

2.1 Freshmen Retention Rates (Based on IPEDS Data)

Increase the percentage of students who persist beyond their first year(s) of enrollment.

The following analysis of freshmen retention rates is based on data reported by Nebraska institutions to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The NCES defines a retention rate as the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions, this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall. Separate retention rates are reported by institutions for their full-time and part-time students.

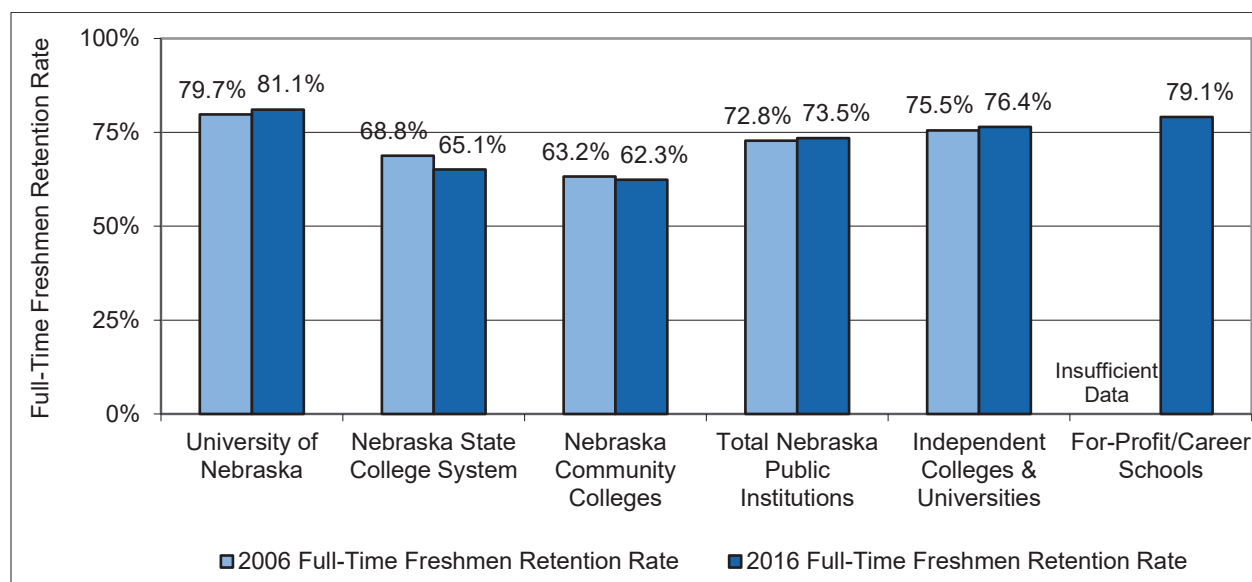
The latest available data are for fall 2016. Retention rates for fall 2017 will not be available until mid-2018 and will be reported in the *2019 Progress Report*. Consequently, the following analysis focuses on how fall 2016 retention rates compare to fall 2006 rates.

Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates by Sector

Figure 2.1.1 shows that full-time freshmen retention rates for the University of Nebraska and Nebraska's independent institutions were higher in fall 2016 than they were in fall 2006. For the remaining sectors, full-time retention rates were lower in fall 2016 than they were in fall 2006 or data are not sufficient to compute a sector retention rate for fall 2006.

Figure 2.1.1

**Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates
of Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
Fall 2016 Compared to Fall 2006**



Note. Data are insufficient to calculate the overall full-time retention rate for the for-profit/career school sector for fall 2006. See [Explanatory Note A9.1](#) and [Table A9.4](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for more information on limitations of sector comparisons. See [Table A9.1](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2005, fall 2006, and fall 2016 surveys.

