



Trends in NCAA Division II Graduation Rates

December 2023



RESEARCH

Summary

Notes on the Graduation Rates Presented

- All graduation rates presented here are based on completion within six years of entry into college (see federal Student-Right-To-Know Act, 1990).
- The Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) is required by law to be calculated and published for all full-time college students and separately for student-athletes who receive athletically-related aid.
- The federal calculation has long been considered an outdated graduation measure in part due to its failure to account for transfer (transfers-out are counted as non-graduates; transfers-in are not included in the calculation). FGR is best characterized as the percentage of students entering directly from high school who graduate from their initial college.
- FGR, with these limitations, is the only rate for which we can compare students with student-athletes.



Notes on the Graduation Rates Presented

- The Academic Success Rate (ASR) is a calculation required by the NCAA for all Division II student-athletes. This rate was designed to approximate a true student-centered measure of graduation (the student graduated from any four-year college within the six-year window) by essentially passing likely transfers from one college's cohort to another's cohort. ASR calculations also deal better with circumstances such as mid-year college entry (such entrants are not included in the FGR). Unlike the Division I GSR calculation, the DII ASR includes many non-scholarship athletes.
- For both FGR and ASR, four-cohort aggregations are used here for group comparisons or when describing rates in isolation. Single-cohort rates are more appropriate for examining change over time.
- It is typically not appropriate to compare an ASR with an FGR.



2023 Four-Class Division II Graduation Rates

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2013-2016 entering cohorts)

	Student-Athletes		Student Body
	ASR	Federal Rate	Federal Rate
DII Overall	76% +0	60% +0	53% +1
DII Men	69% +0	52% -1	48% +1
DII Women	88% +0	69% +0	57% +1

Notes: ASR = Academic Success Rate. The four-cohort rates reported above are based on the last four single-year cohorts with six-year outcomes available (those first reported in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023). Numbers in blue indicate percentage point differences in four-cohort rates from those reported in 2022.

Summary

- The students in the most-recently added cohort (2016 entry) would typically have been in the second semester of their 4th academic year when the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020. Most other members of the latest four-cohort reporting group (e.g., 2013-2015 entry) would have been in years 5 or greater of their graduation window at the beginning of the pandemic. Full pandemic-related impacts on graduation rates will not be completely known for several years.
- Overall Division II student-athlete graduation rates (Academic Success Rate and federal rate) and many subgroup rates are at or near their highest-ever levels.
- Using the federal graduation rate to examine student-athlete vs. student body graduation from initial school in Division II, we see higher rates for student-athletes within every demographic subgroup studied.



Summary

- Notable single-cohort student-athlete increases in Academic Success Rate over the 17 years of calculating this rate in Division II:
 - Overall (69% to 77%).
 - Black men (42% to 51%).
 - Black women (61% to 76%).
 - Hispanic/Latinx men (48% to 66%).
 - Hispanic/Latinx women (63% to 80%).
- Increase in Academic Success Rate observed for two-year (57% to 73%) and four-year transfer student-athletes (66% to 77%) over the past 10 years.



Four-Cohort Academic Success Rates (ASR)

2023 Four-Cohort Division II Academic Success Rates

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2013-2016 entering cohorts)

Student-Athlete Group	ASR
Overall	76%
Black	57%
Hispanic/Latino	71%
White	84%
Black Men	51%
Hispanic/Latino Men	66%
White Men	77%
Black Women	76%
Hispanic/Latino Women	80%
White Women	92%

2023 Four-Cohort ASR for Division II Women's Sports

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2013-2016 entering cohorts)

SPORT	ASR
Basketball	84%
Bowling	82%
Cross Country/Track	86%
Field Hockey	95%
Golf	91%
Ice Hockey	95%
Lacrosse	92%
Rowing	88%
Soccer	89%
Softball	89%
Swimming	92%
Tennis	92%
Volleyball	88%
Water Polo	91%

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

2023 Four-Cohort ASR for Division II Men's Sports

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2013-2016 entering cohorts)

SPORT	ASR
Baseball	78%
Basketball	67%
Cross Country/Track	72%
Football	56%
Golf	83%
Ice Hockey	89%
Lacrosse	76%
Soccer	77%
Swimming	79%
Tennis	85%
Volleyball	75%
Wrestling	60%

