

Methodology and Highlights

The **Destination Survey** is administered annually by the Michigan State University (MSU) Career Services Network. It attempts to document the post-graduate outcomes of MSU students who have received a bachelor's degree during the spring and summer semesters, offering a snapshot of their progress as they transition out of college.

Methodology

The college-based Career Consultants and other colleagues coordinated data collection efforts within their own colleges, but all utilized the Destination Survey System and a common set of questions. Beyond the online survey, data was collected through other sources, including:

- Emails from individual students reporting their outcomes
- Information from departments that were aware of specific student placements
- Reports from employers indicating recent hires
- Information mined from *LinkedIn* and other social networking resources
- Direct calls to graduates.

While these additional data gathering methods are not research oriented, they are consistent with the goal of gathering information on as many students as possible. *Only data that practitioners deemed legitimate and verifiable were included in the dataset.* We will therefore use the term **knowledge rate** or “the percent of graduates for which the institution has reasonable and verifiable information concerning the graduates’ post-graduation career activities” (NACE <http://www.nacweb.org/knowledge/assessment/first-destination-survey-standards.aspx>) throughout the report.

Survey Pool

The survey targeted only undergraduate students who graduated in Spring and Summer 2015. The initial pool was generated by the Office of the Registrar’s *intent to graduate* list. However, the Network eliminated records of students who may have initially responded but, in fact, did not graduate until after August 2015.

Time Frame

The first wave of the survey was sent electronically to students in the weeks prior to graduation. Individual colleges timed the launch date differently: some started four weeks before graduation; others waited until several weeks after in hopes of receiving more definitive placement responses. Subsequent waves of surveys were sent throughout the fall semester to non-responders and to those whose initial response classified them as *unplaced* at the end of the summer. The window to survey for the purposes of this snapshot closes approximately six months after graduation.

The additional data gathering methods described above were engaged throughout the collection period, but were amplified at the end of the fall semester and beginning of winter. Although the official survey portal closed at the end of February 2015, the Career Services Network continued

to accept data from colleges and departments that gathered outcome information through instruments other than the Destination Survey.

Outcome Terms

In this report, outcomes have been divided into three categories:

- **Career Outcome** which includes: **employment; continuing education**, including pursuing graduate school (i.e., admitted to a specific program), an additional degree, or completing a certification requirement (teaching); **starting a business**; or **pursuing other commitments**, which covers personal endeavors such as extended travel, writing a novel or starting a family.
- **Unplaced**, which includes students actively seeking employment, waiting on admission to a graduate program, or uncertain about plans at the close of data collection.
- **Unresolved** refers to students who responded to the first wave of the survey (at graduation) and were classified as “unplaced,” but *did not respond* to any subsequent surveys and for whom no information was acquired through other data collection methods; thus, eventual placement status was never resolved.

Tabulations

Multiple majors or dual degree graduates were counted once within each college in which they were awarded a degree for the college reports. Honors students are included in the tabulations for their respective college but also counted in the Honors College section. Duplications were eliminated for the *MSU – All Colleges* section.

Highlights

- Overall MSU knowledge rate remained steady - 84% in 2015 vs 82% in 2014
- Overall MSU career outcomes rate also remained steady - 92% in 2015 vs 92% in 2014
- Overall MSU employment rate also remained steady - 63% in 2015 from 64% in 2014
- Employment in the state of Michigan remained steady - 62% in 2015 vs 63% in 2014

Knowledge Rate:

- 11 of the 15 colleges reported a knowledge rate equal to or higher than in 2014
- 5 of the 15 colleges raised their knowledge rate greater than or equal to 5% compared to 2014
- 2 of the 15 colleges raised their knowledge rate over 10% compared to 2014

Career Outcomes Rate:

- 5 of the 15 colleges reported a higher career outcomes rate in 2014 than in 2013

Teacher Certification:

- First-year placement tracking of previous year’s (2014) graduates who completed their full year teaching internship resulted in an 84% response rate and 98% placement rate.