

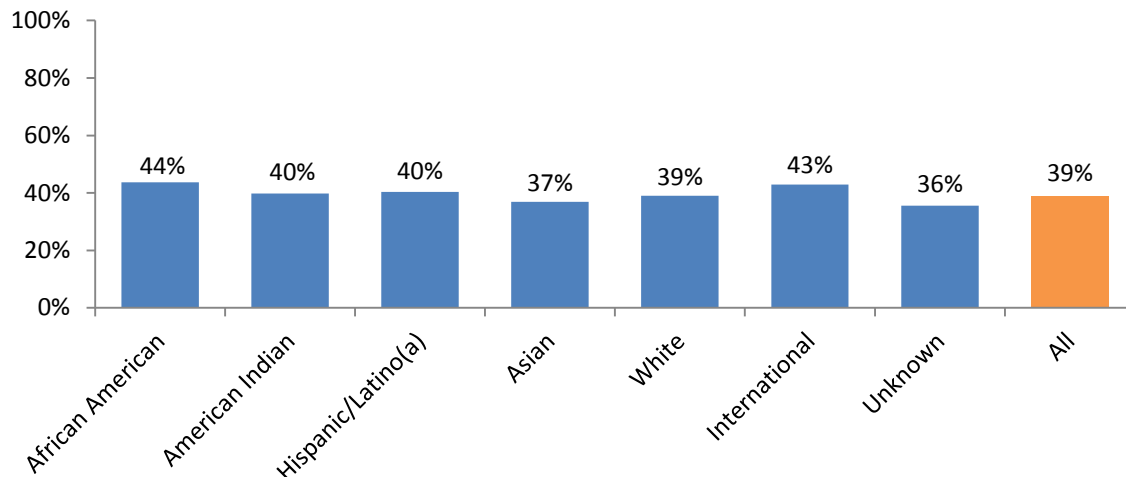
## Graduate Degree Aspirations and Outcomes of UC Students

Entering graduate school is a major objective of many undergraduates who attend a research university. Possession of a graduate professional degree (i.e. Law, Business, and Medicine) can significantly enhance lifetime employment and earnings trajectory, while earning a doctorate provides the training necessary to enter the field of academia. Students experiencing the academic rigor of a research university may also be more likely to attend and succeed in graduate school. While the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUCES) shows that about 40 percent of UC's undergraduates plan to enroll in graduate school, less is known about their actual success rates in completing a graduate degree or how these plans and outcomes vary by demographic groups. This brief summarizes students' plans to enroll in graduate school and their success in completing graduate degrees by ethnic groups.

### Plans

Overall, 39 percent of UC undergraduates indicate plans to enroll in graduate or professional school after receiving their UC bachelor's degree. This reflects the most recent UCUCES student survey administration in 2016, but results have been stable and concentrated around 40 percent in prior administrations. International students and those from underrepresented groups are more likely than other domestic students to indicate plans to attend graduate school. African American students are the most likely (44 percent) to indicate graduate school plans, while American Indian and Hispanic/Latino(a) students are more likely than White or Asian students to do so.

#### PLANS TO ENROLL IN GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL AFTER GRADUATION UCUCES 2016



### Degree Completion

Data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) allows us to track UC students' actual graduate school completion from any institution that participates in the NSC data sharing<sup>1</sup>. The graduate degree

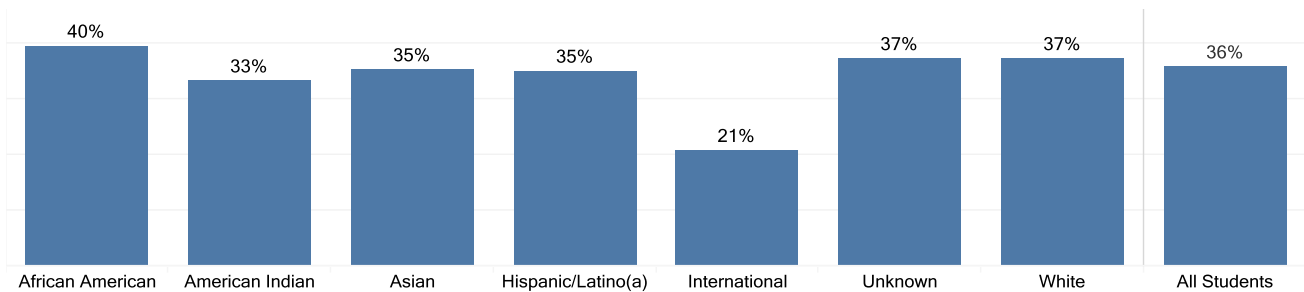
<sup>1</sup> The NSC data covers roughly 99 percent of all 4-year college enrollments and degrees granted. Notable non-participating institutions that could affect the accuracy of UC student graduate degree completion rates include Rutgers University, Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, and University of the Pacific.

completion rates of recent graduating cohorts of UC students very closely resemble their initial plans to enroll in graduate school. Thirty-six percent of students who graduated from UC between 2000 and 2010 completed some type of graduate degree. African American students had the highest graduate degree completion rate at 40 percent, followed by Hispanic/Latino(a), Asian, and White students at 35 percent each. While these graduate degree completion rates are slightly lower than the percent initially indicating graduate school plans, a small percentage of students may still go on to complete graduate degrees that we have not yet observed in the period covered by our data.

