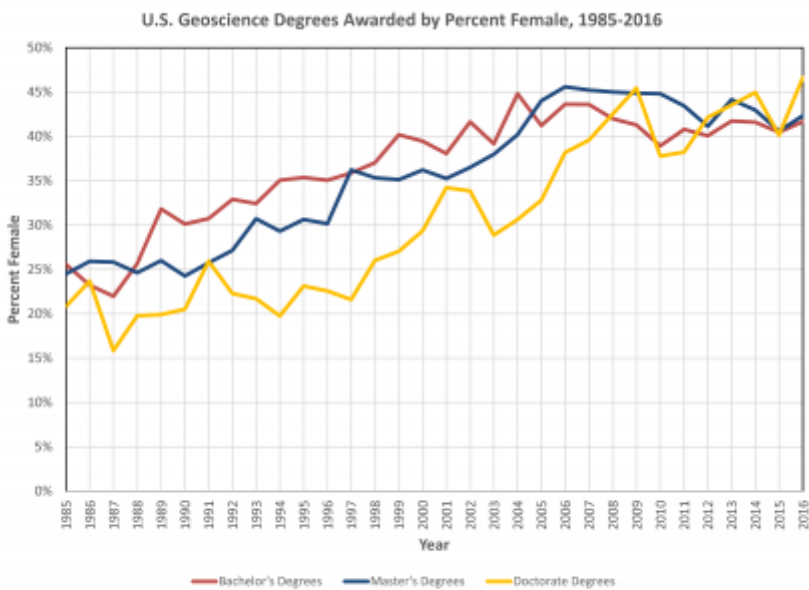

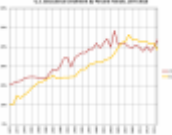
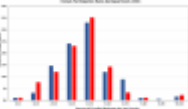


U.S. Female Geoscience Enrollments and Degrees Experience - Marked Change in 2016

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Thursday, December 28, 2017



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The participation rate of women in geoscience degree programs saw marked changes in 2016. There was a spate of doctoral degrees awarded to women in 2016, which has also been reflected in a decline in the participation rate of graduate enrollment of women. We observe that often December graduates and prior summer graduates are counted as “degrees awarded,” but not as “enrolled.” The percent of women receiving bachelor and master’s degrees remained steady, but undergraduate enrollment rates increased sharply to near historic highs at 44%.

We also examined the gender enrollment rates for graduates and undergraduates at U.S. institutions. In 2015, the mode for

undergraduate female enrollments in U.S. geoscience programs was 31-40% female and was 41-50% for graduate programs. This is compared to this year's modes being 41-50% level for both undergraduate and graduate programs.

The sharp increase in female undergraduate enrollment rates is most likely driven by the exiting of a male-dominated cohort. This cohort, which entered degree programs around 2012 was pursuing geoscience to gain employment in the shale gas fields. Though this cohort was overwhelmingly male, we continued to see absolute increases in female participation, which is now being reflected in the percentages.

 [Currents-124-GenderEnrollments2016.pdf](#)