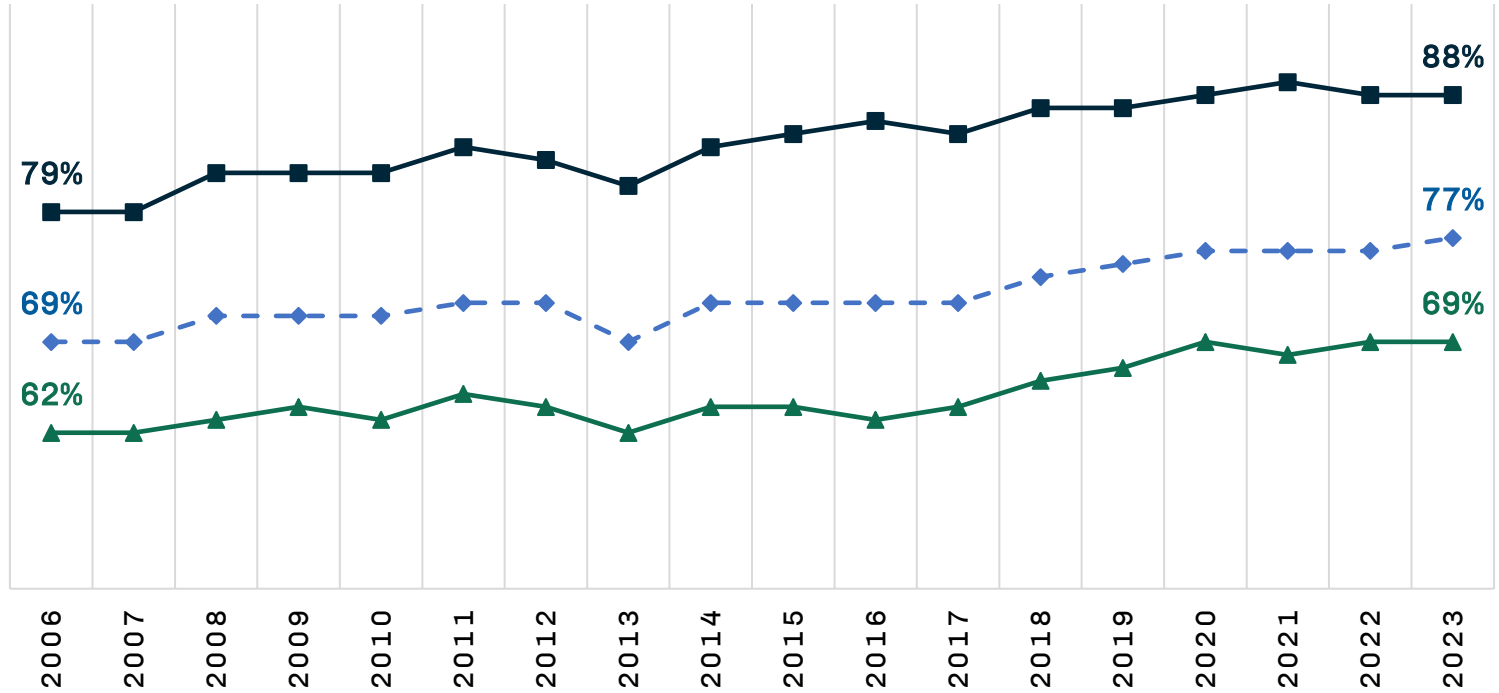
Note: Only those sports with more than 150 Division II graduates are shown.

Trends in Single-Cohort Academic Success Rates (ASR)

Academic Success Rate (ASR) Trends of Division II Student-Athletes

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates)

