



2016-17

First Destination Survey Results

New Mexico State University – Las Cruces

Calixto Melero
Office of Institutional Analysis



2016-17 First Destination Survey—Executive Summary

New Mexico State University

Introduction:

The First Destination Survey is administered within six weeks of the fall and spring graduations to all New Mexico State University (NMSU) students who have applied for graduation. The 2016-17 survey included students at all degree and certificate levels at all five of the NMSU campuses who applied for their degrees in Summer 2016, Fall 2016, or Spring 2017. The predominant goal of this survey is to ascertain the employment picture of students upon graduation.

Response Rates:

The First Destination survey was emailed to approximately 4,733 graduating students, of which 1,299 (27%) respondents completed the online survey. This year, the percent of respondents from each of the NMSU campuses was slightly higher than last year—the Las Cruces campus had 1,003 respondents (31%), Doña Ana had 208 (18%), both NMSU Alamogordo and NMSU Carlsbad had 30 respondents (27% and 28% respectively), and NMSU Grants had 28 respondents, representing the largest increase over last year at 31% (Figure 1).

Demographic responses shifted this year among the different race/ethnic groups. This year, White/Unknown graduates recorded the highest response rate at 32%, unseating minority graduates (29%) who last year had the highest response rate. International graduates registered 26%, followed closely by Hispanics at 25% (Figure 2). Female respondents (31%) once again replied at higher rates than their male counterparts (24%).

Doctoral respondents significantly increased this year to 54%, followed by Master's graduates (34%), and bachelor degree graduates at 29% (Figure 3). Response rates from the academic colleges were proportional to last year's responses. ACES and the College of Education had the highest responses with 35% each. The College of Engineering (32%), the College of Arts and Sciences (31%), and the College of Business (29%) followed. Health and Social Services degree applicants, similar to last year, had the lowest response rate at 23% (Figure 4).

Employment Plans:

In terms of employment plans, 37% of bachelor degree respondents had a job/job offer at the time of the survey. Approximately 60% of graduate degree respondents had a job/job offer upon graduation. Master students with job offers increase slightly this year by about 10%; however, the number of doctoral students with a job/job offer declined 25% from last year's 85% (Figure 5). Similar to previous years, three-fifths of Las Cruces campus graduates found employment in New Mexico, with the remaining 40% taking jobs out of state (Figure 6). More than half of those graduating with a bachelor's degree plan to remain in NM (56%), as will 66% of Master's graduates. A fair amount (44%) of doctoral degree respondents also attained employment in NM (Figure 7).

Employment Sectors:

The employment sector with the highest number of job/job offers was the Education sector (25%), followed by Engineering (16%) (Table 1). As was the case last year, one-third of bachelor degree graduates reported they would enter the job market making between \$20,000 and \$39,999 a year, with another third making between \$40,000 and \$59,999 a year. Nearly half (47%) of Master's degree graduates will make \$40,000 and \$59,999 a year, and doctoral graduates had the highest number of respondents (29%) who stated they will earn \$80,000 or more (Figure 9). By college, Engineering continued to graduate the largest number of high-wage earners—65% at \$60k or more per year (Figure 10). This was true by industry also, as the Engineering sector had nearly 70% of new employees expected to earn \$60k or more per year (Figure 11).

NMSU Services:

Internships were particularly important to NMSU graduates, as 47% of bachelor and 47% of master students reported having an internship, as did one-third of doctoral graduates (Table 3). Having an internship or co-op was important in the relationship of securing a job. Almost 60% of bachelor degree respondents who had an internship stated they had a job/job offer, and 64% of bachelor graduates with a co-op states they had secured a job or job offer (Table 4). NMSU graduates, as a whole, were self-motivated and prepared to enter the job market as 34% of all respondents who had attained a job/job offer reported getting the job because of a direct application (Table 5).

INTRODUCTION

The First Destination Survey is administered within six weeks of the fall and spring graduations to all New Mexico State University (NMSU) students who have applied for graduation. The 2016-17 survey included students at all degree and certificate levels at all five of the NMSU campuses who applied for their degrees in Summer 2016, Fall 2016, or Spring 2017. The predominant goal of this survey is to ascertain the employment picture of students upon graduation.

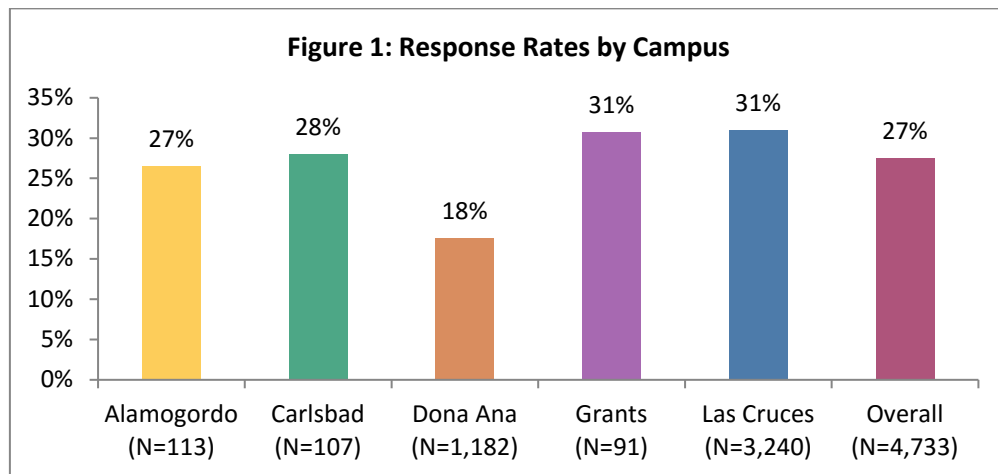


Students who had applied for a certificate or degree within the academic year were individually sent an email message containing a link to the survey within six weeks of graduation for fall and for spring (summer degree applicants were contacted at the same time as fall degree applicants). Because students were offered the survey prior to receiving their degrees, students who applied for a degree in the summer or fall, and who had to re-apply for the degree in the spring, were sent the survey invitation for both administrations. However, only the most recent degree and response was kept for this analysis, i.e., student counts for both population and responses are unduplicated in this

