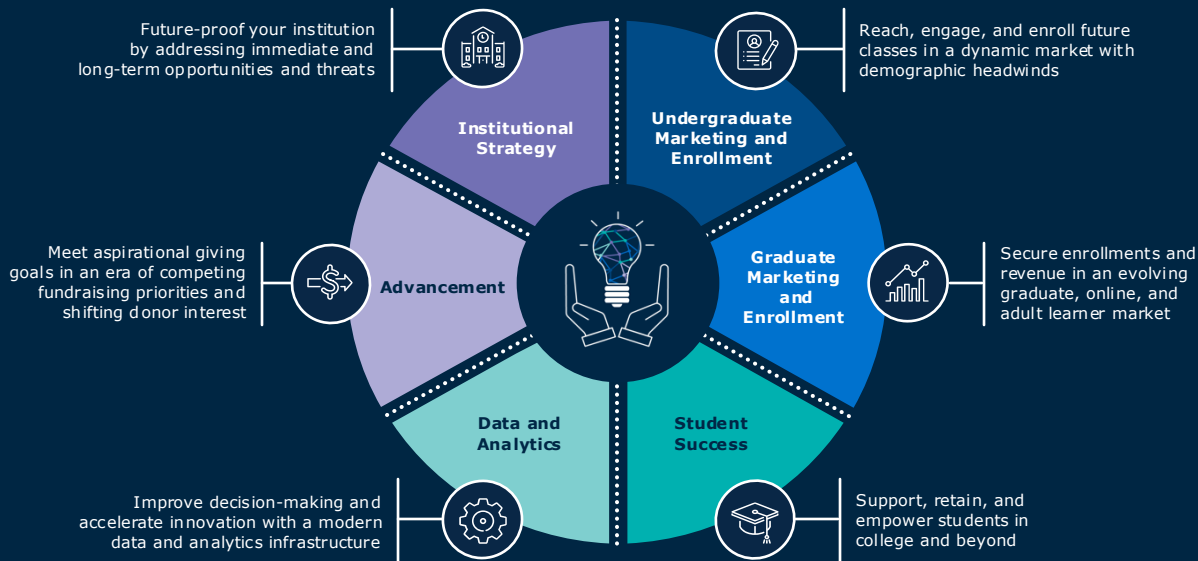




Scaling Graduate Enrollment

Overcoming Resource Challenges and Meeting Growth Goals

Adult Learner Recruitment

Insight-Powered Solutions for Your Top Priorities and Toughest Challenges

We partner with **2,800+** institutions to accelerate progress, deliver results, and enable lasting change.

95%+ of our partners return to us year after year because of results we achieve, together.

Using Zoom

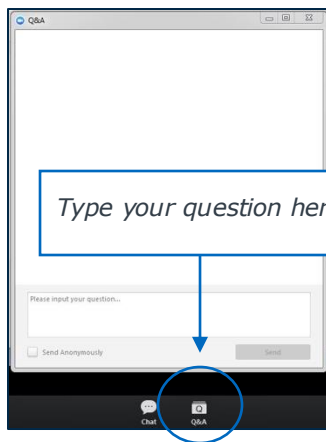


Connecting to Audio



Refer to the **webinar confirmation email** you received in your inbox.

Asking a Question



Brief Exit Survey



We'd appreciate your **feedback** on today's presentation.

An Interactive Discussion

We encourage you to use the Chat and Q&A functions throughout our conversation today

Today's Presenters



Beth Donaldson

*Managing Director,
Adult Learner Recruitment*



Val Fox

*Consultant and Principal,
Adult Learner Recruitment*

Thank you for joining us!

We value your time and appreciate you spending part of your afternoon with us.

