

MEASURING UP

2004

**THE STATE REPORT CARD
ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

SOUTH CAROLINA



**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY AND
HIGHER EDUCATION**

WHAT IS MEASURING UP?

This state report card is derived from *Measuring Up 2004*, the national report card for higher education. Its purpose is to provide the public and policymakers with information to assess and improve postsecondary education in each state. *Measuring Up 2004* is the third in a series of biennial report cards.

Measuring Up 2004 evaluates states on their performance in higher education because it is the states that are primarily responsible for educational access and quality in the United States. In this report card, “higher education” refers to all education and training beyond high school, including all public and private, two- and four-year, for-profit and nonprofit institutions.

The report card grades states in six overall performance categories:

■ **Preparation:** How adequately are students in each state being prepared for education and training beyond high school?

■ **Participation:** Do state residents have sufficient opportunities to enroll in education and training beyond high school?

■ **Affordability:** How affordable is higher education for students and their families?

■ **Completion:** Do students make progress toward and complete their certificates and degrees in a timely manner?

■ **Benefits:** What benefits does the state receive as a result of having a highly educated population?

■ **Learning:** What is known about student learning as a result of education and training beyond high school?

Each state receives a grade in each performance category, and the grades are based on the state’s performance on several indicators, or quantitative measures, in each category. Most states receive an “Incomplete” in learning because there are no common benchmarks that allow for state-by-state comparisons in learning. Five states, however, receive a “Plus” in learning to highlight their work in developing measures to evaluate the state’s educational capital—that is, the reservoir of high-level knowledge and skills

that the state’s population has attained. For more information about this, see page 12 of this state report card.

In four of the performance categories—preparation, participation, completion, and benefits—grades are calculated by comparing each state’s current performance to that of the best-performing states. This provides a basis for assessing and comparing each state’s performance in the national context and encourages each state to “measure up” to the highest performing states.

In the affordability category, however, the nation as a whole is “measuring down.” That is, even in the best-performing states, higher education has become *less* rather than *more* affordable when the costs of attending college are considered in relation to family income. As a result, grades in the affordability category are calculated by comparing each state’s current results to the performance of the top states *a decade ago*. This enables policymakers to examine their state’s results in relation to other states, while also encouraging improved performance over time. A glance at the table of state grades on page 15 reveals that the affordability category is the only one in which no state receives an A.

Measuring Up 2004 also compares each state’s current results with its own performance a decade ago. Although this historical information is not graded, it is offered to allow states to examine their improvements and declines in performance. In gathering information for this period, information from 1992—or the closest year available—is compared with the most recently available data. All information was collected from national, reliable sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education. (For more information about grading, data collection, and sources, please see the technical report at www.highereducation.org.)

This state report card begins by summarizing the state’s performance today compared with ten years ago, and by presenting key policy questions that these results suggest for the state. Next, the state’s performance in each category is described in greater detail, followed by additional contextual information.

A Snapshot of Improvement Over the Past Decade

High school graduates are, in general, better prepared for college today than their peers were a decade ago. However, most states, and the nation as a whole, have made little progress in translating these gains into improvements at the college level.

Preparation: 44 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 6 improved on some of the indicators.

Participation: 8 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 23 improved on some of the indicators; 19 declined on every indicator.

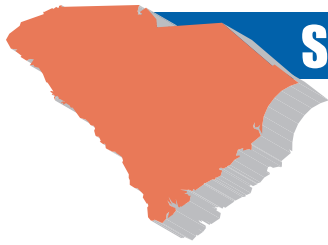
Affordability: 2 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 31 improved on some of the indicators; 17 declined on every indicator.

Completion: 37 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 9 improved on some of the indicators; 4 declined on every indicator.

Benefits: 41 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 8 improved on some of the indicators; 1 declined on every indicator.

Learning: 45 states receive an “Incomplete”; 5 states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) receive a “Plus.”

For more information about improvement, please see *Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education* at www.highereducation.org.



South Carolina's performance is mediocre in preparing students for college, and the state continues to perform poorly in getting young people to graduate from high school. The state has lost ground in providing students with an affordable higher education, which may undermine its efforts to send clear messages to them about the importance of being prepared academically for college.

