

April 2015

Career Outcomes of Mason Graduates: Overview from the 2014 One-Year-Out Alumni Career Survey

The One-Year-Out Career Survey is administered annually by the Office of Institutional Assessment to Mason undergraduate and graduate alumni one year after graduation. The survey collects information about employment, preparation for careers and education, and further education plans. The One-Year-Out Survey was piloted in 2010 using only spring semester graduates from the 2008-2009 academic year. Since the survey's inception, 32,153 alumni have been invited to complete the survey. To date, over 5,000 undergraduate and graduate alumni have completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate of 16%. This report provides comparative results from the 2011-2014 surveys.

Highlights

Undergraduate

- In 2014, eight in ten undergraduate alumni reported being employed one year after graduation, a percentage consistent with results from the 2011 survey.
- Over one-half of undergraduate alumni with full-time employment reported earning a salary in the \$30,001-\$50,000 range (48% in 2011; 51% in 2014).
- From 2011 to 2014, at least three quarters of undergraduate alumni strongly agreed or agreed that their degree program helped them prepare for their work.

Graduate

- In 2014, 93% of graduate alumni reported being employed one year after graduation, a rate slightly higher than what was reported in 2011.
- Salaries are up for full-time employed graduate respondents: 39% reported earning in the \$50,001-\$70,000 range in 2014, compared to 31% in 2011.
- A slightly lower percentage of graduate alumni respondents in 2014 (87%) reported that their degree programs helped them prepare for work, compared to 2011 respondents (91%).

Important Notes

- Results are displayed for the survey year. For example, the 2014 survey represents data from respondents who graduated during the 2012-2013 academic year.
- Percentages in tables may not add to 100 due to rounding.
- Caution should be used when interpreting survey results due to the low and varied response rates.
- Detailed and customizable results are available at <https://assessment.gmu.edu>.

Response Rates

The response rates for the One-Year-Out Survey have varied over the years (see Table 1). For the most recent survey, there were 706 undergraduate and 884 graduate alumni respondents. Among undergraduate alumni, response rates have ranged from 11% in 2012 to an all-time high of 16% in 2013. At the graduate level, the lowest response rate occurred in 2011 at 14% and the highest at 28% in 2014. The varied response rates may be attributed to the overall number of usable alumni e-mail addresses available at the time of survey administration.

Table 1. Undergraduate and Graduate Alumni Response Rates, 2011-2014

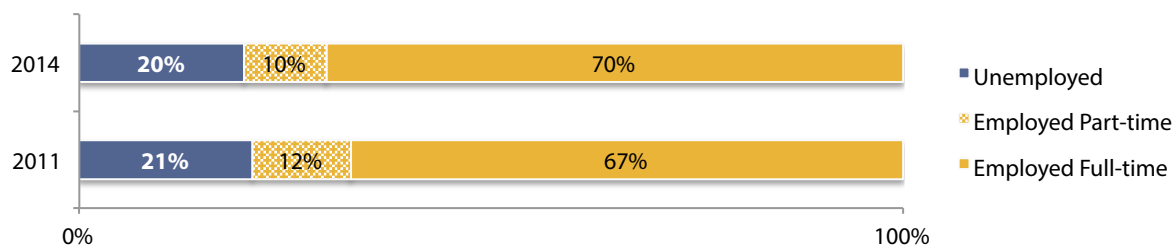
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Undergraduate	12% (n=444)	11% (n=458)	16% (n=739)	15% (n=706)
Graduate	14% (n=379)	15% (n=456)	16% (n=501)	28% (n=884)

UNDERGRADUATE ALUMNI

In 2014, 80% of undergraduate alumni reported being employed, roughly similar to 2011 (see Figure I). Of the respondents in 2014 who reported being employed, 87% were employed in a full-time position, a rate close to what 2011 respondents (85%) reported one year out from college.

