FROM EMPLOYABILITY TO PROFESSIONAL RELEVANCE

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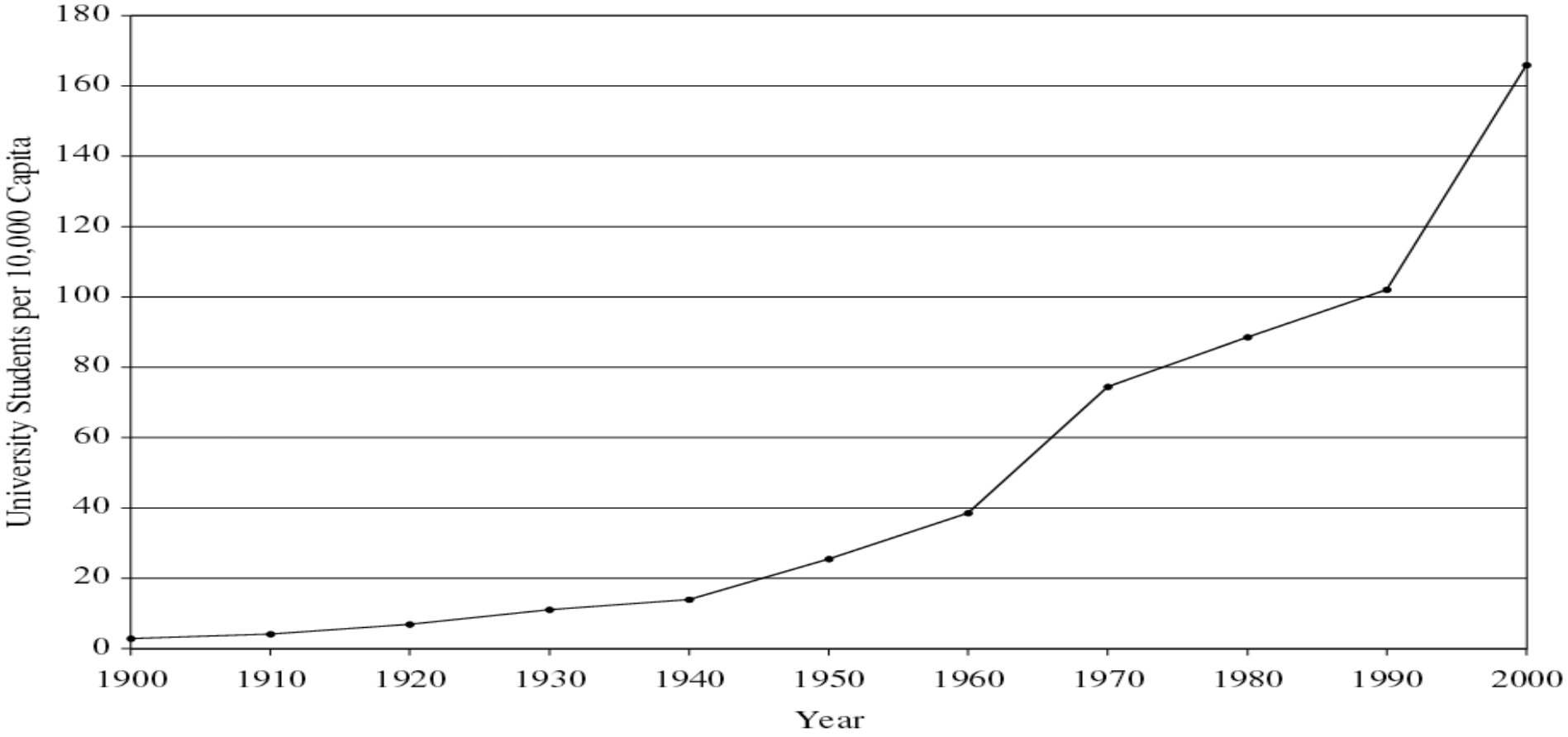
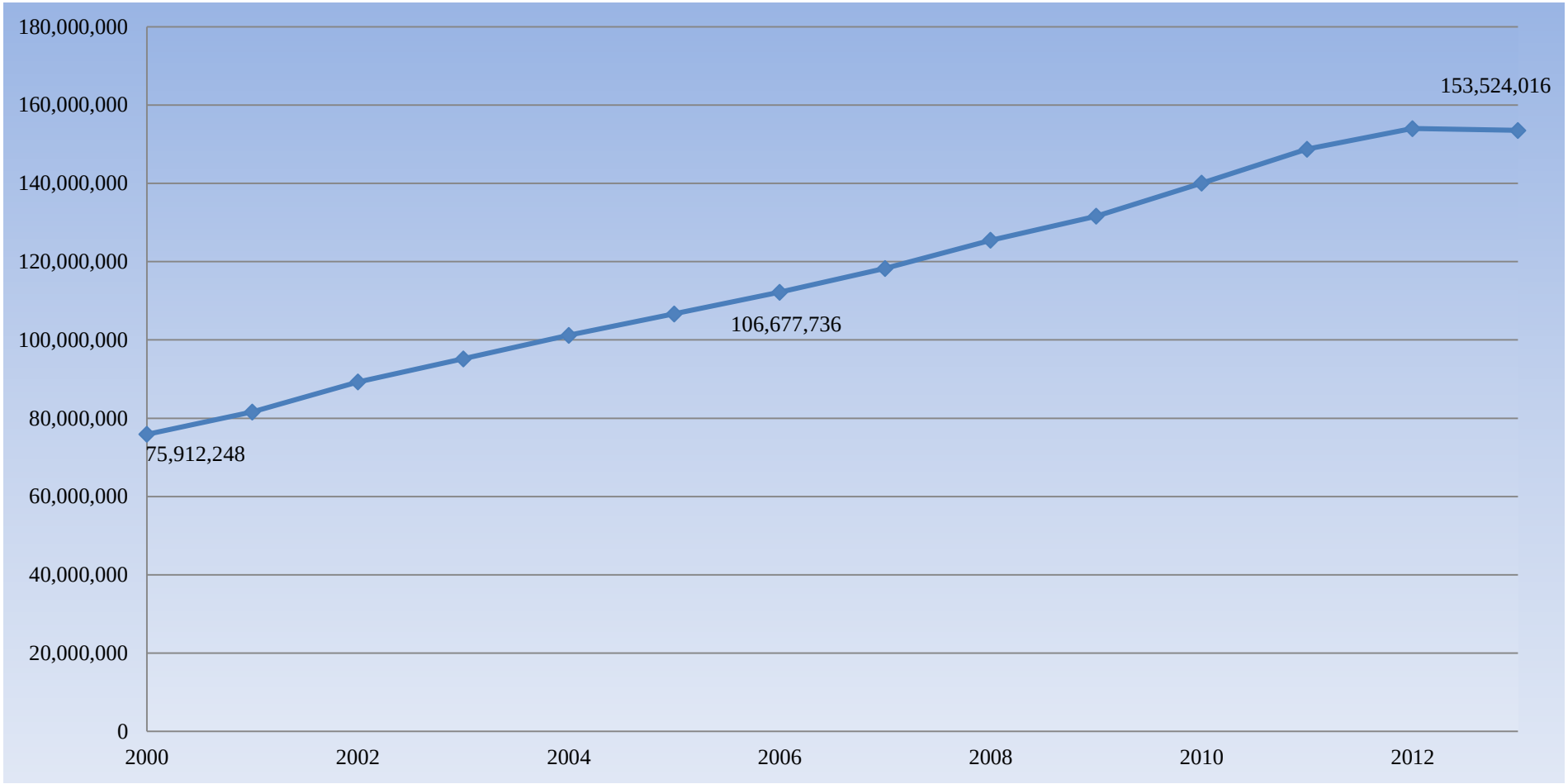