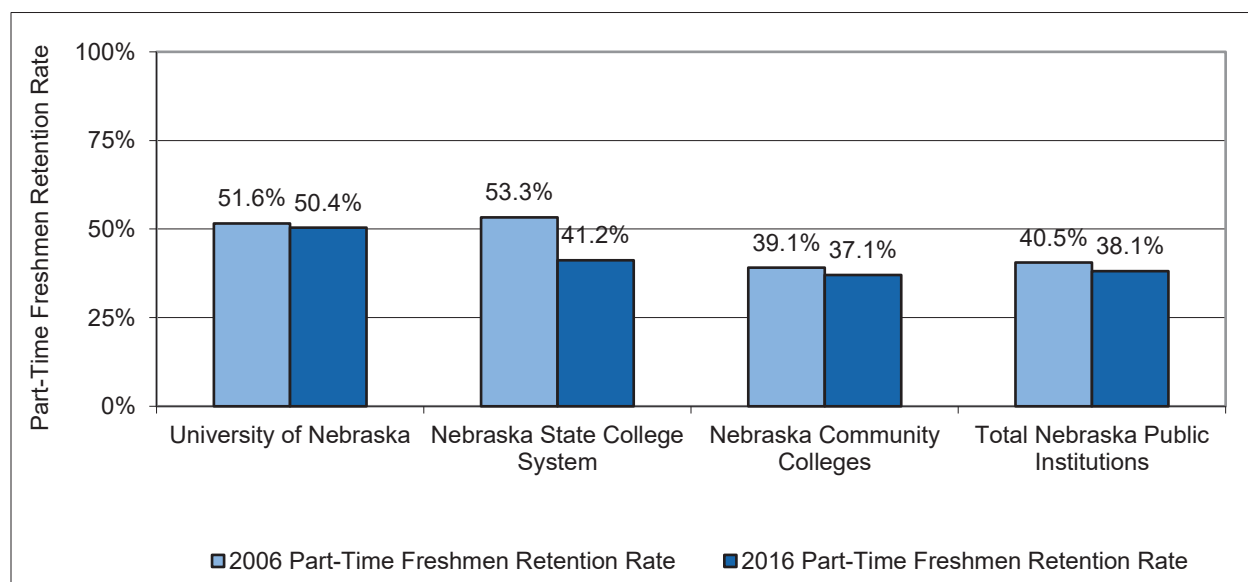
- The net effect of these changes in sector rates was that the estimated overall full-time retention rate for the three public sectors increased 0.7 percentage point, from 72.8% in fall 2006 to 73.5% in fall 2016, while the rate for all institutions in Nebraska, excluding the for-profit/career schools, increased 0.9 percentage point, from 75.5% in fall 2006 to 76.4% in fall 2016.
- See [Table A9.1](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for data related to the calculated sector and state retention rates for full-time freshmen. See [Table A9.4](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for the full-time retention rates by institution for fall 2006 and fall 2016.

Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates by Sector

As shown in [Figure 2.1.2](#), the overall part-time retention rate for Nebraska’s three public sectors of higher education was 38.1% in fall 2016, down from 40.5% in fall 2006. Sector retention rates for the public sectors were lower in fall 2016 than in fall 2006.²⁸

- Regardless of sector, retention rates for part-time students are much lower than comparable rates for full-time students.

Figure 2.1.2
Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates
of Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
Fall 2016 Compared to Fall 2006



Note. The schools in the independent and for-profit/career school sectors did not provide sufficient data to calculate part-time retention rates for the sectors or for the state for fall 2006. See [Explanatory Note A9.1](#) and [Table A9.5](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for more information on limitations of sector comparisons. See [Table A9.2](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2005, fall 2006, and fall 2016 surveys.

²⁸ The Nebraska State College System and the University of Nebraska reported small numbers of part-time first-time freshmen compared to Nebraska’s community colleges. Fall 2006 retention rates are based on the following cohorts: NU = 124; NSCS = 60; CCs = 1,499. Fall 2016 retention rates are based on the following cohorts: NU = 127; NSCS = 17; CCs = 1,538.

Nebraska Freshmen Retention Rates Compared to Those of Other States

The charts in this section show the fall 2016 overall freshmen retention rates for full-time and part-time freshmen enrolled at Nebraska's public four-year colleges and universities and Nebraska's six community colleges, compared to the retention rates for other states and the nation. (See Table A9.3 in Appendix 9 for supporting data.)

Retention Rates for Public Four-Year Institutions

Figure 2.1.3 and Figure 2.1.4 reveal that the fall 2016 retention rates for full-time and part-time freshmen enrolled at Nebraska's public four-year institutions were below the corresponding national averages.

- As shown in Figure 2.1.3, the overall full-time retention rate for Nebraska's public four-year institutions—the University of Nebraska at Kearney, the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the three institutions in the Nebraska State College System—was 78.8% in fall 2016, compared to an 81.1% retention rate for the nation.
- Nebraska's fall 2016 full-time retention rate for public four-year institutions was the 29th highest in the nation.
- As shown in Figure 2.1.4, the overall part-time retention rate for Nebraska's public four-year institutions was 49.3% in fall 2016, compared to the national average of 54.7%.
- Nebraska's fall 2016 part-time retention rate for public four-year institutions was the 26th highest in the nation.

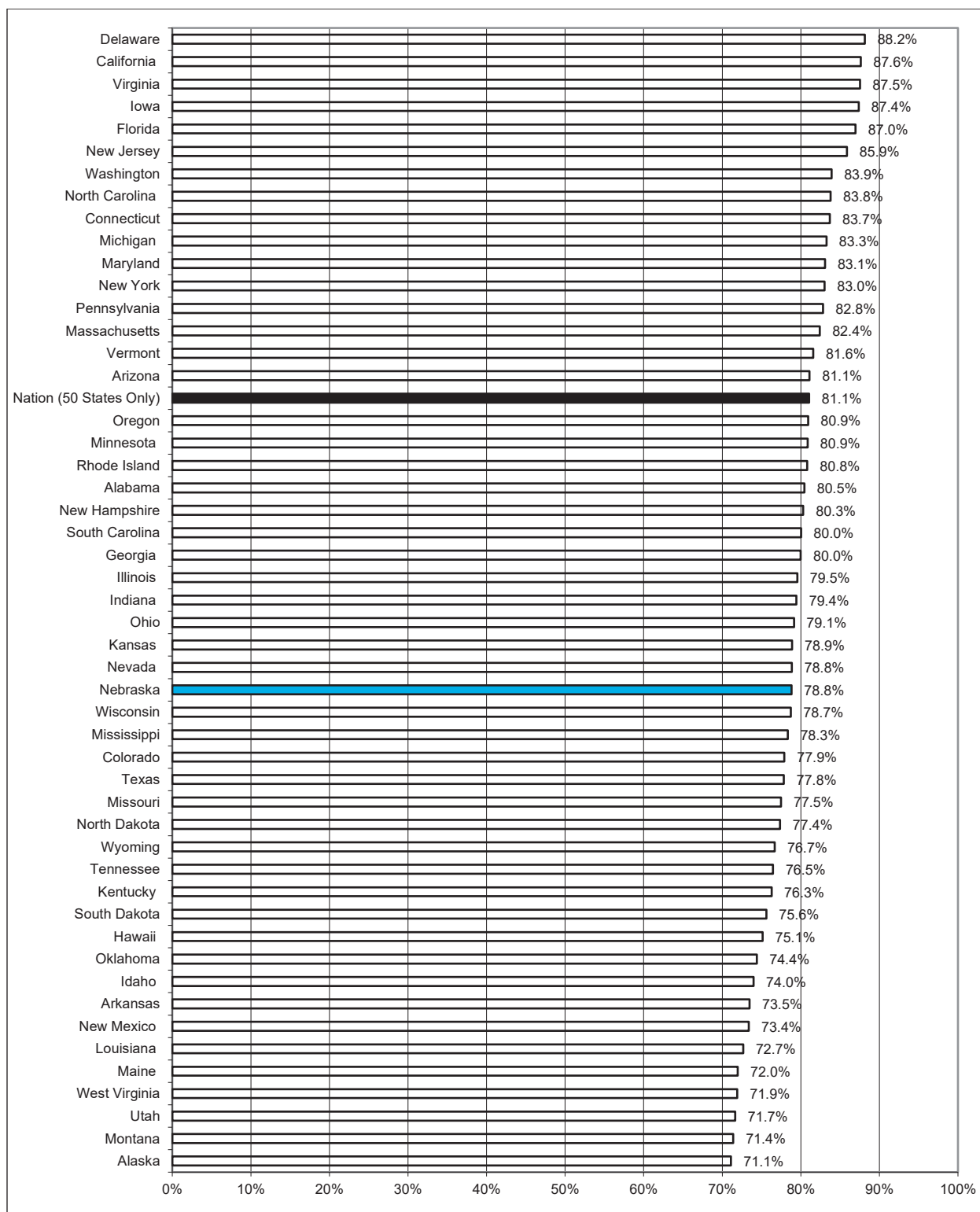
Retention Rates for Public Two-Year Institutions

Figure 2.1.5 and Figure 2.1.6 compare the overall full-time and part-time freshmen retention rates for Nebraska's six community colleges to the state and national rates for all two-year public colleges. These colleges include publicly supported tribal colleges and technical colleges, as well as community colleges. Consequently, retention data for the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis (NCTA-Curtis) and the Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC) are included in the computation of the national full-time and part-time retention rates for all two-year public colleges. Data for NCTA-Curtis and the NICC are not included in the calculation of the full-time retention rate for Nebraska's six community colleges shown in Figure 2.1.5 and Figure 2.1.6.

