

PRESS RELEASE

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Professional Science Master's Programs See Continued Growth

Programs offer pathway to STEM careers

Washington, D.C. (February 7, 2013) – The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) today released the results of its third annual *Professional Science Master's Enrollment and Degrees Survey* documenting applications, enrollments, and degrees awarded in Professional Science Master's (PSM) programs. The PSM is an innovative graduate degree designed to allow students to pursue advanced training in science or mathematics, while simultaneously developing workplace skills highly valued by employers.

"First-time enrollment in PSM programs continues to grow, even as first-time graduate enrollment in general has declined in recent years," said CGS President Debra Stewart. "It's clear that the value of a PSM degree is gaining recognition among students, employers, and graduate institutions. The versatility and professionalism of PSM graduates gives them an edge in the job market, as seen in student outcomes studies that show high levels of career success."

This new report includes data on applications received and accepted for fall 2012, as well as enrollment data for fall 2012 and degrees awarded during the 2011-12 academic year, from 93% of all PSM programs worldwide. Additionally, the report offers comparisons to data from the previous 2010 and 2011 surveys, documenting growth in applications, admissions, and enrollment over the past three years. Key findings include:

Applications:

- Over 6,100 applications were received for fall 2012 admission and 48% were accepted.
- PSM programs in mathematics and statistics received more applications than programs in other fields of study, constituting 35% of all applications received.

First-Time Enrollment:

- Nearly 1,900 students enrolled in PSM programs in 2012.
- 51% of first-time enrollees were men, and 49% were women.
- Nearly two-thirds of all first-time PSM students were enrolled full-time while the remaining one-third were part-time students.
- 22% of first-time enrollees in U.S.-based PSM programs were temporary residents (i.e., international students).
- Among U.S. citizens and permanent residents, 22% of first-time enrollees were underrepresented minorities (Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or American Indian/Alaska Native).

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Total Enrollment:

- Total enrollment in PSM programs topped 5,800 students in 2012.
- Total enrollment increased by 22% overall between 2010 and 2012 and by 10% at the PSM programs that responded to the 2010, 2011, and the 2012 surveys.
- Men comprised 55% of all PSM students and women made up 45%.
- 15% of total PSM students enrolled in U.S.-based institutions were temporary residents.
- Among U.S. citizens and permanent residents, 25% of enrollees in the fall of 2012 were underrepresented minorities.
- Total PSM enrollment in fall 2012 was dominated by four fields of study: computer/information sciences (21%), biotechnology (16%), environmental sciences and natural resources (14%), or mathematics and statistics (14%).

Degrees awarded:

- Just over 1,750 PSM degrees were awarded in academic year 2011/12.
- 52% of PSM degrees awarded by respondents in academic year 2011/12 were awarded to men and 48% to women.
- 17% of graduates of U.S.-based PSM programs were international students.
- Among U.S. citizens and permanent residents, 23% of PSM graduates in 2011/12 were underrepresented minorities.
- Biotechnology and computer/information sciences awarded 42% of all PSM degrees awarded: 22% and 20%, respectively.
- Men earned the majority of the PSM degrees awarded in chemistry and physics, geosciences and GIS, other interdisciplinary sciences, bioinformatics/computational biology, and mathematics and statistics.
- Women earned the majority of the degrees granted in medical-related sciences, biology/biotechnology, and “other interdisciplinary” fields.

The report is available in pdf format at cgsnet.org and at sciencemasters.com.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 92% of the doctoral degrees and 81% of the master's degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

** Based on data from the 2011 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees*