

May 2019 Graduate Future Plans Survey Executive Summary Master's Graduates

This report summarizes the results for master's degree recipients participating in the May 2019 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 Spring 2019 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 May 11. The online survey had an overall response rate of 66.2 percent, with 1,240 of the 1,874 graduates responding; 1,088 of the 1,657 master's students conferring a degree submitted the survey for a response rate of 65.7 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. Thirty percent 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. Fourteen 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. Fifty-two 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. Twenty-four percent indicated they will be continuing to work at a place of employment they obtained during their graduate program and one-fourth 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:

- Fifty-five percent said they began looking for employment six or more months prior to graduation
- Over half reported going on interviews for four or more different positions during their job search, with one-fifth going on interviews for more than ten positions
- Fifty-five percent said they had received more than one job offer from which to choose
- Forty-eight percent indicated receiving the offer for the position they finally accepted three or more months prior to graduation
- Master's students were most likely to identify *LinkedIn* as a helpful resource during their job search (selected by 33% of master's graduates)

Thirty-seven 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 15 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*. Seven percent said they will be working for a *U.S. preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school/school system*, with an additional six percent working in a *U.S. four-year college or university*. Eighty-four percent of master's graduates indicated the position in which they will be working is "directly related" to their field of study.

Over half of master's graduates who will be working full-time said they will be staying in North Carolina, with 40 percent working in the Research Triangle area (e.g., Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill). The top employers of master's degree recipients were Amazon, Ernst & Young (EY), and NC State University.

NC State master's graduates securing full-time employment reported an average salary in the coming year of \$80,806 (median = \$82,500). Thirty-eight 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, 17 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 \$50,000 or more at the time of they accepted the position. Fifty-eight 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, 30 percent of master's degree recipients said they were seeking or planning to seek employment. While the majority of these graduates indicated at the time of the survey that they were unemployed, 15 percent reported having some type of full- or part-time employment and were looking or planning to look for a new position.

Three-fourths 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 six months prior to graduation. Seventy-three percent indicated they had gone on an interview for at least one position during their most recent job search, with one-third going on interviews for three or more different positions.

One-fifth of master's graduates looking for a position said they had received at least one job offer, with four 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

Fourteen percent of the 1,088 master's graduates who submitted the May 2019 Graduate Future Plans Survey said they were planning to continue their education in pursuit of another degree. One-third of them said at the time of the survey that *they are already enrolled and are pursuing the degree* and an additional 32 percent indicated *they have been accepted and know where they will be going*. Six 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:

- Three-fourths are staying in North Carolina, with 60 percent staying at NC State University
- Sixty-nine percent will be enrolled in a PhD program
- Three-fourths have received funding and/or awards they will use while pursuing their next degree

NC State Professional Development Experiences and Resources

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

Among respondents who said they had obtained employment or were seeking employment, two-thirds 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, more than half of master's graduates having had an *externship, clinical placement, internship, co-op, practicum, or research assistantship* rated the experience(s) they had as "very helpful" in their job search.

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

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

Forty-two percent of master's graduates said they had used *ePACK*, the NC State Career Development Center's job posting website and over 38 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, 73 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" (61%) or "somewhat prepared" (36%) for their future career paths.

For more information about the Graduate Future Plans Survey contact:

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