

**2015 UIC First Destination Initiative Pilot Summary**  
**January 2017**

**Career Services**  
**Office of Institutional Research**  
**Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Illinois at Chicago's (UIC) First Destination Initiative was administered as a pilot program to the campus from April through December of 2015 and focused upon gathering information about the career outcomes of UIC bachelor's degree graduates within six months of their graduation. The following represents findings from the Class of 2015 Pilot Study.

- The overall knowledge rate for the pilot was 48.6% meaning career outcomes data were collected either through the survey or secondary sources for nearly half of the Class of 2015 graduates (exclusive of the College of Business).
- Based on respondents selecting a single career outcome category, the UIC Career Outcomes Rate is 77.3% (employed full-time, employed part-time, graduate/professional school, volunteer or service program, or military service). Of this, 71.4% were either employed full-time or continuing their education (i.e., graduate/professional school).
- Internships play a major role in determining full-time employment status. Among full-time employed survey respondents, 71.7% completed one or more internships.
- Salary ranges varied by college and ranged from \$30,000 to nearly \$70,000 depending on the college of enrollment. The College of Applied Health Sciences and College of Engineering had the highest salary range.
- Just over 21% of all survey respondents indicated being enrolled in graduate/professional school and nearly half of these respondents indicated enrollment in a master's level program. Among students who selected a single career outcome category, 19.2% indicated being enrolled in a graduate/professional school.

*Note: The **College of Business** conducts its own individual survey and outcomes from this have been shared with Career Services. For the purposes of this pilot report, this data is not included in the executive summary.*

## INTRODUCTION

The University of Illinois at Chicago's (UIC) First Destination Initiative was launched as a pilot program in April of 2015 and focused upon gathering information about the career outcomes of UIC bachelor's degree graduates within six months of their graduation. Over the past several years, there has been much focus placed on graduation outcomes in higher education. Initiatives such as the White House College Scorecard and media attention on the value of a bachelor's degree are just a few reasons to place a focus on collecting data on career outcomes. Overall, the first destination initiative provides a snapshot of graduates' career outcomes and serves as a tool to inform and shape career expectations of current undergraduates, new alumni, and prospective students as well as inform the community-at-large including parents, the media, and employers.

In 2014, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) released a series of standards and protocols which allowed universities and colleges to align to a framework for national standards. UIC followed this framework and timeline in an effort to collect information on what NACE calls career outcomes. Career outcomes can be defined as the following categories:

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Participating in a volunteer or service program
- Serving in the U.S. Armed Forces
- Enrolled in a program of continuing education

UIC's focus in the pilot was calculating a percentage of graduates who fell into these five categories. A survey was conducted over a 6-month period beginning in late April just prior to graduation with the survey closing in October of 2016. The population invited to participate in the survey was based upon Registrar Office's records who had registered for graduation and were anticipated to receive a bachelor's degree in either December 2014 or May 2015 from the following undergraduate colleges and schools:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applied Health Sciences</li><li>• Architecture, Design, and the Arts</li><li>• Education</li><li>• Engineering</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liberal Arts and Sciences</li><li>• Nursing</li><li>• Public Health</li><li>• Urban Planning and Public Affairs</li></ul> |
|--|---|

*Note: As mentioned the **College of Business** conducts its own individual survey and outcomes from this survey have been shared with Career Services.*

UIC approached the 2015 administration of the First Destination Initiative as a pilot. Being a new initiative, a pilot allows for improvements in survey protocol, question construction, and timelines. The first year that UIC will externally report the University's career outcomes to NACE, as part of their protocols, will be for the 2016 graduation class.

## METHODOLOGY

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines “knowledge rate” as the percent of graduates for which the institution has reasonable and verifiable information concerning the graduates’ post-graduation career activities\*. This information typically comes directly from the graduates via, for example, a survey method. Relevant data, however, may also be provided by employers, or obtained through other sources (e.g., LinkedIn™ profiles, other online sources). Career Services with the guidance of the Office of Institutional Research opted to use both of these methods for the pilot study. While the survey served as the primary mode of data collection and self-reported career outcomes, secondary sources of information through LinkedIn™ and campus advisors was collected to supplement data from non-respondents to the survey.

