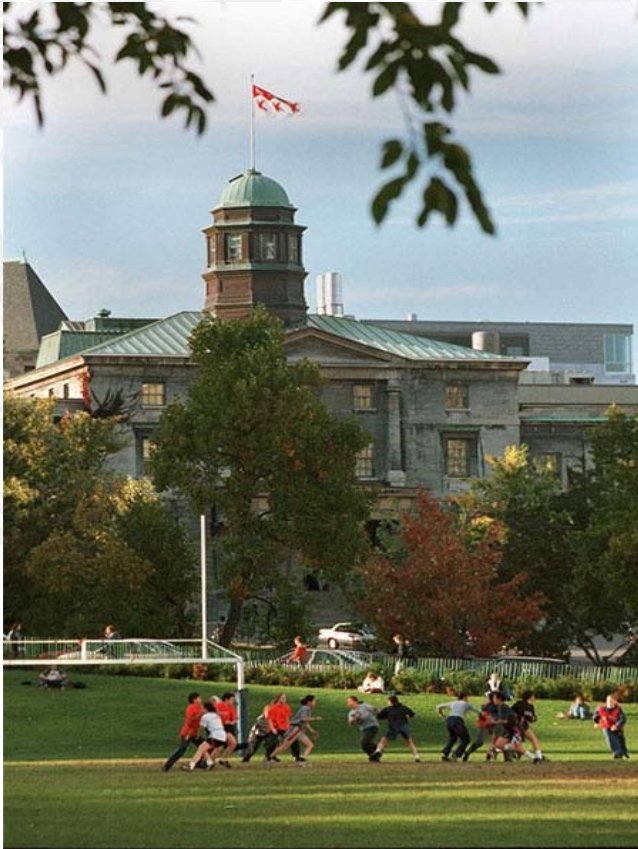


Canadian and U.S. Master's degrees



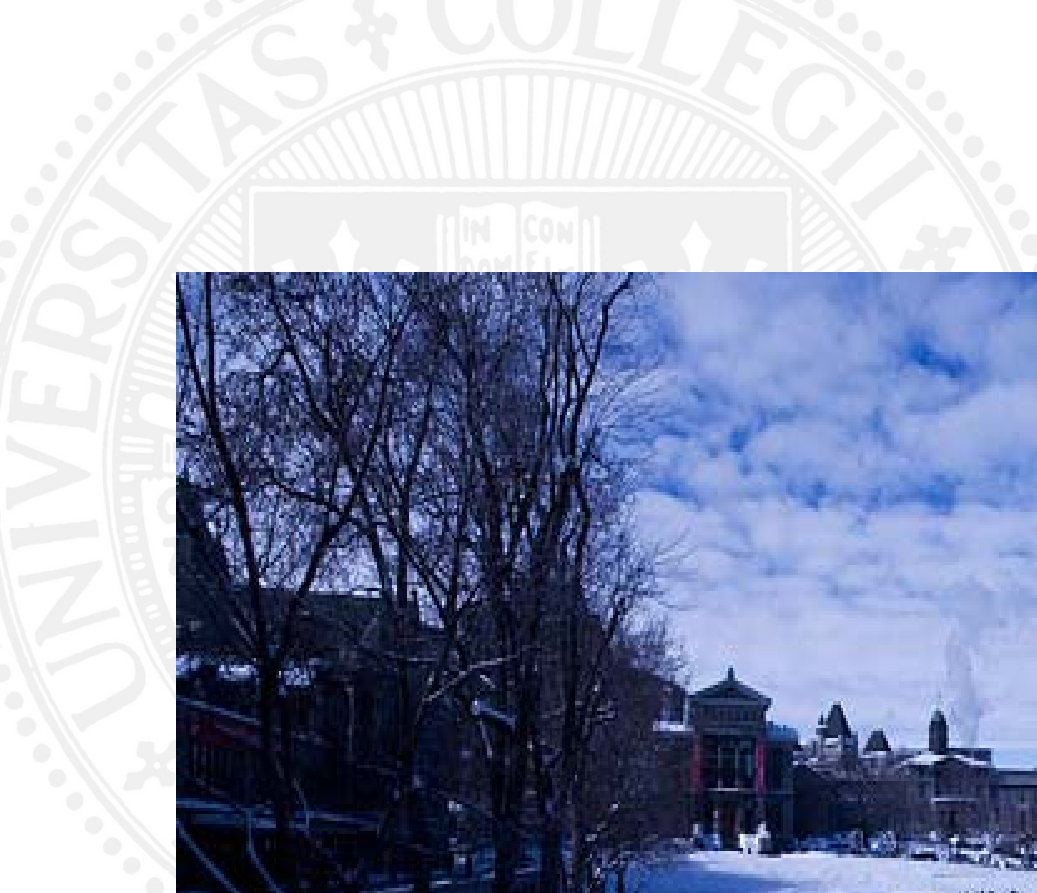
Martin Kreiswirth

**Associate Provost (Graduate
Education), Dean,
Graduate and Postdoctoral
Studies**

McGill University

CGS Summer Workshop

July 14, 2009



Canadian Master's degrees

- **Build on my colleagues' presentations**
 - Master's degree is post-baccalaureate norm in Canada
 - Professional preparation
 - True professional degrees (terminal?)
 - » MBA, OT, PT, etc.
 - Research training/preparation
 - Research degrees
 - » Thesis
 - » Other (project, etc.)
 - Professional / research preparation (?)
 - Course-only degrees
 - Little direct-entry PhD
 - Depending on university / disciplinary competition

Canadian Master's degrees

- **Ubiquity and variety, in part, based on**
 - **Basic configuration of Universities**
 - **State, essentially research, Universities**
 - **Minimal diversity in structures**
 - **While small universities, no true Liberal Arts Colleges**
 - **No (planned) Master's-only institutions**
 - **Provincially funded (and administered) for operations**
 - **Federally funded research (infrastructure)**
 - **Faculty, grad students, postdocs research and training grants**

Canadian Master's degrees

- **No consistency across country**
 - **Minimal to complete control of conformity across provinces and universities**
 - **One year vs. two year**
 - **Credits, academic outcomes, or other criteria (provincial leveraged initiatives)**
 - **Research categorization, e.g.**
 - **Degree design for (some) provincial and federal agencies**
 - » **Social Science Research Council of Canada**
 - » **Fonds quebécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture**
 - » **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport**

