

The mission of *Excelencia* in Education is to accelerate Latino student success while increasing all student success in higher education. A critical set of institutions enrolling Latino students is Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).

## Background

The classification of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) was recognized in the Higher Education Act in 1992. This created a competitive grant for capacity-building support to improve the access and quality of education for Latino and other low-income students. HSIs are defined as accredited, degree-granting public or private not-for-profit institutions of higher education with 25% or more total undergraduate Hispanic full-time equivalent student (FTE) enrollment.<sup>1</sup> To create this list, *Excelencia* uses the most recent data, as of March 2026, from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).<sup>2</sup>

### Overview: 2024-25

- **HSIs disproportionately enroll and graduate Latino, and all, undergraduates.** The 631 HSIs represent 21% of all colleges and universities but enroll 65% of Latino, and 32% of all undergraduates, and graduate 67% of Latino, and 32% of all undergraduates earning a degree in the U.S.
- **HSIs enroll a high concentration of students from various backgrounds.** By FTE, HSIs enroll 42% of all Asian, 24% of all Black, and 18% of all White undergraduates in the nation.
- **The number of HSIs continues to grow.** The number of HSIs increased from 602 to 631 in the last year,<sup>3</sup> reflecting the continued growth of Latinos enrolled in higher education across the country.
- **Many HSIs are smaller institutions.** Over half of HSIs enroll between 1,000 and 10,000 undergraduates.
- **A small subset of HSIs are Seal of *Excelencia* certified institutions.** Seal of *Excelencia* certified institutions have demonstrated with data, practice, and leadership a higher standard and commitment to intentionally serving Latino, and all, students. Only 7% of HSIs (43) are Seal-certified institutions.

### Location

- **HSIs are geographically concentrated.** HSIs are located in 29 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. California has the most HSIs (175), followed by Texas (109), Puerto Rico (54), and Illinois (41).
- **HSIs are in states not known for having large Latino populations.** Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, and Oklahoma each have at least one HSI.
- **The majority of HSIs are located in cities or suburbs.** While 82% of HSIs are either in a city (330) or suburb (187), 18% are in towns (68) or rural areas (46).

### Sector

- **A majority of HSIs are four-year institutions.** Overall, 63% of HSIs are four-year institutions (public—34%; private—29%), and 37% are two-year institutions (public—36%; private—1%).
- **The majority of HSIs are public institutions.** Overall, 70% of HSIs are public and 30% are private.

### Emerging HSIs (eHSIs)

- **Emerging HSIs represent a growing subset of colleges and universities.** eHSIs (institutions with 15.0-24.9% undergraduate FTE Hispanic enrollment) represent 14% of all institutions (427 colleges and universities).
- **The majority of states have at least one eHSI.** eHSIs are in 42 states and the District of Columbia, including Alabama, Hawaii, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.
- **The majority of eHSIs are four-year institutions.** Overall, 74% of eHSIs are four-year institutions (private—44%; public—30%), and 26% are two-year institutions (public—24%; private—2%).<sup>4</sup>

### HSIs with Graduate Programs (gHSIs)

- **More than a third of HSIs offer graduate degrees.** Of the 631 HSIs, 276 offer graduate degrees (44%).
- **gHSIs are concentrated geographically.** Two-thirds (63%) of gHSIs are in California (61), Texas (57), Puerto Rico (34), and New York (23).

<sup>1</sup> Summary of Title V of the Higher Education Act, as amended in 2008. To be eligible for the "Developing HSIs Program", the law further requires an HSI have a high enrollment of needy students and low core expenditures.

<sup>2</sup> *Excelencia* in Education analysis of U.S. Department of Education, NCES, IPEDS, 1994-2024 Fall Enrollment, Institutional Characteristics, and Completions Surveys.

<sup>3</sup> As of 2025, *Excelencia* in Education has removed institutions from the list of HSIs that have less than 100 undergraduate students. See our methodology in *Creating a list of Hispanic-Serving Institutions* essay: [EdExcelencia.org/research/publications/essay-creating-a-list-of-hispanic-serving-institutions-hsis](https://edexcelencia.org/research/publications/essay-creating-a-list-of-hispanic-serving-institutions-hsis).

<sup>4</sup> Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.