\*Source: NACE First Destination Standards/Protocols

### Survey

A web-based survey using the Qualtrics platform was developed and administered at UIC from April through October of 2015 and is considered the primary source of data collected. The online survey was initially sent to graduates via email. Several email reminders were sent and incentives were offered. Starting in October of 2015, LinkedIn™ and campus advisor information was used to collect outcomes data for those graduates that did not respond to the email inquiries.

The purpose of the survey was to collect career outcomes data for each of the bachelor’s degree recipients. The survey used skip-logic and took an average of five minutes to complete. Depending upon how individual questions were answered, respondents could be asked an upper limit of approximately 20 questions. Questions focused on collecting the following information:

- First Destination Employed (Employed Full-Time or Part-Time)
- Salary Information
- Still Seeking Employment
- Graduate School and Continuing Education
- Service or Military Involvement
- Internship or Research Experiences Completed

The list of graduates supplied by the Registrar’s Office contained 2,934 records. Of these records, 899 graduates responded to the survey (30.6% survey response rate).

### Secondary Sources of Data Collection

After the on-line survey period of April, 2014 through early October, 2015 passed, data cleaning occurred, and those graduates who did not respond had their LinkedIn™ profiles reviewed by Career Services staff members. In addition, several campus advisors provided Career Services data on graduate/professional school outcomes. The review of LinkedIn™ profiles occurred from approximately mid-October through early December of 2015. Specifically, 528 LinkedIn™ profiles were reviewed helping to bolster the overall knowledge rate for 2015 undergraduate degree recipients.

## ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING TIMELINE

The timeline for collecting pilot data at UIC coincides with standards and protocols recommended by NACE. Data collection is ongoing, with final summary analysis being completed eight months after the final graduation date. The following is an approximate timeline for future administrations of the First Destination initiative:

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Late November               | Contact Registrar's Office and obtain list of potential bachelor level December graduates (includes August graduates with December) |
| Early December- Mid-January | Administer First Destination survey to December graduates: Initial invitation email and four reminder emails                        |
| Late January- March         | Start secondary data collection methods for August and December graduates   |
| Late April                  | Obtain list of potential May bachelor's level graduates from Registrar's Office   |
| Early May - Late June       | Administer First Destination survey to May graduates: Initial invitation email and four reminder emails                             |
| July                        | Start data analysis of survey results (August, December, and May graduates)   |
| September                   | Provide preliminary survey results  |
| October – December          | Start secondary data collection methods for May graduates   |
| January                     | Start full data analysis (include survey and secondary data)  |
| Late February               | Provide aggregate data to NACE  |
| April                       | Issue final report  |

This timeline is being followed for the 2016 administration and aggregate data will be shared with NACE, per their deadline by March 2017.

## RESULTS

### Knowledge and Response Rate

Calculating the primary survey response rate and secondary sources of data collection collectively allowed for a calculation of the overall “knowledge rate.” **UIC’s overall knowledge rate** (which does not include the College of Business) **was 48.6%**. As a comparison, NACE reported an overall knowledge rate of 55.2% for reporting public institutions for the Class of 2015. For the first year of conducting this pilot, Career Services was pleased with the overall knowledge rate.

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Number of Graduates                    | 2,934                                 |
| Respondents who completed survey       | 899 (30.6% of graduates)              |
| Document Analysis (LinkedIn™ Profiles) | 528 (18.0% of graduates)              |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>1,427 (Knowledge Rate - 48.6%)</b> |

It is also important to look within each college for what percentage of that college did the initiative garner a knowledge rate for their respective 2015 graduates. Engineering had the highest overall knowledge rate of 72.4% of the colleges participating in this initiative.

