

# Reaching College Students



**THE 2020 CENSUS COUNT IS CRITICAL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.** Academic libraries can play a vital role in ensuring a complete count of students. Census data determine the allocation of more than **\$1.5 trillion** each year for essential federal programs, such as scholarships, college readiness, campus facility improvements, research, and extension programs.

In addition, researchers, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations use Census data to establish policy and plan services—including determining representation in Congress and state and local government. If the Census misses people in a community, its residents face economic and political disadvantages.

## WHY MIGHT THE CENSUS UNDERCOUNT COLLEGE STUDENTS?

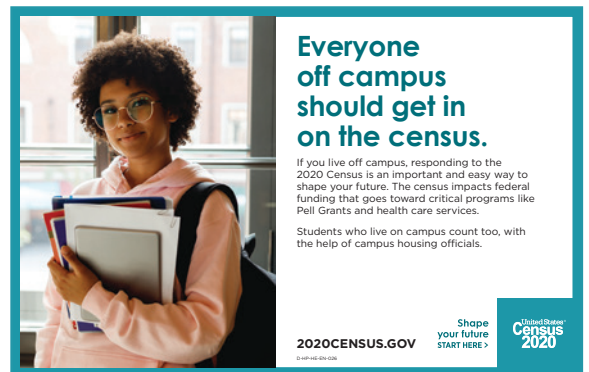
Experts consider college students a hard-to-count population, because:

- They are highly mobile;
- Renters and people aged 18–24 were the **top factors predicting low response areas in the 2010 Census**;
- People aged 18–29 were the **least likely to say they planned to participate** in the 2020 Census; and
- Students may also belong to other hard-to-count populations, such as immigrants, people of color, or people experiencing homelessness.

## HOW DOES THE CENSUS COUNT COLLEGE STUDENTS?

**Group Quarters:** Students who board in a dormitory or other by-the-bed university housing, including some fraternity and sorority houses, will be **counted through the residence administrator**. These residents will not respond directly to the Census Bureau.

**Renters:** Students who rent or stay in a private apartment or house will self-respond to the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will send a mailing to each housing unit (“123 Main Street, Apartment B,” for instance). Residents can respond **online, by phone, or by mail**, listing everyone living there on the same form.



Download outreach materials from  
[2020census.gov/partners](https://2020census.gov/partners).

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FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES  
AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT [ala.org/census](https://ala.org/census)

Share your library's Census story with the hashtag [#CountOnLibraries](https://twitter.com/CountOnLibraries)

## WHERE DOES THE CENSUS COUNT COLLEGE STUDENTS?



The Census counts people **where they live and sleep most of the time**. For example:

- A college student who stays most of the year at a college apartment will be counted there, not at her parents' house where she stays during college breaks.
- An American student who is living and attending college outside the United States will not be counted in the Census.
- An international student who is living and attending college in the United States will be counted at his college residence.

Responses to the 2020 Census are **safe, secure and protected by federal law**. Answers can only be used to produce anonymous statistics—they cannot be used against anyone in any way. The law prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing responses with anyone, including landlords, parents, or any other government agencies.

## WHAT CAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES DO?

**Educate students about the Census:** The Census Bureau offers free **downloadable outreach materials**.

**Reach out:** Partner with faculty, student groups, or community organizations to host informational events. For resources, see **Campus Compact** and **Census Counts**.

**Spread the word about Census job opportunities:** In early 2020, the Census Bureau will **hire 500,000 temporary workers** to conduct the count. With flexible hours and good pay, these may be great jobs for students or recent graduates. Learn more in ALA's tip sheet, "**How Can My Library Increase Awareness of 2020 Census Hiring?**"

**Provide computers and internet access:** Students and other library users may find it convenient to fill out the online Census form at the library. For instance, the library at California State University, Monterey Bay will have a table with Census information next to computers where library users can respond to the Census online.



Catholic University of America Libraries created an **exhibit** to raise awareness.



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