

# Students in Subbaccalaureate Health Sciences Programs: 2015-16

DATA POINT  
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This Data Point uses data from the 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16), a national survey of undergraduates enrolled in Title IV eligible postsecondary institutions, to examine the characteristics of students seeking subbaccalaureate credentials (certificates and associate's degrees) in health sciences. The Data Point compares subbaccalaureate health sciences students with all subbaccalaureate students.

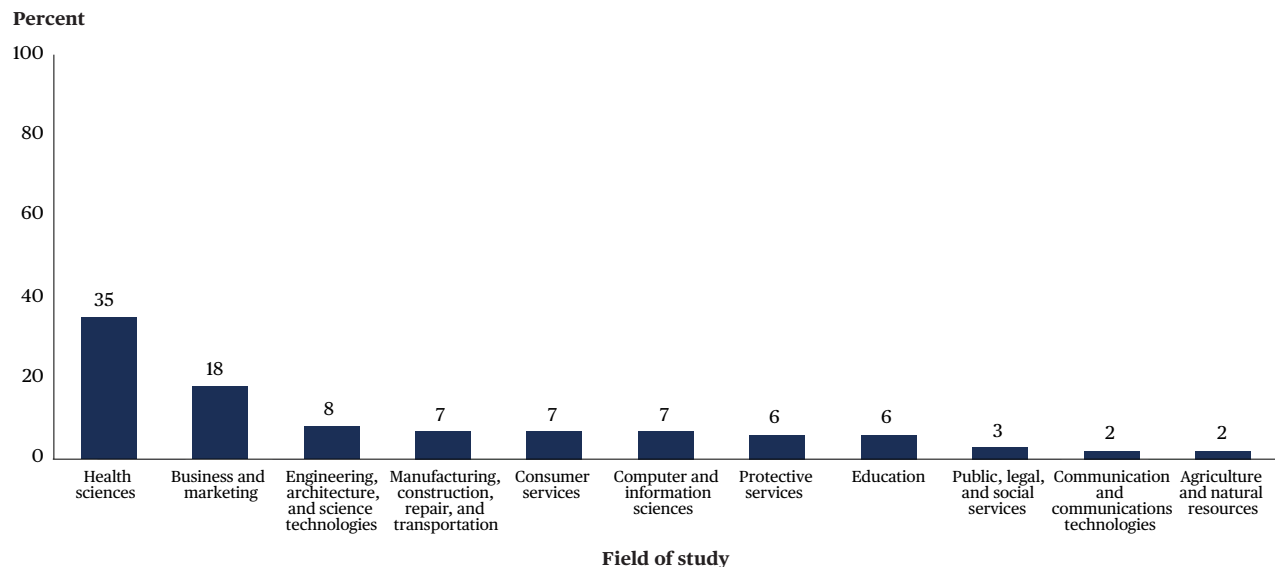
In the 2015-16 school year, 52 percent of undergraduates were enrolled in subbaccalaureate programs, and 69 percent of these subbaccalaureate students were enrolled in occupational education programs.<sup>1</sup> Among these occupational education students, health sciences was the most common field of study, followed by business and marketing (FIGURE 1).

These subbaccalaureate health sciences students more commonly enrolled in public 2-year institutions, as did subbaccalaureate students in general (FIGURE 2). However, relative to all subbaccalaureate students, the proportion of health sciences students who enrolled in public 2-year institutions was lower, while the proportion of health

sciences students who enrolled in private, for-profit institutions was higher.

Both subbaccalaureate health sciences students and subbaccalaureate students in general more often sought an associate's degree than a certificate. However, a smaller proportion of health sciences students than

**FIGURE 1. Percentage distribution of subbaccalaureate occupational education students across fields of study: 2015-16**



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Data include students enrolled in Title IV eligible postsecondary institutions in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Estimates and standard errors are available at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/p181.asp>.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16).

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subbaccalaureate students in general sought an associate's degree, and a higher proportion sought a certificate.

