

Table 3**Postdoctoral appointees and nonfaculty researchers, by field: 2017–21**

(Number and percent change)

Characteristic	Postdoctoral appointees							Nonfaculty researchers						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Percent change		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Percent change	
						2017–21	2020–21						2017–21	2020–21
All surveyed fields	64,733	64,783	66,247	65,681	63,296	-2.2	-3.6	28,180	29,284	30,349	29,661	30,725	9.0	3.6
Science and engineering	46,080	45,478	46,769	47,203	45,526	-1.2	-3.6	20,542	21,848	22,728	22,133	22,890	11.4	3.4
Science	38,241	37,564	38,503	38,741	37,171	-2.8	-4.1	17,268	18,278	18,819	18,212	18,809	8.9	3.3
Agricultural and veterinary sciences	1,024	1,072	1,079	1,678	1,595	55.8	-4.9	496	565	645	964	906	82.7	-6.0
Biological and biomedical sciences	21,781	21,533	21,847	21,902	20,182	-7.3	-7.9	8,203	8,250	8,229	8,112	8,208	0.1	1.2
Computer and information sciences	854	879	878	823	878	2.8	6.7	476	515	510	458	457	-4.0	-0.2
Geosciences, atmospheric sciences, and ocean sciences	2,089	1,726	1,778	1,790	1,799	-13.9	0.5	1,794	2,106	2,177	2,150	2,310	28.8	7.4
Mathematics and statistics	991	982	1,070	1,076	1,121	13.1	4.2	240	266	305	201	243	1.3	20.9
Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary studies	1,131	980	972	832	881	-22.1	5.9	806	832	820	679	816	1.2	20.2
Natural resources and conservation	731	764	806	845	908	24.2	7.5	364	580	582	573	625	71.7	9.1
Physical sciences	7,211	6,976	7,159	6,937	6,825	-5.4	-1.6	2,871	3,056	3,316	2,890	2,935	2.2	1.6
Psychology	1,082	1,145	1,152	1,312	1,337	23.6	1.9	494	507	576	749	803	62.6	7.2
Social sciences	1,347	1,507	1,762	1,546	1,645	22.1	6.4	1,524	1,601	1,659	1,436	1,506	-1.2	4.9
Engineering	7,839	7,914	8,266	8,462	8,355	6.6	-1.3	3,274	3,570	3,909	3,921	4,081	24.6	4.1
Aerospace, aeronautical, and astronautical engineering	196	207	227	233	279	42.3	19.7	102	115	124	149	149	46.1	0.0
Biological, biomedical, and biosystems engineering	1,476	1,529	1,602	1,696	1,615	9.4	-4.8	451	491	545	525	597	32.4	13.7
Chemical, petroleum, and chemical-related engineering	1,262	1,205	1,229	1,157	1,167	-7.5	0.9	340	337	410	330	327	-3.8	-0.9
Civil, environmental, transportation and related engineering fields	804	739	865	1,006	968	20.4	-3.8	422	414	492	488	481	14.0	-1.4
Electrical, electronics, communications and computer engineering	1,170	1,197	1,305	1,302	1,273	8.8	-2.2	557	588	637	706	763	37.0	8.1

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Industrial, manufacturing, systems engineering and operations research	127	156	167	194	137	7.9	-29.4	119	105	137	155	140	17.6	-9.7
Mechanical engineering	1,089	1,069	1,142	1,149	1,200	10.2	4.4	458	489	531	469	537	17.2	14.5
Metallurgical, mining, materials and related engineering fields	565	575	665	630	562	-0.5	-10.8	233	267	303	299	259	11.2	-13.4
Other engineering	1,150	1,237	1,064	1,095	1,154	0.3	5.4	592	764	730	800	828	39.9	3.5
Health	18,653	19,305	19,478	18,478	17,770	-4.7	-3.8	7,638	7,436	7,621	7,528	7,835	2.6	4.1
Clinical medicine	16,100	16,563	16,650	16,287	15,565	-3.3	-4.4	6,448	6,159	6,273	6,500	6,758	4.8	4.0
Other health	2,553	2,742	2,828	2,191	2,205	-13.6	0.6	1,190	1,277	1,348	1,028	1,077	-9.5	4.8

Note(s):

In 2020, the GSS revised its field taxonomy, and the revisions resulted in some disciplines moving between broad fields; see “Data Sources and Limitations” for details. For more information about fields collected in this survey, please see table A-17 in *Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering: Fall 2021*.

Source(s):

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering.