

Research Brief

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Ethnic Diversity at Rowan, 1990 to 2003

Ethnic diversity is a sensitive topic that has received recent publicity in the news media. With articles in the local press and the current debate nationally about affirmative action, this Research Brief summarizes trends in enrollment, retention, graduation rates, degrees conferred by minority students at Rowan while placing these statistics in the context of Rowan's primary and traditional marketing area of South Jersey. This Research Brief, by nature, is a summary of trends; additional tables supporting this volume may be found in a separate document, available from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning upon request.

Rowan University has experienced a positive (and in some cases dramatic) increase in many important benchmarks that use ethnic diversity. A summary of progress in these areas (and where a fuller description can be found in this Research Brief):

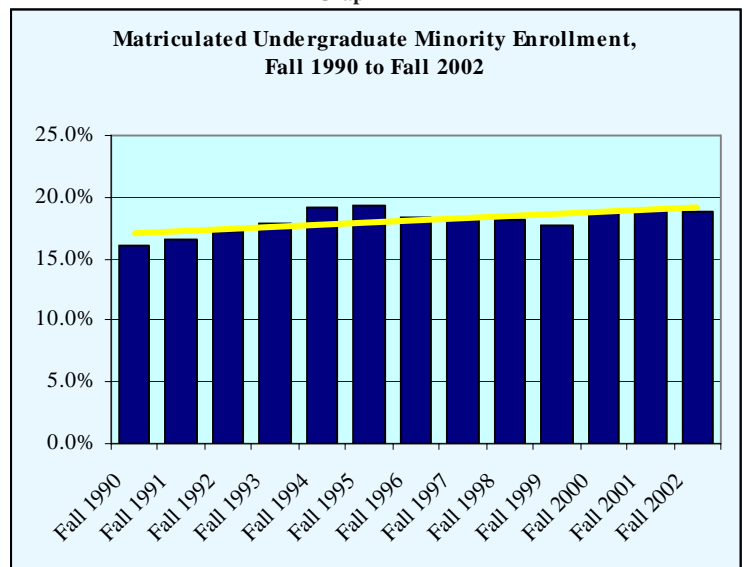
- The proportion of minority students increased among the matriculated undergraduate population (below)
- First-to-second year retention rates for all first-time full-time freshmen increased, especially minority students (pages 2-3)
- Six-year graduation rates increased for native students, especially minority students (pages 3-4)
- The proportion of minority students earning a baccalaureate degree increased (page 4)
- Minority enrollment at Rowan increased and represents the proportion of the minority population living in the seven-county SJ marketing area (page 2)

Minority Enrollment Since 1990

The proportion of minority students among matriculated undergraduates has increased from 16.1 percent in the fall of 1990 to 18.8 percent in the fall of 2002. (See Graph 1.) This increase in minority enrollment was during the period of time when the total number of matriculated undergraduate students increased from 6,615 to 7,737. (See Table 1.)

The trend during this period is positive (the yellow line in Graph 1). Minority enrollment in Fall 2002 (18.8 percent) is only slightly less than the peak minority enrollment of fall 1995 (19.4 percent) and is well above the levels of the early 1990's.

Graph 1



Technical note:

The category, "minority," includes Black, Hispanic, Native American and Asian students. Any reference to the category "majority," refers to Caucasian students.

Table 1. Matriculated Undergraduate Headcount by Ethnic Category

	Fall 1990	Fall 1991	Fall 1992	Fall 1993	Fall 1994	Fall 1995	Fall 1996	Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002
minority	16.1%	16.6%	17.2%	17.8%	19.1%	19.4%	18.3%	18.3%	18.1%	17.7%	18.8%	19.0%	18.8%
majority	83.9%	83.4%	82.8%	82.2%	80.9%	80.6%	81.7%	81.7%	81.8%	82.3%	81.2%	81.0%	81.2%
headcount	6,615	6,743	6,864	6,640	6,380	6,505	6,947	7,171	7,424	7,676	7,382	7,706	7,737

Minority Enrollment Compared to SJ Population

In 1990, the then-Glassboro State College undergraduate population enrolled slightly more white students than were represented in the population of the primary seven-county marketing region in South Jersey.

The ethnic richness of South Jersey is reflected in the Rowan undergraduate enrollment. Black and Asian undergraduates at Rowan exceeded the number in the SJ population. Please refer to the technical note below for information on how the US Census Bureau defined the Hispanic population.

Conversely, minority students were not enrolled at the same level as those represented in the SJ population. (See Graph 2.) For example, 80.7 percent of the SJ population identified itself as white and 82.7 percent of Glassboro undergraduates identified themselves as white.

However, by the Fall of 2002, the Rowan undergraduate white enrollment matched the South Jersey white population (77.9 percent in SJ and 77.6 percent enrolled at Rowan). (See Graph 3.)

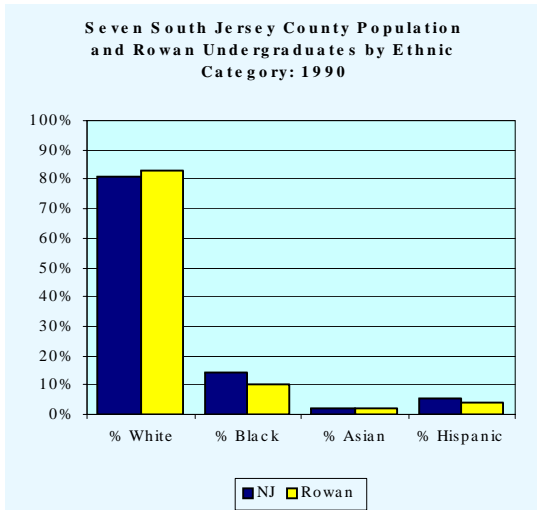
Table 2 Seven South Jersey County Population and Rowan Enrollment, 1990

1990	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
SJ counties	80.7%	14.3%	1.8%	5.5%
Rowan	82.7%	10.1%	2.2%	4.0%

Table 3 Seven South Jersey County Population (Census 2000) and Rowan Enrollment (Fall 2002)

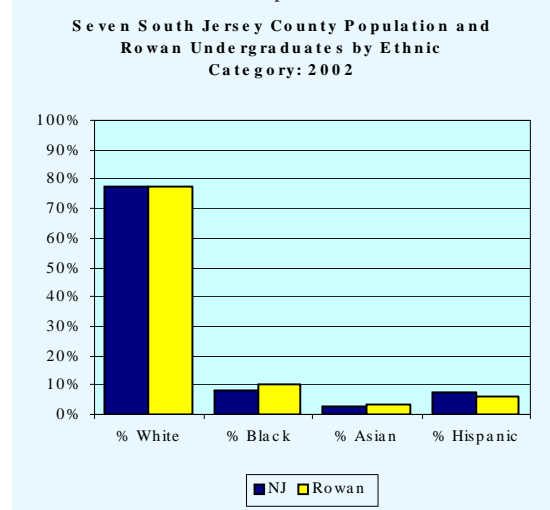
Ten Years Later	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
SJ counties	77.9%	8.3%	2.5%	7.2%
Rowan, Fall 2002	77.6%	10.1%	3.6%	6.1%

Graph 2



Hispanics: NJ duplicated count; Rowan unduplicated count

Graph 3



Hispanics: NJ duplicated count; Rowan unduplicated count

Technical note about the US Census:

The categories of "Black" and "Asian" include persons reporting only one race. Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories. This is labeled as a "duplicated" count. Rowan students are asked to choose only one response for their ethnic category, "Hispanic" being one of the categories.

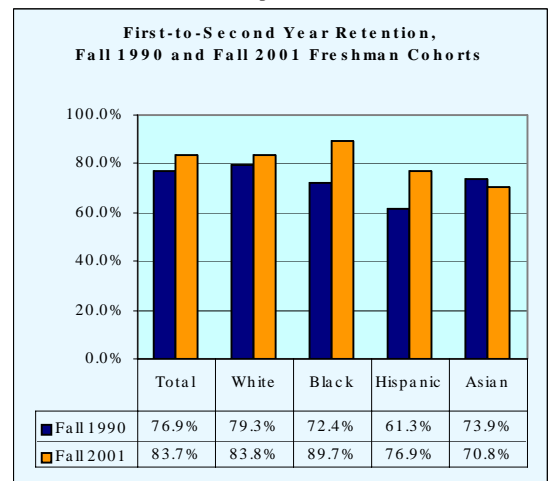
SJ Counties include: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Salem, Cape May, Cumberland
source: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/34000.html>

Change in First-to-Second Year Retention

First-to-Second year retention increased during the last decade. For full-time freshmen who matriculated in the fall of 1990, 76.9 percent re-enrolled the following fall. Retention rates for first-time full-time minority students was slightly less than that of the white students.

