

**Table 281. College Freshmen—Summary Characteristics: 1980 to 2009**

[In percent, except as indicated (24.5 represents \$24,500). As of fall for first-time full-time freshmen in 4-year colleges and universities. Based on sample survey and subject to sampling error; see source.]

Characteristic	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Sex:</b>									
Male	48.8	46.9	45.6	45.2	45.0	45.1	45.2	45.4	45.9
Female	51.2	53.1	54.4	54.8	55.0	54.9	54.8	54.6	54.1
Applied to more than three colleges	31.5	42.9	44.4	50.5	55.4	56.5	56.5	60.1	61.9
<b>Average grade in high school:</b>									
A- to A+	26.6	29.4	36.1	42.9	46.6	46.0	45.9	47.2	48.1
B- to B+	58.2	57.0	54.2	50.5	48.0	49.4	49.0	48.0	47.5
C to C+	14.9	13.4	9.6	6.5	5.4	4.6	5.0	4.7	4.4
D	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<b>Political orientation:</b>	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	67.4	79.7	74.2	75.9	(NA)	77.0
Liberal	21.0	24.6	22.9	24.8	27.1	28.4	29.3	31.0	29.0
Middle of the road	57.0	51.7	51.3	51.9	45.0	43.3	43.4	43.3	44.4
Conservative	19.0	20.6	21.8	18.9	22.6	23.9	23.1	20.7	21.8
<b>Probable field of study:</b>									
Arts and humanities	10.5	10.5	11.2	12.1	12.8	13.1	12.8	13.5	13.3
Biological sciences	4.5	4.9	8.3	6.6	7.6	8.3	8.6	9.3	9.7
Business	21.2	21.1	15.4	16.7	17.4	17.9	17.7	16.8	14.3
Education	8.4	10.3	10.1	11.0	9.9	9.5	9.2	8.2	8.1
Engineering	11.2	9.7	8.1	8.7	8.3	8.0	7.5	9.4	9.7
Physical science	3.2	2.8	3.1	2.6	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.4
Social science	8.2	11.0	9.9	10.0	10.7	11.2	11.1	11.5	11.7
Professional	15.5	13.0	16.5	11.6	14.6	13.0	14.5	13.8	14.4
Technical	3.1	1.1	1.2	2.1	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.1
Data processing/computer programming	1.7	0.7	0.8	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6
Other <sup>1</sup>	14.0	15.8	16.0	17.9	14.1	14.2	14.2	13.2	14.3
Communications	2.4	2.9	1.8	2.7	2.0	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.9
Computer science	2.6	1.7	2.2	3.7	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
<b>Personal objectives—very important or essential:</b>									
Being very well off financially	62.5	72.3	72.8	73.4	74.5	73.4	74.4	76.8	78.1
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life	62.5	45.9	45.4	42.4	45.0	46.3	49.2	51.4	48.0
Keeping up to date with political affairs	45.2	46.6	32.3	28.1	36.4	37.2	37.2	39.5	36.0
Median family income (\$1,000)	24.5	46.6	54.8	64.4	73.2	76.2	77.9	77.5	76.6

NA Not available. <sup>1</sup> Includes other fields not shown separately.

Source: The Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, CA, *The American Freshman: National Norms*, annual.

**Table 282. Students Reported Disability Status by Selected Characteristic: 2007 to 2008**

[20,928 represents 20,928,000. Disabled students reported that they had one or more of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hard of hearing, deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment. Based on the 2007–2008 National Postsecondary Student-Aid Study; see source for details. Includes Puerto Rico. See also Appendix III]

Student characteristic	Undergraduate			Graduate and first-professional		
	All students	Disabled students	Nondisabled students	All students	Disabled students	Nondisabled students
<b>Total students (1,000)</b>	<b>20,928</b>	<b>2,266</b>	<b>18,662</b>	<b>3,456</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>3,195</b>
<b>PERCENT DISTRIBUTION</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>89.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>92.4</b>
<b>Age:</b>						
15 to 23 years old	59.7	54.0	60.4	11.4	7.8	11.7
24 to 29 years old	17.3	20.1	17.0	39.9	36.2	40.2
30 years or older	23.0	25.9	22.7	48.7	56.0	48.1
<b>Sex:</b>						
Male	43.1	42.7	43.1	40.1	39.2	40.2
Female	56.9	57.3	56.9	59.9	60.8	59.8
<b>Race/ethnicity of student:</b>						
White, non-Hispanic	61.8	66.3	61.2	66.6	63.6	66.9
Black, non-Hispanic	14.0	12.7	14.1	11.7	19.0	11.1
Hispanic	14.1	12.3	14.4	8.0	7.4	8.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.6	4.8	6.8	11.1	7.3	11.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.3	0.5	0.3
Other	2.7	3.2	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3
<b>Attendance status:</b>						
Full-time, full-year	39.3	34.7	39.8	34.1	32.6	34.2
Part-time or part-year	60.7	65.3	60.2	65.9	67.4	65.8
<b>Student housing status:</b>						
On-campus	14.2	11.1	14.5	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Off-campus	54.0	56.3	53.7	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
With parents or relatives	31.9	32.6	31.8	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
<b>Dependency status:</b>						
Dependent	53.0	46.8	53.7	(S)	(S)	(S)
Independent, unmarried	15.3	19.5	14.7	50.0	52.7	49.8
Independent, married	6.4	6.9	6.3	16.9	12.9	17.2
Independent with dependents	25.4	26.7	25.2	33.1	34.4	33.0

NA Not available. S Figure does not meet publication standards.

Source: U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, annual.