

## 1.4 Enrollment of First-Time Freshmen by Race/Ethnicity

### **Increase the number and proportion of Nebraska postsecondary students who have been underrepresented in the state's higher education system.**

Increasing the number and percentage of students who have been underrepresented in Nebraska's higher education system is another recommended approach to increasing the state's postsecondary enrollment. To determine the extent to which this strategic objective is being achieved, the following analysis focuses on (1) the changes that have occurred since 2005 in the numbers of white non-Hispanics and minority students who have been enrolled as *first-time freshmen* at Nebraska colleges and (2) the extent to which each racial/ethnic group was represented in the state's postsecondary education system in fall 2015, the latest period for which data are available. (Estimated enrollments for fall 2016 are not available by race/ethnicity; therefore, estimates for fall 2016 will be reported in the *2018 Progress Report*.)

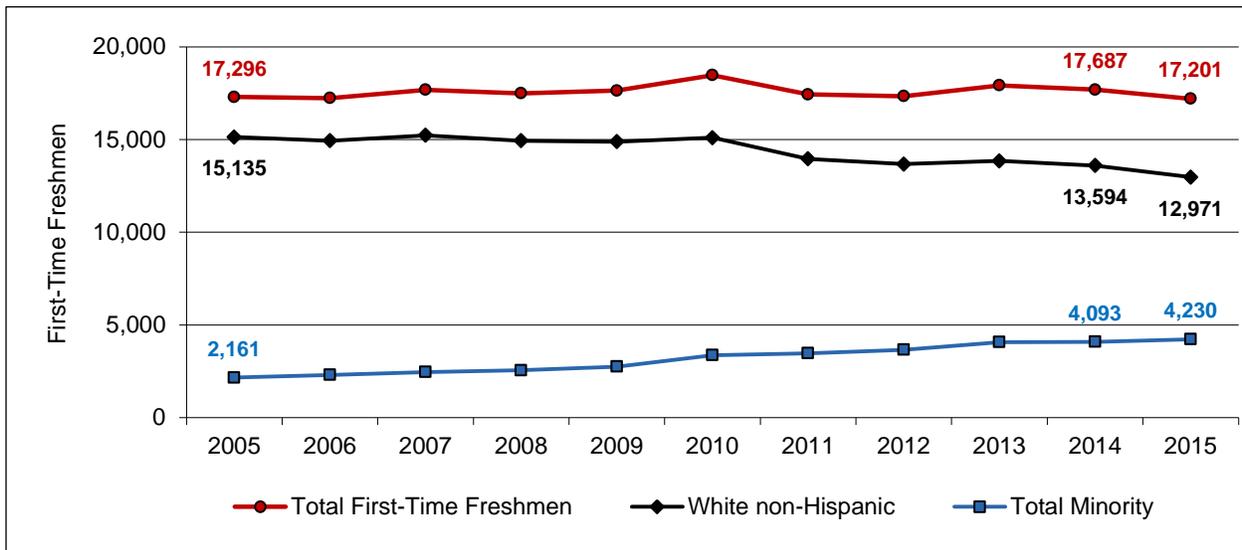
#### **Changes in the Numbers of First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Nebraska Institutions**

- As shown in [Figure 1.4.1](#), 17,201 first-time freshmen of known race/ethnicity were enrolled at Nebraska's degree-granting and non-degree-granting institutions in fall 2015, a 0.5% decrease from the 17,296 first-time freshmen of known race/ethnicity in fall 2005.
- Between fall 2014 and fall 2015, total enrollment of first-time freshmen of known race/ethnicity decreased 2.7%.
- In fall 2005, white non-Hispanics accounted for 87.5% of the first-time freshmen, while minorities accounted for 12.5%. Of the first-time freshmen enrolled in fall 2015, 75.4% were white non-Hispanics, while 24.6% were minorities.<sup>19</sup>
- As shown in [Figure 1.4.2](#), higher numbers of Asians/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and black non-Hispanics were enrolled in college in fall 2015 than in fall 2005. However, the number of Native-American first-time freshmen decreased from 162 in fall 2005 to 151 in fall 2015.
- The net effect of these changes is that there were **2,069 more minority students** attending Nebraska colleges as first-time freshmen in fall 2015 than in fall 2005, an increase of 95.7%. In comparison, there were **2,164 fewer white non-Hispanic** first-time freshmen in fall 2015 than in fall 2005, a decrease of 14.3%.