Source: Schofer & Meyer (2005, Figure 1 p. 899)



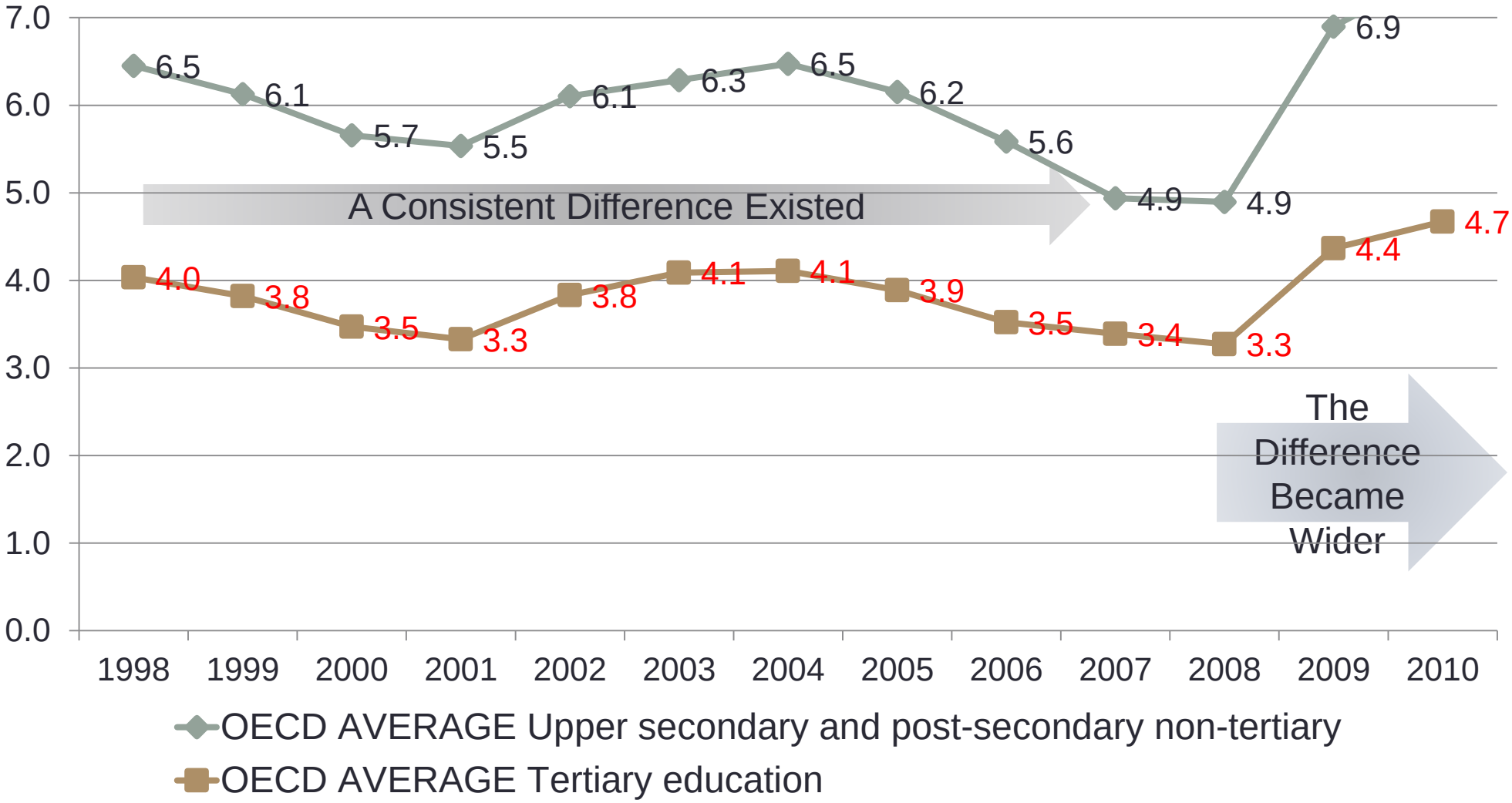
Notes: Total number of students enrolled in public and private tertiary education institutions in programmes on the bachelors, masters or equivalent (ISCED 6 and 7) level.
Source: World Bank (2016)

Entering the grad employment paradigm

