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Pathways to Graduate School: 1.

A Data Overview of U.S. Prospective Women Graduate Students—Profiles of Nine Racial Groups

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Pathways to Graduate School: 1. A Data Overview of U.S. Women Prospective Graduate Students—Profiles of Nine Racial Groups

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Abstract

Understanding the diverse pathways women take toward graduate education is crucial but often overlooked. When these journeys are presented, they are typically compared to men's experiences, which can obscure the unique challenges and opportunities women face. This descriptive research study, one of five reports, aims to provide a comprehensive profile of U.S. women who may pursue graduate study, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Nine distinct profiles of women, based on race/ethnicity, are presented. The 698,298 women who provided gender and race/ethnicity information and had scores for all three *GRE*® test measures are the subjects. GRE General Test data from July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2021, supplemented with U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Census data, are analyzed. These women, referred to as prospective graduate students (PGS), are examined through six core questions: (a) Who were the women PGS? (b) Where did they reside? (c) What were their education and work experiences? (d) What were their undergraduate experiences? (e) What were their plans for graduate study? and (f) What were their emerging graduate school choice sets? Key findings include the following: (a) The majority of women PGS across the nine profiles lived in 10 states, however, the composition of these 10 states varied by group; (b) two out of five women PGS were enrolled in college, with considerable variation across the nine racial profiles; (c) across the profiles, there was a 40 percentage point difference in having no parent with a bachelor's degree, ranging from 68% of Mexican women to 28% of White women; (d) 33% of women PGS reported being eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, ranging from 24% of White women to 60% of Black women; (e) women across the nine profiles were comparable in majoring in the physical sciences or engineering as undergraduates but differed substantially in majoring in life sciences; and (f) 32% of all women

PGS considered a regional comprehensive university in their state of residence for graduate school, with notable variation, ranging from 42% of Mexican women to 28% of Asian women.

Keywords: women, graduate school applications, test measures, GRE®, prospective graduate students, demographics, work experience, undergraduate experience, graduate enrollment, graduate program

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Series Preface

This research report is one of five in the Pathways to Graduate School: A Data Series on U.S. Prospective Graduate Students series, which examines prospective graduate students (PGS) who are U.S. citizens at a time in their educational trajectory that is not commonly explored—when they are considering applying to graduate school. This series is intended to supplement the ETS (2022) report "A Snapshot of the Individuals Who Took the *GRE*® General Test July 2016–June 2021," which presents analyses for all GRE test takers.

The series is intended for individuals and organizations involved in graduate education, such as graduate education institutions, graduate school admissions offices, organizations focused on diversity and inclusion, policymakers and government agencies, and education researchers and analysts who may apply descriptions of domestic subpopulations of the overall GRE test taker population to inform their understanding of and support for various groups within the PGS population. Each report examines the same six questions:

1. Who were the PGS?
2. Where did the PGS reside?
3. What were their education and work experiences?
4. What were their undergraduate experiences?
5. What were PGS' plans for graduate study?
6. What were their emerging graduate school choice sets?

The five profiles of U.S. citizens are (a) women PGS, (b) PGS by Hispanic subgroup and gender, (c) PGS by parental education and gender, (d) PGS by Pell Grant eligibility and gender, and (e) PGS by Black students and gender.

A total of 1.2 million PGS who took the GRE General Test from 2016 to 2021 and responded to questions on the GRE registration form and the Background Information Questionnaire provided data for the series. The GRE data were supplemented with data from the U.S. Department of Education to enrich the descriptions of postsecondary institutions and the U.S. Census Bureau to enhance the profile of where individuals reside. The data are descriptive rather than inferential, so observed differences should not be considered definitive or conclusive.

List of Series Abbreviations

AANAPISI	Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–serving institution
AAU	American Association of Universities
ACE	American Council on Education
ADHD	attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
American Indian	American Indian or Alaskan Native
ANNH	Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian–serving institution
Asian	Asian or Asian American
B&B	Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study
BA/BS	bachelor of arts/bachelor of science
Barron's	*Barron's Profile of American Colleges*
BIQ	Background Information Questionnaire
Black	Black or African American
Carnegie	Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education
CBSA	core-based statistical area
doctorate	doctoral degree, e.g., PhD, EdD
GPA	grade point average
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
HSI	Hispanic-serving institution
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
master's	master's degree, e.g., MA, MS, MEd
Mexican	Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano
MSI	minority-serving institution
NASNTI	Native American–serving nontribal institution
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
no parent bach	no parent earned a bachelor's degree
NSF	National Science Foundation
one parent bach	at least one parent earned a bachelor's degree
one parent bach+	at least one parent earned a graduate degree
other	other race/ethnicity
other Hispanic	other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American
PBI	predominantly Black institution
PGS	prospective graduate students
STEM	science, technology, engineering, and math
TCU	tribal college or university
White	White (non-Hispanic)

Introduction

> A world where gender equality in and through education is achieved, assuring girls and boys, women and men, equal rights and opportunities for education and empowerment, and the power and agency to shape their lives and futures. (UNESCO, 2019, p. 5)

The global community is focused on making progress toward the 17 sustainable development goals by 2030—one of which is Target 4.3, which is to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university. The UNESCO (2022) *Higher Education Global Data Report (Summary)* calls our attention to the point that "gender equality is not only about enrollment; it concerns the quality of learning experiences, the completion of qualifications, participation in the labor market, contribution in research and leadership roles, and engagement in all disciplines" (p. 16). One example of inequality in the report is that only 30.5% of researchers worldwide were women in 2018.

UNESCO (2022) also cautions the global community not to be drawn into thinking that gender parity has been achieved when one looks at averages that often mask disparities. In the case of postsecondary education in the United States, one can quickly be drawn into the rhetoric that women have overtaken men in education. How often do the headlines pronounce that women outnumber men among enrollees in 2-year and 4-year institutions (Leukhina & Smaldone, 2022) or among bachelor's degree holders (Bryant, 2022) or in the college-educated labor force (Fry, 2022)? This binary view of women versus men does not consider how gender interacts with other characteristics of individuals, such as their race/ethnicity.

In the United States, the National Science Board (2020), in the report Vision 2030, pronounced talent as "the treasure on which America's science and engineering (S&E) enterprise and the nation's prosperity, health and security depend" (p. 16). For the United States to be a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) talent powerhouse, the report maintained, it is necessary to expand domestic talent as well as global talent. The report concluded that if the United States were to cultivate "the fullness of the nation's domestic talent," it would lead to fostering individual opportunity and benefit the U.S. economy.

One of UNESCO's (2019) thematic priorities is better data to inform action: "High-quality timely data and evidence are key ingredients for policy-making, planning and the delivery of strategic interventions to advance gender equality in and through education" (p. 10).

In the research community, Caroline Criado Pérez (2010), in *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*, made the case that so much of the data that permeate our daily lives fail to consider gender, because the data treat men as the default and women as atypical. She advocated for sex-disaggregated data:

> If there is a data gap for women overall (both because we don't collect the data in the first place and because when we do we usually don't separate it by sex), when it comes to women of colour, disabled women, working-class women, that data is practically non-existent. Not simply because it isn't collected, but because it is not separated out from the male data—what is called "sex-disaggregated data." In statistics on representation from academic jobs to film roles, data is given for "women" and "ethnic minorities," with data for female ethnic minorities lost within each larger group. (p. xiv)

The need for and use of sex-disaggregated data extend to education. Though its focus was on data disaggregation of racial/ethnic subgroups, the National Forum on Education Statistics (2016) asserted that "disaggregating student data into subpopulations can help schools and communities plan appropriate programs; decide which interventions to implement; target limited resources; and recognize trends in educational participation, outcomes, and achievement."

This research focuses on women considering pursuing a graduate degree, who are called *prospective graduate students*. Each of the women possesses a variety of assets and experiences that she will bring to the graduate education enterprise. Background characteristics, geographical insights, education and work experiences, and graduate school plans for all women and the nine racial groups of women are presented to learn where among women there are similar or dissimilar experiences.

In preparing for this study, a content analysis of the questions on the *GRE*® test registration form and the Background Information Questionnaire (BIQ) was conducted. Following this, consideration was given to how ETS's data from these questions could be presented to offer potential insights for individuals and organizations involved in graduate education, such as graduate education institutions, graduate school admissions offices, organizations focused on diversity and inclusion, policymakers and government agencies, and education researchers and analysts. It was concluded that presenting the data in response to a series of questions would be the most effective way to provide a snapshot of the period from July 2016 to June 2021. In presenting this research, it is important to emphasize, and encourage

readers to remember, Emdin's (2012) wisdom that "yes, there is difference but difference is not deficient" (p. 1).

Six grand questions guided this work:

1. Who were the PGS? This section examines key demographic characteristics, such as age, if they communicate better in English than any other language, and whether they have a documented disability.
2. Where did the PGS reside? This analysis explores their geographic distribution, including their residence by U.S. Census region and the most populous states, core-based statistical areas (CBSAs), and congressional districts.
3. What were their education and work experiences? Their enrollment statuses and work experiences are presented here.
4. What were their undergraduate experiences? This section delves into the characteristics of their baccalaureate institutions, their experiences related to family educational attainment, Federal Pell Grant eligibility, and their academic achievements, such as their undergraduate fields of study and grade point averages (GPAs), both overall and within their major.
5. What were PGS' plans for graduate study? The focus here is on their aspirations for graduate education, including their intended field of study, mode of study (part-time/full-time), attendance plans, and preferred geographic region for pursuing graduate school.
6. What were their emerging graduate school choice sets? This section discusses the set of graduate schools under consideration, including factors such as geographic location and the potential to pursue graduate studies at their baccalaureate institution or a flagship university within their state. Furthermore, the characteristics of these institutions (e.g., public/private) are analyzed, along with the intensity of particular institutional characteristics within the choice sets.

This report takes a descriptive approach, comparing women PGS from different racial and ethnic groups in relation to the six key research questions to illuminate their distinct characteristics, experiences, and pathways toward graduate education.

Methodology

To answer the six research questions about PGS, data from the ETS GRE Program were analyzed. The GRE data are unique in their focus on the period before application to graduate programs. Other well-known national data sets focus on enrollment and degree completion, such as the National Center for Education Statistics' Baccalaureate and Beyond Study; the National Student Clearinghouse education data; and the National Science Foundation's Survey of Earned Doctorates, which examines doctoral degree completion. The Council of Graduate Schools' report *Graduate Enrollment and Degrees: 2011 to 2021* (Zhou, 2022) focused on the more than 2 million applications U.S. graduate schools received in fall 2021. It is not possible, however, to convert applications into numbers of individual applicants.

When individuals register for the GRE, in addition to providing their gender and state of residence, they complete the self-report BIQ, with questions on demographic background, undergraduate institution and experiences, and preferences for graduate study. Each year, the GRE Program publishes a snapshot report that presents analyses for all GRE test takers. The Pathways to Graduate School: A Data Series on U.S. Prospective Graduate Students reports are intended to supplement the ETS (2022) report on the snapshot of individuals who took the GRE General Test from July 2016 to June 2021.

The 1,093,466 individuals who (a) took the GRE General Test between June 30, 2016, and July 1, 2021, and consented to have their data used in research; (b) had valid scores for all three test sections (analytical writing, verbal reasoning, and quantitative reasoning); (c) self-identified as U.S. citizens; (d) had gender data; and (e) reported information about their race/ethnicity are the subjects for this study. Individuals who took the GRE multiple times were counted once, and the BIQ data from the most recent registration were included. As women are the focus of this study, the analyses were run on the 698,298 women who had complete baseline data.

The most common reason for taking the GRE, cited by 99%, was to gain admission to graduate school, with the next most common reason being a requirement for fellowship or scholarship applications (8%). It is appropriate to refer to these women as PGS, as the majority (87%) selected only one of the seven provided response options to the question of why they were taking the GRE.

Variable Response Rates

The data in the following six sections pertain to U.S. individuals who provided both gender and Federal Pell Grant data, along with their responses to each item. Owing to differing response rates for each item, the groups of respondents may vary. Descriptive statistics were computed for each item based on all available responses, and missing values were excluded from the analysis.

The GRE registration form and the 21-item BIQ have required- and optional-response questions. The four BIQ questionnaire items that require an answer ask registrants about their country of citizenship, about their educational status at the time of the GRE exam, whether they communicate better (or as well) in English than in any other language, and about their intended field of graduate study.

Generally, item response rates for almost all the optional-response items used in the study were above 75% (see Table A1). The exception is the undergraduate institution name, with a 62% item response. Accordingly, this response rate moderates the findings on characteristics of the undergraduate institutions attended. Additionally, this low item response rate impacts the derived variables that present information on whether individuals were considering applying to their undergraduate institutions for graduate school.

Other Variable Notes

Federal Pell Grant Eligibility

Individuals responded to the question "If you are a United States citizen, were you eligible for a Pell Grant as an undergraduate?" The response options were "Yes," "No," and "I don't know." This is the only question on the BIQ to offer an "I don't know" option. Two rationales are provided for including an "I don't know" option. The first is to allow people to indicate what Sudman and Bradburn (1973) referred to as memory error, which is forgetting an episode entirely. The second reason is that the U.S. financial aid system has been burdened by decades of students and families experiencing a lack of clear and transparent information about how they pay for college. For example, Burd et al. (2018), writing for New America in "Decoding the Cost of College: The Case for Transparent Financial Aid Award Letters," reported in their analyses of 515 award letters from unique institutions that many institutions fail to differentiate types of aid—70% of award letters grouped all aid together. So, it is possible that an

individual who received financial aid may not have been provided with the level of detail to know if they had a Federal Pell Grant.

Field of Study

One exception to not including missing data in the analyses was for the undergraduate and intended graduate fields of study. The undergraduate field of study was not a required response item, whereas the intended field of graduate study was. To present comparable analyses to those given in ETS (2022) and to compare continuing in the same field of study in graduate school, the missing data for the undergraduate field of study were included in the reported categories as "undecided or no major provided." The "undecided or no major provided" response is more common for intended graduate majors than for undergraduate fields. Although no formal analysis was conducted, one possible explanation is that students are encouraged to take the GRE while still undergraduates and in "study mode," allowing them to bank their scores for future use as they await greater clarity with regard to their graduate school plans.

Graduate Institution Choices

Individuals have two options for indicating which universities or graduate programs they want their scores sent to when they register or after they take the exam. Some individuals may not have sent their scores to institutions when the data were captured. It is reasonable to deduce that individuals sent their scores only to graduate programs in which they hoped to have an option to enroll.

Parental Education

Parents' educational attainment is classified at three levels. No parent with a bachelor's includes individuals who reported that their parents had achieved the following levels of education: less than high school diploma, high school diploma or equivalency, some postsecondary education, or an associate's degree (a first-generation college student and first-generation graduate student). One parent with a bachelor's includes individuals who reported that at least one parent earned a bachelor's degree in any field (a continuing-generation college student and a first-generation graduate student). One parent with a bachelor's+ includes individuals who reported that at least one parent earned a graduate or professional degree in any field (a continuing-generation college student and a continuing-generation graduate student).

State of Permanent Residence

Individuals provided two sources of information about where they were living. The first source, a required response on the registration form, was their address—for example, the specific location where they could receive correspondence. The second source was their state of permanent residence, an optional response on the BIQ. The response rate for the permanent residence question was lower than the response rate for the address question. The match rate of responses for the 640,629 individuals who responded to both questions was 99%, so these analyses assume that state address is comparable to state of permanent residence.

Supplementing the GRE Data

At the individual level, the residential information provided at registration was augmented by matching zip codes with data from the U.S. Census. This included CBSAs and congressional districts. Examining CBSAs rather than a single city, such as Cambridge, MA, captures a larger geographic area, such as Boston–Cambridge–Newton, MA/NH. The U.S. Census Bureau (2023) defined a CBSA as

> the county or counties (or equivalent entities) associated with at least one core (urbanized area or urban cluster) of at least 10,000 population, plus adjacent counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured through commuting ties.

At the institutional level, the GRE data were supplemented with data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to understand better the types of institutions PGS attended as undergraduates and the kinds of institutions they aspire to attend for their graduate education. Institutional characteristics, such as whether the institution was under public or private control, its Carnegie classification, and the size of the student body served, were included. In addition to IPEDS, other enhancements to the institutional data included adding single-sex colleges, regional comprehensive universities, or flagship state university status. At the undergraduate level, information from *Barron's Profile of American Colleges* indexes to undergraduate institutions according to their degree of admissions selectivity was incorporated. For undergraduate and graduate institutions, membership in the American Association of Universities (AAU) and minority-serving institution status data from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education were added to the data set.

Analyses

Because the study uses a convenience sample, its results are not necessarily generalizable to all U.S. women who aspire to attend graduate or first professional school. At the same time, the sheer size of the data pool for this study enables us to provide insights into the aspirations and characteristics of many, and even most, women PGS from 2016 to 2021.

The intention of the Pathways to Graduate School: A Data Series on U.S. Prospective Graduate Students reports aligns with the qualities of quantitative descriptive analyses presented by Loeb et al. (2017), who stated,

> Quantitative descriptive analysis characterizes the world or a phenomenon by identifying patterns in data to answer questions about who, what, where, when, and to what extent. Descriptive analysis is data simplification. Good description presents what we know about capacities, needs, methods, practices, policies, populations, and settings in a manner that is relevant to a specific research or policy question. (p. 1)

This exploratory study aims to identify and describe the experiences of U.S. women overall and across the nine racial groups of women. Descriptive analyses—frequencies and cross-tabulations—of self-reported data are presented. These descriptive analyses answer the six research questions about who, where, and to what extent. Please note that the group differences presented have not been statistically tested and should be interpreted cautiously. Although the group statistics presented from the PGS sample offer valuable insights, readers need to consider how these trends may reflect their own institutions' unique context and data, fostering a deeper understanding of the patterns within their specific institutions or programs.

The body of the report presents selected data in graph and table format, and the appendix provides six data tables (Tables A1–A6) aligned to the six research questions.

Limitations

All data have limitations, and the data analyzed for this study of U.S. citizens who are PGS are no exception. Following are key limitations to keep in mind when thinking about the results of this study: (a) the representativeness of the individuals whose data are presented in this report, (b) the possible difference between the emerging choice set and the final choice set, (c) the high yet variable item response rates, (d) variables that may not reflect the most current standards or classifications, and (e) the graduate school pathway factors that are beyond the scope of the data available for this study.

The primary limitation of this study is that respondents are limited to U.S. citizens who took the GRE between 2016 and 2021. It is understood that this group does not encompass the entirety of PGS. Individuals who did not or will not submit GRE scores for graduate school admission are excluded, and it is not known what portion of the national pool this represents. Nevertheless, while the required elements of a graduate school application may vary depending on degree level or institutional type, the GRE has been a key component of many graduate school admissions applications for the past 75 years.

Another limitation of this study is the possible difference between PGS' emerging and final choice sets. There could be additions and deletions. Additions could include new graduate programs that require GRE scores and those that do not. At a later time, PGS may elect not to apply to some graduate programs where they sent their GRE scores. These changes to the choice set composition could potentially alter the choice set proportions reported in the study. Additionally, it is acknowledged that individuals' plans and interests may change even if they initially apply to graduate schools.

The methodology section discussed issues regarding item response rates for the GRE registration form and the 21-item BIQ. In particular, converting the question about the current or most recent undergraduate institution from open response to forced choice could potentially change the findings on the undergraduate institutional experience.

