



Free science-promotion materials offered

As educators can attest, science is sometimes a tough sell. But free videos, posters, and other information from the Government can help educators close the deal.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Science Education offers products and information that promote science careers. Some materials encourage young women to consider careers in medical and health sciences: Videos portray women surgeons, pathologists, and researchers, and colorful posters and a Web site depict women who work in neuroscience, heart disease, and cancer research. Materials for other audiences include curriculum supplements for K-12 teachers and a career-exploration Web site for middle school and high school students, counselors, and parents.



To learn more about these free products, call (301) 402-2469. To order online, visit science.education.nih.gov.

(202) 502-7300. You may also view the report online at www.nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007065.pdf.

High schoolers trend toward academic courses

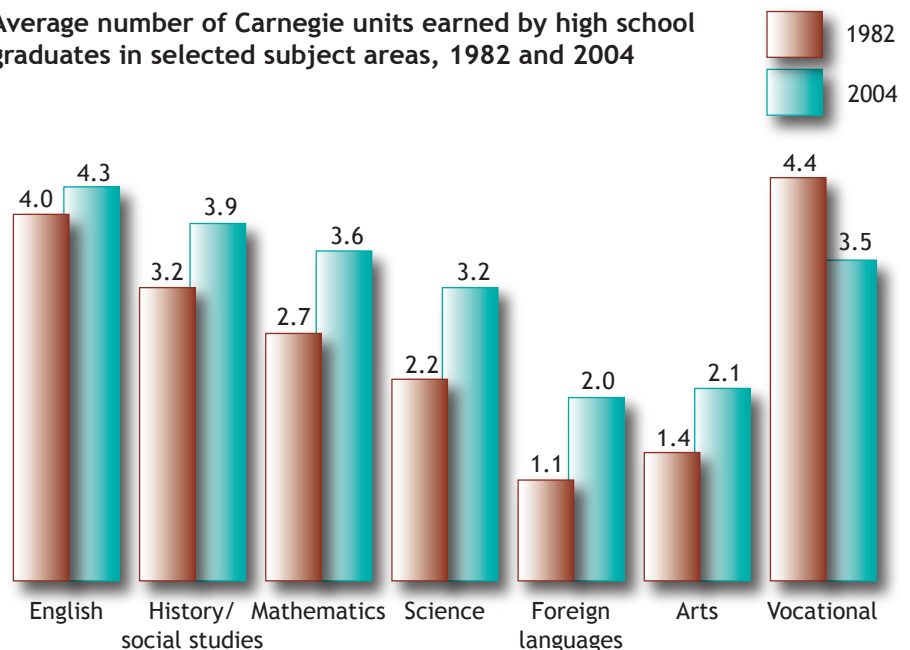
High school students take courses in core subject areas at a greater rate now than two decades ago, according to a recent study by the U.S. Department of Education.

Core subjects are those that make up a required part of most college curriculums. According to “High School Coursetaking: Findings from the Condition of Education,” a 2007 report from the National Center for Education Statistics, 2004 high school graduates had taken more courses in core subject areas than 1982 graduates had. The overall number of course credits that students earned—measured in Carnegie units, a standardized tally of instruction time—was also higher for 2004 graduates. At the same time, participation in vocational education showed significant declines from 1982 levels.

As the chart shows, the numbers of courses taken in science, foreign languages, and mathematics increased most over the period. Strong gains in mathematics were driven by a jump in the number of credits taken in algebra and higher mathematics.

For more information about high school coursetaking, write to the National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street NW., Washington, D.C. 20006, or call

Average number of Carnegie units earned by high school graduates in selected subject areas, 1982 and 2004



Productivity in service industries: Doing more in less time

U.S. workers—including those in services—are becoming more productive. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) show a rise in labor productivity in two-thirds of the service-providing industries measured between 2004 and 2005.

Increased labor productivity shows how much more workers produce per hour; in service-providing industries specifically, it is the value of services provided by the industries divided by the worker hours in those industries. Productivity increases as industries and workers become more efficient, meaning that they can accomplish more work in the same amount of time.

Scholarships for high achievers



If you're looking for a scholarship, check out what's available from Junior Achievement.

Junior Achievement Worldwide and its sponsors provide scholarships for a variety of students. Some scholarships grant tuition and more to students who plan to attend a specific school or major in a particular subject. Others award high achievers preparing for any field

of study. Still others are based on financial need.

Applicants usually must provide transcripts and other documentation, such as college-admissions test scores. Many of the scholarships also require submission of an essay on topics ranging from the importance of ethics in business to the influence of one person in the applicant's life.

Junior Achievement Worldwide is a nonprofit organization that promotes understanding of global business and economics. In addition to scholarships available at the national level, other scholarships might be offered through local Junior Achievement offices.

To learn more about these scholarships, write to Junior Achievement Worldwide, One Education Way, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80906; call (719) 540-8000; or visit online at www.ja.org/files/programs/programs_schol.shtml.

Many factors influence how much workers produce, including technological change, new machinery, and the ways in which work is organized and managed. Between 2004 and 2005, wireless telecommunications carriers, travel agencies, and photofinishing services experienced the greatest productivity gains.

For more information, write to the BLS Office of Productivity and Technology, Suite 2150, 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE., Washington, D.C. 20212; call (202) 691-5600; or visit www.bls.gov/lpc/home.htm. For a PDF version of the news release online, see www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/prin_06082007.pdf.

Suggestions welcome:

Do you have an item for the Grab bag?

Send it to: ooqinfo@bls.gov

O*Net's T2: Technology at work

Computers are crucial in the information age. That's especially true in the workplace.

Many occupations today require the use of technology, and the U.S. Department of Labor gives specifics about those requirements. O*Net, the Department's Occupational Information Network, gathers information about the types of software, machines, equipment, and tools that workers use. These data are called T2, or Tools and Technology, and are made available for more than 250 in-demand occupations through O*Net OnLine.

Knowing the kinds of technology that workers might use helps jobseekers to better prepare for careers, helps educators to better train workers, and helps employers to better assess job candidates' skills. Technology requirements are assigned broadly, however, so users should remember to fully research the occupations that interest them.

Tools and technology data are available within the O*Net occupational profiles through O*Net OnLine. For more information, visit online.onetcenter.org/help/t2.