Strengths

Preparation

■ About three-quarters of secondary school students in South Carolina are taught by qualified teachers, which compares well with top-performing states. The state has improved substantially on this measure over the past decade, keeping pace with the national increase in this area.

Participation

■ Over the past decade, South Carolina has narrowed the gap in college enrollment between whites and minority ethnic groups. The percentage of minority ethnic groups enrolled in college has increased over the same period. However, substantial gaps remain.

■ Over the past decade, the percentage of low-income young adults enrolled in college has more than doubled, narrowing the gaps in college participation between those from low-income and those from high-income families. However, substantial gaps still remain.

Completion

■ A very large percentage of freshmen in four-year colleges and universities return for their sophomore year, compared with other states.

■ Compared with other states, a large percentage of students complete certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Benefits

■ Over the past decade South Carolina has narrowed the gap between whites and minority ethnic groups in the percentage with a bachelor's degree. However, this gap remains large.

Weaknesses

Preparation

■ South Carolina is among the lowest performing states in the percentage of young adults earning a high school credential by age 24. In addition, the state has seen a substantial decrease over the past decade in young adults from minority ethnic groups earning a high school credential.

■ The performance of 8th graders is only fair on national math assessments, and it is poor in science and writing. Compared with their peers in other states, low-income 8th graders score very low on the math assessment.

■ The proportions of 11th and 12th graders performing well on Advanced Placement tests and college entrance exams are very small.



Participation

■ The likelihood of 9th graders enrolling in college within four years is low, primarily because the percentage graduating from high school is the lowest of all states. Compared with a decade ago, a smaller proportion of students finish high school within four years.

■ The percentage of working-age adults enrolled in college-level education or training is very low compared with other states.

Affordability

■ Net college costs for low- and middle-income students to attend community colleges represent a third of their annual family income. For the same students at public four-year colleges and universities, net costs represent nearly half of their income. These families earn on average \$18,481 annually. Over 80% of students in the state attend public two- or four-year institutions. (Net college costs equal tuition, room, and board minus financial aid.)

Completion

■ Over the decade, South Carolina has seen one of the largest declines in the country in the percentage of first-year community college students returning for their second year.

Benefits

■ Compared with other states, a small proportion of residents have a bachelor's degree.

Policy Questions

■ Can South Carolina link higher education and K–12 schools more effectively to improve academic achievement and preparation for college?

■ Can South Carolina increase the number of students who finish high school within four years?

■ Can the state raise the level of academic performance of low-income high school students?

■ Considering that 19% of adults do not have a high school credential (compared with a national average of 14%), can the state encourage more residents to get a General Education Development (GED) credential?

■ Given the projections of a larger and more diverse high school population, can the state provide college opportunities for all college-qualified students?

■ Can South Carolina provide more opportunities for working-age adults to enroll in higher education?

■ South Carolina's Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarship program provides funds for students to enroll in higher education based largely on academic performance in high school. Can South Carolina develop financial aid programs focusing on students' financial need in order to ensure broader access for college-qualified students?

■ Can the state's two-year colleges be made more affordable, particularly for low- and middle-income families?

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Over the past decade, South Carolina has improved in preparing students to succeed in college. Despite that progress, South Carolina receives only a C in preparation this year.

Graded Information

■ South Carolina is among the poorest-performing states in the percentage of young adults earning a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) diploma by age 24.

■ Eighth graders' performance is only fair on national assessments in math, and very poor on national assessments in science and writing.

■ Compared with their peers in other states, low-income 8th graders perform very poorly on national assessments in math.

■ Very small proportions of 11th and 12th graders score well on Advanced Placement tests and college entrance exams.

■ However, about three-quarters of secondary school students are taught by qualified teachers, which compares very well with top-performing states.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past decade, the percentage of 8th graders performing well on national assessments in math has increased substantially.

■ During the past few years, the percentage of 8th graders performing well on national assessments in writing has increased, although the state's current performance on this measure remains very poor compared with other states.

PREPARATION	SOUTH CAROLINA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
High School Completion (20%)			
18- to 24-year-olds with a high school credential	85%	85%*	94%
K-12 Course Taking (35%)			
9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course	36%	n/a	59%
9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course	21%	n/a	41%
8th grade students taking algebra	14%	n/a	35%
12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course	n/a	n/a	66%
K-12 Student Achievement (35%)			
8th graders scoring at or above "proficient" on the national assessment exam:			
in math	15%	26%	36%
in reading	22%	24%	39%
in science	17%	20%	42%
in writing	15%	20%	41%
Low-income 8th graders scoring at or above "proficient" on the national assessment exam in math	5%	12%	23%
Number of scores in the top 20% nationally on SAT/ACT college entrance exam per 1,000 high school graduates	67	132	227
Number of scores that are 3 or higher on an Advanced Placement subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors	82	130	219
Teacher Quality (10%)			
<i>7th to 12th graders taught by teachers with a major in their subject</i>	61%	74%	81%

*Eighty-one percent of 18- to 24-year-olds have a regular high school diploma; 4% have a GED.
Note: Indicators in italics are new for 2004.

■ The percentage of low-income 8th graders performing well on national assessments in math has more than doubled over the past decade, although South Carolina's current performance is very poor compared with other states.

■ In the same period, the proportions of 11th and 12th graders taking and scoring well on college entrance exams have increased substantially, although the state's current performance is very poor relative to other states.

■ The percentage of secondary school students taught by qualified teachers has increased substantially during the past decade.

Other Key Facts

■ Over the past decade, the percentage of young adults who are from minority ethnic groups and who earn a high school credential has decreased from 85% to 79%.

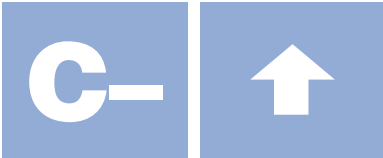
■ About 19% of children under age 18 live in poverty, compared with a national rate of 17%.

■ Policymakers and state residents do not have access to important information about the courses students take in high school because the state declined to participate in the national survey.

The preparation category measures how well a state's K–12 schools prepare students for education and training beyond high school. The opportunities that residents have to enroll in and benefit from higher education depend heavily on the performance of their state's K–12 educational system.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



South Carolina has shown improvement in enrolling students in higher education over the past decade. However, this year South Carolina receives a C- in participation because other states performed better.

Graded Information

■ Compared with other states, the chance of South Carolina high school students enrolling in college by age 19 is low, primarily because the proportion of students who graduate from high school within four years is small. This proportion is among the lowest in the country.

■ The percentage of working-age adults (ages 25 to 49) who are enrolled part-time in college-level education or training is very low.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past decade, the chance of enrolling in college by age 19 has increased by 34%—the highest increase in the nation. Although a smaller percentage of students graduate from high school within four years in the state, more of those who graduate enroll in college. Nonetheless, South Carolina's current performance on this measure remains low when compared with other states.

■ During the past decade, the percentage of working-age adults who are enrolled part-time in college-level education or training has declined by 19%, exceeding the nationwide decline of 11%.

PARTICIPATION	SOUTH CAROLINA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Young Adults (60%)			
Chance for college by age 19	25%	34%	52%
18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college	28%	36%	40%
Working-Age Adults (40%)			
25- to 49-year-olds enrolled part-time in any type of postsecondary education	3.4%	2.8%	5.4%

Other Key Facts

■ Among the young adult population (ages 18 to 24), the gap in college participation between whites and minority ethnic groups has narrowed. A decade ago, 20 of every 100 young adults from minority ethnic groups were enrolled in college; now 29 of 100 are.

■ The college participation gap between young adults from high-income and those from low-income families has also narrowed. A decade ago, 15 of every 100 young adults from low-income families were enrolled in college; now 32 of 100 are.

■ The state's population is projected to grow by 13% from 2000 to 2015, which matches the national rate. During approximately the same period, the number of high school graduates is projected to increase by 10%.

■ About 19% of the adult population has less than a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared with 14% of adults nationwide.

■ In South Carolina, 2,706 more students are entering the state than are leaving to attend college. About 12% of South Carolina high school graduates who go to college attend college out of state.

The participation category addresses the opportunities for state residents to enroll in higher education. A strong grade in participation generally indicates that state residents have high individual expectations for education and that the state provides enough spaces and types of educational programs for its residents.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



South Carolina has lost ground in providing affordable higher education opportunities over the past decade. Like many other states this year, South Carolina receives an F in affordability.

