

# University of North Carolina System Alumni: Great Jobs, Great Lives

Examining the Outcomes  
and Experiences of UNC  
System Graduates

2019



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# Table of Contents

Introduction

1

Executive Summary

4

Great Jobs: Employment and  
Workplace Engagement

6

Educational Value

11

Great Lives: Wellbeing

14

College Experiences of UNC  
System Alumni

16

Institutional Attachment and  
Brand Ambassadorship

23

Methodology

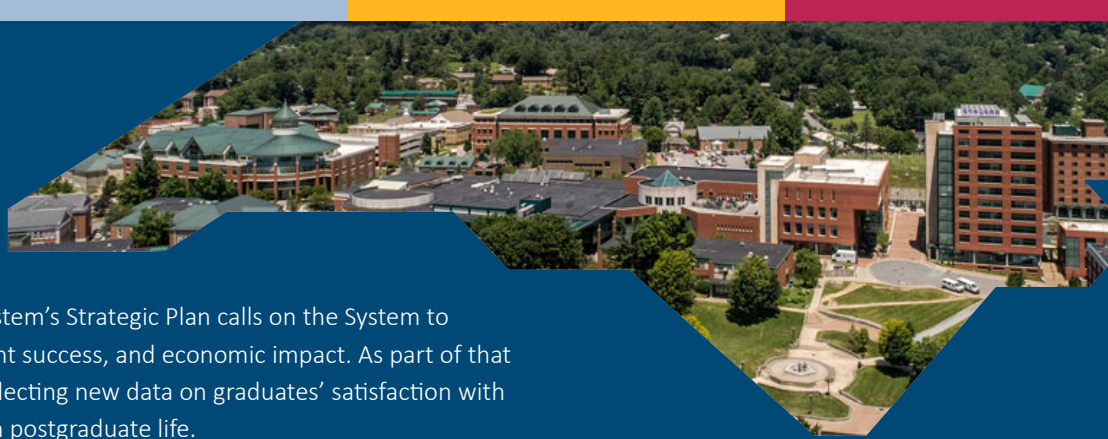
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UNC System alumni strongly agree they can't imagine a world without their institution and that their institution was a perfect school for people like them.

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# Introduction

The University of North Carolina System’s Strategic Plan calls on the System to improve access, affordability, student success, and economic impact. As part of that effort, the System committed to collecting new data on graduates’ satisfaction with their university experience and with postgraduate life.

This study provides insights into undergraduate experiences and includes measures that reflect a multifaceted view of life quality such as engagement with work and wellbeing across five elements. The survey also includes items pertaining to the value of the earned degree. Results from the study may guide the UNC System’s advancement toward its vision and objectives.

The value of an undergraduate degree is often articulated in terms that are easiest to measure, such as alumni job placement rates in the years immediately following graduation and current salaries. These metrics have merit but do not provide a holistic view of graduates’ lives, nor do they demonstrate how alumni fare years after their university experience.

The Gallup Alumni Survey examines the long-term success of graduates in their pursuit of great jobs and great lives, as measured by the Gallup Employee Engagement Index and Gallup Well-Being Index, respectively. The Gallup Alumni Survey provides higher education leaders with actionable information to help them make meaningful performance improvements and to understand the achievements of their alumni and the challenges those alumni may encounter.

The following report highlights findings from an online survey conducted Nov. 15, 2018-Feb. 1, 2019, with a sample of 77,695 alumni from UNC System institutions who earned a bachelor’s degree between 1940 and 2018. The survey participation rate was 10%. Undergraduate alumni with available email addresses from 16 UNC System institutions were included in the survey.

- Appalachian State University
- East Carolina University
- Elizabeth City State University
- Fayetteville State University
- North Carolina A&T State University
- North Carolina Central University
- North Carolina State University
- UNC Asheville
- UNC-Chapel Hill
- UNC Charlotte
- UNC Greensboro
- UNC Pembroke
- UNC Wilmington
- UNC School of the Arts
- Western Carolina University
- Winston-Salem State University

Results from the UNC System alumni survey are compared with three populations from the Gallup Alumni Survey national master database of randomly selected alumni who obtained their degrees between 1940 and 2016. (See Appendix for database comparisons detail.)

77,695

UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES

71,183

COLLEGE GRADUATES  
NATIONALLY

44,824

PUBLIC INSTITUTION  
GRADUATES

23,714

PRIVATE, NOT-FOR-PROFIT  
INSTITUTION GRADUATES

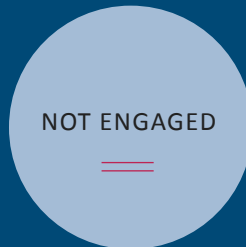
## GREAT JOBS: WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

Workplace engagement is more nuanced than job satisfaction alone. Engaged employees are involved and enthusiastic about their work and workplace; they are intellectually and emotionally connected with their organizations and work teams because they are able to do what they do best; their opinions are heard; and they have someone at work who encourages their development. Gallup's expertise on employee engagement is rooted in 35 years of research conducted in the U.S. and globally on the workplace conditions that are most consistently related to employee and workgroup performance.<sup>1</sup>

Based on employees' responses to three core items about their workplace needs and experiences, Gallup categorizes workers as engaged, not engaged, or actively disengaged.



These employees are involved and enthusiastic, driving performance and innovation and moving the organization forward.



Employees who are not engaged are psychologically unattached to their work and company. Because their engagement needs are not being fully met, they are putting time — but not energy or passion — into their work.



