

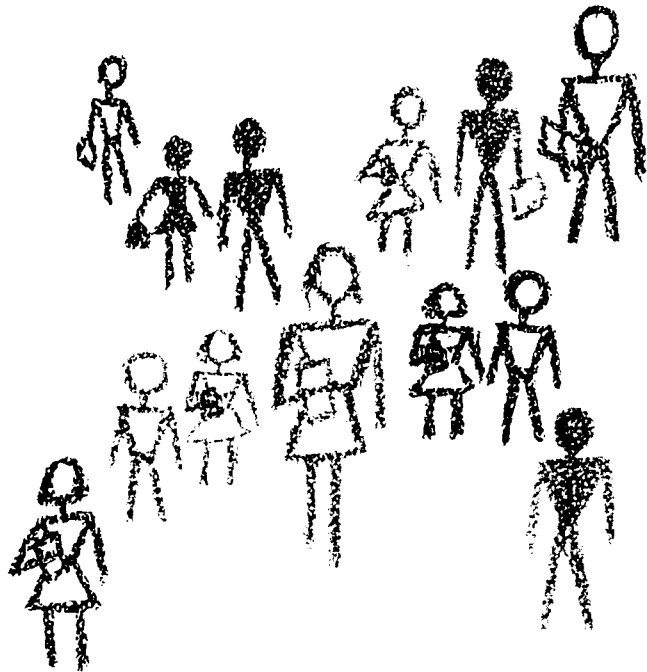


CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS

Population Characteristics

P20-474

School Enrollment— Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 1992



by Robert Kominski and Andrea Adams

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared in the Education and Social Stratification Branch of the Population Division, under the general direction of **Robert Kominski**, Chief. Overall direction was provided by **Arthur J. Norton**, Chief, Population Division.

Data collection was conducted by Bureau of the Census field representatives, under the overall direction of **Paula J. Schneider**, Chief, Field Division. Survey operations and data processing were coordinated by **Ronald R. Tucker**, **Gregory D. Weyland**, and **Francia A. McDaniel**. Programming of tabulations was performed by **Randy J. Gardner**, Demographic Surveys Division. **D. Darcel Carter** assisted with table and manuscript preparation. **Timothy J. Madigan** and **Ronald C. Prevost**, Population Division, reviewed the contents of the report. Statistical review and appendix C were provided by **Caroline A. Riker**, Demographic Statistical Methods Division.

The staff of the Administrative and Publication Services Division, **Walter C. Odom**, Chief, provided publication planning, editorial review, design, composition and printing planning and procurement. **Joan I. Kinikin** provided publication coordination and editing.

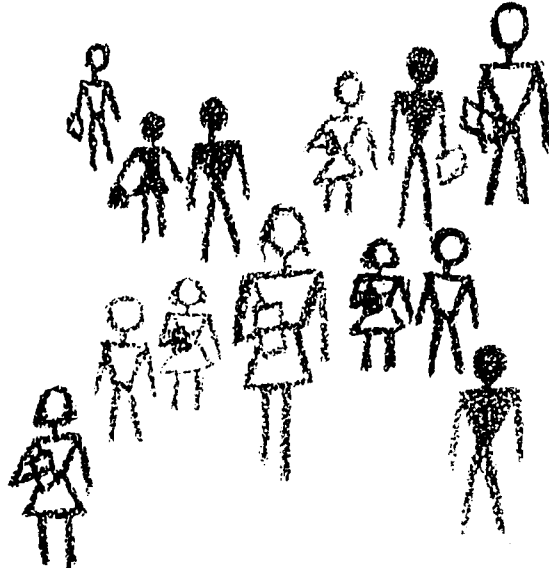
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Economics and Statistics Administration
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SUGGESTED CITATION

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 474, *School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 1992*
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1993.

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School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 1992

(NOTE: The estimates for 1992 in this report are inflated to national population controls by age, race, sex and Hispanic origin. The population controls are based on results of the 1980 census carried forward to 1992. The estimates in this report, therefore, may differ from estimates that would have been obtained using 1990 census results brought forward to the survey date. Population controls incorporating 1990 census results will be used for survey estimation beginning in 1993.)

