

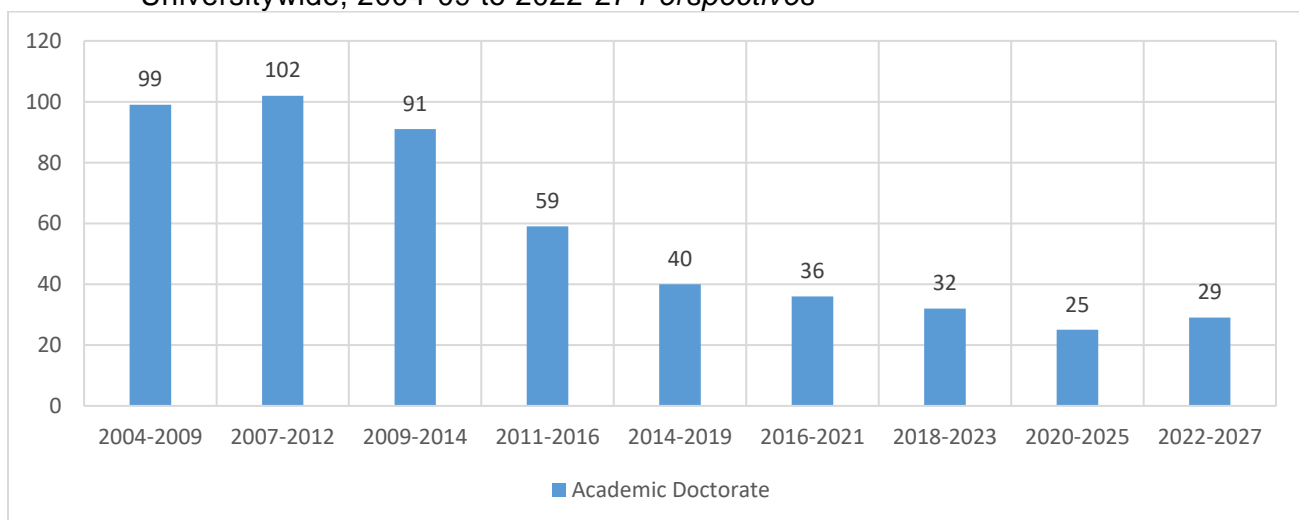
Exploring trends in academic doctoral programs through UC’s *Five-Year Planning Perspectives*

Every other year, campuses submit to the Office of the President their *Five-Year Planning Perspectives (Perspectives)*, which list the anticipated actions to establish, transfer, consolidate, disestablish, or discontinue undergraduate and graduate degree programs, schools, colleges, and other academic units. Individually, the *Perspectives* contain information that can be useful to campus long-range planning efforts; collectively, they offer an informative snapshot of UC’s academic program pipeline. These biennial snapshots can be organized to identify and assess trends, and this topic brief focuses on trends in academic doctoral programs.

Within the *Perspectives*, the number of planning items for academic doctoral programs has steadily dropped since the 2007-12 cycle. In that cycle, there were 102 planning items for academic doctoral programs and in the following two planning cycles that number dipped to 91 then to 59. Since the 2011-16 cycle, academic doctorate planning items have not exceeded 50 items. Proposals to establish academic doctoral programs fell to their lowest point in the 2020-25 cycle—25 items—and slightly rebounded in the 2022-27 cycle to reach 29 items.

