



**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT**

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS — ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Goals

One of the University of California’s highest priorities is to ensure that a UC education remains accessible to all Californians who meet its admissions standards. This goal is articulated in California’s Master Plan for Higher Education, which calls for UC to admit all eligible freshmen and transfers, with freshman eligibility designed to capture the top 12.5 percent of California public high school graduates. It also calls for UC to admit all qualified transfer students from California Community Colleges (CCCs).

Of the nearly 218,000 applications for admission in fall 2019, about 177,000 students applied as freshmen and over 41,000 as transfers. Campus admission decisions are based on a comprehensive review of qualifications and establish the incoming California resident class size based on state funding. Over the last five years, UC’s enrollment of California residents increased by more than 16,000: 2,500 in fall 2019, 3,000 in fall 2018, 4,000 in fall 2017, and 7,000 in the prior two years combined.

For 2019–20, UC is also estimated to have achieved its goal of enrolling a 2:1 ratio of freshman to transfer California resident undergraduates, excluding Merced, for the third year in a row. The UC Transfer Pathways program supports this goal by helping community college students prepare for transfer admission to the most popular majors at UC campuses. Under a new agreement with the California Community Colleges, UC has created a Transfer Guarantee program, Pathways+, for community college students who meet certain criteria.

Admissions — freshmen

UC utilizes a comprehensive review process to make admission decisions, considering not only completion of rigorous college preparatory courses and high school GPA, but also talents, special projects, accomplishments in light of life experiences and circumstances, extracurricular activities, and community service.

The rapid growth in freshman applications to UC over the past two decades demonstrates the increased demand for a college education, the growth of California’s population, and UC’s continued popularity. UC continues to reach its Master Plan goals by guaranteeing admission to California resident applicants who are either in the top nine percent of high school graduates statewide or the top nine percent of graduates from their own high schools. Qualified freshman applicants are offered an opportunity to be admitted to another UC campus if they do not receive an offer of admission from the UC campuses where they applied.

Admissions — transfers

Almost all transfer students enter UC as upper-division juniors. Campus enrollment targets are based on state funding as well as capacity in major programs at the upper-division level.

UC’s Transfer Pathways identify a common set of lower-division courses for each of 20 of the most popular majors among transfer applicants. The Transfer Pathways present a clear roadmap for prospective transfers to prepare for their majors and be well positioned to graduate in a timely fashion from any UC campus. In fall 2019, the third year of the Transfer Pathways, those indicating Pathway-based preparation represented 41 percent of all CCC admits and 35 percent of all CCC enrollees. Many of these students also participated in other preparatory programs such as Transfer Admissions Guaranteed (TAG) and Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).

Transfer Pathways Majors

Anthropology	Computer Science	Molecular Biology
Biochemistry	Economics	Philosophy
Biology	Electrical Engineering	Physics
Business Administration	English	Political Science
Cell Biology	History	Psychology
Chemistry	Mathematics	Sociology
Communication	Mechanical Engineering	

In April 2018, UC signed an agreement with the California Community Colleges (CCCs) to guarantee a place within the UC system to students who complete one of the Transfer Pathways and achieve the requisite grade point average (GPA). The new Pathways+ program launched in August 2019.

Enrollments

The University enrolled over 226,000 undergraduates in fall 2019. The University enrolls freshman and transfer students from almost every county of California. UC's Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) policy is designed to increase the overall geographic diversity of freshman entrants.

Undergraduate Enrollment, Fall 2019

New Freshmen	45,948
New Transfers/Other ¹	21,048
Continuing Students	159,129
TOTAL	226,125

Source: UC Data Warehouse

As academic qualifications have improved over the last decade, UC has maintained access for populations historically underserved by higher education. In fall 2019, 35 percent of new undergraduates received Pell Grants, a marker for low-income status. About 40 percent of UC's entering students are first-generation, meaning neither parent graduated from a four-year college. These students are more likely to be from an underrepresented group (URG, African American, Latinx and Native American/Alaska Native students), to have a first language other than English, to enter as a transfer student, to be female, and/or to have a lower income than students with at least one parent who graduated from a four-year college (1.2.1).

The share of all undergraduates who are nonresident domestic and international students has increased in recent years, though their proportion is still much lower than at comparable public research universities. In 2018–19, the share of new undergraduates paying nonresident tuition went up slightly. In May 2017, UC adopted a policy² affirming that nonresident undergraduates “will continue to be enrolled in addition to, rather than in place of, funded California undergraduates at each campus.” The policy also capped nonresident enrollment at 18 percent for five UC campuses (Davis, Merced, Riverside, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz) and, for the remaining four campuses (Berkeley, Irvine, Los Angeles, and San Diego), at the proportion each campus enrolled in 2017–18. The policy went into effect for the 2018–19 academic year.

Having California students learn and live alongside students from backgrounds and cultures different from their own is part of a world-class educational experience. California students also benefit from the extra tuition paid by nonresident undergraduates, which is about \$30,000 more per year than the amount paid by residents. That tuition helps to fund faculty hires, instructional technology, student advising, and other services that directly benefit California students.

¹ Other types of new students include those enrolling for a second baccalaureate or with limited status (not seeking a bachelor's degree).

² Regents Policy 2109: Policy on Nonresident Student Enrollment: regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/policies/2109.html.

Admissions and enrollment trends

Freshman applicants have nearly tripled over the past two decades, averaging five percent growth per year. In fall 2019, the number of applicants decreased three percent compared to the previous year, while the number of students admitted went up less than half a percent and the number of enrollees went down two percent (1.1.1).

Fall transfer applicants nearly doubled over the last 20 years, with average annual growth of four percent. In fall 2019, transfer applicants and admits both decreased by less than half a percent compared to the previous year, while enrollees went down four percent after the largest transfer class entered the University in 2018 (1.1.2).

The Master Plan specifies that the University maintain a 60:40 ratio of upper-division to lower-division students, which corresponds to a 2:1 ratio of new California resident freshmen to new California resident transfers. UC has moved from 2.3:1 in 2016–7, to an estimated 2.0:1 in 2019–20 (Universitywide). The Universitywide ratio excluding Merced is estimated to be 1.9:1 for 2019–20, achieving the systemwide goal for this metric for a third year. The University continues to work toward achieving this ratio for each campus (except Merced) (1.1.3). Overall undergraduate enrollment (new and continuing students) continued to grow in fall 2019. Total enrollment was over 226,000 in fall 2019, up two percent from the year before. This includes an increase in California residents of over 2,500, following increases of over 7,000 in fall 2016, over 4,000 in fall 2017, and over 3,000 in fall 2018 (1.1.4).