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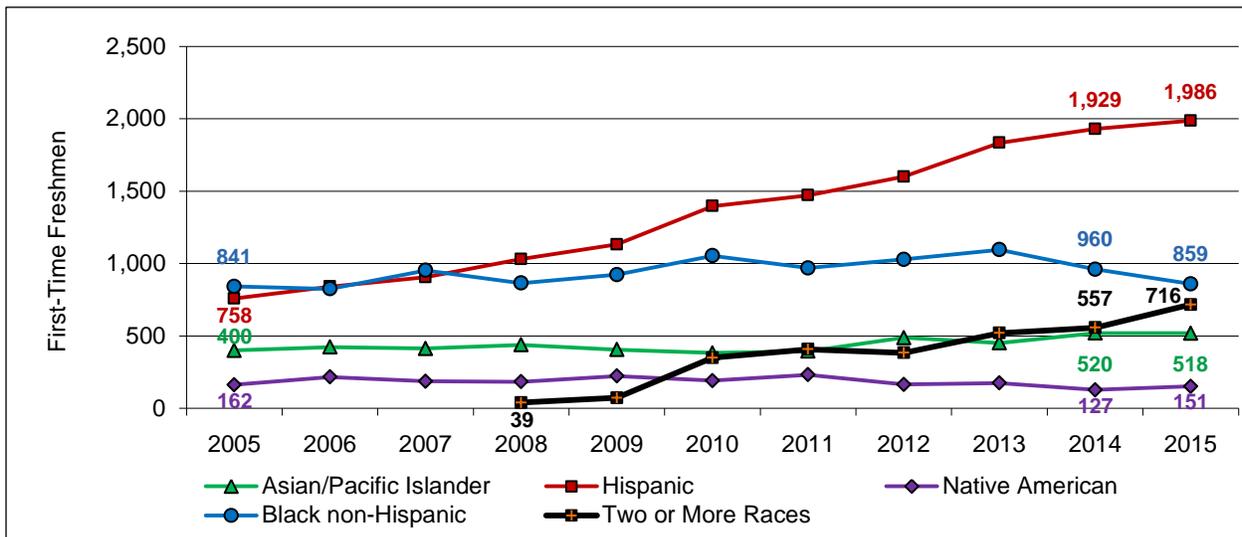
<sup>19</sup> Minority students are defined as students from the following race/ethnicity categories: Asian/Pacific Islander, black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, Native American, and two or more races. Figures do not include nonresident aliens or students of unknown race/ethnicity.

**Figure 1.4.1**  
**Numbers of White Non-Hispanic and Minority First-Time Freshmen**  
**at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions**  
**Fall 2005 through Fall 2015**



*Note.* Counts include full-time and part-time students. Counts do not include nonresident aliens or students of unknown race/ethnicity. See [Table A7.1](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2005 through fall 2015 surveys.

**Figure 1.4.2**  
**Numbers of Minority Students Enrolled as First-Time Freshmen**  
**at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions**  
**Fall 2005 through Fall 2015**



*Note.* Includes full-time and part-time students. The race/ethnicity category 'two or more races' was an optional reporting category for enrollments reported for fall 2008 and fall 2009. Adoption of the category was mandatory beginning with data reported for fall 2010. See [Table A7.1](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2005 through fall 2015 surveys.

