

# A STUDY OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION USING IPEDS DATA\*

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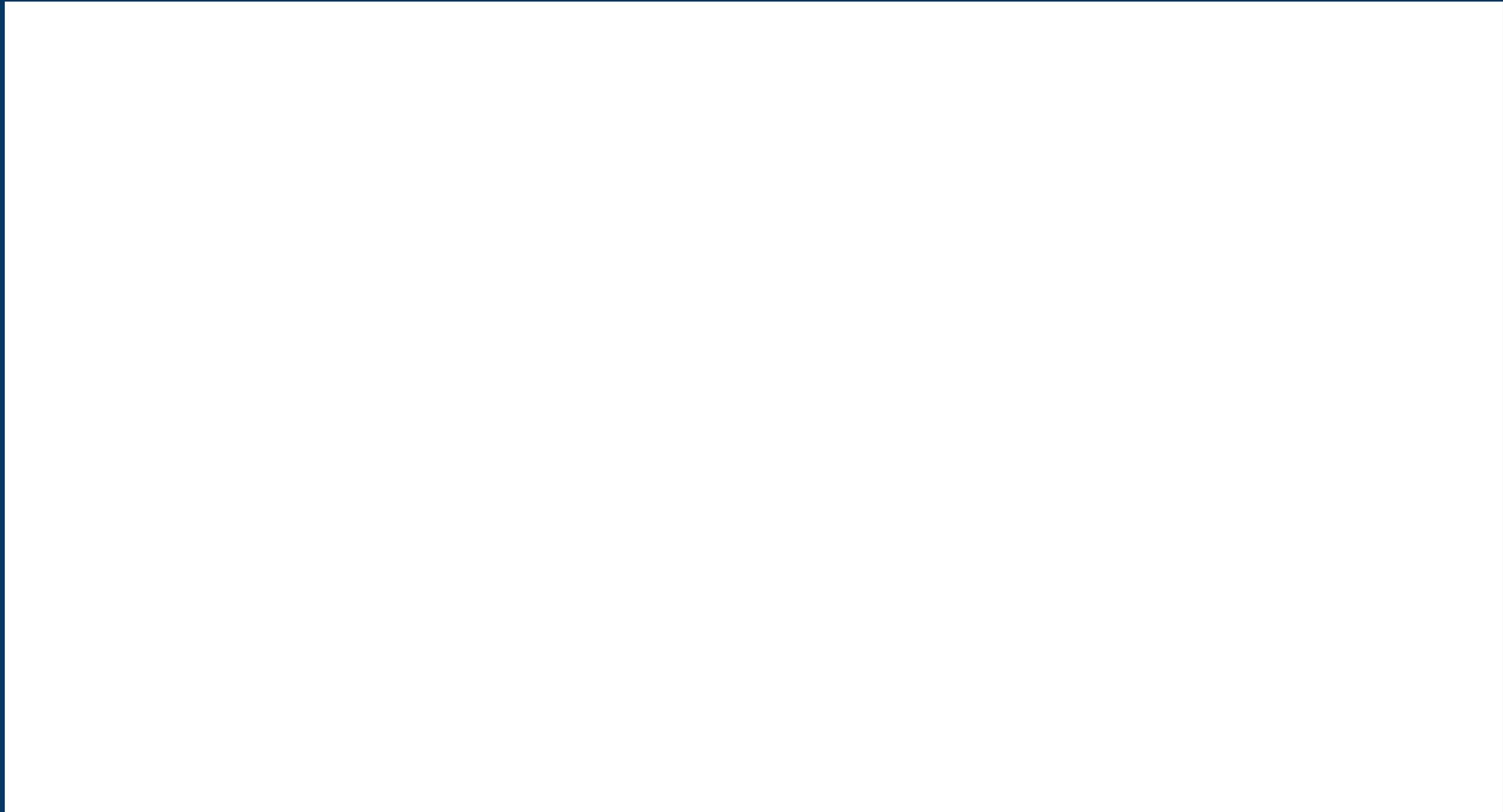
\* How I completed my dissertation and published an article using IPEDS data

# Where I Started

- History of Higher Education class, University of Alabama, Dr. Steven Katsinas
- Assigned to review *The Invisible Colleges: A Profile of Small, Private Colleges With Limited Resources (1972)* written by Alexander Astin and Calvin Lee
- Part of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education series on higher education
- HEA had been passed in 1965, and the Carnegie series was intended to “investigate and provide recommendations on the most vital issues facing American higher education in the latter part of the twentieth century” (Douglas, 3)
- HEA was up for reauthorization in 1972

# Astin and Lee's Methodology

- Looked at all private 4-year institutions: 918
- Categorized institutions based on enrollment size and selectivity, building on work done for *Astin's Predicting Academic Performance in College* (1971)
- Selectivity was determined by average ACT/SAT scores
- Scores obtained from four sources
  - *American Colleges and Universities*, Singletary 1968
  - *Manual of Freshman Class Profiles* (College Entrance Examination Board (1967)
  - *American Junior Colleges*, Glazer, 1967
  - *Who Goes Where to College*, Astin, 1965
- Institutions with average SAT below 998 or ACT below 23 and under were considered non-selective