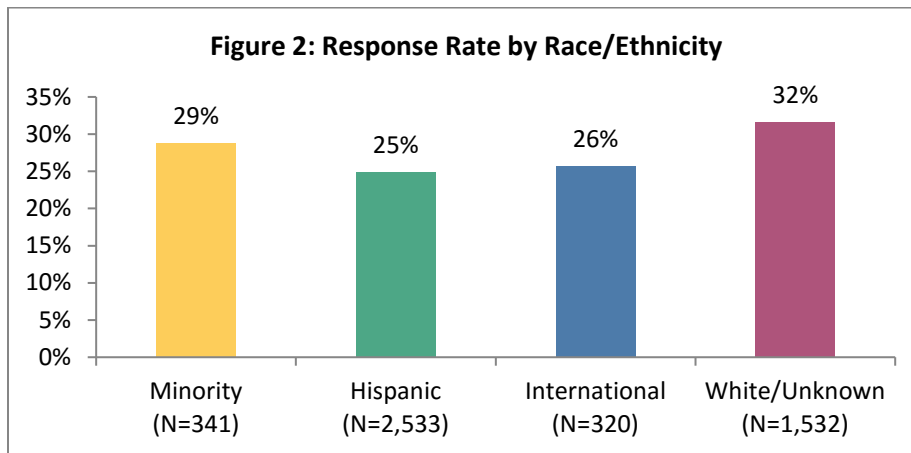
analysis. This includes an unduplicated count for students who may have received multiple certificates and/or degrees from the branch campuses.

RESPONSE RATES

The 2016-17 First Destination survey was emailed to approximately 4,733 graduating students who were invited to complete the survey. This year, the overall response rate increased to 27%, as 1,299 graduated students completed the online survey. This represented a three percent increase over last year's 24% response rate. The response rates from each of the individual campuses was also higher this year. On the Las Cruces campus, 1,003 graduates responded. This is a three percent increase over last year at 31%. There were 296 respondents who obtained a certificate or associate degree from an NMSU community college (23% of respondents). A total of 208 students responded from the Doña Ana campus; this represented 18% of that campus' graduating class. Both NMSU Alamogordo and NMSU Carlsbad were similar in their response rates with 30 respondents from each campus completing the survey, representing 27% and 28% response rates, respectively. NMSU Grants had the highest response rate of the branch campuses, as well as the largest increase (12%) over last year, at 31%. These data are summarized in Figure 1. *Note—counts at the bottom of the graphs represent total degree recipients.*

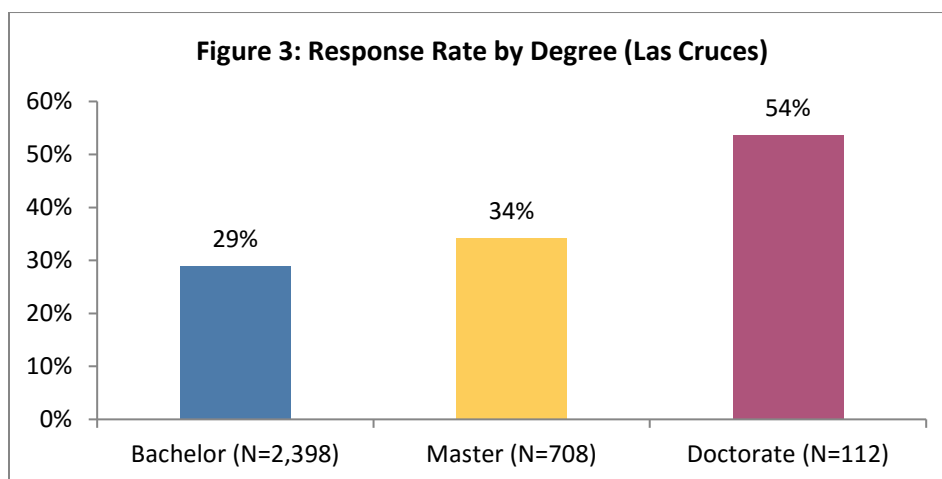


As in previous years, a higher percentage of women responded relative to the graduating population. This year, 31% of female degree applicants responded compared to 24% of men. Both women and men responded at higher rates this year when compared to last year—slightly widening the gap in responses between the two groups from 6% last year to 7% this year. Demographic responses shifted this year among the different race/ethnic groups. This year, White/Unknown graduates recorded the highest response rate (32%), unseating minority graduates (29%) who last year had the highest response rate. International graduates registered 26%, followed closely by Hispanics at 25%, who were up 3% compared to last year (Figure 2).

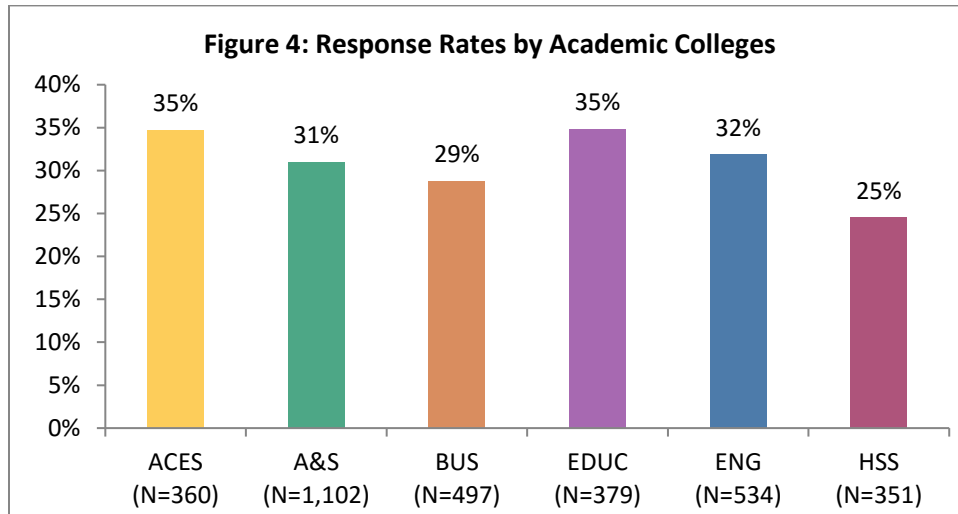


Because Las Cruces campus degree recipients comprised 77% of the responses, this analysis focuses mainly on the Las Cruces campus students. Additional details on the community college respondents are presented near the end of the report.

Response rates from all degree levels increased this year. This increase was particularly large amongst doctoral graduates, increasing 18% to 54%, followed by master's graduates at 34%, and bachelor degree graduates at 29% (Figure 3).

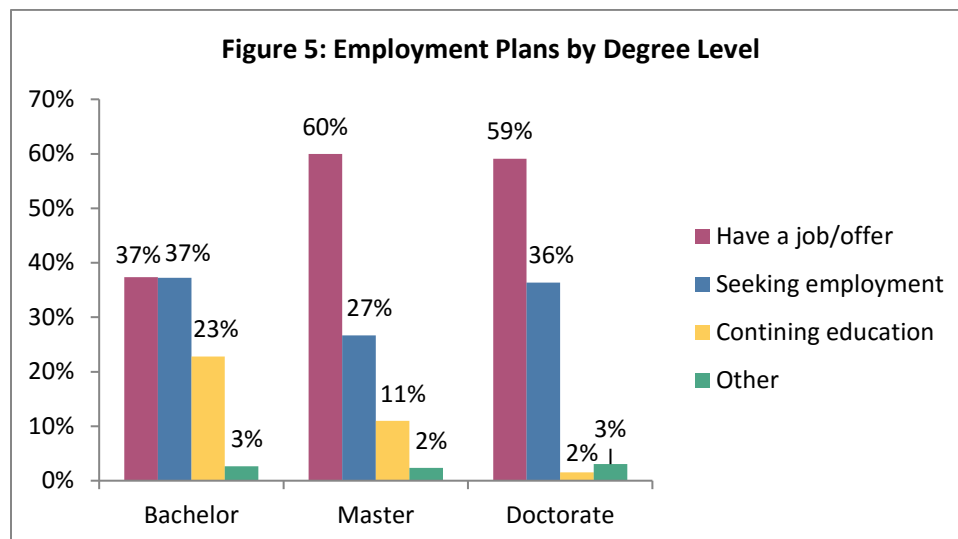


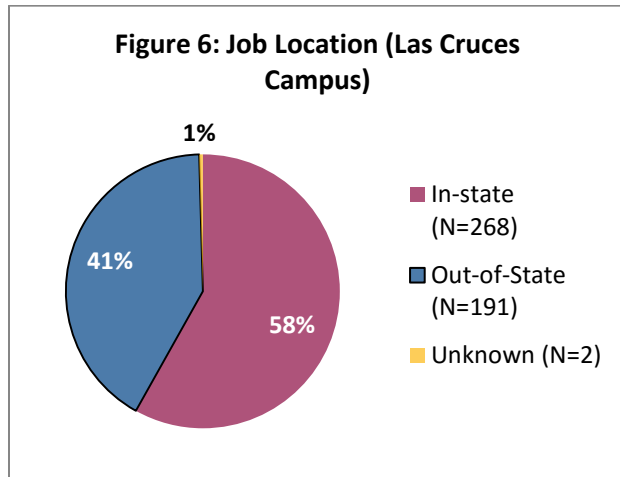
Response rates from the academic colleges were proportional to last year's responses. The College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES) and the College of Education had the highest number of responses with 35% each. The College of Engineering (32%), Arts and Sciences (31%), and the College of Business (29%) followed. Health and Social Services degree applicants, similar to last year, had the lowest response rates at 25% (Figure 4).



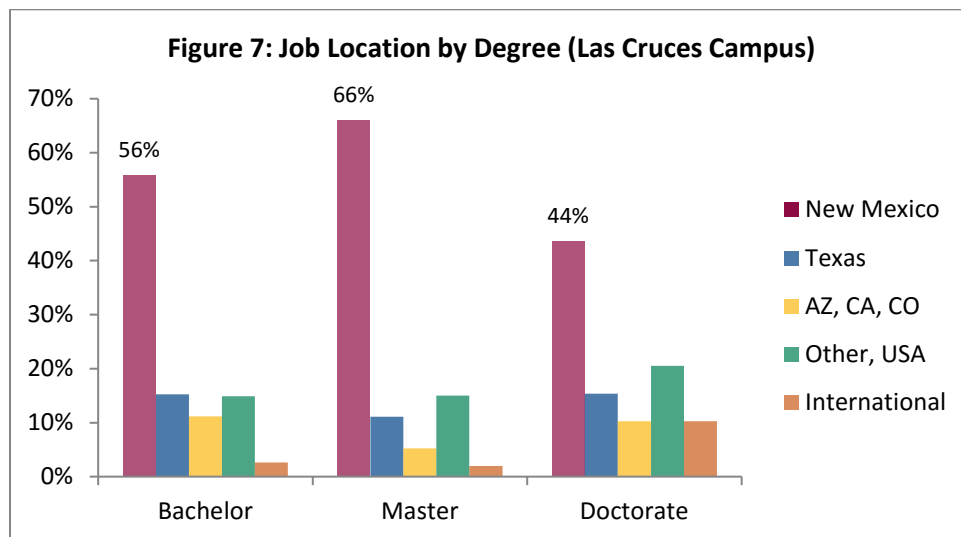
EMPLOYMENT PLANS

In terms of employment plans, 37% of bachelor degree respondents had a job/job offer at the time of the survey. Approximately 60% of master's degree respondents had a job/job offer upon graduation. Master's students with job offers increase slightly this year by about 10%; however, the number of doctoral students with a job/job offer declined 25% from last year's 85% (Figure 5).





