



# Trends in NCAA Division I Graduation Rates

December 2021



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# Summary

# 2018-21 Four-Class Division I Graduation Rates

(2011-14 Entering Cohorts)

	Student-Athletes		Student Body
	GSR	Federal Rate	Federal Rate
DI Overall	89% <small>+1</small>	69% <small>+0</small>	68% <small>+1</small>
DI Men	85% <small>+1</small>	63% <small>+1</small>	65% <small>+1</small>
DI Women	94% <small>+0</small>	75% <small>+0</small>	71% <small>+1</small>

Notes: Numbers in red indicate percentage point change in four-class rate from 2017-2020.

GSR = Graduation Success Rate.



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# Summary

- Nearly all members of this reporting cohort completed their six-year graduation window before the beginning of the pandemic. Potential pandemic-related impacts on graduation rates will not be fully known for several years.
- Overall Division I student-athlete graduation rates (Graduation Success Rate and federal rate) and all subgroup rates are at or near their highest-ever levels.
- Since the implementation of Division I academic reform initiatives (modified initial eligibility and progress-toward-degree standards; application of Academic Performance Program) in the early 2000s, long-term graduation rate increases have been observed.



# Summary

- Notable increases in Graduation Success Rate over the 20 years of calculating this rate in Division I:
  - Overall student-athletes — 74% to 90%.
  - Black student-athletes — 56% to 80%.
  - Hispanic/Latino student-athletes — 64% to 88%.
  - Black FBS football student-athletes — 53% to 77%.
  - Black men's basketball student-athletes — 46% to 81%.

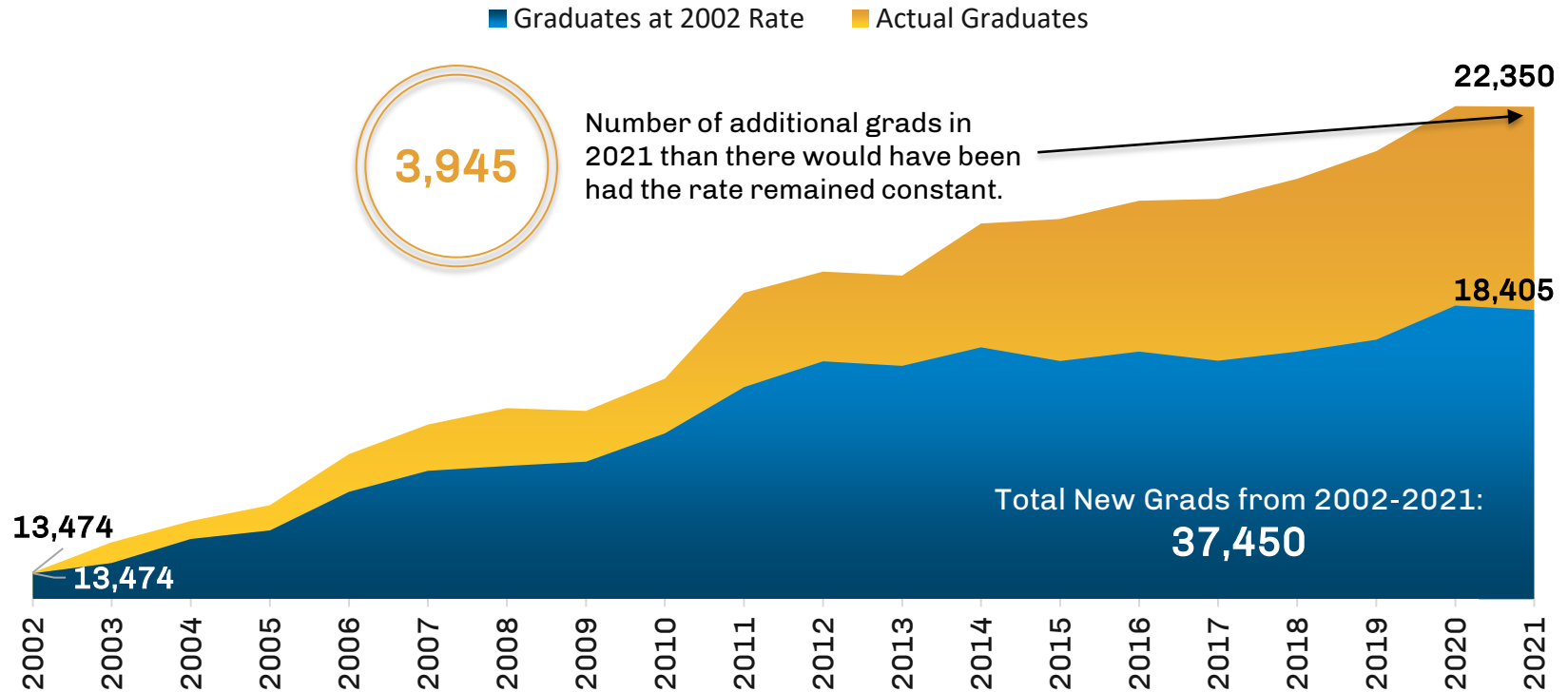


# Summary

- Using the federal graduation rate to examine student-athlete vs. student body graduation from initial school in Division I, we see that Black men who are student-athletes have an aggregate FGR that is 13 percentage points higher than observed among Black men generally at those same schools. The FGR for Black women favors student-athletes by 14 percentage points.
- Even though Division I has seen an increase in transfer behavior, which negatively impacts the federal graduation rate, subgroup FGRs continue to trend higher.



