**Institutional Background**

[Hunter College](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu), founded in 1870 and located in the heart of Manhattan, is the second oldest college and the academic flagship of the [City University of New York (CUNY)](http://www.cuny.edu/), the nation’s largest urban public university system. Hunter’s galvanizing mission is to provide students from all backgrounds, and particularly the underserved, including first-generation college students, with the opportunity to receive an outstanding undergraduate education and, in select areas, professional, master’s and doctoral training, that prepare them to thrive and lead in a technology-driven, diverse, competitive, and changing world.

More than 23,000 students currently attend Hunter, pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in over 170 areas of study. In recent years, the *Princeton Review* has rated Hunter one of the nation’s “Best Value” Colleges, reaching the top ten twice (2010 and 2011) in the past 5 years, and second in the nation in 2010. In *US News and World Report’s* “America’s Best Colleges,” Hunter’s academic standing continues to rise among the 572 public and private institutions in its category, moving from 82 in 2003 to 38 in 2013*.* Over the past five years, the average SAT scores for incoming Hunter freshmen have risen from 1137 to 1180. Critically, at the same time, Hunter has maintained its student body’s diversity which is reflective of New York City itself and is consistently rated as one of the most diverse academic institutions in the nation. Hunter’s undergraduate population is 39%, White, 29% Asian-Pacific Islander, 20% Latino/a, and 12% Black. In 2013, 28% of Hunter’s undergraduates were born overseas, 39% speak a mother tongue language other than English at home, and more than a third are the first in their families to attend college. The most recent *US News and World Report* rankings place Hunter 5th in diversity among colleges in its region with a diversity index of 0.71 out of 1.[[1]](#footnote-1) Speaking from the White House on January 9, 2014, while surrounded by a group of promising young men and women from Harlem, President Barack Obama honored a Hunter student who had overcome adversity and demonstrated great academic achievement, and called Hunter "one of the best colleges in the country."

Hunter students are strongly committed to their education despite their many responsibilities and life in an expensive city and they are graduating faster than ever before. Hunter’s six-year graduation rates have risen by 14 points over the past decade to over 50% in 2014, its highest level since those indicators were recorded. Moreover, Hunter has raised its six-year graduation rates for Black students even higher, from 28.9% for the 2001 cohort to 53.1% for the 2007 cohort, suggesting that Hunter has become a national leader in graduating Black students.[[2]](#footnote-2) Despite the fact that more than half hold jobs, students’ level of academic achievement is extremely high. Many of Hunter’s students go on to top professional and graduate programs, including STEM PhD programs at the best R1 universities in the USA, while winning Mellon fellowships, National Science Foundation fellowships, National Institutes of Health fellowships, and other distinguished honors. Hunter College has the distinction of being one of the “top producers” for the Fulbright U.S. Student and Scholar Programs.[[3]](#footnote-3) Hunter also earned the distinction in the *2010 Survey of Earned Doctorates* of ranking 90th of more than 870 institutions in all categories as a feeder school of doctoral degrees: 57th with respect to women doctoral recipients and 21st with respect to minority doctoral recipients.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The success of Hunter students is largely due to the dedication and expertise of Hunter’s faculty. With more than 1,800 full- and part-time members, the faculty is unparalleled in its breadth of scholarship and creative achievement across the CUNY system. Many of the nation's top scholars are drawn to Hunter by its diverse and uniquely engaged student body, by the abundance of academic and cultural resources in New York, and by ever-growing collaborative opportunities for teaching and research. Hunter’s faculty are exceptional scholars, mentors, teachers, and practitioners, never more eminent or productive than they are today. In the last 5 years, 32 Hunter faculty members have received Fulbrights, Guggenheims, AAAS, and other distinguished fellowships.[[5]](#footnote-5) Moreover, Hunter’s science faculty hold a number of competitive research and training grants from prestigious public and private grant agencies, including 27 years of continuous funding (totaling more than $50 million) from the National Institutes of Health/Research Careers in Minority Institutions program, and support for science students via continuous funding since 1980 from the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health and Howard Hughes Medical Institute programs, totaling more than $53 million.[[6]](#footnote-6) Hunter science faculty productivity, in particular, continues to grow with a 3-year rolling annual average of 290 peer-reviewed articles published in 2011-13, up from 205 in 2007-2009[[7]](#footnote-7), an increase of 41%, during a period when the number of full-time science faculty members only increased by 8% (from 154 in 2007 to 166 in 2013).[[8]](#footnote-8) Hunter faculty are also extraordinary teachers – both in and outside the classroom. Through their innovative in-class teaching efforts and by providing opportunities for undergraduates to actively participate in their research, Hunter faculty do a remarkable job of training and mentoring the next generation of scientists and prominent leaders of the world.

1. For updated information on Hunter’s student demographics, contact the Office of Institutional Research (http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/institutional-research, [joan.lambe@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:joan.lambe@hunter.cuny.edu)) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For updated information on Hunter’s student demographics, contact the Office of Institutional Research (http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/institutional-research, [joan.lambe@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:joan.lambe@hunter.cuny.edu)) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Chronicle of Higher Education (2012)*.* Top Producers of U.S. Fulbright Students by Type of Institution, 2012-13. Retrieved October 31, 2014, from <http://chronicle.com/article/Top-Producers-of-US/135454>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For updated information contact the Office of Institutional Research (<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/institutional-research>, [joan.lambe@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:joan.lambe@hunter.cuny.edu)) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For updated information contact the Acting Associate Provost For Research (Mark Hauber, [mark.hauber@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:mark.hauber@hunter.cuny.edu)) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For updated information contact Office of Research Administration (<http://research.hunter.cuny.edu>, [rbuckley@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:rbuckley@hunter.cuny.edu)) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Data gathered via Web of Knowledge (<http://apps.webofknowledge.com>) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For updated information contact the Acting Associate Provost For Research (Mark Hauber, [mark.hauber@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:mark.hauber@hunter.cuny.edu)) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)