

## 2.2 College Graduation and Transfer Rates (Based on IPEDS Data)

### Increase the percentage of students who complete associate degrees within three years and baccalaureate degrees within six years

The college graduation rates reported in this section are based on data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The latest available data are for undergraduates who completed degree programs during the 2014–2015 academic year. Completion data for students who finished their degree programs in 2015–2016 will not be available for analysis until mid-2017. Consequently, the following analysis focuses on how 2014–2015 graduation rates for Nebraska institutions compare to 2004–2005 rates. **Throughout this analysis, the terms “completion rate” and “graduation rate” are used interchangeably.**

Based on the same cohorts as graduation rates, the 2014–2015 transfer rates for Nebraska’s six community colleges are presented at the end of this section. Presenting these rates provides an important supplement to the graduation rates reported for these institutions.

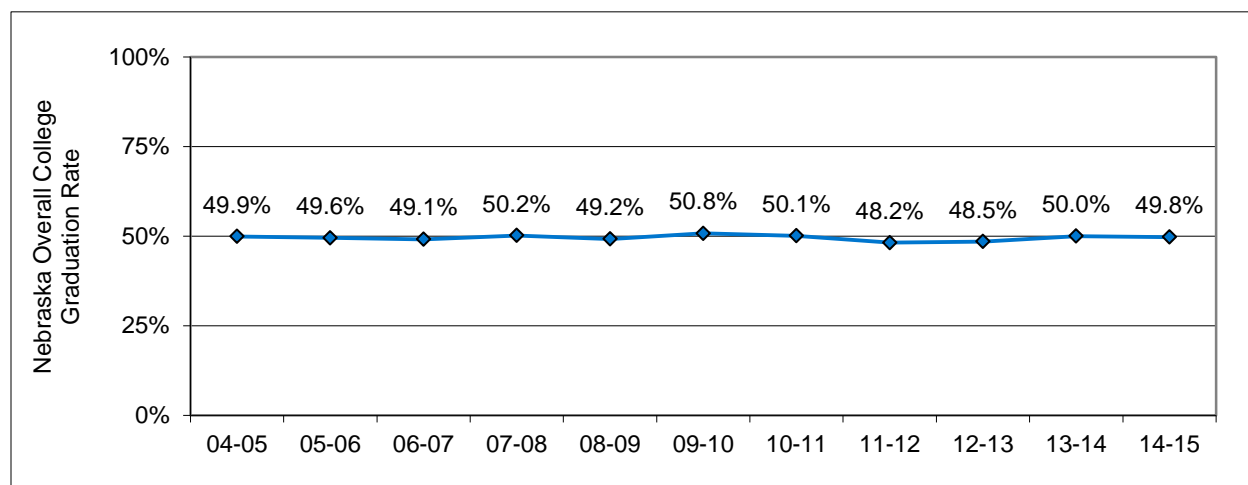
Generally, baccalaureate graduation and transfer rates are based on a six-year time frame, while rates for associate degrees are based on three years. In all cases, rates are calculated only for students who enrolled in degree programs as full-time, first-time freshmen. See Explanatory Note A10.1 in Appendix 10 and Explanatory Note A11.1 in Appendix 11 for further information on IPEDS-defined time frames and how completion and transfer rates are calculated using IPEDS data.

### The Overall College Graduation Rate for Nebraska

- As shown in Figure 2.2.1 the statewide graduation rate for Nebraska’s postsecondary institutions decreased from 49.9% in 2004–2005 to 49.8% in 2014–2015.

**Figure 2.2.1**

**Overall College Graduation Rate for Nebraska  
2004–2005 through 2014–2015**



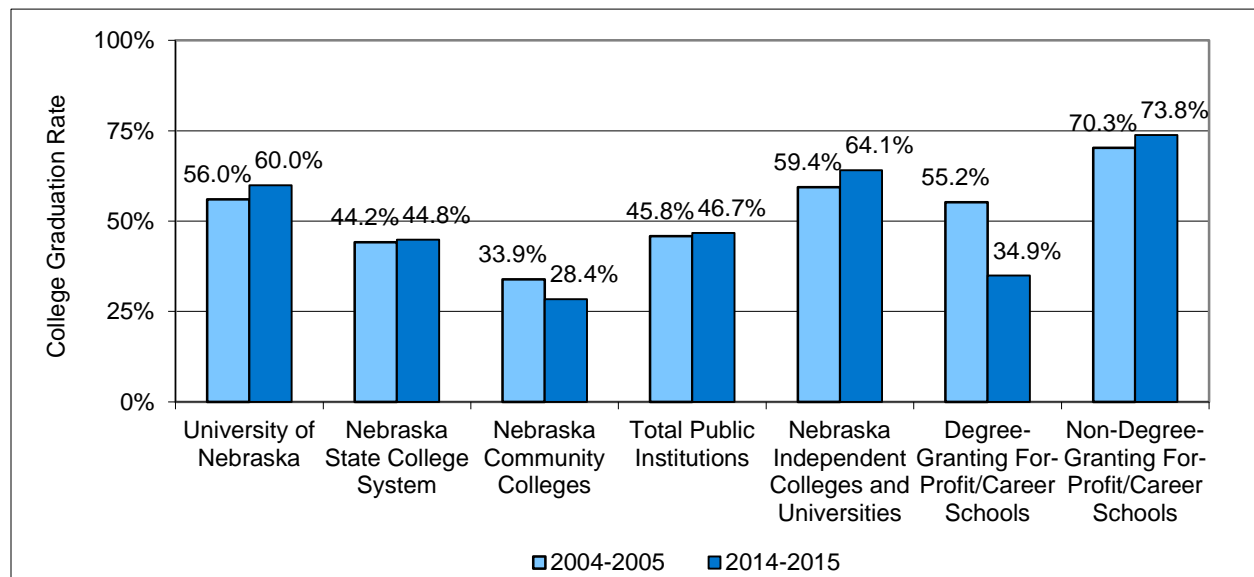
*Note.* See Table A10.1 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 through 2015 surveys.

