

## Appendix J. Features of the Program Array at University of Wisconsin-Madison

### Program Array in Context

A hallmark of large public research universities, especially those that are also land-grant universities, is that they offer a broad array of academic programs. At UW-Madison, the program array spans mature disciplines with a long history to the emerging disciplines that are associated with new areas of scholarship. Some programs are large and offer broad coverage of a discipline. Other programs serve small numbers of students in highly specialized academic niches.

In addition to academic degree-major programs, UW-Madison makes substantial use of certificate programs and sub-major options as a way to experiment with changes in the program array short of offering a new degree/major program. The use of certificate offerings has increased from 24 programs in 1996 to 55 programs in 2005 and a new class of certificate programs – capstone certificates – was developed in the mid-1990's.<sup>1</sup>

### Trends in Major Programs at UW-Madison

At UW-Madison the number of academic major programs was fairly stable in the 1970's and 1980's. Starting in the early 1990's there has been a stepped-up effort to eliminate defunct majors and consolidate related small majors. Since 1996 the net number of academic majors has decreased by 26 programs from 239 to 213 for a reduction of more than 10 percent (Table 1). Over the past 20 years (mostly within the past 12 years) UW-Madison has implemented 17 new major programs at various levels, deleted 44 major programs, and consolidated a number of small majors into larger majors for a net decrease of 41 major programs.

### Size of Major Programs

Counts of degrees awarded are a convenient measure of the size of a degree major program because this measure does not depend on issues like timing of major declaration that confound enrollment counts, especially for undergraduate programs. The size distribution of major programs is illustrated in Table 2 and Figure 1.

The largest 10% of major programs account for a substantial portion of the degrees: 44% of bachelor's degrees, 44% of master's degrees, and 30% of doctoral degrees. For undergraduate majors, the mean size was 46 degrees and 71% of the major programs awarded fewer than 46 degrees. The median major program size was 18 degrees compared with 372 degrees in the largest major. For 22 of the 136 undergraduate majors fewer than 5 degrees were awarded in each of those majors. The numbers cited are for 2004-05, and the same pattern can be observed for any year in the past few decades – a few large major programs and lots of small ones at each level.

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<sup>1</sup> Trends in certificate numbers and certificate awards are available at [http://apa.wisc.edu/degrees/degrees\\_current.htm](http://apa.wisc.edu/degrees/degrees_current.htm)

**Table 1. UW-Madison Trend in Number of Major Programs**

Year	Number of Major Programs				Count of Majors, Sum of all Levels
	Bachelor's level	Master's level	Doctoral and First-Professional levels	Unduplicated Count of Major Programs	
1986	156	184	125	254	465
1996	149	172	125	239	446
1997	148	172	125	239	445
1998	147	161	116	223	424
1999	147	161	116	223	424
2000	137	157	113	216	407
2001	139	157	113	219	409
2002	138	157	114	220	409
2003	139	156	114	219	409
2004	136	155	116	216	407
2005	136	155	115	214	406
2006	135	153	116	213	404
Five year change	-4	-4	3	-6	-5
Ten year change	-13	-19	-9	-26	-41
Change since 1986	-21	-31	-9	-41	-61

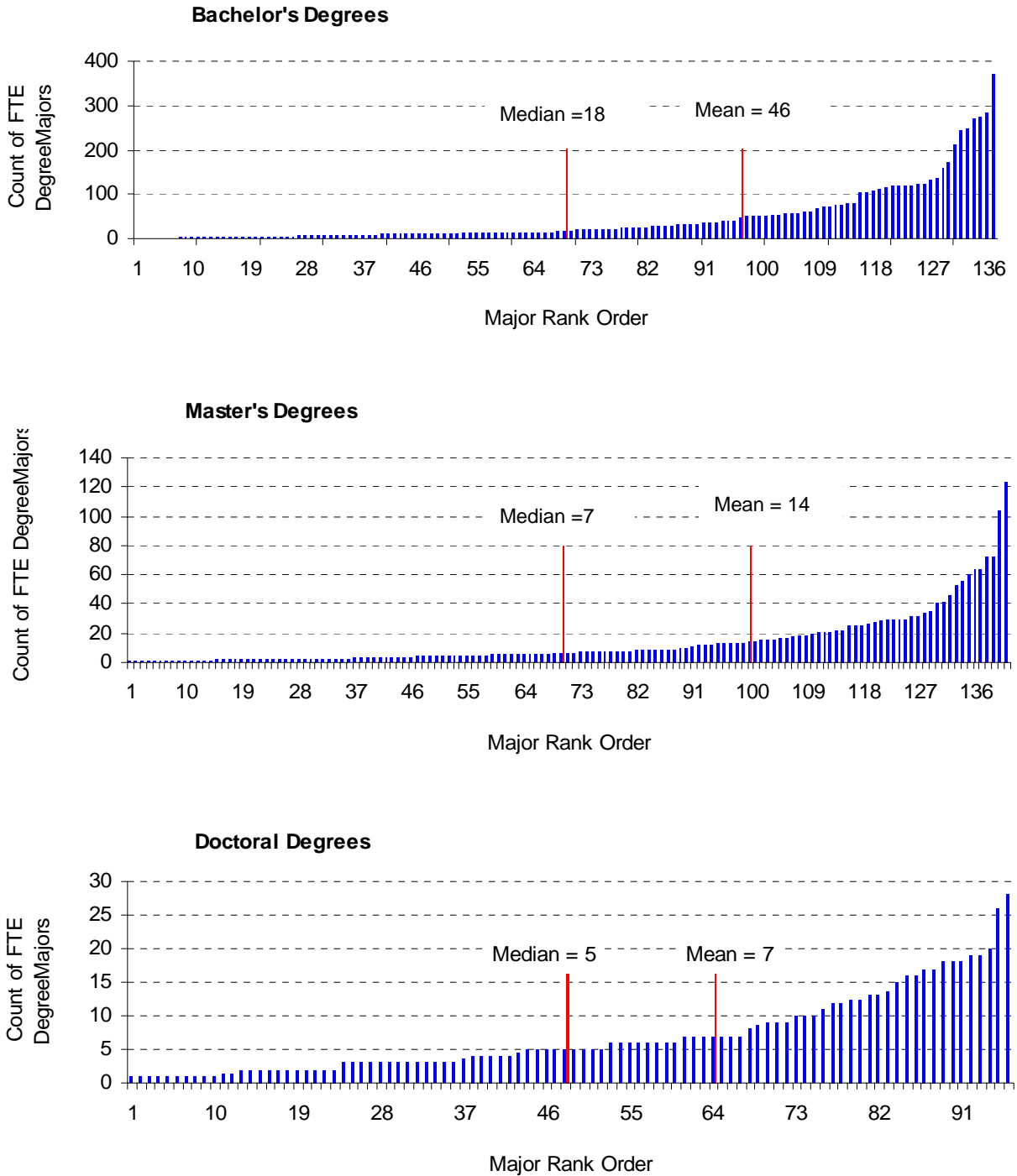
Source: Registrar's Official List of Majors, Options, and Degrees.

**Table 2. Size Distribution of Academic Majors**

	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctoral (PhD)
Median Size (FTE Degrees Conferred)	18	7	5
Mean Size (FTE Degrees Conferred)	46	14	7
Number of Degrees Conferred in Largest Major	372	124	28
Percent of Major Programs Larger than the Mean Size	30%	26%	32%
Percent of Degrees Accounted for by the Largest 10% of Major Programs	44%	44%	30%

Source: APA Degrees Report, 2005

**Figure 1. Size Distribution of Academic Major Programs**



Source: APA Degrees Report, 2005