#### Number of Graduates and Knowledge Rates by College

| Colleges                           | Number of Graduates | Knowledge Rate Total N | Knowledge Rate within each College |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Applied Health Sciences            | 188                 | 107                    | 56.9%                              |
| Architecture, Design, and the Arts | 202                 | 76                     | 37.6%                              |
| Education                          | 33                  | 18                     | 54.5%                              |
| Engineering                        | 493                 | 357                    | 72.4%                              |
| Liberal Arts and Sciences          | 1,752               | 766                    | 43.7%                              |
| Nursing                            | 220                 | 75                     | 34.1%                              |
| Public Health                      | 24                  | 13                     | 54.2%                              |
| Urban Planning and Public Affairs  | 22                  | 15                     | 68.2%                              |

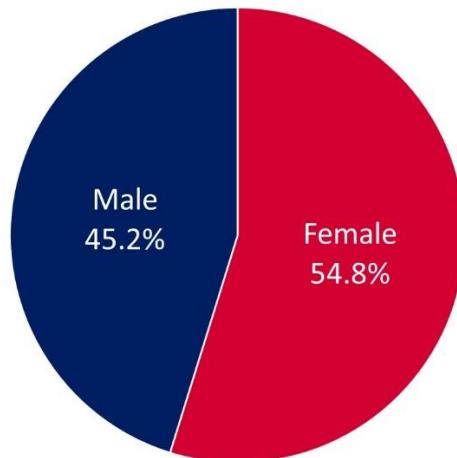
*Note: The **College of Business** reported an 80% knowledge rate and data is representative of 583 graduates.*

#### Knowledge Rate Demographics

All demographic information represents graduates whose career outcomes were confirmed via survey or secondary sources. The Office of Institutional Research provided demographic characteristics based on the graduates' UIN. The demographic data does not include the College of Business.

