

Table 12. Doctorate recipients, by major field of study: Selected years, 1986–2016

Field of study	1986		1991		1996		2001		2006		2011		2016	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All fields	31,897	100.0	37,530	100.0	42,437	100.0	40,744	100.0	45,620	100.0	48,911	100.0	54,904	100.0
Life sciences	5,767	18.1	6,967	18.6	8,337	19.6	8,369	20.5	9,703	21.3	11,535	23.6	12,568	22.9
Agricultural sciences and natural resources	1,191	3.7	1,277	3.4	1,289	3.0	1,132	2.8	1,146	2.5	1,206	2.5	1,385	2.5
Biological and biomedical sciences	3,807	11.9	4,649	12.4	5,724	13.5	5,697	14.0	6,652	14.6	8,152	16.7	8,884	16.2
Health sciences	769	2.4	1,041	2.8	1,324	3.1	1,540	3.8	1,905	4.2	2,177	4.5	2,299	4.2
Physical sciences and earth sciences	3,644	11.4	4,406	11.7	4,550	10.7	4,024	9.9	4,686	10.3	5,271	10.8	6,252	11.4
Chemistry	1,903	6.0	2,194	5.8	2,149	5.1	1,981	4.9	2,364	5.2	2,432	5.0	2,704	4.9
Geosciences, atmospheric, and ocean sciences	554	1.7	801	2.1	724	1.7	660	1.6	757	1.7	852	1.7	1,227	2.2
Physics and astronomy	1,187	3.7	1,411	3.8	1,677	4.0	1,383	3.4	1,565	3.4	1,987	4.1	2,321	4.2
Mathematics and computer sciences	1,128	3.5	1,838	4.9	2,042	4.8	1,840	4.5	2,778	6.1	3,273	6.7	3,957	7.2
Computer and information sciences	399	1.3	800	2.1	920	2.2	830	2.0	1,453	3.2	1,667	3.4	2,085	3.8
Mathematics and statistics	729	2.3	1,038	2.8	1,122	2.6	1,010	2.5	1,325	2.9	1,606	3.3	1,872	3.4
Psychology and social sciences	6,150	19.3	6,470	17.2	7,167	16.9	7,151	17.6	7,231	15.9	8,221	16.8	9,078	16.5
Psychology	3,126	9.8	3,250	8.7	3,494	8.2	3,400	8.3	3,260	7.1	3,576	7.3	3,946	7.2
Anthropology	381	1.2	341	0.9	397	0.9	411	1.0	472	1.0	553	1.1	460	0.8
Economics	859	2.7	885	2.4	1,008	2.4	927	2.3	1,029	2.3	1,121	2.3	1,238	2.3
Political science and government	414	1.3	434	1.2	622	1.5	658	1.6	616	1.4	685	1.4	745	1.4
Sociology	491	1.5	465	1.2	517	1.2	566	1.4	579	1.3	657	1.3	615	1.1
Other social sciences	879	2.8	1,095	2.9	1,129	2.7	1,189	2.9	1,275	2.8	1,629	3.3	2,074	3.8
Engineering	3,375	10.6	5,213	13.9	6,309	14.9	5,512	13.5	7,186	15.8	8,032	16.4	9,469	17.2
Aerospace, aeronautical, and astronautical engineering	118	0.4	206	0.5	287	0.7	203	0.5	238	0.5	262	0.5	369	0.7
Bioengineering and biomedical engineering	67	0.2	149	0.4	220	0.5	233	0.6	525	1.2	898	1.8	1,089	2.0
Chemical engineering	476	1.5	621	1.7	681	1.6	636	1.6	799	1.8	823	1.7	923	1.7
Civil engineering	387	1.2	509	1.4	600	1.4	501	1.2	655	1.4	634	1.3	565	1.0
Electrical, electronics, and communications engineering	705	2.2	1,206	3.2	1,501	3.5	1,346	3.3	1,786	3.9	1,886	3.9	1,827	3.3

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Field of study	1986		1991		1996		2001		2006		2011		2016	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Industrial and manufacturing engineering	101	0.3	165	0.4	259	0.6	206	0.5	234	0.5	258	0.5	256	0.5
Materials science engineering	187	0.6	361	1.0	472	1.1	448	1.1	583	1.3	662	1.4	985	1.8
Mechanical engineering	442	1.4	762	2.0	947	2.2	878	2.2	1,045	2.3	1,084	2.2	1,299	2.4
Other engineering	892	2.8	1,234	3.3	1,342	3.2	1,061	2.6	1,321	2.9	1,525	3.1	2,156	3.9
Education	6,649	20.8	6,454	17.2	6,785	16.0	6,356	15.6	6,122	13.4	4,670	9.5	5,153	9.4
Education administration	1,638	5.1	1,913	5.1	2,165	5.1	2,077	5.1	2,051	4.5	924	1.9	829	1.5
Education research	2,725	8.5	2,354	6.3	2,699	6.4	2,637	6.5	2,751	6.0	2,438	5.0	2,386	4.3
Teacher education	490	1.5	408	1.1	371	0.9	296	0.7	250	0.5	204	0.4	181	0.3
Teaching fields	1,142	3.6	973	2.6	864	2.0	723	1.8	707	1.5	805	1.6	1,167	2.1
Other education	654	2.1	806	2.1	686	1.6	623	1.5	363	0.8	299	0.6	590	1.1
Humanities and arts	3,443	10.8	4,053	10.8	4,982	11.7	5,430	13.3	5,332	11.7	5,226	10.7	5,484	10.0
Foreign languages and literature	445	1.4	498	1.3	605	1.4	620	1.5	614	1.3	644	1.3	599	1.1
History	563	1.8	663	1.8	857	2.0	1,031	2.5	973	2.1	1,065	2.2	1,147	2.1
Letters	957	3.0	1,204	3.2	1,493	3.5	1,493	3.7	1,457	3.2	1,513	3.1	1,533	2.8
Other humanities and arts	1,478	4.6	1,688	4.5	2,027	4.8	2,286	5.6	2,288	5.0	2,004	4.1	2,205	4.0
Other ^a	1,741	5.5	2,129	5.7	2,265	5.3	2,062	5.1	2,582	5.7	2,683	5.5	2,943	5.4
Business management and administration	902	2.8	1,163	3.1	1,279	3.0	1,064	2.6	1,311	2.9	1,327	2.7	1,510	2.8
Communication	258	0.8	332	0.9	389	0.9	390	1.0	510	1.1	650	1.3	673	1.2
Non-S&E fields not elsewhere classified	581	1.8	634	1.7	597	1.4	608	1.5	757	1.7	706	1.4	760	1.4
Unknown field	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	*	0	0.0	0	0.0

* = value < 0.05%.

S&E = science and engineering.

^a Non-science and engineering fields.

NOTES: See table A-6 in the technical notes for a listing of major fields and their constituent subfields. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

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