

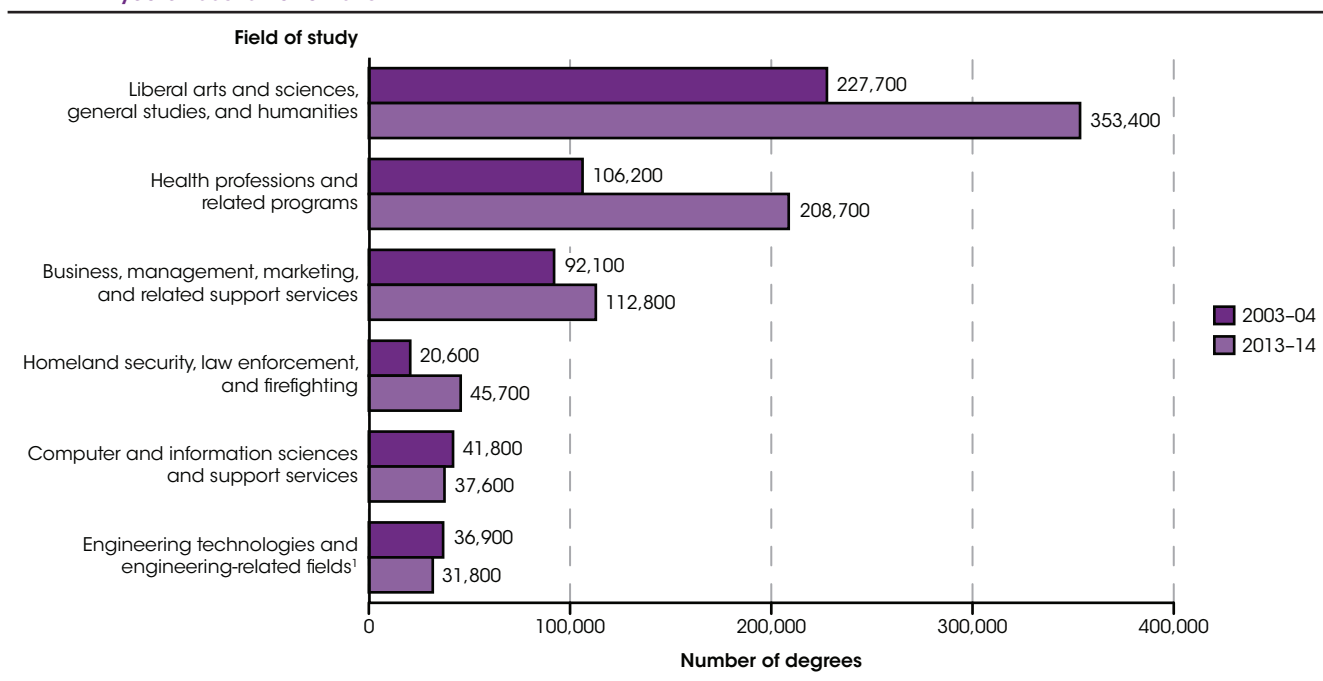
## Undergraduate Degree Fields

*From 2003–04 to 2013–14, the number of associate’s degrees conferred increased by 51 percent, from 665,300 to over 1 million, and the number of bachelor’s degrees conferred increased by 34 percent, from 1.4 million to 1.9 million.*

In academic year 2013–14, over 1 million associate’s degrees were conferred by Title IV postsecondary institutions, a decrease of less than 1 percent from the previous year. Of the associate’s degrees conferred in 2013–14, about two-thirds (67 percent) were concentrated in three fields of study: liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities (35 percent); health professions and related programs (21 percent); and business, management, marketing, and support services

(11 percent). These three fields also accounted for the largest percentage of degrees in 2003–04. In 2013–14, the three next largest percentages of associate’s degrees conferred were in the fields of homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting (5 percent); computer and information sciences and support services (4 percent); and engineering technologies and engineering-related fields<sup>1</sup> (3 percent).

**Figure 1. Number of associate’s degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 2003–04 and 2013–14**



<sup>1</sup> Excludes “Construction trades” and “Mechanic and repair technologies/technicians.”

NOTE: The six fields of study shown were the fields in which the largest number of associate’s degrees were conferred from the approximately 1,003,400 associate’s degrees conferred in 2013–14. Data are for postsecondary institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The new Classification of Instructional Programs was initiated in 2009–10. The estimates for 2003–04 have been reclassified when necessary to make them conform to the new taxonomy. The “business, management, marketing, and related support services” field of study does not include personal and culinary services. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2004 and Fall 2014, Completions component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 321.10.

Between 2003–04 and 2013–14, the number of associate’s degrees conferred increased by 338,000 degrees, or 51 percent. Over this time period, the number of associate’s degrees conferred in liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities; health professions and related programs; and business, management, marketing, and support services (the three fields of study in which the most degrees were conferred) increased by 55 percent

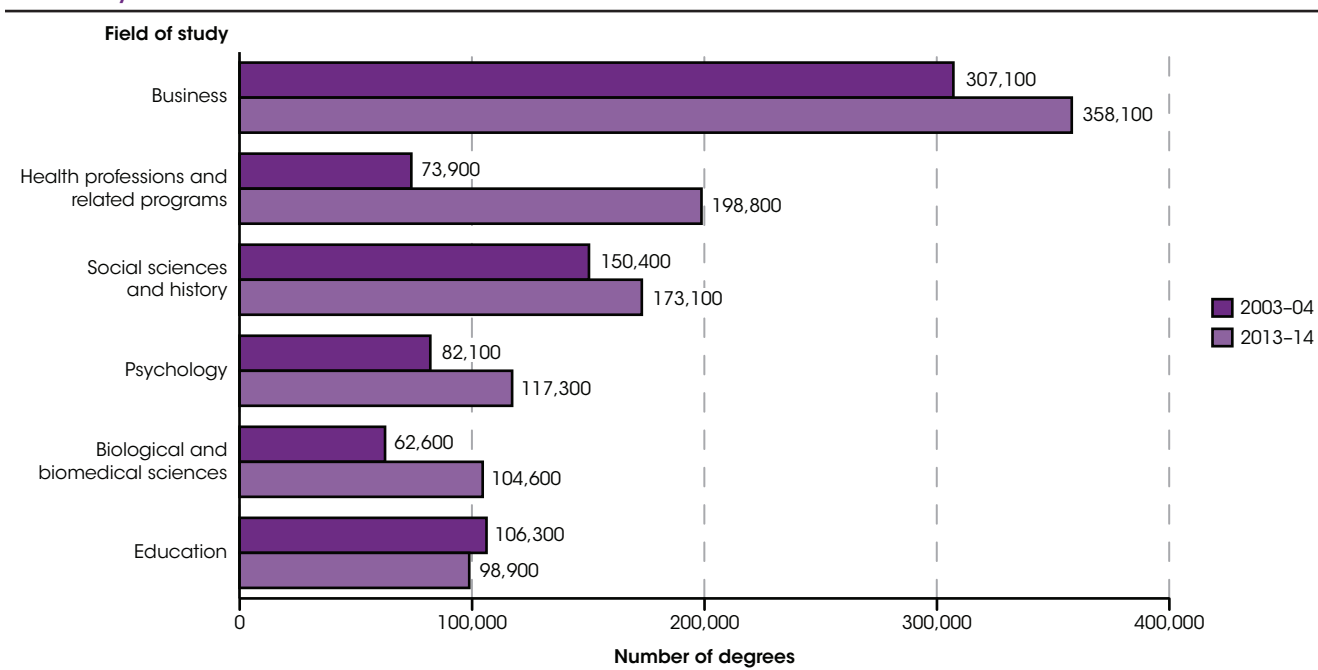
(from 227,700 to 353,400), 96 percent (from 106,200 to 208,700), and 23 percent (from 92,100 to 112,800), respectively. Of the 20 fields of study in which the greatest number of associate’s degrees were conferred in 2013–14, psychology was the field in which there was the largest percentage increase in degrees conferred between 2003–04 and 2013–14 (299 percent, from 1,900 to 7,500 degrees). Additionally, the number of associate’s

degrees conferred more than doubled over the period in the following fields: social sciences and history (increasing from 6,200 to 16,500, or 165 percent); physical sciences and science technologies (increasing from 2,700 to 6,900, or 158 percent); public administration and social services (increasing from 3,700 to 8,900, or 139 percent); homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting (increasing from 20,600 to 45,700, or 122 percent); and communication, journalism, and related programs (increasing from 2,400 to 4,900, or 102 percent).

In 2013–14, the three fields in which the greatest number of associate’s degrees were conferred overall—liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities; health professions and related programs; and business, management, marketing, and support services—were also the three fields in which the most degrees were conferred across the following racial/ethnic groups: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, Two or more races, and Nonresident alien. The fields in which the fourth and fifth most associate’s degrees were conferred overall (homeland

security, law enforcement, and firefighting; and computer and information sciences and support services, respectively) were the same as the fields in which the fourth and fifth most degrees were conferred to White (24,900 and 23,000, respectively), Black (7,800 and 6,100, respectively), and Pacific Islander students (200 and 100, respectively), as well as students of Two or more races (900 and 800, respectively). For Hispanic students, the field in which the fourth most associate’s degrees were conferred in 2013–14 was homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting, and the field in which the fifth most were conferred was multi/interdisciplinary studies. For Asian students, the field in which the fourth most associate’s degrees were conferred was multi/interdisciplinary studies, and the field in which the fifth most were conferred was computer and information sciences and support services. For American Indian/Alaska Native students, the field in which the fourth most associate’s degrees were conferred was education, and the field in which the fifth most were conferred was homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting.

**Figure 2. Number of bachelor’s degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 2003–04 and 2013–14**



NOTE: The six fields of study shown were the fields in which the largest number of bachelor’s degrees were conferred from the approximately 1,869,800 bachelor’s degrees conferred in 2013–14. Data are for postsecondary institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The new Classification of Instructional Programs was initiated in 2009–10. The estimates for 2003–04 have been reclassified when necessary to make them conform to the new taxonomy. The “business” field of study includes business, management, marketing, and related support services, as well as personal and culinary services. Some data have been revised from previously published figures. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2004 and Fall 2014, Completions component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 322.10.

Approximately 1.9 million bachelor’s degrees were conferred by Title IV postsecondary institutions in 2013–14. The fields in which the three largest percentages of bachelor’s degrees were conferred in 2013–14 were business<sup>2</sup> (19 percent), health professions and related

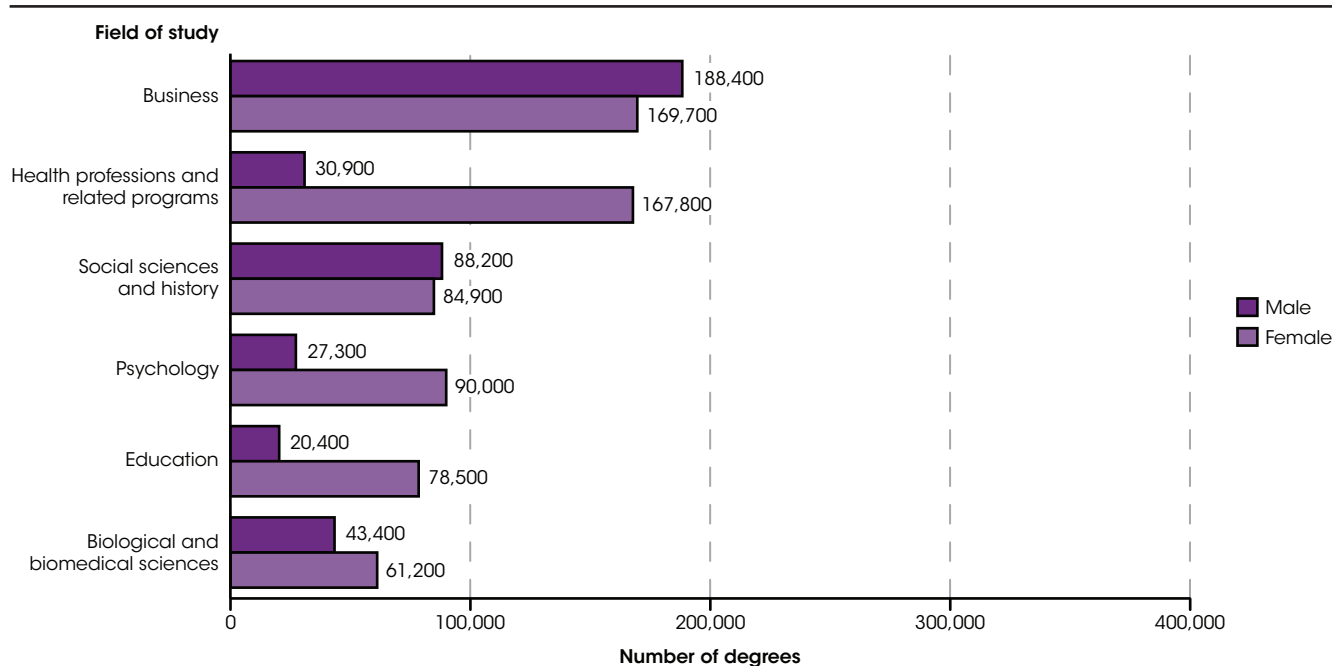
programs (11 percent), and social sciences and history (9 percent). The fields in which the three next largest percentages of bachelor’s degrees were conferred in 2013–14 were psychology (6 percent), biological and biomedical sciences (6 percent), and education (5 percent).

