

Cornell University

# 2010 Undergraduate Graduation Rate Report\*

Students Entering Fall 1980 through Fall 2003

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\* Throughout this report the following abbreviations apply:

AG: Agriculture & Life Sciences  
AR: Architecture, Arts & Planning  
AS: Arts & Sciences  
EN: Engineering  
HA: Hotel Administration  
HE: Human Ecology  
IL: Industrial & Labor Relations

**A. Graduation Rates of First-Time Freshmen**

- **Overall and by College**

- Of the 3,131 first-time freshmen entering Cornell in Fall 2003, 92% (2,877 students) earned a baccalaureate degree within six years (see Figure 1). This is an increase in the six-year graduation rate from 83% achieved by the cohort entering in 1980.
- The vast majority of Cornell undergraduates earn degrees within four-years; less than ten percent complete in five or six years (see Figure 1).
- The proportion of students who graduate early—completing degree requirements prior to the spring semester of their fourth year at Cornell—has increased over time from 3-6% in the early 1980s to closer to 10% beginning with the entering class of 2000.
- The college Architecture, Art & Planning, with a five-year bachelors program in architecture, has the lowest six-year graduation rate of the seven undergraduate colleges (see Table 1).

**Figure 1. Graduation within six years, by years taken to complete baccalaureate requirements**

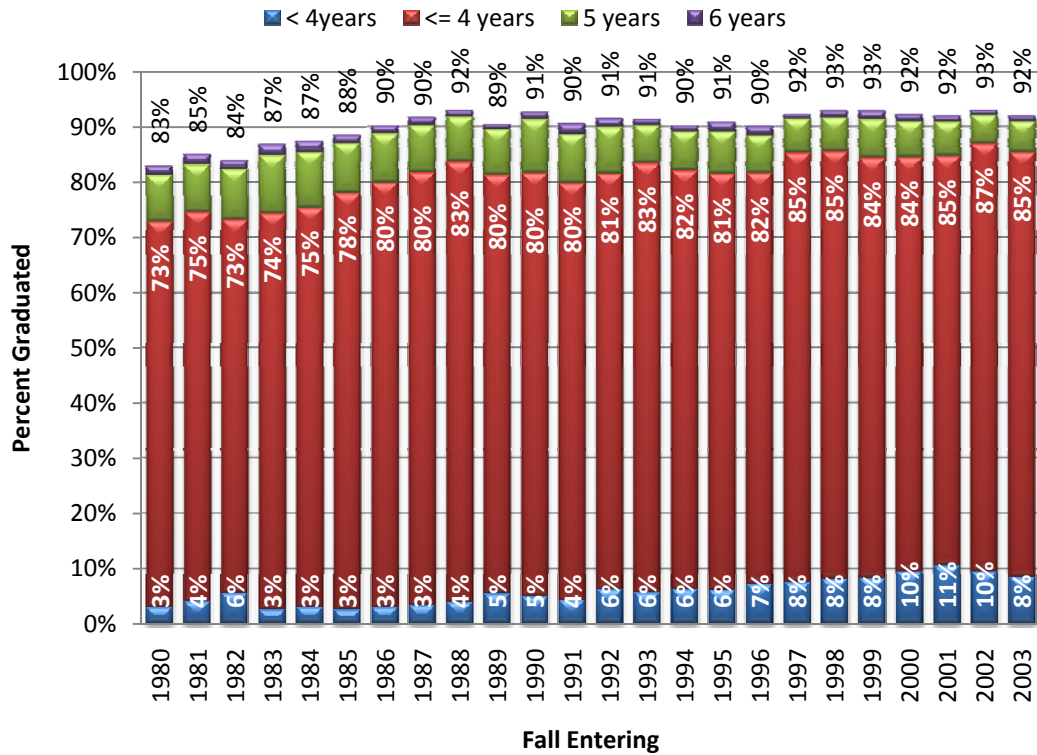


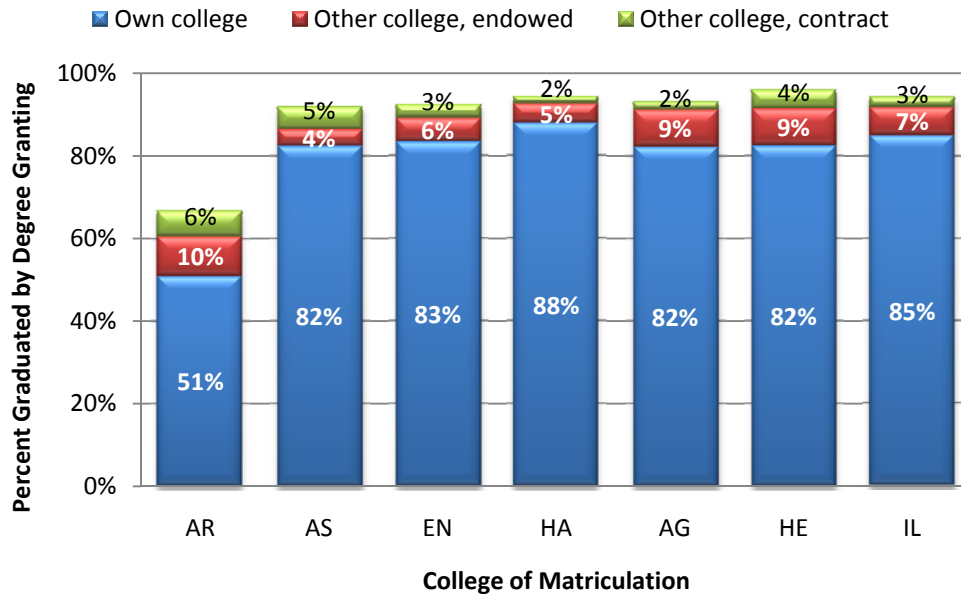
Table 1. Six-year graduation rates by matriculating college

Entering Fall:	First-Time Freshmen Entering in:						
	AR	AS	EN	HA	AG	HE	IL
2003	66.7%	91.9%	92.2%	94.2%	93.0%	95.9%	94.4%
2002	85.2%	93.7%	91.4%	92.7%	93.3%	95.8%	95.9%
2001	68.1%	92.4%	93.7%	90.1%	93.6%	93.4%	93.2%
2000	78.3%	92.0%	92.2%	90.5%	93.5%	95.7%	94.4%
1999	76.5%	92.4%	93.7%	92.2%	93.0%	97.8%	94.0%
1998	81.1%	90.7%	93.7%	94.9%	94.8%	96.4%	94.7%
1997	77.0%	91.5%	91.7%	92.8%	94.4%	95.8%	92.6%
1996	69.7%	88.7%	89.9%	91.8%	91.9%	95.0%	95.1%
1995	73.3%	92.4%	88.3%	89.0%	93.6%	94.3%	93.1%
1994	68.1%	89.8%	90.3%	85.5%	93.2%	92.0%	93.7%
1993	81.1%	90.1%	90.3%	88.4%	93.8%	96.0%	95.0%
1992	81.3%	90.9%	91.6%	95.0%	90.9%	94.1%	95.2%
1991	83.6%	90.2%	89.3%	90.4%	92.3%	92.5%	94.0%
1990	83.3%	91.0%	89.7%	91.1%	93.3%	92.0%	90.2%
1989	85.1%	90.8%	88.8%	90.6%	91.7%	92.5%	93.7%
1988	82.1%	93.6%	90.4%	94.9%	93.8%	95.9%	92.5%
1987	85.1%	90.7%	87.5%	89.4%	89.7%	96.0%	88.0%
1986	86.0%	90.3%	87.9%	91.1%	92.1%	95.3%	91.2%
1985	68.6%	88.7%	89.0%	87.9%	89.1%	89.6%	88.0%
1984	77.3%	89.3%	84.1%	83.2%	88.4%	87.9%	91.6%
1983	85.7%	88.7%	84.2%	81.6%	86.6%	88.7%	88.5%
1982	64.4%	84.9%	83.4%	79.5%	84.8%	86.7%	85.2%
1981	79.3%	83.4%	86.1%	85.6%	85.6%	86.3%	89.5%
1980	77.5%	81.3%	84.6%	84.8%	83.2%	84.0%	84.7%

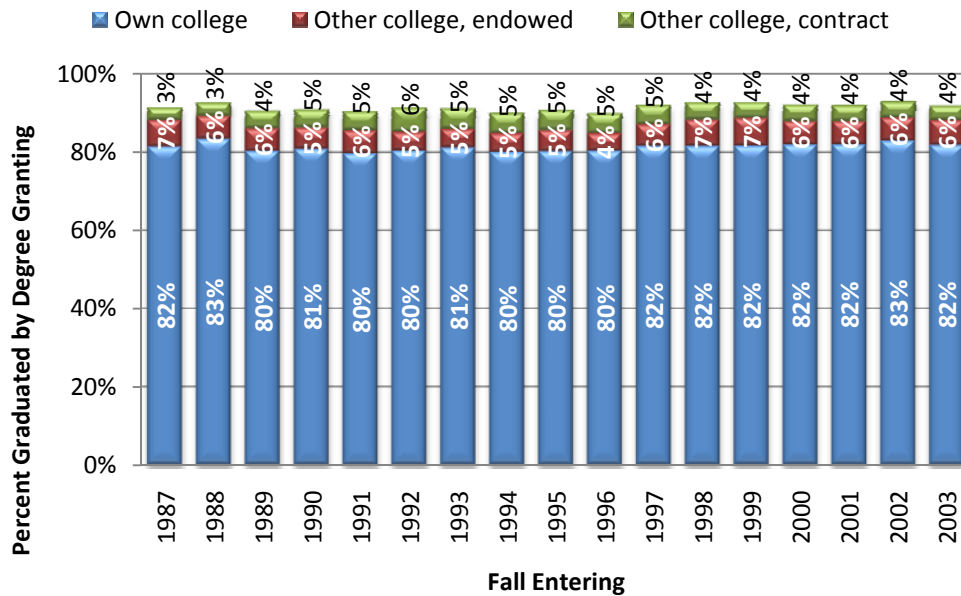
● **Internal Transfers and Six-Year Graduation Rates**

- Some students entering Cornell as first-time freshmen graduate transfer internally and graduate from a different college at Cornell, as illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.
- For students entering in Fall 2003, 16% from AR and 13% from HE graduated from another Cornell college (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Fall 2003 Entering Students Six-Year Graduation Rate within/outside Matriculation College, by College of Matriculation**



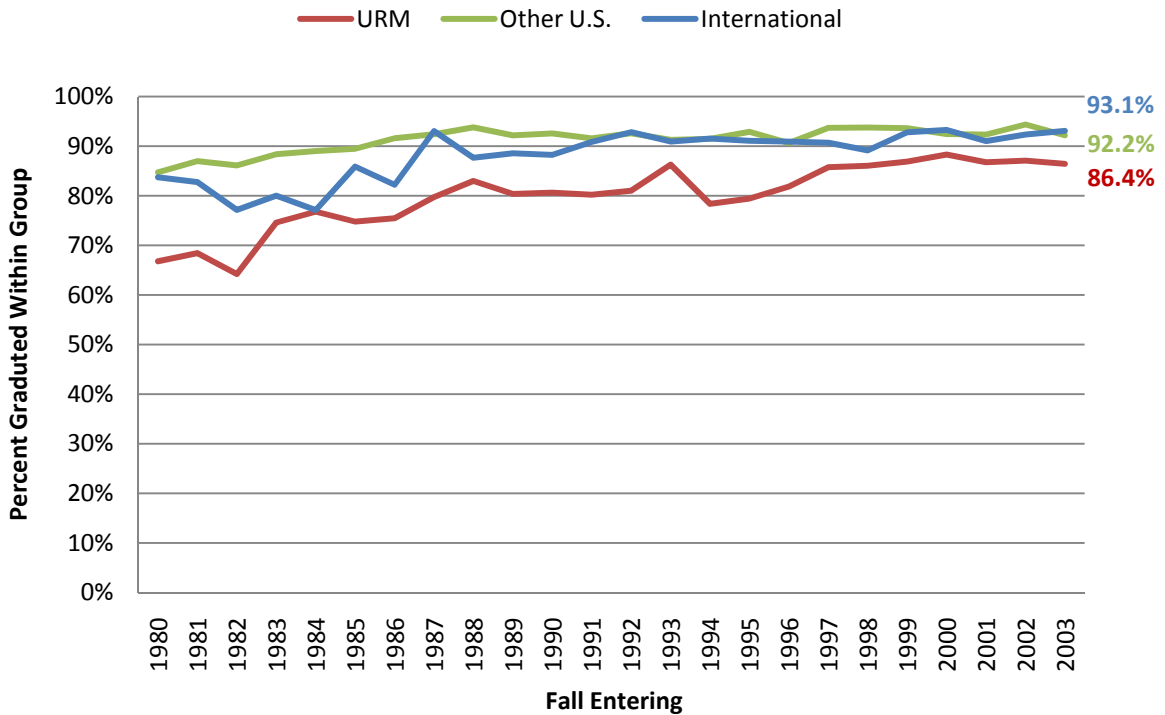
**Figure 3. Six-Year Graduation Rate within/outside Matriculation College, Fall 1987 - Fall 2003 Entering Students**



● **Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender**

- As illustrated in Figure 4, the gap in graduation rates by race has narrowed over time:
  - In the cohort entering in the fall of 1980, there was a gap of approximately 17 percentage points between six-year graduation rate of under-represented minorities (at 70%) and other American students (87%). By the entering class of Fall 1987, the gap reduced to 13 percentage points.
  - For the students entering in Fall 2003, the gap has further narrowed to 6 percentage points.
- The gap between white and Hispanic American students was 4 percentage points for students entering in Fall 2003 (see Figure 5).
- Overall, women graduate at rates higher than men. Among all first-time freshmen entering in Fall 2003, 93% of women 91% of men graduated within six-years (see Figure 6).
- The pattern of women graduating at higher rates than men holds true within racial/ethnic categories, excepting Native Americans and international students.

**Figure 4. Six-year graduation rates by race/ethnic status**



Notes: "URM," underrepresented minorities include: African-American, Hispanic-American, Native American, and students indicating 2 or more with at least one of the preceding categories.  
 "Other US" includes white, Asian American, and students not declaring a race/ethnicity category.

