

# Labor Market Spotlight

## Postsecondary Instructors Vs. Related Occupations: How Do They Compare?

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This edition of Labor Market Spotlight examines the earnings of various professions and highlights the wages tied to postsecondary teaching roles within those same fields.

For those passionate about education and mentoring, becoming a postsecondary instructor can offer a meaningful and fulfilling career. It's an opportunity to share real-world knowledge with the next generation while continuing to engage deeply with your field.

The table below compares estimated employment, average salaries, and typical education requirements for select postsecondary instructors and their related occupations in New Jersey as of 2024. It provides a snapshot of how teaching roles stack up in terms of compensation and qualifications.

**Comparative Analysis of Employment and Earnings:  
Postsecondary Instructors vs. Related Occupations (2024)**

Occupational Title	Est. Employment	Average Salary	Common Education Requirement
Postsecondary Chemistry Teachers	750	\$114,610	Doctoral or professional degree <sup>1</sup>
Chemists	6,210	\$97,460	Bachelor's Degree
Postsecondary Engineering Teachers	1,170	\$114,150	Doctoral or professional degree
Civil Engineers	6,780	\$114,220	Bachelor's Degree
Postsecondary Economics Teachers	350	\$135,630	Doctoral or professional degree
Economists	110	\$110,270	Master's Degree
Postsecondary Education Teachers	1,870	\$88,470	Doctoral or professional degree
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	42,360	\$79,730	Bachelor's Degree
Postsecondary Library Science Teachers	130	\$88,850	Doctoral or professional degree
Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	3,510	\$81,250	Master's Degree
Postsecondary Social Work Teachers	380	\$83,240	Doctoral or professional degree
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	6,410	\$79,610	Bachelor's Degree



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**Take nursing, for example:** in 2024, New Jersey employed approximately 1,540 nursing instructors and 95,150 registered nurses. While nursing instructors typically earn slightly less than practicing nurses, their average salary approached \$100,000—making it a competitive and rewarding option. These roles often require a doctoral degree, though some institutions accept a master's degree. The investment in advanced education pays off in the ability to teach with authority and inspire future healthcare professionals.

Comparative Analysis of Employment and Earnings: Postsecondary Instructors vs. Related Occupations (2024) Nurses and Nursing Instructors			
Occupational Title	Est. Employment	Average Salary	Common Education Requirement
Postsecondary Nursing Instructors and Teachers	1,540	\$99,990	Doctoral or professional degree
Registered Nurses	95,150	\$106,990	Bachelor's Degree



**Similarly, the path to becoming a postsecondary law instructor closely mirrors that of practicing attorneys:** a four-year undergraduate degree, three years of law school, and passage of the state Bar exam. With this shared foundation, law teachers are uniquely positioned to offer students practical, experience-based insights. The role provides not only an intellectually stimulating environment but also the chance to shape the next generation of legal experts.

Comparative Analysis of Employment and Earnings: Postsecondary Instructors vs. Related Occupations (2024) Lawyers and Law Instructors			
Occupational Title	Est. Employment	Average Salary	Common Education Requirement
Postsecondary Law Teachers	N/A	\$146,830	Doctoral or professional degree
Lawyers	23,360	\$186,430	Doctoral or professional degree

<sup>1</sup> A doctorate or professional degree is an advanced level of academic or professional qualification. Doctorates, such as a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy), are research-focused and typically require the completion of a dissertation or thesis based on original research. Professional degrees, like an M.D. (Doctor of Medicine) or J.D. (Juris Doctor), are designed to prepare individuals for specific professions and usually involve practical training and examinations. These degrees signify a high level of expertise and are often prerequisites for certain academic, clinical, or legal careers.

<sup>2</sup>Data on educational attainment is available for the population age 25 and older.

**Technical Note:** The data published in this report are made possible due to thousands of New Jersey employers who participated in the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey over the past three years. Salary data not adjusted for inflation.

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