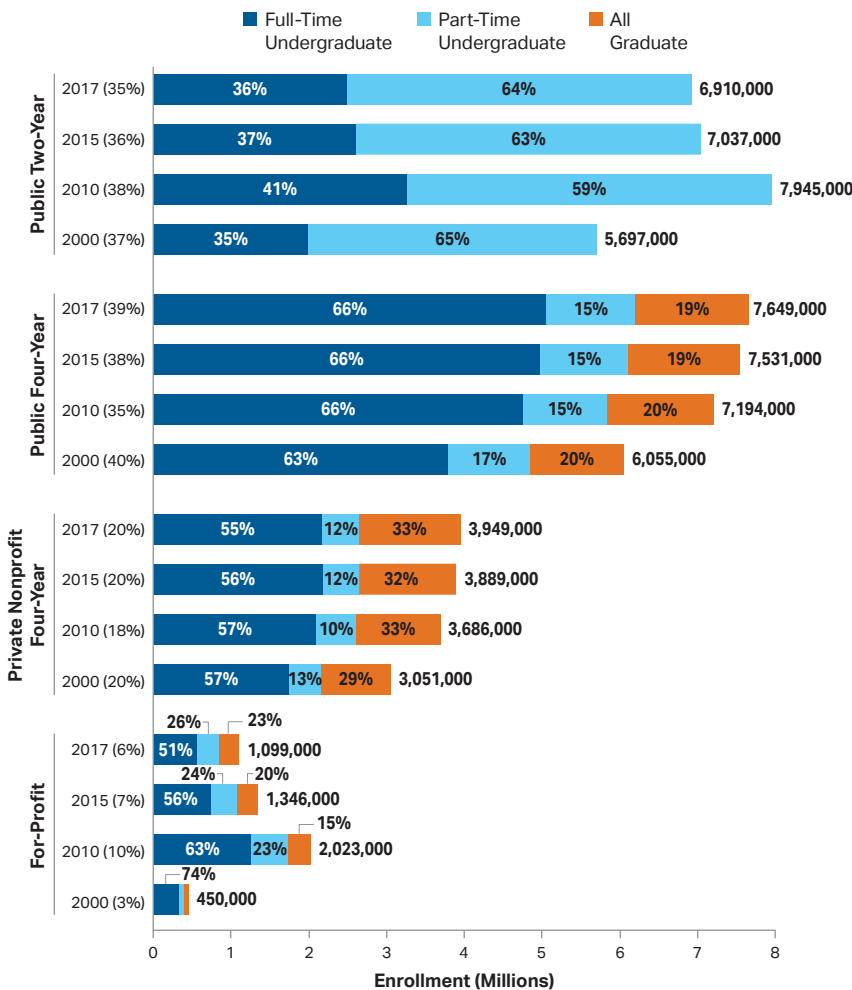


Enrollment Patterns Over Time

Total postsecondary enrollment fell by 196,000 (1%) between fall 2015 and fall 2017. There were 118,000 (2%) more students at public four-year institutions and 60,000 (2%) more in the private nonprofit four-year sector, but 127,000 (2%) fewer at public two-year colleges and 247,000 (18%) fewer in the for-profit sector.

FIGURE 21 Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Attendance Status and Level of Enrollment (with Percentage of All Students Enrolled in Each Sector), 2000 to 2017, Selected Years



NOTES: Percentages on the vertical axis represent the enrollment in each sector as a percentage of total enrollments. Four-year institutions include only those where more than 50% of degrees/certificates awarded are bachelor's degree or higher. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCES: NCES, IPEDS Fall Enrollment data, 2000, 2010, 2015, and 2017; calculations by the authors.

- Total undergraduate enrollment (including full-time and part-time students) fell by 260,000 between fall 2015 and fall 2017; total graduate student enrollment rose by 64,000.
- The share of public two-year college students enrolled full time rose from 35% in fall 2000 to 41% in 2010 but had fallen back to 36% in 2017.
- Graduate students rose from 10% of all students in the for-profit sector in fall 2000 to 15% in 2010 and 23% in 2017. Despite the sharp decline in enrollment in the sector between 2010 and 2017, there were more than twice as many students enrolled in 2017 (1.1 million) as in 2000 (450,000).

ALSO IMPORTANT:

- The students reported in Figure 21 are only those who enrolled in degree-granting institutions that participate in federal student aid programs. In the late 2000s, about 600,000 to 800,000 students were enrolled in for-profit institutions that do not participate in these programs. (S. Cellini and C. Goldin, "Does Federal Student Aid Raise Tuition? New Evidence on For-Profit Colleges," *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, November 2014)
- Students enrolled in non-degree-granting institutions, not included in Figure 21, may be eligible for federal student aid if they are working toward certificates at accredited institutions. Some students enrolled in degree-granting institutions are not eligible for federal student aid because they are enrolled in non-credit-bearing programs.
- Some colleges offer both two-year and four-year degrees. In Figure 21, four-year colleges are defined as institutions where bachelor's degrees constitute more than half of all degrees awarded. Reclassifying colleges that offer any bachelor's degrees as four-year institutions would increase the percentage of total postsecondary enrollments in public four-year colleges from 39% to 45%.

Total Postsecondary Enrollment (in Millions)

Year	Enrollment (in Millions)
2000	15.3
2010	20.8
2015	19.8
2017	19.6