Knocking at the College Door

Projections of High School Graduates

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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MONTANA

National and regional trends mask important variation among states in the supply of high school graduates. This profile provides brief indicators for Montana related to: current levels of educational attainment, our projections of high school graduates into the future, and two common barriers to student access and success – insufficient academic preparation and inadequate finances.

Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity

Workforce projections suggest a growing demand for well-educated labor, so younger adults need to be as well as or more educated than older adults given how much longer they will need to be employed. In Montana in 2011, almost 6% more younger adults (aged 25-44) had earned postsecondary degrees than older adults (aged 45-64), 42.3% and 36.6%, respectively.

Several of Montana's minority populations are too small to be able to reliably discern the exact size of educational attainment gaps among all races/ethnicities. However, data from 2008 to 2010 indicate that younger White non-Hispanic adults are most likely to have postsecondary degrees, both compared to their older counterparts and all other groups for which data are available. Among the younger adults for whom data is available, younger American Indians/Alaska Natives are at the greatest disadvantage, with only 22% having a postsecondary degree. Younger Hispanic adults are more likely to have degrees than their older counterparts, but lag White non-Hispanics and the state average.

Production of High School Graduates

Montana's graduating classes have been in a slow decline since 1999-2000, having declined about 8% to about 10,500 graduates by 2008-09, the last reported year. Projections indicate that they will continue to decline and stay below 10,000 graduates through 2023-24. Despite some gains in the later years, graduates in Montana are not projected to return to the levels of the early 2000s during these projections.

Nonpublic graduates were between 3% and 5% of Montana's total (350 to 600 graduates) leading up to the projections period. They are projected to rapidly decrease in number and as a percent of the total, to 100 or less (1%) in any year, after 2019-20.

Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

- White non-Hispanics have been and will remain the large majority of public graduates in Montana, but they will decline in number. There were 8,840 in 2008-09, and they will decline by 11% (almost 1,000 graduates) in 2019-20 before returning to the mid-8,000s in the later projected years, but will not rise to previous highs.
- American Indians/Alaska Natives are the next largest group of graduates in Montana. Their numbers will remain steady for most projected years, but increase by about 20% in the later years.
- Hispanic graduates will gradually increase over the projected period, from 190 in 2008-09 to 340 in 2019-20, and will hold steady from then on. Black non-Hispanics will also increase, numbering from 65 to 240.
ENROLLMENT BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTROL OF INSTITUTION

Figure 17. Actual and projected numbers for enrollment in all postsecondary degree-granting institutions, by age group: Fall 1996, fall 2010, and fall 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2021 (projected)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24 years old</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-34 years old</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 years old and over</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Millions

NOTE: Some data have been revised from previously published figures. Data by age are based on the distribution by age from the Census Bureau. Mean absolute percentage errors of selected education statistics can be found in table A-2, appendix A. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF-96); IPEDS Spring 2011, Enrollment component; Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Model, 1980-2010; and U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, "Social and Economic Characteristics of Students," various years. (This figure was prepared February 2012.)

Figure 18. Actual and projected numbers for enrollment in all postsecondary degree-granting institutions, by sex: Fall 1996 through fall 2021

Millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Projected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Some data have been revised from previously published figures. Mean absolute percentage errors of selected education statistics can be found in table A-2, appendix A. Some data have been revised from previously published figures. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF-96-99); IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2011, Enrollment component; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Model, 1980-2010. (This figure was prepared February 2012.)

Enrollment by age of student

Enrollment in postsecondary degree-granting institutions of students who are 18 to 24 years old
- increased 52 percent between 1996 and 2010; and
- is projected to increase 10 percent between 2010 and 2021.

Enrollment in postsecondary degree-granting institutions of students who are 25 to 34 years old
- increased 45 percent between 1996 and 2010; and
- is projected to increase 20 percent between 2010 and 2021.

Enrollment in postsecondary degree-granting institutions of students who are 35 years old and over
- increased 32 percent between 1996 and 2010; and
- is projected to increase 25 percent between 2010 and 2021.

For more information: Table 21

Enrollment by sex of student

Enrollment of men in postsecondary degree-granting institutions
- increased 42 percent between 1996 and 2010; and
- is projected to increase 10 percent between 2010 and 2021.

Enrollment of women in postsecondary degree-granting institutions
- increased 49 percent between 1996 and 2010; and
- is projected to increase 18 percent between 2010 and 2021.

For more information: Tables 20–22