

# A Focus on Master's Education: News from CGS

**Suzanne T. Ortega**  
President, CGS

Conference of Southern Graduate Schools  
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# What were the project's key findings?

1. Postbaccalaureate certificates are best understood as part of a larger ecosystem that includes graduate degrees, instead of as an alternative to degrees.
2. Many programs are new and have small enrollments.
3. Departments and programs remain the drivers of program creation.
4. Assessing microcredential quality remains a question, particularly balancing quality with speed.
5. “Stacking” certificates is still in the development phase at many institutions.



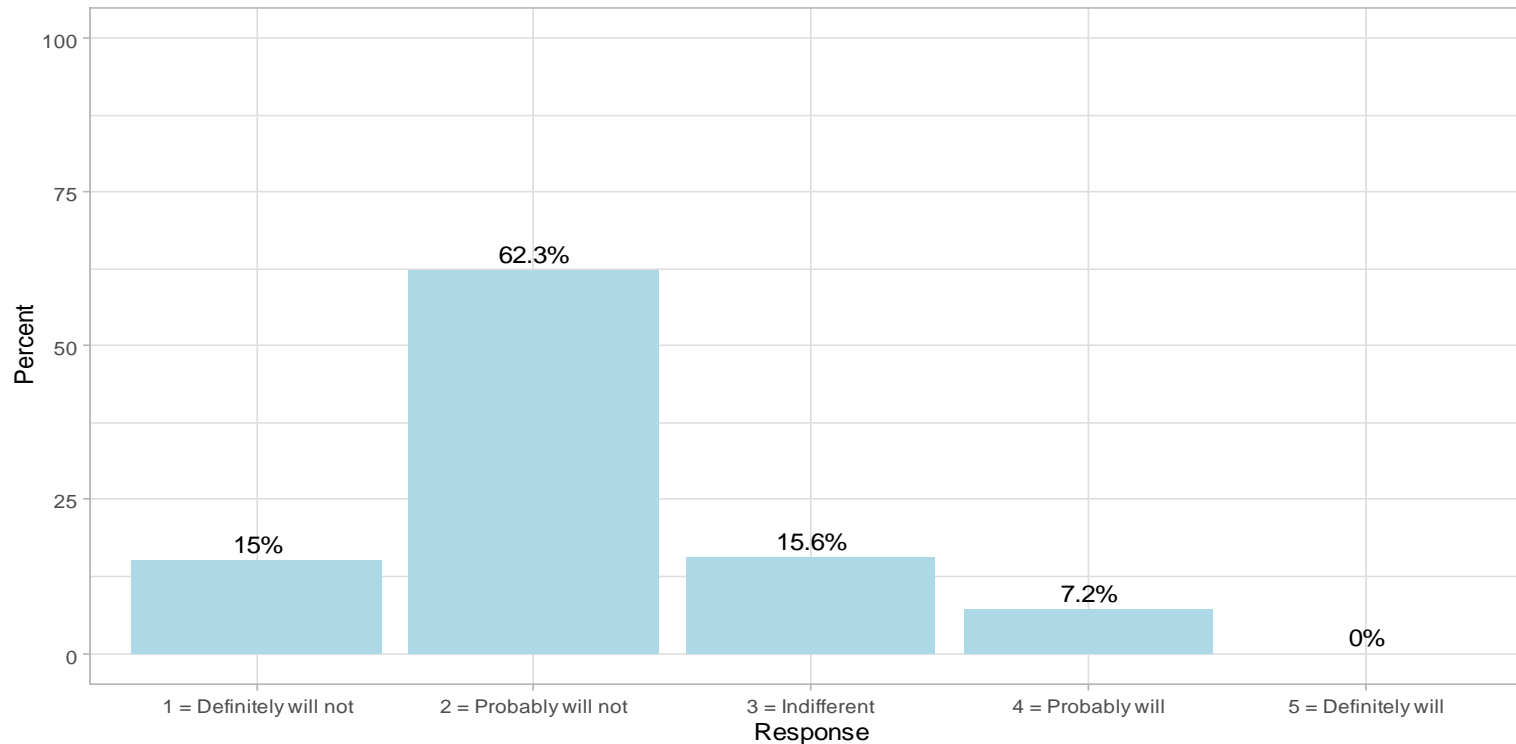
## Microcredentials and the Master's Degree

