Health Physics Enrollments and Degrees Survey, 2015 Data

(August 2016 Update)

Number 77.1 Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education 2016

(One academic program provided additional data after the original publication distribution, and these revisions are included in this updated report.)

SURVEY UNIVERSE

The 2015 Health Physics Enrollments and Degrees Survey reports degrees granted between September 1, 2014 and August 31, 2015. Enrollment information refers to the fall term 2015. Twenty-two academic programs were included in the survey universe, with all 22 programs providing data. The enrollments and degrees information comprises students majoring in health physics or in an option program equivalent to a major. The report includes enrollment information on undergraduate students and graduate students and information by degree level for post-graduation plans.

DEGREE DATA

Bachelor's Degrees. The number of B.S. degrees granted in 2015 is 27 percent lower than in 2014 and 44 percent lower than in 2013. (Table 1.) The 2015 number of B.S. degrees is the lowest number of B.S. degrees reported since 2002 and 66 percent below the peak years in the late 1970s. Health physics programs accounted for 82 percent of all B.S. degrees. (Table 2.)

Graduate Degrees. The number of M.S. degrees granted in 2015 is 4 percent higher than in 2014 but is 2 percent lower than 2013. The number of Ph.D. degrees granted in 2015 is 80 percent higher than in 2014 and 29 percent higher than in 2013. (Table 1.) The 2011 number of Ph.D. degrees continues to be the lowest reported since the survey began more than 45 years ago. Health physics programs accounted for 83 percent of the M.S. degrees and 72 percent of the Ph.D. degrees. (Table 2.)

Table 1. Health Physics Degrees, 2006-2015

	Degrees		
Year	B.S.	M.S.	Ph.D.
2015	49	84	18
2014	67	81	10
2013	88	86	14
2012	82	91	15
2011	64	85	5
2010	62	89	15
2009	77	83	9
2008	73	108	8
2007	79	91	28
2006	71	90	12

Source: Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education.

Table 2. Health Physics Degrees by Curriculum, 2015

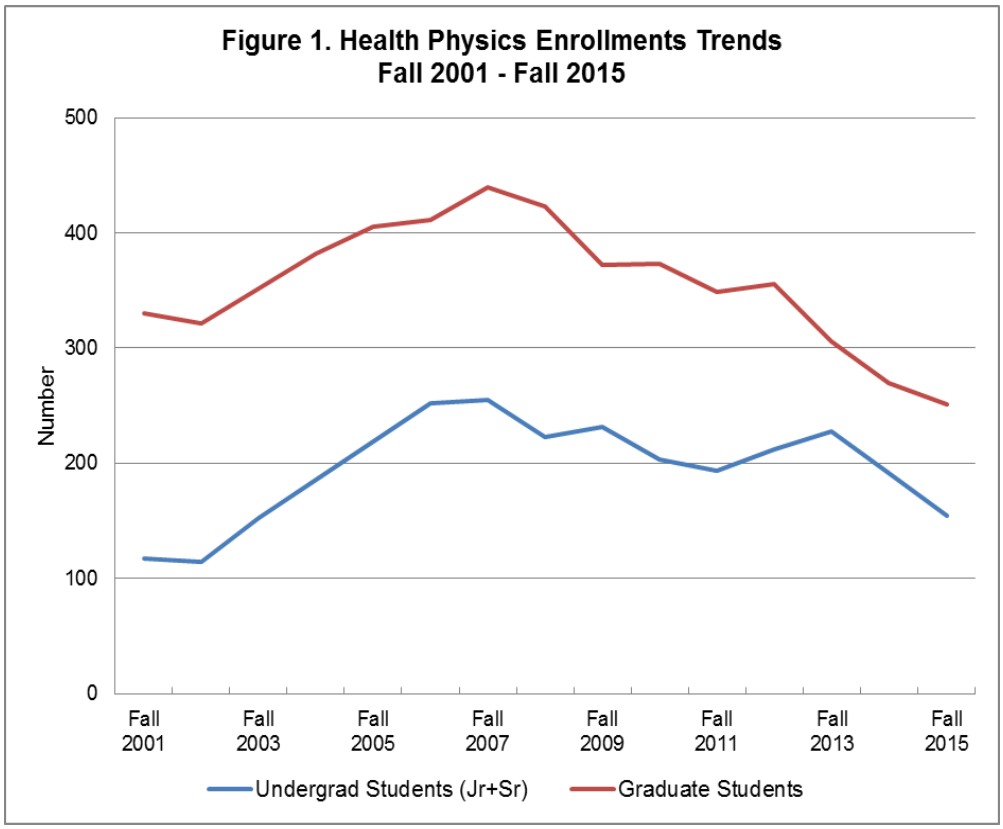
Curriculum	B.S.	M.S.	Ph.D.
Health Physics Program	40	70	13
Medical Health Physics	0	13	3
Other Health Physics Option	9	1	2

Source: Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS AND SHORT-TERM OUTLOOK FOR DEGREE TRENDS (Figure 1)

Undergraduate Students. In 2015, the reported enrollment of junior and senior undergraduates was approximately 155, which reflects a 20 percent decrease over 2014 and a 32 percent decrease over 2013. The 2015 undergraduate enrollment level is the lowest number reported since 2002. The undergraduate enrollment decreases since 2013 indicate that the number of B.S. degrees in 2016 and 2017 are likely to remain closer to the number reported for 2015 than the higher numbers reported for 2012 and 2013.