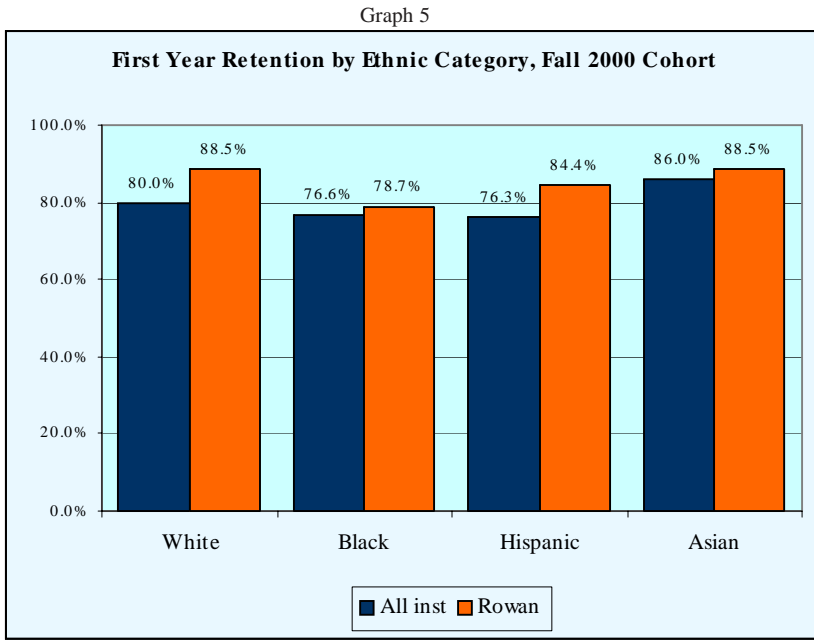
By the fall 2001, 83.7 percent of all full-time freshmen re-enrolled for the fall 2002 term. Minority retention to the second year increased (with the exception of Asian group with fewer than 50 students), with Black freshman retention exceeding that of white freshmen.

Graph 4



Rowan Retention Rates Compared to National Rates

To put retention in a national context, graph 5 displays Rowan first-to-second year retention compared to a national consortium data base* for the fall 2000 freshman cohort. For Black, Hispanic and white freshmen, retention at Rowan is higher than the national average (labeled “All inst” in Graph 5) in a group consisting of 168 “highly selective” and “selective” institutions.



Rowan freshman retention rates also compare favorably to institutions that were defined as “selective” (SAT range 1,014-1,100). In three of the four ethnic categories, Rowan retention was higher than the “selective” institutions who participated. (See Table 4.)

However, Rowan retention rates for the fall 2000 cohort fall short of the retention rates for those institutions who were categorized as “highly selective” (average freshman class SAT above 1,100).

Table 4. Retention Rates by Ethnic Category and Institutional Selectivity, Fall 2000 Cohort

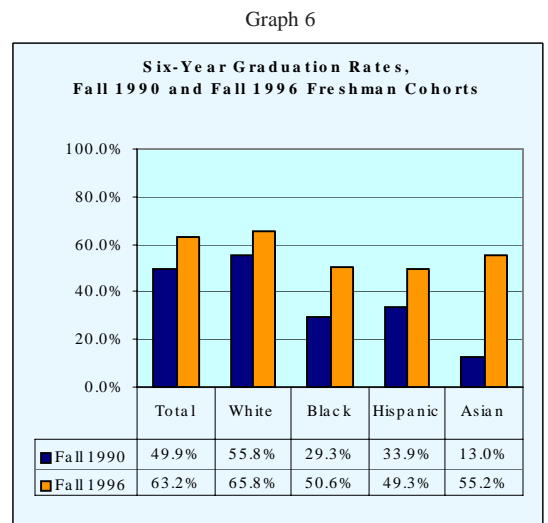
	High sel.	Rowan	Selective	All inst
White	87.0%	88.5%	79.2%	80.0%
Black	86.8%	78.7%	76.4%	76.6%
Hispanic	85.5%	84.4%	74.7%	76.3%
Asian	92.3%	88.5%	76.8%	86.0%
All students	87.5%	87.3%	78.5%	79.9%

* The Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) was established in 1994 and has 420 member institutions. The most recent data were published in June 2002, “2001-02 CRSDE Report” and included data from 360 institutions that participated in the survey. This group represented about 50 percent of an estimated 1.18 million 2000 first-time freshmen at four-year postsecondary institutions. Of the 360 institutions that participated, 24 percent were categorized as “highly selective” and 23 percent were “selective.”

