

JOB OUTLOOK 2020



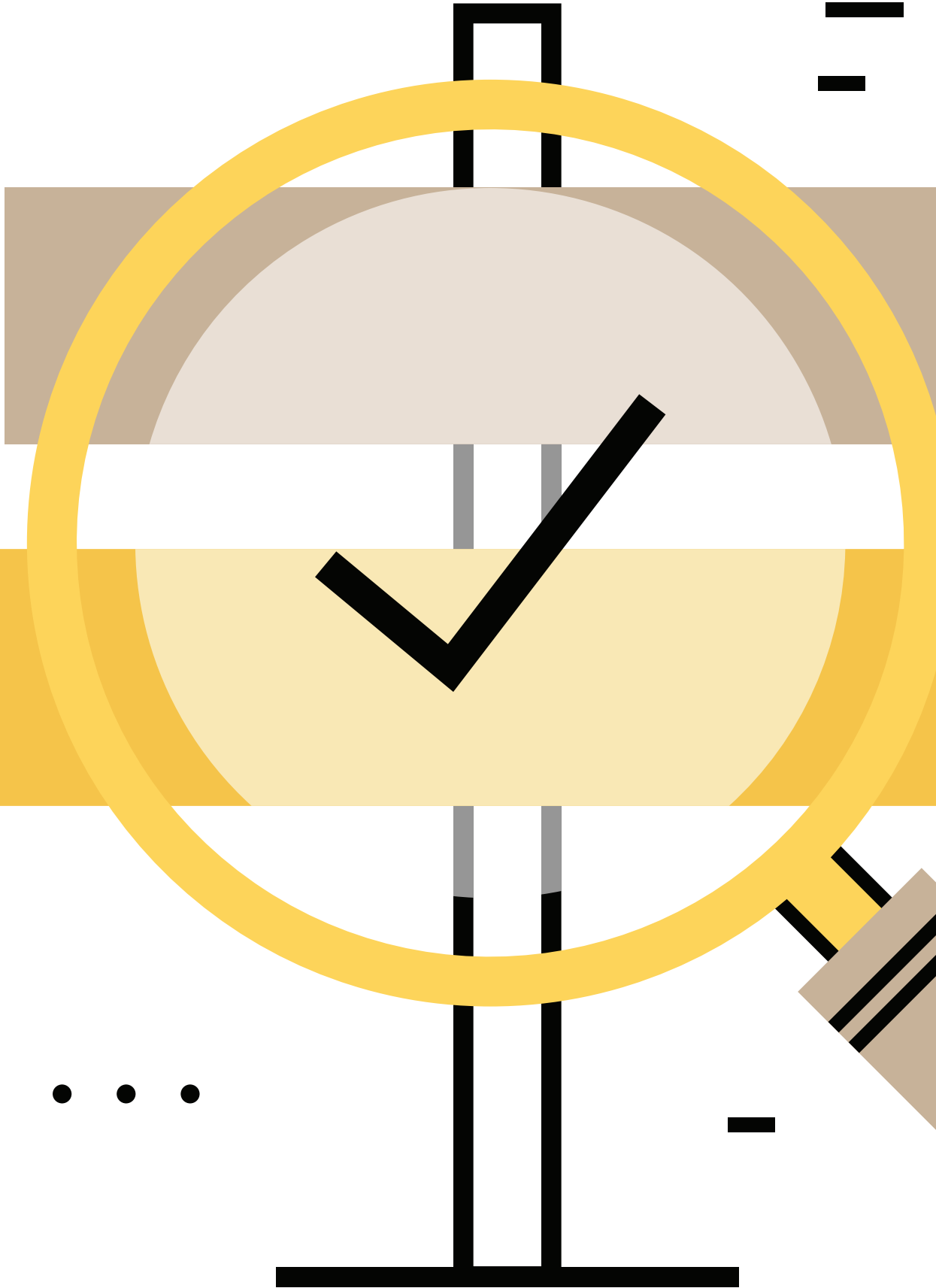


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE <i>JOB OUTLOOK 2020</i> SURVEY	2
EMPLOYERS PLAN A 5.8 PERCENT INCREASE IN COLLEGE HIRING	3
Job Market Ratings	
Plans to Reassess Hiring Needs	
Fall vs. Spring Recruiting	
Hiring by Industry	
Hiring by Region	
WHO'S IN DEMAND	10
International Student Hiring	
EMPLOYERS' VIEW OF CANDIDATES	12
Resume Attributes	
Who Gets the Job When Choosing Between Equally Qualified Candidates? The Intern.	
Career Readiness	
COMPENSATION AND SIGNING BONUSES	17
Signing Bonuses	
APPENDIX	22

ABOUT THE *JOB OUTLOOK 2020* SURVEY

The *Job Outlook* survey is a forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates. Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys its employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues to project the market for new college graduates for the current class and to assess a variety of conditions that may influence that market.

Data for the *Job Outlook 2020* survey were collected from August 1, 2019, through September 30, 2019. This year's data collection not only surveyed 905 NACE employer members, but also 2,229 employer organizations that were nonmembers. A total of 150 surveys were returned; 115 were NACE members and the remaining 35 were nonmembers.

Of the total that responded, 10 percent are from New England, 10.7 percent are from the Southwest, 12.7 percent are from the Southeast, 12.7 percent are from the Rocky Mountain/Far West, 13.3 percent are from the Plains, 18 percent are from the Mideast, and 22.7 percent are from the Great Lakes. For additional information about the respondents, see the Appendix.

Totals throughout this report may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

NACE expects to provide a formal job market update during the 2019-20 academic year. Based on data collected in February and March, the *Job Outlook 2020 Spring Update* survey will give NACE members a final update on hiring for 2019-20 graduates. Results will be available in early April.

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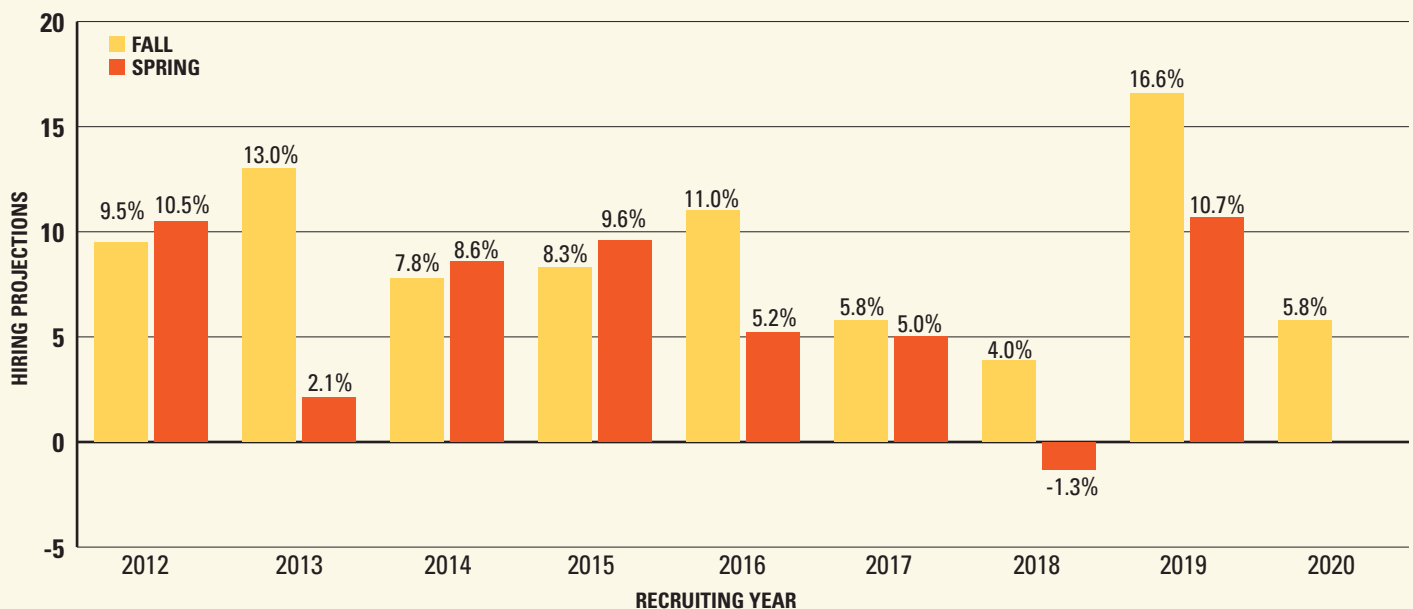
JOB OUTLOOK 2020

EMPLOYERS PLAN A 5.8 PERCENT INCREASE IN COLLEGE HIRING

Employers appear to have tempered their hiring plans for new college graduates as they plan to hire 5.8 percent more new college graduates from the Class of 2020 than they did from the Class of 2019 for positions in the United States.

At this time last year, employers were planning an increase in college hiring of nearly 17 percent. However, this year's results might merely signal a return to normal levels of anticipated hiring. This year's increase is identical to where hiring began for the Class of 2017 and is more in line with the results in recent years. (See Figure 1.)

FIGURE 1: *Job Outlook* Hiring Projections, 2012 – 2020*



*Years 2014 through 2020 are the hiring projections for U.S. locations only. Prior years' projections are shown for informational purposes only and should not be compared to the 2014-20 projections.

The largest group of employers (48.2 percent) will maintain their individual hiring numbers, marking the fifth consecutive year that this is occurring. In addition, 45.5 percent have plans to increase their individual hires, with the remaining 6.3 percent planning to decrease hiring numbers. (See Figure 2.)

Although the Class of 2017 may have begun with the same overall planned hiring increase of 5.8 percent, the Class of 2020 has nearly 10 percent more respondents increasing hiring, and far fewer decreasing hiring (11.6 percent compared to 6.3 percent).

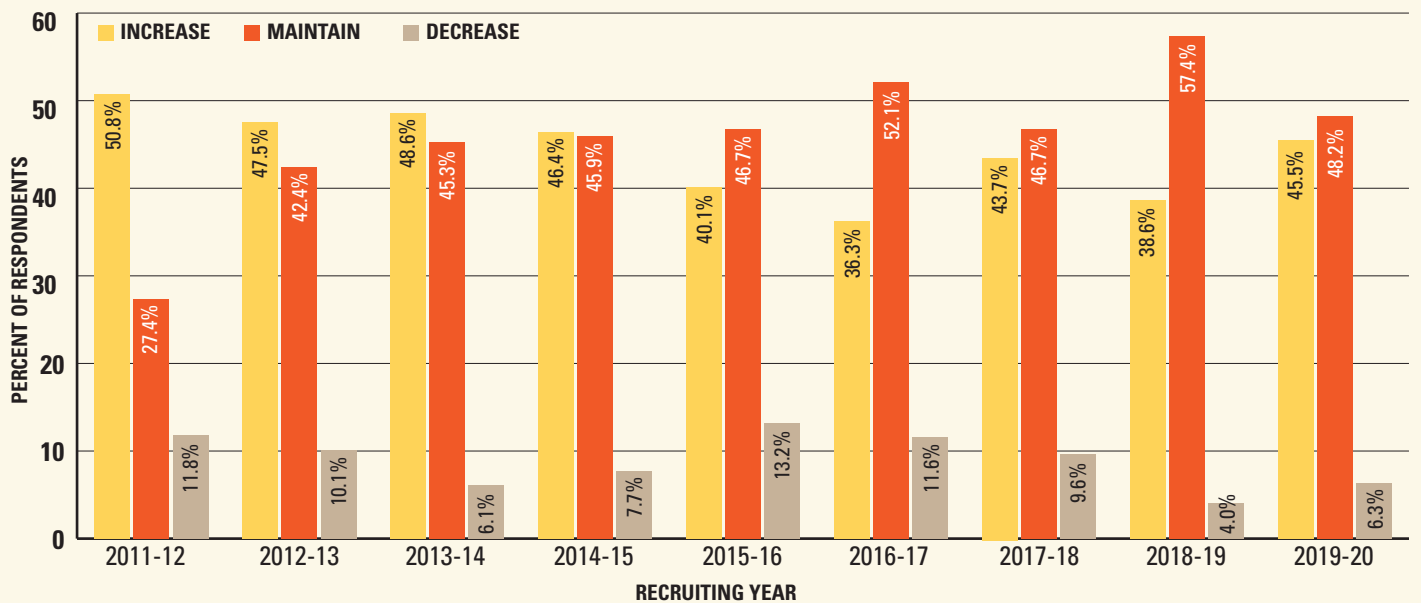
When asked to cite reasons influencing their individual hiring numbers, many of the respondents reported company growth as a catalyst for increasing hires. A large group also cited the success of their internship program and plan to increase their hiring by converting more interns. Further evidence of this trend can be found in the results from *NACE's 2018-19 Internship & Co-op Survey*, which reported an increase in the overall intern conversion rate from 45.6 percent in 2018 to 56.1 percent in 2019.

Two other reasons worth mentioning were the needs to replace retiring employees and to make up for lower hiring rates during the past several years. The value of college hires was also noted as a factor in increasing hiring numbers. Some respondents mentioned that college hires are retained longer than non-degreed employees, and they bring diversity of thought and vitality to their respective organizations.

For those maintaining their college hiring numbers, most indicated that their companies are showing stable and steady growth, so they will keep hiring levels the same. Respondents in this group also indicated that they have found the optimal number of college hires, and don't have a need to increase or decrease hires.

The small group of respondents that are decreasing their hiring numbers cited company reorganization, budgets, and cost controls, and that they are still trying to find the right mix between entry-level and experienced hiring.

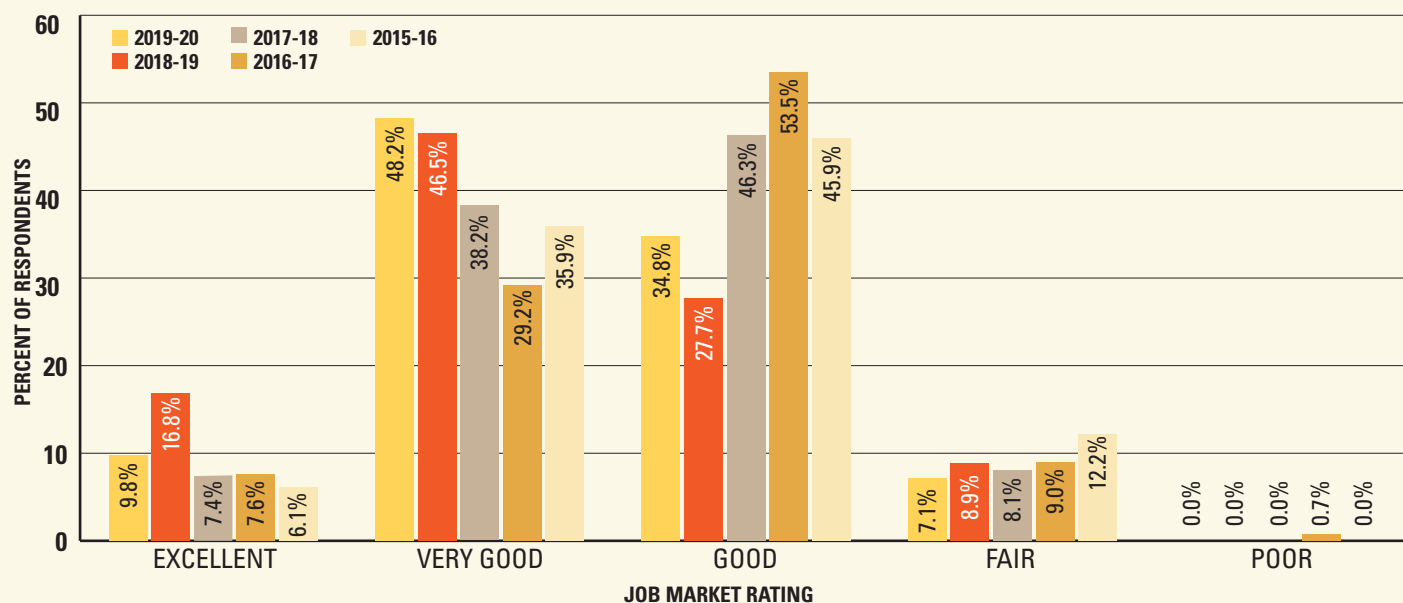
FIGURE 2: Employers' Hiring Expectations



JOB MARKET RATINGS

Respondents to the *Job Outlook 2020* and the *Job Outlook 2019* surveys had a somewhat similar view of the overall college job market, with both rating it as “very good.” While the group of respondents rating the market as “excellent” dropped to slightly less than 10 percent, the “very good” and “good” ratings grew, signaling the perception of an overall stable economy. In addition, the percentage of respondents that rated the market as “fair” fell from 8.9 percent last year to 7.1 percent this year. (See Figure 3.)