# Number of Actual Graduates Since 2002 vs. Number Who Would Have Graduated With No Increase in GSR



# Four-Class Graduation Success Rates



# Four-Class Division I Graduation Success Rates

(2018-2021 by Group)

<b>Student-Athlete Group</b>	<b>GSR</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Black Men</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino Men</b>	<b>83%</b>
<b>White Men</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Black Women</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino Women</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>White Women</b>	<b>96%</b>

# Four-Class GSR for Division I Women's Sports

(2018-2021)

<b>SPORT</b>	<b>GSR</b>
Basketball	92%
Bowling	89%
Cross Country/Track	91%
Fencing	97%
Field Hockey	96%
Golf	96%
Gymnastics	97%
Ice Hockey	99%
Lacrosse	97%
Rowing	96%
Skiing	98%
Soccer	95%
Softball	93%
Swimming	96%
Tennis	96%
Volleyball	94%
Water Polo	94%

# Four-Class GSR for Division I Men's Sports

(2018-2021)

<b>SPORT</b>	<b>GSR</b>
Baseball	86%
Basketball	84%
Cross Country/Track	84%
Fencing	91%
Football (FBS)	81%
Football (FCS)	79%
Golf	91%
Gymnastics	93%
Ice Hockey	93%
Lacrosse	92%
Rifle	91%
Skiing	98%
Soccer	87%
Swimming	91%
Tennis	93%
Volleyball	88%
Water Polo	88%
Wrestling	82%

# Four-Class Division I Graduation Success Rates for Football and Basketball

(2018-2021 by Group)

<b>Student-Athlete Group</b>	<b>GSR</b>
<b>Football (FBS)</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Black Football (FBS)</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>White Football (FBS)</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Men's Basketball</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Black Men's Basketball</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>White Men's Basketball</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Women's Basketball</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Black Women's Basketball</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>White Women's Basketball</b>	<b>97%</b>

# Trends in Graduation Success Rates

# Division I Graduation Success Rate Trends

(20-Year Differences in Single-Class GSR for Select Groups of Student-Athletes)

Student-Athlete Group	2002* GSR	2021 GSR
Overall	74%	90%
Black	56%	80%
Hispanic/Latino	64%	88%
White	81%	94%
Black Men	51%	76%
Hispanic/Latino Men	56%	83%
White Men	76%	90%
Black Women	71%	89%
Hispanic/Latino Women	79%	93%
White Women	89%	97%

\*2002 was the last cohort that entered under the former initial-eligibility rules known as Proposition 48. It was also the first cohort for which GSR data was collected.

# Division I GSR Trends in Football and Basketball

(20-Year Differences in Single-Class GSR for Select Groups of Student-Athletes)

Student-Athlete Group	2002* GSR	2021 GSR
Football (FBS)	63%	81%
Black Football (FBS)	53%	77%
White Football (FBS)	76%	90%
Men's Basketball	56%	84%
Black Men's Basketball	46%	81%
White Men's Basketball	76%	94%
Women's Basketball	80%	94%
Black Women's Basketball	70%	92%
White Women's Basketball	87%	97%

\*2002 was the last cohort that entered under the former initial-eligibility rules known as Proposition 48. It was also the first cohort for which GSR data was collected.

# Graduation Success Rate Trends for Division I Women's Sports

(20-Year Differences in Single-Class GSR)

<b>SPORT</b>	<b>2002 GSR</b>	<b>2021 GSR</b>
<b>Basketball</b>	80%	94%
<b>Cross Country / Track</b>	82%	92%
<b>Field Hockey</b>	93%	97%
<b>Golf</b>	88%	97%
<b>Gymnastics</b>	93%	99%
<b>Lacrosse</b>	94%	98%
<b>Rowing</b>	90%	96%
<b>Soccer</b>	86%	96%
<b>Softball</b>	82%	94%
<b>Swimming</b>	91%	97%
<b>Tennis</b>	86%	97%
<b>Volleyball</b>	83%	94%

Note: Only those sports with more than 150 Division I graduates are shown.



# Graduation Success Rate Trends for Division I Men's Sports

(20-Year Differences in Single-Class GSR)

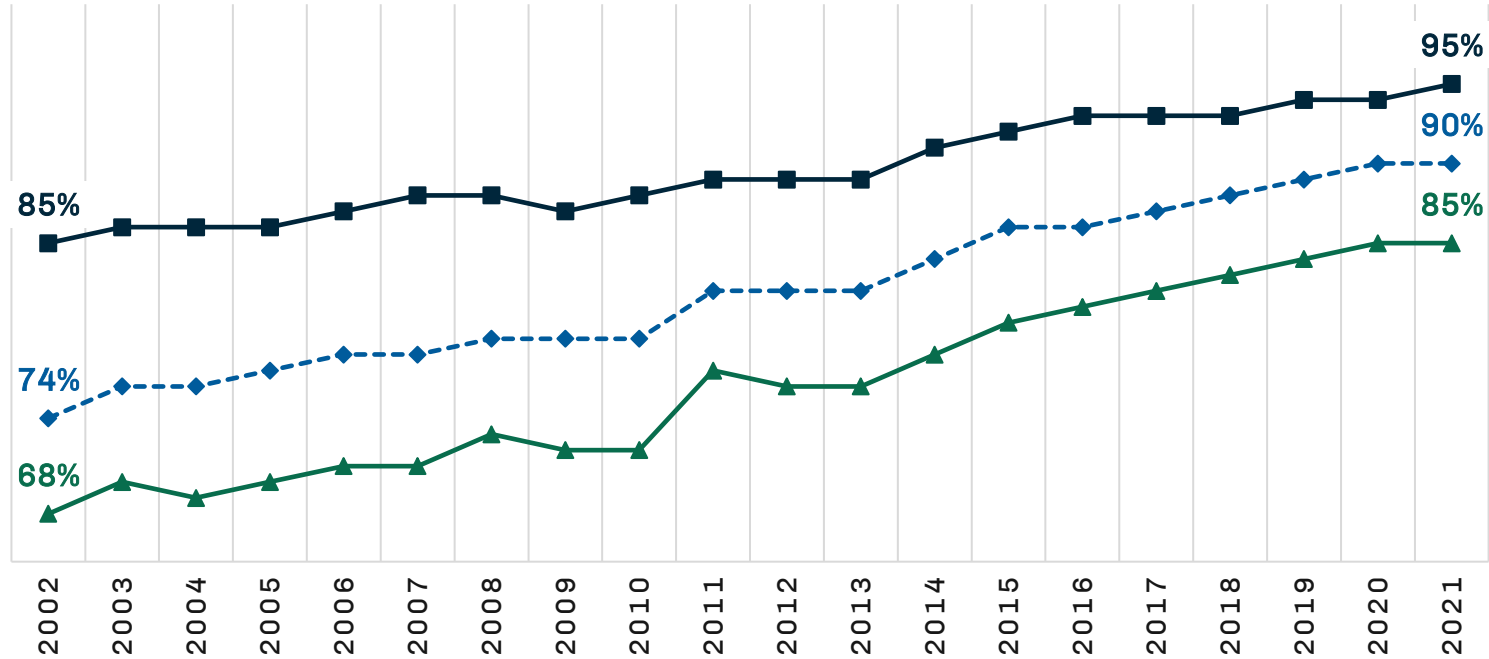
<b>SPORT</b>	<b>2002 GSR</b>	<b>2021 GSR</b>
<b>Baseball</b>	65%	88%
<b>Basketball</b>	56%	84%
<b>Cross Country / Track</b>	72%	84%
<b>Football (FBS)</b>	63%	81%
<b>Football (FCS)</b>	62%	79%
<b>Golf</b>	77%	91%
<b>Ice Hockey</b>	78%	91%
<b>Lacrosse</b>	91%	92%
<b>Soccer</b>	74%	89%
<b>Swimming</b>	81%	91%
<b>Tennis</b>	85%	94%
<b>Wrestling</b>	62%	86%

