



Council of Graduate Schools

Advocacy, Research, and Innovation

One Year Later
***The Path Forward: The
Future of Graduate Education
in the United States***

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Key Findings of the *Path Forward* Report

- The pipeline foreshadows a challenging path forward in talent production.
- International trends suggest US competitive edge is waning.
- There are actions that could reverse the trend.
- US graduate schools have taken up the challenge.



Trends in Degree Production

Pathway trends

- Graduate enrollment has increased 2-3% annually on average over the past decade
- Pathways to graduate school are not linear, but completion of high school and college is prerequisite
- Drop-outs in high school and college limit growth potential for graduate education
- URM's go to graduate school at half the rate of whites



Aspirations Matter

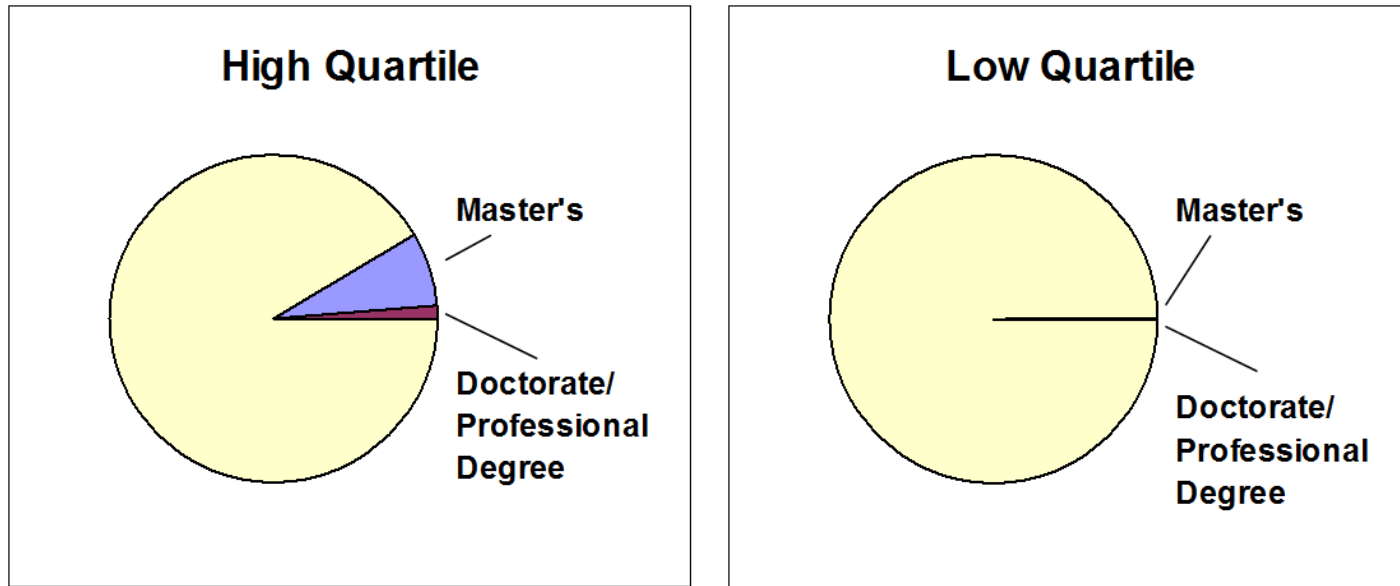
- Among high school sophomores aspirations to graduate school differ by race/ethnicity:
 - 33% of African Americans and Hispanics
 - 41% of white students and half of Asians



But SES Is the Driver.

Socioeconomic factors:

- Students from low SES families are less likely to earn a graduate degree.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2008) *Digest of Education Statistics*.

College Graduation Matters

Aspirations:

- Among high school sophomores aspirations to graduate school differ by race/ethnicity:
 - 33% of African Americans and Hispanics
 - 41% of white students and half of Asians
- *But among bachelor's degree recipients, percentages expect to earn an advanced degree:*
 - *African American (85%), Hispanic (79%), White (70%)*

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2007). *Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002* .

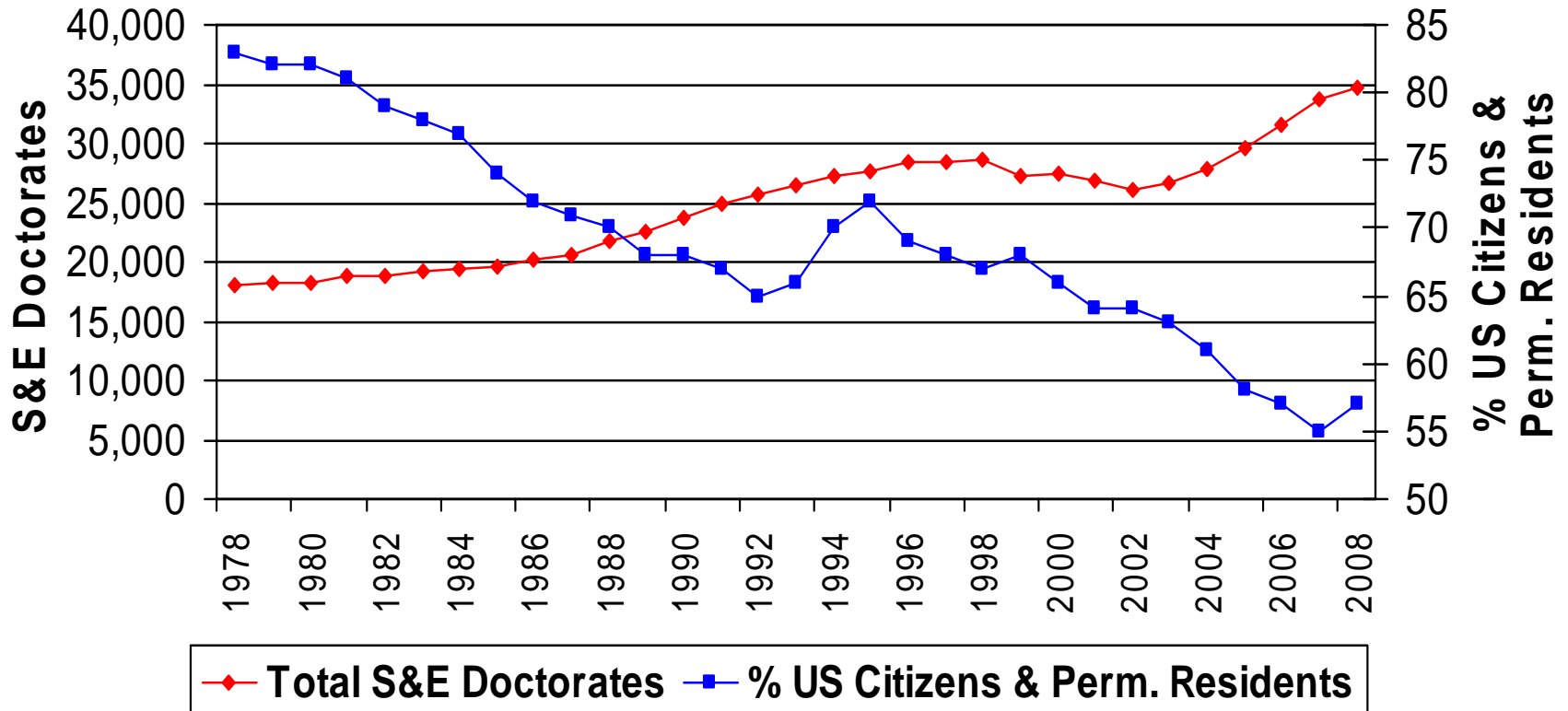


International Trends

- **Other countries** recognize graduate education and human capital development as engine of economic competitiveness
- **International students** have increasing options
 - China and India are investing substantially in graduate programs
 - Canada, Australia, and others are more welcoming to internationals
 - For international students educated in the US increasingly find viable career options in their home countries
- Europe and China now produce **more doctorates** in the natural sciences and engineering than the U.S.



