

## 2.1 Freshmen Retention Rates (Based on IPEDS Data)

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

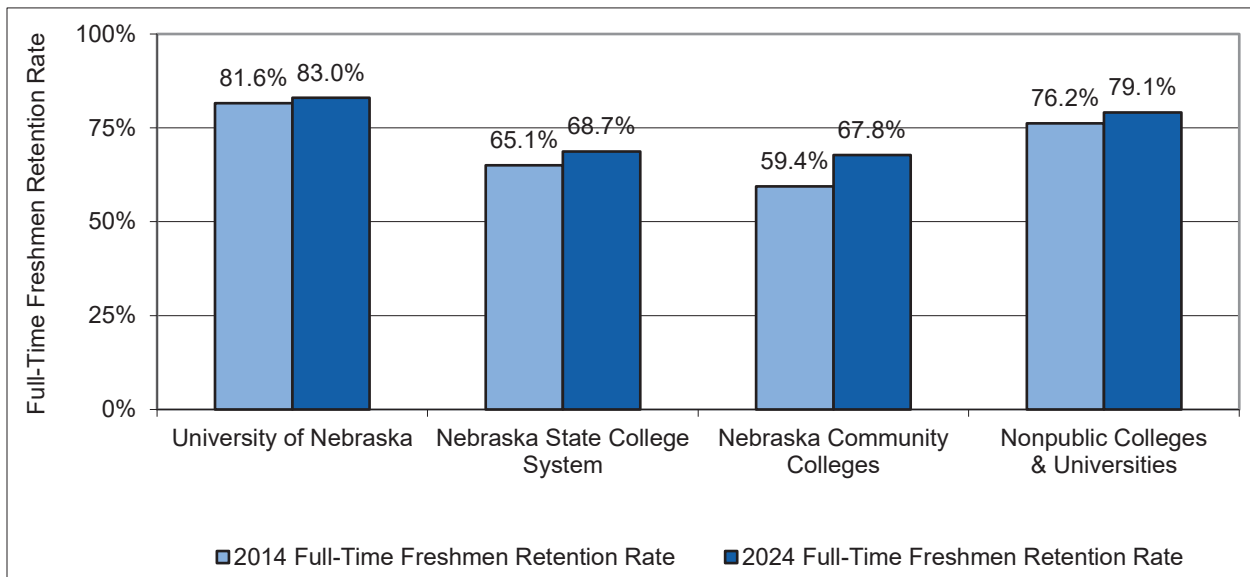
The following analysis of freshmen retention rates is based on data reported by Nebraska institutions to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The NCES defines a retention rate as the rate at which students persist in their 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 2024. Retention rates for fall 2025 will not be available until mid-2026 and will be reported in the *2027 Progress Report*. Consequently, the following analysis focuses on how fall 2024 retention rates compare to fall 2014 rates.

### Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates by Sector

Figure 2.1.1 shows that full-time freshmen retention rates for all sectors were higher in fall 2024 than they were in fall 2014.

**Figure 2.1.1**  
**Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates**  
**of Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector**  
**Fall 2024 Compared to Fall 2014**



*Note.* See [Table A9.1](#) and [Table A9.4](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2014 and fall 2024 surveys.

- The net effect of these changes in sector rates was that the overall full-time retention rate for all institutions in Nebraska increased 4.3 percentage points, from 73.1% in fall 2014 to 77.4% in fall 2024.
- 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 2014 and fall 2024.

