

# **FALL 2025 ENROLLMENT UPDATE**

## **UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS**



**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!**



# FIVE YEAR ENROLLMENT GOALS

- Grow overall undergraduate enrollment by 1.5% – 2% per year
- Grow freshman class by 2-3% per year
- Continue to enroll more SC residents (as freshmen) than prior year
- Increase Pell, first generation, and rural freshmen
- Raise retention/persistence rates to 94% across all cohorts
- Increase four-year and six-year graduation rates



# COMMITMENT TO SOUTH CAROLINA

- More SC residents enrolled at USC Columbia than ever
- New students from every county in SC
- 13% increase in freshmen from SC who are ranked in the top ten percent of their high school class



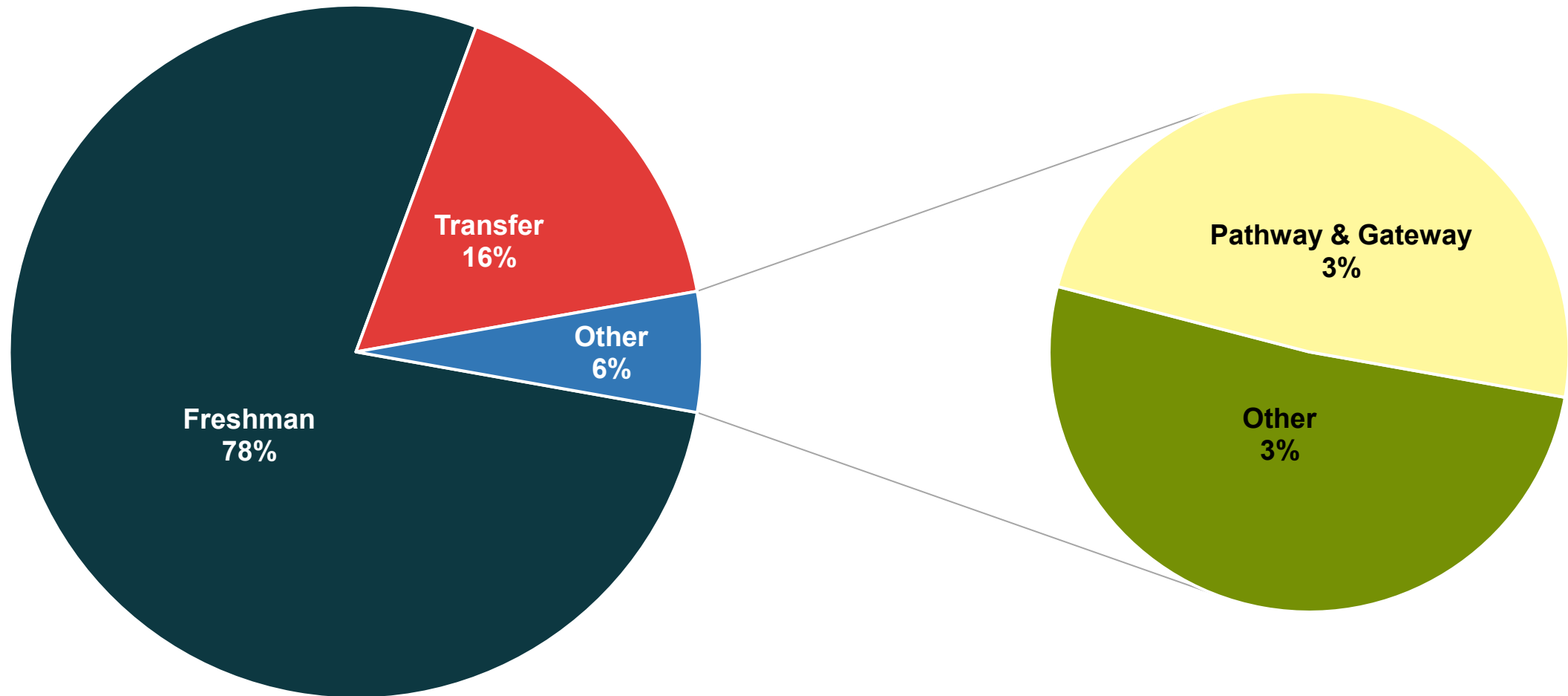
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# FALL 2025 HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT (preliminary)

	Fall 2024			Fall 2025		
	Resident	Non-Resident	Total	Resident	Non-Resident	Total
<b>USC System Undergraduate</b>	31,301	15,313	46,614	32,635	16,291	48,926
<b>USC System Graduate &amp; Prof</b>	5,395	4,158	9,553	5,722	3,893	9,615
<b>USC System Total</b>	36,696	19,471	56,167	38,357	20,184	58,541
<b>Columbia Undergraduate</b>	16,897	13,259	30,156	17,901	13,949	31,850
<b>Columbia Graduate &amp; Prof</b>	4,648	3,699	8,347	4,923	3,538	8,416
<b>USC Columbia Total</b>	21,545	16,958	38,503	22,824	17,487	<b>40,311</b>
<b>USC Columbia New Freshman</b>	3,807	3,465	7,272	<b>4,129</b>	3,685	<b>7,814</b>
<b>USC System New Freshman</b>	6,198	3,926	10,124	6,563	4,162	10,725

Source: OIRAA Official Census Data (2024) and preliminary comparison/dashboard reports (2025)

# FALL 2025 NEW UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

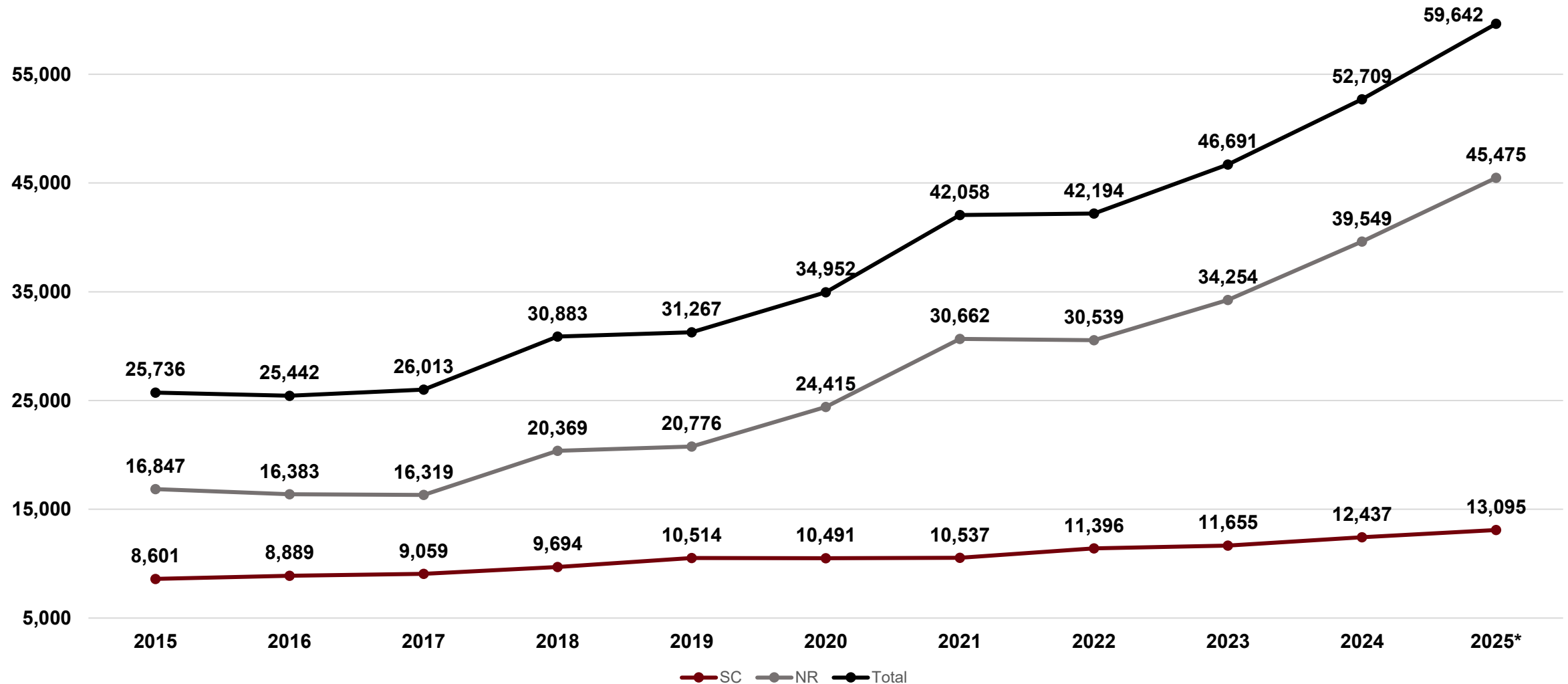


\*Preliminary as 9/8/2025



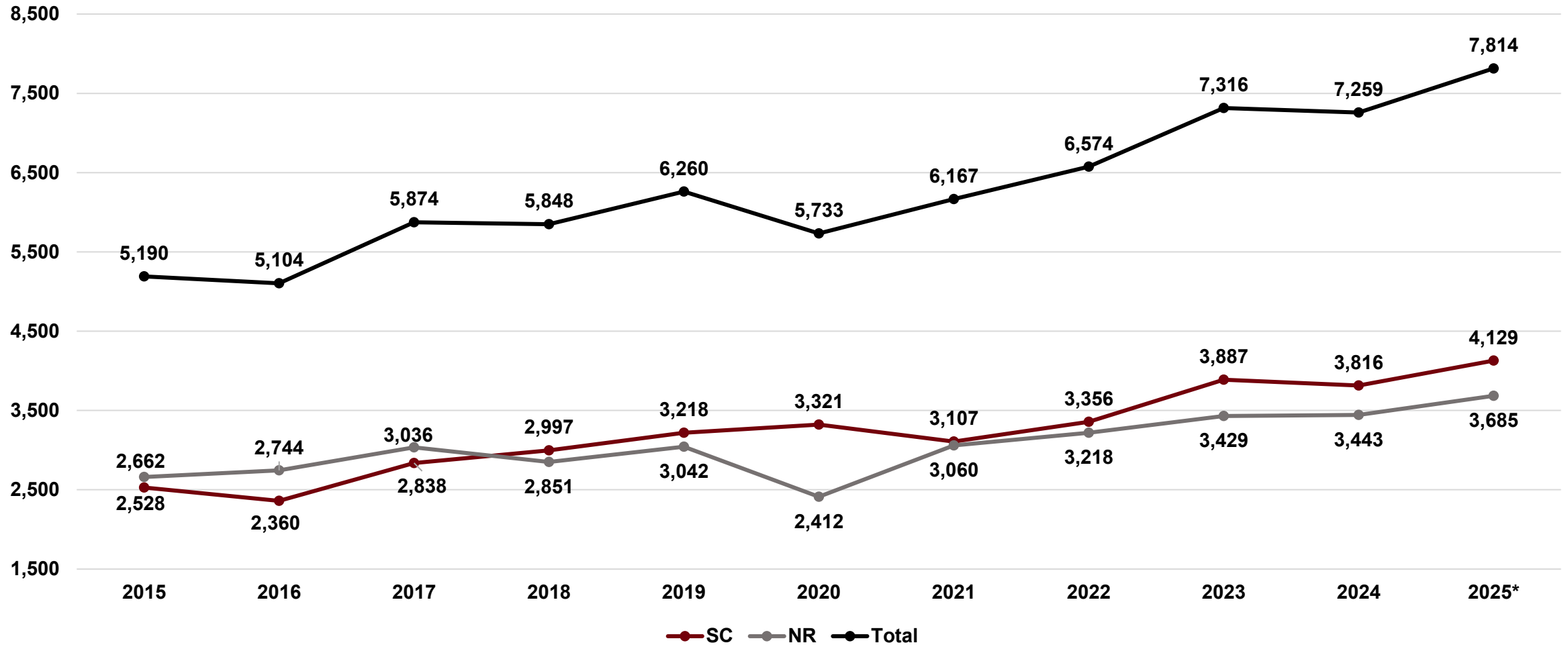
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# FRESHMAN APPLICATIONS BY RESIDENCY