In two instances, the variable definitions used in this study may not reflect the most current standards or classifications, as they were based on the conventions and data available at the time of analysis. The variables follow:

- **Gender.** Gender is a required response on the GRE registration form. The options at the time were binary: female and male.[1] Henceforth individuals who identify as female will be referred to as women.
- **Racial/Ethnic Group.** The BIQ asked respondents, "If you are a United States citizen, how do you describe yourself? (Select one)," offering nine response options: (a) American Indian or Alaskan Native (American Indian); (b) Asian or Asian American (Asian); (c) Black or African American (Black); (d) Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano (Mexican); (e) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders (Hawaiian/Pacific Islander); (f) Puerto Rican; (g) other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American (other Hispanic); (h) White (non-Hispanic) (White); or (i) other.[2] It is

important to note that the "other" option did not allow respondents to provide additional details. Additionally, the survey's single-select design allowed individuals to select only one option, potentially limiting their ability to represent their racial or ethnic identity fully. Individuals who identify with multiple races or ethnicities are able to choose one or "other." These response options may not permit individuals to represent their identity as they want, and the data may not reflect the nation's current diversity or citizenship status.

This study is a secondary data analysis using an internal ETS data source—the GRE Program data. We leveraged the rich data set to answer our questions. Yet the GRE data, while providing great insights into PGS' experiences, accomplishments, and plans, did not contain some of the information we would have liked to have had to enrich and contextualize the findings and add greater insight into this part of the educational journey. These include additional personal data (e.g., marital status, parenthood, and income), significant influences or supporters (e.g., undergraduate faculty, family, or friends), additional educational or work accomplishments (e.g., publications), educational debt (undergraduate and/or graduate), alternative sources of funding (e.g., employer educational assistance programs), and career aspirations.

Results

Research Question 1: Who Were the Women Prospective Graduate Students?

Individuals and organizations working in the graduate school application space may consider prospective applicants in two ways. Active participants are individuals already engaged in the admissions process, preparing or submitting their applications. Graduate schools gather demographic information for this group to understand trends in who is applying and to ensure that they meet diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. Institutions can use the data to tailor support to different populations and inform strategies to retain students from diverse backgrounds throughout the application process. Prospective applicants who have not yet entered the application process but are potential candidates are targets for outreach. Graduate programs and organizations rely on demographic data to identify populations that may be underrepresented in their applicant pool, allowing them to develop outreach efforts that resonate with specific communities.

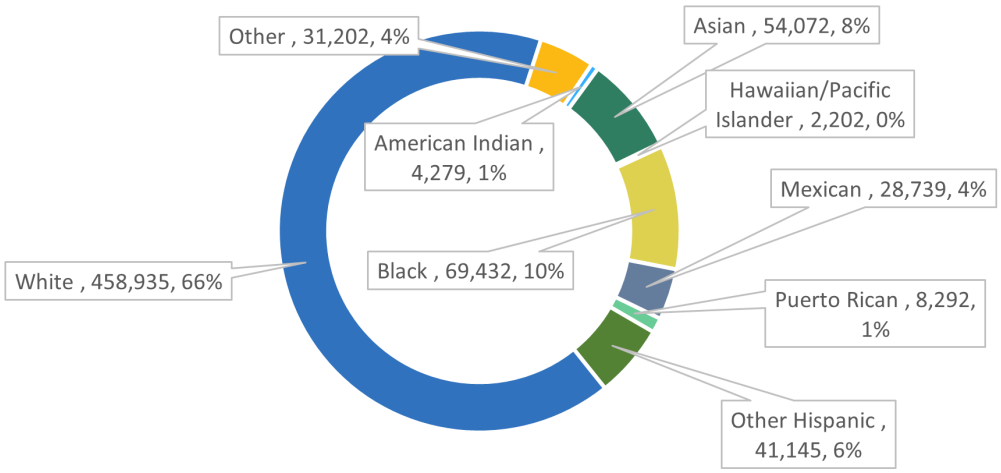
For this study, age, ability to communicate in English, and disability status are all statuses that can shape women PGS' undergraduate experiences and could factor into their considerations for their graduate school experiences (see Table A2).

All Women and the Nine Racial Groups of Women

This study presents data on women across nine racial groups alongside an "all women" category aggregating their profiles. When 5 years of data are combined, the "all women" group comprises 698,298 women who reported their gender and race/ethnicity[3] (see Figure 1 and Table 1). White women account for two-thirds of all women PGS. Black women represent 10%, making them the second largest group, followed by Asian women (8%), other Hispanic women (6%), Mexican women (4%), other women (4%), Puerto Rican women (1%), American Indian women (0.6%), and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women (0.3%).

Beyond percentage representation, the data provide insight into the number of women in each group. The smallest group is Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women, numbering 2,202, while the largest group is White women, who number 458,935.

Figure 1. Profile of U.S. Prospective Women Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group, July 2016–June 2021



Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Table 1. Profile of Prospective Women Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Variable	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019–2020	2020–2021	All women, *n* (%)
All women	157,909	160,397	150,526	129,793	99,673	698,298
American Indian	881	1,012	973	819	594	4,279 (0.6)
Asian	10,794	11,706	11,528	10,603	9,441	54,072 (7.7)
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	383	528	533	451	307	2,202 (0.3)
Black	15,530	16,654	15,413	12,640	9,195	69,432 (9.9)
Mexican	5,583	6,402	6,620	6,015	4,119	28,739 (4.1)
Puerto Rican	2,024	1,960	1,699	1,478	1,131	8,292 (1.2)
Other Hispanic	7,921	9,393	9,263	8,360	6,208	41,145 (5.9)
White	105,455	105,997	98,340	84,215	64,928	458,935 (65.7)
Other	9,338	6,745	6,157	5,212	3,750	31,202 (4.5)

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Age Group

As a group, nearly half of women PGS were under 22 years of age, with an additional 25% being between the ages of 23 and 25 years (see Table A2).

Among the nine groups, considerable differences emerged in the age distribution of women. Asian women (78%) and White women (77%) closely mirrored the overall trend, with approximately three-quarters being 25 years old or younger. Although the rates of women under 25 years of age remained high across all groups, notable differences were observed. Specifically, Black women (62%), American Indian women (65), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women (66%), other women (68%), and other Hispanic women (69%) reported lower rates of being 25 years old or younger compared to their White and Asian counterparts.

In contrast, Black women (13%) and American Indian women (12%) reported higher rates of being 31–40 years of age compared to Asian women (6%). This indicates some variation in the age distribution across racial and ethnic groups.

Communicates Better in English

Overall, 94% of women reported communicating better in English (see Table A2). There is a slight difference—4 percentage points—between the women. For those women who reported that they did not communicate better in English and provided their native language,[4] the 10

languages spoken with the greatest frequency were Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian, Korean, Urdu, Gujarati, Tagalog, and Farsi. These native languages were associated with particular women. For instance, other Hispanic, Mexican, and Puerto Rican women listed Spanish, while Asian women listed Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Urdu, Gujarati, and Tagalog. White women listed Arabic, Russian, and Farsi. Other women listed Arabic, Spanish, and Farsi. Black women listed French, Yoruba, Amharic, and Igbo, which were not in the top 10 languages for all women. Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women reported Tagalog and Hindi as their native languages.

Documented Disability

The Americans With Disabilities Act defines a person with a disability as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (Civil Rights Division, n.d.). These include both visible disabilities—those disabilities that have a visible indicator, such as use of a screen reader—and invisible disabilities, or those disabilities that do not have a visible indicator, such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Individuals could indicate one of the following: none, blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing, physical disability, learning disability, multiple disabilities, or other. For the other disability category, the BIQ did not have the option to provide more information, for example, if they had a neurodevelopmental or cognitive disability or condition (e.g., autism, ADHD, or brain injury) or an emotional or mental health concern or condition (e.g., depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder).

Five percent of women self-reported having a documented disability, with small differences between the groups (see Table A2). For those women who reported having a documented disability, the most often reported were learning disabilities (43%), other disability (23%), blind/visually impaired (12%), physical disability (9%), deaf/hard of hearing (8%), and multiple disabilities (4%).

Differences emerged across the nine racial groups of women in their self-reports of having particular disabilities. There were considerable differences in reporting having (a) a learning disability, ranging from 47% of White women to 29% of Asian women and 29% of Black women; (b) other disability, ranging from 32% of other women to 19% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women; and (c) being blind/visually impaired, ranging from 26% of Asian women and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 10% of White women and other women.

Research Question 2: Where Did Women Prospective Graduate Students Reside?

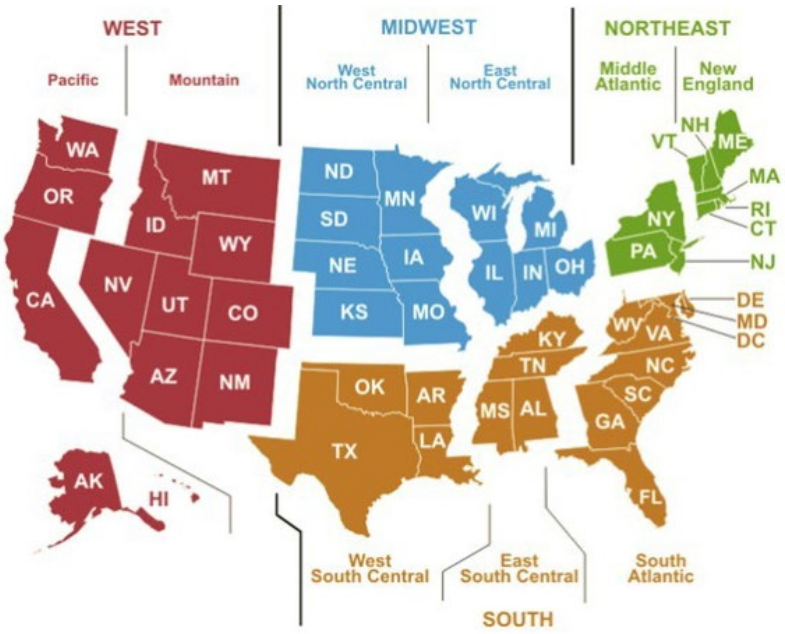
If we look at an aerial view of the 3.1 million square miles composing the contiguous United States, where might we find PGS? The simple answer is, everywhere. And yet, the U.S. population is not evenly distributed across the country. Where are there significant representations of individuals seeking advanced education? Examining geographic data can inform both admissions and advocacy work.

Gevelber (2014) wrote, "Think geographic, not just demographic. . . . Location data provides a reliable window into the mindsets, intentions, and concerns of an audience—sometimes even more so than demographic data." Graduate schools interested in shaping their applicant pools may benefit from a better understanding of where PGS reside. Equipped with this intelligence, graduate schools may refine their strategies to target future graduate students, perhaps in their undergraduate years or even through workforce connections. Insights gained from geographic data may also help with market segmentation when recruiting.

Among the many ways to champion change in graduate education is to advocate for resources and policies that can ease students' journeys. The U.S. president is the only elected official with every prospective graduate student in their constituency. It is imperative that elected officials at all levels—local, county, state, and federal—know who is in their districts and what they need. U.S. Census data can help determine the federal funding state governments and local communities receive; the need for new higher education institutions and programs; and representation in state legislatures and the U.S. House of Representatives, where critical graduate education issues can be voted on.

The data presented in this section include home state, CBSAs, the four U.S. Census regions and nine divisions (see Figure 2),[5] and congressional districts. With the exception of the census data, the data presented are limited to the 10 areas with the highest representations of PGS.

Figure 2. U.S. Census Regions and Divisions



Data are from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Home States

In 2022, California, Texas, Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Georgia, North Carolina, and Michigan were the most populous U.S. states (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). As a group, the states where the highest representations of women PGS reside align with nine of the 10 most populous U.S. states. Fifty-seven percent reside in California, New York, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia (Table 2).

Upon closer examination, three key observations emerge. First, the percentages of women represented in their respective 10 states range significantly from 51% for White women to 85% for Mexican women. Second, even when states overlap for women, the ranking of the top 10 states varies among racial and ethnic groups. For example, Georgia ranks ninth for Asian women but is first for Black women. Third, the nine groups of women do not share the same top 10 states. While 67% of Black women PGS and 85% of Mexican women PGS are concentrated in 10 states, only six states overlap between these two groups: Georgia, New York, Texas, Florida, California, and Illinois. The remaining states differ, with Black women being more represented in North Carolina, Maryland, Louisiana, and Virginia, whereas Mexican women are more prevalent in Arizona, Washington, Colorado, and New Mexico.

Table 2. The 10 States With the Highest Representation of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Representation (highest to lowest)	American Indian	Asian	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Black	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Other Hispanic	White	Other	All women
1	OK	CA	CA	GA	CA	NY	FL	NY	CA	CA
2	CA	NY	HI	NY	TX	FL	TX	CA	NY	NY
3	TX	TX	TX	TX	IL	NJ	CA	TX	TX	TX
4	NC	NJ	WA	FL	AZ	TX	NY	FL	FL	FL
5	AZ	IL	NY	NC	NY	CA	NJ	PA	NJ	NC
6	NM	FL	FL	CA	FL	PA	NM	NC	VA	GA
7	NY	MA	UT	MD	WA	IL	VA	OH	NC	IL
8	WA	VA	VA	LA	CO	NC	IL	IL	IL	PA
9	FL	GA	CO	VA	GA	MA	MA	GA	GA	OH
10	MT	WA	OR	IL	NM	GA	GA	MA	MA	VA
Percentage	62	73	72	67	85	79	80	51	66	57
Top 10 *n*	2,618	38,683	1,543	46,309	24,332	5,618	32,821	231,261	20,355	391,674
50 states + DC	4,254	53,044	2,148	69,120	28,645	7,121	40,918	457,003	30,820	693,073

Note. The states in the "all women" column represent the 10 states with the highest representation of women in descending order. The state, shaded in its corresponding color, may also appear in other columns for women by race/ethnicity in the same row or in the other rows. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Core-Based Statistical Areas

These distinct geographical patterns among the nine groups of women PGS are also observed at the CBSA level. The 10 largest CBSAs in the United States in 2022 were (a) New York–Newark–Jersey City, NY/NJ/PA; (b) Los Angeles–Long Beach–Anaheim, CA; (c) Chicago–Naperville–Elgin, IL/IN/WI; (d) Dallas–Fort Worth–Arlington, TX; (e) Houston–Pasadena–The Woodlands, TX; (f) Washington–Arlington–Alexandria, DC/VA/MD/WV; (g) Philadelphia–Camden–Wilmington, PA/NJ/DE/MD; (h) Atlanta–Sandy Springs–Alpharetta, GA; (i) Miami–Fort Lauderdale–Pompano Beach, FL; and (j) Phoenix–Mesa–Chandler, AZ.

If Phoenix–Mesa–Chandler, AZ, were replaced with Boston–Cambridge–Newton, MA/NH, the top 10 CBSAs for women PGS would fully align with the national profile (see Table 3). There are three notable observations from these data. First, when the CBSAs for women from diverse racial backgrounds are examined, no one group's 10 CBSAs align 100% with those of all women. Second, no single CBSA holds the same ranking across all women PGS. For instance, New York–Newark–Jersey City, NY/NJ, ranks first for all women and for Asian, Black, Puerto Rican, other Hispanic, White, and other women. In contrast, it ranks sixth for American Indian women and third for Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women, and it does not appear in the top 10 for Mexican women. Third, the top 10 CBSAs for American Indian and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women PGS were more often unique to them. Tulsa, OK, stands out for American Indian women, while Urban Honolulu, HI, ranks prominently for Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women, reflecting distinct geographic patterns for these groups.

U.S. Census Regions and Divisions

The South is the most populous region in the United States, with 38.9% of the nation's population, followed by the West (23.6%), the Midwest (20.6%), and the Northeast (17%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2024). This demographic landscape is crucial for understanding PGS distribution by Pell Grant eligibility.

In total, most women lived in the South region of the United States (40%), with the other three regions being approximately equivalent with respect to where women lived—West (20%), Midwest (18%), and Northeast (20%; see Table A3).

Table 3. The 10 Core-Based Statistical Areas With the Highest Representation of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Representation (highest to lowest)	American Indian	Asian	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Black	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Other Hispanic	White	Other	All Women
1	Tulsa, OK	NYC Area	Urban Honolulu, HI	NYC Area	LA Area	NYC Area	NYC Area	NYC Area	NYC Area	NYC Area
2	Oklahoma City, OK	LA Area	LA Area	ATL Area	SD Area	ORL Area	MIA Area	CHI Area	LA Area	LA Area
3	LA Area	SF Area	NYC Area	DC Area	SB Area	MIA Area	LA Area	BOS Area	SF Area	CHI Area
4	Albuquerque, NM	CHI Area	SF Area	HOU Area	CHI Area	TPA Area	HOU Area	DC Area	DC Area	DC Area
5	DAL Area	DC Area	SD Area	DAL Area	DAL Area	CHI Area	DC Area	PHI Area	CHI Area	ATL Area
6	NYC Area	SJ Area	SEA Area	MIA Area	HOU Area	PHI Area	SA Area	LA Area	SD Area	BOS Area
7	PHX Area	HOU Area	Hilo–Kailua, HI	CHI Area	SA Area	DC Area	DAL Area	ATL Area	BOS Area	DAL Area
8	SEA Area	DAL Area	SB Area	LA Area	SF Area	BOS Area	ORL Area	DAL Area	ATL Area	PHI Area
9	Tahlequah, OK	BOS Area	SAC Area	PHI Area	El Paso, TX	ATL Area	CHI Area	MSP Area	MIA Area	HOU Area
10	Lumberton, NC	SD Area	DC Area	BAL Area	AUS Area	DAL Area	SF Area	DET Area	DAL Area	MIA Area
Percentage	25	53	48	43	51	57	53	27	43	32
Top 10 *n*	1,084	28,097	1,022	29,449	14,484	4,052	21,664	121,851	13,128	220,022
50 States + DC	4,254	53,044	2,148	69,120	28,645	7,121	40,918	457,003	30,820	693,073

Note. The core-based statistical areas (CBSAs) in the "all women" column represent the 10 CBSAs with the highest representation of women in descending order. The CBSA, shaded in its corresponding color, may also appear in other columns for women by race/ethnicity in the same row or in the other rows. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). ATL Area = Atlanta–Sandy Springs–Roswell, GA. AUS Area = Austin–Round Rock–San Marcos, TX. BAL Area = Baltimore–Columbia–Towson, MD. BOS Area = Boston–Cambridge–Newton, MA/NH. CHI Area = Chicago–Naperville–Elgin, IL/IN. DAL Area = Dallas–Fort Worth–Arlington, TX. DC Area = Washington–Arlington–Alexandria, DC/VA/MD/WV. DET Area = Detroit–Warren–Dearborn, MI. HOU Area = Houston–Pasadena–The Woodlands, TX. LA Area = Los Angeles–Long Beach–Anaheim, CA. MIA Area = Miami–Fort Lauderdale–West Palm Beach, FL. MSP Area = Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington, MN/WI. NYC Area = New York–Newark–Jersey City, NY/NJ. ORL Area = Orlando–Kissimmee–Sanford, FL. PHI Area = Philadelphia–Camden–Wilmington, PA/NJ/DE/MD. PHX Area = Phoenix–Mesa–Chandler, AZ. SA Area = San Antonio–New Braunfels, TX. SAC Area = Sacramento–Roseville–Folsom, CA. SB Area = Riverside–San Bernardino–Ontario, CA. SD Area = San Diego–Chula Vista–Carlsbad, CA. SEA Area = Seattle–Tacoma–Bellevue, WA. SF Area = San Francisco–Oakland–Fremont, CA. SJ Area = San Jose–Sunnyvale–Santa Clara, CA. TPA Area = Tampa–St. Petersburg–Clearwater, FL.

