



The Future of Undergraduate Education: Pathways and Possibilities

xTalks: Digital Discourses @ Office of Digital Learning MIT

December 6, 2016



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Charge to the Commission on the Future of Undergraduate Education

...examine the state of undergraduate education in America and provide ideas for how to ensure that individual Americans receive the education they need to thrive in the twenty-first century.





Publications

1. *A Primer on the College Student Journey* – released September 22, 2016

Conveys the story of the major themes and trends in undergraduate education through the framework of the contemporary student journey into, through and out of college.

2. Occasional Papers – Spring 2017

- Undergraduate Financial Aid in the United States
- The Complex Universe of Alternative Postsecondary Credentials and Pathways
- Teaching Effectiveness & Learning Science Research
- The National Investment toward Equitable Postsecondary Attainment Rates

3. Final Report and Recommendations – Fall 2017





Outreach Activities

Congressional Visits

New Presidential Administration

Higher Education Organizations and Offices

Business and Non-Profit Groups

Informal Advisors Meetings

Student and Faculty Discussion Groups

Roundtables



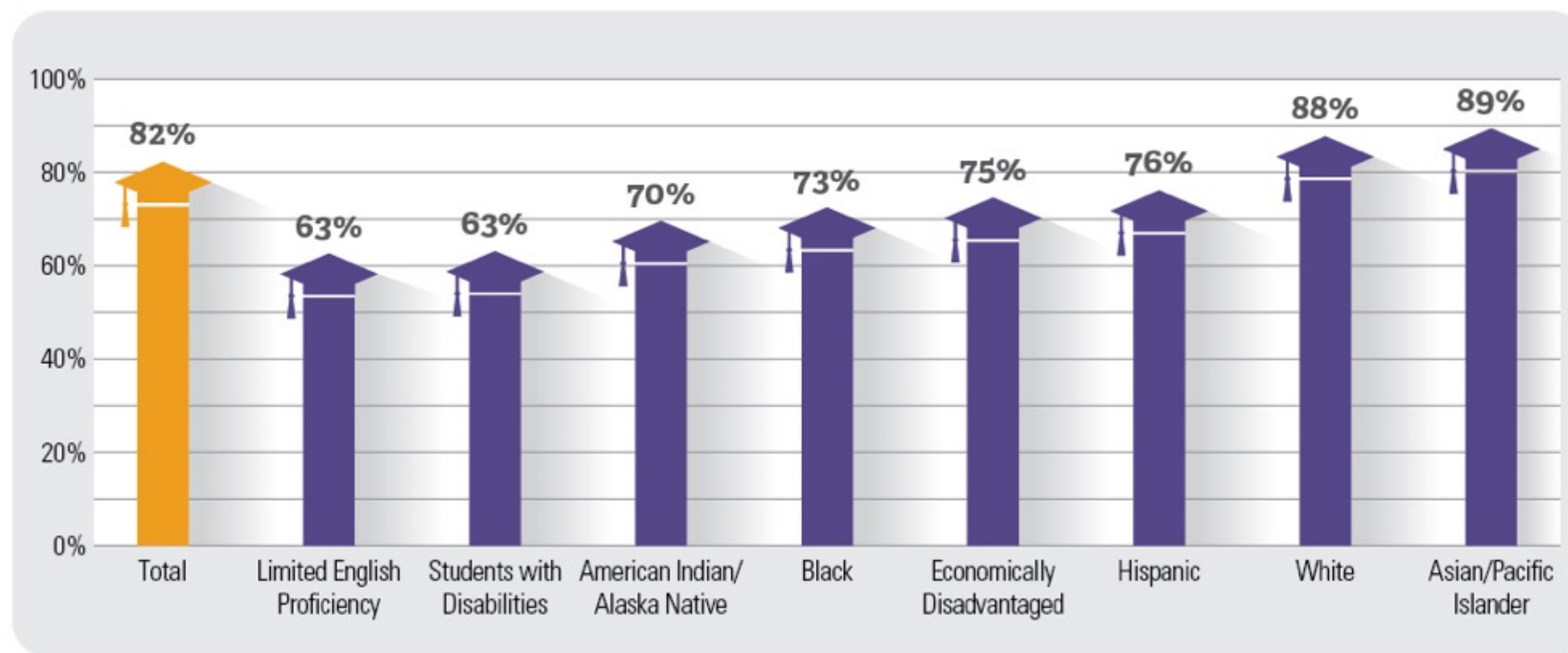
Story #1

The paths students follow on their journey toward college completion and their likeliness toward success vary tremendously depending upon their family background, the kind of college they start at, and the highly varied circumstances that arise along the way.



