

May 2020 Graduate Future Plans Survey Highlights

NC State conducted its semiannual administration of the Graduate Future Plans Survey in May 2020. Doctoral and master's students who applied to graduate in May 2020 were sent email invitations in the weeks immediately surrounding the finals and graduation period encouraging them to participate in the survey. Of the 1,776 graduate students receiving their degrees in May 2020, 1,228 completed the survey for a response rate of 69.1 percent. Seventy-six percent of doctoral degree recipients (146 out of 192) and 68 percent of master's degree recipients (1,082 out of 1,584) participated.

Employment: Seventy-three percent of doctoral graduates and 54 percent of master's graduates said at the time they completed the survey that they had confirmed employment plans for after graduation. Almost all of these doctoral and master's graduates planned to work full-time in the coming year. Over half of graduates with full-time employment said they will be working in North Carolina, with 42 percent staying in the Triangle area (e.g., Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill). Doctoral graduates report an average salary in the coming year of \$83,196 (median = \$77,500) and master's graduates report an average salary of \$83,877 (median = \$82,500). Seventeen percent of doctoral graduates and 36 percent of master's graduates said they had received a signing bonus as part of accepting their job offer, with 53 percent of those getting a signing bonus reporting that the amount was for \$10,000 or more. Eleven percent of doctoral graduates and 17 percent of master's graduates reported receiving company shares at the time they received their job offer, with 46 percent estimating the value of the company shares they received to be \$50,000 or more at the time they accepted the position. Fifty-seven percent of both doctoral and master's graduates who said they will be working outside of North Carolina indicated they had received an offer for a relocation package.

The job search: Sixty-seven percent of doctoral graduates and 54 percent of master's graduates with full-time employment in a position they had obtained either during their graduate program or that will begin after graduation stated that they began searching for a job six or more months before graduation. Forty-eight percent of graduates said they had gone to interviews for five or more positions prior to accepting an offer. Just under half of all graduates with full-time employment that began during their graduate program or that was obtained at the time of graduation indicated receiving more than one job offer from which to choose. Fifty-eight percent of doctoral graduates and 53 percent of master's graduates received the offer for the position they accepted three or more months prior to graduation. Thirty-eight percent of doctoral graduates indicated that an *NC State faculty member* had been helpful in their job search. In contrast, master's graduates were most likely to identify *on-campus interviewing* opportunities as a helpful resource during their job search.

Still seeking employment: One-fourth of doctoral graduates and 30 percent of master's students said at the time of the survey that they were actively seeking employment or planned to do so in the coming year. In addition, 34 percent of doctoral graduates and 35 percent of master's graduates who were currently employed full- or part-time at the time of graduation said they were also planning to actively seek new employment after graduation.

Further education: Thirteen percent of master's degree recipients said they planned to continue in graduate/professional school to pursue another degree. Sixty-five percent of master's graduates who were either already enrolled in a new program at the time of the survey or had been accepted and knew where they will be going reported that they will be staying at NC State. Eighty-four percent of master's graduates who have enrolled or who have been accepted will be pursuing a PhD; 11 percent would be pursuing another master's degree.

Professional development opportunities: All of the doctoral graduates and 95 percent of master's graduates participated in at least one work-related experience while pursuing their degree. The majority of doctoral degree recipients participated in a *research assistantship* (68.6%) and/or a *teaching assistantship* (57.9%) while at NC State. In contrast, the most common work-related experiences reported by master's degree recipients were *internships* (40.3%), followed by a *practicum* (22.9%). Graduate students typically viewed the work-related experiences they had as "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful" in securing a job offer.

Seventy-four percent of doctoral graduates and 11 percent of master's graduates *presented a research paper, poster, or creative work at a conference* at least once during their graduate program. Sixty percent of doctoral graduates and four percent of master's graduates *published at least one article or creative work in a peer-reviewed journal* during their graduate program, with 14 percent of doctoral graduates publishing five or more articles/creative works while earning their degree.

Overall satisfaction: Ninety-one percent of May 2020 graduates said that, overall, they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their graduate program. Fifty-nine percent of graduates say they are "very prepared" and 69 percent are "very excited" about what they will be doing in their future career path.

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