

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS in New Hampshire



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Changes in Educational Program Completers Looking Back to 1985.....4

Should Economic Conditions be changed? - The readers response!7

Local Area Unemployment Statistics.....8

Current Employment Statistics9

For Additional Information12

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Educational Program Completers Women Outnumber Men in Most Programs

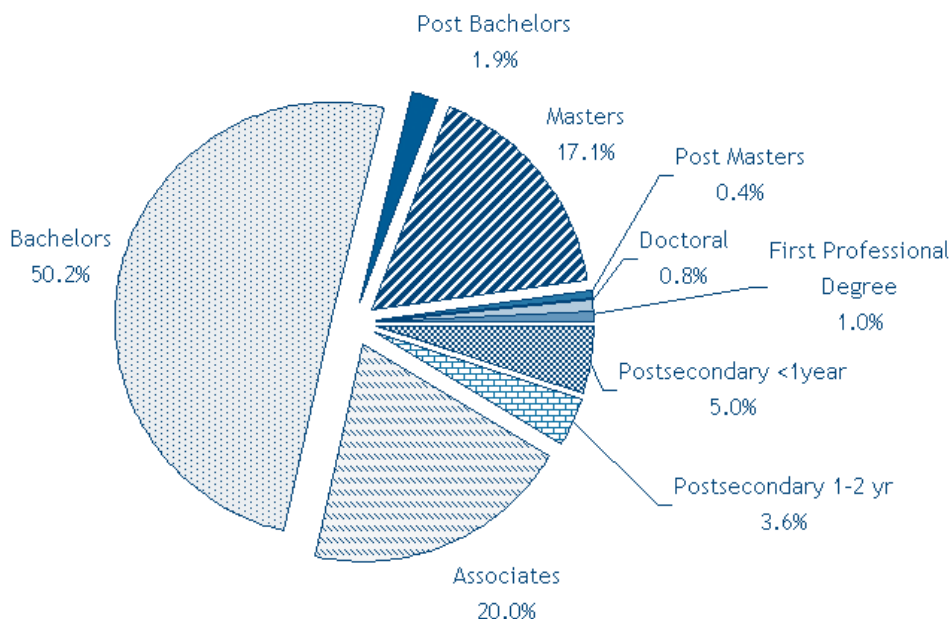
Fall is just around the corner, and that means students are starting a new semester of classes. Decisions are made about majors, with the hope that their college career will prepare them for the world of work. Although it will be a year or so until statistics are available for the class of 2005, recently released statistics on the class of 2004 spotlight the programs currently offered by New Hampshire postsecondary institutions and the degrees and certificates awarded by them.

Postsecondary institutions in New Hampshire granted 16,578

awards in the academic year ending in 2004. Fifty percent of awards were Bachelor's degrees and another twenty percent were Associate's degrees. Nationally, 41 percent of all postsecondary awards were Bachelor's degrees and 19 percent were Associate's degrees. Consequently, New Hampshire has a larger share of completers with a Bachelor's degree than the nation. On the other hand, the state has a smaller share of completers with one- and two-year postsecondary certificates. Combined, these certificates account for less than ten percent of degrees awarded in the state, compared to 19 percent nationally.

Continued on page 2

Half of all postsecondary awards in New Hampshire in 2004 were Bachelor's degrees



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Continued from page 1

Women completing programs at New Hampshire institutions outnumbered men by a wide margin: 10,123 women in 2004 compared to 6,455 men, giving women 61 percent of all postsecondary awards. That is consistent with the US as a whole, where 59 percent of completers are women and 41 percent are men. There are more women completers at every award level in the state, except for doctoral and first professional degrees where completers are equally divided. These programs, however, have relatively few total completers.

One reason for the wide discrepancy is that schools in New Hampshire offer many programs at the one- or two-year certificate level in subject areas that traditionally have higher female enrollment. Cosmetology completers alone accounted for sixty percent of all one- to two-year certificates while medical and clinical assisting completers accounted

for nearly 15 percent of all postsecondary certificates of less than one year. Other programs at these levels with mostly female completers include massage therapy, and esthetics/skin care. Another certificate level program with a majority of female completers is special education, targeted at current teachers seeking to expand their skills or at students considering a career in the field.

In all one- to two-year certificate programs, women accounted for 94 percent of completers, while in one-year programs women accounted for 77 percent.

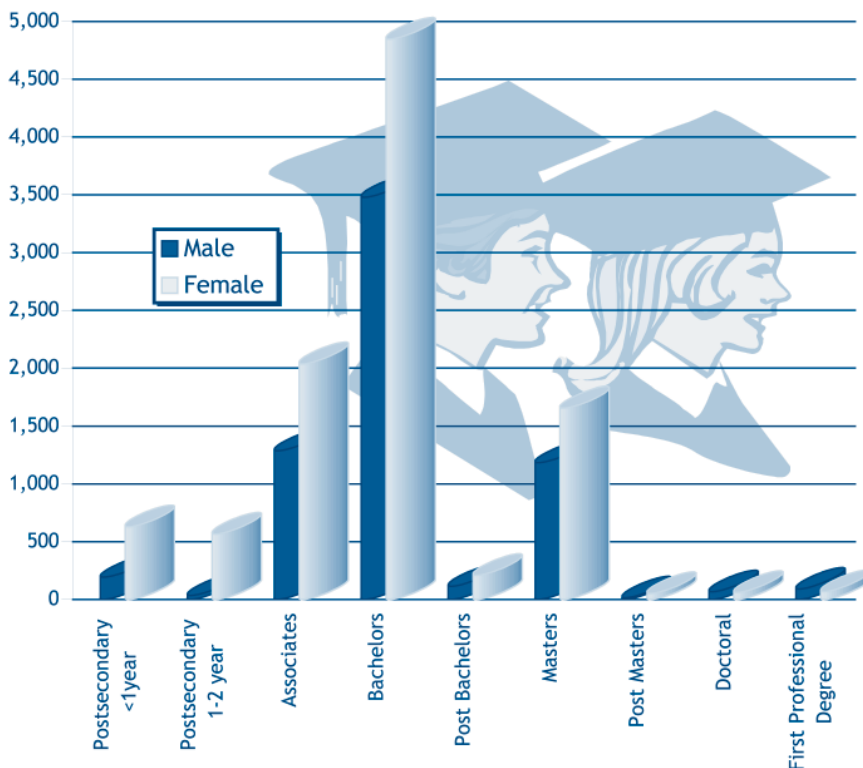
Programs at the certificate levels with more male completers include computer programming, computer science, information technology, and computer systems networking and telecommunications. However, none of these programs had more than 25 completers from New Hampshire institutions in 2004.

