

Statistical profile of persons receiving doctor's degrees, by field of study and selected characteristics: 1987-88 and 2008-09

| Selected characteristic | Field of study | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-----------|-------------|------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| | All fields | Education | Engineering | Humanities | Life sciences | Physical sciences\1\ | | Social sciences and psychology | Other fields | |
| | | | | | | Total | Mathematics | | Other fields | Business and management |
| Number of doctor's degrees conferred | 49,562 | 6,531 | 7,634 | 4,899 | 11,402 | 6,777 | 1,554 | 7,836 | 2,929 | 1,403 |
| 1987-88 | 33,456 | 8,349 | 4,190 | 3,553 | 5,143 | 5,309 | 749 | 5,769 | 1,053 | 1,039 |
| Percent change | 48.1 | -21.8 | 82.2 | 37.9 | 121.7 | 27.7 | 107.5 | 35.8 | 178.2 | 35.0 |
| Sex (percent)\2\ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 53.1 | 33.1 | 78.7 | 48.1 | 45.4 | 70.4 | 68.7 | 41.6 | 51.5 | 62.1 |
| 1987-88 | 64.8 | 44.8 | 93.2 | 55.7 | 63.2 | 83.4 | 83.8 | 55.0 | 59.6 | 76.2 |
| Race/ethnicity (percent)\3\ | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | 74.6 | 70.8 | 69.8 | 79.2 | 75.2 | 78.7 | 76.8 | 74.6 | 72.5 | 70.5 |
| 1987-88 | 86.1 | 85.3 | 77.0 | 89.1 | 88.5 | 86.6 | 86.2 | 87.3 | 83.1 | 84.2 |
| Black | 6.9 | 14.5 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 5.4 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 6.8 | 9.6 | 9.4 |
| 2008-09 | 3.8 | 7.5 | 1.5 | 3.0 | 2.2 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 4.3 | 8.9 | 2.8 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | 5.8 | 6.9 | 5.0 | 6.6 | 5.0 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 7.1 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
| 2008-09 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 3.8 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 1.1 | 3.2 | 2.3 | 1.3 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asian..... | 8.3 | 3.9 | 16.3 | 5.2 | 10.3 | 9.9 | 10.9 | 6.3 | 8.9 | 11.0 |
| 2008-09 | 5.0 | 2.4 | 15.5 | 2.3 | 4.9 | 6.6 | 8.6 | 3.2 | 4.4 | 9.4 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Median age at doctorate(years)..... | 32.2 | 40.5 | 30.5 | 34.5 | 31.3 | 30.2 | 29.9 | 32.4 | 36.1 | 35.1 |
| 2008-09 | 33.8 | 40.5 | 31.0 | 35.4 | 31.9 | 30.3 | 30.9 | 34.1 | 37.1 | 34.8 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Percent with bachelor's degree in same field as doctorate..... | 53.5 | 29.8 | 77.1 | 53.6 | 49.4 | 64.6 | 65.6 | 51.8 | 33.3 | 33.9 |
| 2008-09 | 54.7 | 36.9 | 76.4 | 56.7 | 55.4 | 67.3 | 70.4 | 54.5 | 23.8 | 36.9 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Median time lapse (years) to doctorate | | | | | | | | | | |
| Since bachelor's degree completion | 9.3 | 16.2 | 7.9 | 11.3 | 8.5 | 7.5 | 7.3 | 9.4 | 12.4 | 11.9 |
| 2008-09 | 10.5 | 16.9 | 8.1 | 12.2 | 8.9 | 7.4 | 8.0 | 10.5 | 14.6 | 11.6 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Since starting graduate school | 7.7 | 12.3 | 6.7 | 9.5 | 7.0 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 7.7 | 9.7 | 9.1 |
| 2008-09 | 6.9 | 8.1 | 5.9 | 8.5 | 6.5 | 6.1 | 6.3 | 7.4 | 7.9 | 6.9 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Postdoctoral plans (percent)\5\ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Definite postdoctoral study\6\ | 26.4 | 4.0 | 24.2 | 8.4 | 44.5 | 39.7 | 33.4 | 23.9 | 4.6 | 2.0 |
| 2008-09 | 17.3 | 3.0 | 11.7 | 4.1 | 41.9 | 33.2 | 13.6 | 9.9 | 1.8 | 1.7 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Definite postdoctoral employment\8\ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Educational institution\9\ | 22.6 | 34.5 | 7.4 | 46.1 | 11.2 | 11.7 | 22.5 | 31.0 | 55.8 | 63.1 |
| 2008-09 | 39.2 | 63.1 | 24.0 | 66.1 | 19.9 | 20.3 | 52.9 | 36.8 | 50.1 | 75.6 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Primary work activity after doctorate (percent)\10\ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Research and development | 37.7 | 9.1 | 72.9 | 15.0 | 42.8 | 61.4 | 44.1 | 36.7 | 33.7 | 45.2 |
| 2008-09 | 28.3 | 5.5 | 64.0 | 6.6 | 44.8 | 61.9 | 38.0 | 22.7 | 11.9 | 32.0 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teaching | 36.5 | 38.9 | 8.5 | 72.2 | 31.5 | 25.8 | 47.4 | 38.3 | 48.4 | 41.6 |
| 2008-09 | 36.3 | 35.5 | 20.6 | 70.2 | 28.7 | 24.7 | 50.1 | 29.7 | 46.5 | 57.7 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | | | | | | |

---Not available.

#Reporting standards not met (too few cases).

\1\Includes mathematics, computer science, physics and astronomy, chemistry, and earth, atmospheric, and marine sciences.

\2\Distribution based on respondents reporting sex data.

\3\Distribution based on U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

\4\Includes Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

\5\Percentages are based on only those doctorate recipients who responded to questions about postdoctoral plans.

\6\Percentages are based on only those doctorate recipients who indicated definite postdoctoral plans for study and who indicated the type of study.

\7\Other for 2008-09 includes respondents who indicated definite postgraduation study plans for traineeship, internship/clinical residency, or other study.

\8\Percentages are based on only those doctorate recipients who indicated definite postdoctoral plans for employment and who indicated the sector of employment.

\9\Includes 2-year, 4-year, and foreign colleges and universities, medical schools, and elementary/secondary schools.

\10\Percentages are based on only those doctorate recipients who indicated definite postdoctoral plans for employment and who indicated their primary work activity.

\11\Percentages are based on only those doctorate recipients who indicated definite postdoctoral plans for employment.

NOTE: The above classification of degrees by field differs somewhat from that in most publications of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). One major difference is that history is included under humanities rather than social sciences. Includes Ph.D., Ed.D., and comparable degrees at the doctoral level. Includes only graduates of research programs, which typically require the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Excludes nonresearch professional practice doctor's degrees (e.g., M.D., D.D.S., and J.D.) that are conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice in such fields as health and theology. The number of doctor's degrees in this table differs from that reported in the NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which includes both the research and nonresearch degrees. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: Doctorate Recipients From U.S. Universities: Summary Report 2008-09, Survey of Earned Doctorates, National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (This table was prepared July 2011.)