

Combined Future Plans Surveys and Survey of Recent Graduates: Academic Year 2021-2022 Graduates Introduction, Research Methods, and Response Rates

The 2021-2022 Academic Year (AY21-22) reports present combined results from the December 2021 and May 2022 Future Plans Surveys and the September 2022 Survey of Recent Graduates. The Future Plans Surveys (FPS) and Survey of Recent Graduates (SRG) are designed to collect specific information on students' plans following graduation, including detailed information on employment, graduate/professional school attendance, and participation in career preparation activities while at NC State.

This introductory report provides an overview of the research methods and response rates. Additional results, including a 'fast facts' sheet, interactive dashboards, along with copies of the questionnaires, can be found on the Institutional Strategy and Analysis (ISA) [website](#).

Research Methods

The Future Plans Survey population for each survey administration includes all seniors who have submitted an "application for degree" and been approved by their academic department to graduate by the end of that semester. The survey is administered in the weeks surrounding fall and spring commencement exercises. The Fall 2021 survey was in the field from December 2 to January 12, and the Spring 2022 survey was in the field from April 28 to June 1.

The Survey of Recent Graduates, administered in September, is a follow-up survey to the FPS. Students who did not participate in the FPS when they graduated in either December or May, along with those who received their degree during either the Summer I or Summer II sessions (and therefore were not invited to participate in the FPS that academic year), are invited to participate in the SRG. In order to get updated information from them, SRG invitations are also sent to all graduates from the past year who indicated that, at the time they completed either the December or May FPS, they had not yet found full-time employment, had not yet decided on or been accepted into graduate school, or were still undecided on their plans. The September 2022 Survey of Recent Graduates was in the field from September 6 to October 5.

The final survey population for the combined FPS and SRG surveys is all those who received a baccalaureate degree during the academic year, i.e., December 2021, May 2022, and 2022 Summer I and II. For respondents who graduated in multiple semesters during the academic year and submitted a response to more than one FPS/SRG, only their response to the most recent survey is retained. More detailed information on the SRG population can be found in Appendix A.

Response Rates

A total of 6,066 undergraduate students received baccalaureate degrees from NC State in the 2021-2022 academic year (Table 1). This includes 1,411 students who graduated in Fall 2021, 4,192 who graduated in Spring 2022, and 463 who graduated in the Summer I (n=178) or Summer II (n=285) sessions of 2022. After retaining their most recent survey record, a total of 2,875 graduates are included in the AY21-22 FPS/SRG results (47.4%).

Twenty-three percent of Fall 2021 graduates completed either the FPS or SRG (23.2%). Summer I and II 2022 graduates are underrepresented in the AY FPS/SRG results, with under one fourth of summer graduates completing the SRG (22.9%). Spring 2022 graduates are slightly overrepresented in the final dataset, with about half participating in either the FPS or SRG (50.2%).

Table 1: AY21-22 FPS/SRG Response Rate, Overall and by Semester Graduated

| Semester Graduated | AY21-22 Population | | FPS/SRG Respondents | | Response Rate |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | N | % of population | N | % of respondents | % |
| Fall 2021 | 1,411 | 23.3% | 666 | 23.2% | 47.2% |
| Spring 2022 | 4,192 | 69.1% | 2,103 | 73.1% | 50.2% |
| Summer I 2022 | 178 | 2.9% | 36 | 1.3% | 20.2% |
| Summer II 2022 | 285 | 4.7% | 70 | 2.4% | 24.6% |
| Total | 6,066 | 100.0% | 2,875 | 100.0% | 47.4% |

Participation in the FPS/SRG in the 2021-2022 academic year did vary by college. The College of Design had the highest response rate, with 65 percent of Design graduates participating in the survey (64.5%; Table 2). The College of Engineering also enjoyed higher-than average participation, with a 55% response rate (54.7%).

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences had a lower-than-average participation rate, with 39 percent of graduates completing the FPS/SRG (38.9%). Therefore, humanities and social science graduates are slightly underrepresented in the results. Graduates from the Poole College of Management and the College of Sciences also had relatively lower participation rates (44.8% and 43.9%, respectively).

Table 2: AY21-22 FPS/SRG Response Rate, Overall and by College

| College/School | AY21-22 Population | | FPS/SRG Respondents | | Response Rate |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | N | % of population | N | % of respondents | % |
| College of Agriculture and Life Sciences | 743 | 12.2% | 365 | 12.7% | 49.1% |
| College of Design | 121 | 2.0% | 78 | 2.7% | 64.5% |
| College of Education | 158 | 2.6% | 77 | 2.7% | 48.7% |
| College of Engineering | 1,493 | 24.6% | 817 | 28.4% | 54.7% |
| College of Natural Resources | 384 | 6.3% | 187 | 6.5% | 48.7% |
| College of Humanities and Social Sciences | 1,208 | 19.9% | 470 | 16.3% | 38.9% |
| College of Sciences | 719 | 11.9% | 316 | 11.0% | 43.9% |
| Wilson College of Textiles | 198 | 3.3% | 98 | 3.4% | 49.5% |
| Poole College of Management | 1,042 | 17.2% | 467 | 16.2% | 44.8% |
| Total | 6,066 | 100.0% | 2,875 | 100.0% | 47.4% |

