

Future Plans

2014 College Senior Survey

In spring 2014, we asked graduating seniors at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to participate in the *College Senior Survey*. The survey was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. It is a follow-up to *The Freshman Survey* (TFS) which was administered to this cohort in fall of 2010. Of 983¹ potential participants, 33% (n=326)² submitted responses. Their results are compared to students from a comparison group of universities³. This report provides information about students' future plans. First, student values for the future are covered. Then, specific plans are covered.



The full distribution for items is available on the IR website at: <https://www.case.edu/ir/srvyresults/>. All significant differences include a measure of effect size, Cohen's *d*. Effect size allows us to estimate the size of the differences between two means⁴. For ease of reference, bulleted items which demonstrate significant differences are italicized.

Career Goals and Aspirations

The following items detail what students find important for their futures and the extent to which these conditions and experiences are valued. The results presented below are for instances where students rated an item as "essential".

- *High income potential: 22% vs. 19%; (M=2.78, SD=0.86) vs. (M=2.66, SD=0.88); $d=-0.14$, $p<.05$*
- Availability of jobs: 29% vs. 27%; (M=3.02, SD=0.77) vs. (M=3.01, SD=0.76); No meaningful difference
- Ability to pay off debt: 40% vs. 40%; (M=2.96, SD=1.07) vs. (M=3.00, SD=1.03); No meaningful difference
- Being very well off financially: 28% vs. 26%; (M=2.92, SD=0.84) vs. (M=2.84, SD=0.87); No meaningful difference
- Social recognition or status: 9% vs. 9%; (M=2.18, SD=0.91) vs. (M=2.19, SD=0.90); No meaningful difference

¹ Population n=983: Women=399 (41%), Men=584 (59%); Caucasian=515 (52%), Asian=189 (19%), Black=41 (4%), Hispanic=33 (3%), Other=29 (3%), Unknown=106 (11%), International=70 (7%)

² Sample n=326: Women=166 (51%), Men=160 (49%); Caucasian=184 (56%), Asian=53 (16%), Black=10 (3%), Hispanic=8 (3%), Other=11 (3%), Unknown=42 (13%); International=17 (5%)

³ Pepperdine University, Northeastern University, Fordham University, Texas Christian University and Biola University

⁴The effect size is the size of the difference between two means. Cohen's *d* values were interpreted according to the criteria for NSSE benchmark comparisons as follows: small ~ .1, medium ~ .3, large ~ .5, very large ~ .7. These benchmark criteria were applied unilaterally to *both* constructs *and* individual items for simplicity.

- Becoming an authority in my field: 26% vs. 23%; ($M=2.91, SD=0.85$) vs. ($M=2.84, SD=0.85$); No meaningful difference
- Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field: 20% vs. 17%; ($M=2.76, SD=0.85$) vs. ($M=2.71, SD=0.83$); No meaningful difference
- *Stable, secure future*: 54% vs. 42%; ($M=3.43, SD=0.71$) vs. ($M=3.21, SD=0.80$); $d=-0.28, p<.001$
- Creativity and initiative: 23% vs. 25%; ($M=2.77, SD=0.88$) vs. ($M=2.81, SD=0.88$); No meaningful difference
- *Working for social change*: 13% vs. 19%; ($M=2.25, SD=0.95$) vs. ($M=2.49, SD=0.98$); $d=-0.24, p<.001$
- *Expression of personal values*: 22% vs. 30%; ($M=2.77, SD=0.86$) vs. ($M=2.97, SD=0.84$); $d=-0.24, p<.001$
- Leadership potential: 25% vs. 27%; ($M=2.83, SD=0.89$) vs. ($M=2.90, SD=0.86$); No meaningful difference
- Raising a family: 39% vs. 44%; ($M=3.01, SD=0.97$) vs. ($M=3.10, SD=0.97$); No meaningful difference

While the majority of items indicated no meaningful differences, CWRU students were slightly less likely to rate working for social change and having a high income potential as essential.

