

CAREER & WORKFORCE PREPARATION 2024 & 2026 (COMBINED)

In collaboration with Strada Education Network, NSSE developed the Career & Workforce Preparation topical module to assess how college experience impacts first-year and senior students' career goals and exploration, confidence in work-related skills, and access and utilization of career resources and services. Survey results have been grouped into six career education categories by NSSE through their partnership with Lumina Foundation.

Freshmen student responses in **ORANGE** (n = 1,235)

Senior student responses in **BLUE** (n = 2,295)



MOTIVATION & CAREER VALUES

What drives students' career choices?

% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Fit to their interests and abilities	65%	66%
The desire to impact or support their community	57%	62%
The desire to make a difference in society	54%	64%
Expected job salary & availability	45%	47%



CAREER CONFIDENCE & WORKFORCE READINESS

Are students ready to take on the workforce?

% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Confident working with people from diverse backgrounds	74%	79%
Confident demonstrating effective work habits	66%	74%
Confident addressing ethical issues in careers	56%	67%
Confident overcoming obstacles in finding & using career resources on campus	50%	55%
Confident using career-specific technology	45%	58%
Confident communicating skills to employers	45%	56%
Confident networking with alumni & professionals	31%	37%



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & CAREER PREPARATION

Are students getting real-world experience?

% of students responding "plan to do" or "done or in progress"

Complete a paid internship	73%	20%
Interview or shadow someone in a career they're considering	67%	28%
Network with alumni or professional in a field related to their career interests	62%	21%
Participate in a major or career-related or co-curricular activity	56%	28%
Participate in a mock/practice interview	54%	19%



CAREER-RELATED COURSE EXPERIENCES

Are careers showing up in the classroom?

% of students responding "very often" or "often"

Analyzed a case, scenario, or simulation of a real-life situation	55%	73%
Connected their learning with how to impact their community and society	44%	60%
Researched a career interest, a potential employer, or the job market	40%	58%
Learned about a career or industry from practicing professionals	38%	60%
Observed employees in action at a place of work (clinics, offices, schools, etc.)	28%	45%



CAREER CLARITY & PLANNING

Do students have a clear path forward?

% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Say coursework is relevant to their career plans	64%	73%
Have a clear idea of career plans	56%	62%
Know where to go for career questions	52%	56%
Can describe the knowledge, skills, & experiences necessary for their career plans	50%	68%
Received supportive feedback from faculty or advisors	39%	49%
Have a mentor who shares similar interest or background	27%	32%



CAREER SERVICES & INSTITUTION SUPPORT

Is support present when students need it?

% of students responding "plan to do" or "done or in progress"

Received resume help	69%	37%
Met with career advisors, career coaches, or career services staff	63%	33%
Discussed career interests with a faculty member	60%	37%
Completed a career self-assessment	59%	31%
Participated in a career fair	56%	26%
Took a career exploration or development course	55%	27%

CAREER & WORKFORCE PREPARATION 2024

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Freshmen student responses in **ORANGE**
(n = 1,071; 16% response rate)



MOTIVATION & CAREER VALUES

What drives students' career choices?
% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Fit to their interests and abilities	65%	65%
The desire to impact or support their community	54%	59%
The desire to make a difference in society	51%	59%
Expected job salary & availability	45%	46%



CAREER CONFIDENCE & WORKFORCE READINESS

Are students ready to take on the workforce?
% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Confident working with people from diverse backgrounds	74%	78%
Confident demonstrating effective work habits	65%	72%
Confident addressing ethical issues in careers	54%	66%
Confident overcoming obstacles in finding & using career resources on campus	49%	53%
Confident using career-specific technology	45%	57%
Confident communicating skills to employers	44%	56%
Confident networking with alumni & professionals	30%	37%



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & CAREER PREPARATION

Are students getting real-world experience?
% of students responding "plan to do" or "done or in progress"

Complete a paid internship	72%	19%
Interview or shadow someone in a career they're considering	67%	27%
Network with alumni or professional in a field related to their career interests	62%	19%
Participate in a major or career-related or co-curricular activity	54%	26%
Participate in a mock/practice interview	54%	19%

Senior student responses in **BLUE**
(n = 1,566; 18% response rate)



