

News and Views



□ The Progress of Black Student Enrollments at the Nation's Highest-Ranked Colleges and Universities

For the thirteenth consecutive year, JBHE publishes its survey of the percentages of black first-year students at the nation's highest-ranked universities and liberal arts colleges.

This year, for the fifth time in the last seven years, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill leads the other universities in the percentage of black students in its first-year class. The Ivy League schools did well with Princeton leading the pack. Of this group of eight selective universities, only Brown showed a drop in the number of black first-year students this year.

Among the nation's highest-ranked liberal arts institutions, there is a new leader. This year, Amherst College in western Massachusetts has the largest percentage of black students in its entering class.

Again, this year *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* has completed its survey of admissions offices at the nation's highest-ranked national universities. Again, we determine the racial makeup of this fall's freshman classes. As before, our survey includes racial data on the first-year class at the nation's leading liberal arts colleges. And, as in the past, our survey requested information on the number of African-American applicants, their acceptance rates, enrollment numbers, and yield rates (the percentage of students who eventually enroll in the college at which they were accepted).

Here are the results of this year's survey.

After four consecutive years of ranking Number One in our annual survey, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill lost its position in 2003 as having the largest percentage of black freshmen among the highest-ranking universities. In 2003 Stanford University had captured the top spot in our rankings. And in 2004, for the first time, Duke University took the top position in our survey.

However, this year Chapel Hill once again has the highest percentage of blacks in its first-year class.

There is a very large cadre of 416 black freshmen at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill this year, an



Making the Case for Diversity at a Highly Selective American University

"Dean of Admission Janet Rapelye could have saved herself and her colleagues a great deal of time and effort by admitting the first 1,223 applicants who were class valedictorians, or the first 1,223 with double 800 SAT scores, or 1,223 from the state of New York. The reason she took such care in selecting all of you — weighing your many talents, your academic and extracurricular interests, your diverse histories — was to increase the likelihood that your entire educational experience, inside and outside the classroom, is as mind-expanding as possible."

— Shirley M. Tilghman
President of Princeton University
Address to the freshman class
September 2005

increase of 3 percent from a year ago. Blacks make up 11.1 percent of this year's entering class at Chapel Hill. Duke University, last year's leader in our survey, showed a 13 percent drop in black freshmen this year. Blacks are 9.5 percent of all freshmen at Duke, down from 11.5 percent a year ago.

In the enrollment of black students, the University of Virginia has always been a solid performer. This fall 10.2

percent of the current freshman class at the University of Virginia is black, placing the university second in our rankings. In each of the early years of our survey, the University of Virginia reported the highest percentage of black freshmen of any of the nation's high-ranking universities. But in subsequent years the university appeared to have backpedaled somewhat in its commitment to increasing the racial diversity of its student body.

The decline at UVA in black enrollments was probably due to pressures from various litigating organizations that threatened to bring suits against public universities that were using racial preferences in the admissions process. Now that the Supreme Court has reaffirmed the use of race



Admission of African Americans at the Highest-Ranked¹ Universities, Fall 2005

Institution	All Applicants	Total Students Accepted	Overall Student Acceptance Rate	Black Applicants	Blacks Accepted	Black Acceptance Rate	Black Enrollees	Black Student Yield ⁺	Black % of First-Year Class
Univ. of N.C.-Chapel Hill	18,706	6,740	36.0	2,138	804	37.6	416	51.7	11.1
University of Virginia	15,923	5,901	37.1	1,074	623	58.0	319	51.2	10.2
Stanford University	20,195	2,426	12.0	**	252	**	156	61.9	9.5
Duke University	18,087	3,996	22.1	1,867	**	**	163	**	9.5
Princeton University	16,510	1,807	10.9	**	**	**	116	**	9.4
Harvard University	22,796	2,098	9.2	**	221	**	153	69.2	9.3
Yale University	19,451	1,880	9.7	1,134	**	**	122	**	9.2
Emory University	12,011	4,320	36.0	1,671	508	30.4	110	21.7	8.8
Columbia University	18,125	2,312	12.8	1,390	**	**	114	**	8.5
Vanderbilt University	11,663	4,115	35.3	902	395	43.8	134	33.9	8.3
Wake Forest University	7,486	2,882	38.5	573	216	37.7	91	42.1	8.1
Georgetown University	15,285	3,286	21.5	1,092	330	30.2	121	36.7	7.9
Dartmouth College	12,756	2,171	17.0	**	**	**	82	**	7.6
Univ. of Pennsylvania	18,824	3,913	20.8	1,229	367	29.9	193	52.6	7.6
University of Michigan	23,882	13,610	57.0	1,579	934	59.2	443	47.4	7.2
Rice University	7,893	1,973	25.0	531	143	26.9	50	35.0	6.9
Tufts University	15,530	4,398	28.3	549	277	50.5	90	32.5	6.6
Brown University	16,911	2,588	15.3	1,089	253	23.2	97	38.3	6.6
Northwestern University	16,218	4,819	29.7	932	343	36.8	124	36.2	6.4
Johns Hopkins Univ.	11,283	3,912	34.7	943	344	36.5	75	21.8	6.3
Cornell University	24,452	6,621	27.1	1,126	410	36.4	175	42.7	5.6
Carnegie Mellon Univ.	15,777	6,135	38.9	781	352	45.1	79	22.4	5.6
Mass. Inst. of Technology	10,440	1,494	14.3	365	115	31.5	55	47.8	5.5
Washington University	21,515	4,044	18.8	1,884	253	13.4	76	30.0	5.4
Univ. of Southern Calif.	31,634	8,408	26.6	2,345	391	16.7	132	33.8	4.8
University of Chicago	9,017	3,633	40.3	424	**	**	53	**	4.4
Univ. of Notre Dame	11,316	3,581	31.6	338	164	48.5	66	40.2	3.3
Univ. of Cal.-Berkeley	36,967	9,764	26.4	1,572	292	18.6	129	44.2	3.1
Univ. of Cal.-Los Angeles	42,227	11,428	27.1	1,841	279	15.2	125	44.8	2.7
Calif. Inst. of Technology	2,760	551	20.0	40	**	****	1	**	0.4