Graded Information

■ Compared with best-performing states, families in South Carolina devote a very large share of family income, even after financial aid, to attend public two- and four-year colleges and universities, which enroll 82% of college students in the state.

■ The state's investment in need-based financial aid is very low when compared with top-performing states, and the state does not offer low-priced college opportunities.

■ Undergraduate students borrowed on average \$3,297 in 2003.

Other Key Facts

■ In South Carolina, 42% of students are enrolled in community colleges and 40% in public four-year colleges and universities.

AFFORDABILITY	SOUTH CAROLINA		Top States A Decade Ago
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Family Ability to Pay (50%)			
Percent of income (average of all income groups) needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid:			
at community colleges	22%	25%	15%
at public 4-year colleges/universities	28%	32%	16%
at private 4-year colleges/universities	48%	58%	32%
Strategies for Affordability (40%)			
State investment in need-based financial aid as compared to the federal investment	24%	23%	89%
At lowest-priced colleges, the share of income that the poorest families need to pay for tuition	15%	25%	7%
Reliance on Loans (10%)			
Average loan amount that undergraduate students borrow each year	\$2,874	\$3,297	\$2,619

Note: In the affordability category, the lower the figures the better the performance for all indicators except for "State investment in need-based financial aid."

The affordability category measures whether students and families can afford to pay for higher education, given income levels, financial aid, and the types of colleges and universities in the state.

A CLOSER LOOK AT FAMILY ABILITY TO PAY	Average family income	Community colleges		Public 4-year colleges/universities		Private 4-year colleges/universities	
		Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost	Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost	Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost
Income groups used to calculate 2004 family ability to pay							
20% of the population with the lowest income	\$10,600	\$6,413	61%	\$8,529	80%	\$15,508	146%
20% of the population with lower-middle income	\$26,361	\$7,045	27%	\$9,083	34%	\$16,022	61%
20% of the population with middle income	\$42,260	\$7,416	18%	\$9,492	22%	\$16,352	39%
20% of the population with upper-middle income	\$65,210	\$7,535	12%	\$9,982	15%	\$16,663	26%
20% of the population with the highest income	\$106,300	\$7,623	7%	\$9,988	9%	\$17,816	17%
40% of the population with the lowest income	\$18,481	\$6,729	36%	\$8,806	48%	\$15,765	85%

*Net college cost equals tuition, room, and board, minus financial aid.

Those who are striving to reach or stay in the middle class—the 40% of the population with the lowest incomes—earn on average \$18,481 each year.

■ If a student from such a family were to attend a community college in the state, their net cost to attend college would represent about 36% of their income annually:

Tuition, room, and board:	\$7,727
Financial aid received:	-\$ 998
Net college cost:	\$6,729
Percent of income:	36%

■ If the same student were to attend a public four-year college in the state, their net cost to attend college would represent about 48% of their income annually:

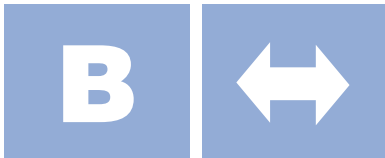
Tuition, room, and board:	\$11,157
Financial aid received:	-\$ 2,351
Net college cost:	\$ 8,806
Percent of income:	48%

Note

The numbers shown for tuition, room, and board minus financial aid may not exactly equal net college cost due to rounding.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Over the past decade, South Carolina has shown consistently good performance in the proportion of students earning a certificate or degree in a timely manner. This year South Carolina receives a B in completion.

Graded Information

- Compared with other states, a fairly large percentage (49%) of first-year students in community colleges return for their second year.
- A very large percentage (77%) of freshmen at four-year colleges and universities return for their sophomore year.
- Of first-time, full-time college students, a large percentage complete a bachelor's degree within six years of entering college.
- Also, a high proportion of students complete certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Change in Graded Measures

- Over the past decade, the percentage of first-year community college students returning for their second year has decreased substantially, making South Carolina one of the fastest declining states on this measure.
- In this same period, however, the state has consistently performed very well in the percentage of freshmen at four-year colleges and universities returning for their sophomore year.

