
MEASURING UP

2006

**THE STATE REPORT CARD
ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

UTAH



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

WHAT IS MEASURING UP?

The purpose of this state report card is to provide the general public and policymakers with information they can use to assess and improve postsecondary education in each state. *Measuring Up 2006* is the fourth in a series of biennial report cards.

Measuring Up 2006 evaluates states on their performance in higher education because it is the states that are primarily responsible for educational access and quality in the United States. In this report card, “higher education” refers to all education and training beyond high school, including all public and private, two- and four-year, for-profit and nonprofit institutions.

The report card grades states in six overall performance categories:

- **Preparation:** How adequately does the state prepare students for education and training beyond high school?
- **Participation:** Do state residents have sufficient opportunities to enroll in education and training beyond high school?
- **Affordability:** How affordable is higher education for students and their families?
- **Completion:** Do students make progress toward and complete their certificates or degrees in a timely manner?
- **Benefits:** What benefits does the state receive from having a highly educated population?
- **Learning:** What is known about student learning as a result of education and training beyond high school?

Each state receives a letter grade in each performance category. Each grade is based on the state’s performance on several indicators, or quantitative measures, in that category.

Measuring Up 2006 is the first edition that includes data in the Learning category for all 50 states on the extent to which colleges and universities prepare students to contribute to the workforce.

As in *Measuring Up 2004*, most states in 2006 receive an “Incomplete” in Learning due to the lack of reported information.

This year, however, nine states (Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) receive a “Plus.” For more information on these states and the Learning category, see page 12 of this state report card.

In four of the performance categories—Preparation, Participation, Completion, and Benefits—grades are calculated by comparing each state’s current performance to that of the best-performing states. This comparison provides a basis for evaluating each state’s performance within a national context and encourages each state to “measure up” to the highest-performing states.

In the Affordability category, however, the United States as a whole is “measuring down.” That is, even in the best-performing states, higher education has become *less* rather than *more* affordable when the costs of attending college are considered relative to family income. As a result, state grades in the Affordability category are calculated by comparing each state’s current performance with the performance of the best states in the early 1990s. This comparison allows policymakers to examine their state’s results relative to other states, while also encouraging improved performance over time. The Affordability category is the only one in which no state receives an A—the highest grade is a C—.

Measuring Up 2006 also compares each state’s current performance with its own performance in the early 1990s. Although this historical comparison is not graded, it is offered so that states can examine their trends in performance—both improvements and declines—over time. All data are drawn from reliable national sources. (For more information, please see the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006* at www.highereducation.org.)

Measuring Up 2006 is the first edition that offers international comparisons that provide essential information on how well the United States and each of the 50 states are preparing residents with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete effectively in a global economy. Every state is compared with nations associated with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

A Snapshot of Change Over Time

Academic preparation for college has continued to improve since the early 1990s, which is approximately when the most reliable data became available for meaningful comparisons. High school graduates are, in general, better prepared for college today than their peers were about a decade ago, as indicated by a greater proportion of high school students enrolled in a college-preparatory curriculum and scoring higher on national assessment examinations. Most states, however, and the United States as a whole, continue to show little progress in translating these gains into improvements at the college level.

Preparation: 45 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 5 improved on some of the indicators.

Participation: 8 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 28 improved on some of the indicators; 14 declined on most or all of the indicators.

Affordability: 1 state improved on more than half of the indicators; 32 improved on some of the indicators; 17 declined on most or all of the indicators.

Completion: 35 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 13 improved on some of the indicators; 2 declined on most or all of the indicators.

Benefits: 40 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 8 improved on some of the indicators; 2 declined on most or all of the indicators.



Utah compares well with many states in preparing students for college. However, the state continues to fall behind in enrolling students in higher education by age 19—and this rate has dropped by double digits since the early 1990s. Utah has held the line on the share of family income, after financial aid, needed to attend its public and private colleges and universities, despite nationwide declines on this measure. Since the early 1990s, Utah has seen some of the greatest improvement nationally in the proportion of students completing certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Strengths

Preparation

■ A very high percentage of 8th graders take algebra, making Utah the top-performing state on this measure. The state has improved substantially on this measure over the past 12 years.

■ Low-income 8th graders perform very well on national assessments in math.

■ Utah has made substantial improvement over the past 12 years on the proportion of high school students enrolled in upper-level math courses, and is now the top-performing state on this measure.

