



Enrollment Projections (2011-2020) Executive Summary April, 2012

Background

In 2011, the Colorado Department of Higher Education contracted with Noel-Levitz, a national higher education consulting firm specializing in enrollment management, to conduct a comprehensive enrollment projection analysis for Colorado's public institutions of postsecondary education. The purpose of this study was to inform the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's master planning and performance contract process, which is currently underway. The primary research question posited was: "how will demographic trends impact student enrollment levels at Colorado's public colleges and universities?"

In conducting the analysis, Noel-Levitz utilized data files provided by the Department of Higher Education from the Student Unit Record System (SURDS), high school graduation data from the Colorado Department of Education, and demographic information from the Colorado State Demography Office. The study assumed that each institution would continue to capture the "exact same share of the geographic market (county) in the state as it did in 2010." By keeping that share constant, the analysis isolated the impact of demographic trends on enrollment through 2021.

Further, the study identified students by the county of residence, or where they were reported to have been living at the time of enrollment. For the purposes of the study, all students with a Colorado county code were considered to be Colorado residents, regardless of classification at institutions for tuition purposes.

Student files were primarily classified according to enrollment status and racial or ethnic group:

- **Enrollment status:**
 - "New freshmen" (enrolled directly from high school);
 - "New, traditional aged-transfer" (enrolled with prior credits between the ages of 18 and 24);
 - "Other transfer" (enrolled with prior credits at 25 years of age or older);
 - "Adult undergraduate" (25 years of age or older without prior credits at the time of enrollment); and
 - "Graduate" student.

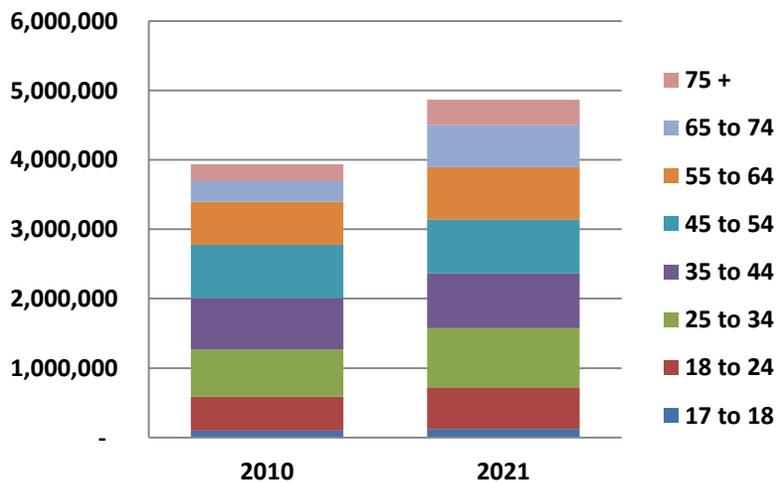
- **Racial or ethnic group:**
 - White;
 - Hispanic/ Latino;
 - Black;
 - Asian;
 - American Indian and Alaskan Native; and
 - "Two or more races."

Summary of Findings

Statewide Population Changes

By the year 2021, the state is projected to add over 929,000 adults age 17 or older. The group expected to experience the largest growth is adults between the ages of 65 and 74, which will more than double in size by 2021 (51% increase). The number of residents between the ages of 18 and 24 will increase by over 130,000 (18% increase), and the number of residents between the ages of 25 and 34 will increase by 170,000 (20% increase) by 2021 (Figure 1). The number of Hispanic/Latino residents will increase from approximately 21% of the population share to over 25% by 2021. By 2040, one in three Colorado residents will be Hispanic/Latino.

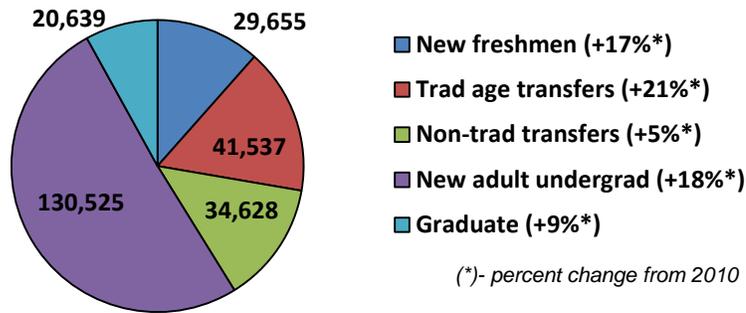
**Figure 1: Change in Population by Age Group
(age 17 and above)**



