



Career Services Spring 2007

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this survey is on undergraduate students' career planning needs. Included in the survey are questions concerning students' use of and satisfaction with some of the current services offered by Career Services, the best ways to inform students about Career Services' offerings and events, and their interest in a variety of career fields. This survey, conducted by Student Affairs Research and Assessment, was administered at the request of Penn State's Career Services Office.

In total, 1,165 undergraduate students responded to the survey for a 27.1% response rate. By phone, 418 responded and 747 participated by Web. The confidence interval for the total sample is +/-2.82%.

Of the respondents, 80.7% are between 18 and 21 years of age, 56.8% are female, 84.0% are White/Caucasian, and 54.5% are juniors or seniors. For additional information on the Pulse methodology, please visit <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara/qa.shtml>.

FINDINGS

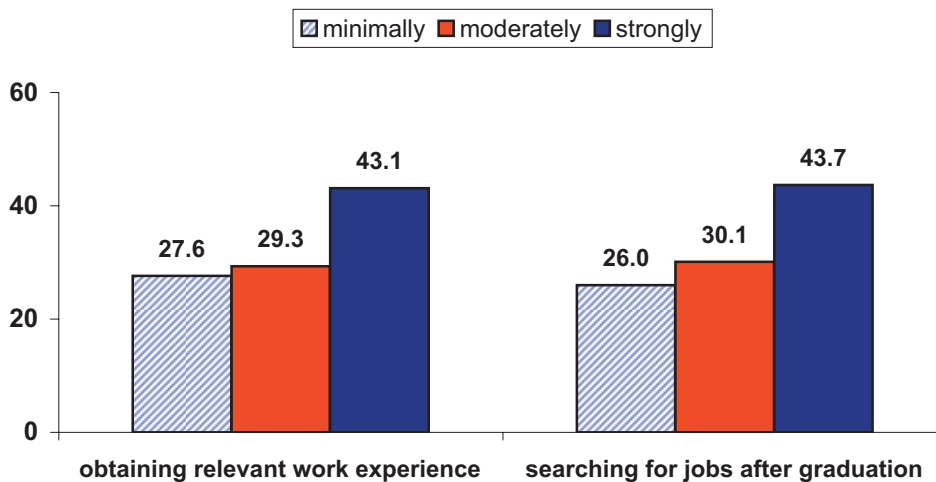
Needs Assessment

Students were asked a series of questions regarding their career planning needs and where they are most likely to seek assistance.

- The greatest needs expressed by students are in obtaining relevant work experience and searching for jobs after graduation (see Chart 1 and Table 1).

Undergraduate students' career planning needs

Chart 1. Students' Career Planning Needs (by percent)



For more information please visit Student Affairs Research and Assessment at <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara>



Penn State Pulse is a project of Student Affairs Research and Assessment.
For further information, please contact Dr. Andrea Dowhower.
222 Boucke, University Park, PA 16802, (814) 863-1809, ald101@psu.edu

Division of Student Affairs
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- In addition, over 60% reported having at least a “moderate” need for assistance with preparing resumes/cover letters (67.8%), developing interviewing skills (62.6%), and identifying career options (62.4%) (see Table 1).
- Women, students of color, and first- and second-year students reported needing greater assistance with most career planning-related needs when compared to men, white students, and juniors and seniors respectively (data not shown).

Table 1: Students’ Career Planning Needs

	percent ¹	average
Searching for jobs after graduation	73.8	3.25
Obtaining internships or other relevant work experience	72.4	3.22
Preparing resumes/cover letters	67.8	3.09
Developing interviewing skills	62.6	2.92
Identifying career options	62.4	2.90
Identifying graduate/professional education options	55.9	2.66
Preparing for standardized tests like the GRE, LSAT, GMAT & MCAT	54.0	2.74
Understanding your career interests and finding careers that best suit your personality and strengths	51.0	2.61
Deciding on a major	33.7	2.08

Scale: 1=not at all; 2=slightly; 3=moderately; 4=substantially; 5=extremely

With regard to their career planning needs, students who expressed at least a moderate need in any of the areas found in Table 1 were asked where they were most likely to seek assistance for each area. The two most frequently provided responses are presented in Table 2.

- Students are more likely to seek assistance from Career Services for the job search process including preparing resumes, developing interview skills, and searching for jobs after graduation (see Table 2).
- Students more frequently seek assistance from their college academic advising area or DUS for needs related to deciding on a major, identifying career options, and understanding their career interests and finding careers that best suit their personality and strengths, as well as identifying graduate/professional education options and preparing for standardized tests (see Table 2).

Table 2: Where Students are Likely to Seek Assistance²: Most Frequent Responses and Percents

	Most frequent	Second most frequent
Deciding on a major (n=390)	College academic advising/ DUS 48.1	Parents 15.9
Identifying career options (n=724)	College academic advising/ DUS 33.6	Career Services 18.7
Understanding your career interests and finding careers that best suit your personality and strengths (n=591)	College academic advising/ DUS 27.8	Career Services 24.4
Preparing resumes/cover letters (n=787)	Career Services 32.1	Instructor/ professor 16.4
Developing interviewing skills (n=727)	Career Services 39.2	Parents 13.9
Obtaining internships or other relevant work experience (n=838)	College’s intern/ co-op office 32.7	Career Services 21.4
Searching for jobs after graduation (n=844)	Career Services 45.0	College’s intern/ co-op office 15.8
Identifying graduate/professional education options (n=629)	College academic advising/ DUS 44.7	Instructor/ professor 17.2
Preparing for standardized tests like the GRE, LSAT, GMAT & MCAT (n=575)	College academic advising/ DUS 27.7	Other 17.6

¹Percents indicate those who responded “moderately,” “substantially,” or “extremely.”