The number of bachelor's degrees conferred overall increased by 470,000 degrees, or 34 percent, between 2003–04 and 2013–14. The three fields of study in which the most bachelor's degrees were conferred—business, health professions and related programs, and social sciences and history—had increases during this period of 17 percent (from 307,100 to 358,100), 169 percent (from 73,900 to 198,800), and 15 percent (from 150,400 to 173,100), respectively. In addition to health professions and related programs, of the 20 fields of study in which the most bachelor's degrees were conferred in 2013–14, the next largest percentage increases between 2003–04 and 2013–14 occurred in homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting (122 percent, from 28,200 to 62,400); and parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies (108 percent, from 22,200 to 46,000).

In 2013–14, the three fields of study in which the most bachelor's degrees were conferred overall (business, health

professions and related programs, and social sciences and history) were also the three fields in which the most bachelor's degrees were conferred in six racial/ethnic groups: White, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native students and students of Two or more races. The three fields in which Asian students received the most bachelor's degrees were business (25,300), biological and biomedical sciences (16,500), and health professions and related programs (14,700). The field in which the fourth most bachelor's degrees were conferred in 2013–14 was psychology for Black (14,200), Hispanic (17,100), and Pacific Islander (300) students and students of Two or more races (3,500). For White students as well as American Indian/Alaska Native students, the field in which the fourth most bachelor's degrees were conferred was education (78,700 and 700, respectively). The field in which Asian students received the fourth most bachelor's degrees was social sciences and history (11,900).

**Figure 3. Number of bachelor's degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions in selected fields of study, by sex: Academic year 2013–14**



NOTE: The six fields of study shown were the fields in which the largest number of bachelor's degrees were conferred from the approximately 1,869,800 bachelor's degrees conferred in 2013–14. Data are for postsecondary institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The "business" field of study includes business, management, marketing, and related support services, as well as personal and culinary services. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2014, Completions component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, tables 322.40 and 322.50.

Some 1.1 million bachelor's degrees were conferred to females in 2013–14, an increase of 1 percent from the previous year. Of the six fields in which the most bachelor's degrees were conferred in 2013–14, females were conferred the majority of degrees in the following four fields: health professions and related programs (167,800 vs. 30,900 for males), education (78,500 vs.

20,400 for males), psychology (90,000 vs. 27,300 for males), and biological and biomedical sciences (61,200 vs. 43,400 for males). Approximately 801,700 bachelor's degrees were conferred to males in 2013–14, and males received the majority of the degrees conferred in business (188,400 vs. 169,700 for females) and social sciences and history (88,200 vs. 84,900 for females).

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Excludes “Construction trades” and “Mechanic and repair technologies/technicians.”

<sup>2</sup> For bachelor’s degrees, the “business” field of study includes business, management, marketing, and related

support services, as well as personal and culinary services. This differs from the “business, management, marketing, and support services” field of study for associate’s degrees, which does not include personal and culinary services.

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**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, tables 321.10, 321.30, 322.10, 322.30, 322.40, and 322.50

**Related indicators:** Annual Earnings of Young Adults, Employment and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment, Graduate Degree Fields, Degrees Conferred by Public and Private Institutions

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**Glossary:** Associate’s degree, Bachelor’s degree, Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), Racial/ethnic group