

2013-14

New College Graduates

REPORT

NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE®
RESEARCH CENTER™

In 2013-14, the number of *new college graduates* in the U.S. — students earning their first postsecondary credential — fell for a second straight year, while the number of students receiving their second or third undergraduate credential continued a postrecession increase (**Figure 1**). The number of new college graduates saw strong growth in the first two years covered by this report (increasing at annual rates of 4.9 percent in 2010-11 and 4.3 percent in 2011-12), followed by two years of declines (-2.1 percent in 2012-13 and -1.3 percent in 2013-14). In 2013-14, U.S. Title IV degree-granting institutions awarded 1,981,534 associate and bachelor's degrees to students with no prior postsecondary award, only 0.7 percent more than they awarded in 2010-11 (1,968,334). Cumulatively, over eight million students received their first college degree (associate or bachelor's) during this four-year period.

The trends varied by gender and age group (**Tables 1-6**). Over the four-year period, the count of new college graduates (associate and bachelor's degrees combined) increased 2.2 percent for men, but decreased 0.4 percent for women. By age group, the count of new college graduates increased 4.4 percent for students under the age of 25, but decreased for all other age groups. Taken as a whole, new college graduates in the 25 and over categories dropped 6.6 percent since 2010-11.

As a percentage of all undergraduate degree recipients, new college graduates fell consistently each year, from 75 percent in 2010-11 to 71 percent in 2013-14. Put another way, the percentage of degree recipients who were stacking credentials, or earning additional undergraduate degrees on top of prior degrees or certificates, grew from 25 percent to 29 percent over this period (**Figure 2**).

Based on student-level enrollment and degree data from the National Student Clearinghouse, the *New College Graduates Report* differentiates between students earning their first postsecondary credential (referred to in this report as “new college graduates”) and students earning additional undergraduate credentials on top of ones earned in prior years. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. In Figures 1 and 2 only recipients of associate and bachelor's degrees are counted as new college graduates. However, the counts include certificates as well as degrees among the prior awards that distinguish new college graduates from repeat graduates. More information on Clearinghouse degree coverage and definitions can be found in the notes section at the end of this report.

Figure 1: New College Graduates and Graduates with Prior Awards (Bachelor's and Associate Degrees Combined)

