

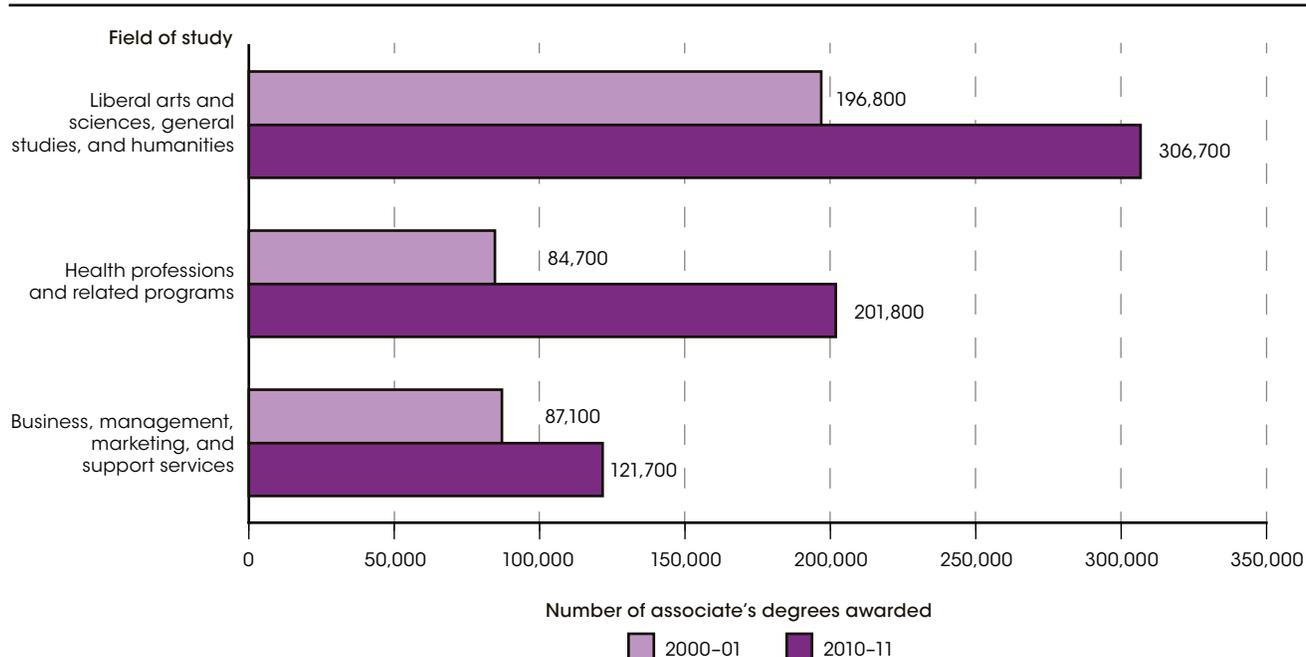
Undergraduate Fields of Study

From academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, the number of associate’s degrees awarded increased by 63 percent to 0.9 million, and the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded increased by 38 percent to 1.7 million.

About two-thirds of the 942,000 associate’s degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in academic year 2010–11 were in three broad fields of study: liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities (33 percent); health professions and related programs (21 percent); and

business, management, marketing, and support services (13 percent). These are the same three fields in which the largest numbers of associate’s degrees were awarded in 2000–01.

Figure 1. Number of associate’s degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 2000–01 and 2010–11



NOTE: These three fields were selected because they were the top fields in which associate’s degrees were awarded in 2010–11. Includes only institutions that participated in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The new Classification of Instructional Programs was initiated in 2009–10. The estimates for 2000–01 have been reclassified when necessary to make them conform to the new taxonomy. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2001 and Fall 2011, Completions component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 312.

Overall, the number of associate’s degrees awarded from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11 increased by 363,000 degrees, or 63 percent. Of the 20 major fields of study in which the most associate’s degrees were awarded in 2010–11, the field of homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting had the largest percentage increase (174 percent, from 16,400 to 44,900 degrees). Additionally, the number of associate’s degrees awarded more than doubled in the following fields: psychology (it increased 149 percent), social sciences and history (it increased 149 percent), health professions and related

programs (138 percent), multi/interdisciplinary studies (127 percent), public administration and social service professions (124 percent), physical sciences and science technologies (116 percent), education (115 percent), and construction trades (101 percent). In contrast, the number of degrees conferred declined in two fields from 2000–01 to 2010–11: Some 6,800 fewer associate’s degrees were awarded in engineering technologies and engineering-related fields (a decrease of 16 percent), and 220 fewer degrees were awarded in agriculture and natural resources (a decrease of 3 percent).

