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Job Outlook 2016

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS

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About the *Job Outlook* 2016 Survey

The *Job Outlook* survey is a forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates. Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys its employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues to project the market for new college graduates for the current class and to assess a variety of conditions that may influence that market.

From August 5, 2015, through September 13, 2015, data were collected for the *Job Outlook 2016* survey. A total of 201 surveys were returned—a 20.1 percent response rate.

Of those responding, 12.4 percent of respondents were from the West, 22.4 percent were from the Northeast, 31.8 percent were from the Southeast, and 33.3 percent were from the Midwest. For a list of respondents by industry and size, and a partial list of organizations that supplied data for this report, see the Appendix.

Totals throughout the report may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

NACE expects to provide a formal update of job market information once more in the 2015-16 academic year: The *Job Outlook 2016* Spring Update survey (data collected in February – March) will give NACE members a final update on hiring for 2015-16 graduates. Results will be available in early April 2016.

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U.S. College Hiring to Increase 11 Percent

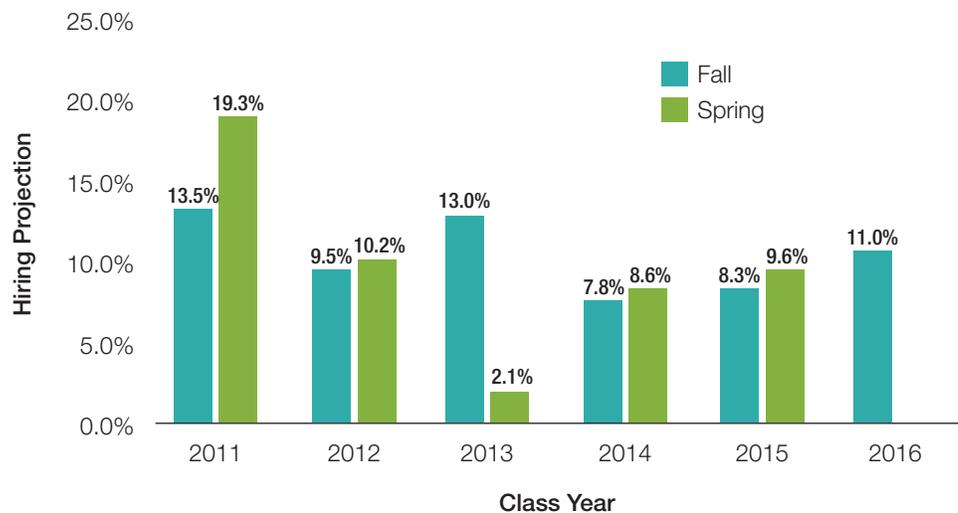
The hiring outlook for college graduates continues to improve as employers plan to hire 11 percent more new college graduates for their U.S. operations from the Class of 2016 than they did from the Class of 2015.

In comparison, in spring 2015 through NACE's *Job Outlook Spring 2015 Update*, employers indicated they would hire approximately 10 percent more new graduates from Class of 2015 than they had hired from the Class of 2014. (See Figure 1.)

Not only is U.S. hiring going to increase for Class of 2016 graduates, but the one-quarter of respondents that recruit college graduates for positions outside of the United States also expect to increase hiring; these employers anticipate increasing hiring for international positions by 5.2 percent. This, too, is an improvement over 2014-15 when respondents planned just a 3.2 percent increase for international hiring of Class of 2015 graduates. Total hiring (both U.S. and international students for both U.S. and international positions) for the Class of 2016 is also expected to increase overall by 10.9 percent.

Figure 1

Job Outlook hiring projections, 2011 – 2016*



*Years 2014, 2015, and 2016 are the hiring projections for U.S. locations only. Prior years' projections are shown for informational purposes only, and should not be compared to the 2014-16 projections.

While the overall increase in U.S. college hiring in 2015-16 shows positive movement over the 2014-15 cycle, it is important to note that not all—or even a majority—of respondents project increases. (See Figure 2.)

In fact, slightly more than 40 percent of respondents expect to increase their hiring. These employers cite company growth as the key behind their plans for increased hiring, with organizations looking to new college graduates to build their talent pipelines.

Nearly 47 percent of respondents expect to maintain hiring at last year's levels—the largest group to do so since 2010-11. This is a positive result, reflecting both steady and consistent growth within their organizations (thus prompting them to continue to hire) and high retention of new college graduates (thereby offsetting the need to increase hiring). It also points to the ability of these respondents to plan their college hiring headcount successfully year over year, negating the need to adjust numbers.

However, more than 13 percent of respondents plan to cut back on hiring; that's a sharp increase over the 7.7 percent who projected cut backs in 2014-15, and the 6.1 percent who planned to trim hiring rolls in 2013-14. Although some employers planning to reduce college hiring blamed smaller budgets and company restructuring, the largest group—42 percent—cited lower oil prices as the cut-back driver.

Figure 2

Employers' hiring expectations



**EMPLOYERS
PLAN TO HIRE
11%
MORE NEW
COLLEGE
GRADUATES**

Available vs. Unfilled Positions for New College Graduates

How are employers doing in filling their open positions?

According to respondents, just 2 percent of their available jobs went unfilled in 2014-15, a vast improvement over the 5.6 percent that remained empty in 2013-14. (See Figure 3.) (Note: From 2012-13 to 2013-14, the number of available positions nearly doubled, which may account for the large number of unfilled positions.)

Of course, these data are highly dependent upon the specific respondents to the survey each year. However, the improvement in unfilled positions may point to employers' being better prepared in 2014-15 to handle their recruiting needs; in fact, NACE's *Recruiting Benchmark Survey* found an increase in the number of recruiting staff for the 2014-15 recruiting cycle.

Figure 3

Available vs. unfilled positions for new college graduates

Recruiting Year	Total Number of Available Positions	Average Number of Available Positions	Total Number of Unfilled Positions	Average Number of Unfilled Positions	Percent of Unfilled to Available Positions
2014-15	34,294	230	670	5	2.0%
2013-14	46,609	251	2,591	14	5.6%
2012-13	24,834	171	1,126	8	4.5%
2011-12	24,854	152	855	5	3.4%
2010-11	24,356	148	1,172	7	4.8%

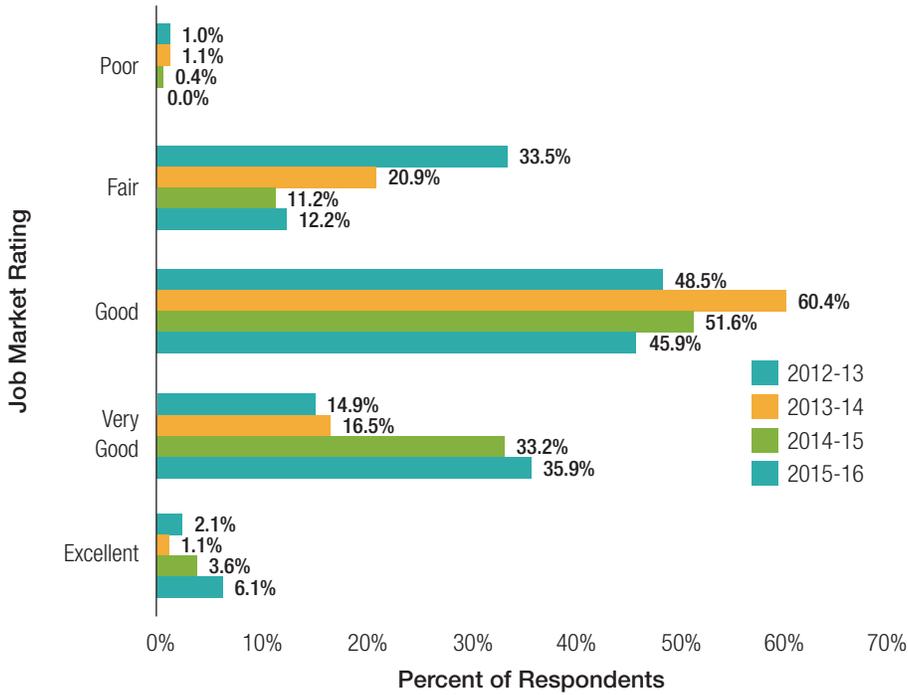
Job Market Ratings

The largest group of respondents rated the overall job market as “good,” as has been the case the last three years. (See Figure 4.) However, this year’s ratings by respondents paint the brightest picture thus far:

- First, no respondents rated the overall job market as “poor,” and the group that rated the overall market as “excellent” has grown to more than 6 percent.
- The group rating the job market as “very good” has also risen, with more than one-third of respondents characterizing the job market in this way.
- The percent of respondents giving the job market a “fair” rating held nearly even.

Figure 4

Employers rate the job market for 2015-16 graduates



**LARGEST
GROUP
RATED
THE JOB
MARKET
AS GOOD**

Reassessing Hiring Plans

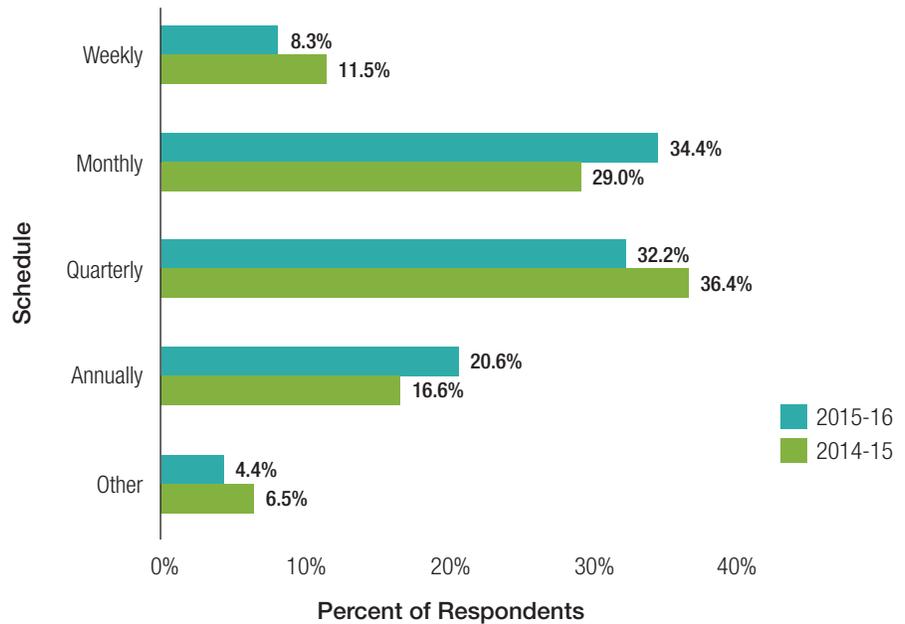
Among current respondents, the largest group plan to reassess their college hiring on a monthly basis. In comparison, a quarterly reassessment was favored by 2014-15 respondents. (See Figure 5.)

Overall, the majority of current respondents will reassess their needs on a quarterly or monthly basis. This year, fewer respondents plan to reassess weekly than was the case a year ago.

EMPLOYERS FAVOR THE FALL RECRUITING SEASON

Figure 5

Employers' plans to reassess hiring needs



Employers appear to favor the fall recruiting season for conducting their college recruiting. This year's respondents plan to conduct an average of 71 percent of their college recruiting in the fall, with the remaining 29 percent in the spring. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6

Percentage of college recruiting conducted in fall vs. spring, 2012-2016

Job Outlook Survey Year	Fall	Spring
2016	71%	29%
2015	66%	34%
2014	62%	38%
2013	68%	32%
2012	65%	35%

Spring 2016 recruiting plans also look promising, with two-thirds of respondents reporting firm or tentative plans in place to recruit then. (See Figure 7.) While employers plan to conduct more than 70 percent of their total college recruiting in fall, slightly more than 19 percent will fulfill all of their recruiting needs in fall 2015 and will not be on campuses in spring 2016. This group of respondents is nearly identical to those responding to last year's survey. This year, slightly more respondents are unsure of their spring 2016 recruiting plans, but those that are not hiring and won't be on campus in spring 2016 remains largely unchanged.

Figure 7

Spring 2016 recruiting plans

Recruiting Plans	Spring 2016	Spring 2015
Firm recruiting plans	41.3%	47.0%
Tentative plans in place	25.7%	23.7%
All recruiting in fall	19.6%	19.2%
Unsure	12.3%	9.1%
Not hiring	1.1%	0.9%

Recruiting Methods

This year’s survey respondents continue the trend of focusing on technology in how they will recruit 2015-16 grads. More than half of the respondents to this year’s survey plan to use more social networks and/or more technology in general in their recruiting methods. (See Figure 8.)

The increased use of technology may affect those respondents that indicated that they expect to attend fewer career fairs, as that group has grown from fewer than one-quarter of last year’s respondents to more than 30 percent of respondents this year. Also, the percentage of recruiters planning to travel less is up—reaching almost 23 percent. Although this isn’t a large bump over last year, it is up almost 5 percent from 2012.

Figure 8

Change in recruiting methods, 2012-2016, by percentage of respondents

Change	% of 2016 Respondents	% of 2015 Respondents	% of 2014 Respondents	% of 2013 Respondents	% of 2012 Respondents
Using more social networks	54.2%	64.7%	50.9%	57.3%	57.1%
Using more technology in general	58.1%	60.9%	48.5%	59.6%	58.3%
Change in branding	37.4%	42.4%	38.2%	34.8%	41.7%
Attending more career fairs	34.2%	32.1%	33.3%	39.3%	42.3%
Attending fewer career fairs	30.3%	23.9%	23.6%	24.7%	27.4%
Less travel	22.6%	20.1%	21.8%	21.3%	18.3%
More travel	19.4%	19.6%	18.2%	21.9%	22.3%
Other	6.4%	13.0%	14.5%	18.5%	13.1%

TWO-THIRDS OF 15 INDUSTRIES REPORT OVERALL INCREASES

Hiring by Industry

Figure 9 shows the changes in hiring for U.S. positions within the industries. Of the 15 industries having at least five respondents, two-thirds are reporting overall increases in college hiring, with the remaining one-third reporting decreases.

