



Demand for Higher Education Programs

July 31, 2025

Agenda

What is a Program Evaluation System?

Student Demand

Employment: Current Indicators

Program of the Month

AI and Higher Ed Strategy with Paskill

Summary

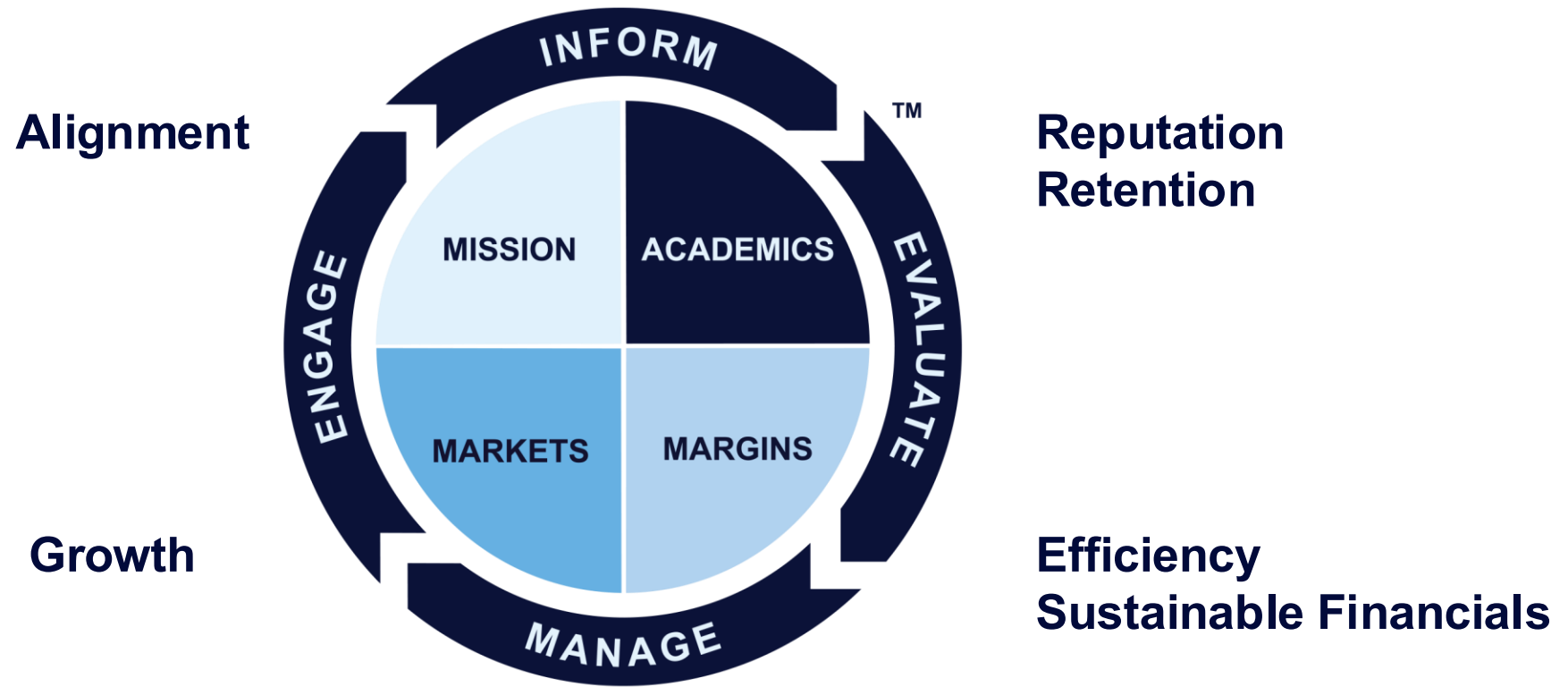


What is a Program Evaluation System (PES)?



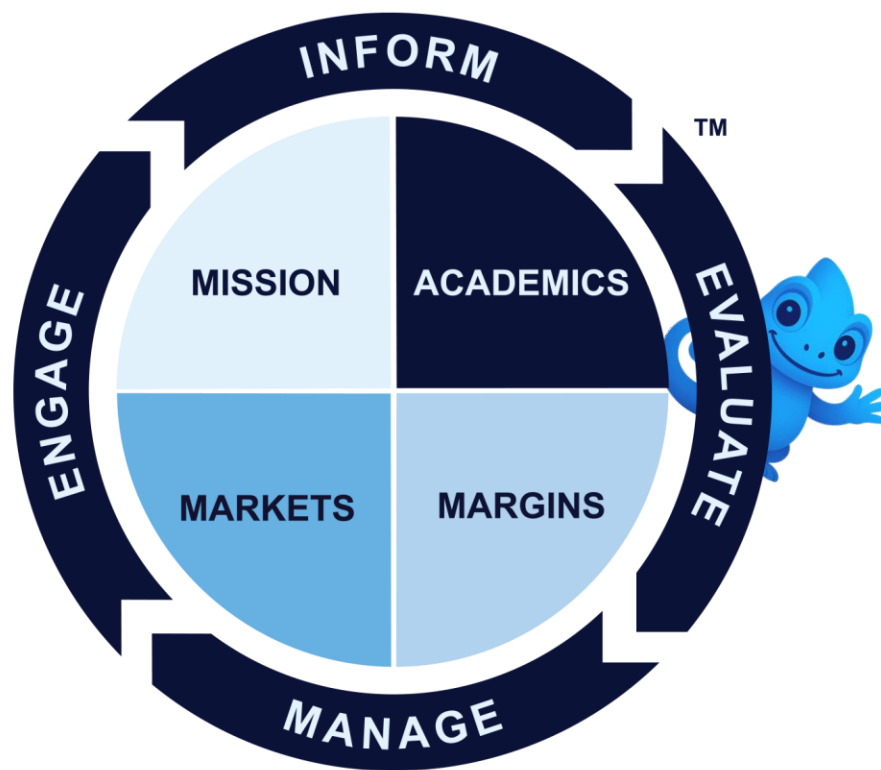


Why do you need a PES?





Gray DI is delighted to announce our AI enhancements for higher education.



College Companions™

- Course Companion
- Career Companion
- Communications Companion
- Information Companion

Agenda

What is a Program Evaluation System?

Student Demand: Google Keywords

Employment: Current Indicators

Program of the Month

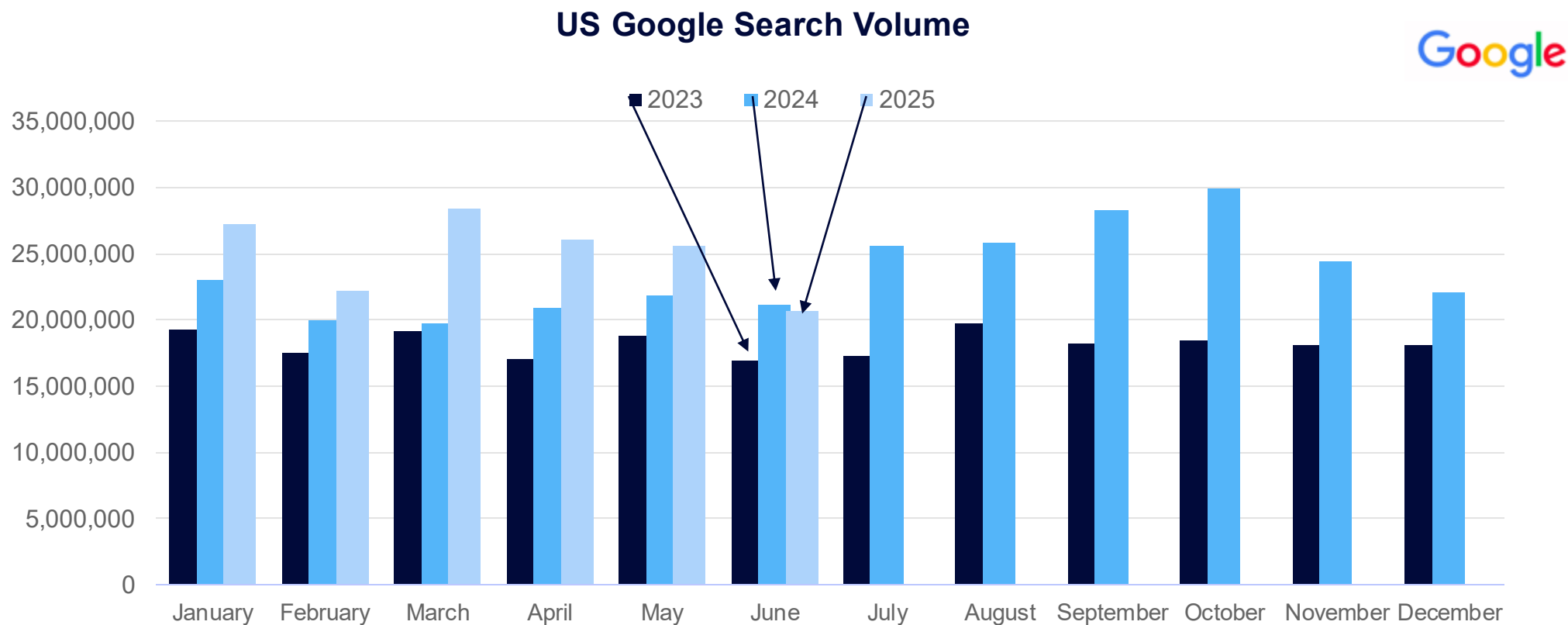
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Google Search Trends: Programs

Gray DI tracks searches for over 900 programs (90% of all US completions).