# Selectivity Levels of Four-Year Private Colleges (n=918)

College selectivity level	SAT mean	ACT composite	4-Year Private (n=918)	Percentage
8	1320+	30+	17	1.80%
7	1236-1319	28-29	27	3.00%
6	1154-1235	26-27	57	6.20%
5	1075-1153	25-26	92	10.00%
4	998-1074	23-24	201	21.90%
3	925-997	21-22	170	18.50%
2	855-925	19-20	87	9.50%
1	854 or lower	18 or lower	86	9.40%
<b>No estimate available</b>			181	19.70%

Adapted from Astin & Lee, p. 9

# Astin and Lee's Assessment

- Determined that 494 private institutions were in the lowest selectivity/enrollment categories (later amended to 491, based on correspondence with Dr. Astin)
- Named this group of institutions "Invisible Colleges"

"...the chief problem facing such institutions: their obscurity and the consequent lack of concern for their welfare within the community of higher education" (Astin & Lee, p. 2)

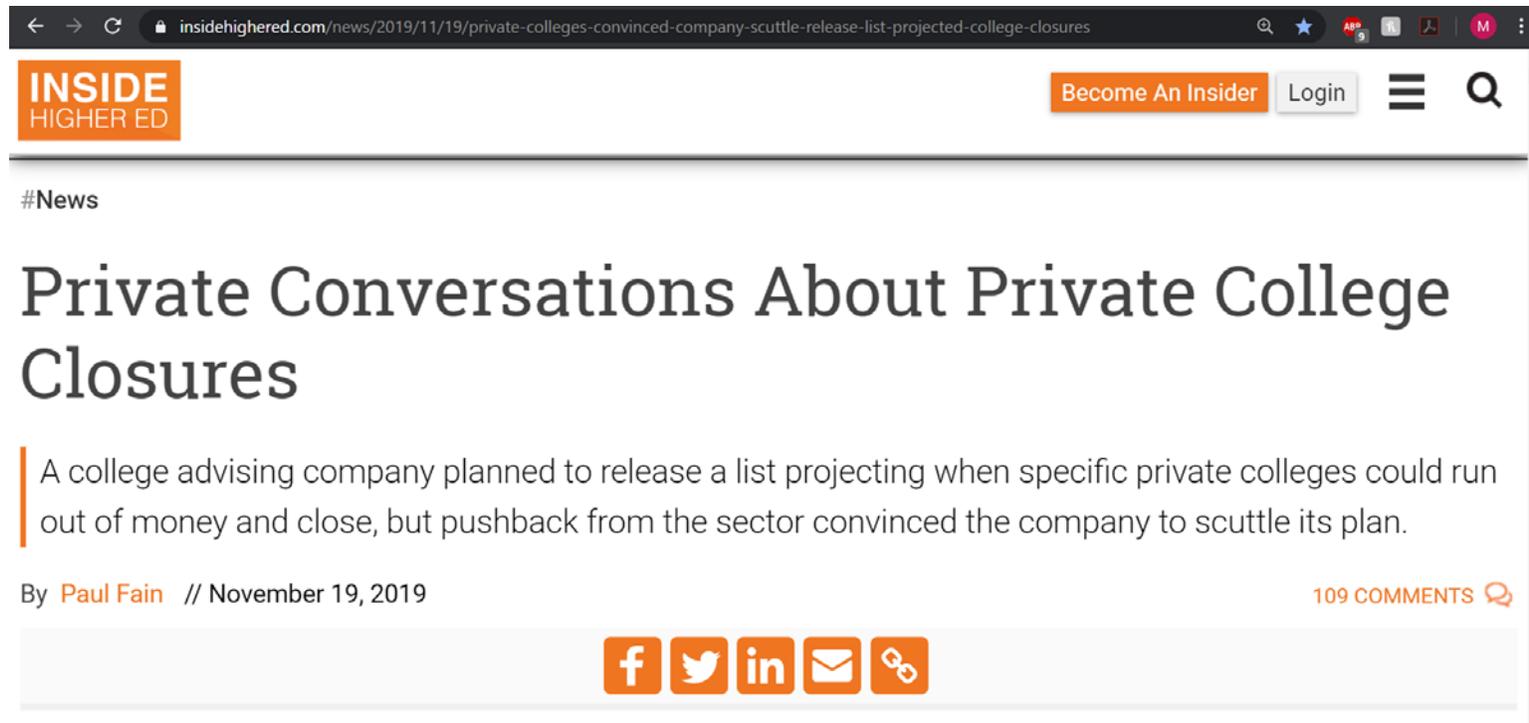
- Determined that 44 private institutions were in the highest selectivity/enrollment categories
- Named this group the Elite Colleges

# Private four-year colleges by selectivity level, 1968 (n=918)

Selectivity level	Enrollment Size (FTE)								Total
	>200	200-499	500-999	1000-2499	2500-4999	5000-9999	10,000-19,999	20,000-more	
8	1	2	2	10	1	1	0	0	17
7	0	2	5	16	4	0	0	0	27
6	2	2	16	29	5	3	0	0	57
5	2	3	26	47	10	3	1	0	92
4	4	16	60	89	21	8	3	0	201
3	2	17	65	71	12	3	0	0	170
2	2	13	40	27	4	0	0	1	87
1	2	12	42	27	3	0	0	0	86
No scores	32	63	59	20	4	3	0	0	181
<b>Total</b>	47	130	315	336	64	21	4	1	918

# Astin and Lee's Assessment

- Intentionally did NOT list these institutions by name
- Edmit's study on predicting college closings last fall met with harsh criticism



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a news article on the Inside Higher Ed website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [insidehighered.com/news/2019/11/19/private-colleges-convicted-company-scuttle-release-list-projected-college-closures](https://insidehighered.com/news/2019/11/19/private-colleges-convicted-company-scuttle-release-list-projected-college-closures). The website's header includes the "INSIDE HIGHER ED" logo, a "Become An Insider" button, a "Login" button, a hamburger menu icon, and a search icon. Below the header, the article is categorized under "#News". The main headline reads "Private Conversations About Private College Closures". A short introductory paragraph states: "A college advising company planned to release a list projecting when specific private colleges could run out of money and close, but pushback from the sector convinced the company to scuttle its plan." The author is identified as "By Paul Fain" and the date is "November 19, 2019". On the right side, there is a "109 COMMENTS" link with a speech bubble icon. At the bottom of the article, there are five social media sharing icons: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Email, and a generic share icon.

# Beyond the Scope of My Research

- The book also examined student characteristics through the CIRP survey, which was created by Dr. Astin
- My study did not include analysis of these characteristics
- Based on a limited number of institutions

# Characteristics Analyzed by Astin & Lee

- Geographic Distribution
- Religious Affiliation
- Sex and Gender
- Admissions and Enrollment
- Tuition and Financial Aid
- Academic Resources
- Finances

# Roadblock to My Research

- I wanted to examine these 491 institutions to see what their status was 40 years later, using the same metrics Astin used
- List of institutions not publicly available
- Wrote to Alexander Astin explaining the study I wished to complete, and requested a copy of the list of institutions
- Astin provided the list, with the agreement that I also keep the names of the institutions confidential

