Students and Career Services

The Career Services Center (CSC) strives “to educate, counsel, and involve students and alumni in career planning and decision-making, experiential learning, continuing education, and/or employment search activities.” This is accomplished by establishing relationships not only between career counselor and student, but also between the department and other campus departments, faculty, other universities, and businesses. The CSC can begin the relationship with a student early in his or her college career, providing resources and guidance for career decision-making, continuing through internship experiences and resume building, and culminating with the job search before graduation. The CSC also has a focus on serving the alumni of UNCG, so the relationship may continue for years after the student graduates.

The CSC has, in recent years, increased their focus on assessment, and now surveys a sample of graduates approximately six months after their graduation date. Questions are asked about current and planned employment, graduate school, and the methods used to obtain their current positions. Questions related to the CSC are also a part of the New Student Survey (NSS) given to new freshmen every year, and the Spartan Experience Questionnaire (SEQ), given to a cross-section of the UNCG community each year. We were able to match a sample of NSS and SEQ respondents, to obtain a sample that completed the NSS their freshman year and the SEQ their sophomore year. The NSS questions focus on student intentions to complete internships or to work on-campus during their educational career. The SEQ questions focus on student awareness and participation in university programs, including internships. Most students who pursue an internship do so during their junior or senior year, so few in our sample had actually completed an internship experience.

This issue will look at some programs that make the CSC a thriving place for students to develop, as well as the results of the Alumni Career Survey given to the 2002 graduates. As you consider the results of the Alumni Career Survey, keep in mind that the respondents do not represent a random sample of all graduates for 2002 and the generalizations we make here are speculative. If you would like more information about the Alumni Career Survey contact the Office of Student Affairs Research and Evaluation at 334-5099.

Editors
Mark Davenport & Julie Anderson Atwood
Research and Evaluation
Division of Student Affairs
Graduates Working in their Field

Students who responded to the Alumni Career Survey reported, in general, that they are employed in their major field. Because of the number of appropriate job functions for several majors, it is difficult to report them in graphs or charts. However, presented below are some of the more popular majors, along with the job functions they reported.

**Accounting** 75% Accounting, 25% Administrative
**Business Admin.** 26% Sales/Mktg, 20% Administrative, 20% Advertising/PR, 13% Human Resources
**Elementary Education** 88% Education (Pre-K to 12)
**HDFS** 27% Education (Pre-K to 12), 27% Administrative, 14% Counseling/Mental Health, 14% Non-Profit
**ISOM** 60% Computing/Info. Systems, 20% Accounting, 20% Administrative
**Music Education** 50% Education (Pre-K to 12), 33% Performing/Creative Arts, 17% Clergy
**Nursing** 100% Medicine/Health
**Psychology** 18% Counseling/Mental Health, 18% Sales/Mktg, 18% Social Services
**Sociology** 40% Education (Pre-K to 12), 20% Non-Profit, 20% Sales/Mktg
**Textile Design/Mktg** 60% Sales/Mktg, 20% Administrative

**CSC has increased their student outreach efforts as well as sending staff to various areas on campus to talk with students before, during, or after class. Nearly 5,000 students had contact with a member of the CSC staff during a classroom or campus presentation during 2002-03.**

The department has been tracking the number of visitors to the website as well. The CSC website provides information about the department and services offered, but also access to on-campus and off-campus job listings. The estimated use of the website has increased from 20,000 hits in 2000-01 to 42,123 in 2002-03.
Internships

Incoming freshmen who responded to the New Student Survey in 2002 indicated interest in pursuing internships while at UNCG. Sixty-four percent of these students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I plan to pursue an internship while at UNCG.” A group of the same students were given the Spartan Experience Questionnaire in 2003, and 88% were aware of opportunities for internship experiences, although only 4% had completed an internship at that point.

Student Employment

While the Career Services Center guides and educates students toward discovering their eventual careers, the Student Employment Office helps students seeking employment during college to assist with financial needs. A survey of UNCG students during the spring 2003 semester (Spartan Experience Questionnaire) indicated that less than half of their college expenses were paid by parents, family, spouse or partner, with a total of nearly 40% reporting they received none or very little help. Accordingly, 59.2% of students reported working off-campus (with 31.9% of these working 20 hours or more per week) and 13.8% reported working on campus. In 2002-03, 306 students (3%) of the undergraduate student population were employed on-campus in federal work-study jobs.

The SEO is dedicated to helping students find part-time employment opportunities on and off-campus, including UNCG federal work-study and departmental jobs. As a convenience to students, the SEO posts all job announcements they receive on SpartanTrak, a web-based database that students can access from any internet connection. Each August, the SEO hosts a part-time job fair to connect students with on-campus employers as well as businesses located throughout the Triad community.

The Student Employment Office does more than provide access to employers and job listings. They advise students on effective job search tools and strategies, making meaningful decisions about job choices, and connecting part-time experience to career goals. The SEO also provides workshops and training opportunities for students on leadership, professionalism and skill building.

The SEO coordinates Student Employee Appreciation Week each year in April to honor and recognize the essential contributions that student employees make to campus offices, enabling faculty and staff to concentrate additional time and efforts on serving students. The SEO solicits nominations for “Student Employee of the Year” from the UNCG community and presents awards to both undergraduate and graduate student employees at a campus-wide reception.

References


The Alumni Career Survey

The Alumni Career Survey is completed six months after students graduate with their bachelor’s degree. It includes items about future plans, current employment, and methods that were used to obtain current jobs. For this issue, we placed a special focus on where students are finding jobs. One hundred and fifty-eight of the 200 respondents indicated where they presently work. Of those, 107 work in the Triad, 51 outside the Triad (42 did not respond to the question). Of those that work outside the Triad, 22 indicated that they left the Triad to return home, 15 wanted to live elsewhere, 6 left because they could not find an appropriate job, 4 left because the best offer they received was from outside of the Triad (4 did not respond). The median starting salary range for respondents working in Greensboro was $20,000 to $24,999 (n=70). The median starting salary range for those working in a different Triad city (n=33) and outside of the Triad (n=47) was $25,000 to $29,999.

About the same number of respondents indicated that Career Services Center resources helped them find their present employer (42) as indicated that they obtained their present position through prior contacts or internships with the employer (44). Forty-seven respondents indicated that they got their present job through a job listing.

When we focused on job functions, since actual job titles vary greatly, we noted four that had sufficient numbers of graduates to be of particular interest. Of the sample of 200, 27 reported pre-K through grade 12 education positions, 19 reported administrative positions (such as customer accounts manager, office manager, and program assistant), 15 reported medical functions (such as nurse, health educator, and dietetic intern), and 15 reported sales and marketing (such as insurance agent, account executive, and marketing associate). The graduates employed in these functions had various majors and UNCG schools of affiliation.

As the following charts show, more respondents reported being employed outside the Triad area than within the Triad in education (60%) and medicine/health (64%). However, when we looked at whether they worked in North Carolina, we found a different picture with 96% of education and 93% of medicine/health employees employed within the state.

This is a particularly important achievement, since the UNC Board of Governor’s long-range plan 2002-07 includes the following strategic directions: “Continue to develop academic programs as well as collaborative strategies in support of critical areas of allied health, nursing, medicine, and related fields in response to the needs of the state for health care providers” and “Expand efforts in teacher preparation to increase the supply of well qualified and more diverse teachers to serve the rapidly growing needs of North Carolina’s schools” (The University of North Carolina Board of Governors, 2002, p. 38). Within those two stated goals, the results of the Career Alumni Survey would indicate that UNCG is succeeding in producing teachers and medical personnel who are finding employment within the state.