

the condition of education 2008



INDICATOR 26

Degrees Earned

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2008*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2008*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008031>) or contact ED PUBS at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Completions

Degrees Earned

Between 1995–96 and 2005–06, the number of associate’s and bachelor’s degrees earned by minority students grew at a faster rate than for White students.

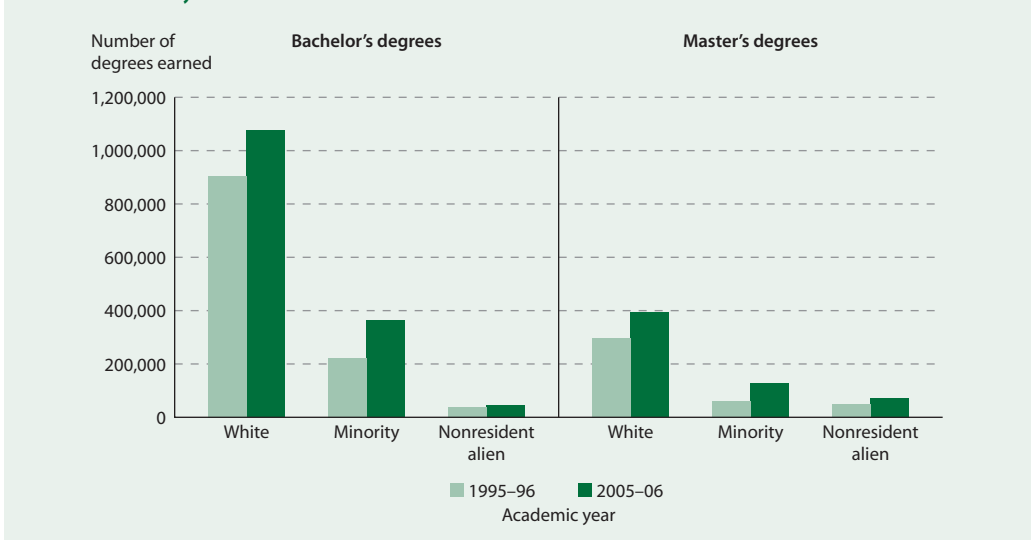
Between 1995–96 and 2005–06, enrollments in postsecondary degree-granting institutions increased by 23 percent, from 14.3 million to 17.5 million students (NCES 2008-022, table 3). This growth in enrollment was accompanied by increases in the number of degrees earned, with the number of associate’s degrees increasing by 28 percent, bachelor’s degrees by 28 percent, master’s degrees by 46 percent, first-professional degrees by 14 percent, and doctoral degrees by 26 percent (see supplemental table 26-1). For example, the annual number of bachelor’s degrees earned increased from 1.2 million in 1995–96 to 1.5 million in 2005–06.

Between 1995–96 and 2005–06, the number of associate’s degrees earned by minority students grew at a faster rate than for White students and accounted for over 60 percent of the increase in the total number of associate’s degrees awarded (see supplemental table 26-2). While the number of bachelor’s degrees earned by White students increased by 19 percent (from 905,800 to 1.1 million), the number of bachelor’s degrees earned by minority students increased by 64 percent (from 221,300 to 363,300) and

accounted for 44 percent of the total increase during this period. Minority students accounted for 37 percent of the increase in the number of master’s degrees, 59 percent of the increase in the number of first-professional degrees, and 27 percent of the increase in the number of doctoral degrees awarded. Nonresident aliens (foreign students) accounted for 13 percent of the increase in the number of master’s degrees awarded and 40 percent of the increase in doctoral degrees awarded. Despite slower growth, however, White students still earned the majority of each type of degree awarded in each year during this period. For example, Whites earned 72 percent of all bachelor’s degrees in 2005–06, compared with 78 percent in 1995–96.

Among minority students, Blacks earned 10 percent each of all bachelor’s and master’s degrees awarded in 2005–06. From 1995–96 to 2005–06, Blacks accounted for 16 percent of the increase in the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded and 18 percent of the increase in the number of master’s degrees awarded. Asians earned 12 percent of all first-professional degrees awarded in 2005–06 and accounted for 37 percent of the increase in first-professional degrees awarded.