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

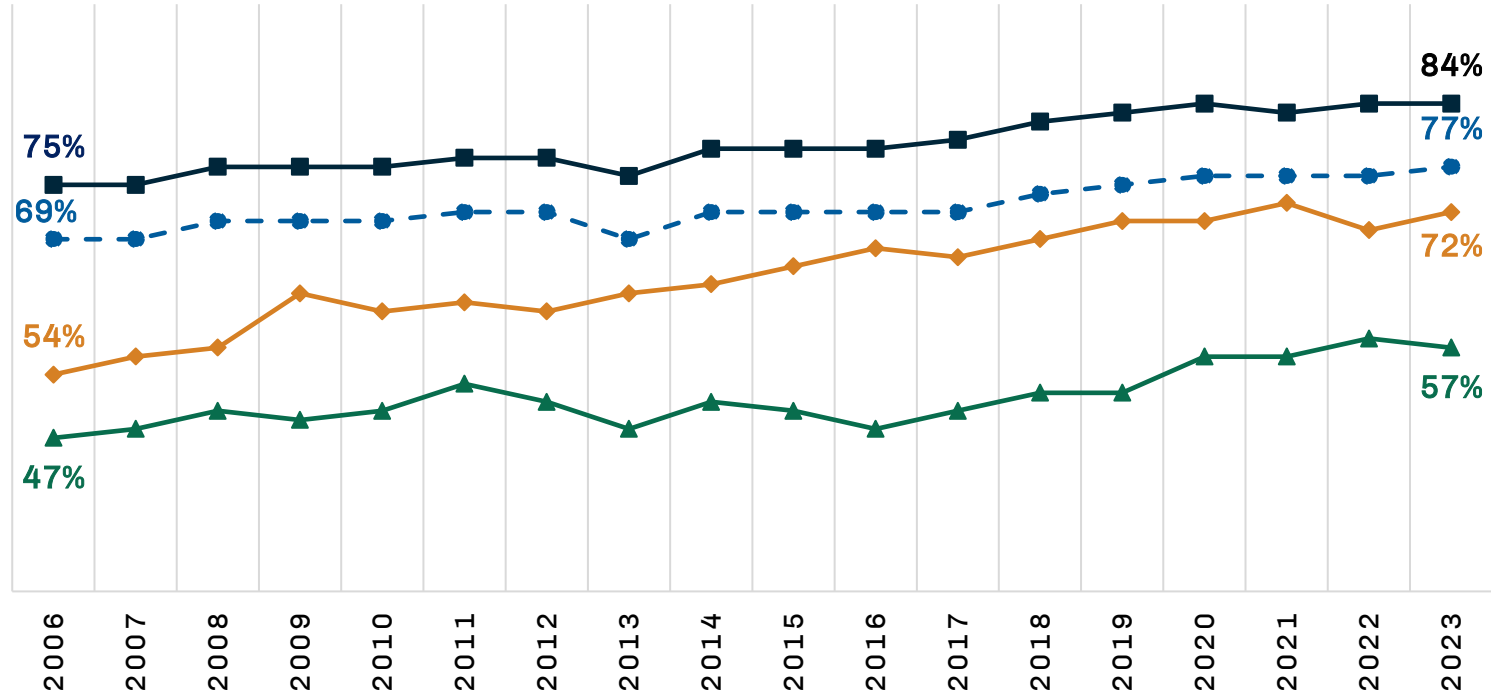


* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2022 represents 2015-16 entering cohort, etc.

Academic Success Rate (ASR) Trends of Division II Student-Athletes

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity)

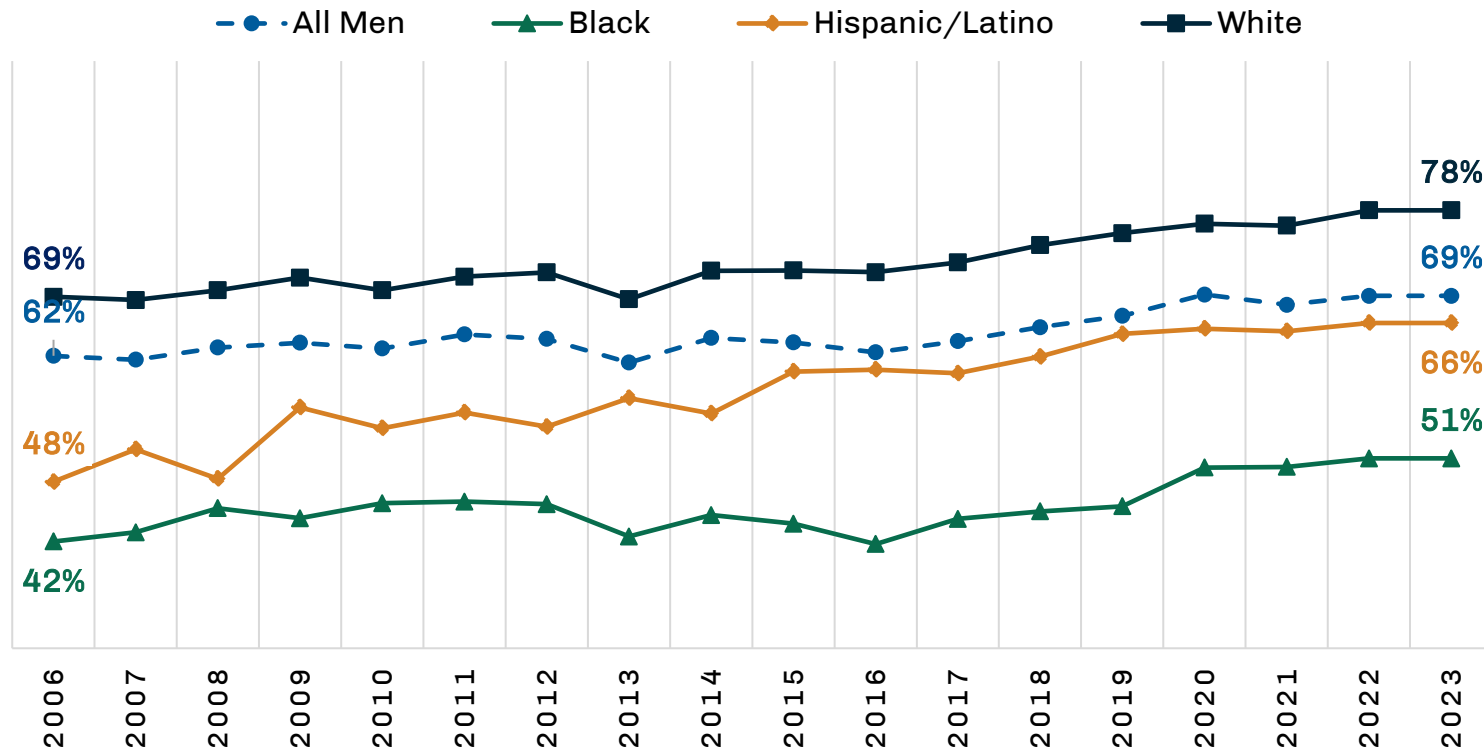
—●— All Student-Athletes —▲— Black —◆— Hispanic/Latino —■— White



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2022 represents 2015-16 entering cohort, etc.

Academic Success Rate (ASR) Trends of Division II Student-Athletes

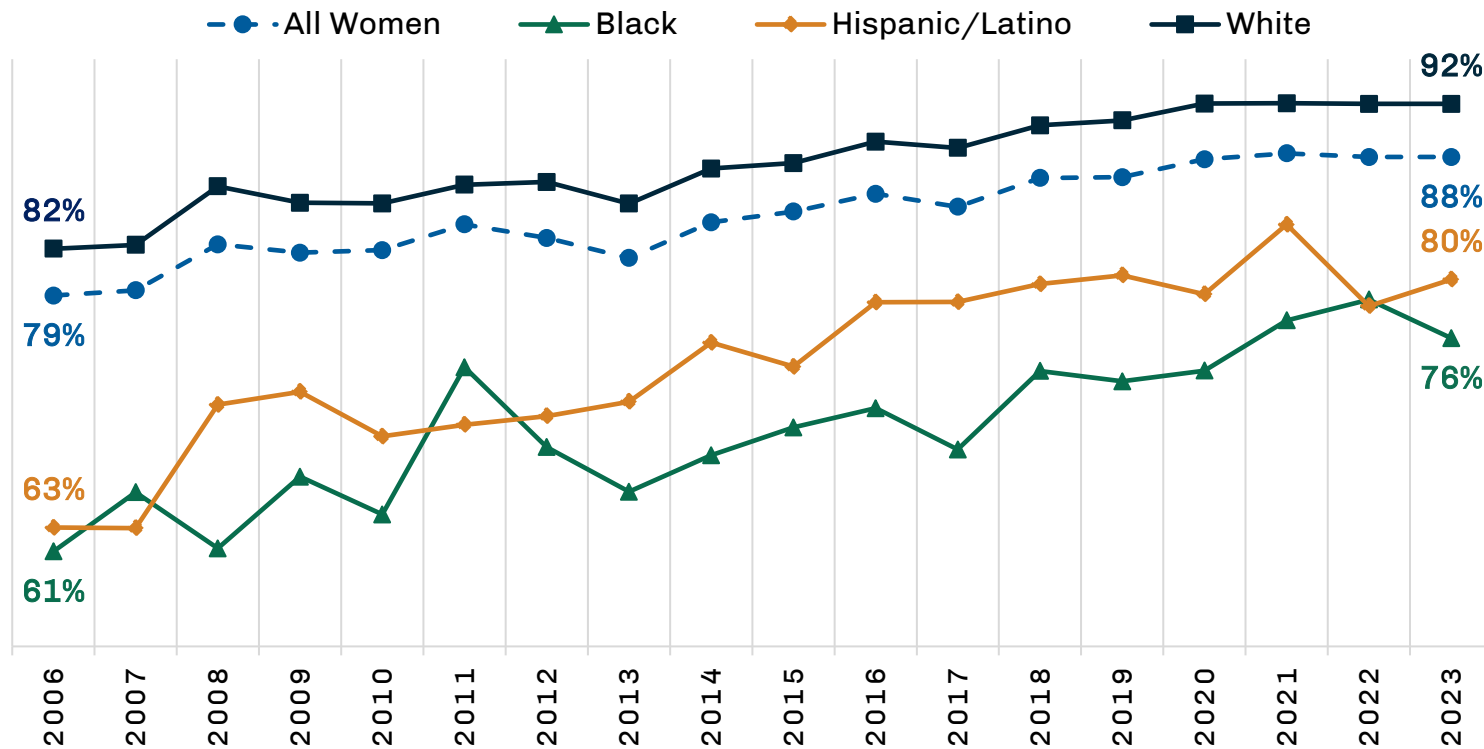
(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates for men by race/ethnicity)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2022 represents 2015-16 entering cohort, etc.