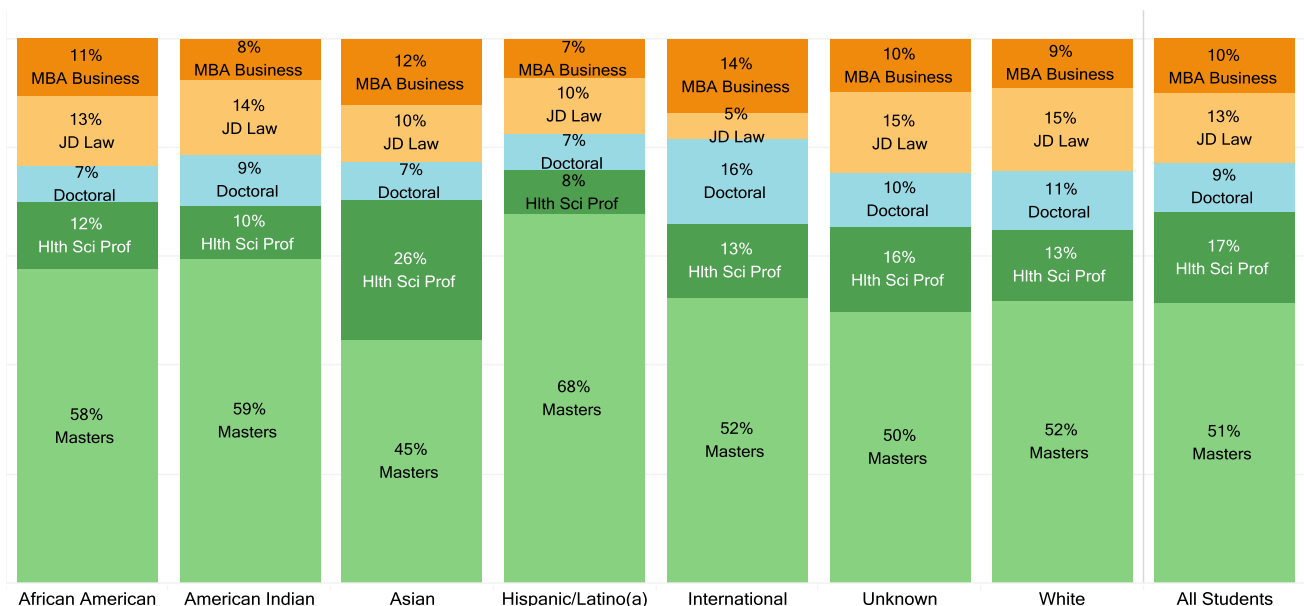
Among UC students completing a graduate degree, the majority (51 percent) complete some type of master's degree while 10 to 17 percent complete a health science professional degree (including M.D.), MBA, or law degree. About 9 percent of graduate degree earners receive a doctoral degree. These patterns are very similar across racial/ethnic groups, with the major exceptions being that Asian students are more likely to earn health science professional degrees and international students more likely to earn a doctorate. The relatively low (21 percent) completion rate among international students is likely primarily due to the data not capturing degree completion at foreign institutions.

UC Undergraduate Alumni Graduate Degree Attainment  
2000-2010 Graduating Cohorts, by Race/Ethnicity