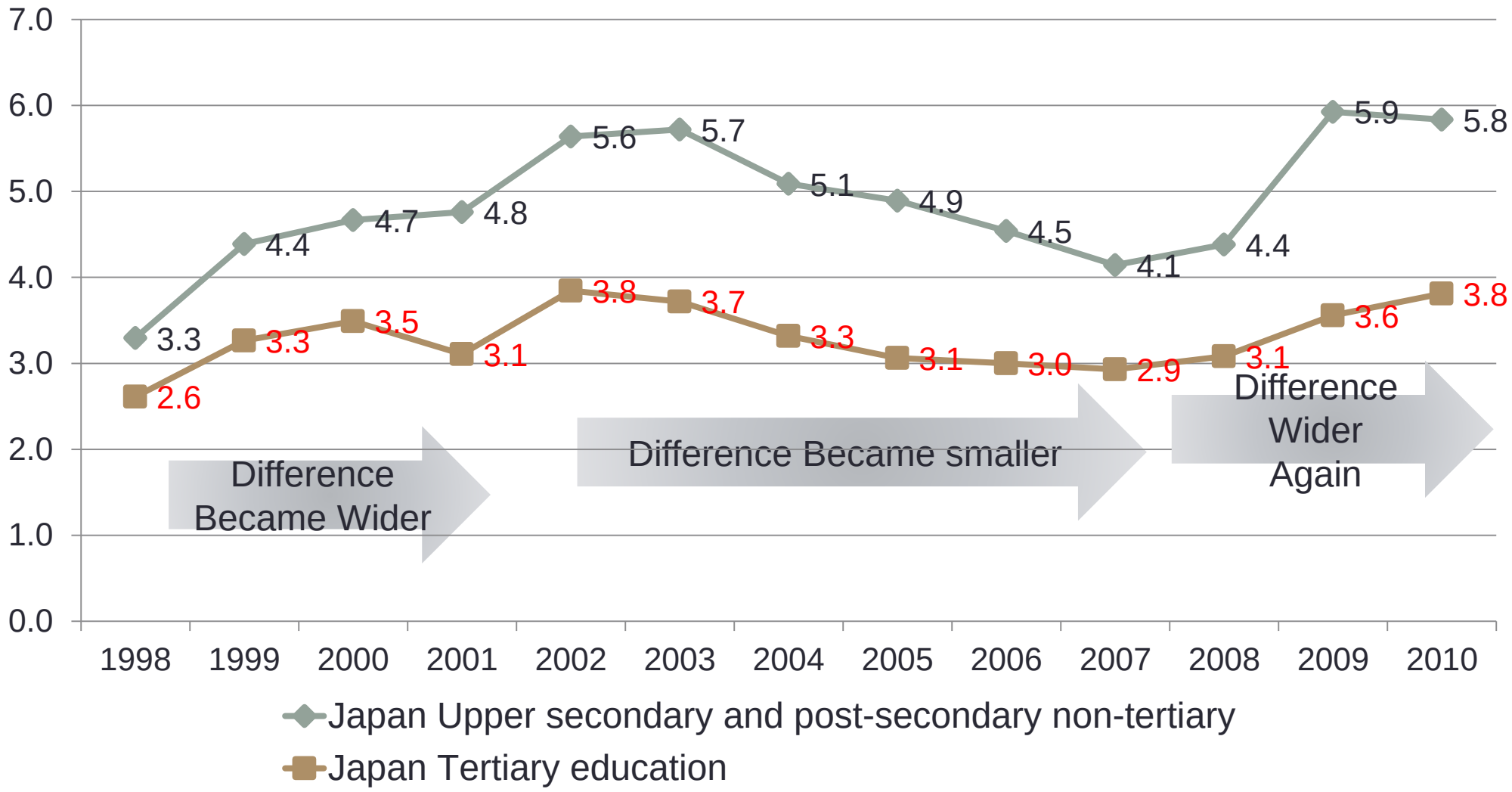
- 1960s & 1970s – Western industrialized countries
  - From elite to mass higher education
  - Computer revolution
- 1980s &1990s – China
  - Transition from planned to market economy
  - Toward knowledge economies
- Discourse
  - Match and mismatch
  - **Employability**