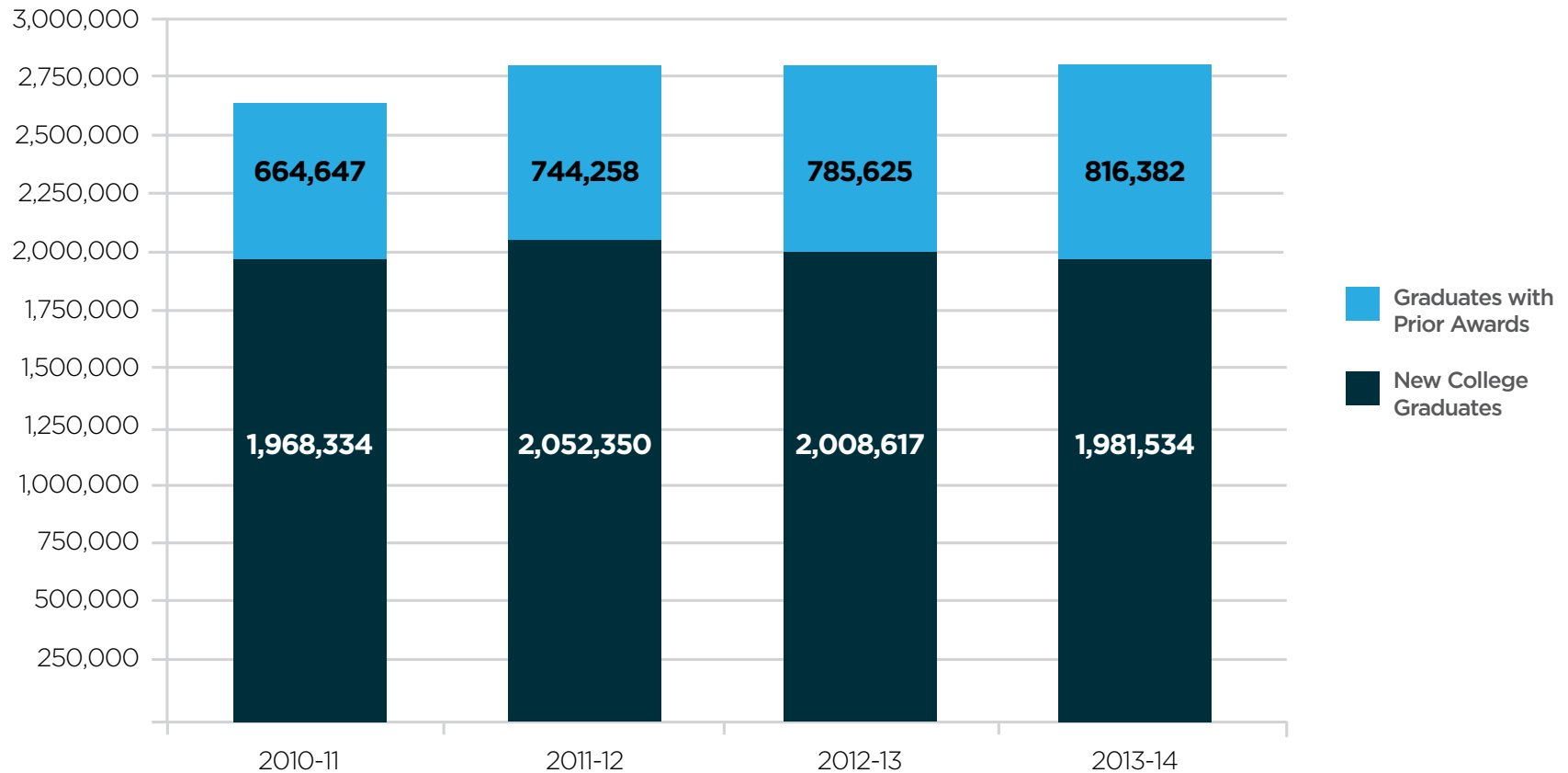


Figure 1 shows counts of students receiving undergraduate degrees (bachelor's and associates) in each academic year, disaggregated by new college graduate status. The number of new college graduates has been falling since 2011-12, while the number of graduates with prior credentials (which may include degrees or certificates) has continued a postrecession increase. The total number of undergraduate degree recipients has been essentially flat since 2011-12.

Figure 2: New College Graduates Receiving Bachelor’s and Associate Degrees as Percentage of All Bachelor’s and Associate Degree Recipients

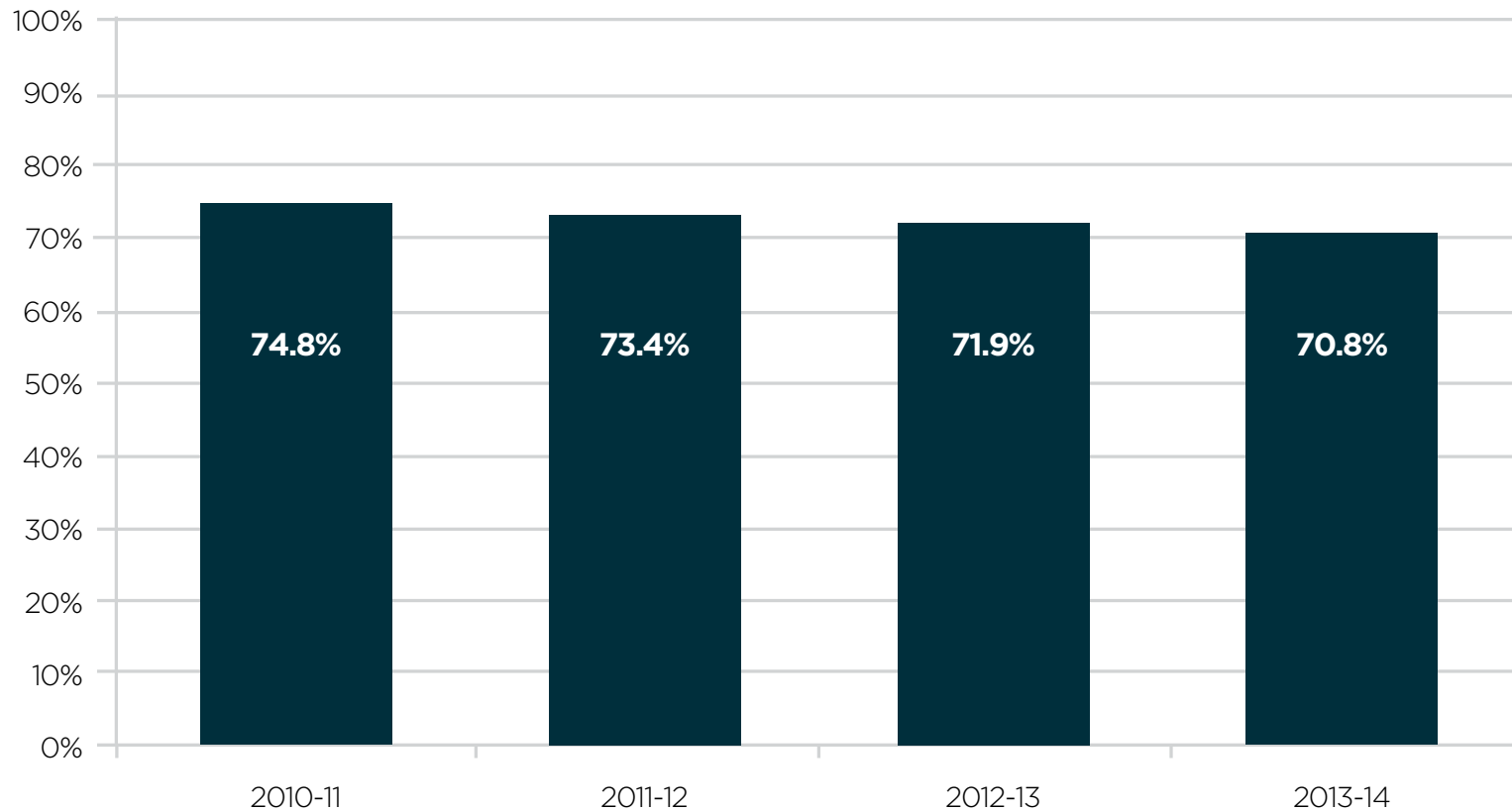


Figure 2 shows the percentage of all undergraduate degree recipients who were new college graduates in recent academic years. In 2010-11, 74.8 percent of all bachelor’s and associate degrees were earned by students with no prior postsecondary award, while the remaining 25.2 percent had previously earned either a certificate or a degree. The new college graduate percentage had dropped to 70.8 percent by 2013-14. New college graduates in this figure are defined as students who earned a bachelor’s degree or associate degree, as their *first* postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of their first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Figure 3: New College Graduates as Percentage of All Undergraduate Credential Recipients (By Level)