¹As rated by U.S. News & World Report.

**Declined to provide information to the JBHE research department.

Universities are listed by highest percentage of black freshmen.

⁺Yield = percentage of accepted students who enroll.

Source: Survey conducted by JBHE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT.

as a positive factor in the admissions process, the University of Virginia appears to be inclined to pursue a more aggressive affirmative action program. Black first-year enrollments at the Charlottesville campus increased from 290 in 2003 to 319 this year, a rise of 10 percent.

This year Stanford University posted a gain of 12.2 percent in black freshmen. This moved Stanford from seventh place in our rankings in 2004 to a tie for third place with Duke this year. There are 156 black freshmen at Stanford this fall, making up 9.5 percent of the entering class.

The slight increase in black freshmen at Stanford should be considered in light of the strong performance two years ago when there were 203 black freshmen at Stanford. In

2003 blacks constituted more than 12 percent of the first-year class. That year Stanford had the highest percentage of African-American freshmen among all of the nation's 30 highest-ranked universities.

Princeton University, which has the highest percentage of black freshmen in the Ivy League, ranks fifth overall in our survey. Currently there are

116 black freshmen at Princeton making up 9.4 percent of the first-year class. This is a stunning improvement from a year ago when only 7.1 percent of entering students were black. The number of black freshmen at Princeton increased by more than 38 percent this year.

Harvard University ranks sixth in our survey this year. There are 153 black first-year students at Harvard and they

make up 9.3 percent of the first-year class. This is the highest percentage of black freshmen at Harvard since JBHE first started collecting data on first-year enrollments in 1992.

The gains in black enrollments at Harvard suggest that the university has successfully weathered the storm surrounding the controversy between President Lawrence Summers and Harvard's African and African-American studies department. In the fall of 2001 Summers had challenged the political activities and seriousness of the scholarship of Professor Cornel West. When the dust settled, both West and his colleague Professor K. Anthony Appiah left Harvard for Princeton. Harvard saw a sharp drop in black student yield and enrollment levels in the following year. But now Harvard has climbed back to where it was before the controversy with black enrollments near an all-time high.

This year Yale University ranked just behind Harvard in seventh position with a freshman class that is 9.2 percent black. The 122 black freshmen at Yale this year is the same number as in 2004.

Emory University is a major gainer in this year's survey. There are 110 black freshmen at Emory this year, up nearly 20 percent from a year ago. Blacks are 8.8 percent of the entering class at Emory which places the university in eighth place in our rankings. This gain reverses what had been a declining trend in black first-year enrollments at this Atlanta university over the past decade.

Columbia University, which ranks ninth with a freshman class that is 8.5 percent black, showed a major improvement this year. At Columbia, black freshman enrollments are up nearly 27 percent.

"The solid enrollment results at MIT suggest that CalTech may have some continuing problem in the way it views black applicants."

Vanderbilt University rounds out the top 10 in our rankings despite the fact that there are 4 percent fewer black freshmen this year than in 2004. But over the past decade the number of black freshmen at Vanderbilt has nearly doubled. In 1995 only 4 percent of all freshmen at Vanderbilt were black. This year the figure is 8.3 percent.

Once again, the lowest percentage of black freshmen occurs at the California Institute of Technology. There is one black freshman at CalTech this year, the same number

as a year ago. On three occasions over the past 12 years there have been no black students entering the freshman class at CalTech. Eight has been the highest number of black freshmen attained in any year in that period.

The consistently low figures at CalTech appear to be due in part to the university's strong and highly rigorous curriculum in the hard sciences, disciplines that African Americans are less likely to pursue. Yet CalTech's East Coast counterpart — the Massachusetts Institute of Technology — does a superior job in attracting black students. This year there are 55 black freshmen at MIT making up a respectable 5.5 percent of the first-year class. The solid enrollment results at MIT suggest that CalTech may have some continuing problem in the way it views black applicants.