*Understanding the National Landscape to Support Learners and the Workforce*



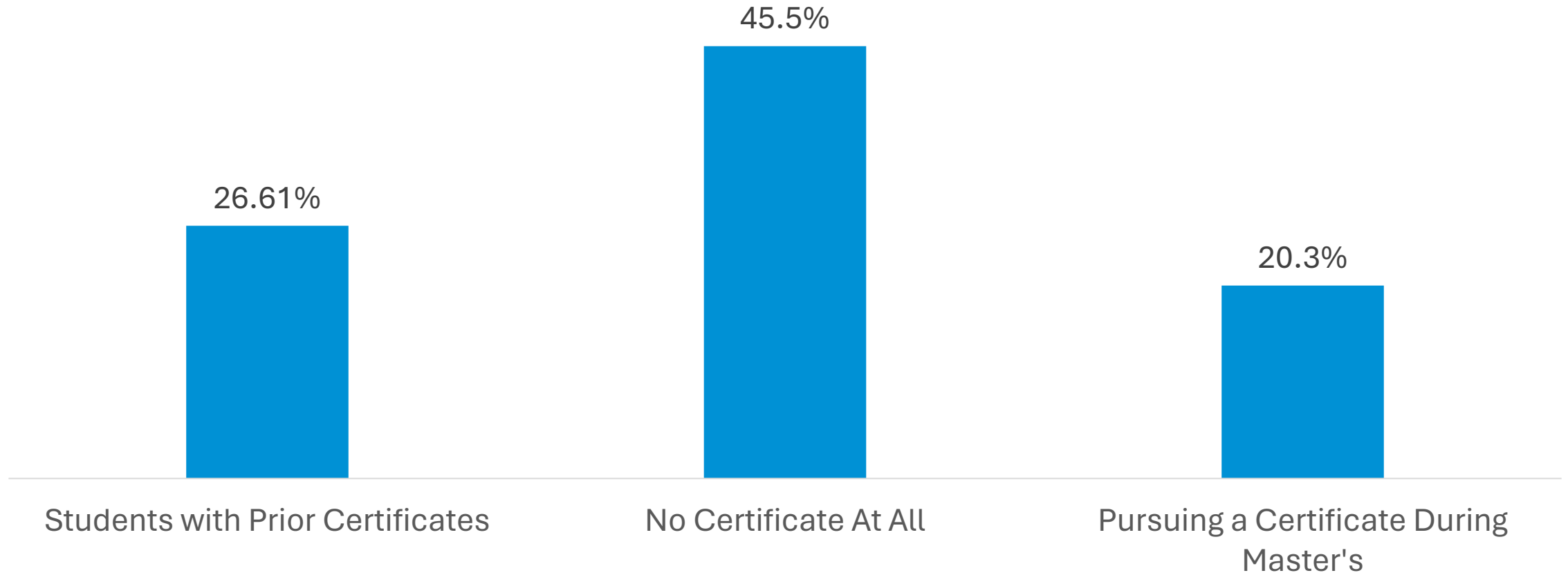
# A blended ecosystem

How likely do you believe it is that certificates will replace the graduate degree as the certificate of choice for employers?