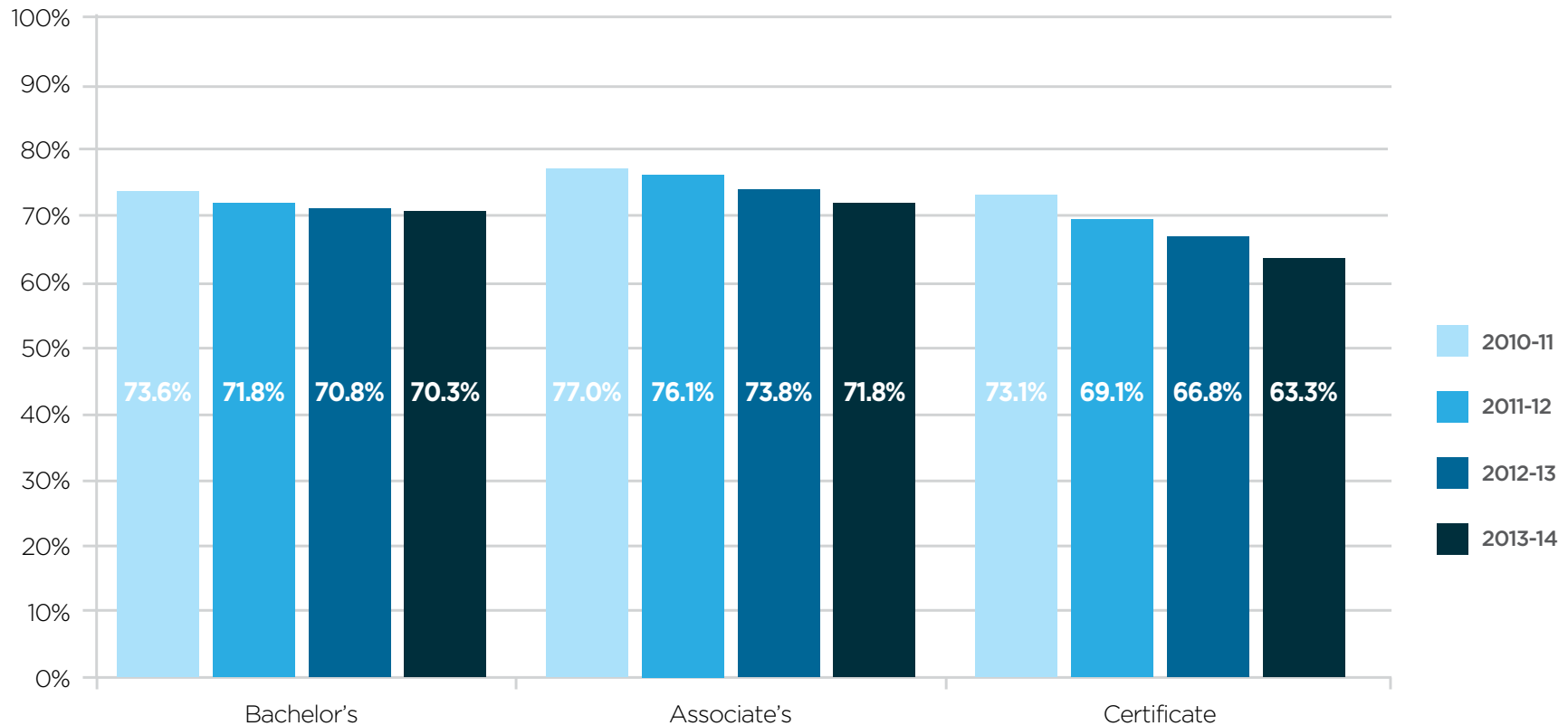


Figure 3 shows the percentage of undergraduate credentials accounted for by new college graduates at each credential level. It includes both certificate and degree recipients. The figure shows that 70.3 percent of the bachelor's degree recipients in 2013-14 were new college graduates. The remaining 29.7 percent of the students receiving bachelor's degrees had already earned a prior college credential. The percentage of new college graduates has been declining among recipients of each award level, and the trend has been most pronounced for certificate recipients. In 2010-11, 73 percent of all certificate recipients had not received a prior postsecondary degree or certificate. This number had dropped to 63 percent by 2013-14. New college graduates are defined in this figure as students who earned a bachelor's degree, associate degree, or certificate as their *first* postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Table 1: Count of New College Graduates Receiving Bachelor's Degrees by Gender, Age, and Institutional Sector

	2010-11	Change from Prior Year	2011-12	Change from Prior Year	2012-13	Change from Prior Year	2013-14	Change from Prior Year
OVERALL								
New College Graduates Receiving Bachelor's Degrees	1,254,037	2.6%	1,284,279	2.4%	1,288,628	0.3%	1,287,766	-0.1%
GENDER								
Women	704,355	2.4%	721,528	2.4%	722,139	0.1%	718,133	-0.6%
Men	549,682	2.8%	562,752	2.3%	566,489	0.7%	569,633	0.6%
AGE GROUP								
Under 25	988,990	2.3%	1,007,310	1.8%	1,016,666	0.9%	1,032,814	1.6%
25-29	127,653	3.4%	127,895	0.2%	125,779	-1.7%	122,277	-2.9%
30-39	77,532	4.4%	82,895	6.5%	82,311	-0.7%	76,078	-8.2%
40-49	39,095	4.2%	43,072	9.2%	41,452	-3.9%	36,636	-13.1%
50+	18,239	6.9%	20,612	11.5%	20,472	-0.7%	18,521	-10.5%
INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR								
4-Year Public	793,737	2.8%	805,897	1.5%	808,568	0.3%	819,101	1.3%
4-Year Private Nonprofit	404,077	0.7%	409,742	1.4%	413,478	0.9%	417,673	1.0%
4-Year Private For-Profit	55,963	12.5%	67,648	17.3%	65,906	-2.6%	50,215	-31.2%

