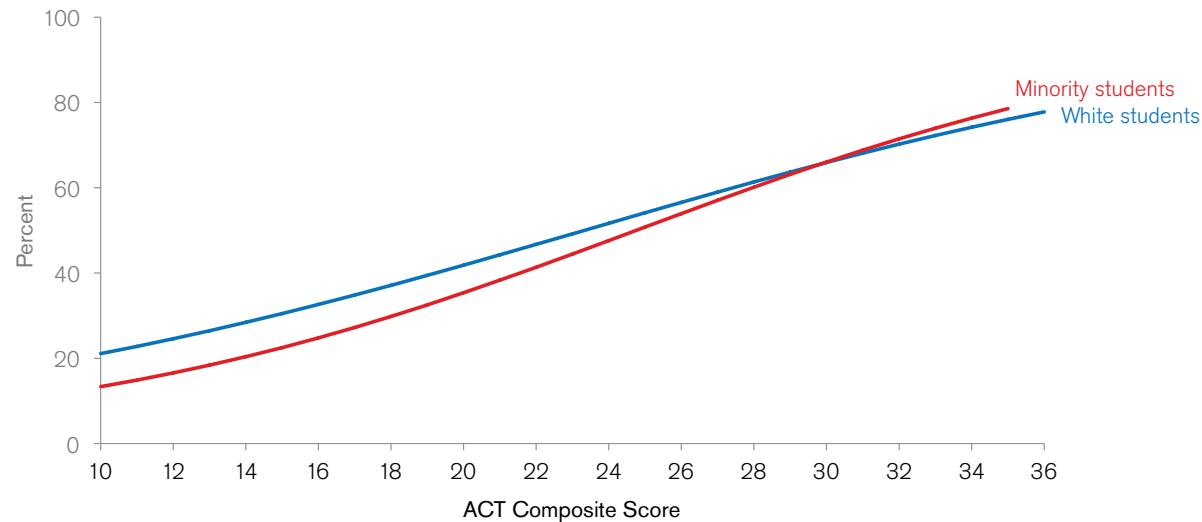


Bachelor's Degree Completion by ACT Composite Score and Race/Ethnicity

Among Students Enrolled in a Four-Year Postsecondary Institution

JUSTINE RADUNZEL

Students' Chances of Completing a Bachelor's Degree within Six Years of Enrolling in a Four-Year Postsecondary Institution by ACT Composite Score and Race/Ethnicity



Note: Underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students included African American, American Indian, and Hispanic students. Results based on data from nearly 126,000 ACT-tested students who enrolled in a four-year postsecondary institution as new students in fall 2000 through 2003. More than 60 institutions were represented. Degree completion from initial institution was tracked. For a more detailed description of the study, see [ACT Research Report 2013-5](#).

A recent ACT study¹ that included data from more than 60 four-year postsecondary institutions found that the typical six-year bachelor's degree completion rate across institutions was 14 percentage points higher for White students than for underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students (44% versus 30%, respectively).

However, when students' academic achievement levels (as measured by Composite score on the ACT® college readiness assessment) were taken into account, smaller racial/ethnic differences in degree completion rates were seen, especially among students with higher ACT Composite scores. For example, for students with an ACT

Composite score of 25, White students had a 54% chance of completing a bachelor's degree from their initial institution compared to a 51% chance for minority students.

For students with ACT Composite scores of 30 or above, chances of completing a bachelor's degree for minority students were the same as or slightly higher than those for White students. ■

¹ Justine Radunzel and Julie Noble, *Differential Effects on Student Demographic Groups of Using ACT College Readiness Assessment Composite Score, ACT Benchmarks, and High School Grade Point Average for Predicting Long-Term College Success through Degree Completion*, ACT Research Report 2013-5 (Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc., 2013). http://www.act.org/research/researchers/reports/pdf/ACT_RR2013-5.pdf.

For both White and underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students enrolling in a four-year postsecondary institution, students' chances of completing a bachelor's degree within six years increased as their ACT Composite score increased.

Racial/ethnic gaps in six-year bachelor's degree completion rates were reduced when students' academic achievement levels were taken into account.