



GRAY[™]
DECISION INTELLIGENCE

Completions Trends in Higher Education: Focus on Community Colleges

Findings from Enhanced IPEDS 2023 Data

September 25, 2024

Agenda

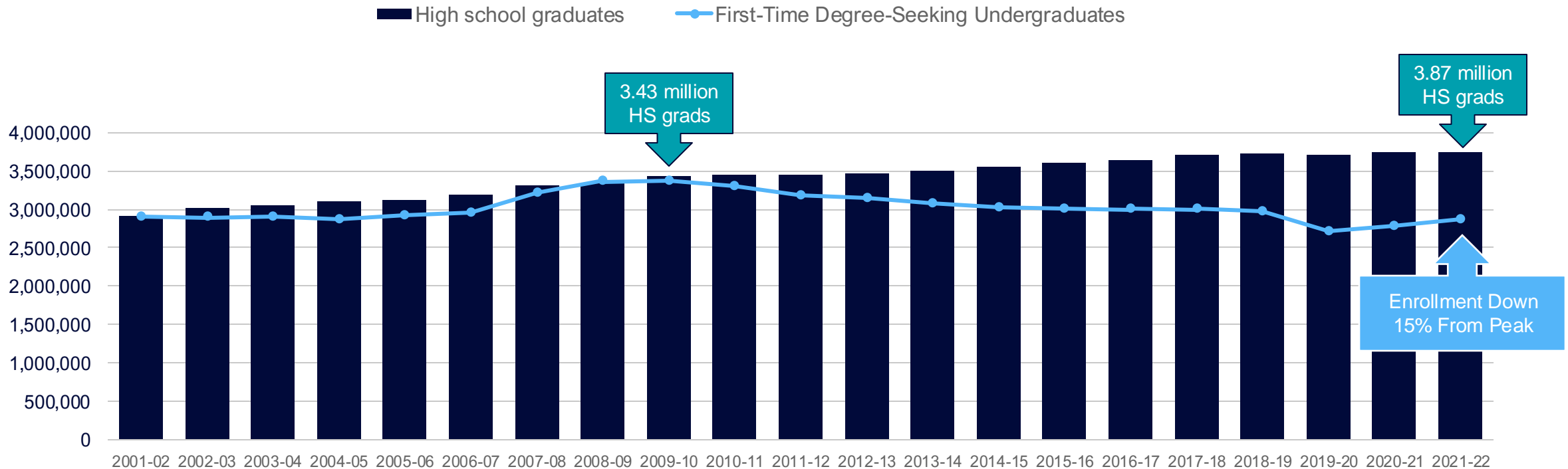
- **Overview of Enrollment and Completions Trends**
- **Undergraduate Certificates**
- **Associate Degrees**
- **Bachelor's Degrees**
- **Graduate Certificates**
- **Master's Degrees**
- **Doctoral Degrees**
- **Summary and Conclusions**

Today's data analysis was done to support the upcoming quarterly update to Gray's Program Evaluation System (PES).



New enrollments have been dropping since 2010.

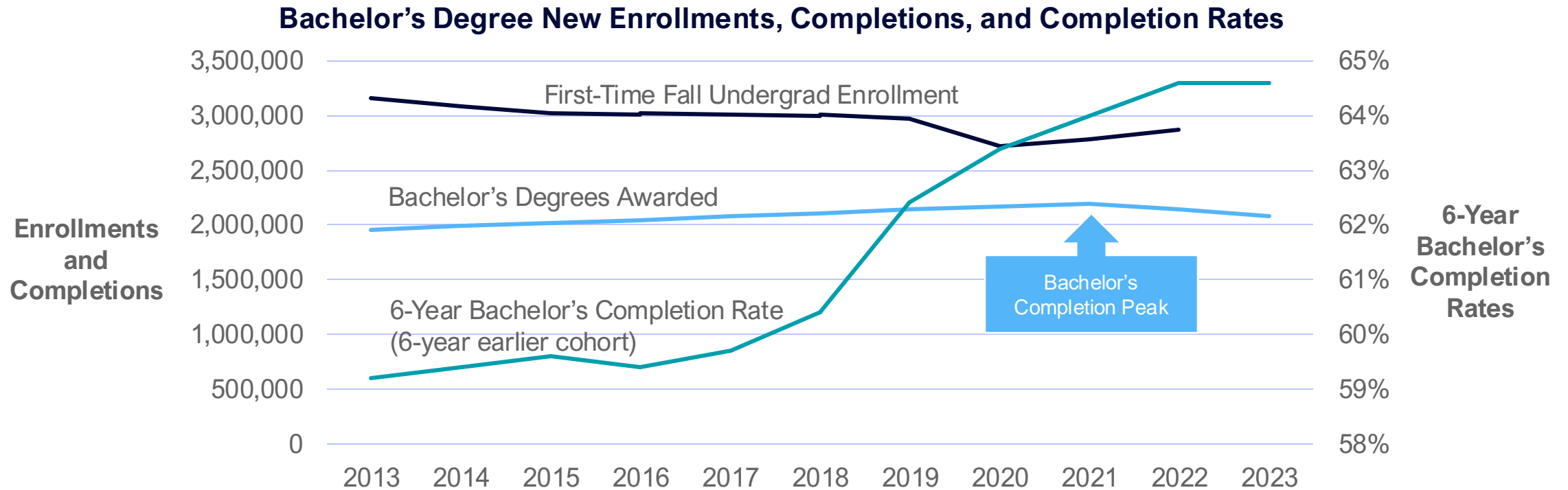
Trends in High School Graduates and First-Time Undergraduate Enrollment



Sources: High school graduates - National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 2023 Table 219.10. Graduates for academic year.
 First-time (degree-seeking) undergraduate enrollment, fall term - National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS (Data Trends). Enrollment data plotted for fall term after high school graduation.

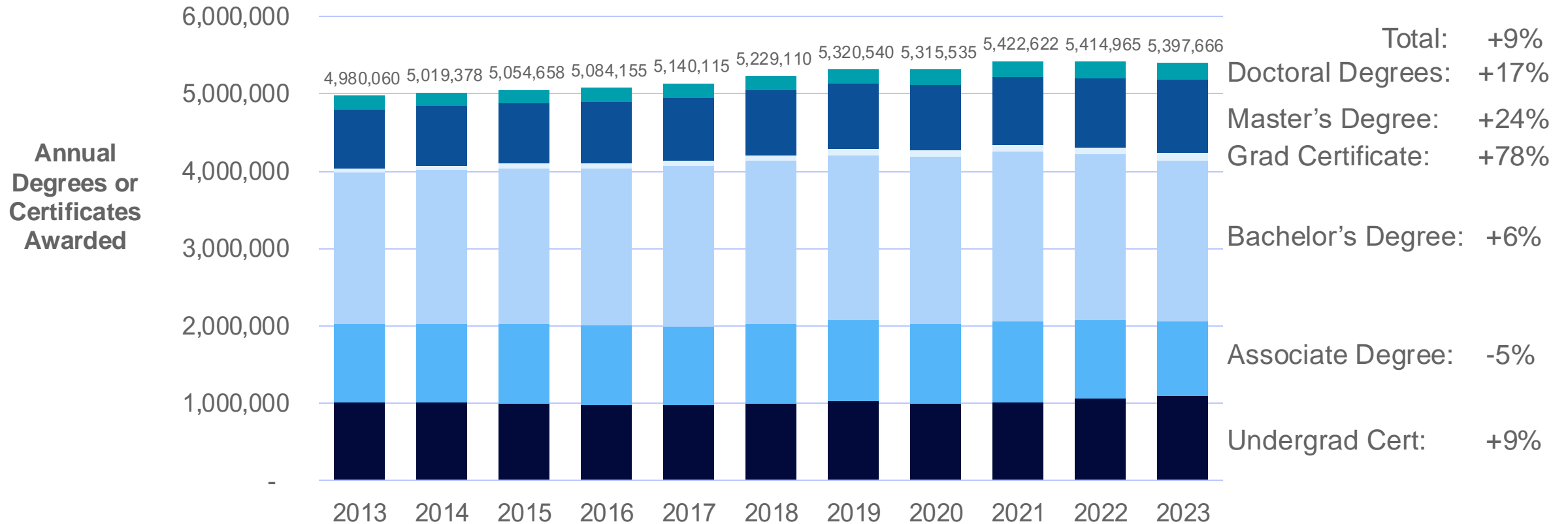
In contrast, bachelor's degrees grew through 2021.

Lags in completion time and increases in completion rates account for the delay in the completions downturn.