Cornel West



Harvard's black enrollments appear to have weathered the Cornel West controversy. Black enrollments at Harvard have rebounded to levels that prevailed prior to Professor West's departure for Princeton.

Short-Term and Long-Term Gainers

For the 27 high-ranking universities for which we have data for both this year and last, it is encouraging to report that 17 universities showed gains in black first-year enrollments. Only eight high-ranking universities had declines in their number of black freshmen. Both CalTech and Yale had precisely the same number of black first-year students as they did last fall.

Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, posted the largest percentage gain in black freshmen this year. There are 91 black first-year students on the Wake Forest campus, up from 61 a year ago. This is an increase of more than 49 percent.

Princeton, Columbia, Cornell, Emory, and the University of Michigan all had increases in black freshman enrollments of at least 19 percent. Black freshman enrollments were up at least 10 percent at Georgetown, Berkeley, Northwestern, and Stanford.

Because of the large number of black students involved, the gains in African-American enrollments at the University of Michigan this fall are especially encouraging. In June 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the *Gratz* case that the undergraduate admissions procedures at the University of Michigan were unconstitutional. The system awarded 20 points to each black applicant in a formula that required 100 points to gain admission. Under the system, a black applicant with a B grade point average was rated the same as a white student with an A average.

In 2004, the first year the University of Michigan operated under its new admissions system which did not use a point formula, black first-year enrollments dropped from 410 to 350, a decline of more than 14 percent. This year there are 443 black freshmen at the University of Michigan, a sharp increase of 26.6 percent. Blacks make up 7.2 percent of all freshmen at the university this fall, up from 5.8 percent a year ago.

“Among the high-ranking universities, Wake Forest University in North Carolina posted the largest percentage gain in black freshmen this year.”

Despite the progress, the University of Michigan still has work to do. In 2001 there were nearly 500 black freshmen at the University of Michigan. They made up more than 9 percent of the first-year class.

Northwestern’s nearly 14 percent gain comes on top of a 21 percent increase in black freshmen last year. It appears that Northwestern may have begun to reverse a downward trend in black enrollments which has persisted for the past decade. From 2003 to 2005, the percentage of blacks in the freshman class at Northwestern has increased from 4.6 percent to 6.4 percent.

Only four high-ranking universities posted declines in black freshmen of greater than 10 percent. They are Duke, Washington, MIT, and Notre Dame. Of the eight Ivy League universities, Brown was the only university to show a decrease in the number of black freshmen this year.

Both Berkeley and UCLA posted gains in black first-year students this year. However, the number of black freshmen at each university is still well below the level that prevailed prior to the 1996 enactment of Proposition 209 banning race-conscious admissions at California’s state-operated universities. Despite the Supreme Court’s *Grutter* ruling, the state ban on affirmative action in freshman admissions continues to be binding on Berkeley and UCLA. At Berkeley there are 129 black freshmen this year. Blacks are only 3.1 percent of all freshmen at Berkeley.

At UCLA the news is even worse. This year there are 125 black first-year students at UCLA and they make up only 2.7 percent of this year’s freshman class. At the privately operated University of Southern California, which is not subject to the ban on race-sensitive admissions, 4.8 percent of all freshmen are black.

Gainers and Losers in Black Freshman Enrollments at the Nation’s Highest-Ranked Universities

Big Gains at Wake Forest, Princeton, and Columbia. Steep Declines at Notre Dame.

(Ranked in Order of Progress Achieved, 2004-2005)

Institution	Blacks in the Freshman Class		
	2004	2005	% Change
Wake Forest University	61	91	+49.2
Princeton University	84	116	+38.1
Columbia University	90	114	+26.7
University of Michigan	350	443	+26.6
Cornell University	146	175	+19.9
Emory University	92	110	+19.6
Georgetown University	106	121	+14.2
Univ. of Calif.-Berkeley	113	129	+14.2
Northwestern University	109	124	+13.8
Stanford University	139	156	+12.2
Univ. of Calif.-Los Angeles	114	125	+9.6
University of Pennsylvania	180	193	+7.2
Carnegie Mellon University	74	79	+6.8
Harvard University	145	153	+5.5
Dartmouth College	78	82	+5.1
Univ. of N.C.-Chapel Hill	404	416	+3.0
University of Virginia	310	319	+2.9
Yale University	122	122	0.0
Calif. Inst. of Technology	1	1	0.0
Johns Hopkins University	76	75	-1.3
Rice University	51	50	-2.0
Brown University	100	97	-3.0
Vanderbilt University	140	134	-4.3
Duke University	188	163	-13.3
Washington University	88	76	-13.6
Mass. Institute of Technology	64	55	-14.1
Univ. of Notre Dame	92	66	-28.3

Note: Not all of the nation’s highest-ranking universities are included in this table. Data could not be computed for universities that did not reply to the JBHE freshman survey in both 2003 and 2004.

Source: JBHERESEARCHDEPARTMENT.

