



Trends in NCAA Division II Graduation Rates

November 2025



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Summary



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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 athletics 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- The federal calculation has long been considered an outdated graduation measure in part due to its failure to account for transfer (transfers-out are counted as nongraduates; transfers-in are not included in the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 major limitations, is the only rate for which we can currently compare students with student-athletes at Division II schools.

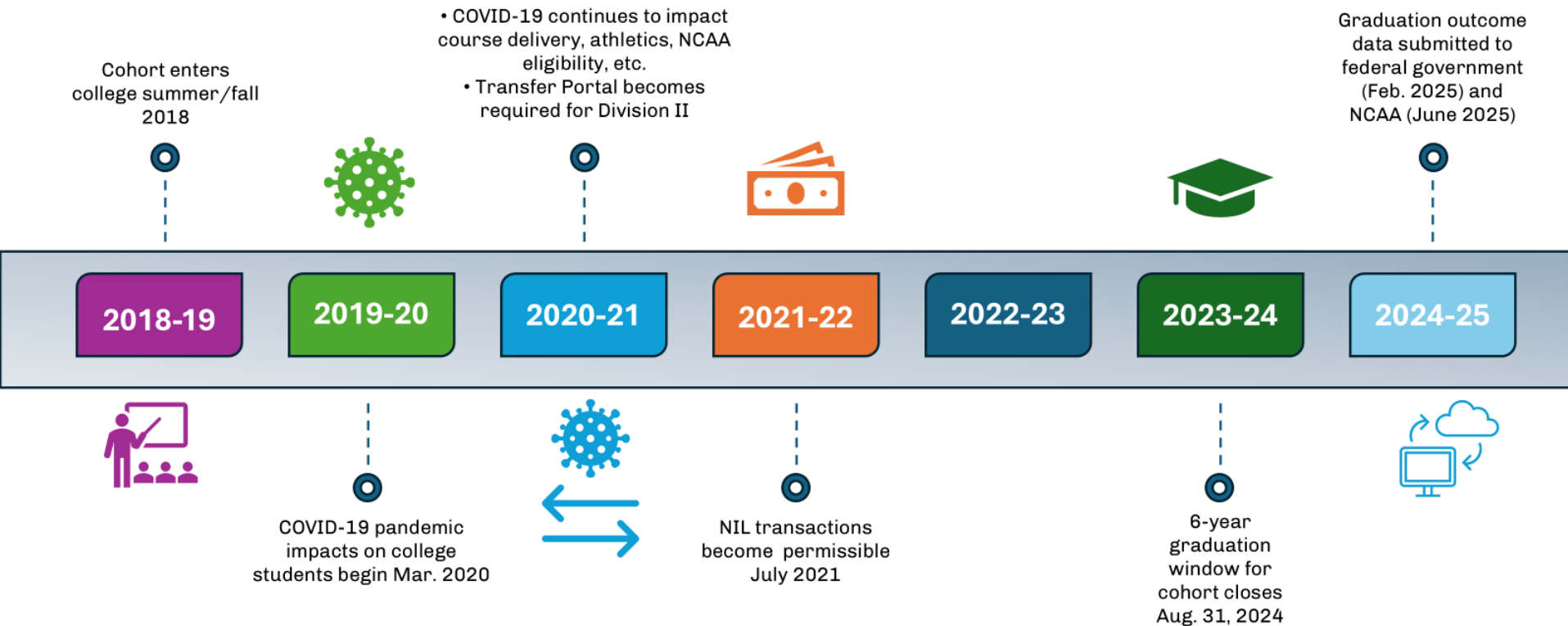


Notes on the Graduation Rates Presented

- 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 nonscholarship 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.



Division II Academic Success Rates Timeline for the Most Recent Cohort to Enter the Calculation (November 2025 Report)



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2025 Four-Cohort Division II Graduation Rates

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2015-2018 entering cohorts)

	Student-Athletes		Student Body
	ASR	Federal Rate	Federal Rate
DII Overall	77% +0	58% -1	53% +0
DII Men	69% +0	50% -1	48% +0
DII Women	88% +0	67% -1	57% +0

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 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025). Numbers in blue indicate percentage point differences in four-cohort rates from those reported in 2024.



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Summary

- The students in the most-recently added cohort (2018 entry) would typically have been in the second semester of their sophomore year when the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020. See Slide 5 for a historical timeline relative to when this cohort was in college.
- 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 19 years of calculating this rate in Division II:
 - Overall (69% to 76%).
 - Black men (42% to 51%).
 - Black women (61% to 74%).
 - Hispanic/Latinx men (48% to 67%).
 - Hispanic/Latinx women (63% to 80%).
- Increase in Academic Success Rate observed for two-year (60% to 73%) and four-year transfer student-athletes (70% to 77%) over the past 10 years.