COMPLETION	SOUTH CAROLINA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Persistence (20%)			
1st year community college students returning their second year	61%	49%	63%
Freshmen at 4-year colleges/universities returning their sophomore year	78%	77%	84%
Completion (80%)			
First-time, full-time students completing a bachelor's degree within 6 years of college entrance	54%	53%	64%
Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all colleges and universities per 100 undergraduate students	17	18	21

The completion category addresses whether students continue through their educational programs and earn certificates or degrees in a timely manner. Certificates and degrees from one- and two-year programs as well as the bachelor's degree are included.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Over the past decade, South Carolina has reaped greater benefits from having a more highly educated population. Despite that improvement, South Carolina receives a C in benefits this year.

Graded Information

■ Compared with other states, a small proportion of residents have a bachelor's degree, and this weakens the state economy.

■ However, residents contribute substantially to the civic good, as measured by charitable giving, volunteerism, and voting.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past decade, the economic benefits that South Carolina enjoys as a result of the percentage of its population with a bachelor's degree have decreased substantially (by 14%), in contrast to a nationwide increase of 18%.

■ Over about the same period, the percentage of residents voting has increased slightly (by 5%), in contrast to a nationwide drop of 9%.

Other Key Facts

■ If all ethnic groups had the same educational attainment and earnings as whites, total personal income in the state would be about \$3.8 billion higher, and the state would realize an estimated \$1.3 billion in additional tax revenues.

■ Over the past decade, South Carolina has narrowed the gap between whites and minority ethnic groups in the percentage who have a bachelor's degree.

BENEFITS	SOUTH CAROLINA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Educational Achievement (37.5%)			
Population aged 25 to 65 with a bachelor's degree or higher	21%	23%	36%
Economic Benefits (31.25%)			
Increase in total personal income as a result of the percentage of the population holding a bachelor's degree	9%	7%	12%
Increase in total personal income as a result of the percentage of the population with some college (including an associate's degree), but not a bachelor's degree	3%	2%	3%
Civic Benefits (31.25%)			
Residents voting in national elections	51%	53%	60%
Of those who itemize on federal income taxes, the percentage declaring charitable gifts	91%	89%	92%
<i>Increase in volunteering rate as a result of college education</i>	n/a	19%	22%
Adult Skill Levels (0%)*			
Adults demonstrating high-level literacy skills:			
quantitative	15%	19%	33%
prose	14%	18%	33%
document	12%	15%	28%

*Adult Skill Levels for 2004 are estimated and are not used to calculate grades.

Note: Indicators in italics are new for 2004.

■ In 2002, South Carolina scored 51 on the New Economy Index, compared to a nationwide score of 60. The New Economy Index, developed by the Progressive Policy Institute, measures the extent to which states are participating in knowledge-based industries.

■ Policymakers and state residents do not have access to important information about high-level literacy skills because the state has declined to participate in the national literacy survey.

The benefits category measures the economic and societal benefits that the state receives as the result of having well educated residents.

2004
Grade



South Carolina residents perform well below the national average on literacy measures, reflecting low levels of educational attainment. Supported by a strong two-year technical college system, higher proportions of college graduates appear prepared to enroll in licensed technical careers and professions, while below-average proportions take graduate admissions tests and perform competitively. College graduates exceed national averages on most direct measures of student learning, with the exception of writing for two-year college students.

In previous years, *Measuring Up* gave all states an “Incomplete” in learning because there are no common benchmarks for learning that would allow for state comparisons. *Measuring Up 2004*, for the first time, gives a “Plus” in learning to five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) that have developed comparable learning measures through their participation in a national project conducted by the National Forum on College-Level Learning and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts.¹

Based on the results of the project, the learning category is being constructed as the other five performance categories in *Measuring Up* have been, with indicators that are grouped in several themes:

1. Literacy levels of the state’s residents:

What are the abilities of the college-educated population?