Respondents in the accounting services industry not only report the highest total number of 2016 projected hires, but they also are reporting an increase in hiring of almost 20 percent. In addition, seven of the nine total respondents in this sector are reporting increases to their individual college hire numbers, with the remaining two respondents maintaining their numbers.

Employers in the oil and gas extraction industry are reporting the poorest outlook for Class of 2016 college graduates. The overall decrease reported is nearly 60 percent, and six of their nine total industry respondents are decreasing their individual college hire numbers, with the remaining three maintaining their numbers. This does not come as a big surprise, as lower oil and gas prices have a direct impact on this particular industry.

(Please note: Industry projections for Class of 2016 graduates should be examined with caution as some sectors contain a very small number of respondents. Only industries with five or more respondents are listed. Additionally, due to the small number of respondents in some industries, overall percentages may be skewed by one or two respondents.)

Figure 9

Total change in hiring, by industry*

Industry	# of 2016 Projected Hires	# of 2015 Actual Hires	% Change	# of Respondents
Oil & Gas Extraction	330	784	-57.9%	9
Utilities	553	594	-6.9%	7
Construction	587	407	44.2%	8
Food & Beverage Mfg.	292	312	-6.4%	6
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	1,648	1,898	-13.2%	14
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	1,548	1,497	3.4%	13
Misc. Mfg.	583	530	10.0%	13
Retail Trade	2,103	1,555	35.2%	12
Transportation	788	702	12.3%	5
Information	1,149	666	72.5%	5
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	9,338	8,847	5.5%	23
Accounting Services	13,117	10,977	19.5%	9
Engineering Services	749	768	-2.5%	8
Management Consulting	412	395	4.3%	5
Misc. Prof. Services	813	592	37.3%	9

*Hiring projections are for U.S. locations only. (Only industries with 5 or more respondents are represented here.)

Plans for on-campus recruiting in spring 2016 and job market ratings by industry— shown in Figures 10 and 11 —also concur with the overall college hiring picture by industry. Accounting services employers have the best outlook for Class of 2016 graduates, with two-thirds of respondents having firm or tentative plans for spring 2016 on-campus recruiting. The remaining one-third are conducting all of their college recruiting in fall 2015. In addition, they report the highest job market rating specific to their industry.

On the other hand, 22 percent of oil and gas extraction employers have firm or tentative plans in place for spring 2016 on-campus recruiting, as more than three-quarters of these respondents are doing all of their recruiting in fall 2015. In addition, oil and gas extraction employers’ job market rating specific to their industry stands numerically at 1.78 on a 5-point scale, between poor and fair.

Figure 10

Spring 2016 on-campus recruiting plans, by industry

Industry	Firm plans In place	Tentative plans	All recruiting in Fall 2015	Not hiring	Unsure	# of Respondents
Oil & Gas Extraction	11.1%	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	9
Utilities	71.4%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	14.3%	7
Construction	62.5%	0.0%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8
Food & Beverage Mfg.	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%	33.3%	6
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	20.0%	13.3%	26.7%	6.7%	33.3%	15
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	35.3%	35.3%	23.5%	0.0%	5.9%	17
Misc. Mfg.	33.3%	33.3%	13.3%	6.7%	13.3%	15
Retail Trade	53.8%	30.8%	7.7%	0.0%	7.7%	13
Transportation	33.3%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	6
Information	33.3%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	6
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	42.3%	26.9%	19.2%	0.0%	11.5%	26
Accounting Services	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	9
Engineering Services	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8
Management Consulting	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5
Misc. Prof. Services	54.5%	36.4%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	11

Figure 11

Job market rating, by industry

Industry	Average Rating	# of Respondents
Accounting Services	4.11	9
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	4.00	17
Information	4.00	6
Management Consulting	4.00	5
Misc. Professional Services	3.73	11
Retail Trade	3.64	14
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	3.62	26
Wholesale Trade	3.60	5
Utilities	3.43	7
Construction	3.38	8
Engineering Services	3.38	8
Food & Beverage Mfg.	3.33	6
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	3.33	15
Transportation	3.17	6
Misc. Mfg.	3.07	14
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	3.00	5
Oil & Gas Extraction	1.78	9

*5-point scale, where 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Very good, 5=Excellent

Hiring by Region

While three of the four geographic regions show increases in college hiring this year, these projections are directly related to the reporting industries located within each region. (See Figure 12.)

The West region is showing the only projected decrease in hiring, but this region also has the largest percentage of total respondents that are decreasing their hires. (See Figure 13.) Also, one particular respondent in the West region is planning a large decrease in hiring—a drop of 85 percent. Without this respondent, the regional projection changes dramatically, from a decrease in hiring of 3.9 percent to an increase of 3.7 percent.

As expected, the Northeast region shows the largest increase in overall hiring, but it also has no respondents that are planning to decrease their hiring numbers. Furthermore, several of its respondents are in industries that have the brightest outlook for Class of 2016 graduates, e.g. accounting services, and finance, insurance, and real estate.

Spring 2016 recruiting plans are fairly equal among the regions, as all have more than 60 percent of respondents reporting firm or tentative plans in place for on-campus recruiting next year. (See Figure 14.) Oddly enough, while the Northeast region has the highest overall increase planned for the Class of 2016, it also has the largest group of respondents that are unsure of their on-campus recruiting plans for the spring. In addition, the West region has the lowest percentage of respondents that are unsure of their spring 2016 on-campus recruiting plans, and not a single respondent reported that it won't be on campus because it isn't hiring.

Figure 12

Total change in hiring, by region

Region	# of 2016 Projected Hires	# of 2015 Actual Hires	% Change	# of Respondents
Northeast	16,671	14,509	14.9%	33
Southeast	5,764	5,244	9.9%	54
Midwest	10,950	10,094	8.40%	56
West	1,664	1,731	-3.9%	18

Figure 13

Hiring expectations by region, by percent of respondents

Region	Region	Maintain	Decrease
Northeast	35.1%	64.9%	0.0%
Southeast	41.7%	38.3%	20.0%
Midwest	41.3%	47.6%	11.1%
West	40.9%	36.4%	22.7%

Figure 14

Spring 2016 recruiting plans, by region

Region	Firm plans in place	Tentative plans	All recruiting in Fall 2015	Not hiring	Unsure
Northeast	43.2%	27.0%	13.5%	0.0%	16.2%
Southeast	40.7%	27.1%	18.6%	1.7%	11.9%
Midwest	37.7%	24.6%	24.6%	1.6%	11.5%
West	50.0%	22.7%	18.2%	0.0%	9.1%

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IS PREFERRED

Who is in Demand?

Respondents continue to show a preference for hiring college graduates at the bachelor's degree level.

Nearly all respondents say they will hire graduates who will receive bachelor's degrees in 2016. (See Figure 15.) In the other degree level categories, the overall percentage of respondents hiring and the composition of their total hires is nearly identical to last year.