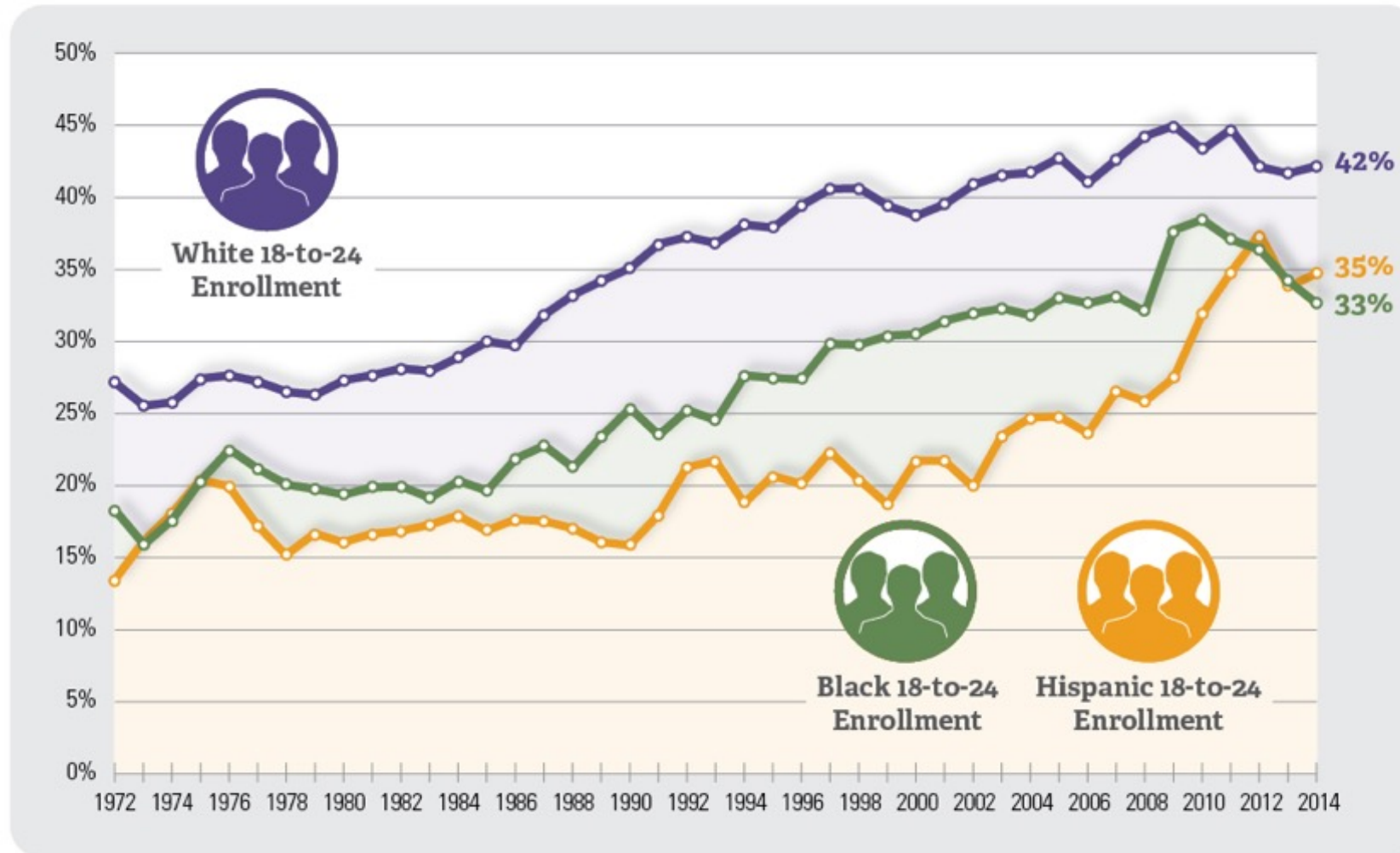


Figure A: U.S. Public High School Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate, by Race/Ethnicity and Selected Demographics: 2013–2014



From *A Primer on the College Student Journey* (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)