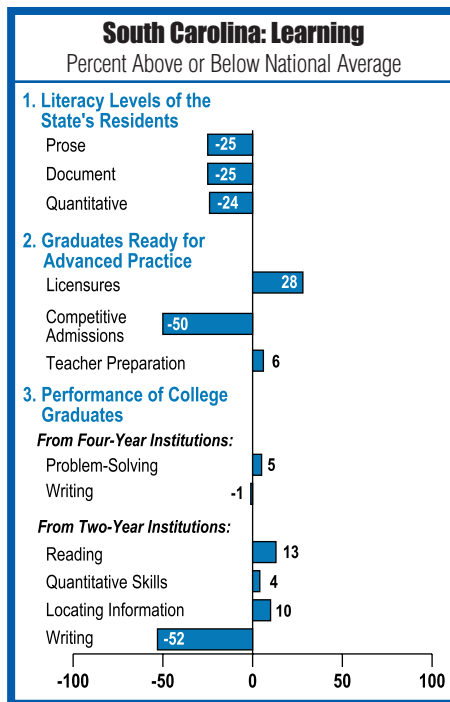
2. Graduates ready for advanced practice:

To what extent do colleges and universities educate students to be capable of contributing to the workforce?

3. Performance of college graduates:

How effectively can college and university graduates communicate and solve problems?

In order to evaluate state performance, the values for each indicator within these themes are compared to a common standard: the national average on each measure. Performance on the resulting



group of measures creates a “learning profile” for each of the five states. Each state’s performance is reflected by how many percentage points *above* or *below* this national level its value falls (see chart).

The bars to the left of the vertical line show how many percentage points below the national average the state falls; bars to the right indicate how many percentage points above this benchmark the state performs.

South Carolina Results

South Carolina’s “educational pipeline” loses many students early, with almost half of 9th graders failing to graduate from high school within four years. However, those

who do make it to college are comparatively well prepared, and the state’s colleges and universities have very good rates of college completion (the state receives a B in completion this year).

This bifurcated pattern is reflected in the state’s learning measures. Literacy levels for the adult population are well below national averages (see chart). However, the performance of South Carolina college students on direct measures of student learning is mostly above average, with the exception of writing for two-year college students. Much of the challenge with respect to writing can be traced to a notable gap in performance between the state’s white and African-American populations (African-Americans constitute more than a quarter of all students enrolled). The state’s African-American students score below white students in the state and frequently score lower than their counterparts in other states as well.

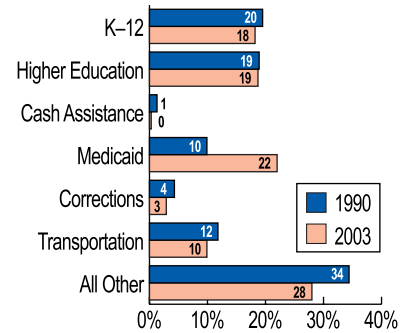
The proportion of graduates who take and pass licensing examinations governing entry to technical professions like nursing and physical therapy are both above average, while the proportions of four-year graduates taking graduate admissions examinations and performing competitively are both below average. This may reflect South Carolina’s historic commitment to two-year technical colleges and the many applied programs (especially in health fields) offered by the state’s four-year colleges.

¹ A report on the results of the project will be released in November.

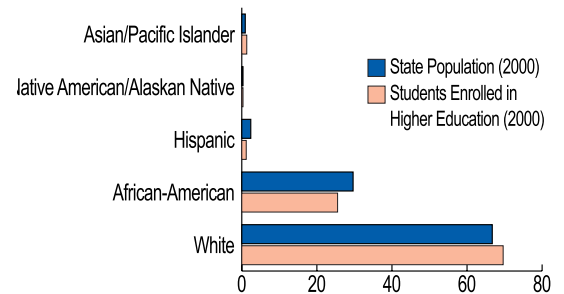
The learning results shown on this page are provided to make broad comparisons across states. But because relatively small numbers of students were tested on the exams under Performance of College Graduates, results should be treated with caution. Readers should look at the overall *pattern* of results in a state profile without making too much of the individual values for each measure.