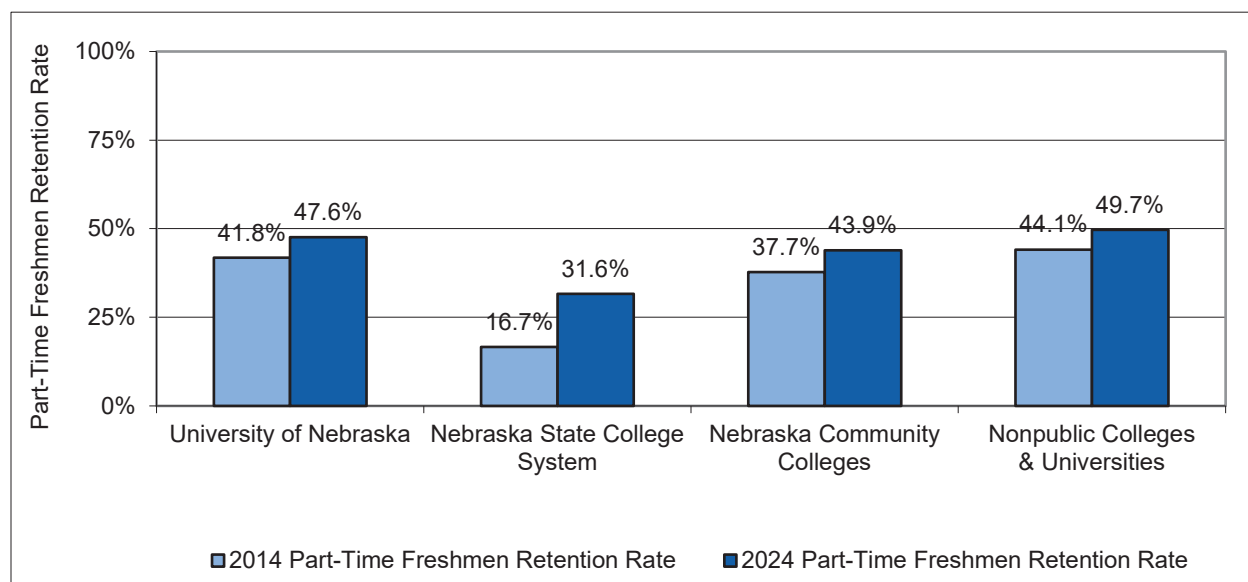
### **Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates by Sector**

As shown in [Figure 2.1.2](#), part-time retention rates increased for all sectors of higher education in Nebraska.

- The net effect of these changes in sector rates was that the overall part-time retention rate for all institutions in Nebraska increased 6.6 percentage points, from 38.3% in fall 2014 to 44.9% in fall 2024.
- Regardless of sector, retention rates for part-time students are much lower than comparable rates for full-time students.
- Compared to Nebraska’s community colleges, the other sectors of higher education in Nebraska consistently report small numbers of part-time, first-time freshmen. See [Table A9.2](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for more information.

**Figure 2.1.2**

**Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates of Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector Fall 2024 Compared to Fall 2014**



*Note.* See [Table A9.2](#) and [Table A9.5](#) in [Appendix 9](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2014 and fall 2024 surveys.

## **Nebraska Freshmen Retention Rates Compared to Those of Other States**

The charts in this section show the fall 2024 overall freshmen retention rates for full-time and part-time freshmen enrolled at Nebraska's public two-year institutions and Nebraska's public four-year institutions, 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 Two-Year Institutions**

Figure 2.1.3 and Figure 2.1.4 compare the overall full-time and part-time freshmen retention rates for Nebraska's public two-year institutions—Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture and Nebraska's six community colleges—to the state and national rates for all two-year public colleges.

- As shown in Figure 2.1.3, the overall full-time retention rate for Nebraska's public two-year institutions was 67.5% in fall 2024, compared to a 64.3% retention rate for the nation.
- Nebraska's fall 2024 full-time retention rate for the two-year publics was the 8<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation.
- As shown in Figure 2.1.4, the overall part-time retention rate for Nebraska's public two-year institutions was 43.9% in fall 2024, compared to the national average of 44.3%.
- Nebraska's fall 2024 part-time retention rate for the two-year publics was the 25<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation.

