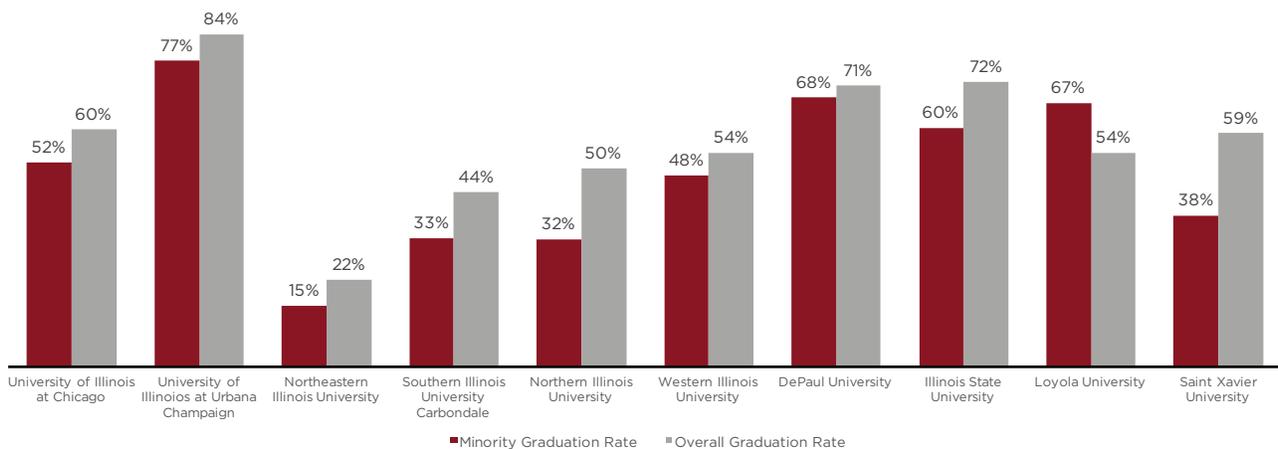


Students applying to college today have more information to fuel their decision-making than ever before. A quick online search of “factors to consider when choosing a college” yields so much information that making sense of college choices can be a confusing process. Fortunately, research from the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research shows that one of strongest predictors of whether an individual student will succeed in and graduate from college is a college’s overall graduation rate, also known as its institutional graduation rate, which indicates how likely individual students are to graduate from that college.

Students of all qualification levels (based on their GPAs and test scores) are more likely to graduate from college if they attend a college with a high graduation rate. This is even true for students who earned strong grades in high school. In fact, college choice matters the most for high achieving students. Once high achieving students choose a college with a low overall graduation rate, their odds of graduating become much lower than the odds of similarly qualified students that choose colleges with higher graduation rates.

Ultimately, a college’s overall graduation rate is just one factor to consider in the process of finding a good college choice, but it can signal how well a college can support students in their quests to graduate from college. A key question for students to ask as they’re considering colleges is, “Of the students who enroll here, how many of them graduate, particularly students like me?”

Minority vs. Overall 2014 Graduation Rates for Top 10 Receiving Institutions for CPS Students



This data insight is part of The To&Through Project, a partnership between the University of Chicago’s Urban Education Institute and Network for College Success. The To&Through Project produces research, data, and resources designed to support CPS high school students as they move to and through high school and college.