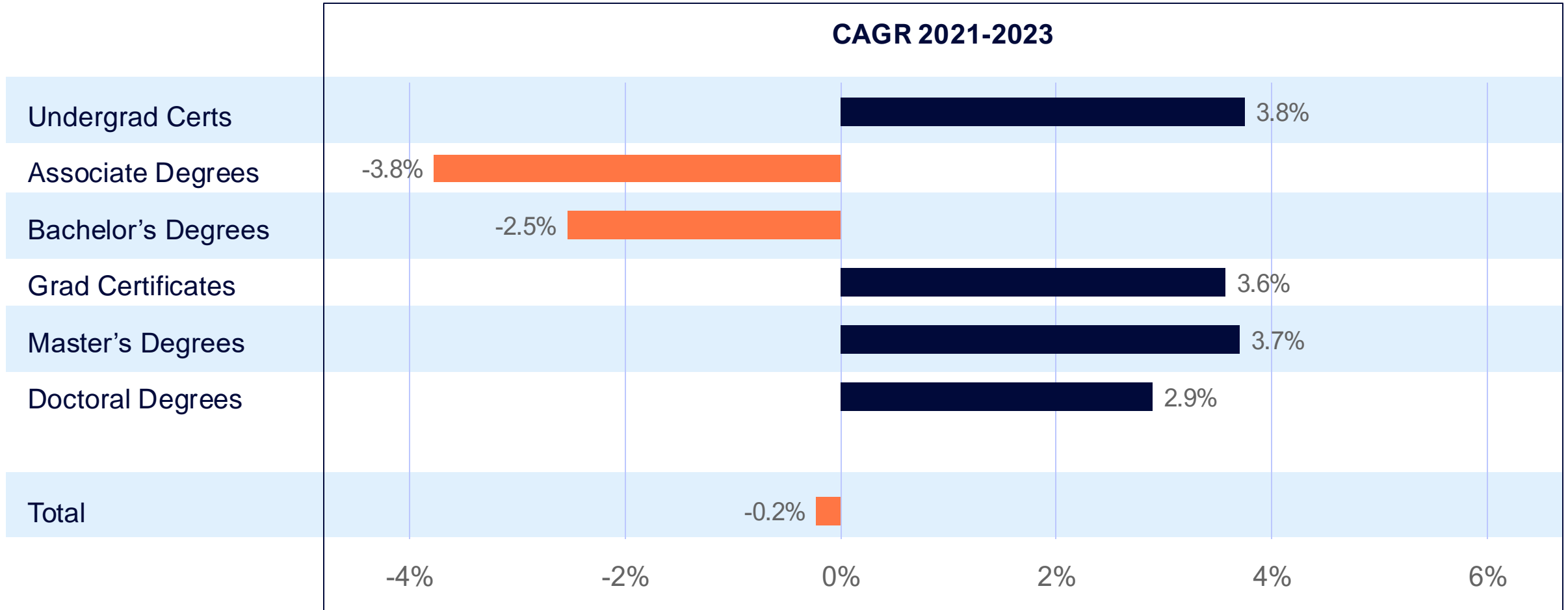


Despite widely varying growth rates, the mix of completions by level is stable.

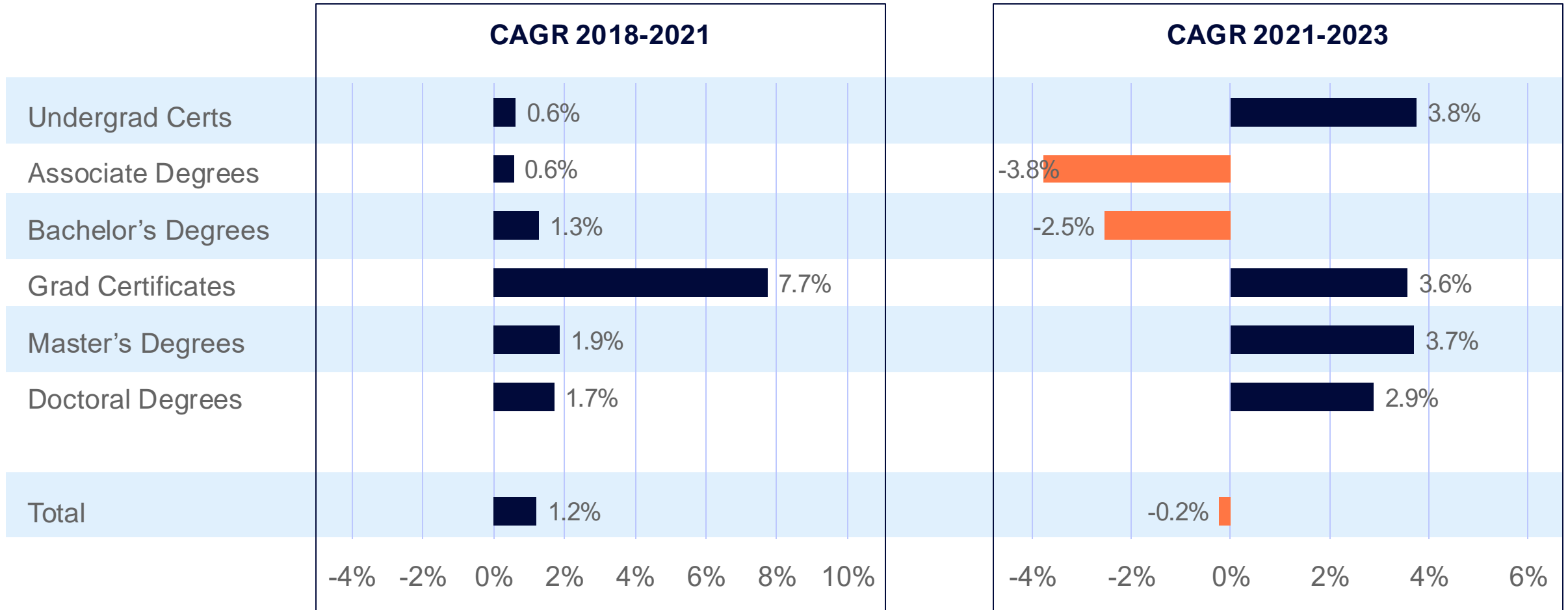
National Higher Education Completions by Award Level



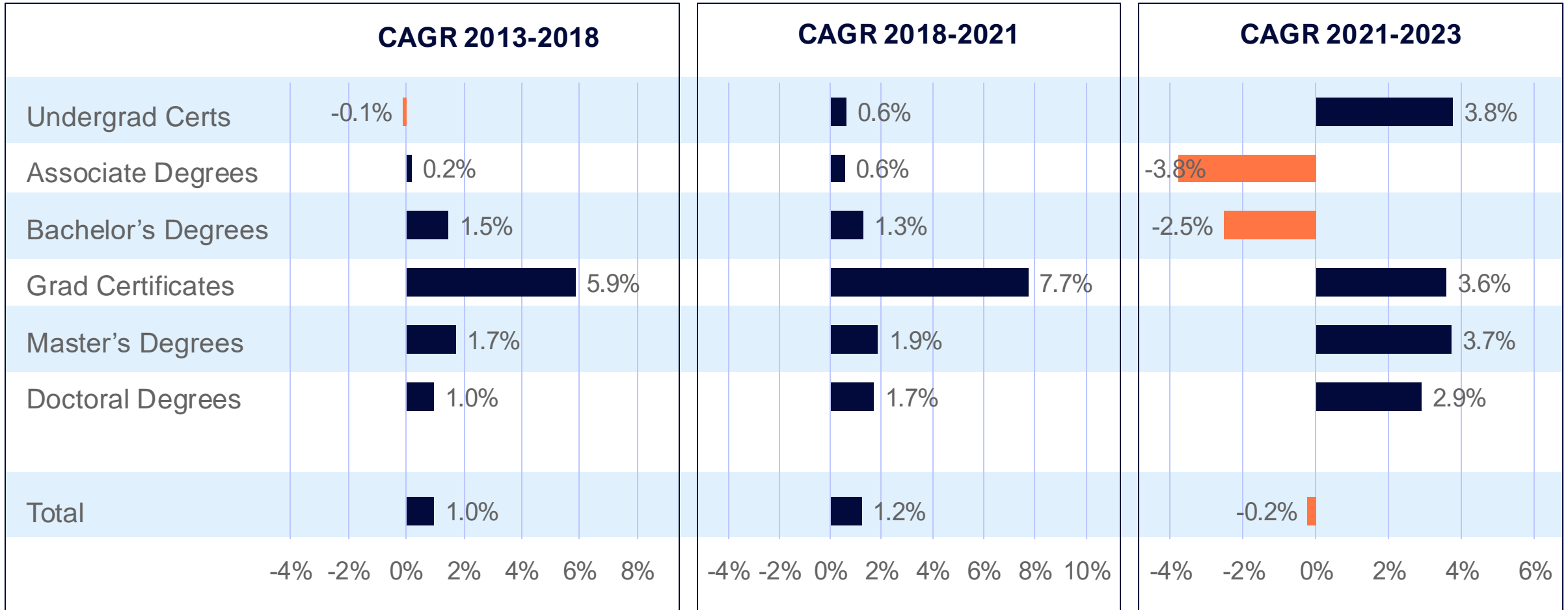
Recent growth trends have differed strongly by award level.