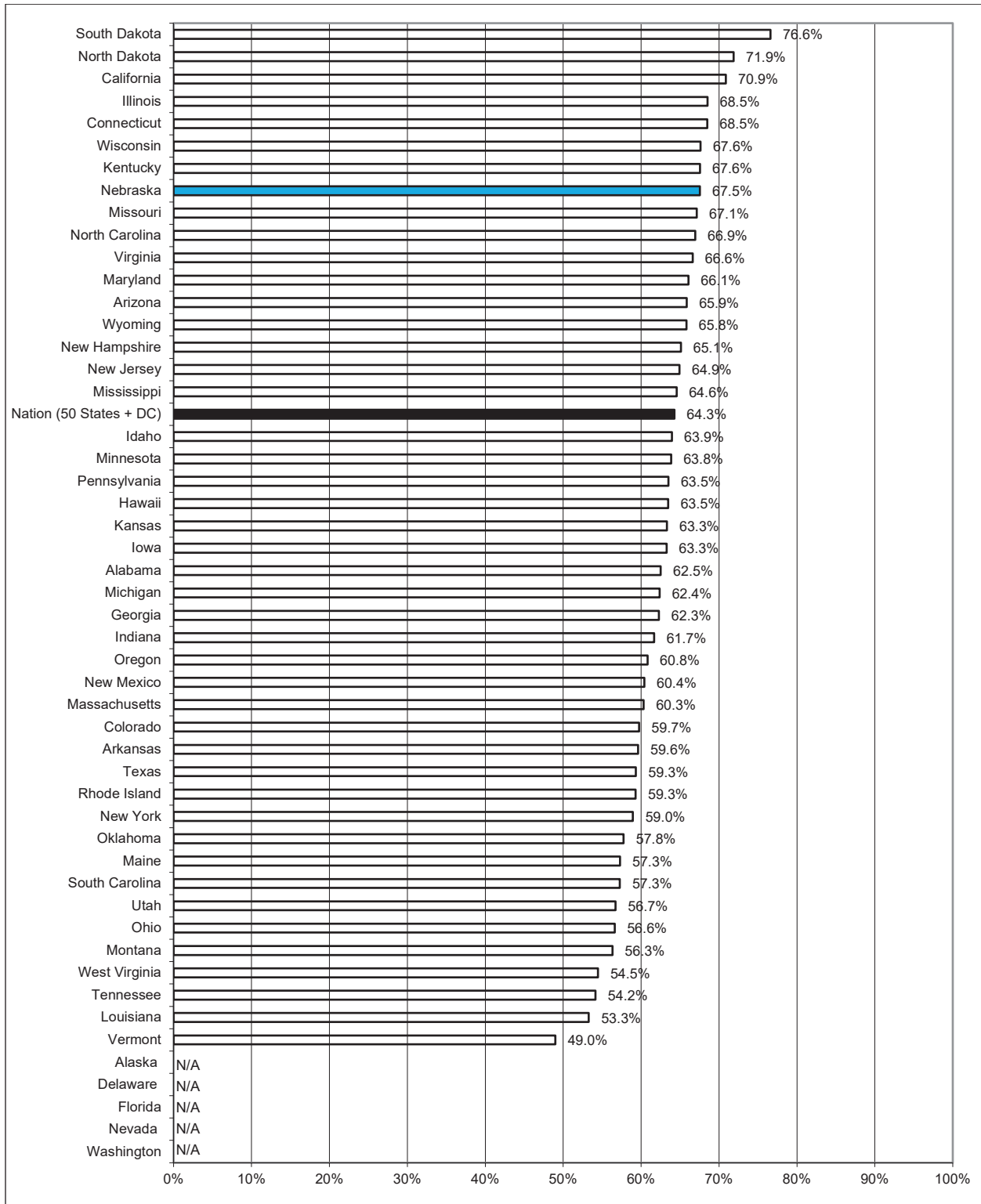
### **Retention Rates for Public Four-Year Institutions**

Figure 2.1.5 and Figure 2.1.6 reveal that the fall 2024 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 2.1.5, the overall full-time retention rate for Nebraska's public four-year institutions—University of Nebraska at Kearney, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the three institutions in the Nebraska State College System—was 81.2% in fall 2024, compared to an 82.4% retention rate for the nation.
- Nebraska's fall 2024 full-time retention rate for public four-year institutions was the 25<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation.
- As shown in Figure 2.1.6, the overall part-time retention rate for Nebraska's public four-year institutions was 44.6% in fall 2024, compared to the national average of 54.3%.
- Nebraska's fall 2024 part-time retention rate for public four-year institutions was the 33<sup>rd</sup> highest in the nation.