Compared with all undergraduate students, higher proportions of subbaccalaureate students are women, older adults, and Black and Hispanic.<sup>2</sup> These findings are accentuated within health sciences for women, older adults, and Black students. Although 58 percent of all

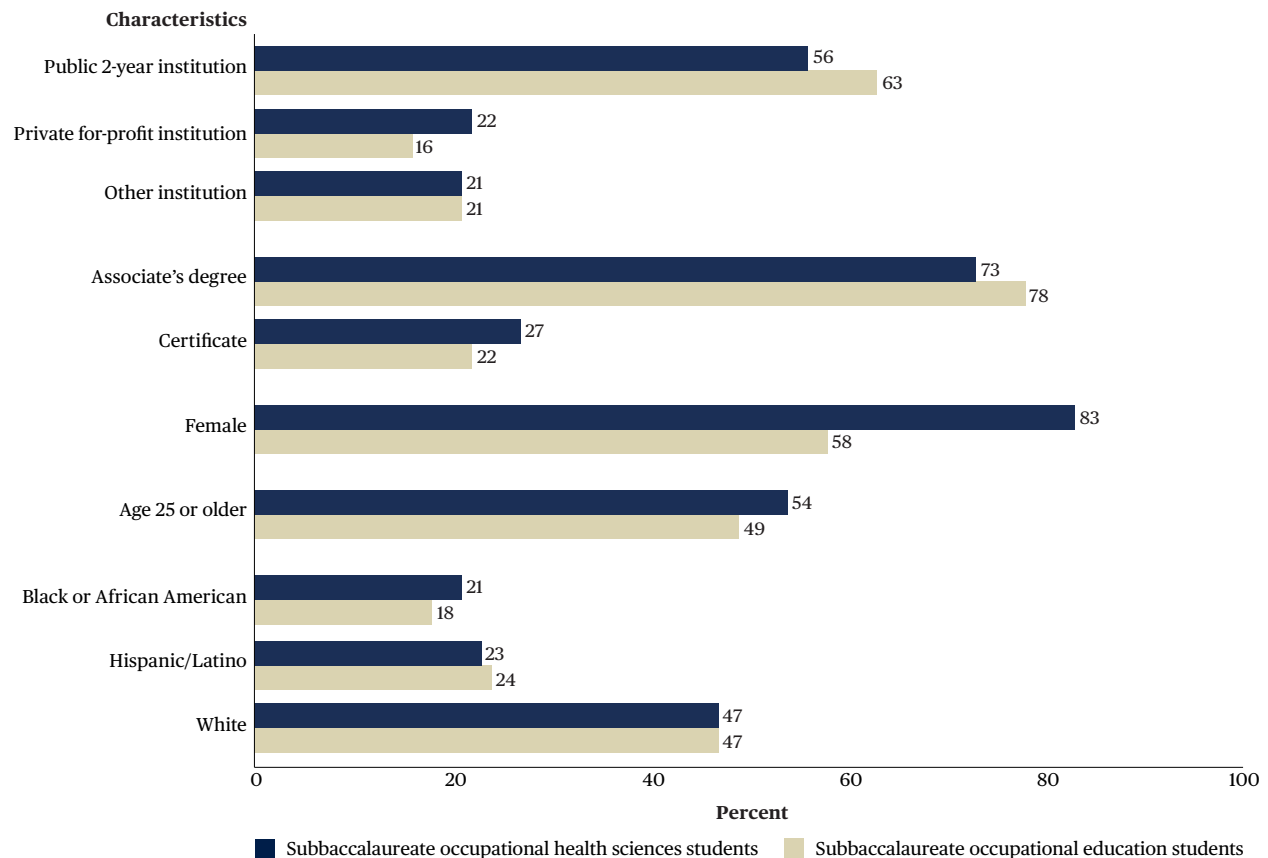
subbaccalaureate students were female, this number increased to 83 percent within the health sciences. In addition, a larger proportion of health sciences students were age 25 or older compared with subbaccalaureate students in general. Finally, the proportion of students in health sciences who were Black was larger than the proportion among all subbaccalaureate students.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Not in figures. Retrieved November 15, 2019, from <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi74.asp> and <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi79.asp>.

<sup>2</sup> Not in figures. Retrieved November 15, 2019, from <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi83.asp> and <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi84.asp>.

**FIGURE 2. Percentage distributions of subbaccalaureate occupational health sciences students and all subbaccalaureate occupational education students, by selected enrollment and demographic characteristics: 2015-16**



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Data include students enrolled in Title IV eligible postsecondary institutions in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Other institutions are public less-than-2-year, public 4-year, private nonprofit, and more than one institution. Estimates and standard errors are available at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi75.asp>, <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi78.asp>, <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi82.asp>, <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi87.asp>, and <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/pi88.asp>.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16).

This National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Data Point presents information on education topics of current interest. It was authored by Shannon Griffin and Albert Y. Liu of Insight Policy Research. Estimates based on samples are subject to sampling variability, and apparent differences may not be statistically significant. All stated differences are statistically significant at the .05 level, with no adjustments for multiple comparisons. In the design, conduct, and data processing of NCES surveys, efforts are made to minimize the effects of nonsampling errors, such as item nonresponse, measurement error, data processing error, or other systematic error.