

RECRUITING TRENDS

2015-16

45th Edition

BRIEF 4

Hiring by Academic Degree

Key findings from 2015-16 are presented in this research brief. We have broken the release of employer information into a series of short briefs that will be made available over the next six weeks. You can download the briefs from the [Collegiate Employment Research Institute](#).



Meet the Completers

We generated this convenience sample from employers currently seeking college talent through their interactions with college and university career services offices. Nearly 200 career service centers from around the country invited their employers to participate in this study. More than 4,730 employers provided information useful for understanding recruiting trends and practices. We also included information from respondents recruiting talent for full-time positions, internships, and co-ops. Readers can use the following key sample characteristics to determine how applicable our survey results are for their campus employer base.

Company Size		
Very small	> 9 employees	9%
Fast-growth	10-100 employees	30%
Small	101–500 employees	24%
Midsize	501–3,999 employees	20%
Large	4,000–25,000 employees	10%
Very large	> 25,000 employees	7%

Role in College Recruiting	
Full-time positions	56%
Internship or co-op positions only	16%
Short-term hiring	8%
Experienced hiring	20%

Active Recruiting by Region	
International	5%
Entire U.S.	23%
Regional recruiting only	72%

Key Economic Sectors	
Professional & scientific services	22%
Manufacturing	11%
Nonprofits	8%
Finance & insurance	8%
Educational services	13%
Government	7%
Healthcare & social assistance	6%

Key States	
Michigan	8%
Massachusetts	7%
Texas	7%
California	6%
Wisconsin & Florida	5%
Illinois, New York & North Carolina	4%

Institutions Where Companies Recruit Talent	
Two-year public college	26%
Four-year public college	51%
Four-year private college	40%
Two- & four-year for-profit institution	22%
Institution with bachelor's & advanced degree programs	67%
Institution with advanced degrees only	9%
Historically black college & university	17%
Hispanic-serving institution	15%
Asian, Asian-Pacific serving institutions	14%

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We wanted to streamline and refine this year's survey to see whether we could gain more meaningful insights on the state of hiring across academic majors. We did not initially present a long checklist of academic disciplines and ask respondents to select which majors they would recruit.

First, we asked respondents if they would be interested in hiring candidates from four broad categories: all academic majors, all business majors, all technical majors, and all majors from arts, communications, humanities, and social sciences. Second, we asked respondents to select specific majors if the comprehensive categories did not adequately describe the candidates they sought. These two steps mitigated the problem of respondents selecting all the possible majors even if they would not really consider hiring them. By focusing on fewer possible majors, respondents saw only the same set of majors when prompted to provide information on starting salaries (see Brief No. 3).

Step 1

When we examined the average number of hires in each broad category, the highs and lows tended to follow organization size. Large companies were more likely to recruit across all majors, or all business, or all arts, communications, etc. Smaller companies were more likely to recruit, for example, all engineering or all technical majors.

Thirty-one percent of recruiters seeking to fill full-time jobs expressed interest in candidates across all academic majors. We did not change the way we presented the question this year; however, the sharp drop of nearly 7 percentage points from last year is a noticeable shift. While the percentage of respondents

recruiting all business and all technical majors remained consistent with past surveys, the loss of recruiters seeking all majors is reflected by the emphasis on business and technical majors in this year's recruiting effort.

The anticipated increase in hiring among the four categories presented a more refined picture of what new college graduates can expect from this year's labor market. Organizations looking for all technical and all business majors expect to expand hiring by more than 20 percent.

When we examined the majors that recruiters specifically target in their campaigns, business, computer science, and engineering dominated the list. Among employers who attend career fairs and consume a large amount of campus resources, the result is an over-emphasis on these majors compared to others.

Step 2

We examined how organizations distributed their hiring targets across various majors to see what proportion of their targets came from each category. Instead of asking respondents to address the distribution questions within the four broad categories, we expanded to seven categories and refined the mix of majors within each category. The categories included arts, humanities, and liberal arts; business; communications and media studies; computer science; engineering and technical; science and math; and social science. When we asked respondents to distribute their hires, some employers cast wider nets than others. For example, in this sample, 23 percent will not recruit any business majors. Of those who will recruit at least one business major, only 10 percent will have business majors comprise 95-100 percent of their potential hires. In this example, 59 percent of business employers will consider candidates across all majors. Slightly less than 10 percent of employers seek e-Commerce Sales, English, and Psychology majors.