Recent growth trends were a significant change from prior trends.

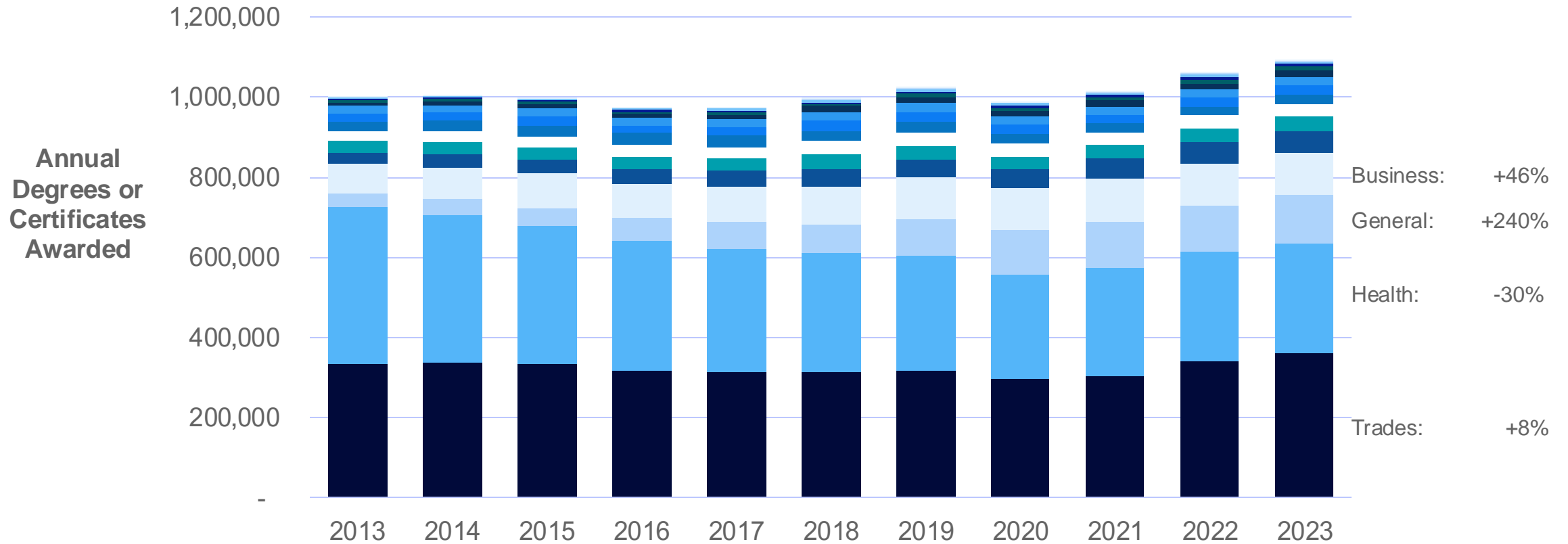


Recent trends differ from comparatively stable pre-COVID trends.

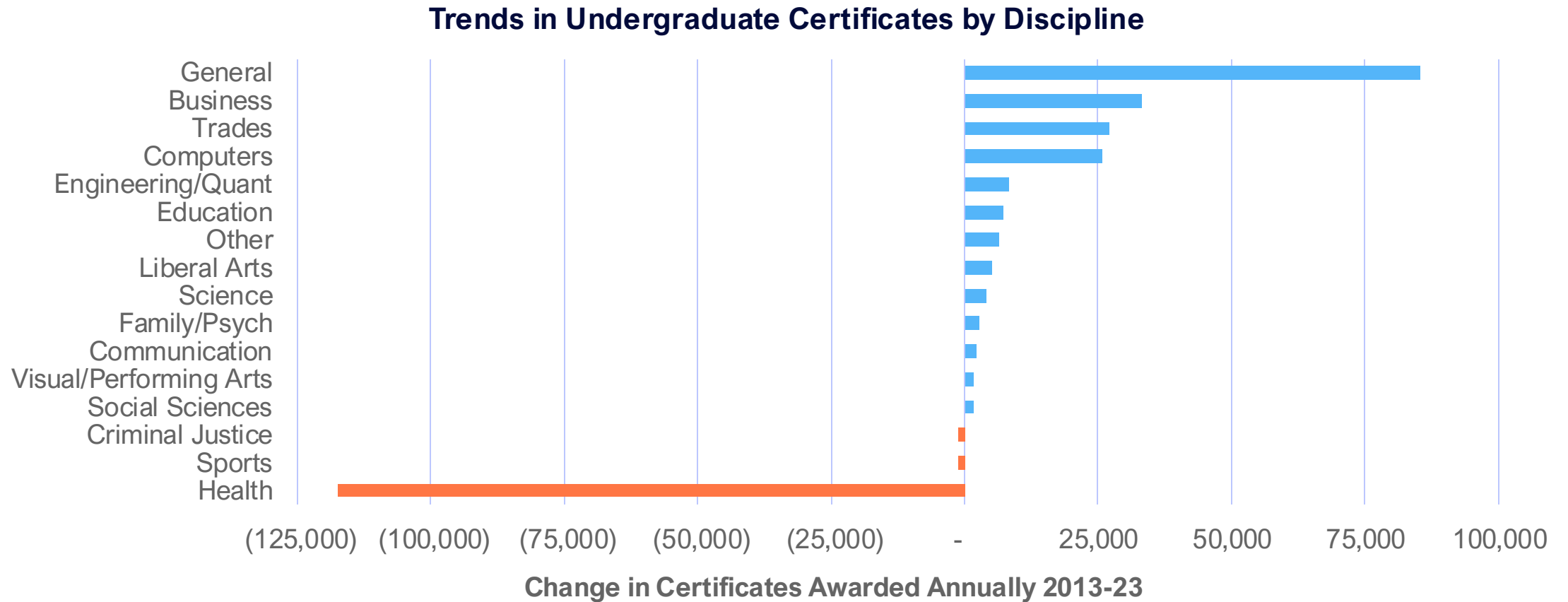


Half of all undergrad certificates are awarded in trades or health.

Undergraduate Certificate Completions by Discipline

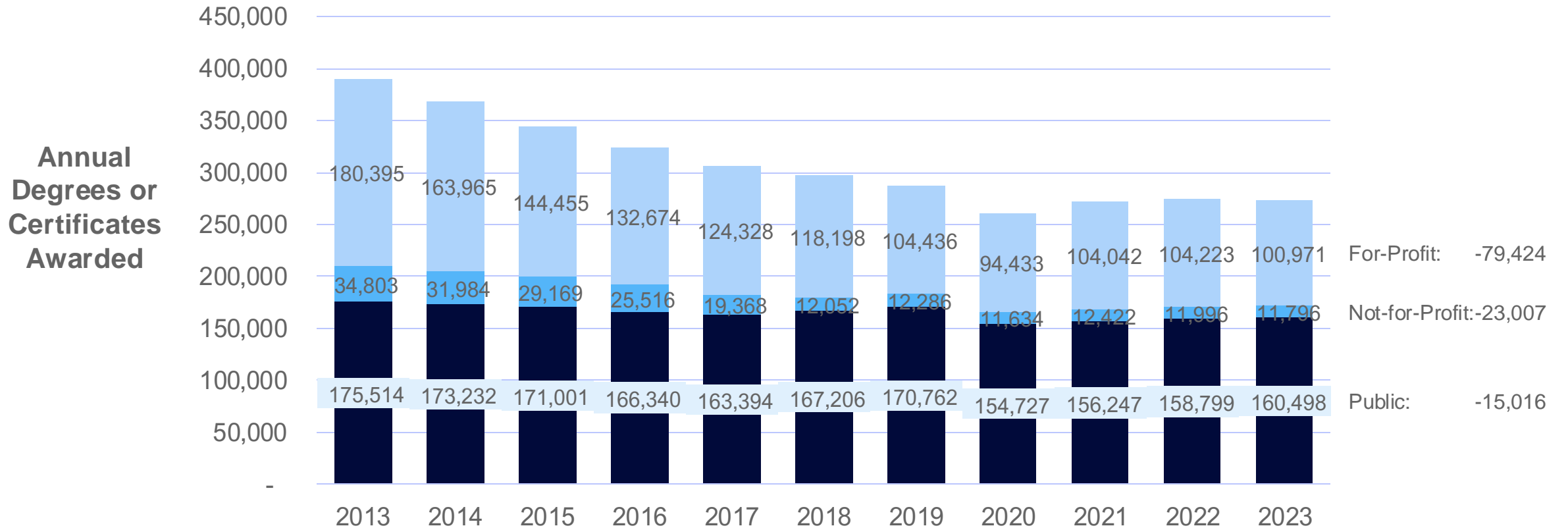


For undergrad certificates, General Studies has shown the most growth.

