

NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE®

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Downward Trend in College Enrollments Shows Signs of Slowing

*National Student Clearinghouse® Research Center™ Report Shows
Only Slight Decrease Compared to Last Year*

Herndon, Virginia, May 15, 2014 – In the current term, college enrollments continued to decline, but at a slower rate than in recent terms, according to the just-released [Spring Current Term Enrollment Estimates](#) from the [National Student Clearinghouse® Research Center™](#). In spring 2014, overall postsecondary enrollments decreased 0.8 percent from the previous spring, the smallest decrease since spring 2012, when enrollments declined 0.3 percent. The Clearinghouse first started reporting on current term enrollments in fall 2011.

Results for the spring 2014 term differ greatly by institutional sector, with continued decreases at four-year for-profit institutions (-4.9 percent) and two-year public institutions (-2.7 percent). However, enrollments increased at four-year public institutions (0.7 percent) and four-year private nonprofit institutions (2.0 percent).

Published every May and December, Current Term Enrollment Estimates are based on postsecondary institutions actively submitting data to the Clearinghouse. These institutions account for 96 percent of the nation's Title IV, degree-granting enrollments. The data are highly current, since institutions make several data submissions per term. In addition, since the Clearinghouse receives data at the student level, an unduplicated headcount is reported, avoiding double-counting of students enrolled in more than one institution.

Additional findings from the report include:

- For-profit rates of decline have slowed considerably from last fall's 9.7 percent decline, but enrollments are still nearly 5 percent below last spring's total.
- Declines continue to be concentrated among adult students (over age 24).
- Traditional-age enrollments (students age 24 and under) grew by 0.7 percent.
- Adult student enrollments at community colleges fell nearly 6 percent from spring 2013.
- Enrollments declined in 37 states and increased in 13 states, with the largest increases seen in Oregon (5.2 percent) and New Hampshire (15.5 percent).

"It is encouraging to see that the number of younger students has begun to grow again after declining in each of the last three terms," stated Doug Shapiro, Executive Research Director of the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. "Not all college students enter straight

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from high school. Even recent graduates sometimes wait a semester or more. These 2014 spring enrollments could be an early indicator that the demand for college degrees among young adults is resuming its historic growth trend.”

The Current Term Enrollment Estimates report for the fall 2014 term is scheduled for release in December 2014.

About the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center is the research arm of the National Student Clearinghouse. The Research Center collaborates with higher education institutions, states, school districts, high schools, and educational organizations as part of a national effort to better inform education leaders and policymakers. Through accurate longitudinal data outcomes reporting, the Research Center enables better educational policy decisions leading to improved student outcomes.

To learn more, visit <http://research.studentclearinghouse.org>.

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