Figure 15

Hiring expectations, by degree level

Degree Level	Average % of New College Hires in 2015-16	# of Respondents Hiring 2015-16	% of Total Respondents Hiring in 2015-16	Average % of New College Hires in 2014-15	# of Respondents That Hired in 2014-15	% of Total Respondents That Hired in 2014-15
Associate	2.4%	32	18.9%	2.2%	31	17.9%
Bachelor's	81.1%	167	98.8%	82.0%	172	99.4%
Master's	14.2%	130	76.9%	13.8%	129	74.6%
Doctorate	1.9%	32	18.9%	1.5%	33	19.1%
Professional (J.D., M.D., etc.)	0.4%	12	7.1%	0.5%	14	8.1%

As in last year's survey, employers were once again asked to report on their hiring intentions for all broad categories of majors, individual majors, and degree levels. (*Note: Responding employers were also asked to provide salary projections, which serve as the basis of NACE's upcoming Winter 2016 Salary Survey report. The report will be released in January 2016.*)

Regardless of degree level, graduates of the business, engineering, and computer and information sciences categories are once again most in demand. (See Figure 16.) At the associate, bachelor's, and master's degree levels, the same is also true. (See Figure 17.) At the doctorate degree level, engineering graduates top the list, with math and sciences, and computer and information sciences being the top three fields in demand.

Figure 16

Top degrees in demand, by broad category

Broad Category	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents (n=180)
Business	136	75.6%
Engineering	124	68.8%
Computer & Information Sciences	106	58.9%
Math & Sciences	58	32.2%
Communications	43	23.9%
Social Sciences	38	21.1%
Humanities	18	10.0%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	12	6.7%
Healthcare	10	5.6%
Education	10	5.6%

Figure 17

Top degrees in demand, by degree level and broad category

Associate	Broad Category	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents (n=180)
	Business	7	3.9%
	Engineering	4	2.2%
	Computer & Information Sciences	3	1.6%
	Communications	2	1.1%
	Humanities	2	1.1%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	1	0.6%
	Education	1	0.6%
	Math & Sciences	1	0.6%
	Healthcare	0	0.0%
	Social Sciences	0	0.0%

**DEMAND FOR
BUSINESS,
ENGINEERING,
AND
COMPUTER &
INFORMATION
SCIENCES
DEGREES**

Bachelor's	Broad Category	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents (n=180)
	Business	125	69.4%
	Engineering	120	66.7%
	Computer & Information Sciences	104	57.8%
	Math & Sciences	50	27.8%
	Communications	40	22.2%
	Social Sciences	35	19.4%
	Humanities	17	9.4%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	10	5.6%
	Healthcare	9	5.0%
	Education	3	1.6%
Master's	Broad Category	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents (n=180)
	Business	59	32.8%
	Engineering	57	31.7%
	Computer & Information Science	51	28.3%
	Math & Sciences	27	15.0%
	Social Sciences	7	3.9%
	Communications	4	2.2%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	3	1.6%
	Healthcare	2	1.1%
	Humanities	0	0.0%
	Education	0	0.0%
Doctorate	Broad Category	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents (n=180)
	Engineering	19	10.6%
	Math & Sciences	10	5.6%
	Computer & Information Science	9	5.0%
	Agriculture & Natural Resources	2	1.1%
	Business	1	0.6%
	Communications	1	0.6%
	Social Science Majors	1	0.6%
	Education	0	0.0%
	Healthcare	0	0.0%
	Humanities	0	0.0%

This year's list of majors most in demand at the bachelor's degree level is heavily composed of business majors. The top three individual bachelor's degree majors in demand are accounting, computer science, and finance. (See Figure 18.) At number five on the list, mechanical engineering is the highest specific engineering degree in demand, while electrical engineering is eighth most in demand.

Figure 18

Top degrees in demand (bachelor's degree level)

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents that will hire
Accounting	98	54.4%
Computer Science	97	53.9%
Finance	91	50.6%
Business Administration/ Mgmt.	86	47.8%
Mechanical Engineering	83	46.1%
Information Sciences & Systems	75	41.7%
Management Information Systems	73	40.6%
Electrical Engineering	71	39.4%
Logistics/Supply Chain	67	37.2%
Economics	64	35.6%
Marketing	64	35.6%

Individual major detail is provided for the top seven broad categories in demand at the bachelor's degree level in Figures 19 through 25. Some of the main findings are:

- Almost eight in 10 employers that are hiring business majors will hire specific accounting graduates. Seven of the individual majors will be targeted by at least half of respondents hiring business degrees. (See Figure 19.)
- Mechanical engineering and electrical engineering majors will also be targeted by more than half of respondents that will hire engineering majors. (See Figure 20.)
- Of students earning degrees in the social sciences, those earning economics degrees will be targeted by 94 percent of respondents that will be hiring social sciences graduates. (See Figure 24.)
- Within the humanities disciplines, liberal arts/general studies majors are most in demand, with 94 percent of respondents indicating they will hire these graduates. (See Figure 25.)

**TOP
3**

**ACCOUNTING
COMPUTER
SCIENCE
FINANCE**

Figure 19

Top business degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring business degrees (n=125)
Accounting	98	78.4%
Finance	91	72.8%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	86	68.8%
Management Information Systems	73	58.4%
Logistics/Supply Chain	67	53.6%
Economics	64	51.2%
Marketing	64	51.2%
Human Resources	57	45.6%
Sales	56	44.8%
International Business	31	24.8%
Actuary	18	14.4%
Hospitality Management	15	12.0%

Figure 20

Top engineering degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring engineering degrees (n=120)
Mechanical Engineering	83	69.2%
Electrical Engineering	71	59.2%
Computer Engineering	53	44.2%
Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering	52	43.3%
Chemical Engineering	45	37.5%
Software Engineering	45	37.5%
Civil Engineering	44	36.7%
Engineering Technology	31	25.8%
Systems Engineering	30	25.0%
Materials Engineering/Science	25	20.8%
Environmental Engineering	22	18.3%
Aerospace/Aeronautical Engineering	15	12.5%
Biomedical Engineering	9	7.5%
Nuclear Engineering	6	5.0%
Petroleum Engineering	6	5.0%

Figure 21

Top computer and information science degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring computer & information science degrees (n=104)
Computer Science	97	93.3%
Information Sciences & Systems	75	72.1%
Software Applications	62	59.6%

Figure 22

Top math and science degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring math & science degrees (n=50)
Mathematics/Statistics	40	80.0%
Biology/Biological Sciences	14	28.0%
Environmental Science	10	20.0%
Chemistry	9	18.0%
Geology/Geological Sciences	8	16.0%
Construction Science	7	14.0%
Physics	7	14.0%

Figure 23

Top communications degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring communications degrees (n=40)
Communications	40	100.0%
Public Relations	23	57.5%
Advertising	19	47.5%
Journalism	19	47.5%

Figure 24

Top social sciences degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring social sciences degrees (n=35)
Economics	33	94.3%
Psychology	14	40.0%
Political Science/International Relations	12	34.3%
Sociology	11	31.4%
Social Work	7	20.0%

Figure 25

Top humanities degrees in demand

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of respondents hiring humanities degrees (n=17)
Liberal Arts/General Studies	16	94.1%
English Language & Literature	8	47.1%
History	6	35.3%
Foreign Language & Literature	5	29.4%
Visual & Performing Arts	5	29.4%
Philosophy	3	17.6%
Area & Gender Studies	1	5.9%

This year, demand at the master's degree level has shifted more toward STEM graduates. While finance majors were in top demand last year and M.B.A. graduates were in most demand two years ago, this year's list is topped by computer science, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and information sciences and systems majors. (See Figure 26.)