Enrollment Growth in Colorado’s Public Institutions of Higher Education

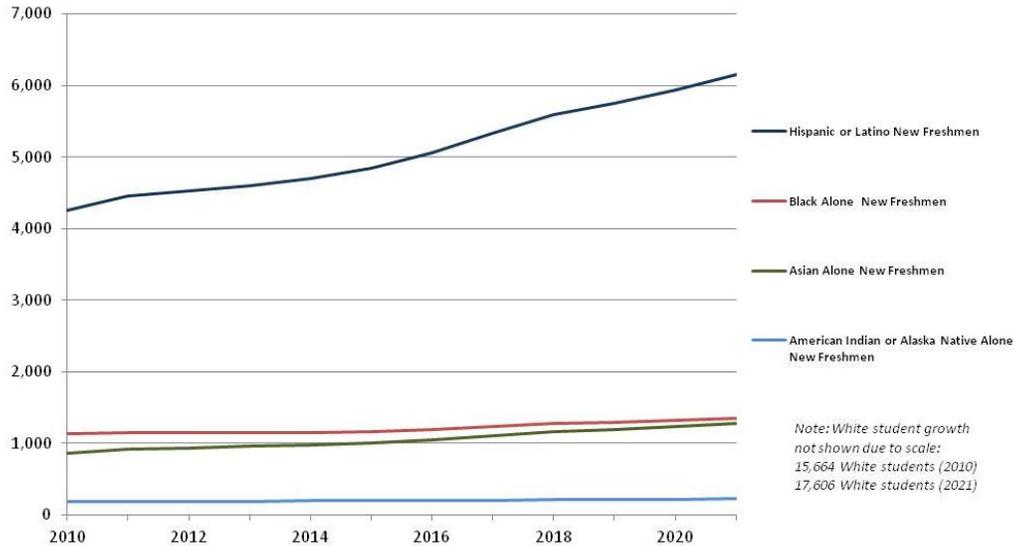
Based on population change alone, Colorado’s public institutions could enroll more than 40,000 (over 20%) additional new Colorado students by 2021. Much of this growth will be fueled by the dramatic increases of the state’s Hispanic/Latino population. The most dramatic enrollment changes are expected to be among adult undergraduates aged 25 and older (Figure 2).

Figure 2: College Enrollment in 2021



Again, projected changes are expected to be most dramatic for Hispanic/Latino students: a 45% increase in new freshman (Figure 3), a 50% increase in new traditional aged transfers, a 44% increase in adult undergraduate, and a 38% increase in new graduate students.

**Figure 3: Change in New Freshmen Minority Students
(Statewide: 2010-2021)**



Although overall statewide student enrollment is expected to increase in all sectors over 2010 levels, projections suggest that the state’s four-year institutions will see slightly greater growth rates than two-year institutions. The number of new freshmen (traditional age) is expected to increase by 22% at four-year institutions, compared to 18% at two-year schools; the number of adult undergraduate is projected to increase by 27% at four-year institutions, compared to 16% at two-year schools.

Statewide, most students currently reside in the Front Range counties, and although the Front Range is expected to increase students in all sectors between 2010 and 2021, the intensity of growth is expected to be highest along the Western Slope and Eastern Mountains. The San Luis Valley and Eastern Plains are projected to have slight to moderate decreases in new freshman between 2010-2021.

Table 1: Regional Change in College Enrollment (2010-2021)

	<i>Eastern Mountains</i>	<i>Eastern Plains</i>	<i>Front Range</i>	<i>San Luis Valley</i>	<i>Western Slope</i>
<i>New Freshmen</i>	17.00%	-8.16%	20.88%	-0.57%	34.78%
<i>Traditional age Transfers</i>	41.95%	19.06%	27.79%	11.58%	22.97%
<i>Non-traditional Transfers</i>	27.55%	28.43%	3.03%	28.38%	24.67%
<i>New Adult UG</i>	35.45%	20.62%	21.29%	15.44%	24.65%
<i>Graduate</i>	28.19%	22.46%	8.01%	18.44%	21.25%

In addition to modeling statewide and geographic growth in student populations, Noel-Levitz also conducted institution-specific studies of all two and four-year public institutions of higher education. The study's findings suggest that while nearly all institutions of higher education are expected to experience growth in enrollment, some will see higher growth rates than others over the next ten years.