Residency patterns varied among the different groups of women. One pattern was that more than 50% of the population lived in one census region—most Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women (62%) lived in the West, most Black women (63%) lived in the South, and slightly more than half of Mexican women (52%) lived in the West. A second pattern was for women to concentrate heavily in two census regions—for American Indian women, the South (46%) and the West (34%), and for Puerto Rican women, the Northeast (44%) and the South (40%).

The third pattern was to concentrate in three of the four census regions—for other Hispanic women, the South (48%), the West (23%), and the Northeast (23%); for Asian women, the West (38%), the South (28%), and the Northeast (22%); for White women, the South (39%), the Midwest (23%), and the Northeast (22%); and for other women, the South (33%), the West (31%), and the Northeast (23%).

The next level is composed of the nine U.S. Census divisions. The highest concentrations of each of the nine groups of women reside in four of the nine divisions, with variation in the proportional representation of the populations observed (see Table A3).

U.S. Congressional Districts

For women overall, the top 10 congressional districts to focus on would span six states and Washington, DC: Massachusetts (District 07), DC (District 00), New York (Districts 03, 12, and 04), North Carolina (Districts 02 and 04), Michigan (District 06), Texas (District 10), and Florida (District 02; see Table 4). Five percent of all women PGS live in these 10 congressional districts.

When women across the nine racial groups are considered, the percentage of women in the top 10 congressional districts varies from 6% to 26%. In addition, the number of congressional districts with high representations of women PGS would increase fivefold from 10 to 69. In 48 congressional districts, elected representatives may be best positioned to advocate for one particular group of women (e.g., Alaska District 00 for American Indian women), while in the other 21 congressional districts, they may be representing multiple groups of women (e.g., Utah District 03—Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and White women).

Table 4. The 10 U.S. Congressional Districts with the Highest Representation of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Representation (highest to lowest)	American Indian	Asian	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Black	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Other Hispanic	White	Other	All women
1	OK Dist. 02	CA Dist. 17	HI Dist. 02	NY Dist. 08	TX Dist. 16	NY Dist. 14	FL Dist. 27	MA Dist. 07	CA Dist. 50	MA Dist. 07
2	OK Dist. 01	CA Dist. 45	HI Dist. 01	GA Dist. 05	TX Dist. 15	NY Dist. 11	FL Dist. 28	DC Dist. 00	MA Dist. 07	DC Dist. 00
3	OK Dist. 04	CA Dist. 28	CA Dist. 07	GA Dist. 13	CA Dist. 52	FL Dist. 09	NY Dist. 13	UT Dist. 03	CA Dist. 12	NY Dist. 03
4	OK Dist. 03	NY Dist. 06	CA Dist. 15	GA Dist. 04	TX Dist. 34	NY Dist. 15	FL Dist. 25	NY Dist. 01	NY Dist. 05	NC Dist. 02
5	OK Dist. 05	CA Dist. 11	CA Dist. 50	MS Dist. 02	CA Dist. 38	FL Dist. 10	FL Dist. 26	MI Dist. 06	CA Dist. 11	NY Dist. 12
6	NM Dist. 01	TX Dist. 22	CA Dist. 51	FL Dist. 02	TX Dist. 23	NY Dist. 07	TX Dist. 15	NC Dist. 02	DC Dist. 00	TX Dist. 10
7	NC Dist. 07	CA Dist. 15	CA Dist. 14	LA Dist. 02	TX Dist. 28	NY Dist. 17	TX Dist. 34	IL Dist. 05	CA Dist. 36	NC Dist. 04
8	AZ Dist. 02	HI Dist. 01	WA Dist. 07	MD Dist. 04	CA Dist. 31	NY Dist. 13	NY Dist. 14	NY Dist. 12	NY Dist. 11	MI Dist. 06
9	NM Dist. 03	CA Dist. 16	CA Dist. 12	NC Dist. 06	CA Dist. 51	NY Dist. 08	TX Dist. 23	NY Dist. 03	NY Dist. 03	NY Dist. 04
10	AK Dist. 00	CA Dist. 14	UT Dist. 03	NY Dist. 05	CA Dist. 21	NY Dist. 10	NY Dist. 15	CO Dist. 02	NY Dist. 12	FL Dist. 02
Percentage	26	14	25	13	17	20	18	6	9	5
Top 10 *n*	1,098	7,331	534	9,154	4,910	1,446	7,218	25,318	2,706	37,349
50 States + DC	4,254	53,044	2,148	69,120	28,645	7,121	40,918	457,003	30,820	693,073

Note. The U.S. congressional districts in the "all women" column represent the 10 congressional districts with the highest representation of women in descending order. The congressional district, shaded in its corresponding color, may also appear in other columns for women by race/ethnicity in the same row or in the other rows. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Research Question 3: What Were Their Education and Work Experiences?

Graduate programs are interested in knowing what PGS are engaged in at the time of application. Women PGS bring a diverse range of educational and work backgrounds. This section elucidates two areas that graduate programs typically consider: the applicants' current educational status and their work experience. Both of these experiences play a critical role in shaping PGS' readiness for graduate education (see Table A4).

Current Educational Level

Two out of five women (42%) were currently enrolled in college. Thirty-eight percent of women reported being unenrolled college graduates (bachelor of arts [BA]/bachelor of science [BS]). Eleven percent were unenrolled master's program graduates, 5% were enrolled in graduate school, and 4% reported other educational status.

Among the various racial groups of women, there were considerable differences in current enrollment status. For example, 47% of White women reported being currently enrolled, compared to 29% of Black women. There were also substantial differences among women who reported being unenrolled college graduates with a BA or BS degree, ranging from 45% of Asian women to 33% of American Indian women reporting this status.

Full-Time Work Experience

Individuals decide whether to enroll in graduate school directly from undergraduate studies or to take a break. Those who take time off between undergraduate studies and graduate school may gain work experience and prepare for graduate school. More than half of women (55%) reported having less than 1 year of work experience. This is plausible given the high number of women who reported still being enrolled in college. Another 22% of women reported having 1–2 years of work experience, 9% reported having 3–4 years of work experience, 6% had 5–7 years, and 8% had 8 more years.

Two moderate differences are observed among the different groups of women in their work experiences. There is an 8 percentage point difference in having 1–2 years of work experience (28% of Asian women; 20% of White women). There is a 7 percentage point difference in having 8 or more years of work experience between the nine groups of women (12% of Black women; 5% of Asian women).

Research Question 4: What Were Their Undergraduate Experiences?

Diverse undergraduate experiences shape the academic journeys of PGS. Understanding these pathways begins by examining the institutions they attended, providing essential context for their postsecondary education. This section also explores two key dimensions of their undergraduate experiences: their status as first-generation college students and their eligibility for Pell Grants, offering insight into the socioeconomic and familial factors influencing their academic decisions. Additionally, the majors they pursued and their academic performance, such as grades, are analyzed to paint a fuller picture of their readiness for advanced study. Together, these factors provide a comprehensive view of the diverse academic profiles of women PGS, offering valuable information for graduate admissions committees and organizations interested in fostering equitable access to graduate education (see Table A5).

What Are the Profiles of Their Baccalaureate Institutions?

There are approximately 2,600 4-year, degree-granting, postsecondary institutions in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2021, Table 317.10). Like the women profiled in this report, higher education institutions have multiple identities—academic, athletic, and research. Several baccalaureate institution profiles are of interest. Women PGS self-reported their undergraduate institutions when they registered for the GRE. The first profile examines if women attended an undergraduate institution in their state of residence and particular types of institutions in their state of residence. The next set are two conventional institutional characteristics: control and size. The third set considers whether women attended a minority-serving institution (MSI) or a single-sex college. The final set focuses on the range of institutional diversity using the Carnegie classification, *Barron's* selectivity measures, and membership in the AAU.

Baccalaureate Institutions in Their Home States

An individual may elect to earn a bachelor's degree at a higher education institution in the state where they reside for several reasons, such as privileges tied to admissions (e.g., Texas Top 10% Plan), being eligible for in-state tuition, proximity to home, and academic offerings. Within a state, there is variation among public higher education institutions, from the state flagship (usually the most prominent public university in the state, with a high research profile and the most doctoral programs) to regional comprehensive universities usually founded as

teacher's colleges, night schools, veteran's education centers, or technical colleges (Orphan, 2018) to state land grant universities created by the Morrill Act of 1862 with an "original mission . . . to teach agriculture, military tactics, and the mechanic arts as well as classical studies so members of the working classes could obtain a liberal, practical education" (Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, n.d., "What Is a Land-Grant University," para. 2). In some states, colleges and universities hold multiple designations, such as in New Jersey, where Rutgers–New Brunswick is the state's land grant and its public flagship university, and Montclair State University is one of the public regional comprehensive universities. By contrast, in North Carolina, North Carolina State University, Raleigh is the land grant college, North Carolina Central University is the public regional comprehensive university, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC Chapel Hill) is the public flagship.

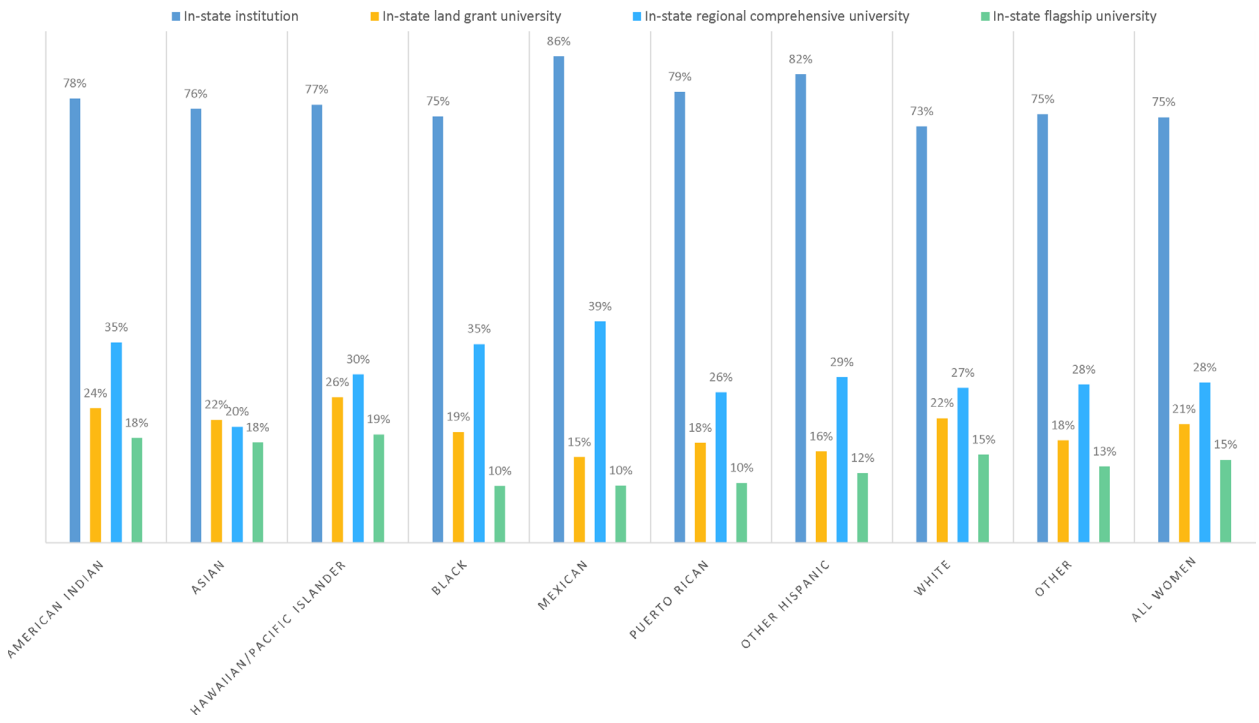
Four different profiles of the baccalaureate experience, categorized by state of residence, are presented: attending an in-state institution within their state of residence, a state land grant university within their state of residence, a regional comprehensive university within their state of residence, or a flagship university within their state of residence (see Figure 3 and Table A5). State land grant universities, regional comprehensive universities, and flagship universities are subsets of the broader category of in-state institutions.

Three-quarters of all women PGS attended a public or private undergraduate institution in their state of residence (see Figure 3 and Table A5). Among the different racial groups of women, there were large differences—12 percentage points—between those who attended an in-state institution, ranging from 86% of Mexican women to 73% of White women.

Twenty-one percent of women attended a state land grant institution in their state of residence, and substantial differences in attendance were also found among the various racial groups of women, ranging from 26% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 15% of Mexican women.

Twenty-eight percent of women attended a regional comprehensive university in their state of residence. Across the nine women's groups, enrollment at a public regional comprehensive university in their state of residence differed considerably, ranging from 39% of Mexican women to 20% of Asian women.

Figure 3. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Attendance at an Undergraduate Institution in Their State of Residence and by Institutional Type by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Apart from the University of Idaho, the University of North Dakota, and the University of South Dakota, there is no overlap between the state flagship university and the regional comprehensive universities in a state. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

As a group, 15% of women enrolled at the state flagship. There were moderate differences—9 percentage points—in the attendance of women from diverse racial backgrounds at the flagship university, ranging from 19% of Native Hawaiian/Alaskan Native women to 10% each of Mexican women, Puerto Rican women, and Black women.

Institution Control and Student Body Size

Institution control is a classification for whether an institution operates either as part of a state government (public) or independently of the state government (private). Private institutions

can be either nonprofit or for-profit. In fall 2021, 77% of undergraduate students nationally enrolled at public institutions, 18% at nonprofit private institutions, and 5% at for-profit institutions (NCES, 2022, Table 306.50). Control is associated with the student body size. Eighty-four percent of the institutions that compose the 120 largest degree-granting colleges and universities are public universities, followed by private nonprofit (9%) and private for-profit (7%; NCES, 2021, Table 312.10).

Seventy-one percent of women attended a public undergraduate institution, and 29% attended a private institution (see Table A5). There were considerable differences among the nine racial groups—12 percentage points—for attending a public undergraduate institution, ranging from 81% of American Indian women to 69% of Asian women.

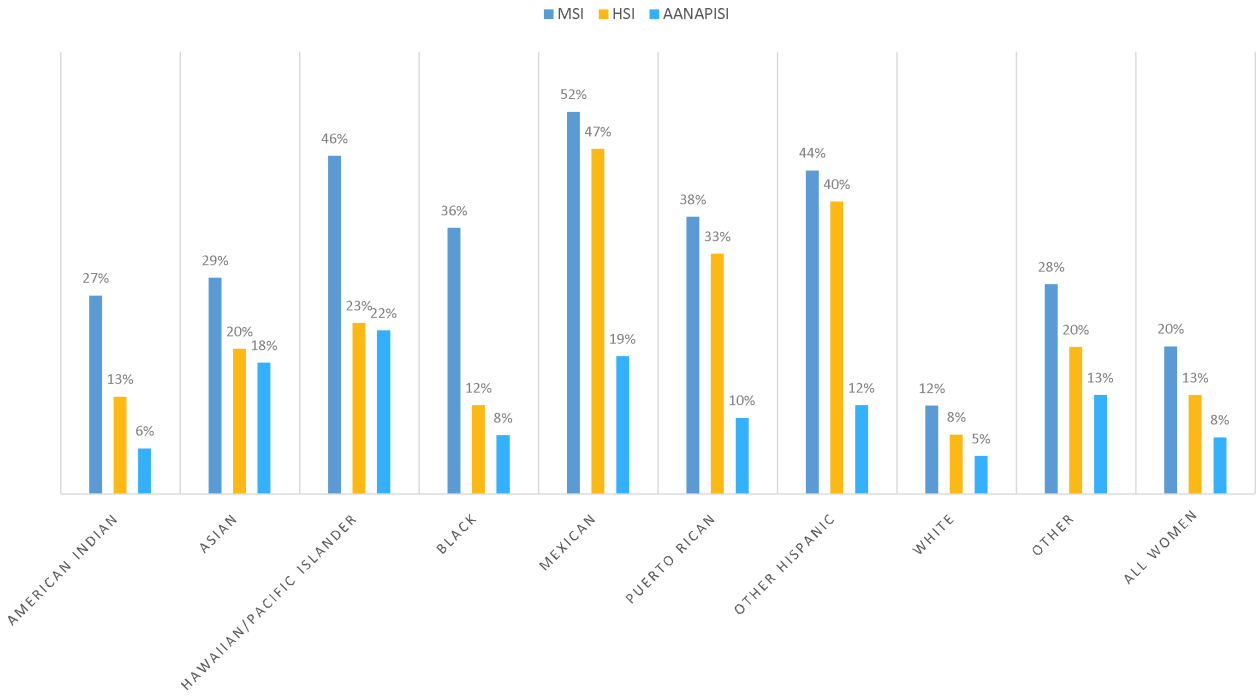
Half of all women attended an undergraduate institution with a student population of 20,000 or more. There was a 20 percentage point difference among the women across the nine racial groups who attended large institutions, ranging from 62% of Asian women to 42% of Puerto Rican women.

Minority-Serving Institutions

Today, millions of students of color, many of whom may be from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and the first in their families to attend college, enroll at an MSI (American Council on Education [ACE], n.d.-b). Students of all races/ethnicities attend MSIs. The 771 MSIs compose a category of educational establishments based on historical origin or enrollment criteria (typically the percentage of enrolled minorities at a particular school; Conrad & Gasman, 2017). Institutions may have more than one MSI designation. For this research, the umbrella term MSI subsumes Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–serving institutions (AANAPISIs), Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian–serving institutions (AANHs), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Native American–serving nontribal institutions (NASNTIs), predominantly Black institutions, and tribal colleges and universities.

Women across the nine racial groups reported attending MSIs for their baccalaureate degrees (see Figure 4 and Table A5). As a whole, 20% of all women attended an MSI. However, there were considerable differences in MSI enrollment across the racial groups, with a 40 percentage point range. Enrollment was highest among Mexican women (52%) and lowest among White women (12%).

Figure 4. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Attendance at Minority-Serving Institutions, Overall, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–Serving Institutions by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Minority-serving institution is the overarching term for the various types of institutions. Some institutions have multiple affiliations. Hispanic-serving institutions and Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–serving institutions are two types of minority-serving institution. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). AANIPISI = Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–serving institution. HSI = Hispanic-serving institution. MSI = minority-serving institution.

Regarding specific types of MSIs, HSIs were the most highly attended (see Figure 4 and Table A5). As a group, 13% of women earned their undergraduate degree at an HSI, and women from all racial groups reported enrolling at an HSI. The patterns of enrollment at HSIs mirror those of MSIs: 47% of Mexican women attended an HSI, compared to 8% of White women—a 39 percentage point difference. AANAPISIs were the second most popular MSI for women, with

8% enrollment. In the same pattern, there were considerable differences—17 percentage points—with 22% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women enrolled, compared to 5% of White women.

Three other types of MSI were popular among certain women. For Black women, HBCUs represented 19% of the institutions where they enrolled. For Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women, AANH institutions represented 15% of the institutions where they enrolled, and for American Indian women, NASNTI institutions represented 8% of the institutions where they enrolled.

Single-Sex Women's College

Since 1836, with the founding of Wesleyan College in Georgia, women's colleges have enjoyed a long and rich history of educating women in the United States. One example of their contribution is that women's college graduates are nearly twice as likely to complete a graduate degree as their public university peers (51% vs. 27%; Day, 2012). One percent of all women PGS attended one of the 36 single-sex women's colleges in the United States, as listed by the National Center for Education Statistics College Navigator, as undergraduates (see Table A5). However, there was a very slight difference: Black and Mexican women had the highest rates of attending a women's college (2%).

Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education highlights important similarities and differences among institutions focusing on mission and function. This classification shows the range of institutional diversity in the U.S. higher education system. The basic classification is doctoral universities, master's colleges and universities, baccalaureate colleges, baccalaureate/associate colleges, associate colleges, special focus institutions, and tribal colleges (ACE, n.d.-a).

Altogether, most women (68%) attended doctoral universities, followed by master's colleges and universities (23%) and baccalaureate colleges (8%; see Table A5). Attendance at doctoral universities differed among women—12 percentage points—ranging from 76% of Asian women to 64% of Puerto Rican women. Among the nine groups of women, there were minimal differences in attending baccalaureate colleges.

Barron's Profile of American Colleges

Barron's Profile of American Colleges indexes colleges according to their degree of undergraduate admissions selectivity (Barron's College Division Staff [BCDS], 2015). It considers the median entrance examination scores for the first-year class, class rank, GPA required for admission, and the percentage of accepted applicants (BCDS, 2015). The approximately 200 institutions ranked most competitive and highly competitive typically enroll students ranked in the top 35% of their high school class with a B or higher high school GPA. For example, *Barron's*-ranked institutions in Connecticut would be Charter Oak College (other), the University of Hartford (competitive), Fairfield University (very competitive), Trinity College (highly competitive), and Yale University (most competitive).

Thirty-four percent of women enrolled at *Barron's* competitively ranked institutions, followed by 31% at very competitive institutions, 16% at highly competitive institutions, 12% at most competitive institutions, and 7% at institutions ranked other (see Table A5).

Within each ranking level, there were large to moderate differences among the nine racial groups of women who attended these institutions. One example of a large difference was the 16 percentage point difference among the women who attended competitive colleges, ranging from 39% of Black women to 23% of Asian women. An example of a moderate difference was the 10 percentage point difference in attendance at highly competitive institutions, with 20% of Asian women and 11% of American Indian women attending them.

Association of American Universities Member University

The 63 U.S. member universities of the AAU are "on the leading edge of innovation, scholarship, and solutions that contribute to scientific progress, economic development, security and well-being" (American Association of Universities [AAU], n.d.-b, para. 1).[6] In 2020, AAU institutions awarded 48% of all research doctoral degrees and 20% of all undergraduate degrees in STEM and social sciences (AAU, n.d.-a). The AAU universities conduct critical research and receive 63% of the funding from federal agencies to perform research in the national interest (AAU, n.d.-a).

Overall, 22% of women attended AAU institutions as undergraduates (see Table A5). However, there were substantial differences in attendance across the nine racial groups, with a 25 percentage point range. Attendance was highest among Asian women (41%) and lowest among Black women (16%).

How Did Women Prospective Graduate Students Experience Their Undergraduate Education?

In addition to gender and race/ethnicity, other dimensions of women's lived experiences may influence how they navigate their undergraduate and graduate school experiences. Parental education and Federal Pell Grant eligibility may be two factors.

Parent Educational Attainment

Parent/guardian (parent) educational attainment is correlated with children's educational attainment. For example, data from the Survey of Earned Doctorates reveal that among all individuals who received a doctorate in 2021, 47% of women had at least one parent who earned a master's degree, professional doctorate, or research doctoral degree; 25% had at least one parent with a bachelor's degree; and 27% had at least one parent whose highest level of education was some college or less (National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, 2021, Table 5-5).

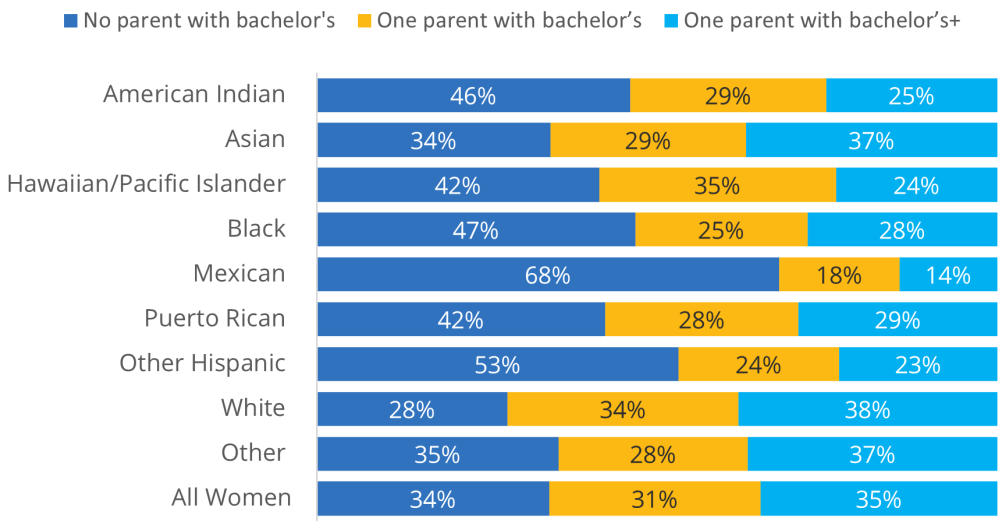
When all women are considered, parents' educational attainment distribution differs slightly. Thirty-four percent of women reported no parent with a bachelor's degree, 31% reported one parent with a bachelor's degree, and 35% reported one parent with a bachelor's degree+ (see Figure 5 and Table A5). Substantial differences emerge when looking at different groups of women within each level of parent education. One example is the 40 percentage point difference in reports of having no parent with a bachelor's degree, ranging from 68% of Mexican women to 28% of White women. For a more comprehensive analysis of parental education, see the third report of the Pathways to Graduate School series (Millett, 2025b).

Federal Pell Grant Eligibility

PGS were not asked to provide information about their income, their parents' income, or other financial assets. Instead, they were asked whether they participated in the Federal Pell Grant program as undergraduates, a proxy measure for economically disadvantaged status.

Taken together, a roughly even distribution of women reported being Pell-eligible (33%), being non-Pell-eligible (36%), or not knowing whether they were Pell-eligible (31%; see Table A5). The picture changes when diverse groups of women are analyzed. There was a 36 percentage point difference among the nine groups reporting being Pell-eligible, ranging from 60% of Black women to 24% of White women (see Millett, 2025c, for a detailed discussion of Pell-eligible and non-Pell-eligible experiences.

Figure 5. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Parent Educational Attainment by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

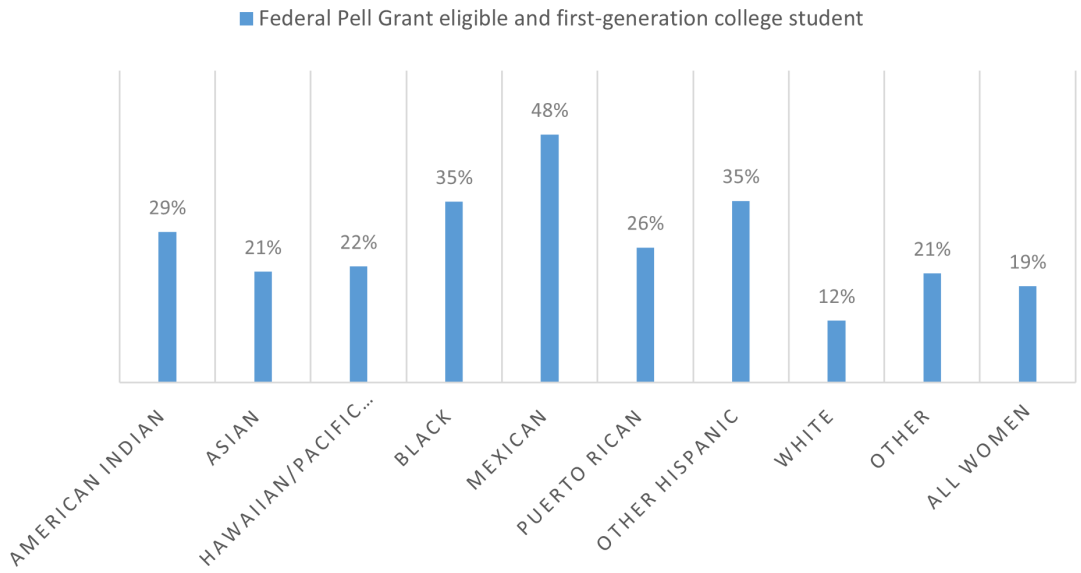


Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Pell-Eligible and First-Generation College Students

Being a first-generation college student (no parent BA) can be associated with being a student from an economically disadvantaged background. Pell-eligible women and first-generation college students are presented (see Figure 6 and Table A5). As a group, 19% of women were Pell-eligible and first-generation college students. This varied across the range of women's groups—36 percentage points—with 48% of Mexican women compared to 12% of White women being Pell-eligible and first-generation college students.

Figure 6. Women Prospective Graduate Students Who Were Pell Grant–Eligible and With No Parent Who Earned A Bachelor's Degree by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

What Were Women Prospective Graduate Students' Academic Accomplishments?

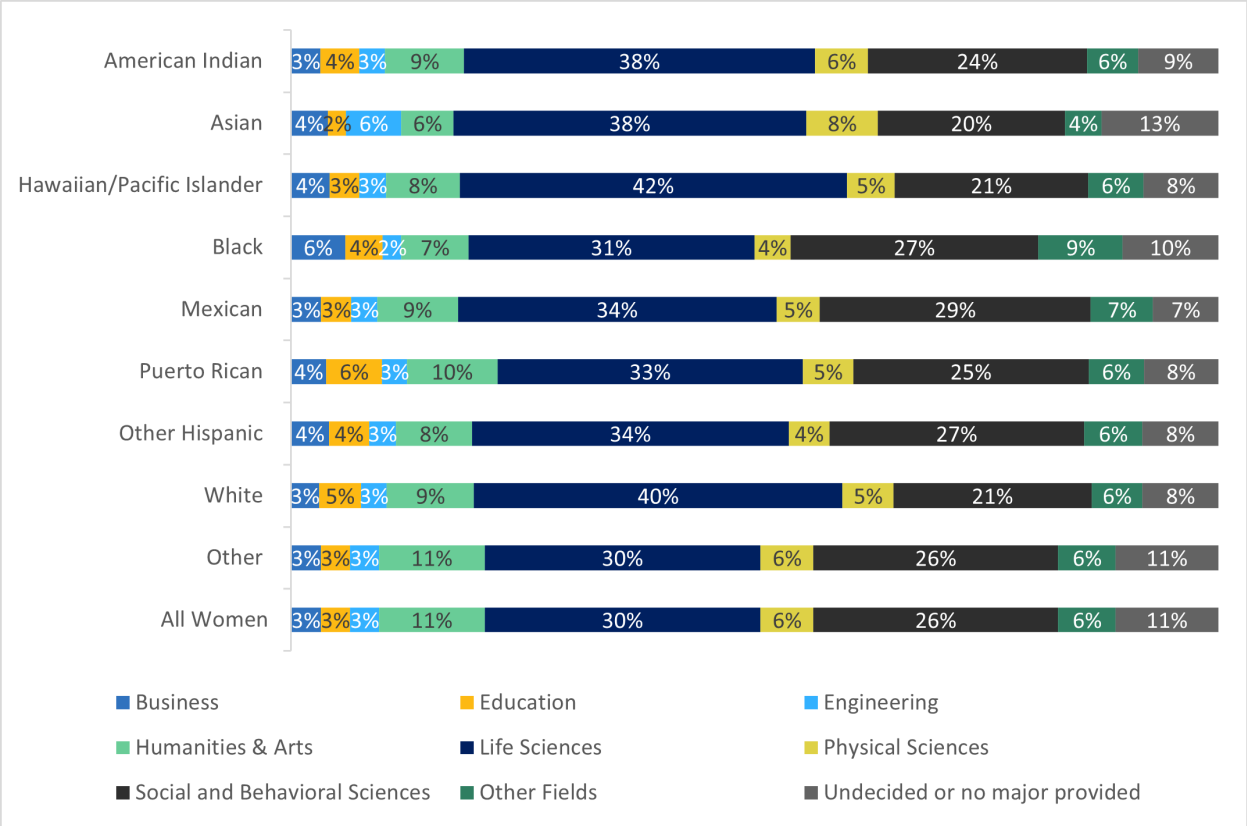
Women reported on two of their undergraduate academic accomplishments: what they studied and the grades they achieved.

Undergraduate Major Field

Glassdoor, in its report *The Pipeline Problem: How College Majors Contribute to the Gender Pay Gap* (Chamberlain & Jayaraman, 2017), identified the most female-dominated majors—social work, health care administration, anthropology, nursing, and human resources—as well as the most male-dominated majors: mechanical engineering, civil engineering, physics, computer science and engineering, and electoral engineering. It reported that 10 of the highest-paying majors they examined are male dominated and that six of the lowest-paying majors are female dominated.

Among all women PGS, the gendered nature of college majors observed by Glassdoor held—3% majored in engineering and 5% in the physical sciences, in contrast to 38% in the life sciences, 23% in the social and behavioral sciences, and 9% in the humanities and arts (see Figure 7 and Table A5).

Figure 7. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Undergraduate Major Field by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Other fields include, among others, architecture and environmental design, communications and journalism, family and consumer services, law, library and archival studies, public administration, religion and theology, social work. Those who indicated undecided, indicated any department not listed, or did not respond to the question or provided an invalid answer are included in the undecided or no major provided category. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Since the 1970s, colleges, universities, and organizations like the National Science Foundation have worked to increase women's participation in STEM. Analyzing the landscape

of women majoring in STEM fields is akin to peeling an onion. The outer layer reveals that 46% of all women PGS majored in a STEM field. Among the various groups of women, those majoring in STEM fields ranged from 37% of Black women to 52% of Asian women, reflecting a 15 percentage point difference.

The next layer shows that when STEM is disaggregated into its parts, all women's participation is notably higher in the life sciences (38%) compared to the physical sciences (5%) and engineering (3%).

The third layer reveals little variation among the different groups of women majoring in the physical sciences or engineering. However, substantial differences emerge in their majoring in life sciences, with a 12 percentage point range, from 42% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 30% of other women.

Undergraduate Grade Point Average

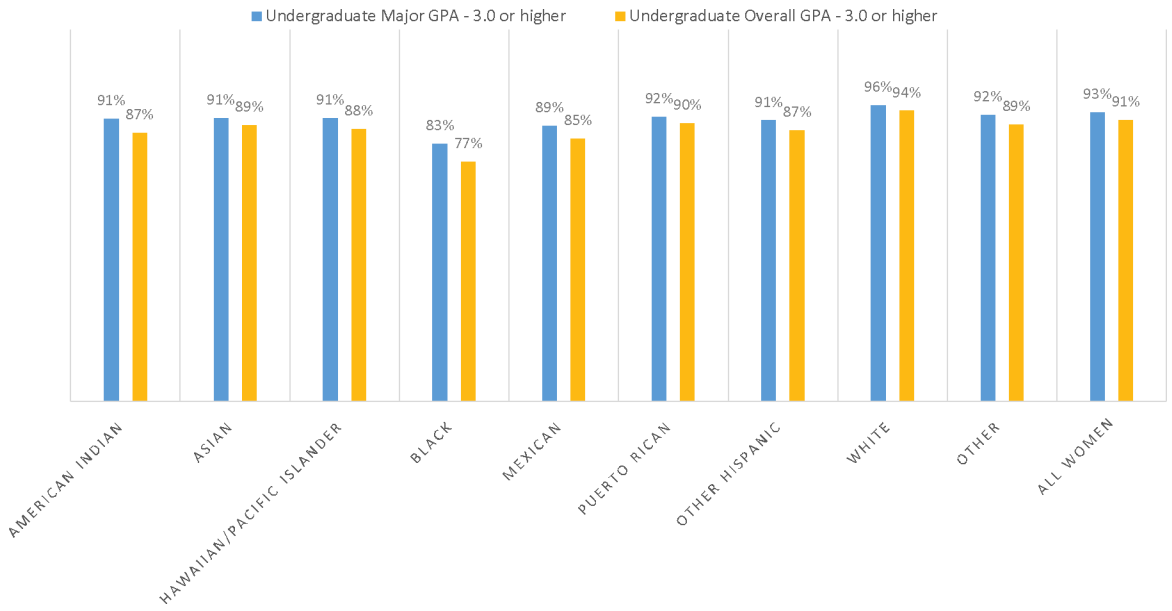
Unlike for undergraduate admissions, department faculty typically make graduate school admissions decisions (Kent & McCarthy, 2016). Although there is no universal minimum GPA admissions committees require, PGS may consult popular forums (e.g., Quora, Academic Stack Exchange, or Forbes Advisor) that suggest (a) at least a 3.0 GPA, with some variation for more competitive programs, and (b) that graduate school admissions committees tend to prioritize undergraduate major GPA above overall GPA, with possible exceptions if an applicant is applying to a different field than their undergraduate major.

To provide context for the data in this study, the U.S. Department of Education, through the Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B) Longitudinal Study, presented GPAs for students who earned their bachelor's degrees during the 2007–2008 academic year (Woo et al., 2012). Seventy-five percent of White and Asian bachelor's degree recipients had a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Among Hispanic bachelor's degree recipients, 64% of all graduates had a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Among Black bachelor's degree recipients, 55% of all graduates had a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Women self-reported their undergraduate major GPAs and their overall GPAs. In keeping with the 3.0 or higher consideration for graduate school admissions, 93% of women PGS met this academic accomplishment by earning a 3.0 or higher in their undergraduate majors (see Figure 8 and Table A5). Akin to what was observed with the B&B data, there is variability. A

substantial difference of more than 12 percentage points is observed between White women (96%) and Black women (83%) in earning a 3.0 or higher undergraduate major GPA.

Figure 8. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Undergraduate Major Grade Point Average of 3.0 or Higher and Overall Grade Point Average of 3.0 or Higher by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). GPA = grade point average.

Ninety-one percent of women PGS reported earning a 3.0 or higher overall GPA (see Figure 8 and Table A5). However, their overall undergraduate GPAs, while close to their major GPAs, were lower. This is expected, as individuals may do better in their major courses compared to general education courses and electives. Similar to their major GPA accomplishments, there are differences in academic achievement among the nine groups of women concerning their overall undergraduate GPAs. A 16 percentage point difference, from 94% of White women to 77% of Black women, was observed.

Research Question 5: What Were Women Prospective Graduate Students' Plans for Graduate Study?

Understanding PGS' aspirations and goals can help individuals and organizations interested in graduate education better align their offerings with student expectations. This information can also be helpful when advising students to consider where they might go. Women PGS were asked several broad questions about their plans, covering key aspects such as their intended degrees, expected fields of study, and preferred learning modalities, including online and in-person formats. Additionally, they provided insights into their anticipated enrollment status—full-time or part-time—and geographic preferences for where they planned to pursue their graduate education. These insights offer a comprehensive picture of women's graduate education objectives (see Table A6).

Graduate Degree Objective

In the academic year 2020–2021, four out of five graduate degrees conferred were for master's degrees (NCES, 2022, Table 319.10). The doctoral degrees conferred included individuals who earned a PhD, an EdD, an MD, a DDS, a law degree, or another comparable degree at the doctoral level.

As a group, 37% of women reported that they intended to earn a doctoral degree, 58% a master's degree, 3% a master's in business administration, fewer than 1% a juris doctor, and 2% an "other" degree. There were moderate differences among the diverse group of women in their goal to earn a doctoral degree, ranging from 42% of American Indian women to 34% of Asian women, and in their intent to earn a master's degree, ranging from 60% of other Hispanic women to 51% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women.