Employment Status

Figure 1. Employment Rates of Undergraduate Alumni One Year Out

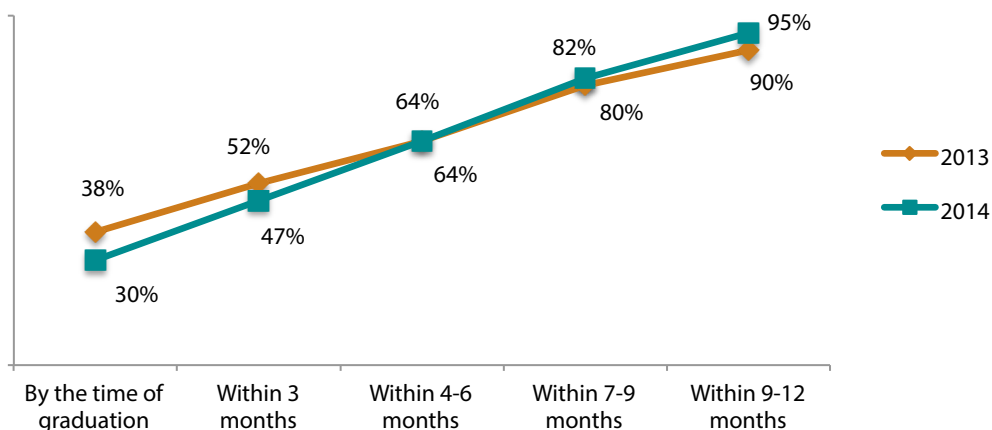


Note: Data exclude "not employed and not seeking employment" responses.

Time of Acceptance to First Position Related to Academic Major or Career Goals

Figure 2 illustrates that nearly two-thirds of 2013 and 2014 respondents with positions related to their major or career goals accepted their positions by six months from graduation. Within one year of graduation, 95% of 2014 respondents reported that they had found a job related to their majors or career goals, compared to 90% in 2013.

Figure 2. Acceptance by Employed Undergraduate Alumni of First Position Related to Academic Major or Career Goals



Note: 2013 n=626 and 2014 n=547; comparable data were not available for the 2011 and 2012 survey years due to a change in item wording.

Salary

The 2011 and 2014 distributions of salary ranges for full-time and part-time employed respondents were similar. About one-half of respondents working full-time in 2014 reported having an annual salary in the \$30,001-\$50,000 range compared to 48% in 2011. One-quarter of respondents reported an annual salary of \$50,001-\$70,000 both in 2014 and 2011. Respondents with part-time employment were most likely to report earning a salary below \$30,000 for both years (93% in 2014; 90% in 2011).

Table 2. Undergraduate Alumni Salaries One Year Out

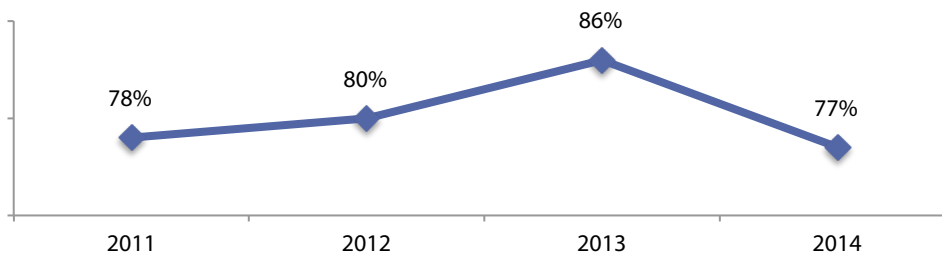
Salary Range	2011		2014	
	Full-time (n=280)	Part-time (n=30)	Full-time (n=464)	Part-time (n=68)
Below \$30,000	15%	90%	15%	93%
\$30,001-\$50,000	48%	8%	51%	7%
\$50,001-\$70,000	26%	2%	25%	0%
\$70,001-\$90,000	7%	0%	6%	0%
\$90,001-\$125,000	3%	0%	3%	0%
Above \$125,000	0%	0%	1%	0%

Note: Results exclude "prefer not to answer" responses.