■ The proportion of high school students enrolled in upper-level science courses has increased substantially over the past 12 years.

■ Large percentages of 11th and 12th graders take and score well on Advanced Placement tests.

■ About two-thirds of secondary school students are taught by teachers with an undergraduate or graduate major in the subject they are teaching, which compares well with top-performing states.



Change in Utah Since 1992



Preparation



Participation



Affordability



Completion



Benefits



Learning

What do the arrows mean?



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



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



The state has declined on most or all indicators.

Affordability

■ Since 1992, Utah has held the line on the share of family income, after financial aid, needed to pay for college, making the state a top performer on this measure.

Completion

■ Compared with other states, a large percentage of freshmen at four-year colleges and universities return for their sophomore year. These institutions enroll the majority of students in Utah.

■ A very large proportion of Utah students complete certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled. Over the past 12 years, this proportion has increased substantially—one of the steepest increases in the nation.

Weaknesses

Preparation

■ Eighth graders perform very poorly on national assessments in writing.

■ Hispanics in the 9th to 12th grades are about one-half as likely as whites to enroll in upper-level math courses.

Participation

■ Utah high school students are not very likely to enroll in college by age 19, primarily because few high school students go directly on to college after graduating. Over the past decade, the state has declined faster than the nation on this measure.

■ Among 18- to 24-year-olds, a substantial gap exists between whites and non-whites in college enrollment.

2006
Grade

Change
Over Time

A



Utah has shown notable improvement on its already excellent performance in preparing students to succeed in college. This year Utah receives an A in preparation.

Graded Information

Compared with other states:

■ Utah is the top-performing state in the proportion of high school students enrolled in upper-level math (74%). A fairly high proportion (32%) of high school students are enrolled in upper-level science.

■ A very high proportion (60%) of 8th graders take algebra, making Utah the top-performing state on this measure.

■ Eighth graders in Utah perform fairly well on national assessments in science. However, their performance on national assessments in math and reading is only fair, and their performance in writing is very poor.

■ Low-income 8th graders perform very well on national assessments in math.

■ Large proportions of 11th and 12th graders score well on Advanced Placement tests, but fairly small proportions score well on college entrance exams.

■ About two-thirds of secondary school students are taught by qualified teachers, which compares well with top-performing states.

PREPARATION	UTAH		Top States 2006
	1992*	2006	
High School Completion (20%)			
18- to 24-year-olds with a high school credential	94%	88%†	94%
K-12 Course Taking (35%)			
9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course	45%	74%	64%
9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course	20%	32%	40%
8th grade students taking algebra	35%	60%	35%
12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course	n/a	56%	66%
K-12 Student Achievement (35%)			
8th graders scoring at or above "proficient" on the national assessment exam:			
in math	22%	30%	38%
in reading	31%	29%	38%
in science	32%	33%	41%
in writing	21%	23%	41%
Low-income 8th graders scoring at or above "proficient" on the national assessment exam in math	17%	20%	22%
Number of scores in the top 20% nationally on SAT/ACT college entrance exam per 1,000 high school graduates	142	162	237
Number of scores that are 3 or higher on an Advanced Placement subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors	155	182	217
Teacher Quality (10%)			
7th to 12th graders taught by teachers with a major in their subject	58%	69%	81%

*The indicators report data beginning in 1992 or the closest year for which reliable data are available. See the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006*.

†Eighty-four percent of 18-24-year-olds have a regular high school diploma; 5% have a GED. The numbers shown for a regular high school diploma and a GED may not exactly equal the number for a high school credential due to rounding.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past 12 years, the proportion of high school students enrolled in upper-level math has increased by 65%, and the proportion of high school students enrolled in upper-level science has increased by 62%, placing Utah among the fastest-improving states on both measures.

■ During the same period, the proportion of 8th graders taking algebra has increased substantially.

Other Key Facts

■ Hispanics in the 9th to 12th grades are only about one-half as likely as whites to enroll in upper-level math, and three-quarters as likely as whites to enroll in upper-level science.

■ About 13% of children under age 18 live in poverty, compared with a national rate of 18%.

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

2006
Grade

Change
Over Time

B



Despite a decline in performance, Utah continues to do well in enrolling students in higher education when compared with other states. This year Utah receives a B in participation.