Four-Cohort Academic Success Rates (ASR)



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2025 Four-Cohort Division II Academic Success Rates

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2015-2018 entering cohorts)

Student-Athlete Group	ASR
Overall	77% +0
Black	57% +0
Hispanic/Latinx	72% +0
White	84% +0
Black Men	51% +0
Hispanic/Latinx Men	66% +0
White Men	78% +0
Black Women	75% -1
Hispanic/Latinx Women	80% -1
White Women	92% +0



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2025 Four-Cohort ASR for Division II Men's Sports

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2015-2018 entering cohorts)

SPORT	ASR	
Baseball	80%	+1
Basketball	67%	+0
Cross Country/Track	72%	+0
Football	56%	+0
Golf	83%	+0
Ice Hockey	90%	+4
Lacrosse	77%	+2
Soccer	77%	+0
Swimming	82%	+2
Tennis	86%	-1
Volleyball	74%	-2
Wrestling	65%	+3

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



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2025 Four-Cohort ASR for Division II Women's Sports

(Aggregate six-year graduation rates for 2015-2018 entering cohorts)

SPORT	ASR	
Basketball	84%	+0
Bowling	80%	-1
Cross Country/Track	84%	-1
Field Hockey	92%	-1
Golf	91%	-1
Ice Hockey	95%	+2
Lacrosse	91%	-1
Rowing	87%	+1
Soccer	89%	+0
Softball	89%	+0
Swimming	92%	+0
Tennis	92%	+0
Volleyball	88%	+0

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



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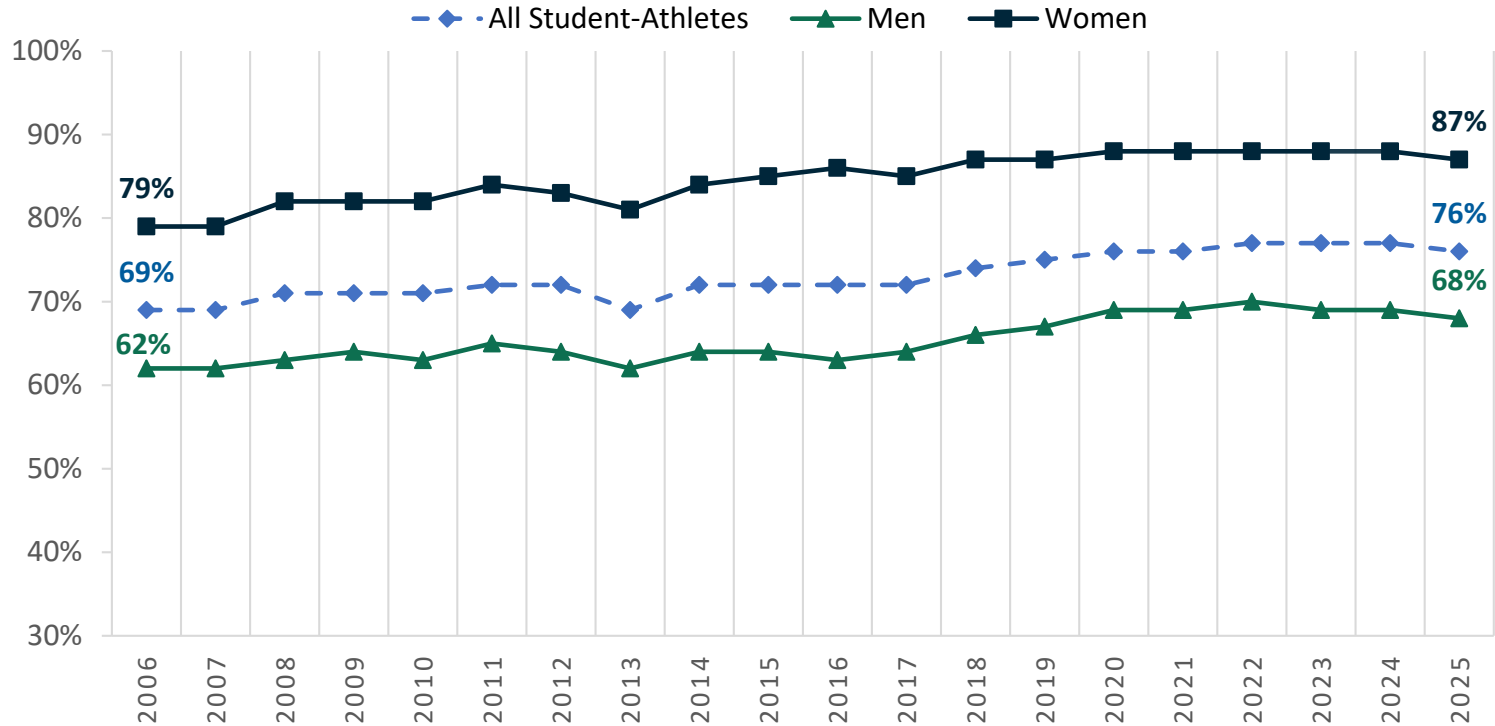
Trends in Single-Cohort Academic Success Rates (ASR)



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

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates)