\*Preliminary as of 8/9/2025

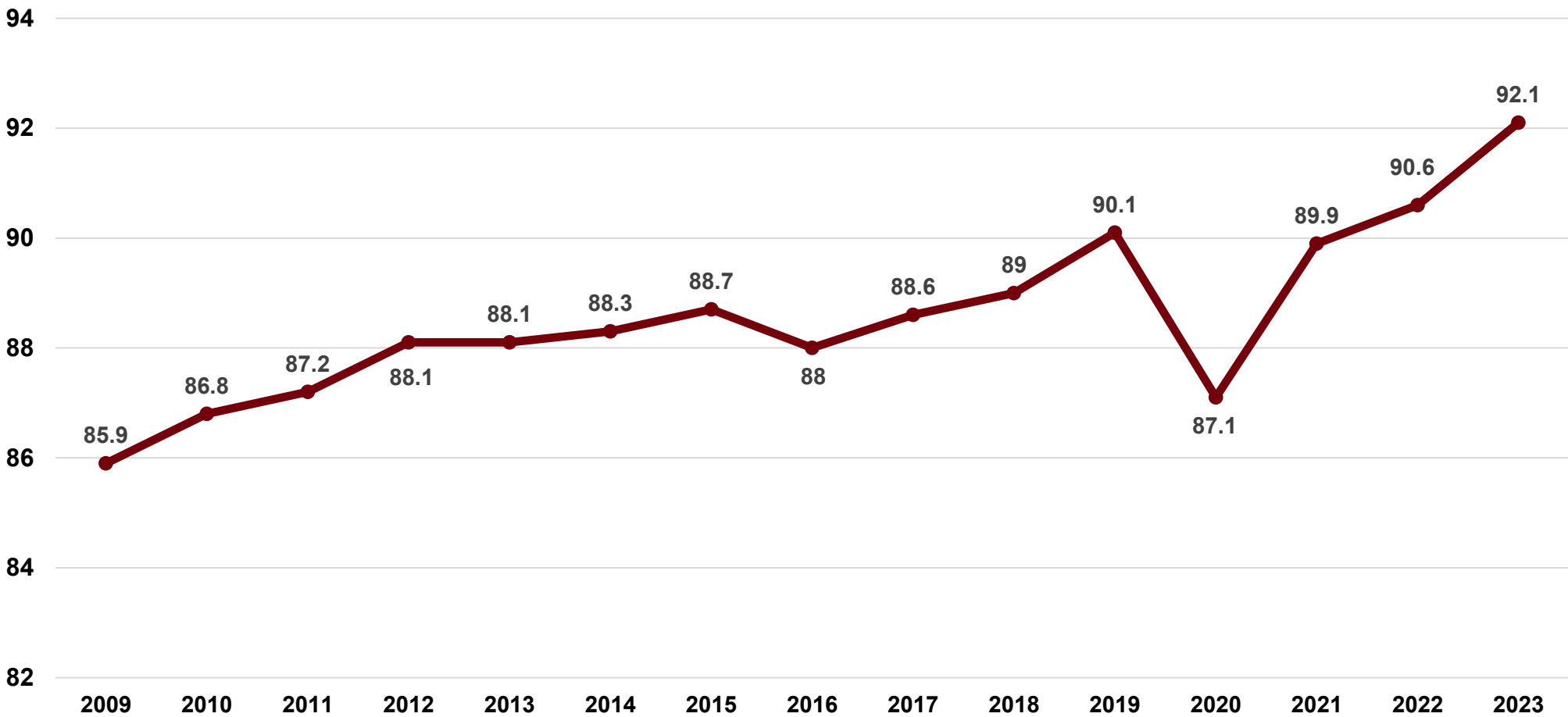
# FRESHMEN ENROLLMENT BY RESIDENCY



\*Preliminary as of 9/8/2025