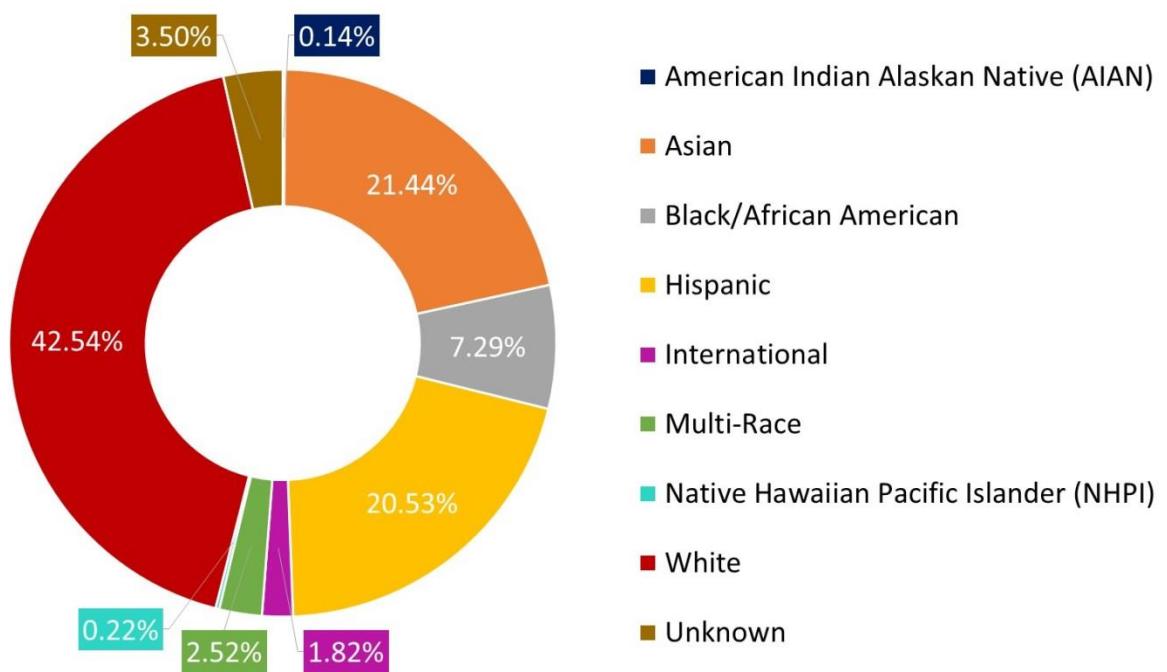
#### Knowledge Rate by Gender

N = 1,427



## Knowledge Rate by Ethnicity

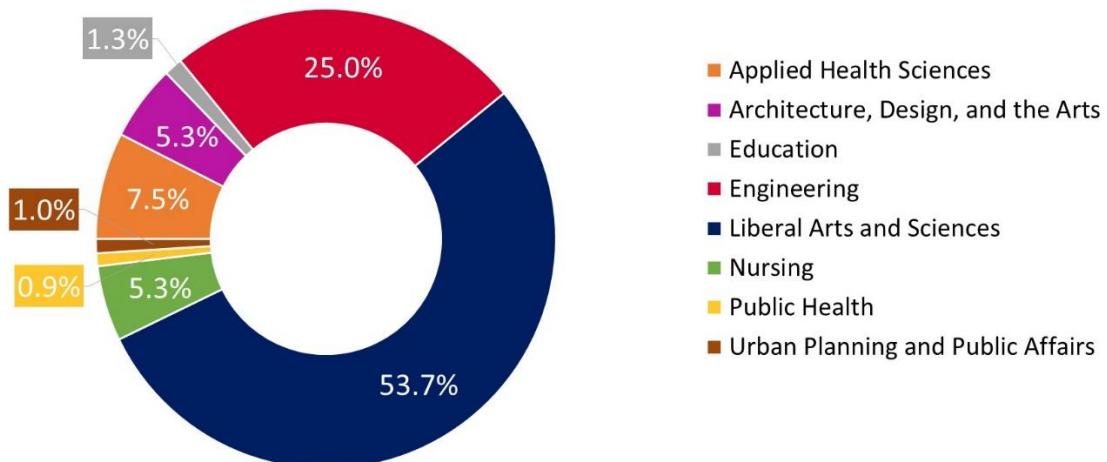
N = 1,427



## Knowledge Rate by College

In considering the make-up of the graduating class for 2015, of the total participants, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences had the highest knowledge rate by college, followed by the College of Engineering, which was expected given the size of the respective graduating classes.

N = 1,427



## Career Outcomes Rate

The “career outcomes” rate is the percent of respondents (through the web survey or LinkedIn™) who reported or were identified as having secured or held a job (full-time or part-time), involved in a volunteer or service program, military, and/or enrolled in graduate/professional school. In summary, the career outcomes rate provides information on the types of destinations that UIC’s graduates secured.

Due to the pilot survey design which allowed participants to select multiple primary statuses, initial percentages exceeded 100%. Because of this, an analysis was conducted from two different perspectives, respondents who chose one career outcome and those who chose multiple outcomes. The following two sections provide some of the results based on the respondents selecting one or more post-graduation outcomes.

### Single Outcome

Of surveyed graduates, 84% of respondents indicated a single primary outcome for their post-graduation plans, meaning they selected one item (i.e., full-time employment, graduate/professional school, military, etc.) as their post-graduation plan.