Figure 2.1.3

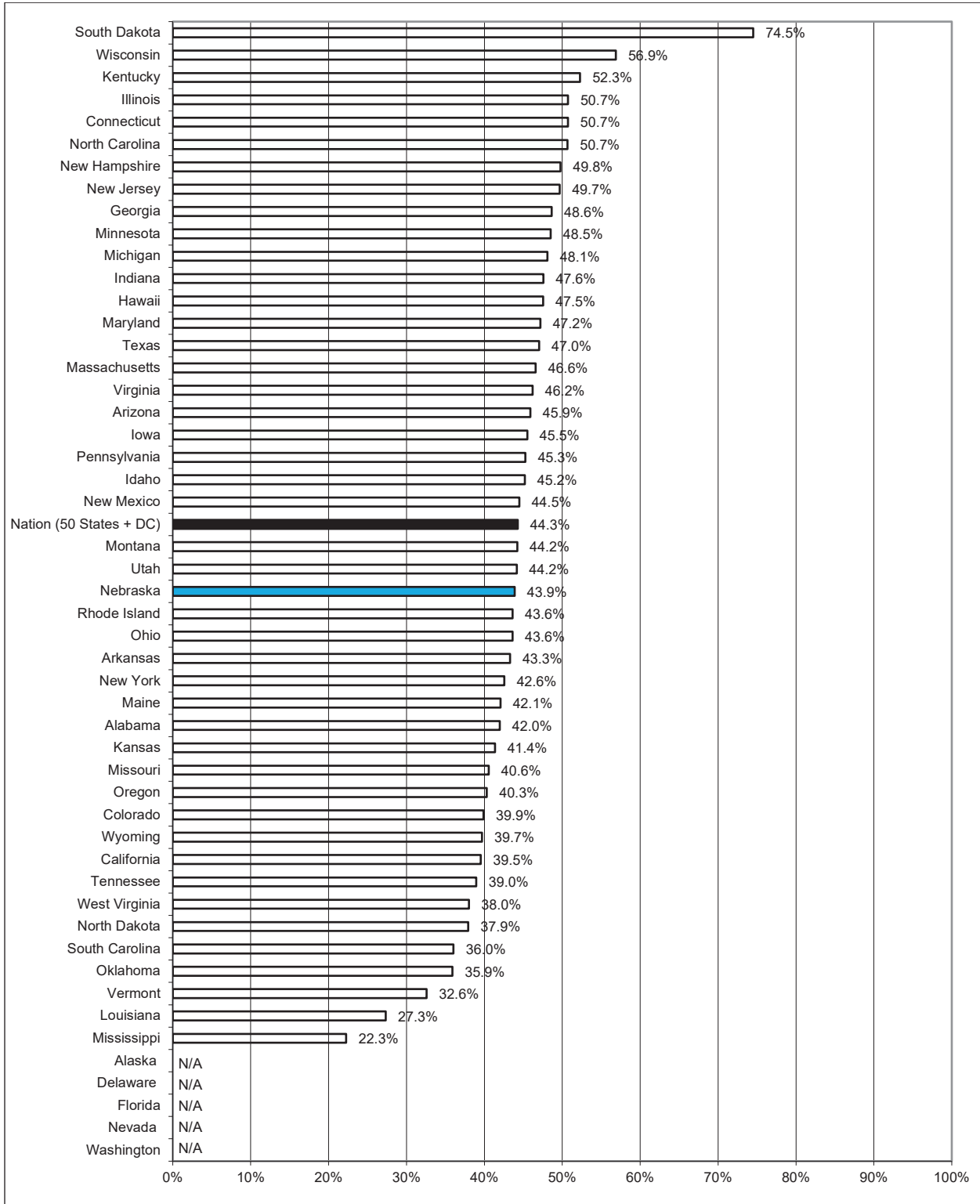
2024 Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Two-Year Public Institutions by State



Note. Data includes only Title IV participating, degree-granting institutions. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2024 survey.

Figure 2.1.4

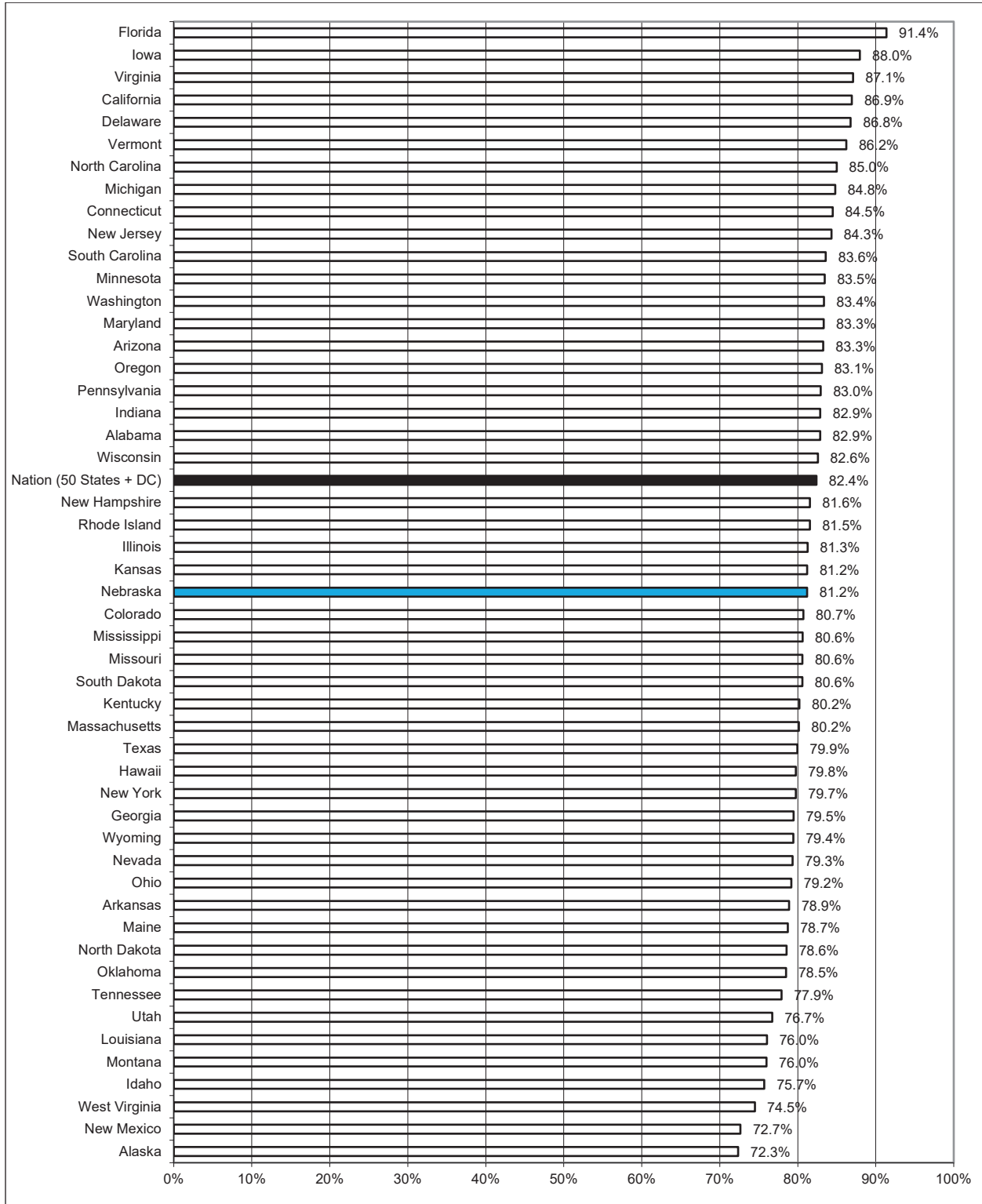
2024 Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Two-Year Public Institutions by State



Note. Data includes only Title IV participating, degree-granting institutions. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2024 survey.