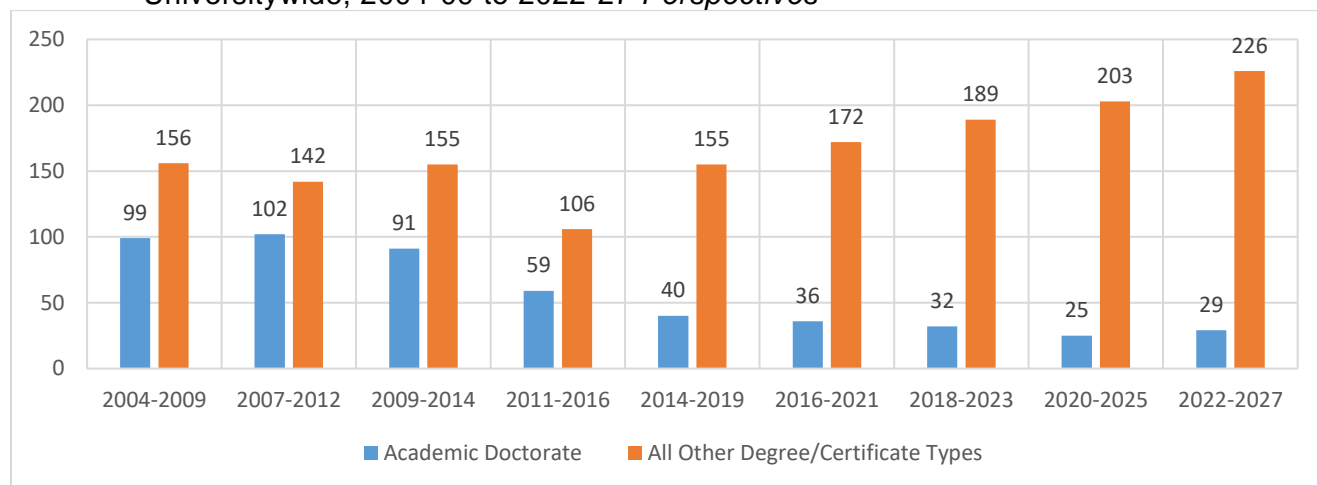
- The number of planning items for academic doctoral programs has steadily declined; there were more than two-thirds fewer of these programs in the current *Perspectives* cycle compared to the 2007-12 cycle.
- Planning items for all degree/certificate types besides academic doctorates reached its lowest point in the 2011-16 cycle, with 106 items. This number has since jumped to 226 whereas planning items for academic doctoral programs dropped to 29 in the most recent cycle.
- Proposals for academic doctoral programs were eclipsed by professional master proposals in the 2014-17 cycle and in the 2022-27 cycle academic doctoral programs were 11% of all planning items while professional master programs were 37% of the total.

Figure 1. Proposals for academic doctoral program establishments Universitywide, 2004-09 to 2022-27 *Perspectives*



While the number of academic doctorate planning items has decreased since the 2007-12 *Perspectives* cycle, the number of planning items for all other academic program types has increased.¹ Planning items for all other academic program types reached its lowest point in the 2011-16 cycle, with 106 items. This number jumped to 155 in the 2014-19 cycle and then to 203 in the 2020-25 cycle. In the most recent cycle, there were 226 planning items for all other academic program types compared to 29 for academic doctoral programs.

Figure 2. Proposals to establish academic doctoral programs versus other program types Universitywide, 2004-09 to 2022-27 *Perspectives*



The following two figures begin to disaggregate these academic programs besides academic doctoral programs. As discussed in multiple *Perspectives* reports, one striking observation is the rise of professional master proposals. In the 2007-12 cycle, there were 16 professional master proposals (7% of the total) and in the most recent cycle there were 95 professional master proposals or 37% of the total. In contrast, there were 102 academic doctorate proposals in the 2007-12 cycle—42% of the total—and 29 in the most recent cycle, 11% of the total.

¹ Besides academic doctoral programs, there are a total of seven academic program types in the *Perspectives*: Academic Master programs; Post-Baccalaureate Certificate/Credential programs; Professional Doctorate programs; Professional Master programs; Professional Practice programs; Undergraduate programs; and Undergraduate Certificate programs.

Figure 3. Proposals for academic program establishments, by broad degree/certificate type Universitywide, 2004-09 to 2022-27 *Perspectives*