Graduate Students. The reported graduate enrollment in 2015 was approximately 250 students. This is 7 percent lower than in 2014 and 18 percent lower than in 2013. Graduate enrollment in 2015 is the lowest reported since the survey began. The enrollment trends indicate the number of M.S. degrees may drop to lower levels in 2016 and 2017, while the number of Ph.D. degrees is also likely to have plateaued and could fall back somewhere near the 5 to 10 range in 2016 and 2017.



Source: Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education.

EMPLOYMENT OR OTHER POST-GRADUATION STATUS

Data on employment/post-graduation status for those graduating in 2015 are shown in Table 3. Excluding the unknown/not reported category, continued study is the largest post-degree activity for the B.S.-level and M.S.-level graduates. For B.S. graduates, nuclear utility employment and other nuclear-related employment reported the largest number employed with four graduates each. The total number reported for nuclear utility employment, other nuclear-related employment, and DOE contractor employment represents over half of all reported employed B.S. graduates. This percent is similar to the relative numbers reported for the period 2008-2012, reversing a fall to 25 percent in 2013.

For M.S. graduates reported as employed, federal government employment has the largest number with 12. Medical facility employment, academic employment, other business employment, and other nuclear-related employment had five or more reported. For Ph.D. graduates, medical facility employment followed by academic employment and federal government employment accounted for nearly 70 percent of the employed graduates.

Table 3. Employment or Other Post-Graduation Plans, 2015

	B.S. Degree	M.S. Degree	Ph.D. Degree
Continued Study	12	14	2
Academic Employment	2	6	2
Federal Government Employment	0	12	2
DOE Contractor Employment	2	1	0
State and Local Government Employment	1	2	0
Medical Facility Employment	1	8	5
Nuclear Utility Employment	4	4	1
Other Nuclear-Related Employment	4	5	1
Other Business Employment	0	6	1
Foreign (non-U.S.) Employment	0	2	1
U.S. Military, Active Duty	1	0	0
Other Employment	2	0	0
Still Seeking Employment	0	3	2
Unknown/Not Reported	20	21	1
TOTALS	**49**	**84**	**18**

Source: Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education.

Table 4. Health Physics Degrees, 2015, by Academic Institution

State	Name of Institution	Degrees Sept. 1, 2014 – Aug. 31, 2015 B.S.	M.S.	Ph.D.
CALIFORNIA	San Diego State University	0	5	0
COLORADO	Colorado State University	0	3	2
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	Georgetown University	0	4	0
IDAHO	Idaho State University	5	6	1
ILLINOIS	Illinois Institute of Technology	0	13	0
INDIANA	Purdue University	3	1	0
LOUISIANA	Louisiana State University	0	1	0
MAINE	University of Maine	3	0	0
MASSACHUSETTS	University of Massachusetts, Lowell	2	12	1
MISSOURI	University of Missouri - Columbia	0	2	1
NEVADA	University of Nevada, Las Vegas	1	2	0
NEW JERSEY	Thomas Edison State University	9	0	0
NEW YORK	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	5	0	1
NORTH CAROLINA	Duke University	0	2	0
OHIO	University of Cincinnati	0	1	3
OREGON	Oregon State University	6	16	1
PENNSYLVANIA	Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania	6	0	0
SOUTH CAROLINA	Clemson University	0	6	0
	Francis Marion University	3	0	0
TENNESSEE	University of Tennessee	6	4	6
	Vanderbilt University	0	3	1
TEXAS	Texas A&M University	0	3	1
TOTALS		**49**	**84**	**18**

Source: Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education.

This document was prepared for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). ORISE is managed by Oak Ridge Associated Universities under DOE contract number DE-AC05-06OR23100.

This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by the United States Government. Neither the United States Government or any agency thereof, makes any warranty, expressed or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe on privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, mark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement or recommendation, or favor by the U.S. Government or any agency thereof.

The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Government or any agency thereof, Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education, or the sponsoring institutions of Oak Ridge Associated Universities.

The Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) is a U.S. Department of Energy institute focusing on scientific initiatives to research health risks from occupational hazards, assess environmental cleanup, respond to radiation medical emergencies, support national security and emergency preparedness, and educate the next generation of scientists. ORISE is managed by Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU).