

December 2016 Future Plans Survey Executive Summary

Survey Methods

NC State conducted its semiannual Future Plans Survey of graduating seniors in the weeks immediately before and after December 2016 graduation, with commencement being held on December 16. The final population used in analysis consists of those undergraduate students who had applied to graduate by commencement. The December Future Plans Survey had a response rate of 52%, with 680 of the 1,303 seniors who had applied to graduate participating.

Plans Following Graduation

Over 80 percent of students graduating in December said their primary plan in the year after graduation was to be employed, with half of students reporting that they had already obtained employment for the coming year and the remaining 30 percent saying they were currently seeking or planning to seek employment. Seventeen percent of students indicated that their primary plan was to attend graduate/professional school.

Post-Graduation Employment Among Those Accepting a Full-Time Position

Ninety percent of graduating seniors who said they had obtained employment indicated that they would be working full-time. The remainder of this section on post-graduation employment focuses on those students who said they would be employed full-time.

About 40 percent of graduating seniors at NC State who had obtained full-time employment reported going on interviews for three or more positions, and nearly half received job offers for two or more positions. About 80 percent of students said the position in which they would be working was for a *private, for profit business or organization*, with an additional 13 percent saying they would be working for the *federal, state, or local government*. Two-thirds of those with full-time employment said the position in which they would be working was “directly related” to their major.

NC State graduates obtaining a full-time non-internship position reported an average starting salary of \$51,392 (median = \$53,750). Just over one-fourth of those with full-time employment upon graduation said they had received a signing bonus for the position in which they would be working, and close to half of those students said it was for \$5,000 or more. About 60 percent of students who said they would be working outside of North Carolina indicated that they had received an offer for a relocation package.

About three-fourths of graduating seniors said they would be working in North Carolina, with just over half saying they would be working in the Research Triangle area (e.g., Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill). The companies and organizations hiring the greatest number of NC State December graduates were Cisco, International Paper, NC State University, and IBM.

Nearly half of students who said they would be working full-time employment said that an *internship/externship* had been helpful in their job search. More than one-quarter of students cited *career fairs at NC State* and

applying for a job via ePACK as helpful resources in their job search (31% and 27%, respectively).

Just over half of students who had obtained a full-time position said they started their job search six or more months before graduation. By contrast, over three-fourths of students who indicated at the time of the survey that they had not yet found a position said they began their job search less than six months before graduation, with nearly 40 percent saying they had not begun their job search until within two months graduation.

Graduates Seeking Employment

Nearly 70 percent of those who reported at the time of the survey that they were currently looking for a job said that they had gone on an interview for at least one position during their most recent job search, with one-third having gone on interviews for three or more different positions.

Twenty percent of current job-seekers said that they had received at least one job offer. When these students were asked why they had not yet accepted a job offer, the most common reasons cited included *currently being in the process of negotiating or considering one or more job offers, the job not being a good fit for their interests or career goals, or dissatisfaction with the proposed compensation.*

Further Education

Seventeen percent of the 680 graduates who submitted the December 2016 Future Plans Survey said they were planning on going to graduate/professional school. About one-quarter said at the time of the survey *they have been accepted and know where they will be going* and an additional six percent said *they have been accepted but are still undecided on whether or not or where they will actually attend.* The remaining 70 percent said *they have applied, but have not yet been accepted* (31%) or *they have not yet applied, but plan to do so within the next year* (39%).

Almost all of those who said they had been accepted to graduate school and knew where they would be going said they would be staying in North Carolina, with two-thirds of all students going on to graduate school attending NC State University. Nearly all respondents with confirmed plans for graduate school said they would be attending their first choice school.

The majority of those who had been accepted into a program and knew the school they would be attending said they would enrolling in a master's degree program, with a small number enrolling in a doctoral or professional program.

Half of those who said they had been accepted to graduate/professional school and knew where they would be going indicated that they had received funding and/or awards as part of their acceptance into their program of study, with research assistantships and scholarships identified as the most common forms of funding awarded.

NC State Career-Related Experiences and Resources

Two-thirds of the students reported having had an *internship/externship or job in their field of study*, and about one-fifth of students said they had participated in a *class project specifically designed to work with a company/organization outside of NC State, and/or on a research project with a faculty member*.

While just about ten percent of students reported participating in a *co-op*, a co-op experience, along with *internships/externships*, was more likely than other types of work-related experiences to be viewed by those with such experiences as “very helpful” in securing their job offer.

About half of all graduating seniors who submitted the Future Plans Survey said they had gone to a career services office on campus, with the vast majority of these students giving very favorable ratings of the services they provided.

Use of career services offices varied wildly by college: Eighty-six percent of students in the College of Textiles (COT) said they gone to an NC State career services office at least once, with almost all of them going to the COT career services office. By contrast, only about 40 percent of students in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences said they had gone to a career services office at NC State, and no students in the College of Education said they had used any of the career services offices asked about.

Over 70 percent of students said they had used *ePACK*, the NC State Career Development Center’s internship and job posting website, and about two-thirds of students reported that they had *attended a career fair*.

When asked about their overall satisfaction with the career guidance they received from their academic department/college, 70 percent of students said they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied.”

Feelings about the Future

Overall, the December 2016 graduates have a positive outlook on their futures. When asked which statement comes closest to how they were feeling about their future, 84 percent of respondents said that they were either “very excited” or “excited.” A small percentage of respondents answered that they were “a bit confused/uncertain” or “very confused/uncertain” (16%). Most students, however, say report that they are “very prepared” or “somewhat prepared” for their future career paths (90%).

For more information about the Future Plans Survey contact:

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