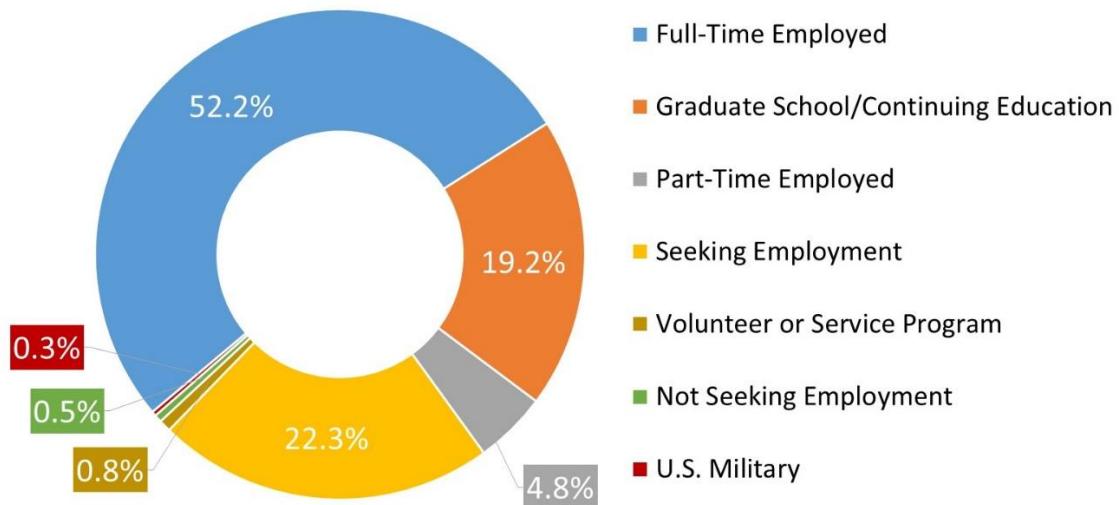
**UIC’s career outcome rate is 77.3%** (based upon a single outcome and employed full-time, employed part-time, graduate/professional school, volunteer or service program, or military). Including the College of Business data would have increased the rate even higher. For the Class of 2015, NACE data indicated a national comparison career outcomes rate of 80.9% for public institutions. When examining full-time employment and specifically those UIC graduates that solely chose this outcome category, 52.2% reported full-time status.

The percentage of those attending graduate or professional school as a single post-graduation outcome was 19.2%, while 22.3% of respondents indicated that they were still seeking employment. In comparison to public institutions, NACE data for the Class of 2015 indicated 17.5% of graduates continuing their education and 14.4% still seeking employment.

The following chart summarizes survey responses in which respondents selected one post-graduation outcome (primary status).

## Summary of Career Outcome Responses (single outcome selected)

N = 1,199



Below is a summary of employers and graduate/continuing education institutions most mentioned by survey respondents and ordered by frequency of mentions.

### Top Employers Reported

University of Illinois at Chicago  
Walgreens  
Northwestern Memorial Hospital  
Chicago Park District  
ComEd  
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago  
Sargent and Lundy  
Underwriter Laboratories

### Top Graduate/Continuing Education Institutions Reported

University of Illinois at Chicago  
Midwestern University  
The John Marshall Law School  
DePaul University  
Loyola University

## Select Career Outcomes Rate by College

To understand select career outcomes (employed full-time, employed part-time, or continuing education) for each college, the following table summarizes respondent data for those individuals who selected one outcome from the set of select outcomes. Based on combined percentages of the select outcomes, colleges had career outcomes rates varying from 58.8% to 86.8%

| College                            | Employed Full-Time | Employed Part-Time | Continuing Education | Total |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Applied Health, Sciences           | 60.4%              | 1.1%               | 25.3%                | 86.8% |
| Architecture, Design, and the Arts | 58.7%              | 7.9%               | 7.9%                 | 74.5% |
| Education                          | 35.3%              | 5.9%               | 17.6%                | 58.8% |
| Engineering                        | 71.4%              | 1.2%               | 7.5%                 | 80.1% |
| Liberal Arts and Sciences          | 41.5%              | 7.0%               | 25.4%                | 73.9% |
| Nursing                            | 47.7%              | 3.1%               | 18.5%                | 69.3% |

## Multiple Outcomes Chosen

A smaller percentage of survey respondents (15.42%) selected multiple primary post-graduation outcomes (i.e., full-time and continuing education).

