

Teaching across the Generations
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Generation	Birth Years	Current Age	Other Names	Big Events
Baby Boomers I	1946–1954	64–71	“Baby Boomers”	Kennedy, MLK, Vietnam
Baby Boomers II	1955–1965	53–63	“Generation Jones”	Watergate, AIDS
Generation X	1966–1980	38–52	“Lost Generation”	Latchkey, daycare, divorce, “digital immigrants”
Generation Y	1981–1999	19–37	“Millennials”	9/11, Columbine, VA Tech, “digital natives”
Generation Z	2000–present	0–18	“iGen”, “Centennials”	Diversity, “digital natives”, social justice

Tables 1 & 2 below from Black A (2010)

1969	2009
Caucasian	All races and ethnicities
Majority were men	Majority are women
Enrolled full-time	Growing part-time enrollment
Aged 18-22	Ages 18 and older
Graduated in four years	Graduate in six years or more
Majority lived on-campus	Majority live off-campus
Abled	Abled and disabled
Presumed heterosexual	All sexual orientations
May have worked part-time on campus	Work part-time or full-time off-campus
Attended community college <i>or</i> four-year college	Increasing number attend both community college <i>and</i> four-year college
Native-born to United States	Increasing number of immigrants
Middle-class	Increasingly diverse cultural, economic, and geographic backgrounds

Table 1: Changing Demographics of Students

1969	2009
Politically more liberal	Politically more conservative or independent
General learning orientation	Vocational/career orientation
Family/self-financed	Government/family/self-financed
Academically prepared	Lacking basic skills
Competitive	Collaborative
Worked and studied alone	Group work, team work
Lack of experience with diversity	Acceptance of diversity, more tolerant
Unsure of self	Assertive and confident
Low debt after college	High debt and defaults on loans after college
Friendships bound by proximity	Friendships not bound by geographical limits
Idealist—any problem can be solved	Cynical—aware of global warming and other world issues but still hopeful
Rejection of organized religion	Growing importance of spirituality and religion
Took responsibility for self	Growth of helicopter parents who hover and assume responsibility for college-age children
Acceptance of institutional structure (i.e., food, dorms, etc.)	More demanding consumers with customer expectations of immediate service
A privilege to attend college	An expectation to attend college; entitlement
Family stability	Family instability
Physically fit	Growing problem of obesity
Rejection of values of parents and society	Sharing values of parents and society
Mentally healthy	Less mentally healthy
Dependent upon note-taking; paper and pencil	Dependent upon technology; “digital natives”

Table 2: Characteristics of Students

References

Black A (2010). Gen Y: who they are and how they learn. *Educ Horizons*; 92-100.

Seemiller C, Grace M (2017). Generation Z: Educating and engaging the next generation of students. *About Campus*; 21-26.