Note: Only those sports with more than 150 Division I graduates are shown.

# Graduation Success Rate Trends of Division I Student-Athletes

## Single-Class Rates

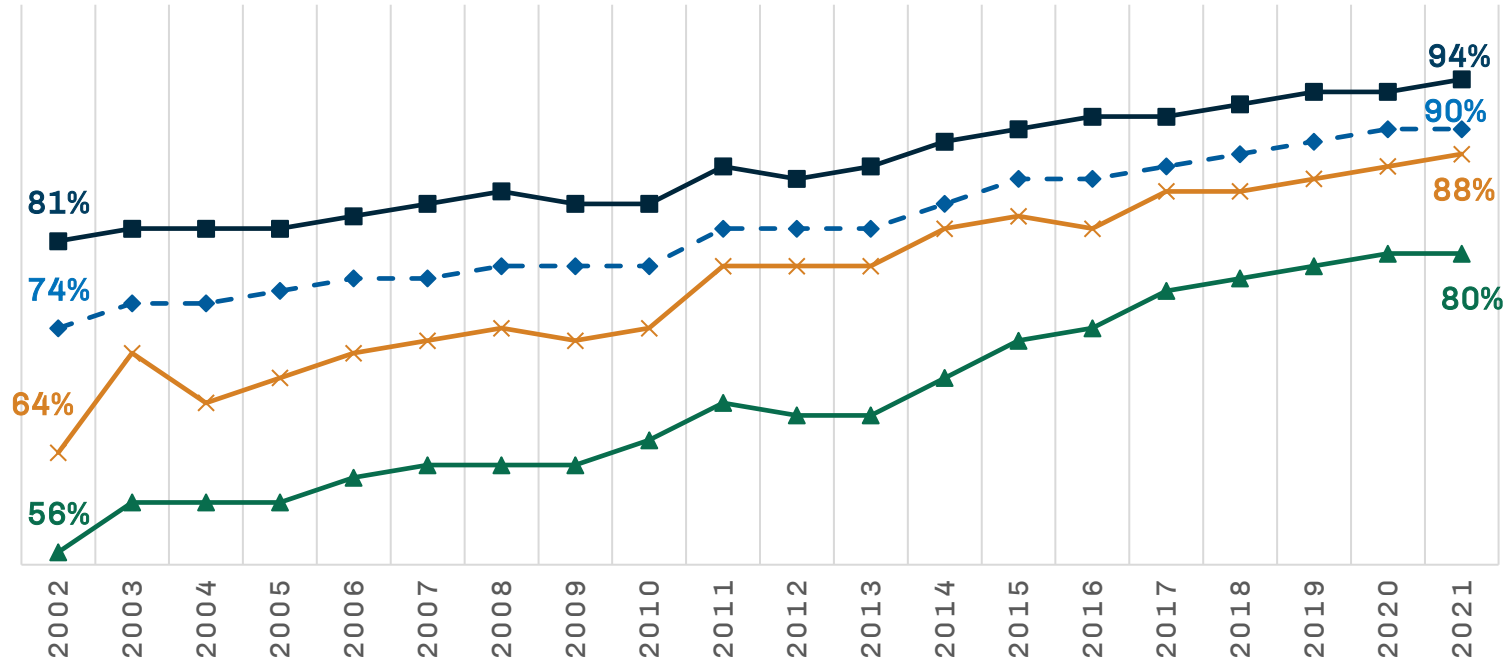
—◆— All Student-Athletes    —■— Women    —▲— Men