INTRODUCTION

This report presents detailed tabulations of data on school enrollment of the civilian noninstitutional population in October 1992. It also includes summary time series of data collected since the beginning of the survey. The data are from the October school enrollment supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). Data on school enrollment have been collected annually in the CPS since 1946 and reported in this publication series. The data cover enrollment in "regular school" which includes nursery school, kindergarten, elementary school, high school, and college and professional school.

Data are shown by the following characteristics: age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, marital status, family status, family income, education of the householder, labor force status, metropolitan residence, region, and mother's labor force status and education (for preprimary enrollment). Also, the following enrollment characteristics are shown: level and grade of school, public/private school, full-time and part-time attendance status, and two-year/four-year college. Vocational school enrollment is shown separately.

HIGHLIGHTS

(Figures shown in parentheses define 90-percent confidence intervals. For details of calculation see "Appendix B, Source and Accuracy of the Estimates.")

- In October 1992, 64.6 ($\pm .5$) million persons were enrolled in regular school—nursery school through college. About 42.6 ($\pm .04$) million of these persons were between the traditional elementary and secondary school ages of 6 and 17.
- The number of persons in nursery school or kindergarten was 7.0 ($\pm .2$) million, which was not statistically different from the 7.1 ($\pm .2$) million enrolled in the fall of 1991.

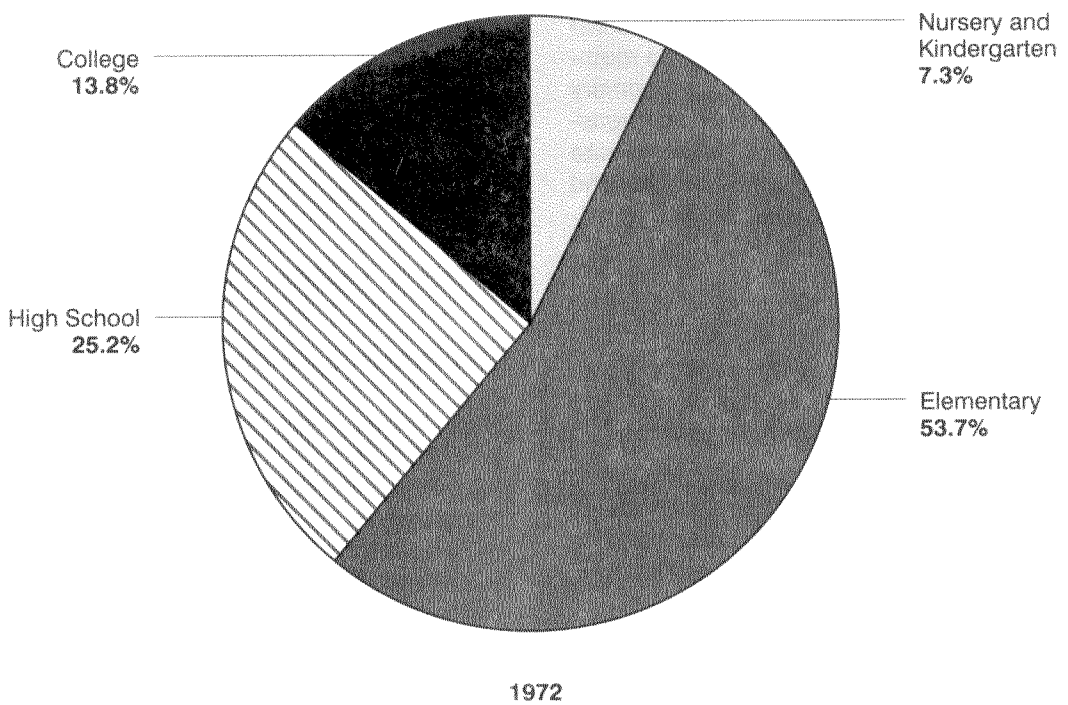
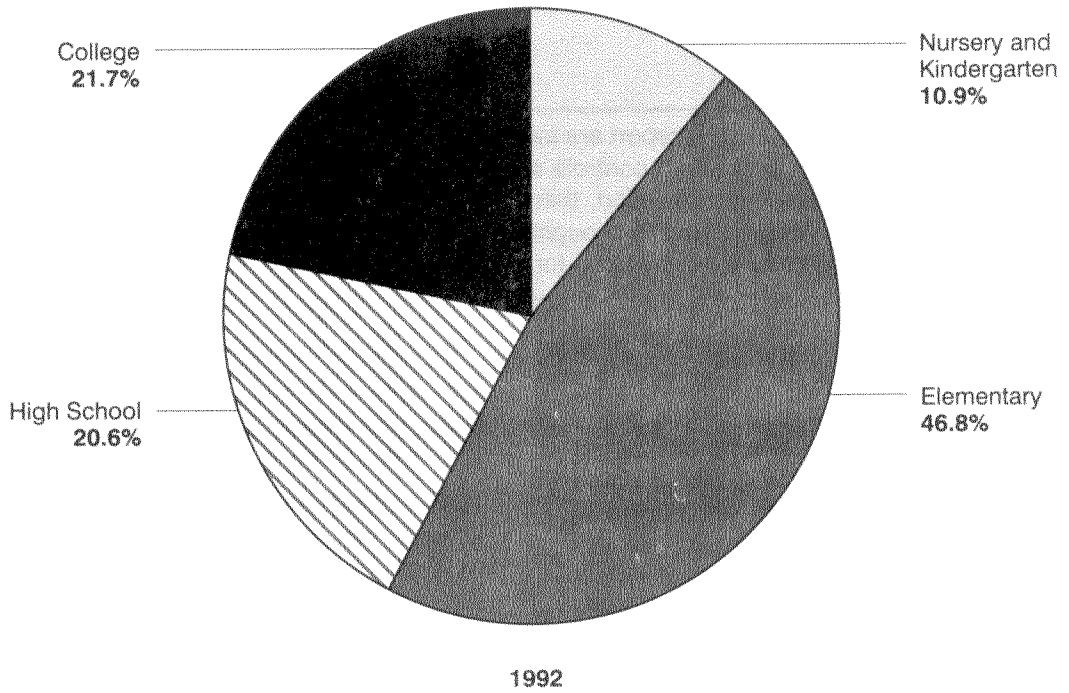
- Elementary school enrollment (grades 1-8) stood at 30.2 ($\pm .2$) million persons, up from 29.6 ($\pm .2$) million one year earlier.
- High school enrollment totalled 13.3 ($\pm .2$) million persons, not significantly different from the 13.1 ($\pm .2$) million enrolled in the fall of 1991.
- The annual high school dropout rate (from grades 10-12) for 1992 was not different from 1991: 4.3 ($\pm .5$) vs. 4.0 ($\pm .5$) percent.
- The "dropout pool" (persons not enrolled and not a high school graduate) of young adults ages 18 to 24 totalled 3.1 million ($\pm .1$) or 12.7 percent ($\pm .5$) of this age group. This was a significant decrease, both numerically and proportionately, from 1991 (3.5 ($\pm .1$) million and 14.2 percent ($\pm .6$)).
- The number of persons enrolled in college totalled 14.0 ($\pm .3$) million, which was not significantly different from the 14.1 ($\pm .3$) million enrolled one year before. About 2.4 ($\pm .1$) million of current college students were over age 34.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN 1992

The Nation's Students

In October 1992, 64.6 million persons were enrolled in regular schools throughout the United States. This total included 7.0 million persons in nursery school and kindergarten, 30.2 million in elementary school, 13.3 million persons in high school, and 14.0 million persons in college. About 62.1 million of these people (96.2 percent) were between the ages of 3 and 34, and 42.6 million (66.0 percent) were between the ages of 6 and 17—the traditional ages for elementary and high school. The total of 64.6 million students, while not a significant increase from the level of 63.9 one year earlier in 1991,

Figure 1.
Distribution of Students at Various Levels of School: October 1992 and 1972



was a sizable increase over the total of 61.1 million students reported two decades ago. Figure 1 shows the proportionate distribution of students at various levels of school in 1992 and 1972. This figure shows that the proportion of all students who are enrolled at the college level has increased considerably in the past twenty years, reflecting general shifts in the population age structure.

Preprimary Enrollment

About 55.5 percent (6,403,000) of children ages 3 to 5 years old were enrolled in preprimary school in the fall of 1992. Among children 3 or 4 years old, 39.7 percent were enrolled, most of them in nursery school (2.6 million of 3.1 million total enrollees). Given the availability of public kindergarten in all States, most 5 year olds were enrolled in school (92.4 percent), the majority in kindergarten (80.3 percent). There was no difference measured in preprimary enrollment levels for Whites (55.8 percent) and Blacks (55.1 percent), but the level for Hispanic children (who can be of any race) was significantly lower (48.4 percent).

A large difference in nursery school enrollment is observed when examined across family income groups. Table A shows that 24.1 percent of young children (ages 3 to 4) from families with income less than \$20,000 were enrolled in nursery school, as compared to 31.0 percent for children from families with income between \$20,000 and \$39,999. Children from families with income \$40,000 and above had the highest level of nursery school enrollment (49.2 percent).

Of the 3 and 4 year olds enrolled in nursery school, 939,000 (36.2 percent) were in public school, while 1,657,000 (63.9 percent) attended private school. Family income is strongly associated with patterns of public and private schooling. Children from families with high income are more likely to attend private school, while those from lower income families are more likely to enroll in public systems. Among nursery school students from families with income less than \$20,000, 71 percent attended public school, compared to 17 percent of those from families with income over \$40,000.

Enrollment for young children is also strongly related to the education of the parents. As data from table 4 show, 57.5 percent of 3 and 4 year-old children whose mother had a college degree were enrolled in school, compared with 34.9 percent of those whose mother held only a high school degree, and 25.8 percent of those whose mother had not completed high school. Better-educated mothers may also be more likely to be employed, and one question frequently asked concerns the extent to which school is being used as child care for very young children. Table B shows that 3 and 4 year-old children of women in the labor force were only

Table A. Enrollment of Children 3 and 4 Years Old in Nursery School, by Family Income and Race: October 1992

(In thousands)

Characteristic	Total	Less than \$20,000	\$20,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 and over
TOTAL				
Total children	7,712	2,685	2,411	2,273
Enrolled in nursery school ..	2,595	648	747	1,119
Percent enrolled	33.6	24.1	31.0	49.2
Percent public	36.2	70.5	35.3	17.3
Percent private	63.8	29.5	64.7	82.7
WHITE				
Total children	6,173	1,803	2,093	2,026
Enrolled in nursery school ..	2,136	433	638	1,003
Percent enrolled	34.6	24.0	30.5	49.5
Percent public	31.1	65.5	30.5	17.1
Percent private	68.9	34.5	69.5	82.9
BLACK				
Total children	1,155	766	221	100
Enrolled in nursery school ..	337	193	73	55
Percent enrolled	29.2	25.2	33.0	55.0
Percent public	65.9	80.6	B	B
Percent private	34.1	19.4	B	B
HISPANIC ORIGIN¹				
Total children	993	568	253	115
Enrolled in nursery school ..	182	81	51	33
Percent enrolled	18.3	14.3	20.2	28.7
Percent public	61.5	81.2	B	B
Percent private	38.5	19.8	B	B

B Base less than 75,000.

¹May be of any race.

slightly more likely to be enrolled in school than those of women who were not in the labor force (43.2 vs. 36.0 percent). However, about 39.8 percent of the students with a mother in the labor force were attending fullday, compared to just 20.9 percent of the students whose mother was not in the labor force. Nevertheless, while school and fullday enrollments were higher for the children of mothers employed or looking for work, the majority of 3 and 4 year-old children were not enrolled in school at all, regardless of the labor force activity of the mother.