Academic preparation

Freshmen entering UC are increasingly well prepared, as shown by changes in the number of college preparatory courses, high school GPA, and test scores over time (1.3.1). Transfer students are also increasingly well prepared, as measured by college GPA (1.3.2).

Geographic origins and nonresidents

UC has a lower proportion of out-of-state undergraduates than other public AAU universities. In fall 2019, only 17.9 percent of UC's enrollees were out-of-state or international, compared with 29.5 percent for other AAU public institutions (1.4.1).

About 36 percent of freshmen and 47 percent of transfer students entering UC campuses come from within 50 miles of campus. These numbers are relatively stable and have risen only slightly over the past few years (1.4.2, 1.4.3).

The percentage of all undergraduates paying nonresident tuition has gone up in recent years. The proportion of *new* undergraduate students paying nonresident tuition went up slightly in 2018–19 (1.4.4).

Looking ahead

The University of California Board of Regents at its May 2020 meeting unanimously approved the suspension of the standardized test requirement for all California freshman applicants until fall 2024, providing time for the University to create a new test that better aligns with A–G curricular standards. However, if a new test does not meet specified criteria in time for fall 2025 admission, UC will eliminate the standardized testing requirement for California students. This year's Accountability Report will not include ACT and SAT measures and next year's report will include indicators that better align with goals of UC's new test.

It is unclear how fall 2020 enrollment may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, though early indicators continue to show strong demand for students to enroll at UC.

For more information

Information on admissions: admission.universityofcalifornia.edu

Data on UC admissions:

universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/admissions-residency-and-ethnicity

universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/freshman-admissions-summary

universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/transfer-admissions-summary

universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/admissions-source-school

universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/transfers-major

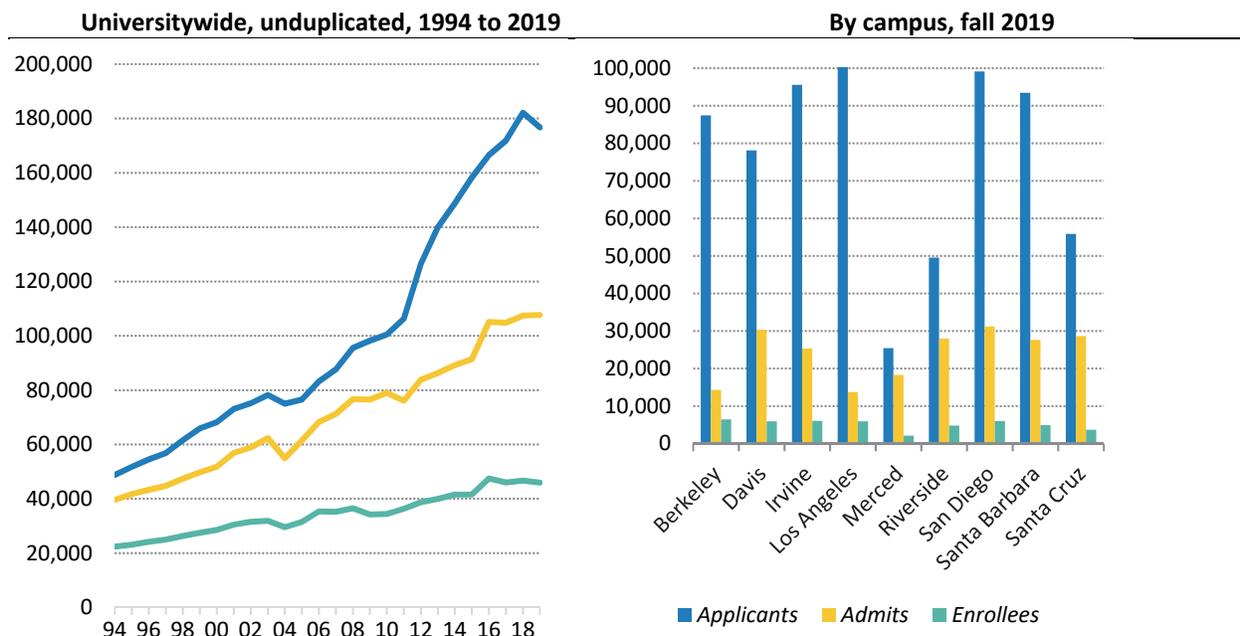
Data on UC fall enrollment:

universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/fall-enrollment-headcounts

1.1 APPLICANTS, ADMITS, AND ENROLLEES

Demand for UC admission from freshman applicants remains high.

1.1.1 Freshman applicants, admits, and enrollees Universitywide and UC campuses Fall 1994 to 2019



Source: UC Data Warehouse¹

Although unduplicated freshman applicants went down by three percent in 2019 compared to 2018, they remained above the levels for all years prior to 2018. From 2011 to 2018, applicants increased 71 percent (or about eight percent per year), from about 106,000 to about 182,000, compared to a 42 percent increase in the seven-year period between 2004 and 2011 (or about five percent per year), from about 75,000 to 106,000. The 71 percent growth represents about 76,000 applicants, including about 35,000 California residents.

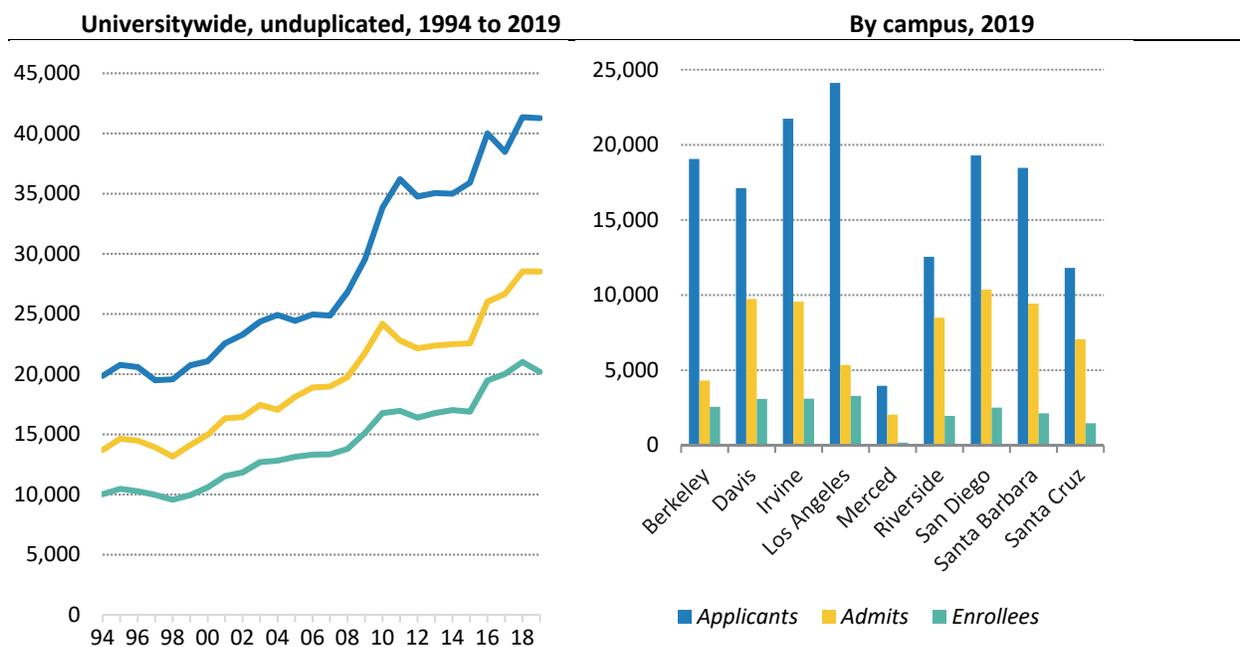
Most campuses admit less than half of applicants. Many applicants apply to more than one UC campus; in fall 2019, UC applicants applied to an average of 3.9 campuses. Freshman applications decreased at Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Santa Cruz and increased slightly for all other campuses in fall 2019. For data tables on UC freshman applicants, admits, and enrollees by campus over time, see: universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/admissions-residency-and-ethnicity.

¹ Admits and enrollees here include applicants guaranteed admission who are not offered admission at a campus to which they applied but who are referred to and admitted by another campus. Some campuses admit fall applicants for a subsequent term (winter or spring). These “rollover” admits and enrollees are excluded in this indicator. Students who apply to multiple UC campuses are counted only once in the Universitywide indicator. A change in accounting for referral students is responsible for the apparent drop in 2011 admits. Beginning that year, UC Merced admitted only students who indicated interest in a referral offer, rather than every student who qualified for an offer.

1.1 APPLICANTS, ADMITS, AND ENROLLEES

Transfer demand remains strong after a record-breaking fall 2018.

1.1.2 Transfer applicants, admits, and enrollees Universitywide and UC campuses Fall 1994 to 2019



Source: UC Data Warehouse¹

Transfer applications and admits decreased slightly and transfer enrollees went down four percent in 2019 after the largest class of transfer students entered the University in fall 2018. Over 41,000 transfer students applied, about 29,000 were admitted, and over 20,000 enrolled in fall 2019. Consistent with UC’s commitment to transfer students from California Community Colleges (CCCs), fall enrollment of new CCC California resident

transfers has more than doubled since 1994, from 8,400 to 17,200. The average transfer applicant applies to 3.6 UC campuses, compared to 3.9 for the average freshman applicant.

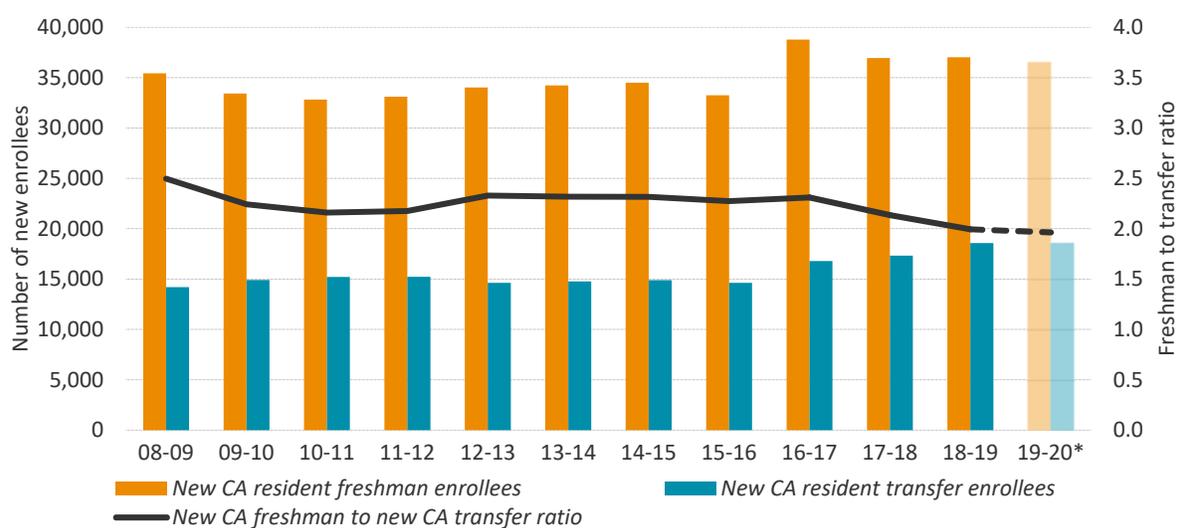
For data tables on UC transfer applicants, admits, and enrollees by campus see: universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/admissions-residency-and-ethnicity.

¹ Admits and enrollees here include the referral pool. Some campuses admit fall applicants for a subsequent term (winter or spring). These “rollover” admits and enrollees are excluded in the graphs here, which only show fall data.

1.1 APPLICANTS, ADMITS, AND ENROLLEES

UC has met the systemwide goal of a 2:1 ratio of California resident freshmen to transfer students and is on track to meet the goal at all campuses.

1.1.3 New California resident freshman and transfer students Universitywide 2008–09 to 2019–20



* The actual figures for 2019-20 are not yet available and may differ from the estimated figures shown here.