# Graduation Success Rate Trends of Division I Student-Athletes

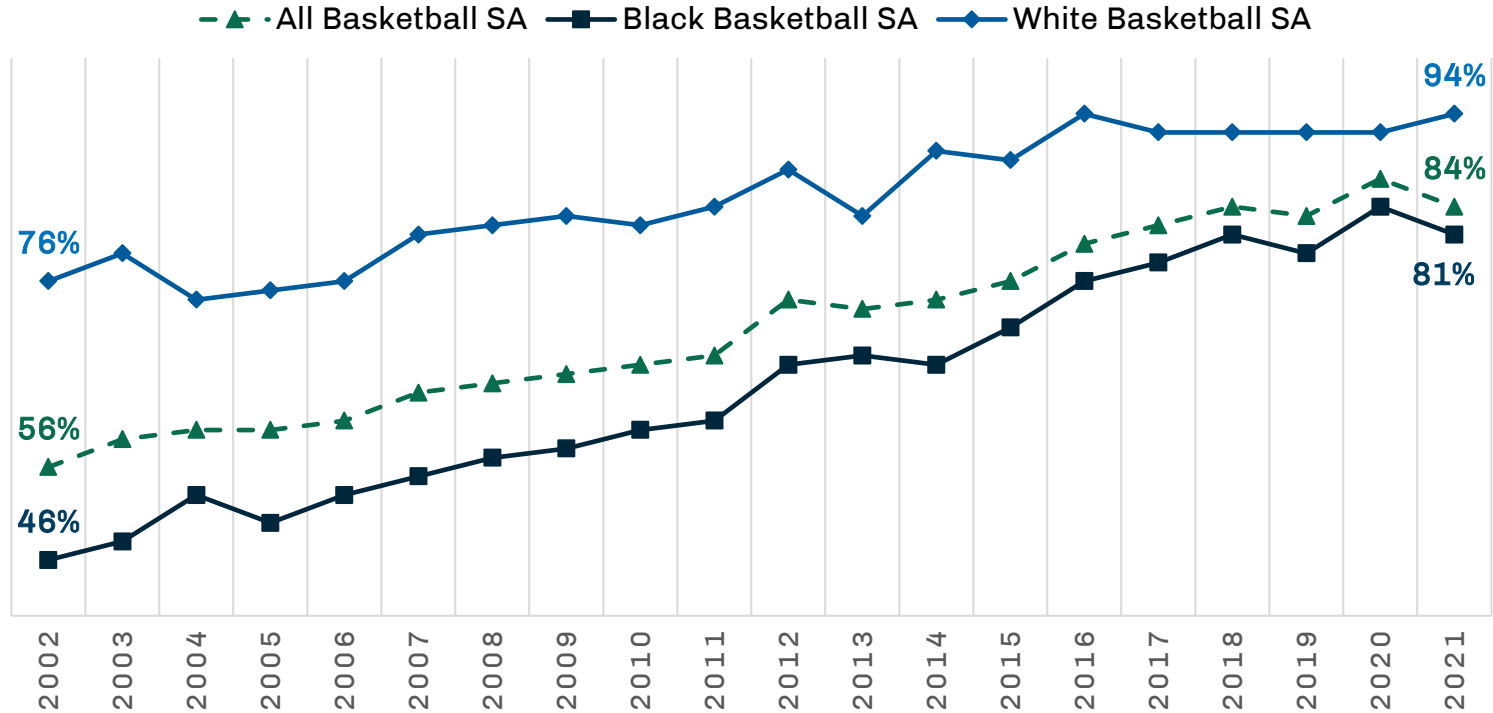
Single-Class Rates by Race/Ethnicity

—◆— Overall    —▲— Black    —×— Hispanic/Latino    —■— White



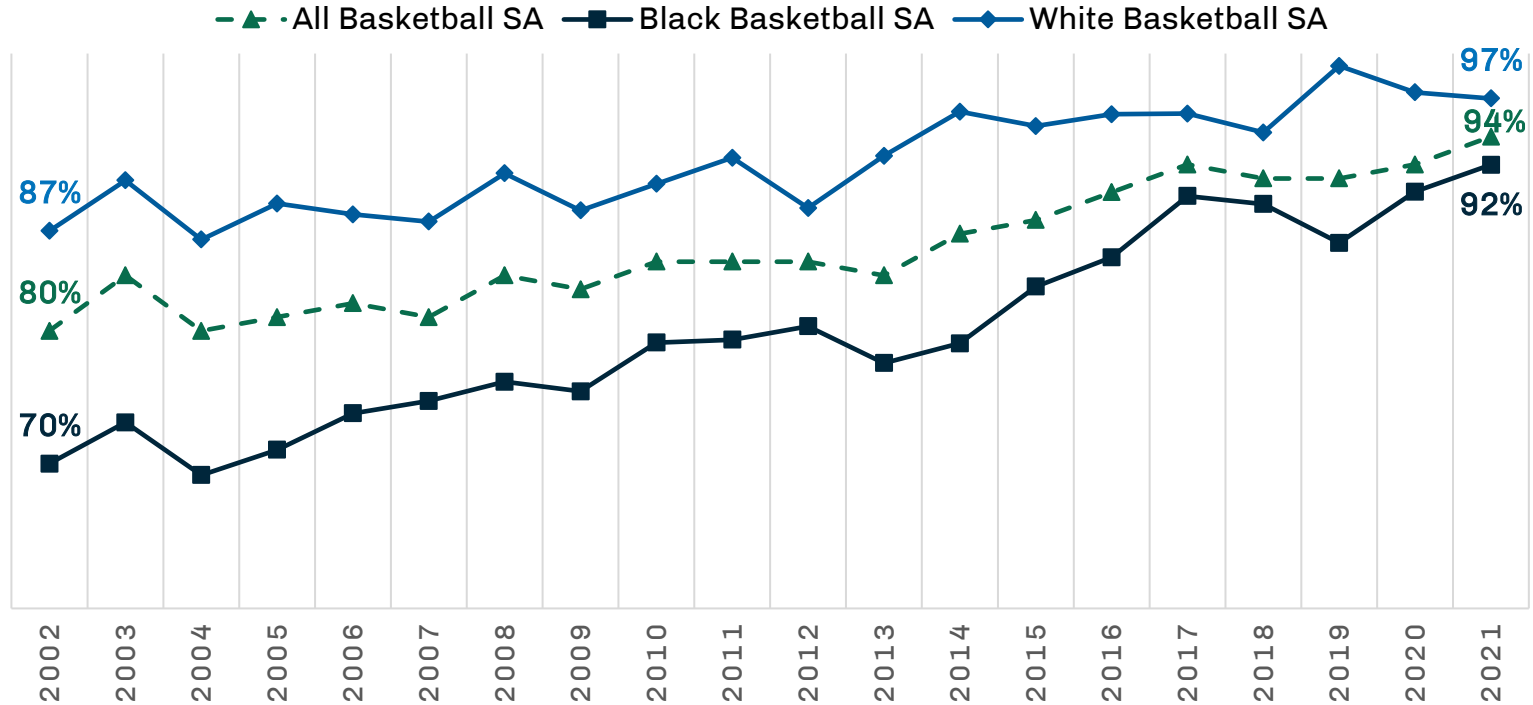
# Graduation Success Rate Trends of Division I Men's Basketball Players