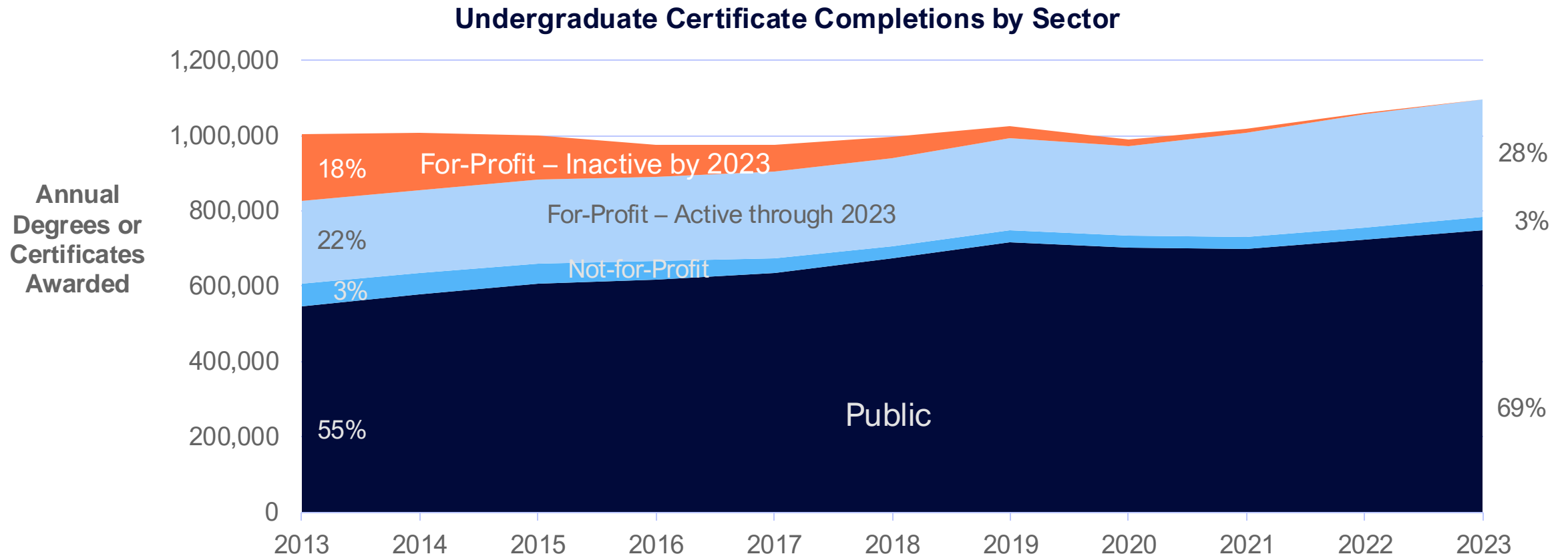


Two-thirds of the drop in health certificates was at for-profit institutions.

Undergraduate Certificate Health-Related Completions by Sector

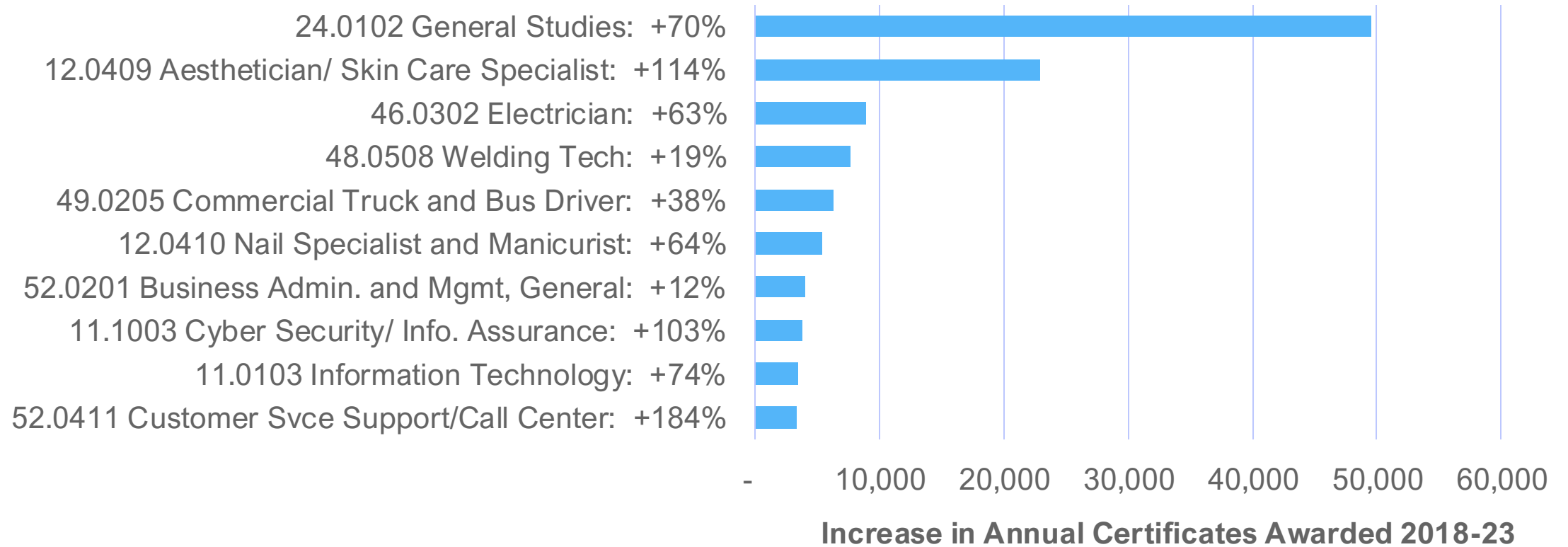


Closure of for-profit colleges was a driver of the health certificate drop.



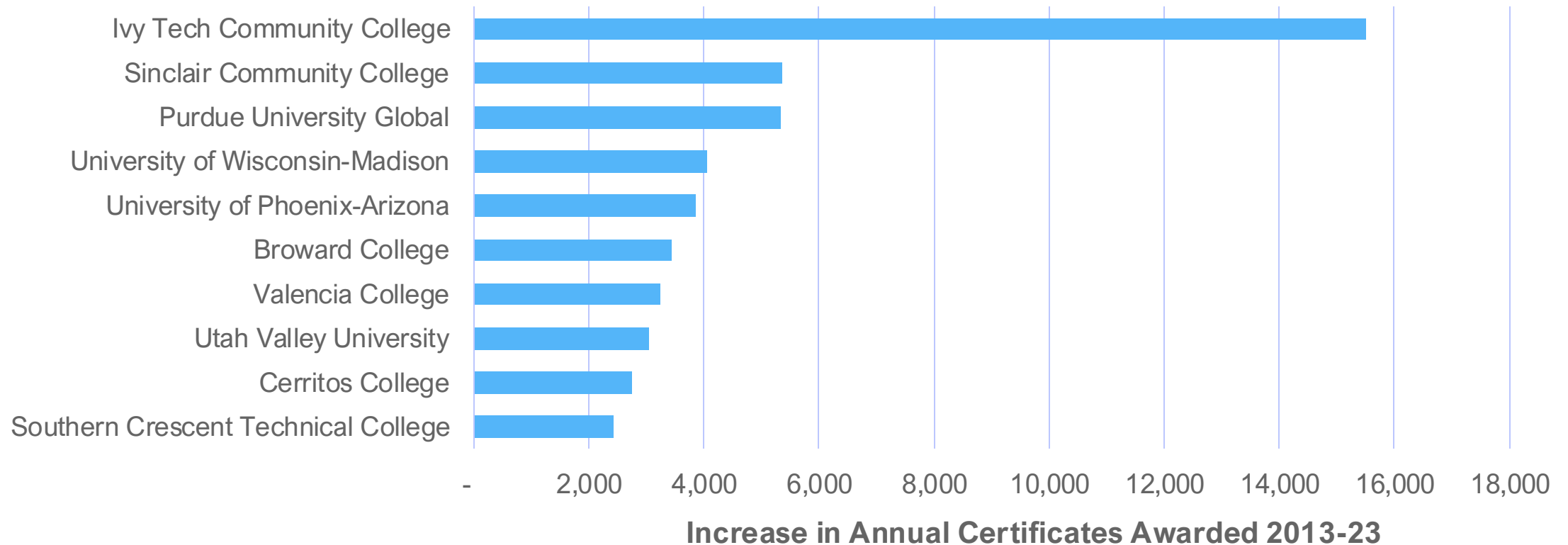
General Studies has been the highest-growth undergrad certificate program.