Change in Six Year Graduation Rate

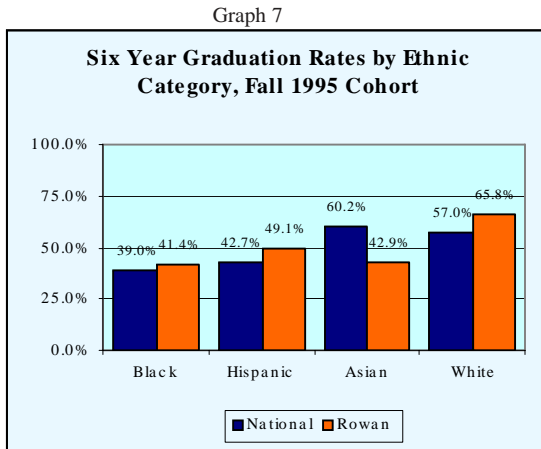
Graduation rates for native Rowan students improved significantly from the fall 1990 cohort to the fall 1996 (the latest cohort for which six year graduation rates can be tracked). Six years after the fall 1990 freshman cohort matriculated, 49.9 percent graduated. That rate increased to 63.2 percent for the fall 1996 freshman cohort who graduated in six years.

The success rate for minority students is even more dramatic. Native Rowan Black students who graduate within six years of their matriculation date increased from 29.3 percent to 50.6 percent and the Hispanic student graduation rate increased from 33.9 percent to 49.3 percent. Though the Asian student rate was even more pronounced there were significantly fewer students in each cohort.



Six-Year Graduation Rates Compared to National Data

The same national study that documented freshman retention (CRSDE above), also collected information from 360 institutions about six-year graduation rates for the fall 1995 freshman cohort. (See Graph 7.) In three of the four ethnic categories (Black, Hispanic and White), Rowan six-year graduation rates were higher than the national average. (Please note that there were only 28 freshmen who identified themselves as Asian in this freshman cohort.)



For the fall 1995 cohort, Rowan graduation rate (54.3 percent) most closely resembled the “selective” institutions (55.3 percent) and the national average (54.9 percent). Rowan’s graduation is quite a bit lower than the graduation rate for “highly selective” institutions (68.1 percent).

Table 5. Six-Year Graduation Rates by Ethnic Category and Selectivity, 1995 Cohort

	High sel.	Rowan	Selective	All inst.
White	68.5%	57.2%	57.6%	57.0%
Black	55.2%	41.4%	38.6%	39.0%
Hispanic	61.5%	49.1%	41.8%	42.7%
Asian	73.2%	42.9%	49.5%	60.2%
All inst.	68.1%	54.3%	55.3%	54.9%

Undergraduate Bachelors Degrees Awarded to Minority Students

Not only has the retention and graduation rates for minority students improved, but so has the relative proportion of minority students who earn undergraduate degrees from Rowan.

The total number of undergraduate degrees conferred by Rowan University increased from 1459 to 1682 during this reporting period (an increase of just over 15 percent). The number of minority students who earned baccalaureate degrees from Rowan increased from 175 to 261 (almost a 50 percent increase) during the period academic year 1993 through academic year 2002. (See Table 2 and Graph 6.) Not only has the pool of degrees increased, but the proportion of minorities earning a degree in this larger pool also increased. The proportion of minority students receiving their undergraduate degree increased from 12 percent to 15.5 percent during the last ten years.

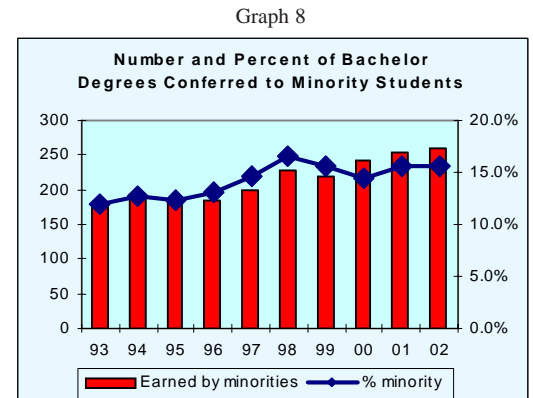


Table 6. Undergraduate Degrees Conferred from AY93 to AY02

	AY93	AY94	AY95	AY96	AY97	AY98	AY99	AY00	AY01	AY02
Total Bachelor's degrees	1459	1539	1481	1397	1353	1378	1411	1691	1632	1682
Earned by minorities	175	194	182	184	199	227	220	243	255	261
Percent	12.0%	12.6%	12.3%	13.2%	14.7%	16.5%	15.6%	14.4%	15.6%	15.5%

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