

# Section B

## Degrees and Awards

### Executive Summary of Data

Section B of the *Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska* summarizes the numbers of degrees and other awards reported through Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) surveys of Nebraska's public and independent (not for profit) colleges and universities and for-profit/career schools. Institutions report the number of degrees and other awards conferred during a one-year period beginning on July 1. For example, degrees and awards reported for 2005-2006 were awarded between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006. Ten-year trends are based on the 1996-2006 IPEDS surveys of Nebraska public and independent colleges and universities. Five-year trends include Nebraska's for-profit/career schools. In this section, the number of degrees and awards conferred are analyzed by (1) sector and institution, (2) degree level, (3) gender, (4) race/ethnicity and (5) discipline.

# Executive Summary of Data 1996-2006

## Total Number of Degrees Conferred

- In 2005-06, Nebraska's public and independent colleges and universities<sup>1</sup> conferred 23,982 degrees, certificates, and diplomas.<sup>1</sup>
- Between 1995-96 and 2005-06, the total number of degrees conferred by public and independent institutions increased by 33.4%, and almost half of this growth occurred within the last three years of the 10-year period.
- Including the for-profit/career schools, the total number of awarded degrees increased to 25,813 in 2005-06, an increase of 19.8% from 2000-01 when 21,540 degrees were conferred by all of Nebraska's postsecondary institutions.

## Increases in the Number of Degrees by Sector

The number of degrees increased across all sectors, but the highest rates of increase were in the for-profit and independent sectors.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>5-Year Increase in the Number of Degrees 2000-01 through 2005-06</b>
For-profit/career schools	Up 51.8%
Independent colleges and universities	Up 32.4%
Nebraska community colleges	Up 24.8%
Nebraska State College System	Up 7.2%
University of Nebraska	Up 7.0%

## Shifts in the Degrees Awarded by Sector

- As a result of the significant increase in the number of degrees awarded within the independent and for-profit sectors, there has been a shift in the percentage of degrees awarded by each sector.
- Between 2000-01 and 2005-06, the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska State College System accounted for slightly decreasing percentages of all of the degrees conferred in the state, while the state's independent institutions, community colleges, and for-profit/career schools and colleges accounted for increasing percentages of the awards conferred.

<sup>1</sup>Throughout the remainder of this summary, "degrees" include certificates and diplomas.

**% of Total Degrees Awarded by  
Public and Independent Institutions**

Sector	2000-01	2005-06
University of Nebraska	40.9%	36.6%
Independent colleges and universities	25.5%	28.2%
Nebraska community colleges	21.5%	22.4%
Nebraska State College System	6.4%	5.8%
For-profit/career schools	5.6%	7.1%

**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
		1995-96	2005-06	
1	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	4,051	4,385	8.2%
2	University of Nebraska at Omaha	2,131	2,467	15.8%
3	Bellevue University	667	2,328	243.9%
4	Southeast Community College	1,251	1,769	41.4%

**Institutions with the Highest Growth Rates**

- Between 1995-96 and 2005-06, the highest increase in the number of degrees awarded was at Bellevue University, where the number of degrees more than tripled.
- Bellevue University alone accounted for 59.6% of the growth in the independent sector and for 27.5% of the growth in the total number of degrees awarded by public and independent institutions (excluding for-profit/career schools).
- The highest growth rate within the public sector was at Peru State College, where the number of degrees almost doubled from 192 in 1995-96 to 349 in 2005-06.

## **Degrees by Level**

Undergraduate degrees accounted for 79.3% of the 25,813 degrees granted in 2005-06, but the highest rate of growth between 2000-01 and 2005-06 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 more than doubled.
- By 2005-06, master's degrees accounted for 15.6% of the degrees awarded, up from 15.0% in 2000-01.
- First-professional<sup>2</sup> and doctoral degrees accounted for the remaining 5.1% in 2005-06.

## **Degrees by Discipline (Not Including Degrees Conferred by For-Profit/Career Schools)**

- Nebraska's public and independent institutions confer the highest numbers of degrees in business, education, and health professions. Together, these disciplines accounted for 51.2% of the degrees awarded in 2005-06 and for almost 60% of the growth in the number of degrees between 1995-96 and 2005-06.
- 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.

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Number of Degrees</b>		<b>% Increase</b>
	<b>1995-96</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	
Business	3,686	4,968	34.8%
Health professions	2,687	4,365	62.4%
Education	2,401	2,944	22.6%

- Degrees in the health professions accounted for almost 37% of the increased number of degrees at the master's level and for virtually all of the increased number of first-professional and doctoral degrees between 1995-96 and 2005-06.
- 1,583 more master's degrees were conferred in 2005-06 than in 1995-96. Of these additional degrees, 36.9% were in the health professions, 26.9% were in education, and 19.0% were in business.

<sup>2</sup>In Nebraska, first-professional degrees are conferred in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, and law.

- 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>3</sup>	Number of Degrees		10-Year Increase in the Number of Degrees
	1995-96	2005-06	
Pharmacy (FP)	149	239	90
Dentistry (FP)	125	139	14
Medicine, M.D. (FP)	233	235	2
Other Health			
Professions (Doctoral)	<u>10</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>119</u>
Health professions total	517	742	225
Law (FP)	319	279	-40
All other disciplines	<u>206</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>-2</u>
Total	1,111	1,306	195

<sup>3</sup>FP = First-professional program

### **Degrees by Gender**

- In 2005-06, women earned 57.2% of the degrees awarded by Nebraska's public, independent and for-profit institutions, up slightly from 55.3% in 2000-01.
- The widest gender gap was at the master's level, where women earned almost 60% of the degrees in 2005-06.
- The most significant changes in gender gaps occurred at the first-professional and doctoral levels.
  - In 2005-06, women earned 49.9% of the first-professional degrees, up from 40.4% in 1995-96.
  - In 1995-96, men earned 60.7% of the doctoral degrees, compared to the 39.3% earned by women. By 2005-06, the pattern was reversed with women earning 56.0% of the doctorates awarded by the University of Nebraska and Creighton University.
- In 2005-06, the smallest gender gaps at the undergraduate level were evidenced at the Nebraska community colleges, where women earned 51.4% of the less-than-four-year degrees, and at the University of Nebraska, where women earned 53.5% of the bachelor's degrees. In comparison, women earned 57.1% of the bachelor's degrees conferred by the state colleges and 58.0% of the bachelor's degrees awarded by independent institutions.

**Minorities and Foreign Students**

- Minorities students – consisting of black non-Hispanics, Hispanics, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans – earned 9.7% of the degrees conferred in 2005-06, up from 7.5% in 2000-01, while foreign students earned 2.6%, down from 2.9% five years earlier. 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 2005-06**

	<b>Undergraduate Degrees</b>	<b>Master’s Degrees</b>	<b>First-Professional and Doctoral Degrees</b>
White non-Hispanics	88.9%	83.5%	79.6%
Minorities	9.5%	9.9%	12.5%
Foreign students	1.6%	6.6%	7.9%