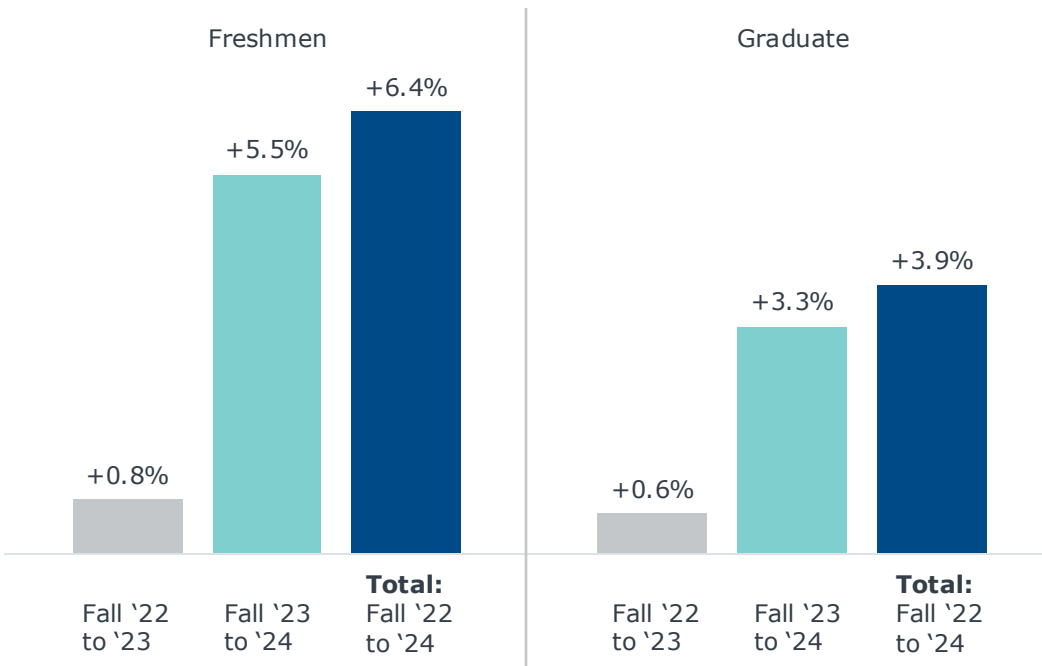


Freshmen Enrollment Boomed In The Fall



Freshmen Enrollment Grew 5.5% From Fall 2023 Levels, Despite FAFSA Snafu

National Student Clearinghouse Current Term Enrollment Estimates From Fall 2024, Year-on-Year Change and total change from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024.



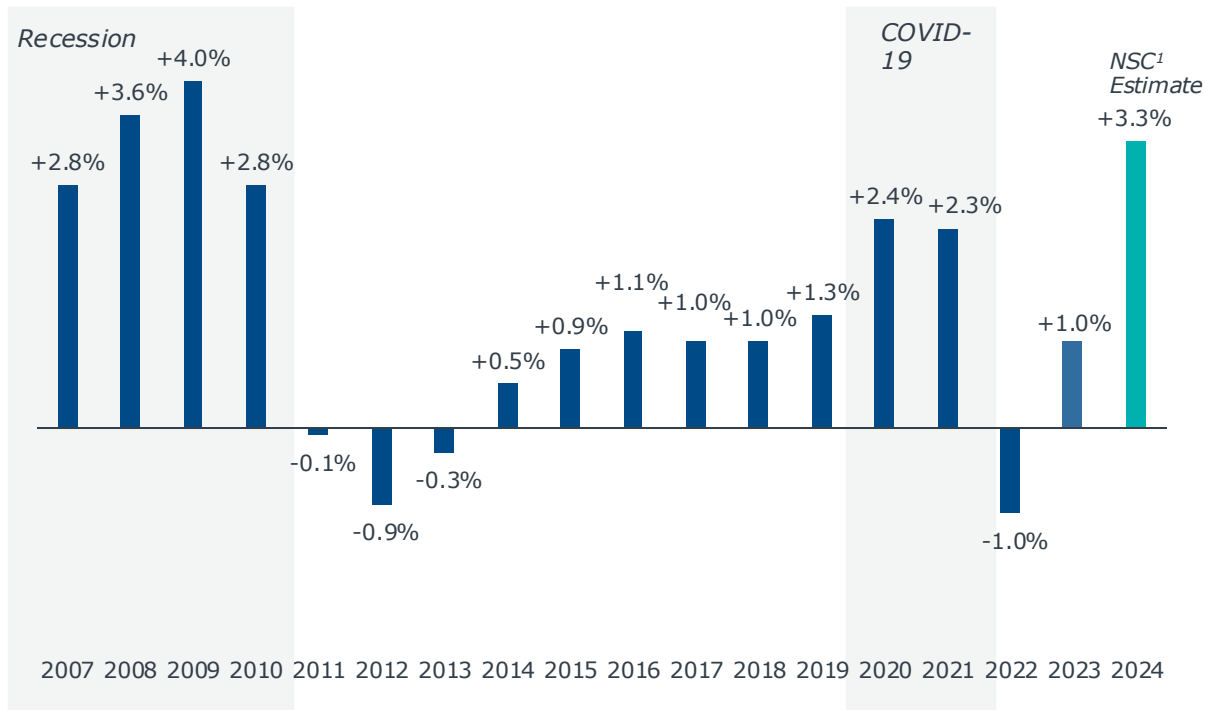
Source: National Student Clearinghouse Current Term Enrollment Estimates Fall 2024 2025-01-23; EAB Analysis.

Grad Enrollment Growth Rebounds



Are we Already Seeing Recession-Like Graduate Enrollment Growth in 2024?

Year on Year Growth of Total Graduate Enrollments – All 4-Year Institutions



1) National Student Clearinghouse..