DEGREES CONFERRED: Number of bachelor’s and master’s degrees earned by White, minority, and nonresident alien students: Academic years 1995–96 and 2005–06



NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Nonresident aliens are shown separately because information about their race/ethnicity is not available. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. The contribution of growth is calculated as the increase in the number of degrees for a particular level divided by the increase in the total number of degrees.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1995–96 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, “Completions Survey” (IPEDS-C:96), and Fall 2006.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 3, 9, 10
Supplemental Tables 26-1,
26-2



NCES 2008-022

Degrees Earned

Table 26-1. Number of degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by type of degree: 1990–91 through 2005–06

Academic year	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	First-professional ¹	Doctoral ²
1990–91	481,720	1,094,538	337,168	71,948	39,294
1991–92	504,231	1,136,553	352,838	74,146	40,659
1992–93	514,756	1,165,178	369,585	75,387	42,132
1993–94	530,632	1,169,275	387,070	75,418	43,185
1994–95	539,691	1,160,134	397,629	75,800	44,446
1995–96	555,216	1,164,792	406,301	76,734	44,652
1996–97	571,226	1,172,879	419,401	78,730	45,876
1997–98	558,555	1,184,406	430,164	78,598	46,010
1998–99	559,954	1,200,303	439,986	78,439	44,077
1999–2000	564,933	1,237,875	457,056	80,057	44,808
2000–01	578,865	1,244,171	468,476	79,707	44,904
2001–02	595,133	1,291,900	482,118	80,698	44,160
2002–03	632,912	1,348,503	512,645	80,810	46,024
2003–04	665,301	1,399,542	558,940	83,041	48,378
2004–05	696,660	1,439,264	574,618	87,289	52,631
2005–06	713,066	1,485,242	594,065	87,655	56,067
Increase in the number of degrees conferred between 1990–91 and 2005–06	231,346	390,704	256,897	15,707	16,773
Increase in the number of degrees conferred between 1995–96 and 2005–06	157,850	320,450	187,764	10,921	11,415
Percentage change in the number of degrees conferred between 1990–91 and 2005–06	48.0	35.7	76.2	21.8	42.7
Percentage change in the number of degrees conferred between 1995–96 and 2005–06	28.4	27.5	46.2	14.2	25.6

¹ An award that requires completion of a degree program that meets all of the following criteria: (1) completion of the academic requirements to begin practice in the profession; (2) at least 2 years of college work before entering the degree program; (3) a total of at least 6 academic years of college work to complete the degree program, including previously required college work plus the work required in the professional program itself. See glossary for a definition of first-professional degree.

² Includes Ph.D., Ed.D., and comparable degrees at the doctoral level. Excludes first-professional degrees, such as M.D., D.D.S., and law degrees.

NOTE: Detail in accompanying tables may not sum to totals shown here because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990–91 through 2004–05 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:90–99), and Fall 2000 through Fall 2006.

Degrees Earned

Table 26-2. Number and percentage distribution of degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by type of degree and racial/ethnic group: Academic years 1990–91, 1995–96, and 2005–06

