

December 2018 Undergraduate Future Plans Survey Executive Summary

Survey Methods

NC State conducted its semiannual Undergraduate Future Plans Survey of graduating seniors in the weeks immediately before and after December 2018 graduation, with commencement being held on December 19. The final population used in analysis consists of those undergraduate students who had applied to graduate by the day prior to commencement and were conferred degrees. The December 2018 Undergraduate Future Plans Survey had a response rate of 50%, with 689 of the 1,366 graduates participating.

Plans Following Graduation

Eighty percent of students graduating in December said that their primary plan in the year after graduation was to be employed, with over half of students reporting that they had already obtained employment for the coming year and over one-fourth saying they were currently seeking or planning to seek employment. Nineteen 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-three percent of graduating seniors who said they had obtained employment indicated that they would be working full-time.

Forty-four percent of graduating seniors at NC State who had obtained full-time employment reported going on interviews for three or more positions during their most recent job search, and close to half received more than one job offer. 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 10 percent saying they would be working for the *federal, state, or local government*. Sixty-four percent 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 \$53,474 (median = \$56,250). Just over 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. In addition, eight percent said they had received company shares as a part of accepting their job offer, with about half estimating the value of their shares to be \$10,000 or more. 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.

Seventy-eight percent of graduating seniors indicated they would be working in North Carolina, with 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 SAS, NC State University, and IBM.

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 (46%), followed by *personal connections within the company* (26%).

Just over half of graduates who had obtained a full-time position said they started their job search six or more months before graduation and the majority received the offer for the position in which they will be working less than three months prior to graduation. By contrast, 83 percent 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 about four-in-ten saying they had not begun their job search until within two months graduation.

Graduates Seeking Employment

One-fourth of the December 2018 graduates indicated that they were planning to obtain employment in the coming year, but as of the time they completed the survey they had not yet found a position or had not yet begun their search. Sixty-three percent of those who reported 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 over one-fourth having gone on interviews for three or more different positions.

One-fifth 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 or currently being in the process of negotiating or considering one or more offers.

Further Education

Nineteen percent of the 689 graduates who submitted the December 2018 Undergraduate Future Plans Survey said they were planning on going to graduate/professional school. Just over one-third said at the time of the survey that *they have been accepted and know where they will be going* and an additional eight percent said *they have been accepted but are still undecided on whether or not or where they will actually attend*. Fifty-five percent said *they have applied, but have not yet been accepted* (32%) or *they have not yet applied, but plan to do so within the next year* (23%).

Almost all 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. Sixty-three percent of all those going on to graduate school would be attending NC State University. Ninety-four percent of 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, or some other type of degree granting program.

Thirty-six 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. The most commonly awarded type of funding was scholarships.

NC State Career-Related Experiences and Resources

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

More than half of those who participated in an *internship* or *job in their field of study*, and who had found or were seeking employment said the experience was “very helpful” in obtaining a job offer. In addition, while just 12 percent of students had had a *co-op* experience, more than half of them reported the experience being “very helpful” in securing a job offer.

About half of all graduating seniors who submitted the Undergraduate 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 by college: Sixty-nine percent of students in the College of Design said they gone to an NC State career services office at least once. By contrast, just 28 percent of students in the College of Natural Resources said they had used an NC State career services office.

Close to two-thirds of students said they had *attended a career fair* and/or used *ePACK*, the NC State Career Development Center’s internship and job posting website.

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

Feelings about the Future

Overall, the December 2018 graduates have a positive outlook on their futures. When asked which statement comes closest to how they were feeling about their futures, 96 percent of respondents said that they were either “very excited” or “fairly excited.” The vast majority of students also report that they feel “very prepared” or “somewhat prepared” for their future career paths (95%).

For more information about the Undergraduate Future Plans Survey contact:

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