

# National Collegiate Dropout and Graduation Rates

2003

*Compiled by ACT™*

Since 1983, ACT has collected a comprehensive database of graduation rates and freshman to sophomore dropout rates. These dropout and graduation rates provide national benchmarks for institution type and level of selectivity. Data are compiled by ACT from the ACT Institutional Data Questionnaire, which is completed annually by more than 2,500 two-year and four-year institutions.

## National Dropout Rates

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## National Graduation Rates

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For more information, contact ACT Office for the Enhancement of Educational Practices, (319) 341-2275

# National Dropout Rates

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Table 1

## Freshman to Sophomore Year by Type of Institution

Degree Level/Control	N	SD*	Mean %
Two-year Public	729	14.6	47.2
Two-year Private	122	18.4	33.0
BA/BS Public	84	13.4	31.8
BA/BS Private	464	16.6	29.6
MA/1st Professional Public	227	10.7	30.2
MA/1st Professional Private	506	12.0	25.7
PhD Public	214	9.4	22.7
PhD Private	184	12.1	17.7
Total	2530	17.0	32.7

\* Standard deviation

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Table 2

## Freshman to Sophomore Year by Admissions Selectivity

Selectivity Level	Typical Test Scores		N	SD*	Mean %
	ACT	SAT			
Highly Selective	27–31	1220–1380	127	9.5	8.7
Selective	22–27	1030–1220	414	7.8	18.6
Traditional	20–23	950–1070	704	10.1	27.7
Liberal	18–21	870– 990	386	14.1	35.5
Open	17–20	830– 950	892	15.8	45.4
Number of Institutions			2523		

\* Standard deviation

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Table 3

## Public Institutions: Freshman to Sophomore Year by Type and Selectivity

<b>Self-Reported Admissions Selectivity</b>		<b>Associate</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>PhD</b>
<b>Highly Selective</b>	Mean % =		14.5	9.0	8.4
	N =	NA	4	3	21
	*SD =		5.9	3.0	4.0
<b>Selective</b>	Mean % =		16.8	22.4	19.2
	N =	NA	6	42	80
	*SD =		12.3	6.1	7.1
<b>Traditional</b>	Mean % =	36.0	27.5	28.1	27.0
	N =	3	37	109	83
	*SD =	16.4	9.6	8.2	6.4
<b>Liberal</b>	Mean % =	45.1	32.6	36.4	28.8
	N =	40	14	41	23
	*SD =	12.5	8.8	7.9	8.8
<b>Open</b>	Mean % =	47.4	45.3	41.3	37.5
	N =	683	23	32	6
	*SD =	14.6	10.2	12.3	9.3
<b>Number of Institutions</b>		726	84	227	213

\* Standard deviation

Source: Compiled from ACT Institutional Data File, 2003.

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Table 4

## Private Institutions: Freshman to Sophomore Year by Type and Selectivity

<b>Self-Reported Admissions Selectivity</b>		<b>Associate</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>PhD</b>
<b>Highly Selective</b>	Mean % =		7.6	9.2	9.0
	N =	NA	32	19	47
	*SD =		5.7	4.9	14.1
<b>Selective</b>	Mean % =	24.0	18.3	18.8	15.8
	N =	3	84	133	65
	*SD =	22.5	7.7	8.5	5.3
<b>Traditional</b>	Mean % =	20.0	30.9	27.3	23.1
	N =	18	154	246	54
	*SD =	14.4	12.6	9.2	8.7
<b>Liberal</b>	Mean % =	33.6	37.0	31.7	33.4
	N =	53	125	74	16
	*SD =	14.1	15.9	13.9	12.8
<b>Open</b>	Mean % =	38.8	37.5	37.1	
	N =	46	67	33	NA
	*SD =	21.2	20.5	15.8	
<b>Number of Institutions</b>		120	462	505	182

\* Standard deviation

Source: Compiled from ACT Institutional Data File, 2003.

# National Graduation\* Rates 2003

Table 5  
by Type of Institution

Degree Level/Control	N	SD**	Mean %
Two-year Public	793	19.5	30.1
Two-year Private	128	23.5	60.1
BA/BS Public	63	17.5	41.2
BA/BS Private	388	20.4	54.5
MA/1st Professional Public	200	16.1	38.2
MA/1st Professional Private	464	16.6	53.8
PhD Public	203	18.1	46.1
PhD Private	180	17.5	64.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2419</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>45.0</b>

\* Graduation in 3 years for associate's degree; 5 years for BA/BS

\*\* Standard deviation

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Table 6

## Public Institutions by Type and Selectivity

<b>Self-Reported Admissions Selectivity</b>		<b>Associate</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>PhD</b>
<b>Highly Selective</b>	Mean % =		74.0	78.0	72.8
	N =	NA	4	3	20
	**SD =		10.4	3.5	11.2
<b>Selective</b>	Mean % =		62.0	46.4	52.0
	N =	NA	6	40	76
	**SD =		15.6	16.7	14.1
<b>Traditional</b>	Mean % =	37.3	41.1	39.6	38.3
	N =	4	34	106	80
	**SD =	24.3	12.2	14.1	11.4
<b>Liberal</b>	Mean % =	36.8	27.6	28.0	32.0
	N =	44	7	33	23
	**SD =	23.7	7.8	10.6	18.1
<b>Open</b>	Mean % =	29.7	28.2	24.0	35.0
	N =	745	12	18	4
	**SD =	19.1	12.5	8.7	31.8
<b>Number of Institutions</b>		<b>793</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>203</b>

\* Graduation in 3 years for associate's degree; 5 years for BA/BS

\*\* Standard deviation

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Table 7

## Private Institutions by Type and Selectivity

<b>Self-Reported Admissions Selectivity</b>		<b>Associate</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>PhD</b>
<b>Highly Selective</b>	Mean % =		83.4	79.7	82.8
	N =	NA	34	20	47
	**SD =		8.1	6.5	10.3
<b>Selective</b>	Mean % =	73.3	66.7	62.1	64.5
	N =	4	81	125	65
	**SD =	5.4	10.7	12.5	10.8
<b>Traditional</b>	Mean % =	62.0	49.6	51.6	54.0
	N =	15	138	227	53
	**SD =	26.5	15.3	13.2	13.3
<b>Liberal</b>	Mean % =	62.0	45.3	43.3	46.6
	N =	60	89	65	13
	**SD =	20.9	19.7	16.8	19.6
<b>Open</b>	Mean % =	56.1	44.3	40.1	
	N =	49	46	27	NA
	**SD =	25.6	24.2	22.5	
<b>Number of Institutions</b>		<b>128</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>178</b>

\* Graduation in 3 years for associate's degree; 5 years for BA/BS

\*\* Standard deviation