State Context	South Carolina	State Rank
Population (2003)	4,147,152	25
Gross state product (2001, in millions)	\$115,204	28
Leading Indicators	South Carolina	U.S.
Projected % change in population, 2000-2015	13.2%	12.9%
Projected % change in number of all high school graduates, 2002-2017	9.8%	8.0%
Projected budget surplus/shortfall by 2010	-6.3%	-3.4%
Average income of poorest 20% of population (2002)	\$10,600	\$12,072
Children in poverty (2001)	18.0%	16.0%
Percent of adult population with less than a high school diploma or equivalent (2003)	19.2%	14.0%
New economy index (2002)*	51.1	60.3
Facts and Figures	South Carolina	
	Number/Amount	Percent
Institutions of Postsecondary Education (2002-03)		
Public 4-year	12	
Public 2-year	21	
Private 4-year	23	
Private 2-year	7	
Students Enrolled by Institution Type (2001)		
Public 4-year	67,376	40%
Public 2-year	71,409	42%
Private 4-year	28,276	17%
Private 2-year	1,602	1%
Students Enrolled by Level (2001)		
Undergraduate	168,663	88%
Graduate	19,970	10%
Professional	2,957	2%
Enrollment Status of Students (2001)		
Full-time	123,810	65%
Part-time	67,780	35%
Net Migration of Students (2000)		
Positive numbers for net migration mean that more students are entering than leaving the state to attend college. Negative numbers reveal the reverse.	2,706	
Average Tuition (2002-03)		
Public 4-year institutions	\$6,065	
Public 2-year institutions	\$2,635	
Private 4-year institutions	\$14,626	
State and Local Appropriations for Higher Education		
Per \$1,000 of personal income, FY 2004	\$6	
Per capita, FY 2004	\$160	
% change, FY 1994-2004		7%

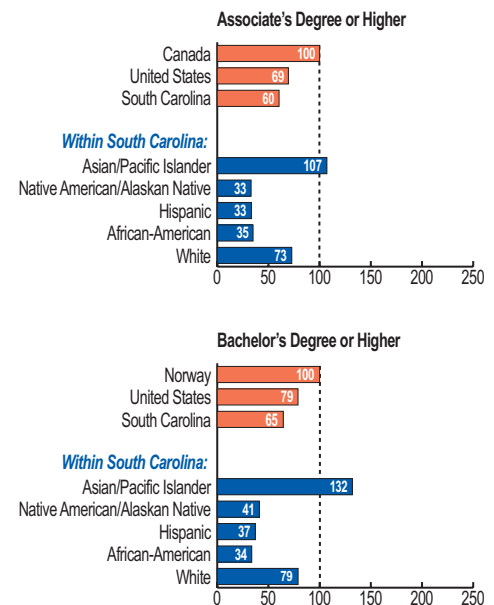
Share of State Appropriations



Ethnic Distribution (%)



Attainment of College Degrees in United States and Top Country, 25- to 34-year-olds (2000)



Note: These two charts compare performance in the U.S. to the performance of the top country, which receives a score of 100.

* This index, created by the Progressive Policy Institute, measures the extent to which a state is participating in knowledge-based industries. A higher score means increased participation.

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to rounding.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: Who is being graded in this report card, and why?

A: *Measuring Up 2004* grades states, not individual colleges or universities, on their performance in higher education. The states are responsible for preparing students for higher education through sound K–12 systems, and they provide most of the public financial support—\$69 billion currently—for colleges and universities. Through their oversight of public colleges and universities, state leaders affect the kind and number of programs available in the state. They determine the limits of financial support and often influence tuition and fees for public colleges and universities. They determine how much state-based financial aid to make available to students and their families, which affects students attending private as well as public colleges and universities.

Q: How are states graded?

A: The report card grades states in six performance categories: academic preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and learning. Each category is made up of several indicators, or quantitative measures—a total of 35 in the first five categories. Grades are calculated based on each state's performance on these indicators, relative to other states. *Measuring Up 2004* draws its data from the most recent public information available. Most of the data in *Measuring Up 2004* is from 2002 and 2003.

In the affordability category, *Measuring Up 2004* reflects the major changes in tuition and financial aid that occurred in 2003. In addition, each state's performance is now calculated in relation to the performance of top states a decade ago—rather than in relation to top states' current performance, as is the case with other graded categories. This change creates

a more stable basis for states to assess their performance in affordability, which is the most volatile of the graded categories.

In the learning category, *Measuring Up 2004* reports information about five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) that participated in a pilot project on measuring learning. This report card gives these states a “Plus” for their efforts in assessing and measuring learning; however, all other states continue to receive an “Incomplete” in this category, as there is no information available to make state-by-state comparisons.