Figure 5. Fall 2003 Entering Students Graduation in 4, 5, and 6 years by Race/Ethnicity

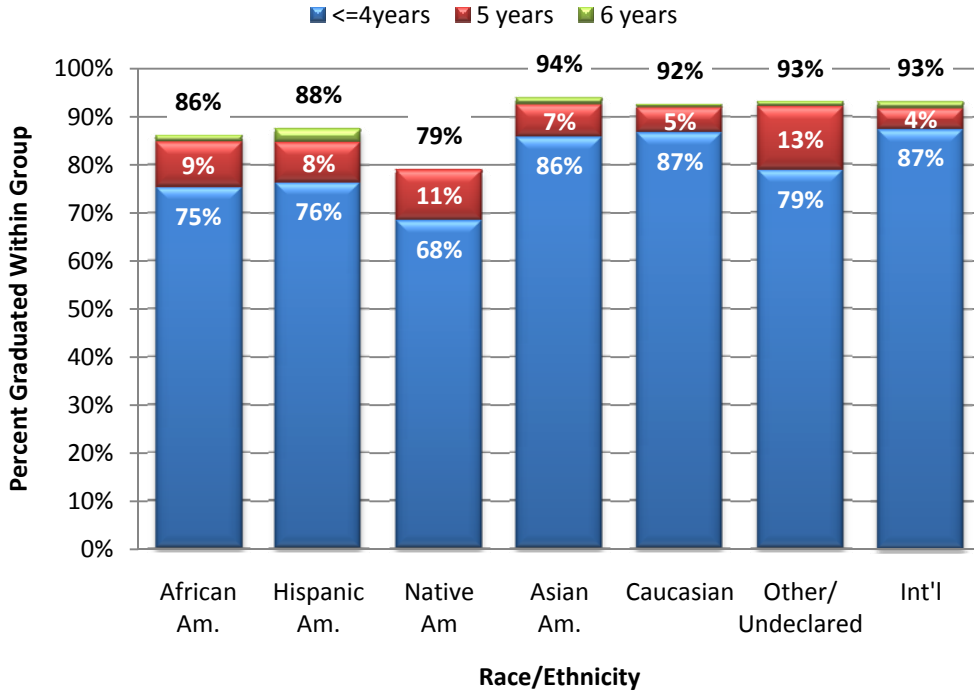
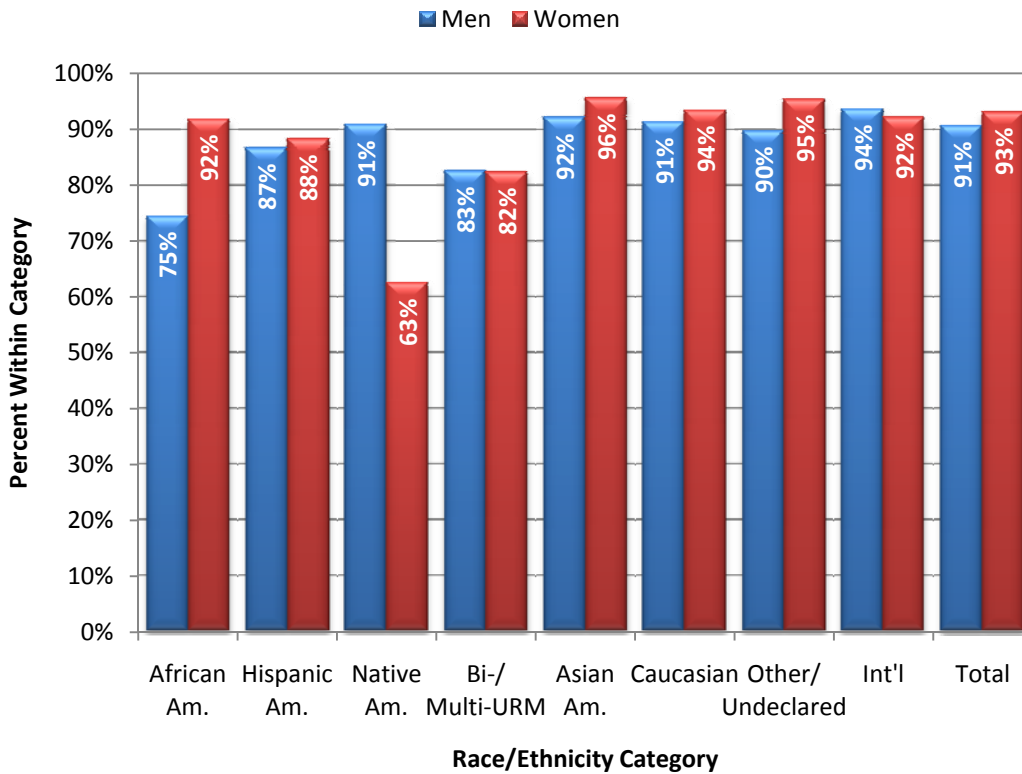