- As shown in Figure 2.1.5, the overall full-time retention rate for Nebraska's community colleges was 62.3% in fall 2016, compared to a 62.0% retention rate for the nation.
- Nebraska's fall 2016 full-time retention rate for the community colleges was the 13th highest in the nation.
- As shown in Figure 2.1.6, the overall part-time retention rate for Nebraska's community colleges was 37.1% in fall 2016, compared to the national average of 44.3%.
- Nebraska's fall 2016 part-time retention rate for the community colleges was the 44th highest in the nation.

Figure 2.1.3

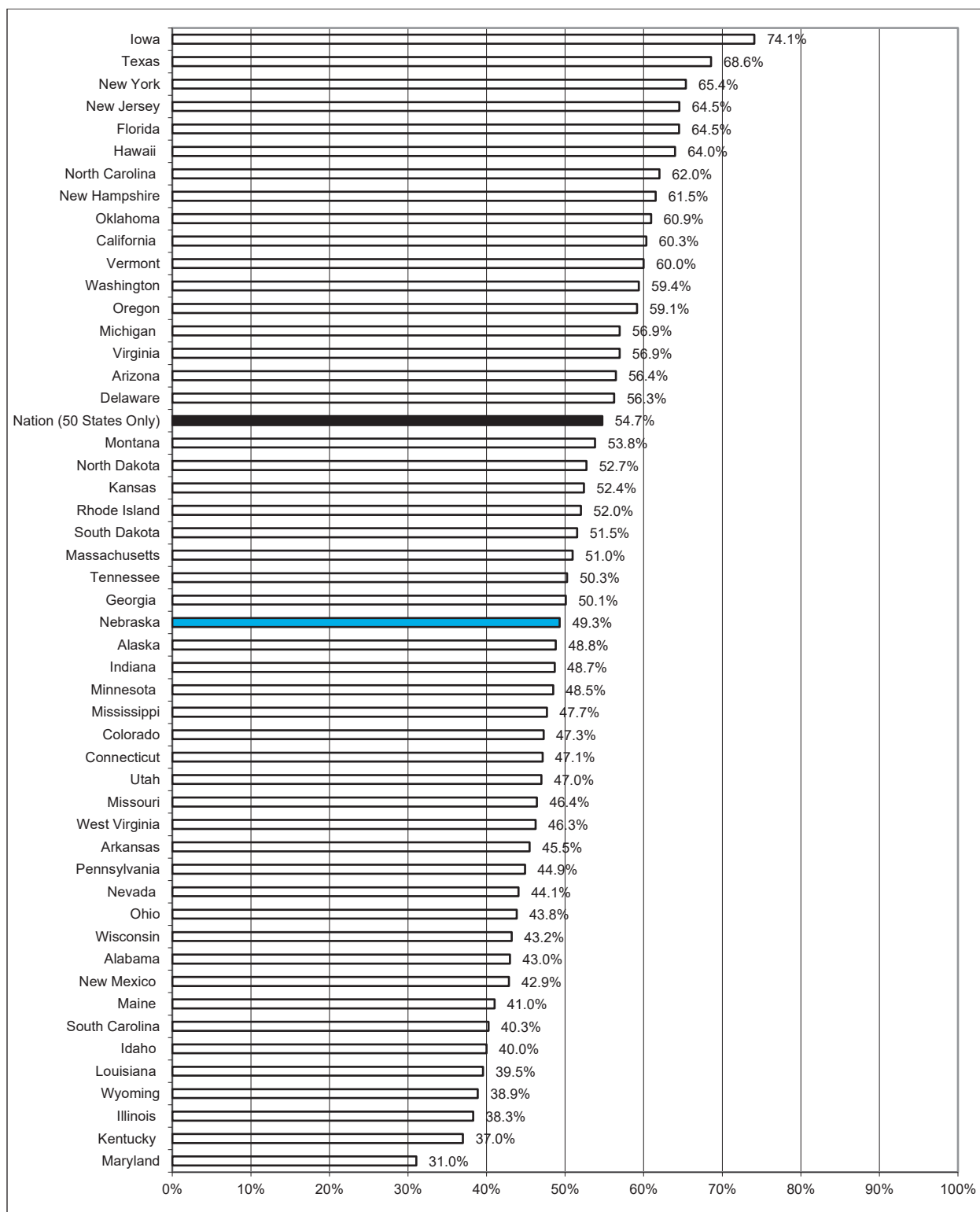
2016 Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Four-Year Public Institutions by State



Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2016 survey.