Source: UC Data Warehouse and UC campuses¹

The California Master Plan calls for UC to accommodate all qualified resident California Community College (CCC) transfer students. It specifies that the University maintain at least a 60:40 ratio of upper-division (junior and senior) to lower-division (freshman and sophomore) students to ensure adequate upper-division spaces for CCC transfers. To do so, UC aims to enroll one new California resident transfer student for every two new California resident freshmen, or 67 percent new resident freshmen to 33 percent new resident transfer students.² UC has moved from 2.3:1 in 2016–17 to 2.0 in 2019–20 (Universitywide). Excluding Merced, the ratio for 2019–20 is estimated to be 1.9:1, meeting the systemwide goal three years in a row.³ Santa Cruz met the goal in 2018–19, San Diego met it in 2019–20, and Riverside is on track to meet it in 2020–21.⁴

	2019–20*	% New CA resident freshmen	% New CA resident transfers	Ratio of new CA freshmen to new CA transfers
Berkeley		66%	34%	2.0
Davis		64%	36%	1.8
Irvine		64%	36%	1.8
Los Angeles		62%	38%	1.6
Merced		90%	10%	9.4
Riverside		69%	31%	2.2
San Diego		64%	36%	1.8
Santa Barbara		66%	34%	2.0
Santa Cruz		67%	33%	2.0
Universitywide, all campuses		66%	34%	2.0
Universitywide, excl. Merced		65%	35%	1.9

¹ Full year headcount enrollment.

² Nearly all (95 percent) of California resident transfer students in 2018–19 came from CCCs.

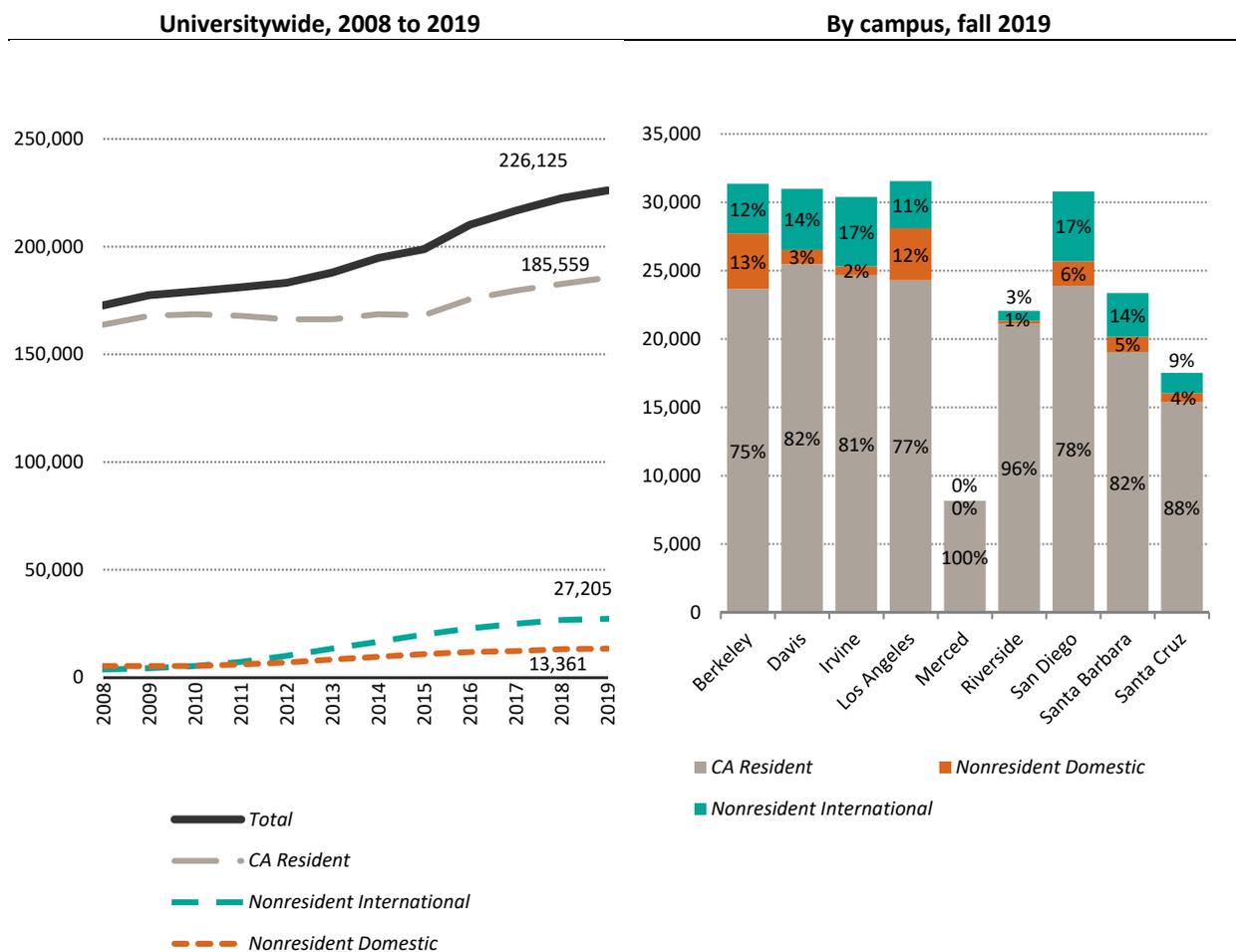
³ Merced is excluded from the 2:1 ratio goal that was part of the Budget Framework agreement with the State of California.

⁴ San Diego was above 2:1 in 2018–19 due to a one-time surge in freshmen.

1.1 APPLICANTS, ADMITS, AND ENROLLEES

UC's fall undergraduate headcount grew by two percent between fall 2018 and fall 2019, including over 2,000 additional California residents.

