

TABLE 5

Research doctorate recipients, by historical broad and major field of doctorate: 2017–21

(Number and percent)

Field of doctorate	Field level ^a	Percent distribution					Change (percentage point)			
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
All fields (number)	-	54,552	55,080	55,609	55,224	52,250	-	-	-	-
Life sciences	Broad	23.0	23.2	22.9	22.7	22.6	0.1	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1
Agricultural sciences and natural resources	Major	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	-0.1	0.1	-0.0	-0.1
Biological and biomedical sciences	Major	15.7	15.9	15.6	15.2	15.6	0.2	-0.3	-0.4	0.4
Health sciences	Major	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.5	*	*	0.2	-0.4
Physical sciences and earth sciences	Broad	11.1	11.5	11.8	11.3	11.0	0.3	0.3	-0.5	-0.3
Chemistry	Major	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.0	4.9	0.1	0.2	-0.3	-0.1
Geosciences, atmospheric sciences, and ocean sciences	Major	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.0	*	0.1	-0.0	-0.2
Physics and astronomy	Major	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	0.2	*	-0.2	*
Mathematics and computer sciences	Broad	7.0	7.3	7.6	7.9	8.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4
Computer and information sciences	Major	3.7	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.5	-0.0	0.4	0.3	0.2
Mathematics and statistics	Major	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.9	0.3	-0.1	0.1	0.2
Psychology and social sciences	Broad	16.6	16.1	16.3	16.2	16.6	-0.4	0.1	-0.1	0.4
Psychology	Major	7.2	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.3	-0.3	0.1	-0.0	0.3
Anthropology	Major	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	-0.0	*	*	-0.0
Economics	Major	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.4	-0.0	-0.0	-0.0	0.2
Political science and government	Major	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	-0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.0
Sociology	Major	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	-0.0	-0.1	-0.0	-0.0
Other social sciences	Major	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.0	-0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Engineering	Broad	17.9	18.5	18.5	19.0	19.6	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.6
Aerospace, aeronautical, and astronautical engineering	Major	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	*	-0.0	*	-0.0
Bioengineering and biomedical engineering	Major	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	0.2	*	-0.1	0.1
Chemical engineering	Major	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.0	0.1	-0.0	*	0.2
Civil engineering	Major	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	-0.1	*	0.2	-0.3
Electrical, electronics, and communications engineering	Major	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.6	4.0	0.1	-0.3	0.3	0.4
Industrial and manufacturing engineering	Major	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.7	*	-0.1	0.1	0.1
Materials science engineering	Major	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.8	0.1	-0.0	-0.2	0.2
Mechanical engineering	Major	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.0	2.8	0.2	*	0.2	-0.2
Other engineering	Major	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.4	4.5	*	0.4	-0.2	0.1
Education	Broad	8.8	8.7	8.3	8.5	8.1	-0.1	-0.4	0.2	-0.4
Education administration	Major	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.4	-0.1	-0.1	0.2	-0.3
Education research	Major	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	0.1	-0.4	0.1	*
Teacher education	Major	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	-0.0	*	*	*
Teaching fields	Major	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	*	-0.0	-0.0	-0.2
Other education	Major	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	-0.2	0.1	-0.0	0.1
Humanities and arts	Broad	9.7	9.3	9.1	8.9	7.9	-0.4	-0.2	-0.2	-1.0
Foreign languages and literature	Major	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.7	-0.0	-0.0	-0.1	-0.3
History	Major	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.4	-0.2	-0.1	-0.0	-0.2
Letters	Major	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.3	-0.1	-0.1	*	-0.2
Other humanities and arts	Major	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.5	-0.1	-0.0	-0.1	-0.3
Other	Broad	5.8	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.7	-0.4	*	-0.0	0.3
Business management and administration	Major	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	-0.2	0.1	-0.1	*
Communication	Major	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.0	*	-0.2	0.1	-0.1
Non-science and engineering fields nec	Major	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.7	2.1	-0.2	0.1	*	0.4

* = value between 0.00 and 0.05.

nec = not elsewhere classified.

^a Field level provides information about the fields that are nested together. There are two levels of historical field aggregation shown in this table: broad field and major field.

Note(s):

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Beginning in 2021, a modified version of the 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes was used in the survey data collection; the historical fields were reconstructed using the crosswalk in table A-3. Therefore, the field of doctorate data in 2021 may not be comparable to prior years. See table A-1 for a full list of SED-CIP codes in the new field taxonomy and table A-2 for a summary of the new SED field of taxonomy.

Source(s):

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Earned Doctorates.