Elementary and Secondary School Enrollment

There were 30.2 million persons enrolled in elementary school (grades 1 through 8) in the fall of 1992. Given the near-universal nature of schooling for young persons, the number of persons enrolled in elementary school closely parallels the size of the population 6 to 13 years of age. During the 1970's and early 1980's, elementary school enrollments fell, following the general decrease in the size of the 6 to 13 year old population. In the past few years, however as "echo

Table B. Full- and Part-Day Enrollment of Children 3 and 4 Years Old, by Labor Force Activity and Race: October 1992

(In thousands)

Enrolled in nursery school or kindergarten	Mother in labor force	Mother not in labor force
TOTAL		
Total enrolled.....	1,721	1,134
Percent enrolled.....	43.2	36.0
Full day.....	685	237
Percent full day.....	39.8	20.9
WHITE		
Total enrolled.....	1413	944
Percent enrolled.....	43.7	37.1
Full day.....	591	149
Percent full day.....	41.8	15.8
BLACK		
Total enrolled.....	220	145
Percent enrolled.....	38.9	33.4
Full day.....	161	76
Percent full day.....	73.2	52.4
HISPANIC ORIGIN¹		
Total enrolled.....	134	135
Percent enrolled.....	33.4	25.8
Full day.....	62	38
Percent full day.....	46.3	28.1

Note: Includes only those children living with their mother.

¹May be of any race.

boom"¹ children have come of school age, this has changed, and both the school age population and elementary enrollments have risen. This trend is expected to continue for the near-term future. The current projections of the population for children ages 6 to 13 for 1997 is 31.2 million.² If existing enrollment rates for this age group continue, there will be over a million more elementary students in 1997 than in 1992.

Most elementary school students attend public institutions, as the top panel of table C shows. In the fall of 1992, about 10.4 percent of all elementary school students ages 3 to 17 were in private schools, but the data indicate that private school enrollment is more likely for children from families with higher family income. Whereas 3.8 percent of children from families with income less than \$20,000 attended private school, 17.1 percent of those from families with income of \$40,000 or more did so.

¹The "echo boom" is defined by the large increase in births beginning around 1977, which was due primarily to the entrance of "baby boom" women (born 1945-64) into their prime childbearing years)

²Current Population Report, Series P 25-1092, *Population and Projections of the United States by Age, Sex, Race, Hispanic Origin: 1992 to 2050*. Middle series are used for all projections in this report)

Table C. Public and Private Elementary and High School Enrollment of Primary Family Members 3 to 17 Years Old, by Family Income, Race, and Hispanic Origin: October 1992

(In thousands)

Characteristic	Total	Less than \$20,000	\$20,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 and over
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL				
All Races				
Total enrolled.....	29,531	9,393	8,894	9,690
Percent public.....	89.6	96.2	90.4	82.9
Percent private.....	10.4	3.8	9.6	17.1
White				
Total enrolled.....	23,431	6,097	7,482	8,682
Percent public.....	88.5	95.3	90.1	82.6
Percent private.....	11.5	4.7	9.9	17.4
Black				
Total enrolled.....	4,626	2,743	1,037	531
Percent public.....	95.1	98.1	92.7	85.7
Percent private.....	4.9	1.9	7.3	14.3
Hispanic Origin¹				
Total enrolled.....	3,433	1,859	927	532
Percent public.....	92.7	95.1	94.4	80.3
Percent private.....	7.3	4.9	5.6	19.7
HIGH SCHOOL				
All Races				
Total enrolled.....	11,570	2,976	3,618	4,286
Percent public.....	92.4	96.6	94.4	88.5
Percent private.....	7.6	3.4	5.6	11.5
White				
Total enrolled.....	9,320	1,958	2,949	3,883
Percent public.....	91.6	96.7	93.7	88.2
Percent private.....	8.4	3.3	6.3	11.8
Black				
Total enrolled.....	1,747	851	539	214
Percent public.....	96.7	97.5	96.8	92.5
Percent private.....	3.3	2.5	3.2	7.5
Hispanic Origin¹				
Total enrolled.....	1,198	604	358	193
Percent public.....	95.2	97.5	93.6	90.2
Percent private.....	4.8	2.5	6.4	9.8

¹May be of any race.