Fall 2024 National Total Graduate Enrollment

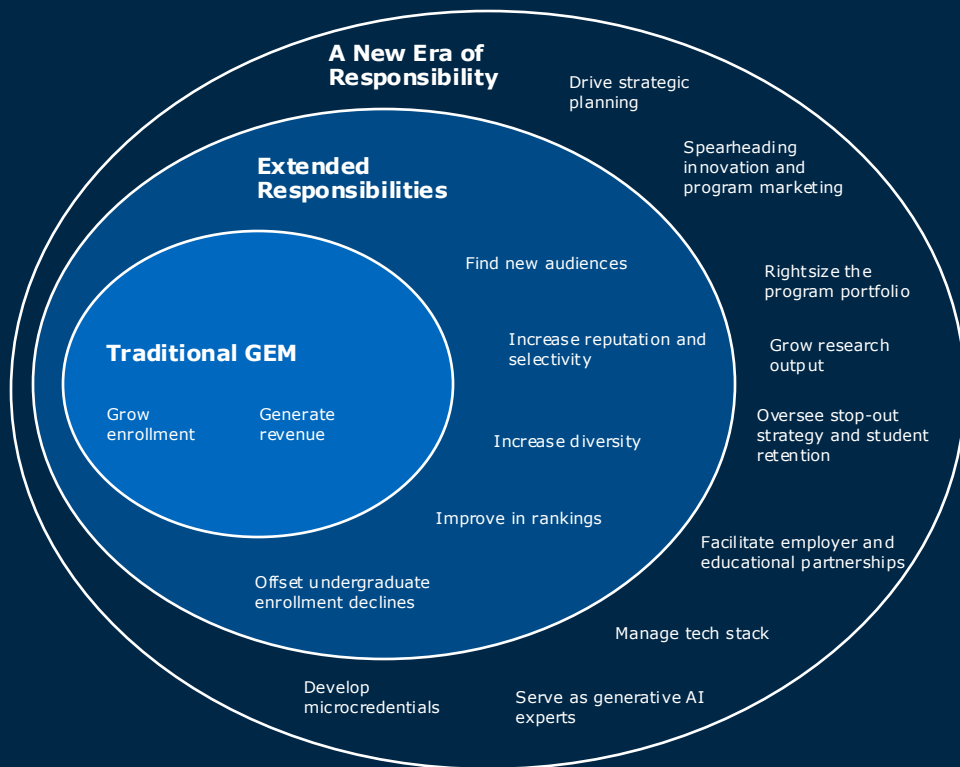


Top 20 Major Fields

	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..
Health Professions a...	681,347		710,715	4.3%	719,337	1.2%	709,193	-1.4%	708,899	0.0%	745,998	5.2%
Business, Manageme...	460,350		481,528	4.6%	480,452	-0.2%	455,827	-5.1%	448,803	-2.0%	456,201	2.1%
Education	445,503		461,454	3.6%	452,536	-1.9%	428,893	-5.2%	420,752	-1.9%	428,075	1.7%
Computer and Inform..	136,285		139,077	2.0%	161,839	16.4%	192,058	18.7%	217,815	13.4%	220,967	1.4%
Engineering	163,237		157,536	-3.5%	166,932	6.0%	175,050	4.9%	175,150	0.1%	180,196	2.9%
Psychology	127,892		139,481	9.1%	147,209	5.5%	147,536	0.2%	148,996	-0.4%	148,712	1.2%
Legal Professions an..	130,720		130,749	0.0%	138,755	6.1%	135,867	-2.1%	136,845	0.7%	137,147	0.2%
Public Administration ..	126,324		129,359	2.4%	132,160	2.2%	126,092	-4.6%	121,906	-3.3%	127,446	4.5%
Biological and Biome..	91,221		94,784	3.9%	99,604	5.1%	102,440	2.8%	105,605	3.1%	110,395	4.5%
Multi/Interdisciplinary ..	36,402		38,139	4.8%	44,856	17.6%	58,790	31.1%	75,094	27.7%	88,783	18.2%
Social Sciences	60,811		60,992	0.3%	61,749	1.2%	60,507	-2.0%	58,676	-3.0%	58,343	-0.6%
Physical Sciences	53,797		53,298	-0.9%	54,456	2.2%	54,341	-0.2%	54,742	0.7%	56,044	2.4%
Visual and Performin..	50,038		48,316	-3.4%	49,016	1.4%	47,949	-2.2%	46,409	-3.2%	46,144	-0.6%
Theology and Religio..	45,656		45,598	-0.1%	44,134	-3.2%	43,953	-0.4%	45,757	4.1%	46,962	2.6%
Mathematics and Stat..	35,847		35,117	-2.0%	36,646	4.4%	36,652	0.0%	36,528	-0.3%	36,714	0.5%
Agriculture, Agricult..	29,037		28,915	-0.4%	29,694	2.7%	28,584	-3.7%	29,339	2.6%	32,195	9.7%
Communication, Jour..	26,901		28,857	7.3%	30,311	5.0%	28,830	-4.9%	27,485	-4.7%	27,646	0.6%
Security and Protecti..	29,440		31,722	7.8%	31,395	-1.0%	28,589	-8.9%	27,025	-5.5%	28,108	4.0%
English Language an..	29,189		29,048	-0.5%	29,415	1.3%	27,157	-7.7%	25,800	-5.0%	25,444	-1.4%
Engineering Technol..	15,707		16,592	5.6%	17,849	7.6%	20,455	14.6%	21,778	6.5%	21,714	-0.3%

1) Top Majors by State
<https://nscresearchcenter.org/current-term-enrollment-estimates/>

Growing Responsibilities for Grad Enrollment Teams



The Perennial Challenge

How Do We Organize Our Graduate Enrollment Team?