Figure 26

Top degrees in demand (master's degree level)

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents who will hire
Computer Science	49	27.2%
Electrical Engineering	35	19.4%
Mechanical Engineering	34	18.9%
Information Sciences & Systems	33	18.3%
M.B.A.	32	17.8%
Accounting	29	16.1%
Finance	28	15.6%
Software Applications	28	15.6%
Computer Engineering	24	13.3%
Management Information Systems	24	13.3%

Like the master's degree level, demand at the doctorate degree level consists entirely of majors in the STEM disciplines. (See Figure 27.)

Figure 27

Top degrees in demand (doctorate degree level)

Major	# of respondents that will hire	% of total respondents who will hire
Electrical Engineering	12	6.7%
Computer Science	9	5.0%
Software Engineering	8	4.4%
Computer Engineering	7	3.9%
Mechanical Engineering	7	3.9%
Chemical Engineering	6	3.3%
Math/Statistics	5	2.8%
Systems Engineering	5	2.8%
Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering	4	2.2%
Physics	4	2.2%

Figures 28 through 31 provide the top bachelor's degrees in demand by geographic region.

**STEM
GRADUATES
TOP
DEMAND**

Figure 28

Top five undergraduate majors – Northeast

Major	# of Northeast respondents that will hire	% of Northeast respondents who will hire	% of total respondents that will hire
Finance	23	51.1%	50.6%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	22	48.9%	47.8%
Accounting	21	46.7%	54.4%
Economics	21	46.7%	35.6%
Logistics/Supply Chain	18	40.0%	37.2%

Figure 29

Top five undergraduate majors – Southeast

Major	# of Southeast respondents that will hire	% of Southeast respondents that will hire	% of total respondents that will hire
Computer Science	36	56.3%	53.9%
Accounting	32	50.0%	54.4%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	30	46.9%	47.8%
Mechanical Engineering	29	45.3%	46.1%
Electrical Engineering	28	43.8%	39.4%

Figure 30

Top five undergraduate majors – Midwest

Major	# of Midwest respondents that will hire	% of Midwest respondents that will hire	% of total respondents that will hire
Accounting	37	55.2%	54.4%
Computer Science	36	53.7%	53.9%
Finance	35	52.2%	50.6%
Mechanical Engineering	31	46.3%	46.1%
Management Information Systems	28	41.8%	40.6%

Figure 31

Top five undergraduate majors – West

Major	# of West respondents that will hire	% of West respondents that will hire	% of total respondents that will hire
Electrical Engineering	12	48.0%	39.4%
Information Sciences & Systems	10	40.0%	41.7%
Computer Science	9	36.0%	53.9%
Mechanical Engineering	9	36.0%	46.1%
Accounting	8	32.0%	54.4%

Demand for the top five majors at the bachelor’s degree level is spread somewhat evenly by industry. (See Figure 32.) The demand by industry is highly correlated to the specific major, e.g. accounting services employers having a high demand for accounting majors, and manufacturing respondents with high demand for mechanical engineering majors.

Figure 32

Who is hiring, by industry (bachelor’s degree level)

Major	Most interested industries	% of industry respondents
Accounting	Accounting Services	100%
	Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	67%
	Misc. Manufacturing	67%
Computer Science	Information	71%
	Misc. Professional Services	69%
	Computer & Electronics Mfg.	67%
Finance	Accounting Services	67%
	Food & Beverage Mfg.	67%
	Retail Trade	67%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	Retail Trade	80%
	Information	71%
	Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	63%
Mechanical Engineering	Misc. Manufacturing	93%
	Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	75%
	Food & Beverage Mfg.	67%

Of the four regions, employers in the Midwest region show the most interest in three of the top five majors in demand at the bachelor's degree level. (See Figure 33.)

Figure 33

Who is hiring, by region (bachelor's degree level)

Major	Most interested industries	% of respondents by region
Accounting	Midwest	55%
	Southeast	50%
	Northeast	47%
	West	32%
Computer Science	Southeast	56%
	Midwest	54%
	West	36%
	Northeast	36%
Finance	Midwest	52%
	Northeast	51%
	Southeast	41%
	West	28%
Business Administration/Mgmt.	Northeast	49%
	Southeast	47%
	Midwest	40%
	West	28%
Mechanical Engineering	Midwest	46%
	Southeast	45%
	West	36%
	Northeast	31%

International Student Hiring Plans

The group of respondents with plans to hire international students has leveled off somewhat this year, with less than one-third of respondents reporting plans to hire these particular graduates. (See Figure 34.)

Figure 34

International student hiring plans, 2011 – 2016



Nearly 70 percent of the industries that responded to this survey report some interest in hiring international graduates from the Class of 2016. Computer and electronics manufacturers show the most interest, with two-thirds of respondents having plans to hire international graduates. (See Figure 35.)

Figure 35

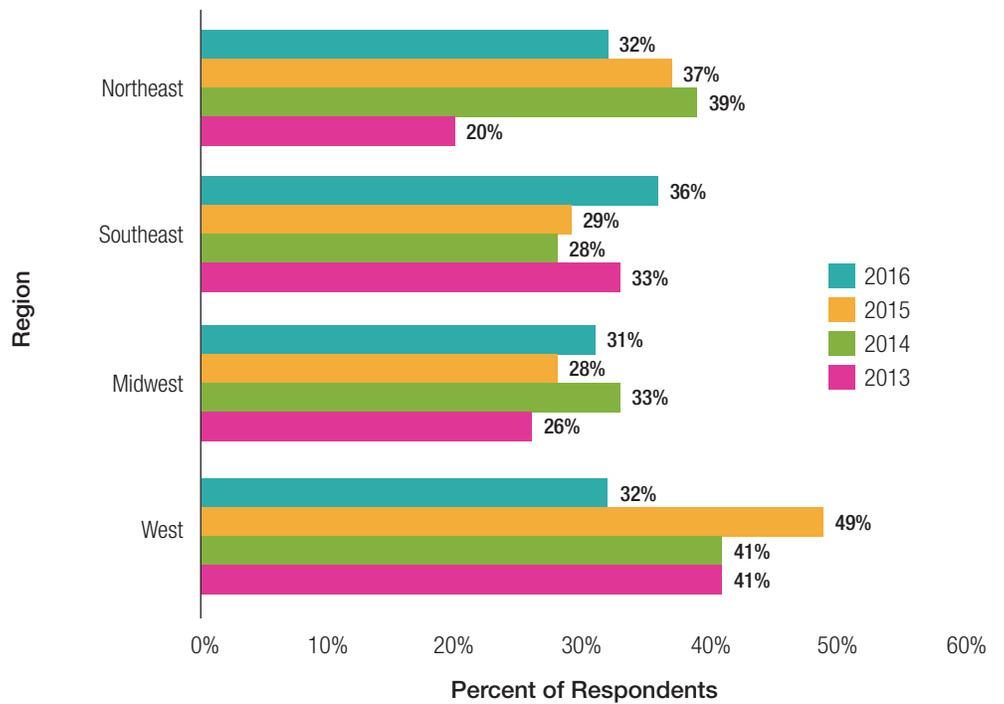
International student hiring plans, by industry

Industry	% of respondents that plan to hire international students
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	66.7%
Information	57.1%
Construction	44.4%
Engineering Services	44.4%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	43.8%
Misc. Prof. Services	38.5%
Retail Trade	35.7%
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	33.3%
Accounting Services	33.3%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	26.7%
Oil & Gas Extraction	22.2%
Misc. Mfg.	20.0%
Food & Beverage Mfg.	16.7%
Wholesale Trade	16.7%
Transportation	16.7%
Utilities	11.1%

Demand for international students has grown in two of the four geographic regions this year. (See Figure 36.) Respondents in the Southeast and Midwest regions now have a larger percentage of respondents with plans to hire international grads. This may be due to the fact that more than half of responding computer and electronics manufacturers are located within these two regions, and they exhibit the most interest in hiring these students.

