

May 2018 Graduate Future Plans Survey Executive Summary Master's Graduates

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

Survey Methods

Doctoral and master's students who applied to graduate in Spring 2018 were invited to participate in the inaugural administration of the Graduate Future Plans Survey. The survey was administered in the weeks immediately before and after commencement, held on May 12. The online survey had an overall response rate of 69.3 percent, with 1,218 of the 1,758 graduates responding; 1,075 of the 1,565 master's students conferring a degree submitted the survey for a response rate of 68.7 percent.

Plans Following Graduation

Sixty-four 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-third of master's graduates – including some who also indicated they had confirmed employment plans – indicated that they were seeking or planning to seek new employment or a change of employment. Thirteen 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.

Respondents were asked what their employment plans would constitute, and were given the option to select multiple responses. About half of master's graduates securing full-time employment said they have accepted a new position to begin after graduation. 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 during the course of their graduate program:

- Fifty-five percent said they began looking for employment six or more months prior to graduation
- Sixty-two percent reported going on interviews for three or more different positions during their job search, with 15 percent going on interviews for 10 or more positions
- Just over half indicated they had received more than one job offer from which to choose
- About 30 said indicated that *LinkedIn* and *internships/externships* had been helpful resources in their job search

About 40 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-fifth indicated they would be getting both a salary increase and a promotion/title change, while 16 percent said they would be getting only a salary increase. An additional three 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, two-thirds 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 eight percent working in the *federal, state, or local government*. Eighty-four percent of master's graduates indicated the position in which they will be working is "directly related" to their field of study.

Fifty-seven percent 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 employer of master's degree recipients was the Wake County Public School System.

NC State master's graduates securing full-time employment reported an average salary in the coming year of \$78,776 (median = \$77,500). About one-third said they had received a signing bonus upon accepting their position, and of those indicating the amount, close to half said it was for \$10,000 or more. In addition, 14 percent 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 \$20,000 or more at the time of they accepted the position, with about one-fourth indicating the shares were valued at \$50,000 or more. Close to 60 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-third of master's degree recipients said they were seeking or planning to seek employment. Eighty-five percent of these graduates indicated at the time of the survey that they were unemployed, with the remaining 15 percent having some type of full- or part-time employment following graduation, but looking or planning to look for a new position.

Forty-six 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. About 70 percent indicated they had gone on an interview for at least one position during their most recent job search, with 36 percent going on interviews for three 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 large 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

Thirteen percent of the 1,075 master's graduates who submitted the May 2018 Graduate Future Plans Survey said they were planning to continue their education in pursuit of another degree. Half said at the time of the survey that *they are already enrolled and are pursuing the degree* and an additional one-fourth indicated *they have been accepted and know where they will be going*. Three 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, *one-fifth 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:

- Three-fourths are staying at NC State University
- About 80 percent will be enrolled in a PhD or EdD program
- Fifteen percent will be pursuing another master's degree and a small number will be enrolled in a professional degree program
- Over half have received funding and/or awards they will use while pursuing their next degree

NC State Professional Development Experiences and Resources

Forty-one percent of all master's graduates indicated they had an *internship* during the course of their graduate program and one-fifth said they had a *practicum* or *teaching assistantship*.

While just eight percent of master's graduates had a *co-op* experience, 70 percent of those having such an experience rated it as "very helpful" in securing a job offer. Similarly, two-thirds of those having a *job in their field of study* rated the experience as "very helpful" in their job search. In addition, among the small number of master's graduates who reported having an *externship*, all six indicated that the experience had been "very helpful" in securing a job offer.

Four 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 12 percent of master's graduates said they had *presented at least one research paper, poster, or creative work at a conference in their field*.

Just under half of master's graduates said they had gone to a career services office on campus at least once, with about 30 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.

Just over 40 percent of master's graduates said they had used *ePACK*, the NC State Career Development Center's 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, 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 two percent said that they were "not very excited" or "not at all excited." Ninety-seven percent of master's graduates indicated they feel "very prepared" (59%) or "somewhat prepared" (38%) for their future career paths.

For more information about the Graduate Future Plans Survey contact:

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