How are grad enrollment teams structured and who oversees them?



How are other teams setting and achieving grad goals?



How do my peers allocate staff and budget?

Benchmarking Graduate and Online Enrollment



INSIGHT PAPER

Benchmarking Graduate and Online Enrollment

Key Findings from a Survey of
340+ Graduate Enrollment Leaders



Want the full report?

Let us know in the exit survey at the end of the webinar

▶ The Survey Explored...

- Organizational structure
- Staffing
- Enrollment objectives
- Goal attainment
- Budget
- Recruitment practices

▶ Survey Fast Facts

- **343** respondents
- The survey was live across **December 2024**
- **27** questions across the areas above



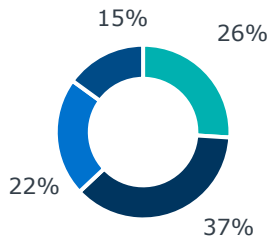
Who Participated?

By
institution
type



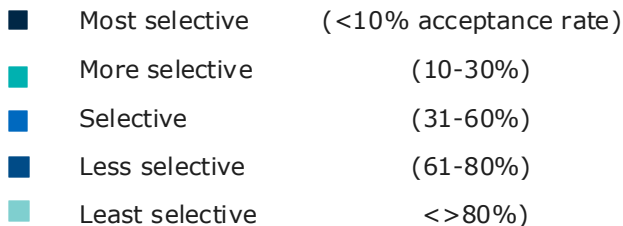
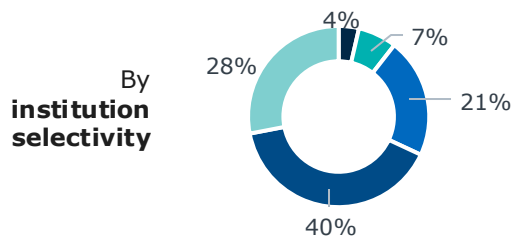
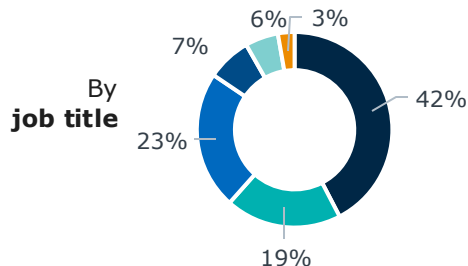
Public
Private

By
region



Northeast
South
Midwest
West

Who Participated?





Organizational Structure and Staffing

SECTION

1

Ownership of Grad Enrollment Can Vary Significantly

14



Dean

- On average, surveyed deans have 24 total FTEs across all their areas of responsibility
- 38% of surveyed deans have held their role for more than 5 years, and 43% for 2–5 years



VPEM

- On average, VPEMs have 60 total FTEs across all their areas of responsibility
- 28% of VPEMs have been in-seat for more than 5 years



Head of Marketing

- On average, heads of marketing have 23 total FTEs across all their areas of responsibility
- Just 21% of surveyed heads of marketing have been in their roles for more than 5 years



Provost

- On average, surveyed provosts have 119 total FTEs across all their areas of responsibility
- 36% of surveyed provosts have been in their role for at least 5 years, and 34% have been in-seat for 2–5 years

Grad Enrollment Teams Are Small But Scrappy



Mean Number of FTEs Associated with Core Graduate Enrollment Functions

Enrollment cross-functional staff	18
Financial aid	17
Marketing and communications	15
Other	12
Admissions	11

Marketing

Operations	1.0
Management/executive	0.9
Creative (content creators, copywriters, designers)	0.8
Digital marketing specialists	0.8
CRM email automation specialists	0.8
Website producers/specialists	0.7
Analytics	0.6
Paid search and paid social specialists	0.4
Search engine optimization specialists	0.4

Admissions

Campus-based recruiters	2.8
Operations	2.4
Marketing and communications	2.3
Management	1.6
CRM analysts/specialists	1.5
Regional recruiters	1.4
Analytics	1.2
International recruiters	1.0
Event planning	0.9

To Build, to Buy, or to Partner?



Most Respondents Fully Own...

- Financial aid call center
- Graduate admissions call center
- Admissions CRMI
- Financial aid optimization
- Website
- Data analysis/analytics
- Brand marketing



Respondents Most Commonly Split Responsibility of...

- Recruitment marketing
- Market research
- International recruitment



Successful Teams Work with a Vendor to Support Key Functions

The respondents who met their enrollment goals disproportionately outsourced or shared responsibility for **market research**, **recruitment marketing**, and **SEO** with an outside vendor.