Graded Information

Compared with other states:

■ The chance of Utah high school students enrolling in college by age 19 is fairly low, primarily because few graduates go on to college immediately after high school.

■ Only a fair percentage of working-age adults (ages 25 to 49) are enrolled part-time in college-level education or training.

Change in Graded Measures

Over the past decade:

■ The chance of enrolling in college by age 19 has declined by 11%, compared to a national decline of 2%. The state's decrease is primarily due to a decline in the percentage of graduates going on to college immediately after high school.

■ The percentage of working-age adults who are enrolled part-time in college-level education or training has decreased by 1%, compared with a national decrease of 12%.

PARTICIPATION	UTAH		Top States 2006
	1992*	2006	
Young Adults (60%)			
Chance for college by age 19	42%	37%	53%
18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college	41%	34%	41%
Working-Age Adults (40%)			
25- to 49-year-olds enrolled part-time in any type of postsecondary education	3.9%	3.9%	5.1%

*The indicators report data beginning in 1992 or the closest year for which reliable data are available. See the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006*.

Other Key Facts

■ Among the young adult population (ages 18 to 24), the gap in college participation between whites and other ethnic groups is substantial. Currently, 36 out of 100 white young adults are enrolled in college, compared with 25 out of 100 young adults from other ethnic groups.

■ The state's population is projected to grow by 24% from 2005 to 2020, far exceeding the national rate of 14%. During approximately the same period, the number of high school graduates is projected to increase by 31%.

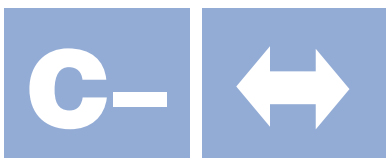
■ About 9% of the adult population has less than a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared with 14% of adults nationwide.

■ In Utah, 6,486 more students are entering the state than are leaving to attend college. About 8% of Utah high school graduates who go to college attend college out of state.

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

2006
Grade

Change
Over Time



Utah has made no notable progress in providing affordable higher education. This year Utah receives a C- in affordability.

Graded Information

■ Utah has held the line on the share of family income, after financial aid, needed to attend its public two-year colleges, and its public and private four-year institutions, making Utah a top-performing state in this area.

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

■ Undergraduate students borrowed on average \$3,100 in 2005, the lowest amount in the nation.

Other Key Facts

■ In Utah, 20% of students are enrolled in community colleges, 56% in public four-year colleges and universities, and 22% in private four-year institutions.

AFFORDABILITY	UTAH		Top States In Early 1990s
	1992*	2006	
Family Ability to Pay (50%)			
Percent of income (average of all income groups) needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid:			
at community colleges	16%	18%	15%
at public 4-year colleges/universities	16%	18%	16%
at private 4-year colleges/universities	17%	22%	32%
Strategies for Affordability (40%)			
State investment in need-based financial aid as compared to the federal investment	1%	6%	89%
At lowest-priced colleges, the share of income that the poorest families need to pay for tuition	12%	14%	7%
Reliance on Loans (10%)			
Average loan amount that undergraduate students borrow each year	\$3,131	\$3,100	\$2,619

*The indicators report data beginning in 1992 or the closest year for which reliable data are available. See the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006*.

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

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

Financial Burden to Pay for College Varies Widely Among Different Income Families in the State

A CLOSER LOOK AT FAMILY ABILITY TO PAY	Average family income	Community colleges		Public 4-year colleges/universities		Private 4-year colleges/universities	
		Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost	Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost	Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost
Income groups used to calculate 2006 family ability to pay							
20% of the population with the lowest income	\$15,382	\$6,032	39%	\$6,082	40%	\$7,481	49%
20% of the population with lower-middle income	\$35,029	\$6,591	19%	\$6,906	20%	\$8,358	24%
20% of the population with middle income	\$51,363	\$7,065	14%	\$7,828	15%	\$9,160	18%
20% of the population with upper-middle income	\$73,540	\$7,198	10%	\$7,961	11%	\$9,389	13%
20% of the population with the highest income	\$119,900	\$7,224	6%	\$8,011	7%	\$9,558	8%
40% of the population with the lowest income	\$25,206	\$6,312	25%	\$6,494	26%	\$7,920	31%

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

Those who are striving to reach or stay in the middle class—the 40% of the population with the lowest incomes—earn on average \$25,206 each year.