1.1.4 Undergraduate headcount enrollment Universitywide and UC campuses Fall 2008 to 2019



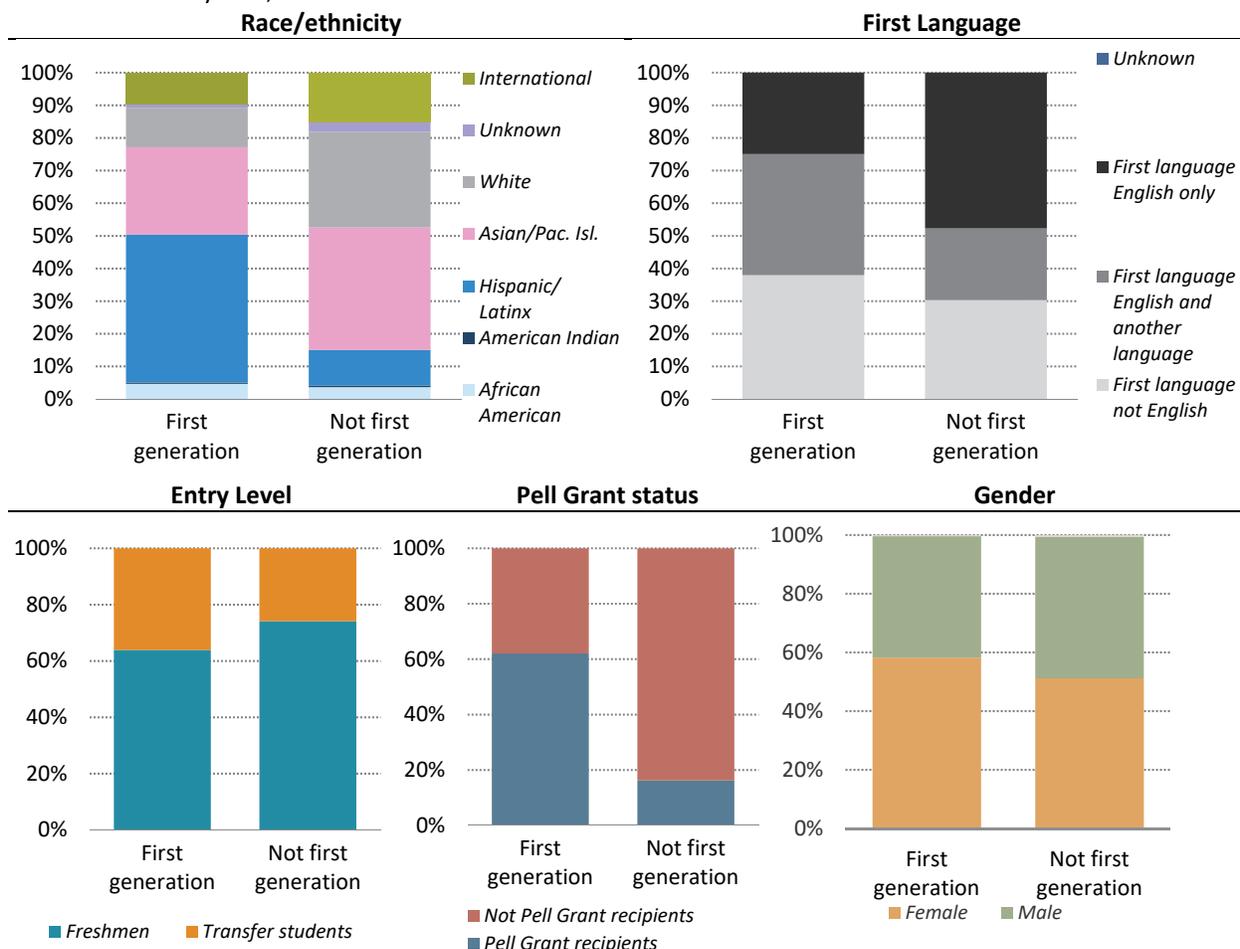
Source: UC Data Warehouse

The University and the state share the goal of expanding access to a UC education. The University enrolled over 2,000 additional California residents in fall 2019 compared to fall 2018, following increases of 3,000, 4,000 and 7,000 in the three prior years, for a total of over 16,000.

1.2 DEMOGRAPHIC OUTCOMES

UC's entering first-generation students are more likely to be from an underrepresented group (URG), to enter as transfer students, and/or to be Pell Grant recipients.

1.2.1 Entering students by first generation status, race/ethnicity, first language spoken at home, entry level, Pell Grant status, and gender Universitywide, Fall 2019



Source: UC Data Warehouse¹

Half (50 percent) of entering first-generation students in fall 2019 are from URGs, compared to 15 percent of not-first-generation students. Over one-third (38 percent) of first-generation students' first language was not English, versus 30 percent for others. Over one-third (36 percent) of first-generation students entered as transfers, versus 26

percent for others. Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of first-generation students are lower-income Pell Grant recipients, versus 16 percent for others. And nearly three-fifths (58 percent) of first-generation students are female, compared to just over half (51 percent) of others.

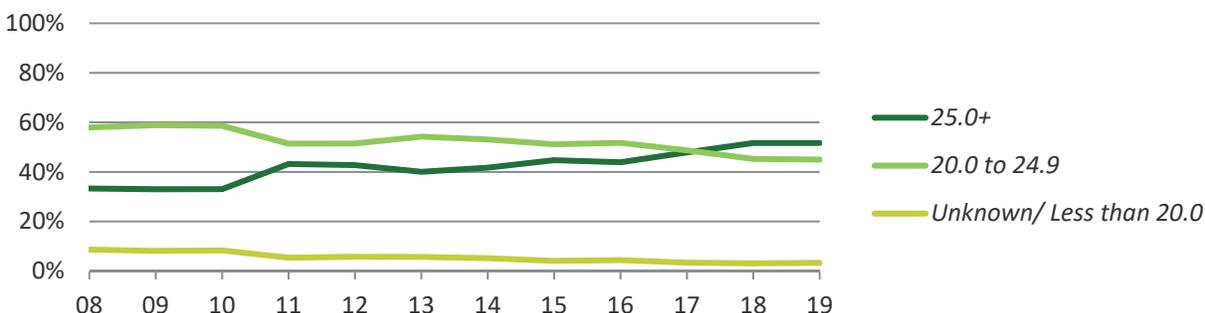
¹ First-generation students are those whose parent(s) did not complete a four-year college degree. Total of first-generation students is 26,946 (40.2 percent); not-first-generation students total 37,504 (56.0 percent); and missing/unknown are 2,546 (3.8 percent). Those with unknown first-generation status are excluded from this indicator. Pell Grant receipt is used as a proxy for low-income status. Less than .02 percent of entering students have an unknown first language.

1.3 PREPARATION OUTCOMES

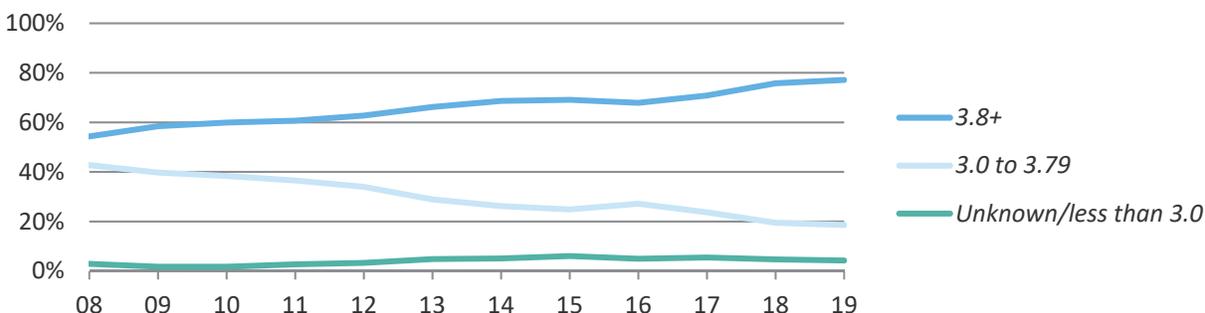
Freshmen entering UC are increasingly well prepared.