Figure 36

International student hiring plans, by region



Employers' View of Candidates

GPA Cutoff

The percentage of employers that plan to screen graduates by GPA has crept up for the second consecutive year, with 69.3 percent of respondents saying they will screen candidates from the Class of 2016. (See Figure 37.)

Slightly more than 70 percent of employers that plan to screen by GPA use a cutoff of 3.0. Typically, the remaining respondents are equally divided above and below the 3.0 GPA cutoff ; this year, however, slightly more will use cutoffs that fall below 3.0.

Nearly all industries report a median GPA cutoff of 3.0; food and beverage manufacturers, however, use a slightly lower GPA cutoff of 2.9. (See Figure 38.)

69.3%
SCREEN
GPA's

Figure 37

Screen candidates by GPA, by percent of respondents



Figure 38

Screen candidates by GPA, by industry

Industry	% of Respondents	GPA Cutoff (Reported Median)
Transportation	100.0%	3.0
Utilities	100.0%	3.0
Accounting Services	88.9%	3.0
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	82.6%	3.0
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	81.3%	3.0
Management Consulting	80.0%	3.0
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	73.3%	3.0
Engineering Services	71.4%	3.0
Retail Trade	69.2%	3.0
Information	66.7%	3.0
Oil & Gas Extraction	66.7%	3.0
Misc. Mfg.	64.3%	3.0
Construction	50.0%	3.0
Food & Beverage Mfg.	40.0%	2.9
Misc. Prof. Services	40.0%	3.0

Key Skills and Attributes

After candidates pass the GPA screening, employers will scrutinize their resumes for certain items. The top two attributes they are seeking are evidence of leadership and their ability to work in a team. (See Figure 39.)

For the most part, the order of the list has not changed year to year, but last year, the group of employers that were seeking candidates' ability to work in a team jumped to 77.8 percent. Nearly 80 percent will look for teamwork skills in Class of 2016 graduates, while written communication skills and problem-solving skills are also highly valued.

Figure 39

Attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume

Attribute	% of respondents
Leadership	80.1%
Ability to work in a team	78.9%
Communication skills (written)	70.2%
Problem-solving skills	70.2%
Communication skills (verbal)	68.9%
Strong work ethic	68.9%
Initiative	65.8%
Analytical/quantitative skills	62.7%
Flexibility/adaptability	60.9%
Technical skills	59.6%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	58.4%
Computer skills	55.3%
Detail-oriented	52.8%
Organizational ability	48.4%
Friendly/outgoing personality	35.4%
Strategic planning skills	26.7%
Creativity	23.6%
Tactfulness	20.5%
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	18.6%

Academic major leads in terms of what influences an employer's candidate preference. (See Figure 40.) Leadership skills are also highly influential in the hiring decision, and a high GPA and participation in extracurricular activities also have strong influence, but other attributes continue to have little influence on employers' hiring decisions.

Figure 40

Influence of attributes

Attribute	2016 Average Influence Rating*	2015 Average Influence Rating*
Major	4.0	3.9
Has held leadership position	3.9	3.9
Has been involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student government, etc.)	3.6	3.6
High GPA (3.0 or above)	3.5	3.6
School attended	2.9	2.8
Has done volunteer work	2.8	2.8
Is fluent in a foreign language	2.2	2.4
Has studied abroad	2.0	2.1

*5-point scale, where 1=No influence at all, 2=Not much influence, 3=Somewhat of an influence, 4=Very much influence, and 5=Extreme influence.

When asked to rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities shown on the list in Figure 41, employers rated verbal communications skills highest this year. In contrast, last year, teamwork and the ability to make decisions and solve problems tied for the top spot. The remainder of the list has not changed at all in terms of order compared to last year. The one difference this year is that more of the skills/qualities were rated just below “4.0”—the very important rating—than last year. (Just two skills/qualities were rated below “4.0” last year—ability to create and/or edit written reports and the ability to sell or influence others.)

Figure 41

Employers rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities

Skill/Quality	Weighted average rating*
Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization	4.63
Ability to work in a team structure	4.62
Ability to make decisions and solve problems	4.49
Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work	4.41
Ability to obtain and process information	4.34
Ability to analyze quantitative data	4.21
Technical knowledge related to the job	3.99
Proficiency with computer software programs	3.86
Ability to create and/or edit written reports	3.60
Ability to sell or influence others	3.55

*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; and 5=Extremely important

Although conventional wisdom suggests that new college graduates lack key abilities necessary for entering the work force, current results indicate otherwise. In fact, current respondents appear to be generally pleased with the skills and attributes of their new graduate recruits. (See Figure 42.)

While last year’s respondents rated teamwork at just a “B,” this year’s group gave teamwork the highest grade of “A-.” Also, the lowest grade this year is a “B” for just one skill/attribute, where last year’s lowest grade was a “B-” for the same skill—written communication skills.

Figure 42

Employers grade their average new graduate recruit on skills/attributes

Attribute	Letter grade	Numerical Average
Teamwork	A-	10.68
Problem-solving ability	B+	10.30
Analytical/quantitative skills	B+	10.27
Initiative	B+	10.24
Work Ethic	B+	10.16
Verbal communication skills	B+	9.75
Leadership	B+	9.75
Written communication skills	B	9.36

Work Experience

Employers also consider work experience when hiring new college graduates. Only 6.3 percent of respondents report that work experience does not factor into their hiring decisions. (See Figure 43.) While that particular group has grown slightly, the group of respondents that prefers relevant work experience has decreased from 72.5 percent last year to slightly more than 64 percent this year. The group that prefers any type of work experience, whether it be relevant or not, has also grown to 27 percent this year.