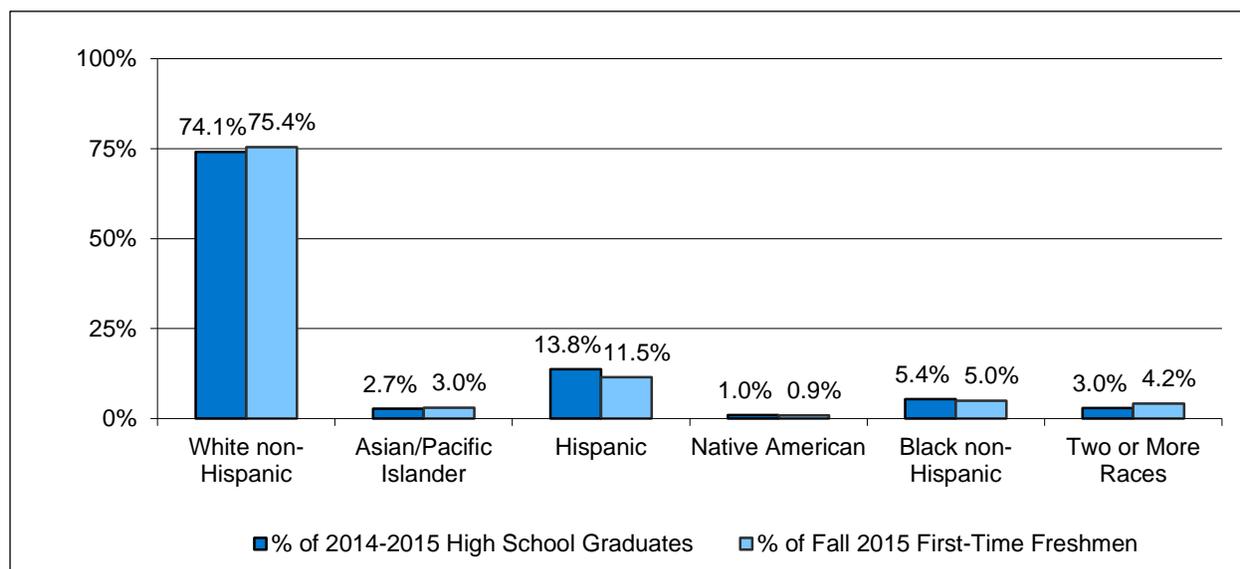
## **Racial/Ethnic Representation in Nebraska’s Postsecondary Education System Fall 2015**

The following analysis examines the extent to which students in each racial/ethnic group have been represented in Nebraska’s postsecondary education system. In this analysis students in a race/ethnic category are considered to be underrepresented if they accounted for a smaller percentage of the first-time college freshmen at Nebraska institutions than they did of the students who graduated from Nebraska high schools the preceding year. Conversely, students are considered to be overrepresented if they accounted for a larger percentage of first-time college freshmen than they did of the students who graduated from high school the year before. This should be interpreted as an approximate measure as it does not account for in-state and out-of-state enrollments.

- As evidenced in [Section 1.1.a](#) of this report, disproportionately lower percentages of Asians/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, Native Americans, black non-Hispanics, and multiracial students graduate from Nebraska high schools compared to white non-Hispanics.
- Furthermore, as evidenced in [Section 1.1.c](#) of this report, college continuation rates for Hispanics, Native Americans, black non-Hispanics, and multiracial graduates are lower than college continuation rates for white non-Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander graduates.
- As illustrated in [Figure 1.4.3](#), white non-Hispanics, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and multiracial individuals were overrepresented among first-time freshmen in fall 2015, while Hispanics, Native Americans, and black non-Hispanics were underrepresented among first-time freshmen in fall 2015.

**Figure 1.4.3**

**Percentages of 2014–2015 Nebraska High School Graduates and First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Nebraska Degree-Granting and Non-Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions in Fall 2015 by Race/Ethnicity**



*Note.* High school graduates include graduates of nonpublic schools, public schools, educational service units, and state-operated schools. Graduates do not include GED recipients or completers who did not receive regular diplomas. First-time freshmen include full-time and part-time students. Counts do not include nonresident aliens or students of unknown race/ethnicity. See [Table A7.2](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for supporting data. Data sources: Nebraska Department of Education, January 2016, and the National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2015 survey.