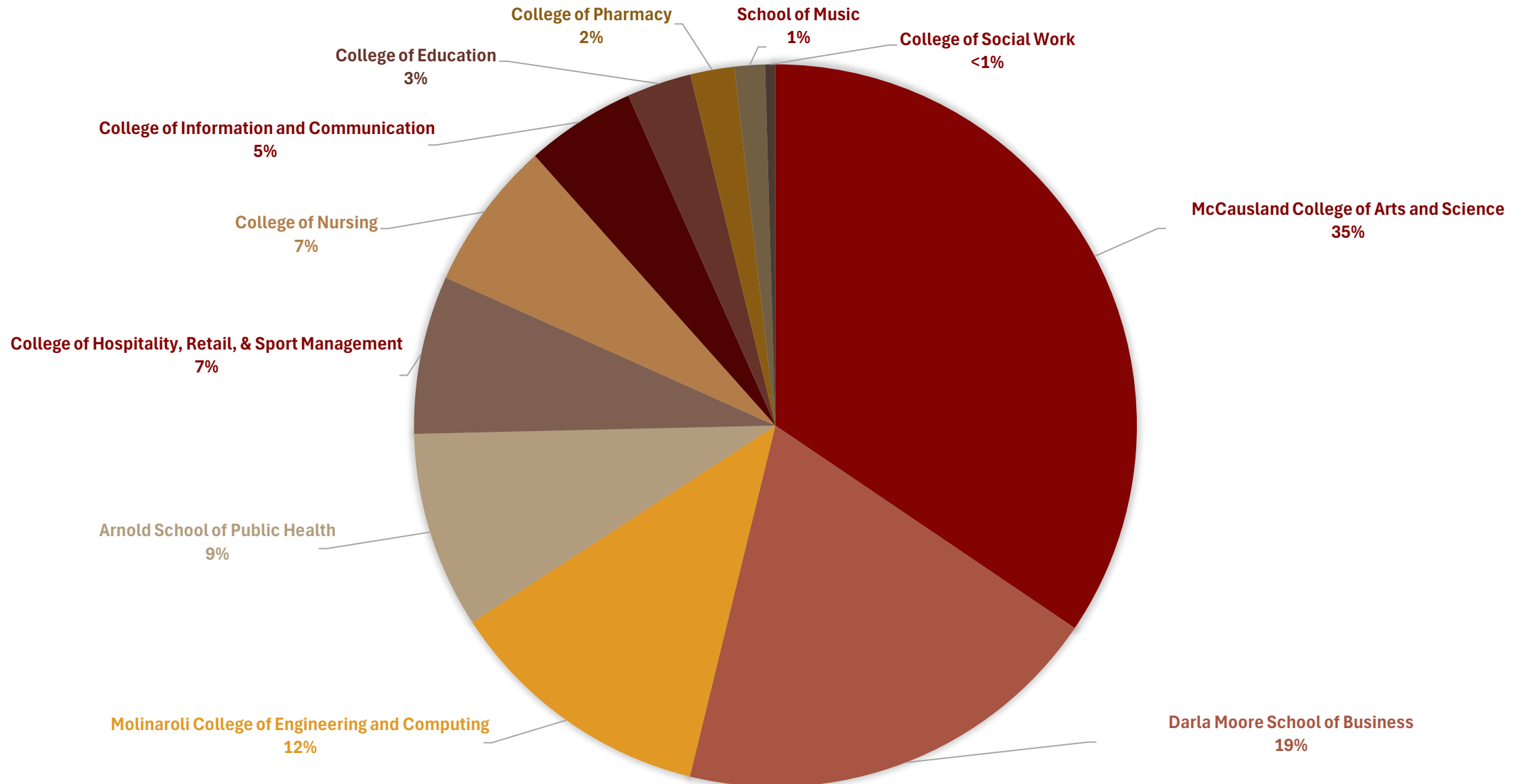
# FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMAN RETENTION RATES