In the fall of 1992, about 13.3 million persons were enrolled at the high school level (grades 9 through 12). During the late 1980's, the number of persons in high school fell as the size of the population ages 14 to 17 also dropped. Data for 1992 shows a rise in the number of high school students over 1991 (13.3 vs. 13.1 million persons), however, this is not a statistically significant increase. Projections of 14 to 17 year olds indicate that

high school enrollments will continue to rise through most of this decade, if enrollment rates remain the same.

Public institutions account for most high school enrollments, with just 7.6 percent of secondary students attending private schools. The bottom half of table C shows public and private high school enrollment levels by income, race, and Hispanic origin groupings. As with primary school, there is a relationship between family income and private school enrollment. About 3.4 percent of children from lower income (less than \$20,000) families attended private high school, compared to 11.5 percent from higher income families.

High School Dropouts

During the one year period from October 1991 to October 1992, about 384,000, or 4.3 percent, of all students in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade dropped out of high school.³ While this overall national dropout rate is considerably lower than the level of 5.4 percent just 10 years earlier (see table A-3), variation among different subpopulations is apparent.

The data in table D show that the high school dropout rate of 4.1 percent for Whites is not statistically different from the Black rate of 4.9 percent, but is different from the Hispanic rate of 7.9 percent. (The Black and Hispanic rates are not statistically different from each other.) The rates for men and women, at 3.8 and 4.8 percent, respectively, are not statistically different from each other. Across family income groups there are differences in the dropout rate. While 7.2 percent of high school students from families with income below \$20,000

dropped out of high school in the past year, just 1.3 percent of those from families with incomes of \$40,000 or more left school before graduation.

A different measure of high school dropouts is the proportion of persons who are no longer enrolled and have not completed high school. This "dropout pool" measure is to some extent a summary of the year-to-year dropout rates (and reenrollment) over the life of a cohort. Data from table A-4 show that among persons ages 18 to 24 years old, 3.1 million (12.7 percent) were high school dropouts; this is a significant decrease from the level of 10 years earlier when it was 4.5 million and 15.6 percent. Men and women were different in their proportions of dropouts (13.5 vs. 11.9 percent). While Blacks had a somewhat higher proportion of dropouts than Whites (16.3 vs. 12.2 percent), the level for Hispanics was 33.9 percent. Data from table 2 shows that the dropout proportion was considerably higher among young persons of central cities (15.2), than of suburbs (11.0) or nonmetropolitan areas (12.4), which were not statistically different from each other.

College Enrollment

In October 1992, 14,035,000 persons were enrolled in colleges across the nation; this was statistically unchanged from the 14,057,000 who were enrolled in the fall of 1991. While the "traditional" college age population (persons ages 18-24) declined by 4.6 million persons in the past 10 years, the number of college students rose by 1.7 million, largely reflecting the increase in college enrollment by persons ages 25 and older.

Table E details some of the basic characteristics of college students in 1992, illustrating the diverse nature of the college population. As can be seen in the age detail, 39.1 percent of all college students were age 25 or older. In 1972, the year the Bureau first began collecting school enrollment data on a routine basis for persons age 35 and above, just 8.6 percent of all college students were age 35 or older; by 1982 this had risen to 11.3 percent; in 1992 it stood at 16.8 percent.

Women accounted for 55.9 percent of all college students, continuing the majority role they have occupied since 1979. Just 20 years ago, women constituted only 42.6 percent of all college students. Table A-4 shows the proportion of high school graduates ages 18-24 who are enrolled in college. The data show that women in this age group have enrollment rates which exceed that of men (42.8 vs. 40.9). Just twenty years earlier, the enrollment rates strongly favored men, 38.2 vs. 26.3 percent. The age and gender data illustrate the fact that much of the older student enrollment is also enrollment by women. In 1992, among students 35 and over, two-thirds were women. Among all college students, women were more likely than men to be enrolled in a two-year college, and more likely to be in a public school.