- In OECD countries and Japan
  - differences of unemployment rates between degree holders and upper-secondary leavers remains relatively stable ranging from 0.6% to 2.5%.
- In South Korea, this differences were shrinking dramatically

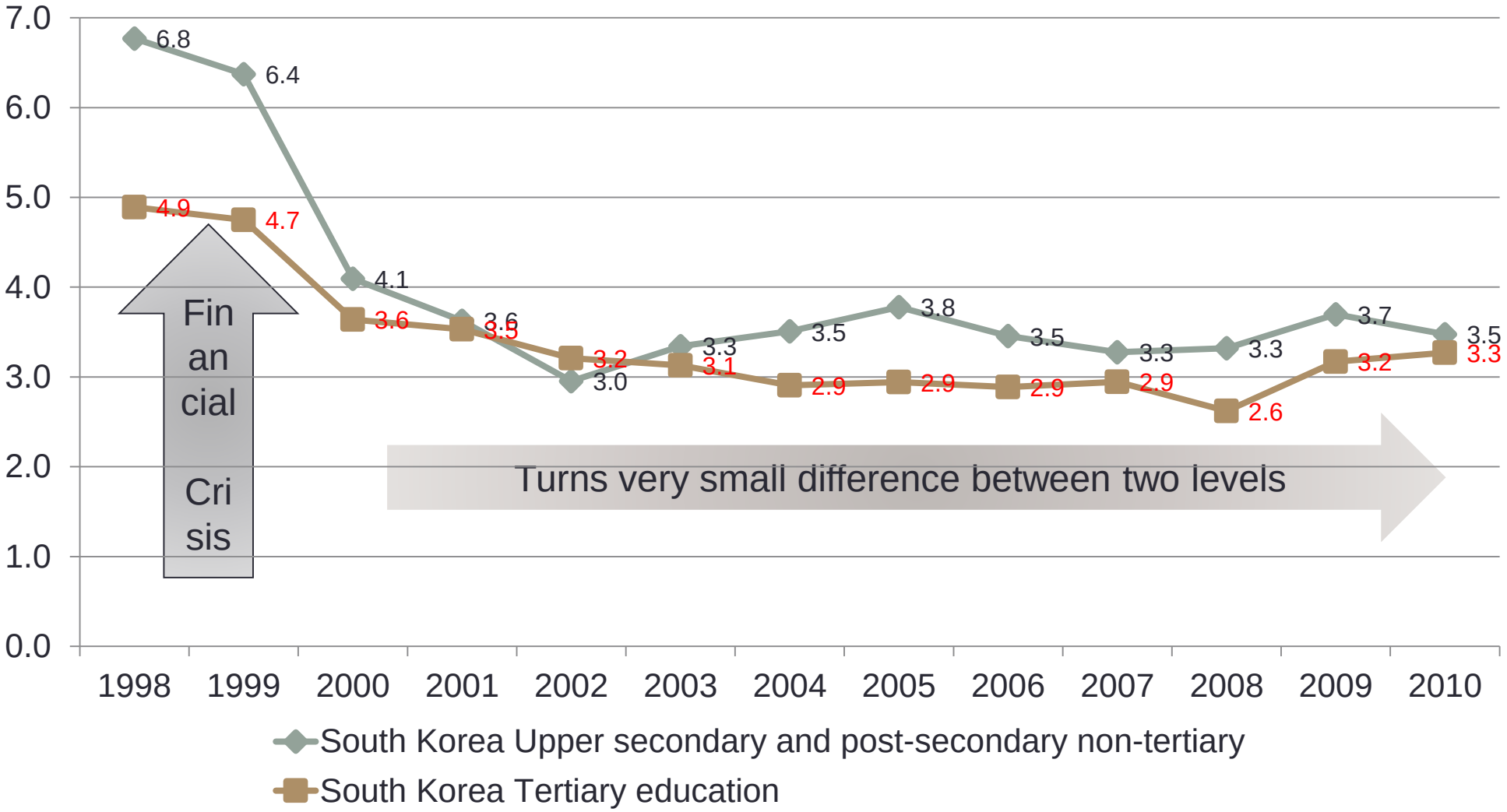
Unemployment Rates by Different Educational Attainment of OECD Average



Unemployment Rates with Different Educational Attainment in Japan



Unemployment Rates with Different Educational Attainment in South Korea

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Policies for university led graduate employment

- China case
  - How serious?
  - 2025 Innovative Nation
  - Tech progress & UBI?

China: Isomorphism or path dependency?

- Isomorphism
  - Interconnected world
  - Knowledge exchange
  - Labor mobility
  - innovative nation
  - Labor mobility
- Path dependency
  - Unique history, culture and society
  - Domestic economy and livelihood
  - Belt & Road.
  - Play by rules then change the rules

- Go beyond the paradigm of
  - Shortage
  - over-education
  - match/mismatch.
- Emphasize the role of the individual university, faculty, curriculum program
- Go to the heart of the question: What can the university do?

Employability vs. professional relevance

- Bologna Declaration (1999) does not advocate “employability”; but rather, expresses concern that the new bachelor programmes might have “too little relevance for the work of graduates.”

- Instead, it talks more about “work” (knowledge, competences, work tasks, job requirements).

- **“employability”** signifies a loss of general, theoretical, academic learning; loss of critical, creative, proactive learning; substitution of specific professional emphasis (laying the foundation or preparing for professions) by broad professional competence emphasis; and questionable ethics of strong involvement of universities in transition to employment.

- The European Commission stated that employability is:
  - **“A combination of knowledge, competences and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and progress during their career.”**
    - (European Commission. Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Access, Retention and Employability 2014. Brussels: EACEA, 2014 (Eurydice Brief)).

“Professional relevance”

- Better link between curricula, teaching and learning, knowledge and achievement, competences, work, and job requirements

- Better communication between subject matter specialists, teaching, learning and personality specialists, higher education and labor market specialists, work analysis specialists and employers.

Professional relevance

1. Academic/professional specialized knowledge
2. General cognitive competences (generic skills, broad knowledge, theories and methods, learning to learn, etc.)
3. Working styles (e.g. working under time constraints and perseverance)
4. General occupationally-linked values (e.g. loyalty, curiosity and achievement orientation)
5. Specific professionally related values (e.g. entrepreneurial spirit, service orientation)
6. Transfer competences (e.g. problem-solving ability)
7. Socio-communicative skills (e.g. leadership, team work, rhetoric)
8. Supplementary knowledge areas (foreign languages, ICT, etc.)
9. Ability to organize one's own life
10. Ability to handle the labor market (e.g. job search relevant knowledge and good self-presentation to employers)
11. International competences (e.g. knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures, comparative analysis, coping with unknown persons).

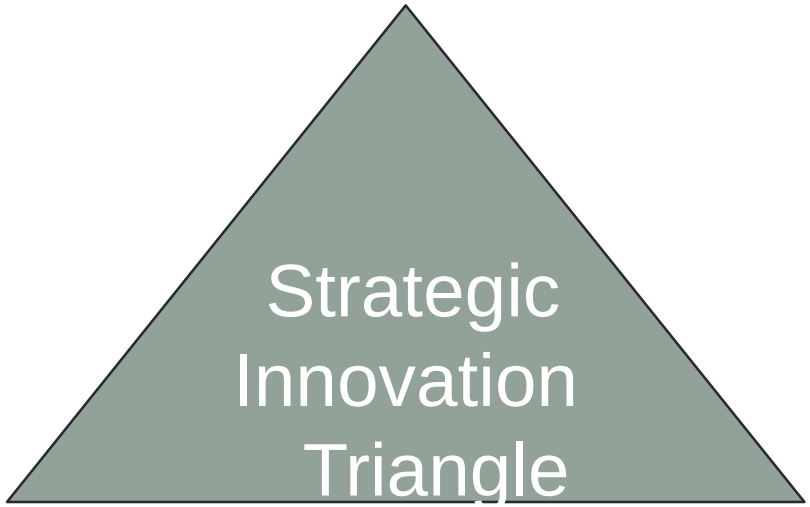
Teichler 2006

In a flat world,
average is
over

2025 Innovative nation

Creating an innovative nation

MEDIUM-TO-LONG TERM EDUCATION REFORM PLAN

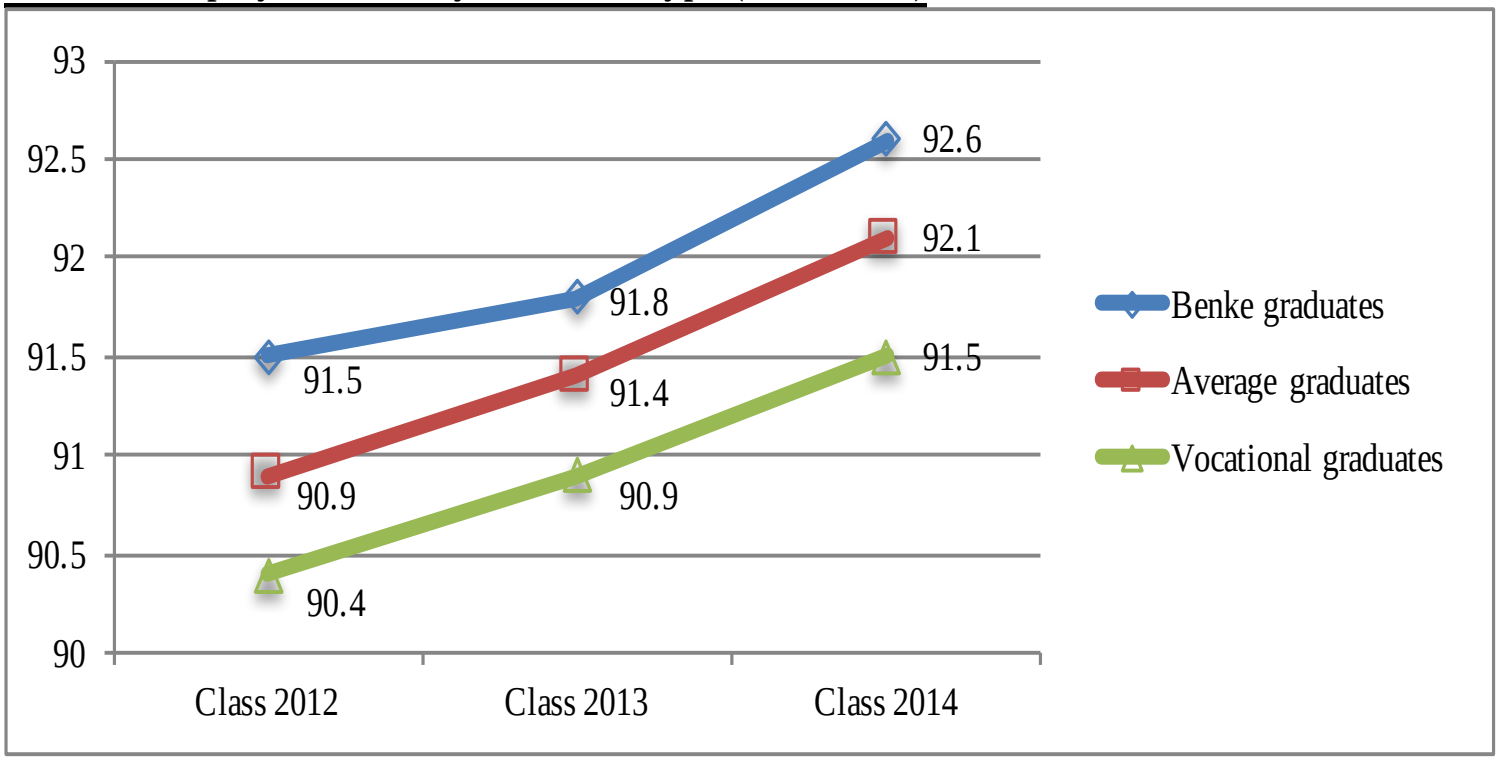


15 YEAR MEDIUM-TO-LONG TERM S&T PLAN 2006-2020

MEDIUM-TO-LONG TERM TALENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Inequality by institution type

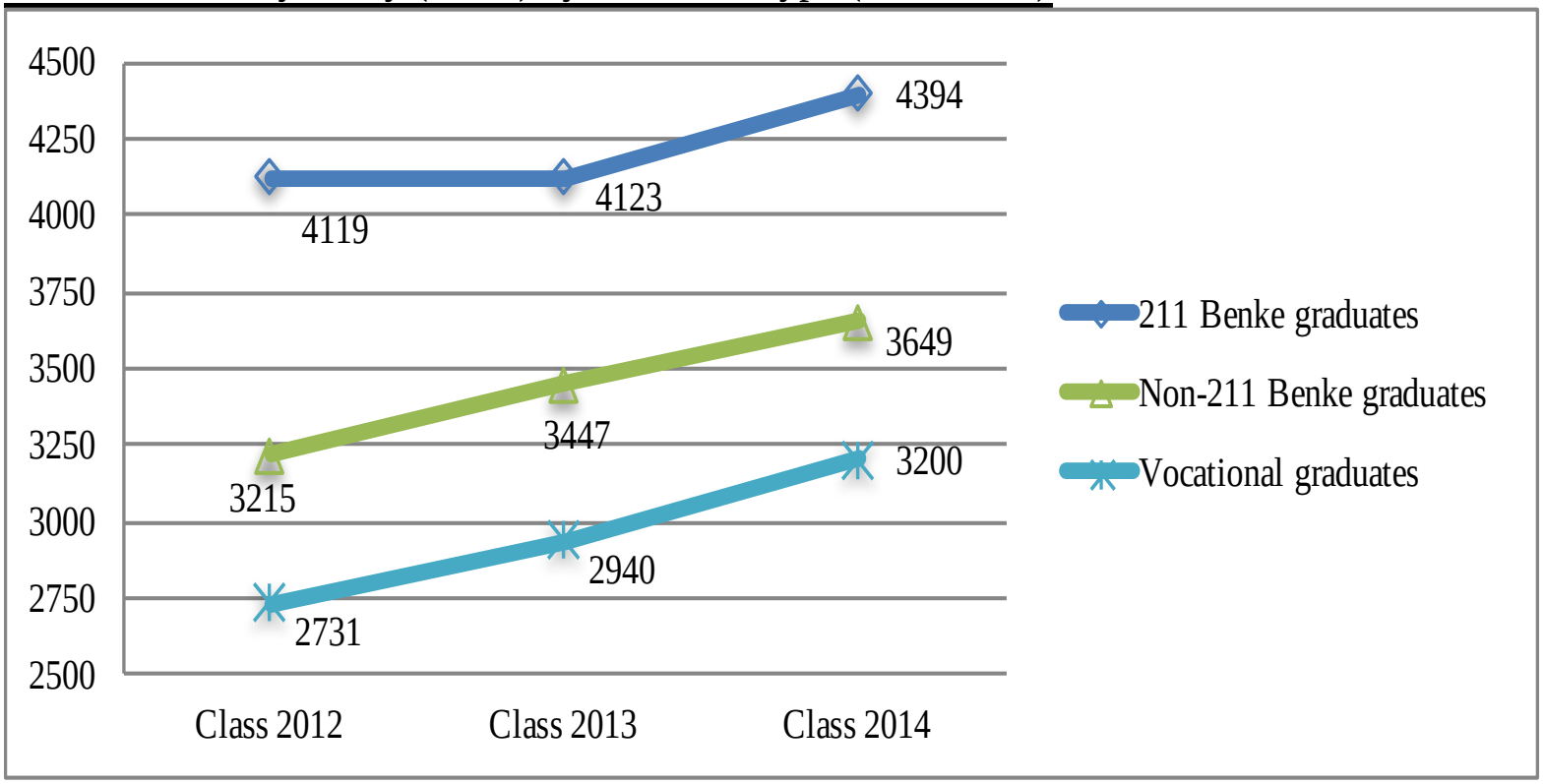
Graduate employment rate by institution type (2012-2014)



Note: Employment rate=No. of employed graduates/No. of graduates (excluding those in further studies).
Source: Adapted from MyCos (2015a:42-43, Graph 1-2-1).

Inequality by institution type

Graduate monthly salary (RMB) by institution type (2012-2014)



Source: Adapted from MyCos (2015b:77, Graphs 1-3-7 & 1-3-8).

