

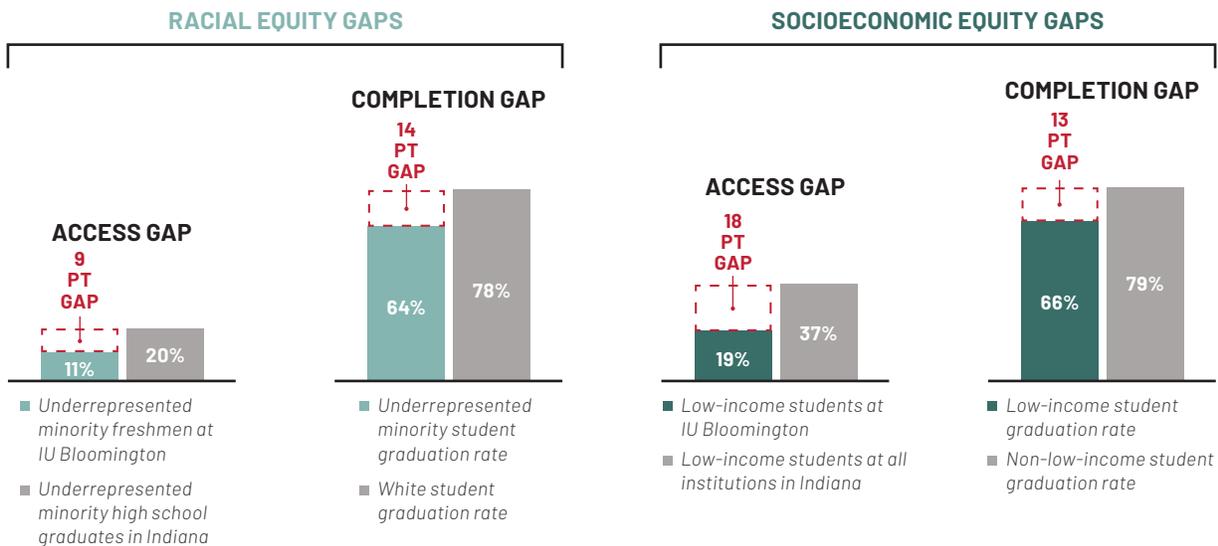
# Equity Snapshot

# Indiana University – Bloomington

Public flagship universities were established to provide an excellent education to their states' residents and are therefore well-positioned to enhance social and economic mobility within their states. Yet in many cases, too few low-income students and students of color have access to these elite colleges and the opportunities they provide. This analysis of racial and socioeconomic equity at Indiana University – Bloomington (IU Bloomington) finds large and growing gaps in college access, as well as troubling gaps in college completion, by race and socioeconomic status (Figure 1). To serve as a catalyst for mobility and equity for the state of Indiana, IU Bloomington must do a better job enrolling and graduating low-income students<sup>1</sup> and students of color.