JBHE’s research department was able to assemble long-term data for black freshmen at 22 high-ranking universities for the 1994 to 2005 period. At 12 of the universities, the long-term trend in black enrollments is positive. At nine top-rated universities, black enrollments have decreased. At Washington University in St. Louis, there were 76 black freshmen in both 1994 and 2005. The largest increases have been at Vanderbilt, Rice, and Carnegie Mellon. Also, we note that Berkeley, Johns Hopkins, and MIT have posted the largest declines.

Almost all of the major universities have recognized the value of seeing comparative information on black enrollments. Last year, Tufts, the University of Southern California, and the University of Chicago did not provide

Long-Term Gainers and Losers in Black Freshman Enrollments at the Nation's Highest-Ranked Universities

Big Gains at Vanderbilt, Rice, Carnegie Mellon, and Princeton. Steep Declines at MIT, Johns Hopkins, and Berkeley.

(Ranked in Order of Progress Achieved, 1994-2005)

Institution	Blacks in the Freshman Class		
	1994	2005	% Change
Vanderbilt University	70	134	+91.4
Rice University	28	50	+78.6
Carnegie Mellon University	45	79	+75.6
Princeton University	79	116	+46.8
Stanford University	114	156	+36.8
Columbia University	85	114	+34.1
Cornell University	134	175	+30.6
University of Pennsylvania	154	193	+25.3
Georgetown University	103	121	+17.5
Duke University	148	163	+10.1
Harvard University	146	153	+4.8
Northwestern University	123	124	+0.8
Washington University	76	76	0.0
University of Virginia	320	319	-0.3
Brown University	101	97	-4.0
Emory University	115	110	-4.3
Dartmouth College	86	82	-4.7
Yale University	132	122	-7.6
Univ. of Notre Dame	75	66	-12.0
Mass. Institute of Technology	73	55	-24.7
Johns Hopkins University	123	75	-39.0
Univ. of Calif.-Berkeley	214	129	-39.7

Note: Not all of the nation's highest-ranking universities are included in this table. Data could not be computed for universities that did not reply to JBHE's freshman survey in both 1994 and 2004.

Source: JBHERESEARCH DEPARTMENT

data on black first-year enrollments to the JBHE research department. This year we are pleased to have had the cooperation and data from all of the nation's highest-ranked universities.

The Institutional Acceptance Rate by Race: A Good Yardstick to Measure Commitment to Racial Outreach

The percentage of black applicants who receive invitations to join the freshman class is a strong gauge of an institution's commitment to racial diversity. This figure remains the most sensitive of all admissions data. This is particularly true for the very highest ranked institutions. Of the 30 highest-ranked universities that responded to our survey, nine declined to reveal their black acceptance rates to JBHE. Unquestionably, public and private threats to affirmative action policies in col-



lege admissions have been a factor in producing this sensitivity. With this in mind, admissions officers — who on the whole are profoundly supportive of affirmative action — are concerned when statistics on black admissions are made available to the public. There are standard concerns too that racial conservatives on faculties and among alumni and trustees may interpret the figures as showing a so-called dumbing down of academic standards and a favoring of “unqualified” blacks over perhaps more qualified whites. But it is critical to keep in mind that an institution's high black acceptance rate often indicates nothing more than the fact that the admissions office of a given institution has a very strong and well-qualified black applicant pool.

“At MIT the black student acceptance rate of 31.5 percent was more than twice as high as the 14.3 percent acceptance rate for all applicants to MIT.”

At 15 of the 21 universities that supplied data to JBHE, the black student acceptance rate was higher than the acceptance rate for white students. In some cases the differences were substantial. For instance, at MIT the black student acceptance rate of 31.5 percent was more than twice as high as the 14.3 percent acceptance rate for all applicants. At the University of Notre Dame 48.5 percent of black students were accepted compared to 31.6 percent of all applicants. At the University of Virginia 58 percent of blacks were accepted whereas 37.1 percent of all applicants received notices of acceptance.