Single-Class Rates by Race/Ethnicity



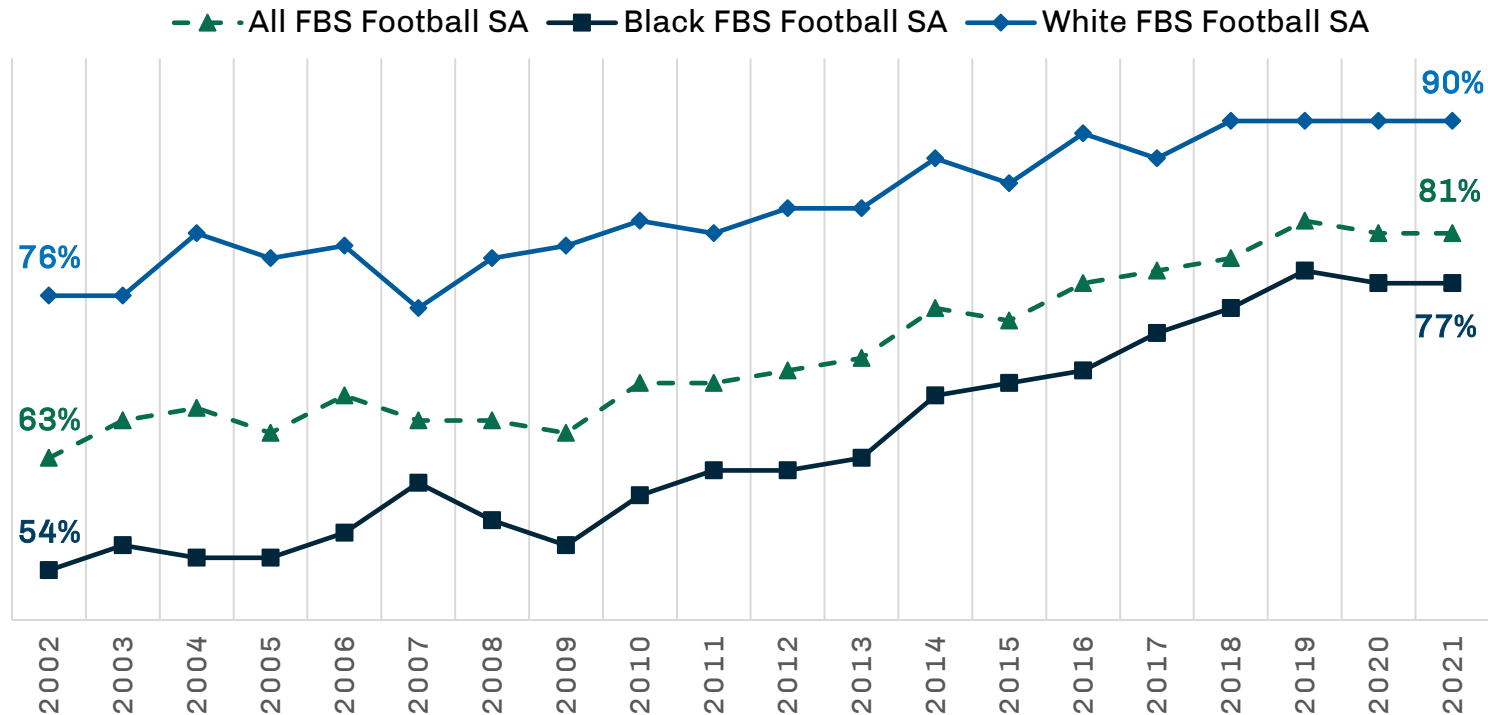
# Graduation Success Rate Trends of Division I Women's Basketball Players

Single-Class Rates by Race/Ethnicity



# Graduation Success Rate Trends of FBS Football Players

Single-Class Rates by Race/Ethnicity



# Federal Graduation Rates



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# Comparison of Federal Graduation Rates Between Division I Student-Athletes and Student Body

Four-Class Rates for 2018-21

<b>Student-Athlete Group</b>	<b>Student-Athlete Federal Rate</b>	<b>Student Body Federal Rate</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Men</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>Black Men</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino Men</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>White Men</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Black Women</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino Women</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>White Women</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>73%</b>



# Division I Federal Graduation Rate Trends

(30-Year Differences in Single-Class FGR for Select Groups of Student-Athletes)

Student-Athlete Group	1991* Federal Rate	2021 Federal Rate
Overall	52%	69%
Black	35%	60%
Hispanic/Latino	43%	68%
White	59%	73%
Black Men	33%	56%
Hispanic/Latino Men	40%	61%
White Men	55%	67%
Black Women	45%	67%
Hispanic/Latino Women	48%	75%
White Women	66%	78%

\*1991 was the first cohort for which federal graduation rate data was collected.