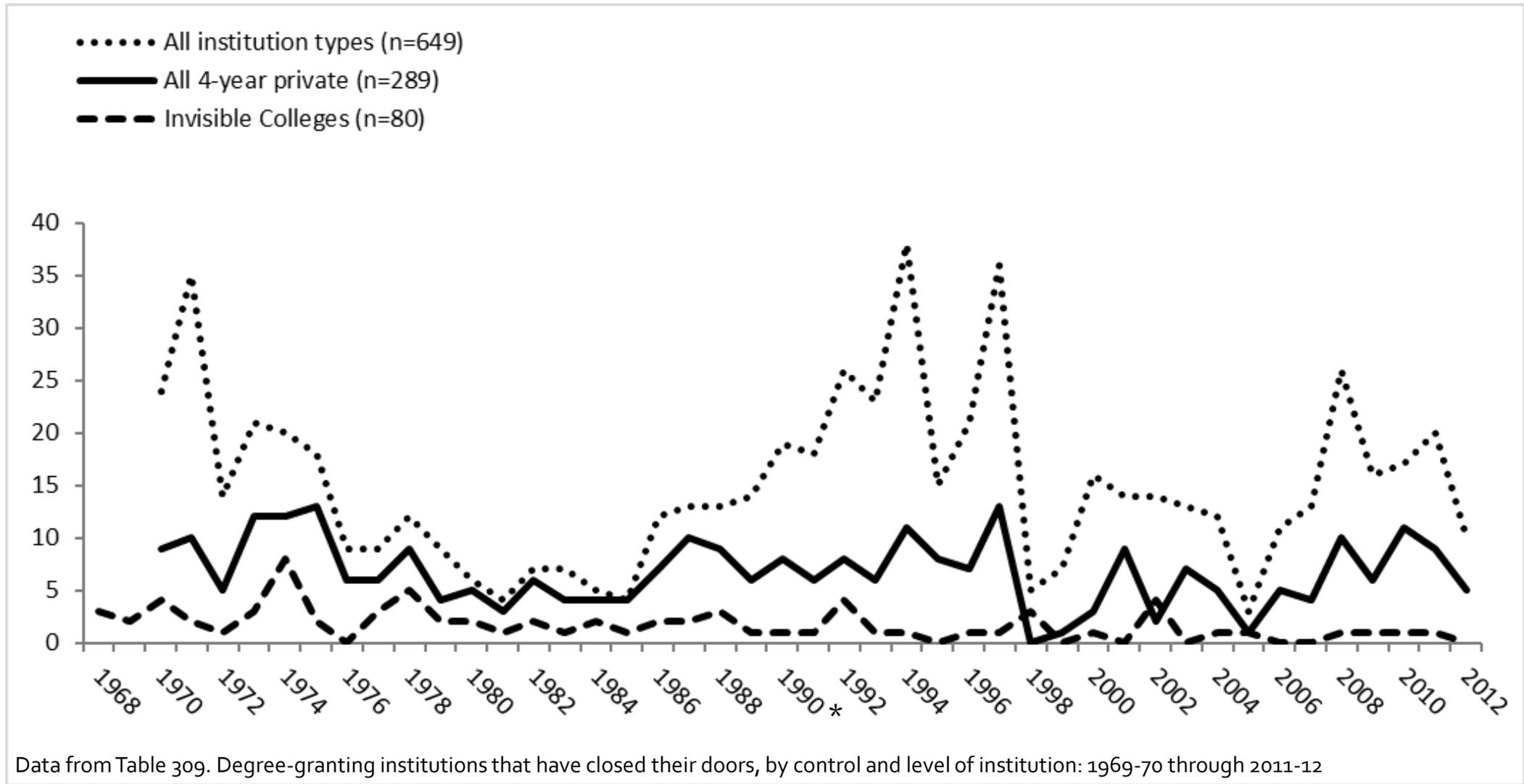
# My Research Process

- Identified the current status of each institution: open, closed, or merged (thanks, Google!)
- Determined IPEDS institution numbers for those that remained open or had merged
- Pulled data to compare to Astin and Lee's data components as close as possible (2012-13 data)
- Estimated average test scores for selectivity, emulating Astin's methodology
  - IPEDS reports 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles. Calculated estimated 50<sup>th</sup> percentile (Open Enrollment institutions not required to submit scores)
  - Institutions not requiring scores for admission are not required to report SAT/ACT data

## Status of Astin's 491 Invisible Colleges in 2012-13

Private, not-for-profit 4-year or greater	354	72%
Merged with another Invisible College	10	2%
Merged with another institution	25	5%
Open, but not listed in IPEDS	10	2%
Public, 4-year or greater	6	1%
Private, for-profit 4-year or greater	5	1%
Private, not-for-profit 2-year	1	>1%
Closed	80	16%

# Closings by Institutional Type per Year (1968-2012)

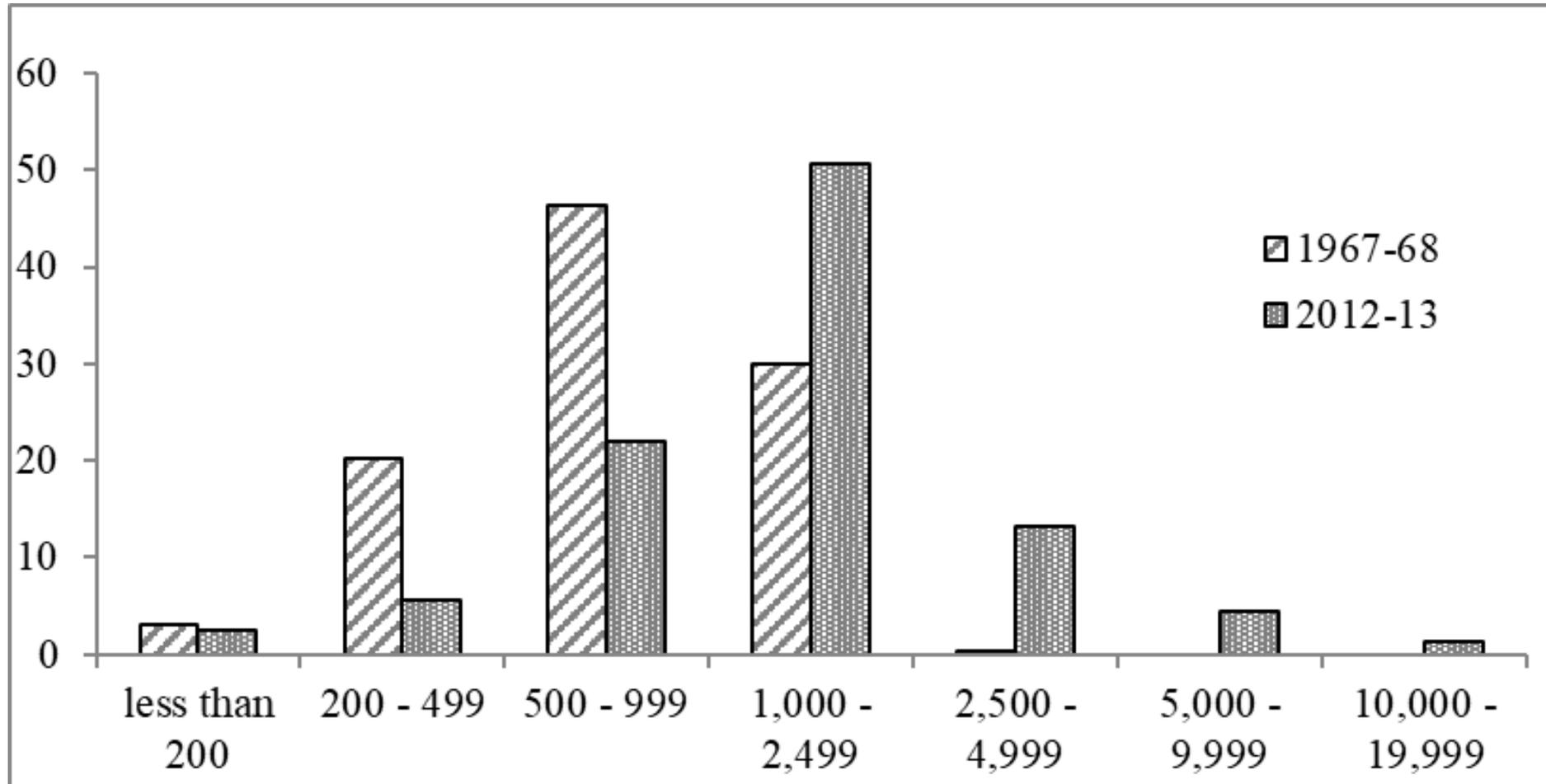


\*Until 1990, for-profit institutions were not reported on separately from non-profits

## Selectivity and Enrollment in 2012 of 1968 Persisting Invisible Colleges (n=354)

Selectivity level	Enrollment Size							Total	Percentage
	under 200	200-499	500-999	1000-2499	2500-4999	5000-9999	10,000-19,999		
8		1						1	0.3
7				1				1	0.3
6				5	1	2		8	2.3
5			7	15	12	5		39	11
4	1		12	42	13	3	2	73	20.6
3		6	24	63	11	3	1	108	30.5
2		2	9	27	4	1		43	12.1
1	1	1	7	10	2			21	5.9
Unknown	7	10	19	16	4	2	2	60	17
Subtotal Invisible Colleges	8	19	66	116				209	59.1
Totals	9	20	78	179	47	16	5	354	100

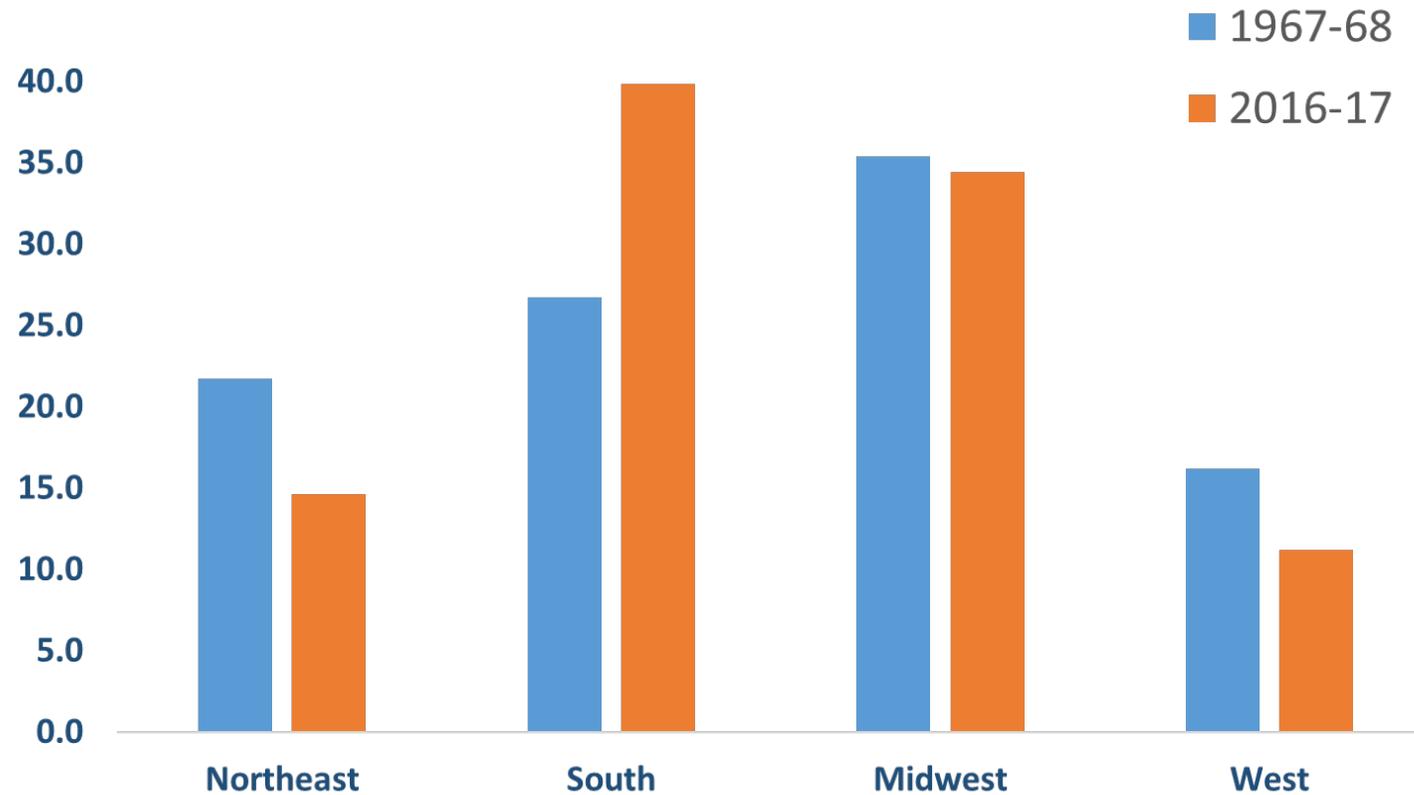
# Enrollment Shift 1968-2012



# Geographic Distribution Changes

	1967-68		2012-13	
	Invisible Colleges (N=491)		Persisting Invisible Colleges (N=354)	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Northeast	107	21.7	56	16
Midwest	175	35.4	120	34
South	132	26.7	139	39
West	80	16.2	39	11