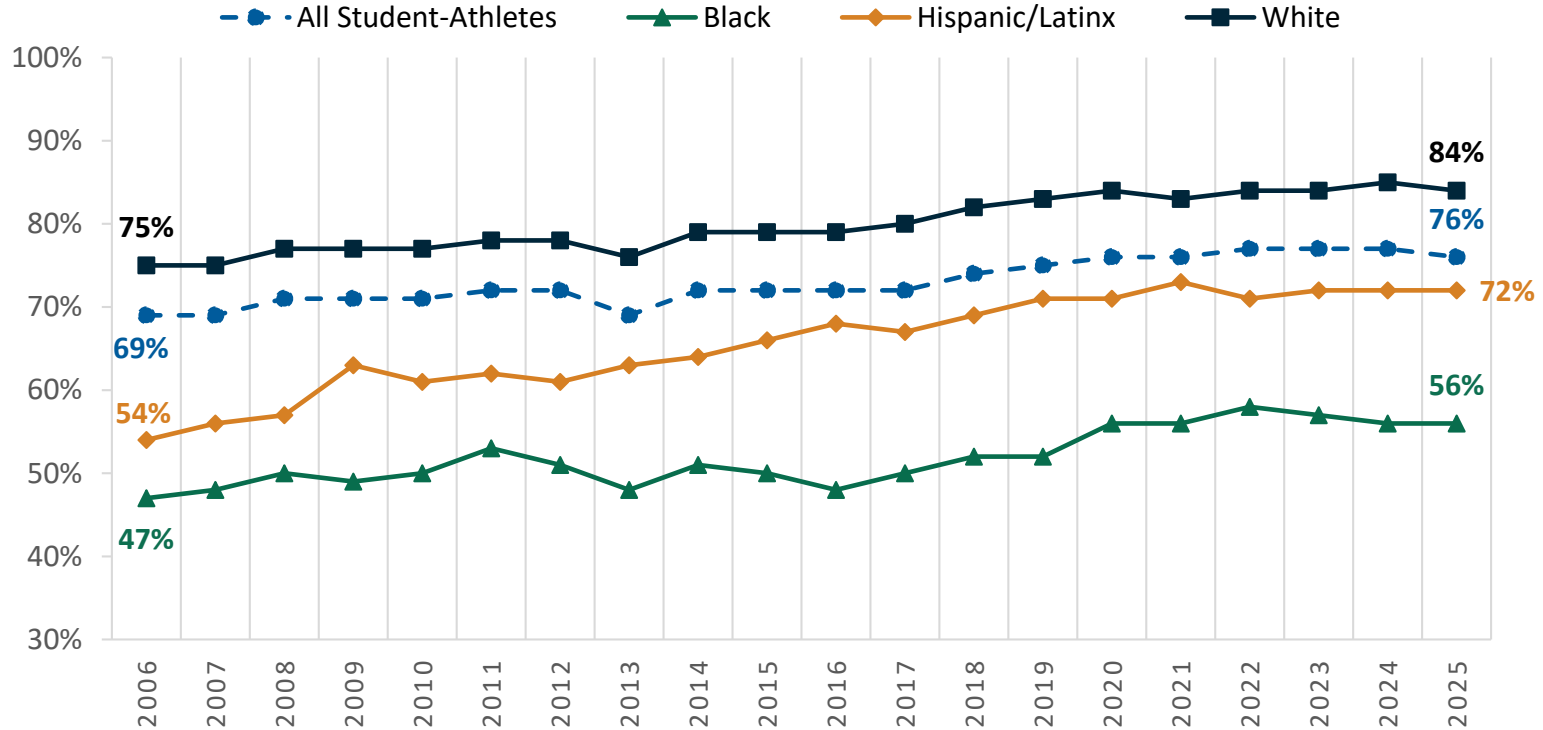
Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2024 represents 2017-18 entering cohort, etc.