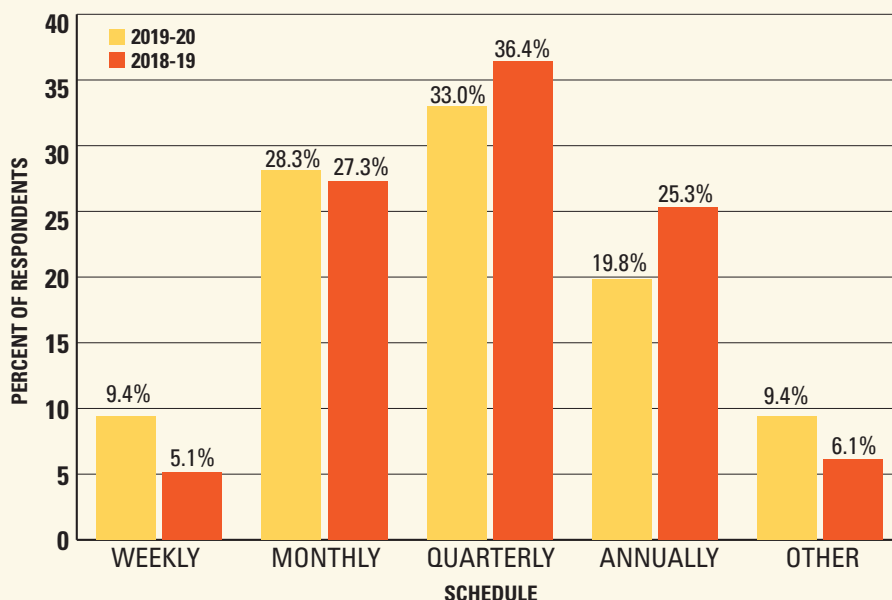
FIGURE 3: Employers Rate the Job Market for 2019-20 Graduates



PLANS TO REASSESS HIRING NEEDS

Following the same preferred schedule as survey respondents from the past two years, one-third of employers this year plan to reassess their college hiring needs on a quarterly basis. (See Figure 4.) Almost one in five will check their college hiring needs only once a year, down from more than one-quarter last year. Slightly more than one-quarter of employers this year—similar to last year’s result—have plans to reassess on a monthly basis, with the remaining respondents split between a weekly reassessment schedule and one not covered by the four schedules provided. The respondents that indicated “other” schedules were split between reassessing every six months and doing so on an “as needed” basis.

FIGURE 4: Employers’ Plans to Reassess Hiring Needs



FALL VS. SPRING RECRUITING

In each of the past four years, employers indicated that they will conduct at least 70 percent of their college recruiting in the fall. This year, however, that percentage has fallen to 68 percent, with the remaining 32 percent planned for the spring. (See Figure 5.) While fall clearly remains the preferred recruiting season, just 4.2 percent of respondents plan to do all of their recruiting in the fall this year, down from 15 percent last year and 13 percent two years ago.

FIGURE 5: Percentage of College Recruiting Conducted in Fall vs. Spring, 2014-2020

JOB OUTLOOK SURVEY YEAR	FALL	SPRING
2020	68%	32%
2019	71%	29%
2018	70%	30%
2017	72%	28%
2016	71%	29%
2015	66%	34%
2014	62%	38%

Individual spring 2020 recruiting plans also show that employers will be active on campuses. More than 70 percent of this year's respondents have either firm or tentative recruiting plans in place for spring 2020, up from 67.7 percent last year. (See Figure 6.)

Not surprisingly, the group of respondents that will not be on campus in spring because they completed all their recruiting in the fall has dropped from 19.2 percent last year to 14.8 this year. Even though a slightly higher percentage of respondents are unsure of their spring recruiting plans this year, no respondents reported that they will not be on campus in spring 2020 because they are not hiring.

FIGURE 6: Spring 2020 Recruiting Plans

RECRUITING PLANS	SPRING 2020	SPRING 2019
Firm recruiting plans	32.4%	37.4%
Tentative plans in place	38.0%	30.3%
All recruiting in fall	14.8%	19.2%
Unsure	14.8%	12.1%
Not hiring	0.0%	1.0%

HIRING BY INDUSTRY

A total of nine industries with at least five respondents reported their individual hiring numbers for the Class of 2020, and only one is showing an overall decrease in hiring. It is important to view these results with caution as the industry data are limited. **(See Figure 7.)**

Respondents in the information industry are reporting the largest increase in their hiring numbers, with plans to hire 30.5 percent more new graduates this year than they did last year. While this increase appears substantial, it demonstrates the how individual results can have a significant impact on a small pool of respondents. Among the six respondents in the information industry, there is one respondent planning a decrease in hires and one that plans to maintain its hires. In addition, three of the respondents in this category are planning increases of 50 percent or more. Likewise, this group gave one of the highest job market ratings within an industry (3.86 out of 5) and has no respondents that are unsure of their spring 2020 recruiting plans. **(See Figures 8 and 9.)**

Miscellaneous professional services employers gave the job market within their industry the highest rating at 4.0 out of 5. They are projecting an 11.2 percent increase in hiring, with five out of eight respondents growing their college hire numbers; the remaining respondents are planning to maintain their numbers. All respondents are planning to conduct spring 2020 recruiting, including almost 43 percent with firm plans in place. Nearly 30 percent, however, are unsure of their plans for spring.

In the computer and electronics manufacturing sector, respondents are planning an overall decrease in hiring of almost 11 percent. This result is directly due to limited data. Of the 12 industry respondents, three are reporting decreases, three are maintaining their numbers, and the remaining six are reporting increases—some of which exceed 100 percent. However, the firms reporting the decreases account for most of the total hires; without their numbers, the group would show a robust increase of 36 percent. The job market rating from employers in this industry is also relatively high, standing at 3.67 out of 5.

FIGURE 7: Total Change in Hiring, by Industry

INDUSTRY	# OF 2020 PROJECTED HIRES	# OF 2019 ACTUAL HIRES	% CHANGE	# OF RESPONDENTS
Utilities	190	179	6.1%	5
Food & Beverage Mfg.	786	704	11.6%	5
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	384	329	16.7%	5
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	4,136	4,640	-10.9%	12
Misc. Mfg.	629	615	2.2%	12
Retail Trade	927	792	17.0%	6
Information	651	499	30.5%	6
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	9,874	9,128	8.2%	9
Misc. Prof. Services	773	695	11.2%	8

FIGURE 8: Spring 2020 Recruiting Plans, by Industry

INDUSTRY	FIRM PLANS	TENTATIVE PLANS	ALL IN FALL	NOT HIRING	UNSURE	# OF RESPONDENTS
Utilities	33.3%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	6
Food & Beverage Mfg.	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	5
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	5
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	42.9%	35.7%	21.4%	0.0%	0.0%	14
Misc. Mfg.	26.7%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	13.3%	15
Wholesale Trade	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	5
Retail Trade	37.5%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	8
Information	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	30.0%	50.0%	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10
Management Consulting	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	5
Misc. Prof. Services	42.9%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	28.6%	7

FIGURE 9: Job Market Ratings, by Industry*

INDUSTRY	AVERAGE RATING	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Utilities	3.33	6
Food & Beverage Mfg.	3.40	5
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	3.60	5
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	3.67	15
Misc. Mfg.	3.20	15
Wholesale Trade	3.60	5
Retail Trade	3.56	9
Information	3.86	7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	3.70	10
Management Consulting	3.80	5
Misc. Prof. Services	4.00	8

*5-point scale, where 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Very Good, and 5=Excellent.

HIRING BY REGION

In last year's *Job Outlook 2019* survey, hiring increases were reported in all seven geographic regions, with five of the seven regions indicating double-digit gains. This year, six regions are reporting overall increases—including three that are in the double digits—while the Mideast is showing a double-digit decrease. (See Figure 10.)

When examining individual hiring plans by employers within the seven regions, there is some inconsistency when comparing to the hiring expectations and spring 2020 recruiting plans. For example, 58.8 percent of Mideast employers will increase hiring and the remaining 41.2 percent will maintain their hiring numbers. No employers are planning specifically to decrease hires. Yet, less than 20 percent of respondents in this region have firm plans in place for spring 2020 recruiting. (See Figures 11 and 12.)