Academic Success Rate (ASR) Trends of Division II Student-Athletes

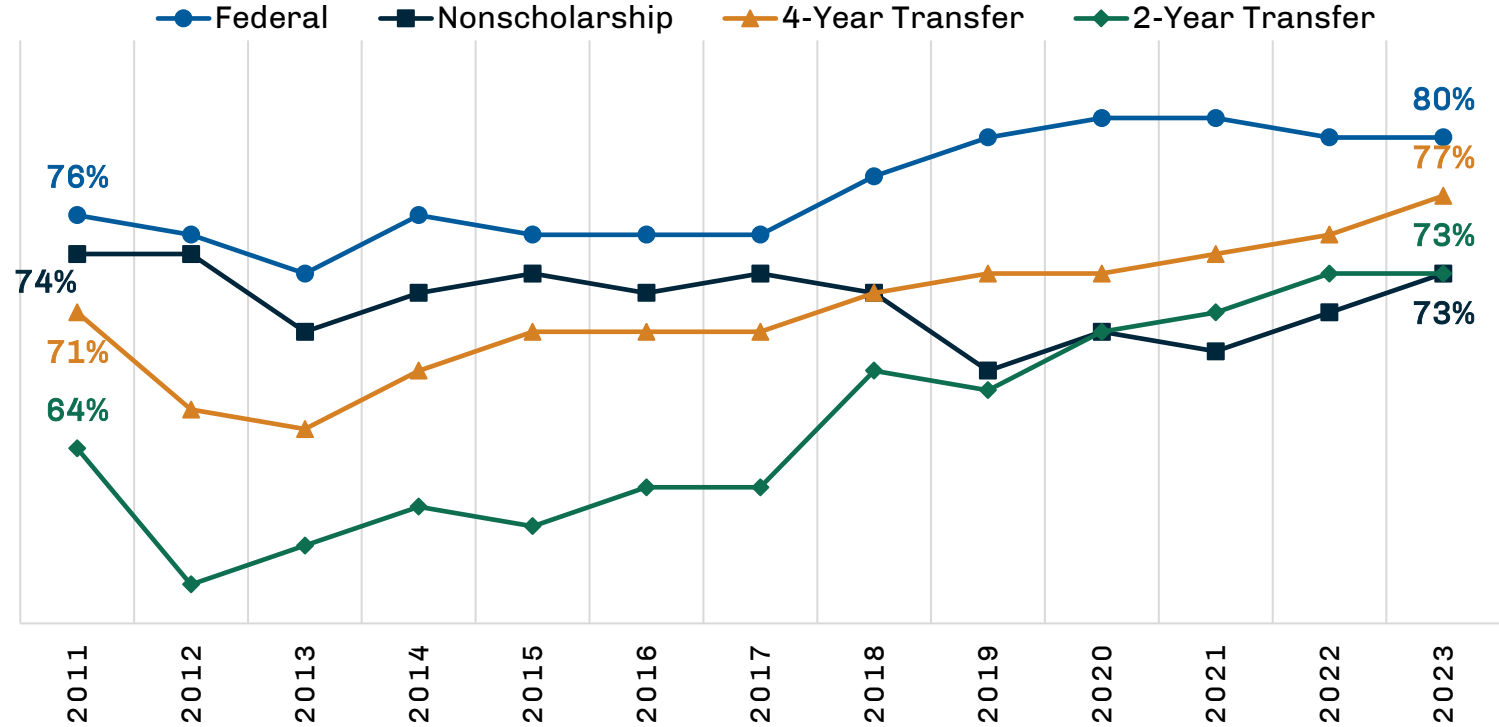
(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates for women by race/ethnicity)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2022 represents 2015-16 entering cohort, etc.

Academic Success Rate (ASR) Trends of Division II Student-Athletes

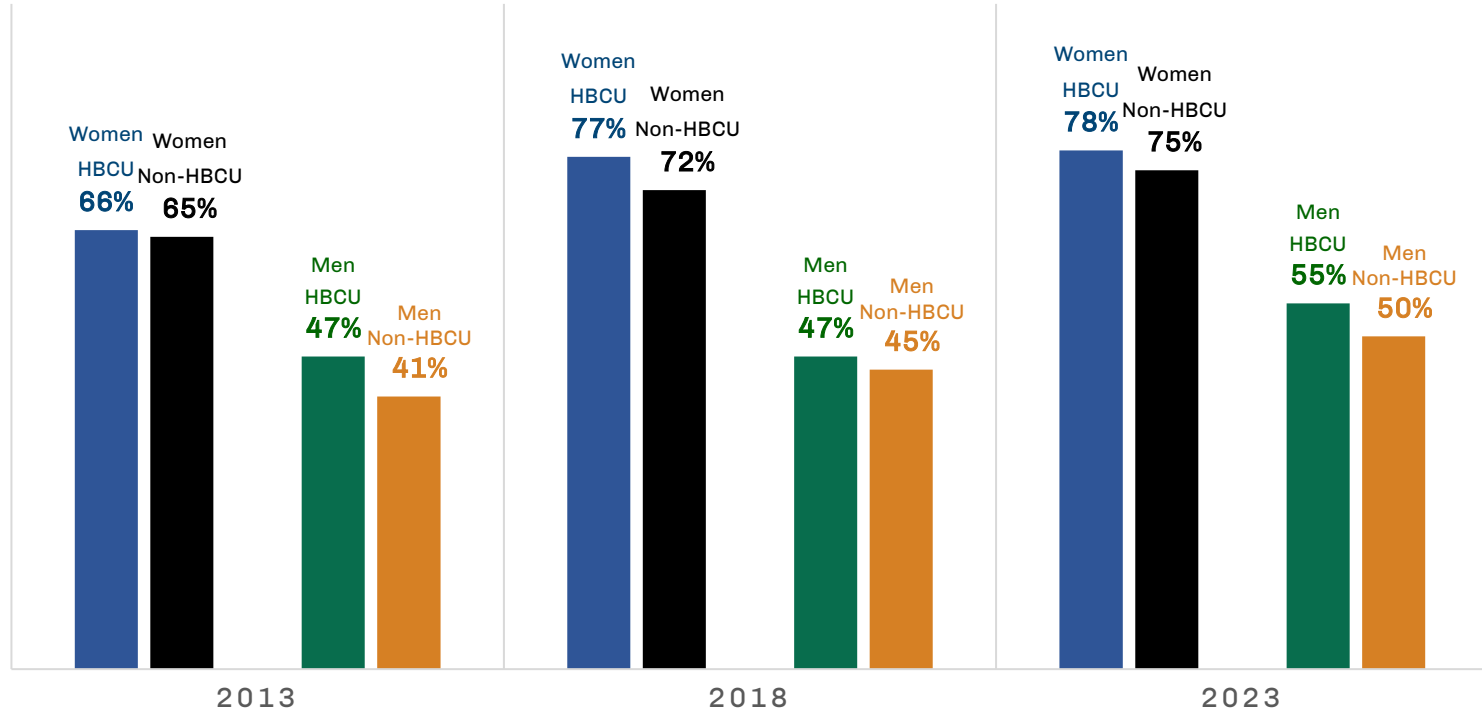
(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates by student type)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2022 represents 2015-16 entering cohort, etc.

