

December 2025 Graduate Future Plans Survey Introduction, Research Methods, and Response Rates

This report provides an overview of the research methods and response rates for the Graduate Future Plans Survey (GFPS), administered by University Data and Analytics (UDA) at NC State University. The GFPS is designed to collect specific information on master's and doctoral degree earners' plans following graduation, including details of their employment, further graduate/professional school attendance, and participation in career-preparation activities while at NC State. Results from the survey can be found on the UDA [website](#).

Research Design

The December GFPS is administered at the end of each fall semester. In preparing the surveys for online administration, ISA identifies the survey population, notifies and coordinates with survey contacts in each academic unit regarding promotional activities to encourage participation, and develops and sends email invitations and reminders. After data collection ends, ISA analyzes the data and distributes reports on the results.

The December 2025 GUFPS was in the field from November 24 through January 9, with commencement being held on December 13. On November 24, all students who as of that day had applied to graduate in December were sent an email from their college dean inviting them to participate in the survey. The first follow-up reminder email was sent to non-respondents from their college associate dean one week later on December 1. On December 9, the second reminder email came from the Executive Director of the Career Development Center for students in a college without its own career services office, and from the director of the student's college career services office (or equivalent) if their college did have such an office. The final two reminders came from the Assistant Vice Provost for Institutional Survey Research and Analysis on December 12 and January 8. On each of the days that reminders were sent to non-respondents, UDA identified those who had applied to graduate during the intervening period and sent them a reminder as well.

In addition to the invitation and follow-up emails, ISA engaged in other promotional activities to boost response rates. Various administrators, faculty/staff, and career services employees who work with graduate students were encouraged to contact their students directly and remind them about the survey. A flyer and QR code were distributed to survey contacts in each department who were encouraged to incorporate them into communications with their graduating master's and doctoral students. Some students, therefore, might have received additional requests to participate in the survey via email, flyer, and/or other graduation-related communications.

Students were offered incentives to encourage participation in the survey. Four respondents who completed the survey by midnight on commencement day (December 13) were randomly selected to receive a \$25 Amazon eGift Card. In addition, two respondents who submitted the survey by the final deadline of January 9 were randomly selected to each receive a \$50 Amazon eGift Card.

Response Rates

The final December 2025 GFPS population consists of 905 master's and doctoral students who had applied to graduate in fall 2025 and were conferred degrees as of February 10, 2025 (202 doctoral students and 703 master's students). Of these students, 473 participated in the Graduate Future Plans Survey for an overall response rate of 52%. Participation in the survey was slightly lower among master's students (51.5%) compared to doctoral students (55.0%).

Table 1: Response Rates, by Degree Received

Degree	Dec 2025 Graduating Class (N)	Percent of Population	Survey Respondents (N)	Percent of Survey Respondents	Response Rate
Doctoral	202	22.3%	111	23.5%	55.0%
Master's	703	77.7%	362	76.5%	51.5%
Total	905	100.0%	473	100.0%	52.3%

Participation rates for the survey varied by college/school. In looking at master's and doctoral programs combined (Table 2), the College of Design had the highest response rate (86.7%), followed by the Wilson College of Textiles (69.6%), the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (68.2%), the College of Veterinary Medicine (66.7%), and the College of Education (66.2%). Participation was lowest for the Poole College of Management (37.5%).

Tables 3 and 4 provide response rates by college, separately, for master's and doctoral degree earners.

Table 2: Response Rates by College (All respondents)

College/School	Dec 2025 Graduating Class (N)	Percent of Population	Survey Respondents (N)	Percent of Survey Respondents	Response Rate
The Graduate School	9	1.0%	4	0.8%	44.4%
College of Agriculture & Life Sciences	110	12.2%	75	15.9%	68.2%
College of Design	15	1.7%	13	2.7%	86.7%
College of Education	77	8.5%	51	10.8%	66.2%
College of Engineering	356	39.3%	172	36.4%	48.3%
College of Natural Resources	44	4.9%	23	4.9%	52.3%
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	43	4.8%	23	4.9%	53.5%
College of Sciences	110	12.2%	50	10.6%	45.5%
Wilson College of Textiles	23	2.5%	16	3.4%	69.6%
College of Veterinary Medicine*	6	0.7%	4	0.8%	66.7%
Poole College of Management	112	12.4%	42	8.9%	37.5%
Total	905	100.0%	473	100.0%	52.3%

*Doctoral and master's degree recipients only. DVM students are not included in the GFPS survey population.

Table 3: Response Rates by College (Master's Degree Recipients)

College/School	Dec 2025 Graduating Class (N)	Percent of Population	Survey Respondents (N)	Percent of Survey Respondents	Response Rate
The Graduate School	7	1.0%	3	0.8%	42.9%
College of Agriculture & Life Sciences	81	11.5%	54	14.9%	66.7%
College of Design	11	1.6%	9	2.5%	81.8%
College of Education	49	7.0%	33	9.1%	67.3%
College of Engineering	292	41.5%	143	39.5%	49.0%
College of Natural Resources	30	4.3%	15	4.1%	50.0%
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	36	5.1%	19	5.2%	52.8%
College of Sciences	71	10.1%	33	9.1%	46.5%
Wilson College of Textiles	15	2.1%	11	3.0%	73.3%
Poole College of Management	111	15.8%	42	11.6%	37.8%
Total	703	100.0%	362	100.0%	51.5%

Table 4: Response Rates by College (Doctoral Degree Recipients)

College/School	Dec 2025 Graduating Class (N)	Percent of Population	Survey Respondents (N)	Percent of Survey Respondents	Response Rate
The Graduate School	2	1.0%	1	0.9%	50.0%
College of Agriculture & Life Sciences	29	14.4%	21	18.9%	72.4%
College of Design	4	2.0%	4	3.6%	100.0%
College of Education	28	13.9%	18	16.2%	64.3%
College of Engineering	64	31.7%	29	26.1%	45.3%
College of Natural Resources	14	6.9%	8	7.2%	57.1%
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	7	3.5%	4	3.6%	57.1%
College of Sciences	39	19.3%	17	15.3%	43.6%
Wilson College of Textiles	8	4.0%	5	4.5%	62.5%
College of Veterinary Medicine	6	3.0%	4	3.6%	66.7%
Poole College of Management	1	0.5%	.	.	.
Total	202	100.0%	111	100.0%	55.0%

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

University Data and Analytics

NC State University

Email: studentsurveys@ncsu.edu