Close to 60% of the 461 Las Cruces campus graduates reported having a job/job offer in New Mexico when they responded to the survey, with the remaining 41% reporting a job/job offer out-of-state (Figure 6). Just over half (56%) of bachelor degree respondents were staying in New Mexico with job/job offers, as were 66% of master's degree respondents. Doctoral degree graduates reporting job/job offers in New Mexico increased to 44% this year, while those with international job/job offers decreased by 10% from last year's 20% (Figure 7). Similar to previous years, Texas drew 15% of bachelor job/job offers, 15% for doctoral candidates, and 11% of master's job/job offers. Across all degree levels, the proportion of graduates remaining in New Mexico to work was relatively similar to those in 2015-16.



While employment plans varied significantly for masters and doctoral graduates with job/job offers when compared to last year, the percentage of graduates continuing their education or pursuing other plans remained similar to previous years. Just under a quarter (23%) of bachelor degree respondents will be continuing their education, as will 11% of master's graduates. Nearly half of those bachelor and master's graduates, 46% and 48% respectively, will continue their educational endeavors at NMSU. For bachelor respondents, 43% plan to move out of state to continue their study plans, and 11% will pursue an advanced degree at another New Mexico institution. All of the master's degree graduates (52%) who were not continuing their studies at NMSU reported their educational plans would take them out of state. A very small percent (2%) of respondents plan to join the military or work for some other type of organization.

EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

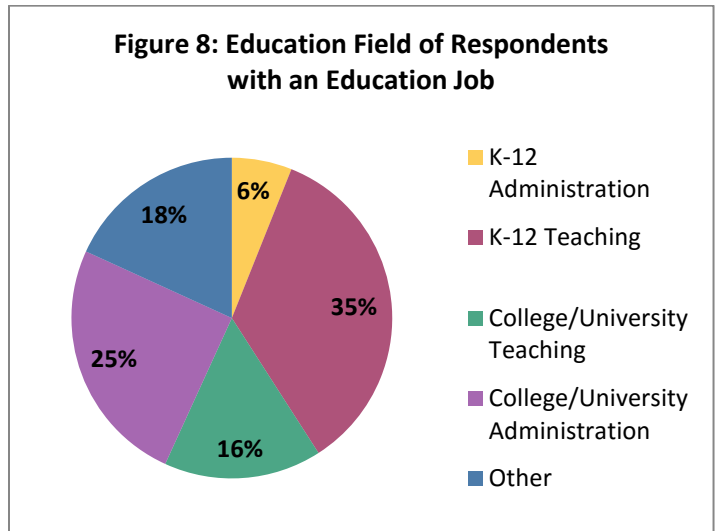
Employment by sector remained similar to last year, with a couple of exceptions. This year, bachelor degree respondents continued to report their primary employment sector as Engineering; however, the percentage of graduates entering this field increased by 5% over last year to 21%. Graduates entering the Business (15%) and Education (15%) sectors remained similar to previous years. Jobs for master’s degree respondents were predominantly in the Education sector (33%). The majority of doctoral degree respondents (64%) also reported a job in Education; this was a 10% increase over last year. Few doctorate degree graduates (8%) reported entering the Engineering sector, and 10% reported other sectors.

As one might expect, there is a strong relationship between college of degree and job sector, wherein each college fielded the most job offers in their respective job sector. This was especially true of the College of Education where 84% of respondents reported having a job/job offer in the education sector. This was followed by the College of Engineering where 69% of respondents had job/job offers in their respective sector, and Health and Social Services with 56% (Table 1). The college that offered the most diverse industry sector job/job offers was the College of Arts and Sciences that filled every industry sector, including a variety of “Other” sectors. The industry sector with the highest number of job/job offers was the Education sector (25%), followed by the Engineering sector (16%), and the Business sector (13%). These three industries accounted for 54% of all job/job offers. The finance and nonprofit sectors offered the least number of job/job offers to respondents, each with 1%. See Appendix A for the list of other types of industry. Additionally, a list of employers as provided by the respondents is in Appendix B.

Table 1: Industry Sectors of Jobs/Job Offers for Las Cruces Graduates by College

Industry Sector	Ag., Cons., & Env. Sci.	Arts & Sciences	Business	Education	Engineering	Health & Soc. Serv.	Total	Percent
Agriculture	15	2	1	0	0	0	18	4%
Business	8	9	37	1	0	1	56	13%
Education	5	25	5	62	9	4	110	25%
Finance	0	1	3	0	0	0	4	1%
Federal Government	3	14	4	0	11	1	33	8%
State/Local Government	3	11	4	1	2	5	26	6%
Arts & Entertainment	3	12	0	1	1	0	17	4%
Engineering	0	10	3	0	59	0	72	16%
Healthcare	4	5	1	5	0	24	39	9%
Nonprofit	0	1	0	0	0	5	6	1%
Other	14	19	14	4	3	3	57	13%
Total	55	109	72	74	85	43	438	100%

Respondents who attained a job/job offer in the education sector were asked by the College of Education to specify the education field of their job. The majority (35%) reported having a job teaching K-12, while the fewest portion of respondents (6%) would go into K-12 Administration. A quarter of respondents had acquired administration jobs at the college/university level, while 16% expected to teach at a college/university (Figure 8). The remaining 18% reported jobs in “other” areas of the education field. This year, graduates working in college/university administration increased, while the number of jobs in “other” areas decreased when compared to 2015-2016 figures. A complete list of “other” positions is in Appendix C.



Salary is a very important consideration for many job candidates. Figure 9 reports annual salary by degree level. Thirty-one percent of bachelor degree graduates reported earning between \$20,000 and \$39,999 a year, with an additional 29% reporting between \$40,000 and \$59,999 a year. Earning a master’s degree increased the number of graduates who expected to earn \$40,000 to \$59,999 to nearly half (47%). For doctoral candidates, the extra years of schooling was compensated by higher earnings, as nearly 30% would earn \$80,000+ a year and an additional 24% earning \$60,000-\$79,999 a year.

Figure 10 reports earnings across academic colleges. The academic college with the highest reported earning was Engineering, where 42% of graduates expected to earn \$60,000-\$79,999 and another 22% anticipated earning \$80,000 or more. Health and Social Services graduates anticipated earning the largest proportion (53%) of median income at \$40,000-\$59,999. Consistent with previous years, the colleges of Arts & Sciences and ACES both reported the lowest expected wage—over 60% of their graduates will earn below \$39,999.