Percent Ever Receiving Graduate Degree



Graduate Degrees Received Among Recipients

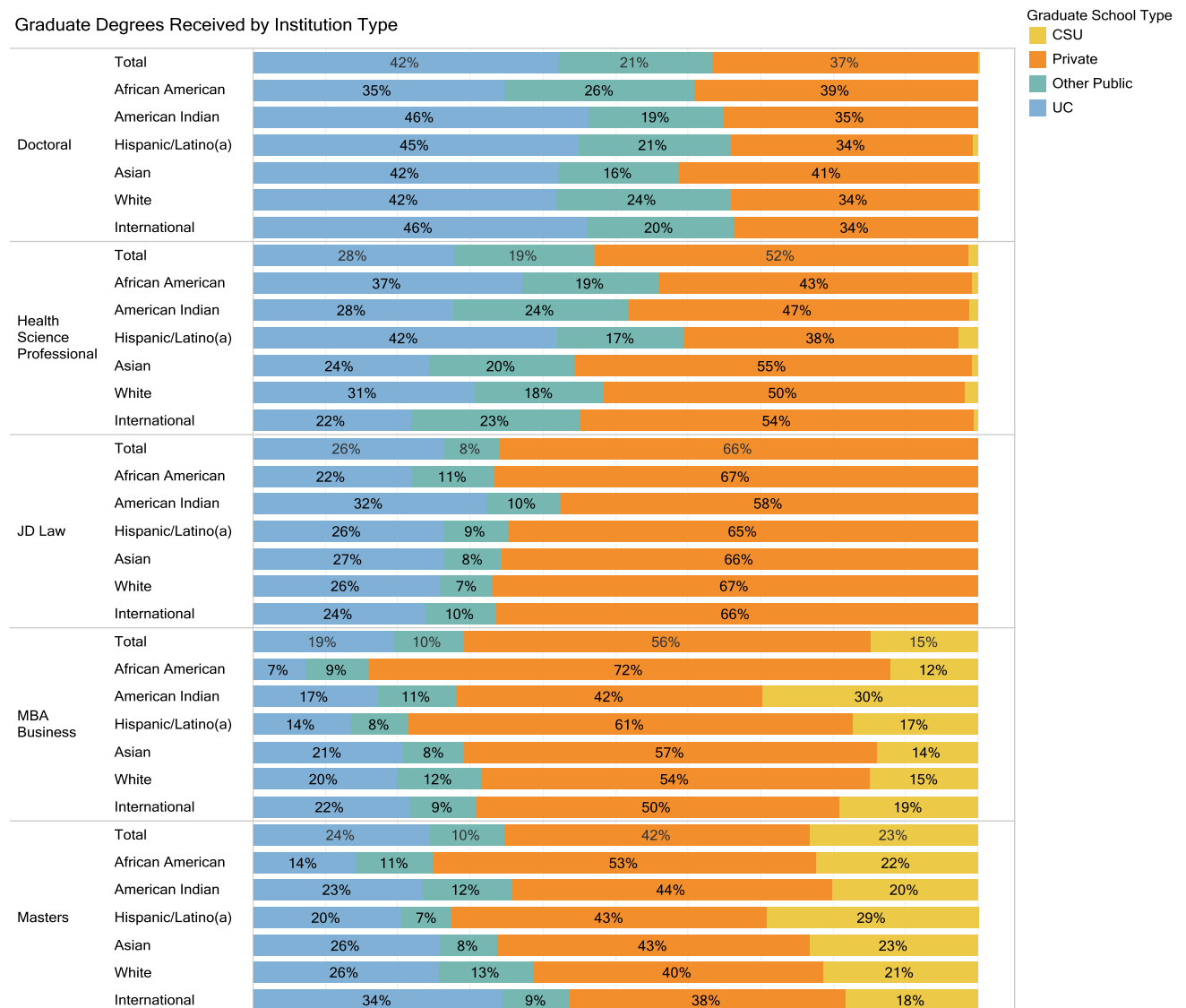


Where Do They Earn Graduate Degrees?

The type of institution where UC students earn their graduate degrees depends on the type of degree they pursue. Overall, those pursuing a doctoral degree are most likely (42 percent) to earn one from a UC campus, while those pursuing law, business, health science professional, or other type of master’s degree do so predominantly at private institutions. The figure below shows the type of institution attended for each graduate degree by race/ethnicity. African American students are less likely to earn their doctoral degrees at UC (35 vs. 42 percent overall) and more likely to earning health science professional degrees at UC (37 vs. 28 percent overall). Hispanic/Latino(a) students are more likely to earn both their doctorate (45 vs. 42 percent) and health science professional degree (42 vs. 28 percent) at UC.

**UC Undergraduate Alumni Graduate Degree Attainment  
2000-2010 Graduating Cohorts**

Graduate Degrees Received by Institution Type



Conclusion - Plans Matter

Students who declare an intention to enroll in graduate school are more than twice as likely to eventually earn a graduate degree. As the figure below shows, up to 70 percent of recent UC graduates who stated an intention to enroll in graduate school eventually completed a graduate degree, while only about 30 percent of students without graduate school plans did so. As the data in this brief shows, the relationship between graduate school goal setting and graduate degree completion appears strong - for students from all ethnic backgrounds. To the extent that graduate degree completion is an important outcome for both students and their universities, this suggests the importance of supporting students in the early setting of appropriate graduate school goals, and providing them with the support needed to achieve those goals.

**Graduate Degree Completion Rates**