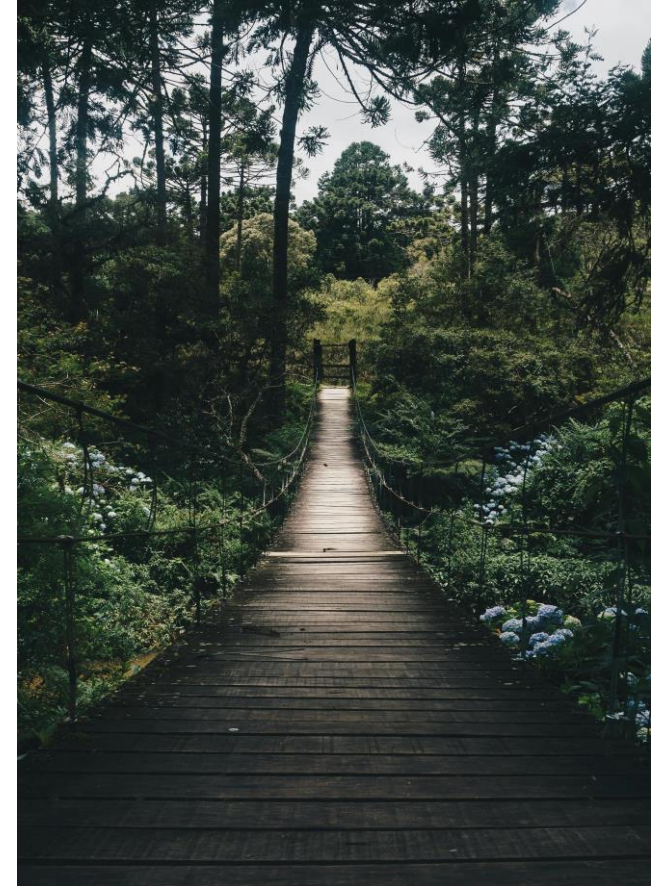
“A graduate certificate to me signals the student has gained a new skill or understanding of a specific subject/topic at a deeper level than undergrad. A master's degree implies increased knowledge of a topic/subject but also includes further development of skills like critical thinking, problem-solving etc.”  
– Graduate Dean Respondent

# One fifth of all Master's students earn a certificate during their Master's degree, more than half hold at least one certificate by graduation



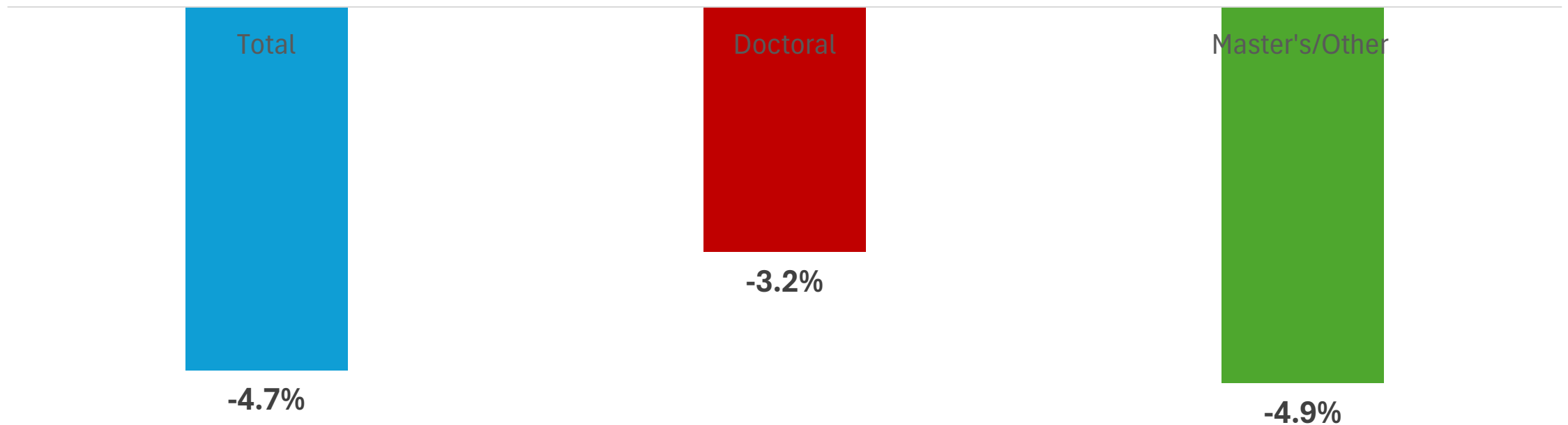
# Master's Degrees *and* Certificates

- Allows learners to customize their master's degree to fit a specific career pathway
- Modify or update a master's degree to earn a promotion or pay raise
- Can also help master's degree recipients broaden their career pathways to more options.