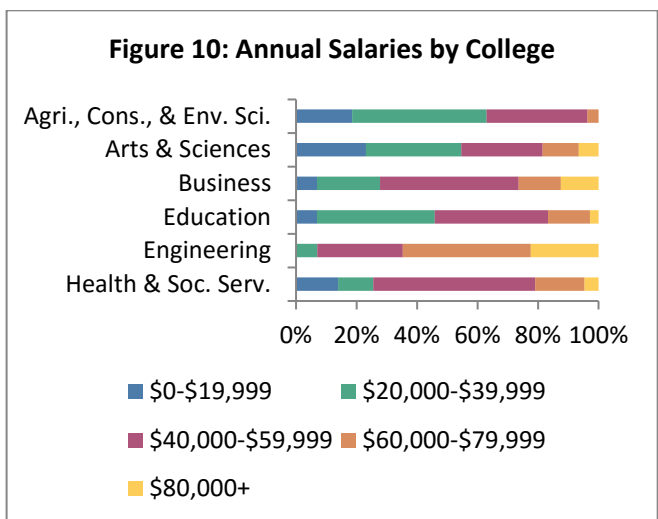
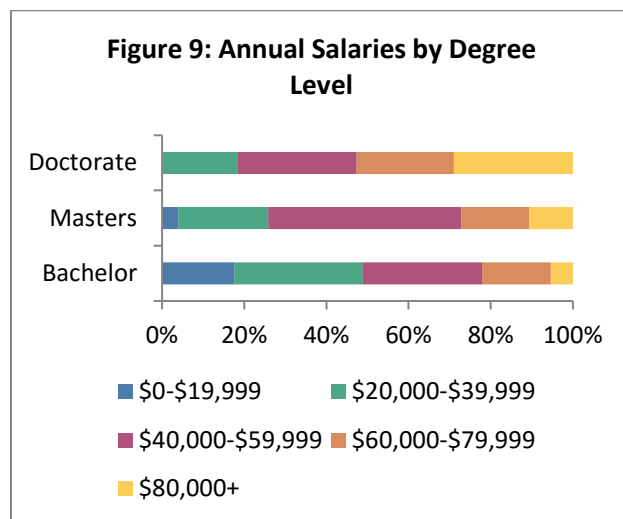
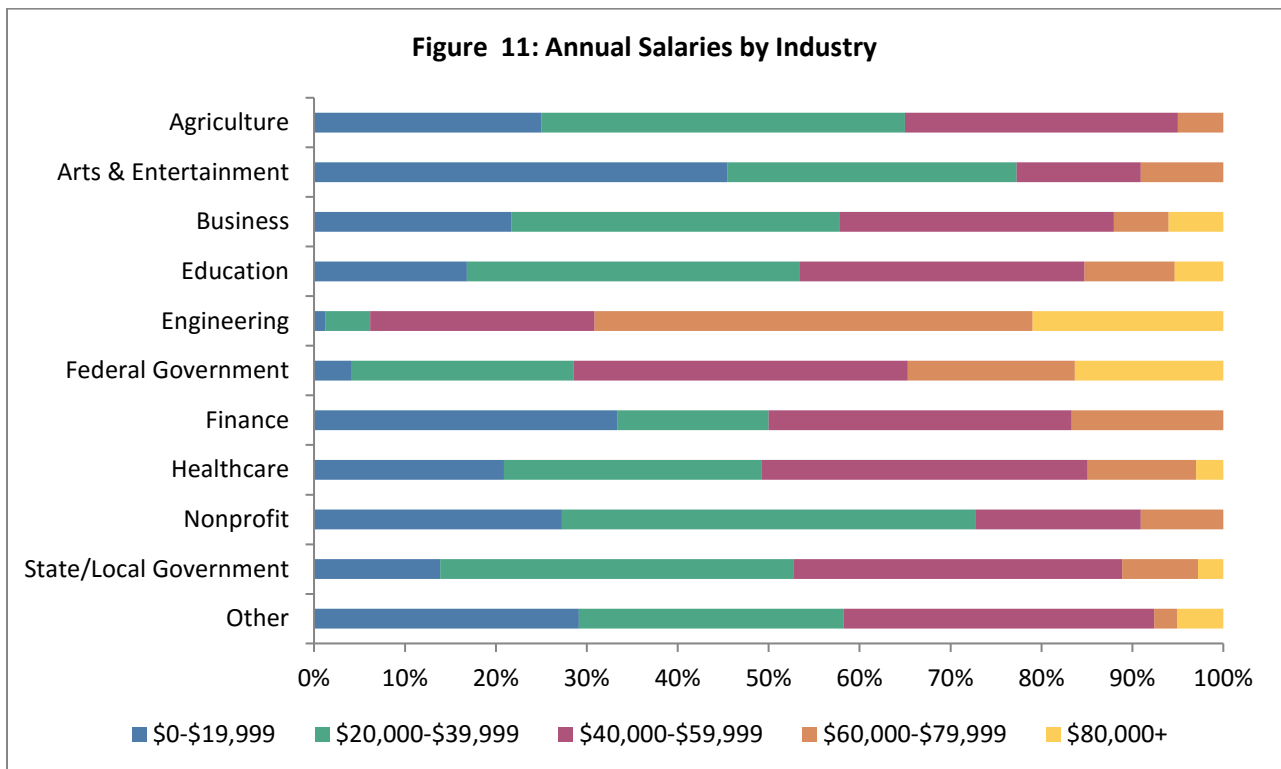


Figure 11 examines the distribution of earnings by industry of employment. Consistent with previous years, graduates entering the fields of engineering and the federal government can expect to be among the highest salary earners. Nearly 70% of engineers expect to earn \$60,000 or more and another 25% expect earning between \$40,000 and \$59,999. Thirty-four percent of federal government employees expect to earn greater than \$60,000, an additional 37% expect to earn above \$40,000. Graduates entering the arts & entertainment fields reported the lowest actual/anticipated earning; however, the number of respondents expecting to earn between \$0-\$19,999 was reduced by nearly half this year (45%), when compared to last year's 80%. The nonprofit sector followed as the second lowest compensated field with 72% of nonprofit employees earning less than \$40,000.



ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONS

The number of graduates reporting full-time positions was almost identical to last year's response for all degree levels, with only a 3% decrease for doctoral graduates and a 1% decrease for bachelor and master's degree graduates reporting full-time employment. This year, 92% of doctorate degree respondents reported full-time positions, while the remaining 6% reported temporary positions. Slightly less master's degree respondents reported full-time employment (89%), and 79% of bachelor degree respondents reported full-time employment.

Table 2 offers additional insight into the employment picture of respondents who had already secured a job/job offer. Thirty-nine percent of respondents who reported one job/job offer also reported they had multiple job offers when they graduated. Slightly more than half (57%) of respondents with a job/job offer reported their offers came from employers who had NMSU graduates already employed with their company, and some type of prior connection to an employer was reported by 46% of respondents receiving a job/job offer.

Table 2: General Questions of Respondents with Job/Job Offer

	Bachelor		Masters		Doctorate		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Have other job offers	106	40%	62	41%	12	32%	180	39%
NMSU graduates already employed	144	54%	97	64%	19	50%	260	57%
Prior connection to an employer	127	48%	67	44%	16	42%	210	46%

PARTICIPATION IN NMSU SERVICES

NMSU offers opportunities for students to participate in Cooperative Education Programs (Co-ops) and internships. A high proportion of students participate in internships, annually. Almost half of bachelor (47%) and master’s (47%) graduates reported an internship, and almost a third of doctorate (29%) graduates similarly participated. Each year, however, only a relatively small number of graduating students report participating in Co-ops. This year 8% of all graduates reported participating in a Co-op (Table 3). While Co-ops are available in a majority of majors, only 9% of bachelor degree respondents participated and 6% for both masters and doctorate respondents noted participation.

Table 3: Number of Respondents with Co-ops or Internships

	Bachelor		Masters		Doctorate		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Had a Co-op	63	9%	15	6%	4	6%	82	8%
Had an Internship	339	47%	120	47%	19	29%	478	46%

Participation in an internship or Co-op appears to give respondents an advantage in obtaining a job/job offer, as each year graduates who take part in these programs have higher rates of job/job offers than non-participants. This year, 59% of bachelor degree respondents who had an internship had a job/job offer, versus 42% who did not have an internship (Table 4). Having a Co-op was also advantageous for job seekers, as 64% of respondents who had secured a job/job offer had a Co-op compared to 48% of job/job offer without a Co-op.

Table 4: Bachelor Degree Respondents and Relationship

	Have a job/offer		Still looking		Total Count
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Had a Co-op	32	64%	18	36%	50
Did not have a Co-op	233	48%	249	52%	482
Had an Internship	150	59%	106	41%	256
Did not have an Internship	115	42%	161	58%	276

The result of a job/job offer, however, can often result from a variety of reasons. When students were asked directly what factors contributed to their employment, only 19% of bachelor degree graduates felt their employment was a result of an internship (Table 5). The most common response for employment was direct application—28% of bachelors receiving a job/offer, 37% of master’s graduates with a job/offer, and 62% of doctorates with job/offers felt it was due to direct application. An additional quarter of job/job offer recipients (the second most common reason) cited “Other” reasons as the result of their employment. Appendix D provides a

complete list of “Other” categories. Students also listed NMSU faculty (4%), family members (6%), and on-campus career fairs (6%) as reasons for employment. A complete list of options is provided in Table 5. These results were similar to the 2015-16 iteration of the survey.

Table 5: For Respondents with a Job/Job Offer, Employment was a result of...

	Bachelor		Masters		Doctorate		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
On-Campus Career Fair	19	7%	5	3%	1	3%	25	6%
Off-Campus Career Fair	3	1%	1	1%	0	0%	4	1%
Career Services	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	2	0%
NMSU Faculty	8	3%	8	5%	2	5%	18	4%
Direct Application	73	28%	54	37%	23	62%	150	34%
Family Member	22	8%	3	2%	1	3%	26	6%
Co-op	4	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4	1%
Internship	50	19%	23	16%	2	5%	75	17%
Summer Employment	19	7%	4	3%	0	0%	23	5%
Other	62	24%	49	33%	8	22%	119	27%
Total	262	100%	147	100%	37	100%	446	100%

Participation in workshops, career fairs, and the Aggie Career Manager have remained fairly consistent over the past few years. Table 6 indicates 44% of bachelor respondents reported having participated in career fairs at NMSU, and 39% have used the Aggie Career Manager. Workshops were the least attended career service program with a 14% participation rate from both bachelor and master’s degree graduates and 23% from doctorate graduates. Twenty-nine percent of master’s graduates attended career fairs, followed closely by 27% of doctorate graduates. Master’s students had almost three times the number of Aggie Career Manager respondents (22%) than did doctorate respondents (8%). Similar to last year, students commented that the career fairs were useful for meeting potential employers, but these comments also suggest that a wider array of companies need to attend the career fairs, and greater efforts should be focused toward employment of graduate students.

Table 6: Participation in Career Services Activities--Las Cruces Campus (select all that apply)

	Bachelor		Masters		Doctorate		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Workshops	97	14%	33	14%	14	23%	144	14%
Career Fairs	305	44%	71	29%	16	27%	392	39%
Aggie Career Manager	272	39%	52	22%	5	8%	329	33%
None of the above	258	37%	142	59%	39	65%	439	44%

NMSU COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES

Graduates from each of the community colleges participated in the survey. There was a total of 287 responses—11% received certificate awards and the remaining 89% were associate degree respondents (Table 7). The majority of respondents were graduating from Doña Ana Community College. Unlike previous years, this year’s response rates from the branch campuses had more variation in all response areas

Table 7: Awards of Respondents by Campus

Award Category	Alamogordo	Carlsbad	Dona Ana	Grants	Total
Certificate	1	1	21	8	31
Associate	28	29	179	20	256
Total	29	30	200	28	287

This year, slightly more community college respondents (46%) reported they had a job or job offer upon graduating—this was about a 4% increase over last year (Table 8). Nearly a third of the branch campus respondents were seeking employment at the time of the survey, while another handful (18%) were not seeking employment. Respondents who planned to continue their education (12%) dropped moderately when compared to last year’s respondents; the biggest drop in continued education came from the Carlsbad and Grants campuses. Several comments on employment and education plans are provided in the comments section.