# Geographic Distribution Changes



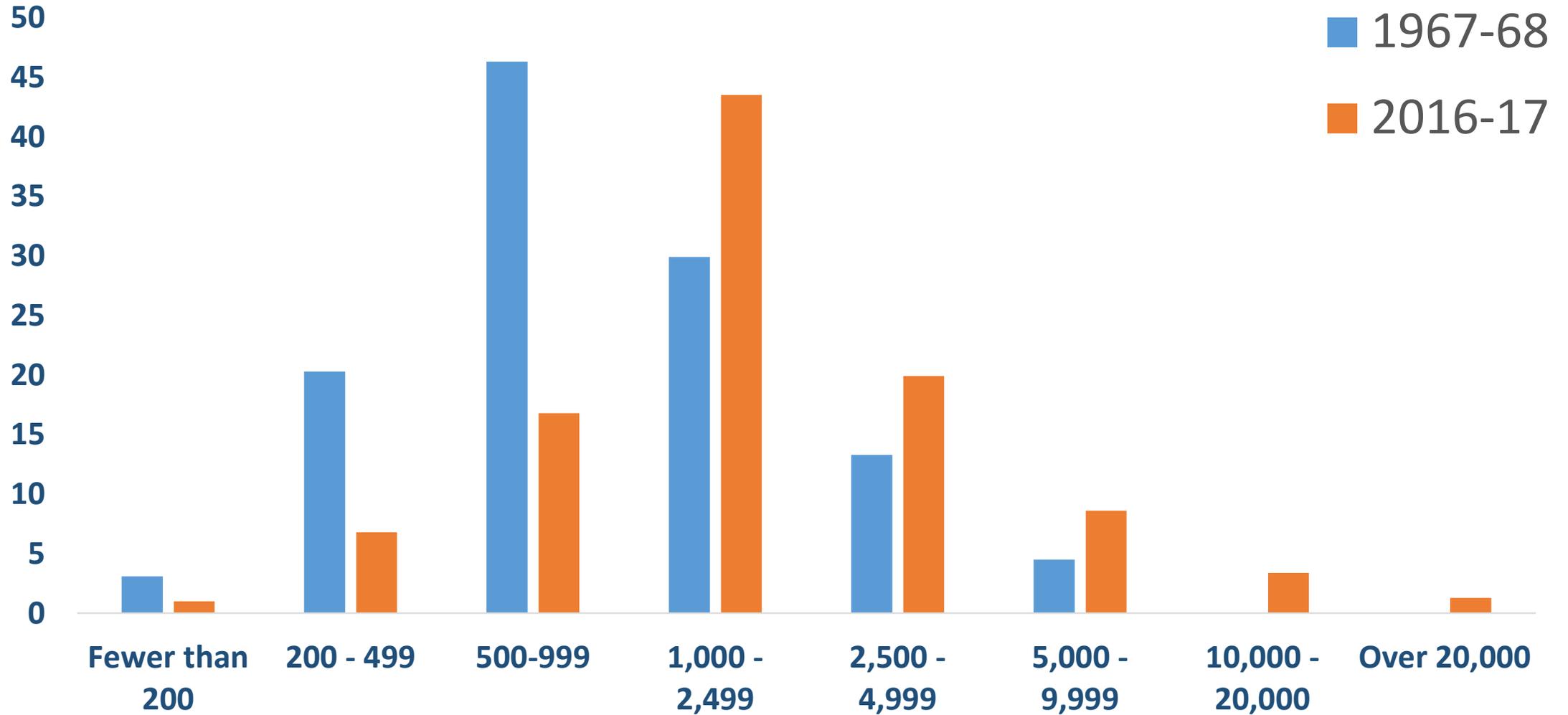
# Denominational Affiliation Changes

Denomination	1968 Invisible Colleges (n=491)	2012 Persisting Colleges (n=354)
Roman Catholic	22.9	19.5
Lutheran	1.4	1.7
American Baptist	3.2	1.1
Church of Christ	1.0	0.8
Methodist	6.1	9.0
Presbyterian (U.S.)	4.0	4.5
Southern Baptist	5.5	3.4
Seventh-Day Adventist	1.8	2.3
Other religious	20.1	34.5
Nonsectarian	34.0	23.2
Subtotal religious	66.0	76.8
Total	100.0	100.0