## **College Graduation Rates by Sector and by Institution**

- Completion rates by sector varied noticeably, as shown in [Figure 2.2.2](#).
- The overall graduation rate for the [University of Nebraska](#) system increased from 56.0% in 2004–2005 to 60.0% in 2014–2015. The highest graduation rate within this sector in 2014–2015 was at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (67.0%) while the lowest rate was at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (46.5%).
- The overall graduation rate for the [Nebraska State College System](#) increased from 44.2% in 2004–2005 to 44.8% in 2014–2015. The highest graduation rate within this sector in 2014–2015 was at Wayne State College (49.2%) while the lowest rate was at Peru State College (36.6%).
- The overall graduation rate for [Nebraska’s community colleges](#) decreased from 33.9% in 2004–2005 to 28.4% in 2014–2015. The highest graduation rate within this sector in 2014–2015 was at Northeast Community College (48.4%) while the lowest rate was at Metropolitan Community College (13.4%).
- Within the [independent sector](#), the graduation rate has increased from 59.4% in 2004–2005 to 64.1% in 2014–2015. The highest graduation rate in the independent sector in 2014–2015 was at Bryan College of Health Sciences (78.7%). Meanwhile, Nebraska Indian Community College (9.1%) reported the lowest graduation rate.
- The overall graduation rate for the [degree-granting for-profit/career schools](#) decreased from 55.2% in 2004–2005 to 34.9% in 2014–2015. The highest graduation rate within this sector was 100.0% at the Universal College of Healing Arts while the lowest rate was at Kaplan University-Lincoln (25.4%).

**Figure 2.2.2**

### **Graduation Rates for Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector 2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



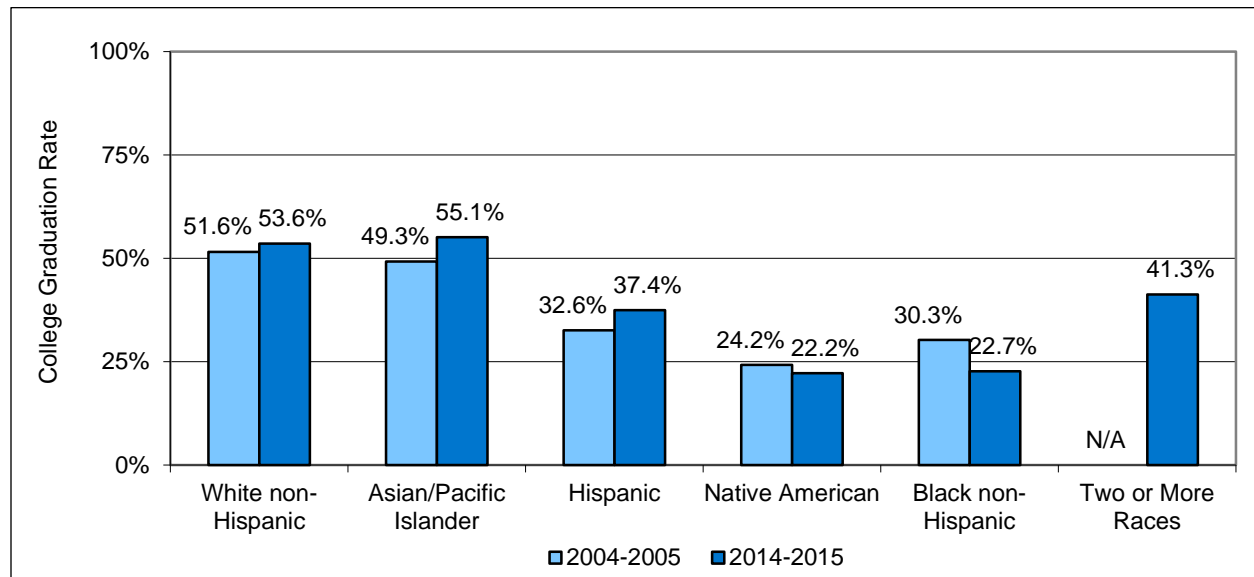
*Note.* See [Table A10.2](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

- The overall graduation rate for the non-degree-granting for-profit schools increased from 70.3% in 2004–2005 to 73.8% in 2014–2015. Graduation rates for 2014–2015 ranged from 100.0% at Fullen School of Hair Design to 53.5% at Joseph’s College Cosmetology.
- Within all of the sectors, some schools showed significant decreases in their completion rates, while others reported noticeable improvements in their completion rates. Consequently, the sector completion rates shown in Figure 2.2.2 should not be interpreted as an indicant of the performance of any particular school.
- See Table A10.3 for the 2004–2005 and 2014–2015 completion rates by institution and by sector. See Table A10.4.a through Table A10.4.k in Appendix 10 for the data used to calculate the completion rates by institution and by sector for 2004–2005 through 2014–2015.