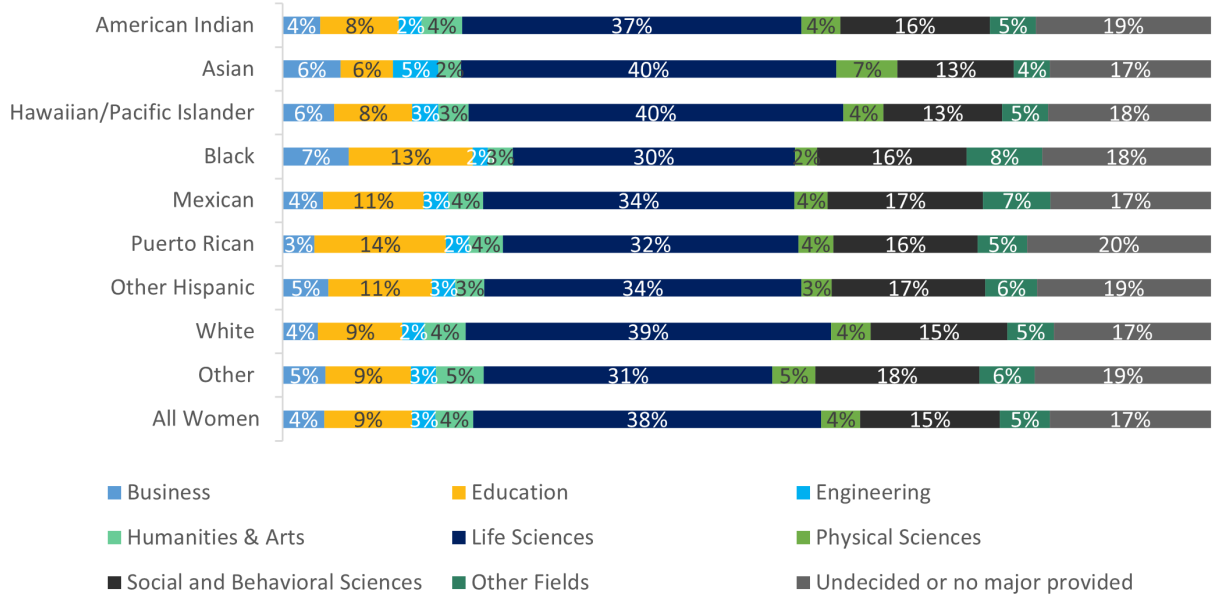
Intended Graduate Major Field

The intended fields of graduate study are examined while considering the possible shift in field of study from the undergraduate to the graduate level. It is valuable to note that admissions test requirements at either the graduate school or the department level may drive some of the observed outcomes.

Overall, women intended to pursue graduate studies in life sciences (38%), followed by the social and behavioral sciences (15%), education (9%), other fields (5%), business (4%),

humanities and arts (4%), physical sciences (4%), and engineering (3%), with 17% reporting being undecided or not providing a major (see Figure 9 and Table A6).

Figure 9. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Intended Graduate Major Field by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Other fields include, among others, architecture and environmental design, communications and journalism, family and consumer services, law, library and archival studies, public administration, religion and theology, social work. Those who indicated undecided, indicated any department not listed, or did not respond to the question or provided an invalid answer are included in the undecided or no major provided category. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

The patterns observed in undergraduate majors within STEM fields are mirrored at the graduate level. Women's interest in education increased at the graduate level, rising from 4% in undergraduate programs to 9%. Additionally, while there was minimal variation among the various groups of women who majored in education at the undergraduate level, the differences became more pronounced at the graduate level. For instance, 14% of Puerto Rican women intended to major in education at the graduate level, compared to 6% of Asian women.

Overall, 57% of women planned to continue their graduate studies in the same field as their undergraduate major. There is a notable difference among the various groups of women, with 59% of White women compared to 51% of Black women planning to continue in the same major field.

Program Format

In the academic year 2019–2020, 64% of all postbaccalaureate students reported taking a class taught entirely online. For those who reported taking an online class, 46% reported that their entire degree program was online (NCES, 2022, Table 311.32).

Within this broader context, 70% of women preferred an on-campus graduate school experience, with a combination of on-campus and online being their second choice (16%), online being their third choice (6%), and 7% being undecided (see Table A6). Regarding a preference for on-campus learning, women's preferences differed substantially—17 percentage points—ranging from 74% of Asian women to 57% of Black women. Interest in a combination of on-campus and online program formats also differed—14 percentage points—from 28% of Black women to 14% of White women.

Enrollment Preference

In fall 2021, 57% of postbaccalaureate students nationally had full-time status (NCES, 2023b, Table 303.45). For women nationally, 55% attended full-time.

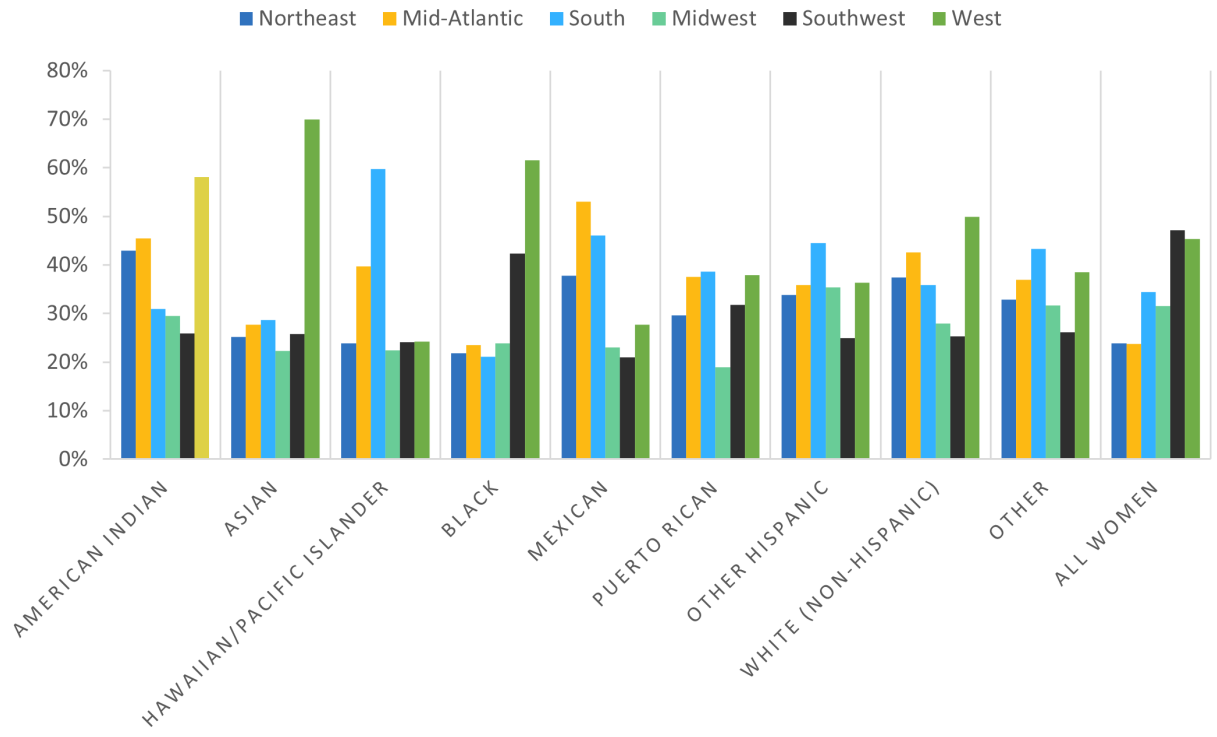
In light of these figures, 84% of women would like to enroll full-time (see Table A6). Women differed moderately in their preference for full-time enrollment, ranging from 88% of American Indian women to 81% of Puerto Rican women.

Preferred Geographic Region for Graduate Study

All individuals were asked a general question about the geographic regions in the United States[7] and outside of the United States where they preferred to attend graduate school. While women could select multiple regions of the United States and outside of the United States to attend graduate school, the majority of women (55%) selected one region of the United States. Women differed considerably in limiting their selection to one region—13 percentage points—ranging from 61% of Mexican women to 48% of Asian women.

Women displayed varied preferences for each of the six regions in the United States (see Figure 10 and Table A6). There was a 21 percentage point difference for the Northeast, ranging from 43% of Asian women to 22% of Mexican women. For the Mid-Atlantic, the difference was 30 percentage points, ranging from 53% of Mexican women to 24% of American Indian women. For the South, the difference was 39 percentage points, ranging from 35% of White women to 19% of other Hispanic women. There was a 26 percentage point difference for the Southwest, with 47% of American Indian women compared to 21% of Puerto Rican women. Finally, for the West, the difference was 46 percentage points, ranging from 70% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 24% of Black women.

Figure 10. Women Prospective Graduate Students' Preferred Regions to Attend Graduate School Within the United States by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Respondents were able to indicate multiple regions. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

U.S. women considered their options for graduate school outside the United States, with Western Europe (8%) being the most popular region, followed by Canada (7%) and Australia/New Zealand and Pacific Islands (4%). Moderate differences in choices outside the United States were observed in preferences for Australia/New Zealand and Pacific Islands, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Russia.

Research Question 6: What Were Their Emerging Graduate School Choice Sets?

This section focused on the early construction of PGS' graduate program choice sets (see Table A7). In constructing their choice sets—the collections of graduate institutions to which they may apply—individuals weigh varied factors, for instance, the number of programs to apply to. According to one commonly used discussion forum, graduate school applicants may refer to the rule of thumb when applying to a degree program, which is to consider applying to four to six programs (GradCafe Editor, 2024). Another set of factors is related to the characteristics of the prospective programs. The Council of Graduate Schools (2021) suggested that individuals consider program fit, financial investment, student support services, location, and professional development and career support.

Although insights into how PGS settled on specific graduate programs and their exhaustive or final collections of institutions in their choice sets are unavailable for this study, information regarding the graduate schools and departments they were considering is accessible. Two caveats may have shaped the parameters of the choice set presented. First, on test day, individuals can designate up to four graduate institutions and departments and fellowship sponsors to receive scores as part of the test fee. Individuals who elect to send their GRE General Test scores to additional institutions or to send their scores after test day can do so by ordering additional score reports for a fee (ETS, n.d.). Second, PGS may apply to graduate programs that do not require GRE scores, and thus these programs would not be reflected in the observed emerging choice set.

Graduate programs and schools are typically divisions in a college or university that award graduate degrees. For example, the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, which has master's and doctoral programs, is part of the University of Texas at Austin. The data presented in this section describe the college or university (e.g., the University of Texas at Austin) rather than specific graduate programs. An institution is counted only once per individual, even if the individual sent scores to multiple graduate programs at a single university

(e.g., the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin).

Choice Set Size

Altogether, 82% of women sent their scores to graduate institutions and, therefore, had a choice set. It is not surprising that fewer than 100% of women sent score reports, as GRE scores are good for 5 calendar years from when individuals take the test. Even though the BIQ does not ask questions about the costs of applying to graduate programs or the ease or hardship of paying those costs, women most likely cover the cost of applications, which in a field like psychology can range from $0 to $125 per application plus the cost of official transcripts (Weiss & Tamura, 2023). According to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (2018), the average cost of a transcript ranges from $5.00 to $9.99. If or how these costs may have factored into choice set construction (e.g., number or type of programs) has yet to be discovered.

The 572,975 women with graduate school choice sets had approximately 2.1 million choices, with a median of three graduate institutions per individual (see Table A7). Women across the different groups were comparable in having a graduate school choice set, ranging from 83% of White women to 79% of other Hispanic women.

As a group, 72% of women's choice sets had four or fewer institutions, 24% had a choice set with 5–10 institutions, and 5% had a choice set with 11 or more institutions. There were considerable differences among the different groups of women in having a prospective graduate institution choice set with four or fewer institutions—19 percentage points—ranging from 82% of Black women to 63% of Asian women.

In addition to presenting whether women included a graduate school with a certain institutional characteristic (yes/no), the intensity of this characteristic in the graduate school choice set is presented (see Table A7). An example may best illustrate the difference (see Table 5). Consider two women, each of whom has four graduate programs in her choice set. If the women's preference for a graduate program at a private institution is considered, the fact that each chose at least one private graduate school would be reported. This would mask that for Woman 1, three out of four (75%) graduate programs were at private institutions, whereas for Woman 2, two were graduate programs at private institutions (50%).

Table 5. Hypothetical Example of Graduate School Choices

Individual	Graduate school choice			
	1	2	3	4
Woman 1: Public/private institution	Public	Private	Private	Private
Woman 2: Public/private institution	Public	Public	Private	Private

Where in the United States Would Women Like to Go to Graduate School?

Women's graduate school choice sets provide a second opportunity to learn about their geographic preferences. Here women's choice sets are restricted to U.S. institutions to learn if women included a constellation of graduate schools across the country for their choice sets or if they narrowed their geographic considerations. There may be a precedent for geographic narrowing based on selecting an undergraduate institution. In their transition from high school to college, the majority (56.2%) of public, 4-year college students attend an institution under an hour's drive away from home (fewer than 50 miles), and nearly 70% attend within 2 hours of their homes (fewer than 100 miles; Wozniak, 2018). Two patterns have been observed when individuals graduate from college (EAB, 2018). Graduates of state universities tend to remain close to their alma maters—often staying within state lines. The typical graduate lives within 330 miles of the university, and 40% stay within 50 miles. The second pattern is for graduates of elite universities to move to major economic hubs—usually near their alma maters.

Let us consider a woman who lived in California and who applied to four graduate programs—one each in California, Washington, Arizona, and Florida (see Figure 11). As she resides in California, this choice would be in-state as well as within the U.S. Census Pacific Division and Region where she resides. A graduate institution in Washington would be considered out-of-state and in the same U.S. Census division and region. The institution in Arizona would be considered out-of-state, in the same U.S. Census division, and out of the region. The Florida-based institution would be out-of-state and out of U.S. Census division and region.

Figure 11. U.S. Map With Hypothetical Graduate School Choices

In this figure, California is the prospective graduate students' state of residence.

Pursuing Graduate Study at In-State or Out-of-State Colleges or Universities

Seventy-seven percent of women included in their choice sets at least one in-state graduate program (see California in the example in Figure 11; see also Figure 12 and Table A7). There were considerable differences among the different groups of women, ranging from 85% of Mexican women to 75% of American Indian women, who included at least one in-state school. For those women who did, in-state graduate programs represented 70% of their choices. However, there was considerable variation—13 percentage points—ranging from constituting 78% of other Hispanic women's choice sets to 65% of Asian women's choice sets.

Sixty-two percent of women included at least one out-of-state graduate program (see Washington, Arizona, or Florida in the example in Figure 11) in their choice sets. There were large differences among the different groups of women—18 percentage points—ranging from 67% of Asian women to 49% of Mexican women. For women who included out-of-state graduate programs, they represented nearly 75% of their choices with moderate differences across the various groups of women.

Pursuing Graduate Study in Their U.S. Census Divisions or Regions

Eighty-six percent of women included graduate programs in the U.S. Census division where they reside (see Washington in the example in Figure 11; see also Table A7). There were minimal differences among the women. For those who did include graduate programs in their census divisions, these programs represented 76% of their choice sets, with considerable differences between the women, ranging from 82% of other Hispanic women to 71% of Asian women.

Twenty-five percent of women included a graduate program outside their census division but within their census region (see Arizona in the example in Figure 11). There were notable differences among the women including such a program, ranging from 26% of White women to 18% of Puerto Rican women. For those women who included them, graduate programs outside their census divisions represented 36% of the institutions in their choice sets, with 43% of Black women's to 31% of Asian women's choice sets.

As a group, 44% of women included a graduate program outside their census region (see Florida in the example in Figure 11). This differed across the various groups of women by a 19 percentage point difference, ranging from 54% of Asian women to 34% of Black women. For those women who included them, graduate programs outside their census regions represented 58% of their choice sets, with minimal difference among the various groups of women.

What Are the Profiles of the Institutions in Their Graduate School Choice Sets?

Now that PGS' geographic preferences for where to pursue graduate studies are known, the next consideration is the types of institutions included in their choice sets.

Intend to Pursue Graduate Studies at Their Undergraduate Institutions

There are pros and cons to earning a graduate degree at the same institution where one received one's undergraduate degree (Bonacolta, 2021; Lovick, 2020). Some of the pros to continuing at the same place include already being a member of the academic community, possible tuition discounts, and, in some cases, finishing or continuing one's undergraduate research. In addition, PGS would not incur relocation costs and could retain existing networks outside of the university community. Some cons are that one may be restricting one's network, limiting one's exposure to how academic departments are run in other places, and potentially limiting one's international experience. While the reason for excluding them from their

undergraduate institutions is unknown, one factor may be that it offers limited or no graduate programs (e.g., a Carnegie classification baccalaureate college).

As a group, 45% of women indicated that they may apply to their undergraduate alma maters (see Table A7). There were moderate differences among the groups of women indicating that they may apply to their undergraduate alma maters, ranging from 53% of other Hispanic women to 43% of White women. For those women who included their undergraduate institution in their choice set, it represented 56% of their choice set. This ranged from 62% for American Indian women and Black women to 48% for Asian women.

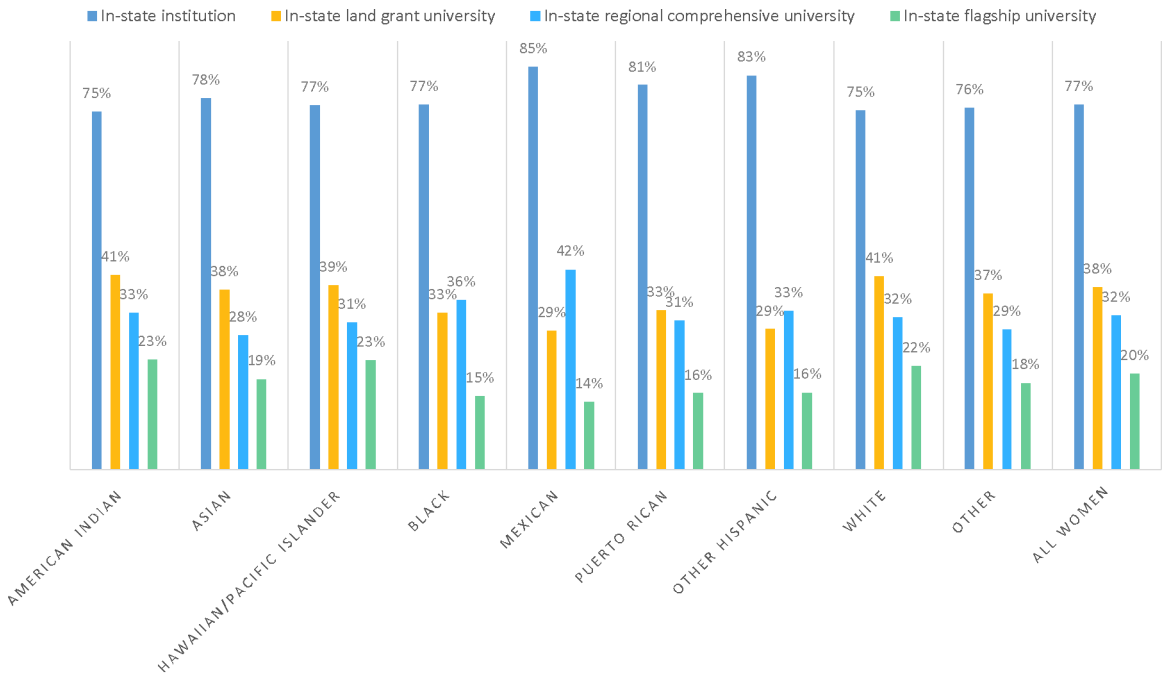
Land Grant Institutions, Regional Comprehensive Universities, and Flagship Universities in Their States of Residence

Thirty-eight percent of women included the land grant institutions of their state in their choice set (e.g., North Carolina State University, Raleigh; see Figure 12 and Table A7). Again, variations ranged from 41% of American Indian women and White women to 29% of Mexican women and other Hispanic women. If included in the choice set, land grant institutions represented around 46% of the choices, ranging from 55% for Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 37% for Asian women.

