



FRESNO PACIFIC
UNIVERSITY

FPUScholarWorks

Fresno Pacific University demographics

Author(s): Hannah Keeney.

Source: *Pacific Journal* 14 (2019): 119-124.

Published by: Fresno Pacific University

Stable URL: <http://hdl.handle.net/11418/1294>

FPUScholarWorks is an online repository for creative and scholarly works and other resources created by members of the Fresno Pacific University community. FPUScholarWorks makes these resources freely available on the Web and assures their preservation for the future.

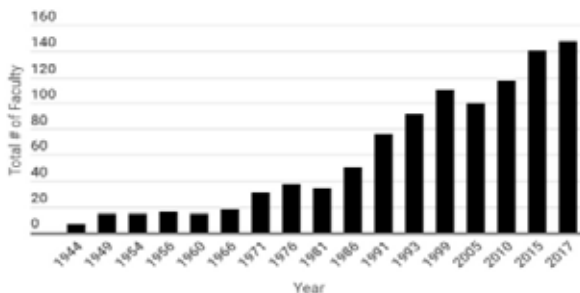
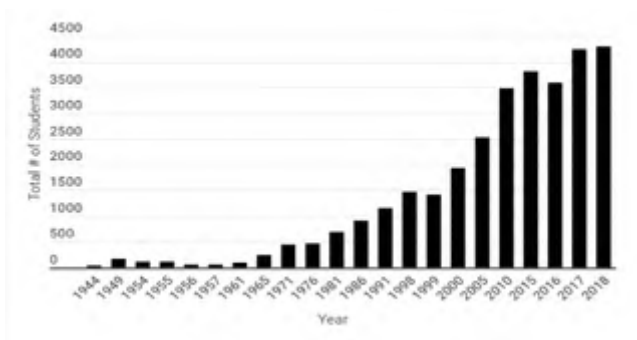
Fresno Pacific University Demographics

HANNAH KEENEY

In the age of digital media, information is being constantly produced and consumed by individuals and institutions. Colleges and universities rely heavily on data to illustrate their stories in a variety of contexts. Outside of the data produced through scholarly work, institutions of higher learning generate many internal and external reports that provide important statistics. These assist in the measurement of progress, the celebration of success, even advertising.

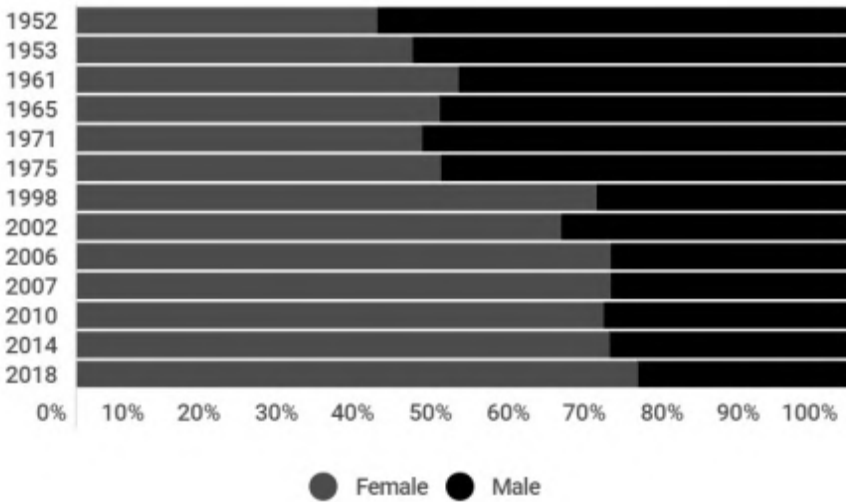
These metrics are thus used to define and evaluate the institution. Schools are assessed and ranked by their accreditations, resources, programs, number of students, etc. As a picture “is worth a thousand words” it is not only important to have the information available but to find effective ways to publicize and use it. Infographics, charts, graphs, and other visual expressions of information are commonplace in an increasingly visual, digital world. So, how has Fresno Pacific University changed during the past 75 years?