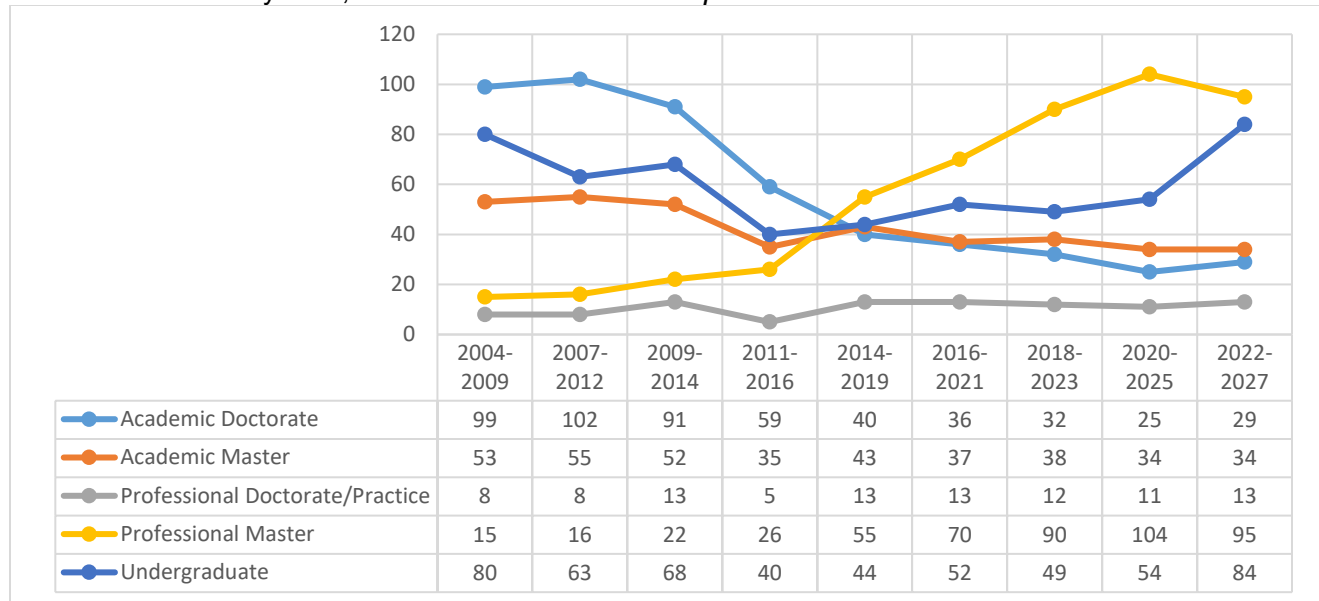


Figure 4. Distribution of academic program establishments, by broad degree/certificate type Universitywide, 2004-09 to 2022-27 *Perspectives*