■ If a student from such a family were to attend a community college in the state, their net cost to attend college would represent about 25% of their income annually:

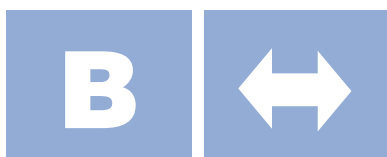
Tuition, room, and board:	\$7,283
Financial aid received:	—\$ 972
Net college cost:	\$6,312
Percent of income:	25%

■ If the same student were to attend a public four-year college in the state, their net cost to attend college would represent about 26% of their income annually:

Tuition, room, and board:	\$8,500
Financial aid received:	—\$2,006
Net college cost:	\$6,494
Percent of income:	26%

Note

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

2006
GradeChange
Over Time

Utah continues to perform well in the proportion of students earning a certificate or degree in a timely manner. Utah receives a B in completion this year.

Graded Information

Compared with other states:

■ Only a fair percentage (46%) of first-year community college students return for their second year.

■ However, a large percentage (71%) of freshmen at four-year colleges and universities return for their sophomore year.

■ The percentage of first-time, full-time college students who complete a bachelor's degree within six years is only fair (47%).

■ A very large proportion of students complete certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past 12 years, Utah has been one of the fastest-improving states in the proportion of students completing certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Other Key Facts

■ Hispanic students are only three-quarters as likely as white students to complete certificates and degrees.

COMPLETION	UTAH		Top States 2006
	1992*	2006	
Persistence (20%)†			
1st year community college students returning their second year	49%	46%	62%
Freshmen at 4-year colleges/universities returning their sophomore year	70%	71%	82%
Completion (80%)			
First-time, full-time students completing a bachelor's degree within 6 years of college entrance	47%	47%	64%
Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all colleges and universities per 100 undergraduate students	14	19	20

*The indicators report data beginning in 1992 or the closest year for which reliable data are available.

†2006 data may not be entirely comparable with data from previous years.

See the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006*.

Note

Utah's performance on completion indicators may be higher than measured, as many Mormon students leave colleges and universities for two years to fulfill a service mission and return to complete a degree.

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

2006
Grade

Change
Over Time

A-



Utah has seen an increase in the benefits the state receives from having a more highly educated population. Utah earns an A- in benefits this year.

Graded Information

Compared with other states:

■ Only a fair proportion of residents have a bachelor's degree, and the economic benefits to the state as a result are also only fair.

■ However, residents contribute substantially to the civic good, as measured by charitable giving, volunteerism, and voting. Utah is the top-performing state on the volunteerism measure.

Other Key Facts

■ If all ethnic groups had the same educational attainment and earnings as whites, total personal income in the state would be about \$728 million higher.

■ In 2002, Utah scored 69 on the New Economy Index, compared to a nationwide score of 60. The New Economy Index, developed by the Progressive Policy Institute, measures the extent to which states are participating in knowledge-based industries.

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

BENEFITS	UTAH		Top States 2006
	1992*	2006	
Educational Achievement (37.5%)			
Population aged 25 to 65 with a bachelor's degree or higher	27%	29%	37%
Economic Benefits (31.25%)			
Increase in total personal income as a result of the percentage of the population holding a bachelor's degree	9%	9%	12%
Increase in total personal income as a result of the percentage of the population with some college (including an associate's degree), but not a bachelor's degree	2%	2%	3%
Civic Benefits (31.25%)			
Residents voting in national elections	60%	53%	64%
Of those who itemize on federal income taxes, the percentage declaring charitable gifts	93%	91%	91%
Increase in volunteering rate as a result of college education	n/a	26%	22%
Adult Skill Levels (0%)			
Adults demonstrating high-level literacy skills:			
quantitative	31%	33%	33%
prose	30%	32%	33%
document	26%	27%	28%

*The indicators report data beginning in 1992 or the closest year for which reliable data are available. See the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006*.

†These are estimates from *Measuring Up 2004* and are not used to calculate grades. New data will be available in fall 2006.