**College Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity**

- As shown in Figure 2.2.3, the graduation rates for white non-Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders in 2004–2005 and 2014–2015 were significantly higher than the graduation rates for Hispanics, Native Americans, black non-Hispanics, and multiracial students.<sup>33</sup>
- Between 2004–2005 and 2014–2015, graduation rates increased for white non-Hispanics, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics but decreased for Native Americans and black non-Hispanics.
- See Table A10.5 and Table A10.6 in Appendix 10 for supporting data.

**Figure 2.2.3**  
**Graduation Rates for Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



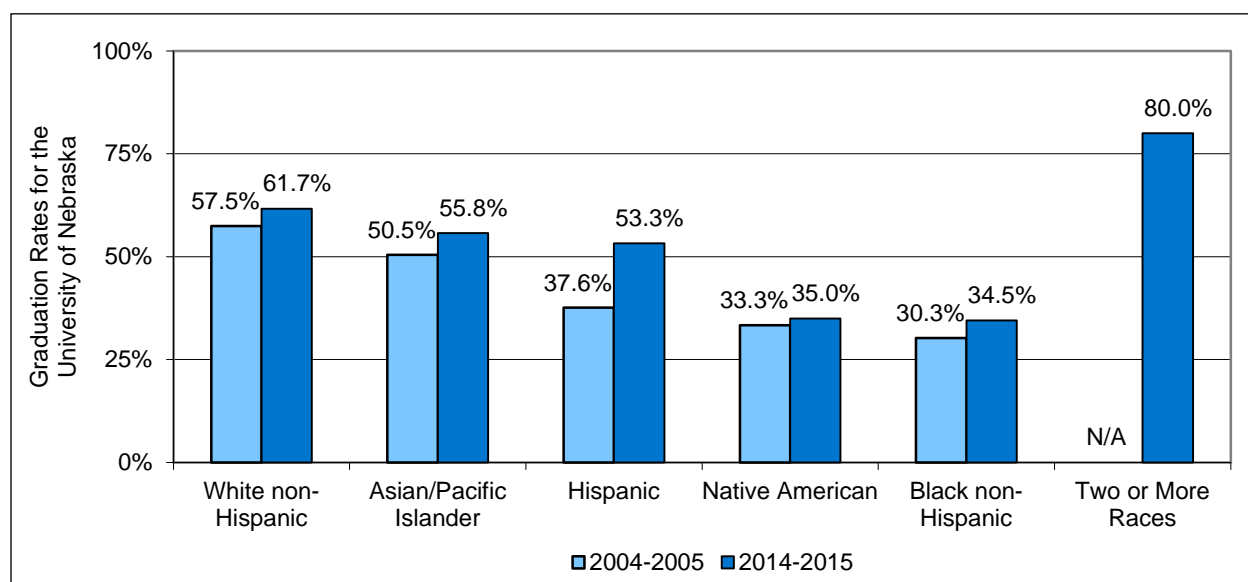
Note. See Table A10.5 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

<sup>33</sup> The race/ethnicity category ‘two or more races’ was an optional reporting category for graduation rates reported for 2007–2008, 2008–2009, and 2009–2010. Adoption of the category was mandatory beginning with graduation rate data reported for 2010–2011.