# Division I Federal Graduation Rate Trends in Football and Basketball

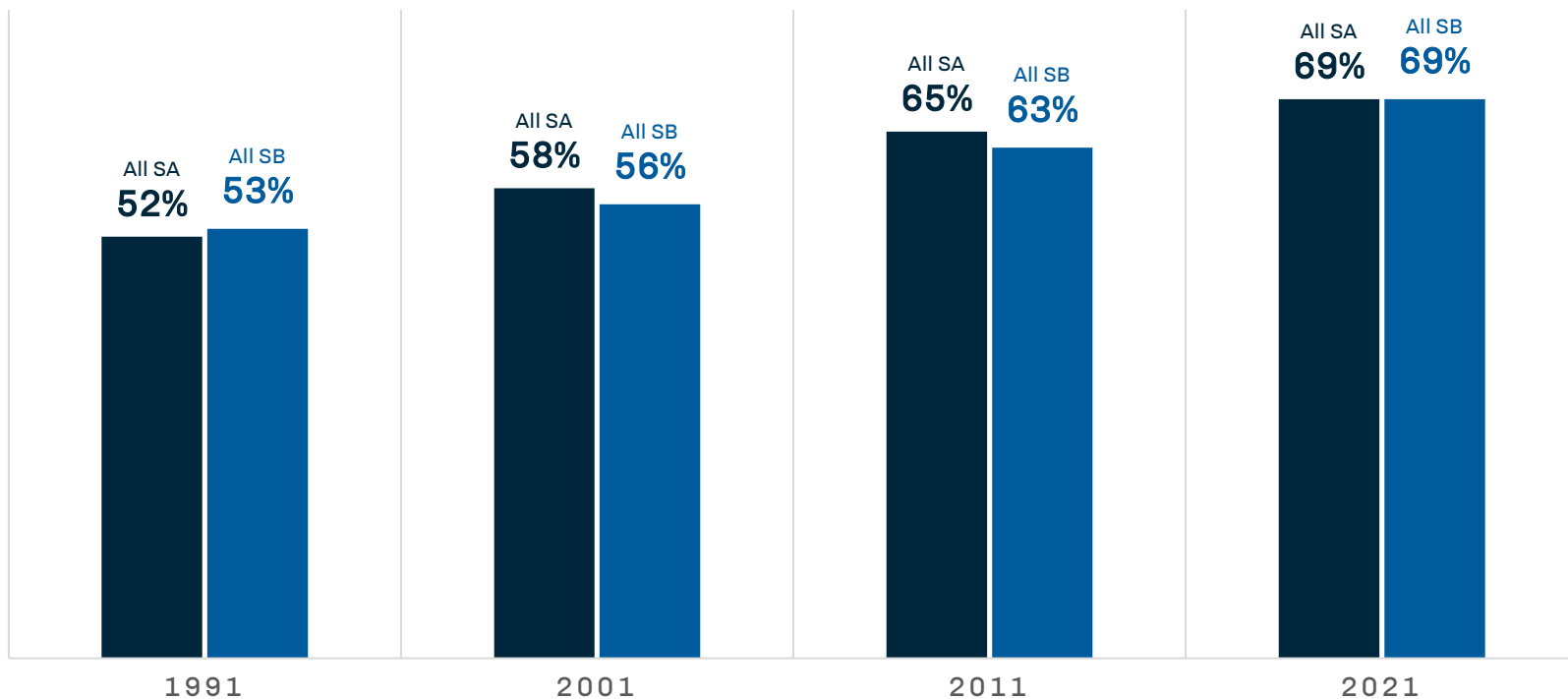
(30-Year Differences in Single-Class FGR)

Student-Athlete Group	1991* Graduation Rate	2021 Graduation Rate
Football (FBS)	47%	64%
Black Football (FBS)	35%	59%
White Football (FBS)	56%	77%
Men's Basketball	38%	49%
Black Men's Basketball	29%	46%
White Men's Basketball	53%	63%
Women's Basketball	57%	64%
Black Women's Basketball	42%	60%
White Women's Basketball	66%	70%

\*1991 was the first cohort for which federal graduation rate data was collected.

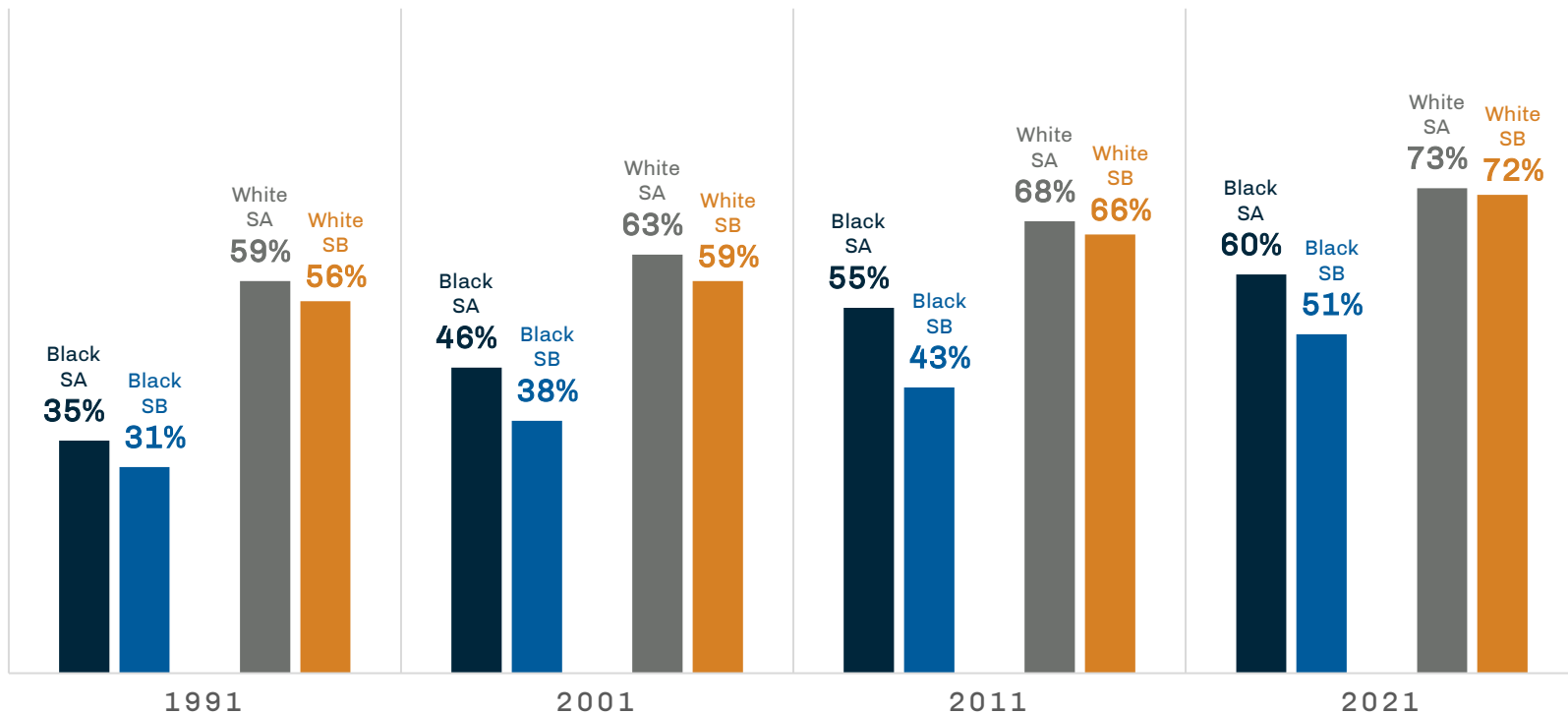
# Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division I Student-Athletes (SA) vs. Student Body (SB)