## EQUITY AT A GLANCE

**Figure 1.** Racial and Socioeconomic Equity Gaps in Access and Completion at IU Bloomington, 2016



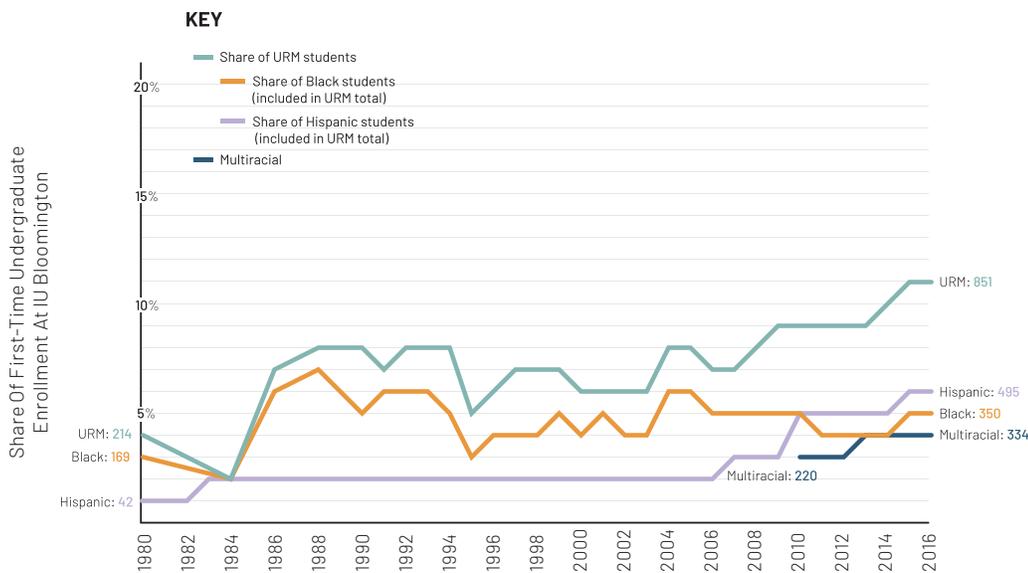
Source: Racial equity gaps: IHEP analysis of first-time, full- and part-time undergraduate fall enrollment, 2016 IPEDS data and public high school graduates 2015–16 Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) data retrieved from <https://knocking.wiche.edu/data/>; IHEP analysis of first-time, full-time undergraduate six-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity, 2016 IPEDS data. Socioeconomic equity gaps: IHEP analysis of first-time, full-time undergraduates receiving Pell Grants at IU Bloomington and at public, private not-for-profit, and for-profit two- and four-year Title IV participating institutions in Indiana, 2015–16 IPEDS data; IHEP analysis of first-time, full-time undergraduate six-year graduation rate by Pell receipt, 2016 IPEDS data.

## WHO HAS ACCESS TO IU BLOOMINGTON?

**RACIAL EQUITY:** More students of color attend IU Bloomington today than 30 years ago, but Black and Hispanic students are nonetheless more underrepresented compared with the state population than they were 15 years ago. Between 1980 and 2016, the number of underrepresented minority students at IU Bloomington nearly quadrupled (Figure 2). See sidebox, “Who are Underrepresented Minority Students?”

Yet IU Bloomington’s enrollment of Black and Hispanic students has failed to keep pace with the growing racial/ethnic diversity in the state. Since 2001, racial gaps between the flagship’s freshmen class and the state’s high school graduates more than doubled from 4 percentage points to 9 percentage points (Figure 3).

Black students are especially underrepresented at IU Bloomington.<sup>2</sup> Despite a growing proportion of Black high school graduates in Indiana, IU Bloomington’s enrollment of Black students has remained flat over the last 15 years—perpetuating and worsening the status quo. While 11 percent of Indiana’s high school graduates were Black in 2016, only 5 percent of IU Bloomington’s incoming freshmen were Black that fall (Figure 3). In fact, Black enrollment has not exceeded 7 percent of IU Bloomington’s freshmen class at any point over the past three and a half decades (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Change in Racial/Ethnic Diversity at IU Bloomington, 1980–2016

Source: IHEP analysis of first-time, full- and part-time undergraduate fall enrollment, 1980–2016 IPEDS data. Note: Cohorts of American Indian/Alaska Native students are too small and therefore not shown separately. However, American Indian/Alaska Native students are included in the underrepresented minority (URM) category.

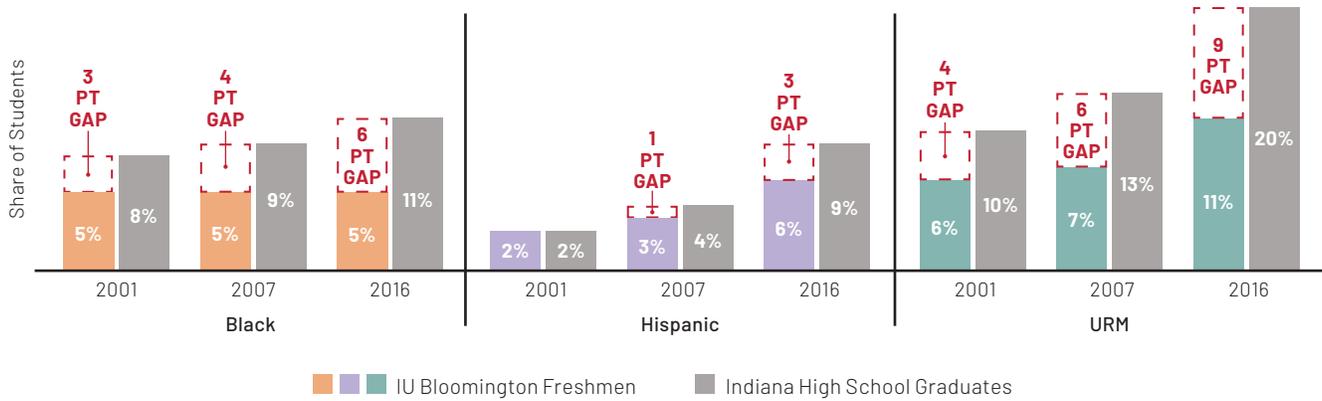
### Who are Underrepresented Minority Students?

