

# GENERAL NOTES

This publication is based on data obtained from two surveys. Bachelor's and master's degree data were collected by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, from all accredited institutions of higher education. Data on doctorates are from the Survey of Earned Doctorates, a universe survey of individual doctorate recipients that was sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and four other Federal agencies in 1998.

These data cover earned degrees conferred in the aggregate United States, which includes the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories and Outlying Areas (American Samoa, the former Canal Zone, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands). Degree data are compiled for a 12-month period, July of one year through June of the following year. For convenience, degrees for such a given 12-month period will be referred to by the year in which the period ended, e.g., 1998 means the 12-month period ending June 1998.

The definitions of science and engineering for bachelor's and master's degrees in this report differ from those in other NSF reports. The reason for these differences is that racial/ethnic data for bachelor's and master's degrees were collected by NCES for broad fields of study only (e.g., physical science, biological science, psychology, engineering) until 1995. These broad fields include some fields that are normally not included in NSF's science and engineering definitions. While in most fields this impact is small, there is one instance where this difference has a large impact—the broad field of “Social

Sciences.” The U.S. Department of Education includes the field of history in this broad category. When NCES collected the racial/ethnic data up until 1995, this field was included in “Social Sciences” and comprised 20–23 percent of the “Social Sciences” category for bachelor's and master's degree data. However, for doctorate degrees, the “Social Sciences” definition in this report is the same as in other NSF reports: i.e., it does not include history.

If the reader is interested in earlier data for science fields, please request *Science and Engineering Degrees, by Race/Ethnicity of Recipients: 1977–91*, NSF 94-306. Please note, however, that before 1985, the broad category of “Engineering” included engineering technologies. This report excludes engineering technologies so that trend data by race/ethnicity are more consistent with the definition of science and engineering used in other NSF reports. However, the reader can use tables 31 and 32 to add in these data so as to correspond to the earlier report (NSF 94-306).

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