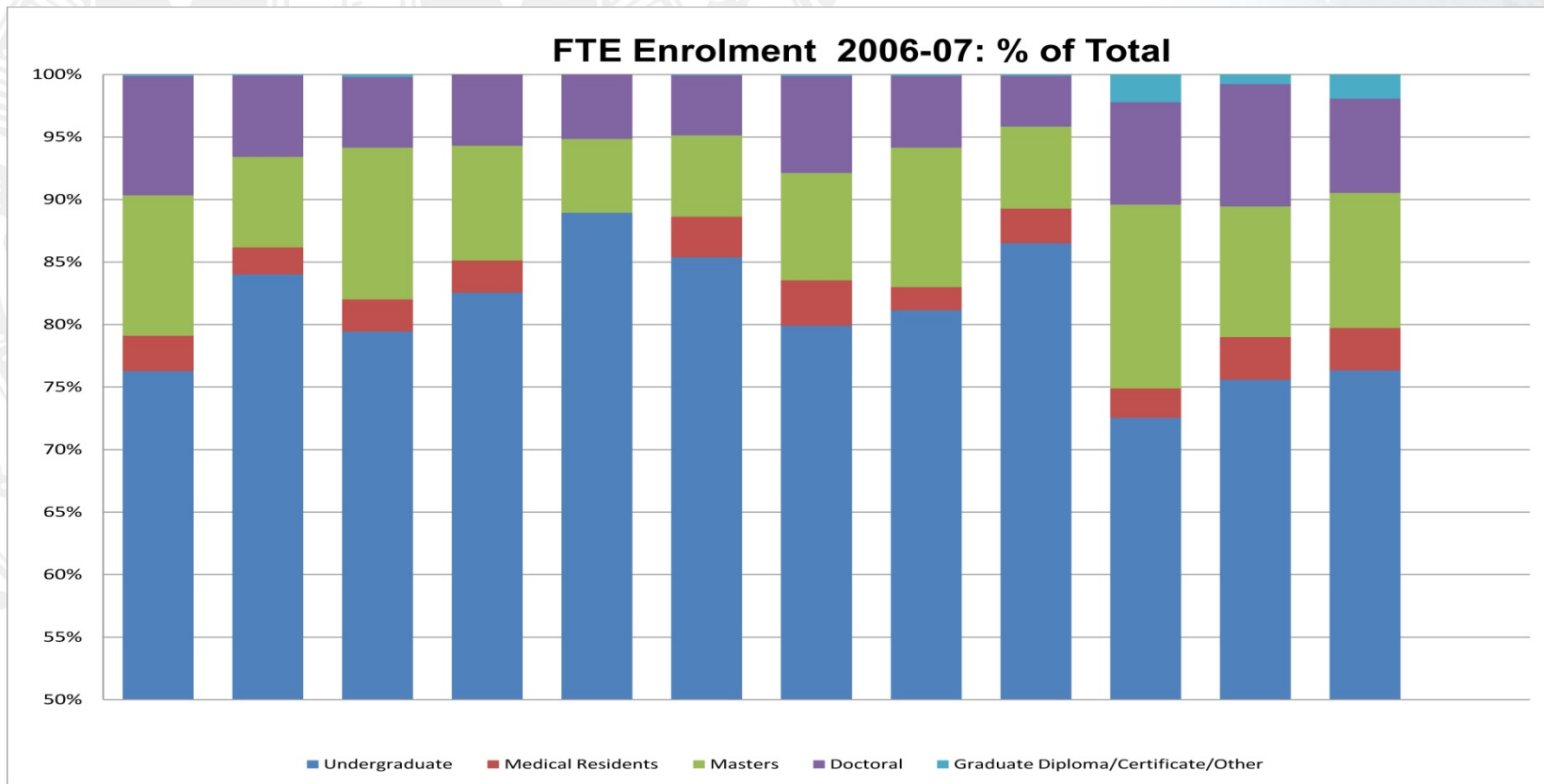
What's it look like

G13 – Data Exchange* (cohort data)

- Master's students range between 5% to 20% of the student population
- Disciplinary division of Master's students (Doctoral in parentheses)
 - **Sciences 21% (23%)**
 - **Health Sciences 17% (17%)**
 - **Humanities 17% (15%)**
 - **Social Sciences 15% (18%)**
 - **Engineering 15% (13%)**
 - **Business and Management 6% (3%)**
 - **Education 4% (8%)**
 - **Other Professional 5% (3%)**

*The G13 (Group of Thirteen) is a consortium consisting of 13 research intensive Canadian Universities whose membership is determined on the basis of peer-adjudicated modeled on the Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE) in which two out of the ten universities were already members (University of Toronto and McGill University). G13 Universities are U of Alberta; U of British Columbia; Dalhousie U; U Laval; McGill U; McMaster U; U de Montreal; U of Ottawa; Queen's U; U of Toronto; U of Waterloo; U of Western Ontario.

G13 Full-time Enrolment



Canada and US*

- Canada's Master's enrolment trends
 - 1996-2006: 50% increase in full-time
 - Slight increase in part-time
- Canadian vs. US
 - Proportionately the US offers twice as many Master's degrees as Canada
- Degree structures/configurations (US)
 - Direct entry PhD
 - Terminal professional
 - Research preparation
 - “consolation prize”

Doctoral Completion and Master's*

Canada vs. US comparisons (early 90s cohort data)

- G13 data vs. PhD completion project
 - After 10 years – doctoral degree completion
 - Canada = 62.9%
 - US = 56.7%
 - Disciplinary divisions show stronger discrepancies in sciences
- Taking into account Canadian master's
 - 8.2 years vs. 8 years median from baccalaureate

*Susan Pfeiffer, "Canadian versus American Doctoral Completion and Time-to-Degree Comparisons," *Global Perspectives on Graduate Education* (Washington: CGS, 2008), 12-14.