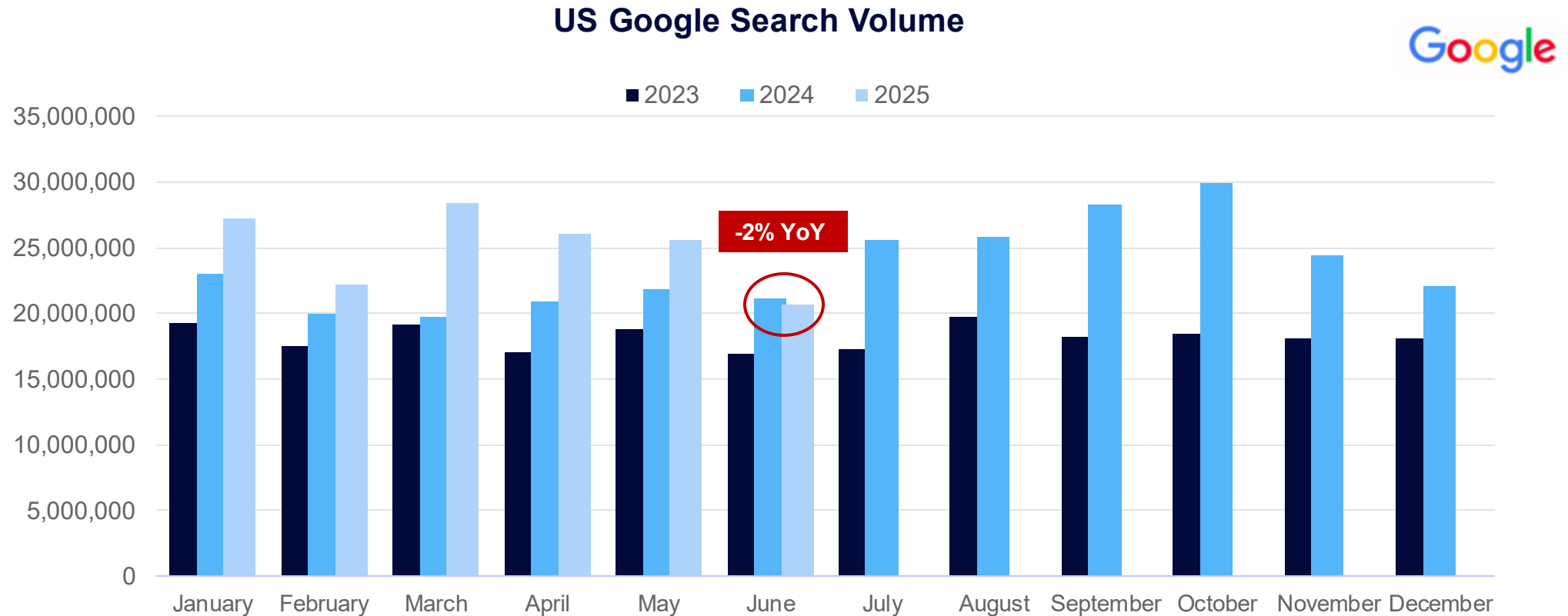


Source: Gray DI's PES Keyword Search Dashboard



Google Search Trends: Programs

In June 2025, Google searches for academic programs fell 2% year-over-year.

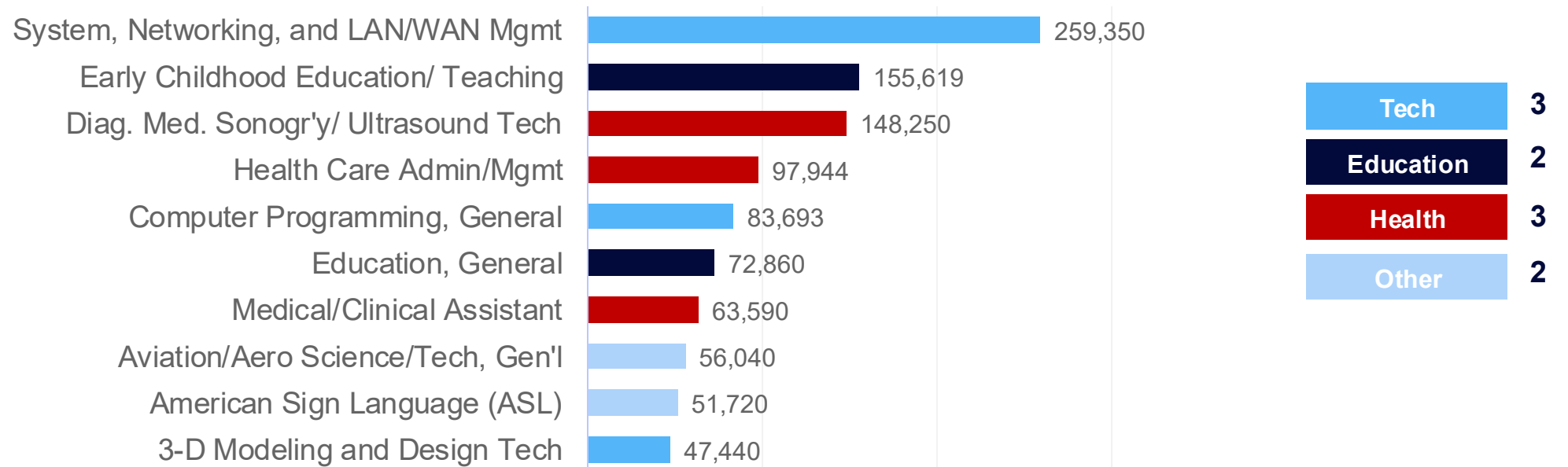


Source: PES Keyword Search Dashboard

Google: Programs with Fastest-Growing US Search Volumes

In June, searches for **System, Networking, and LAN/WAN MGT** grew almost 260,000 YoY.

Programs with the Fastest-Growing Google Search Volume
June 2025 YoY Unit Change



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What is a Program Evaluation System?

Student Demand: Enrollment

Employment: Current Indicators

Program of the Month

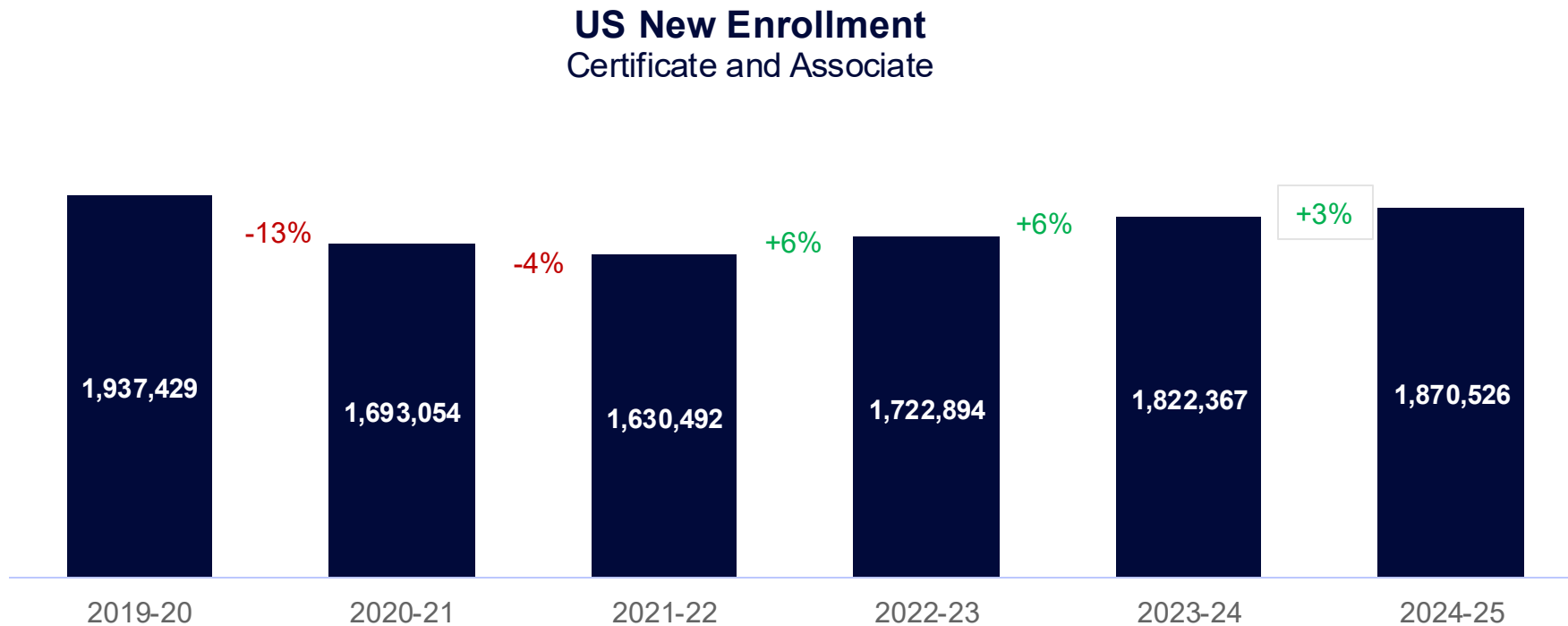
AI and Higher Ed Strategy with Paskill

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Fall/Spring New Enrollment: Community Colleges

Community Colleges' new enrollment continues to rise.



Source: Gray DI's PES Program Enrollment Dashboard

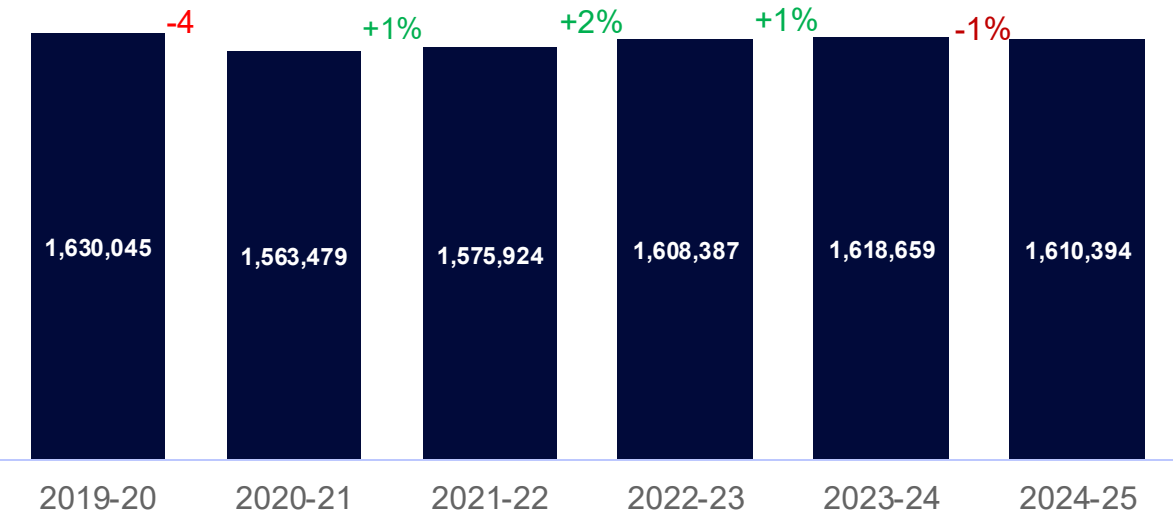


Fall/Spring New Enrollment: Bachelor's and Master's

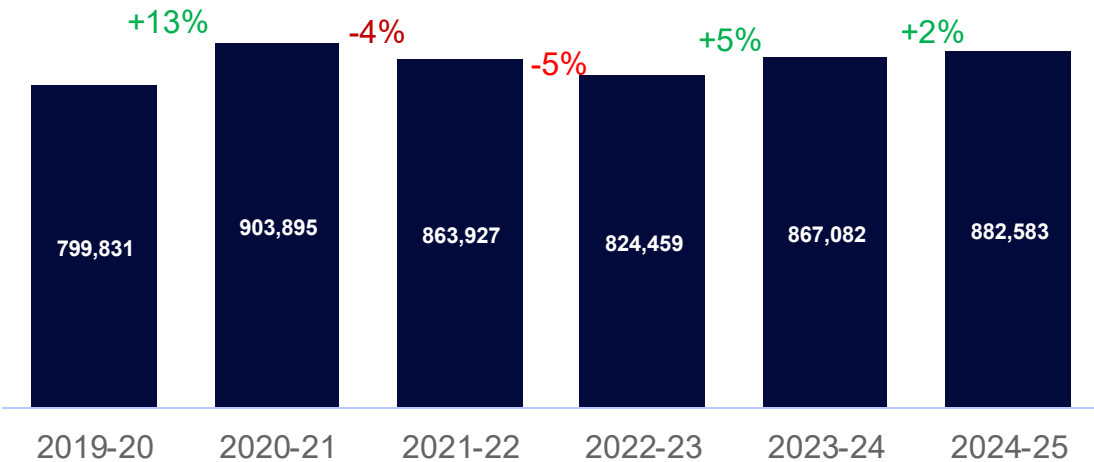
In Fall/Spring 2025, bachelor's new enrollment fell slightly.

- Master's rose 2%.

US New Fall/Spring Enrollment
Bachelor's Programs



US New Fall/Spring Enrollment
Master's Programs



Source: Gray DI's PES Program Enrollment Dashboard

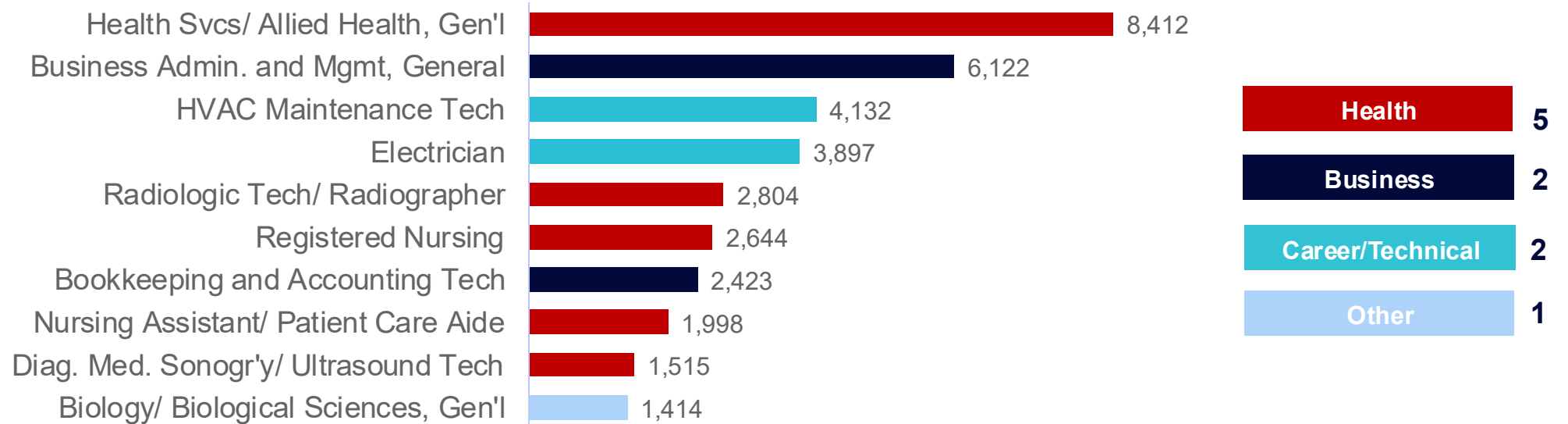
Associate and Certificate: Year-over-Year Unit Growth

In Fall/Spring 2025, Allied Health had the highest new enrollment growth year-over-year.

US Fastest-Growing Programs

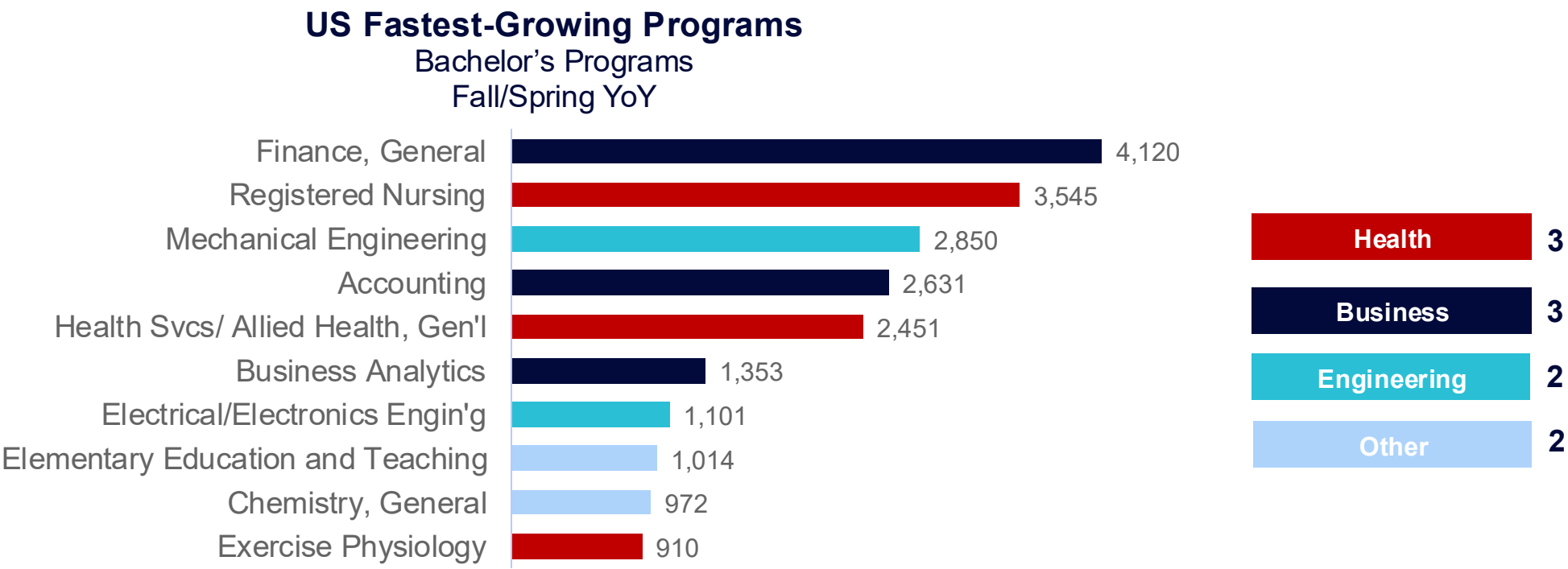
Certificate and Associate Programs

Fall/Spring 2025 YoY



Bachelor's: Year-over-Year Unit Growth

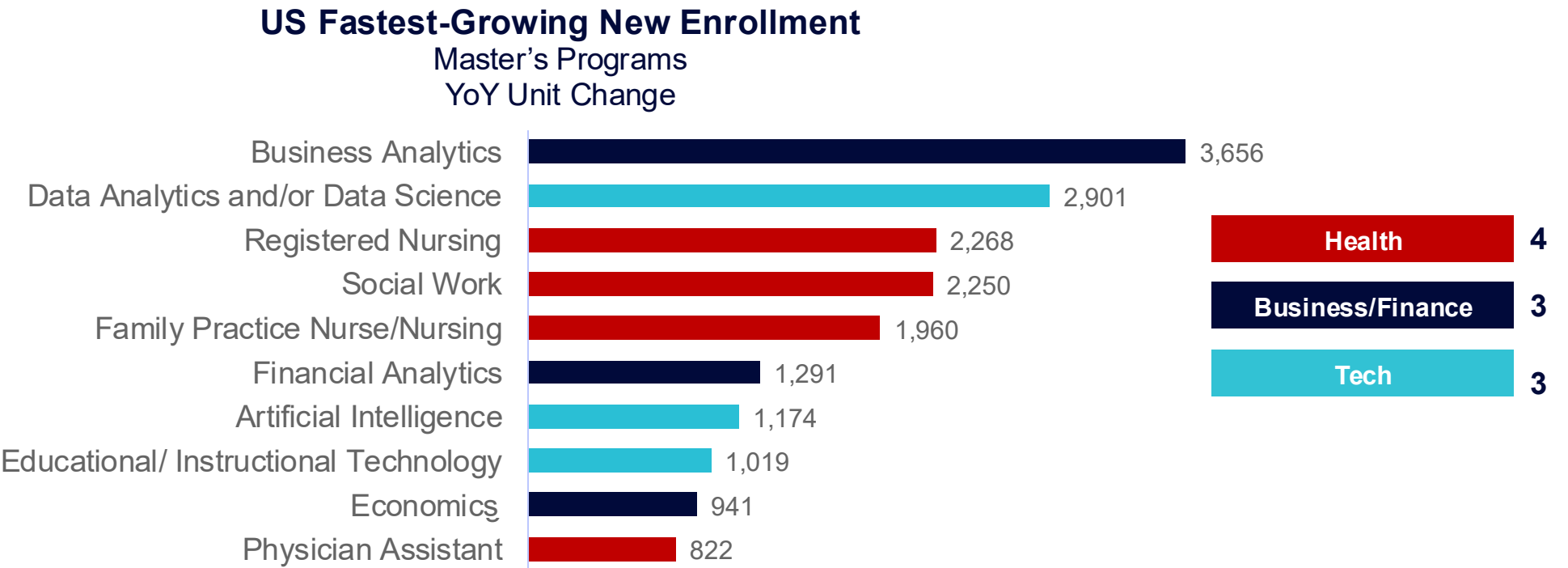
In 2024/2025, Finance new enrollment grew by over 4,100 students.



