



# Graduate Enrollment and Degrees:

2010 to 2020

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

# APPENDIX A

## Definitions

The CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees collects data on four aspects of graduate education:

**Applications**—Includes the number of completed applications for admission to U.S. graduate schools for the Fall term, the number of those applications accepted for admission, and the number of applications not accepted. Data are collected by fine field and degree level (master's and 'other' vs. doctoral). The application data excludes individuals who applied as transfers or for readmission at the same institution.

**First-Time Enrollment**—Includes the number of students enrolled for the first time in graduate certificate, education specialist, master's, or doctoral programs for the Fall term. Data are collected by fine field, degree level (master's and 'other' vs. doctoral), gender, race/ethnicity, citizenship, and enrollment status (full-time/part-time).

**Total Enrollment**—Includes the total number of students enrolled (first-time and continuing students) in graduate certificate, education specialist, master's, or doctoral programs for the Fall term. Data are collected by fine field, degree level (master's and 'other' vs. doctoral), gender, race/ethnicity, citizenship, and enrollment status (full-time/part-time).

**Degrees**—Includes the number of master's and doctoral degrees and post-baccalaureate and post-master's certificates awarded in the U.S. in a given academic year (July 1 through June 30). Degree data are collected by fine field, degree level (graduate certificate, master's, and doctoral), and gender. The survey does not collect degree data by race/ethnicity or citizenship.

For both first-time and total enrollment, master's and 'other' enrollment is defined as the number of students enrolled in programs specifically leading

to the master's degree and other non-doctoral programs, such as graduate certificate programs and education specialist programs. Graduate certificates are awards that require the completion of an organized program of study generally equivalent to 15-18 credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. Education specialist programs are generally equivalent to 30-45 credit hours beyond the master's degree. Doctoral enrollment is defined as the number of students enrolled in programs leading directly to the doctoral degree as well as the total number of students enrolled in doctoral programs where a master's degree is earned en route to the doctoral degree.

Full-time enrollment includes students enrolled for credit in graduate degree programs who are engaged full time in training activities in their field; these activities may include any appropriate combination of study, teaching, and research, depending on the responding institution's own policy. Part-time enrollment includes students enrolled in graduate degree programs who are not pursuing graduate work full-time as defined above.

The survey collects the total data for each institution for the categories and variables listed above, as well as data for up to 51 individual fields of study. This report groups the data from the 51 fine fields of study into 11 broad fields. A special online report, Graduate Enrollment and Degrees by Fine Field, presents the fine field data for first-time enrollment, total enrollment, and degrees awarded and is available exclusively to CGS member institutions at [www.cgsnet.org](http://www.cgsnet.org).

The survey excludes students applying to, enrolled in, or graduating from the following comprehensive list of first-professional programs: Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Law (LL.B., J.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), Theology (M.Div.,

M.H.L., B.D., or Ordination), and Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.). Data for all other graduate-level programs are collected, including programs in other professional fields such as health sciences and business.

The racial/ethnic data included in this report are collected from institutional records based on graduate students' self-reports. Accordingly, the number of students in any given racial/ethnic category is subject to individual interpretation on the part of students as they complete registration forms. The citizenship and race/ethnicity categories are defined as follows:

**Temporary Resident/Non-Resident Alien (International Student)**—A person who is not a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the U.S., and who is in the country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely.

**Hispanic/Latino (Latinx)**—A U.S. citizen or permanent resident of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

**American Indian/Alaska Native**—A U.S. citizen or permanent resident having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

**Asian**—A U.S. citizen or permanent resident having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam.

**Black/African American**—A U.S. citizen or permanent resident having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).

**Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander**—A U.S. citizen, permanent resident, or national having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific islands.

**White**—A U.S. citizen or permanent resident having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East (except those of Hispanic origin).

**Two or More Races**—A U.S. citizen or permanent resident having origins in any two or more of the following race categories: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, or White.

**Race/Ethnicity Unknown**—Includes U.S. citizens and permanent residents whose race/ethnicity is not known.

**Citizenship Unknown**—Includes individuals whose citizenship is not known.

Two significant changes to the race/ethnicity categories occurred starting with the 2010 data collection cycle. The first change divided the previous Asian/Pacific Islander category into two separate categories: Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. The second change split the previous Other/Unknown category into three separate categories: Two or More Races, Race/Ethnicity Unknown, and Citizenship Unknown. The findings regarding the current academic year are based on the new race/ethnicity categories. Readers of this report should not directly compare the figures in this report to those that appeared in editions of this report issued prior to 2010. Findings regarding changes and trends are aggregated to correspond with the earlier definitions of Asian/Pacific Islander and Other/Unknown, to permit a comparable examination.

In some sections of this report, data are presented by Carnegie Classification based on the 2018 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, using the "basic" classification. The 33 "basic" classification categories are aggregated to five categories in this report as follows:

**R1: Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity**—Universities with very high research activity that award at least 20 doctorates per year.

**R2: Doctoral Universities – High Research Activity**—Universities with High Research activity that award at least 20 doctorates per year.

**D/PU: Doctoral/Professional Universities** — Universities with below 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees that awarded at least 30 professional practice doctoral degrees in at least 2 programs.

**Master's Colleges and Universities**—Institutions that award at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctorates per year.

**Other**—Includes baccalaureate institutions awarding fewer than 50 master's degrees or 20 doctorates per year, as well as institutions awarding graduate degrees where a high concentration of degrees is in a single field or set of related fields (e.g., theological seminaries, medical schools, health profession schools, schools of engineering, etc.).

Since the institutions responding to the survey differ slightly from year-to-year, the trend data are limited to only those institutions that responded to the CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees in those years being compared.

**One-year Comparisons**—One-year comparisons, which are reported as percentages, are based on data collected from only those institutions that responded to both the 2019 and 2020 surveys.

**Five-year Average Annual Changes**—Five-year average annual changes, which are reported as percentages, are based on data collected from only those institutions that responded to both the 2015 and 2020 surveys.

**Ten-year Average Annual Changes**— Ten-year average annual changes, which are reported as percentages, are based on data collected from only those institutions that responded to both the 2010 and 2020 surveys.

**Trend Lines**—Trend lines were constructed using data collected from only those institutions that responded to all surveys from 2010 through 2020.

## OTHER NOTES

In some cases, survey respondents were unable to provide data for one or more categories or variables. Thus, not all tables and figures in this report include data from all 558 institutions that responded to the 2020 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees. Data were not imputed for missing fields or for non-responding institutions. Also, while the reporting guidelines and definitions of degree programs have not changed between 2010 and 2020, the interpretation of these guidelines and definitions by individual institutions may have changed due to various reasons. Some of the extreme outliers were reviewed and verified; however, data submitted by institutions were used for analysis without imputation.

Due to the small numbers of for-profit institutions providing data on graduate applications and first-time graduate enrollment, their data are suppressed from this report. The total graduate enrollment and graduate certificates and degrees awarded for for-profit institutions are reported in this report; however, given the small number of institutions participating in this survey, the data may not be representative of all for-profit institutions in the U.S.

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