In this analysis, underrepresented minority (URM) students or students of color refers to Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native students. Other populations, such as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, Southeast Asian Americans, and other underserved Asian students, also are underrepresented within higher education and deserve attention.<sup>3</sup> However, current data are insufficient to measure access and completion for these critical populations over time.

Also, due to small population sizes and to protect students’ anonymity, this paper includes American Indian/Alaska Native students as part of the collective underrepresented minority group but does not discuss or depict them on their own. In 2016, American Indian/Alaska Native students comprised approximately 1 percent of undergraduates in the United States.<sup>4</sup> And just 40 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native students at public four-year colleges earned a degree within six years in 2014, compared with 61 percent of White students.<sup>5</sup>

We urge institutions to examine trends for all underrepresented groups to develop recruitment and intervention strategies targeted to their needs.

**Figure 3.** Change in Racial/Ethnic Gaps Between Indiana High School Graduates and IU Bloomington Undergraduates, 2001, 2007, and 2016



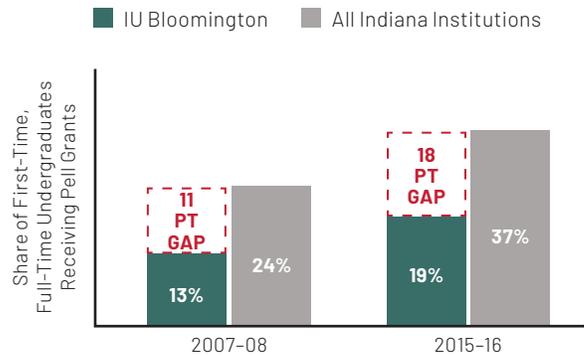
Source: IHEP analysis of first-time, full- and part-time undergraduate fall enrollment, 2001-16 IPEDS data and public high school graduates 2000-01 (earliest available data) through 2014-15 Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) data retrieved from <https://knocking.wiche.edu/data/>. 2000-01 through 2012-13 data on high school graduates are based on the Common Core of Data (CCD), and 2013-14 through 2015-16 high school graduate data are WICHE projections. Note: IPEDS cohorts of American Indian/Alaska Native students are too small and therefore not shown separately. However, American Indian/Alaska Native students are included in the underrepresented minority (URM) category.

**SOCIOECONOMIC EQUITY:** IU Bloomington enrolls more low-income students today than it did a decade ago, but these increases have not kept pace with the growing enrollment of low-income college students in Indiana overall. IU Bloomington enrolls low-income students at about half the rate of all Indiana colleges combined (19 percent compared with 37 percent; Figure 4).

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**NET PRICE:** Price is one barrier to college access for low-income students. IU Bloomington keeps costs relatively low for those students with limited resources. In 2015-16, the lowest income in-state students at IU Bloomington—those with family incomes of \$30,000 or less—paid about \$5,500 in college expenses after accounting for grant aid.<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 4.** Change in Socioeconomic Gaps between IU Bloomington and All Indiana Colleges, 2007-08 and 2015-16



Source: IHEP analysis of first-time, full-time undergraduates receiving Pell Grants at IU Bloomington and at all public, private not-for-profit, and for-profit two- and four-year Title IV participating institutions in Indiana, 2007-08 to 2015-16 IPEDS data.

## WHO SUCCEEDS AT IU BLOOMINGTON?

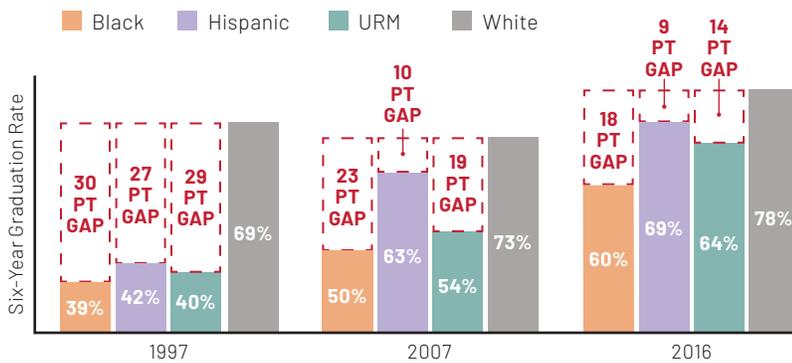
**RACIAL EQUITY:** IU Bloomington has made impressive gains in graduation rates for all students, especially students of color. Yet the university must continue to improve completion rates for underrepresented minority students to close persistent equity gaps. Over the past two decades, IU Bloomington cut in half graduation-rate gaps between underrepresented minority and White students (Figure 5).

Despite these noteworthy improvements, staggering graduation-rate gaps remain, especially between Black students and their White peers. In 2016, IU Bloomington graduated White students at a rate 9 percentage points higher than Hispanic students and 18 percentage points higher than Black students (Figure 5).

The flagship must continue working to improve completion rates for students of color but do so without increasing admissions requirements that could exclude students poised to benefit from an IU Bloomington education. Indeed, increasing selectivity likely contributed to IU Bloomington's graduation-rate gains over the past several decades. The flagship became more selective, increasing the median SAT/ACT scores of incoming students by approximately 9 percent between 2002 and 2016.<sup>7</sup> This trend, however, is at odds with the need to enhance socioeconomic and racial diversity.<sup>8</sup>



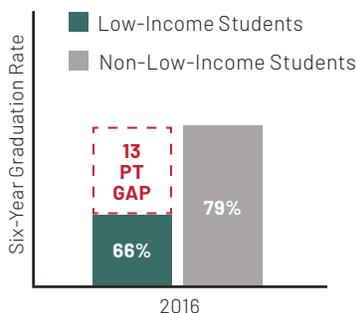
**OUT-OF-STATE ENROLLMENT:** Many flagships have increased out-of-state enrollments, a practice that can hurt socioeconomic or racial diversity.<sup>9</sup> The share of first-time, full-time undergraduates at IU Bloomington who are from outside of Indiana increased by 12 percentage points over the last 30 years (from 31 percent in 1986 to 43 percent in 2016).<sup>10</sup>



**Figure 5.** Graduation-Rate Gaps by Race/Ethnicity at IU Bloomington, 1997, 2007, 2016

Source: IHEP analysis of first-time, full-time undergraduate six-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity, 1997–2016 IPEDS data. Note: Cohorts of American Indian/Alaska Native students are too small and therefore not shown separately. However, American Indian/Alaska Native students are included in the underrepresented minority (URM) category.

**SOCIOECONOMIC EQUITY:** Low-income students have a lower chance of graduating from IU Bloomington than their higher-income peers. In 2016, IU Bloomington graduated just two-thirds (66 percent) of low-income students within six years, compared with 79 percent of non-low-income students (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Graduation-Rate Gap by Socioeconomic Status at IU Bloomington, 2016

Source: IHEP analysis of first-time, full-time undergraduate six-year graduation rate by Pell receipt, 2016 IPEDS data. Data on graduation rates for low-income students became available in 2016, allowing for analysis of socioeconomic gaps in student success at individual institutions.