## **College Graduation Rates by Sector and by Race/Ethnicity**

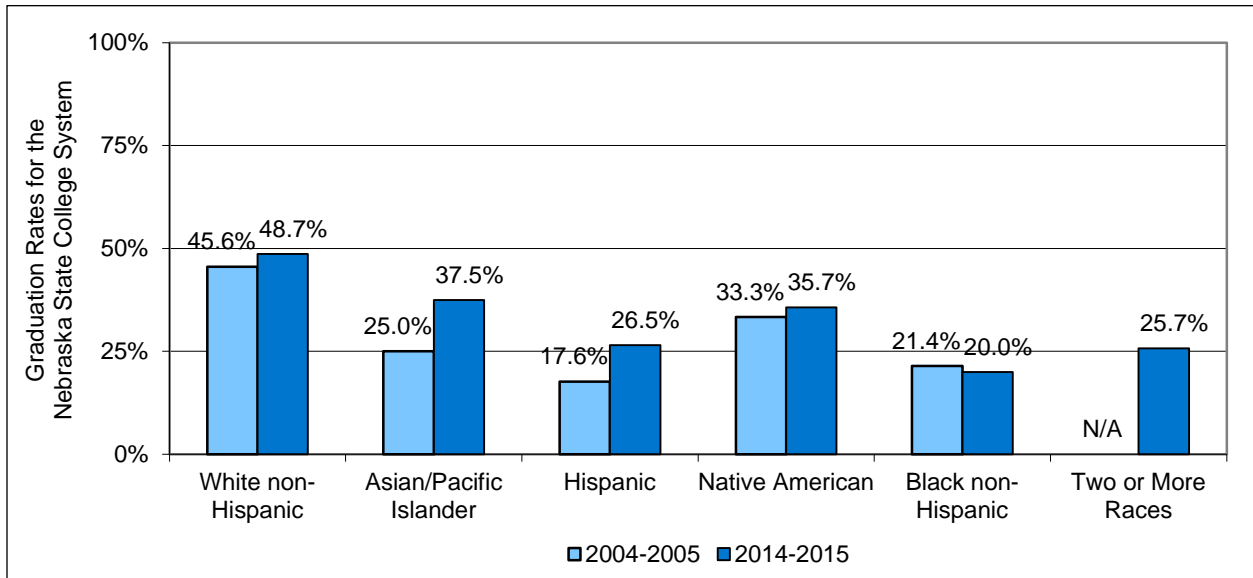
- The following charts show how the graduation rates for each racial/ethnic group varied and changed between 2004–2005 and 2014–2015 within each sector of higher education in Nebraska.
- Segmenting college graduation rates by sector and by race/ethnicity results in graduation rates for 36 subgroups. For some subgroups, the cohorts are very small and graduation rates should be interpreted with caution. For example, the 2014–2015 graduation rate for Native Americans at non-degree-granting for-profit/career schools was 100%, but the cohort consisted of only one student. See [Table A10.7](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for more information.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.4](#), graduation rates increased for all racial/ethnic groups at the University of Nebraska between 2004–2005 and 2014–2015.
- At the state colleges, graduation rates decreased for black non-Hispanics but increased for all other racial/ethnic groups between 2004–2005 and 2014–2015 (see [Figure 2.2.5](#)).
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.6](#), graduation rates at Nebraska’s community colleges decreased for all racial/ethnic groups except Hispanics between 2004–2005 and 2014–2015.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.7](#), graduation rates at Nebraska’s independent institutions increased for all racial/ethnic groups except Native Americans between 2004–2005 and 2014–2015.
- Meanwhile, graduation rates decreased for all racial/ethnic groups except Native Americans at the degree-granting for-profit/career schools (see [Figure 2.2.8](#)). At the non-degree-granting for-profit/career schools, graduation rates increased for white non-Hispanics, Hispanics, and Native Americans (see [Figure 2.2.9](#)).

**Figure 2.2.4**  
**Graduation Rates for the University of Nebraska**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



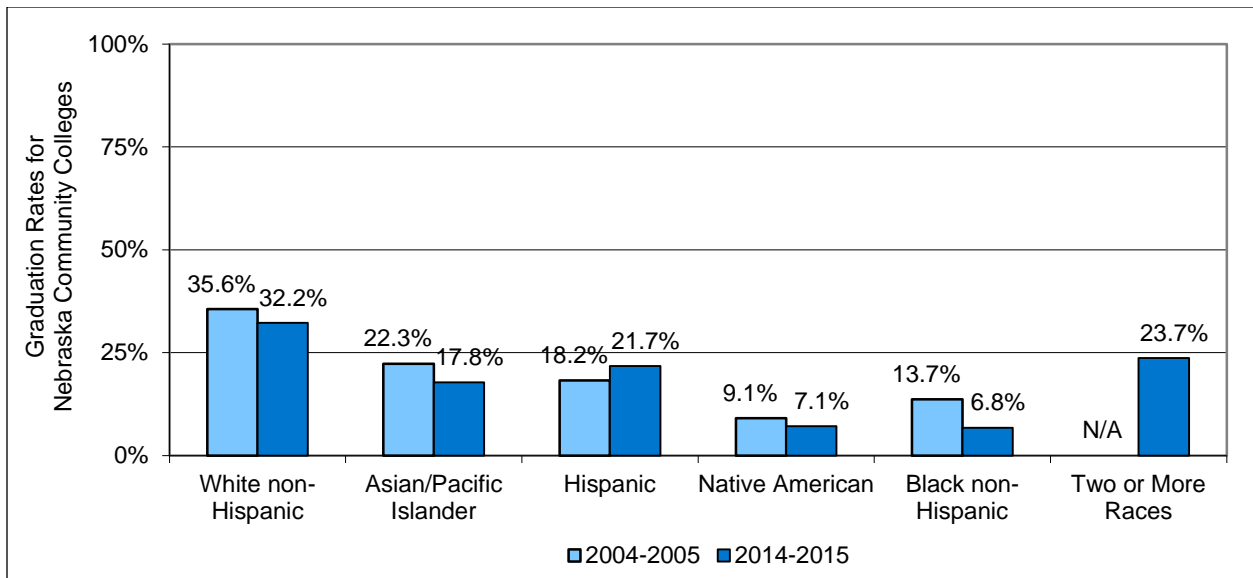
*Note.* See [Table A10.7](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

**Figure 2.2.5**  
**Graduation Rates for the Nebraska State College System**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



