

May 2017 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 May 2017 graduation, with commencement being held on May 13. The final population used in analysis consists of those undergraduate students who had applied to graduate by commencement. The May Future Plans Survey had a response rate of 59%, with 2,017 of the 3,412 seniors who had applied to graduate participating.

Plans Following Graduation

About three-fourths of students graduating in May said that 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 one-fourth saying they were currently seeking or planning to seek employment. Twenty-four 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-two percent of graduating seniors who said they had obtained employment indicated that they would be working full-time.

Just over half of graduating seniors at NC State who had obtained full-time employment reported going on interviews for three or more positions in their most recent job search, and half received job offers for two or more positions. About 75 percent of students said the position in which they would be working was for a *private, for profit business or organization*, with an additional 10 percent saying they would be working for the *federal, state, or local government*. Nearly 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 \$51,781 (median = \$53,750). About one-fifth of those having secured full-time employment upon graduation said they had received a signing bonus for the position in which they would be working, and of those half said it was for \$5,000 or more. Just over half of students who said they would be working outside of North Carolina reported that they had received an offer for a relocation package.

Two-thirds of graduating seniors indicated they would be working in North Carolina, with just under 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 May graduates were Cisco, Deloitte, and the US Navy.

Among a number of resources used in the job search process, students obtaining full-time employment were most likely to say that an *internship/externship* had been helpful in their job search (41%), followed by *career fairs at NC State* (32%).

Three-fourths of students who had obtained a full-time position said they started their job search six or more months before graduation. By contrast, three-fourths of students who indicated at the time of the survey that they were seeking but had not yet found a position said they began their job search *less than* six months before graduation, with 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 the job not being a good fit for their interests or career goals, dissatisfaction with the proposed compensation (e.g., salary too low), or currently being in the process of negotiating or considering one or more offers.

Further Education

Twenty-four percent of the 2,017 graduates who submitted the May 2017 Future Plans Survey said they were planning on going to graduate/professional school. Over three-fourths of them said at the time of the survey *they have been accepted and know where they will be going* and an additional two percent said *they have been accepted but are still undecided on whether or not or where they will actually attend*. The remaining 20 percent said *they have applied, but have not yet been accepted* (6%) or *they have not yet applied, but plan to do so within the next year* (14%).

About two-thirds of students 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 44 percent of all those 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.

Sixty-one percent 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 two-fifths enrolling in a doctoral (18%) or professional program (19%).

About 60 percent 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 scholarships, research assistantships, and teaching assistantships 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-fourth of students said they had participated on a *research project with a faculty member and/or a class project specifically designed to work with a company/organization outside of NC State*.

While less than ten percent of students reported participating in a *co-op, co-op experiences*, along with *internships/externships*, were 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.

Just over 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: Ninety-two 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, just 22 percent of students in the College of Education said they had used any of the career services offices asked about.

Over two-thirds of students said they had used *ePACK*, the NC State Career Development Center’s internship and job posting website, and/or 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 May 2017 graduates have a positive outlook on their futures. When asked which statement comes closest to how they were feeling about their future, 85 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” (13%). Almost all students, however, report that they feel “very prepared” or “somewhat prepared” for their future career paths (94%).

For more information about the Future Plans Survey contact:

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