

**Section B**  
**Degrees and Awards**  
**Executive Summary of Data**

**Note: Summarized data are for Nebraska public and independent colleges and universities.  
These institutions do not include for-profit career schools.**

# Executive Summary of Data 1995-2005

## **Total Number of Degrees Conferred**

- In 2004-05, Nebraska’s public and independent colleges and universities<sup>1</sup> conferred 23,488 degrees, certificates, and diplomas.<sup>2</sup>
- Between 1994-95 and 2004-05, the total number of earned degrees increased by 27.1%, but two thirds of this growth occurred within the last three years of the 10-year period.

## **Increases in the Number of Degrees by Sector**

The number of degrees increased across all sectors, but the highest rate of increase was in the independent sector.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Number of Degrees</b>
Independent colleges and universities	Up 59.0%
Nebraska community colleges	Up 22.2%
Nebraska State College System	Up 22.0%
University of Nebraska	Up 13.8%

## **Shifts in the Degrees Awarded by Sector**

As a result of the significant increase in the number of degrees awarded within the independent sector, there has been a shift in the percentage of degrees awarded by each sector:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>% of Total Degrees Awarded by Public and Independent Institutions</b>	
	<b>1994-95</b>	<b>2004-05</b>
University of Nebraska	45.0%	40.3%
Independent colleges and universities	23.6%	29.5%
Nebraska community colleges	24.7%	23.7%
Nebraska State College System	6.7%	6.4%

<sup>1</sup>For-profit career schools are not included in the reported analysis.

<sup>2</sup>Throughout the remainder of this summary, “degrees” include certificates and diplomas.

### **Institutions Conferring the Highest Number of Degrees**

- The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) continue to award the highest numbers of degrees in the state's postsecondary system.
- Southeast Community College awarded the third-highest number of degrees until 2002-03, when Bellevue University in the independent sector started to confer more degrees than Southeast.

Rank	Sector	Number of Degrees		% Increase
		1994-95	2004-05	
1	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	4,067	4,446	9.3%
2	University of Nebraska at Omaha	2,181	2,367	8.5%
3	Bellevue University	551	2,122	285.1%
4	Southeast Community College	1,397	1,677	20.0%

### **Institutions with the Highest Growth Rates**

- Between 1994-95 and 2004-05, the highest increase in the number of degrees awarded was at Bellevue University, where the number of degrees almost quadrupled.
- Bellevue University alone accounted for 61% of the growth in the independent sector and for 31% of the growth in the total number of degrees awarded by public and independent institutions.
- The highest growth within the public sector was at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), where the number of degrees almost doubled from 814 in 1994-95 to 1,533 in 2004-05.

### **Degrees by Level**

Undergraduate degrees accounted for 77.2% of the degrees granted in 2004-05, but the highest rate of growth between 1994-95 and 2004-05 was at the master's level.

- Significant increases in the number of master's degrees were evidenced at the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska State College System, as well as within the independent sector, where the number of master's degrees almost tripled.
- By 2004-05, master's degrees accounted for 17.0% of the degrees awarded, up from 12.4% in 1994-95.
- First-professional<sup>3</sup> and doctoral degrees accounted for the remaining 5.8% in 1994-95 and 2004-05.

<sup>3</sup>In Nebraska, first-professional degrees are conferred in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, and law.

## Degrees by Discipline

- The highest numbers of degrees are in business, education, and health professions. Together, these disciplines accounted for 51.4% of the degrees awarded in 2004-05 and for almost 60% of the growth in the number of degrees between 1994-95 and 2004-05.
- Over the 10-year period, business accounted for the highest total number of degrees, but the highest rate of growth was in the health professions.

Discipline	Number of Degrees		% Increase
	1994-95	2004-05	
Business	3,957	4,776	20.7%
Health professions	2,755	4,378	58.9%
Education	2,418	2,923	20.9%

- Degrees in the health professions accounted for almost 45% of the increased number of degrees at the master's level and for 97% of the increased number of first-professional and doctoral degrees between 1994-95 and 2004-05.
- 1,707 more master's degrees were conferred in 2004-05 than in 1994-95. Of these additional degrees, 44.6% were in the health professions, 24.3% were in education, and 14.5% were in business.
- At the first-professional level, the highest growth was in pharmacy, followed by dentistry. However, by far, the highest number of additional degrees was at the doctoral level, where the introduction of doctorates in occupational therapy and physical therapy produced a dramatic increase. Increases in these two fields are largely attributable to the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) and the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) replacing master's degrees in these disciplines as the degrees generally accepted for entry into professional practice.

Discipline <sup>4</sup>	Number of Degrees		10-Year Increase
	1994-95	2004-05	in the Number of Degrees
Pharmacy (FP)	147	224	77
Dentistry (FP)	111	150	39
Medicine, M.D. (FP)	250	214	- 36
Other Health			
Professions (Doctoral)	<u>9</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>200</u>
Health professions total	517	797	280
Law (FP)	317	290	- 27
All other disciplines	<u>246</u>	<u>283</u>	<u>37</u>
Total	1,080	1,370	290

<sup>4</sup>FP = First-professional program

## **Degrees by Gender**

- In 2004-05, women earned 56.1% of the degrees awarded by Nebraska's public and independent institutions, up only slightly from 55.3% in 1994-95.
- The consistently widest gender gap has been at the master's level, where women earned almost 60% of the degrees in 2004-05.
- The most significant changes in gender gaps occurred at the first-professional and doctoral levels.
  - In 2004-05, women earned 49.4% of the first-professional degrees, up from 41.6% in 1994-95.
  - In 1994-95, men earned 60.4% of the doctoral degrees, compared to the 39.6% earned by women. By 2004-05, the pattern was reversed with women earning 56.2% of the doctorates awarded by the University of Nebraska and Creighton University.
- In 2004-05, the smallest gender gaps at the undergraduate level were evidenced at the Nebraska community colleges, where women earned 53.0% of the less-than-four-year degrees, and at the University of Nebraska, where women earned 53.6% of the bachelor's degrees. In comparison, women earned almost 58% of the bachelor's degrees conferred by the state colleges and independent institutions.

## **Minorities and Foreign Students**

- Minorities students – consisting of black non-Hispanics, Hispanics, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans – earned 8.5% of the degrees conferred in 2004-05, up from 6.2% in 1994-95, while foreign students earned 3.8%, up from 3.0% a decade earlier. However, minorities and foreign students earn lower percentages of the degrees at the undergraduate level than at the master's level or above.

### **% of Degrees Earned in 2004-05**

	<b>Undergraduate Degrees</b>	<b>Master's Degrees</b>	<b>First-Professional and Doctoral Degrees</b>
White non-Hispanics	90.2%	81.3%	77.3%
Minorities	7.7%	9.9%	14.3%
Foreign students	2.1%	8.8%	8.4%

- Over the 10-year period between 1994-95 and 2004-05, the number of Native Americans who earned less-than-four-year degrees decreased by 40.0%. Otherwise, the number and percentage of degrees earned by each minority group, including Native Americans, increased at all degree levels.