

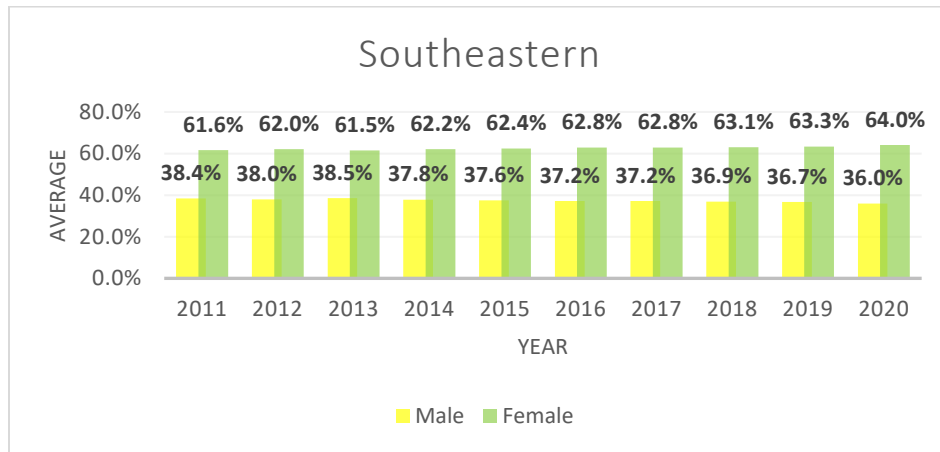
Office of Institutional Research

Gender Enrollment Trends of Southeastern Louisiana University Fall 2011 – Fall 2020

Research Brief #35

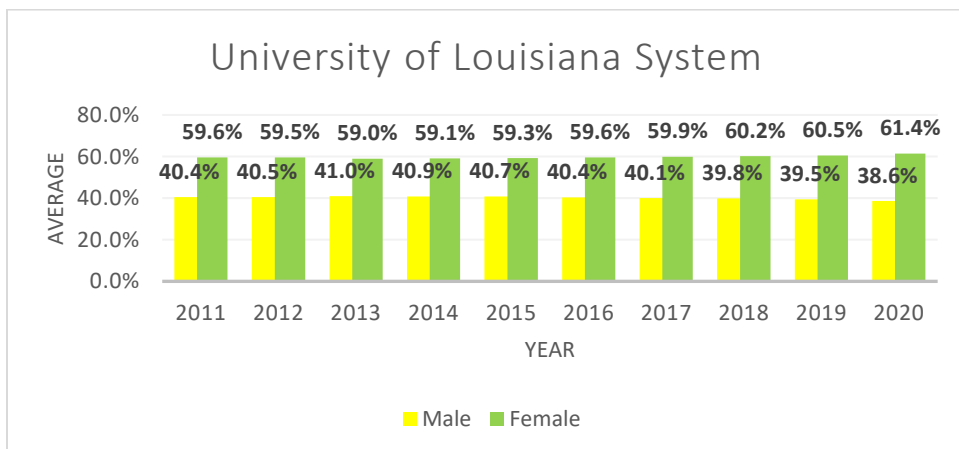
Spring 2021

Gender Enrollment Trends of Southeastern Louisiana University Fall 2011 - Fall 2020:



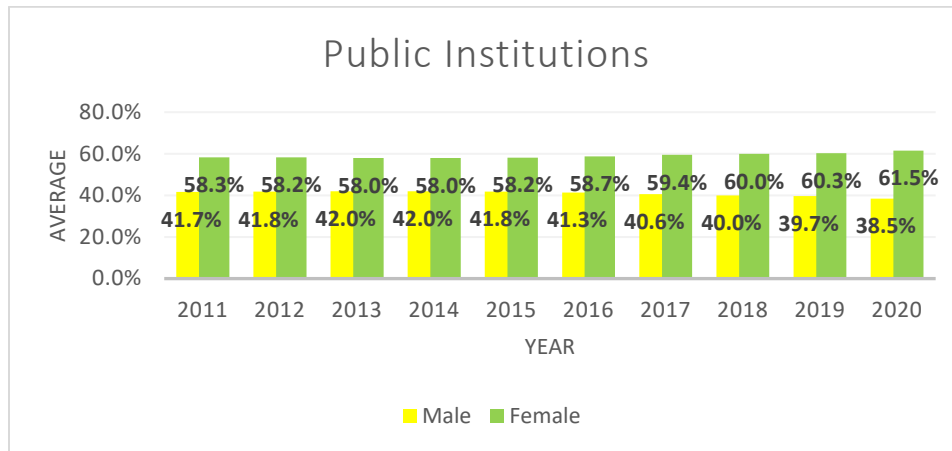
- ❖ The percentage of male students enrolled at Southeastern has decreased from 38.4 % (n=5,917) in Fall of 2011 to 36.0% (n=5,219) in Fall of 2020. The percentage of male student enrollment ranged from a low of 36.0% in Fall of 2020 (n=5,219) to a high of 38.5% (n=5,759) in Fall of 2013 (*Statewide Student Profile: SSPS Report by Gender and Student Level*).
- ❖ On the other hand, the percentage of female students enrolled has increased from 61.6% (n=9,506) in Fall of 2011 to 64.0% (n=9,295) in Fall of 2020, ranging from a low of 61.5% (n=9,200) in Fall of 2013 to a high of 64.0% (n=9,295) in Fall of 2020 (*Statewide Student Profile: SSPS Report by Gender and Student Level*).

