

# → **Fast Facts**

## → **U.S. workforce literacy**

A new ETS report looks at the convergence of three sociological and economic forces that will affect the future of U.S. society. They are: substantial disparities in skill levels (reading and math), economic changes (widening wage gaps), and demographic shifts (less education, lower skills). High school graduation rates peaked at 77 percent in 1969, fell back to 70 percent in 1995 and have stayed in this range into the current decade. The graduation rate for disadvantaged minorities is thought to be closer to 50 percent. Employment growth is expected to continue, with college labor market clusters (professional, management, and technical) expected to generate about 46 percent of all job growth between 2004 and 2014. The U.S. labor force is projected to grow more slowly over the next 20 years than it did between 1980 and 2000. None of this growth is predicted to come from native-born workers of prime working age (25 to 54). A larger share of workers will have minimal reading skills in 2030 than today.

Irwin Kirsch, Henry Braun, Kentaro Yamamoto, and Andrew Sum, "America's Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing our Nation's Future, Policy Information Report, Educational Testing Service," January 2007, [www.ets.org/Media/Education\\_Topics/pdf/AmericasPerfectStorm.pdf](http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/AmericasPerfectStorm.pdf). February 2, 2007

## → **Top academic workplaces**

While the majority of junior faculty at America's colleges and universities are satisfied at work, some institutions are doing extraordinarily well in this area. A survey by the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education in 2005 found that five universities (Auburn, Brown, Ohio State, Stanford, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) and one college (Davidson) achieved exemplary status in four of seven categories. The categories are: tenure, clarity and fairness; nature of work (workload, research and teaching environment, quality of students); effectiveness of key policies (e.g., mentoring, childcare, and leave); compensation; work and family balance; collegiality; and overall satisfaction.

Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE). Top Academic Workplaces, January 23, 2007, [gseacademic.harvard.edu/~coache/reports/20070123.html](http://gseacademic.harvard.edu/~coache/reports/20070123.html). February 1, 2007

## → **The future of news**

PBS's FRONTLINE program has produced a four-part series on the future of news. From the introduction: "Drawing on more than 80 interviews with key figures in the print, broadcast and electronic media, and with unequaled, behind-the-scenes access to some of today's most important news organizations, FRONTLINE correspondent Lowell Bergman examines the challenges facing the mainstream news media, and the media's reaction, in 'News War.'" The documentary delineates the ways in which in-depth reporting and the idea of reporter-source privilege are changing. The Web site provides access to the entire content. A teacher's guide for "News War," focusing on freedom and the press and the Constitution, will be available this month.

PBS. FRONTLINE: News War, February 13, 2007, [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/newswar/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/newswar/)

*Gary Pattillo is reference librarian at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, e-mail: [pattillo@email.unc.edu](mailto:pattillo@email.unc.edu)*