# For Fall 2022, the decrease in first-time graduate enrollment is driven by decreases in master's programs.

Annual Percent Changes in First-time Enrollment by Degree Level, Fall 2021 to Fall 2022

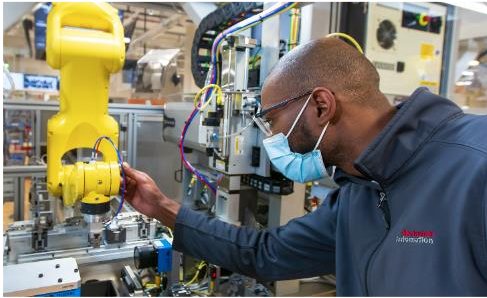


# Issues of Concern

- Total enrollment declined for the fifth semester in a row to 4.1%
- Entry level jobs that require a master's degree are projected to grow by 15% between 2019 and 2029.
- Increasing concerns about debt and cost among students, particularly underrepresented minorities.
- Many industries challenged to diversify their workforce.
- Media and policy makers focused on individual ROI; they also need to consider workforce needs.

# Industries that have state and national workforce needs that rely on a master's educated workforce.

**Advanced Manufacturing**



**K-12 Education**



**Cybersecurity**



**Museums & Culture**



**Biomedical & Healthcare**





# Master's Degrees at Work

We launched last June with a webpage featuring:

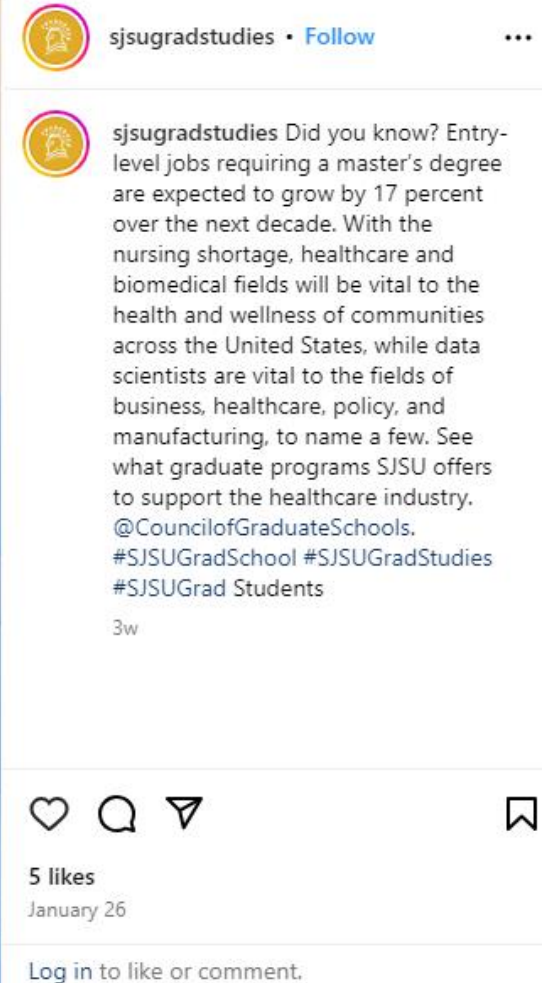
- Facts about master's degrees
- Resources about master's degrees
- A toolkit for our members
- Stories from students on why they are pursuing their master's degree
- CGS policy priorities that would make master's degrees more accessible

## Media Coverage:

*Is a Master's Degree Worth it?*

*How to Make Master's Degrees More Affordable*

- Mark Drozdowski, BestColleges, August 29 and 30



# Master's Degrees at Work

## A Clear Vision: Using a Master's Degree in Social Work to Empower People with Disabilities

"I'm striving for my community to have a safe space for people with disabilities to go to for encouragement or for resources to help them reach their goals. I'm trying to get everyone to realize that our disabilities don't define us."

Mirranda Williams, who is blind, on why she got her master's degree in social work so she can work with blind seniors.

She received her master's degree in 2022 from Morgan State University.



## A Master's Education in School Administration for a Life-Long Learner

"So many children, their lives depend on us and they are our greatest resources for our future. We are preparing them for jobs that don't even exist yet."

And that's why I am continuing my journey in education and leadership so I can provide that greatness to our students."

Dayna Williams is in her last year in the Master's of School Administration at University of North Carolina, Pembroke.





**New Deans Institute  
and Summer Workshop**

***We hope to  
see you in  
Boston for a  
“tea party?”  
July 13-17***