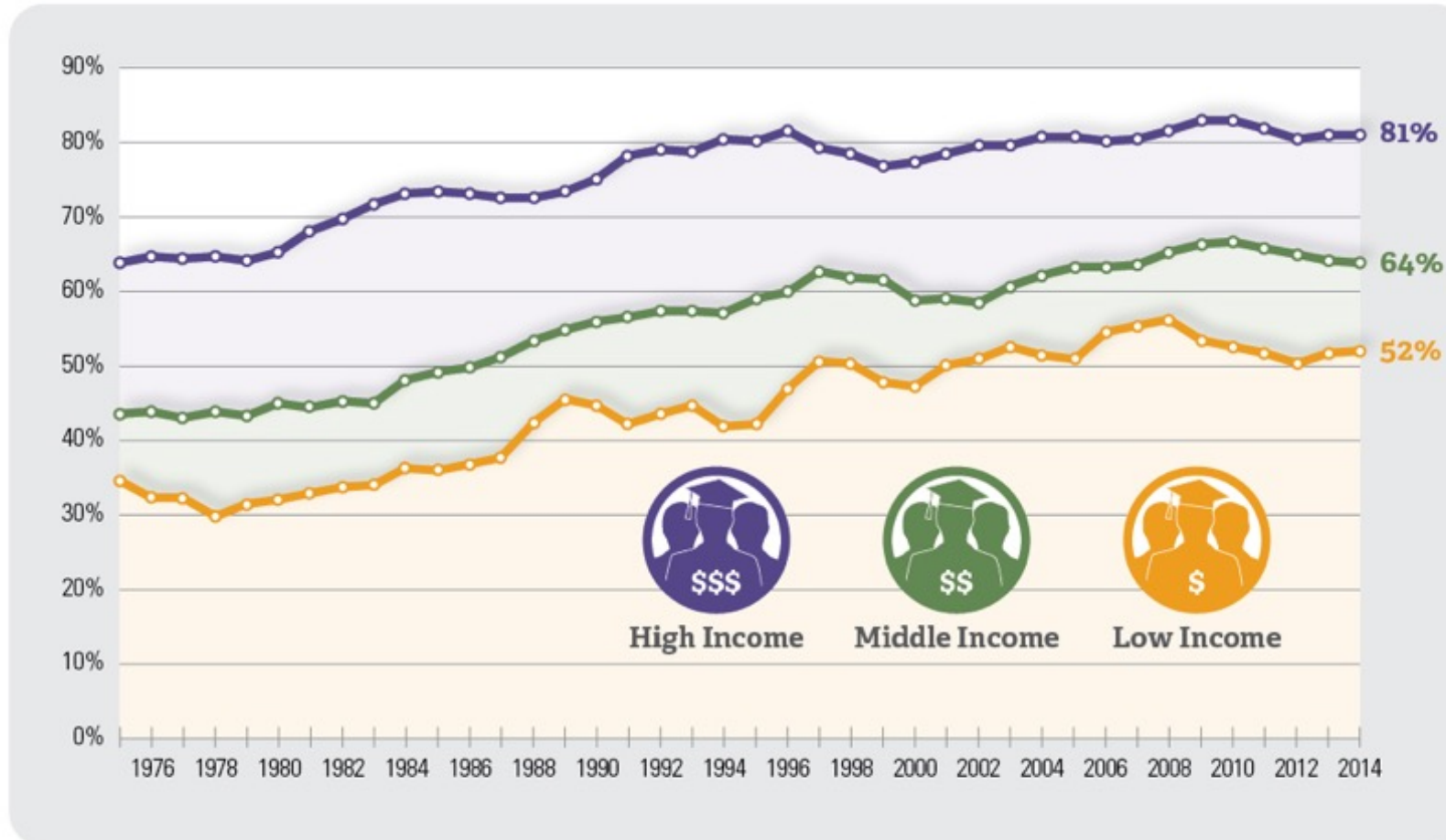
Figure C: Undergraduate Enrollment Rates by Race/Ethnicity
for 18- to 24-Year-Olds: 1972–2014





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Figure E: Percentage of Recent High School Completers Enrolled in College,
by Income Level: 1975–2014

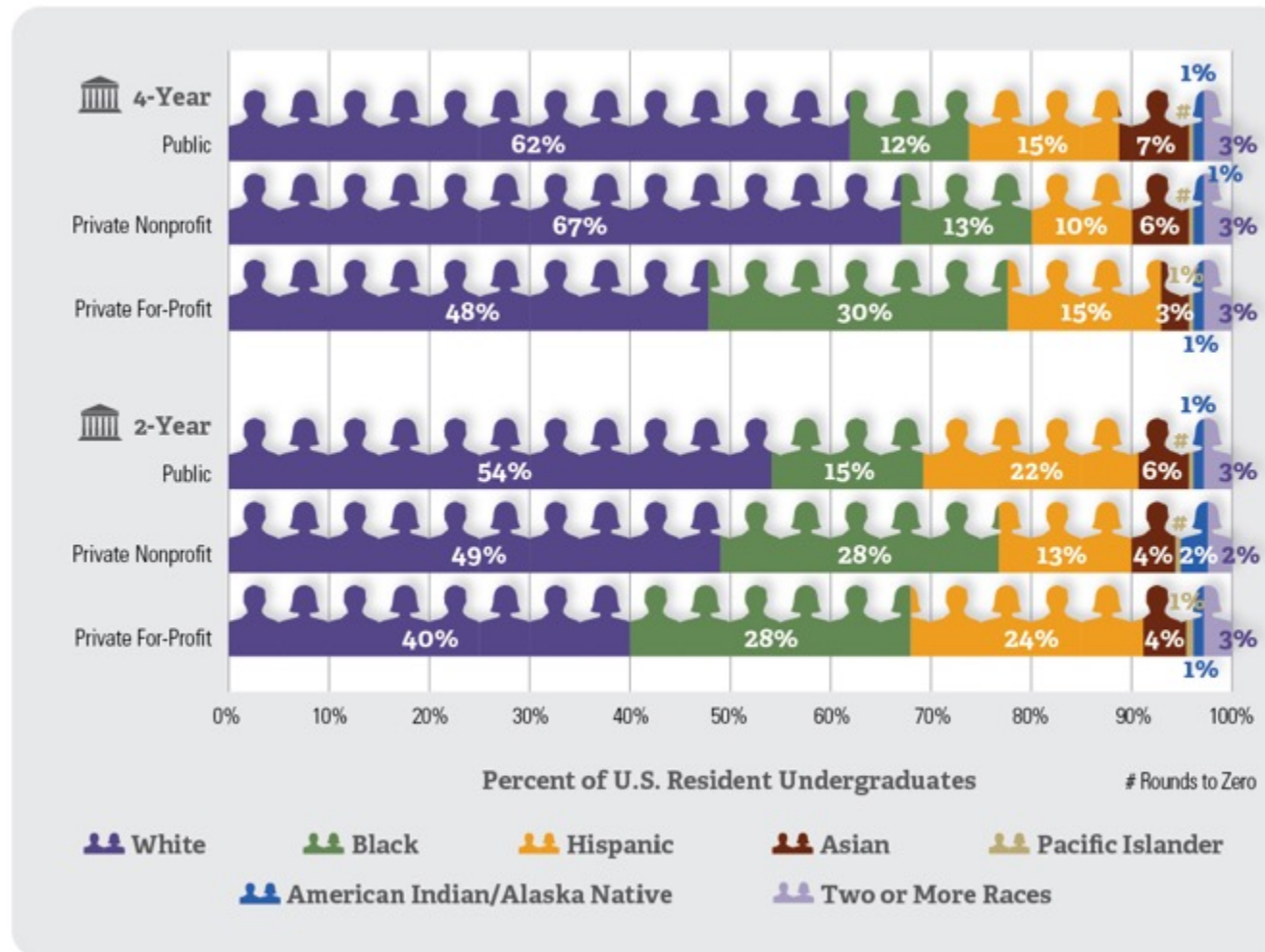


From *A Primer on the College Student Journey* (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)



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Figure K: Distribution of Undergraduate Enrollment by
Sector and Race/Ethnicity: Fall 2013



From *A Primer on the College Student Journey* (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)



Only **40 percent of students complete a bachelor's degree within four years** and only 60 percent graduate from the college at which they started within six years of entry.

Only **29 percent of students who start a certificate or associate degree at a two-year college earn a credential** within 150 percent of the time required to do so.

While graduation rate gaps across race and ethnicity are narrowing, **gaps based upon gender and income are increasing.**