Employers Seeking Candidates from Four Categories

Degree	Employers reporting hiring projects (no.)	Employers seeking (%)	Number of hires per organization (avg.)	Change year over year (%)
All majors	736	31	77.8	11
All technical majors (engineering, computer science, & IT)	403	17	29.2	24
All business majors	362	15	67.5	22
All arts, communications, humanities & social science majors	167	7	97.8	17

Distribution of Majors Considered for Employment

Category ^a	Will not hire any from this group (%)	Will consider 95-100% of all hires from this group (%)	Will consider all majors (%)	Will consider all business majors (%)	Will consider all technical majors (%)	Will consider all arts, communications, humanities & social science majors (%)
Arts, Humanities & Liberal Arts	61	1	78	10	26	19
Business	23	13	59	34	21	10
Communications (PR, Advertising)	65	1	74	26	15	13
Computer Science	53	8	51	25	41	9
Engineering & Technical	56	18	37	22	47	6
Science & Math	66	3	58	22	28	12
Social Science	83	3	71	17	17	25

a. The organization is seeking at least one candidate from the category.

We omitted certain categories because less than 15 percent of respondents indicated they would hire Agriculture, Natural Resources, Health Sciences, and Education majors. Thus the total sample may not include employers who will be more active on college campuses offering these academic programs.

We examined the distribution of degrees sought by respondents who reported plans to hire from the three most prevalent degree categories (Business, Computer Science and IT, and Engineering). The mix of degrees sought appears to be fairly similar across all three categories.

When we looked at the respondents' hiring intentions, the outlook was positive. We sorted the responses differently from previous surveys; therefore, the results shifted accordingly.

Four categories showed double-digit increases: Arts, Humanities and Liberal Arts; Business; Communication and Media Studies; and Computer Science. The increases for Engineering and Science and Math are about half as large. The increase for Social Science is very small.

Hires Selected by Employers Seeking at Least One Business Degree	
Degree	Hires 2015-16 (%)
Accounting	28
Finance	24
Marketing	24
MIS (Business)	19
Economics	17
HR/LIR	16
Computer Science	15
CIS	13
Supply Chain	13
Computer Programming	12
MIS (Computer Science)	11
Computer Engineering	10

Hires Selected by Employers Seeking at Least One Computer Science or IT Degree	
Degree	Hires 2015-16 (%)
Computer Science	37
Computer Programming	33
CIS	28
Computer Engineering	25
Economics	24
MIS	24
Accounting	20
Computer Security	20
Finance	19
Marketing	19
Electrical Engineering	18
HR/LIR	14
Engineering Technology	12
Multimedia Design	12
Supply Chain	10

What understanding do we gain from the survey results?

- ◆ Employers recruiting Business, Computer Science, and Engineering majors are shaping the new college labor market to a greater extent than has been the case over several of the last few years. A more focused market may make it challenging for candidates from majors outside these groups.
- ◆ Employers seeking Business and Computer Science talent cast a wider net to recruit majors from other academic disciplines than employers who focus on a different set of majors.
- ◆ Employers seeking Engineering majors cast the smallest nets, capturing only a few if any other majors. Engineering firms tend to be small and more likely to recruit only engineers; therefore, smaller companies are more likely to shape engineering opportunities for new college graduates.

Hires Selected by Employers Seeking at Least One Engineering Degree	
Degree	Hires 2015-16 (%)
Electrical Engineering	27
Computer Science	25
Mechanical Engineering	20
Computer Programming	19
Accounting	17
CIS	17
Computer Engineering	17
Engineering Technology	17
Industrial Engineering	17
Finance	16
Marketing	16
MIS	16
General Engineering	15
Software Design	15
Supply Chain	13
Civil Engineering	12

Hiring Intentions for Seven Categories			
Major groups	Employers (no.)	Number of hires 2015-16 (avg.)	Change year over year (%)
Arts, Humanities, & Liberal Arts	480	106.8	13
Business	909	70.0	14
Communication & Media Studies	457	97.2	13
Computer Science	561	72.9	13
Engineering	563	51.8	7
Science and Math	324	95.2	9
Social Science	255	89.9	3