Among all women, 32% included a regional comprehensive university in their state of residence in their choice set (e.g., North Carolina Central University). The different groups of women varied considerably in including a regional comprehensive, ranging from 42% of Mexican women to 28% of Asian women. If included in the choice set, regional comprehensive institutions ranged substantially from representing 57% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women's choice sets to 36% of Asian women's choice sets.

Twenty percent of women included their flagship state university in their state of residence in their choice set (e.g., UNC Chapel Hill). The different groups of women varied moderately in considering a graduate program at the flagship state university, ranging from 23% of American Indian women and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 14% of Mexican women. For those women who included the state flagship, it represented 55% of their choice set but ranged substantially between the nine groups, from representing 64% for Black women to 49% for Asian women's choice set.

Figure 12 Women Prospective Graduate Students' Inclusion of Possible Graduate School Choices in Their State of Residence and by Institutional Type by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021



Apart from the University of Idaho, the University of North Dakota, and the University of South Dakota, there is no overlap between the state flagship university and the regional comprehensive universities in a state. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Among all women, 32% included a regional comprehensive university in their state of residence in their choice set (e.g., North Carolina Central University). The different groups of women varied considerably in including a regional comprehensive, ranging from 42% of Mexican women to 28% of Asian women. If included in the choice set, regional comprehensive institutions ranged substantially from representing 57% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women's choice sets to 36% of Asian women's choice sets.

Twenty percent of women included their flagship state university in their state of residence in their choice set (e.g., UNC Chapel Hill). The different groups of women varied moderately in considering a graduate program at the flagship state university, ranging from 23% of American Indian women and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 14% of Mexican women.

For those women who included the state flagship, it represented 55% of their choice set but ranged substantially between the nine groups, from representing 64% for Black women to 49% for Asian women's choice set.

Institution Control and Student Body Size

In fall 2021, 50% of postgraduate students nationally enrolled at public institutions, 43% at nonprofit private institutions, and 7% at for-profit institutions (NCES, 2022, Table 306.5). As a group, 84% of women included at least one public institution in their choice sets. The different groups of women had moderate differences in their including public institutions in their choice sets, from 89% of American Indian women to 79% of Puerto Rican women. For those women who did include a public institution, they represented 75% of their choice set. This ranged considerably, from 82% of American Indian women's to 65% of Asian women's choice sets.

As a group, 60% of women included at least one private nonprofit institution in their choice sets (see Table A7). The nine racial groups of women differed considerably in including private nonprofit institutions in their choice sets, from 73% of Asian women to 47% of American Indian women. For those women who did include a private institution, they represented 60% of their choice sets, with moderate differences across the groups. Private for-profit graduate programs were not as popular, with 5% of all women including one in their choice sets. This selection pattern may be due to private for-profit graduate programs having different GRE requirements for admissions.

Regarding the size of the institution where they might like to earn their graduate degree, for women as a group, 77% of women included an institution with at least 20,000 students. Including a large-sized institution ranged considerably, from 84% of Asian women to 70% of Black women. For those women who did include a large-sized institution, they accounted for 68% of their choice sets, with moderate differences across the nine groups of women.

Minority-Serving Institutions

Among the 771 MSIs, 454 (59%) are 4-year institutions, and not all necessarily offer graduate degrees. In looking at the presence of at least one MSI in their graduate school choice sets, 41% of women included at least one (see Table A7). The various racial groups of women included an MSI in their graduate school choice sets. Still, this ranged considerably—more than 30 percentage points—from 60% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 36% of White women.

The same pattern was observed for the proportional representation of an MSI in their choice sets. For those women who did include an MSI, they accounted for 48% of their choice sets. There was a 21 percentage point difference in the representation of an MSI in their choice sets, ranging from 63% of Mexican women's to 42% of White women's choice sets.

A closer look at the types of MSI women were considering for graduate school echoes their undergraduate experiences. Among all women, 27% included at least one HSI, ranging from 58% of Mexican women to 23% of White women. For those women who did include an HSI, they represented 47% of their choice sets. This varied from 64% for Mexican women to 42% for White women.

AANAPISIs were the second most frequent type of MSI included in choice sets, at 23%. AANAPISIS were most often included by Asian women (36%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women (36%), and Mexican women (35%) and least often by American Indian women (20%), Black women (20%), and White women (20%). For those women who did include an AANAPISI in their choice sets, they represented 39% of their choices. For Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Mexican, and Puerto Rican women, AANAPISIs represented 48% of the institutions in their choice sets.

While 3% of women from the nine racial groups applied to an HBCU for graduate school, Black women did so at a moderately higher rate (8%). For those Black women who included an HBCU, these institutions represented 42% of their choice sets.

Single-Sex Women's Colleges

Among the 35 single-sex women's colleges, 40% are primarily bachelor's degree institutions that award master's degrees and postbaccalaureate certificates, and a few award doctoral degrees. Three percent of women included a women's college in their choice sets, and if they did include them, they represented 26% of their choice sets (see Table A7).

Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

Institutions classified as Carnegie doctoral-granting institutions were prevalent in women's choice sets. Overall, 90% of women included at least one doctoral institution, with moderate differences across the nine racial groups, ranging from 91% of Asian women and White women to 86% of Puerto Rican women (see Table A7). For those who did include a Carnegie doctoral institution, they represented 84% of institutions in their choice sets, with

minimal difference across the nine groups. Approximately 32% of women included at least one institution with Carnegie master's classification in their choice sets. While there were minimal differences among women in including one, there were considerable differences in master's institutions' representation in the PGS' choice sets. They ranged from composing 57% of Puerto Rican women's choice sets to 43% of Asian women's choice sets.

Approximately one-fifth of women included at least one graduate institution with a Carnegie classification of special focus 4-year (e.g., Relay Graduate School of Education or Pardee RAND Graduate School). If women included a special focus 4-year program, they represented 37% of the choice sets.

Association of American Universities Member University

Fifty-one percent of women's graduate school choice sets included at least one AAU member institution (see Table A7). Women across the nine racial groups varied considerably in adding an AAU institution to their choice sets—a 25 percentage point difference—ranging from 65% for Asian women to 40% for Black women. For those women who did include an AAU institution, they represented 57% of the institutions in their choice sets. Again, AAU member institutions have a range of representation in women's choice sets, ranging from 63% for Asian women's and other women's choice sets to 55% for White women's choice sets.

Selected Highlights

The data represent 698,298 women aspiring to graduate education, collected over a 5-year period. The report narrative focused on all women and nine distinct profiles of women based on race/ethnicity.

The majority of women PGS across the nine profiles lived in 10 states, although the composition of these states varied by group. Two out of five women PGS were enrolled in college, with considerable variation across the racial profiles. There was a 40 percentage point difference in the proportion of women with no parent holding a bachelor's degree, ranging from 68% of Mexican women to 28% of White women. Thirty-three percent of women PGS reported being eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, with the percentage varying from 24% of White women to 60% of Black women. While women across the nine profiles were comparable in majoring in the physical sciences or engineering as undergraduates, there was significant variation in their choice of the life sciences. Additionally, 32% of all women PGS considered a regional

comprehensive university in their state of residence for graduate school, with notable variation across groups, ranging from 42% of Mexican women to 28% of Asian women.

Following are selected data highlights from the findings.

Q1. Who Were the Women Prospective Graduate Students?

- **Age.** Nearly half of all women PGS were under 22 years of age, with another 24% being aged 23–25 years. Among the nine groups, considerable differences emerged in the age distribution of women.
- **Disability.** Five percent of all women PGS self-reported having a documented disability. Among those women who reported having a documented disability, the most often reported was a learning disability (43%). There were considerable differences in reporting having a learning disability, ranging from 47% of White women to 29% of Asian women and Black women.

Q2. Where Did Women Prospective Graduate Students Reside?

- **Top 10 States.** The majority of women PGS and the women PGS from the nine profiles lived in 10 states. The composition of the top 10 states varied across the nine groups.
- **Regional Distribution.** Women PGS lived in the South region of the United States (40%) and were nearly evenly distributed among the other areas—the Northeast (20%), West (20%), and Midwest (18%). These residency patterns varied among the different groups of women.

Q3. What Were Their Education and Work Experiences?

- **Enrollment.** Two out of five women PGS (42%) were enrolled in college. Among the various racial groups of women, there were considerable differences in their current enrollment status. For example, 47% of White women reported being currently enrolled, compared to 29% of Black women.

Q4. What Were Their Undergraduate Experiences?

- **In-State Attendance.** Three-quarters of women PGS attended a baccalaureate institution in their state of residence. Among the different racial groups of women, there were considerable differences—12 percentage points—between those who

attended an in-state institution, ranging from 86% of Mexican women to 73% of White women.

- **Parent Education.** There was a 40 percentage point difference in women PGS who reported having no parent with a bachelor's degree, ranging from 68% of Mexican women to 28% of White women.
- **Pell Grant Eligibility.** Thirty-three percent of women PGS reported being eligible for a Federal Pell Grant as an undergraduate, ranging from 24% of White women to 60% of Black women.
- **Undergraduate Majors.** As undergraduates, women across the nine profiles were comparable in majoring in the physical sciences or engineering. However, they differed substantially in majoring in life sciences, with a 12 percentage point range, from 42% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 30% of other women.

Q5. What Were Women Prospective Graduate Students' Plans for Graduate Study?

- Degree Goals. Fifty-eight percent of all women PGS expressed interest in earning a master's degree, with moderate differences among the nine groups of women.
- Graduate Field of Interest: Women's interest in education increased at the graduate level, rising from 4% in undergraduate programs to 9%.

Q6. What Were Their Emerging Graduate School Choice Sets?

- **In-State Preference.** Seventy percent of women PGS may apply to at least one in-state institution for graduate school. However, the nine groups differed considerably. For all women, in-state schools represented 70% of their choices.
- **Regional Comprehensive University Preference.** Thirty-two percent of all women PGS included a regional comprehensive university in their state of residence in their choice sets. The different groups of women varied considerably in their rates of including a regional comprehensive university, ranging from 42% of Mexican women to 28% of Asian women.
- **MSI Preference.** All women PGS and women across the nine racial groups included at least one MSI in their graduate school choice sets. However, the rate of women including an MSI ranged considerably—more than 30 percentage points—from 60% of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander women to 36% of White women.

Application of Research

The detailed profiles of PGS provide a foundation for enhancing how different segments of the prospective graduate student population are understood and supported. This research offers valuable insights that may help various audiences, including graduate schools, admissions offices, faculty, policymakers, and organizations advocating for diversity and inclusion in graduate education, reassess their own data and practices. Following are several key ways in which these stakeholders may apply the findings to inform how they evaluate and utilize their own data.

Graduate Schools

In the United States, 1,836 institutions award master's degrees, and 1,066 award doctoral degrees (NCES, 2022). Universities and colleges offering graduate programs may use the findings from this research to reassess their data regarding PGS. Institutions could explore the following:

- How does an institution's current student pool compared to the demographic and academic profiles outlined in this research?
- What insights can an institution gain about their challenges in attracting certain groups of students, particularly underrepresented populations?

Institutions may use these data as they analyze their recruitment strategies, potentially identifying areas for improvement in outreach to local, regional, or national student populations. By comparing the PGS data with their own admissions and enrollment data, schools may discover trends they had yet to consider, helping them refine their efforts to build a more diverse and inclusive graduate student body.

Graduate School Admissions Offices

Admissions offices play a vital role in analyzing trends in their applicant pools. The findings from the PGS profiles may inform how they assess their data, offering new ways to

- evaluate the geographic and academic backgrounds of their applicants
- understand whether they are reaching the prospective students who align with their institution's strategic priorities

This research may help admissions teams examine their recruitment data through a new lens, focusing on regions or demographics that may be underrepresented in their applicant pools.

By examining their data in the context of the broader national trends revealed in the PGS research, they may more effectively target outreach efforts and refine their recruitment strategies in collaboration with faculty.

Graduate Programs and Faculty

Faculty are deeply involved in the graduate admissions process, particularly at the departmental level. The insights from this research may help faculty analyze their program data in several ways:

- **Selection of Applicants.** Faculty may use the findings to review how their applicant pool compares to national trends in academic preparation, research interests, and demographic diversity. This comparison may lead to a better understanding of gaps or opportunities in their admissions process.
- **Admissions Criteria.** The research may prompt faculty to reassess their admissions criteria, exploring whether they are attracting students who align with the department's research priorities and long-term goals.
- **Recruitment and Outreach.** Faculty may look at where their current applicants come from and assess whether there are untapped feeder institutions or geographic regions. The data may inform how faculty evaluate their recruitment efforts and suggest new partnerships with other institutions or organizations.

By examining their own admissions data in light of these broader trends, faculty may better understand how to attract academically prepared students who are aligned with the department's research goals.

Policymakers and Government Agencies

Policymakers responsible for shaping higher education policies may use this research to guide how they analyze existing data on graduate education access and financial aid programs. The profiles of PGS may provide a broader context for understanding issues related to

- equity in access to graduate education, particularly among underrepresented groups
- the effectiveness of existing financial aid programs in ensuring that support reaches the students who are most in need of financial support

By comparing the national trends to their data on program effectiveness, policymakers may make informed decisions about where to allocate resources and which policy adjustments may be necessary to improve access and equity in graduate education.

Organizations Focused on Diversity and Inclusion

Advocacy groups promoting equity in higher education may use these findings to reexamine their data and refine their focus. The PGS data may inform how they evaluate the effectiveness of their diversity efforts and how well they are reaching key populations, such as

- first-generation students, Black and Hispanic students, or women in STEM
- students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds or rural areas

By analyzing their data through the lens of the PGS findings, these organizations may assess whether they are effectively directing resources and support. They may also identify new opportunities for outreach or scholarship programs aimed at underserved populations.

Undergraduate Institutions

The findings from this research may help undergraduate institutions as they analyze their data related to student outcomes and graduate school preparation. Institutions may

- evaluate their students' academic preparation and career aspirations in light of broader trends among PGS
- compare where their graduates are applying for graduate school with national trends and assess whether their students are aiming for the right types of institutions

These data may inform how undergraduate institutions improve their advising and graduate school preparation services, ensuring that their students are well prepared for the subsequent stage of education. They may also identify potential gaps in support for students considering graduate education and develop programs to address these needs.

Future Research

Building on the current findings, several promising areas for future research could deepen our understanding of PGS and the dynamics of graduate education access, diversity, and success. This future research would help fill key gaps and extend the utility of the data.

Education Researchers and Analysts

Individuals focused on higher education issues, such as equity, access, and diversity, could explore new dimensions of the PGS experience. Future research could aim to

- better understand how diverse student populations, including students from underrepresented socioeconomic backgrounds, international students, and students with disabilities, navigate graduate education opportunities
- explore how factors beyond race—such as age, geographic background, and interdisciplinary experience—impact access and success in graduate education

Connect GRE Data to Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems

The variability in the maturity of statewide longitudinal data systems across the United States offers a rich area for research. Identifying states with well-developed systems that connect high school and undergraduate academic data could enable deeper insights into students' educational trajectories. Specifically, this approach could reveal

- how high school academic experiences, such as specific coursework or extracurricular activities, influence students' decisions to pursue graduate education
- which factors in a student's undergraduate experience (e.g., GPA, field of study, institutional type) are most predictive of applying to graduate school

Connect GRE Data to National Student Clearinghouse Data

Linking GRE data with the National Student Clearinghouse could provide a more complete picture of students' paths through higher education. This approach would allow researchers to

- measure how many PGS ultimately enroll in graduate programs, where they choose to attend, and whether they persist to graduation
- analyze trends in graduate program completion rates across different demographic groups or fields of study, helping to identify areas where interventions could improve retention and success

Conduct a Non–U.S. Citizen Study

The current study excluded individuals who self-reported not being U.S. citizens, limiting the analysis to domestic populations. Future research could

- investigate the experiences of non-U.S. citizens navigating the graduate school application process, who may face distinct challenges related to visa requirements, financial aid, or access to specific academic programs
- conduct comparative studies between U.S. citizens and noncitizens, which could reveal important insights into how international students' experiences differ from those of domestic students and how policies could better address their needs

Expand the Graduate School Choice Set Information

The current study was limited to graduate schools where PGS sent their GRE scores, excluding GRE-optional or GRE-not-required programs from analysis. This omission creates a potential gap in understanding the full range of options PGS consider. Future research could

- include data from GRE-optional and GRE-not-required programs to analyze whether including these institutions changes the size and diversity of the choice sets
- examine how the growing trend of graduate programs removing GRE requirements impacts student decisions and overall program competitiveness

Conduct Qualitative Research

The present study focuses primarily on quantitative data, which provides a broad view of the "what" in the graduate school application process. Adding a qualitative component could provide critical insights into the "why" behind these choices:

- Why are so many PGS choosing in-state graduate programs? What financial, social, and academic factors drive these decisions?
- How do personal motivations, career goals, or perceptions of institutional prestige influence which graduate schools students apply to and ultimately attend?

By pursuing these new lines of inquiry, future research can build on the current study's findings and significantly advance the understanding of how students navigate the graduate school application process and succeed in their academic and professional pursuits.

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Appendix

Table A1. Counts and Percentages for Valid and Missing Data for U.S. Prospective Women Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group, July 2016–June 2021

Table	Variable description	Valid responses		Missing responses	
		No.	%	No.	%
2	State where GRE test takers resided	674,478	96.6	23,820	3.4
3	CBSA where GRE test takers resided	693,073	99.3	5,225	0.7
4	Congressional district where GRE test takers resided	688,586	98.6	9,712	1.4
A2	Age at time of taking the GRE	697,842	99.9	456	0.1
A2	Communicates best in English	697,647	99.9	651	0.1
A2	Documented disability (self-reported)	529,017	75.8	169,281	24.2
A3	U.S. Census region and division where GRE test takers resided	693,073	99.3	5,226	0.7
A4	Current educational level	698,298	100.0	0	0.0
A4	Full-time work experience	572,798	82.0	125,500	18.0
A5	Individual provided undergraduate institution	429,986	61.6	268,312	38.4
A5	Undergraduate institution has IPEDS information	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution was in their state of residence	426,992	61.1	271,306	38.9
A5	Undergraduate institution is a state land grant institution in their state of residence	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution is a regional comprehensive university in their state of residence	426,883	61.1	271,415	38.9
A5	Undergraduate institution is the flagship university in their state of residence	426,883	61.1	271,415	38.9
A5	Undergraduate institution—control—public/private/for-profit	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution has more than 20,000 students	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution is an MSI	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution is a single-sex institution	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution's *Barron's Profile of American Colleges* classification	418,858	60.0	279,440	40.0
A5	Undergraduate institution's Carnegie classification	428,415	61.4	269,883	38.6
A5	Undergraduate institution is a member of the AAU	429,045	61.4	269,253	38.6
A5	Parent educational attainment	601,504	86.1	96,794	13.9

A5	Eligible for a Federal Pell Grant as an undergraduate	611,954	87.6	86,344	12.4
A5	Federal Pell Grant–eligible and first-generation college student	591,018	84.6	107,280	15.4
A5	Undergraduate major field	643,605	92.2	54,693	7.8
A5	Undergraduate major GPA	643,605	92.2	54,693	7.8
A5	Overall undergraduate GPA	600,314	86.0	97,984	14.0
A6	Graduate degree objective	642,871	92.1	55,427	7.9
A6	Intended graduate major field	698,298	100.0	0	0.0
A6	Undergraduate major is the same as intended graduate major field	698,298	100.0	0	0.0
A6	Program format preference for graduate study	628,148	90.0	70,150	10.0
A6	Enrollment preference for graduate study	647,507	92.7	50,791	7.3
A6	Preferred geographic region for graduate study	618,467	88.6	79,831	11.4
A7	Sent at least one GRE score report to a graduate institution with an IPEDS ID	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9
A7	Number of GRE score reports sent	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9
A7	GSC: may apply to at least one in-state institution	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC: may apply to at least one out-of-state institution	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one institution in U.S. Census division	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one institution outside U.S. Census division but within region	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one institution outside U.S. Census region	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC : may apply to their undergraduate institution	372,046	53.3	326,252	46.7
A7	GSC : may apply to regional flagship institution in state of residence	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one regional comprehensive institution in state of residence	569,132	81.5	129,166	18.5
A7	GSC : may apply to the land grant institution in their state of residence	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one public/private/private-for-profit graduate institution	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one graduate institution with at least 20,000 students	572,950	82.0	125,348	18.0
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one graduate program at an MSI	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one graduate program at a single-gender institution	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one graduate institution with Carnegie classification	572,513	82.0	125,785	18.0
A7	GSC : may apply to at least one AAU member graduate institution	572,975	82.1	125,323	17.9

Note. *N* = 698,298. AAU = Association of American Universities. CBSA = Core-based statistical area. GPA = grade point average. GSC = graduate school choice. IPEDS = Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. MSI = minority-serving institution.