## Single-Class Rates



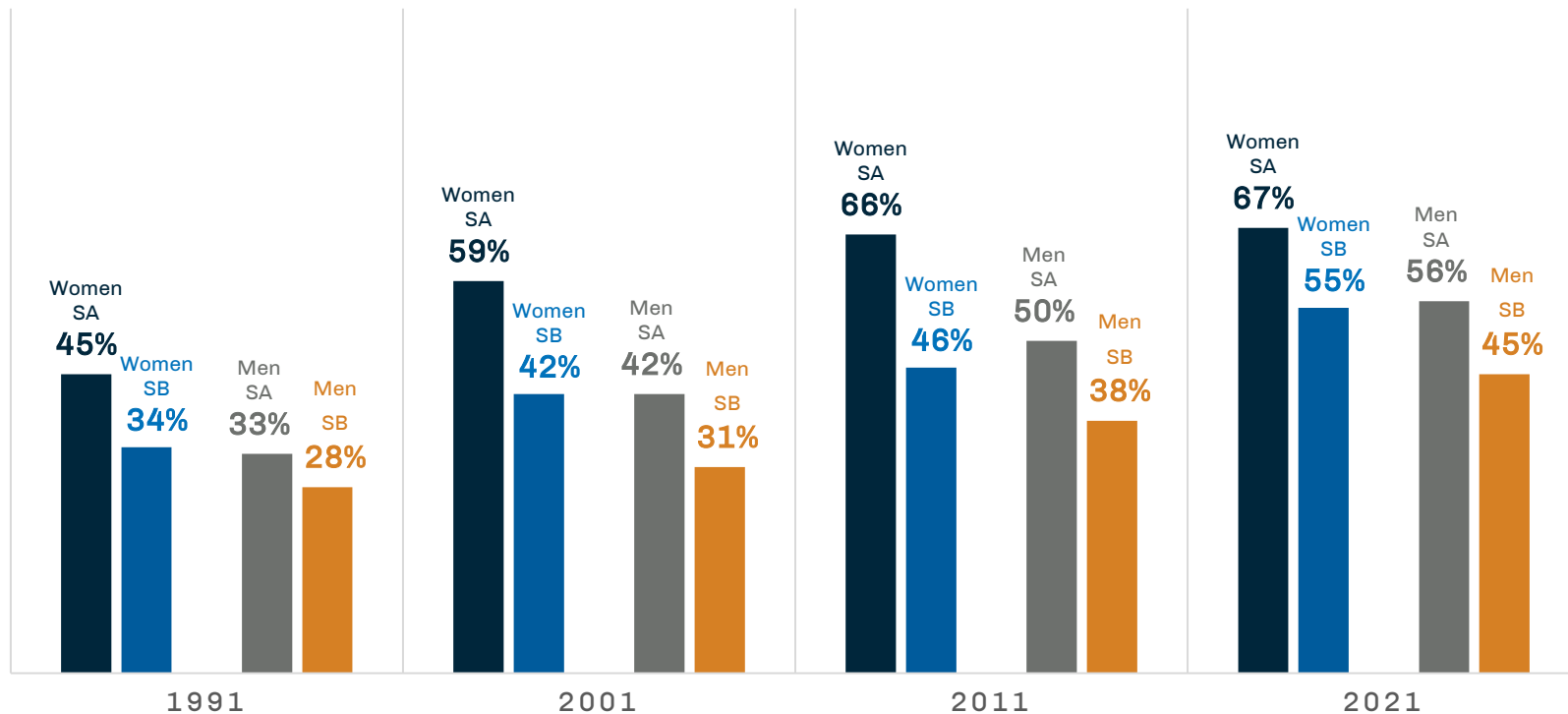
# Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division I Student-Athletes (SA) vs. Student Body (SB)

Single-Class Rates by Race/Ethnicity



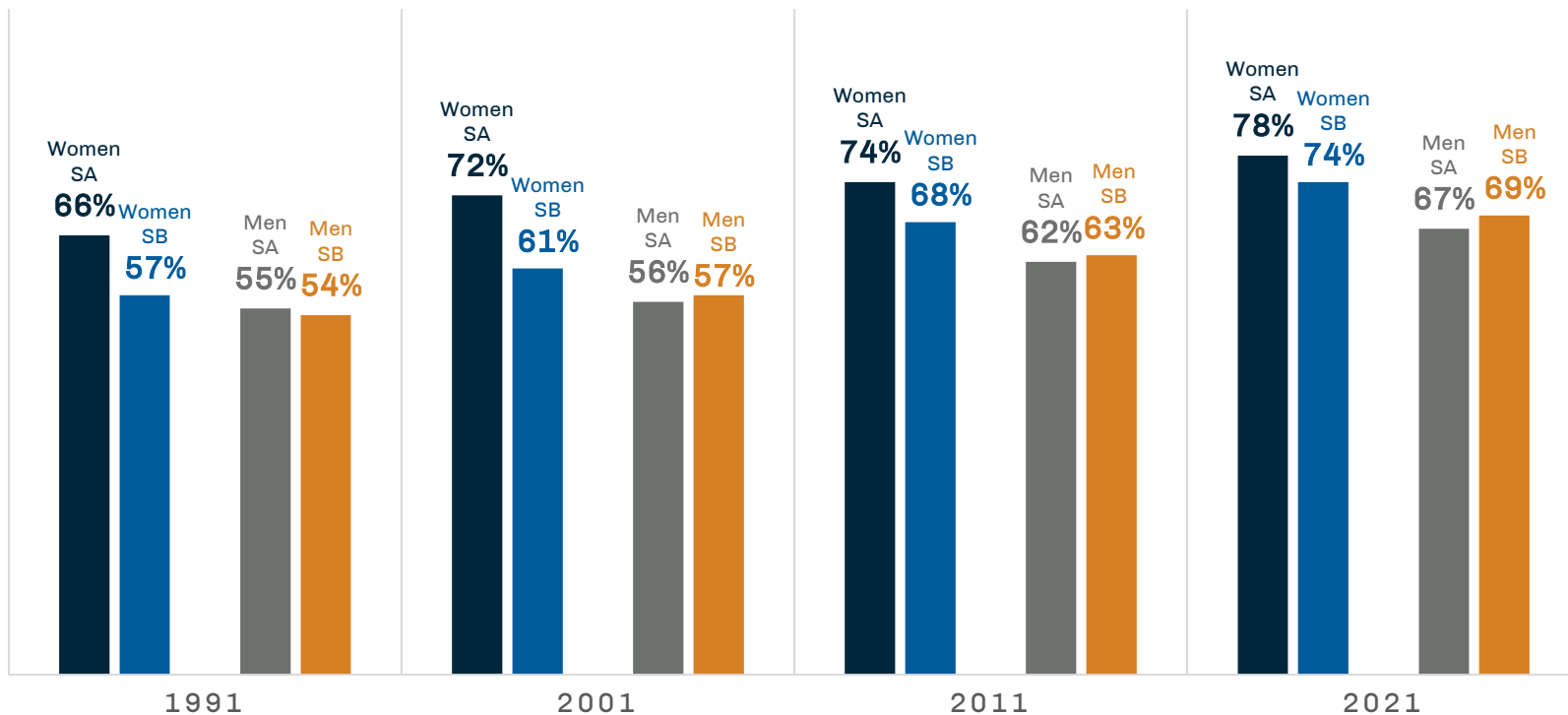
# Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division I Student-Athletes (SA) vs. Student Body (SB)

Single-Class Rates, Race/Ethnicity=Black



# Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division I Student-Athletes (SA) vs. Student Body (SB)

Single-Class Rates, Race/Ethnicity=White



# Definitions and Methods

# Methods

- Detailed information on graduation reporting requirements and graduation rate calculations, as well as links to school reports and an interactive analysis dashboard can be found on the NCAA research website (graduation rates tab) or at [ncaa.org/about/resources/research/graduation-rates](https://ncaa.org/about/resources/research/graduation-rates).
- Generally, four-class aggregations are used for reporting rates in isolation; single-class rates are used for examining trends over time.





# Federal Graduation Rate Calculation

- Federally mandated reporting of student body and student-athlete (if on athletics aid) graduation from initial college/university. Essentially measures retention at that school.
- Graduation must occur within six years of initial entry.
- Makes no accommodation for transfers into or out of a school. Transfers out are recorded as academic failures. Transfers into the school are not tracked.
- Only published rate that allows a direct comparison between student-athletes and the general student body.



# Graduation Success Rate Calculation

- Graduation metric developed by NCAA presidents.
- Calculation mandated for student-athletes only. Should not be compared to the federal rate.
- Graduation must occur within six years of initial entry.
- More inclusive than the federal rate because it includes transfers into the school, midyear enrollees and nonscholarship students at schools that do not offer athletics aid.
- Student-athletes who leave school while academically eligible to compete are removed from the calculation (assumed transfers passed on to another school's cohort). Student-athletes who leave school while ineligible to compete are coded as nongraduates (even though many are known to transfer). Both assumptions are imperfect but lead to a graduation rate that better approximates a true student-centered graduation rate (student earns a degree from some college within six years of entering higher education).



# Comparison of Graduation Success Rate and Federal Rate Cohorts

(2018-21 Reporting Cohorts)

	Federal Rate	GSR
Enrolled (Under Federal Definition)	94,470	94,470
Enrolled as Freshman in January	0	3,632
Two-Year College Transfers	0	10,098
Four-Year College Transfers	0	8,320
Nonscholarship Athletes (Only at Schools Not Offering Aid)	0	10,198
<b>Total Enrolled</b>	<b>94,470</b>	<b>126,718 (+34%)</b>
Allowable Exclusions (Death, Military, Church Mission, etc.)	286	370
Left Eligible	0	25,628
Participants on Teams No Longer Sponsored by School	0	2,188
<b>Total Denominator</b>	<b>94,184</b>	<b>98,532 (+5%)</b>



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