH	15.7%	14.7%
OK	8.9%	9.0%
OR	2.4%	2.3%
PA	15.0%	14.2%
RI	7.4%	7.2%
SC	33.1%	32.2%
TN	20.4%	20.2%
TX	13.2%	14.9%
UT	1.4%	1.3%
VA	24.0%	23.8%
WA	4.8%	4.7%
WI	9.5%	8.3%
WV	5.3%	5.3%



## Metric 1: Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges

State	A Score: Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges Score = (C+D) x 100	B Grade: Black Enrollment Representation at Community and Technical Colleges	C Percentage of Public Community and Technical College Undergraduates Who Are Black	D Percentage of State Residents (18-49 With No College Degree) Who Are Black
HI	44	F	1.4%	3.1%
IL	69	D+	12.8%	18.5%
TN	73	C-	14.9%	20.4%
WI	74	C	7.1%	9.5%
MO	78	C+	12.0%	15.3%
NV	79	C+	7.8%	9.9%
VA	80	B-	19.3%	24.0%
AL	81	B-	26.3%	32.4%
KY	81	B-	8.0%	9.9%
OH	83	B-	13.1%	15.7%
NJ	85	B	15.1%	17.7%
OK	85	B	7.6%	8.9%
MD	85	B	30.7%	36.1%
MI	85	B	15.8%	18.6%
NC	85	B	21.9%	25.9%
SC	87	B+	28.9%	33.1%
MS	87	B+	38.6%	44.5%
FL	87	B+	17.9%	20.6%
NY	87	B+	15.9%	18.4%
NE	91	A-	6.1%	6.7%
DE	95	A	25.3%	26.5%
WV	95	A	5.0%	5.3%
WA	97	A+	4.7%	4.8%
TX	97	A+	12.8%	13.2%
IN	99	A+	11.4%	11.5%
CO	99	A+	5.1%	5.2%
CA	102	A+	6.4%	6.2%
GA	103	A+	36.8%	35.9%
AR	105	A+	19.7%	18.7%
NM	106	A+	2.2%	2.1%
OR	106	A+	2.5%	2.4%
LA	107	A+	40.6%	37.8%
AZ	107	A+	5.4%	5.0%
KS	108	A+	8.3%	7.7%
PA	109	A+	16.4%	15.0%
IA	112	A+	6.1%	5.4%
CT	119	A+	17.0%	14.2%
RI	123	A+	9.1%	7.4%
MN	129	A+	11.8%	9.1%
UT	129	A+	1.8%	1.4%
MA	155	A+	15.1%	9.8%

Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State score calculations may not be exact due to rounding in columns C and D.





## Metric 2: Black Enrollment Representation at Public Four-Year Institutions

State	A Score: Black Enrollment Representation at Public Four-Year Institutions Score = (C÷D) x 100	B Grade: Black Enrollment Representation at Public Four-Year Institutions	C Percentage of Public Four-year Undergraduates Who Are Black	D Percentage of State Residents (18-49 With a HS Diploma and No Bachelor's Degree) Who Are Black
WI	37	F	3.1%	8.3%
HI	48	F	1.5%	3.1%
MI	51	F	8.7%	17.1%
CA	52	F	3.6%	7.0%
SC	53	F	17.1%	32.2%
KS	57	F	4.2%	7.5%
OH	60	D-	8.8%	14.7%
IN	60	D-	6.6%	11.1%
NV	60	D-	6.1%	10.3%
NE	62	D-	3.8%	6.1%
VA	63	D-	14.9%	23.8%
IA	64	D	2.9%	4.5%
DE	64	D	17.0%	26.4%
NJ	65	D	11.7%	18.0%
MN	65	D	5.0%	7.7%
FL	66	D	12.9%	19.5%
PA	66	D	9.3%	14.2%
LA	67	D+	23.7%	35.5%
MO	67	D+	9.6%	14.5%
CO	68	D+	3.6%	5.3%
CT	69	D+	9.9%	14.3%
AL	70	C-	22.2%	31.6%
WA	70	C-	3.3%	4.7%
GA	72	C-	26.8%	37.1%
IL	73	C-	13.1%	17.9%
TX	75	C	11.2%	14.9%
MD	75	C	27.7%	37.1%
AR	78	C+	14.3%	18.4%
MS	79	C+	34.0%	43.0%
AZ	80	B-	4.3%	5.4%
OK	80	B-	7.2%	9.0%
KY	82	B-	8.1%	9.9%
NC	84	B	21.8%	26.0%
NY	85	B	15.4%	18.2%
MA	87	B+	8.4%	9.6%
UT	87	B+	1.1%	1.3%
RI	89	B+	6.4%	7.2%
TN	96	A	19.4%	20.2%
OR	98	A+	2.3%	2.3%
WV	115	A+	6.0%	5.3%
NM	130	A+	3.1%	2.4%

Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State score calculations may not be exact due to rounding in columns C and D.



### Metric 3: Gap Between Black and White Undergraduates Attending Selective Public Institutions

State	A Gap Between Black and White Undergraduates Attending Selective Public Institutions Gap = D - C	B Gap Grade	C Percentage of Public Four-Year Black Undergraduates Attending Selective Institutions	D Percentage of Public Four-Year White Undergraduates Attending Selective Institutions
NC	39.4	F	10.6%	50.0%
AL	36.9	F	18.8%	55.7%
SC	31.4	F	22.7%	54.0%
MS	27.4	F	10.9%	38.4%
TX	25.3	F	10.6%	35.9%
VA	25.1	F	21.5%	46.6%
CO	23.6	F	21.3%	44.9%
AR	22.6	F	9.6%	32.2%
FL	20.0	F	41.4%	61.4%
MD	18.8	F	15.0%	33.8%
GA	18.8	F	5.4%	24.2%
CA	18.5	F	21.5%	40.1%
NM	16.9	F	39.8%	56.7%
TN	16.5	F	6.7%	23.2%
NY	16.4	F	18.7%	35.1%
IN	15.5	F	21.5%	37.0%
LA	15.3	F	11.2%	26.5%
CT	15.2	F	21.3%	36.5%
MA	13.9	D	10.9%	24.7%
PA	13.7	D	13.2%	26.9%
OH	13.2	D	24.0%	37.2%
NE	12.4	D	33.2%	45.6%
MO	12.3	D	20.2%	32.5%
NJ	10.4	D	21.6%	31.9%
WV	10.2	D	33.9%	44.1%
MI	10.1	D	20.0%	30.1%
IL	9.9	C	18.9%	28.7%
OK	8.8	C	15.9%	24.6%
WI	5.1	C	15.5%	20.6%
MN	3.4	B	27.8%	31.2%
AZ	2.8	B	48.4%	51.1%
OR	1.7	A	20.7%	22.4%
KS	1.4	A	24.2%	25.6%
WA	-1.1	A	23.2%	22.0%
UT	-5.7	A	23.8%	18.1%
KY	-6.9	A	42.4%	35.5%

Note: Analysis based on data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Fall Enrollment Survey. State score calculations may not be exact due to rounding in columns C and D.