²Students who indicated they needed at least “moderate” assistance were asked where they were most likely to seek assistance.

Interest in Career Fields

Students were asked about their interest in learning about career fields whose employers do not typically recruit on campuses. Approximately half expressed interest in careers in social and human services (51.6%), with non-profit organizations (49.6%), and in government and public administration (48.7%) (see Table 3).

Table 3: Interest in Selected Career Fields

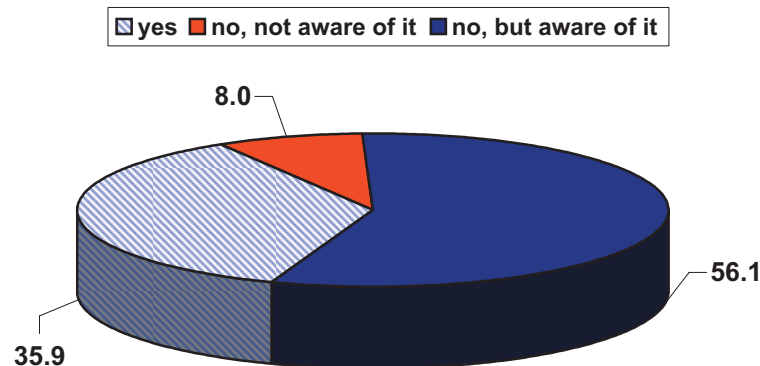
Careers in/with:	percent
social & human services	51.6
non-profit organizations	49.6
government & public administration	48.7
science & research	43.2
communications and the media	41.6
health services	40.8
arts and architecture	32.8
agriculture and the environment	25.8

Use of Career Services Sponsored Programs

Students were asked about their use of several Career Services sponsored programs.

- When asked about Nittany Lion Recruiting (the online job posting service), 9.0% reported having used it while 22.9% were aware of the service without having used it. Of those who used the service, 62.4% reported being satisfied with the service (data not shown).
- Close to 36% reported having attended a career day/fair (e.g., Fall Career Day, Law School Day, Grad School Day, Spring Career Day, Education Career Day) (see Chart 2), and of those, 66.6% reported being satisfied with the event(s) (data not shown). Many of those who were not satisfied commented on the type and/or lack of variety of employers present (an issue that is not easily addressed by Career Services).
- Approximately 13% reported having used the on-campus recruiting services and another 52% reported being aware of the services even though they hadn't used it. Of those who had used it, 77.8% reported being satisfied with the service. (data not shown).

Chart 2. Attendance at Career Days/ Fairs (by percent)



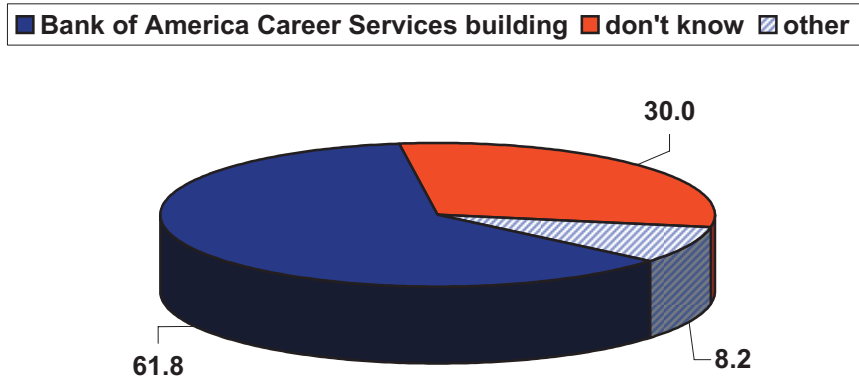
In addition, students were asked about the most effective ways to inform them about Career Services' offerings and events. Career Services listserv (83.8%), college listservs (81.2%), and ads in *The Daily Collegian* (78.0%) appear to be the most effective means of communication (see Table 4).

Table 4: Effective Ways to Inform Students about Career Services' Offerings

	percent
Career Services listserv	83.8
college listserv	81.2
ads in <i>The Daily Collegian</i>	78.0
flyers distributed by mail	63.5
an ANGEL group	53.1
advertisements on sites like Facebook / MySpace	45.4
an RSS feed	44.1
Career Services Blog	22.3
Podcasts	9.1

When asked where Career Services was located, 61.8% were able to name the Bank of America Career Services building, while 30% didn't know and 8.2% named another building on campus (e.g., HUB, Boucke, Grange) (see Chart 3).

Chart 3. Location of Career Services (by percent)



Moreover, when asked about the availability of evening hours at Career Services, 26.5% preferred Tuesday evenings; 23.6% responded Monday evenings, 21.3% indicated they had no preference (see Table 5).

Table 5: Preferences Regarding Evening Hours

	percent
Monday evenings	23.6
Tuesday evenings	26.5
Wednesday evenings	18.3
Thursday evenings	10.3
No preference/ none	21.3