Gender Enrollment Trends for Louisiana Institutions in University of Louisiana System Fall 2011 - Fall 2020:



- ❖ The percentage of male students enrolled at Louisiana institutions in the University of Louisiana System has declined from 40.4% (n=37,863) Fall of 2011 to 38.6% (n=35,086) in Fall of 2020 (*Statewide Student Profile: SSPS Report by Gender and Student Level*).
- ❖ The percentage of female students enrolled; however, increased from 59.6% (n=55,793) in Fall of 2011 to 61.4% (n=55,800) in Fall of 2020 (*Statewide Student Profile: SSPS Report by Gender and Student Level*).

Gender Enrollment Trends for Public Institutions in the State of Louisiana Fall 2011 - Fall 2020:



- ❖ The percentage of male students enrolled in public institutions in the state of Louisiana has seen a considerable drop from 41.7% (n=95,522) in Fall of 2011 to 38.5% (n=81,791) in Fall of 2020. A 3.2 percent decrease (~13,700 male students drop) in a span of ten years (*Statewide Student Profile: SSPS Report by Gender and Student Level*).
- ❖ The percentage of female students enrolled in public institutions increased throughout the years from a 58.3% (n=133,391) in Fall of 2011 to a 61.5% (n=130,697) in Fall of 2020 (*Statewide Student Profile: SSPS Report by Gender and Student Level*).

Key Findings:

- ❖ Southeastern, like institutions in the University of Louisiana System and other public institutions in the state, has seen a drop in male student enrollment for the past ten years. However, Southeastern’s percentage average of male student enrollment is lower than the average of institutions in the University of Louisiana System as well as the average of public institutions in the state.
- ❖ According to the latest research by National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, the gender gap in college enrollment widened in Fall of 2020 more than the previous year in response to the global pandemic COVID-19. But while total enrollment fell for both genders compared to previous years, it was a drop seven times greater for male students. Furthermore, female students attending four-year public institutions grew in number by 71,000 nationwide while male enrollment dropped by 57,000 in this category (*COVID-19 gender gap: Female enrollment rises at four-year public colleges, male enrollment drops*).

