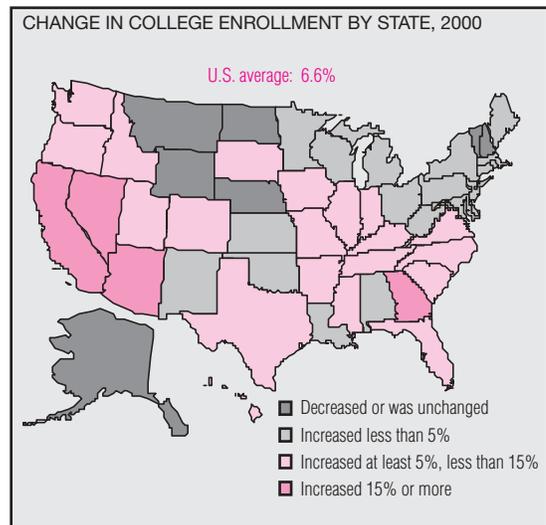
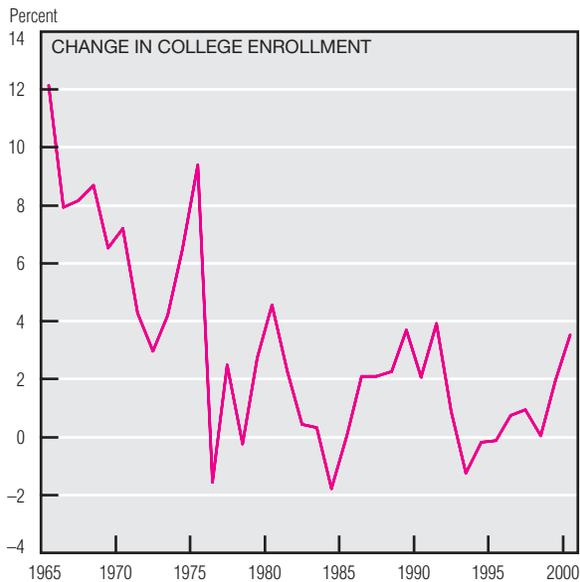
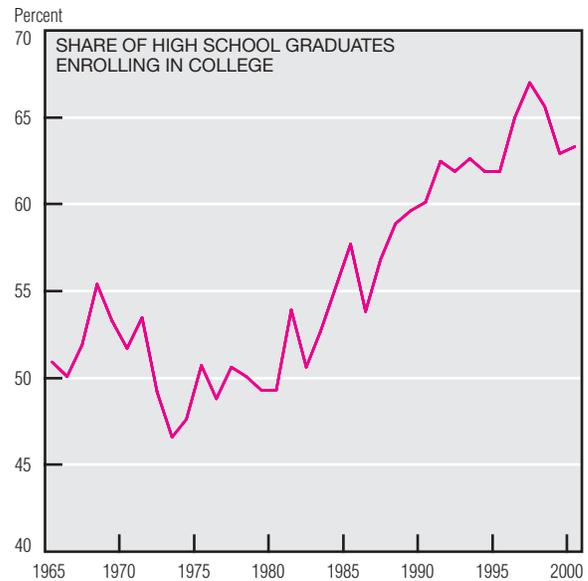
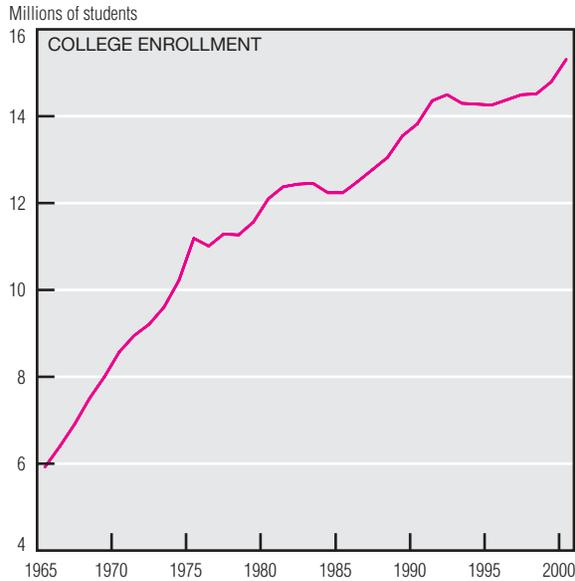


# Higher Education Enrollment



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2002.

In our increasingly high-tech economy, education is becoming ever more important. U.S. college enrollment held steady in the mid-1990s but rose later in the decade, primarily because the number of women attending college increased substantially. In 2000 (the latest data available), more than 15 million students nationwide were enrolled in institutions of higher learning.

Although college enrollment rose in the late 1990s, the percentage of high school graduates enrolling in