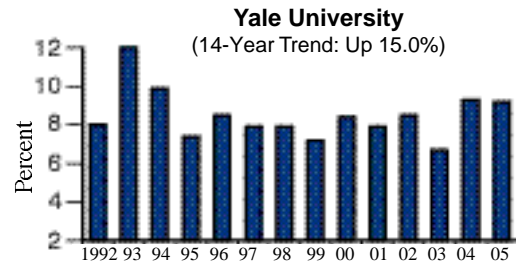
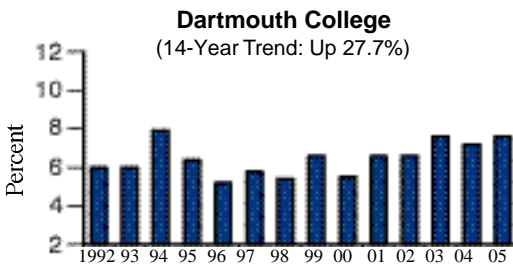
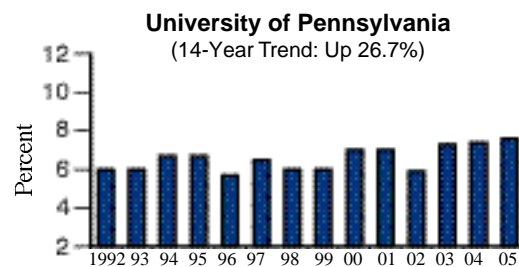
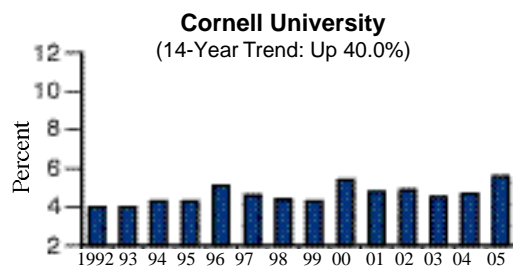
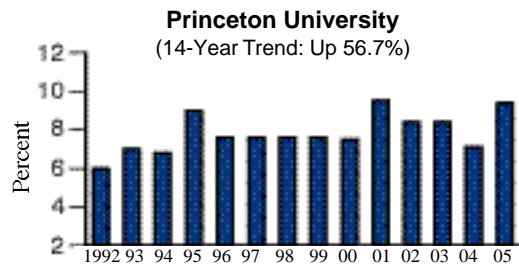
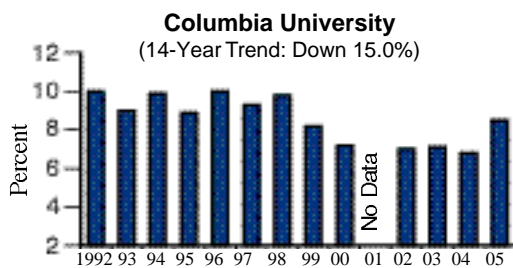
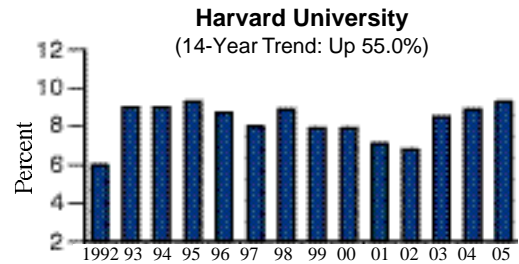
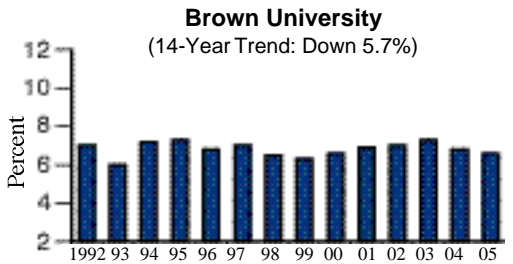
Last year, for the first time since we began collecting black first-year enrollment figures, Harvard supplied JBHE with complete data on acceptance rates. Overall, in 2004 Harvard accepted 10.7 percent of all students who applied for admission. But black applicants stood a significantly better chance of being admitted. Nearly 17 percent of all black applicants to Harvard in 2004 were accepted. This year Harvard reverted to its previous level of reporting and declined to provide its black student acceptance rate.

Six of the high-ranking universities we surveyed had black acceptance rates that were lower than the overall acceptance rate. At the University of California at Berkeley and the University of California at Los Angeles, which were prohibited from taking race into account

Fourteen-Year Enrollment Trends for Black Freshmen at Ivy League Colleges

Over the past 14 years The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education has gathered enrollment figures for black freshmen at the nation's highest-ranked colleges and universities. Information on Ivy League colleges holds special importance since these institutions tend to be national pacemakers whose practices in the recruitment and enrollment of African Americans are closely followed and frequently matched by other institutions of higher education.

Here we present the enrollment trends for black freshmen at the eight Ivy League institutions for the 1992 to 2005 period. Enrollment trends are up at six of the eight Ivy League colleges, with the largest gains at Princeton and Harvard. Black enrollments are down at Brown and Columbia over the 14-year period, but Columbia posted a 26.7 percent gain in black freshmen this year compared to a year ago.



Source: Telephone surveys by the JBHE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT.

during the 2005 admissions process, the black acceptance rate was significantly below the rate for whites. The black acceptance rate was also lower than the white rate at Washington University, Emory University, the University of Southern California, and Wake Forest University.

Black Student Yield: Harvard Regains the Lead

So-called yield, the percentage of applicants who decide to go to a college that issues an invitation to them, has become the standard measure of an institution’s strength and drawing power. For most of the past 20 years Harvard University has been the nation’s gold standard in student yield percentage for both black and white students. But in both 2002 and 2003 this gold standard in student yield moved to Stanford University. In 2003 the black student yield at Stanford was 67.9 percent, the highest in the country. Among the 23 universities that disclosed black student yield statistics to JBHE this year, Harvard once again had the highest rate at 69.2 percent. Stanford’s black student yield has dropped to 61.9 percent, which is second in our rankings.



In the 1940s there were no black students at Princeton University. Today there is a greater percentage of black freshmen at Princeton than at any other Ivy League institution.