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

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



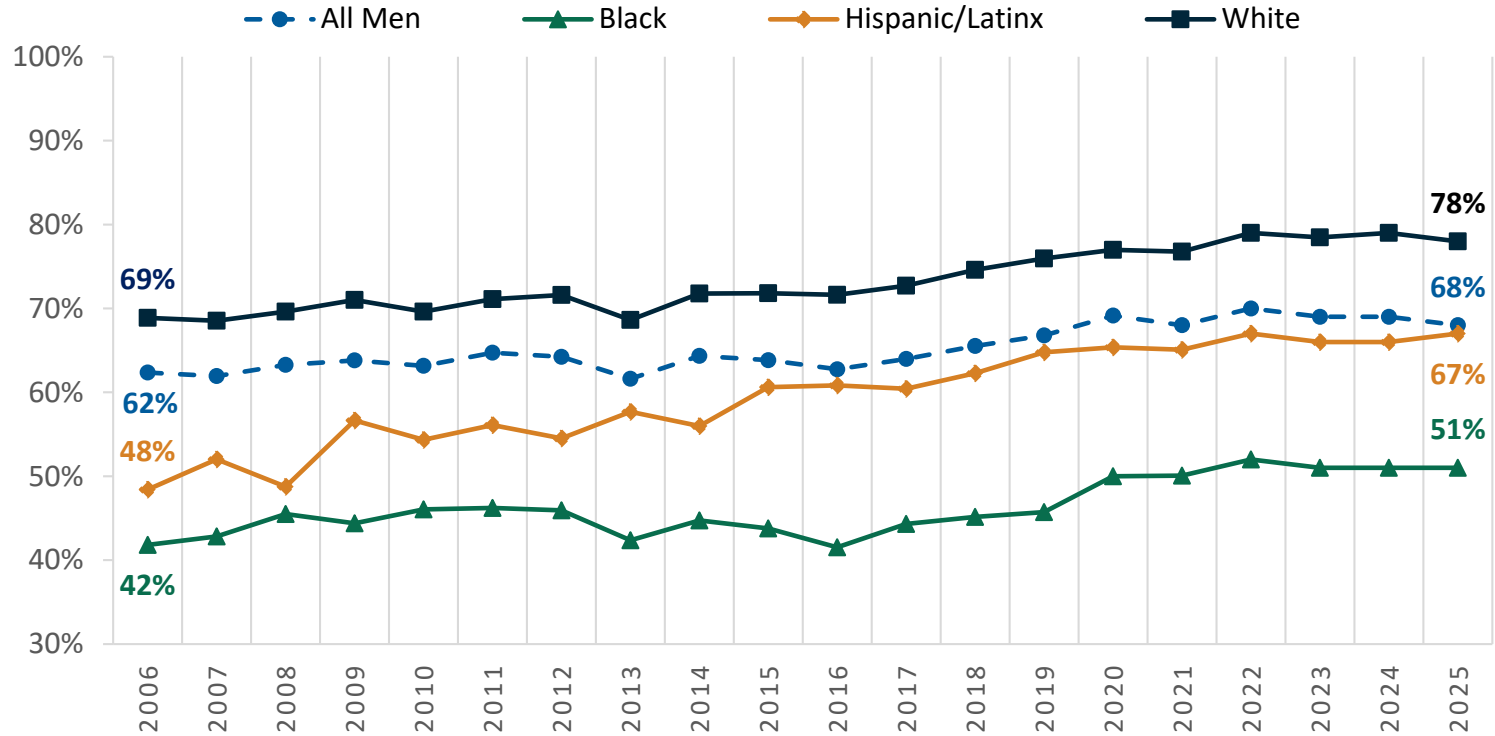
Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2024 represents 2017-18 entering cohort, etc.



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

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



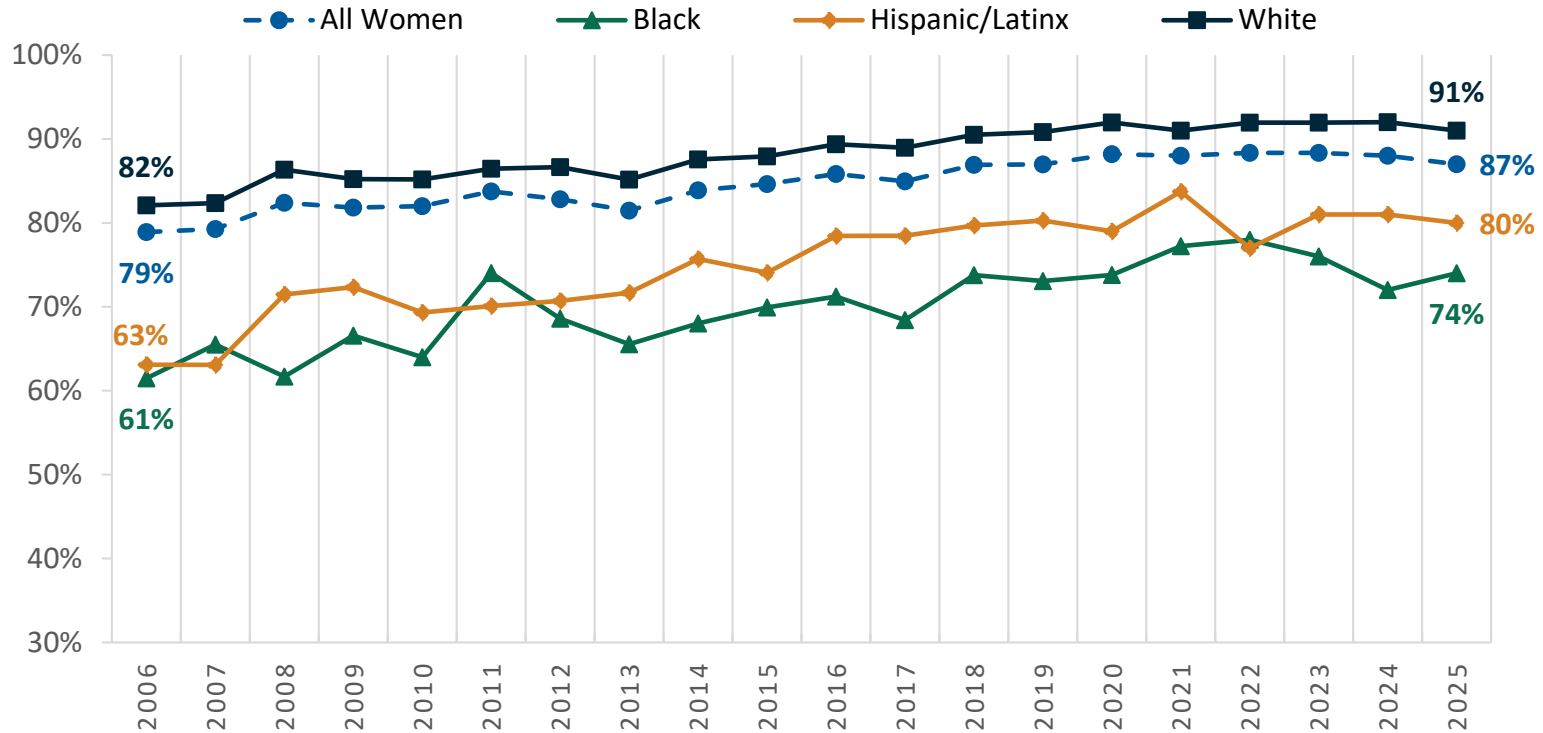
Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2024 represents 2017-18 entering cohort, etc.



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

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



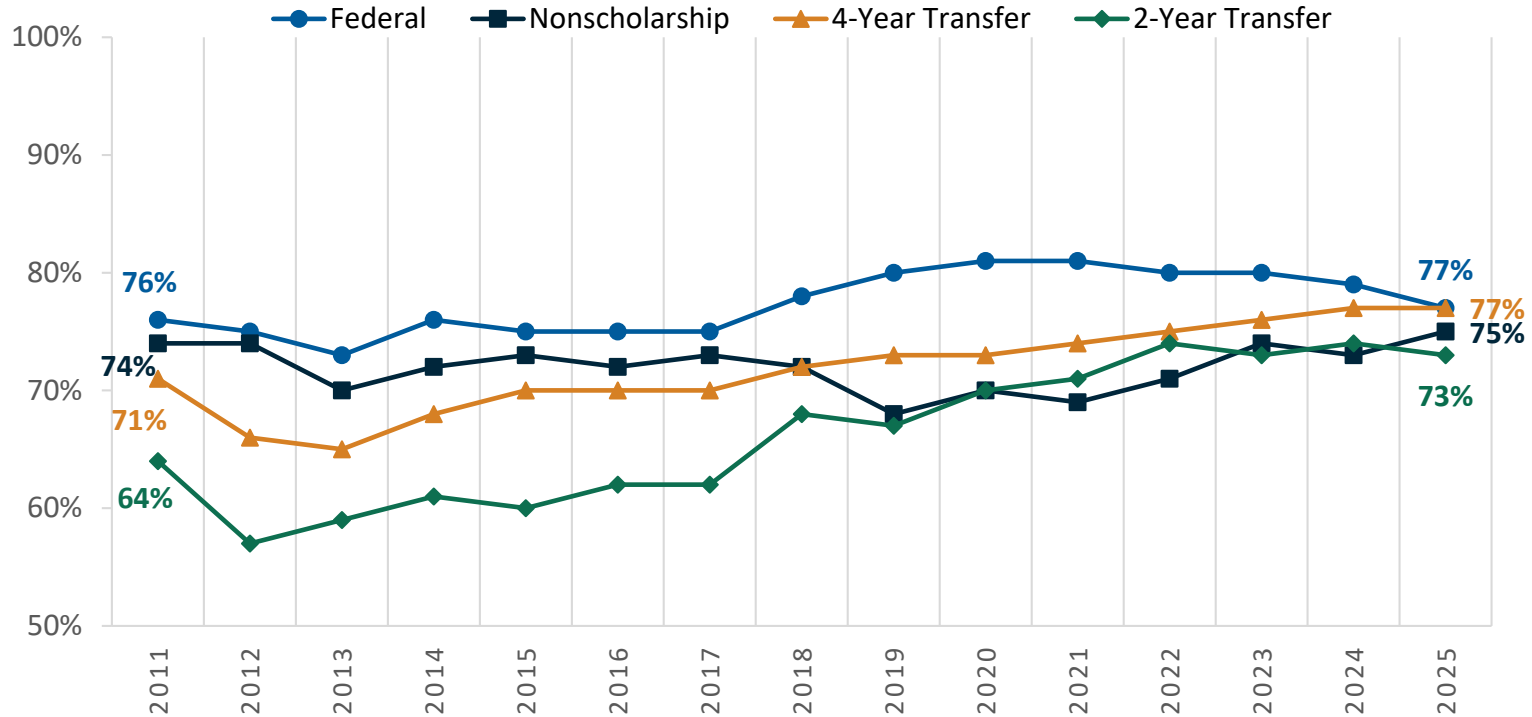
Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2024 represents 2017-18 entering cohort, etc.