Table A2. Demographic Profile of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

	American Indian		Asian		Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		Black		Mexican		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		White		Other		All women	
Variable	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Age (years)																				
<22	1,781	42	26,046	48	912	41	24,931	36	11,442	40	3,575	43	16,354	40	245,674	54	12,680	41	343,395	49
23–25	1,000	23	16,289	30	560	25	18,351	26	8,614	30	2,208	27	12,027	29	103,249	23	8,420	27	170,718	24
26–30	649	15	7,470	14	363	16	11,882	17	5,182	18	1,313	16	7,358	18	57,626	13	5,363	17	97,206	14
31–40	531	12	3,072	6	265	12	8,745	13	2,536	9	789	10	3,821	9	34,649	8	3,298	11	57,706	8
>41	318	7	1,176	2	102	5	5,466	8	944	3	401	5	1,562	4	17,425	4	1,423	5	28,817	4
Communicates better in English	3,996	93	49,547	92	2,028	92	63,542	92	26,955	94	7,442	90	38,497	94	431,748	94	28,788	92	652,543	94
10 most common native languages (other than English)																				
1	SPA	0.5	CHI	12.4	TGL	4.2	FRE	1.0	SPA	59.5	SPA	51.0	SPA	46.9	RUS	0.4	ARA	3.2	SPA	4.5
2	GUJ	0.2	VIE	7.8	HIN	1.7	YOR	0.5	FRE	0.0	GRE	0.0	POR	1.7	ARA	0.3	SPA	1.6	CHI	0.6
3	TEL	0.2	KOR	5.0	SMO	1.3	AMH	0.5	SMO	0.0	ARA	0.0	FRE	0.0	FAS	0.2	FAS	1.3	VIE	0.4
4	CHI	0.1	URD	4.3	TON	0.7	IBO	0.4	SWE	0.0	NAU	0.0	EST	0.0	POL	0.1	ARM	0.6	ARA	0.4
5	FAS	0.1	GUJ	3.6	CEB	0.2	TWI	0.3	EFI	0.0	KHM	0.0	ITA	0.0	ALB	0.1	URD	0.5	RUS	0.3
6	FRE	0.1	TGL	3.4	CHI	0.1	ARA	0.3	EST	0.0	FRE	0.0	EFI	0.0	ARM	0.1	RUS	0.5	KOR	0.3
7	HIN	0.1	BEN	2.5	JPN	0.1	SOM	0.3	ITA	0.0	SMO	0.0	GER	0.0	FRE	0.1	FRE	0.4	URD	0.2
8	ORI	0.1	PAN	1.9	SPA	0.1	SWA	0.2	SUN	0.0	SWE	0.0	HEB	0.0	RUM	0.1	HEB	0.2	GUJ	0.2
9	YPK	0.1	HIN	1.8	FRE	0.1	TIR	0.1	JPN	0.0	EFI	0.0	ARA	0.0	UKR	0.1	TUR	0.2	TGL	0.2
10	VIE	0.0	MAL	1.5	MAH	0.1	AKA	0.1	DAN	0.0	EST	0.0	CAT	0.0	BOS	0.1	POR	0.2	FAS	0.2
Documented disability	211	6.3	1,391	3.8	103	6.1	2,222	4.4	996	4.5	371	5.8	1,562	4.9	17,724	5.0	1,684	7.5	26,264	5.0
If documented disability, type of disability																				
Blind/visually impaired	28	13	358	26	27	26	467	21	203	20	57	15	216	14	1,747	10	168	10	3,271	12

Deaf/hard of hearing	23	11	138	10	6	6	158	7	87	9	28	8	112	7	1,569	9	102	6	2,223	8
Learning disability	83	39	398	29	37	36	641	29	333	33	145	39	679	43	8,350	47	636	38	11,302	43
Multiple disabilities	11	5	46	3	5	5	103	5	40	4	11	3	71	5	678	4	101	6	1,066	4
Other	50	24	337	24	20	19	631	28	244	24	91	25	379	24	3,849	22	537	32	6,138	23
Physical disability	16	8	114	8	8	8	222	10	89	9	39	11	105	7	1,531	9	140	8	2,264	9

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). AKA = Akan. ALB = Albanian. AMH = Amharic. ARA = Arabic. ARM = Armenian. BEN = Bengali. BOS = Bosnian. CAT = Catalan. CEB = Cebuano. CHI = Chinese. DAN = Danish. EFI = Efik. EST = Estonian. FAS = Farsi. FRE = French. GRE = Greek. GUJ = Gujarati. HEB = Hebrew. HIN = Hindi. JPN = Japanese. IBO = Igbo. KHM = Khmer. KOR = Korean. MAL = Malayalam. MAH = Marshallese. ORI = Oriya. PAN = Punjabi. POL = Polish. POR = Portuguese. RUM = Romanian. RUS = Russian. SPA = Spanish. SMO = Samoan. SUN = Sundanese. SWA = Swahili. SWE = Swedish. TEL = Telugu. TGL = Tagalog. TIR = Tigrinya. TUR = Turkish. TWI = Twi. UKR = Ukrainian. URD = Urdu. VIE = Vietnamese. YOR = Yoruba. YPK = Yupik.

Table A3. U.S. Census Geographic Profile of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

	American Indian		Asian		Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		Black		Mexican		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		White		Other		All women	
Variable	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
U.S. Census region																				
West	1,430	34	19,959	38	1,333	62	6,041	9	14,990	52	541	8	9,555	23	78,130	17	9,673	31	141,652	20
Midwest	591	14	6,396	12	178	8	7,690	11	2,813	10	607	9	2,386	6	103,171	23	4,063	13	127,895	18
Northeast	290	7	11,754	22	204	9	12,062	17	1,177	4	3,147	44	9,524	23	99,672	22	7,013	23	144,843	21
South	1,943	46	14,935	28	433	20	43,327	63	9,665	34	2,826	40	19,453	48	176,030	39	10,071	33	278,683	40
U.S. Census division																				
Pacific	707	17	17,971	34	1,106	51	4,833	7	12,618	44	359	5	6,938	17	47,012	10	8,006	26	99,550	14
Mountain	723	17	1,988	4	227	11	1,208	2	2,372	8	182	3	2,617	6	31,118	7	1,667	5	42,102	6
West North Central	325	8	1,436	3	64	3	1,596	2	551	2	98	1	625	2	32,762	7	997	3	38,454	6
East North Central	266	6	4,960	9	114	5	6,094	9	2,262	8	509	7	1,761	4	70,409	15	3,066	10	89,441	13
Middle Atlantic	205	5	9,296	18	161	7	10,243	15	910	3	2,750	39	8,169	20	71,751	16	5,525	18	109,010	16
New England	85	2	2,458	5	43	2	1,819	3	267	1	397	6	1,355	3	27,921	6	1,488	5	35,833	5
West South Central	1,198	28	5,253	10	140	7	10,276	15	7,586	26	479	7	7,428	18	47,661	10	2,757	9	82,778	12
East South Central	160	4	1,079	2	29	1	6,796	10	299	1	167	2	641	2	32,006	7	1,001	3	42,178	6
South Atlantic	585	14	8,603	16	264	12	26,255	38	1,780	6	2,180	31	11,384	28	96,363	21	6,313	20	153,727	22

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic).

Table A4. Education and Work Experiences of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Variable	American Indian		Asian		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		Black		Mexican		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		White		Other		All women	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Current educational level																				
Currently enrolled in college	1,853	43	19,380	36	831	38	19,827	29	10,359	36	3,132	38	13,930	34	213,617	47	10,755	34	293,684	42
Unenrolled college graduate (BA/BS)	1,426	33	24,572	45	857	39	27,477	40	12,139	42	2,855	34	16,769	41	166,636	36	12,851	41	265,582	38
Unenrolled master's program graduate	495	12	5,375	10	279	13	11,785	17	3,353	12	1,185	14	5,678	14	43,667	10	3,932	13	75,749	11
Enrolled in graduate school	277	6	1,864	3	105	5	6,000	9	1,527	5	581	7	2,570	6	18,281	4	1,715	5	32,920	5
Other	228	5	2,881	5	130	6	4,343	6	1,361	5	539	7	2,198	5	16,734	4	1,949	6	30,363	4
Full-time work experience (years)																				
<1	2,041	56	21,373	53	940	51	24,951	43	12,795	53	3,747	54	17,333	50	220,494	58	12,324	50	315,998	55
1–2	746	21	11,145	28	433	24	14,508	25	6,028	25	1,512	22	8,811	26	77,093	20	6,050	24	126,326	22
3–4	328	9	3,964	10	166	9	6,493	11	2,465	10	629	9	3,659	11	32,311	9	2,646	11	52,661	9
5–7	210	6	2,086	5	128	7	4,567	8	1,511	6	443	6	2,232	6	21,300	6	1,778	7	34,255	6
≥8	303	8	1,921	5	164	9	7,027	12	1,551	6	580	8	2,380	7	27,595	7	2,037	8	43,558	8

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). BA = bachelor of arts. BS = bachelor of science.

Table A5. Undergraduate Experiences Women Prospective Graduate Students Will Bring to Graduate School by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

	American Indian		Asian		Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		Black		Mexican		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		White		Other		All women	
Variable	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Individual provided undergraduate institution	2,702	63	29,700	55	1,406	64	40,685	59	17,680	62	4,749	57	23,707	58	291,475	64	17,882	57	429,986	62
Undergraduate institution has IPEDS information	2,697	63	29,594	55	1,403	64	40,635	59	17,643	61	4,740	57	23,666	58	290,860	63	17,807	57	429,045	61
Undergraduate institution in their state of residence	2,102	78	22,407	76	1,058	77	30,361	75	15,073	86	3,226	79	19,431	82	212,458	73	13,336	75	319,452	75
Undergraduate institution: state land grant institution in their state of residence	636	24	6,376	22	358	26	7,879	19	2,640	15	830	18	3,780	16	63,528	22	3,192	18	89,219	21
Undergraduate institution: regional comprehensive university in their state of residence	946	35	5,964	20	405	30	14,123	35	6,847	39	1,072	26	6,843	29	78,816	27	4,904	28	119,920	28
Undergraduate institution: flagship university in their state of residence	494	18	5,160	18	260	19	4,008	10	1,757	10	424	10	2,864	12	44,691	15	2,357	13	62,015	15
Undergraduate institution: control: public	2,175	81	20,349	69	1,049	75	29,395	72	13,758	78	3,282	69	17,642	75	205,102	71	12,376	70	305,128	71
Undergraduate institution: control: private nonprofit	514	19	9,170	31	347	25	11,176	28	3,836	22	1,450	31	5,986	25	85,322	29	5,401	30	123,202	29
Undergraduate institution: control: private for-profit	8	0	75	0	7	0	64	0	49	0	8	0	38	0	436	0	30	0	715	0

Undergraduate institution: >20,000 students	1,299	48	18,453	62	686	49	17,875	44	10,836	61	2,008	42	13,840	58	139,821	48	9,524	53	214,342	50
Undergraduate institution: MSI	725	27	8,673	29	643	46	14,653	36	9,144	52	1,780	38	10,379	44	34,713	12	5,059	28	85,769	20
AANAPISI	166	6.2	5,258	17.8	311	22.2	3,224	7.9	3,293	18.7	488	10.3	2,844	12.0	14,888	5.1	2,387	13.4	32,859	7.7
ANNH	37	1.4	346	1.2	203	14.5	22	0.1	36	0.2	9	0.2	39	0.2	478	0.2	109	0.6	1,279	0.3
HSI	355	13.2	5,815	19.6	325	23.2	4,886	12.0	8,256	46.8	1,544	32.6	9,380	39.6	23,351	8.0	3,543	19.9	57,455	13.4
HBCU	31	1.1	70	0.2	8	0.6	7,659	18.8	56	0.3	30	0.6	109	0.5	937	0.3	298	1.7	9,198	2.1
NASNTI	216	8.0	21	0.1	1	0.1	74	0.2	27	0.2	4	0.1	25	0.1	1,224	0.4	54	0.3	1,646	0.4
PBI	8	0.3	291	1.0	3	0.2	1,260	3.1	76	0.4	61	1.3	282	1.2	1,140	0.4	201	1.1	3,322	0.8
TCU	3	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.0
Undergraduate institution: single sex	15	0.6	427	1.4	10	0.7	896	2.2	293	1.7	38	0.8	299	1.3	3,447	1.2	253	1.4	5,678	1.3
Men’s college	0	0.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	14	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0	1	0.0	17	0.0
Women’s college	15	0.6	426	1.4	10	0.7	882	2.2	293	1.7	38	0.8	299	1.3	3,446	1.2	252	1.4	5,661	1.3
Undergraduate institution: Carnegie classification																				
Doctoral universities	1,788	66	22,565	76	959	68	27,763	68	11,870	67	3,018	64	16,802	71	196,140	68	12,269	69	293,174	68
Master’s colleges and universities	725	27	5,047	17	361	26	9,728	24	4,913	28	1,417	30	5,507	23	68,370	24	4,105	23	100,173	23
Baccalaureate colleges	181	7	1,935	7	83	6	3,047	8	809	5	290	6	1,251	5	26,065	9	1,407	8	35,068	8
Undergraduate institution: *Barron’s*																				
Most competitive	218	8	6,948	24	142	10	4,329	11	1,916	11	439	11	2,621	11	30,777	11	2,960	17	50,350	12
Highly competitive	282	11	5,885	20	164	12	4,273	11	2,169	13	690	17	3,788	17	48,781	17	2,879	17	68,911	16
Very competitive	930	36	8,524	30	462	34	9,981	25	4,123	25	1,403	34	7,052	31	91,513	32	5,011	29	128,999	31

Competitive	981	38	6,533	23	510	38	15,483	39	6,322	38	1,290	31	6,876	30	98,430	35	5,509	32	141,934	34
Other	195	7	976	3	77	6	5,696	14	2,245	13	284	7	2,465	11	15,705	6	1,021	6	28,664	7
Undergraduate institution: AAU	472	18	12,152	41	293	21	6,530	16	4,309	24	783	17	5,111	22	61,536	21	4,881	27	96,067	22
Parental educational attainment																				
No parent bach	1,863	46	16,447	34	860	42	29,691	47	18,567	68	3,305	42	20,536	53	120,645	28	10,050	35	221,964	34
One parent bach	1,164	29	13,744	29	720	35	16,028	25	4,824	18	2,215	28	9,120	24	146,254	34	7,883	28	201,952	31
One parent bach+	1,018	25	17,704	37	492	24	17,728	28	3,938	14	2,280	29	8,995	23	163,872	38	10,385	37	226,412	35
Federal Pell Grant–eligible																				
Yes	1,888	50	16,394	36	773	39	37,566	60	15,314	58	3,501	48	18,558	50	97,621	24	10,756	40	202,371	33
No	1,137	30	14,611	32	581	30	14,252	23	5,292	20	2,081	28	8,834	24	166,485	42	7,435	27	220,708	36
Do not know	780	20	14,454	32	606	31	10,652	17	5,583	21	1,780	24	9,668	26	136,347	34	9,005	33	188,875	31
Federal Pell Grant–eligible and first-generation college student	1,086	29	9,346	21	429	22	20,893	35	12,266	48	1,867	26	12,678	35	47,038	12	5,425	21	107,243	18
Undergraduate major field—detailed																				
Business	137	3	2,148	4	92	4	4,062	6	936	3	317	4	1,688	4	14,001	3	1,008	3	24,389	3
Education	179	4	1,069	2	70	3	2,816	4	941	3	496	6	1,779	4	20,708	5	979	3	29,037	4
Engineering	119	3	3,220	6	64	3	1,402	2	795	3	226	3	1,184	3	12,754	3	986	3	20,750	3
Humanities and arts	365	9	3,057	6	175	8	5,016	7	2,506	9	810	10	3,397	8	43,193	9	3,549	11	62,068	9
Life sciences	1,618	38	20,552	38	920	42	21,422	31	9,874	34	2,729	33	14,039	34	182,406	40	9,279	30	262,839	38
Physical sciences	246	6	4,194	8	113	5	2,685	4	1,343	5	451	5	1,810	4	25,189	5	1,786	6	37,817	5
Social and behavioral sciences	1,009	24	10,892	20	459	21	18,574	27	8,397	29	2,106	25	11,291	27	97,970	21	8,233	26	158,931	23
Other field	237	6	2,140	4	132	6	6,316	9	1,929	7	492	6	2,593	6	25,260	6	1,938	6	41,037	6

Undecided or no major provided	369	9	6,800	13	177	8	7,139	10	2,018	7	665	8	3,364	8	37,454	8	3,444	11	61,430	9
Undergraduate major field—STEM fields aggregated																				
Business	137	3	2,148	4	92	4	4,062	6	936	3	317	4	1,688	4	14,001	3	1,008	3	24,389	3
Education	179	4	1,069	2	70	3	2,816	4	941	3	496	6	1,779	4	20,708	5	979	3	29,037	4
STEM fields	1,983	46	27,966	52	1,097	50	25,509	37	12,012	42	3,406	41	17,033	41	220,349	48	12,051	39	321,406	46
Humanities and arts	365	9	3,057	6	175	8	5,016	7	2,506	9	810	10	3,397	8	43,193	9	3,549	11	62,068	9
Social and behavioral sciences	1,009	24	10,892	20	459	21	18,574	27	8,397	29	2,106	25	11,291	27	97,970	21	8,233	26	158,931	23
Other field	237	6	2,140	4	132	6	6,316	9	1,929	7	492	6	2,593	6	25,260	6	1,938	6	41,037	6
Undecided or no major provided	369	9	6,800	13	177	8	7,139	10	2,018	7	665	8	3,364	8	37,454	8	3,444	11	61,430	9
Undergraduate major field—STEM yes/no	1,983	46	27,966	52	1,097	50	25,509	37	12,012	42	3,406	41	17,033	41	220,349	48	12,051	39	321,406	46
Undergraduate major GPA																				
3.7–4.0	2,059	55	23,099	55	1,006	53	23,182	39	12,233	49	4,059	56	18,912	53	269,595	68	15,259	59	369,404	62
2.7–3.6	1,576	42	17,486	42	844	44	31,513	54	11,757	47	3,011	41	15,445	43	123,790	31	9,998	39	215,420	36
0.0–2.6	136	4	1,344	3	57	3	4,152	7	1,099	4	195	3	1,229	3	5,597	1	620	2	14,429	2
≥3.0	3,440	91	38,285	91	1,743	91	48,915	83	22,291	89	6,670	92	32,261	91	381,151	96	23,895	92	558,651	93
Undergraduate overall GPA																				
3.7–4.0	1,691	45	19,850	47	822	43	17,180	29	9,709	39	3,484	48	15,619	44	237,261	59	12,740	49	318,356	53
2.7–3.6	1,855	49	20,396	48	985	52	35,032	60	13,674	54	3,515	48	18,116	51	153,093	38	12,055	46	258,721	43
0.0–2.6	231	6	1,894	4	94	5	6,617	11	1,711	7	269	4	1,863	5	9,408	2	1,150	4	23,237	4
≥3.0	3,274	87	37,552	89	1,672	88	45,431	77	21,263	85	6,525	90	31,103	87	374,626	94	23,157	89	544,603	91

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). AANAPISI = Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–serving institution. AAU = Association of American Universities. ANNH = Alaska Native and

Native Hawaiian–serving institution. GPA = grade point average. HBCU = historically Black college or university. HSI = Hispanic-serving institution. IPEDS = Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. MSI = minority-serving institution. NASNTI = Native American–serving nontribal institution. PBI = predominantly Black institution. STEM = science, technology, engineering, and math. TCU = tribal college or university.