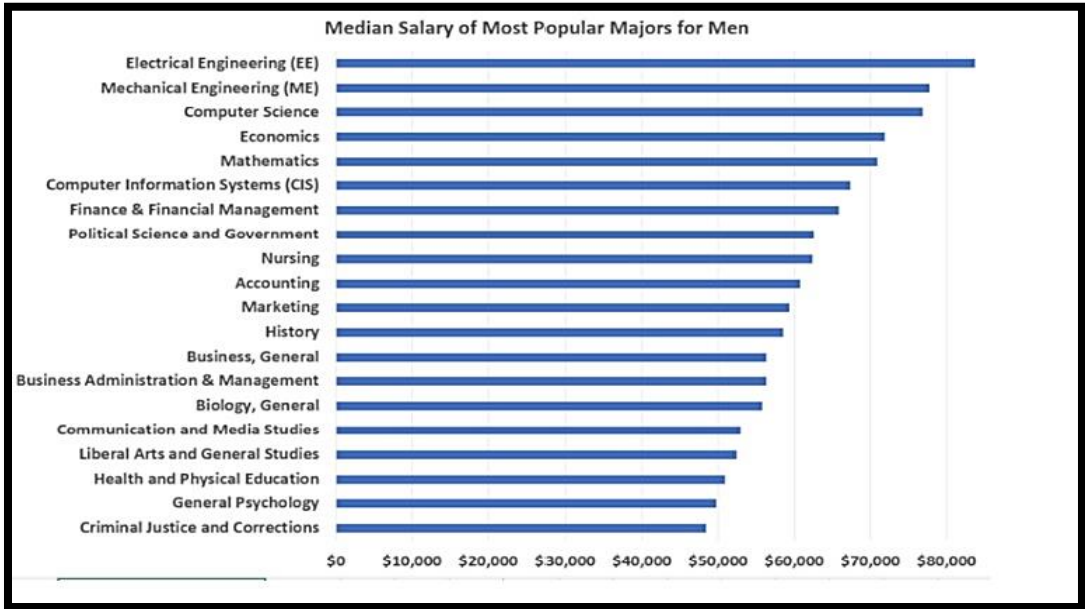
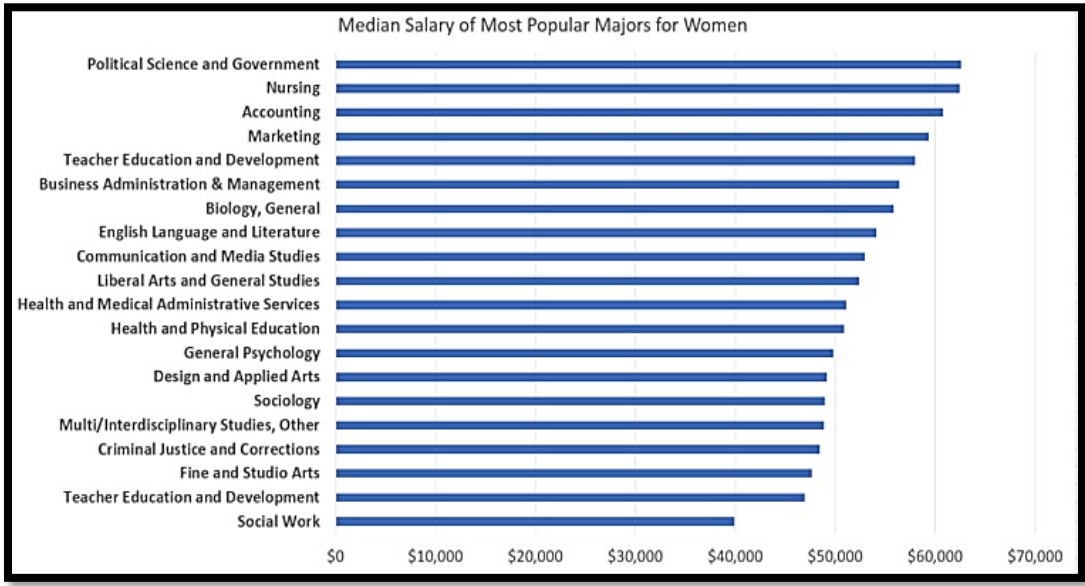
Why Male Students are underrepresented in Higher Education?

According to Mintz, S. (2019), factors that may explain why fewer men enroll include the following:

- **Academic Underpreparation:** Schools demand better reading and writing skills; areas in which girls surpass boys leaving boys discouraged so many withdraw from pursuing higher education.
- **Young Men's Declining Academic Aspirations:** Since the 1990s, young men's educational aspirations fell while women's rose. Low-income was not a factor that determined this drop, as even among middle-income students men were less likely to pursue a college education than women.
- **Unresponsiveness to the Differing Needs of Students:** Teachers, according to some older studies, are more likely to focus on boys in K-12 classrooms. It has been found that despite the bias, some boys are more likely to become distracted and not take their classes seriously. This presents a challenge for teachers to differentiate instruction based on the different learning styles and gender dynamics.

Does Gender Play a Role in Students' Choice of College Major?

- ❖ While men are underrepresented in higher education and enrollment in general, women tend to be underrepresented in certain fields of study of the highest demand and the highest paying. These fields of study include Computer Science and Engineering as well as mathematics, statistics and the physical sciences that are usually more dominated by men (Mintz, S. (2019)).
- ❖ Beutel, A. M. et al (2017) suggests a relationship between the extent women conform to feminine norms and their choice of college major. Women who reported greater conformity to feminine norms were less likely to choose a major in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or doctoral track-medicine or arts or humanities. Women choosing majors in social sciences, education, and social services aligned more to the feminine norm of caring for children.
- ❖ Women who reported greater conformity to the domesticity norm were more likely to choose a major from the STEM fields of study, doctoral-track medicine or clinical and health sciences fields (Beutel, A. M. et al (2017)).
- ❖ Although women dominate jobs that pay less, like early childhood education or social work, and men dominate jobs that pay more, it is not as simple as a mere difference in the choice of major. Studies indicate that when more women move into a job field, the pay goes down for that field. For example; female doctors, nurses, and lawyers all get paid less than their male counterparts (*The Most Popular Majors for Women & Men*).
- ❖ The average salary for the top 20 most popular majors women major in is \$52,800 while the average salary for the top 20 most popular majors men major in is \$62,060 (*The Most Popular Majors for Women & Men*).
- ❖ Fortunately, in most recent years the pay gap based on gender has been decreasing steadily. Since more women are attending college and are being informed about the fields that provide the best options for them, the gap will continue to decrease further (*The Most Popular Majors for Women & Men*).



Source: (*The Most Popular Majors for Women & Men*; U.S. Department of Education. College Factual).

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