All data used to grade states in *Measuring Up 2004* were collected from national, reliable sources, including the U.S. Census and the U.S. Department of Education. All data are the most current available for state-by-state comparisons, are in the public domain, and were collected in ways that allow for effective comparisons among the states. The *Technical Guide* (available at www.highereducation.org) has information about sources used in *Measuring Up 2004*.

Q: What information is provided but not graded?

A: The state report cards highlight important gaps in college opportunities for various income and ethnic groups, and they identify improvements and setbacks in each state's performance over the past decade. In addition, the series of indicators measuring adult literacy skills (in the benefits category) is not being used to calculate grades in *Measuring Up 2004* because the data have not been updated in 12 years. As a temporary placeholder for these indicators, the National Center commissioned a study to estimate adult skill levels based on the 2000 Census. These estimates are provided in the charts found in the state report cards, but they are not used to calculate any grades.

What do the arrows mean?



The state has improved on more than half of the indicators in the category.



The state has improved on some, but no more than half, of the indicators in the category.



The state has declined on every indicator in the category.

STATE GRADES

	Preparation	Participation	Affordability	Completion	Benefits
Alabama	D-	C	F	B-	C+
Alaska	B-	C	F	F	B
Arizona	D	B+	F	C+	B
Arkansas	C	C-	F	C	D+
California	C	A	B	C	A
Colorado	A-	B	D-	B-	A
Connecticut	A	A	F	B	A
Delaware	C+	C+	F	A-	A-
Florida	C	C	F	A-	B-
Georgia	C	D	F	B	B
Hawaii	C	B-	D	C	B
Idaho	C	C-	D-	C+	C
Illinois	B+	A	D	B	B-
Indiana	C	C+	D	B	C
Iowa	B+	B+	F	A	C
Kansas	B	A	F	B	B+
Kentucky	C-	B-	D-	C	B
Louisiana	F	D+	F	C	C
Maine	B	B-	F	B	B
Maryland	A-	A	F	B-	A
Massachusetts	A	A	F	A	A
Michigan	C	B+	F	C+	A-
Minnesota	B+	A	C-	B+	A
Mississippi	D+	D	F	B-	C
Missouri	B-	B	F	B	B
Montana	B+	C	F	C	C
Nebraska	B+	A	F	B	B
Nevada	D	C	F	F	C-
New Hampshire	B+	C+	F	A	A-
New Jersey	A	A-	D	B	A
New Mexico	F	A-	F	D	C+
New York	A	C+	F	B+	B
North Carolina	B	C+	D-	B	C
North Dakota	B	A-	F	B	C
Ohio	C+	C+	F	B	B-
Oklahoma	C-	C	F	C-	C+
Oregon	C	B-	F	C	B
Pennsylvania	B-	B	F	A	B
Rhode Island	C+	A	F	A	B+
South Carolina	C	C-	F	B	C
South Dakota	B	B+	F	B	C-
Tennessee	C-	C-	F	C+	C
Texas	C+	C	D	C	B-
Utah	A	C+	C	B	B
Vermont	C+	C	F	A	B-
Virginia	B+	B-	D-	B	A-
Washington	B-	C	F	A-	A-
West Virginia	C+	C-	F	C	D
Wisconsin	B+	B	D	A-	C+
Wyoming	C+	B	F	B+	D

MEASURING UP 2004 RESOURCES

To view *Measuring Up 2004* and its resources visit

www.highereducation.org

Select the *Measuring Up* icon

National Picture

- **Snapshot:** Performance overview on national maps
- **Improvement:** The nation's performance over the past decade
- **Download** the national report in PDF format

State Reports

- **State Report Cards:** A comprehensive picture of higher education in each state
- **Download** each state's report card in PDF format

Compare States

- **Graded Performance:** Compare state results by performance category
- **State Facts:** Compare non-graded state information
- **Index Scores (sort/compare/map):** Sort states by their rank within each category and create a national map based on individual indicator scores

Commentary

- **Foreword,** by James B. Hunt Jr., Chairman, and Garrey Carruthers, Vice Chairman of the National Center's Board of Directors
- **A Message** from Governor Mark R. Warner, Governor of Virginia and Chairman of the National Governors Association

- **A Ten-Year Perspective: Higher Education Stalled Despite High School Improvement,** by Patrick M. Callan, President of the National Center

- **Grading Learning: Extending the Concept**
- Special reports forthcoming

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