The Great Lakes region is also showing a discrepancy in findings. In this region, the overall hiring increase is 21.5 percent, but the individual hiring expectations show just one-third of respondents with plans to increase hiring, 63 percent planning to maintain hiring, and 3.7 percent expecting to decrease hiring. In addition, slightly more than 30 percent of respondents in the Great Lakes region have firm plans in place for the spring 2020 recruiting season.

On the other hand, the Plains region is showing consistent results. Employers in this region are reporting the highest number of individual hires projected, yielding an overall increase of 9.1 percent. No respondents in this region are reporting that they will decrease individual hiring numbers. In addition, almost 65 percent of respondents from the Plains region have firm or tentative plans for recruiting in spring of 2020 and 17.6 percent plan to do all their recruiting during the fall.

FIGURE 10: Total Change in Hiring, by Region

REGION	# OF 2020 PROJECTED HIRES	# OF 2019 ACTUAL HIRES	% CHANGE	# OF RESPONDENTS
New England	5,938	5,707	4.0%	12
Midwest	1,392	1,771	-21.4%	13
Great Lakes	1,339	1,102	21.5%	23
Plains	10,748	9,851	9.1%	15
Southeast	250	223	11.9%	7
Southwest	468	463	1.1%	12
Rocky Mountain/Far West	1,310	1,144	14.5%	11

FIGURE 11: Hiring Expectations by Region, by Percent of Respondents

REGION	INCREASE	MAINTAIN	DECREASE
New England	58.3%	33.3%	8.3%
Midwest	58.8%	41.2%	0.0%
Great Lakes	33.3%	63.0%	3.7%
Plains	38.9%	61.1%	0.0%
Southeast	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%
Southwest	37.5%	43.8%	18.8%
Rocky Mountain/Far West	60.0%	33.3%	6.7%

FIGURE 12: Spring 2020 Recruiting Plans, by Region

REGION	FIRM PLANS	TENTATIVE PLANS	ALL IN FALL	NOT HIRING	UNSURE	# OF RESPONDENTS
New England	45.5%	36.4%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	11
Midwest	18.8%	56.3%	6.3%	0.0%	18.8%	16
Great Lakes	30.8%	34.6%	23.1%	0.0%	11.5%	26
Plains	41.2%	23.5%	17.6%	0.0%	17.6%	17
Southeast	57.1%	14.3%	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	7
Southwest	25.0%	56.3%	6.3%	0.0%	12.5%	16
Rocky Mountain/Far West	26.7%	33.3%	6.7%	0.0%	33.3%	15

WHO'S IN DEMAND

Like in last year's survey, all respondents to the *Job Outlook 2020* survey have plans to hire bachelor's degree graduates. (See Figure 13.) In addition, the percentages that make up the total hires in 2019-20 and 2018-19 are nearly identical. Bachelor's degree graduates will account for slightly more than 83 percent of Class of 2020 hires, with master's degree graduates following at 11.7 percent. The associate (3 percent), doctorate (1.1 percent), and professional (0.3 percent) levels will comprise less than 5 percent of the remaining hires.

FIGURE 13: Hiring Expectations, by Degree Level

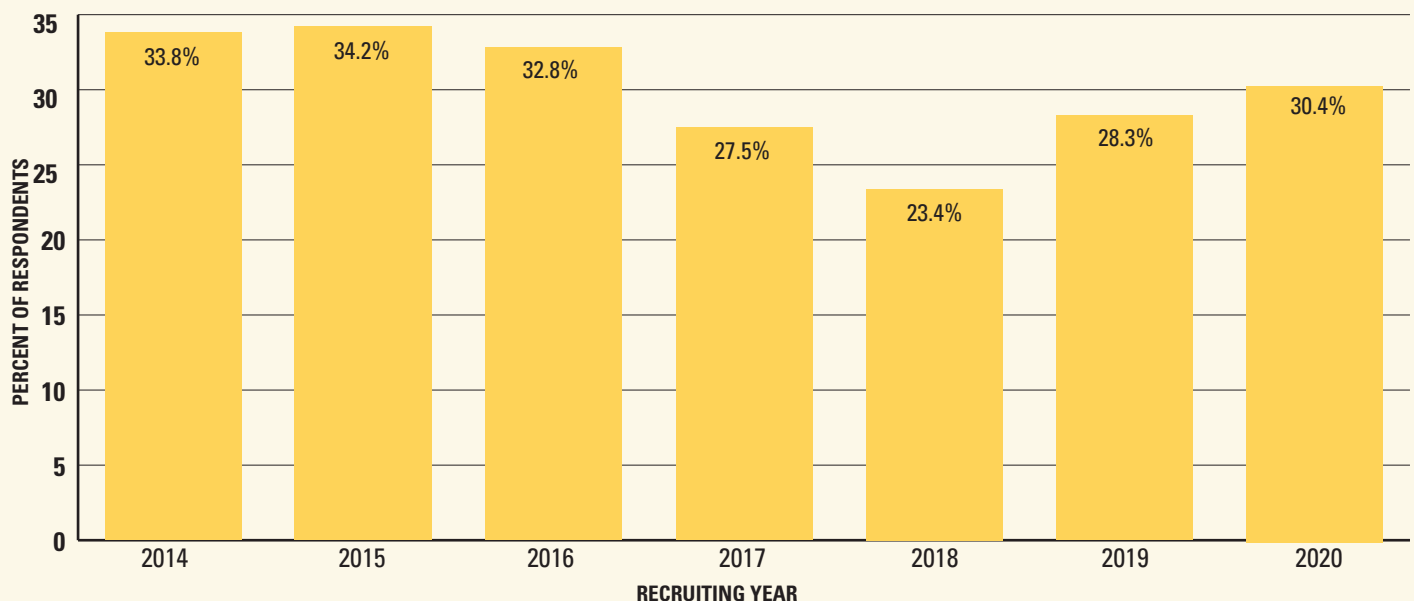
DEGREE LEVEL	AVERAGE % OF NEW COLLEGE HIRES IN 2019-20	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS HIRING 2019-20	% OF TOTAL RESPONDENTS HIRING IN 2019-20	AVERAGE % OF NEW COLLEGE HIRES IN 2018-19	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS THAT HIRED IN 2018-19	% OF TOTAL RESPONDENTS THAT HIRED IN 2018-19
Associate	3.0%	17	20.2%	2.1%	15	17.6%
Bachelor's	83.8%	84	100.0%	83.5%	85	100.0%
Master's	11.7%	63	75.0%	12.9%	68	80.0%
Doctorate	1.1%	18	21.4%	1.2%	18	21.2%
Professional (J.D., M.D., etc.)	0.3%	6	7.1%	0.4%	7	8.2%

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HIRING

International student hiring appears to be rebounding from the 2018 recruiting year, when it fell to its lowest level. More than 30 percent of respondents plan to hire international students from the Class of 2020, up from 23.4 percent in 2018 and 28.3 percent in 2019. (See Figure 14.)

Last year, a total of 14 responding employers shared their international student hiring numbers for both U.S. and international positions, and they reported an overall increase of 23.2 percent. This year, the 24 respondents that provided these international student hiring numbers appear to be holding steady by planning an overall increase of just 2.6 percent.

FIGURE 14: International Student Hiring Plans



At least half of respondents in the computer and electronics manufacturing, miscellaneous professional services, and chemical (pharmaceutical) manufacturing sectors have plans to hire international students. **(See Figure 15.)** Last year, employers in the information industry were the most interested in these students, with two-thirds of respondents planning to hire them from the Class of 2019. However, their interest has waned, as just one-third have plans to hire international graduates this year. The same is true for retail employers. Last year, half of the respondents from this industry had plans to hire international students, while less than 10 percent have plans to do so this year.

FIGURE 15: International Student Hiring Plans, by Industry

INDUSTRY	% OF RESPONDENTS THAT PLAN TO HIRE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	52.9%
Misc. Prof. Services	50.0%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	50.0%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	40.0%
Engineering Services	40.0%
Wholesale Trade	33.3%
Information	33.3%
Misc. Mfg.	28.0%
Government	20.0%
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	20.0%
Construction	16.7%
Management Consulting	14.3%
Retail Trade	8.3%

There is a wide range in international student hiring plans among the seven different geographic regions. Almost three-quarters of the employers located in the New England region have plans to hire international students, as opposed to the 5.9 percent of respondents in the Great Lakes region. **(See Figure 16.)** However, overall interest has improved as, last year, only four of the regions had at least one-quarter of respondents planning to hire international students. This has grown to six regions this year.