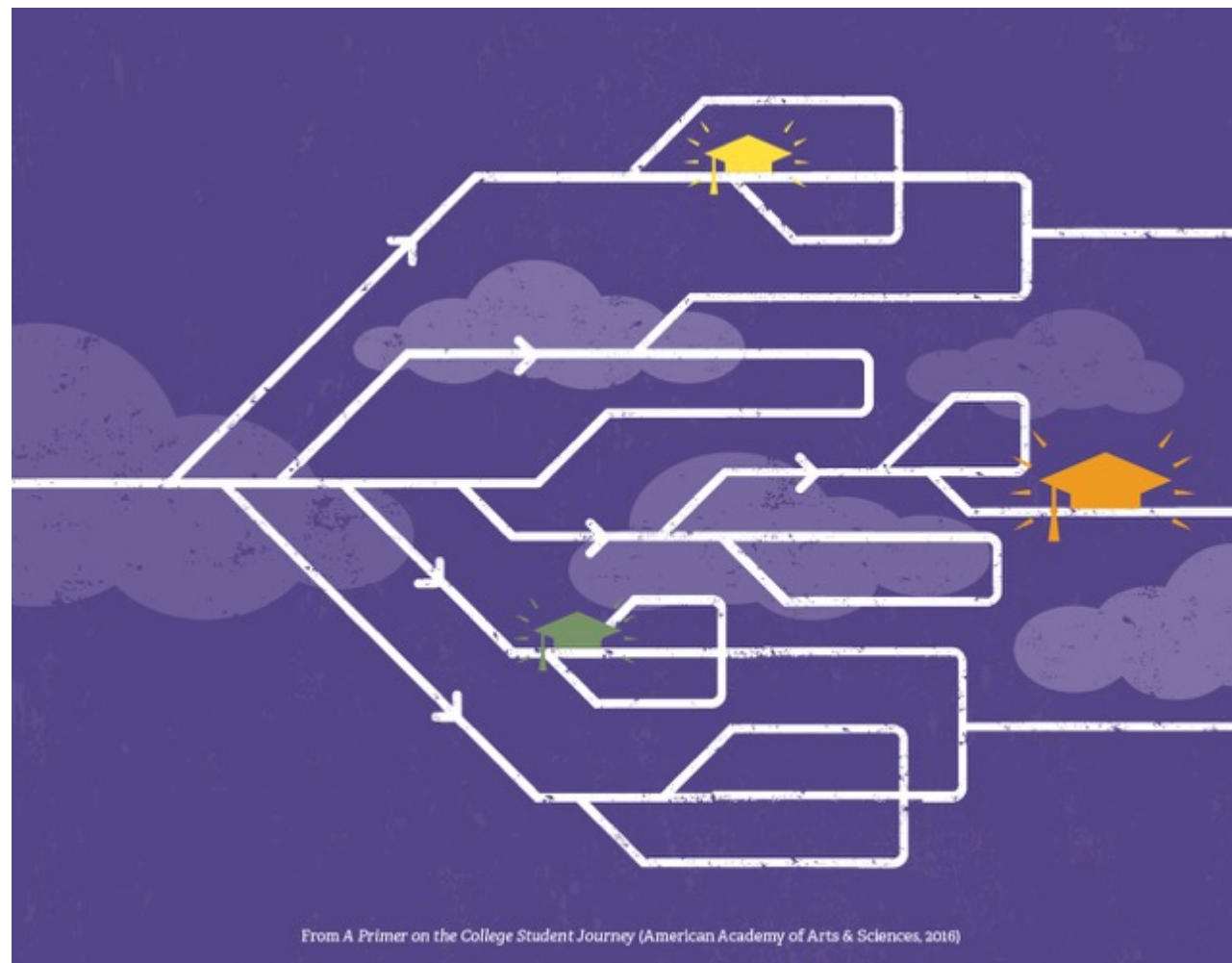
It takes students an **average of five years and ten months to earn a bachelor's degree.**

Of recently awarded undergraduate credentials, **less than half--48 percent--were bachelor's degrees**, while 26 percent were associate degrees and 25 percent were certificates.



Story #2

Paying for college is complicated with more students taking out more loans but those who struggle the most to pay off loans are not who'd you expect.



From A Primer on the College Student Journey (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)