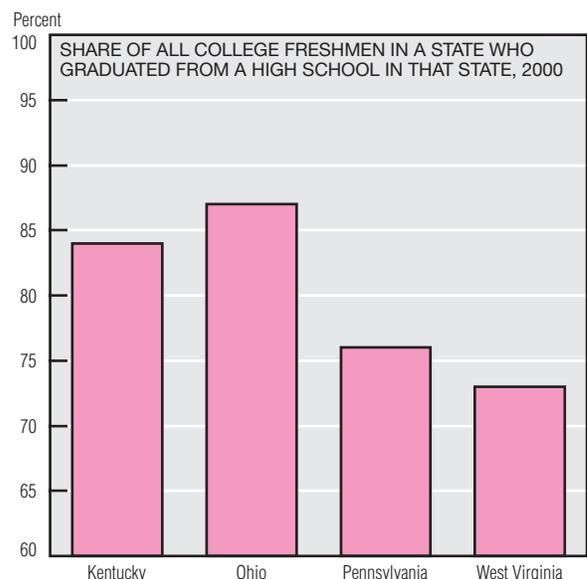
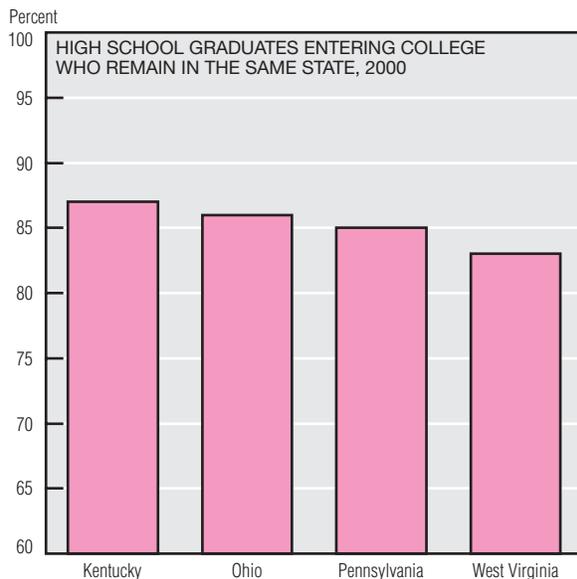
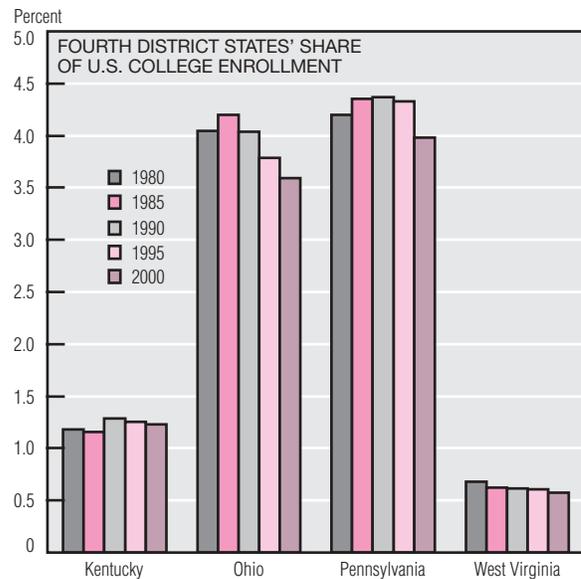
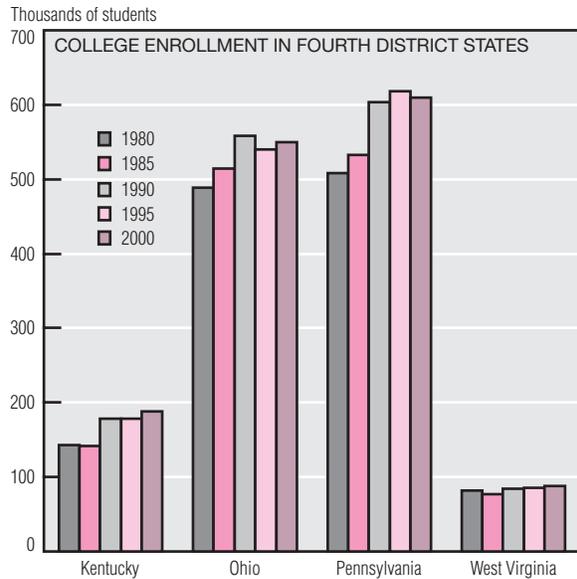
college declined. After a fairly steady rise that began in the early 1980s, 67% of high school graduates went on to college in 1997, the highest share recorded in the 40 years the Department of Education has tracked matriculation rates. By 2000, however, that share had fallen to slightly more than 63%.

College enrollment growth in recent years has been meager compared with increases in the 1960s and early 1970s. During that period, the nation was shifting away from a manufacturing-based economy, where

a high school diploma was enough to land a job that paid well and could last a person's entire working life. The U.S. was developing a service-based economy, where employers wanted people with higher degrees. Typically, in the years following recessions, U.S. college enrollment has shown very meager growth (less than 0.5%) or outright declines. Enrollment was flat or fell in 1976, after the 1973–75 recession; in 1983 and 1984, after the 1981–82 recession; and in 1993–95, after the recession of 1990–91.

(continued on next page)

## Higher Education Enrollment (cont.)



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2002.

From 1996 to 2000, college enrollment rose 6.6% nationwide. The strongest enrollment growth occurred in California, Nevada, Arizona, and Georgia, where rates exceeded 15%. The Fourth District states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia also experienced some growth over this period, but the rates were well below the national average (1.0%, 3.8%, and 0.9%, respectively). Kentucky fared slightly better, with enrollment growing 5.3% between 1996 and 2000. In all four of the Fourth District states,

enrollment has remained relatively steady over the last 10 years: In 2000, enrollment in each Fourth District state was near 1990 levels.

Although enrollment numbers have held their ground, the share of the nation's college students educated in Fourth District states has fallen. Ohio and Pennsylvania have seen the largest drops, losing a combined 1% share of national enrollment between 1985 and 2000.

In 2000, more than four out of every five high school students who

went on to college in Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia stayed in their home state (the rates were 87%, 86%, 85%, and 83%). The share of high school graduates remaining in their state as a percentage of all college students in the state varied more widely within the Fourth District: 87% of Ohio college students were graduates of Ohio high schools, whereas only 73% of West Virginia college students had graduated from high schools in West Virginia.