1.3.1 A–G (college preparatory)¹ courses and weighted, capped high school grade point average (GPA)² of entering freshmen, as share of class
Universitywide
Fall 2008 to Fall 2019

Yearlong A–G courses



High school weighted, capped GPA



Source: UC Application Processing data (A–G courses) and UC Data Warehouse (GPA)

The academic indicators of UC’s entering freshmen have improved over time, as reflected by an increase in the share of students completing 25 or more college-preparatory courses and having a 3.8 or higher high school GPA. From 2008 to 2019, the first indicator went up from 33 percent to 52 percent, while the second went up from 54 percent to 77 percent.

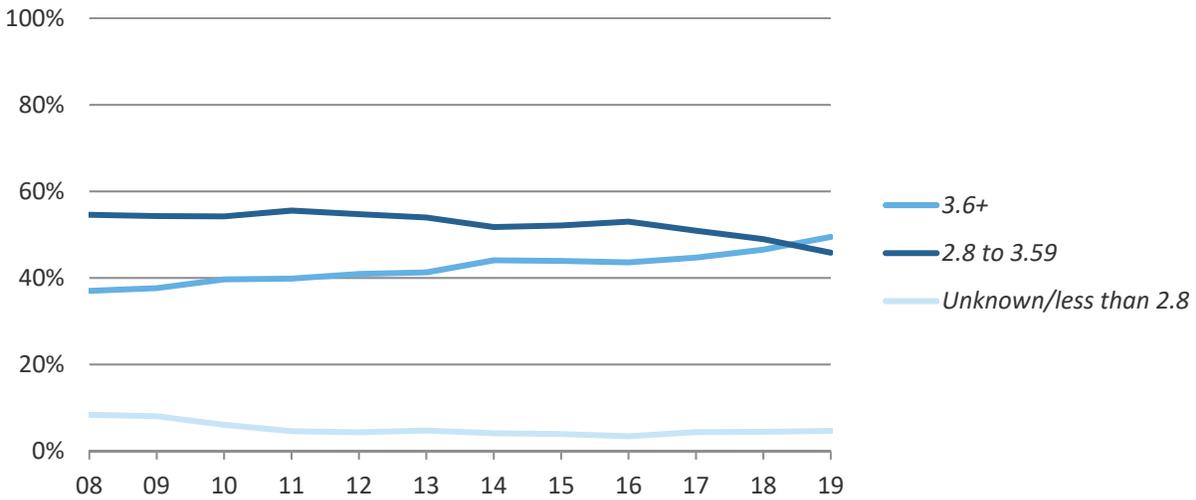
¹ A–G courses refer to those high school courses that UC has reviewed and approved as college preparatory. The minimum number of required A–G courses is 15.

² Weighted, capped GPA means that students may receive a maximum of eight semesters of honors credit. More information is available at admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/california-residents/admissions-index/index.html.

1.3 PREPARATION OUTCOMES

UC transfer students in fall 2019 were better prepared academically than their counterparts a decade ago, as measured by their grades.

1.3.2 College grade point average (GPA)¹ of entering transfer students, as share of class Fall 2008 to Fall 2019 Universitywide



Source: UC Data Warehouse and UC Corporate Student System

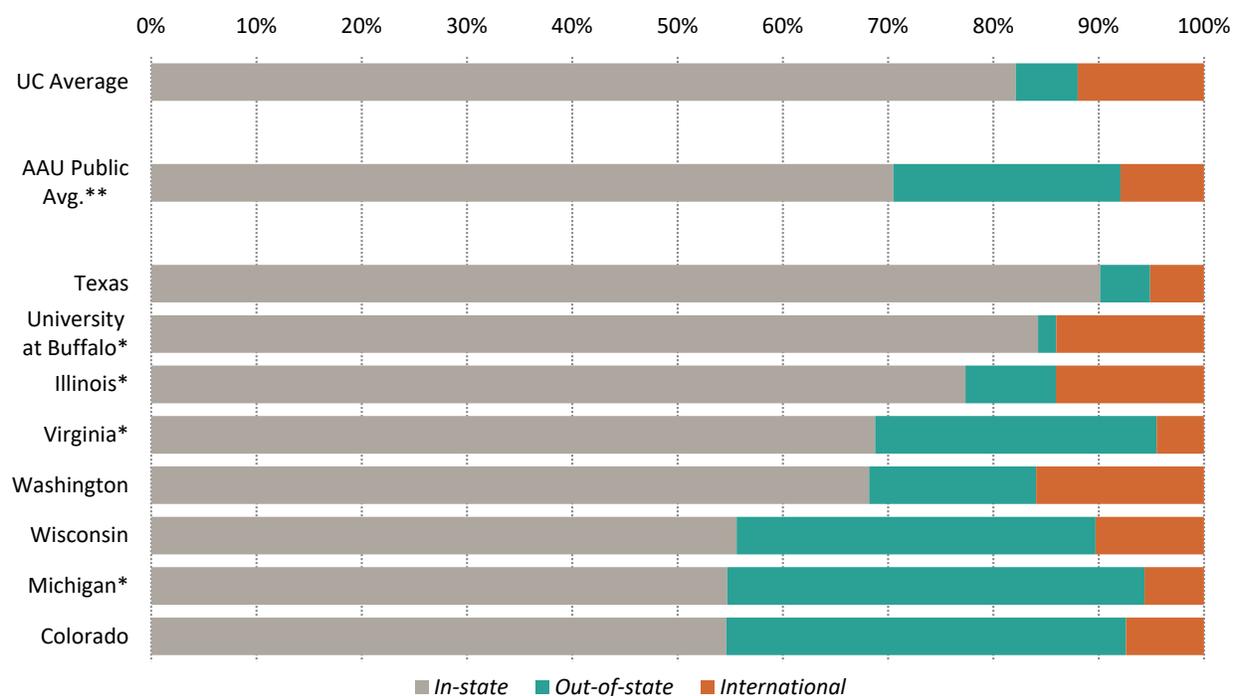
The academic qualifications of transfer students entering UC have improved over time, as reflected by an increase in the share of students having a 3.6 or higher college GPA, from 38 percent in fall 2008 to 49 percent in fall 2019.