Inequality by institution type

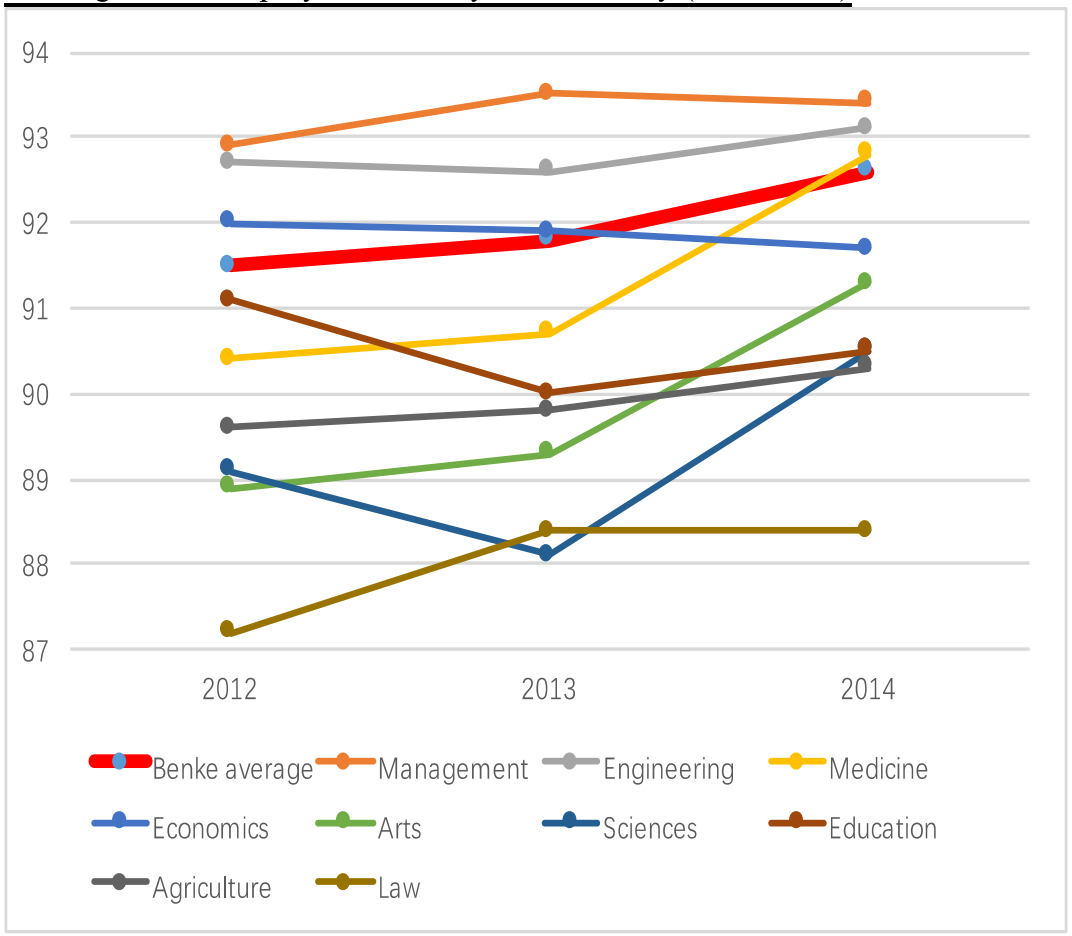
Relevance of major by institution type (2014)

Graduate type	Relevance of Major
211 Benke graduates	73%
Benke graduates	69%
Vocational graduates	62%

Notes: Rate of relevance=No. of graduates employed full-time on major-related jobs / No. of graduates employed full-time.
Source: Adapted from MyCos (2015a:90).

Inequality by field of study

Benke graduate employment rate by field of study (2012-2014)



Note: Employment rate=No. of employed graduates/No. of graduates (excluding those in further studies).
Source: Adapted from MyCos (2015:48, Graph 1-2-2).

micro questions

- **How are students responding to graduate labour markets?**
- **What are students doing to gain "positional advantage"?**
  - **Internships**
  - **Extra-curricular activities**
  - **International experience (e.g., student exchanges)**
  - **Networking and making connections**
  - **Others???**
- **How does this affect inequalities in gaining employment?**

Positional Conflict Theory + other theories

- Human Capital Theory
  - (e.g., Becker, 1964; Goldin & Katz, 2008)
- Signalling Theory
  - (e.g., Caplan, 2016; Spence, 1973)
- Cultural Capital Theory
  - (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984)
- Credentialism Theory
  - (e.g., Collins, 1979)
- “Public” Social Capital Theory
  - (e.g., Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995)
- “Private” Social Capital Theory
  - (e.g., Bian, 1997; Granovetter, 1973)

Where to start with policy analysis?

- Neoliberalism
- Neo-institutionalism
- Political economy (most Eastern Asian states)
  - But, policy evolution toward university autonomy (China 2016)

Recommend policies that:

- Provide more university autonomy to issue degrees
- Support professional relevance in a changing workplace
- Deepen cooperation: universities, government and industry
- Improve web based graduate employment
- Provide start-up incentives for universities and graduates
- Support reform and strengthening of Applied Universities.
- Address equity before it becomes more complicated
- Coordinate regional mobility

- 1. Central government – tracking and tracing
- 2. Provincial governments – coordinate industrialist and university partner
- 3. Universities- special measures for 2nd and 3rd tier, western regions in grad prep
- 4. Universities – begin career planning for 1st first year
- 5. Award universities for improved employment rates
- 6. Applied universities – support transition
- 7. Students – increase quotas for employment of women and minorities.

- Gender inequality in graduates labor market (Yue, 2013,2014)

Table 3 Placement rates of college graduates by gender and types of degrees												
	2003		2005		2007		2009		2011		2013	
Type of degree	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Three-year degree	35	30	59.8	50	71.9	66	67.8	62.3	78.3	74.3	81	75.5
Four-year bachelor	76.2	71.9	73.2	68.9	71.3	66.1	71.8	60.7	71.3	64.8	73.7	59
Graduates	86.1	84.7	82.5	79.4	83.9	82.4	74.3	59.7	77.5	73.3	88.5	82.4

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