



Council of Graduate Schools

PRESS RELEASE

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Doctorates Awarded Jumped 8% in 2007 **Double-digit growth in engineering, biological sciences**

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is reporting today that the number of doctoral degrees conferred by U.S. graduate schools rose 8% between 2006 and 2007, compared to 2% average annual growth over the past decade.

The survey report, *Graduate Enrollment and Degrees: 1997 to 2007*, reveals that doctorates in the critical fields of engineering and biological sciences increased 10% and 11%, respectively, in one year. The number of doctorates awarded to women rose 10% from 2006 to 2007, compared to 8% growth among men; over the 1997-2007 period, there was 4% average annual growth in doctorates granted to women, versus 1% for men.

The ten-year trend also shows that graduate enrollment of U.S. minority groups grew much faster than that of White, non-Hispanic students. There was 8% average annual growth for African-Americans, 7% for Hispanic students, 6% for Native Americans, and 4% for Asians, compared to 1% for White students.

Additionally, minorities made substantial one-year gains in enrollment in vital science and engineering fields last year. For example, African-American enrollment rose 7% in biological sciences and 6% in both engineering and physical sciences, while the number of Native American students in engineering rose 11% in 2007.

“The increase in doctorates awarded, particularly in two key fields, is a necessary step in producing the highly qualified workforce required to enhance U.S. competitiveness,” said Debra W. Stewart, CGS President. “While the increased representation of minority students is another encouraging sign, we must continue to expand the domestic pipeline to ensure that America has the talent pool it will need in the 21st century global economy,” she added.

CGS’ annual report presents statistics on applications and enrollment for Fall 2007, degrees conferred in 2006-07, and trend data for one-, five- and ten-year periods. Highlights include:

One-year changes

- Total graduate enrollment increased 3% last year, with more than twice as much growth among international students, 7%, than domestic students, up 3%.

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- Enrollment of men grew faster than for women, 4% vs. 3% (compared to no growth for men and 2% for women in 2006).
- The proportion of female graduate students held steady at 59% overall in 2007, though it was 66% at master's-level institutions. Racial/ethnic minorities comprised 28% of enrollment.
- First-time enrollment increased 4% overall last year, including a 10% rise in international students. There was 3% growth for domestic students, compared to a 1% decline in 2006.
- The number of doctoral degrees awarded to women increased 14% at private universities, compared to 8% for men.
- The number of master's degrees awarded in 2007 increased 4% overall, but *declined* in several fields: down 5% in business, education (-4%), and engineering (-3%).

Ten-year trends

- Total enrollment growth has averaged 3% annually, with 4% average yearly growth for women and 5% for international students.
- The representation of minorities in science has steadily increased. For example, the average annual enrollment growth for Hispanic students was 7% in biological sciences and 6% in physical sciences, compared to 1% for White, non-Hispanics in those fields.
- Health sciences continues to be the fastest-growing field, with 4% average annual enrollment growth overall, although the fastest-growing field for international students was public administration, up an average of 7% annually.
- Health sciences also significantly outpaced all other fields in the growth of doctorates awarded, with 13% average annual growth; no other field had more than 3% annual growth.
- Growth in the number of master's degrees awarded was more consistent between fields of study, with average annual increases between 1% and 3% for each.

About the report

Graduate Enrollment and Degrees: 1997 to 2007 presents the findings of a survey, co-sponsored with the Graduate Record Examinations Board, that is the only national annual enrollment survey that covers all fields of graduate study and is the only source of national data on graduate applications. Data on 683 institutions were included. The report is available at www.cgsnet.org.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. CGS member institutions award 94% of the doctoral degrees and 80% of the master's degrees in the U.S. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

* *Graduate Enrollment and Degrees: 1996-2006* (Council of Graduate Schools, 2007)