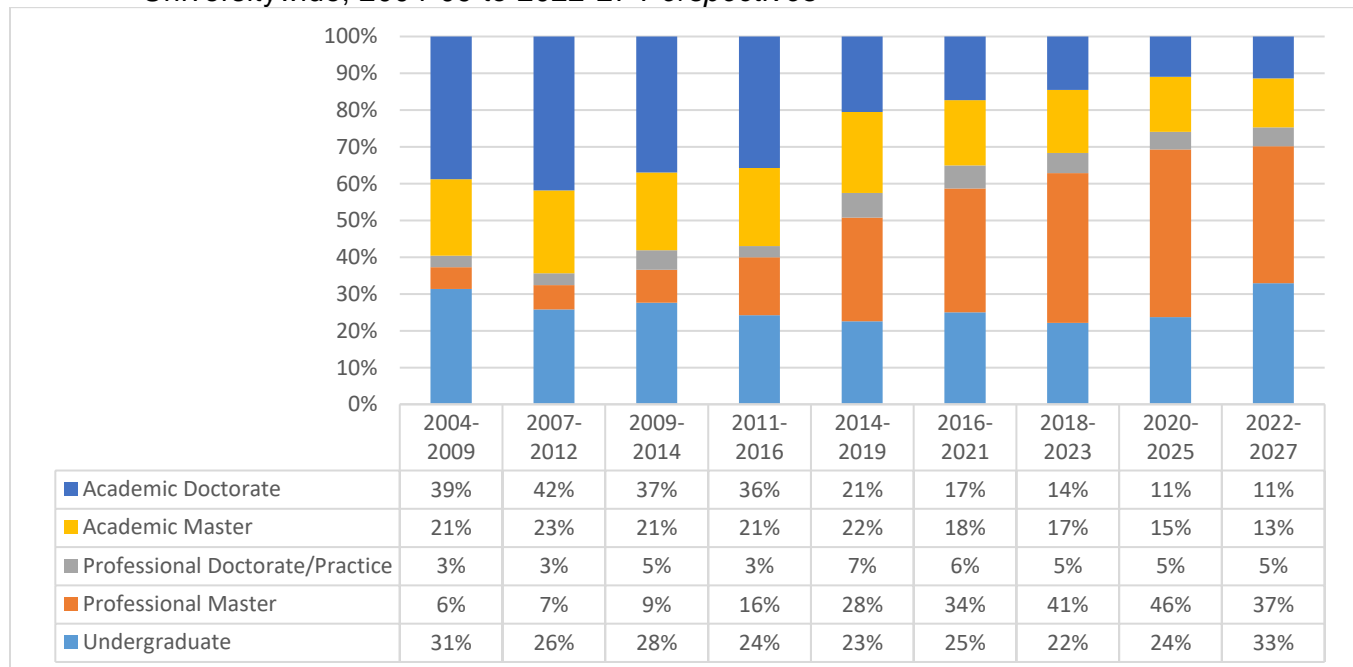
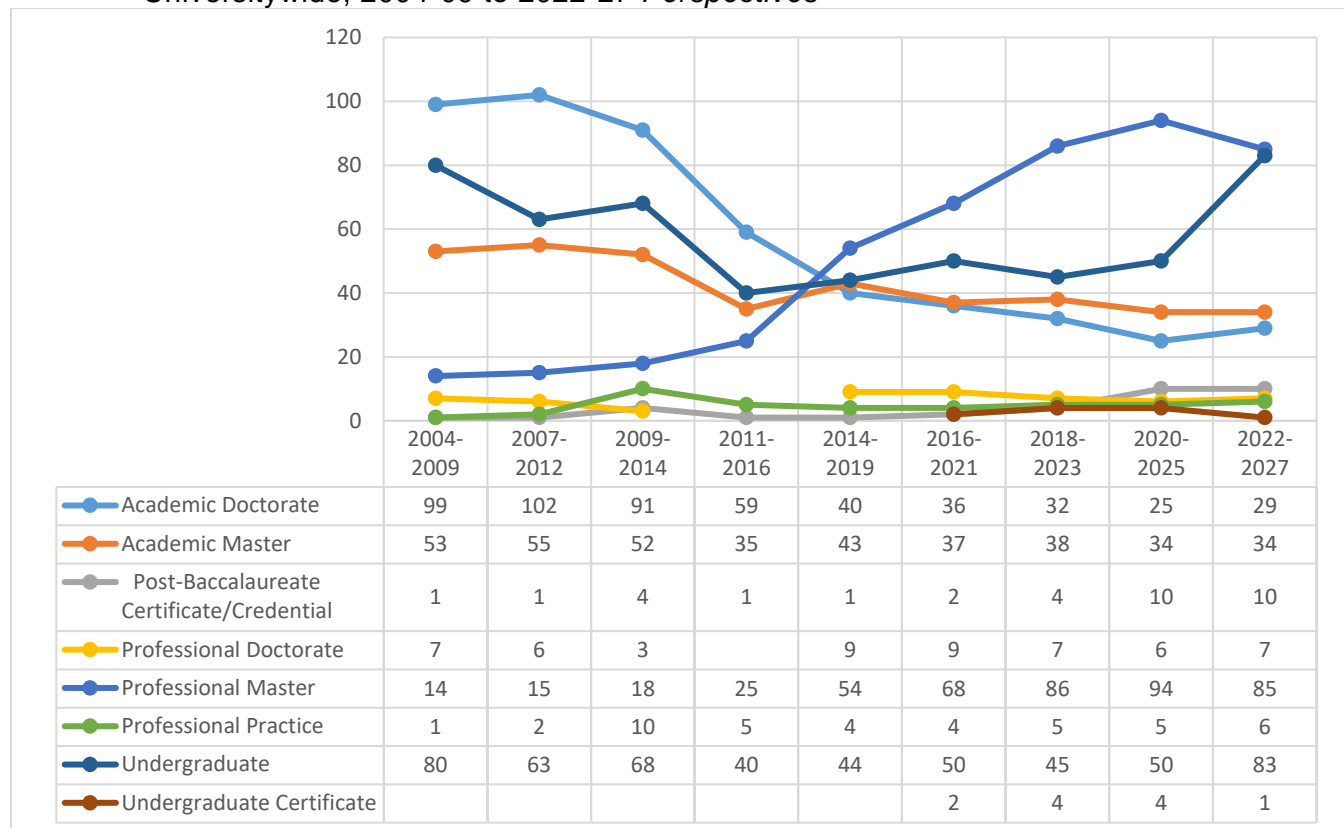


Figure 5 fully disaggregates the degree/certificate types, and the rise of professional master planning items continues to be evident. Beyond this observation, one interesting result from the 2022-27 cycle is a spike in undergraduate degree proposals. There were practically the same number of these proposal compared to professional master proposals in the 2022-27 cycle and undergraduate degree proposals reached 33% of all proposals during this cycle (compared to 11% for academic doctorates), their greatest proportion across all cycles.

Figure 5. Proposals for academic program establishments, by specific degree/certificate type Universitywide, 2004-09 to 2022-27 *Perspectives*



Finally, below is a list of all the academic doctorate planning items from the 2022-27 *Perspectives*, providing a detailed picture of these items from the most recent cycle. Note that these planning items were not distributed evenly; in the 2022-27 cycle, Merced listed nine academic doctorate planning items whereas each of the other campuses listed three or less.