Table 1 shows the count of bachelor's degree recipients in each year and category who were new college graduates. New college graduates are defined as students who earned a bachelor's degree, associate degree, or certificate as their first postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Table 2: New College Graduates Receiving Bachelor’s Degrees as Percentage of All Bachelor’s Degree Recipients by Gender, Age, and Sector

	2010-11	Change from Prior Year	2011-12	Change from Prior Year	2012-13	Change from Prior Year	2013-14	Change from Prior Year
OVERALL								
New College Graduates Receiving Bachelor’s Degrees as Percentage of All Bachelor’s Degree Recipients	73.6%	-0.9	71.8%	-1.7	70.8%	-1.0	70.3%	-0.6
GENDER								
Women	72.2%	-1.1	70.4%	-1.8	69.2%	-1.1	68.8%	-0.5
Men	75.4%	-0.8	73.8%	-1.6	73.0%	-0.8	72.3%	-0.7
AGE GROUP								
Under 25	84.5%	-0.2	83.4%	-1.1	82.9%	-0.6	82.3%	-0.6
25-29	54.1%	-1.2	52.0%	-2.1	50.5%	-1.5	49.2%	-1.3
30-39	45.8%	-1.8	44.1%	-1.8	42.2%	-1.9	40.3%	-1.9
40-49	44.8%	-1.7	43.8%	-1.0	41.9%	-1.9	39.3%	-2.6
50+	47.8%	-2.1	47.0%	-0.8	44.3%	-2.7	42.5%	-1.8
INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR								
4-Year Public	73.2%	-0.7	71.4%	-1.8	70.1%	-1.3	69.2%	-1.0
4-Year Private Nonprofit	79.5%	-0.5	78.4%	-1.1	77.8%	-0.6	77.2%	-0.6
4-Year Private For-Profit	50.5%	-2.1	51.2%	0.7	50.7%	-0.5	48.9%	-1.8

Table 2 shows the percentage of bachelor’s degree recipients in each year and category who were new college graduates. New college graduates are defined as students who earned a bachelor’s degree, associate degree, or certificate as their first postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Table 3: Count of New College Graduates Receiving Associate Degrees by Gender, Age, and Sector

	2010-11	Change from Prior Year	2011-12	Change from Prior Year	2012-13	Change from Prior Year	2013-14	Change from Prior Year
OVERALL								
New College Graduates Receiving Associate Degrees	714,297	9.0%	768,070	7.5%	719,989	-6.3%	693,767	-3.6%
GENDER								
Women	432,554	7.9%	464,995	7.0%	433,701	-7.2%	413,697	-4.8%
Men	281,742	8.9%	303,076	7.0%	286,288	-5.9%	280,071	-2.2%
AGE GROUP								
Under 25	350,864	4.7%	366,725	4.3%	357,493	-2.6%	364,272	1.9%
25-29	127,847	9.3%	137,672	7.1%	127,099	-8.3%	120,043	-5.9%
30-39	131,874	12.1%	147,414	10.5%	132,624	-11.2%	120,852	-9.7%
40-49	69,448	13.3%	78,171	11.2%	68,042	-14.9%	58,953	-15.4%
50+	30,793	19.5%	36,018	14.5%	31,760	-13.4%	27,873	-13.9%
INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR								
4-Year Public	81,281	14.8%	89,510	9.2%	88,427	-1.2%	90,114	1.9%
4-Year Private Nonprofit	29,130	-4.7%	33,270	12.4%	32,816	-1.4%	33,036	0.7%
4-Year Private For-Profit	108,533	18.7%	117,494	7.6%	93,234	-26.0%	63,976	-45.7%
2-Year Public	438,225	5.5%	464,396	5.6%	466,251	0.4%	468,550	0.5%