Figure 43

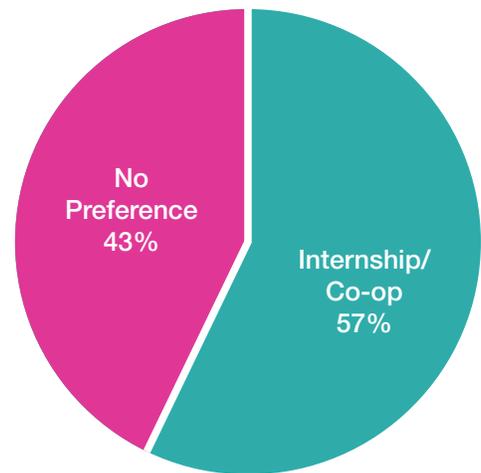
Employers' hiring preferences relative to experience, by percent of respondents

Hiring Preference	2016	2015	2014	2013
I prefer to hire candidates with relevant work experience	64.2%	72.5%	74.1%	71.0%
I prefer to hire candidates with any type of work experience (doesn't matter if it's relevant or not, just some type of experience)	27.0%	20.1%	20.7%	19.9%
Work experience doesn't typically factor into my decision when hiring a new college graduate	6.3%	3.9%	1.1%	4.8%
Other	2.5%	3.4%	4.0%	4.3%

When asked specifically about work experience preferences, the group that prefers experience gained through an internship or co-op has decreased from 60 percent last year to 57 percent this year. (See Figure 44.) The remaining 43 percent of respondents have no preference as to how the work experience was gained.

Figure 44

Employers' preference as to how work experience was gained, by percent of respondents



Compensation and Signing Bonuses

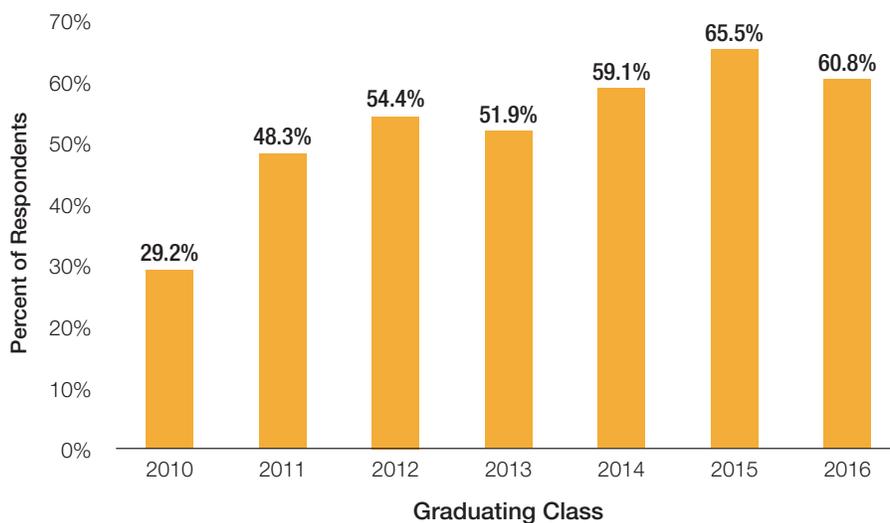
Starting Salaries

In 2014-15, almost two-thirds of respondents planned to increase salaries to bachelor's degree graduates—an all-time high. However, 2015-16 respondents came a close second; with 61 percent reporting plans to increase salaries. (See Figure 45.)

Overall, the average salary increase amount is 4.9 percent; however, this is skewed by two extremely high projected increases. The median increase of 3.2 percent is much more in line with the 3.6 percent average reported for Class of 2015 graduates.

Figure 45

Employers with plans to increase starting salaries to bachelor's degree graduates



61
PERCENT
TO INCREASE
SALARIES

By industry, miscellaneous professional services firms are most likely to increase bachelor's degree salaries, with 100 percent of respondents planning to do so. (See Figure 46.)

Figure 46

Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by industry

Industry	# of Respondents with Plans to Increase Bachelor's Salaries	# of Respondents by Industry	% of Respondents by Industry
Misc. Professional Services	5	5	100.0%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	14	18	77.8%
Construction	5	7	71.4%
Accounting Services	5	7	71.4%
Oil & Gas Extraction	6	9	66.7%
Misc. Manufacturing	8	13	61.5%
Management Consulting	3	5	60.0%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	5	11	45.5%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	3	8	37.5%
Retail Trade	2	8	25.0%

Figure 47

Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by region

Region	# of Respondents with Plans to Increase Bachelor's Salaries	# of Respondents by Region	% of Respondents by Region	Average projected increase*
Northeast	13	23	56.5%	4.7%
Southeast	17	39	43.5%	4.2%
Midwest	35	47	74.5%	5.0%
West	8	11	72.7%	6.1%

*Average calculation based only on respondents with plans to increase salaries

Signing Bonuses for Selected Grads

When compared to members of the graduating classes over the past five years, members of the Class of 2016 have the best chance of being offered signing bonuses, with 51.8 percent of current respondents planning to offer bonuses. (See Figure 48.)

Not all Class of 2016 graduates will receive signing bonuses, however. Nearly two-thirds of those who expect to offer bonuses say that they will offer signing bonuses to selected graduates. Graduates earning degrees in the business, engineering, and computer sciences fields will be most likely to receive these bonuses.

Figure 48

Employers offering signing bonuses

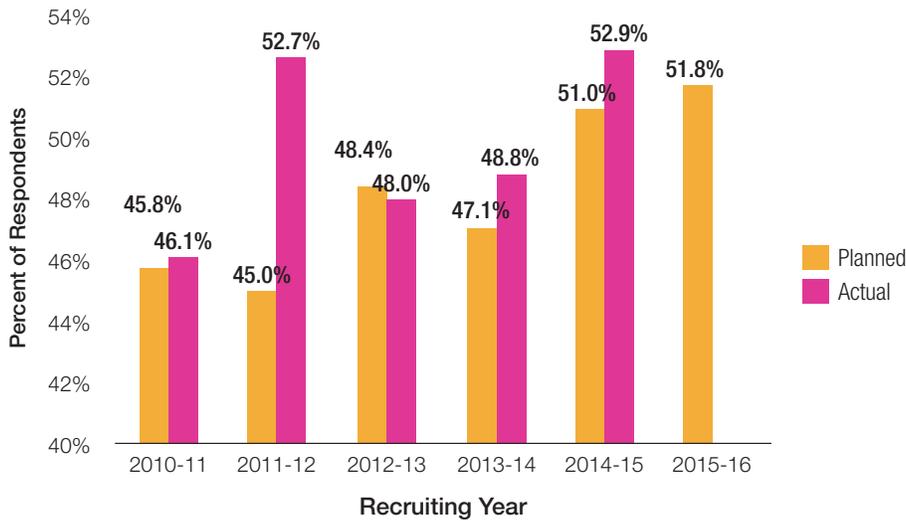


Figure 49

Percent of employers offering signing bonuses to 2015-16 graduates, by industry

Industry	% offering signing bonuses	# of respondents
Utilities	100.0%	5
Food & Beverage Mfg.	80.0%	5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	66.7%	24
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	64.3%	14
Retail Trade	64.3%	14
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	62.5%	16
Misc. Mfg.	60.0%	15
Information	50.0%	6
Oil & Gas Extraction	44.4%	9
Accounting Services	44.4%	9
Transportation	40.0%	5
Management Consulting	40.0%	5
Misc. Prof. Services	40.0%	10
Construction	37.5%	8
Engineering Services	12.5%	8
Wholesale Trade	0.0%	5

**51.8%
BONUSES**

Figure 50

Percent of employers offering signing bonuses to 2015-16 graduates, by region

Region	% who plan to offer signing bonuses in 2015-16	% who planned to offer signing bonuses in 2014-15
Northeast	48.6%	48.6%
Southeast	49.1%	54.4%
Midwest	53.4%	51.7%
West	60.0%	60.0%

Figure 51

Average signing bonus, by major (bachelor's degrees)*

Major	2015-16 average bonus (projected)	# of respondents 2015-16	2014-15 average bonus (projected)	# of respondents 2014-15
Accounting	\$2,929	7	\$3,682	11
Business	\$3,100	5	\$3,958	6
Chemical Engineering	Not reported	3	\$5,250	6
Computer Science	\$6,357	7	\$4,364	11
Engineering – not specified	\$5,750	8	\$5,107	14

*Where 5 or more data points were provided.