Source: PES Program Enrollment Dashboard

Master's: Year-over-Year Unit Growth

In Fall/Spring 2025, Business Analytics added the most students at the master's level.



Source: PES Program Enrollment Dashboard

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What is a Program Evaluation System?

Student Demand: International

Employment: Current Indicators

Program of the Month

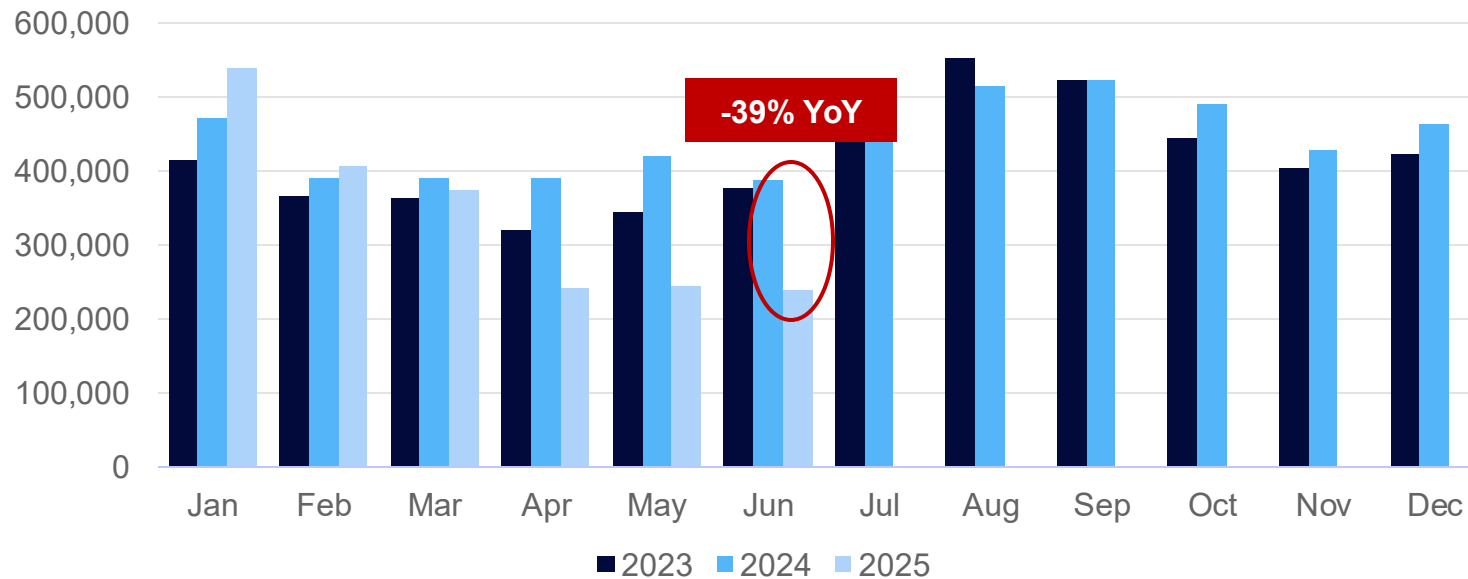
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International Student Demand

In June 2025, international student interest in US programs fell 39% year-over-year.*

International Page Views
2023 - 2025



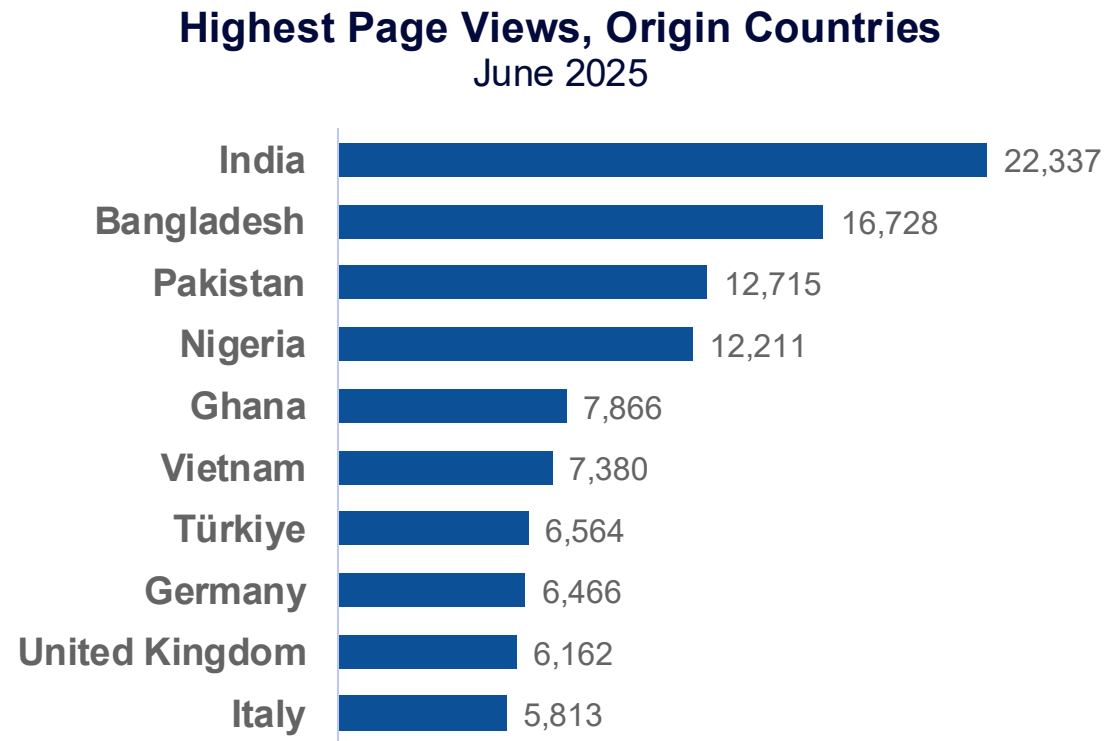
Int'l Page Views by Award Level
June 2025 YoY

Bachelor's	-21%
Master's	-44%
Doctorate	-21%

*Bachelor's, Master's, PhD only

International Student Demand

India had the highest page views – Nepal dropped out of the top 10.



*Bachelor's, Master's, PhD only

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What is a Program Evaluation System?

Student Demand: Coursera

Employment: Current Indicators

Program of the Month

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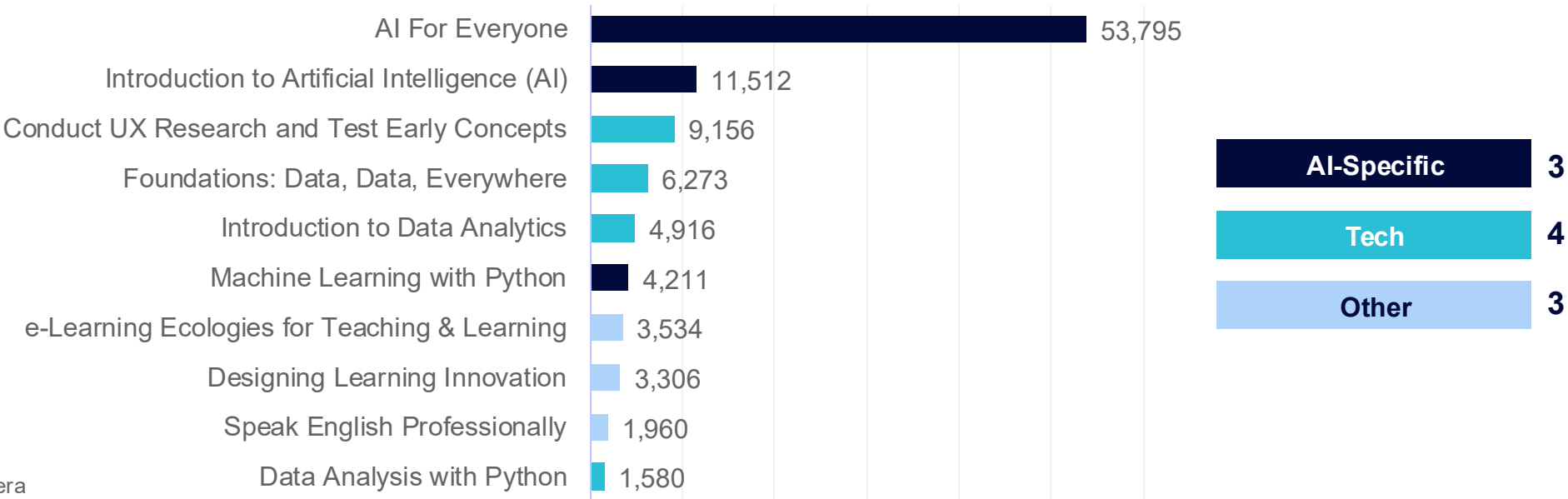
Summary

Non-Degree Demand: Coursera

Three of the ten fastest-growing programs were related to Artificial Intelligence.

- In June 2025, AI for Everyone added close to 54,000 students year-over-year.

Highest Enrollment Volume, Courses
June 2025 1-Year Unit Change



Source: PES Non-Degree Dashboard, Coursera

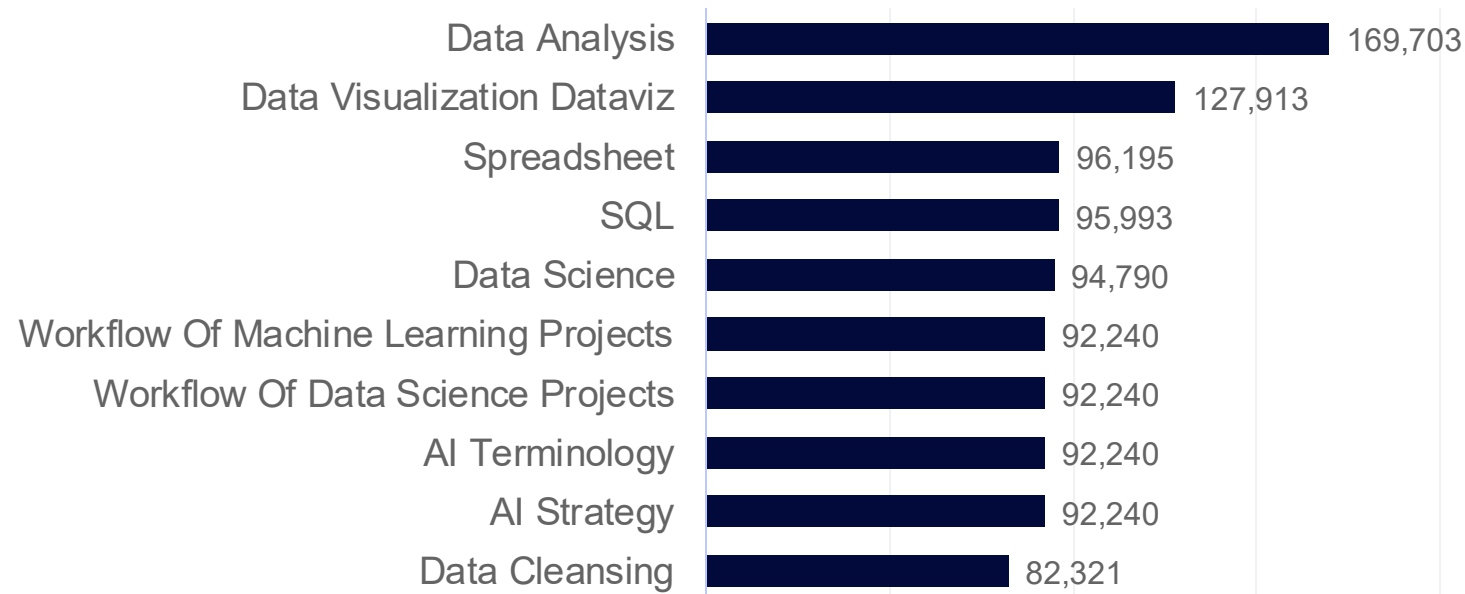
Non-Degree Demand: Most-Taught Skills on Coursera

In June 2025, Data Analysis was the most frequently taught on Coursera.

- All 10 of the most frequently taught skills were in technology; three were AI-related.

Highest Skills Volume

March 2024 to 2025



Source: PES Non-Degree Dashboard, Coursera

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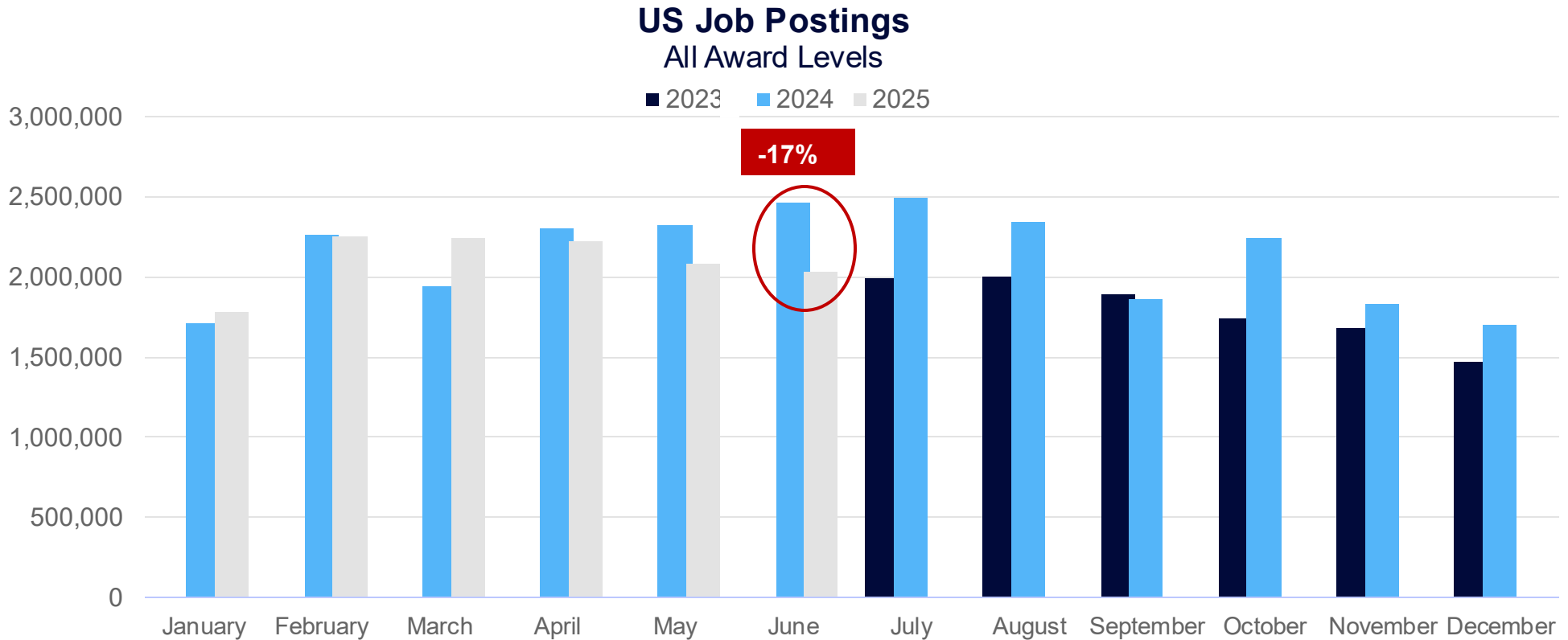
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US Job Postings Trends

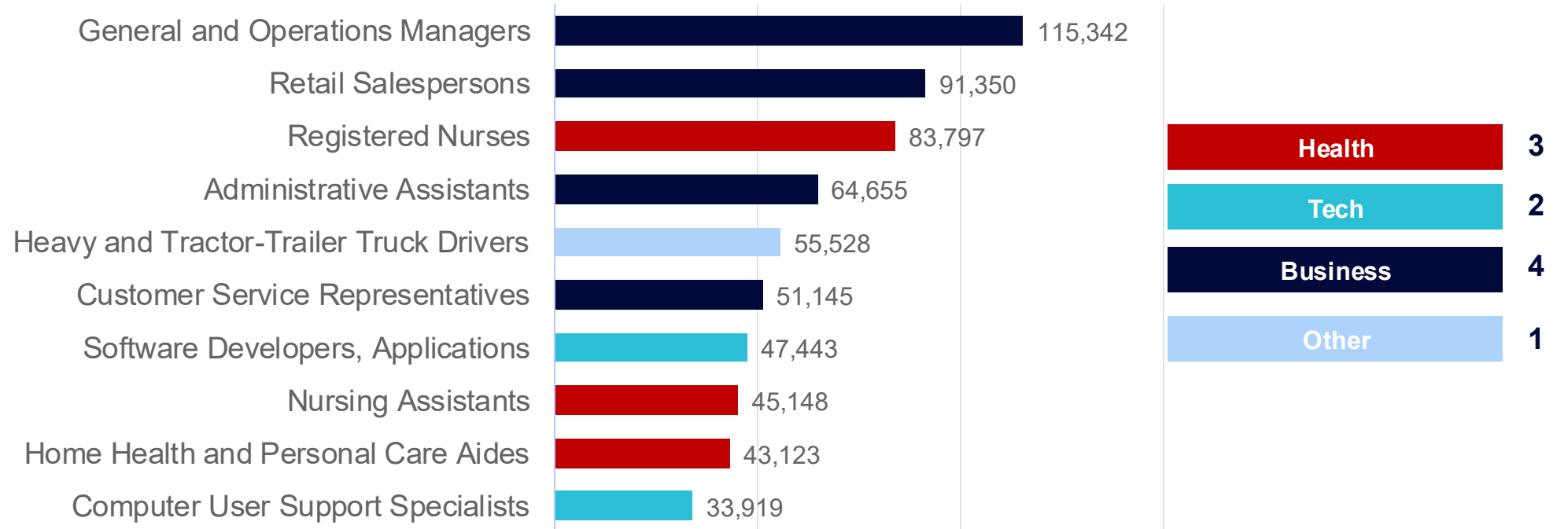
In June, US job postings fell 17% year-over-year.