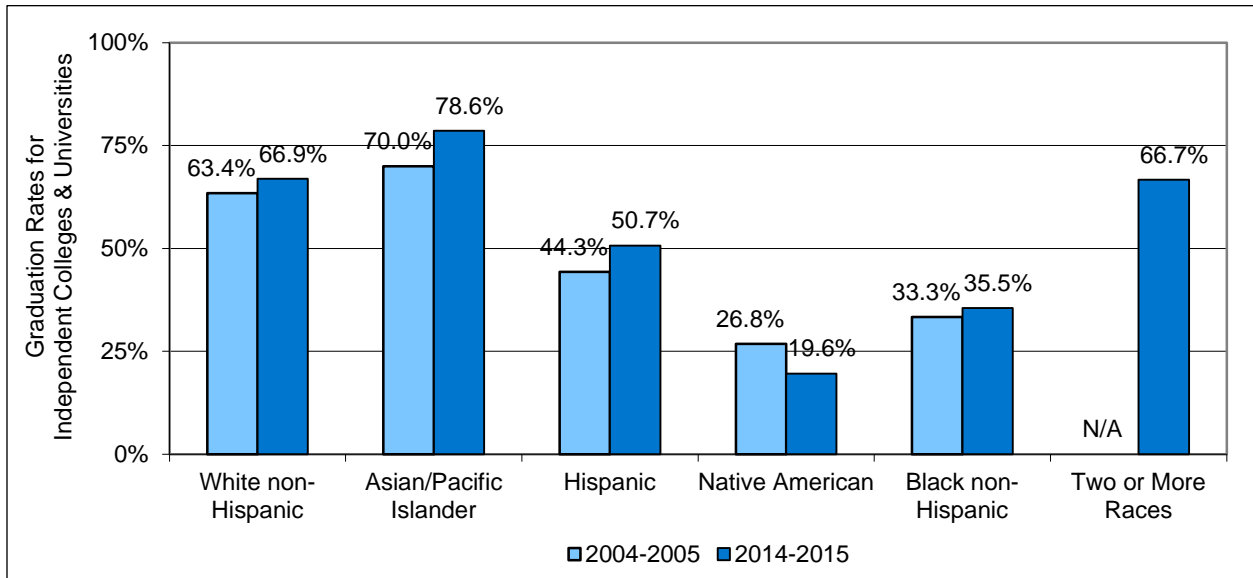
Note. See Table A10.7 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

**Figure 2.2.6**  
**Graduation Rates for Nebraska Community Colleges**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



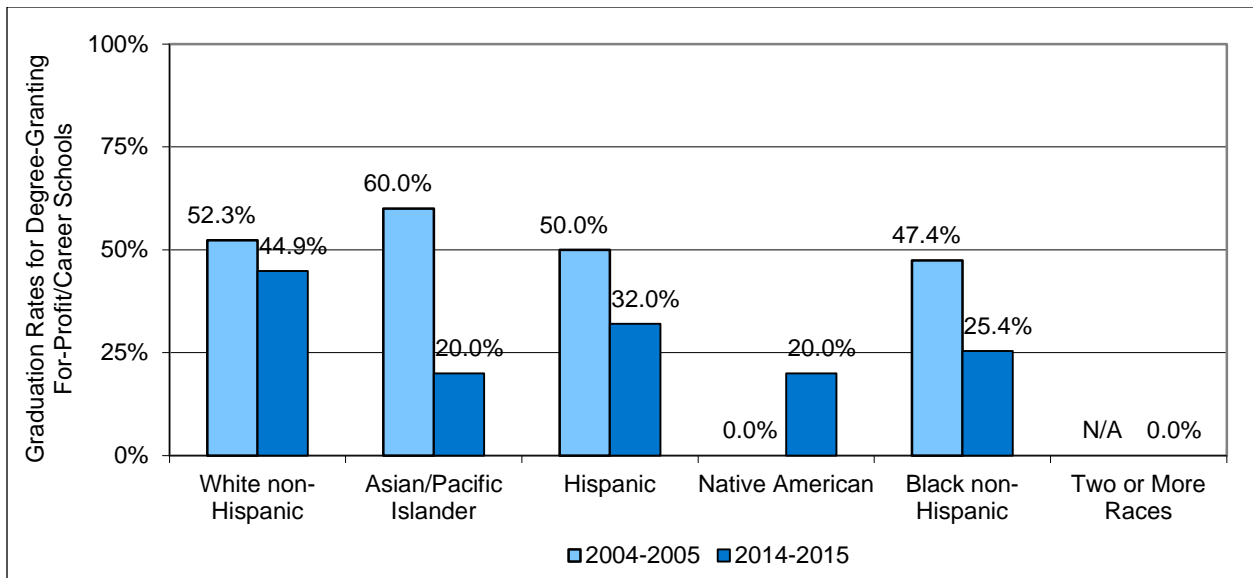
Note. See Table A10.7 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

**Figure 2.2.7**  
**Graduation Rates for Independent Colleges and Universities**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