Total Number of Students & Faculty



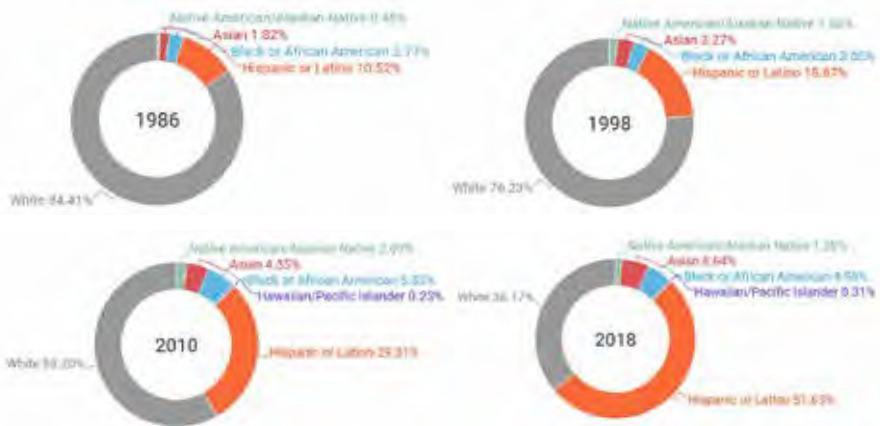
“How many students attend Fresno Pacific University?” is a common question. The chart above illustrates student population growth between 1952 and 2018, as the school moved from being a Bible Institute in the 1940s to a 4-year college in the 1960s and 1970s, and eventually to a university in the 1990s. Programs changed and the number of students increased, as did the faculty (also administrators and staff).

Gender of student body



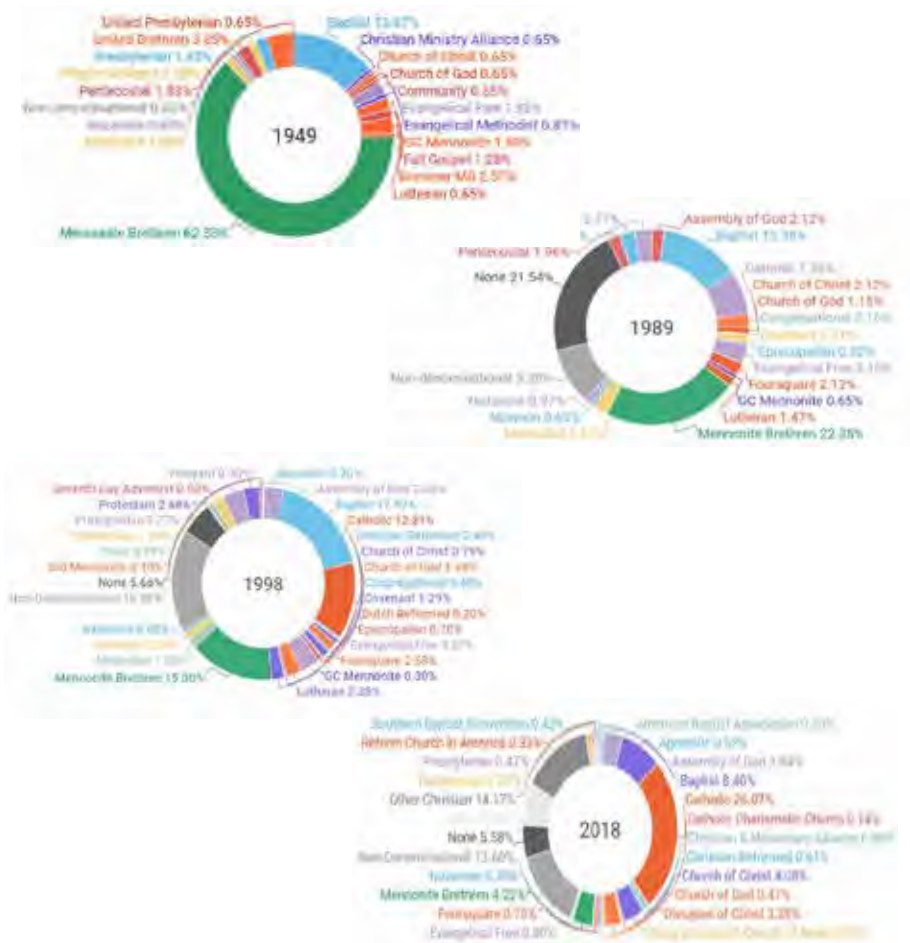
The gender balance of the Fresno Pacific student body has changed significantly since the early 1950s. Due to wartime conscription responsibilities, females outnumbered males during Pacific Bible Institute’s first three years (this information is not shown on the chart). Men then represented a majority of the students until 1961, when one sees an almost equal male-female balance (48 women, 49 men), a phenomenon that held into the 1990s when there was a radical shift in the student body with women usually representing more than 70% of students. This continues to the present.

