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ABSTRACT

This small study provides information on the numbers of doctorates in philosophy, history and English literature that universities in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming expect to award between 1980 and 1982. A brief survey form was mailed to the heads of humanities departments at 31 Western universities that offer doctoral degrees in English, history and philosophy. The form asked respondents to estimate number of doctorates to be conferred until 1982, whether doctoral awards would increase or decrease in 1983-84, and how nonacademic employment would affect doctoral candidates. Results showed that English departments report aggregate estimates of increased numbers of doctorates in the next three years, while history departments show an increase from June 1980 to June 1981, then a sharp decline to June 1982. The estimated number of doctorates in philosophy is greater than the average of degrees conferred over the past five years. It was estimated that most programs would stabilize their doctoral population and try to control initial large numbers of doctoral awards to prospective candidates. History departments were the most active in preparing graduates for nonacademic careers; philosophy departments least active. Appendices include a list of departments surveyed, copies of cover letters and survey forms used, and a directory of advisory council members associated with the project. (DC)

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Project on Expanding Regional Cooperation in Graduate & Professional Education

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EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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Improving Education In The West

WICHE

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education is a nonprofit regional organization. It helps the thirteen member states cooperatively provide high-quality, cost-effective programs to meet the education and manpower needs of the West. Member states are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Project Intent

The Project on Expanding Regional Cooperation in Graduate and Professional Education is developing and testing new models for interstate planning and resource sharing. Through the project, WICHE provides data to support planning and program review, assists state agencies and institutions in gathering data, and compiles an inventory of doctoral programs. The project is working closely with the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington to develop and test a model for effectively sharing unique program resources and facilities. The results of this demonstration project will be disseminated widely as a model that may be useful to the other western states and to states in other regions. The graduate education project is supported by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and by WICHE state dues through its Student Exchange Program.

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ESTIMATES OF DOCTORATES TO BE CONFERRED
BY WESTERN UNIVERSITIES IN ENGLISH,
PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY, 1980-1982

by

Norman Kaufman

June 1980
Report 80-2

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

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This report was prepared by Norman Kaufman, Director of Planning and Research for the Graduate Education Project.

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ESTIMATES OF DOCTORATES TO BE CONFERRED BY WESTERN
UNIVERSITIES IN ENGLISH, PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY, 1980-1982

Purpose of the Survey

National forecasts of the numbers of doctorates to be granted over the next decade predict a massive oversupply of graduates relative to demand. Predictions of the supply-demand imbalance are particularly disturbing for humanities disciplines, which have traditionally placed most graduates in academic positions. Because the job market for doctorate recipients is national, most studies have focused attention on that level. Program planning decisions are institutional in nature, however, making those national studies and data a composite of many individual decisions.

The small study reported here provides information on the numbers of doctorates in philosophy, history, and English that Western universities expect to award in the next three years. Its purpose is to indicate the short-run trends in the region in order to give educators and program planners data that can be compared to national studies and reports.

The study was co-sponsored by WICHE's Project on Expanding Regional Cooperation in Graduate and Professional Education, the Graduate School of the University of Colorado, and the Humanities Council of the University of Washington.

Methodology

WICHE mailed a brief survey form and cover letter (see appendix) to the heads of departments at Western* universities that offer doctoral.

*Use of the term West or Western refers to the thirteen states in the WICHE Compact: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

degrees in English, history, and philosophy. WICHE's Inventory of Doctoral Programs in the Western United States was used to identify the programs to be surveyed. The survey form, a return postcard with the questions on the reverse side, and the cover letter were mailed on April 14, 1980, with a request to respond by May 1, 1980. WICHE sent a follow-up request to nonrespondents on May 1, 1980. As of May 19, WICHE had received the following numbers of responses:

Philosophy	--	15 of 17 requested (88 percent)
History	--	25 of 28 requested (89 percent)
English	--	18 of 23 requested (78 percent)

These rates of response are good for survey research and permit reasonable estimates of current trends. The appendix contains a copy of the cover letter, questionnaire, and a list of the departments that responded.

Limitations of the Study

As with any survey research, the survey returns may not represent the universe of respondents adequately. Although we do not believe this to be the case here, the reader should review the list of nonrespondents to make an informed judgment. It is also important to recognize that the data reported here are estimates made by informed individuals--department heads and program directors--but that they still may be affected by any number of factors, including the time required to complete the degree and changes in department or university policy.

Results

The table below displays the estimated numbers of doctorates in each of these fields to be awarded in the period July 1979 through June 1980,

July 1980 through June 1981, and July 1981 through June 1982, and the weighted average number awarded annually over the five-year period 1974-1979. The latter figures were taken from WICHE's Inventory of Doctoral Programs in the Western United States, and were adjusted to exclude nonrespondents to the survey. English departments report aggregate estimates of increased numbers of doctorates in the next three years, while history shows an increase from June 1980 to June 1981, then a sharp decline to June 1982. Doctorates in philosophy are estimated to increase sharply, then level off. The estimated number of doctorates in philosophy is greater than the weighted average of degrees conferred over the past five years, while the same results hold for English doctorates in 1981 and 1982. The estimated number of doctorates in history is lower than the last five years' average.

Estimated Number of Doctorates, 1980-1982

Discipline	July 1979- June 1980	July 1980- June 1981	July 1981- June 1982	Weighted Average* 1974-1979 (Excl. Nonrespondents)
Philosophy	33	47	45	29
History	123	132	116	147
English	93	106	118	104

*The weightings used give increasing emphasis to recent years by assigning a value of 5 to 1979, 4 to 1978 . . . 1 to 1974.

The survey questionnaire asked respondents whether they expected the number of doctorates awarded by their programs to increase, decrease, or remain the same in 1983 and 1984 compared to their 1982 estimates. The results are displayed on the following page:

	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Remain the Same</u>
Philosophy	0	3	12
History	0	5	19
English	1	6	11

The figures clearly indicate an anticipated leveling-off of most programs and the downward adjustments of others.

The final two survey questions asked if the respondents expected an increase in the numbers of their Ph.D.s going into nonacademic employment and whether their departments made special efforts to prepare students for nonacademic employment. From the responses tabulated below, the reader can see that a majority of the respondents in all three fields expect an increase in the numbers of their Ph.D.s going into nonacademic employment. A much smaller number in each field, however, report that their departments make special efforts to prepare Ph.D.s for nonacademic employment.

	<u>Expect an Increase in Nonacademic Employment of Ph.D.s</u>		<u>Prepare Ph.D.s for Nonacademic Employment</u>
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	
Philosophy	10	5	2
History	21	4	14
English	12	6	5

History departments seem to be most active in preparing graduates for non-academic careers; philosophy departments least active. WICHE will contact departments that indicated they make these special efforts and will provide a report on the approaches they use.

Conclusions

These data are exploratory in the sense that they present estimates of short-term trends in doctorate degree production. They suggest that the numbers of doctorates awarded by Western universities in English and philosophy will increase initially, then stabilize and that the numbers of doctorates awarded in history will decrease slightly and then stabilize. These data suggest that unless significantly fewer students enroll in these programs in the coming years, there will not be an appreciable downturn in the numbers of doctorates awarded by Western universities in these fields.

APPENDIX

DEPARTMENTS SURVEYED

English

Arizona State University
 *University of Arizona
 *Claremont Graduate School
 Stanford University
 **University of California, Berkeley
 *University of California, Davis
 University of California, Irvine
 University of California, Los Angeles
 University of California, Riverside
 University of California, San Diego
 University of California,
 Santa Barbara.
 University of the Pacific
 *University of Southern California
 University of Colorado
 University of Denver
 University of Northern Colorado
 Idaho State University
 University of Nevada, Reno
 University of New Mexico, Main Campus
 University of Oregon, Main Campus
 University of Utah
 University of Washington
 Washington State University

Philosophy

University of Arizona
 Claremont Graduate School
 Stanford University
 *University of California, Berkeley
 University of California, Davis
 University of California, Irvine
 *University of California, Los Angeles
 University of California, Riverside
 University of California, San Diego
 University of California,
 Santa Barbara
 University of Southern California
 **California Institute of Asian Studies
 University of Colorado
 University of Hawaii--Manoa
 University of New Mexico, Main Campus
 University of Oregon, Main Campus
 University of Utah
 University of Washington

History

Arizona State University
 University of Arizona
 *Claremont Graduate School
 Stanford University
 University of California, Berkeley
 University of California, Davis
 University of California, Irvine
 University of California, Los Angeles
 University of California, Riverside
 University of California, San Diego
 *University of California, San
 Francisco Medical Center
 University of California,
 Santa Barbara
 *University of California, Santa Cruz
 University of Southern California
 University of Colorado
 University of Northern Colorado
 University of Denver
 University of Hawaii--Manoa
 University of Idaho
 University of Montana
 University of Nevada, Reno
 University of New Mexico, Main Campus
 University of Oregon, Main Campus
 Brigham Young University, Main Campus
 University of Utah
 University of Washington
 Washington State University
 University of Wyoming

*Departments that did not respond.

**Response was not included in the tabulations.



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Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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MEMORANDUM

April 14, 1980

TO: Department Heads in English, History and Philosophy

FROM: Norman Kaufman
Graduate Education Project
Rose Marie Oster, Acting Dean of the Graduate School,
University of Colorado
Carol Thomas, Chair of the Humanities Council,
University of Washington

SUBJECT: Attached Survey of Doctoral Degrees

National forecasts of the numbers of doctorates to be granted over the next decade predict a massive "oversupply" of graduates. Predictions of the supply-demand imbalance are particularly disturbing for humanities fields, which have traditionally placed most graduates in academic positions.

We believe, however, that short-term estimates will be somewhat more accurate and, in addition, that many departments are making special efforts to prepare their graduates for careers outside academe. As part of its project on expanding regional cooperation in graduate education, WICHE is attempting to provide accurate data to be used in program planning. Would you assist in this effort by answering the questions on the enclosed post card? The results will be analyzed and returned to all respondents.

Although we ask you to identify yourself and your institution in order to keep track of responses, no individuals, programs, or institutions will be identified in our report.

Thank you for your help.

NK:CP

Enclosure

Please respond by May 1, 1980.

WICHE Graduate Education Project Survey
of Number of Doctorates Expected to be
Awarded in 1979-80, 1980-81, and 1981-82

Field _____

University _____

Estimated number of doctorates to be
conferred:

July 1979 - June 1980 _____

July 1980 - June 1981 _____

July 1981 - June 1982 _____

Compared to 1981-82, do you expect the
annual number of doctorates awarded to
increase, decrease or remain the same
for 1983 and 1984? _____

Do you expect the numbers of your Ph.D.s
going into nonacademic employment to
increase?

Yes _____ No _____

Does your program make special efforts
to prepare students for nonacademic
employment?

Yes _____ No _____

Name of Respondent _____

Title _____

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