## Metric 4: Black Representation Among Associate Degree Earners

State	A Score: Black Representation Among Associate Degree Earners <b>Score = (C ÷ D) x 100</b>	B Grade: Black Representation Among Associate Degree Earners	C Percentage of Associate Degree Earners Who Are Black	D Percentage of State Residents (18-49 With No College Degree) Who Are Black
HI	28	F	0.9%	3.1%
WI	49	F	4.7%	9.5%
MO	50	F	7.6%	15.3%
TN	52	F	10.7%	20.4%
NV	55	F	5.5%	9.9%
MD	58	F	20.9%	36.1%
IL	61	D-	11.4%	18.5%
DE	62	D-	16.5%	26.5%
OH	64	D	10.1%	15.7%
NC	65	D	16.9%	25.9%
KY	66	D	6.5%	9.9%
VA	68	D+	16.4%	24.0%
AL	68	D+	22.0%	32.4%
NJ	69	D+	12.3%	17.7%
UT	69	D+	1.0%	1.4%
OK	70	C-	6.3%	8.9%
SC	70	C-	23.2%	33.1%
CO	71	C-	3.7%	5.2%
MI	72	C-	13.5%	18.6%
WA	73	C-	3.5%	4.8%
FL	74	C	15.2%	20.6%
MS	76	C	33.7%	44.5%
LA	77	C+	29.1%	37.8%
OR	77	C+	1.8%	2.4%
PA	78	C+	11.8%	15.0%
IN	80	B-	9.2%	11.5%
RI	83	B-	6.2%	7.4%
CA	83	B-	5.2%	6.2%
NY	83	B-	15.2%	18.4%
NE	83	B-	5.5%	6.7%
MN	85	B	7.7%	9.1%
AR	87	B+	16.3%	18.7%
IA	89	B+	4.8%	5.4%
GA	91	A-	32.8%	35.9%
CT	92	A-	13.1%	14.2%
TX	96	A	12.8%	13.2%
WV	103	A+	5.4%	5.3%
AZ	107	A+	5.4%	5.0%
KS	112	A+	8.6%	7.7%
MA	121	A+	11.8%	9.8%
NM	128	A+	2.7%	2.1%

Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State score calculations may not be exact due to rounding in columns C and D.



## Metric 5: Black Representation Among Bachelor's Degree Earners

State	A Score: Black Representation Among Bachelor's Degree Earners <b>Score = (C ÷ D) x 100</b>	B Grade: Black Representation Among Bachelor's Degree Earners	C Percentage of Bachelor's Degree Earners Who Are Black	D Percentage of State Residents (18-49 With a HS Diploma and No Bachelor's Degree) Who Are Black
WI	26	F	2.2%	8.3%
HI	36	F	1.1%	3.1%
MI	40	F	6.8%	17.1%
SC	44	F	14.3%	32.2%
NE	44	F	2.7%	6.1%
KS	47	F	3.5%	7.5%
OH	48	F	7.1%	14.7%
CA	49	F	3.4%	7.0%
NV	50	F	5.2%	10.3%
IN	51	F	5.6%	11.1%
IA	52	F	2.4%	4.5%
CO	52	F	2.7%	5.3%
PA	53	F	7.5%	14.2%
AL	54	F	17.2%	31.6%
VA	54	F	12.8%	23.8%
DE	54	F	14.2%	26.4%
NJ	56	F	10.0%	18.0%
MO	57	F	8.3%	14.5%
MN	58	F	4.5%	7.7%
CT	58	F	8.3%	14.3%
IL	59	F	10.5%	17.9%
LA	60	D-	21.2%	35.5%
GA	63	D-	23.5%	37.1%
AZ	64	D	3.5%	5.4%
MD	64	D	23.6%	37.1%
WA	65	D	3.1%	4.7%
MS	66	D	28.5%	43.0%
FL	66	D	12.9%	19.5%
TX	66	D	9.8%	14.9%
OK	67	D+	6.1%	9.0%
AR	67	D+	12.4%	18.4%
NY	67	D+	12.2%	18.2%
MA	68	D+	6.5%	9.6%
NC	70	C-	18.2%	26.0%
KY	72	C-	7.2%	9.9%
RI	73	C-	5.3%	7.2%
OR	79	C+	1.9%	2.3%
TN	80	B-	16.1%	20.2%
UT	91	A-	1.2%	1.3%
WV	99	A+	5.2%	5.3%
NM	124	A+	2.9%	2.4%

Note: Analysis based on data from a) the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey, and b) the United States Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. State score calculations may not be exact due to rounding in columns C and D.



## Metric 6: Gap Between Shares of Black and White Graduates Earning Bachelor's Degrees

	A	B	C	D
State	Gap Between Shares of White and Black Degree/Cert Earners With Bachelor's Degrees. <b>Gap = D - C</b>	Gap Grade	Percentage of Black Certificate and Degree Earners Awarded Bachelor's Degrees	Percentage of White Certificate and Degree Earners Awarded Bachelor's Degrees
SC	19.1	F	37.3%	56.4%
KS	18.6	F	27.7%	46.3%
MA	17.7	F	40.8%	58.5%
WI	17.2	F	32.1%	49.3%
MI	15.8	F	42.5%	58.4%
AZ	15.0	F	28.0%	43.1%
IA	14.6	D	26.8%	41.5%
LA	14.3	D	35.1%	49.5%
CO	14.1	D	40.0%	54.1%
MN	13.6	D	30.4%	44.0%
CT	13.1	D	48.8%	61.9%
NE	13.0	D	41.8%	54.9%
GA	12.6	D	30.7%	43.2%
PA	12.4	D	56.0%	68.3%
TX	11.2	D	40.9%	52.1%
IN	11.1	D	45.1%	56.2%
AR	11.0	D	31.4%	42.4%
AL	10.7	D	50.0%	60.7%
OH	10.5	D	42.1%	52.6%
MS	10.1	D	34.7%	44.8%
WA	10.0	D	25.8%	35.8%
CA	8.3	C	35.2%	43.5%
FL	7.8	C	31.9%	39.7%
DE	7.2	C	63.8%	71.0%
NJ	6.3	C	50.9%	57.2%
VA	6.2	C	46.2%	52.4%
IL	5.5	C	28.4%	34.0%
RI	4.9	B	63.9%	68.8%
HI	4.5	B	53.7%	58.1%
NY	3.9	B	46.9%	50.8%
OK	2.9	B	43.7%	46.6%
NV	2.4	B	45.3%	47.6%
NC	1.1	A	43.1%	44.2%
WV	-0.6	A	60.2%	59.7%
OR	-1.0	A	51.0%	50.0%
MO	-2.4	A	55.7%	53.3%
KY	-3.5	A	49.7%	46.2%
NM	-3.9	A	42.2%	38.3%
MD	-4.9	A	58.9%	54.0%
UT	-5.0	A	48.4%	43.4%
TN	-8.8	A	54.7%	45.9%

Note: Analysis based on data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2016 Completions Survey. State score calculations may not be exact due to rounding in columns C and D.



## Black Student Graduation Rate Data by State

State	Grad Rate (%)	Grad Rate Rank	Black-White Grad Rate Gap (% pts)	Grad Rate Gap Rank
AL	32.7	31	29.1	35
AR	24.2	41	24.6	28
AZ	46.6	12	17.4	14
CA	51.5	7	22.3	26
CO	36.2	22	21.9	23
CT	52.2	6	13.6	6
DE	47.0	11	36.3	41
FL	53.6	4	15.2	9
GA	36.7	21	18.9	18
HI	25.0	40	13.5	5
IA	48.8	10	23.7	27
IL	34.8	27	33.1	40
IN	31.7	34	26.1	30
KS	26.3	39	32.3	39
KY	35.3	26	17.4	12
LA	33.3	29	19.1	21
MA	52.7	5	10.1	2
MD	42.0	18	31.4	38
MI	35.4	24	31.1	37
MN	43.2	17	17.4	13
MO	32.4	32	26.3	31
MS	35.4	23	27.5	33
NC	50.7	8	18.3	16
NE	32.9	30	27.3	32
NJ	53.6	3	18.3	17
NM	28.8	38	19.1	19
NV	33.6	28	15.6	10
NY	49.2	9	16.4	11
OH	28.8	37	27.8	34
OK	29.8	36	22.1	24
OR	46.4	15	13.4	4
PA	44.2	16	22.1	25
RI	46.5	13	14.9	8
SC	46.4	14	19.1	20
TN	38.2	20	13.9	7
TX	35.3	25	24.8	29
UT	40.6	19	3.9	1
VA	54.0	2	21.7	22
WA	58.3	1	10.4	3
WI	31.9	33	31.0	36
WV	31.0	35	17.8	15



## Selective Public Four-Year Institutions Used for Metric 3

### Gap Between Black and White Undergraduates Attending Selective Public Institutions

**AL:** Auburn University (100858), The University of Alabama (100751), University of Alabama in Huntsville (100706), **AR:** University of Arkansas (106397), **AZ:** Arizona State University-Tempe (104151), University of Arizona (104179),

**CA:** California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo (110422), University of California-Berkeley (110635), University of California-Davis (110644), University of California-Irvine (110653), University of California-Los Angeles (110662), University of California-Riverside (110671), University of California-San Diego (110680), University of California-Santa Barbara (110705), University of California-Santa Cruz (110714), **CO:** Colorado School of Mines (126775), Colorado State University-Fort Collins (126818), University of Colorado Boulder (126614), **CT:** University of Connecticut (129020),

**FL:** Florida State University (134097), New College of Florida (262129), University of Florida (134130), University of Central Florida (132903), University of South Florida-Main Campus (132903),

**GA:** Georgia Institute of Technology-Main Campus (139755), University of Georgia (139959),

**IL:** University of Illinois at Chicago (145600), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (145637), **IN:** Indiana University-Bloomington (151351), Purdue University-Main Campus (243780),

**KS:** University of Kansas (155317), **KY:** University of Kentucky (157085), University of Louisville (157289),

**LA:** Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College (159391),

**MA:** University of Massachusetts-Amherst (166629), **MD:** St Mary's College of Maryland (163912), University of Maryland-Baltimore County (163268), University of Maryland-College Park (163286), **MI:** Michigan State University (171100), Michigan Technological University (171128), University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (170976), **MN:** University of Minnesota-Morris (174251), University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (174066), **MO:** Missouri University of Science and Technology (178411), Truman State University (178615), University of Missouri-Columbia (178396), **MS:** University of Mississippi (176017),

**NC:** Appalachian State University (197869), North Carolina State University at Raleigh (199193), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (199120), University of North Carolina Wilmington (199218), **NE:** University of Nebraska-Lincoln (181464), **NJ:** New Jersey Institute of Technology (185828), Rutgers University-New Brunswick (186380), The College of New Jersey (187134), **NM:** New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (187967), University of New Mexico-Main Campus (187985), **NY:** CUNY Bernard M Baruch College (190512), CUNY Hunter College (190594), Stony Brook University (196097), SUNY at Albany (196060), SUNY at Binghamton (196079), SUNY College at Geneseo (196167), SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (196103), University at Buffalo (196088),

**OH:** Miami University-Oxford (204024), Ohio State University-Main Campus (204796), University of Cincinnati-Main Campus (201885), **OK:** University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus (207500), **OR:** University of Oregon (209551),

**PA:** Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus (214777), University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus (215293),

**SC:** Clemson University (217882), University of South Carolina-Columbia (218663),

**TN:** The University of Tennessee-Knoxville (221759), **TX:** Texas A & M University-College Station (228723), Texas Tech University (229115), The University of Texas at Austin (228778), The University of Texas at Dallas (228787), **UT:** University of Utah (230764),

**VA:** Christopher Newport University (231712), College of William and Mary (231624), George Mason University (232186), University of Virginia-Main Campus (234076), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (233921),

**WA:** University of Washington-Seattle Campus (236948), **WI:** University of Wisconsin-Madison (240444), **WV:** West Virginia University (238032)



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