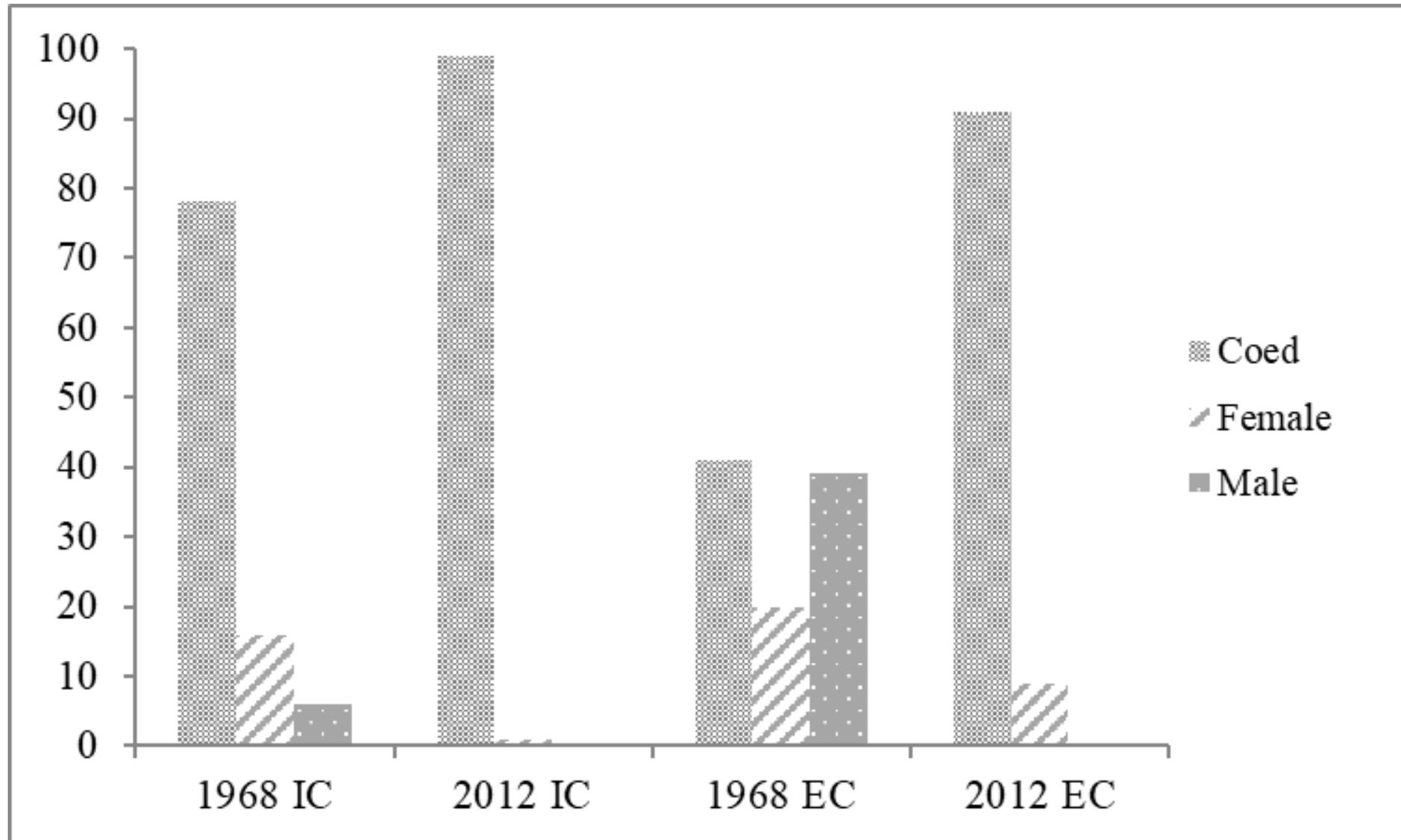
# Enrollment Changes

% of students attending full-time	1967-68 (n = 491)	2012-13 (n = 354)
unknown	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Less than 50	<i>4.2</i>	<i>7.6</i>
50-54	<i>2.6</i>	<i>2.8</i>
55-59	<i>2.8</i>	<i>3.4</i>
60-64	<i>2.4</i>	<i>6.8</i>
65-69	<i>3.0</i>	<i>7.1</i>
70-74	<i>4.7</i>	<i>9.3</i>
75-79	<i>6.3</i>	<i>10.2</i>
80-84	<i>9.1</i>	<i>11.6</i>
85-89	<i>13.8</i>	<i>10.2</i>
90-94	<i>16.0</i>	<i>15.0</i>
95-98	<i>19.6</i>	<i>14.1</i>
99-100	<i>15.4</i>	<i>1.7</i>

# Enrollment Changes



# Co-Educational Status Changes



# Endowment Changes

Dollars per FTE	1967-68		2012-13	
	Invisible Colleges (N=494)	Elite Colleges (N=44)	Persisting Invisible Colleges (N=354)	Persisting Elite Colleges (N=43)
Less than \$3,299	20.4	9.1	11.0	0.0
\$3,305 - \$6,598	40.9	6.8	5.9	0.0
\$6,604 - \$9,237	7.1	2.3	8.5	0.0
\$9,243 - \$10,556	2.2	0.0	5.6	0.0
\$10,563 - \$11,876	2.6	0.0	5.1	0.0
\$11,882 - \$13,195	2.8	2.3	3.7	2.3
\$13,202 - \$14,515	4.0	0.0	5.6	0.0
\$14,521 - \$17,154	2.6	6.8	4.0	0.0
\$17,160 - \$19,793	9.5	2.3	13.6	2.3
\$19,799 - \$29,869	2.8	13.6	13.3	0.0
More than \$29,869	4.9	56.8	21.8	95.3