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

2006
Grade



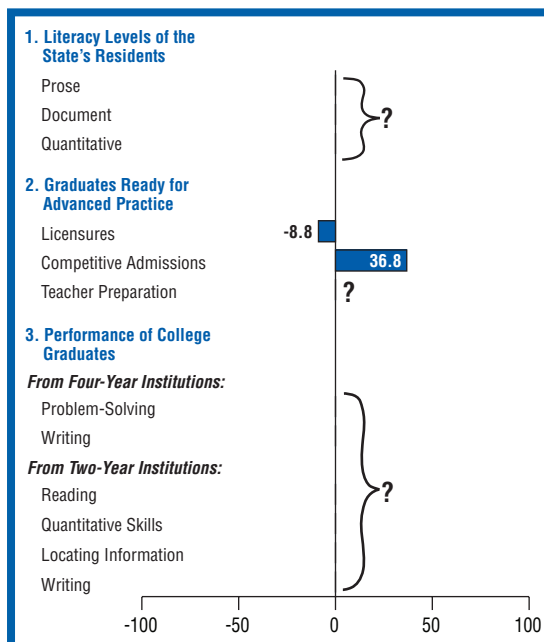
Like most states, Utah receives an “Incomplete” in Learning because insufficient data would not allow meaningful state-by-state comparisons. However, data are available this year to examine the readiness of college graduates—from two- and four-year institutions—for advanced practice. State results are described below.

In *Measuring Up 2006*, data are available, for the first time, for all fifty states on “Graduates Ready for Advanced Practice” indicators (see chart). In the 2004 edition of *Measuring Up*, state-level results on all Learning indicators were reported for five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) that participated in a pilot project directed by the National Forum on College-Level Learning and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.* This project evaluated state performance in Learning on three topics:

1. Literacy Levels of the State’s Residents. These indicators answer the question, “What are the abilities of the state’s college-educated population?” The answer provides information about the level of “educational capital” the state can count on to develop a competitive 21st-century workforce and a responsible citizenry.

2. Graduates Ready for Advanced Practice. These indicators address the question, “To what extent do colleges and universities in the state educate students to contribute to the workforce?” These measures examine how well prepared state college and university graduates are to enter a licensed profession or participate in graduate study.

3. Performance of College Graduates. These indicators address the question, “How effectively can college and university graduates in the state communicate and solve problems?” The ability of college graduates to perform complex academic and real-world tasks is the “bottom line” in Learning. This can only be determined by common direct assessments of college graduate abilities.



Note: Measures under the third cluster will require special data collection efforts similar to those undertaken by the five pilot project states in 2004.

Measuring Up 2006 employs the same methodology for Learning as used in the 2004 edition of *Measuring Up*. Overall state performance is illustrated by a bar chart for each state. In the chart, the data for each indicator are represented by a bar showing the number of percentage points the state performed above or below the national average.

The overall picture for *Measuring Up 2006* remains incomplete. While “Graduates Ready for Advanced Practice” results can be reported for all states, results for “Literacy Levels of State’s Residents” can only be calculated for five of the six states that participated in a state-level version of the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (SAAL) conducted in 2003. Results for “Performance of College Graduates”, reported in the 2004

edition of *Measuring Up*, were based on assessments administered to representative samples of college students in each of the five pilot project states. These measures were not updated for 2006.

Utah Results

Utah is somewhat below the national benchmark in work-force preparation as reflected in professional licensure examinations. About 16% fewer Utah graduates take such examinations than is typical nationally, although their pass rate is more than 7% above the national average. Utah is 38% above the national benchmark in preparing students for graduate study as reflected in

graduate admissions examinations, placing it among the top five states on this measure. Although about the same percentage of Utah graduates take such examinations as is typical nationally, the proportion earning competitive scores is almost 13% above the national average.

Utah is one of nine states that does not publicly report pass rates on teacher licensure examinations.

Utah did not participate in the SAAL, so no results on literacy are available.

*More information on the National Forum on College-Level Learning can be obtained at http://www.highereducation.org/reports/mu_learning/index.shtml.

How Utah Measures Up Internationally

Participation*

■ About 37% of young adults, ages 18 to 24, in Utah are currently enrolled in college. Although Utah's enrollment rate compares well internationally, it represents only 77% of the rate in Korea, the best-performing nation on this measure. Utah is also surpassed by Greece.

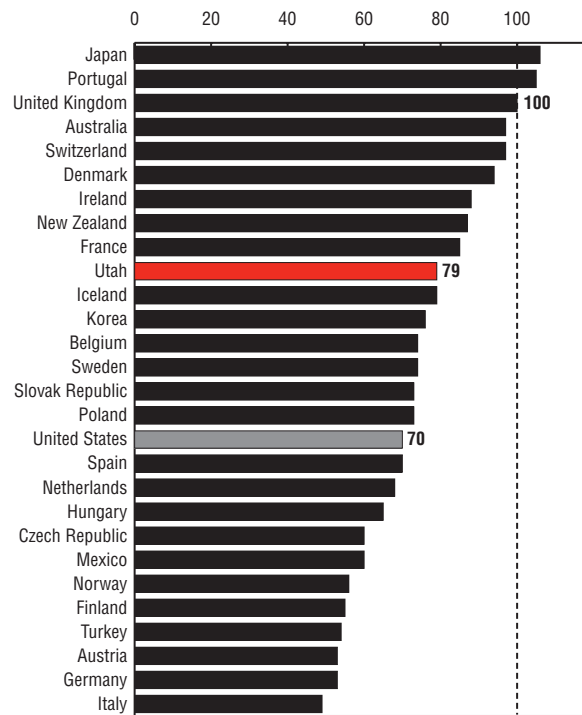
Completion

■ When compared internationally, Utah is surpassed by many countries in the proportion of students who complete certificates or degrees. With 19 out of 100 students enrolled completing certificates or degrees, Utah's completion rate is only 79% of the rate in the United Kingdom, the top-performing nation on this measure, where 24 out of 100 students complete certificates or degrees. Utah also lags Japan, Portugal, Australia, Switzerland, Denmark, Ireland, New Zealand, and France (see figure 1).

Educational Level of Adult Population

■ Internationally, the proportion of younger adults, ages 25 to 34, with a college degree in Utah is only 77% of the proportion in Japan, the top-performing nation on this measure. Utah is also surpassed by Canada and Korea.

Figure 1. Total Degrees/Certificates Awarded Per 100 Students Enrolled, 2004



*This measure includes both undergraduate and graduate enrollment, whereas the similar indicator in the graded category only reports undergraduate enrollment.

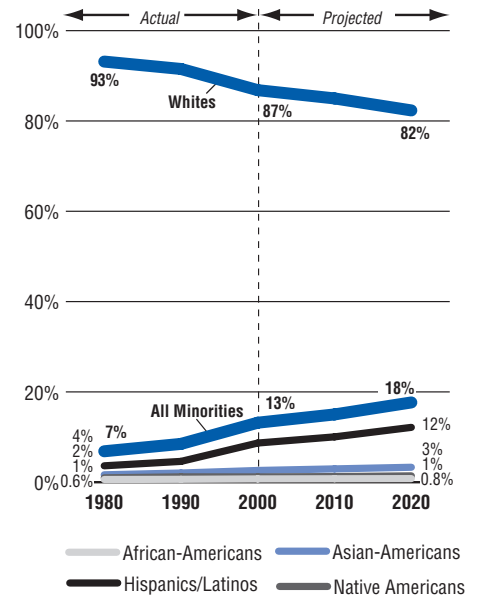
Note: The chart shows index scores, as measured against the top performance. The top performance, defined as the median value of the top five performers, receives a score of 100. The top performer can be a nation or a U.S. state. For more international comparison information, go to www.highereducation.org.

State Context	Utah	State Rank
Population (2005)	2,469,585	34
Gross state product (2004, in millions)	\$82,546	34
Leading Indicators	Utah	U.S.
Projected % change in population, 2005-2020	24%	14%
Projected % change in number of all high school graduates, 2002-2017	31%	8%
Projected budget surplus/shortfall by 2013	-6%	-6%
Average income of poorest 20% of population (2004)	\$15,382	\$12,168
Children in poverty (2004)	13%	18%
Percent of adult population with less than a high school diploma or equivalent (2004)	9%	14%
New economy index (2002)*	69	60
Facts and Figures	Utah	
	Number/Amount	Percent
Institutions of Postsecondary Education (2004-05)		
Public 4-year	7	
Public 2-year	6	
Private 4-year	9	
Private 2-year	5	
Students Enrolled by Institution Type (2004)		
Public 4-year	99,785	56%
Public 2-year	34,649	20%
Private 4-year	38,861	22%
Private 2-year	3,614	2%
Students Enrolled by Level (2004)		
Undergraduate	176,909	91%
Graduate	15,972	8%
Professional	1,443	1%
Enrollment Status of Students (2004)		
Full-time	118,707	61%
Part-time	75,617	39%
Net Migration of Students (2004)		
Positive numbers for net migration mean that more students are entering than leaving the state to attend college. Negative numbers reveal the reverse.	6,486	
Average Tuition (2005-06)		
Public 4-year institutions	\$3,442	
Public 2-year institutions	\$2,225	
Private 4-year institutions	\$5,388	
State and Local Appropriations for Higher Education		
Per \$1,000 of personal income, FY 2006	\$10	
Per capita, FY 2006	\$272	
% change, FY 1996-2006		61%

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

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

Working-Age Population (ages 25-64) by Race/Ethnicity, 1980-2020



Racial and Ethnic Gaps in Educational Levels of Working-Age Population (ages 25-64), 2000

	Whites	Hispanics/Latinos
Less than a high school credential	7%	42%
Associate's degree or higher	38%	14%

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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

A: *Measuring Up 2006* grades states, not individual colleges or universities, on their performance in higher education. The states are responsible for preparing students for higher education by means of sound K–12 school systems, and they provide most of the public financial support—\$72 billion currently—for colleges and universities. Through their oversight of public colleges and universities, state leaders affect the types and number of programs available in the state. State leaders also determine the limits of financial support and often influence tuition and fees for public colleges and universities. They establish how much state-based financial aid is available to students and their families, which affects students attending both private and public colleges and universities.

Q: How are states graded?

A: *Measuring Up 2006* grades states in six performance categories: Preparation, Participation, Affordability, Completion, Benefits, and Learning. Each category is made up of several indicators, or quantitative measures—a total of 35 in the first five categories. Grades are calculated based on each state's performance on these indicators, relative to the best-performing states. As in earlier editions, state data are drawn from the most recent public information available, and the grades in *Measuring Up 2006* reflect state performance in 2004 or 2005.

In the Affordability category, *Measuring Up 2006* reflects the major changes in tuition and financial aid that occurred in 2005. In addition, each state's performance is calculated relative to the performance of top states in the early 1990s—rather than relative to the current performance of top states, as is the case with other graded categories. This difference in comparison, first introduced in *Measuring Up 2004*, creates a more stable basis for states to assess their performance in Affordability, which is the most volatile of the graded categories.

Measuring Up 2006 is the first edition that includes data in the Learning category for all 50 states on the extent to which colleges and universities prepare students to contribute to the workforce (see the “Graduates Ready for Advanced Practice” indicators). As in *Measuring Up 2004*, most states in 2006 receive an “Incomplete” in Learning due to the lack of reported information. This year, however, nine states receive a “Plus”: Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, and South Carolina. These nine states reported adequate data in more than

one of the indicator groups either through their participation in a pilot project, or by collecting additional state data for the state version of the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) conducted in 2003.

All data used to grade states in *Measuring Up 2006* were collected from reliable national sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education. All data are the most current available for state comparisons, are in the public domain, and were collected in ways that allow meaningful comparisons among states. Please see the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006* (available at www.highereducation.org) for more information regarding data sources used in *Measuring Up 2006*.

Q: What information is provided but not graded?

A: The state report cards highlight important gaps in college opportunities for various income and ethnic groups, and they identify improvements and setbacks in each state's performance over time. Each report card also presents important contextual information, such as demographic trends, student migration data, and state funding levels for higher education. International comparisons provide new contextual information for states.

Q: Why does *Measuring Up 2006* include international indicators?

A: *Measuring Up 2006* is the first edition to draw on international indicators, at both the state and national levels. In a global economy, it is critical for each nation to establish and maintain a competitive edge through the ongoing, high-quality education of its population. *Measuring Up 2006* provides essential information on how well the nation and each of the 50 states are preparing residents with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete effectively in the global economy. As with other data in *Measuring Up*, each international measure is based on the most current data available. In this case, the data are from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). International comparisons are used to gauge the states' and the nation's standing relative to OECD countries on the participation and educational attainment of their populations.

For more information on international comparisons, see *Measuring Up Internationally: Developing Skills and Knowledge for the Global Knowledge Economy* by Alan Wagner. For more information on available data sources, see the *Technical Guide for Measuring Up 2006* (available at www.highereducation.org).

STATE GRADES

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