Table A6. Plans for Graduate School of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Variable	American Indian		Asian		Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		Black		Mexican		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		White		Other		All women	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Graduate degree objective																				
Doctorate	1,693	42	16,029	34	852	41	24,624	38	9,936	37	3,134	40	13,113	34	157,091	37	11,268	40	237,740	37
Master's	2,106	53	27,768	59	1,061	51	35,191	55	15,678	58	4,248	55	22,991	60	247,142	58	14,983	53	371,168	58
MBA	108	3	2,269	5	90	4	3,128	5	879	3	175	2	1,379	4	11,517	3	1,041	4	20,586	3
JD	29	1	267	1	25	1	477	1	124	0	35	0	183	0	1,054	0	153	1	2,347	0
Other	61	2	957	2	35	2	962	1	415	2	185	2	620	2	7,159	2	636	2	11,030	2
Intended graduate major field—detailed																				
Business	174	4	3,392	6	122	6	4,974	7	1,265	4	285	3	2,040	5	17,601	4	1,447	5	31,300	4
Education	363	8	3,040	6	186	8	9,236	13	3,102	11	1,177	14	4,573	11	41,528	9	2,863	9	66,068	9
Engineering	103	2	2,643	5	61	3	1,155	2	765	3	202	2	1,034	3	10,931	2	856	3	17,750	3
Humanities and arts	189	4	1,311	2	72	3	1,843	3	1,077	4	305	4	1,306	3	20,500	4	1,606	5	28,209	4
Life sciences	1,563	37	21,888	40	890	40	21,136	30	9,643	34	2,638	32	14,038	34	180,567	39	9,699	31	262,062	38
Physical sciences	179	4	3,559	7	95	4	1,662	2	1,033	4	312	4	1,357	3	19,759	4	1,433	5	29,389	4
Social and behavioral sciences	689	16	6,773	13	281	13	11,169	16	4,796	17	1,293	16	6,809	17	67,493	15	5,514	18	104,817	15
Other field	213	5	2,104	4	109	5	5,639	8	2,097	7	440	5	2,284	6	22,908	5	1,866	6	37,660	5
Undecided or no major provided	806	19	9,362	17	386	18	12,618	18	4,961	17	1,640	20	7,704	19	77,648	17	5,918	19	121,043	17
Intended graduate major field—STEM fields aggregated																				
Business	174	4	3,392	6	122	6	4,974	7	1,265	4	285	3	2,040	5	17,601	4	1,447	5	31,300	4
Education	363	8	3,040	6	186	8	9,236	13	3,102	11	1,177	14	4,573	11	41,528	9	2,863	9	66,068	9
STEM fields	1,845	43	28,090	52	1,046	48	23,953	34	11,441	40	3,152	38	16,429	40	211,257	46	11,988	38	309,201	44
Humanities and arts	189	4	1,311	2	72	3	1,843	3	1,077	4	305	4	1,306	3	20,500	4	1,606	5	28,209	4
Social and behavioral sciences	689	16	6,773	13	281	13	11,169	16	4,796	17	1,293	16	6,809	17	67,493	15	5,514	18	104,817	15
Other field	213	5	2,104	4	109	5	5,639	8	2,097	7	440	5	2,284	6	22,908	5	1,866	6	37,660	5
Undecided or no major provided	806	19	9,362	17	386	18	12,618	18	4,961	17	1,640	20	7,704	19	77,648	17	5,918	19	121,043	17

Intended graduate major field—STEM yes/no	1,845	43	28,090	52	1,046	48	23,953	34	11,441	40	3,152	38	16,429	40	211,257	46	11,988	38	309,201	44
Undergraduate major is the same as intended graduate major field	2,459	57	30,374	56	1,250	57	35,109	51	15,990	56	4,522	55	22,698	55	272,370	59	16,619	53	401,391	57
Program format																				
On-campus	2,605	66	34,191	74	1,317	66	36,415	57	18,566	70	5,014	66	25,089	67	300,446	73	19,195	70	442,838	70
Online	262	7	1,175	3	102	5	5,216	8	1,401	5	419	5	1,889	5	23,298	6	1,142	4	34,904	6
A combination of both	808	21	6,955	15	440	22	17,580	28	4,852	18	1,619	21	8,003	21	58,573	14	4,523	17	103,353	16
Undecided	263	7	3,577	8	151	8	4,130	7	1,787	7	572	8	2,688	7	31,398	8	2,487	9	47,053	7
Enrollment preference																				
Full-time	3,516	88	41,139	86	1,752	85	53,337	82	23,216	86	6,308	81	31,965	83	359,575	84	23,626	84	544,434	84
Part-time	242	6	2,669	6	144	7	6,381	10	1,818	7	789	10	3,357	9	31,739	7	1,905	7	49,044	8
Undecided	260	6	4,082	9	172	8	5,027	8	2,118	8	731	9	3,239	8	35,637	8	2,763	10	54,029	8
Preferred region for graduate study (may select more than one)																				
U.S. regions																				
Northeast	928	24	19,342	43	498	25	14,775	24	5,704	22	2,825	38	10,927	30	138,238	34	10,034	37	203,271	33
Mid-Atlantic	923	24	20,519	46	549	28	24,633	40	6,140	24	3,967	53	13,827	38	146,612	36	11,427	43	228,597	37
South	1,338	34	13,927	31	568	29	37,058	60	5,521	21	3,442	46	14,226	39	181,961	45	9,632	36	267,673	43
Midwest	1,226	32	13,306	30	441	22	13,901	22	6,216	24	1,718	23	6,983	19	144,445	35	7,486	28	195,722	32
Southwest	1,835	47	11,701	26	511	26	14,954	24	11,058	42	1,568	21	11,722	32	101,894	25	6,804	25	162,047	26
West	1,765	45	26,158	58	1,384	70	15,049	24	16,068	62	2,070	28	13,977	38	148,497	36	13,375	50	238,343	39
Non-U.S. regions																				
Canada	281	7	3,711	8	120	6	3,124	5	1,478	6	642	9	2,091	6	28,254	7	2,649	10	42,350	7
Africa	39	1	276	1	17	1	1,274	2	172	1	66	1	252	1	3,291	1	423	2	5,810	1
Asia	49	1	1,914	4	62	3	926	1	320	1	94	1	470	1	4,328	1	795	3	8,958	1
Australia/New Zealand	230	6	1,873	4	218	11	1,481	2	946	4	353	5	1,356	4	17,943	4	1,602	6	26,002	4
Latin America	97	2	533	1	41	2	1,418	2	1,218	5	634	8	1,202	3	6,761	2	760	3	12,664	2
Middle East	28	1	298	1	17	1	517	1	173	1	55	1	250	1	2,856	1	525	2	4,719	1
Western Europe	272	7	3,940	9	162	8	3,290	5	1,871	7	633	8	2,764	7	33,972	8	3,230	12	50,134	8
Eastern Europe and Russia	70	2	804	2	38	2	866	1	470	2	159	2	671	2	7,175	2	751	3	11,004	2
Count ALL regions																				

1	2,092	54	20,746	46	1,068	54	35,757	58	15,339	59	3,974	53	21,547	58	215,615	53	13,022	49	329,160	53
2	630	16	7,358	16	319	16	9,795	16	3,667	14	1,125	15	5,287	14	64,664	16	4,239	16	97,084	16
3	410	11	5,464	12	220	11	6,288	10	2,402	9	747	10	3,507	10	43,099	11	3,021	11	65,158	11
4	226	6	3,283	7	94	5	3,127	5	1,321	5	466	6	1,898	5	25,002	6	1,887	7	37,304	6
5	104	3	1,812	4	57	3	1,753	3	753	3	264	4	1,101	3	13,730	3	1,086	4	20,660	3
≥6	426	11	6,416	14	220	11	5,254	8	2,602	10	902	12	3,530	10	46,181	11	3,570	13	69,101	11
Number of U.S. regions																				
0	7	0	133	0	27	1	133	0	59	0	136	2	131	0	790	0	120	0	1,536	0
1	2,186	56	21,794	48	1,131	57	36,514	59	15,928	61	4,095	55	22,205	60	223,593	55	13,842	52	341,288	55
2	645	17	7,634	17	314	16	10,184	16	3,874	15	1,159	15	5,621	15	67,186	16	4,566	17	101,183	16
3	434	11	5,918	13	210	11	6,669	11	2,441	9	778	10	3,698	10	46,268	11	3,295	12	69,711	11
4	192	5	3,080	7	84	4	2,986	5	1,221	5	421	6	1,698	5	23,932	6	1,674	6	35,288	6
5	75	2	1,303	3	46	2	1,391	2	542	2	175	2	773	2	9,982	2	765	3	15,052	2
6	349	9	5,217	12	166	8	4,097	7	2,019	8	714	10	2,744	7	36,540	9	2,563	10	54,409	9
All regions outside U.S.																				
Yes	524	13	6,936	15	344	17	6,022	10	3,331	13	1,434	19	4,559	12	54,283	13	5,173	19	82,606	13
Number of regions outside U.S.																				
0	3,364	87	38,143	85	1,634	83	55,952	90	22,753	87	6,044	81	32,311	88	354,008	87	21,652	81	535,861	87
1	272	7	3,904	9	195	10	3,215	5	1,785	7	844	11	2,485	7	29,714	7	2,668	10	45,082	7
2	124	3	1,454	3	68	3	1,242	2	709	3	293	4	990	3	12,476	3	1,173	4	18,529	3
3	62	2	775	2	37	2	668	1	419	2	153	2	513	1	6,477	2	628	2	9,732	2
4	29	1	372	1	20	1	302	0	207	1	75	1	265	1	2,511	1	316	1	4,097	1
5	13	0	186	0	10	1	178	0	78	0	25	0	105	0	1,033	0	126	0	1,754	0
≥6	43	1	422	1	25	1	742	1	227	1	77	1	350	1	3,625	1	470	2	5,981	1

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). JD = juris doctor. MBA = master of business administration. STEM = science, technology, engineering, and math.

Table A7. Characteristics of the Institutions in the Graduate School Choice Sets of Women Prospective Graduate Students by Racial/Ethnic Group (U.S. Citizens), July 2016–June 2021

Variable	American Indian	Asian	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Black	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Other Hispanic	White	Other	All women
Percentage PGS who sent at least one GRE score report to a graduate institution with an IPEDS ID	82	80	80	81	81	80	79	83	80	82
Number of PGS who sent at least one GRE score report to a graduate institution with an IPEDS ID	3,514	43,182	1,755	56,249	23,284	6,665	32,613	380,683	25,030	572,975
Total number of GRE score reports	11,331	199,250	5,998	169,397	78,051	21,981	111,091	1,468,776	94,935	2,160,810
Median number of graduate institutions	3.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Mean number of graduate institutions	3.22	4.61	3.42	3.01	3.35	3.30	3.41	3.86	3.79	3.77
Minimum number of graduate institutions	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum number of graduate institutions	35	56	27	49	51	32	55	53	57	57
Percentage with ≤4 prospective graduate institution choices	79	63	77	82	78	78	77	70	72	72
Percentage with 5–10 prospective graduate institution choices	18	29	19	16	19	19	20	25	23	24
Percentage with ≥11 prospective graduate institution choices	2	8	4	2	3	3	4	5	5	5
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one in-state institution (Y/N)	75	78	77	77	85	81	83	75	76	77
Percentage in-state institutions in choice set	73	65	71	76	78	78	78	68	70	70
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one out-of-state institution (Y/N)	59	67	60	55	49	50	49	64	61	62
Percentage out-of-state institutions in choice set	77	73	76	76	69	74	72	75	76	75
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one institution in U.S. Census division (Y/N)	86	87	87	87	89	89	90	86	85	86
Percentage institutions in U.S. Census division in choice set	78	71	78	82	81	82	82	75	75	76
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one institution outside their U.S. Census division but within their region (Y/N)	25	25	22	20	19	18	19	26	22	25
Percentage institutions outside U.S. Census division but within region in choice set	40	31	38	43	35	35	35	36	35	36
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one institution outside of their U.S. Census region (Y/N)	40	54	42	34	38	36	36	45	47	44
Percentage institutions outside U.S. Census region in choice set	57	57	56	59	56	58	56	58	60	58
Percentage PGS who may apply to their undergraduate institution (Y/N)	46	45	51	48	51	45	53	43	44	45
Percentage undergraduate institutions in choice set	62	48	59	62	59	60	60	55	56	56

Percentage PGS who may apply to regional flagship institution in state of residence (Y/N)	23	19	23	15	14	16	16	22	18	20
Percentage regional flagship institutions in state of residence in choice set	60	49	57	64	62	61	60	53	58	55
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one regional comprehensive institution in state of residence (Y/N)	33	28	31	36	42	31	33	32	29	32
Percentage regional comprehensive institutions in state of residence in choice set	49	36	57	43	39	41	40	41	40	41
Percentage PGS who may apply to the land grant institution in their state of residence (Y/N)	41	38	39	33	29	33	29	41	37	38
Percentage land grant institutions in their state of residence in choice set	52	37	55	47	45	49	44	46	43	46
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one public graduate institution (Y/N)	89	81	85	81	87	79	82	86	81	84
Percentage public graduate institutions in choice set	82	65	76	77	79	74	75	75	72	75
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one private nonprofit graduate institution (Y/N)	47	73	56	57	53	62	58	59	64	60
Percentage private nonprofit graduate institutions in choice set	55	62	58	64	57	64	62	59	63	60
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one private for-profit graduate institution (Y/N)	4	8	8	4	5	5	7	5	5	5
Percentage private for-profit graduate institutions in choice set	27	24	33	30	31	34	29	24	27	26
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one graduate institution with at least 20,000 students (Y/N)	74	84	73	70	82	72	77	77	79	77
Percentage graduate institutions with at least 20,000 students in choice set	71	66	69	69	74	70	71	67	70	68
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one MSI graduate institution (Y/N)	45	52	60	48	65	49	58	36	48	41
Percentage MSI graduate institutions in choice set	53	46	61	57	63	56	61	42	51	48
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one AANAPISI graduate institution (Y/N)	20	36	36	20	35	22	25	20	30	23
Percentage AANAPISI graduate institutions in choice set	40	39	48	45	48	48	47	36	42	39
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one ANNH graduate institution (Y/N)	2	1	13	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
Percentage ANNH graduate institutions in choice set	37	49	72	35	32	42	32	33	42	38
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one HSI graduate institution (Y/N)	27	37	36	24	58	39	50	23	33	27
Percentage HSI graduate institutions in choice set	52	44	51	51	64	56	62	42	49	47
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one NASNTI graduate institution (Y/N)	3	2	2	18	1	3	2	3	3	4
Percentage NASNTI graduate institutions in choice set	37	24	24	54	31	34	30	27	41	40
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one PBI graduate institution (Y/N)	6.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.5
Percentage PBI graduate institutions in choice set	54	33	32	49	39	47	35	41	42	42
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one HBCU graduate institution (Y/N)	1	3	2	8	1	4	3	2	3	3

Percentage HBCU graduate institutions in choice set	32	30	35	42	34	38	41	31	36	35
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one TCU graduate institution (Y/N)	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Percentage TCU graduate institutions in choice set	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one single-sex college (Y/N)	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	2	3
Percentage single-sex colleges in choice set	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	N/A	N/A	42	37	N/A	37
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one men's college (Y/N)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Percentage men's colleges in choice set	29	23	23	31	32	25	30	25	26	26
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one women's college (Y/N)	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	2	3
Percentage women's colleges in choice set	29	23	23	31	32	25	30	25	26	26
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one graduate institution with Carnegie doctoral classification (Y/N)	87	91	88	87	88	86	87	91	90	90
Percentage graduate institutions with Carnegie doctoral classification in choice set	85	83	82	87	83	86	85	84	87	84
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one graduate institution with Carnegie master's classification (Y/N)	30	30	33	30	33	33	31	33	28	32
Percentage graduate institutions with Carnegie master's classification in choice set	53	43	50	55	54	57	54	46	51	48
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one graduate institution with Carnegie classification special focus 4 year (Y/N)	20	28	23	16	21	17	21	21	18	21
Percentage graduate institutions with Carnegie classification special focus 4 year in choice set	43	37	41	45	43	40	41	35	38	37
Percentage PGS who may apply to at least one AAU member graduate institution (Y/N)	44	65	47	40	48	46	45	51	57	51
Percentage AAU member graduate institutions in choice set	58	63	58	59	61	57	57	55	63	57

Note. Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: Racial/ethnic groups are defined as follows: American Indian = American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian = Asian or Asian American; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Black = Black or African American; Mexican = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano; Puerto Rican = Puerto Rican; other Hispanic = other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American; White = White (non-Hispanic). AANAPISI = Asian American Native American Pacific Islander–serving institution. ANNH = Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian–serving institution. AAU = American Association of Universities. HBCU = historically Black college or university. HSI = Hispanic-serving institution. IPEDS = Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. MSI = minority-serving institution. N/A = not applicable. NASNTI = Native American–serving nontribal institution. PBI = predominantly Black institution. PGS = prospective graduate students. TCU = tribal college or university. Y/N = yes/no.

Notes

[1] In 2022, the gender question was revised. *A Snapshot of the Individuals Who Took the GRE General Test July 2018–June 2023* (ETS, 2024) presents gender data using the revised gender question.
[2] These race/ethnicity categories match those provided in *A Snapshot of the Individuals Who Took the GRE General Test July 2016–June 2021* (ETS, 2022).
[3] For a more comprehensive analysis of the experiences of Black PGS, refer to *Pathways to Graduate School: 5. A Data Overview of U.S. Prospective Graduate Students by Black Students and Gender* (Millett, 2025d), and for Hispanic PGS, refer to *Pathways to Graduate School: 2. A Data Overview of U.S. Prospective Graduate Students by Hispanic Subgroups and Gender* (Millett, 2025a).
[4] On the BIQ, individuals were asked "What is your native language?" It is acknowledged that within the field of applied linguistics, using the term *first language* rather than *native language* would address concerns surrounding the "native speaker bias."
[5] The U.S. Census Bureau does not include Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories in any census region or division.
[6] This list is from July 2022. As of July 2023, 69 AAU member universities are in the United States.
[7] Note that these regions do not align precisely with the U.S. Census divisions and regions presented in other report sections. These regions are from the BIQ. The Northeast region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Mid-Atlantic region includes Washington, DC, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. The South region includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Midwest region includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The Southwest region includes Arizona, Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The West region includes Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

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