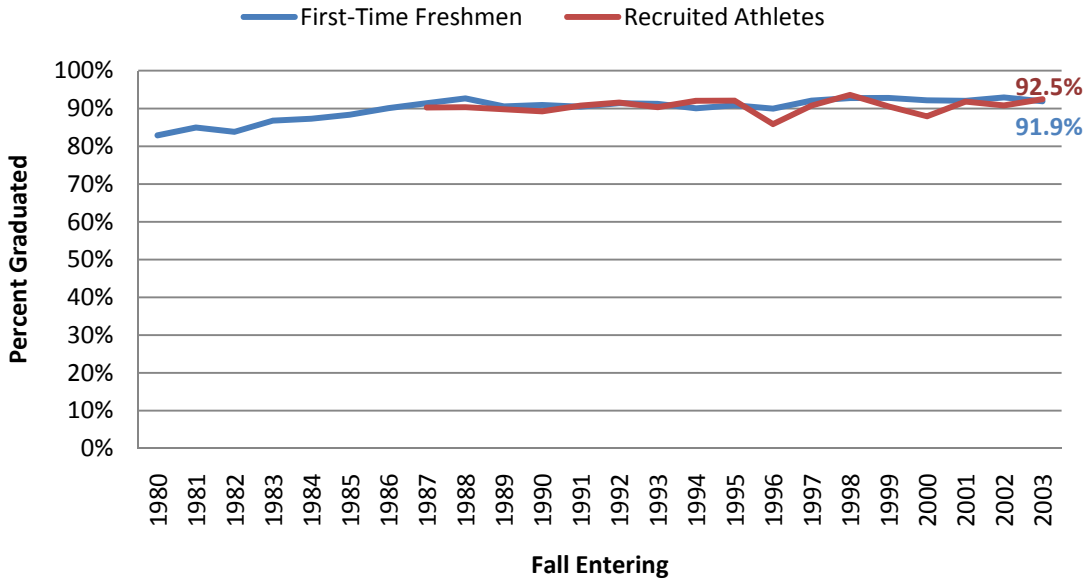
Figure 6. First-time freshmen by gender within race/ethnicity category entering in fall 2003 graduating within six-years



- **Recruited Athletes Six-Year Graduation Rates**

- First-time freshmen who are recruited athletes generally graduate at rates equivalent to the total first-time freshmen population (92 percent) as shown in Figure 7.

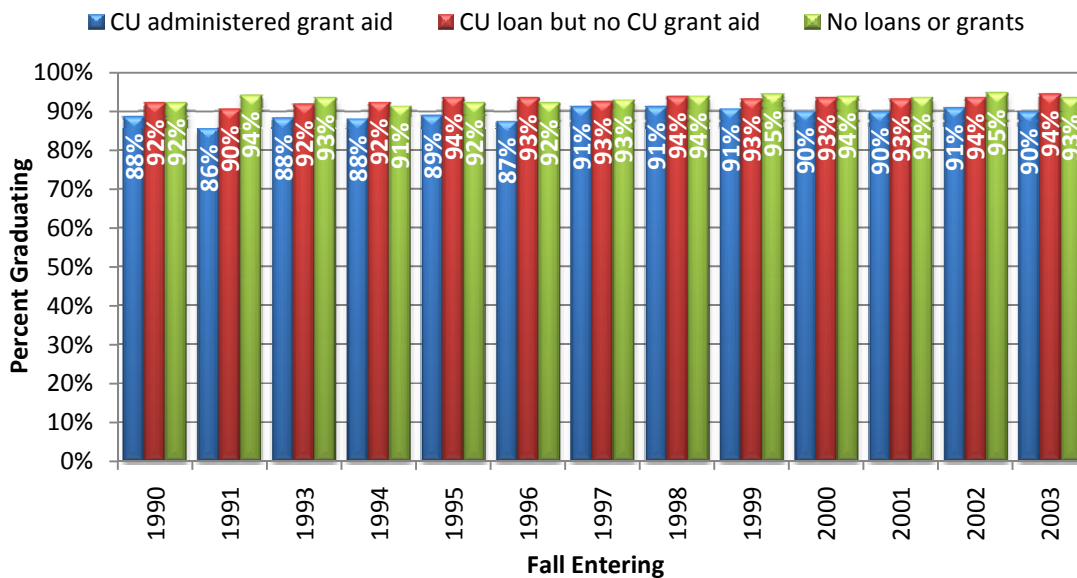
**Figure 7. Six-year graduation rate, total and recruited athletes**



- **Financial Aid Package Recipients Six-Year Graduation Rates**

- The students with the greatest documented financial need receive Cornell grant aid. Students who receive grant aid graduate at a slightly lower rate than students who receive loans or those who do not receive loans or grants as part of a financial aid award (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Financial aid package recipients' six-year graduation rate**



NOTE: Financial aid data for Fall 1992 are not available.