## **A Comparison of the Representation of Racial/Ethnic Groups in Fall 2005 and Fall 2015**

Determining if there was any change between fall 2005 and fall 2015 in the pattern of racial/ethnic representation in Nebraska's postsecondary education system is complicated by the fact that fewer white non-Hispanics and more minority students graduated from Nebraska high schools in 2014–2015 than in 2004–2005. However, as shown in [Table A7.2](#) in [Appendix 7](#), comparing the percentage distributions of high school graduates in 2004–2005 and 2014–2015 to the percentage distributions of first-time freshmen in fall 2005 and fall 2015 reveals that compared to the first-time freshmen who started college in 2005:

1. White non-Hispanics were underrepresented in fall 2005 but overrepresented in fall 2015.
2. Asians/Pacific Islanders were overrepresented among first-time freshmen in fall 2005 and fall 2015.
3. Hispanics were underrepresented among first-time freshmen in fall 2005 and fall 2015.
4. Native Americans were appropriately represented in fall 2005 but were underrepresented in fall 2015.
5. Black non-Hispanics were overrepresented in fall 2005 but underrepresented in fall 2015.
6. Students of two or more races were appropriately represented in fall 2011 but were overrepresented in fall 2015.<sup>20</sup>

As stated on the previous page, these measures are approximations of representation as they do not account for the flow of first-time freshmen between states.

## **The Types of Institutions Most Frequently Attended by Each Racial/Ethnic Group**

Another approach to analyzing the representation of white non-Hispanics and minorities is to examine the percentage of students in each racial/ethnic group who attend each of the institutional sectors within Nebraska's postsecondary education system. For the purposes of statewide analysis, two Native American tribal colleges—Little Priest Tribal College and Nebraska Indian Community College—are included among the independent colleges and universities since they are not state or locally supported. However, in the following analysis, the tribal colleges are considered separately from other independent institutions so that student enrollment patterns of Native Americans can be interpreted more clearly.

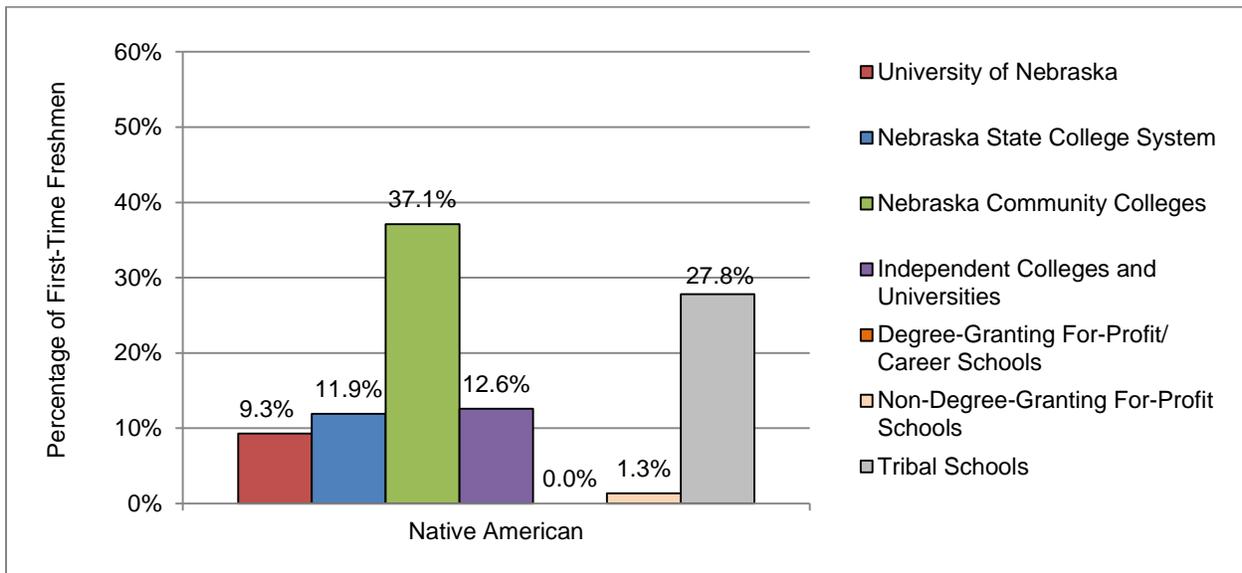
- As shown in [Figure 1.4.4](#) and [Table A7.3](#) in [Appendix 7](#), 42 (27.8%) of the 151 [Native Americans](#) who were first-time freshmen in fall 2015 attended Little Priest Tribal College or Nebraska Indian Community College, while 19 (12.6%) chose to enroll at other independent colleges and universities.
- 37.1% (56) of the Native American, first-time freshmen attended the state's community colleges, 11.9% (18) went to Nebraska's state colleges, 9.3% (14) enrolled at the University of Nebraska, and 1.3% (2) enrolled at non-degree-granting for-profit/career schools in fall 2015.

