



Career Development Services: Results from Graduating Student Surveys

Prior to the start of each FGCU Commencement ceremony, graduating students can participate in a survey about their employment/educational status and future plans. Below are the survey results of Bachelor degree candidates from the last three graduating classes. Survey results from each college are available by contacting Reid Lennertz, Director of Career Development Services.

What is your current employment status? (at time of Commencement)	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	What is most likely to be your PRINCIPAL activity upon graduation?	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Employed full-time	38.1%	47.8%	35.0%	Full-time Employment	72.9%	76.7%	61.8%
Employed part-time	39.0%	31.6%	34.5%	Part-time Employment	1.5%	5.3%	3.2%
Not employed – just completed field experience/internship	11.4%	10.1%	15.4%	Grad School Full-time	18.7%	11.3%	24.3%
Not employed	11.6%	10.4%	15.1%	Grad School Part-time	3.2%	3.9	4.8%
				Other*	3.7%	2.9%	5.8%

After graduation, do you plan on staying in SW Florida to begin or continue your career?	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Yes	56.4%	56.9%	55.7%
No	24.7%	23.6%	22.3%
Unsure	19.0%	19.5%	22.0%

Full-time employment defined as 30+ hrs/wk

Part-time employment defined as less than 30 hrs/wk

*Other – includes military service, starting/raising a family, volunteer activities, and additional undergraduate coursework.

Survey items rounded to the tenth percentage. Consequently, some column totals may not equal 100%.

Can the Career Center Affect the Job-Search Success of its Students?

According to research conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, the answer is "Yes!" Results from NACE's 2009 Student Survey* show that students who used career center resources intensely were more likely to land a job or get a job offer than others who didn't use or used the career center in a limited way.

Nearly 26 percent of those who reported "intense" use of career center services (i.e., the student used a variety of services, not just the most popular offerings—job listings and resume development help) had accepted a job compared to 21 percent of those who didn't use the career center. Similarly, 50 percent of those who reported intense use had a job offer compared to 43 percent of those who didn't use the career center.

* The 2009 Student Survey was conducted from February 19 through April 30, 2009; more than 35,000 students from more than 840 colleges and universities nationwide—including more than 16,500 graduating seniors—participated.

A Message From:

Dr. Mike Rollo, Vice President of Student Affairs

In light of the highly challenging job market, the role that Career Development Services plays in helping students achieve their career goals has never been more important. In order to grow this critical part of the Student Affairs Division, the Career Development Services operation will move into a new facility as part of the Student Union expansion, scheduled to be completed in late 2010. (Feel free to stop by the Vice President of Student Affairs office to view architectural drawings of the expansion.) Recognizing the significance that "career planning" plays in each student's personal development, as well as the importance of making accurate and informed career decisions, we hope that you encourage our students to take advantage of the many valuable resources available through Career Development Services.

Are students requesting letters of recommendation from you?
See Suggested Guidelines on other side.

For comments or suggestions regarding this issue, please contact:

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Connections is available online at
studentservices.fgcu.edu/publications

Connections may be obtained in an alternative format by contacting the Office of Institutional Equity & Compliance at 239-590-7405 or 800-590-3428, or the Office of Adaptive Services at 239-590-7956.

Suggested Guidelines for Letters of Recommendation and References

It is that time of year when faculty and staff are often asked to write letters of recommendation, or serve as a reference, for students seeking employment or admittance to a graduate school program. However, the issue of providing references has become increasingly complex as a result of freedom of information and anti-discrimination laws. To help you be mindful of the ethical and legal considerations when serving as a reference, Career Development Services has prepared some key points to guide you in the process:

- Communicate honestly and directly with the student whether or not you are able to write a positive letter on their behalf. If a negative impression would prevent you from providing a positive letter, you should discuss the issues with the student at the onset. This clarification may encourage the student to pursue other sources or initiate a conversation that may address your concerns.
- Manage expectations: If you have limited knowledge of the student's abilities, don't promise a "glowing" reference, only to deliver a "glimmer."
- Have students submit a written request to you for letters of recommendation or to serve as a reference. If you are contacted by an employer without a student's prior authorization, it is best to decline the request until you have confirmation from the student.
- Do not include information that might indicate the student's age, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, citizenship status, or gender (unless it is obvious by their name.)
- Do not disclose any information covered by FERPA, such as grades or GPA, unless you have the written consent of the student.
- If you make subjective statements, clearly identify them as opinions and not facts.
- Refrain from commenting on general moral character (so as not to risk any claims of defamation) or speculating on personal characteristics of which you have no knowledge.
- If you are aware of extenuating circumstances that impacted the student's academic progress, obtain the student's written permission to disclose that information.

This information has been reviewed by University legal counsel.

Graduate School Planning

In surveys of FGCU students graduating with Bachelor's degrees conducted over the last two years, an increasing number indicate that their principal activity upon graduation will be to pursue an advanced degree full-time. (See survey results on front page.) This increase is consistent with the national trend, based on information collected by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. The trend is not altogether surprising considering the weak job market. However, pursuing a graduate degree is a significant investment of time, energy, and money, and should be done for the right reasons. When we work with students, our goals are to help them:

- Understand the decision-making process and ensure students are pursuing advanced degrees as part of a long-term career strategy
- Identify the degree program and school that fits their goals and needs
- Understand how the admissions process, in general, works
- Learn how to market themselves in the competitive world of graduate and professional school admissions

Feel free to refer students to Career Development Services for graduate school planning assistance.

Fall Job Fair



Spring Job Fair



Etiquette Dinner



Etiquette Dinner



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