Enrollment Objectives and Budgets

SECTION

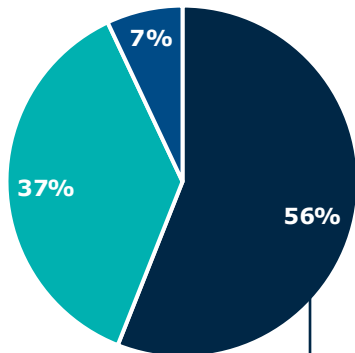
2

Most Respondents Met Grad Headcount Goals



Graduate Goal Attainment

Headcount

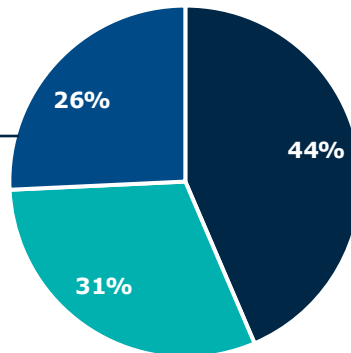


56%

met graduate headcount goals. These institutions are disproportionately:

- public schools
- not religiously affiliated

Net Tuition Revenue



26%

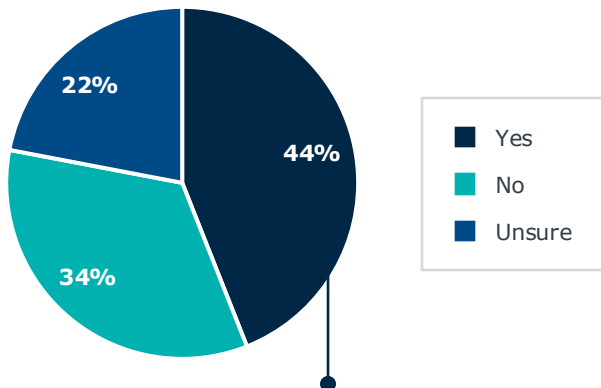
are unsure if they met NTR goals, underscoring a theme throughout this research—many institutions aren't tracking key metrics OR this info lives in disparate places and isn't shared

Online Goal Attainment



Online Goal Attainment

Headcount

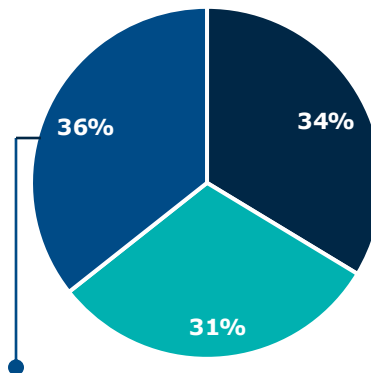


44%

met online headcount goals. These institutions are disproportionately:

- public schools
- not religiously affiliated

Net Tuition Revenue



36%

are unsure if they met NTR goals for their online programs

Poll

What are your graduate enrollment growth goals for the next three years?

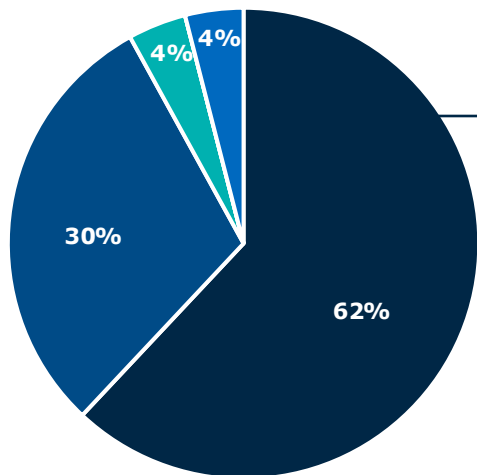
- Increase significantly (greater than 3%)
- Increase slightly (0 to 3%)
- Stay the same (0%)
- Decrease slightly (0 to -3%)
- Decrease significantly (greater than -3%)
- Unsure



Goals Continue to Grow

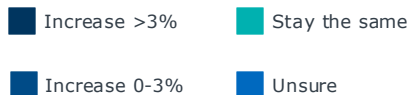


Graduate Enrollment Goals for the Next Three Years



• 62%

of respondents are **tasked with growing grad enrollment by more than 3%** in the next three years, above the 1.3% projected average annual growth during this time

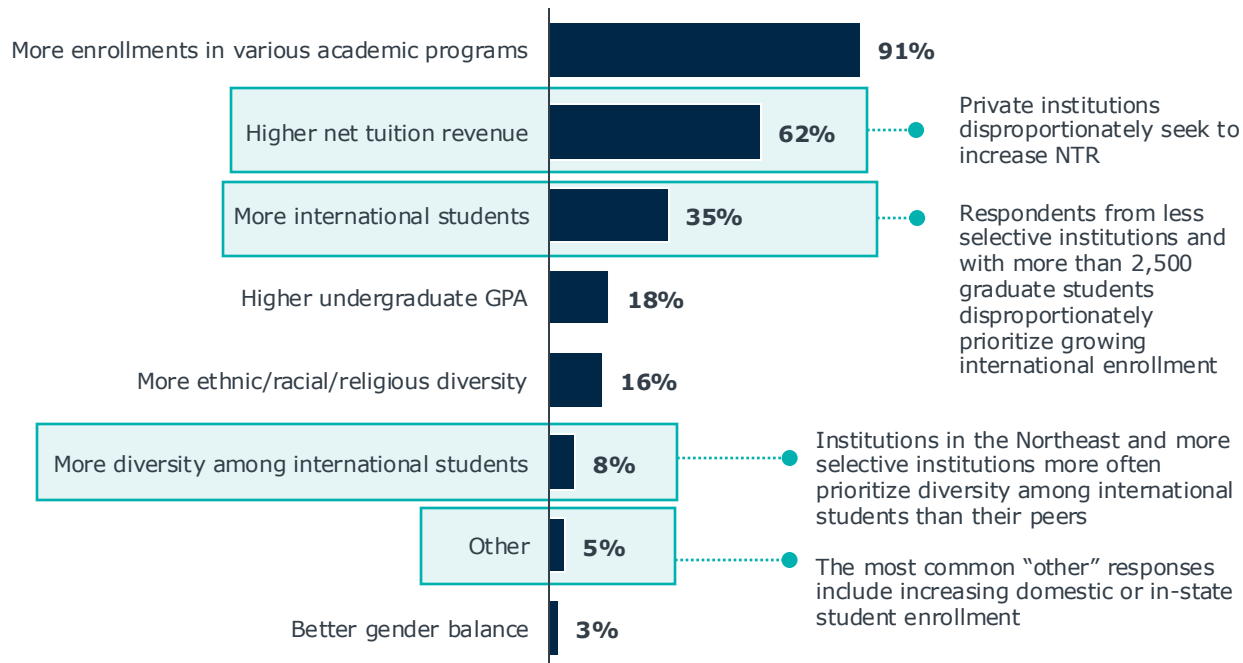


Enrollment Objectives



Top Graduate and Online Enrollment Objectives for Fall 2024-25

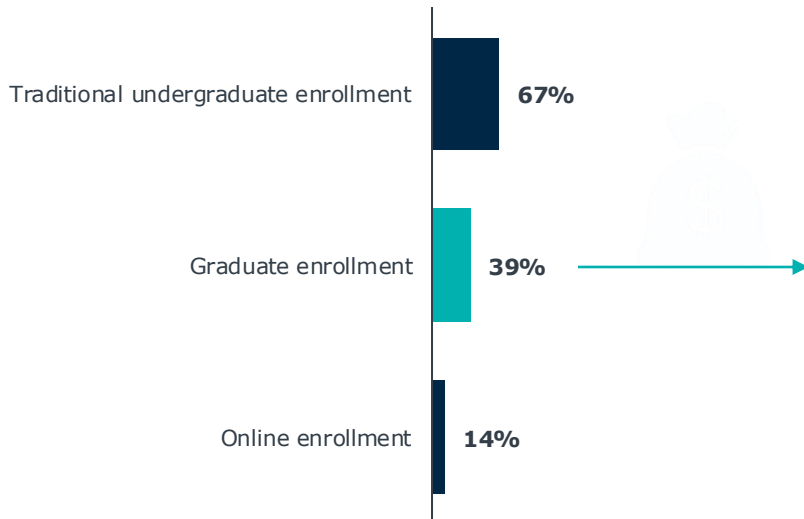
Respondents could select up to three priorities



How Does NTR From Graduate Programs Compare?

23

Sources of Net Tuition Revenue



4.6%

On average, respondents **reinvest 4.6% of net tuition revenue** from graduate programs back into recruitment marketing