**B. Attrition among First-Time Freshmen**

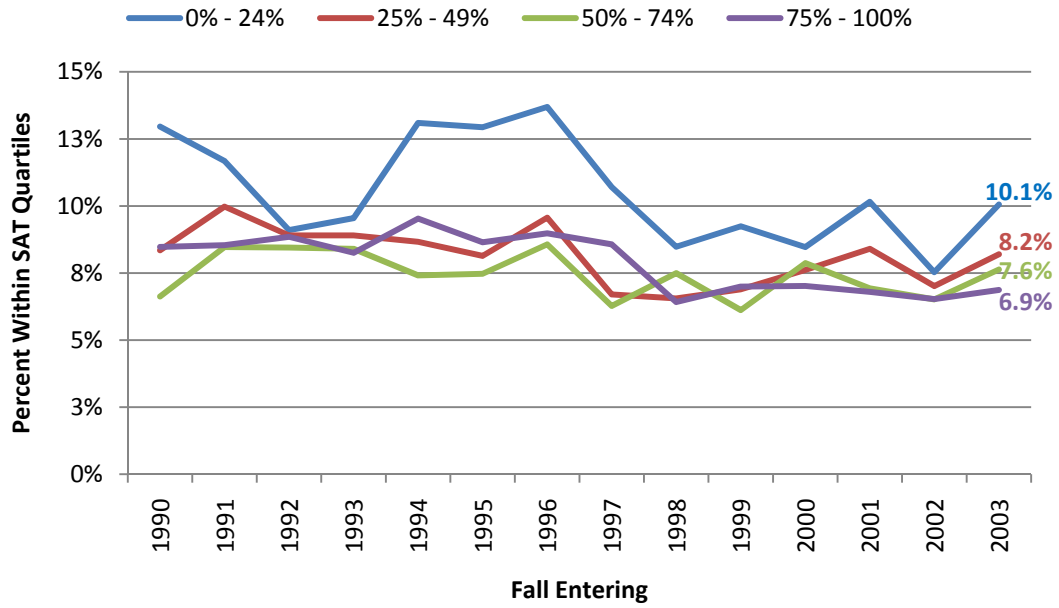
- Overall, attrition decreased from 17 percent for those who entering in Fall 1980 (477 students) to 8 percent for first-time freshmen entering in Fall 2003 (254 students).
- For students entering in Fall 2003, a little over a quarter of the attrition group (70 of 254 students) was required to leave or withdraw from Cornell (see Table 2). Over half of the students not graduating within six-years took a non-required leave or withdrawal (166 of 254 students).
- Of the students not obtaining a degree or still enrolled at Cornell after six years (236 students), data from the National Student Clearinghouse indicate that 74 have graduated from another 4-year institution within the six-year window.
- Entering SAT scores are weakly associated with attrition (see Figure 9).
- Geographic origin is weakly associated with attrition (see Figure 10).

**Table 2. Attrition categories of first-time freshmen not graduating within six-years**

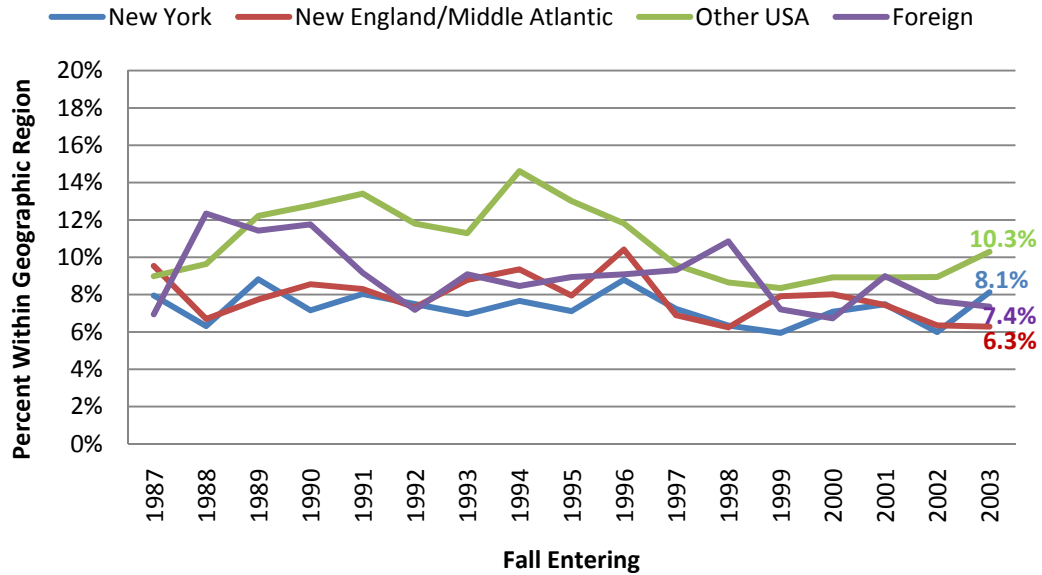
<b>Fall 2003 Entering Class</b>								
<b>Reason</b>	<b>AR</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>EN</b>	<b>HA</b>	<b>AG</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>IL</b>	<b>Total</b>
Graduated After Six-Year Window	3	2	2	-	1	-	-	<b>8</b>
Registered as of Fall 2009	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	<b>10</b>
Leave								
Medical	-	20	12	2	4	-	3	<b>41</b>
Required	5	14	3	2	2	-	4	<b>30</b>
Voluntary	7	17	7	2	16	2	2	<b>53</b>
Withdrawal								
Required	-	4	24	4	6	2	-	<b>40</b>
Voluntary	4	15	2	-	15	6	-	<b>42</b>
Other/Unknown	17	8	2	-	2	1	-	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>254</b>