Graduation rates can account for some of the disparity. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the graduation rate for men in four-year programs (1996 cohort year) was 61.7 percent compared to 63.6 for women. In less-than-four-year programs, the split was more visible, 39.9 percent for men and 49.7 percent for women. Other factors that may contribute to the higher female completions is that young men often enter the workplace directly from high school and are more likely to enter the military. Men may also participate in career and technical programs in high schools or in apprenticeship programs where completers are not reflected in postsecondary totals.

At the Associate's degree level, women are the recipients of more awards than men are by a margin of 61 percent to 39 percent, both in New Hampshire

Continued on page 3

In 2004, female completers in New Hampshire outnumbered males by a wide margin at most training levels



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

and for the nation. The most popular program for Associate's degree recipients is registered nursing, with 305 women earning degrees compared to only 32 men. Women also lead in the number of completers at this award level for accounting, liberal arts, and legal assistant/paralegal. Some Associate's degree programs in which men outnumber women completers are culinary arts, criminal justice/law enforcement administration, and commercial and advertising art.

The gender difference is not as pronounced at the Bachelor's degree level, where women hold a 58 to 42 percent edge and account for the majority of completers in programs such as psychology, English language and literature, communication studies, and elementary education. General business administration and management, the most popular degree at the Bachelor's level, is almost evenly divided by gender, with 568 male and 601 female graduates.

Bachelor's programs with higher numbers of male completers in New Hampshire include economics, mechanical engineering, sport and fitness administration, and political science. Programs in computers and information science and support services, which encompass more than twenty specific programs, had the vast majority of male completers, with 255 graduates out of 325.

Michael Argiropolis

Recently released statistics on completers (graduates) of postsecondary educational programs are based on the latest data collected and analyzed by the National Center for Education Statistics, a federal entity within the U.S. Department of Education.

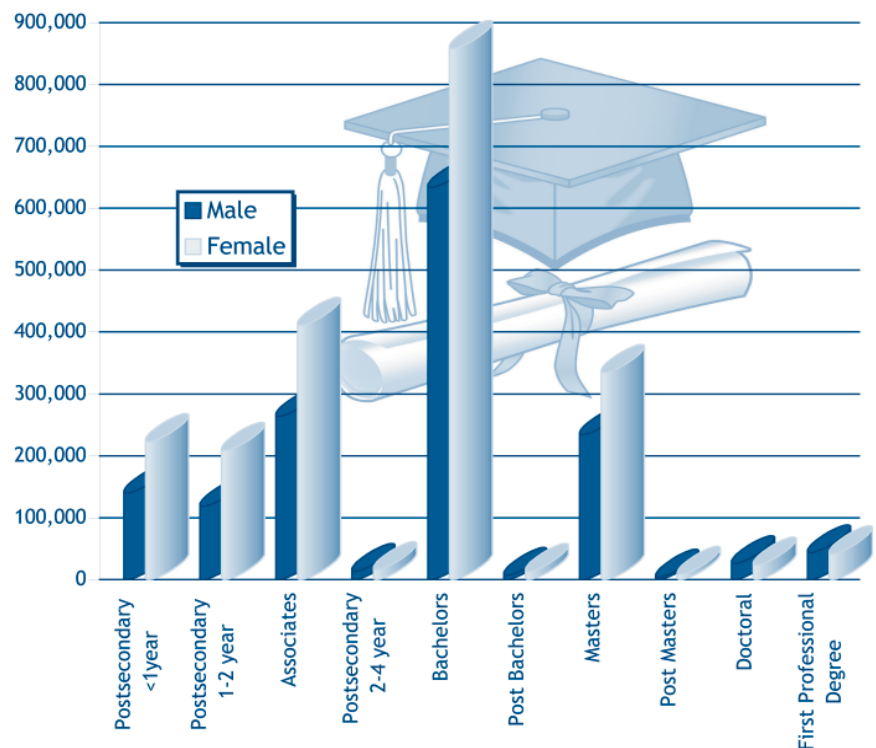
Completers are tallied separately for each level of education, starting with programs that require less than one year of study to first professional degrees. Completers are at educational institutions located in New Hampshire. Some institutions affiliated with schools based in other states do not report completers separately for New Hampshire.

Not all schools are required to report completers. Some proprietary schools that specialize in specific vocational training do not have their completers included in these totals.

Programs are defined by a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) which describes more than 1,400 programs of study.

Continued from page 2

In 2004, there was also a gap between male and female completers for the United States as a whole



Source: National Center for Education Statistics