Big Goals, But with Comparatively Small Budgets



Average Annual Enrollment Management Budgets

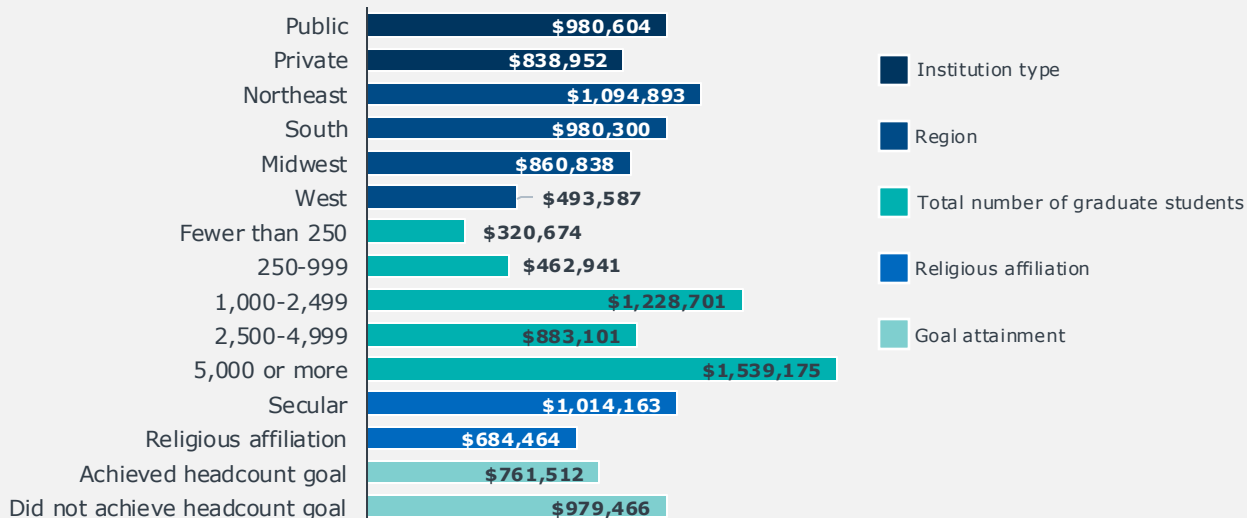
\$4.37M

Undergraduate

\$912K

Graduate and Online

Grad and Online Enrollment Budgets by Institutional Characteristics





Recruitment Practices

SECTION

3

Digital Media, Pay-Per-Lead Services Most Effective

26

Use and Effectiveness of Lead Sources

Scale of 1-5, with 1=not effective and 5=extremely effective

	Use	Efficacy	
Digital media	77%	3.27	Private institutions more often rely on digital media than public institutions
Outdoor/transit media	44%	2.44	
Pay-per-lead service	43%	2.76	
Test takers	39%	2.3	
Broadcast media	37%	2.63	Less selective institutions more often use broadcast media than their peers

Digital Media Accounts for Greatest Spend



Total Budget by Lead Source in the Last Year

	Pay-per-lead service	Digital media	Broadcast media	Outdoor/transit media	Test-taker lists
Under \$25,000	30%	17%	30%	28%	62%
\$25,000-\$100,000	23%	22%	19%	17%	5%
\$100,001-\$250,000	4%	9%	7%	4%	6%
\$250,001-\$500,000	3%	6%	0%	1%	0%
\$500,001-\$1,000,000	1%	6%	2%	2%	0%
Over \$1,000,000	2%	8%	0%	1%	0%
Unsure	37%	33%	42%	47%	28%

Most Respondents Are Unsure of Key Cost Metrics

Average Costs

Cost-per-Lead/Cost-Per-Inquiry

Under \$50	11%
\$50-\$100	6%
\$101-\$150	6%
\$151-\$200	6%
Over \$200	4%
Not tracking	12%
Unsure	56%

▶ **Colleges and universities in the West** disproportionately report spending under \$50 per inquiry or lead

▶ **Private institutions** disproportionately report spending more than \$200 per inquiry/lead compared to public institutions

Cost-per-Enrolled Student

Under \$500	9%
\$501-\$1,000	5%
\$1,001-\$3,000	10%
Over \$3,000	2%
Not tracking	17%
Unsure	56%

▶ **Institutions in the West** more often spend under \$500 per enrolled student than peers elsewhere in the country

▶ **Private institutions** disproportionately report spending more than \$3,000 per enrolled student

Polls

What Is Your Average Cost-per-Inquiry/Lead?

- Under \$50
- \$50-\$100
- \$101-\$150
- \$151-\$200
- Not tracking
- Unsure

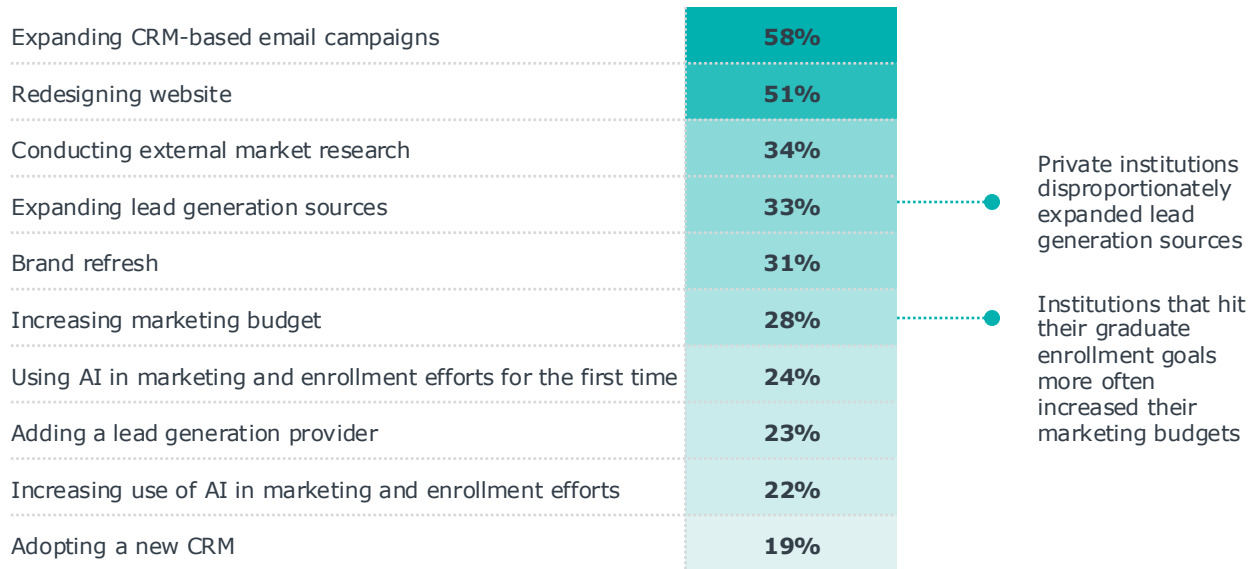
What Is Your Average Cost-per-Enrolled Student?