S&E Doctorates Awarded by US Institutions

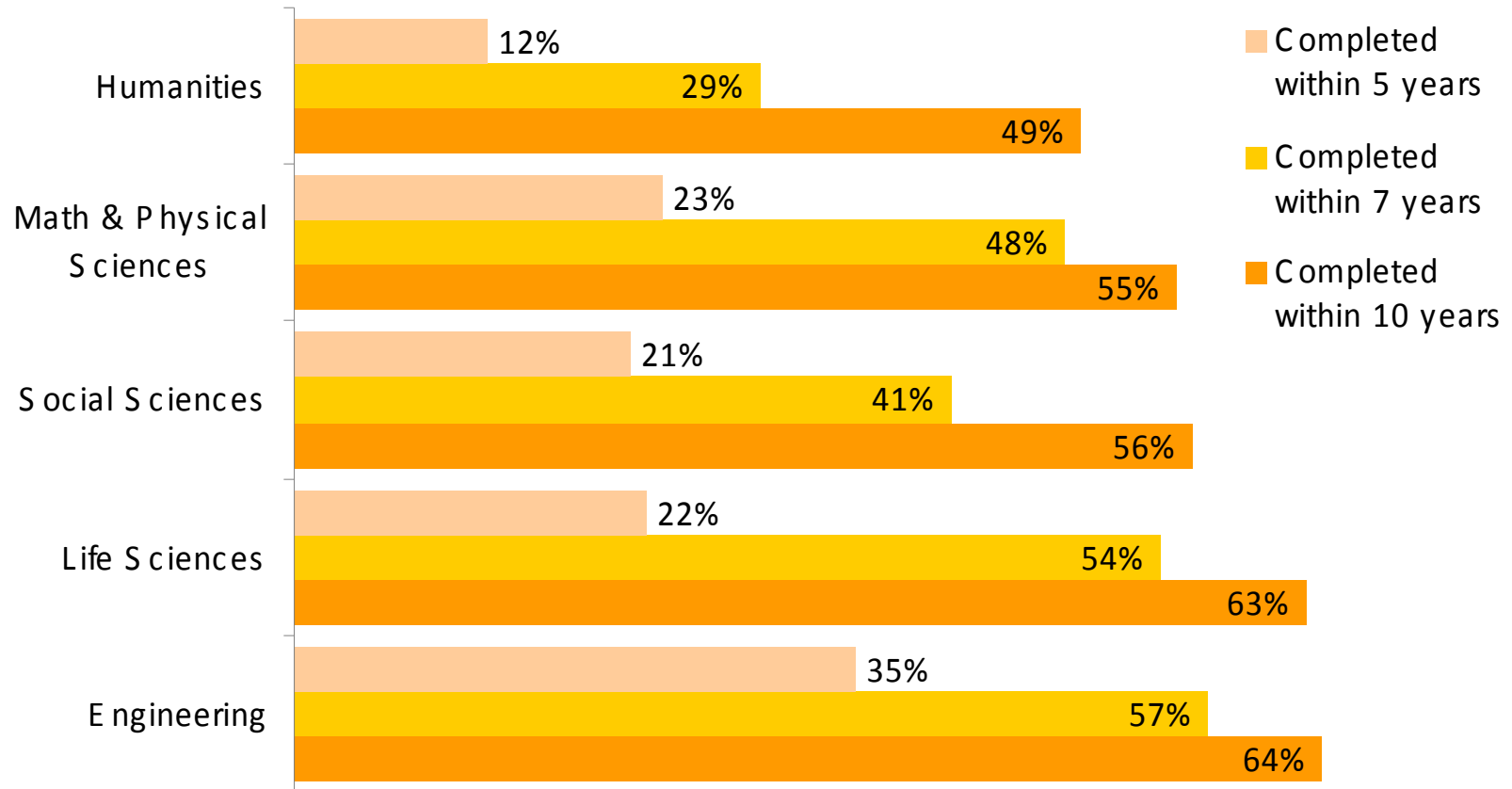


Source: National Science Foundation, WebCASPAR Database, retrieved September 2008



Lever: Completion and Attrition

The current state of attrition and completion in US doctoral programs wastes human and financial resources



Source: CGS. (2008) *PhD Completion and Attrition: Analysis of Baseline Program Data from the PhD Completion Project*.



Lever: Illuminate Career Pathways for Students

- Most professional master's programs illuminate wide range of career pathways for students
- Most PhD programs do not



Lever: Systems of Financing Graduate Study

- The significant debt at graduation among graduate students who borrow (e.g., master's \$50k, doctorate \$77k)
- The current structure of federal support for graduate students pursuing doctorates and research master's emphasizes research, not education, and does not support cost of education



Audiences for *The Path Forward*

Internal

- Trustees/Board of Visitors meetings
- President's cabinet
- University leadership retreats
- Council of deans/academic deans & directors
- Graduate Council
- Departmental chairs group
- General faculty meeting
- Graduate student/post-doc organizations
- Individual/targeted sessions

External

- Federal policy makers
- State legislators/policy makers/other elected
- Higher educational coordinating boards
- Foundation/advancement boards
- Graduate dean convenings
 - State graduate dean organizations
 - Regional affiliates of CGS
 - Other organizations (CIC/CRPGE/AGS)
- Professional and academic conferences
- Professional societies



Deans' Use of *The Path Forward* Findings and Recommendations

1. Influence Critical Decision Making
2. Change Priorities
3. Create New Communication Channels
4. Shape Evaluation Metrics
5. Introduce New Programs



Impact of *The Path Forward* on Federal Policy

- America COMPETES Act
- Proposed increases in some federal graduate education programs
- CGS Annual Legislative Forum, April 5



Thank You!

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