“Among the 22 universities that disclosed black student yield statistics to JBHE this year, Harvard once again had the highest rate at 69.2 percent.”

Among the top-ranking universities, the University of Pennsylvania had the third-highest black student yield. More than 52 percent of accepted black students there decided to enroll. The lowest black student yield of 21.7 percent was found at Emory University. At Carnegie Mellon University and Johns Hopkins University the black student yield was below 25 percent.

Black Freshmen at Liberal Arts Colleges

Now let’s turn to black freshmen at the nation’s highest-ranked liberal arts colleges. Over the 12 years JBHE has collected data on the highest-ranked liberal arts colleges, on five occasions Wesleyan University has enrolled the highest

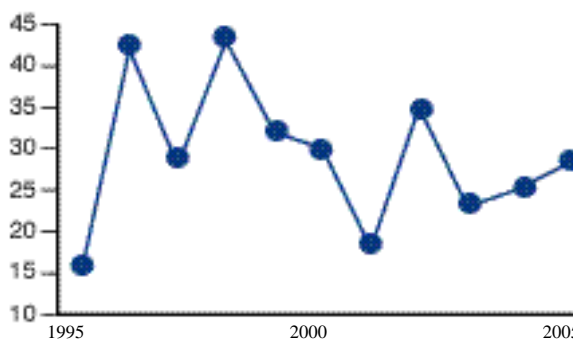
percentage of black first-year students. On four occasions, including this year, Amherst College has had the highest percentage of black freshmen among the nation’s most prestigious liberal arts colleges. There are 41 black first-year students at Amherst College this year. They make up 9.5 percent of the first-year class. At Wesleyan University, blacks make up 9.3 percent of the freshman class, which places the university second in our rankings of the top liberal arts colleges.

Williams College and Pomona College both have freshman classes that are more than 8 percent black. This ranks these colleges third and fourth in our survey.

Swarthmore College ranks fifth in our survey this year. Black enrollments at this suburban Philadelphia college have been on a roller-coaster ride in recent years. In 1998 there were 43 black first-year students at Swarth-

more College, the prestigious liberal arts college in suburban Philadelphia. That year blacks made up 11.6 percent of all freshmen at Swarthmore. Three years later in 2001, black first-year enrollments had plummeted to 18 students. Two years after that in 2003, black enrollments were nearly double what they had been in 2001. Then in 2004, black

The Roller-Coaster Ride of Black Student Enrollments at Swarthmore College
(Black First-Year Students, 1995-2005)



*Source: Office of Admissions, Swarthmore College.
Chart © Copyright The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education.*

Admission of African Americans at the Highest-Ranked* Liberal Arts Colleges, Fall 2005

Institution	All Applicants	Total Students Accepted	Overall Acceptance Rate	Black Applicants	Blacks Accepted	Black Acceptance Rate	Black Enrollees	Black Student Yield ⁺	Black % of First-Year Class
Amherst College	6,284	1,186	18.9	319	162	50.8	41	25.3	9.5
Wesleyan University	6,879	1,902	27.6	611	248	40.6	66	26.6	9.3
Williams College	5,822	1,095	18.8	**	**	**	46	**	8.6
Pomona College	5,054	954	18.9	187	73	39.0	31	42.5	8.1
Swarthmore College	4,167	917	22.0	227	105	46.3	28	26.7	7.2
Haverford College	3,113	817	26.2	154	73	47.4	22	30.1	6.9
Vassar College	6,314	1,803	28.6	418	154	36.8	45	29.2	6.9
Smith College	3,408	1,649	48.4	356	142	39.9	40	28.2	6.4
Trinity College	5,744	2,265	39.4	373	152	40.8	37	24.3	6.4
Bowdoin College	5,026	1,242	24.7	149	69	46.3	28	40.6	5.9
Oberlin College	5,462	2,016	36.9	345	137	39.7	37	27.0	5.8
Carleton College	5,036	1,471	29.2	245	108	44.1	31	28.7	5.7
Grinnell College	3,730	1,398	37.5	223	77	34.5	22	28.6	5.5
Wellesley College	4,466	1,463	32.8	295	108	36.6	30	27.8	5.0
Hamilton College	4,189	1,502	35.9	174	72	41.4	23	31.9	4.6
Claremont McKenna	3,734	786	21.0	143	63	44.1	12	19.0	4.4
Mount Holyoke	2,924	1,530	52.3	202	84	41.6	21	25.0	4.2
Washington & Lee Univ.	3,949	1,139	28.8	275	58	21.1	19	32.8	4.1
Colgate University	8,008	2,163	27.0	483	97	20.1	26	26.8	3.5
Macalester College	4,317	1,893	43.8	141	72	51.1	16	22.2	3.3
Middlebury College	5,254	1,241	23.6	82	50	61.0	20	40.0	3.0
Colby College	3,874	1,454	37.5	69	34	49.3	8	23.5	1.6

*As rated by *U.S. News & World Report*.