- Under \$500
- \$501-\$1,000
- \$1,001-\$3,000
- Over \$3,000
- Not tracking
- Unsure

Priorities Include CRM-Based Campaigns, Website

Top Ten Changes Graduate Enrollment Leaders Are Pursuing, 2024-25

Respondents could select all that apply



Looking Ahead



Graduate Enrollment Goals for the 2025-26 Academic Year

Respondents could select all that apply

Increasing marketing budget

43%

Expanding CRM-based email campaigns

39%

Increasing use of AI in marketing and enrollment efforts

38%

Redesigning website

37%

Expanding lead generation sources

35%

Using AI in marketing and enrollment efforts for the first time

32%

Brand refresh

25%

Adding a lead generation provider

21%

Adopting a new CRM

17%

Adding online program managers (OPMs)

11%

Institutions with fewer than 250 graduate students disproportionately plan to increase their marketing budgets next year

The Biggest Changes from This Year to Next Year Include:

- Increasing marketing budget (28% in 2024-25, up to 43% for 2025-26)
- Increase use of AI (22% in 2024-25, up to 38% in 2025-26)

Key Takeaways



Resources and Infrastructure Have Not Kept Pace with Growing Goals

Despite higher goals, and the growing portion of total net tuition revenue generated by graduate enrollments, the resources, staff, and infrastructure to support graduate programs lag the resources supporting undergraduate enrollment.



Teams Meeting Grad Goals Thoughtfully Balance Insourcing and Outsourcing

The institutions that met their graduate enrollment goals disproportionately shared responsibility of recruitment marketing, program market research, and SEO with an external partner.



Strategic Spending Can Compensate for Limited Graduate Budgets

Respondents identified an average graduate enrollment budget of \$912,000. This pales in comparison to average undergraduate enrollment budgets, which hover around \$4.37M in a similar EAB survey of undergraduate enrollment teams.



Inability to Track Key Data Is a Missed Opportunity

The often decentralized and understaffed nature of graduate and online enrollment operations may also contribute to respondents' inability to monitor and access key enrollment metrics easily.

Interested in More?

I'd like to speak to an EAB expert about...

- 1 **Emerging trends** in the graduate, online, and adult markets
- 2 Optimizing graduate, online, or adult education programs for **growth**
- 3 **Generating leads** for graduate and online programs
- 4 Developing **marketing campaigns** to reach and recruit graduate and online students

EAB Adult Learner Recruitment

Secure Your Future in a Changing Graduate, Online, and Adult Learner Market

Outperform the Market at Every Stage of the Funnel



Strategize

Identify and build market-ready programs for competitive advantage



Curate

Expand and diversify your pool of right-fit students



Cultivate

Customized campaigns to drive students to application



Convert

Improve yield and retention to maximize enrollment potential

What Makes Us Different

40+ Years of
**Higher Ed
Expertise**

**Unrivaled
Access** to New
Audiences

Seamless
**Marketing
Orchestration**

Visibility into
Full-Funnel
Performance

Proven Results in a Dynamic Landscape

200+

Partner
institutions

6:1

Average ROI across
multiyear partnership

18%

Average graduate
enrollment growth

\$2M

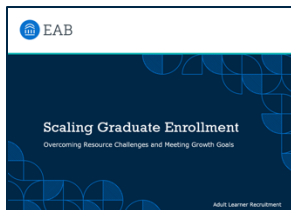
Average NTR
influenced per partner

Next Steps

Today's Slides

1

Receive a copy of today's **presentation slides**



Full Survey Findings

2

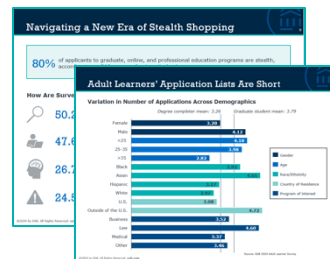
Receive a copy of our **new insight paper** with in-depth analysis of the survey findings



Our Next Webinar

3

Join us on April 8 for insights from our latest survey of 6,000+ graduate and online students



4

Get the latest insights from EAB

Subscribe to the EAB Briefing to receive EAB's latest and most relevant content each morning

Thank You for Joining Us!



Beth Donaldson
BDonaldson@eab.com



Val Fox
VFox@eab.com

Consider Our Team a Resource

Please fill out the exit survey to let us know how we can support your team in follow up



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