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<sup>20</sup> The race/ethnicity category 'two or more races' was an optional reporting category for enrollments reported for fall 2008 and fall 2009. Adoption of the category was mandatory beginning with data reported for fall 2010. In addition, the 'two or more races' category was first utilized by the Nebraska Department of Education with the 2010–2011 high school graduating class. Therefore, comparisons of the representation of multiracial students are limited to the fall 2011 through fall 2015 cohorts.

**Figure 1.4.4**

**Nebraska Enrollment of Native American, First-Time Freshmen  
at Nebraska Degree-Granting and Non-Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions  
Fall 2015**

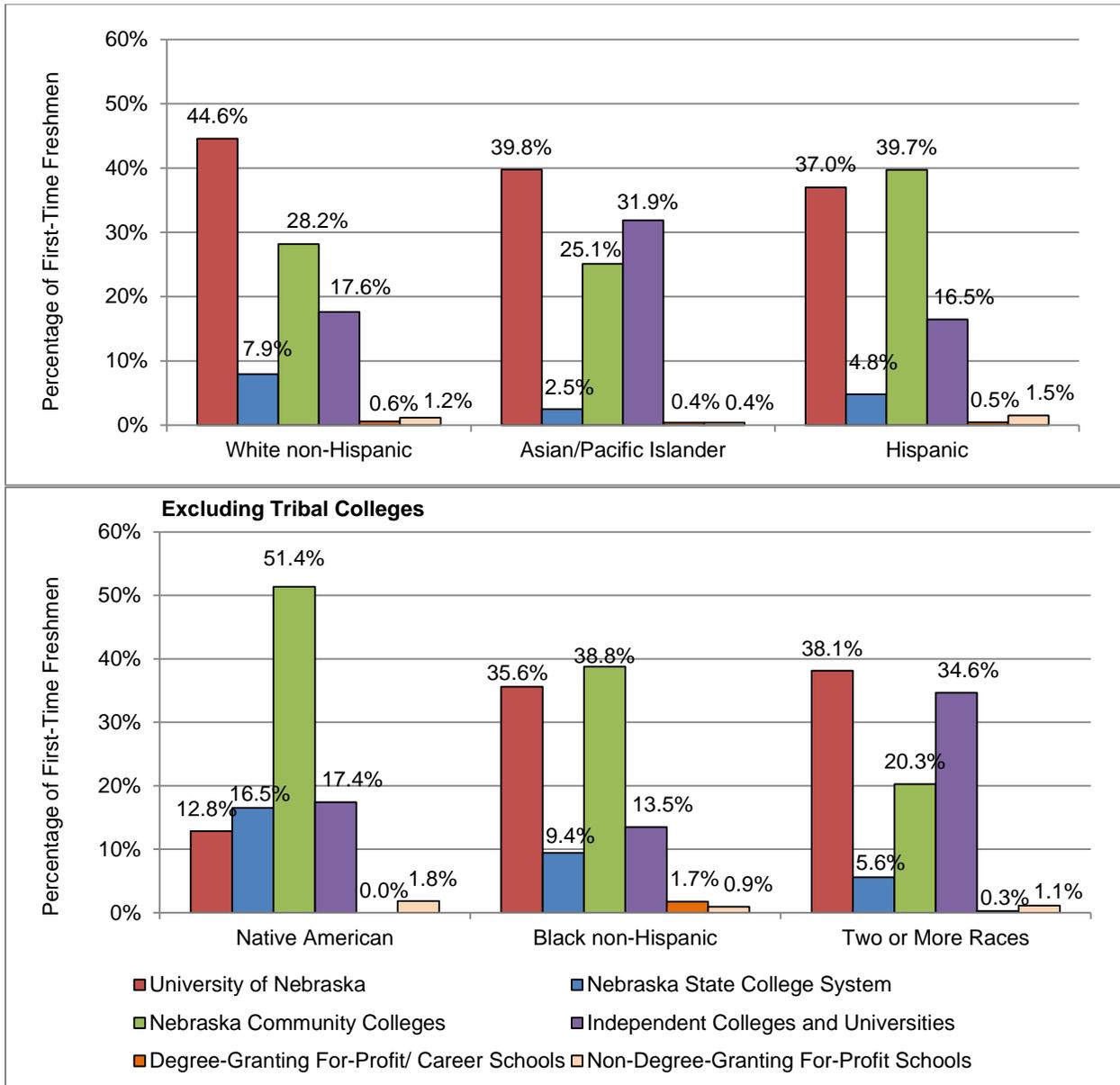


*Note.* Includes full-time and part-time students. See [Table A7.3](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2015 survey.

- [Figure 1.4.5](#) shows the percentages of the first-time freshmen in each of the six major racial/ethnic groups who attended, by sector, institutions within Nebraska’s postsecondary education system in fall 2015, excluding the two native tribal colleges in the analysis of Native American enrollments.
- As evidenced in [Figure 1.4.5](#), white non-Hispanics most frequently enrolled as first-time freshmen at the University of Nebraska.
- Asian/Pacific Islanders most frequently enrolled as first-time freshmen at the University of Nebraska or at the state’s independent colleges and universities.
- Almost eight out of ten Hispanic first-time freshmen enrolled at the University of Nebraska or the state’s community colleges.
- If the tribal colleges are excluded from the independent sector, as shown in [Figure 1.4.5](#), the first-time freshmen enrollment pattern for Native Americans in fall 2015 is dominated by the high percentage of these students who enroll at the state’s community colleges. In comparison, far lower percentages go to the schools constituting the University of Nebraska, the state colleges, or the independent institutions.
- Like Hispanics, black non-Hispanic first-time freshmen were most likely to enroll at the state’s community colleges or the University of Nebraska.
- Multiracial first-time freshmen were most likely to enroll at the University of Nebraska or the state’s independent institutions.