Academic Success Rate (ASR) Trends of Black Division II Student-Athletes

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates by gender and HBCU status)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2018 represents 2011-12 entering cohort, etc.
HBCU = Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Federal Graduation Rates

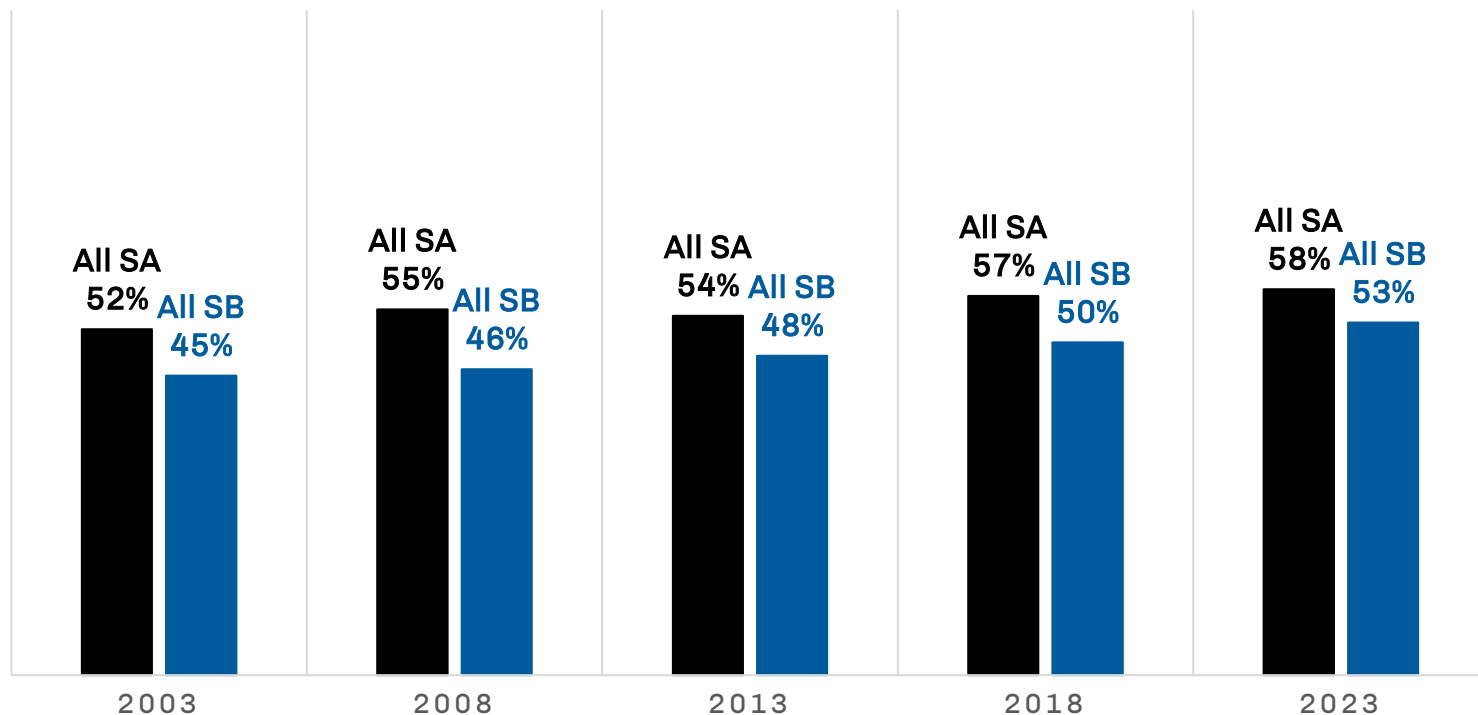
2023 Comparison of Four-Cohort Federal Graduation Rates (FGR) of Division II Scholarship Student-Athletes with Student Body

(Aggregate six-year FGR for 2013-2016 entering cohorts)

Student-Athlete Group	Student-Athlete Federal Rate	Student Body Federal Rate
Overall	60%	53%
Men	52%	48%
Women	69%	57%
Black	44%	37%
Hispanic/Latino	55%	49%
White	65%	58%
Black Men	38%	31%
Hispanic/Latino Men	48%	43%
White Men	59%	53%
Black Women	58%	41%
Hispanic/Latino Women	62%	54%
White Women	72%	61%

Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division II Scholarship Student-Athletes vs. Student Body

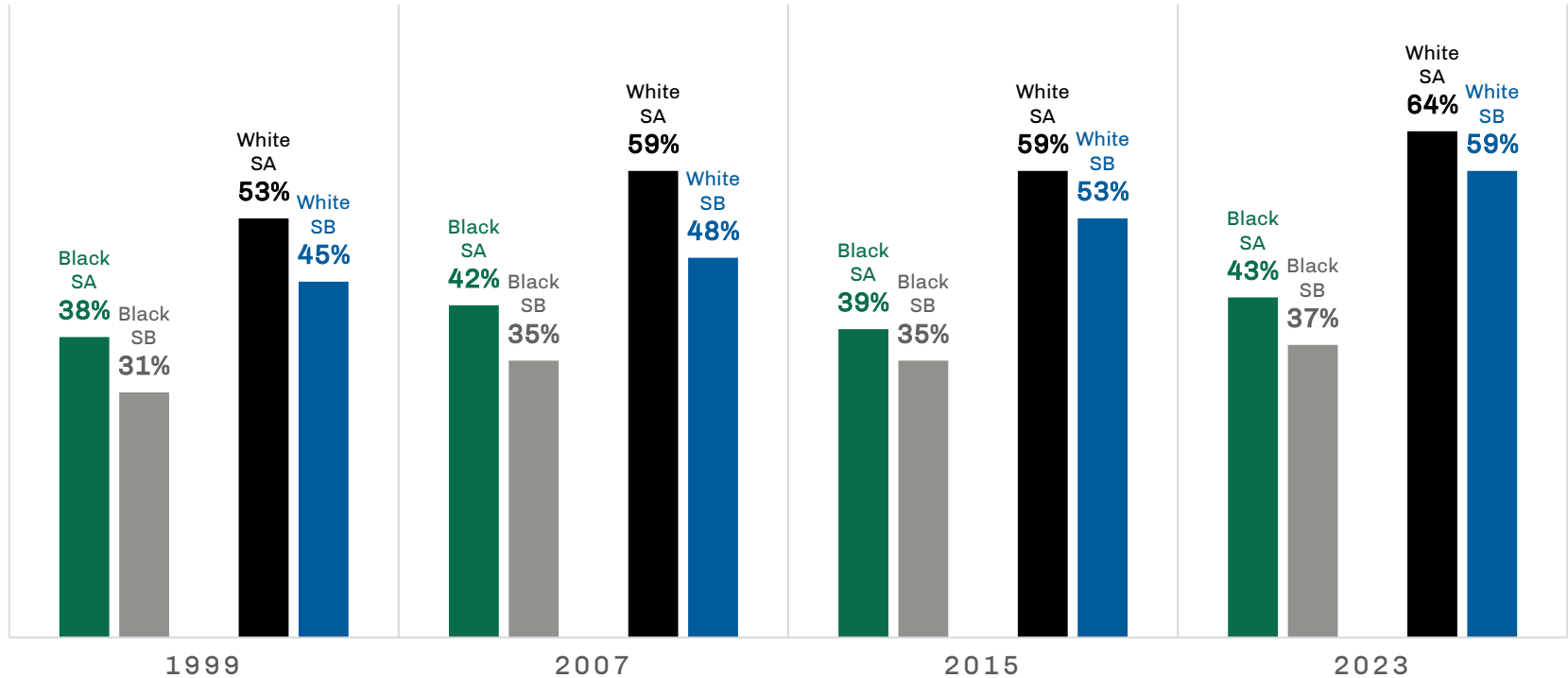
(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort, etc.

Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division II Scholarship Student-Athletes vs. Student Body