¹ The transfer GPA is based on grades for college-level academic courses from the college(s) where students were previously enrolled.

1.4 GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS AND NONRESIDENTS

UC has a substantially lower proportion of out-of-state undergraduates than other AAU universities. In fall 2019, only 17.9 percent of UC's enrollees were out-of-state or international, compared with 29.5 percent for other AAU Public institutions.

1.4.1 Residency of undergraduate students Universitywide and comparison institutions Fall 2019



Source: UC Data Warehouse (UC numbers) and Common Data Set (comparator numbers)

* UC's four comparison public institutions.

**AAU public institution average excludes UC; also excludes Univ. of Missouri because data not available.

UC's priority is to enroll California residents. Campuses enroll nonresident students based on available physical and instructional capacity and the campus' ability to attract qualified nonresident students.

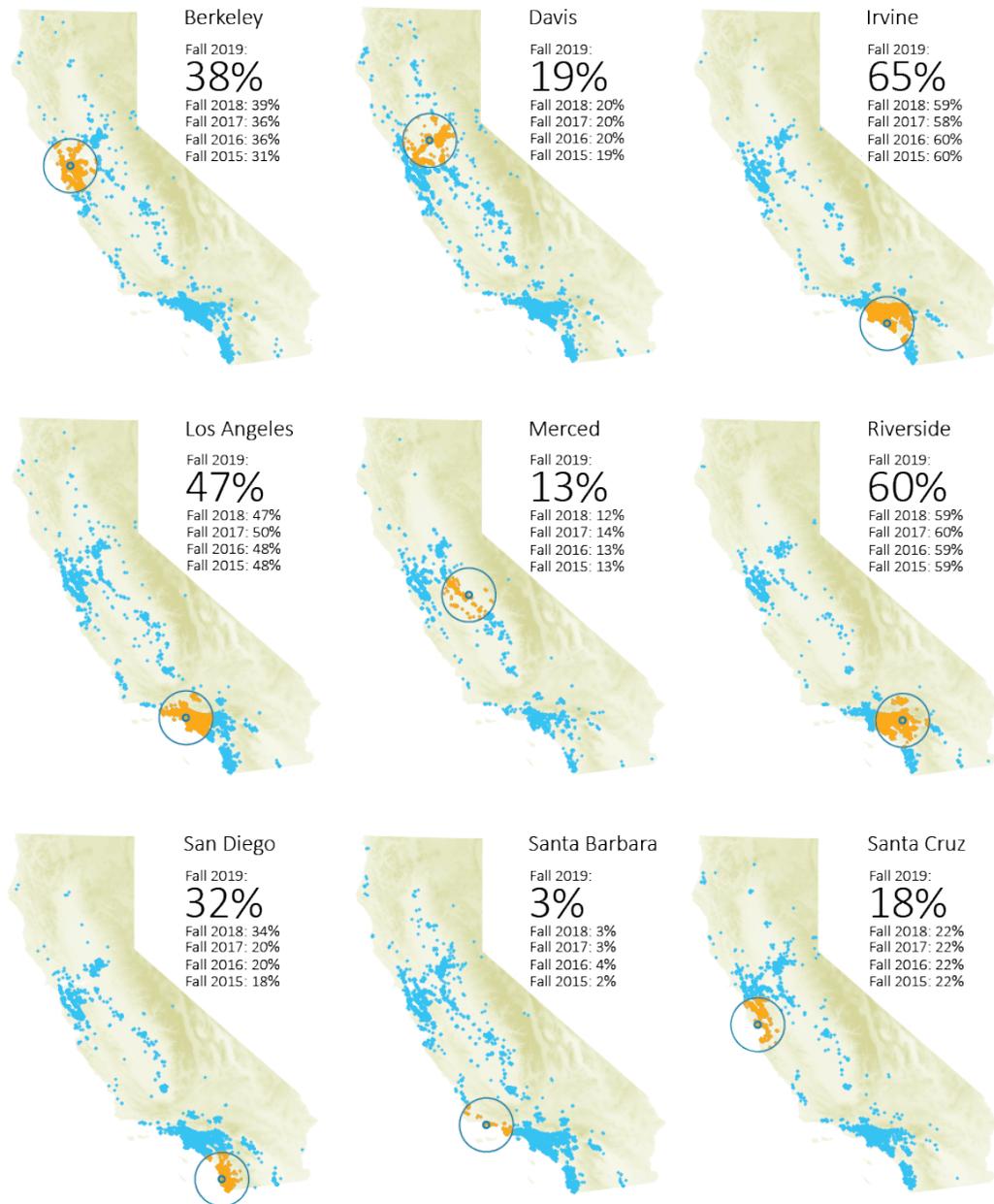
Nonresidents provide geographic and cultural diversity to the student body. They also pay the full cost of their education. In 2018–19, systemwide tuition and fees for a nonresident undergraduate were \$41,562, compared to \$12,570 for California resident students.

Nonresident applicants must meet higher criteria to be considered for admission. The minimum high school GPA for nonresident freshmen is 3.4, compared to 3.0 for California freshmen. The minimum college GPA for nonresident transfer students is 2.8, compared to 2.4 for California residents.

1.4 GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS AND NONRESIDENTS

UC campuses attract freshmen from nearby regions and the major urban areas of California, with a systemwide local attendance rate of 36 percent.

1.4.2 Percentage of new CA resident freshman enrollees whose home is within a 50-mile radius of their campus¹ Fall 2019



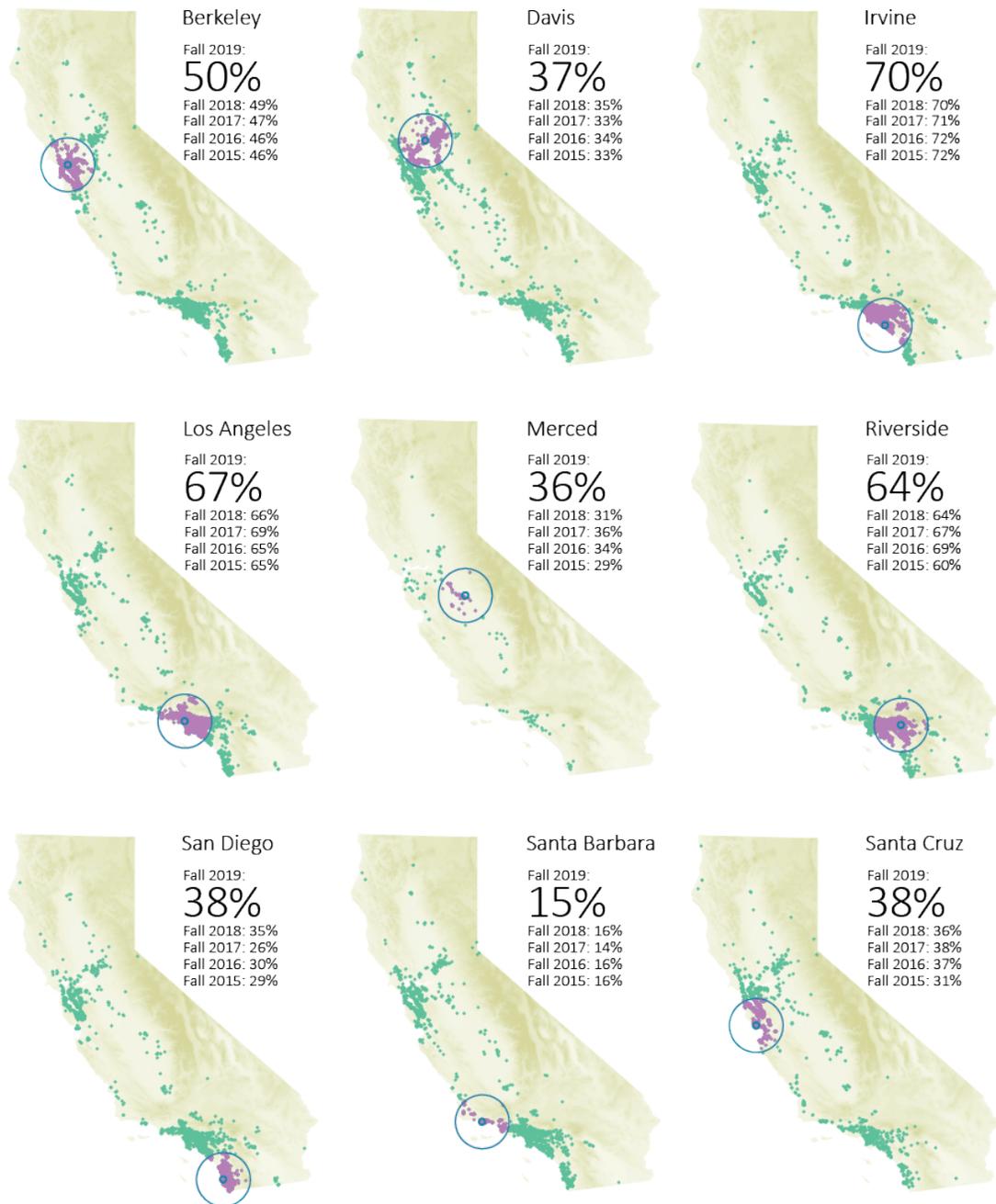
Source: UC Data Warehouse and UC Corporate Student System

¹ California residents are defined here as those with permanent addresses in California.

1.4 GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS AND NONRESIDENTS

Local enrollment rates for transfers are higher than for freshmen, with 49 percent enrolling at a UC campus within 50 miles of their homes.

1.4.3 Percentage of new CA resident transfer enrollees whose home is within a 50-mile radius of their campus UC campuses¹ Fall 2019



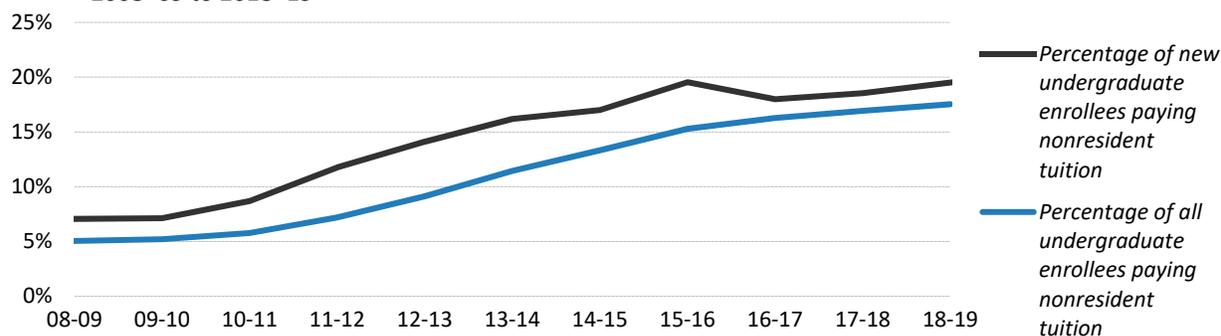
Source: UC Data Warehouse and UC Corporate Student System

¹ California residents are defined here as those with permanent addresses in California.

1.4 GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS AND NONRESIDENTS

The proportion of new undergraduate students paying nonresident tuition rose slightly in 2018–19.

1.4.4 Percentage of undergraduate enrollees paying nonresident tuition¹ Universitywide 2008–09 to 2018–19



Source: UC Data Warehouse

Systemwide, the share of all undergraduates paying nonresident tuition rose from five percent to 18 percent between 2009–10 and 2018–19. From 2009–10 to 2015–16, the proportion of new undergraduates paying nonresident tuition went up from seven percent to 20 percent before dropping to 18 percent in 2016–17 as enrollment of new California residents increased. In 2017–18 and 2018–19, the proportion of new undergraduates paying nonresident tuition went up slightly, to 19 percent then 20 percent.

The proportion of nonresident students at individual campuses varies depending on a campus' capacity, and its ability to attract nonresident students, as well as its nonresident cap under a policy approved in May 2017, which applies to total undergraduate numbers. Under the policy, effective in 2018–19, nonresident enrollment is limited to 18 percent at five UC campuses. At the other four campuses where the proportion of nonresidents already exceeded 18 percent — UC Berkeley, UC Irvine, UCLA, and UC San Diego — nonresident enrollment is capped at the proportion that each campus enrolled in 2017–18.

¹ This chart uses year average headcount enrollment, the average headcount across all terms in the academic year (three quarters or two semesters).

² Not all nonresident students pay nonresident tuition. Some have statutory exemptions, such as AB 540 students, children of UC employees, and others designated by the state. AB 540 students are considered California residents for tuition purposes as established by Assembly Bill 540, passed in 2001.