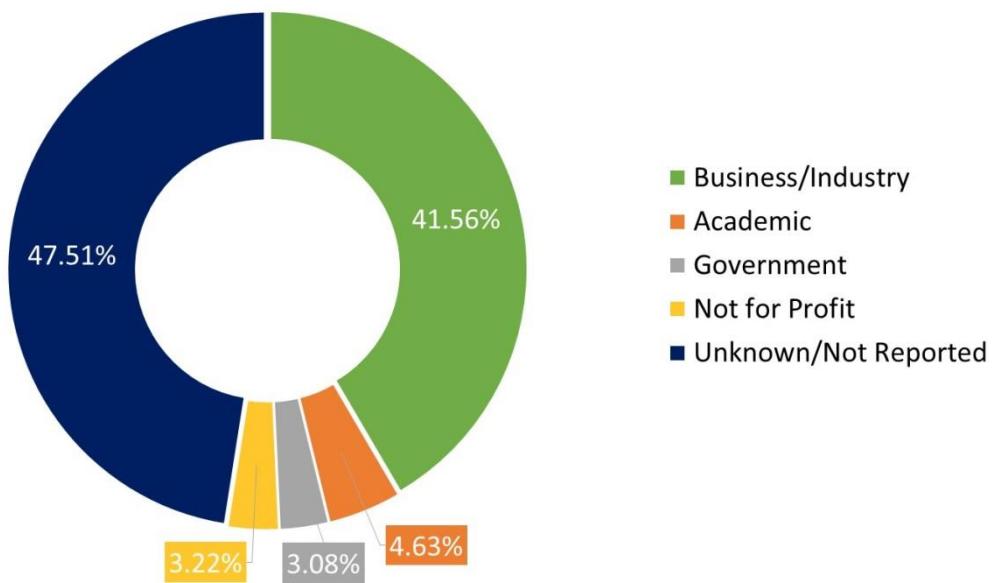
The following table summarizes respondent data for those individuals who selected multiple outcomes. For the purposes of analysis, we made the decision to focus upon specific combinations.

### Multiple Outcomes (specific combinations)

| Career Outcomes  | # of Respondents | %     |
|--|------------------|-------|
| Total Full-Time Employed and Seeking Employment          | 41               | 18.6% |
| Total Enrolled in Graduate School and Seeking Employment | 24               | 10.9% |
| Total Part-Time Employed and Seeking Employment          | 77               | 35.0% |

## Areas Employed

Respondents were asked to indicate what broad sector they were employed. A large percentage of survey respondents did not indicate the area employed. Of those who indicated an area of employment, 41.56% of respondents indicated the Business/Industry category. However, we do not know the specific types of business or industry at which the 2015 graduates are working. Changes have been made to this question for the 2017 administration to obtain more meaningful data about areas of employment beyond the broad categories below.



## Internship Outcomes

Students were asked if they completed one or more internships. The analysis indicated that internships do play a significant role in determining full-time employment. Those that completed one or more internships were more likely to be employed full-time than those who did not complete an internship. Of those that indicated being employed full-time, 71.7% of respondents indicated they completed one or more internships.

|                                     | Did not Complete Internship | Completed One or More Internship | Total      |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Employed full-time (30+ hours/week) | 91 (28.3%)                  | 230 (71.7%)                      | 321 (100%) |

Additional analysis examined the impact of internships on full-time employment. Those students who completed an internship are more likely to be employed than those who did not. Specifically, 29% of those respondents who did not have an internship are employed compared to 40% of those who had an internship, and this difference is significant at the .001 level.

|                                     | No Internship | Had Internship | Total        |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Employed full-time (30+ hours/week) | 91            | 230            | 321          |
| Not Employed (30+ hours/week)       | 226           | 352            | 578          |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                  | <b>317</b>    | <b>582</b>     | <b>899</b>   |
| <b>% Employed</b>                   | <b>(29%)</b>  | <b>(**40%)</b> | <b>(36%)</b> |

\*\*significant <.001

## Salary

Respondents were asked a question about salary and information was captured through the web-survey. Respondents chose salary by range (i.e., \$40,000-\$45,000). The national average (based on the NACE 2015 salary survey of 2015 graduates) is \$50,219 for bachelor's degree graduates. The following table shows the variation between colleges of median salary ranges for their respective graduates. Overall, the median salary range for 2015 graduates responding to the survey is between \$30,000 and \$70,000.