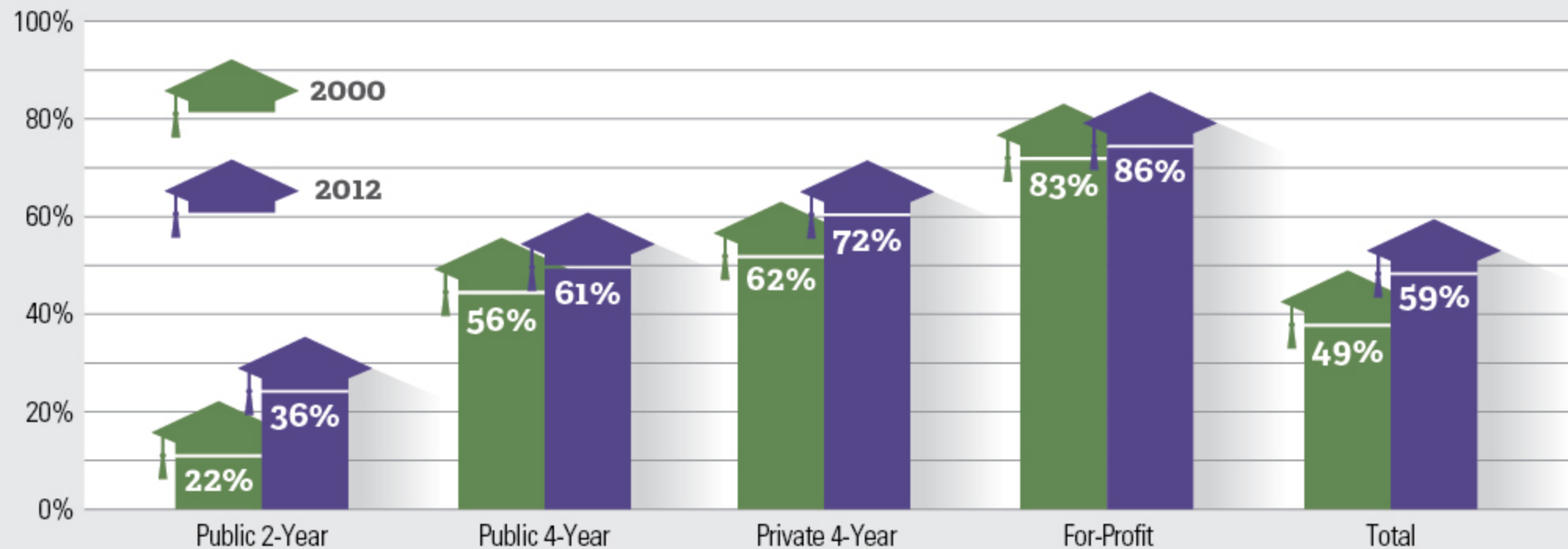
Figure N: Average Published and Net Prices for Full-Time Undergraduates
by Sector: 2015–2016



	Public 2-Year In-District	Public 4-Year In-State	Private Nonprofit 4-Year	For-Profit
Tuition and Fees				
Published Prices	\$3,435	\$9,410	\$32,405	\$15,610
Net Prices	-\$770	\$3,980	\$14,890	\$12,175
Tuition, Fees, and Room and Board				
Published Prices	\$11,438	\$19,548	\$43,921	\$31,425
Net Prices	\$7,230	\$14,120	\$26,400	\$26,980



Figure P: Share of College Graduates Borrowing for College:
2000 and 2012



From *A Primer on the College Student Journey* (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)



Figure Q: Median Cumulative Loan Amount Borrowed in 2015 Dollars
for Graduates: 2000 and 2012