+Yield = percentage of accepted students who enroll

**declined to provide information to JBHE's research department.

Colleges are ranked by the highest percentage of black freshmen.

Bates, Davidson, Bryn Mawr, and Harvey Mudd colleges declined to participate.

Source: Survey conducted by the JBHERESEARCH DEPARTMENT.

enrollments dropped again, this time by nearly 29 percent.

This fall black first-year enrollments at Swarthmore are up 12 percent from a year ago. There are 28 black freshmen at Swarthmore this year. They make up 7.2 percent of the first-year class. Yet the number of black freshmen at Swarthmore is still nearly 35 percent below the level that existed just seven years ago in 1998.

In 2004, for the first time in the history of our survey, Haverford College in suburban Philadelphia had the highest percentage of black freshmen of any of the nation's highest-ranked liberal arts colleges. There were 30 black freshmen at Haverford in 2004 and they made up 9.1 percent of the entering class. Both the number of black freshmen and the black percentage of all freshmen at Haverford were at all-time highs. This year the number of black freshmen at Haverford dropped by 27 percent. Yet Haverford still ranks sixth in black first-year enrollments among the top 25 liberal arts colleges. Vassar, Smith, and Trinity colleges were the only other high-ranking liberal arts institutions where blacks made up at least 6 percent of the entering class.



Four of the high-ranking liberal arts colleges have first-year classes that are less than 4 percent black. They are Colgate, Middlebury College, Macalester College, and Colby College. In 2004 blacks were 6.4 percent of the first-year class at Macalester College. This year blacks make up 3.3 percent of the freshman class.

Davidson College, which in 2004 ranked fourth in our survey with a freshman class that was 8 percent black, declined to reveal its black student enrollment data this year. Bates College, Bryn Mawr College, and Harvey Mudd also decided not to participate in this year's survey.

From 1995 to 2000 Washington and Lee University, the prestigious liberal arts institution in Lexington, Virginia, complied with our requests for black enrollment data each year. During this period, the percentage of blacks in the freshman class at the university ranged from a low of 2 percent in 1996 to a high of 5 percent in 1997.

In the year 2000 there were 20 black freshmen at Washington and Lee University. They made up 4.4 percent of the entering class. This was the last time that the university

responded to our annual survey. We do know that in the fall of 2004 blacks made up 4 percent of the total enrollments at Washington and Lee. So it seems that, on average, black first-year enrollments for the missing years in our survey were at or close to 4 percent.

Now, five years after the university last participated in our survey, we have new data on black freshmen at Washington and Lee. There are 19 black freshmen at the university this fall. They make up 4.1 percent of the first-year class.

Short-Term Gainers and Losers

Now we turn to a comparison of this year's results with the data from last year. For the 21 colleges for which we have data, nine colleges have posted gains in black enrollments while 10 have fewer black freshmen than a year ago. Colby College and Oberlin College have the same number of black freshmen as they had a year ago.

The largest percentage increase in black freshmen this year was at Amherst College. Last year there were 22 blacks in the entering class. This year there are 41, an increase of more than 86 percent. Tom Parker, dean of admissions and financial aid at Amherst, told JBHE that the college was "shocked" at its unusually low number of black first-year students in 2004. In analyzing the college's admission data, Dean Parker realized that black student yield was his major concern. "We invested more money in bringing black and other minority students to campus," Parker said. "We expanded the number of visitors to campus; once we get them here, we know we have a pretty good product to offer."

Amherst increased campus visits by prospective black students both in the fall before applications were due and also during the period after acceptances were mailed out and students were deciding where to enroll. As a result, the number of black applicants, the number of black students accepted for admission, and black student yield all showed healthy gains this year. Black student yield, which was the focus of Dean Parker's attention, improved from 15 percent to 25 percent.

Amherst was not the only high-ranking liberal arts college to post a healthy gain in black freshmen from a year ago. Wesleyan University posted a gain of 46.7 percent in black students this year compared to 2004. And Hamilton College showed a gain of more than 35 percent.



Gainers and Losers in Black Freshman Enrollments at the Nation's Highest-Ranked Liberal Arts Colleges

Big Gains at Amherst, Wesleyan, and Hamilton. But Colgate, Haverford, and Macalester Show Big Drops.

(Ranked in Order of Progress Achieved, 2004-2005)

Institution	Blacks in the Freshman Class		
	2004	2005	% Change
Amherst College	22	41	+86.4
Wesleyan University	45	66	+46.7
Hamilton College	17	23	+35.3
Grinnell College	17	22	+29.4
Swarthmore College	25	28	+12.0
Carleton College	28	31	+10.7
Middlebury College	19	20	+5.3
Bowdoin College	27	28	+3.7
Vassar College	44	45	+2.3
Colby College	8	8	0.0
Oberlin College	37	37	0.0
Williams College	45	46	-2.2
Trinity College	38	37	-2.6
Pomona College	32	31	-3.1
Wellesley College	33	30	-9.1
Smith College	47	40	-14.9
Mount Holyoke	25	21	-16.0
Haverford College	30	22	-26.7
Claremont McKenna	17	12	-29.4
Colgate University	42	26	-38.1
Macalester College	31	16	-48.4

Note: Not all of the nation's highest-ranking liberal arts colleges are included in this table. Data could not be computed for colleges that did not reply to JBHE's freshman survey in both 2004 and 2005.