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

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



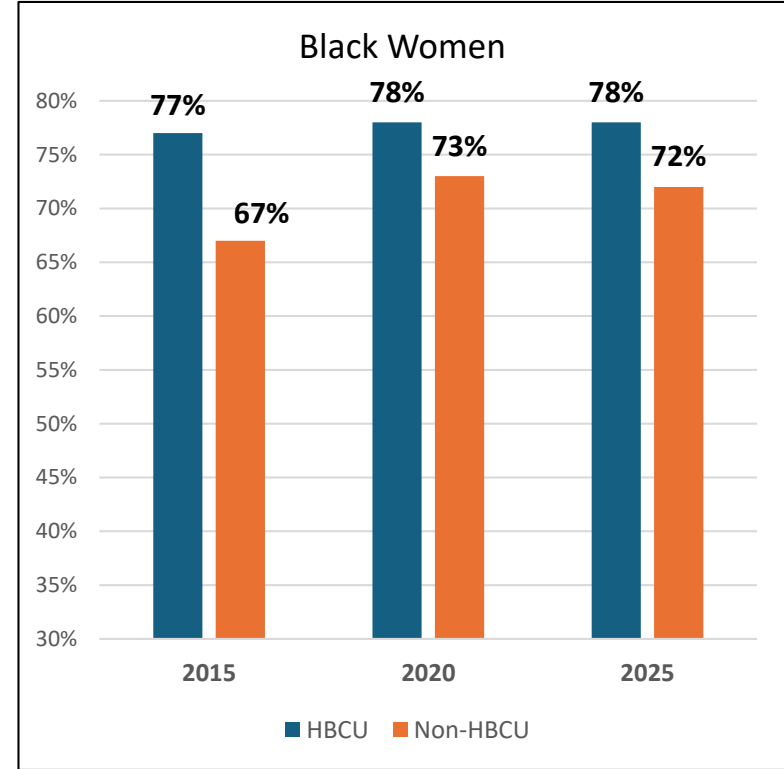
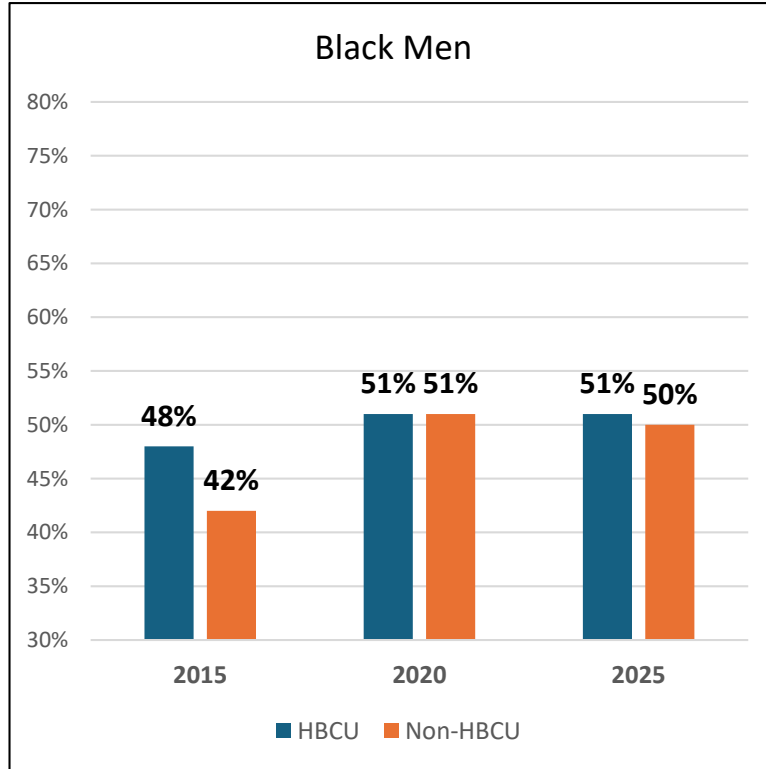
Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2024 represents 2017-18 entering cohort, etc. Federal refers to aided student-athletes who are in the FGR cohort and have not transferred, nonscholarship refers to unaided non-transfers.



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

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



Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2020 represents 2013-14 entering cohort, etc.
HBCU = Historically Black Colleges and Universities.