Figure 52

Average signing bonus, by major (bachelor's degrees)*

Major	2015-16 average bonus (projected)	# of respondents 2015-16	2014-15 average bonus (projected)	# of respondents 2014-15
M.B.A.	\$9,929	7	\$20,250	8
Computer Science	Not reported	3	\$5,125	8
Engineering – not specified	\$6,100	5	\$7,500	5

*Where 5 or more data points were provided.



Updates for The Class of 2016

The *Job Outlook 2016 Spring Update* survey (data collected in February – March) will give NACE members a final update on hiring for 2015-16 graduates. Results will be available in early April 2016.

The first report of starting salaries for the Class of 2016 will be published in January 2016, when the *Winter 2016 Salary Survey* is released.

Appendix

Figure 53

Respondents by size of department/business unit

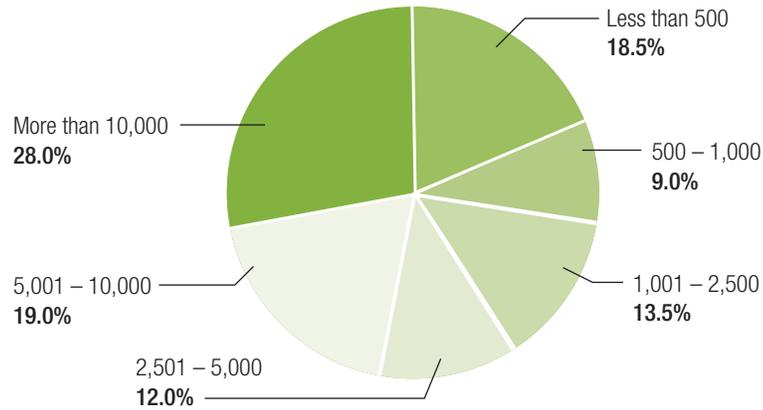


Figure 54

Respondents by industry

Industry	# of respondents	% of respondents
Agriculture	1	0.5%
Oil & Gas Extraction	9	4.5%
Utilities	9	4.5%
Construction	9	4.5%
Food & Beverage Mfg.	6	3.0%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	16	8.0%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	18	9.0%
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	7	3.5%
Misc. Mfg.	15	7.5%
Wholesale Trade	6	3.0%
Retail Trade	15	7.5%
Transportation	6	3.0%
Messaging & Warehousing	1	0.5%
Information	7	3.5%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	30	14.9%
Accounting Services	9	4.5%
Engineering Services	9	4.5%
Management Consulting	5	2.5%
Misc. Prof. Services	13	6.5%
Social Services	3	1.5%
Recreation & Hospitality	1	0.5%
Misc. Support Services	3	1.5%
Government	3	1.5%

Participating Organizations

Below is a list of the organizations that responded to the *Job Outlook 2016* survey.
(Please note: Although 201 organizations responded, the list below includes 147, as 54 organizations preferred not to be listed.)

Aetna Inc.	Chicago Trading Company
American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings, Inc.	Chrysler Group LLC
AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies	Citrix Systems, Inc.
Anadarko Petroleum Corporation	Con Edison
ARAMARK	ConAgra Foods, Inc.
ArcelorMittal USA	ConocoPhillips Company
Ascend Performance Materials	Continental AG
Asurion Corporation	Continental Resources, Inc.
BBVA Compass	Cree, Inc.
Bechtel Bettis, Inc.	Crowe Horwath LLP
Black & Veatch Corporation	Cymer Inc.
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of IL, MT, OK, NM and TX	Dell, Inc.
BreitBurn Energy	Delphi Corporation
Briggs & Stratton Corporation	Dick's Sporting Goods
Burlington Stores	Direct Energy
Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co. Inc.	DuPont
C&S Wholesale Grocers, Inc.	Dynetics Inc.
California State Auditor	Ecolab Inc.
Cambridge Associates LLC	Edward Jones
CBRE Group, Inc.	ELS Educational Services
Cemex, Inc.	Enterprise
CenterPoint Energy, Inc.	Equinix
CGI Federal	EthosEnergy
Chevron Corporation	ExxonMobil Corporation
	Fifth Third Bank
	Fluor Corporation – Global Recruiting
	FMC Technologies, Inc.

Freeport-McMoRan, Inc.
Fugro, Inc.
General Electric Company
GoDaddy.com
Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company
Gulf Interstate Engineering
Hazen and Sawyer P.C.
HNTB Companies
Hormel Foods Corporation
Huntington National Bank
Huron Consulting Group
Infinera
International SOS Assistance Inc.
J.B. Hunt Transport Inc.
kCura
KPMG LLP
L-3 Mission Integration
Lake Shore Cryotronics, Inc.
Lennox International Inc.
Liberty Mutual Insurance Company
Linbeck Corporation
Linde
Macy's, Inc.
MasterCard
Mattress Firm
MAVERICK Technologies
McCarthy Holdings, Inc
Meaden & Moore
Medical Mutual of Ohio
Minnetronix Inc.
Modern Woodmen of America
Mondelz International
NetSuite
Numerica Corporation
Olin Chlor Alkali Products
Owens Corning
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Parsons Corporation
Phillips-Medisize Corporation
PPL Corporation
PriceKubecka, PLLC
PrimeSource Building Products, Inc.
Procter & Gamble Co.
Protiviti Inc.
PSEG
Questar Corporation
Rockwell Collins
Rosetta
Ross Stores Inc.
SanDisk

SapientNitro	The Pep Boys – Manny Moe & Jack
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions	The PFM Group
Save-A-Lot	The Rehmann Group
Sealed Air Corporation	The Schwan Food Company
Sears Holdings Corporation	The Timken Company
Selden Fox LTD	The Vanguard Group
Sensata Technologies	Tindall Corporation
Shadow Financial Systems, Inc.	TMX Finance
Shaw Industries, Inc.	Toys “R” Us, Inc.
South Jersey Industries	True Partners Consulting, LLC
Southern California Edison	Turner Construction Company
Southwestern Energy Company	U.S. Postal Service
Speedway LLC	Unimin Corporation
Spredfast	Union Pacific Railroad Company
STAPLES Inc.	Unum
Sterling Jewelers	Valero Energy Corporation
Sundt Construction Inc.	Verso Corp.
SWIFT	Wawa Inc.
Synchrony Financial	WESCO International, Inc.
TD Bank	Woolpert LLP
Teradata Corporation	Zachry
Texas Instruments Incorporated	
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department	
The Bozzuto Group	
The Northern Trust Company	

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