Source: JBHERESEARCHDEPARTMENT.

The largest drops in black enrollments this year occurred at Macalester College, Colgate University, and Claremont McKenna College.

The nation's high-ranking liberal arts colleges that restrict admissions to women have seen black enrollments decrease this year. Black first-year enrollments at Wellesley College dropped from 33 in 2004 to 30 this year, a decrease of 9 percent. Even larger drops have occurred at Smith and Mount Holyoke. At Smith black first-year enrollments are down nearly 15 percent from a year ago. At Mount Holyoke the decrease is 16 percent.

The huge gender gap in African-American higher education may be a factor in the decline in black enrollments at these high-ranking liberal arts colleges. Perhaps black women seeking top quality higher education have become aware that there are comparatively few black men who will achieve the same educational status. By going to an all women's college these

black women may believe that they are putting themselves at a disadvantage in the competition for possible marriage with black men of similar educational status. By enrolling at a co-educational institution, black women will have more contact with black men, who nevertheless are in short supply. Black women now make up more than 60 percent of all African-American college enrollments.

Black Acceptance Rates at Liberal Arts Colleges

JBHE has found that the liberal arts colleges tend to be more forthcoming than the large universities in releasing data on racial differences in black and white student acceptance rates. This year we have acceptance rate data for all but one of the 21 high-ranking liberal arts colleges that responded to our survey. Only Williams College declined to release information on its black student acceptance rate.

At 16 of these 21 high-ranking liberal arts colleges the black acceptance rate was higher than the acceptance rate for all students. In some cases the differences were huge. For example, at Middlebury College 61 percent of black applicants were admitted compared to 23.6 percent of all applicants. At Amherst the black acceptance rate of 50.8 percent is more than twice the rate for all students.

At Smith, Grinnell, Mount Holyoke, Washington and Lee, and Colgate, the black student acceptance rate was below the rate prevailing for all students.

Only three of the nationally ranked liberal arts colleges in our survey had a black student yield of at least 40 percent. The highest yield in our survey belongs to Pomona College. Slightly more than 42 percent of all accepted black students decided to enroll. The black student yield was also over 40 percent at Bowdoin and Middlebury.

The lowest black student yield among the high-ranking liberal arts colleges was at Claremont McKenna College. Only 19 percent of the black students who were accepted at Claremont McKenna decided to enroll. Macalester, Colby, and Trinity colleges had student yields below 25 percent.

Long-Term First-Year Black Student Enrollment Trends at the Selective Liberal Arts Colleges

Before we conclude our discussion on black freshman enrollments at the liberal arts colleges, it is useful, as was the case for the large research universities, to examine the long-term trends.

The value of this comparison becomes clear when we

Long-Term Gainers and Losers in Black Freshman Enrollments at the Nation's Highest-Ranked Liberal Arts Colleges

Big Gains at Bowdoin, Smith, Middlebury, and Pomona Oberlin and Claremont McKenna Show Big Drops.

(Ranked in Order of Progress Achieved, 1994-2005)

Institution	Blacks in the Freshman Class		
	1994	2005	% Change
Bowdoin College	8	28	+250.0 %
Smith College	16	40	+150.0
Middlebury College	11	20	+81.8
Pomona College	18	31	+72.2
Carleton College	19	31	+63.2
Trinity College	23	37	+60.9
Mount Holyoke	14	21	+50.0
Williams College	32	46	+43.8
Swarthmore College	20	28	+40.0
Colgate University	20	26	+30.0
Amherst College	37	41	+10.8
Wellesley College	31	30	-3.2
Grinnell College	23	22	-4.3
Wesleyan University	71	66	-7.0
Colby College	9	8	-11.1
Claremont McKenna	14	12	-14.3
Oberlin College	51	37	-27.5

Note: Not all of the nation's highest-ranking liberal arts colleges are included in this table. Data could not be computed for colleges that did not reply to JBHE freshman survey in both 1994 and 2005.

Source: JBHERESEARCHDEPARTMENT.

examine, for example, the record of Bowdoin College in Maine. This year there is only one more black freshman at Bowdoin than a year ago. But look at the progress Bowdoin has achieved over the past 11 years. In 1994 there were only eight black freshmen at Bowdoin. This year there are 28 black first-year students, an increase of more than 250 percent.

“On four occasions over the past 12 years, including this year, Amherst College has enrolled the highest percentage of black freshmen among the nation’s most prestigious liberal arts colleges.”

We have long-term freshman enrollment data for 17 of the nation's highest-ranked liberal arts colleges. Of these, 11 show increases in black enrollments over the past 11 years and in all 11 cases black enrollments are up by at least 10 percent.

Over the long term, the largest declines in black enrollments on a percentage basis occurred at Colby, Claremont McKenna, and Oberlin colleges.