**Figure 9. Percent by SAT combined score quartiles not graduating within six-year, first-time freshmen**



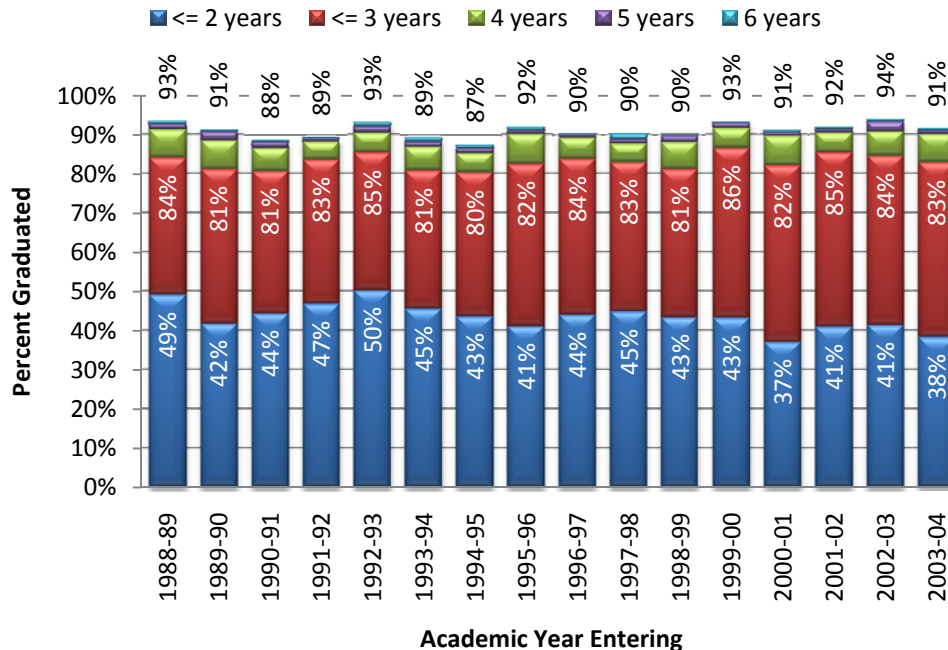
**Figure 10. Percent by geographic admit region not graduating within six-years, first-time freshmen**



**C. Graduation Rates of External Transfers**

- Most external transfers enter Cornell during their sophomore or junior year.
- Eighty-three percent of those entering in academic year 2003-04 graduated at within three years and 91% graduated within six years (see Figure 11).
- Among transfer students entering in academic year 2003-04, those in EN had a higher six-year graduation rate than those entering in other colleges (see Table 3, and Figure 12).
- Reflecting differences observed among first-time freshmen, under-represented minorities and men graduate at slightly lower rates than do white US citizens, international students and female students (see Figures 13 and 14).

**Figure 11. Graduation rate by years taken**



**Table 3. Six-year graduation rates by matriculating college**

Entering Acad Year:	External Transfers Entering in:						
	AR	AS	EN	HA	AG	HE	IL
2003-04	68.8%	83.8%	96.0%	87.5%	94.1%	94.0%	93.1%
2002-03	66.7%	94.8%	96.0%	86.5%	95.4%	95.8%	94.1%
2001-02	60.0%	91.3%	84.6%	88.5%	91.7%	94.5%	97.7%
2000-01	70.6%	91.2%	87.5%	91.3%	90.3%	94.6%	91.9%
1999-00	85.7%	92.2%	93.7%	94.7%	93.4%	92.5%	94.9%
1998-99	70.0%	90.4%	93.5%	92.6%	87.6%	91.0%	95.4%
1997-98	50.0%	92.8%	86.8%	91.1%	91.8%	88.9%	91.5%
1996-97	64.7%	91.3%	76.9%	96.7%	89.9%	91.9%	97.9%
1995-96	84.2%	87.4%	86.7%	94.1%	92.5%	94.8%	97.2%
1994-95	56.3%	87.1%	93.5%	84.5%	87.0%	91.2%	89.7%
1993-94	78.6%	83.8%	90.3%	82.4%	90.6%	91.9%	97.4%
1992-93	92.0%	95.1%	100.0%	88.4%	91.9%	91.9%	93.3%
1991-92	77.8%	84.8%	87.1%	92.6%	89.5%	89.9%	90.9%
1990-91	90.9%	87.6%	87.2%	90.2%	86.0%	91.5%	90.5%
1989-90	80.8%	91.6%	82.4%	97.1%	90.2%	92.9%	96.2%
1988-89	75.0%	91.9%	91.4%	98.0%	92.9%	94.9%	93.0%

Figure 12. Graduation time of academic year 2003-2004 external transfers, by college