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Federal Graduation Rates



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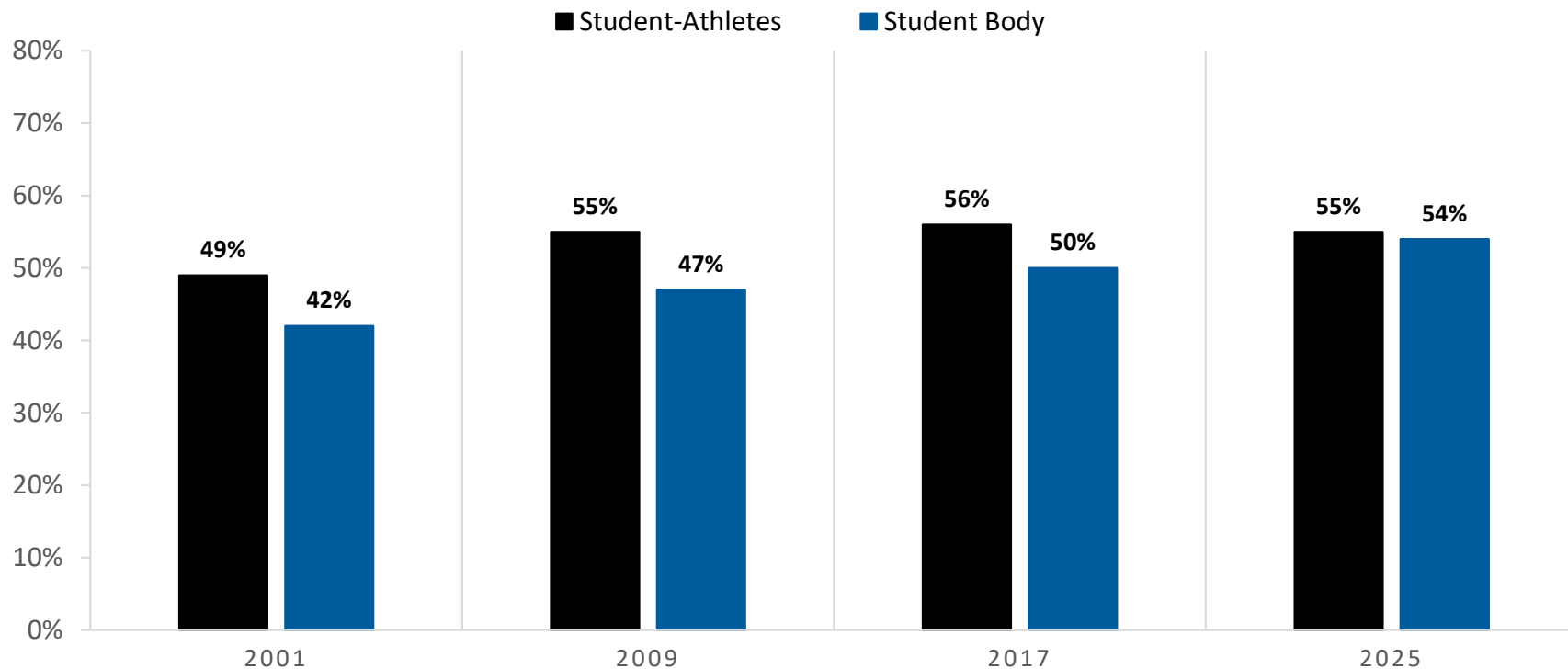
2025 Comparison of Four-Cohort Federal Graduation Rates (FGR) of Division II Scholarship Student-Athletes with Student Body

(Aggregate six-year FGR for 2015-2018 entering cohorts)

Student-Athlete Group	Student-Athlete Federal Rate	Student Body Federal Rate
Overall	58%	53%
Men	50%	48%
Women	67%	57%
Black	41%	36%
Hispanic/Latinx	53%	49%
White	64%	59%
Black Men	36%	31%
Hispanic/Latinx Men	46%	43%
White Men	57%	54%
Black Women	54%	41%
Hispanic/Latinx Women	61%	53%
White Women	71%	62%

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

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates)



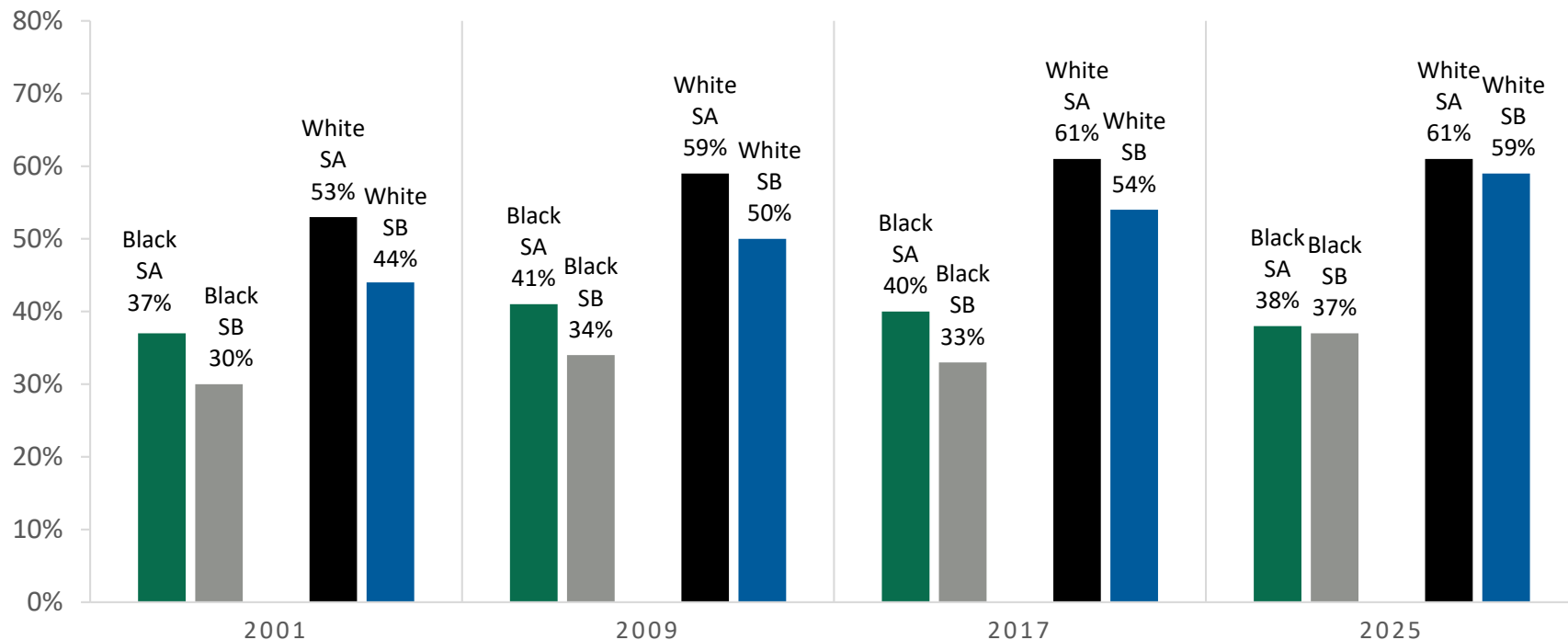
Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2017 represents 2010-11 entering cohort, etc.