Preparation for Work

Consistently since 2011, over three-quarters of respondents have reported that they strongly agree or agree that the skills and concepts learned in their degree programs have helped to prepare them for their current work (see Figure 3). The highest percentage occurred in 2013 at 86%. Although there is some fluctuation in reported percentages, differences over the years could be attributed to the varied response rates.

Figure 3. Undergraduate Alumni Agreement with Degree Program Helping to Prepare Them for Work



Note: Percentages are for "strongly agree" and "agree" responses.

Further Education Plans and Preparation for Further Study

One year out from graduation, 25% of 2014 respondents reported that they had either completed a graduate/professional degree or were currently enrolled in or have been accepted into a graduate/professional degree or certificate program. This is nine percentage points lower than what was reported in 2011 (see Table 3). Meanwhile, respondents in both 2014 and 2011 were most likely to report that they were exploring or applying to a graduate or professional degree program (44% and 43%, respectively).

Respondents were asked to rate how well their Mason education prepared them for further study. Since 2011, over 80% of respondents have consistently rated their Mason education as excellent or good in preparing them for further study.

Table 3. Further Education Plans

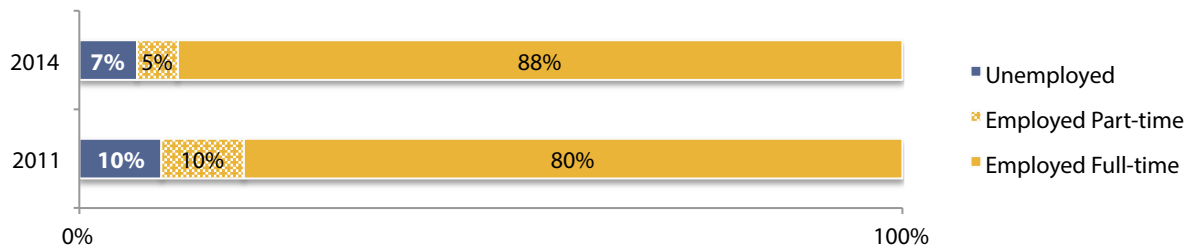
	2011 (n=419)	2014 (n=674)
I have completed a graduate or professional degree	5%	3%
I am currently enrolled in or have been accepted into a graduate/professional degree or certificate program	29%	22%
I am exploring or applying to a graduate/professional degree program	43%	44%
I don't currently plan to pursue further graduate/professional education	23%	30%

GRADUATE ALUMNI

Employment Status

Among the 2014 graduate respondents, 93% reported being employed one year out from graduation, a three-percentage point increase from 2011. Among employed respondents, 95% reported working in a full-time position in 2014 compared to 89% in 2011.

Figure 4. Employment of Graduate Alumni One Year Out

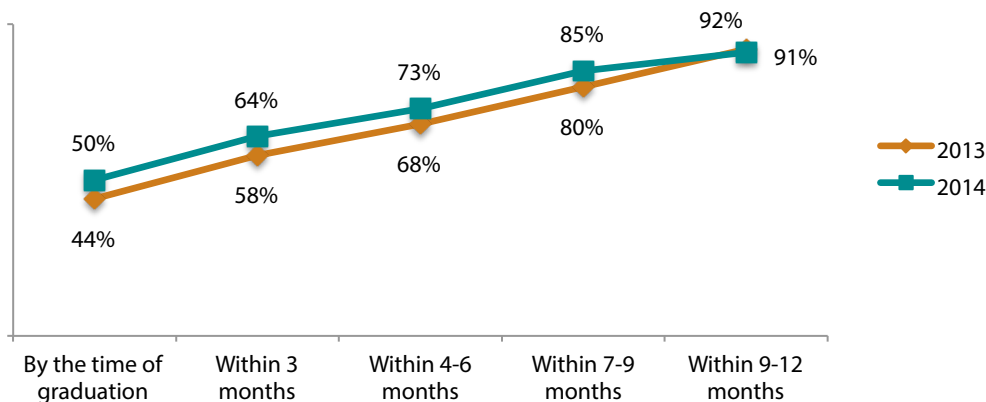


Note: Data exclude "not employed and not seeking employment" responses.