Doctoral Completion and Master's*

- Effect of Master's degree?
 - US – norm, direct entry to Doctoral
 - Master's = negative connotation; “failed PhD”
 - “reason for higher completion rates is Canada’s maintenance of the research master’s as a distinct and valued milestone”
 - “trial effect” - help students self-select and supervisors assess
 - Supported by Daniel Denecke
 - also “significant portion of American students may in fact want a master’s degree, but many have to enter a doctoral program to get what they want”**

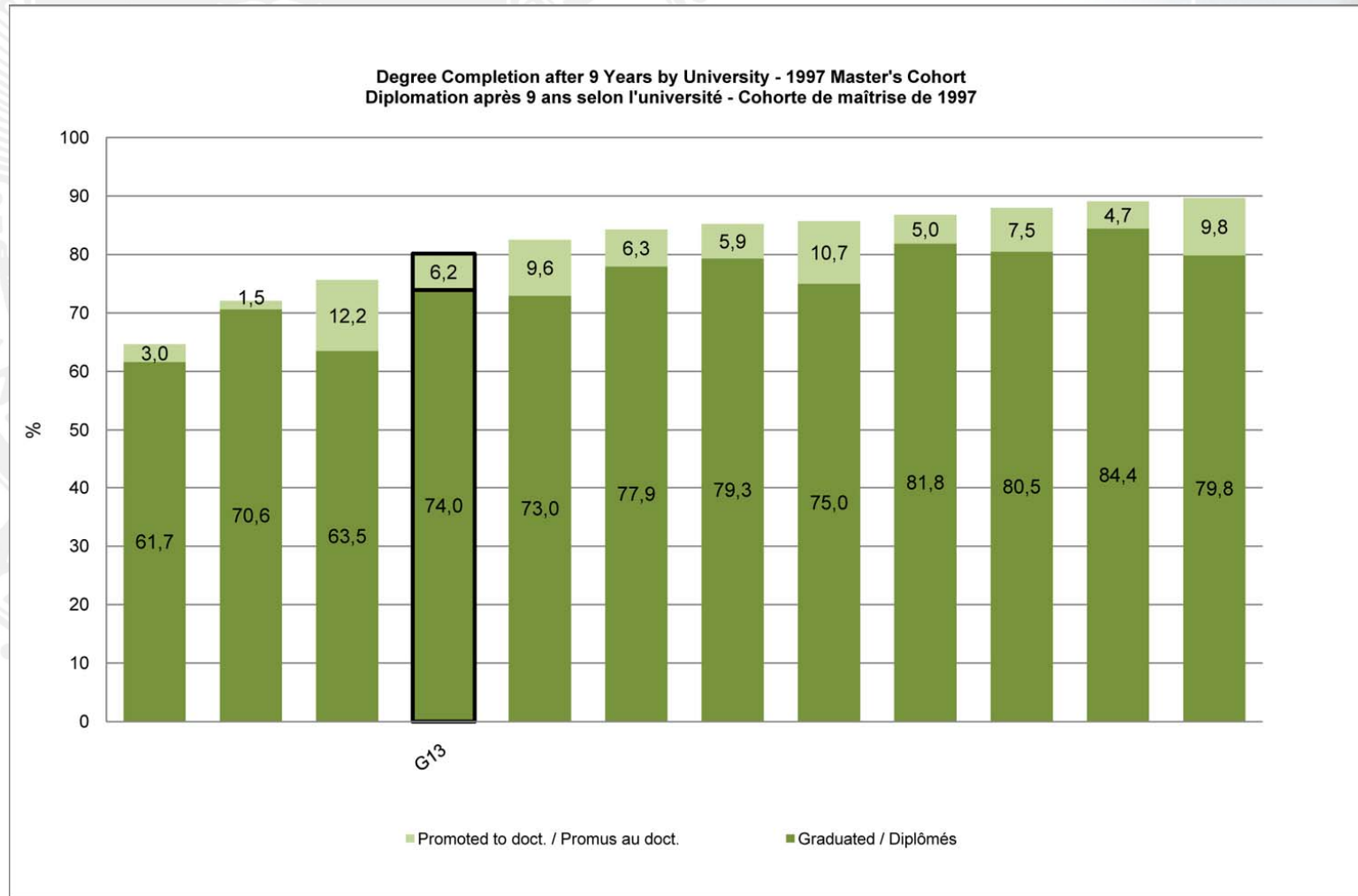
*Susan Pfeiffer, “Canadian versus American Doctoral Completion and Time-to-Degree Comparisons,” *Global Perspectives on Graduate Education* (Washington: CGS, 2008), 12-14.