All four-year institutions are expected to exceed 20% growth rates in new (traditional aged transfer students, and all but University of Colorado at Boulder and Colorado State University- Global Campus are expected to have graduate student increases in excess of 10%. Tables 2 and 3 provide detail on two- and four-year institutional change across student enrollment categories.

Table 2: Institutional Change in 2-Year Public College Enrollment (2010-2021)

	<i>New Freshmen</i>	<i>New Traditional Age Transfer</i>	<i>Other Transfer</i>	<i>Adult Undergraduate</i>	<i>Graduate</i>
Community College of Aurora	15.32%	23.16%	-1.96%	7.62%	N/A
Aims Community College	39.78%	34.70%	32.80%	36.68%	N/A
Arapahoe Community College	28.03%	57.69%	.24%	30.74%	N/A
Colorado Mountain College	40.27%	23.05%	13.25%	23.61%	N/A
Colorado Northwestern CC	23.64%	21.66%	29.89%	30.57%	N/A
Community College of Denver	18.85%	21.49%	-8.71%	3.35%	N/A
Front Range Community College	25.72%	16.26%	8.18%	11.88%	N/A
Lamar Community College	5.59%	3.81%	20.38%	10.55%	N/A
Morgan Community College	-4.57%	16.68%	13.18%	14.87%	N/A
Northeastern Junior College	4.35%	14.88%	20.30%	15.35%	N/A
Otero Junior College	-.29%	14.98%	21.71%	12.31%	N/A
Pikes Peak Community College	16.67%	32.01%	16.76%	22.06%	N/A
Pueblo Community College	6.36%	27.43 %	21.62%	22.43%	NA
Red Rocks Community College	3.27%	19.57%	-1.46%	6.16%	N/A
Trinidad State Junior College	3.40%	12.76%	31.07%	21.33%	N/A

Table 3: Institutional Change in 4-Year Public College Enrollment (2010-2021)

	<i>New Freshmen</i>	<i>New Traditional Age Transfer</i>	<i>Other Transfer</i>	<i>Adult Undergraduate</i>	<i>Graduate</i>
Adams State College	9.31%	20.30%	20.84%	20.80%	12.02%
Colorado Mesa University	23.76%	29.14%	31.71%	29.13%	29.72%
Colorado School of Mines	22.00%	32.17%	1.50%	37.16%	14.17%
Colorado State University	24.66%	23.11%	18.80%	26.96%	12.91%
Colorado State University- Global Campus	N/A	35.97%	8.60%	19.90%	7.59%
Colorado State University/ Pueblo	10.94%	25.87%	21.25%	28.52%	15.95%
Ft. Lewis College	25.01%	24.93%	26.18%	31.12%	N/A
Metropolitan State College of Denver	21.73%	28.58%	-7.22%	15.72%	2.57%
University of Colorado/Boulder	24.58%	27.81%	-2.51%	31.34%	6.83%
University of Colorado/ Colorado Springs	18.51%	31.57%	16.65%	32.55%	15.69%
University of Colorado/Denver	19.70%	31.10%	-4.45%	25.29%	2.03%
University of Northern Colorado	23.46%	31.59%	22.66%	37.73%	16.17%
Western State College	30.42%	21.66%	-2.63%	25.24%	13.44%

A Final Word

The results of the Noel-Levitz enrollment projection analysis indicate that demographic trends are expected to impact student enrollment levels at the majority of Colorado's public colleges and universities, in particular two-year schools in the Front Range and all four-year institutions. With expected significant increases in the Hispanic /Latino population, it will be imperative that Colorado finds a way to increase access and success for these new students. It will also be important for the state and institutions to address both the capacity of its campuses, and the financial resources available to the thousands of other students expected to enroll in our public system of postsecondary education in the years to come.

Questions or additional information about this summary or the master planning process should be directed to Dr. Beth Bean, Director of Research and Information (beth.bean@dhe.state.co.us or 303.866.2661) or Tamara Johnson, Director of Admission & Access Policy (tamara.johnson@dhe.state.co.us or 303.866.4036).