Table 3 shows the count of associate degree recipients in each year and category who were new college graduates. New college graduates are defined as students who earned a bachelor's degree, associate degree, or certificate as their first postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Table 4: New College Graduates Receiving Associate Degrees as Percentage of All Associate Degree Recipients by Gender, Age, and Sector

	2010-11	Change from Prior Year	2011-12	Change from Prior Year	2012-13	Change from Prior Year	2013-14	Change from Prior Year
OVERALL								
New College Graduates Receiving Associate Degrees as Percentage of All Associate Degree Recipients	77.0%	-1.3	76.1%	-0.8	73.8%	-2.3	71.8%	-2.0
GENDER								
Women	75.4%	-1.3	74.9%	-0.5	72.4%	-2.4	70.4%	-2.1
Men	79.5%	-1.3	78.2%	-1.3	76.0%	-2.1	74.1%	-2.0
AGE GROUP								
Under 25	83.5%	-1.0	82.6%	-0.9	81.1%	-1.5	79.7%	-1.4
25-29	72.2%	-1.2	71.8%	-0.3	69.0%	-2.9	66.2%	-2.8
30-39	71.6%	-1.1	71.1%	-0.5	67.5%	-3.6	64.4%	-3.1
40-49	71.2%	-0.8	70.5%	-0.8	67.1%	-3.4	63.9%	-3.1
50+	70.7%	-0.8	70.1%	-0.6	66.6%	-3.5	62.4%	-4.1
INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR								
4-Year Public	75.1%	-1.1	71.5%	-3.6	72.0%	0.5	70.5%	-1.6
4-Year Private Nonprofit	77.3%	-2.4	75.8%	-1.6	75.3%	-0.5	75.1%	-0.2
4-Year Private For-Profit	86.4%	-2.6	87.4%	1.0	81.9%	-5.6	79.2%	-2.6
2-Year Public	75.7%	-0.6	74.7%	-1.0	73.5%	-1.2	72.1%	-1.4

Table 4 shows the percentage of associate degree recipients in each year and category who were new college graduates. New college graduates are defined as students who earned a bachelor’s degree, associate degree, or certificate as their first postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Table 5: Count of New College Graduates Receiving Certificates by Gender, Age, and Sector

	2010-11	Change from Prior Year	2011-12	Change from Prior Year	2012-13	Change from Prior Year	2013-14	Change from Prior Year
OVERALL								
New College Graduates Receiving Certificates	415,009	12.6%	366,102	-11.8%	353,927	-3.3%	344,150	-2.8%
GENDER								
Women	248,007	12.2%	216,526	-14.5%	203,044	-6.6%	187,418	-8.3%
Men	167,002	9.8%	149,576	-11.7%	150,883	0.9%	156,732	3.7%
AGE GROUP								
Under 25	185,670	10.5%	166,477	-11.5%	166,018	-0.3%	163,444	-1.6%
25-29	71,172	12.9%	62,542	-13.8%	59,736	-4.7%	57,663	-3.6%
30-39	79,153	12.5%	68,492	-15.6%	65,100	-5.2%	61,777	-5.4%
40-49	48,259	10.7%	41,632	-15.9%	37,968	-9.7%	35,918	-5.7%
50+	29,433	14.2%	25,680	-14.6%	24,216	-6.0%	24,629	1.7%
INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR								
4-Year Public	11,894	17.4%	13,221	10.0%	14,525	9.0%	15,346	5.3%
4-Year Private Nonprofit	2,523	-4.1%	2,267	-11.3%	2,136	-6.1%	2,735	21.9%
4-Year Private For-Profit	19,327	-1.1%	17,536	-10.2%	18,914	7.3%	17,758	-6.5%
2-Year Public	237,466	7.6%	219,308	-8.3%	223,854	2.0%	231,967	3.5%

Table 5 shows the count of certificate recipients in each year and category who were new college graduates. New college graduates are defined as students who earned a bachelor's degree, associate degree, or certificate as their first postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

Table 6: New College Graduates Receiving Certificates as Percentage of All Certificate Recipients by Gender, Age, and Sector