Overview of Responses Included in Final Results

Table 3 shows from which specific survey the responses included in this report are drawn. Among those respondents who graduated in Fall 2021, the December FPS record was used for 88 percent (88.4%), the May FPS record was used for two respondents, and the September SRG record was used for eleven percent (11.3%). Among Spring 2022 graduate respondents, the May FPS record was used for three-fourths of respondents (74.5%), while the September SRG record was used for one-fourth (25.4%). All but six responses of Summer I and II graduates come from the September SRG. Some graduates may have had the opportunity to fill out the FPS in a semester earlier than when they graduated by filing the “application for degree” for the spring semester and then earning the degree in Summer I or II.

Table 3: Survey Results Included, by Semester Graduated

| Survey Results Included in Report | Graduated Fall 2021 | | Graduated Spring 2022 | | Graduated Summer I 2022 | | Graduated Summer II 2022 | | Total | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| December FPS | 589 | 88.4% | 1 | 0.0% | . | . | . | . | 590 | 20.5% |
| May FPS | 2 | 0.3% | 1,567 | 74.5% | 1 | 2.8% | 5 | 7.1% | 1,575 | 54.8% |
| September SRG | 75 | 11.3% | 535 | 25.4% | 35 | 97.2% | 65 | 92.9% | 710 | 24.7% |
| Total | 666 | 100.0% | 2,103 | 100.0% | 36 | 100.0% | 70 | 100.0% | 2,875 | 100.0% |

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Appendix A: Survey of Recent Graduates Population and Response Rate

The Survey of Recent Graduates enables us to provide a more complete picture of the employment and further education of NC State's graduates from the previous academic year, taking into consideration those who might have taken a few months beyond graduation to obtain employment or enroll in graduate/professional school. This appendix further breaks down the composition of the population for the September 2022 SRG and the survey responses included in the AY reports.

Of the 6,066 graduates receiving baccalaureate degrees in AY21-22, 4,401 were eligible to complete the September 2022 Survey of Recent Graduates (Table 4). Fifty-four percent of the SRG population had not completed the Future Plans Survey when asked to do so when they graduated in either December or May (54.1%), and fourteen percent were Summer I or II graduates who had not been invited to participate in the FPS (14.1%). The remaining 32 percent had submitted their FPS when they graduated in either December or May (31.8%) but indicated at that time that they did not have confirmed plans for after graduation. Altogether, 22 percent of the SRG population had graduated in Fall 2021, 67 percent in Spring 2022, and 11 percent in either Summer I or II, 2022 (*not shown*).

Seven hundred and ten of the 4,401 AY21-22 graduates eligible to participate in the SRG submitted their survey for an overall response rate of 16 percent (16.1%). Graduates who had previously submitted their FPS but who had unconfirmed plans at the time were most likely to submit the SRG and update their information, with 226 of the 742 in this group participating in the SRG (30.5%). (As a reminder, the responses from surveys submitted at graduation in December or May are included in the combined FPS/SRG academic year results for those who did not participate in the SRG when asked to do so.) Twenty-two percent who graduated in Summer I or II – who had not been invited to participate in the FPS – submitted the SRG (22.3%). Those who had not submitted their FPS when they graduated in either the fall or spring semester were least likely to participate in the SRG, with just 12 percent submitting their SRG.

Table 4: Survey of Recent Graduates Response Rate, by type of respondent

| Group | AY21-22 Population | | FPS/SRG Respondents | | Response Rate |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | N | % of population | N | % of Respondents | % |
| FPS respondent (<i>with unconfirmed plans</i>) | 742 | 16.9% | 226 | 31.8% | 30.5% |
| FPS nonrespondent | 3,211 | 73.0% | 384 | 54.1% | 12.0% |
| Summer I or II graduate | 448 | 10.2% | 100 | 14.1% | 22.3% |
| Total | 4,401 | 100.0% | 710 | 100.0% | 16.1% |

Loss of NC State Graduate Emails

Due to an NC State Office of Information Technology (OIT) policy change enacted in 2022, NC State graduates retain their @ncsu.edu email account for *up to six months after graduation*, after which their accounts are disabled. This impacted response rates for the September 2022 SRG.

Of the SRG population that was scheduled to receive an SRG invitation on September 6, one in five emails sent to graduates bounced (e.g., were undeliverable; 20.8%). This means that 913 graduates' email accounts had expired, and they had not updated their NC State contact information. Ninety-six percent of these bad emails belonged to December 2021 graduates. We were subsequently able to identify valid email addresses and contact 209 graduates. This means that, ultimately, we were able to contact 84% of all those who completed an undergraduate degree in AY21-22 and who were eligible to take the SRG.