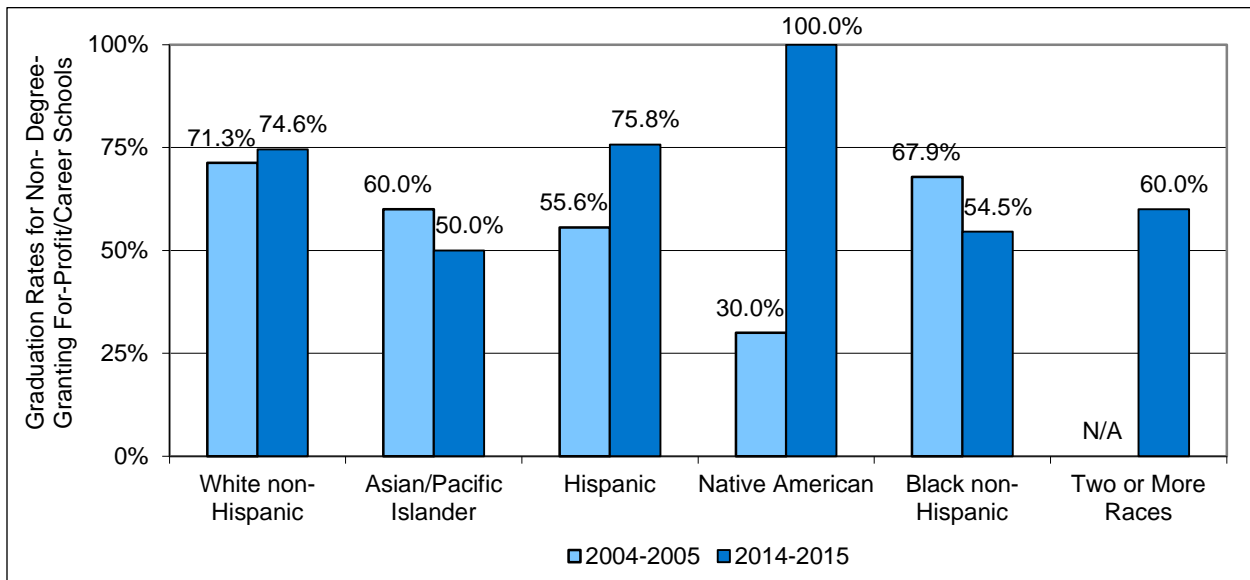
Note. See Table A10.7 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

**Figure 2.2.8**  
**Graduation Rates for Degree-Granting For-Profit/Career Schools**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**



Note. See Table A10.7 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

**Figure 2.2.9**  
**Graduation Rates for Non-Degree-Granting For-Profit/Career Schools**  
**by Race/Ethnicity**  
**2014–2015 Compared to 2004–2005**