Ethnicity of Student body¹



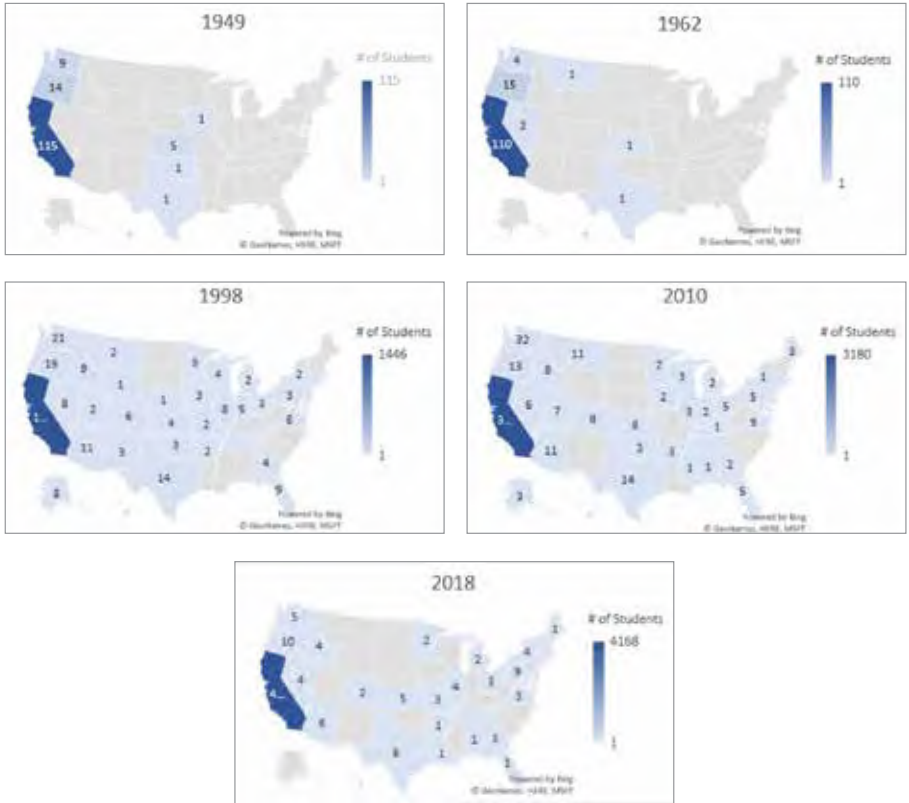
Given the European cultural and religious background of Fresno Pacific as a Mennonite Brethren institution it is not surprising to see a high majority of white students during the first 40-50 years of the university’s existence. Hispanic or Latino students made up the next highest percentage reflecting Fresno Pacific’s location in California’s San Joaquin Valley. All of this changed radically during the 1990s and 2000s with Hispanic/Latino students, who represented 15% of the student body in 1998, comprising more than half of the students in 2018, only 20 years later.

Denominational Affiliation of Student body²



As a faith-based, non-sectarian Christian university it is not surprising to see so many streams of Christian faith represented in the student body. As a Mennonite Brethren (MB) institution, the significant percentage of MB students represented not only in 1949 (62%) but in a continued, if much reduced, extent 40 years later (still 15%) is also to be expected. By 2018, however, MB students made up only 4% of the total student body (now including regional centers, degree completion programs, etc.). Also, of note is the significant percentage of Baptist students throughout FPU's history (also greatly reduced in the past 20 years) and the increasing number of students who place themselves in the "other Christian" category.

Home state/country



“Where do our students call their home?” As a California-based institution it’s unsurprising to see that the largest number of students come from California. The next largest groups are from surrounding states like Oregon and Arizona.

NOTES:

- ¹ Removed “Unknown”, “Two or more Races”, and “Non-Resident Alien” & Combined Undergraduate and Graduate totals. In the early days the student body was overwhelmingly white.
- ² Removed “Unknown” and “Not Available” and combined Undergraduate and Graduate totals.
- ³ All charts were created with Excel and Infogram from data available in catalogs, registrar’s reports, and general ethnographic information, which was available from the IR office. Some inspiration and data was also pulled from Robert Enn’s, “Community and the Fresno Pacific College Idea: Dilemmas in the Institutionalization of Religion,” in *Mennonite Idealism and Higher Education: The Story of the Fresno Pacific College Idea* (Paul Toews, editor, Fresno: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1995). The charts used in this article portray only very general patterns.