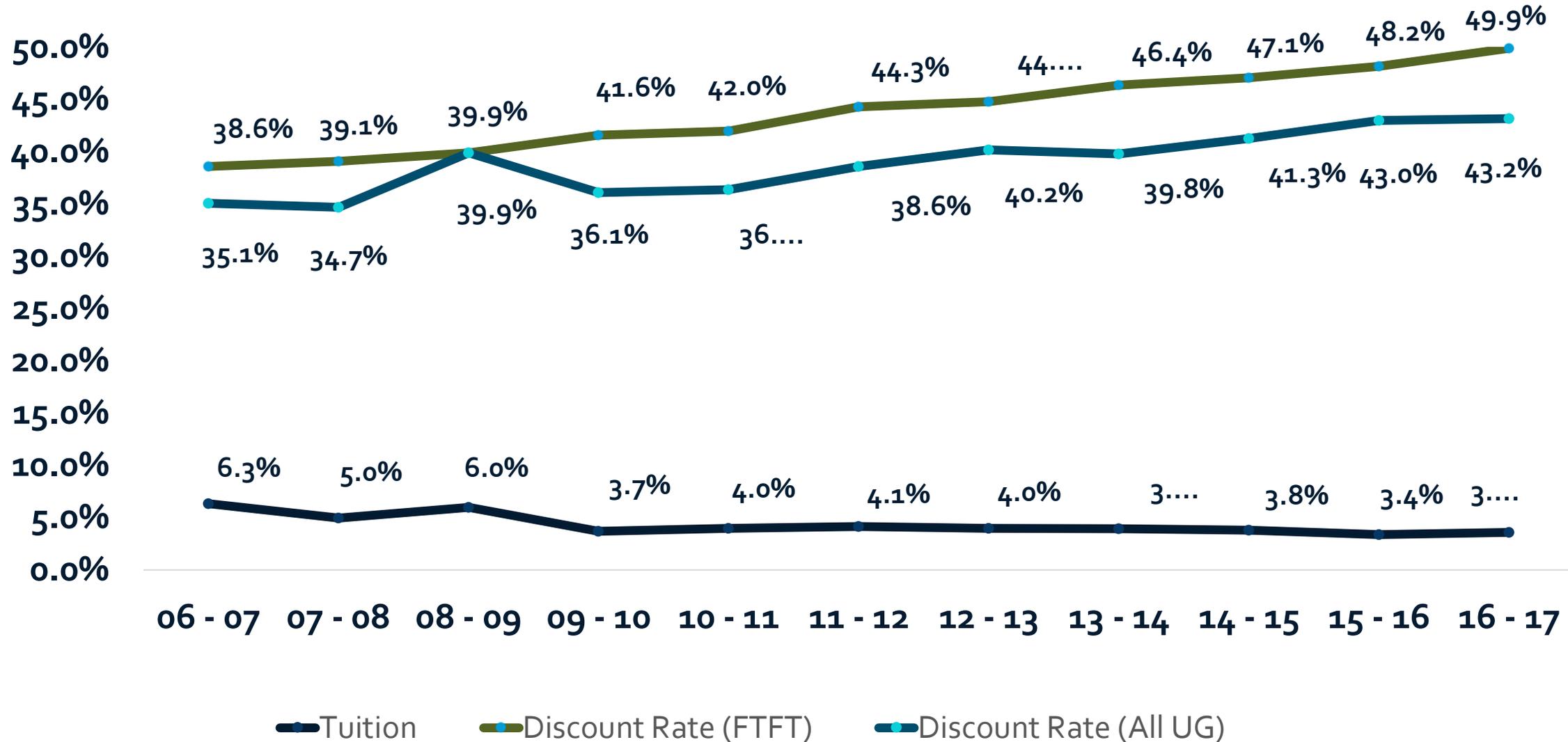
# Endowment Growth 2013

	Persisting Invisible Colleges (N=354)	Persisting Elite Colleges (N=43)
Value of endowment assets at beginning of year	\$13,149,877,672	\$33,359,882,391
Value of endowment assets at end of year	\$14,612,723,274	\$36,401,210,911
Gain	\$1,462,845,602	\$3,041,328,520
Average gain per institution	\$4,227,877	\$70,728,570
Gain per FTE	\$2,135	\$31,008

# Institutional Grant Aid

	1967-68		2012-13	
% of FTE receiving institutional grant	Invisible Colleges (N=494)	Elite Colleges (N=44)	Persisting Invisible Colleges (N=354)	Persisting Elite Colleges (N=43)
0	34.2	4.5	2.5	0.0
1-9	12.0	0.0	0.8	0.0
10-19	19.0	18.2	0.8	0.0
20-29	16.4	31.8	1.1	0.0
30-39	9.2	36.3	1.4	2.3
40-49	4.0	4.5	2.3	23.3
50-59	1.8	0.0	2.5	32.6
60-69	1.4	4.6	3.4	11.6
70-79	1.0	0.0	6.8	16.3
80-89	0.4	0.0	8.5	4.7
90-100	0.6	0.0	69.8	9.3

# Changes in Tuition/Fees and Discount Rates



# Conclusions

- Small private colleges are not “disappearing”
- Much of the perception that the small private colleges are closing at a rapid pace is based on media coverage of a few institutions
- They are resilient and adaptable (curriculum changes, adding athletic teams, changing marketing strategies, online offerings, etc.)
- They increased their selectivity and enrollment
- Continue to offer diverse options for students
- A widening gap between Invisible Colleges and Elite Colleges in terms of finances

# Comments and Questions