

## **December 2018 Graduate Future Plans Survey Executive Summary Master's Graduates**

*This report summarizes the results for master's degree recipients participating in the December 2018 Graduate Future Plans Survey. A separate document summarizing the results for doctoral degree recipients is located on the [OIRP website](#).*

### **Survey Methods**

Doctoral and master's students who applied to graduate in Fall 2018 were invited to participate in the semiannual Graduate Future Plans Survey. The survey was administered in the weeks immediately before and after commencement, held on December 19. The online survey had an overall response rate of 64.2 percent, with 615 of the 958 graduates responding; 506 of the 782 master's students conferring a degree submitted the survey for a response rate of 64.7 percent.

### **Plans Following Graduation**

Sixty percent of master's degree recipients said that at the time they completed the survey they had confirmed plans for employment in the year after graduation. One-fourth of master's graduates – including some who also indicated they had confirmed employment plans – said that they were seeking or planning to seek new employment or a change of employment. Eleven percent of master's graduates said they planned to return to graduate/professional school in the coming year to pursue another degree.

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

Almost all master's graduates with confirmed plans for employment reported that they will be working full-time. Forty-six percent of master's graduates who will be working full-time said that they will be starting a new position at a new place of employment. About one-third indicated they will be continuing to work at a place of employment they obtained during their graduate program and one-fifth said they will be continuing at a place of employment they had prior to the start of their graduate program.

Among the master's graduates who said they will be working full-time in a position they accepted at the time of graduation or for which they began working during the course of their graduate program:

- Sixty-two percent said they began looking for employment six or more months prior to graduation
- Sixty-one percent reported going on interviews for three or more different positions during their job search, with 29 percent going on interviews for five or more positions
- Just under half said they had received more than one job offer from which to choose
- Over half indicated receiving the offer for the position they finally accepted three or more months prior to graduation
- Over 40 percent said that *LinkedIn* and *internships/externships* had been helpful resources in their job search

Forty-eight percent of master's graduates who said they will be continuing to work full-time at a place of employment they had obtained prior to or during their graduate program indicated they would receive a salary increase and/or a promotion/title change contingent upon receiving their degree. One-fourth indicated they would be getting both a salary increase and a promotion/title change, while one-fifth said they would be getting only a salary increase. An additional four percent said they would be getting only a promotion/title change and would not receive an increase in their salary.

Among all master's graduates who said they will be working full-time in the coming year, close to three-fourths said they will be working for a *private, for profit business or organization*. Eleven percent said they will be working for a *U.S. preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school/school system*, with an additional seven percent working in the *federal, state, or local government*. Eighty percent of master's graduates indicated the position in which they will be working is "directly related" to their field of study.

Half of master's graduates who will be working full-time said they will be staying in North Carolina, with 38 percent working in the Research Triangle area (e.g., Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill). The top employers of master's degree recipients were Apple and Qualcomm.

NC State master's graduates securing full-time employment reported an average salary in the coming year of \$81,877 (median = \$77,500). Thirty-six percent said they had received a signing bonus upon accepting their position, and of those indicating the amount, over half said it was for \$10,000 or more. In addition, one-fourth of master's graduates reported receiving company shares as part of their job offer and over half specified that the estimated value of the company shares was for \$50,000 or more at the time of they accepted the position. Seventy percent of those who said they will be working outside of North Carolina indicated they had received an offer for a relocation package.

## **Graduates Seeking Employment**

As noted above, about one-fourth of master's degree recipients said they were seeking or planning to seek employment. Ninety-four percent of these graduates indicated at the time of the survey that they were unemployed, with the remaining six percent having some type of full- or part-time employment, but looking or planning to look for a new position.

Forty-four percent of master's graduates who at the time of the survey said they were actively seeking employment or a change of employment indicated beginning their search less than three months prior to graduation. Three-fourths indicated they had gone on an interview for at least one position during their most recent job search, with about one-fourth going on interviews for four or more different positions.

One-fourth of master's graduates looking for a position said they had received at least one job offer, with six percent saying they had received two or more job offers. The majority of master's graduates who reported receiving at least one job offer indicated at the time of the survey that *they were in the process of negotiation with one or more specific organizations*.

## Further Education

Eleven percent of the 506 master's graduates who submitted the December 2018 Graduate Future Plans Survey said they were planning to continue their education in pursuit of another degree. Forty-seven percent of them said at the time of the survey that *they are already enrolled and are pursuing the degree* and an additional seven percent indicated *they have been accepted and know where they will be going*. Sixteen percent reported they *have been accepted but are still undecided on whether or not or where they will actually attend or they have applied, but have not yet been accepted*. Finally, 29 percent said *they had not applied, but plan to do so in the coming year*.

Among the master's degree recipients who at the time of the survey were enrolled in another graduate program or who had been accepted and knew where they will be going:

- Eighty-seven percent are staying at NC State University
- Eighty-four percent will be enrolled in a PhD program
- Ninety percent have received funding and/or awards they will use while pursuing their next degree

## NC State Professional Development Experiences and Resources

Forty-three percent of all master's graduates indicated they had had an *internship* during the course of their graduate program and one-fourth said they had had a *job in their field of study*.

Among respondents who said they had obtained employment or were seeking employment, 72 percent of master's graduates who said they had had a *job in their field of study* rated the experience as "very helpful" in securing a job offer. Similarly, about 71 percent of those participating in a *co-op* or *internship* rated the experience they had as "very helpful" in their job search.

Seven percent of master's graduates said they had *published at least one article or creative work in a peer-reviewed journal* while pursuing their degree and 14 percent of master's graduates said they had *presented at least one research paper, poster, or creative work at a conference in their field*.

Half of master's graduates said they had gone to a career services office on campus at least once, with 41 percent going to NC State's Career Development Center. The vast majority of those who had gone to a campus or college career services office gave very favorable ratings of the services they provided.

Half of master's graduates said they had used *ePACK*, the NC State Career Development Center's job posting website and over 40 percent said they had *attended a career fair*.

When asked about their overall satisfaction with the career guidance they received from their academic department/college, two-thirds of master's graduates said they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the career guidance they had received.

### **Feelings about the Future**

When asked which statement comes closest to how they were feeling about their future plans, 70 percent of master's graduates said they were "very excited" about what they will be doing, and just four percent said that they were "not very excited" or "not at all excited." Ninety-six percent of master's graduates indicated they feel "very prepared" (63%) or "somewhat prepared" (34%) for their future career paths.

**For more information about the Graduate Future Plans Survey contact:**

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Posted: May, 2019