### Median Salary Range by College

| College                            | Median Salary Range                                      |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Applied Health Sciences            | \$60,000 - \$69,999                                      |
| Architecture, Design, and the Arts | \$40,000 - \$49,999                                      |
| Education                          | \$40,000 - \$49,999 and \$50,000 - \$59,999 <sup>1</sup> |
| Engineering                        | \$60,000 - \$69,999                                      |
| Liberal Arts and Sciences          | \$30,000 - \$39,999 and \$40,000 - \$49,999 <sup>2</sup> |
| Nursing                            | \$40,000 - \$49,999 and \$60,000 - \$69,999              |
| Public Health                      | No data available  |
| Urban Planning and Public Affairs  | \$30,000 - \$39,999 and \$40,000 - \$49,999              |

<sup>1</sup>Both were equally reported ranges

<sup>2</sup>Both were nearly equally reported ranges

*Note: The College of Business reported an average undergraduate business salary of \$43,000.*

## NEXT STEPS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Several lessons have been learned from the pilot study which have/will inform future administrations. Lessons learned/changes include:

- **Increased partnership with the colleges** – Further collaboration and communication with the individual colleges will help increase the overall response rate. In addition, building promotion of the survey into various commencement activities when possible will also aid in the response rate.
- **Survey design** – Changes are being made to the overall survey design which will aid in administration and data analysis. For example, in future iterations of the survey, participants will be allowed to select only one primary status instead of multiple. Examining industry selection options to be more specific and adding options for geographic regions/location will give the campus additional information on how UIC graduates impact both the State of Illinois as well as other areas of the country in terms of their post-graduation plans.
- **Reviewing the overall timeline for the survey** – One of the unique challenges of administering the survey is timing, particularly since there are three points in time when which undergraduates are getting degrees conferred. Outcome results can vary depending upon when the survey is administered and when secondary sources of information are collected. An additional challenge is keeping in touch with recent graduates using the most up to date contact information. The timeline for survey administrations has been modified based upon lessons learned from the pilot.

Data analysis is underway for the Class of 2016 with a target of publishing results in May-June 2017.

## CONCLUSIONS

The data from the pilot study is complex in terms of analysis and outcomes vary due to the variety and size of the individual colleges. Overall, in comparing the pilot data to NACE outcomes for 2015, UIC compares favorably by most measures which is an initial positive indicator of student success. A 49% knowledge rate and 77% career outcomes rate shows promise and is by most measures comparable to NACE 2015 peer institutions data.

The data collection did present some challenges in regard to the interpretation of outcomes. However, a few key points stand out:

- The full-time employment outcomes rate is slightly lower than NACE peer institution data while the continuing education outcomes rate is slightly higher than 2015 NACE peer institutions.
- A higher percentage of students at UIC are seeking work in comparison to NACE 2015 benchmark data of research universities.
- Career Services is hoping that information from this pilot will help to inform the university and create conversations of how to better support UIC students.

- Internship data as it relates to full-time employment is promising and the department and university should focus on providing students quality experiences that take advantage of Chicago and surrounding areas.
- Future administrations will strive to implement the use of visualization software/tools in order to provide greater access to aggregate information.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The UIC First Destination Initiative is a collaborative effort of Career Services, the Office of Institutional Research, and Student Affairs Assessment. The First Destination project team contributors included:

- Career Services - Thy Nguyen, Tatjana Rapajic, Christine Corral
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