## EQUITY-MINDED POLICIES AT IU BLOOMINGTON

### What institutions do matters.

Colleges and universities must commit to increasing racial and economic diversity and supporting students of color and low-income students through to completion. That commitment requires unwavering leadership, alongside a solid financial investment. That institutional commitment plays out in a number of ways, including through university policies, which shape the opportunities available to low-income students and students of color. Public flagship institutions should design admissions and financial aid policies that encourage historically underrepresented students to gain access and succeed at high levels. The checklist below includes examples of policies that can encourage, or impede, enrollment and success for low-income students and students of color. Interviews with Great Lakes flagship administrators provided context on the motivations behind enacting these policies and how they impact equity on campus.

While designing and implementing the policies below can open more opportunities for students of color and low-income students, this list is illustrative—not exhaustive. Furthermore, fully closing gaps in access and completion is about more than checking a handful of policy boxes. Institutions need consistent leadership that sets equity goals as top institutional priorities. Doing so compels administrators, faculty, and staff to re-examine and question all policies and practices—large and small. Institution-wide policies matter, but so do the day-to-day decisions made and priorities set on a campus. As a public university founded on the principal of providing an excellent education to Hoosiers, IU Bloomington has a responsibility to examine its policies and practices with the goal of opening doors of opportunity within the state.



### NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID

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**IU Bloomington does not award more than three-quarters of institutional grant aid based on need.** Low-income students are sensitive to the price of college and financial aid offers. Need-based grant aid helps ease the financial burden of attending college, promote affordability, and narrow access inequities.<sup>11</sup> In the 2015–16 academic year, IU Bloomington awarded less than half (42 percent) of institutional grants (\$44.1 million) based on financial need.<sup>12</sup> IU Bloomington offers financial support to eligible low-income students through the Pell Promise and 21st Century Scholarship Covenant programs. Through these programs, students' federal Pell Grants or 21st Century Scholar awards are matched by IU Bloomington to help cover the cost of tuition and fees.<sup>13</sup>



## EARLY DECISION

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**IU Bloomington does not accept early decision applications.** Binding early decision polices increase the admissions chances of students who have the preparation and financial means to apply early to only one college and commit to enroll there if admitted, without comparing financial aid packages across multiple institutions. Affluent students are almost twice as likely as low-income students to apply to early decision deadlines, and thus benefit disproportionately from the advantages these policies offer.<sup>14</sup> IU Bloomington does not offer early decision.<sup>15</sup>



## DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

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**IU Bloomington does not consider students' demonstrated interest in the admissions process.** Institutions that favor applicants who show "demonstrated interest" in the school disadvantage low-income students. While affluent students have the financial means to demonstrate their interest by visiting college campuses, low-income students are often unable to do so because of the high costs associated with these trips.<sup>16</sup> IU Bloomington avoids this harmful practice by not considering "level of applicant interest" in the admission process.<sup>17</sup>



## LEGACY PREFERENCE

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**IU Bloomington considers legacy status during the admissions process.** Legacy admissions policies that give preference to students with familial ties to the institution can increase admissions chances of the children of alumni, a benefit exclusively available to students with college-educated parents.<sup>18</sup> These policies disadvantage low-income students and students of color, who are more likely than their White and higher income peers to be the first in their family to attend college.<sup>19</sup> IU Bloomington considers "alumni/ae relation" in their application review process.<sup>20</sup>



## INTERACTIONS WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

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**IU Bloomington has not "Banned the Box,"** meaning applicants must disclose and provide an explanation of past criminal convictions and pending criminal charges.<sup>21</sup> Requiring applicants to check a box disclosing interactions with the criminal justice system, a practice that has not been shown to have any impact on campus safety, disadvantages applicants of color to a larger degree than White students.<sup>22</sup> IU Bloomington asks about a prospective student's criminal justice involvement on its application, and considers that information after admissions decisions have been made, at which point the university might conduct further evaluation or follow-up.<sup>23</sup> Notably, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)—of which IU Bloomington is a member—recently called on its membership to remove questions about criminal history from applications for admissions.<sup>24</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Low-income students are those who receive Pell Grants; 82 percent of all Pell recipients have incomes below \$40,000. U.S. Department of Education, 2015–16 Federal Pell Grant Program End-Of-Year Report, Table 71. Retrieved from: <https://www2.ed.gov/finaid/prof/resources/data/2015-2016eoyresearchreports.zip>
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