Source: Gray DI's PES Job Postings Dashboard

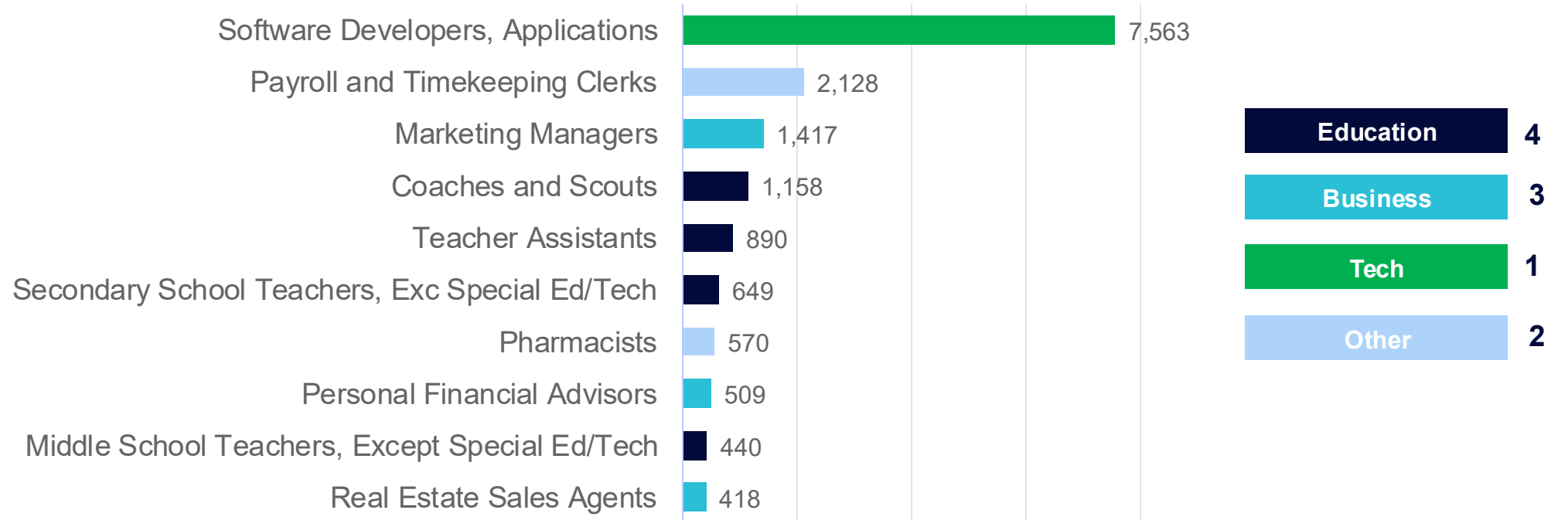
June Highest Job Posting Volume

Highest Job Posting Volume by Occupation
June 2025



Fastest-Growing Job Postings

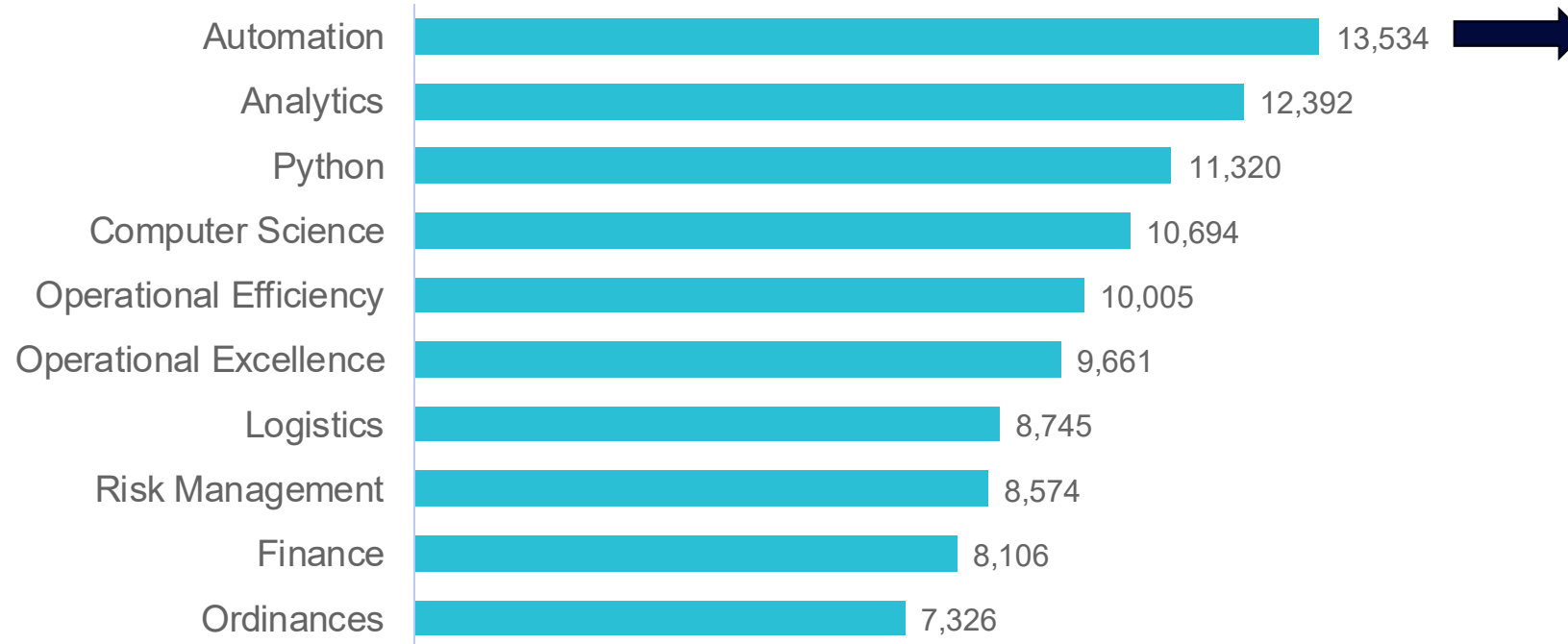
Fastest-Growing Job Postings Volume June 2025, YoY Unit Change



Which skills are growing in demand in the US?

There is an increasing need for automation skills, especially for technicians.

10 Fastest-Growing Skills Volume in Job Postings
June 2025 1-Year Unit Change



Top Jobs Postings with Keyword “Automation”

Maintenance Technician

Field Service Technician

Automation Technician

Project Manager

Pharmacy Technician

Marketing Manager

Technician

Service Technician

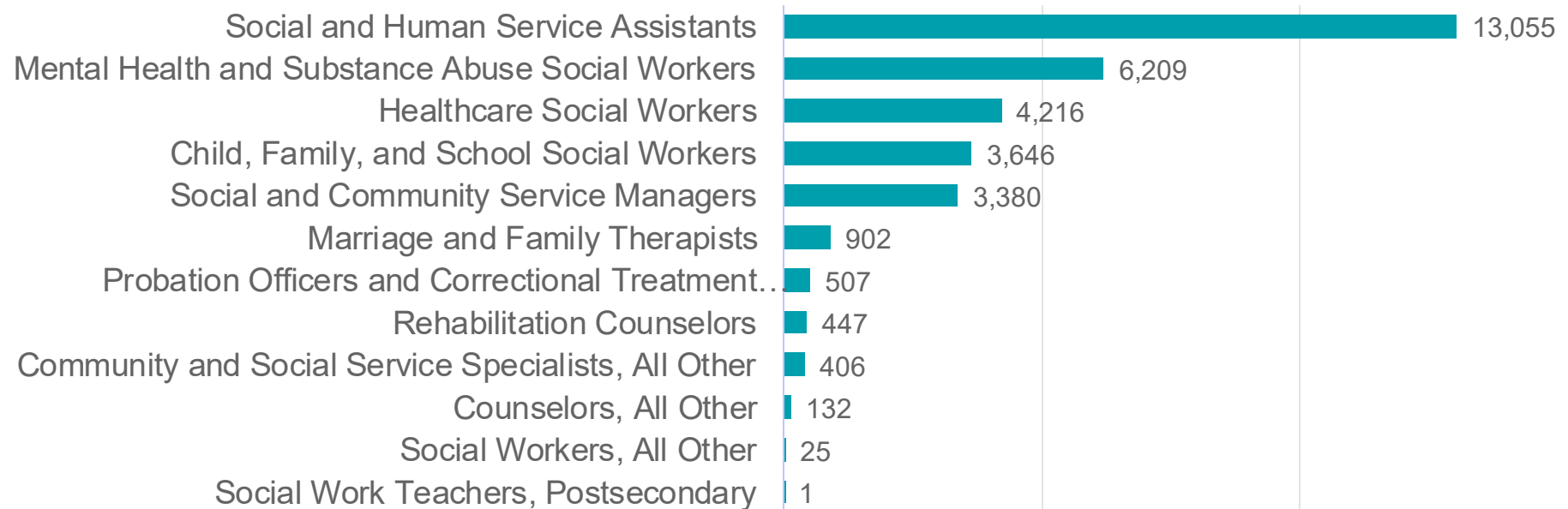
Data Analyst

Software Engineer

Commonly available data sources link programs to direct prep occupations.

According to direct prep jobs data, Social Work grads are prepared for 12 occupations.

