

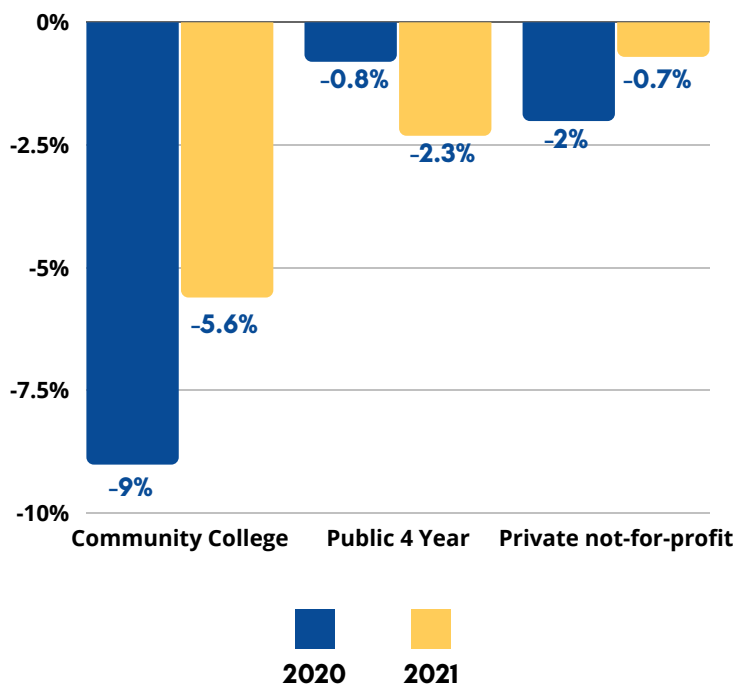


***FROM THE NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE:  
PRELIMINARY DATA ON 2021 UNDERGRADUATE  
ENROLLMENTS***

**October 26, 2021:** Nationally, total **fall** undergraduate enrollment across all sectors of higher education continues to decline. Much of the witnessed decline in enrollment can be attributed to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated economic fall-out. However, even before the onset of the pandemic, enrollment in postsecondary education was experiencing dips caused by a myriad of factors, including the increasing cost of postsecondary education. Despite the decrease in enrollment in all sectors over the past few years, *highly selective* private institutions continue to see an increase in their enrollment. This year these institutions saw a growth of **4.3%**, which brought them back up to pre-pandemic levels. In stark contrast, the institutions that are often most accessible to students – two year public institutions – saw the most drastic decline in enrollment at **-5.6%**. The declines reported in 2020 were more extreme than those reported in 2021. This is indicative of the fact that students might slowly be returning to postsecondary education, albeit at a lower rate than 2019. However, as many students and families still struggle to recover from the last two years, it is more important than ever to support policies and practices that provide affordable, high quality postsecondary education for all students. Read below to see some of the key takeaways from this first iteration of the Clearinghouse's data collection.

***"With 50.5% of institutions, representing 8.4 million students reporting, as of September 2021, total undergraduate enrollment has dropped by 3.2% since Fall 2020. In total, enrollment has fallen 6.5% since Fall***

**Change in total undergraduate enrollment,  
Fall 2020-21 and Fall 2021-22**



**Other takeaways include:**

- Total **Freshmen** enrollment declined by **3.1%** in 2021 (compared to **9%** decline in 2020).
  - The most drastic **Freshmen** declines came from **community colleges**, followed by **public four-year** institutions.
- Enrollment declines were most prominent among **white & Black freshmen (-8.6% and -7.5% respectively)**.
- **Male** enrollment has dropped by **-9.3%** whereas **Female** enrollment has declined by **-5.3%** between 2019-2021.



STATE - LEVEL ENROLLMENT DATA

**News from New England:** As explored above, in 2021 total **fall** undergraduate enrollment across all sectors of higher education continues to decline nationally. This trend is replicated across the New England region and across most of our New England states. The National Student Clearinghouse reported state-level, estimated enrollments for **Spring** 2021 and juxtaposed those to the **Spring** 2020 and 2019 enrollments. In 2019 enrollment rose slightly. However in 2020, due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic, the total regional enrollment declined by 1.5%. In 2021, enrollment declined by 0.9%. The regional average reflects less substantial a drop-off than those reported in most of the other states in New England - a fact which can be explained by the "SNHU effect" in New Hampshire (Southern New Hampshire University is a global, online institution). In New Hampshire in 2019, 2020, and 2021 enrollment grew by 9.9%, 3.5% and 10.8% respectively. The remaining New England states continue to experience enrollment declines, at varying levels. The states most impacted by recent enrollment dips are Rhode Island and Vermont. Taking a closer look at enrollment by sector, New England follows national trends. *The steepest enrollment declines in New England were experienced by community colleges (-14.9%), followed by public two-year institutions (-1.5%). Private not-for-profits saw a small increase in enrollment at 2.2%.* The enrollment data below, reflects total enrollment.

Year by Year Change in Enrollment, 2019, 2020 & 2021