Figure 2.1.5

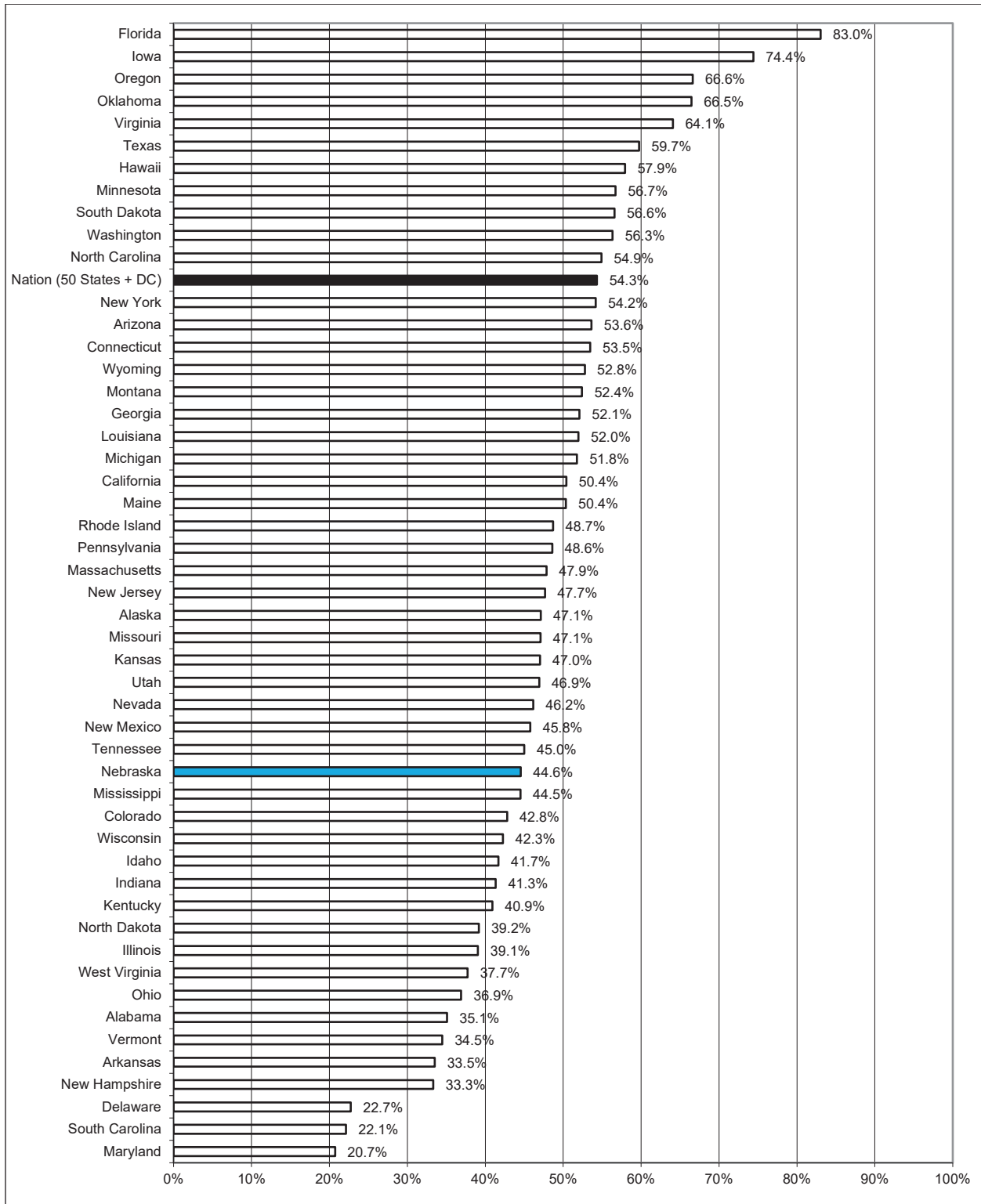
2024 Full-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Four-Year Public Institutions by State



Note. Data includes only Title IV participating, degree-granting institutions. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2024 survey.

Figure 2.1.6

2024 Part-Time Freshmen Retention Rates for Four-Year Public Institutions by State



Note. Data includes only Title IV participating, degree-granting institutions. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2024 survey.