**Steven Strauss, “PhDs in Science finish faster in Canada than U.S.,” *University Affairs* (November 5, 2007).

Master's "transfer" *

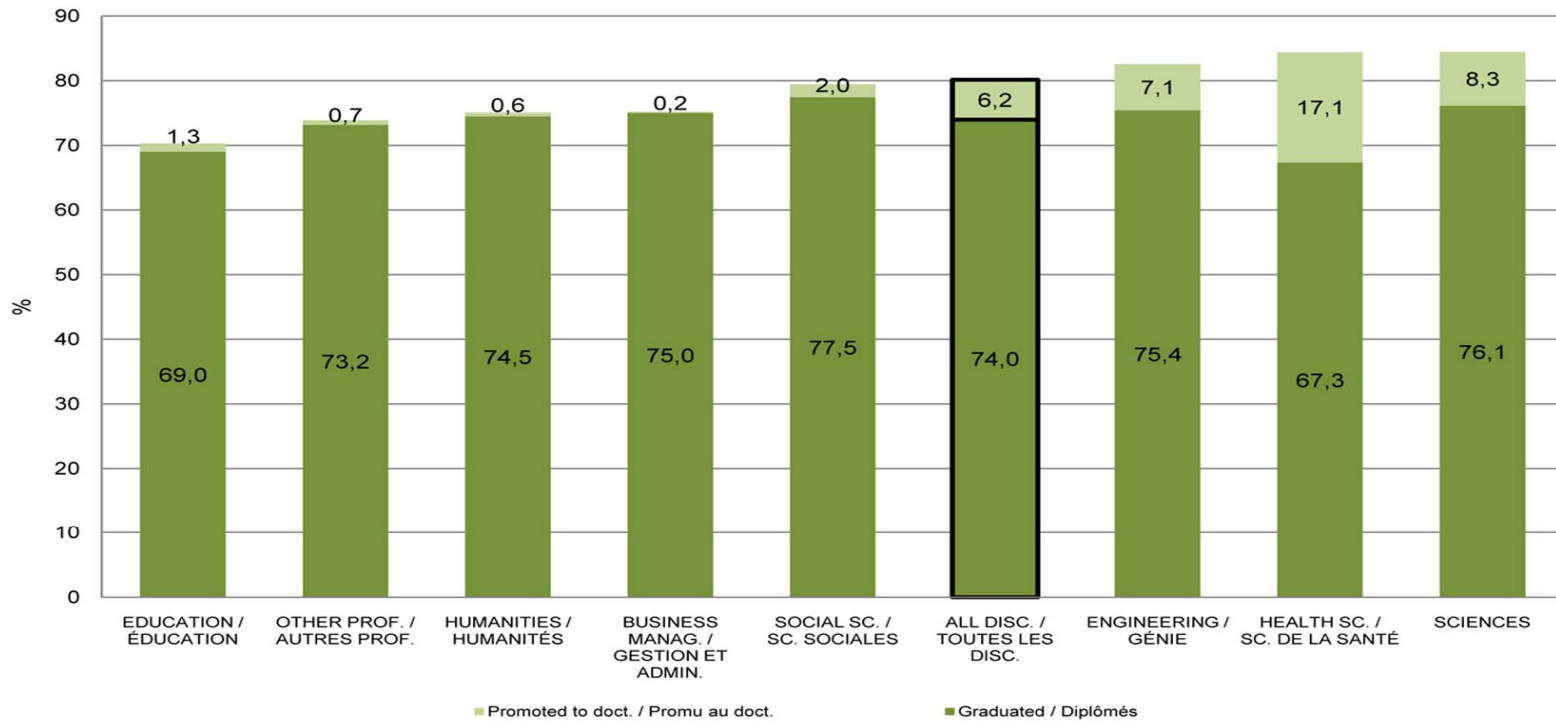
- Becoming increasingly common
 - Bi-directional “Trial effect”
 - Disciplinary differences and effects
 - Research paradigm and funding
 - Employability of Master’s