**Figure 1.4.5**

**Nebraska First-Time Freshmen Sector Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity  
Fall 2015**



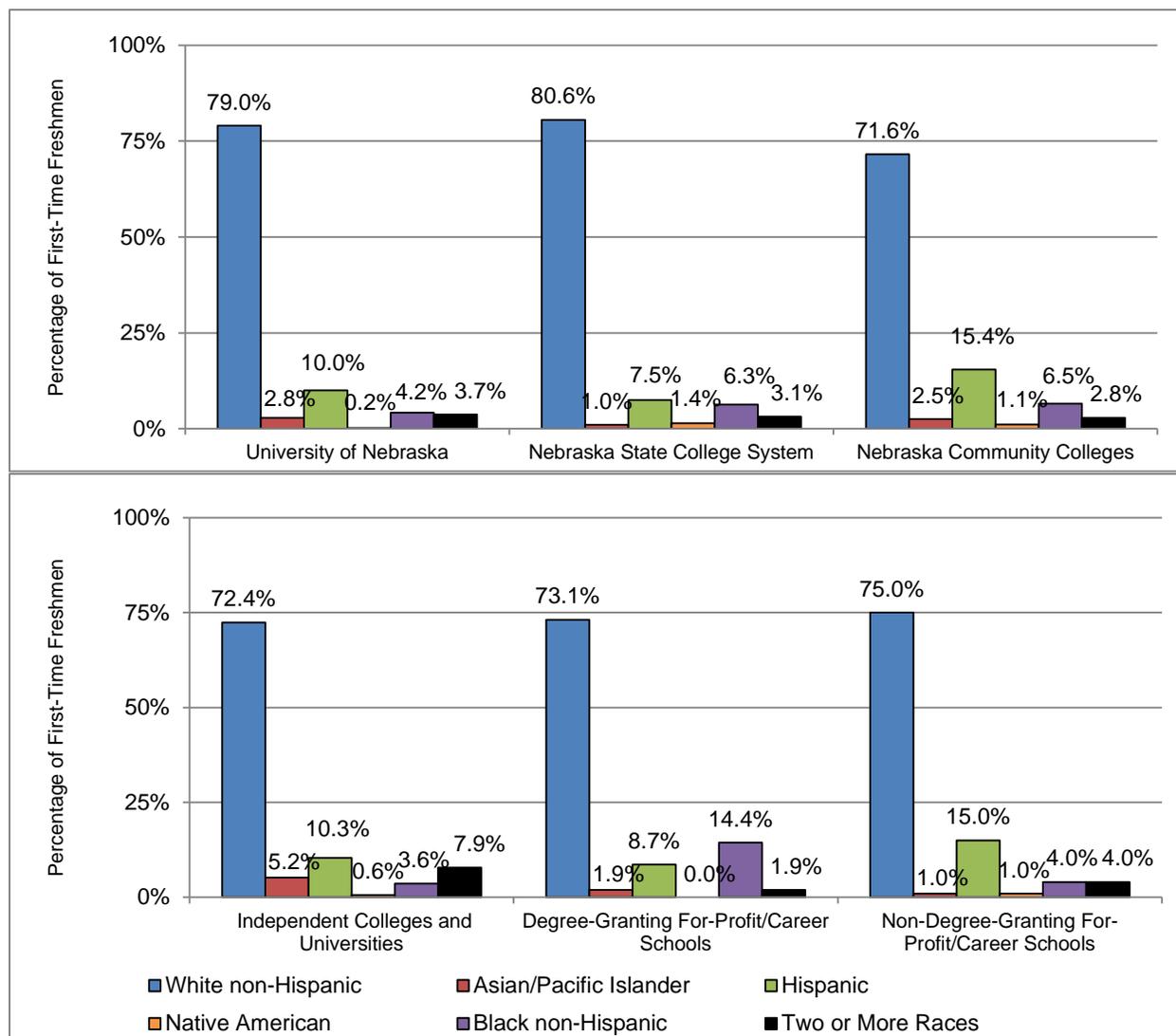
*Note.* Counts include full-time and part-time students. Counts do not include nonresident aliens or students of unknown race/ethnicity. The two native tribal colleges, Little Priest Tribal College and Nebraska Indian Community College, are excluded from the analysis of Native American enrollments in this figure. See [Table A7.3 in Appendix 7](#) for fall 2005 through fall 2015 data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2015 survey.

## Representation of Racial/Ethnic Groups by Sector

Since different percentages of white non-Hispanics and minority students enrolled as first-time freshmen at each of the sectors of postsecondary institutions in fall 2015, their representation varied across the six sectors of higher education, as shown in [Figure 1.4.6](#). Native Americans accounted for 93% of the combined first-time freshmen enrollment in fall 2015 of Little Priest Tribal College and Nebraska Indian Community College. Consequently, these two schools are excluded from the sector of independent colleges in the following analysis so sectors can be more clearly compared. See [Table A7.4](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for supporting data.

Figure 1.4.6

### Nebraska First-Time Freshmen Racial/Ethnic Enrollments by Sector Excluding Little Priest Tribal College and Nebraska Indian Community College Fall 2015



Note. Includes full-time and part-time students. Does not include nonresident aliens or students of unknown race/ethnicity. See [Table A7.4](#) and [Table A7.5](#) in [Appendix 7](#) for supporting data and comparable data for fall 2005 through fall 2014. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2015 survey

- In the fall of 2015, white non-Hispanics accounted for the highest percentages of first-time freshmen enrolled within every sector.
- Asians/Pacific Islanders accounted for 5.2% of first-time freshmen at the independent colleges/universities (excluding tribal colleges) but only 1.0% at the state colleges.
- Hispanics accounted for 15.4% of first-time freshmen at the community colleges but only 7.5% at the state colleges.
- Native Americans accounted for 1.4% of first-time freshmen at the state colleges. None of the first-time freshmen at the degree-granting for-profit/career schools were Native American in fall 2015.
- Black non-Hispanics accounted for 14.4% of first-time freshmen at the degree-granting for-profit/career schools but only 3.6% at the independent colleges/universities.
- Multiracial students accounted for 7.9% of first-time freshmen at the independent colleges/universities but only 1.9% at the degree-granting for-profit/career schools.