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

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



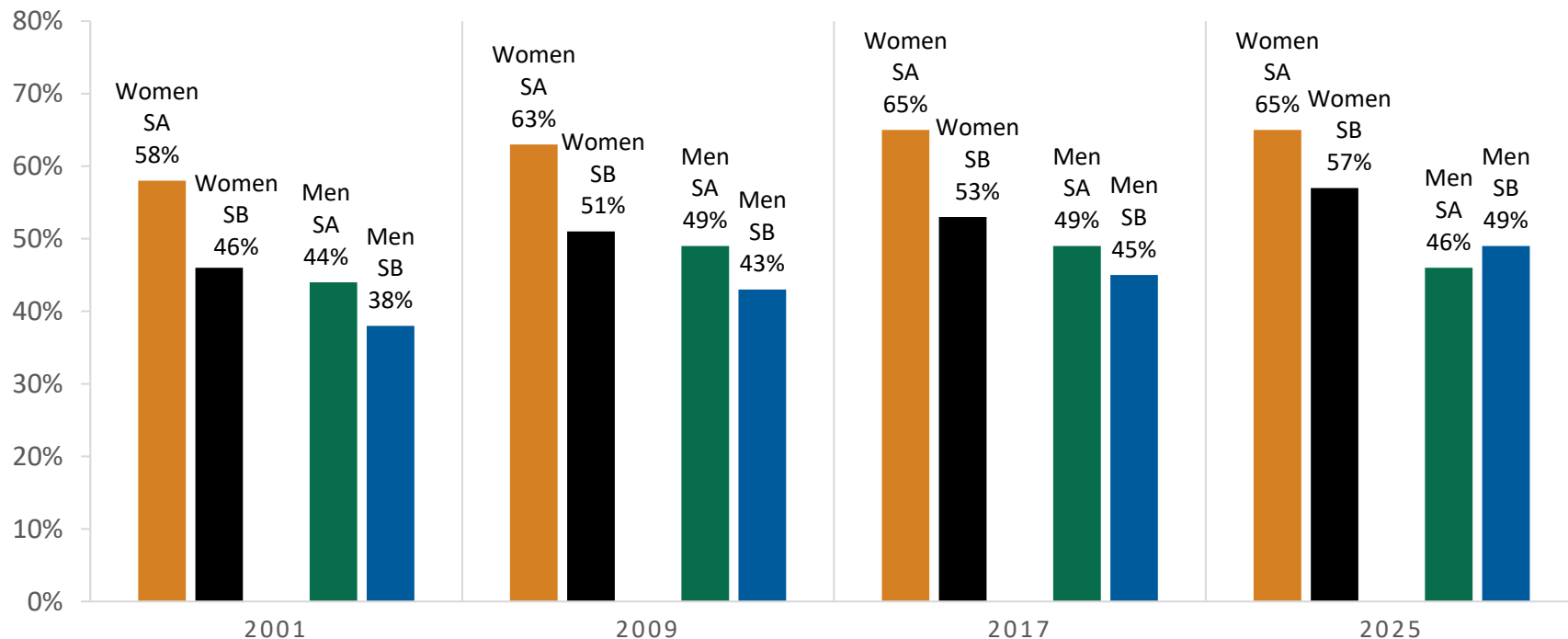
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Trends in Federal Graduation Rates: Division II Scholarship Student-Athletes vs. Student Body

(Single-cohort six-year graduation rates)



Note: 2025 reporting year represents 2018-19 entering cohort; 2017 represents 2010-11 entering cohort, etc.



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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-cohort aggregations are used for reporting rates in isolation; cohort 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.



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Comparison of Academic Success Rates and Federal Rate Cohorts

(2022-25 Reporting Cohorts)

	Federal Rate	ASR
Enrolled (Under Federal Definition)	70,850	70,850
Enrolled as Freshmen in January	0	1,485
Two-Year College Transfers	0	16,508
Four-Year College Transfers	0	17,191
Nonscholarship Athletes	0	38,863
Total Enrolled	70,850	144,897 (+105%)
Allowable Exclusions (Death, Military, Church Mission, etc.)	119	361
Left Eligible	0	34,847
Participants on Teams No Longer Sponsored by School	0	3,192
Total Denominator	70,731	106,497 (+51%)





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