

the condition of education 2008



INDICATOR 40

Graduate Fields of Study

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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Programs and Courses

Graduate Fields of Study

In 2005–06, of the 594,000 master's degrees awarded, over 50 percent were in the fields of education (29 percent) and business (25 percent).

In each year shown (1990–91, 1995–96, and 2005–06), six fields—education, business, health professions, engineering, public administration and social services, and psychology—accounted for 72 to 77 percent of the total number of master's degrees awarded (see supplemental table 40-1). In 2005–06, about 175,000 degrees (29 percent) were awarded in education and 146,000 degrees (25 percent) were awarded in business.

Overall, 188,000 more master's degrees were awarded in 2005–06 than in 1995–96 (a 46 percent increase). The increase in the number of education and business degrees earned contributed to over 65 percent of this growth. Although they had less impact on the overall growth, during this time, the number of degrees earned in architecture increased by 44 percent (totaling 5,700 in 2005–06) and the number earned in mathematics and statistics increased by 30 percent (totaling 4,700 in 2005–06).

In each year shown, between 71 and 74 percent of doctoral degrees were awarded in seven fields: education, engineering, health professions, biological and biomedical sciences, psychology, physical sciences, and social sciences and history. In 2005–06, some 7,600 degrees

were awarded in education, 7,500 were awarded in engineering, and 7,100 were awarded in health professions (each accounting for 13 to 14 percent of all degrees).

Overall, 11,400 more doctoral degrees were awarded in 2005–06 than in 1995–96 (a 26 percent increase). The increase in doctoral degrees awarded in health professions accounted for 48 percent of this overall growth, and the increase in education and engineering degrees accounted for an additional 21 percent of the overall growth. Although the increase in degrees awarded in computer and information sciences made a smaller contribution to the overall growth (5 percent), the number of degrees in this field increased by 63 percent (from 870 to 1,400) between 1995–96 and 2005–06. During this period, the number of degrees awarded decreased in English language and literature/letters, theology and religious vocations, and agriculture and natural resources.

The number of first-professional degrees awarded increased by 11,000 (a 14 percent increase) between 1995–96 and 2005–06. The increase in the number of degrees awarded in pharmacy (264 percent) accounted for 62 percent of this overall growth.

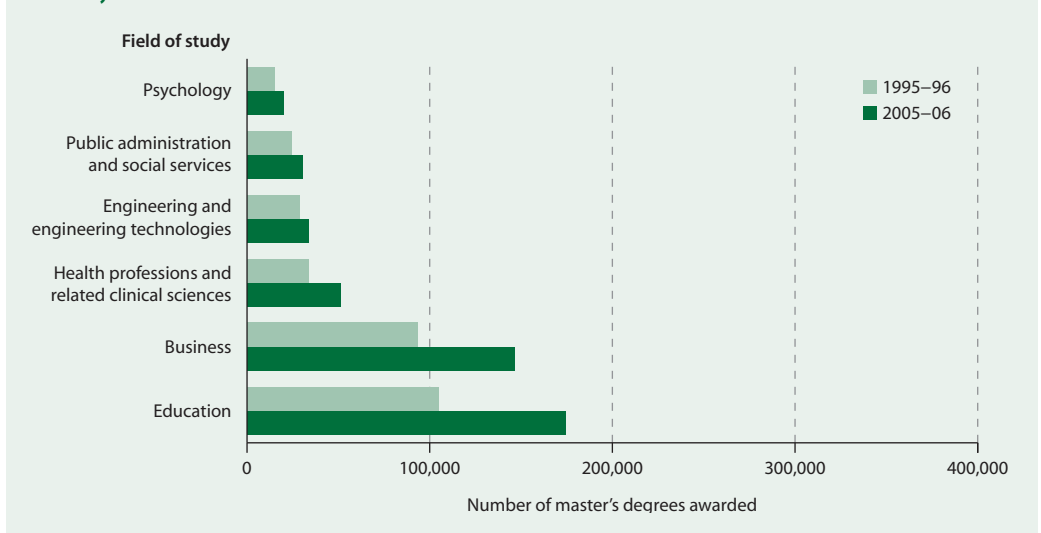
NOTE: The six most common fields of study at the master's degree level in academic year 2005–06 are featured for academic years 1995–96 and 2005–06; the remaining fields of study are not shown. The contribution of growth is calculated as the increase in the number of degrees for a particular field divided by the increase in the total number of degrees. See supplemental note 10 for more information on fields of study. The new *Classification of Instructional Programs* was initiated in 2002–03. Estimates for earlier years have been reclassified when necessary to conform to the new taxonomy. See supplemental note 9 for more information on the Classification of Postsecondary Education Institutions. See supplemental note 3 for more information on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2007* (NCES 2008-022), table 262, data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1995–96 and 2005–06 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:96), and Fall 2006.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 3, 9, 10
Supplemental Table 40-1
Indicators 26, 27, 39

FIELDS OF STUDY: Number of master's degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 1995–96 and 2005–06



Graduate Fields of Study

Table 40-1. Number of master's, doctoral, and first-professional degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions, percentage of total, and percent change, by selected fields of study: Academic years 1990–91, 1995–96, and 2005–06

Field of study	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
Master's degrees									
Total¹	337,168	100.0	406,301	100.0	594,065	100.0	20.5	46.2	76.2
Education	87,352	25.9	104,936	25.8	174,620	29.4	20.1	66.4	99.9
Business	78,255	23.2	93,554	23.0	146,406	24.6	19.6	56.5	87.1
Health professions and related clinical sciences	21,354	6.3	33,920	8.3	51,380	8.6	58.8	51.5	140.6
Engineering and engineering technologies	25,450	7.5	28,946	7.1	33,530	5.6	13.7	15.8	31.7
Public administration and social services	17,905	5.3	24,229	6.0	30,510	5.1	35.3	25.9	70.4
Psychology	11,349	3.4	15,152	3.7	19,770	3.3	33.5	30.5	74.2
Social sciences and history	12,233	3.6	15,012	3.7	17,369	2.9	22.7	15.7	42.0
Computer and information sciences and support services	9,324	2.8	10,579	2.6	17,055	2.9	13.5	61.2	82.9
Visual and performing arts	8,657	2.6	10,280	2.5	13,530	2.3	18.7	31.6	56.3
English language and literature/ letters	6,784	2.0	7,657	1.9	8,845	1.5	12.9	15.5	30.4
Biological and biomedical sciences	4,796	1.4	6,544	1.6	8,681	1.5	36.4	32.7	81.0
Communication, journalism, and related programs	4,123	1.2	5,080	1.3	7,244	1.2	23.2	42.6	75.7
Library science	4,763	1.4	5,099	1.3	6,448	1.1	7.1	26.5	35.4
Theology and religious vocations	4,803	1.4	5,030	1.2	6,092	1.0	4.7	21.1	26.8
Physical sciences and science technologies	5,281	1.6	5,807	1.4	5,922	1.0	10.0	2.0	12.1
Architecture and related services	3,490	1.0	3,993	1.0	5,743	1.0	14.4	43.8	64.6
Mathematics and statistics	3,549	1.1	3,651	0.9	4,730	0.8	2.9	29.6	33.3
Agriculture and natural resources	3,295	1.0	4,551	1.1	4,640	0.8	38.1	2.0	40.8

See notes at end of table.

Graduate Fields of Study

Table 40-1. Number of master's, doctoral, and first-professional degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions, percentage of total, and percent change, by selected fields of study: Academic years 1990–91, 1995–96, and 2005–06—Continued

Field of study	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
Doctoral degrees²									
Total¹	39,294	100.0	44,652	100.0	56,067	100.0	13.6	25.6	42.7
Education	6,189	15.8	6,246	14.0	7,584	13.5	0.9	21.4	22.5
Engineering and engineering technologies	5,330	13.6	6,431	14.4	7,471	13.3	20.7	16.2	40.2
Health professions and related clinical sciences	1,534	3.9	1,651	3.7	7,128	12.7	7.6	331.7	364.7
Biological and biomedical sciences	4,034	10.3	5,035	11.3	5,775	10.3	24.8	14.7	43.2
Psychology	3,932	10.0	4,141	9.3	4,921	8.8	5.3	18.8	25.2
Physical sciences and science technologies	4,248	10.8	4,512	10.1	4,489	8.0	6.2	-0.5	5.7
Social sciences and history	3,012	7.7	3,760	8.4	3,914	7.0	24.8	4.1	29.9
Business	1,185	3.0	1,366	3.1	1,711	3.1	15.3	25.3	44.4
Theology and religious vocations	1,076	2.7	1,517	3.4	1,429	2.5	41.0	-5.8	32.8
Computer and information sciences and support services	676	1.7	869	1.9	1,416	2.5	28.6	62.9	109.5
Visual and performing arts	838	2.1	1,067	2.4	1,383	2.5	27.3	29.6	65.0
Mathematics and statistics	978	2.5	1,158	2.6	1,293	2.3	18.4	11.7	32.2
English language and literature/ letters	1,056	2.7	1,395	3.1	1,254	2.2	32.1	-10.1	18.8
Agriculture and natural resources	1,185	3.0	1,259	2.8	1,194	2.1	6.2	-5.2	0.8
Foreign languages, literatures, and linguistics	889	2.3	1,020	2.3	1,074	1.9	14.7	5.3	20.8
Multi/interdisciplinary studies	424	1.1	764	1.7	987	1.8	80.2	29.2	132.8
First-professional degrees³									
Total¹	71,948	100.0	76,734	100.0	87,655	100.0	6.7	14.2	21.8
Law	37,945	52.7	39,828	51.9	43,440	49.6	5.0	9.1	14.5
Medicine	15,043	20.9	15,341	20.0	15,455	17.6	2.0	0.7	2.7
Pharmacy	1,244	1.7	2,555	3.3	9,292	10.6	105.4	263.7	646.9
Theology	5,695	7.9	5,879	7.7	5,666	6.5	3.2	-3.6	-0.5
Dentistry	3,699	5.1	3,697	4.8	4,389	5.0	-0.1	18.7	18.7
Osteopathic	1,459	2.0	1,895	2.5	2,718	3.1	29.9	43.4	86.3
Chiropractic	2,640	3.7	3,379	4.4	2,564	2.9	28.0	-24.1	-2.9
Veterinary medicine	2,032	2.8	2,109	2.7	2,370	2.7	3.8	12.4	16.6
Optometry	1,115	1.5	1,231	1.6	1,198	1.4	10.4	-2.7	7.4

¹ Includes other fields not shown separately.

² Includes Ph.D., Ed.D., and comparable degrees at the doctoral level.

³ 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; and (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 complete list of first-professional degrees.

NOTE: See *supplemental note 10* for more information on fields of study. The new *Classification of Instructional Programs* was initiated in 2002–03. Estimates for earlier years have been reclassified when necessary to conform to the new taxonomy. See *supplemental note 9* for information on the Classification of Postsecondary Education Institutions. See *supplemental note 3* for more information about the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2007* (NCES 2008-022), tables 262, 263 and 270, data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1990–91, 1995–96, and 2005–06 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, “Completions Survey” (IPEDS-C:91 and 96), and Fall 2006.