Graduate Enrollment Trends

The Data You Need to Know
How Big Is the Adult and Grad Ed Market?

Adult Learners Make Up 42% of Total Higher Ed Tuition Revenue
Higher Ed Gross Annual Revenue\(^2\), 2021

- Adult and Grad Ed: $84B
- Traditional Undergraduate: $118B
- Total Tuition Revenue: $203B

25+ Undergrad Students Account for Half of All Adult Ed Revenue
Total Gross Annual U.S. Revenue Generated from Adult (25+) Bachelor’s, Post-Bac Certificates, and Graduate Enrollment, 20-21

- Adult Degree Completer: $19.3B
- Other Adult Bachelor’s\(^3\): $21.9B
- Master’s Degrees: $32.5B
- Professional Doctorate: $7.2B
- All Grad Certificates (Post-Bacc and Post-Master’s): $780M

Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2023). Postbaccalaureate Enrollment, Condition of Education. U. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (link); Weissman, S. Lower completion rates among part-time students. Inside Higher Ed (link); National Student Clearinghouse. (2023) Some College, No Credenti Report (link); IPEDS Fall 2021 Enrollment Survey Data; IPEDS Spring 2021 Conferrals Survey Data; IPEC 2021 Student Charges Survey Data; EAB interviews and analysis
The Graduate Pandemic Boom Didn’t Last Long

Pandemic-Fueled Growth Weak Compared Previous Recession Growth

Year on Year Growth of Total Graduate Enrollments – All 4-Year Institutions

Pandemic Boom Really Didn’t Last That Long

Pandemic-Fueled Growth Weak Compared Previous Recession Growth

Year on Year Growth of Total Graduate Enrollments – All 4-Year Institutions

Recession

+4.0%

+3.6%

+2.8%

+2.8%

+0.5%

+0.9%

+1.1%

+1.0%

+1.0%

+1.3%


COVID-19

+2.4% +2.4%

NSC¹ Estimate

International students coming back into market

New domestic interest in graduate education

2020 2021 2022


¹ National Student Clearinghouse.
Grad enrollment surges in computer & information sciences, but for other core programs, pandemic enrollment growth is all but dissolved.

Change in Estimated Master’s Degree Enrollments by Major From Fall 2019 to Fall 2022

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comp. &amp; Info Sciences</td>
<td>+3%</td>
<td>+22%</td>
<td>+21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>+6%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Professions</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+1%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Admin &amp; Social Work</td>
<td>+2%</td>
<td>+3%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business, Mgmt. &amp; Mktg.</td>
<td>+6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>+4%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
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Source: 'COVID-19 Stay Informed Fall 2022', National Student Clearinghouse, Oct. 20, 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.
### Declining Interest in More Traditional Programs

#### The Rise of Interdisciplinary Studies: Demand for Flexibility, A POI Marketing Push, or Something Else?

*Change in Estimated Master's Degree Enrollments by Major From Fall 2019 to Fall 2022*

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
<td>+3%</td>
<td>+19%</td>
<td>+31%</td>
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<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>+0%</td>
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<td>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</td>
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<td>Communications &amp; Journalism</td>
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<td>-5%</td>
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<td>English Language &amp; Literature</td>
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<td>+1%</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-12%</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 'COVID-19 Stay Informed Fall 2022', National Student Clearinghouse, Oct. 20, 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.
Learn More About The Graduate & Adult Learner Markets

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