Highest-Growth Undergraduate Certificate Programs

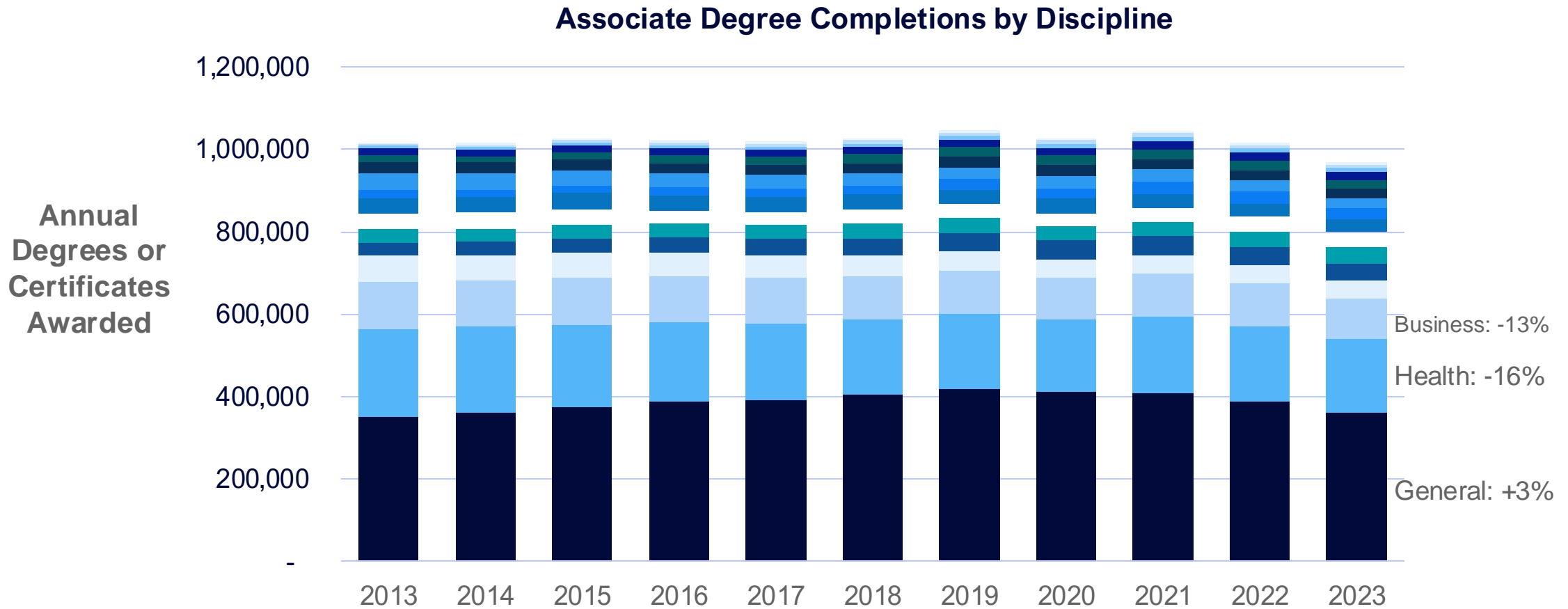


Some of the highest-growth institutions reported no undergraduate certificates until fairly recently.

Highest-Growth Institutions for Undergraduate Certificates

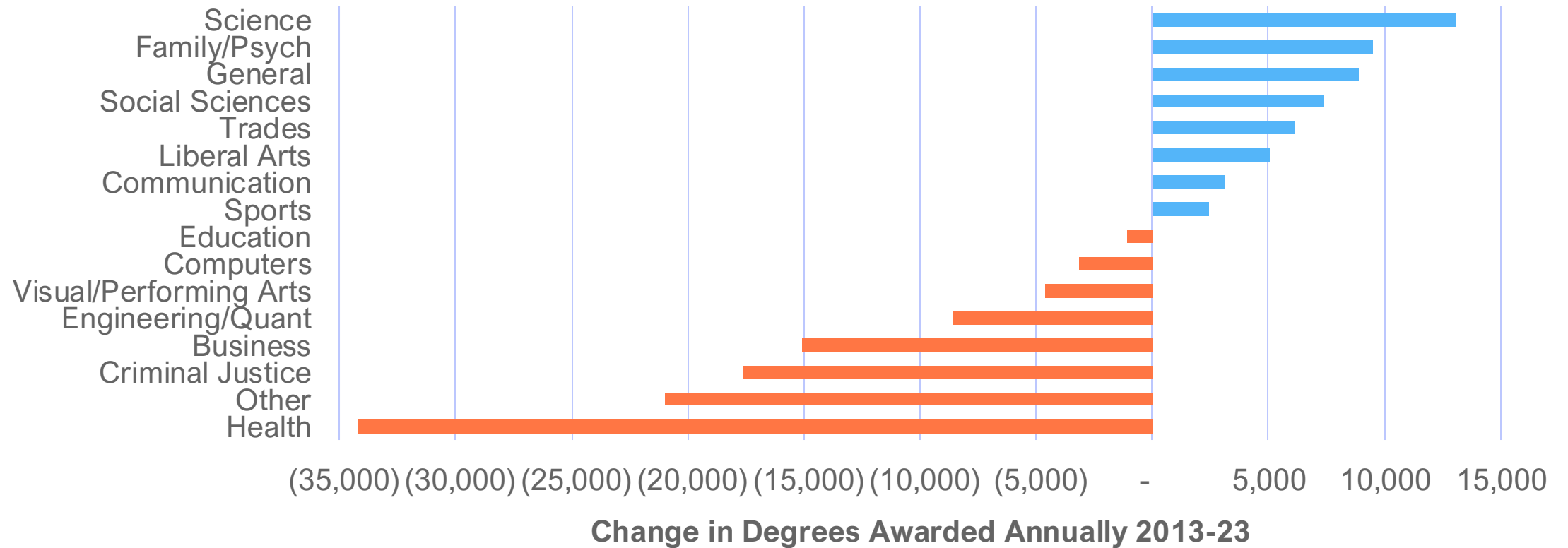


Half of all associate degrees are in General Studies or Health.



