FALL CLASS OF 2015

Background
Metropolitan State University of Denver outsourced their Graduate and Alumni Survey to the Outcomes Survey Group from Summer 2014 through Fall 2016. The survey was administered separately for the Summer, Fall, and Spring graduating classes. An email link to an online survey was sent to students who graduated in December, 2015. The response rate of 42.2% was a substantial increase from the 34% response rate in Fall 2014. When picking up caps and gowns, this cohort was asked to fill out the survey before they picked up their alumni gift. Tablets were offered if mobile devices were not available. The demographics of survey respondents can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic breakdown of survey respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Invited</th>
<th>Total Responded</th>
<th>% Responded</th>
<th>% Sample</th>
<th>% MSU Denver Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to MSU Denver’s fall 2015 graduate population overall, the sample is roughly equivalent across sex and ethnicity. The top ten majors represented by the survey respondents were in Accounting (6.7%), Individualized Degree program (6.2%), Management (6.2%), Psychology (5.2%), Biology (4.8%), Criminal Justice (4.8%), Computer Information Systems (4.6%), Nursing (4%), and Hospitality (3.8%). Together, students in these ten majors make up about 50% of the college majors represented in the Outcomes Survey.

Did they get a job or pursue additional education?
The Outcomes Survey asks students about their post-graduation employment and educational status. As you can see in Figure 1., the majority of our Fall 2015 graduates indicated that their primary employment status was employed. Of the employed students, about 4 out of 5 students were employed full-time. The percentage of full-time employees was substantially higher for Fall 2015 graduates compared to Fall 2014, 61% (n=307) and 52% (n=242), respectively. The percentage of part-time workers was about the same.
About 8.6% (n=43) of graduates were enrolled or seeking additional education. Compared to Fall 2014 graduates, a smaller percentage of the Fall 2015 graduate cohort was unemployed and seeking employment, 15% (n=70) and 12.7% (n=64), respectively. The top three reasons cited for being unemployed or not seeking employment included being unable to find employment related to career goals (24.1%, n=20), enrollment in post-secondary educational pursuits (18.1%, n=15), and family/personal issues (14.5%, n=12).

About 58% (n=293) of graduates began pursuing their primary post-graduation situation before graduation, which is similar to the Fall 2014 graduate cohort. Further, 18.1% (n=91) of students kept the same occupation that they had prior to graduation or were promoted, up from 15.6% (n=70) in Fall 2014. The overall median income for undergraduate was $40,000, which was the highest median salary reported from graduate cohorts since Summer 2014 and $4,000 higher than Fall 2014 graduates.

Where are they now?
The Outcome Survey tracked students occupational and post-secondary pursuits. As indicated in Table 2., the vast majority of Fall 2015 graduates were employed by an organization (71%, n=284).

### Table 2. Fall 2015 graduates’ primary employment type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following best describes your occupation?</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed by organization</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged in an entrepreneurial/start-up effort as owner</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed freelance</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in a temporary/contract work assignment</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in a postgraduate internship</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in a faculty position at an institution of higher learning</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in any other work category</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d rather not answer</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When undergraduates were asked if they held more than one paid position, 29.5% (n=118) relied yes, which is down from Fall 2014 (34.5%, n=115, replied that they held more than one position).

Almost 50% (n=157) of survey respondents were employed or planned to be employed in the following top ten industries: healthcare, education, accounting, government/public administration, retain/wholesale, information technology, non-profit/philanthropy, financial services, telecommunications and law enforcement/security. About nine out of ten students stayed in Colorado to work.

The Outcome Survey data regarding the 2015 fall graduates’ post-secondary educational pursuits is only based on the responses of 31 graduates. For instance, 51.6% of graduates pursued education, health professions, and business but that percentage only represents 16 out of 31 responses. Remarkably, these were the top three fields of study pursued by the Fall 2014 cohort as well. Seventy percent of the graduates pursuing additional post-secondary education were pursuing Master’s degrees (n=23) and 12 percent (n=4) were pursuing a doctorate.

What helped get them there?
The Outcomes Survey asked students a series of workforce preparation questions including “Please indicate the primary job search activity that led to the job you accepted or hold (select one)”. The top three activities that graduates cited as helped them land a job were self- or third-party initiated rather than offered as part of their educational experiences; (1) interviews in-person (20.9%, n=67); (2) job posting (21.3%, n=68); and (3) referral (12.8%, n=41). Of the response options focused specifically on school-facilitated activities, 6.9% (n=22) of students reported engaging in interviews and 5.3% (n=17) in internships. While larger percentages of students participate in school-facilitated internships for past Outcome Survey administrations, Fall 2015 graduates were different: Less students participated in school-facilitated internships (5.3%, n=17) than those facilitated by self or a third party (7.8%, n=25).

In response to “How helpful did you find each of these resources when searching for an occupation”, students rated the level of helpfulness and the extent to which they used that resource (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percentage of fall 2015 graduates perceived helpfulness of campus and personal resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Helpful</th>
<th>% Neutral</th>
<th>% Unhelpful</th>
<th>% Did Not Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEERS</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY MEMBERS</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOSSES/CO-WORKERS/SUPERVISORS</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPARTMENTAL FACULTY / STAFF / SERVICES</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC ADVISING STAFF/SERVICES</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER FACULTY/STAFF/SERVICES</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREER CENTER RESOURCES</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREER CENTER STAFF</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALUMNI</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As you can see in Figure 2, a large percentage of graduates considered their peers, professional contacts, family and colleagues as helpful or very helpful resources when searching for an occupation. This trend was observed for the Fall 2014 graduate cohort, with one exception: a larger percentage of Fall 2014 graduates considered departmental faculty/staff/services as helpful than colleagues. Departmental faculty/staff/students has been considered the most helpful for the past five terms, with Fall 2015 graduates being no different. Of other campus-specific resources, the Fall 2015 graduates considered academic advising, other faculty/staff/services, career services, alumni and career services staff as most helpful for the job search. As in previous terms, the small percentage of graduates considering career center staff/services and alumni as helpful in the job search may be due to the fact that these resources were only used by roughly 35% of the students.

Similar to Fall 2014 graduates, almost half of the MSU Denver Fall 2015 graduates reported that they engaged in internships (44.1%, n=200) and field experiences/practicums (23.8%, n=108), followed by student teaching (12.6%, n=54), service learning (9.7%, n=4), and study abroad (5.1%, n=23) while working in their degree. About a third of both Fall 2014 and Fall 2015 graduates reported that they did not engage in any of the preceding activities. Almost 30% of graduates who participated in internships reported that they were offered a full-time job as a result. Eighty-six percent of graduates indicted that their internship was helpful in preparing them for the workforce/career.

About three out of four graduates indicated that their program/area of study was related to their post-graduation occupation and that their occupation was related to their career goals. This is an important outcome because the vast majority of graduates (86.1%, n=385) said that it was important to them that their primary post-graduation occupation career was related to their program/area of study. Finally, about three out of four Fall 2015 graduates were satisfied with their primary post-graduation occupation.

**Conclusion**

Most MSU Denver’s Fall 2015 graduates pursued employment after graduation within the state of Colorado. While seeking jobs, they tended to draw upon their personal networks and departmental faculty, staff, and services. Academic advising, career services, and alumni were not used to a great extent as resource for their job searches. Graduates also participated in educational experiences that they believed, for the most part, prepared them for their occupational career. Overall, the vast majority of students felt that their academic career at MSU Denver was related to their current occupation, and further, that their occupation was aligned with their career goals. The alignment between their academic career and their eventual career goals were of importance to most students.