Race/Ethnicity of Adults in Developmental Education

Significantly more White students over aged 30 enrolled in developmental education over time

![Bar Chart]

Source: NPSAS data analyzed for Strong Start to Finish by Research Triangle Institute
Notes: The data comes from a nationally representative sample of college students collected by the US Department of Education called the National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey (NPSAS). This chart depicts the percentage of first-year undergraduates age 30 or older taking a developmental course by race/ethnicity for select years. The White group was the only to show a statistically significant difference between 2003-04 and 2015-16.

Adult students returning to higher education represent an important population within numerous initiatives including but not limited to reverse transfer, state attainment goals, workforce development and upskilling for dislocated workers. To provide additional detail on last week’s Points of Interest titled Age Group Dynamics, this contribution examines trends for returning adults over age 30 by their race/ethnicity.

Using a nationally representative sample of students across four observation periods, researchers identified a trend of an increasing proportion (18.8%) of White students over age 30 or older enrolling in developmental education courses to the same extent as Black (18.9%) and Hispanic (19.1%) adult students. This Points of Interest highlights that significantly more first-year White students over aged 30 enrolled in developmental education over time.

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