Time of Acceptance to Current Position

At the time of graduation, 50% of 2014 respondents had accepted their current position (see Figure 5). Within six months of graduation, nearly three-quarters of 2014 graduates had accepted their position, a five-percentage point increase over 2013. Within one year after graduation, over 90% of graduate alumni had accepted positions related to their academic major or career goals.

Figure 5. Acceptance by Employed Graduate Alumni of First Position Related to Academic Major or Career Goals



Note: 2013 n=408 and 2014 n=801

Salary

Among graduate alumni employed in full-time positions, respondents were more likely to report earning a salary in the \$50,001-\$70,000 range than in any other range (39% in 2014 and 31% in 2011). Respondents with part-time employment were most likely to report earning below \$30,000, at rates of 72% and 77% in 2014 and 2011, respectively (see Table 4).

Table 4. Graduate Alumni Salaries One Year Out

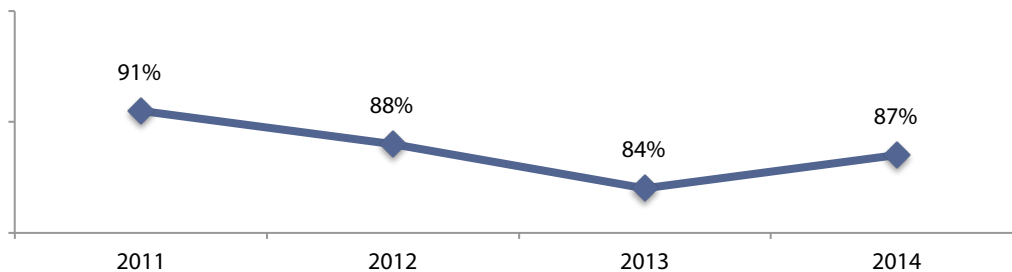
Salary Range	2011		2014	
	Full-time (n=285)	Part-time (n=30)	Full-time (n=741)	Part-time (n=39)
Below \$30,000	5%	77%	5%	72%
\$30,001-\$50,000	18%	10%	17%	18%
\$50,001-\$70,000	31%	13%	39%	8%
\$70,001-\$90,000	21%	3%	15%	3%
\$90,001-\$125,000	15%	0%	15%	0%
Above \$125,000	9%	0%	9%	0%

Note: Results exclude "prefer not to answer" responses.

Preparation for Work

Graduate alumni thought favorably of how well their Mason education prepared them for their current work. However, percentages of respondents reporting that they strongly agreed or agreed that Mason helped prepare them for their current work declined between 2011 and 2013, from an all-time high of 91%. The rate of agreement bounced back by three percentage points, reaching 87% in 2014.

Figure 6. Graduate Alumni Agreement with Degree Program Helping to Prepare Them for Work



Note: Percentages are for "strongly agree" and "agree" responses.

Office of Institutional Assessment • George Mason University • 703.993.8834 • assessment@gmu.edu • <https://assessment.gmu.edu>

Stephanie Hazel	Acting Director, Institutional Assessment	shazel@gmu.edu	703.993.5106
Sarah Pérez-Kriz	Associate Director, Institutional Assessment	skriz@gmu.edu	703.993.8616
Zhicheng Zhang	Associate Director, Institutional Assessment	zzhang11@gmu.edu	703.993.5104
Rawa Jassem	Applications Analyst & Web Developer	rjassem1@gmu.edu	703.993.8876
Karen Manley	Administrative & Communications Coordinator	kmanley@gmu.edu	703.993.8834
Nicole Long	Assessment Analyst		