G13 Master's completion and transfer to PhD by University

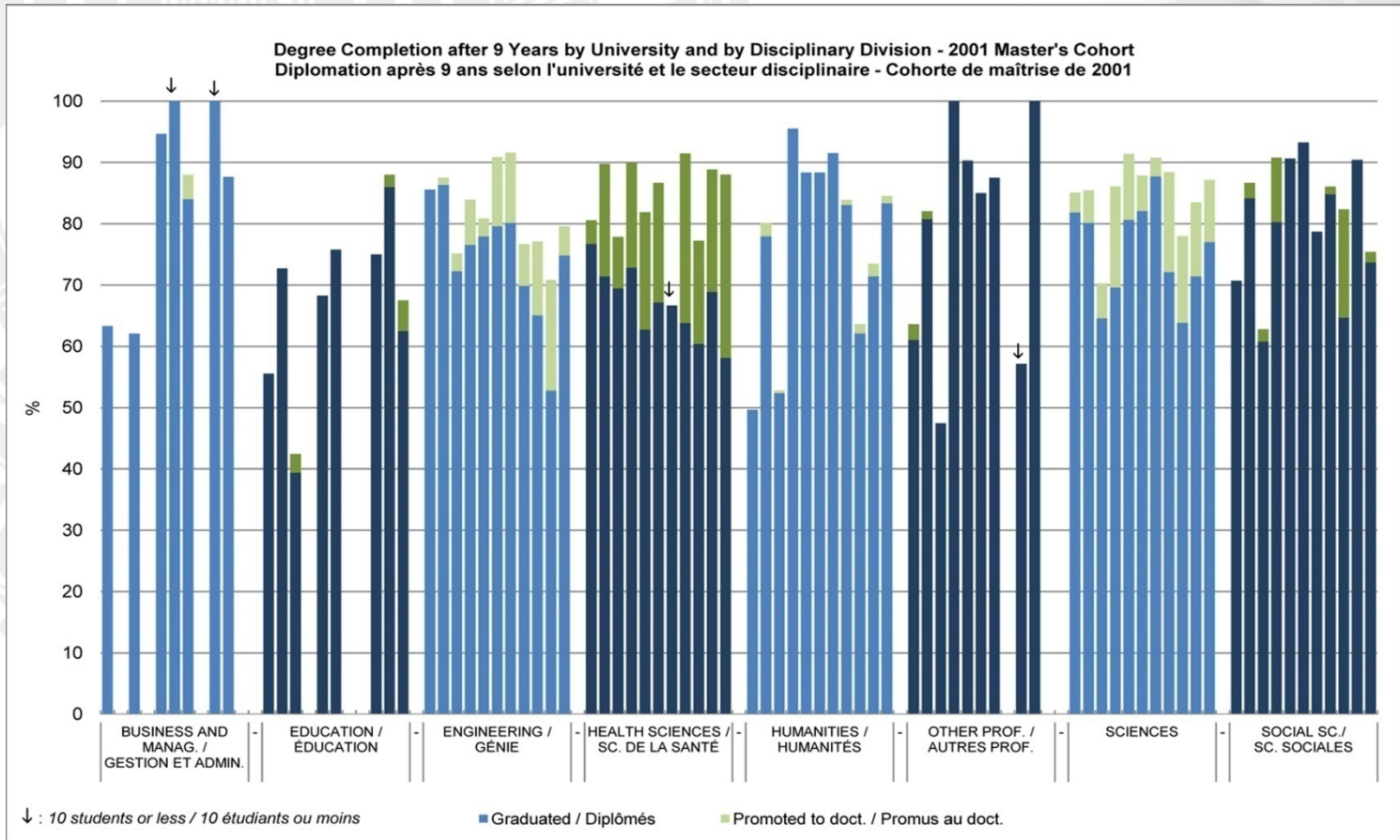


G13 Master's completion and transfer to PhD by Discipline

Degree Completion after 9 Years by Disciplinary Division - 1997 Master's Cohort
Diplomation après 9 ans selon le secteur disciplinaire - Cohorte de maîtrise de 1997



G13 Master's completion and transfer to PhD by University & Discipline



McGill: Master's completion