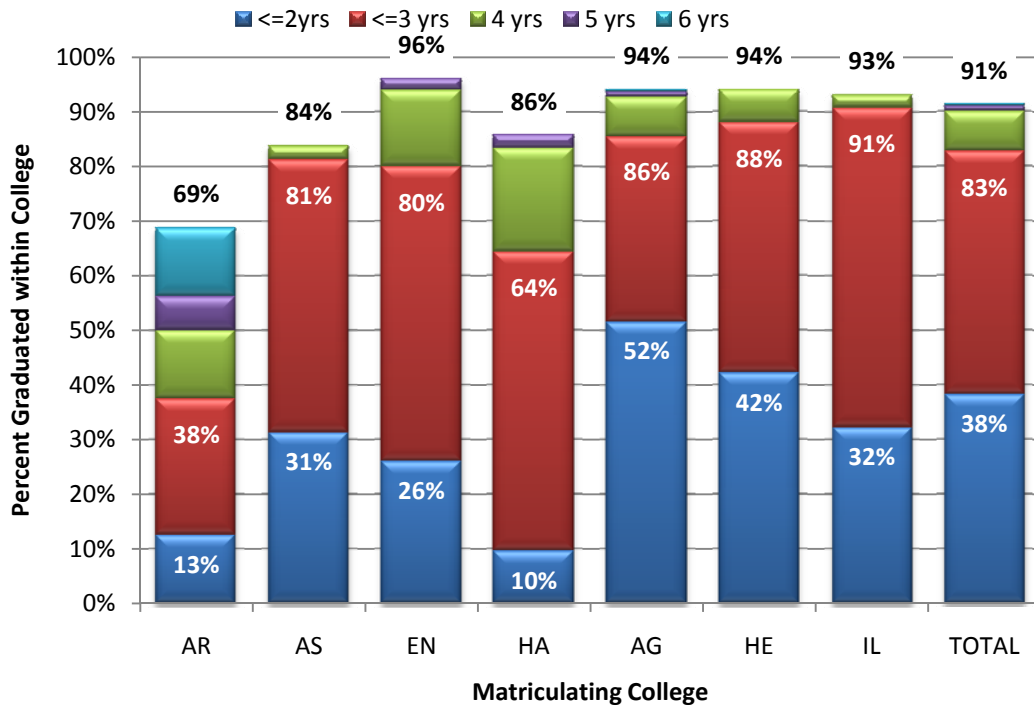


Figure 13. Graduation time of academic year 2003-2004 external transfers, by race/ethnicity

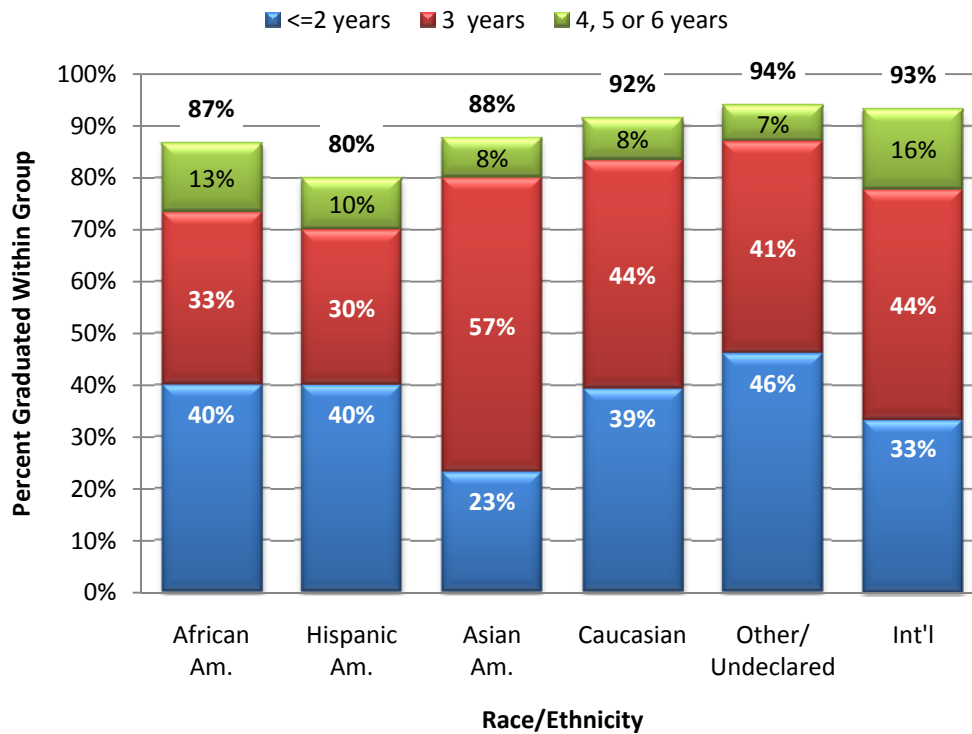


Figure 14. Graduation time of external transfers, by sex