Data retrieved from Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics [www.ipr.sc.edu](http://www.ipr.sc.edu)



# FALL 2025 ENROLLMENT BY COLLEGE



# FRESHMAN CLASS TOP MAJORS

(ALPHA ORDER)

<b>Biological Sciences</b>	<b>Pre-International Business</b>
<b>Business Undeclared</b>	<b>Pre-Nursing</b>
<b>Exercise Science</b>	<b>Psychology</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>Public Health</b>
<b>Marketing</b>	<b>Sport and Entertainment Management</b>
<b>Mechanical Engineering</b>	<b>Undeclared</b>

12 Majors account for 56% of freshman class

\*Preliminary as of 6/1/2025

# MORE ABOUT THE FRESHMAN CLASS

- New students from all 46 SC counties
- 1,176 SC students in the Top 10% (13% increase)
- 46 states and 44 countries
- 2,057 different high schools
- Approximately 60 high school valedictorians
- Top male names: William, John, Ryan, James, Benjamin
- Top female names: Ava, Olivia, Lauren, Abigail, Ella

\*Preliminary as of 9/8/2025



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# FRESHMAN CLASS TOP 10 STATES

(OTHER THAN SC)

New York	↑	Georgia	↑
North Carolina	↑	Maryland	↓
New Jersey	↓	Massachusetts	→
Virginia	→	Illinois	→
Pennsylvania	↓	Ohio	↑

\*Preliminary as of 9/8/2025



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# IMAGES ASSOCIATED WITH USC

Overall, USC is considered a friendly, welcoming, fun and academic-oriented university by all respondents as indicated in the following table. While the order differed, there were identical to the top five perceptions indicated in 2023 and 2021.

IMAGE	% ENROLLED	% NON-ENROLLED
Friendly	83%	68%
Welcoming	81%	64%
Fun	69%	53%
Academic	69%	45%
Comfortable	67%	46%
Athletics	60%	50%
Vibrant	59%	46%
Career-Oriented	52%	25%
Highly-Respected	49%	27%



# RANKED REASONS STUDENTS CHOSE NOT TO ATTEND USC

1. **Cost and Financial Aid:** This remains the most significant factor. Many respondents, especially out-of-state students, cited high tuition costs and insufficient financial aid. Several mentioned receiving better financial packages from other schools, including in-state options with lower costs.
2. **Competitive Offers from Other Schools:** Many students chose to attend higher-ranked universities, preferred schools, or institutions offering better overall aid packages.
3. **Personal Preferences and Fit:** Students often cited preferences for different campus cultures, sizes, or atmospheres. Some found USC too large or urban, while others preferred smaller schools. Personal/family connections to other schools also played a role.
4. **Location and Distance:** Many students preferred schools closer to home or in different regions. Some specifically mentioned wanting to stay in-state or attend schools in larger cities. The urban environment of Columbia was a factor for some students.
5. **Academic Program Factors:** Students frequently mentioned not being admitted to their desired major (especially the business school), perceiving stronger programs at other schools for their specific interests, or choosing schools with unique programs not offered at USC.

*\* AI generated from qualitative responses.*



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# FALL 2026 ENROLLMENT GOAL

7,900



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# **NON-FRESHMEN**

**(TRANSFERS, SYSTEM TRANSFERS, READMITS, NON-DEGREE)**

- **September 1: Spring 2026 application opened**
- **February 1: Su-Fall 2026 applications open**



# QUESTIONS?

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