Table 8: Employment Plans by Campus

	Alamogordo		Carlsbad		Dona Ana		Grants	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Have a job/offer	12	40%	19	63%	93	45%	13	46%
Seeking employment	5	17%	9	30%	73	35%	8	29%
Military or other	3	10%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%
Not seeking employment	3	10%	1	3%	16	8%	5	18%
Continuing education	7	23%	1	3%	24	12%	2	7%
Total	30	100%	30	100%	207	100%	28	100%

Table 9 on the next page, presents data on the industry of employment among community college respondents who indicated that they had a job/job offer. Much like the 2015-2016 iteration, Healthcare, Business, and Education were the top industries to provide job/offer to branch campus students, as was the “Other” industry sectors that provided a generous number of job/offers.

Table 9: Industry Sector of Job, by Campus

	Alamogordo	Carlsbad	Dona Ana	Grants	Total
Agriculture	0	0	3	0	3
Business	2	4	15	3	24
Education	2	4	9	1	16
Finance	0	1	1	0	2
Federal Government	3	1	11	0	15
State/Local Government	1	0	7	1	9
Arts & Entertainment	2	0	3	0	5
Engineering	0	1	4	1	6
Healthcare	1	3	19	4	27
Nonprofit	1	1	2	0	4
Other	0	4	17	2	23
Total	12	19	91	12	134

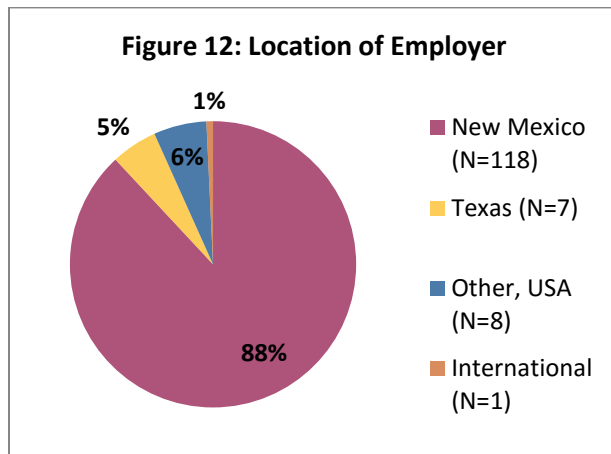


Figure 12 reveals that nearly 9 out of every 10 community college graduates who either secured a job or were offered a job will be working within New Mexico. These results mirror those of the 2015-2016 survey.

Annual salaries for each of the branch campuses are reported in Figure 13. The number of observations reported for each of the campuses are low (Alamogordo=11; Grants=12; Carlsbad=19; Dona Ana=86); consequently, these figures should be interpreted with caution. The combined income for campuses in each income level varied very little from reported incomes in previous years. Taken as a whole, just over 75% of all community college graduates report they expect to earn less than \$40,000 a year.

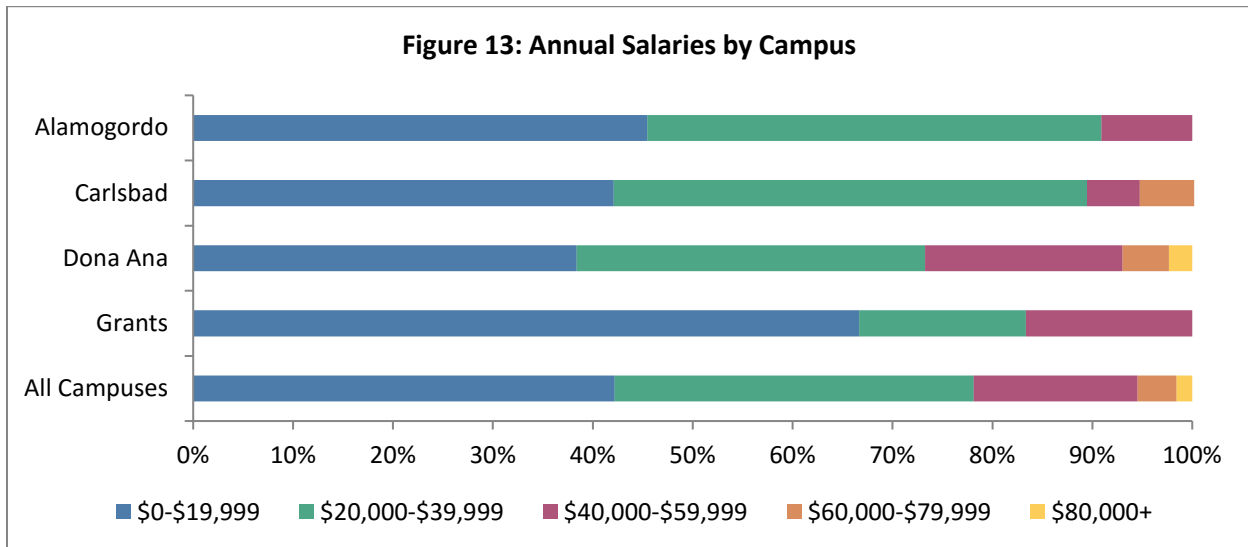


Table 10 provides information about participation in internships and co-ops among community college graduates. Results vary substantially by campus, with the Doña Ana graduates having the highest participation rate in Co-ops and a substantial participation rate in internships. NMSU Alamogordo had the highest percentage of respondents completing an internship (23%), and the only other campus where students reported participating in a Co-op (3%). Doña Ana had 22% of its students participate in internships and 10% reported participating in a Co-op. Internships and Co-ops were very rare at NMSU Carlsbad and NMSU Grants. Both campuses had no participation in Co-ops. NMSU Carlsbad increased slightly this year in internships (14%), but NMSU Grants had similar participation to last year (7%).