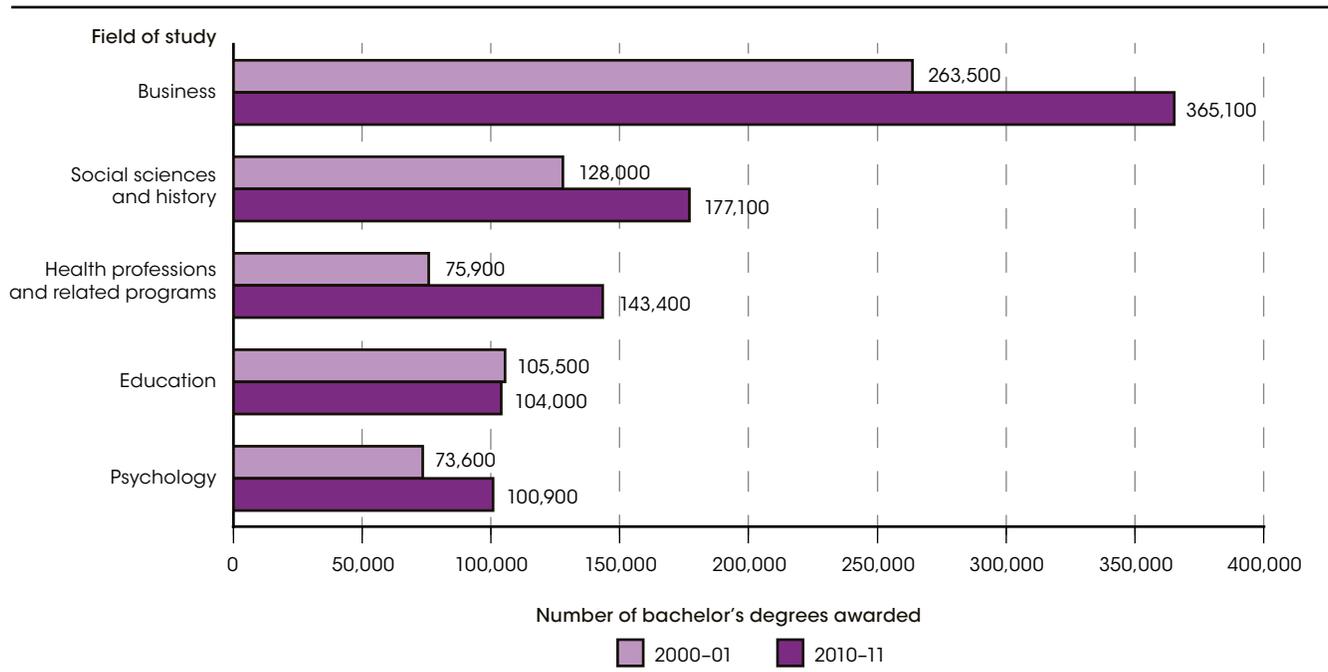
For more information, see the Reader’s Guide and the Guide to Sources.

Of the 1.7 million bachelor's degrees awarded in academic year 2010–11, almost one-third were concentrated in two fields: business (21 percent) and social sciences and history (10 percent). Five other fields each accounted for 5 percent or more of all bachelor's degrees awarded. These were health professions and related programs, education, psychology, visual and performing arts, and biological and biomedical sciences. These are the same seven fields in which the largest numbers of bachelor's degrees were awarded in 2000–01.

Overall, the number of bachelor's degrees awarded increased by 472,000 degrees from academic year 2000–01 to 2010–11, reflecting an increase of 38 percent.

During this period, the two largest fields of study, business and social sciences, had increases of 39 percent and 38 percent, respectively. Of the 20 major fields of study in which the most bachelor's degrees were awarded in 2010–11, the largest percentage increase in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded occurred in the field of parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies (from 17,900 to 35,900 degrees, an increase of more than 100 percent). In contrast, the number of degrees conferred declined in two fields from 2000–01 to 2010–11: Some 1,500 fewer bachelor's degrees were awarded in education (a decrease of 1 percent), and 1,100 fewer degrees were awarded in computer and information sciences (a decrease of 2 percent).

Figure 2. Number of bachelor's degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 2000–01 and 2010–11



NOTE: These five fields were selected because they were the top fields in which bachelor's degrees were awarded in 2010–11. Includes only institutions that participated in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The new Classification of Instructional Programs was initiated in 2009–10. The estimates for 2000–01 have been reclassified when necessary to make them conform to the new taxonomy. "Business" includes Business, management, marketing, and related support services and Personal and culinary services.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2001 and Fall 2011, Completions component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 313.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, tables 312, 313

Glossary: Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)