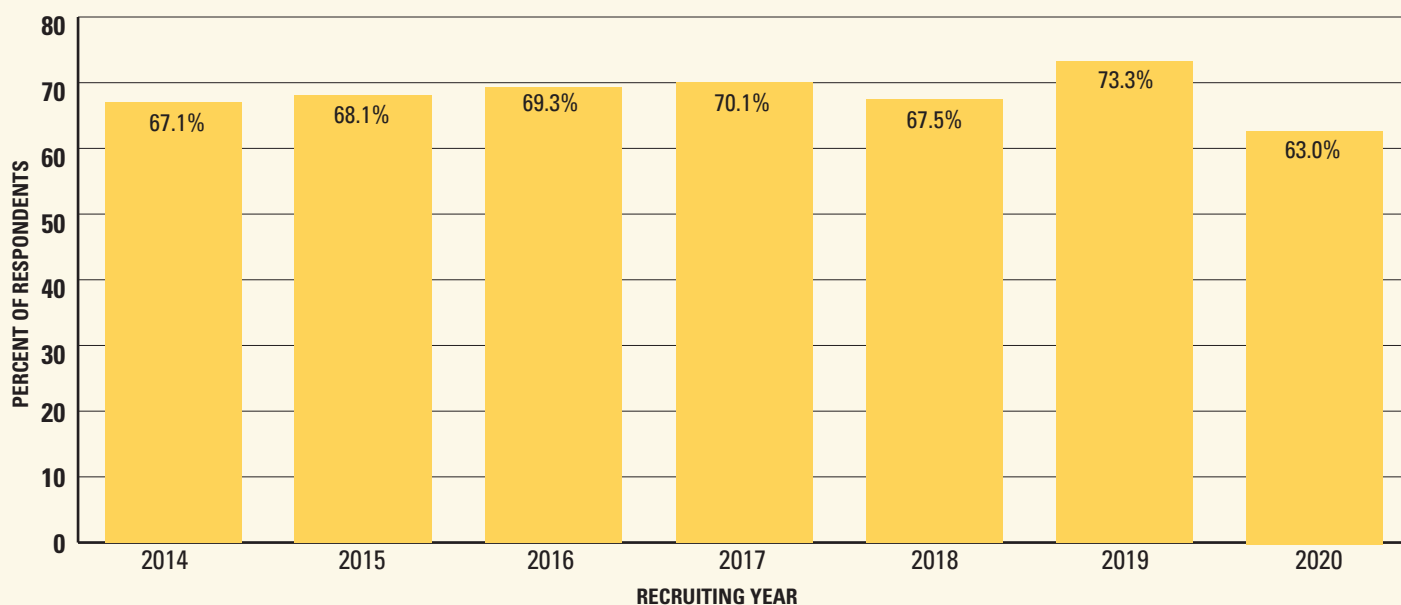
FIGURE 16: International Student Hiring Plans, by Region

REGION	% OF RESPONDENTS THAT PLAN TO HIRE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
New England	73.3%
Southwest	43.8%
Mideast	34.6%
Rocky Mountain/Far West	33.3%
Southeast	26.3%
Plains	25.0%
Great Lakes	5.9%

EMPLOYERS' VIEW OF CANDIDATES

Last year, the percentage of employers that planned to screen candidates by GPA reached its highest level in the past five years at 73.3 percent. **(See Figure 17.)** This year, just 63 percent of respondents are planning to screen by GPA. The last time this result reached these depths was for the Class of 2008, when just 62.3 percent of respondents planned to screen candidates by GPA. Despite the drop, the GPA cutoff will remain at 3.0 this year.

FIGURE 17: Screen Candidates by GPA, by Percentage of Respondents



With an overall smaller percentage of respondents screening candidates by GPA, it stands to reason that there are fewer respondents within each industry that will use this screening method. Last year, all of the responding chemical (pharmaceutical) manufacturers and oil and gas extraction firms planned to screen by GPA. This year, only miscellaneous manufacturing companies come close, with 92.9 percent having plans to do so. **(See Figure 18.)**

A least three-quarters of responding employers in the food and beverage manufacturing (80 percent), management consulting (80 percent), and computer and electronic manufacturing (75 percent) industries plan to screen candidates by GPA this year.

FIGURE 18: Screen Candidates by GPA, by Industry

INDUSTRY	% OF RESPONDENTS	GPA CUTOFF (REPORTED MEDIAN)
Misc. Mfg.	92.9%	3.0
Food & Beverage Mfg.	80.0%	2.9
Management Consulting	80.0%	3.0
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	75.0%	3.0
Information	71.4%	3.0
Retail Trade	71.4%	3.0
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	50.0%	3.0
Misc. Prof. Services	42.9%	3.2

RESUME ATTRIBUTES

As they are reviewing college graduates' resumes this year, survey respondents will be focused on finding elements that demonstrate the candidates' problem-solving skills (91.2 percent) and ability to work as part of a team (86.3 percent). (See Figure 19.)

Last year, the largest percentage of respondents (82 percent) were focused on written communication skills. These skills fall to fifth on this year's list of resume attributes, with 77.5 percent of respondents seeking them.

Also dropping on the list this year is initiative. The fourth most sought-after attribute last year, with 74.2 percent of respondents seeking it, initiative now falls to eighth (69.6 percent).

The largest drop this year appears at the bottom of the "wish list." Although fluency in a foreign language remains the least sought-after attribute, the percentage of respondents seeking it has tumbled from 11.2 percent last year to just 2.9 percent this year.

FIGURE 19: Attributes Employers Seek on a Candidate's Resume

ATTRIBUTE	% OF RESPONDENTS
Problem-solving skills	91.2%
Ability to work in a team	86.3%
Strong work ethic	80.4%
Analytical/quantitative skills	79.4%
Communication skills (written)	77.5%
Leadership	72.5%
Communication skills (verbal)	69.6%
Initiative	69.6%
Detail-oriented	67.6%
Technical skills	65.7%
Flexibility/adaptability	62.7%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	62.7%
Computer skills	54.9%
Organizational ability	47.1%
Strategic planning skills	45.1%
Friendly/outgoing personality	29.4%
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	24.5%
Tactfulness	24.5%
Creativity	23.5%
Fluency in a foreign language	2.9%

WHO GETS THE JOB WHEN CHOOSING BETWEEN EQUALLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATES? THE INTERN.

For the third consecutive year, when employers have equally qualified candidates, they choose the candidate with internship experience. Candidates who have completed an internship with a hiring organization have a slight edge over those with internship experience in a given industry, but both attributes show the highest influence ratings in choosing one candidate over another. (See Figure 20.)

A student's major and having held a leadership position are equally influential, as are general work experience and involvement in extracurricular activities. Having a GPA of 3.0 or above also has somewhat of an influence, but having no work experience may influence the employer to hire another candidate who does. Further evidence of this is shown earlier in Figure 19 where more than 80 percent of respondents indicated they would seek a strong work ethic on a candidate's resume.

FIGURE 20: Influence of Attributes

ATTRIBUTE	2020 AVERAGE INFLUENCE RATING*	2019 AVERAGE INFLUENCE RATING*	2018 AVERAGE INFLUENCE RATING*
Has completed an internship with your organization	4.6	4.6	4.6
Has internship experience in your industry	4.4	4.5	4.4
Major	3.9	4.0	3.8
Has held leadership position	3.9	3.8	3.7
Has general work experience	3.6	3.7	3.7
Has been involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student government, etc.)	3.6	3.5	3.3
High GPA (3.0 or above)	3.5	3.3	3.4
Has no work experience	3.4	3.4	3.4
School attended	2.7	2.8	2.9
Has done volunteer work	2.7	2.7	2.6
Is fluent in a foreign language	2.2	2.2	2.1
Other	2.1	2.2	N/A
Has studied abroad	2.0	2.2	2.0

*5-point scale, where 1=No influence at all, 2=Not much influence, 3=Somewhat of an influence, 4=Very much influence, and 5=Extreme influence.