CAREER-RELATED COURSE EXPERIENCES

Are careers showing up in the classroom?
% of students responding "very often" or "often"

Analyzed a case, scenario, or simulation of a real-life situation	54%	73%
Connected their learning with how to impact their community and society	42%	57%
Researched a career interest, a potential employers, or the job market	38%	55%
Learned about a career or industry from practicing professionals	37%	60%
Observed employees in action at a place of work (clinics, offices, schools, etc.)	27%	43%



CAREER CLARITY & PLANNING

Do students have a clear path forward?
% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Say coursework is relevant to their career plans	62%	71%
Have a clear idea of career plans	54%	60%
Know where to go for career questions	49%	66%
Can describe the knowledge, skills, & experiences necessary for their career plans	50%	54%
Received supportive feedback from faculty or advisors	37%	47%
Have a mentor who shares similar interest or background	27%	30%



CAREER SERVICES & INSTITUTION SUPPORT

Is support present when students need it?
% of students responding "plan to do" or "done or in progress"

Received resume help	70%	35%
Met with career advisors, career coaches, or career services staff	64%	29%
Discussed career interests with a faculty member	59%	35%
Completed a career self-assessment	58%	28%
Participated in a career fair	55%	24%
Took a career exploration or development course	54%	25%

CAREER & WORKFORCE PREPARATION 2026

In collaboration with Strada Education Network, NSSE developed the Career & Workforce Preparation topical module to assess how college experience impacts first-year and senior students' career goals and exploration, confidence in work-related skills, and access and utilization of career resources and services. Survey results have been grouped into six career education categories by NSSE through their partnership with Lumina Foundation.

Freshmen student responses in **ORANGE**
(n = 164; 3% response rate)



MOTIVATION & CAREER VALUES

What drives students' career choices?

% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Fit to their interests and abilities	70%	70%
The desire to impact or support their community	74%	69%
The desire to make a difference in society	73%	74%
Expected job salary & availability	42%	48%



CAREER CONFIDENCE & WORKFORCE READINESS

Are students ready to take on the workforce?

% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Confident working with people from diverse backgrounds	78%	83%
Confident demonstrating effective work habits	68%	77%
Confident addressing ethical issues in careers	65%	69%
Confident overcoming obstacles in finding & using career resources on campus	54%	60%
Confident using career-specific technology	50%	60%
Confident communicating skills to employers	51%	57%
Confident networking with alumni & professionals	39%	36%



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & CAREER PREPARATION

Are students getting real-world experience?

% of students responding "plan to do" or "done or in progress"

Complete a paid internship	80%	21%
Interview or shadow someone in a career they're considering	67%	29%
Network with alumni or professional in a field related to their career interests	67%	25%
Participate in a major or career-related or co-curricular activity	69%	33%
Participate in a mock/practice interview	58%	20%

Senior student responses in **BLUE**
(n = 729; 5% response rate)



CAREER-RELATED COURSE EXPERIENCES

Are careers showing up in the classroom?

% of students responding "very often" or "often"

Analyzed a case, scenario, or simulation of a real-life situation	63%	74%
Connected their learning with how to impact their community and society	59%	67%
Researched a career interest, a potential employers, or the job market	58%	63%
Learned about a career or industry from practicing professionals	52%	62%
Observed employees in action at a place of work (clinics, offices, schools, etc.)	44%	50%



CAREER CLARITY & PLANNING

Do students have a clear path forward?

% of students responding "very much" or "quite a bit"

Say coursework is relevant to their career plans	72%	78%
Have a clear idea of career plans	65%	65%
Know where to go for career questions	55%	72%
Can describe the knowledge, skills, & experiences necessary for their career plans	62%	61%
Received supportive feedback from faculty or advisors	53%	53%
Have a mentor who shares similar interest or background	30%	38%



CAREER SERVICES & INSTITUTION SUPPORT

Is support present when students need it?

% of students responding "plan to do" or "done or in progress"

Received resume help	60%	42%
Met with career advisors, career coaches, or career services staff	59%	42%
Discussed career interests with a faculty member	66%	43%
Completed a career self-assessment	63%	36%
Participated in a career fair	64%	30%
Took a career exploration or development course	62%	31%