	2010-11	Change from Prior Year	2011-12	Change from Prior Year	2012-13	Change from Prior Year	2013-14	Change from Prior Year
OVERALL								
New College Graduates Receiving Certificates as Percentage of All Certificate Recipients	73.1%	-0.8	69.1%	-4.0	66.8%	-2.3	63.3%	-3.5
GENDER								
Women	74.1%	-0.7	69.6%	-4.5	66.8%	-2.8	62.0%	-4.8
Men	71.6%	-0.8	68.4%	-3.2	66.7%	-1.7	64.9%	-1.8
AGE GROUP								
Under 25	83.5%	-0.3	79.6%	-3.9	77.7%	-1.9	74.7%	-3.0
25-29	67.8%	-0.2	63.1%	-4.7	60.2%	-2.9	57.0%	-3.2
30-39	66.2%	-0.8	62.1%	-4.1	59.0%	-3.1	54.9%	-4.1
40-49	65.4%	-1.3	61.8%	-3.6	58.7%	-3.1	54.7%	-4.1
50+	64.5%	-1.3	60.9%	-3.6	59.1%	-1.8	55.5%	-3.6
INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR								
4-Year Public	39.2%	0.4	38.1%	-1.1	38.0%	-0.2	36.8%	-1.2
4-Year Private Nonprofit	26.9%	-0.3	24.5%	-2.4	24.4%	-0.1	24.1%	-0.3
4-Year Private For-Profit	67.2%	-8.8	65.4%	-1.8	68.6%	3.2	63.8%	-4.8
2-Year Public	69.6%	-1.1	67.4%	-2.2	66.6%	-0.7	65.0%	-1.7

Table 6 shows the percentage of certificate recipients in each year and category who were new college graduates. New college graduates are defined as students who earned a bachelor’s degree, associate degree, or certificate as their first postsecondary credential. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30.

NOTES ON THE DATA

Definition of *New College Graduate*

The *New College Graduates Report*, published annually by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, provides counts of new graduates by institutional sector, award level, age group, and gender. Award recipients are considered to be new graduates if the award received in the report year is their first postsecondary award from a U.S. Title IV, degree-granting institution. Each student is counted as a new college graduate only once, in the academic year of his or her first postsecondary credential. Academic years run from July 1 to June 30. A student who earned two credentials in the year of his or her first credential is counted under the highest credential level earned in that year. For example, if a student whose first award was a certificate received in December 2010 subsequently received an associate's degree in May 2011, he or she would be counted in this report as a "new college graduate" at the associate's degree level in academic year 2010-11.

Degree Coverage and Weighting

The National Student Clearinghouse collects graduation information from its participating institutions via two data reporting services: Enrollment Reporting (ER) and DegreeVerify (DV). Enrollment Reporting has higher data coverage rates, but includes only basic completion information, such as graduation indicator and the date of graduation. DV includes enhanced information on completions, including degree title, major, level, and CIP code, but covered only 87 percent of credentials granted by U.S. Title IV degree-granting institutions in 2013-14. Degree and certificate totals in this report include only awards reported to DV, however new graduate/repeat graduate flags were assigned using prior award records from both ER and DV. To adjust for the DV participation rate, weights were applied to each degree record included in this report. Weights were derived by calculating the inverse of the rate of degree data coverage for each combination of

year, institution sector, award level (bachelor's, associate's, or certificate), and student gender. To obtain degree data coverage for each combination of year, sector, and award level, Clearinghouse degree data were compared to IPEDS Completions data for all U.S. Title IV, degree-granting institutions.

Imputation of Gender

Institutions reported student gender to the Clearinghouse for slightly less than half of all students included in this report. The genders of the remaining students were imputed using a table of name-gender pairs that the Research Center developed using data publicly available from the Census Bureau and the Social Security Administration as well as the institution-reported data. The imputation used only those pairs in which the name had at least two instances and was associated with a single gender in at least 95 percent of the instances. The imputation is accurate in 99.6 percent of the cases with known gender. A detailed document on the development of our approach resides on the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's "[Working with Our Data](#)" Web page.

Degree-Granting Status

When referencing IPEDS counts of postsecondary awards, it is important to distinguish degree-granting institutions from non-degree-granting institutions. Clearinghouse certificate and degree data, as well as the IPEDS comparison data used for the weighting calculation in this report, are limited to degrees and certificates awarded by U.S. Title IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions.



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