CAREER READINESS

The way respondents rate the essential need of the eight career readiness competencies that NACE has identified that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace is in line with the attributes respondents seek on candidates' resumes. The three highest-rated competencies—critical thinking/problem solving, teamwork/collaboration, and professionalism/work ethic—are also the top three attributes employers seek on a resume. (See Figure 21.)

Both oral and written communication skills are also rated above "essential," with three of the remaining four competencies landing between "somewhat essential" and "essential." This was also the case in last year's survey, but information technology application and leadership were in reverse order last year, although they are essentially rated equally (3.63 for leadership and 3.61 for information technology application) this year.

Career management and global/multi-cultural fluency continue to round out the bottom of the list, receiving similar ratings to last year (career management: 3.38 last year and 3.32 this year; and global/multi-cultural fluency: 2.78 last year and 2.83 this year).

FIGURE 21: Employers Rate the Essential Need of the Career Readiness Competencies

COMPETENCIES	WEIGHTED AVERAGE RATING*
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	4.65
Teamwork/Collaboration	4.57
Professionalism/Work Ethic	4.48
Oral/Written Communications	4.35
Leadership	3.63
Information Technology Application	3.61
Career Management	3.32
Global/Multi-cultural Fluency	2.83

*5-point scale, where 1=Not essential, 2=Not very essential, 3=Somewhat essential, 4=Essential, 5=Absolutely essential.

The employer ratings given to recent graduates in terms of their proficiency in the eight competencies fall in nearly the same order as they did in last year's survey. Employers give the highest ratings to teamwork/collaboration, information technology application, and critical thinking/problem solving. On the other hand, while all last year's competency ratings fell between "somewhat proficient" and "very proficient," the rating for teamwork/collaboration this year has topped the "very proficient" mark at 4.01. (See Figure 22.)

Two competencies changing order this year are professionalism/work ethic (3.48) and oral/written communications (3.47), but the difference both years has been negligible. Last year, oral/written communications received a 3.49 rating compared to the 3.47 rating for professionalism/work ethic.

FIGURE 22: Employers Rate Recent Graduates' Proficiency in the Eight Career Readiness Competencies

COMPETENCIES	WEIGHTED AVERAGE RATING*
Teamwork/Collaboration	4.01
Information Technology Application	3.79
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	3.66
Professionalism/Work Ethic	3.48
Oral/Written Communications	3.47
Leadership	3.27
Global/Multi-cultural Fluency	3.02
Career Management	2.93

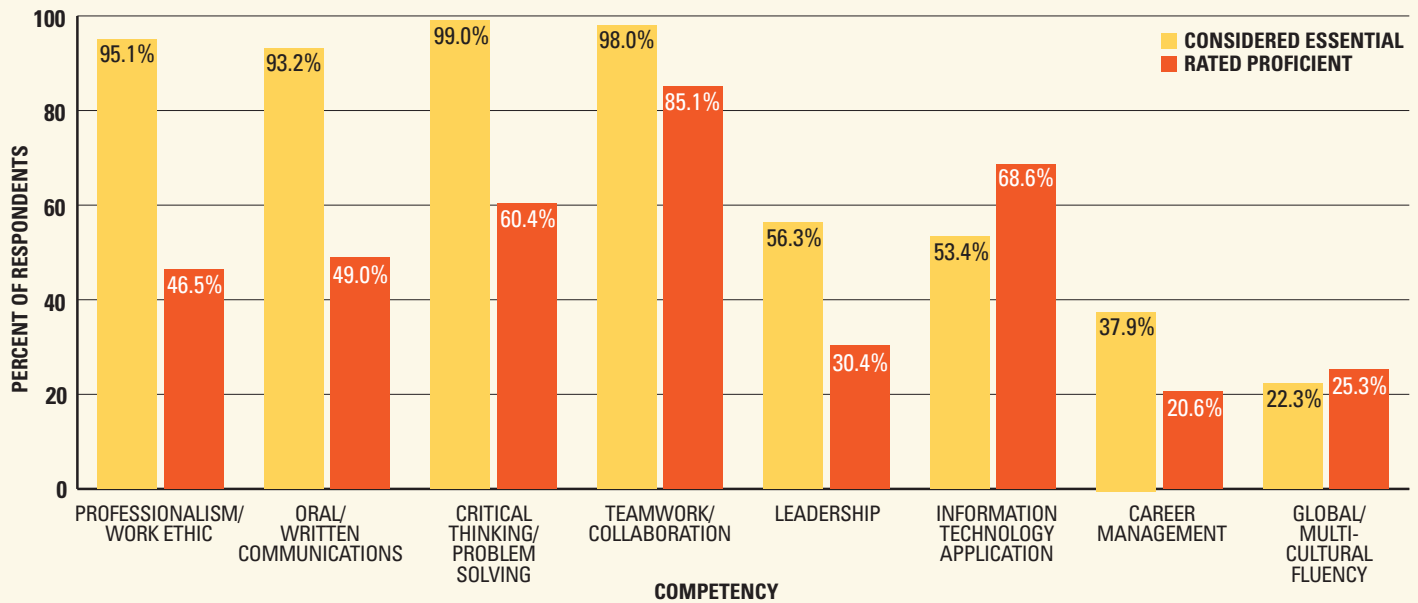
*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all proficient, 2=Not very proficient, 3=Somewhat proficient, 4=Very proficient, 5=Extremely proficient

In the eyes of employers, there is still some room for improvement for graduates in terms of career readiness. Employers found graduates to be least proficient in those areas that the employers deemed most essential. (See Figure 23.)

The highest skill gaps are seen in professionalism/work ethic (a 48.6 percentage point difference) and oral/written communications (a 44.2 percentage point difference), which are third and fourth on the list of most-essential competencies. The top-rated competency in terms of need is critical thinking/problem solving, which has a smaller, but still significant, difference in need versus proficiency (a 38.6 percentage point difference).

One of the higher-rated competencies in which graduates are hitting the mark is teamwork, which has a difference of just 12.9 percentage points in need versus proficiency. In addition, while information technology application is sixth in terms of essential need, graduates are surpassing the need versus proficiency percentages by more than 15 percentage points. This is also the case with global/multi-cultural fluency, where the proficiency of graduates outpaces the essential need by 3 percentage points.

FIGURE 23: Need vs. Proficiency on Career Readiness Competencies, by Percent of Respondents



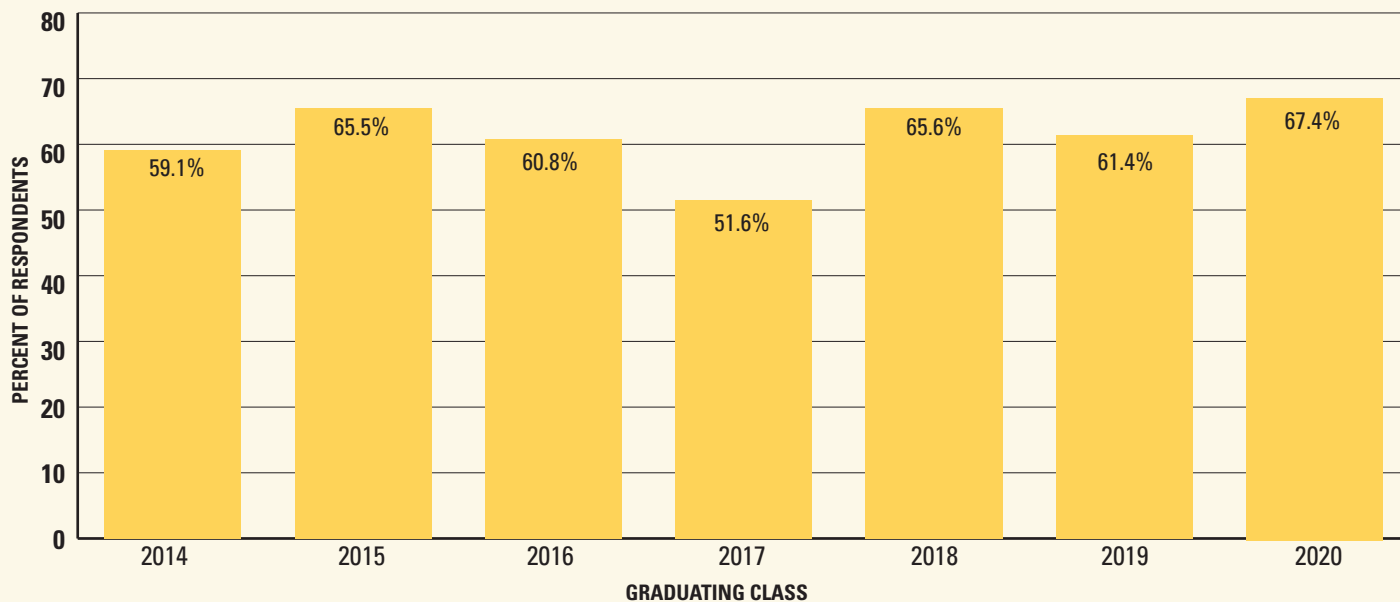
Note: The percentages corresponding to “considered essential” represent, among all responding employers, the percentage that, on a five-point scale, indicated that the respective competency was either “essential” (4) or “absolutely essential” (5) for college graduates to enter their work force. The percentages corresponding to “rated proficient” represent, among all responding employers, the percentage that, on a five-point scale, rated recent graduates either “very” (4) or “extremely” (5) proficient in the respective competency.

COMPENSATION AND SIGNING BONUSES

The percentage of employers with plans to increase starting salaries has hit a seven-year high, with almost 68 percent of respondents planning higher salaries for Class of 2020 bachelor's degree graduates. (See Figure 24.)

Among those respondents that provided their planned salary increase, the average is 3.95 percent with a median increase of 3 percent. Although the average planned increase is up from last year's projected increase of 3.4 percent, just one-third of these respondents indicated plans to increase salaries for bachelor's degree graduates by more than 3 percent.

FIGURE 24: Employers With Plans to Increase Starting Salaries to Bachelor's Degree Graduates



With such a large overall percentage of respondents planning to increase salaries at the bachelor's degree level, it's not surprising that the individual industries are reporting such plans across the board. (See Figure 25.)

All of the respondents in three industries—food and beverage manufacturing, chemical (pharmaceutical) manufacturing, and wholesale trade—are planning salary increases to bachelor's degree graduates. In the remaining reported industries, at least half of the respondents will increase salaries to bachelor's degree graduates. This comes in contrast to last year's survey, when there were no employment sectors with all respondents planning increases, and just three of the five reported industries had between half and 80 percent of their respondents planning salary increases to bachelor's degree graduates.

FIGURE 25: Employers With Plans to Increase Starting Salaries, by Industry

INDUSTRY	# OF RESPONDENTS WITH PLANS TO INCREASE BACHELOR'S SALARIES	# OF RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY	% OF RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY
Food & Beverage Mfg.	5	5	100.0%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	5	5	100.0%
Wholesale Trade	5	5	100.0%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	9	10	90.0%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	6	9	66.7%
Information	3	5	60.0%
Misc. Mfg.	7	12	58.3%
Retail Trade	3	6	50.0%
Misc. Prof. Services	3	6	50.0%

Similar findings are true in the regional breakouts of respondents with plans to increase bachelor's degree starting salaries. (See Figure 26.) At least half of the organizations in the regions that had at least five respondents will increase starting salaries to bachelor's degree graduates. Employers in the Rocky Mountain/Far West are most likely to do so, with 10 of 11 total respondents reporting plans to increase salaries.

FIGURE 26: Employers With Plans to Increase Starting Salaries, by Region

REGION	# OF RESPONDENTS WITH PLANS TO INCREASE BACHELOR'S SALARIES	# OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION	% OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION
Rocky Mountain/Far West	10	11	90.9%
Southwest	11	15	73.3%
Great Lakes	15	21	71.4%
Plains	8	14	57.1%
Mideast	6	12	50.0%
Southeast	3	6	50.0%

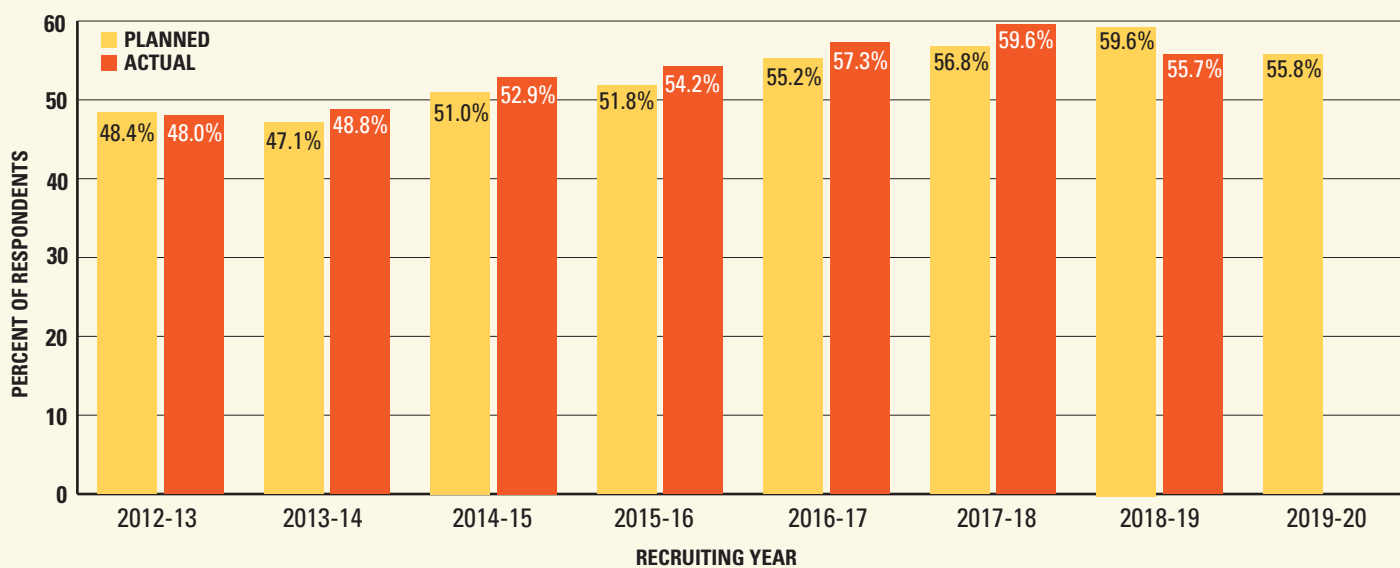
SIGNING BONUSES

Keeping in line with results from recent *Job Outlook* surveys, signing bonuses will be offered to Class of 2020 graduates by more than half of the survey respondents. (See Figure 27.)

Bonus plans for Class of 2019 graduates fell slightly short of the original plans made by employers in the *Job Outlook 2019* survey, with 59.6 percent of respondents that planned to offer bonuses, and just 55.7 percent that did. Since 2013-14, every other graduating class ended the recruiting year having more respondents providing bonuses than originally planned. Nearly the same percentage of respondents that did provide signing bonuses to the Class of 2019 (55.7 percent) plan to offer them to Class of 2020 graduates (55.8 percent).

Signing bonuses will only be offered to selected graduates, as just one-quarter of respondents will offer them to all graduates. The remaining three-quarters will offer signing bonuses to selected majors, mainly consisting of STEM fields and a few business majors, such as accounting and M.B.A.s, that are typically in high demand.

FIGURE 27: Employers Offering Signing Bonuses



By industry, food and beverage manufacturers are most likely to offer signing bonuses, with 100 percent of these respondents planning to do so. In addition, all but one reported industry—retail trade—have at least one-third of their respondents planning to offer signing bonuses to Class of 2020 graduates. (See Figure 28.)

Three-quarters of respondents in the Southwest region have plans to offer signing bonuses. Meanwhile, at least half of the respondents in four of the six remaining regions anticipate offering signing bonuses. (See Figure 29.)

FIGURE 28: Percent of Employers Offering Signing Bonuses to 2019-20 Graduates, by Industry

INDUSTRY	% OFFERING SIGNING BONUSES	# OF RESPONDENTS
Food & Beverage Mfg.	100.0%	5
Information	85.7%	7
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	80.0%	5
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	64.3%	14
Misc. Mfg.	64.3%	14
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	60.0%	10
Management Consulting	60.0%	5
Wholesale Trade	40.0%	5
Utilities	33.3%	6
Retail Trade	28.6%	7

FIGURE 29: Percent of Employers Offering Signing Bonuses to 2019-20 Graduates, by Region

REGION	% OFFERING SIGNING BONUSES	# OF RESPONDENTS
Southwest	75.0%	16
Rocky Mountain/Far West	61.5%	13
Plains	60.0%	15
New England	54.5%	11
Great Lakes	50.0%	26
Mideast	43.8%	16
Southeast	42.9%	7

In last year's report, just four majors—accounting, business, computer science, and engineering—had enough data to report an overall average projected bonus. This year, data are somewhat more plentiful, with 10 fields having at least four respondents to calculate an average signing bonus. (See Figure 30.) Although business majors are projected to be the only major that is showing an increase in average signing bonus from last year—\$4,455 this year compared to \$4,000 last year—the data are still limited and should be read with caution.

FIGURE 30: Average Signing Bonus, by Major (Bachelor's Degrees)*

MAJOR	2019-20 AVERAGE BONUS (PROJECTED)	# OF RESPONDENTS 2019-20	2018-19 AVERAGE BONUS (PROJECTED)	# OF RESPONDENTS 2018-19
Accounting	\$4,357	7	\$5,400	5
Business	\$4,455	11	\$4,000	4
Chemical Engineering	\$6,000	4	N/A	N/A
Computer Engineering	\$4,125	4	N/A	N/A
Computer Science	\$5,900	10	\$7,500	5
Electrical Engineering	\$3,643	7	N/A	N/A
Engineering (not specified)	\$4,658	19	\$5,600	10
Finance	\$4,556	9	N/A	N/A
Information Systems	\$3,800	5	N/A	N/A
Mechanical Engineering	\$5,000	5	N/A	N/A

*Where 4 or more data points were provided.

Similar findings appear at the master's degree level, with data on just four majors—M.B.A., computer science, electrical engineering, and overall engineering majors. (See Figure 31.) Once again, the data should be read with caution, as it is highly affected by both high and low data points.

FIGURE 31: Average Signing Bonus, by Major (Master's Degrees)*

MAJOR	2019-20 AVERAGE BONUS (PROJECTED)	# OF RESPONDENTS 2019-20	2018-19 AVERAGE BONUS (PROJECTED)	# OF RESPONDENTS 2018-19
M.B.A.	\$13,800	5	\$22,500	5
Computer Science	\$4,000	4	\$10,167	4
Electrical Engineering	\$5,500	4	N/A	N/A
Engineering (not specified)	\$5,000	4	N/A	N/A

*Where 4 or more data points were provided.

APPENDIX

FIGURE 32: Respondents by Size of Department/Business Unit

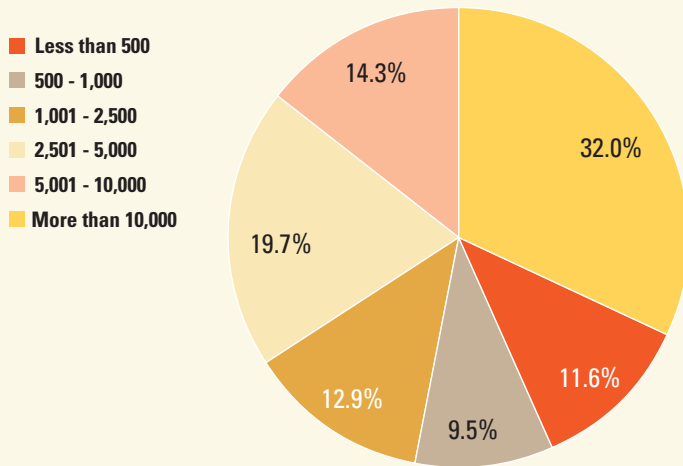


FIGURE 33: Geographic Regions Defined by State

NEW ENGLAND	MIDEAST	GREAT LAKES	PLAINS	SOUTHEAST	SOUTHWEST	ROCKY MOUNTAIN/ FAR WEST
Connecticut	Delaware	Illinois	Iowa	Alabama	Arizona	Alaska
Maine	District of Columbia	Indiana	Kansas	Arkansas	New Mexico	California
Massachusetts	Maryland	Michigan	Minnesota	Florida	Oklahoma	Colorado
New Hampshire	New Jersey	Ohio	Missouri	Georgia	Texas	Hawaii
Rhode Island	New York	Wisconsin	Nebraska	Kentucky		Idaho
Vermont	Pennsylvania		North Dakota	Louisiana		Montana
			South Dakota	Mississippi		Nevada
				North Carolina		Oregon
				South Carolina		Utah
				Tennessee		Washington
				Virginia		Wyoming
				West Virginia		

FIGURE 34: Respondents by Industry

INDUSTRY	# OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Oil & Gas Extraction	2	1.3%
Utilities	6	4.0%
Construction	6	4.0%
Food & Beverage Mfg.	5	3.3%
Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.	6	4.0%
Computer & Electronics Mfg.	17	11.3%
Motor Vehicle Mfg.	5	3.3%
Misc. Mfg.	25	16.7%
Wholesale Trade	6	4.0%
Retail Trade	12	8.0%
Transportation	3	2.0%
Messaging & Warehouse	1	0.7%
Information	9	6.0%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	10	6.7%
Accounting Services	2	1.3%
Engineering Services	5	3.3%
Management Consulting	7	4.7%
Misc. Prof. Services	10	6.7%
Social Services	3	2.0%
Recreation & Hospitality	2	1.3%
Misc. Support Services	3	2.0%
Government	5	3.3%

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Below is a list of the organizations that responded to the *Job Outlook 2020* survey. (Please note: Although 150 organizations responded, the list below includes 106, as 44 organizations preferred not to be listed.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| Alcoa | Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co. Inc. |
| Altec Inc. | Cambridge Associates LLC |
| Altria Group, Inc. | Cargill, Inc. |
| Applied Materials Inc. | CIGNA Corporation |
| ArcelorMittal USA | Comcast Corporation |
| Arizona Department of Economic Security | ConocoPhillips Company |
| Arizona Public Service | Danaher Corporation |
| Arup | Dassault Systèmes |
| Ascend Performance Materials | Dell Technologies |
| Ball Aerospace | Dick's Sporting Goods |
| Barry-Wehmiller Design Group | Dot Foods |
| Bemis Company, Inc. | DST Systems Inc. |
| Benjamin Moore & Co. | E. & J. Gallo Winery |
| Best Buy | Echo Global Logistics |

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS cont.

Below is a list of the organizations that responded to the *Job Outlook 2020* survey. (Please note: Although 150 organizations responded, the list below includes 106, as 44 organizations preferred not to be listed.)

Ecolab Inc.	ONEOK, Inc.
Edward Jones	Owens Corning
ellucian	Pariveda Solutions Inc.
Entegris	Parsons Corporation
Enterprise	Paylocity
Envestnet - Yodlee	Polaris Industries, Inc.
EOG Resources, Inc.	PPL Corporation
EY	Presidio Trust
First Solar	Principal Financial Group
Foundation Medicine	Protiviti Inc.
Fresenius Kabi USA	QVC Inc.
GE Appliances, a Haier company	Randstad North America
General Dynamics Electric Boat	Raytheon Company
GlaxoSmithKline	RSM US LLP
Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company	Sabre Corporation
Haas Automation	Seagate Technology
Hanley, Flight & Zimmerman	SEEL LLC
Heidrick & Struggles	Selden Fox LTD
High Industries Inc.	Silicon Labs
Highmark Health	Sonoco Products Company
Honeywell International Inc.	Speedway LLC
Hormel Foods Corporation	STAPLES Inc.
Hubbell Incorporated	Stryker Corporation
ICF International	T-Mobile USA, Inc.
Indian Health Service	Takata
INEOS	Tennessee Valley Authority
Ingersoll Rand Company	Textron Inc.
Ingredient	The Aerospace Corporation
Internal Revenue Service	The Travelers Companies, Inc.
ITW	ThyssenKrupp Elevator
Kimberly-Clark Corporation	TimkenSteel Corporation
Lexmark International, Inc.	TracFone Wireless
Liberty Mutual Insurance Company	U.S. Cellular Corporation
Link-Belt Construction Equipment Co.	U.S. Comptroller of the Currency
Mackay Communications, Inc.	Underwriters Laboratories Inc.
Macy's, Inc.	Varian Medical Systems Inc.
Michelin North America	Verisk
National Instruments	Viasat, Inc.
Nokia	Wright Medical