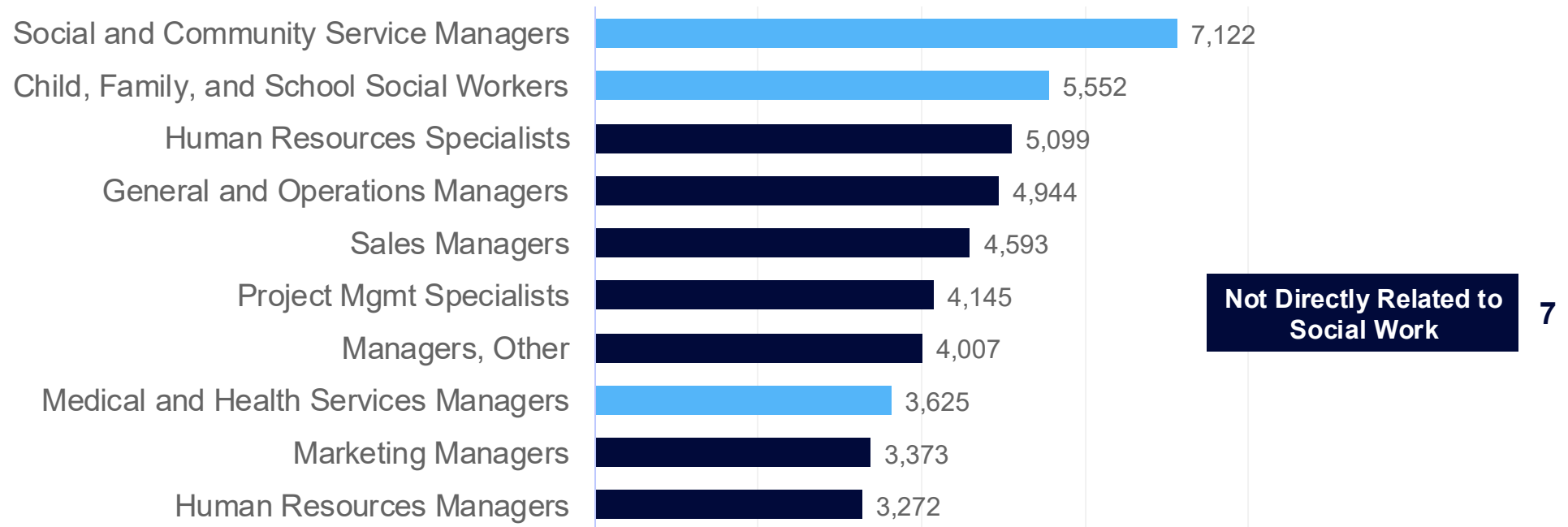
Direct Prep Job Postings, Social Work
June 2025



Source: NCES Direct Prep Crosswalk, Gray DI's Job Postings Dashboard

Data on over 100k graduates with a Bachelor's in Social Work shows they go into 758 occupations; the top ten have over 45K job postings.

Top 10 Occupations
Alumni with Bachelor's in Social Work
 First Four Jobs Post-Grad



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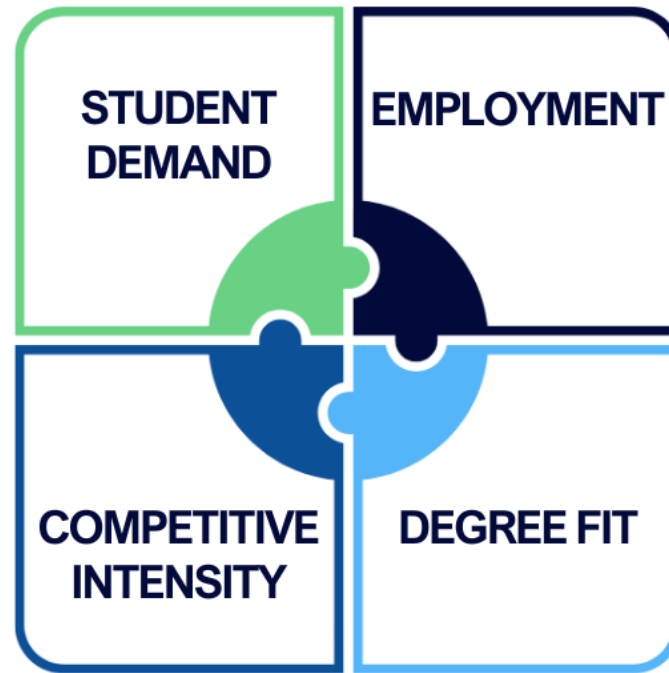
Program of the Month

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Program of the Month





How do I sort through over 1,500 academic programs?

Score and rank them!

US Bachelor's Program Rank

CIP Q	Total Percentile	Student Demand Percentile	Competitive Intensity Percentile	Employment Percentile
11.0701 Computer Science	<div><div>5</div><div>100</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>85</div></div>	<div><div>100</div></div>
45.0601 Economics (incl. Quant Econ and Econometrics)	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>100</div></div>	<div><div>97</div></div>	<div><div>97</div></div>
52.0801 Finance, General	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>100</div></div>	<div><div>79</div></div>	<div><div>94</div></div>
52.0301 Accounting	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>100</div></div>	<div><div>35</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>
14.1001 Electrical/Electronics Engin'g	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>98</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>
14.1901 Mechanical Engineering	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>97</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>
51.3801 Registered Nursing	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>95</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>
30.7101 Data Analytics and/or Data Science	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>61</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>
11.1003 Cyber Security/ Info. Assurance	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>50</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>
49.0101 Aviation/Aero Science/Tech, Gen'l	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>98</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>	<div><div>99</div></div>

Total Percentile	0	20+	40+	70+	90+	95+	98+	100
Total Score	-32	-6	-1	3	11	16	24	49


Source: Gray DI's PES Markets



How do I sort through the 1,500+ academic programs?

Create a summary composite score to rank overall and on each category.

US Bachelor's Program Rank

CIP Q	Total Percentile	Student Demand Percentile	Competitive Intensity Percentile	Employment Percentile
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Total Percentile	0	20+	40+	70+	90+	95+	98+	100
Total Score	-32	-6	-1	3	11	16	24	49

Source: Gray DI's PES Markets

Student Demand

A Bachelor's in Finance scores in the 100th percentile for Student Demand.

- This is a very large program.
 - Google searches are in the 96th percentile.
 - International page views are in the 98th percentile.
 - New enrollments and completions are in the 99th percentile.
- Only 7% of programs have online graduates.
- Growth metrics are healthy.
 - Google searches grew 54% year-over-year.
 - New student enrollment grew 15%.
 - Completions fell 1%.

Student Demand				
Score: 29 Percentile: 100				
Category	Pctl	Criterion	Value	Score
Size	96	Google Search Volume (12 Months)*	2,278,780	4
	98	International Page Views (12 Months)	6,412	NS
	99	New Student Enrollment Volume (12 Mo.)	25,737	6
	99	On-ground Completions at In-Market Institutions	43,323	4
	99	Online Completions by In-Market Students	3,202	4
	99	Sum of On-ground and Online Completions	46,525	4
Growth	98	Google Search YoY Change (Units)*	797,280	2
	99	New Student Enrollment Vol. YoY Change (Units)	3,399	2
	3	Completion Volume YoY Change (Units)	-318	0
	85	Google Search YoY Change (%)*	54%	2
	78	New Student Enrollment Vol. YoY Change (%)	15%	1
	58	Completion Volume YoY Change (%)	-1%	0

Employment Opportunities

Finance is in the 94th percentile.

- There is a large volume of entry-level job opportunities.
- Current employment is very strong.
- Growth is lackluster: positive, but lower than the average program.
- Market saturation is relatively low.
- Wages are healthy.
 - The highest wage potential is at the master's level.
- 40% of graduates are employed in direct prep occupations.

Employment

Score: 18 Percentile: 94

Category	Pctl	Criterion	Value	Score
Size: Entry →	99	Job Postings Total (12 Months)	88,215	4
	99	BLS Current Employment	513,598	1
	99	BLS Annual Job Openings	43,891	1
Underemployed	84	Underemployed Percent of Graduates**	32%	1
Growth: Entry Jobs →	7	BLS 1-Year Historical Growth	2.6%	0
	33	BLS 3-Year Historic Growth (CAGR)	3.5%	0
	34	BLS 10-Year Future Growth (CAGR)	0.6%	0
Saturation: Entry Jobs →	87	Job Postings per Graduate	1.9	1
	89	BLS Job Openings per Graduate	0.9	0
Weighted-Avg BLS Wages →	77	Entry 25th Percentile	\$61,125	4
	89	Post Entry Median	\$95,520	6
		Post Entry w/Associates Median	NA	NS
	90	Post Entry w/Bachelors Median	\$89,863	NS
	99	Post Entry w/Masters Median	\$124,713	NS
	89	Post Entry w/Doctoral Median	\$121,763	NS
National American Community Survey Bachelor's Degree Outcomes* →	40	% with Any Graduate Degree*	32%	NS
	50	% with Masters*	26%	NS
	41	% with Doct/Prof Degree*	6%	NS
	35	% Unemp. (Age < 30)**	3%	NS
	92	% in Direct Prep Jobs*	40%	NS

Bachelor's in Finance Alumni Employment

Almost 353,000 graduates from 8,068 institutions go into 773 occupations.

Top 10 Occupations Alumni with Bachelor's in Finance First Four Jobs Post-Grad





Competitive Intensity is in the 79th percentile.

- This program is competitive.
 - Nine new programs graduated students in the current year.
- Median program size is healthy, with modest growth year-over-year.
- Marketing costs are high.
- The program is not strong online.

Competitive Intensity Score: 7 Percentile: 79

Category	Pctl	Criterion	Value	Score
Volume of In-Market Competition	2	Campuses with Graduates**	661	0
	2	Campuses with Grads YoY Change (Units)**	9	NS
	1	Institutions with Online In-Market Students**	110	0
In-Market Program Sizes	98	Average Program Completions	66	4
	93	Median Program Completions	24	2
	82	YoY Median Prog. Compl. Change (Units)	1	0
	72	YoY Median Prog. Compl. Change (%)	4%	0
In-Market Saturation	14	Google Search * Cost per Click**	\$14	1
	12	Google Competition Index**	0.48	0
National Online Competition	1	National Online Institutions (Units)**	107	NS
	79	Nat'l Online % of Institutions	15%	NS
	67	Nat'l Online % of Completions	7%	NS

Bachelor's is an appropriate award level for Finance.

- It is more expensive to teach than the median program.
- 91% of completions are at the bachelor's level.
- 87% of enrollments are bachelor's level.
- 47% of the workforce are bachelor's level.
- 21% of the workforce have master's degrees.
 - However, completions and enrollment numbers in this major are low at the master's level.