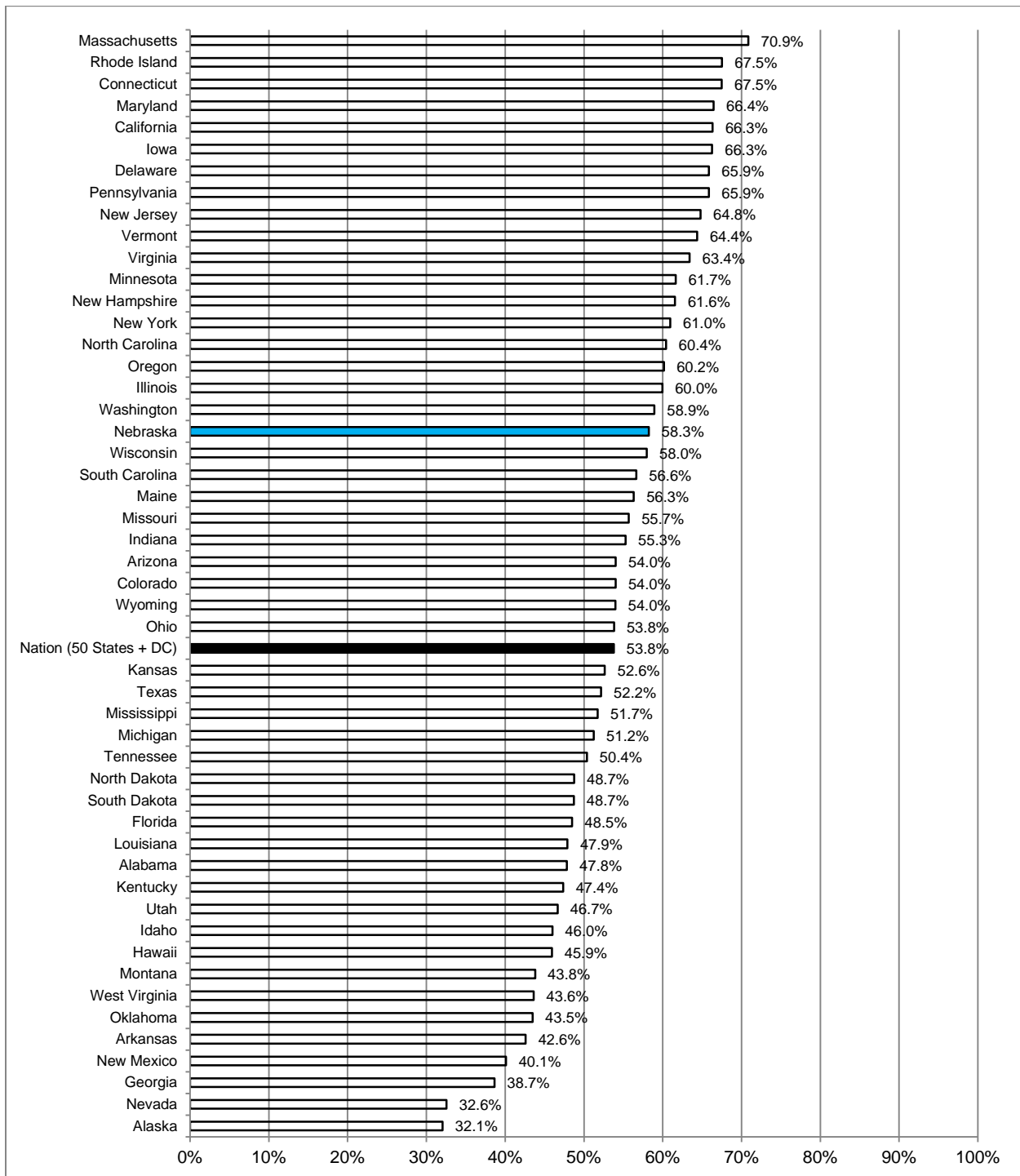


Note. See Table A10.7 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2005 and 2015 surveys.

### **Nebraska Graduation Rates Compared to the Graduation Rates of Other States**

- Figure 2.2.10 and Figure 2.2.11 show how the graduation rates of Nebraska’s four-year and two-year institutions compare to the rates calculated for other states and the United States as a whole. These rates are calculated for all of the degree-granting institutions within each state, including public, private (not-for-profit), and for-profit schools. These rates are for all awards conferred. For example, the graduation rate for Nebraska’s two-year schools encompasses awards of diplomas and certificates as well as two-year associate degrees.
- As shown in Figure 2.2.10, the graduation rate for Nebraska’s four-year institutions was 58.3% for 2014–2015, or 19<sup>th</sup> highest among the 50 states and 4.5 percentage points above the graduation rate for all four-year institutions in the United States, which was 53.8%.
- As illustrated in Figure 2.2.11, the graduation rate for Nebraska’s two-year institutions was 29.5%, or 17<sup>th</sup> highest among the 50 states, and 0.4 percentage point higher than the graduation rate of 29.1% for all two-year institutions in the United States.

**Figure 2.2.10**  
**2014–2015 Graduation Rates for Four-Year Institutions by State**

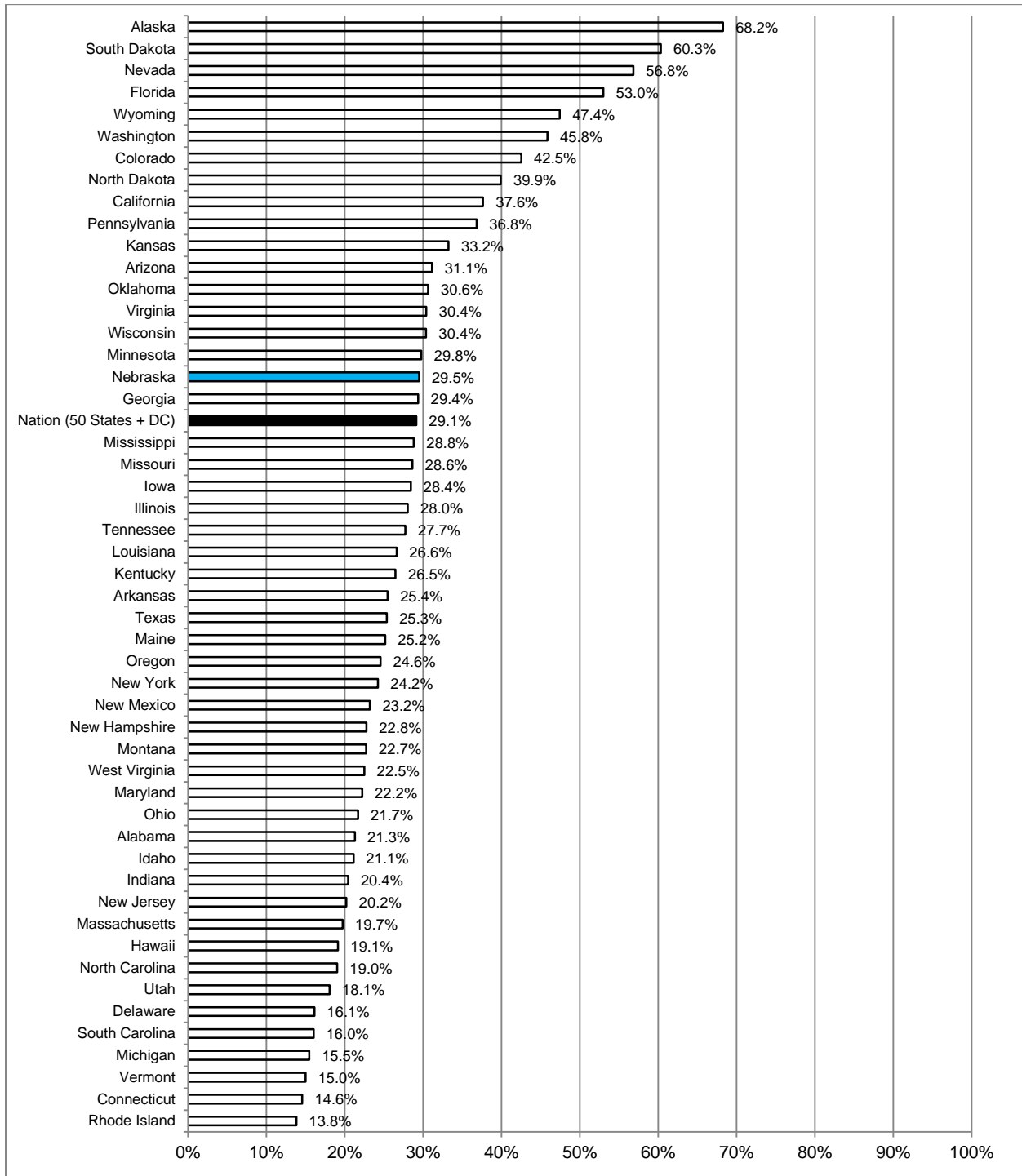


Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2015 survey. Graduation rates obtained from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), February 2017.



Figure 2.2.11

2014–2015 Graduation Rates for Two-Year Institutions by State



Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2015 survey. Graduation rates obtained from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), February 2017.

## Transfer Rates for Nebraska Community Colleges

A college's graduation and transfer rates are based on the same full-time, first-time freshmen cohort. Consequently, a college's graduation and transfer rates can be added together to determine the total percentage of the full-time, first-time freshmen who either completed their programs or transferred to other schools within 150% of the time specified for normal program completion.

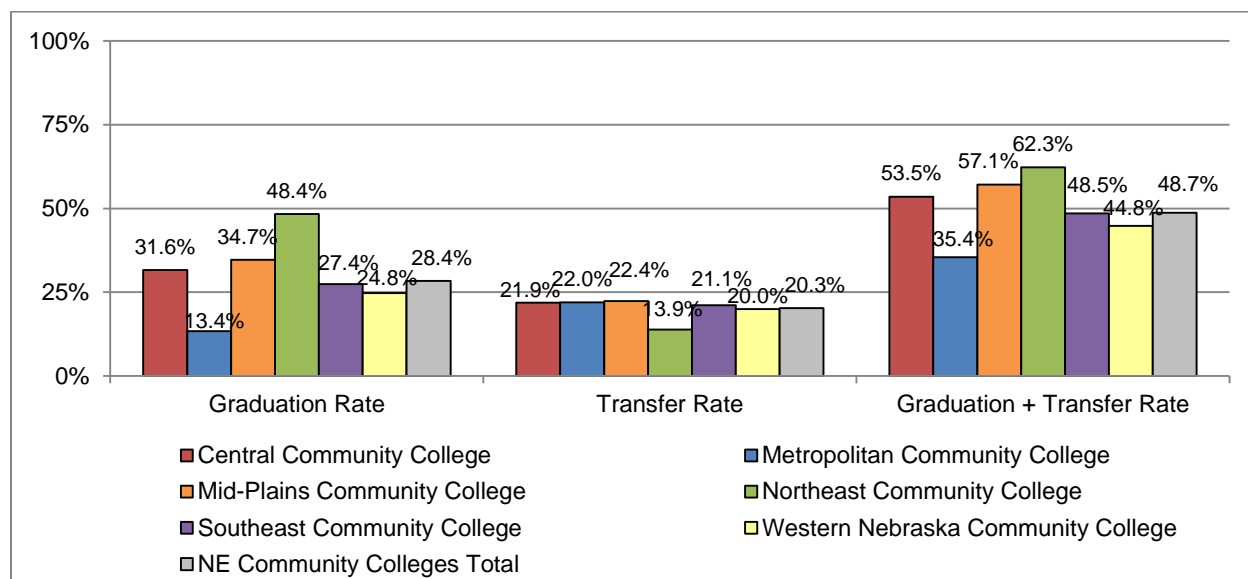
Institutions are not required to report the number of students in their freshmen cohorts who transfer to other institutions unless the mission of the institution, "...includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution..." (IPEDS Graduation Rates Full Instructions). Since 2010–2011, all six of Nebraska's community colleges have reported transfer data. (For more information about computed college transfer rates based on IPEDS data, see [Explanatory Note A11.1](#) in [Appendix 11](#).)

[Figure 2.2.12](#) compares the 2014–2015 graduation rates, transfer rates, and graduation plus transfer rates for Nebraska's six community colleges.

- As shown in [Figure 2.2.12](#), the overall graduation rate for Nebraska's community colleges in 2014–2015 was 28.4% while the overall transfer rate was 20.3%.
- The 2014–2015 graduation rates for the colleges ranged from 13.4% at Metropolitan Community College to 48.4% at Northeast Community College.
- Meanwhile, the schools' transfer rates ranged from 13.9% at Northeast Community College to 22.4% at Mid-Plains Community College.
- The rates produced by combining each institution's graduation rates and transfer rates ranged from 35.4% at Metropolitan Community College to 62.3% at Northeast Community College.

**Figure 2.2.12**

### **2014–2015 Graduation Rates and Transfers Rates for Nebraska Community Colleges**



Note. See [Table A10.4.k](#) in [Appendix 10](#) and [Table A11.1](#) and [Table A11.2](#) in [Appendix 11](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2015 survey.