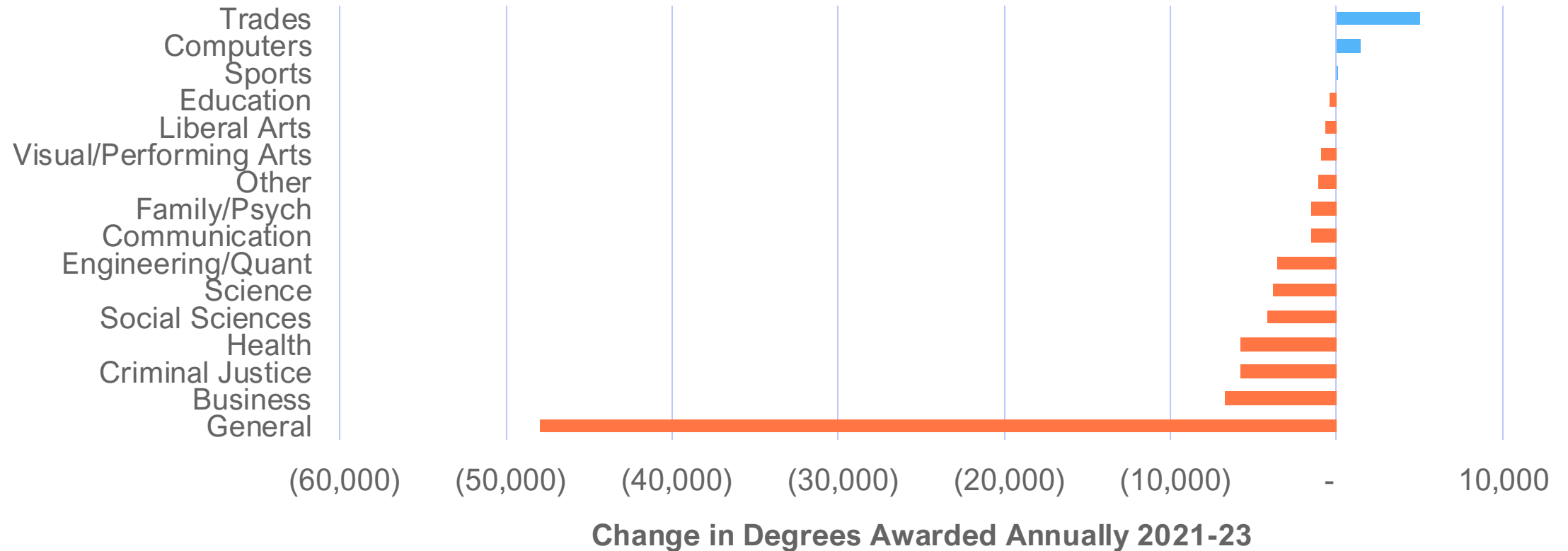
For associate degrees, Science, Family Studies/Psychology, and General Studies have shown the most growth.

Trends in Associate Degrees by Discipline



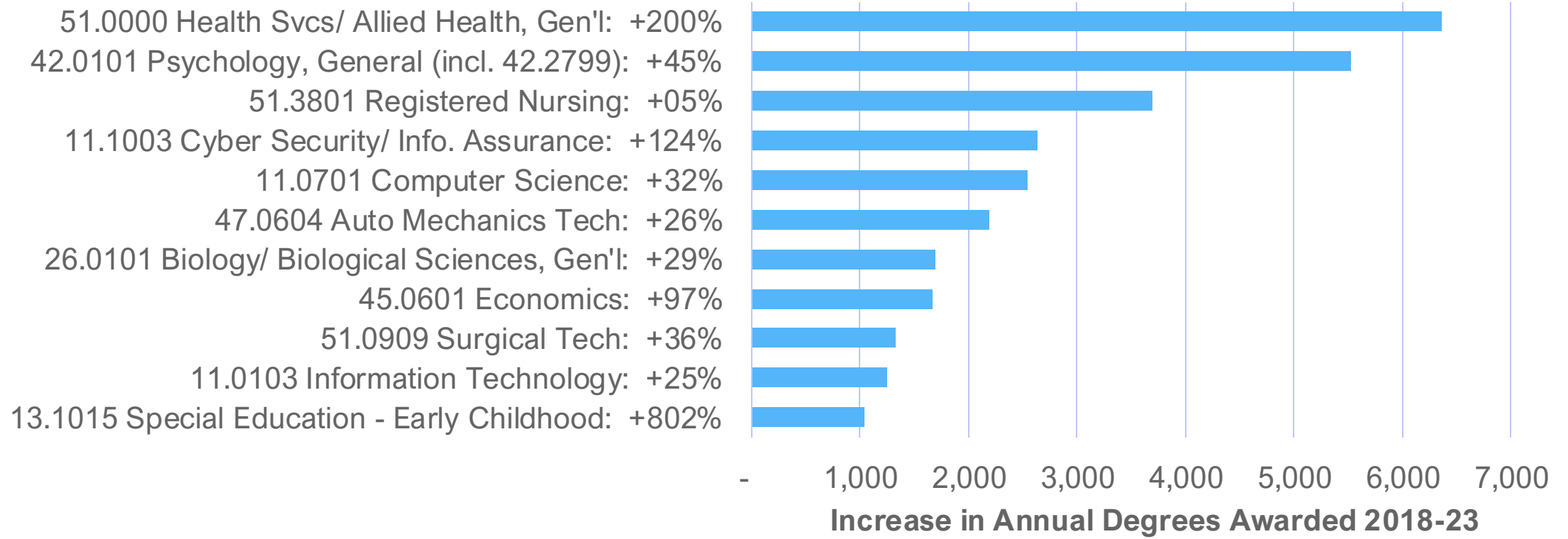
The big change in associate degrees awarded since 2021 was a large drop in General Studies degrees.

Recent Trends in Associate Degrees by Discipline



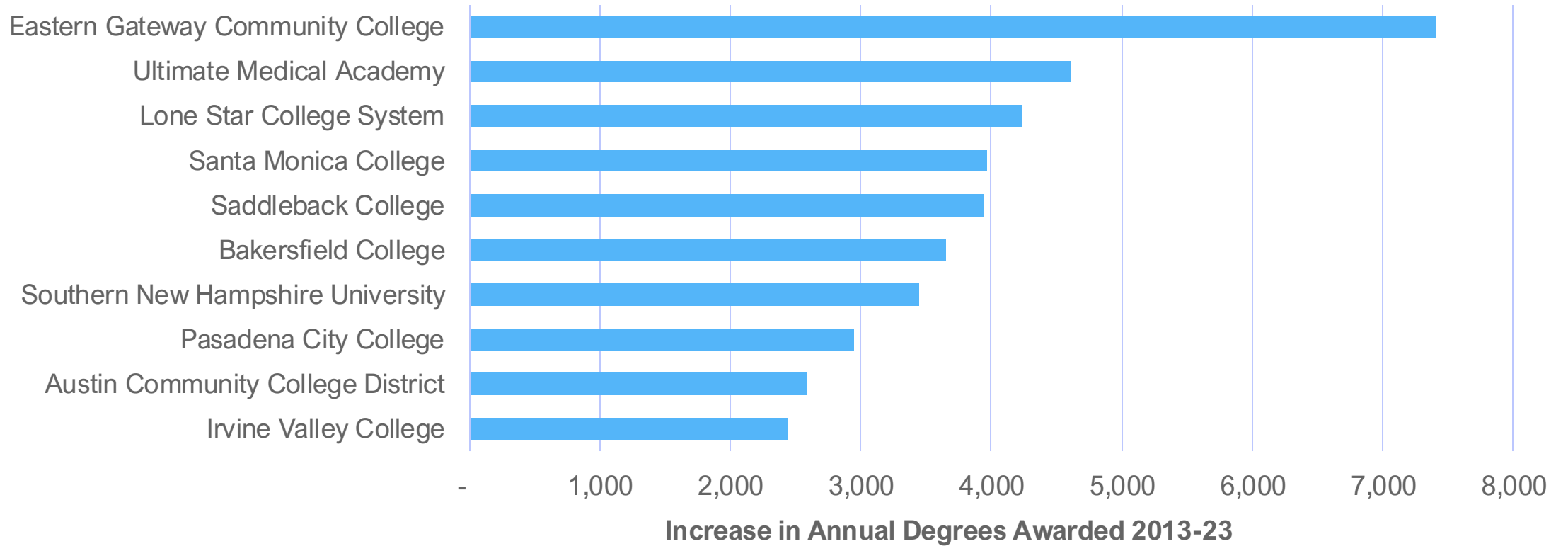
General Health and Psychology have been the highest-growth associate degree programs.

Highest-Growth Associate Degree Programs



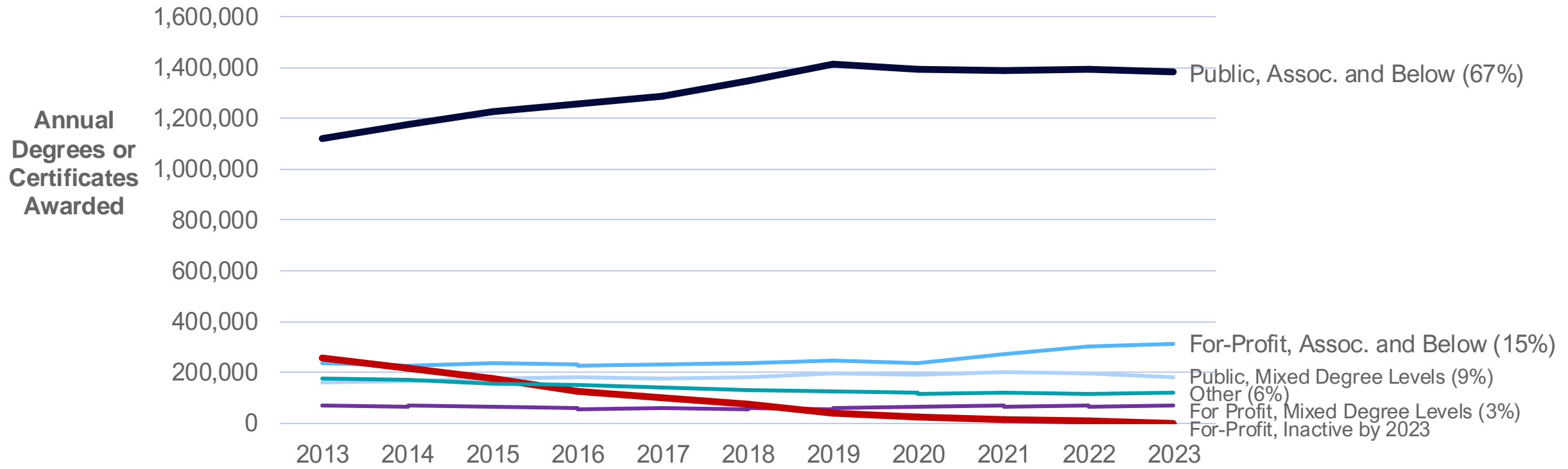
The highest-growth provider of associate degrees just shut down.

Highest-Growth Institutions for Associate Degrees



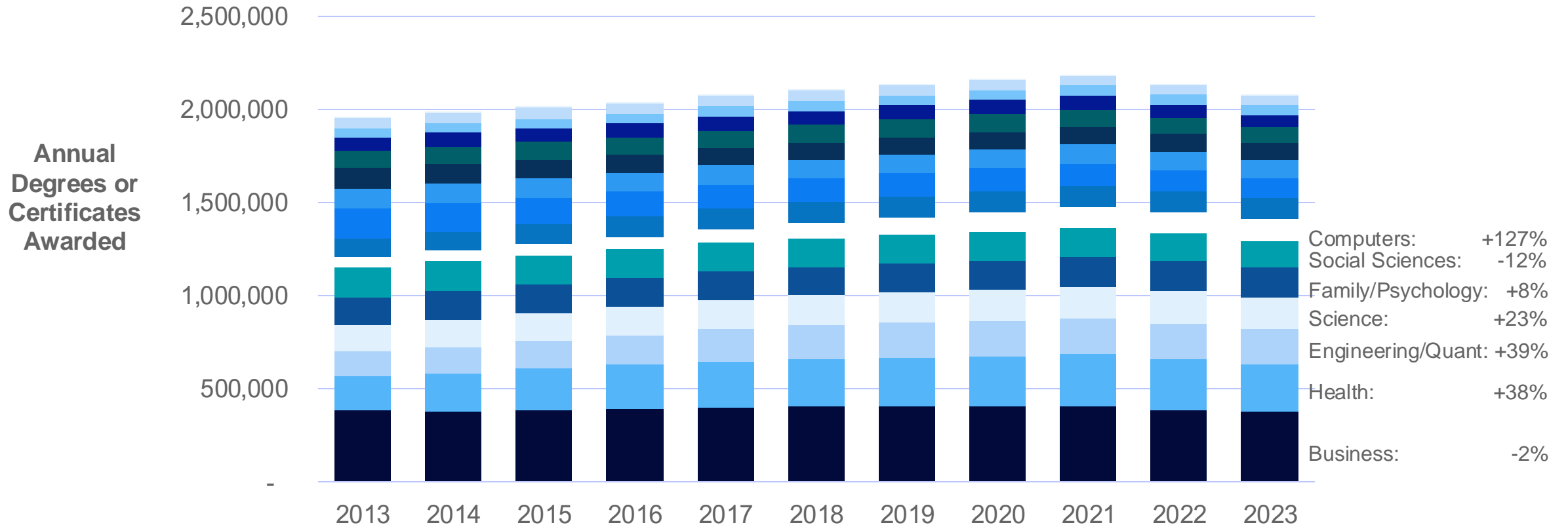
Public community and technical colleges dominate associate degree and undergraduate certificate completions.

Associate Degree and Below Completions by 2023 Sector over Time



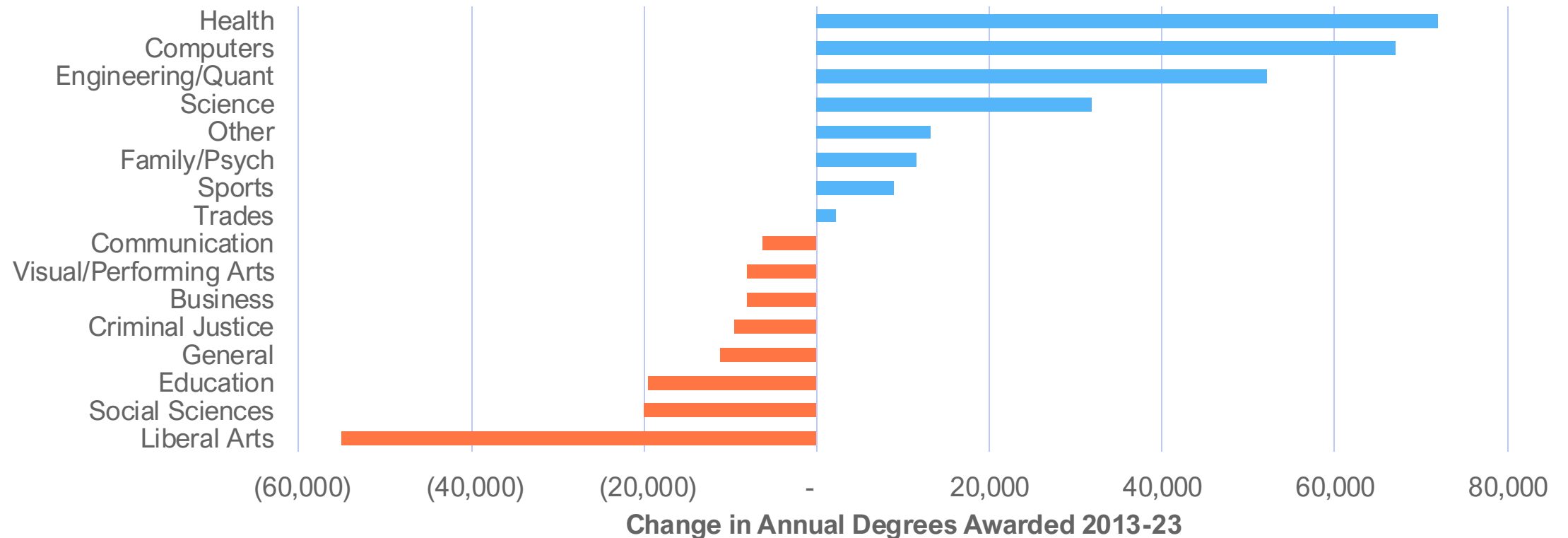
Bachelor's degrees are not very concentrated by discipline.

Bachelor's Degree Completions by Discipline



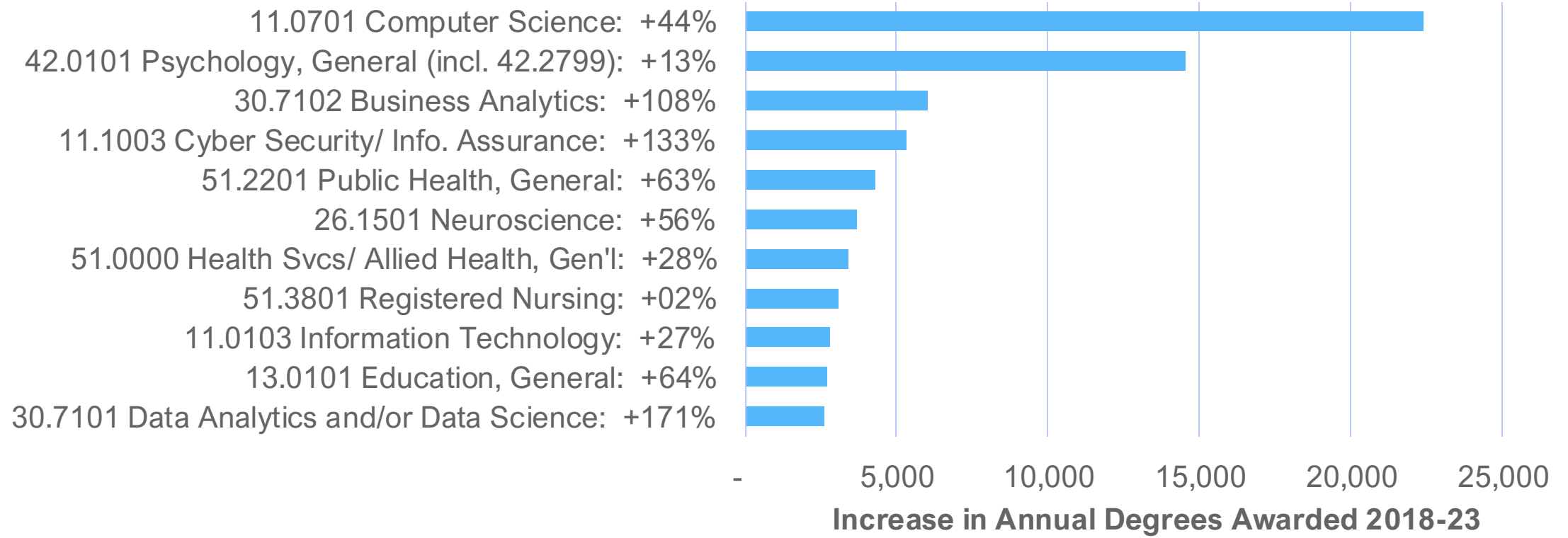
For bachelor's degrees, health, computing, and engineering/quantitative fields have shown the most growth.

Trends in Bachelor's Degrees by Discipline



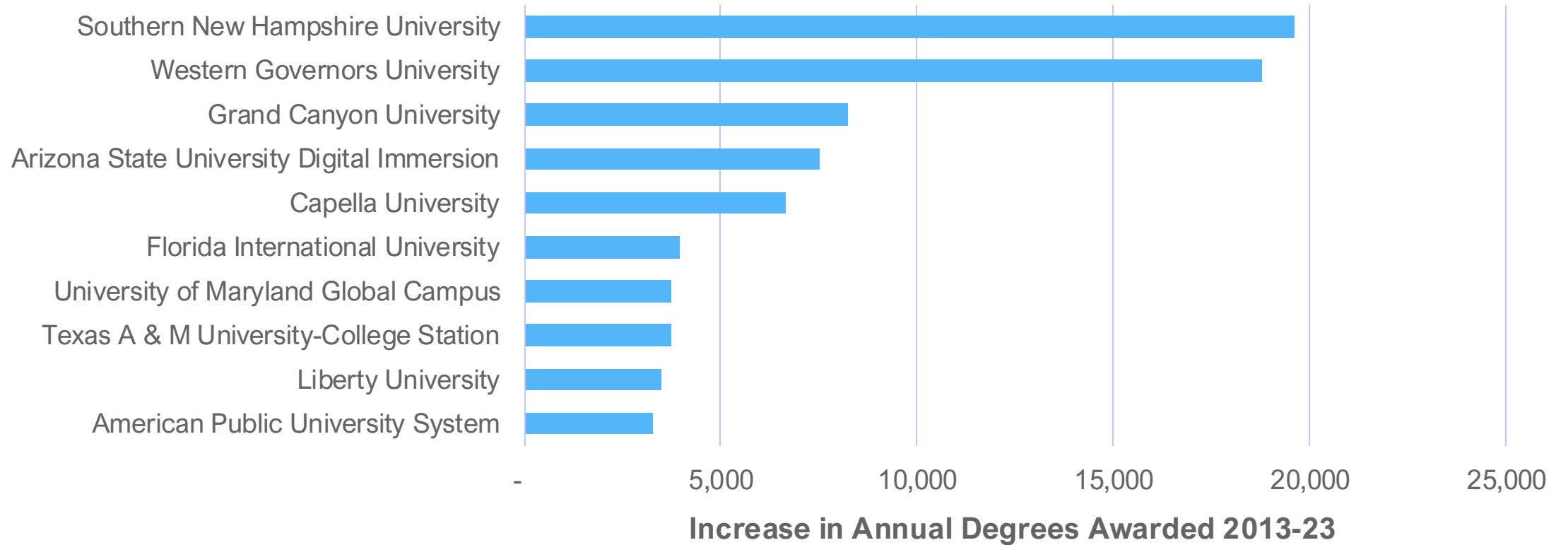
Computer Science and Psychology have been the highest-growth bachelor's degree programs.

Highest-Growth Bachelor's Degree Programs



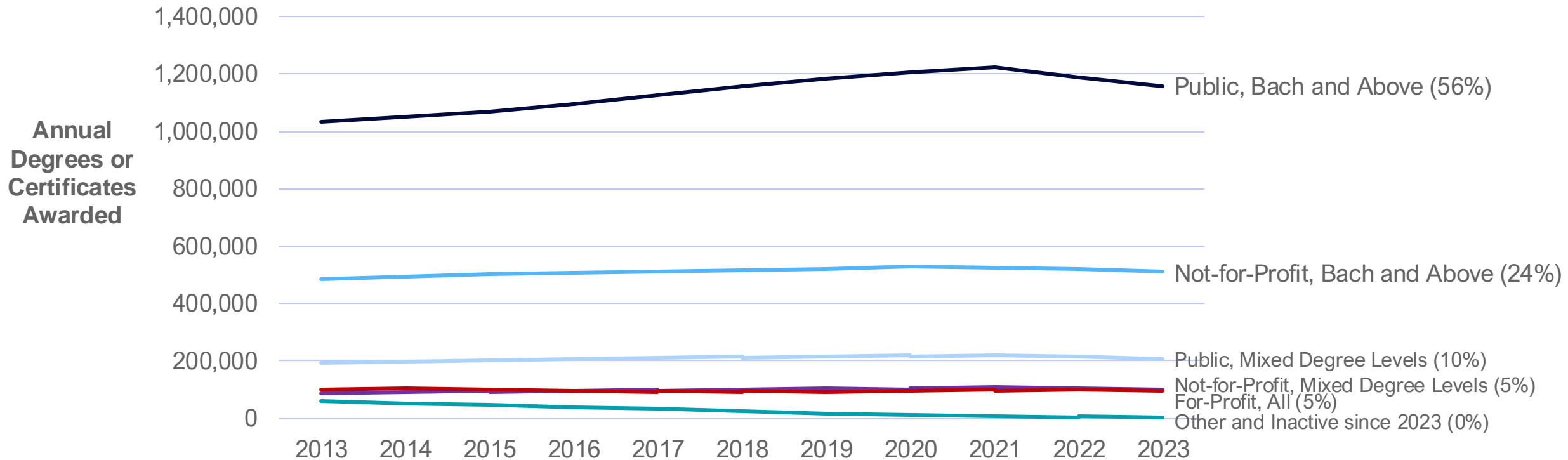
The highest-growth institutions for bachelor's degrees are nearly all primarily online.

Highest-Growth Institutions for Bachelor's Degrees



Public colleges and universities dominate bachelor's degree completions.

Bachelor's Degree Completions by 2023 Sector over Time



Summary and Conclusions

- Total completions peaked in 2021 and have begun a slow decline.
 - Associate and bachelor's degrees are driving the overall decline, dropping 3.8% and 2.5% annually, respectively, for the past two years.
 - In contrast, undergrad certificates and graduate degrees and certificates have each been growing at 3% to 4% annually.
 - This represents a big change from the previous eight years, when completions at most levels were growing slowly, except for rapid growth in the relatively small market for graduate certificates.
- Half of all undergraduate certificates are awarded in trades or health-related fields.
 - Health certificates dropped dramatically 2013-19, mostly driven by shrinkage in for-profit career colleges. These have since stabilized.
 - General-Studies certificates have grown substantially. Half of these are awarded in California.
 - Reporting of certificates and certifications earned by students enrolled in associate or bachelor's programs is not consistent and is still quite limited.
- After eight years of stability, the number of associate degrees awarded dropped substantially in 2022 and again in 2023.
 - Most of that recent decline was due to a drop in associate degrees awarded in General Studies, reversing an earlier upward trend.
 - Health Services and Psychology have been the associate degree fields with the most growth over the past five years.

Upcoming October Webinars

Higher Education Demand Trends

Join us next month as we present the latest data on student demand and employment opportunities.

GRAY DI OCTOBER DEMAND TRENDS WEBINARS

TOPIC	DATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGES	OCT 30 @ 2 PM ET
BACHELOR'S AND ABOVE	OCT 31 @ 2 PM ET