Degree Fit

Score: 0 Percentile: 50

Category	Pctl	Criterion	Value	Score
Cost Benchmarking	67	Average Cost per SCH Index**	0.86	NS
	28	Median Cost per SCH Index**	1.16	NS

National Completions by Level

Score: 0

National Workforce Ed. Attainment

Score: 0

Award Level	Completions (National)	Completions (Market)	Enrollment (Market)	BLS Educational Attainment
No College				8%
Some College				14%
Certificate	1%	1%	1%	
Associates	0%	0%	3%	6%
Bachelors	91%	91%	87%	47%
Postbaccalaureate Certificate	1%	1%	0%	
Masters	7%	7%	8%	21%
Post-masters Certificate	0%	0%	1%	
Doctoral	0%	0%	0%	3%

CIP: 52.0801 Finance, General	Award Level: Bachelors	Market: National	Total Score: 54	Percentile: 99
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* - Google search do not filter by award level.
** - Percentiles are displayed in reverse (100% minus the percentile).
NA - No data available/not currently tracked.
NS - Not Scored in Rubrics (values = 0).
PCTL - Percentile

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Postbaccalaureate Certificate	1%	1%	0%	
Masters	7%	7%	8%	21%
Post-masters Certificate	0%	0%	1%	
Doctoral	0%	0%	0%	3%

CIP Description:
A program that generally prepares individuals to plan, manage, and analyze the financial and monetary aspects and performance of business enterprises, banking institutions, or other organizations. Includes instruction in principles of accounting, financial instruments, capital planning, funds acquisition, asset and debt management, budgeting, financial analysis, and investments and portfolio management.

Total Percentile	0	20+	40+	70+	90+	95+	98+	100
Total Score	-20	-16	2	15	27	34	43	66

The academic program showcases formidable strengths in Student Demand and Employment prospects due to high national completion rates and lucrative salary potential, yet is hindered by extraordinary Competitive Intensity with low campus availability and escalating advertising costs.

Overview

National Completions stand at an impressive 46,525, ranking in the 99th percentile, underscoring the extensive reach and popularity of the program. The program shines in terms of Student Demand, holding a top position with high search volumes and new student enrollment. However, the Competitive Intensity is a significant weakness, as evidenced by scarce campus availability and high advertising costs.

Student Demand

High Google Search Volume of 1,862,377 places the program in the 96th percentile, indicating robust interest. The Google Search YoY Unit Change of 495,337, also in the 96th percentile, reflects growing curiosity and popularity over time. Moreover, the Google Search YoY Percentage Change stands at 36%, ranking 84th, showing significant year-over-year interest increase. New Student Enrollment Volume reaches 24,188, positioning itself in the 99th percentile, highlighting strong incoming class size. However, the New Student Enrollment Volume YoY Percentage Change of 8% ranks 69th, suggesting room for improvement in growth rate compared to its peers.

Employment

The program offers a compelling Entry Level Salary of \$61,125, aligning with the 77th percentile, which appeals to new graduates. Post Entry Level Median Salary rises to \$95,520, noting high earning potential in the 89th percentile. With 1.7 Job Postings per Graduate, the program ranks 87th, showcasing strong demand for graduates. Yet, BLS 1-Year Historical Growth of 3% is a challenge as it ranks a low 7th percentile, implying limited short-term growth opportunities. Meanwhile, the Underemployed Percent of Graduates is at a favorable 32%, in the 84th percentile, reflecting adequate employment alignment.

Competitive Intensity

The landscape faces challenges with only 661 Campuses with Graduates, placing it in the 2nd percentile, suggesting limited geographic presence. Compounded by a Google Search Cost per Click of \$20.00 in the 9th percentile, marketing the program is expensive. The Google Competition Index of 0.52 ranks 11th, highlighting significant marketing challenges in attracting students. Institutions with Online In-Market Students number 110, significantly low at the 1st percentile, limiting online availability. Conversely, an Average Program Completions value of 66 ranks in the 98th percentile, demonstrating program scale despite limited campuses.

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Summary

State of Google & AI Search

- Zero-click searches and growing AI platform referrals
- Growth in inbound direct visits and branded query traffic
- Full social content integration
- Localization, rank-grounding, and ad placements in Google AI Overviews (AIO)
- Third-party listicles and IPEDS data influence
- Accessibility limitations

The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "flexible and affordable nursing programs online". Below the search bar, the "AI Overview" section is visible, providing a summary of the search results. A yellow arrow points from the search bar to the AI Overview section. The AI Overview section includes a paragraph summarizing the search results, followed by a list of institutions with notable online nursing programs. The list includes "Purdue University Global", "Western Governors University (WGU)", "University of North Carolina at Pembroke", "University of Central Florida (UCF)", and "Walden University". Each institution is followed by a brief description of its online nursing program. Below the AI Overview section, a list of search results is displayed, including "Best Online Nursing Programs in Nevada: 2025 Accredited RN to BS...", "Master's in Nursing (MSN)", "Easiest Nursing Schools to Get Into for 2025 - Research.com", "Minorities in Nursing: Improving Workforce Diversity", "Top 50 Most Affordable Online Nursing Administration Degrees...", and "2025 Best Online RN to BSN Degree Programs". Each result includes a title, a brief description, and a source link.

flexible and affordable nursing programs online

AI Mode All Short videos Forums Images Videos News More

AI Overview

Several universities offer flexible and affordable online nursing programs, allowing students to balance their education with other commitments. Many programs offer online coursework, flexible scheduling options, and opportunities for local clinical practice. Financial aid and scholarships can help make these programs more accessible.

Here are some examples of institutions with notable online nursing programs:

Affordable and Flexible Options:

Purdue University Global:
Offers flexible online courses and clinical experiences within local communities.

Western Governors University (WGU):
Known for its competency-based approach, allowing students to progress at their own pace and potentially complete programs faster.

University of North Carolina at Pembroke:
Offers an affordable and accessible online RN to BSN program.

University of Central Florida (UCF):
Provides flexible and affordable MSN programs with various online options, including full-time, part-time, and accelerated tracks.

Other Notable Online Programs:

Walden University:
Offers a range of online nursing programs, including MSN and doctoral degrees.

Grand Canyon University:
Known for its online MSN in Leadership program, designed for nurses seeking management roles.

UTA:
Offers a 100% online RN to BSN program that is both flexible and affordable, according to CollegeRanker.com.

Important Considerations:

Accreditation:
Ensure the program is accredited by a recognized body like the CCNE or ACEN, as this is crucial for licensure and career opportunities.

Best Online Nursing Programs in Nevada: 2025 Accredited RN to BS...
Western Governors University offers a financially affordable and flexible online ...
Research.com

Master's in Nursing (MSN)
Earning your MSN (Master of Science in Nursing) at UCF (University of Central...
University of Central Florida

Easiest Nursing Schools to Get Into for 2025 - Research.com
2025 List of the Easiest Nursing Schools to Get Into * The University of North Carolin...
Research.com

Minorities in Nursing: Improving Workforce Diversity
Jan 30, 2019 — With the option to move through an online nursing degree faster...
Western Governors University

Top 50 Most Affordable Online Nursing Administration Degrees...
Grand Canyon University is well respected in the area of online education. The onlin...
healthcare-administration-degree.net

2025 Best Online RN to BSN Degree Programs
Feb 4, 2025 — UTA's RN to BSN program stands out for its affordability and flexibil...
CollegeRanker



Optimizing for Gen AI Search

AEO, GEO, LLMO – call it what you will.

It requires **building brand reputation and credibility** across your entire digital ecosystem.

Robust, Trustworthy Content

Focus on topics, not just individual keywords. **Ranking still matter but now how they used to.**

Website UX & SEO

SEO and UX basics are still key. **LLMs need to be able to render that content.**

Cross-Channel Social Presence

Search is your new homepage. Repurpose and distribute content infused with keywords in forums, video, audio and social posts. **Brand engagement > CTR.**

Build Reputation, Not Just Links

AI Search is the new digital word of mouth. Reputation and third-party mentions influence AI search generative answers. **Mentions > links.**

Paid Media

Expanding your audience and amplifying messaging where your audience spends their time. **Paid influences search behavior.**



Expanding the Funnel

Brands must move beyond demand capture to generate demand across a variety of touchpoints

Beyond Paid Search

AI Search has carved out a portion of the top spot from traditional paid search. Colleges/universities have to establish touchpoints at **upper funnel** moments.

Expanding Your Media Mix

Relying solely on paid search **limits growth**, and diversifying your media mix unlocks new audiences and builds **future demand** earlier in the student journey.



YouTube



AI Max

Demand Starts Upstream

Create college/university familiarity **before** the search query happens, so when users are ready to act, your institution is already **top-of-mind**. This reduces acquisition costs, helps to outpace competitors, and increases conversion efficiency across the funnel.

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- In June, Google searches for academic programs fell 2% year-over-year.
 - System, Networking, and LAN/WAN Management searches grew by almost 260,000 searches year-over-year.
 - Average cost-per-click rose by almost 1% year-over-year.
- In Fall/Spring 2025, new enrollment in certificate and associate programs rose 3% year-over-year.
 - Bachelor's fell 1%.
 - Master's rose 2%.
- In Fall/Spring 2025, Allied Health (associate), Finance (bachelor's), and Business Analytics (master's) had the highest new enrollment growth year-over-year.
- In June, US job postings fell 17% year-over-year.
 - Software Developers had the highest growth in demand.
 - There is a growing demand for automation skills.
- Social Work grads go into 759 occupations, not 12. Most are not directly related to their major.
- Finance programs have strong market demand, and there may be room in the market to start one online.

Resources

Join us for our **August monthly Demand Trends webinar** for data on all award levels.

Up Next: Monthly Demand Trends Webinar

Date	Time
Thursday, August 28 th	2 PM ET

Other Resources

The Course

Earn Your APEM Certificate

Academic Program Evaluation and Management Course

Understand the data, systems, processes, and people needed to make well-informed and fully supported program decisions



Presented by Gray DI and Bay Path University

The Book on Program Evaluation and Management