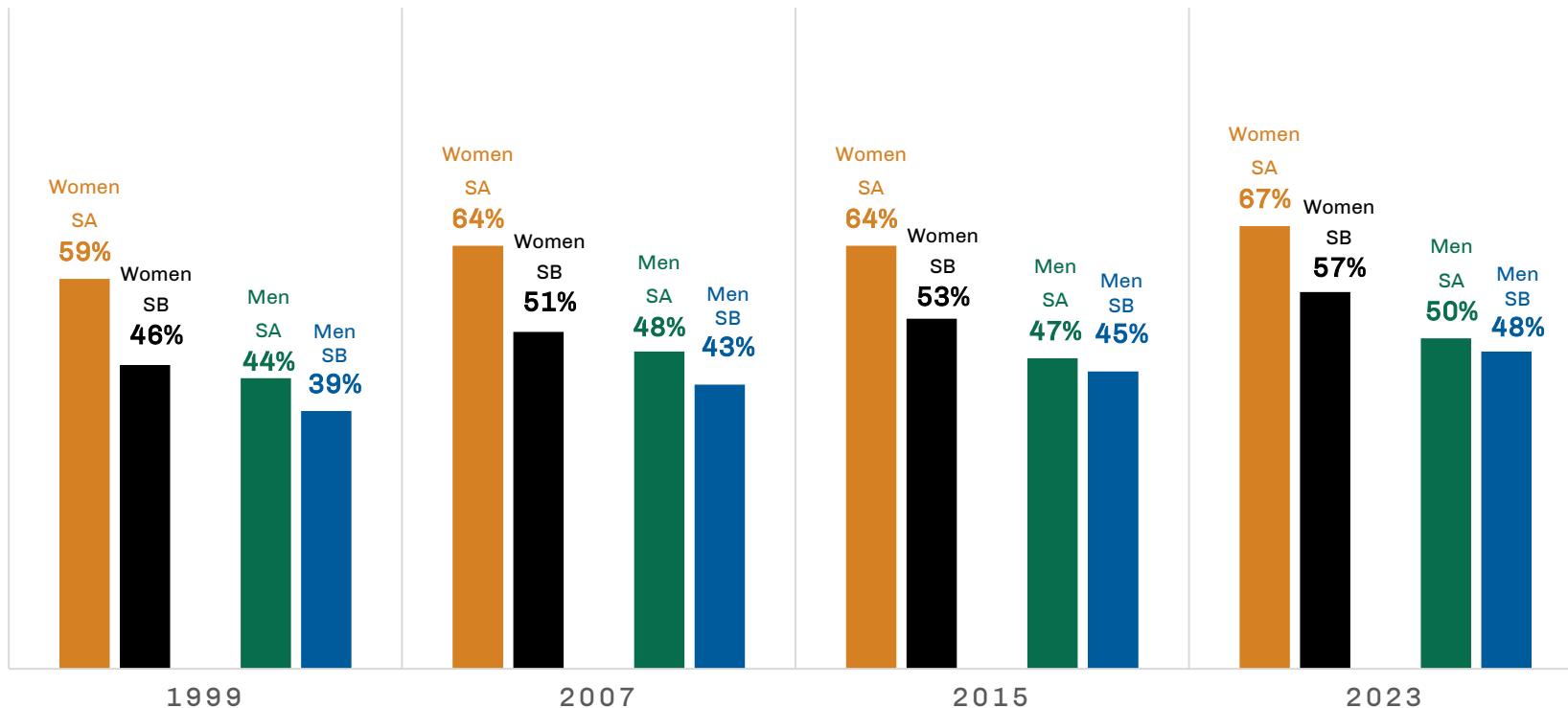
(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2015 represents 2008-09 entering cohort, etc.

Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division II Scholarship Student-Athletes vs. Student Body

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates)



* 2023 reporting year represents 2016-17 entering cohort; 2015 represents 2008-09 entering cohort, etc.

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.
- Generally, four-class aggregations are used for reporting rates in isolation; single-class rates are used for examining trends over time.
- Schools can submit student-athlete outcome adjustments for the past four years; all updates are reflected in this report and on the interactive analysis dashboard.



Federal Graduation Rate Calculation

- The federal graduation rate is federally mandated reporting of student body and student-athlete (if on athletics aid) graduation from an initial school. The rate essentially measures retention at that school.
- Graduation must occur within six years of initial entry.
- The federal rate makes no accommodation for transfers into or out of a school.
 - Incoming transfers into the school are not tracked.
 - Outgoing transfers are recorded as academic failures.
- The federal rate is the only published rate that allows for a direct comparison between student-athletes and the general student body.



Academic Success Rate Calculation

- The ASR is a graduation metric developed by NCAA presidents and chancellors.
- The calculation is mandated for student-athletes only and should not be compared with the federal rate.
- Graduation must occur within six years of initial entry.
- The ASR is more inclusive than the federal rate because it includes transfers into the school, midyear enrollees and nonscholarship student-athletes. Two assumptions are made:
 1. Student-athletes who leave school while academically eligible to compete are removed from the calculation (assumed transfers passed on to another school's cohort).
 2. 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 an ASR that better approximates a true student-centered graduation rate (student earns a degree within six years of entering higher education).



Rate Calculations

Federal

- First-time fall freshmen on athletics aid.

$$\frac{\text{Graduates}}{\text{Cohort} - \text{Exclusions}^*}$$

ASR

- First-time fall freshmen on athletics aid.
- *Transfers.*
- *Midyear enrollees.*
- *Nonscholarship student-athletes.*

$$\frac{\text{Graduates}}{\text{Cohort} - \text{Exclusions}^* - \text{Left Eligible}}$$

* Exclusions include death, permanent disability, church mission, and military or foreign service.
Note: Both rates use a six-year window from initial collegiate enrollment.



Comparison of Academic Success Rates and Federal Rate Cohorts

(2020-23 Reporting Cohorts)

	Federal Rate	ASR
Enrolled (Under Federal Definition)	76,695	76,695
Enrolled as Freshmen in January	0	1,623
Two-Year College Transfers	0	17,542
Four-Year College Transfers	0	16,095
Nonscholarship Athletes	0	31,563
Total Enrolled	76,695	143,518 (+87%)
Allowable Exclusions (Death, Military, Church Mission, etc.)	116	307
Left Eligible	0	34,710
Participants on Teams No Longer Sponsored by School	0	3,374
Total Denominator	76,579	105,127 (+37%)





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