Figure 6. Proposals for academic doctoral program establishments Universitywide, 2022-27 Perspectives

Campus	Name of Academic Unit	Degree	Department	Status	Previous Perspectives Status	CIP field
Berkeley	Computational Precision Health	Ph.D. (Joint UC Berkeley and UC San Francisco)	College of Computing, Data Science, and Society (pending establishment of academic unit)	(4) CCGA/UCOP review	Not given/Does not apply	Health-Related Knowledge and Skills
Berkeley	Social Science and Public Policy	Ph.D. Designated Emphasis	Goldman School of Public Policy / Econ / Political Science / Sociology	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
Berkeley	Quantum Science and Technology	Ph.D.	Physics (MPS, L&S)	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Physical Sciences
Davis	Marine Science	M.S. & Ph.D.	Coastal and Marine Sciences Institute (CBS)	(2) Dept./school review	(3) Campus review	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
Davis	Power Engineering Joint Program with Sacramento State	Ph.D.	College of Engineering	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Engineering
Davis	Environmental Policy & Management	Ph.D.	College of Agricultural and Environmental Science	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Natural Resources and Conservation
Irvine	Interdisciplinary Neuroscience	Ph.D.	School of Medicine and School of Biological Sciences	(2) Dept./school review	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
Irvine	Electrochemistry and Electrochemical Engineering	M.S. & Ph.D.	Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering/Henry Samueli School of Engineering	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Engineering
Los Angeles	Political Science PhD/Statistics MS Articulated Degree (Political Methodology)	M.S./Ph.D.	Statistics / Physical Sciences and Social Sciences divisions / The College	(2) Dept./school review	(3) Campus review	Social Sciences
Los Angeles	Asian American Studies	Ph.D.	Asian American Studies / Social Sciences division / The College	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Area, Ethnic, Cultural, Gender, and Group Studies
Los Angeles	Clinical Aspects of Human Biology and Disease	Ph.D.	Basic Biomedical Sciences / Medicine / DGSOM	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
Merced	Civil and Environmental Engineering	M.S./Ph.D.	CEE (School of Engineering)	(2) Dept./school review	(2) Dept./school review	Engineering
Merced	San Jose State/UC Merced Joint PHD - Engineering Science	Ph.D.	School of Engineering	(2) Dept./school review	Not given/Does not apply	Engineering

Campus	Name of Academic Unit	Degree	Department	Status	Previous Perspectives Status	CIP field
Merced	Molecular and Cell Biology	Ph.D.	School of Natural Sciences	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Biological and Biomedical Sciences
Merced	Ecology and Evolutionary Biology	Ph.D.	School of Natural Sciences	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Biological and Biomedical Sciences
Merced	Science Education	Ph.D.	School of Natural Sciences	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Education
Merced	Engineering	M.S./Ph.D.	School of Engineering	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Engineering
Merced	CSU Fresno/UC Merced Joint PHD - Engineering Systems	Ph.D.	School of Engineering	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Engineering
Merced	Computational Data Science	Ph.D.	School of Natural Sciences	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
Merced	Anthropology	M.A./Ph.D.	School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Social Sciences
Riverside	Astronomy	Ph.D.	College of Natural & Agricultural Sciences, Division of Life Sciences	(3) Campus review	Not given/Does not apply	Physical Sciences
Riverside	Public Policy	Ph.D.	School of Public Policy	(2) Dept./school review	(2) Dept./school review	Public Administration and Social Service Professions
Riverside	Computer Engineering	Ph.D.	Dept. of CSE and ECE	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Engineering
San Diego	Urban Studies and Planning	Ph.D.	Department of Urban Studies & Planning	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Architecture and Related Services
San Francisco	Computational Precision Medicine	Ph.D.	Graduate Division	(4) CCGA/UCOP review	(4) CCGA/UCOP review	Health-Related Knowledge and Skills
San Francisco	Global Health Sciences	Ph.D.	Institute for Global Health Sciences	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Health Professions and Related Programs
San Francisco	Epidemiology & Translational Science	Ph.D.	Dept. of Epidemiology and Biostatistics	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Not given/Does not apply	Health Professions and Related Programs
Santa Cruz	Materials Science and Engineering	M.S./Ph.D.	Jack Baskin School of Engineering	(3) Campus review	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Engineering
Santa Cruz	Future Stages	Ph.D.	Performance, Play and Design (Arts Division)	(2) Dept./school review	(1) Suggested for FYPP list	Visual and Performing Arts