Characteristic	1990–91		1995–96		2005–06		Percent change		
	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	1990–91 to 1995–96	1995–96 to 2005–06	1990–91 to 2005–06
Associate's	481,720	100.0	555,216	100.0	713,066	100.0	15.3	28.4	48.0
White	391,264	81.2	426,106	76.7	485,297	68.1	8.9	13.9	24.0
Total minority	83,503	17.3	118,979	21.4	214,391	30.1	42.5	80.2	156.7
Black	38,835	8.1	52,014	9.4	89,784	12.6	33.9	72.6	131.2
Hispanic	25,540	5.3	38,254	6.9	80,854	11.3	49.8	111.4	216.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	15,257	3.2	23,138	4.2	35,201	4.9	51.7	52.1	130.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	3,871	0.8	5,573	1.0	8,552	1.2	44.0	53.5	120.9
Nonresident alien	6,953	1.4	10,131	1.8	13,378	1.9	45.7	32.1	92.4
Bachelor's	1,094,538	100.0	1,164,792	100.0	1,485,242	100.0	6.4	27.5	35.7
White	914,093	83.5	905,846	77.8	1,075,561	72.4	-0.9	18.7	17.7
Total minority	150,829	13.8	221,256	19.0	363,324	24.5	46.7	64.2	140.9
Black	66,375	6.1	91,496	7.9	142,420	9.6	37.8	55.7	114.6
Hispanic	37,342	3.4	58,351	5.0	107,588	7.2	56.3	84.4	188.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	42,529	3.9	64,433	5.5	102,376	6.9	51.5	58.9	140.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	4,583	0.4	6,976	0.6	10,940	0.7	52.2	56.8	138.7
Nonresident alien	29,616	2.7	37,690	3.2	46,357	3.1	27.3	23.0	56.5
Master's	337,168	100.0	406,301	100.0	594,065	100.0	20.5	46.2	76.2
White	261,232	77.5	298,133	73.4	393,357	66.2	14.1	31.9	50.6
Total minority	38,331	11.4	60,258	14.8	128,947	21.7	57.2	114.0	236.4
Black	16,616	4.9	25,822	6.4	58,976	9.9	55.4	128.4	254.9
Hispanic	8,887	2.6	14,442	3.6	32,438	5.5	62.5	124.6	265.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	11,650	3.5	18,216	4.5	34,029	5.7	56.4	86.8	192.1
American Indian/Alaska Native	1,178	0.3	1,778	0.4	3,504	0.6	50.9	97.1	197.5
Nonresident alien	37,605	11.2	47,910	11.8	71,761	12.1	27.4	49.8	90.8
First-professional ¹	71,948	100.0	76,734	100.0	87,655	100.0	6.7	14.2	21.8
White	60,631	84.3	59,525	77.6	63,590	72.5	-1.8	6.8	4.9
Total minority	10,231	14.2	15,587	20.3	22,024	25.1	52.4	41.3	115.3
Black	3,588	5.0	5,022	6.5	6,223	7.1	40.0	23.9	73.4
Hispanic	2,547	3.5	3,475	4.5	4,446	5.1	36.4	27.9	74.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	3,835	5.3	6,627	8.6	10,645	12.1	72.8	60.6	177.6
American Indian/Alaska Native	261	0.4	463	0.6	710	0.8	77.4	53.3	172.0
Nonresident alien	1,086	1.5	1,622	2.1	2,041	2.3	49.4	25.8	87.9
Doctoral ²	39,294	100.0	44,652	100.0	56,067	100.0	13.6	25.6	42.7
White	25,855	65.8	27,773	62.2	31,601	56.4	7.4	13.8	22.2
Total minority	3,615	9.2	5,429	12.2	8,491	15.1	50.2	56.4	134.9
Black	1,248	3.2	1,632	3.7	3,122	5.6	30.8	91.3	150.2
Hispanic	757	1.9	997	2.2	1,882	3.4	31.7	88.8	148.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,504	3.8	2,641	5.9	3,257	5.8	75.6	23.3	116.6
American Indian/Alaska Native	106	0.3	159	0.4	230	0.4	50.0	44.7	117.0
Nonresident alien	9,824	25.0	11,450	25.6	15,975	28.5	16.6	39.5	62.6

¹ An award that requires completion of a degree program that meets all of the following criteria: (1) completion of the academic requirements to begin practice in the profession; (2) at least 2 years of college work before entering the degree program; (3) a total of at least 6 academic years of college work to complete the degree program, including previously required college work plus the work required in the professional program itself. See glossary for a definition of first-professional degree.

² Includes Ph.D., Ed.D., and comparable degrees at the doctoral level. Excludes first-professional degrees, such as M.D., D.D.S., and law degrees.

NOTE: Reported racial/ethnic distributions of students by type of degree, field of degree, and sex were used to estimate race/ethnicity for students whose race/ethnicity was not reported. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Nonresident aliens are shown separately because information about their race/ethnicity is not available. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990–91 through 2004–05 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:90–99), and Fall 2000 through Fall 2006.