Table 10: Respondents Reporting an Internship or a Co-op

Campus	Total	Had an Internship		Had a Co-op	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Alamogordo	30	7	23%	1	3%
Carlsbad	29	4	14%	0	0%
Dona Ana	201	45	22%	20	10%
Grants	27	2	7%	0	0%
Total	287	58	20%	21	7%

Similar to graduates on the Las Cruces campus, a majority (42%) of the community college graduates reported direct application as the primary reason for why they got their job/job offer (Figure 14). Reasons other than those listed on the survey was the next cause of employment for many graduates. These reasons included some relationship to the employer or continuing their current employment. A complete list of "Other" reasons is available in Appendix D. In addition to how graduates secured a job/job offer, they also reported their participation in the various career services provided at their campus. Doña Ana Community College respondents had the highest rate of participation with the Career Services activities of Aggie Career Manager, Career Fairs, and Workshops (Table 11). Alamogordo, Carlsbad, and Grants campus students only sparsely participated in the

workshops and career fairs offered, and only Grants campus used the Aggie Career Manager. Workshop and career fair participation continued to grow this past year amongst community college students.

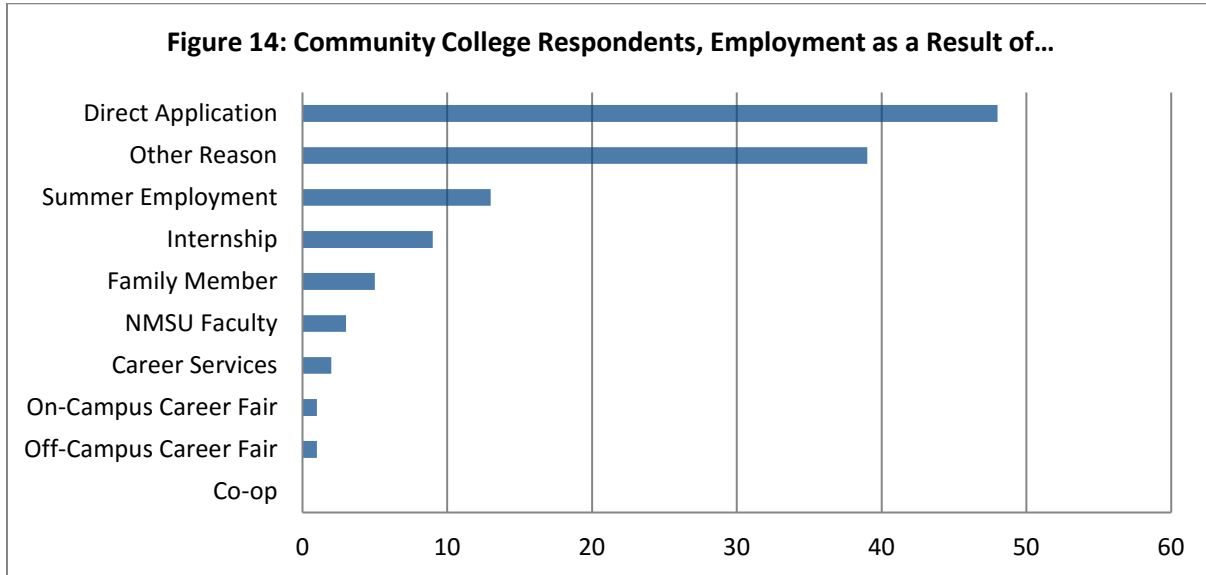


Table 11: Participation in Career Services Activities by Community College Respondents

	Alamogordo	Carlsbad	Dona Ana	Grants	Total
Workshops	2	1	28	4	35
Career Fairs	4	4	36	6	50
Aggie Career Manager	0	0	51	2	53
None of the above	24	25	127	22	198
Total	30	30	208	28	296

STUDENT VOICES

The last question in the survey asked respondents for any open-ended comments they deemed relevant and worth sharing. Table 12 presents the distribution of these comments across general thematic categories. This year, the number of comments provided dropped slightly over last year; there were 231 coded comments this year. The biggest change in the number of comments came from slightly fewer comments in the “Overall” and “Career Services” sections. Here, students generally give praise to NMSU and discuss the time spent on campus, as well as list the benefits received from the various job placement services. This year, “Overall” comments dropped by 4% and “Career Services” by 3%. Despite the decrease in volume, students graduating from NMSU continue to have similar types of concerns as in previous years, evidenced by the proportion of comments in each category.

Similar to previous years, just over one-third of comments were focused on NMSU career and professional services (i.e., Aggie Career Manager, Career Fair, or Career Services). Several of these comments offered ways to expand services and improve Aggie Career Manager, while numerous comments mentioned how the Center helped them to get their job. Future plans (17%) was another area students wanted to share what was in store for them. Many wanted to share their plans of continuing their educational goals, while others were open to sharing their new career choices.

A variety of student comments wished to express sincere appreciation for NMSU and, in particular, appreciation for the community colleges. Other comments wanted to convey more detailed appreciation of the education they received, the faculty, and their programs of study. A new thematic category was added this year, which focused on the concerns of graduate students. While only a small portion of the comments received, the 4% of graduate students who voiced their concerns are an important part of any exit survey and their concerns warrant future planning. With a few exceptions, the thematic categories and percentages within each category were similar to last year's totals. The similarity in comments, in addition to similarities in the overall results of the survey, when compared to previous years, may indicate consistency in NMSU preparing students for life after college. Throughout the survey, NMSU's graduating classes indicated a readiness to enter the job market or a desire to continue their educational aspirations.

Table 12: Comments by Theme

Theme	Count	Percent
Aggie Career Manager	6	3%
Career Fair	25	11%
Career Services	39	17%
Department, Program, or College	18	8%
Future Plans	40	17%
Graduate Student Focus	8	4%
Internships/Co-ops	18	8%
Not Applicable	18	8%
Online Students	6	3%
Overall Reflection	32	14%
Other	19	7%
Survey	2	1%
Total	231	100%