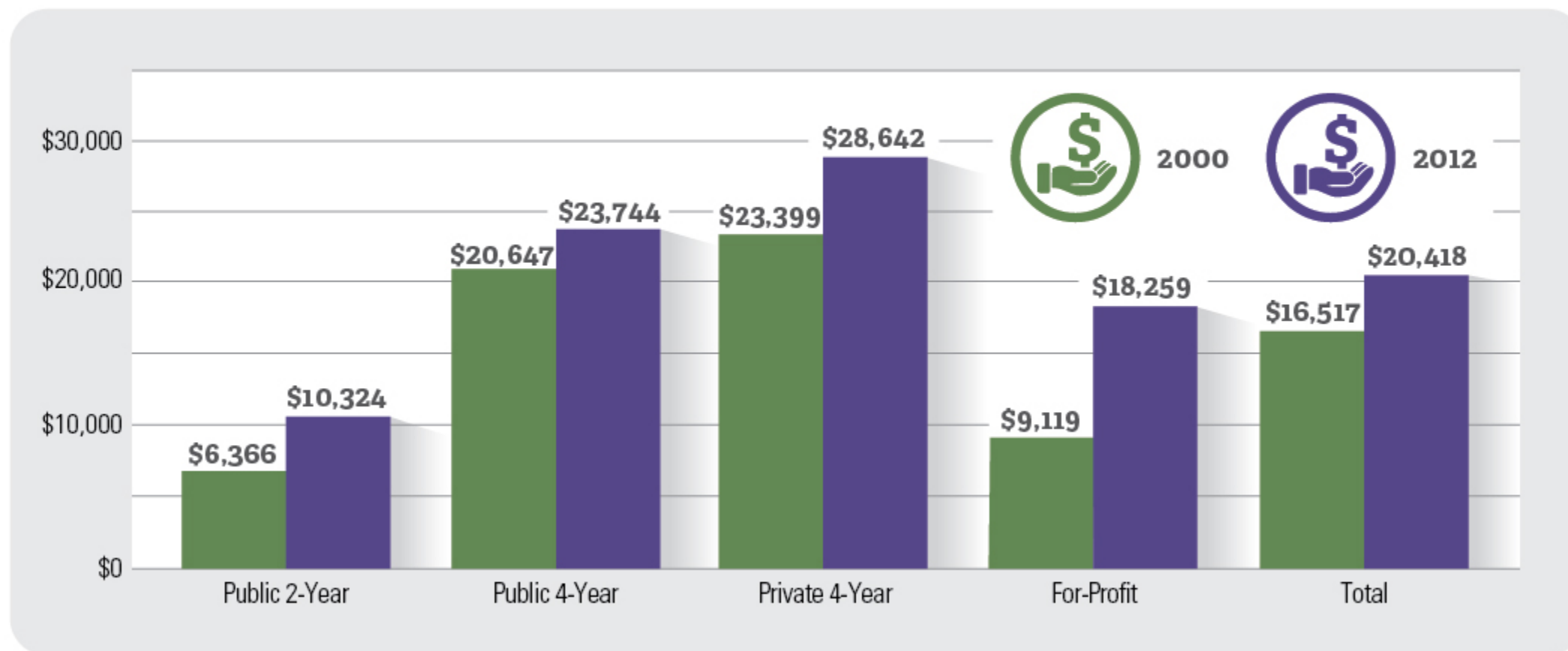
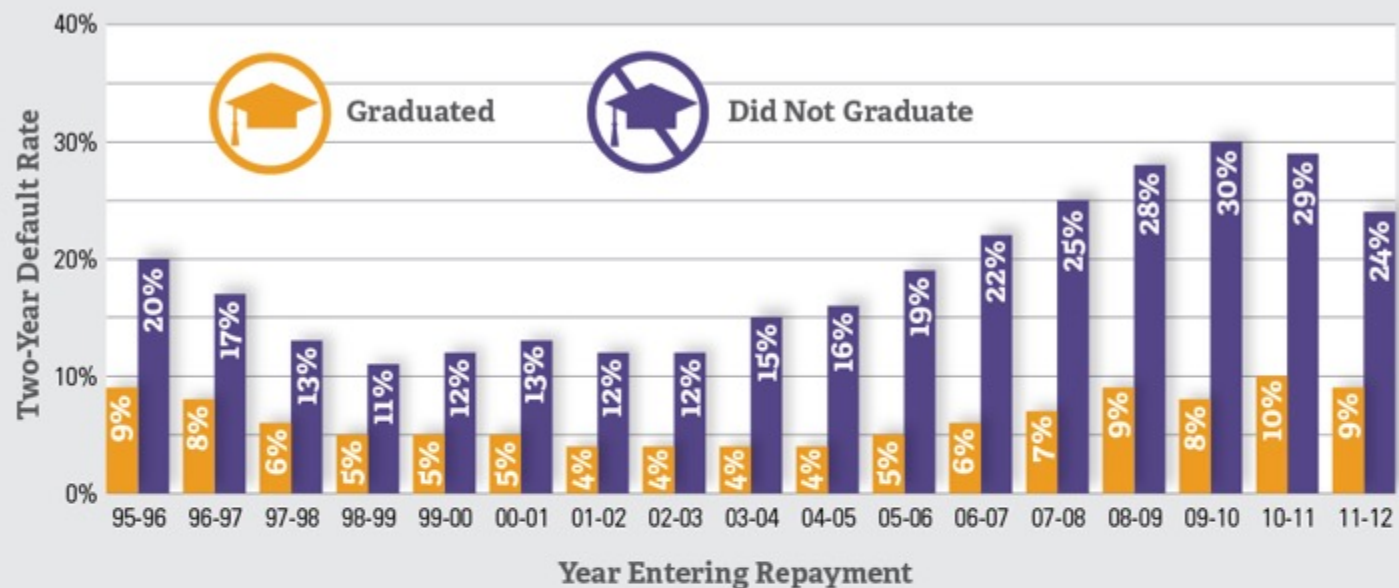




Figure R: Two-Year Student Loan Default Rates by Degree Completion Status:
1995–1996 to 2011–2012



Two-Year Cohort Default Rates, Borrowers Entering Repayment in 2011–2012

	Public 2-Year	Public 4-Year	Private Nonprofit 4-Year	For-Profit	All
All Borrowers	23%	9%	7%	18%	14%
Borrowers Who Graduated	17%	6%	5%	14%	9%
Borrowers Who Did Not Graduate	29%	18%	15%	28%	24%

Story #3

College positively affects the lives of graduates in at least three important ways:

1. Economic circumstances
2. Social and civic contributions
3. Personal and family well-being

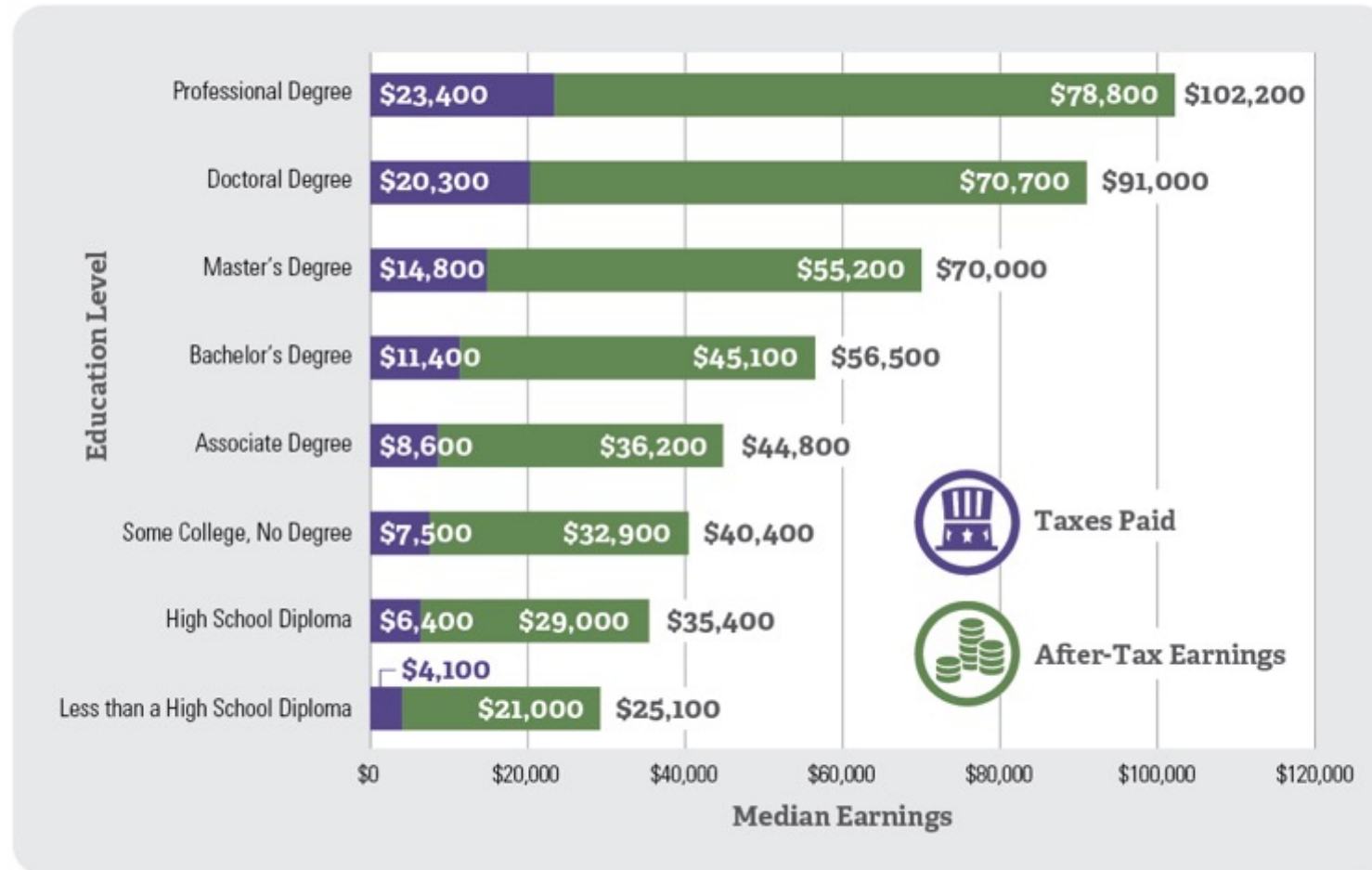


From A Primer on the College Student Journey (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)



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Figure W: Median Earnings and Tax Payments of Full-Time Year-Round Workers Aged 25 and Older, by Education Level, 2011



From *A Primer on the College Student Journey* (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2016)



Developing Focus on Teaching and Learning

What are the college teaching improvement efforts that strengthen and enrich undergraduate subject-matter learning, including the skills needed to reason through and with subject-matter concepts? In other words, *what is good college teaching*?

How can educational technologies be best utilized and integrated to improve college teaching and student learning? Where can we expect new breakthroughs in these areas?

As college classrooms become increasingly diverse, what needs to happen to ensure and leverage diversity for learning and democratic practice?

What can we say about the student learning outcomes assessment efforts made over the last 10 years? Where does this point us for the future?

What are the implications for a faculty workforce that is increasingly bifurcated?





Discussion