Post-Graduation Plans

The following table illustrates student plans for fall 2014. The majority of students at CWRU and the comparison institutions planned to work full time following graduation. However, more CWRU students reported that they planned to attend graduate or professional school when compared to students at the comparison institutions.

Table 1. Primary Plans

	CWRU	Comparison
Working full-time	51.1%	60.2%
Attending graduate/professional school full-time	35.1%	21.9%
No current plans	4.0%	3.1%
Working part-time	2.9%	4.0%
Participating in an organization like the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps/VISTA, or Teach for America	2.5%	1.9%
Attending graduate/professional school part-time	1.8%	1.5%
Traveling	1.1%	1.2%
Serving in the Armed Forces	0.7%	1.0%
Completing additional undergraduate coursework/Post-baccalaureate program	0.4%	3.4%
Volunteer work	0.4%	1.2%
Staying at home to be with or start a family	0.0%	0.3%

CWRU students were also asked about additional plans that were expected to be concurrent with their primary plans. At CWRU and the comparison institutions, the majority of students reported plans to volunteer, travel, or work. More students at CWRU reported plans to volunteer than those at the comparison institutions. A breakdown of additional plans is illustrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Additional Plans

	CWRU	Comparison
No current plans	8.3%	8.2%
Staying at home to be with or start a family	7.1%	9.5%
Volunteer work	38.0%	31.2%
Traveling	29.1%	30.7%
Serving in the Armed Forces	1.5%	0.6%
Participating in an organization like the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps/VISTA, or Teach for America	1.5%	1.9%
Completing additional undergraduate coursework/Post-baccalaureate program	3.1%	3.5%
Attending graduate/professional school part-time	9.2%	8.5%
Attending graduate/professional school full-time	3.7%	3.8%
Working part-time	22.7%	19.0%
Working full-time	10.1%	10.0%