Figure 2.1.4

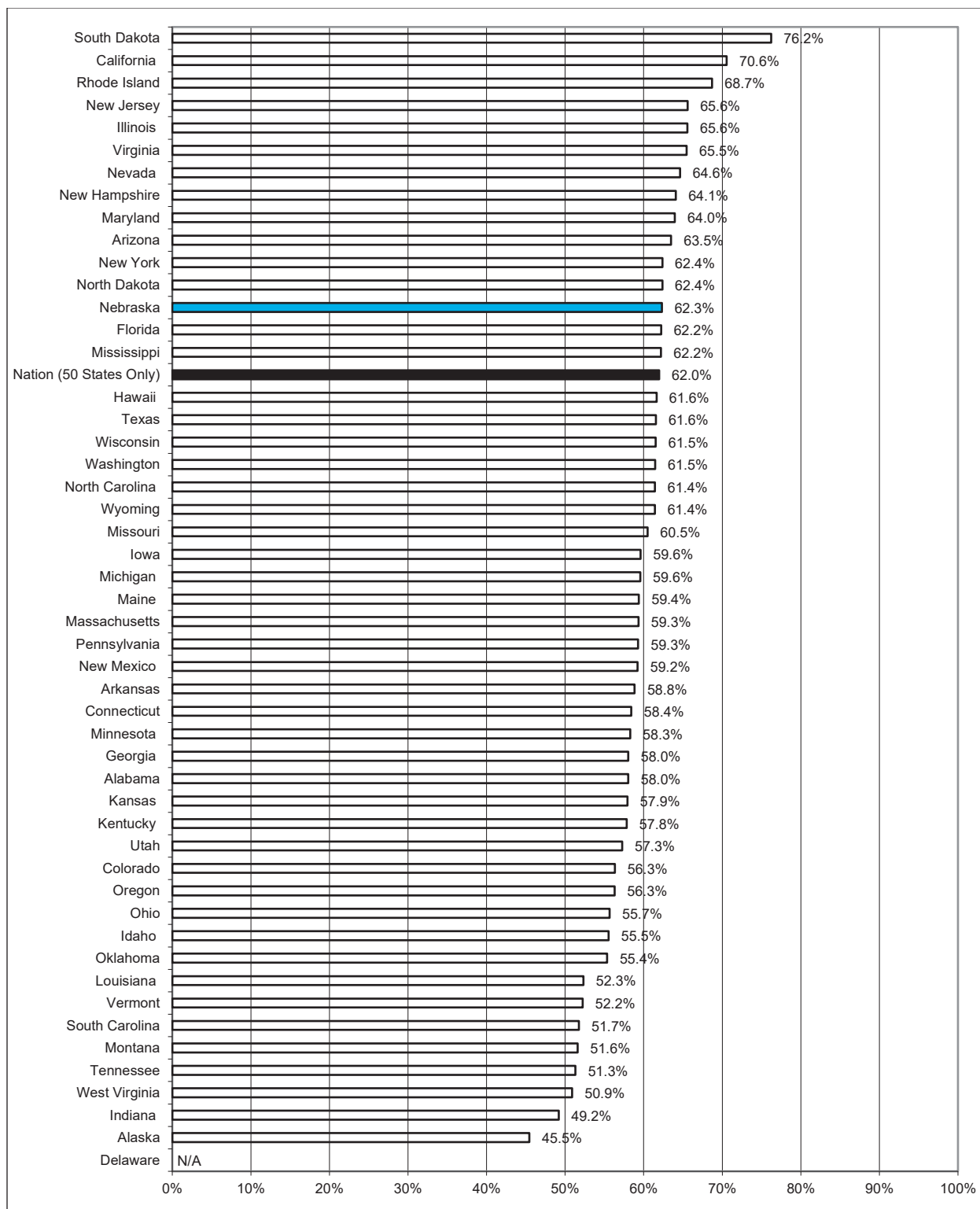
2016 Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Four-Year Public Institutions by State



Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2016 survey.

Figure 2.1.5

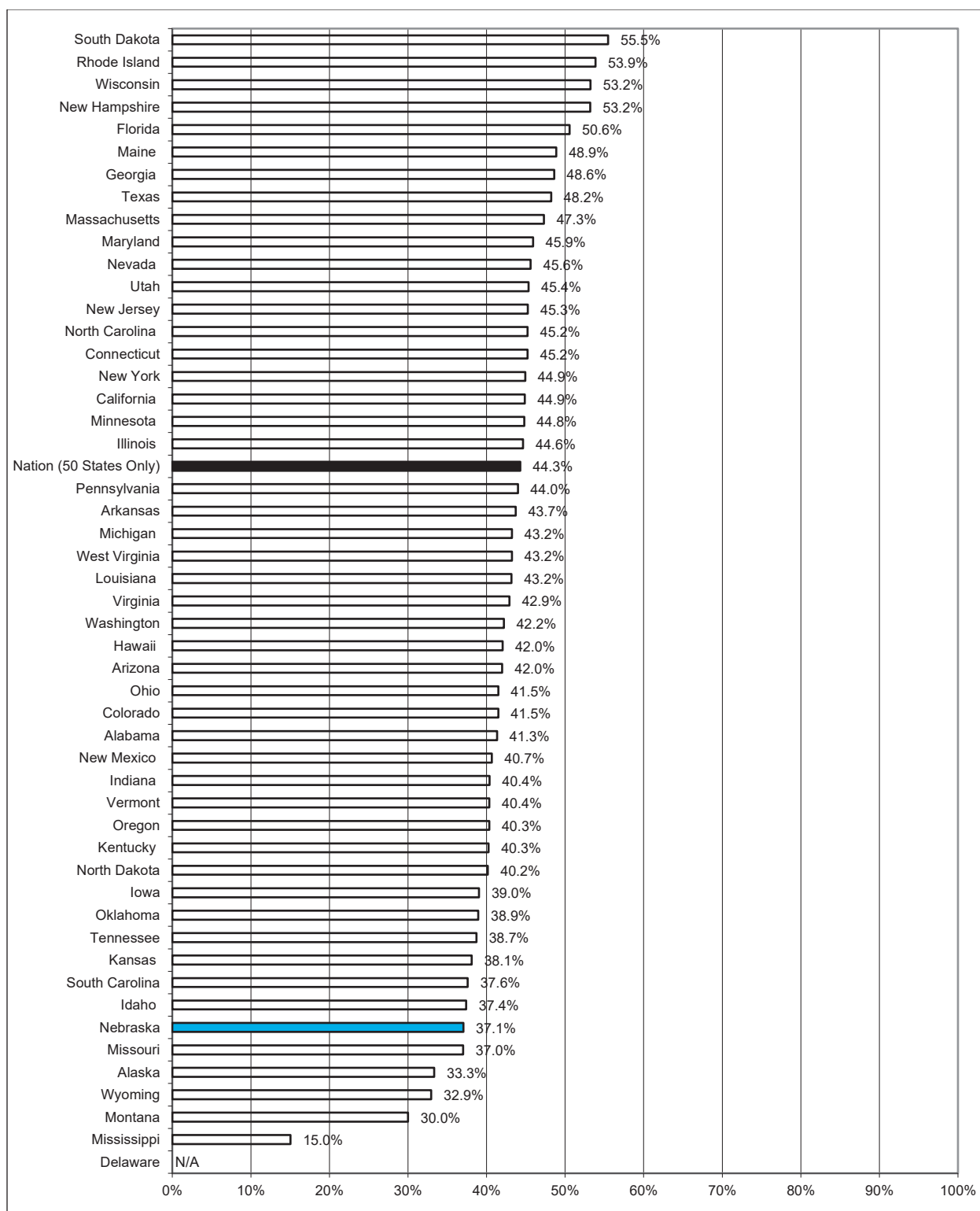
**2016 Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Two-Year Public Institutions by State
(Nebraska Rate for Nebraska Community Colleges Only)**



Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2016 survey.

Figure 2.1.6

**2016 Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Two-Year Public Institutions by State
(Nebraska Rate for Nebraska Community Colleges Only)**



Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2016 survey.