

Launching a new program can seem like a quick fix for enrollment challenges, but unless an institution weighs it against the labor market, it may not actually bring in new students or increase revenues. By evaluating your institution's academic portfolio against in-demand career paths, however, college and university leaders can boost enrollment and improve cost efficiency.

Producing successful, in-demand degree and certificate programs requires a thorough, combined analysis of student demand data and labor market trends. Here, we look at the top academic programs and occupations capturing student and employer attention in 2022.

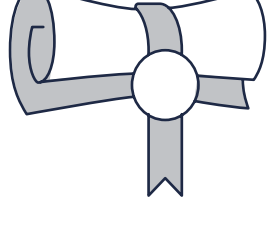
WHY YOUR ACADEMIC PROGRAM PORTFOLIO MATTERS



\$350K

The estimated minimum cost of offering an academic program

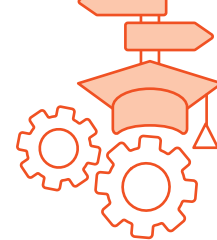
Source: Burning Glass Technologies



12

The number of programs that enroll the majority of students at institutions, among hundreds of options

Source: RPK Group



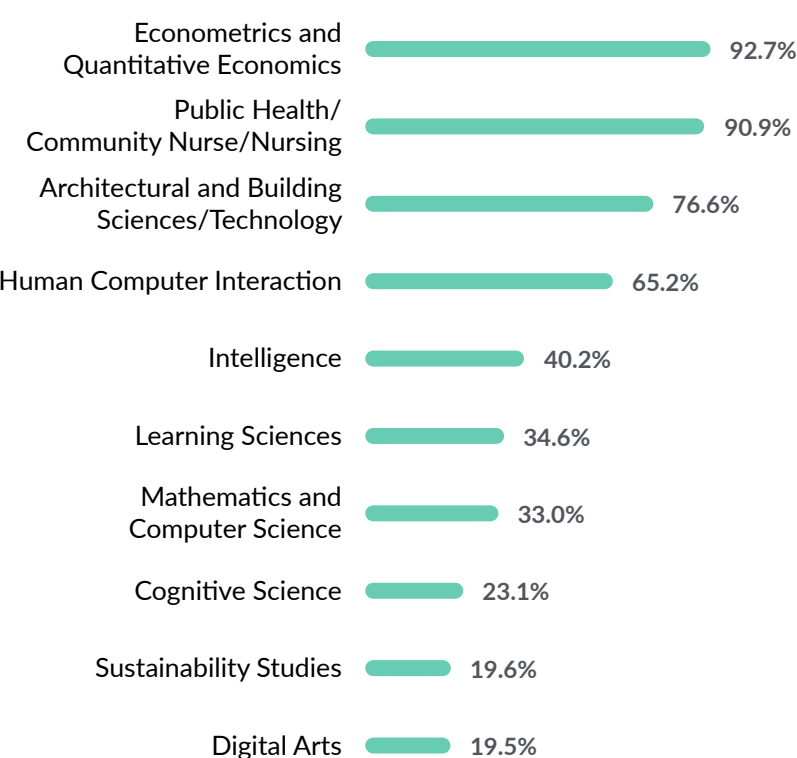
21%

The percent of prospective students who said higher education may not be worth their time and money in 2021, up from 17% the year before

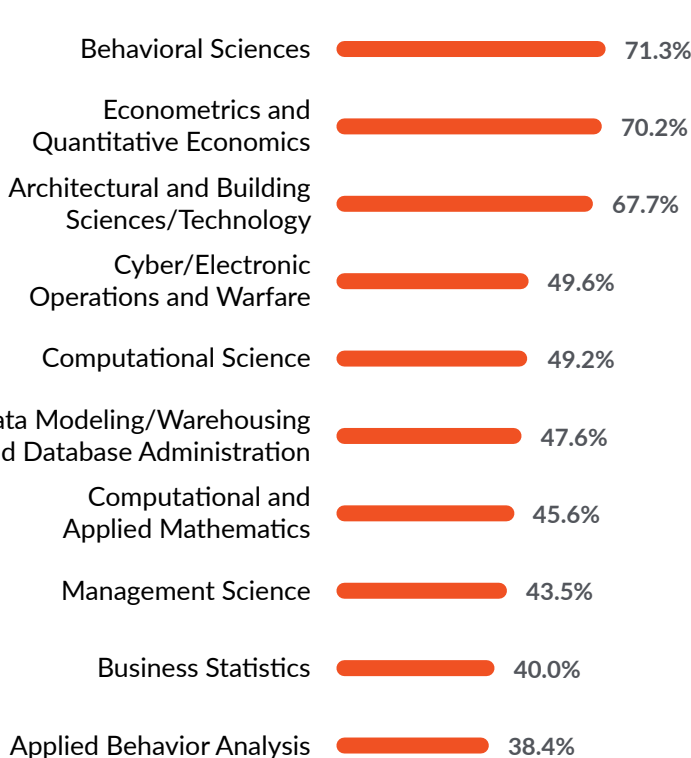
Source: Hanover Research

FASTEST-GROWING DEGREE PROGRAMS

TOP 10 BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAMS



TOP 10 MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS



Highest-annualized growth rate in degree completions in the United States, 2016-2020. Source: IPEDS

TOP OCCUPATIONS

FASTEST-GROWING OCCUPATIONS TYPICALLY REQUIRING A COLLEGE DEGREE

Growth Rate and Average Annual Wage

Occupation	Degree Required	Average Wage	Growth Rate ↑
Nurse Practitioner	Master's Degree	\$114,500	51.6%
Statistician	Master's Degree	\$97,200	33.9%
Information Security Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	\$107,600	33.6%
Medical and Health Services Manager	Bachelor's Degree	\$118,800	31.0%
Physician Assistant	Master's Degree	\$116,100	30.5%
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselor	Bachelor's Degree	\$51,600	27.0%
Marriage and Family Therapist	Master's Degree	\$56,900	25.6%
Operations Research Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	\$92,300	25.3%
Speech-Language Pathologist	Master's Degree	\$83,200	24.3%
Software Developer, Software Quality Assurance Analyst and Tester	Bachelor's Degree	\$114,300	23.7%

Fastest-growing occupations between 2021-2031 based on typical entry-level education. Source: JobsEQ, Bureau of Labor Statistics

DEGREES RISING TO THE TOP

FASTEST-GROWING DEGREES

Bachelor's Degrees ECONOMETRICS AND QUANTITATIVE ECONOMICS
As the field of economics becomes more empirical and employers increasingly seek workers with quantitative skillsets, econometrics programs have grown in popularity.

Master's Degrees BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
Increasing awareness of how human behavior affects business, policy, and everyday life has fueled growth for graduate programs in the interdisciplinary field of behavioral sciences.

FASTEST-GROWING FIELDS

Bachelor's Degrees MULTI/INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS
Four of the top 10 fastest-growing undergraduate degrees are multi- or interdisciplinary, revealing student interest in programs that combine the study of multiple fields.

Master's Degrees ANALYTICAL AND DATA-BASED PROGRAMS
Graduate programs in analytical and data-based fields, including cyber operations and database administration, have grown in popularity as students prepare to enter rapidly evolving technology jobs.

EMERGING FIELDS

Bachelor's Degrees SUSTAINABILITY
Sustainability-focused undergraduate programs have become more popular because of growing public awareness about environmental concerns. Relatedly, as interest in green building grows, more students are demanding programs in architecture and building sciences.

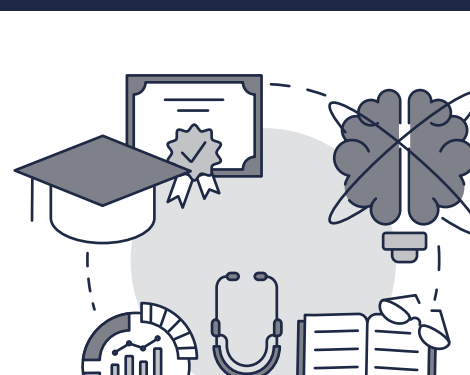
Master's Degrees MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
As businesses increasingly seek ways to make data-driven decisions, graduate programs in management science and related fields are seeing increased student demand.

DRIVERS OF DEGREE DEMAND



HIGH EARNINGS

With the exception of community and social service occupations, all of the fastest-growing occupations requiring a degree benefit from above-average salaries nationally. Wages are particularly high for medical and health services managers, who typically need to hold at least a bachelor's degree.

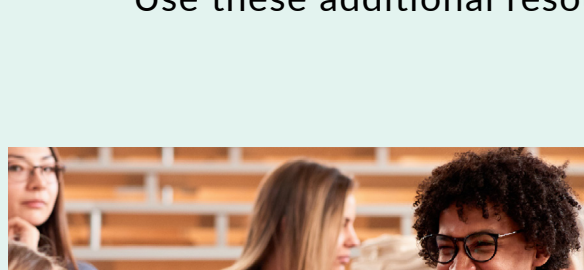


EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Although several of the fastest-growing occupations only require a bachelor's degree for entry, people generally need to hold a master's degree to become a statistician or to gain employment as a healthcare practitioner.

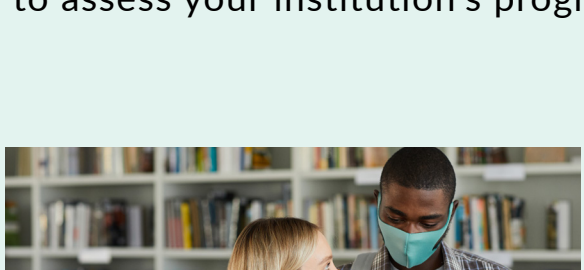
TAKE ACTION

Use these additional resources to assess your institution's programs and investigate new ones:



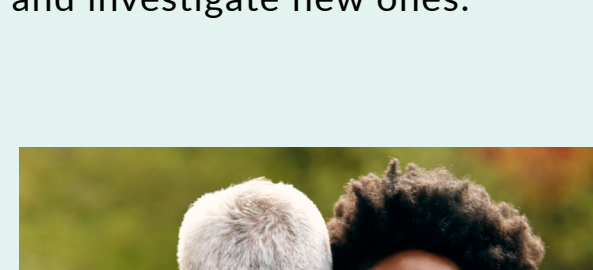
Step-by-Step Guide to a Comprehensive Academic Portfolio Review

Guide to planning a portfolio review



Four Critical Steps to Optimize Degree Program Portfolios

A four-stage approach to developing new programs



2022 Trends in Higher Education

The top trends in store for this year, including degree program trends

Is it time for a comprehensive academic portfolio review?

Find out how Hanover can help your institution optimize low-performing programs and identify new programs to maximize enrollment.