³The annual high school dropout rate was first presented in Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 413, *School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 1983*. Details of its calculation are presented in that report, as well as in appendix B, Definitions and Explanations, of this report.

Table D. Annual High School Dropout Rates: October 1992

Characteristic	Percent
Total	4.3
Male	3.8
Female	4.8
White	4.1
Black	4.9
Hispanic origin ¹	7.9
Family income less than \$20,000	7.2
Family income between \$20,000 and \$39,000	3.4
Family income greater than \$40,000	1.3
10th grade	2.5
11th grade	3.7
12th grade	7.2

¹May be of any race.

There were 11.6 million students enrolled at the undergraduate level, and 63.6 percent of them were enrolled in four-year institutions. The majority of students (69.3 percent) were enrolled full-time, and 81.8 percent were enrolled in a public college or university. Finally, 60.4 percent of all college students were employed either full- or part-time.

For many persons, college enrollment must be negotiated not only with respect to financial cost, but among many life-cycle factors as well, such as marriage, building a family and establishing a career. Table F shows the proportion of students attending full-time at two-year and four-year institutions, by the age of the student. In general, a much larger proportion of students at four-year schools attend full-time, but there is also a strong relationship between age and full-time attendance. While 90.9 percent of traditional age college

students in four-year schools are attending full-time, just 23.6 percent of persons age 35 or older in two-year schools are full-time students.

DATA FILES AVAILABLE

The time series tabulations of enrollment shown in tables A1 through A6 in appendix A are now available on two floppy diskettes. The tables are available as either six ASCII print files, or six LOTUS 1-2-3 © files (version 2.1). Users wishing to purchase files should specify which data format they prefer (ASCII or LOTUS), include a check for \$25 (make checks payable to "Commerce-Census") and send to:

Education and Social Stratification Branch
Population Division
U.S. Bureau of the Census
Washington, DC 20233

Table E. Characteristics of the College Population: October 1992

(In thousands)

Characteristic	Total population	Enrolled in college	Type of school			Percent enrolled full time	Percent public school	Percent employed		
			2-year college	4-year college	Graduate school			Total	Full time	Part time
Total	195,586	14,035	4,239	7,404	2,392	65.5	78.8	60.4	31.3	29.1
Male	93,604	6,192	1,688	3,403	1,102	69.9	77.6	60.5	31.8	28.7
Female	101,982	7,844	2,551	4,002	1,291	61.9	79.8	60.4	31.0	29.4
White	165,757	11,710	3,527	6,152	2,030	64.4	78.6	62.7	32.2	30.5
Black	22,614	1,424	466	815	143	68.6	80.0	50.3	30.8	19.5
Hispanic origin ¹	15,763	918	448	409	62	56.2	86.9	59.6	32.4	27.2
15 to 19 years old	16,648	3,097	1,084	2,013	0	91.6	79.0	45.9	7.5	38.4
20 and 21 years old	6,884	2,938	789	2,113	36	86.4	80.2	54.2	12.7	41.5
22 to 24 years old	10,859	2,512	581	1,423	508	72.2	80.1	60.1	27.4	32.7
25 to 34 years old	41,661	3,125	988	1,102	1,035	42.0	78.9	70.6	54.6	16.0
35 years and older	119,532	2,364	797	753	814	29.0	75.5	74.0	59.2	14.8

¹May be of any race.

Table F. Full-time Enrollment, by Age and Type of College: October 1992

(In thousands)

Age	All colleges		2-Year colleges		4-Year colleges		Graduate school	
	Total students	Percent full time	Total students	Percent full time	Total students	Percent full time	Total students	Percent full time
Total	14,035	65.5	4,239	52.0	7,404	79.1	2,392	47.1
15 to 24 years	8,547	84.1	2,454	69.8	5,549	91.2	544	77.2
25 to 34 years	3,125	42.0	988	30.8	1,102	48.1	1,035	46.2
35 years and over	2,364	29.0	797	23.6	753	35.9	814	28.0