Status of Educational Plans

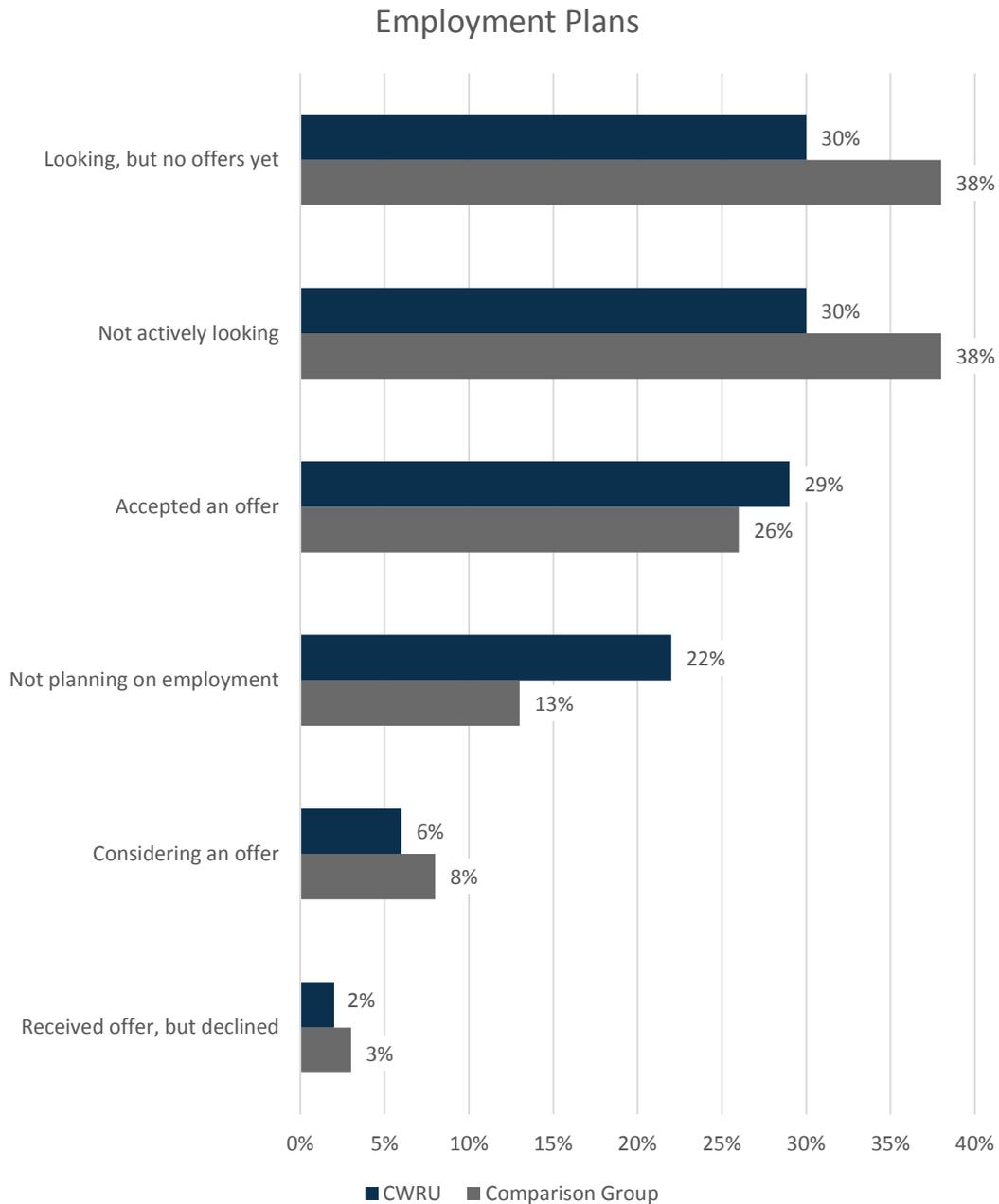
Students were also asked about the status of their educational plans. Most students indicated either that they were accepted to an advanced degree program and planned on attending in the fall, or that they planned on applying at a future date beyond fall 2014. More students at CWRU reported acceptance into an advanced program than those at the comparison institutions, while more students at the comparison institutions reported plans to apply at a future date beyond fall 2014.

Table 3. Status of graduate/professional school plans

	CWRU	Comparison
Accepted and will be attending in the fall	37.2%	23.3%
Accepted and deferred admission until a later date	0.8%	1.2%
Placed on waiting list, no acceptances	1.6%	0.8%
Still awaiting responses, no acceptances	4.7%	3.6%
Will be applying this coming fall	9.9%	12.1%
Not applying this fall, but might apply at a future date	34.0%	44.5%
No plans to apply to school now or in the future	11.9%	14.4%

Employment Plans

When asked about their employment plans for fall 2014, the majority of students indicated either that they were looking, or had accepted an offer of employment. This was true among both CWRU students and the comparison group. However, more students at CWRU reported that they were not planning on employment in the fall than those at the comparison institutions, reflecting higher percentages attending graduate or professional school. Results are outlined in the graph below.



Highest Degree Plans

When asked about their highest degree plans, most students reported intentions to complete an advanced degree. While more students at the comparison institutions reported plans to complete a Master's degree, more CWRU students reported plans to complete a Ph.D./Ed.D. degree or a medical doctorate.

Table 4. Highest degree plans

	CWRU	Comparison
None	0.9%	1.6%
Vocational certificate	0.0%	0.1%
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S., etc.)	14.4%	18.0%
Master's (M.A., M.S., etc.)	36.5%	46.6%
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	22.1%	17.0%
M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M.	19.0%	7.8%
LL.B or J.D. (Law)	5.2%	5.8%
B.D. or M.DIV. (Divinity)	0.3%	0.4%
Other	1.5%	2.6%

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