These employees are unhappy at work; their needs are not being met, and they may express their unhappiness. Every day, these workers potentially undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish.<sup>2</sup>

## GREAT LIVES: WELLBEING

The Gallup Well-Being Index is used to measure important aspects of a life well-lived. Wellbeing encompasses how people feel about and experience their lives.<sup>3</sup> The measure, which is based on more than a decade of Gallup's global research, includes 10 items that measure wellbeing across five interrelated elements:



Liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals



Having supportive relationships and love in your life



Managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security



Liking where you live, feeling safe, and having pride in your community



Having good health and enough energy and vitality to get things done

1 Gallup Q12<sup>®</sup> Meta-Analysis Report. (2016). Retrieved from [www.gallup.com/workplace/229424/employee-engagement.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/workplace/229424/employee-engagement.aspx)

2 The State of the American Workplace Report (Feb. 2017) reports as few as 10% of workers globally have a great job. Retrieved from [https://news.gallup.com/reports/178514/state-american-workplace.aspx?g\\_source=link\\_NEWSV9&g\\_medium=TOPIC &g\\_campaign=item\\_&g\\_content=State%2520of%2520the%2520American%2520Workplace](https://news.gallup.com/reports/178514/state-american-workplace.aspx?g_source=link_NEWSV9&g_medium=TOPIC &g_campaign=item_&g_content=State%2520of%2520the%2520American%2520Workplace)

3 Rath, T., & Harter, J. (2010). Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements. Gallup: New York.

Based upon responses to items measuring each wellbeing element, Gallup categorizes individuals as “thriving,” “struggling,” or “suffering”:

- Thriving: Wellbeing that is strong and consistent in a particular element
- Struggling: Wellbeing that is moderate in a particular element
- Suffering: Wellbeing that is low and inconsistent in a particular element

### GALLUP WELL-BEING INDEX

- 1) I like what I do every day.
- 2) I learn or do something interesting every day.
- 3) Someone in my life always encourages me to be healthy.
- 4) My friends and family give me positive energy every day.
- 5) I have enough money to do everything I want to do.
- 6) In the last seven days, I have worried about money.
- 7) In the last seven days, I have felt active and productive every day.
- 8) My physical health is near perfect.
- 9) The city or area where I live is a perfect place for me.
- 10) In the last 12 months, I have received recognition for helping to improve the city or area where I live.

### GREAT EXPERIENCES: COLLEGIATE LIFE

Gallup’s research on U.S. college graduates has consistently revealed six key undergraduate experiences that strongly relate to workplace engagement and wellbeing after graduation.<sup>4</sup> These findings debunk the conventional belief that the type of institution students attend is the most meaningful factor in determining whether graduates have fulfilling careers and lives. Rather, Gallup’s study of alumni outcomes suggests that how they experienced college is, in fact, more meaningful.

### GREAT ADVOCATES: ALUMNI ATTACHMENT

Gallup’s global research on behalf of hundreds of organizations and institutions examines the populations they serve and their emotional connection to their organizations, measuring what drives their engagement as well as the attributes of those who are engaged versus those who are not. Similarly, Gallup examines the emotional connection alumni have to their alma mater, determining which experiences and attributes relate to a lasting sense of connection and commitment to their undergraduate college or university.

### SIX KEY EXPERIENCES

#### SUPPORT

- 1) My professors at [Institution] cared about me as a person.
- 2) I had at least one professor at [Institution] who made me excited about learning.
- 3) While attending [Institution], I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.

#### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- 4) While attending [Institution], did you have a job or internship that allowed you to apply what you were learning in the classroom?
- 5) While attending [Institution], I worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.
- 6) I was extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while attending [Institution].

<sup>4</sup> Crabtree, S. (Jan. 22, 2019). Six College Experiences Linked to Student Confidence on Jobs. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/246170/six-college-experiences-linked-student-confidence-jobs.aspx>

UNC System alumni strongly agree that their university prepared them well for life outside of college.



## Executive Summary

Results from the University of North Carolina System alumni outcomes study offer evidence that UNC System alumni outpace their peers in employment, engagement at work, wellbeing, educational value, and attachment to their alma mater. The study offers insights into how and how well the System fulfills its mission to prepare students for life after college.

### **UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES ARE MORE LIKELY THAN THEIR COMPARISON GROUPS TO BE FULFILLED IN THEIR WORK AND TO HAVE HIGHER LEVELS OF WELLBEING**

- The majority of UNC System graduates (64%) report finding a “good job” within six months of earning their undergraduate degree. This result compares favorably to all comparison groups.
- More than two in five UNC System graduates (41%) are engaged at work — leading all comparison groups. Additionally, more than one-third (37%) are extremely satisfied with their organization as a place to work; about 10 percentage points higher than all comparison groups.
- UNC System graduates are more likely than their peer groups to strongly agree that they have the ideal job for them (35%), their job gives them the opportunity to do work that interests them (50%), and that they are deeply interested in the work they do (50%).
- UNC System graduates are more likely than their comparison groups to be thriving in multiple elements of wellbeing.





**UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES LEAD COMPARISON GROUPS IN VALUING THEIR EDUCATION AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO STRONGLY AGREE THEY WERE PREPARED WELL FOR LIFE OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE**

- Nearly two in three UNC System graduates (64%) strongly agree that their education was worth the cost, outpacing all comparison groups by more than 10 percentage points.
- Two in five UNC System graduates strongly agree that their university prepared them well for life outside of college (39%); leading other college graduates in this regard.

**UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES INDICATE THEY HAD STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEMS AT COLLEGE**

- Many UNC System graduates strongly agree that they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning (71%), while 33% strongly agree that their professors cared about them as people. Both outcomes are higher than college graduates nationally (64% and 28%, respectively), and graduates of public institutions (61% and 23%, respectively).
- Twenty-eight percent of UNC System graduates strongly agree they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams — higher than all comparison groups.
- Three in four UNC System graduates (73%) visited career services at least once, and about half (49%) found it helpful.

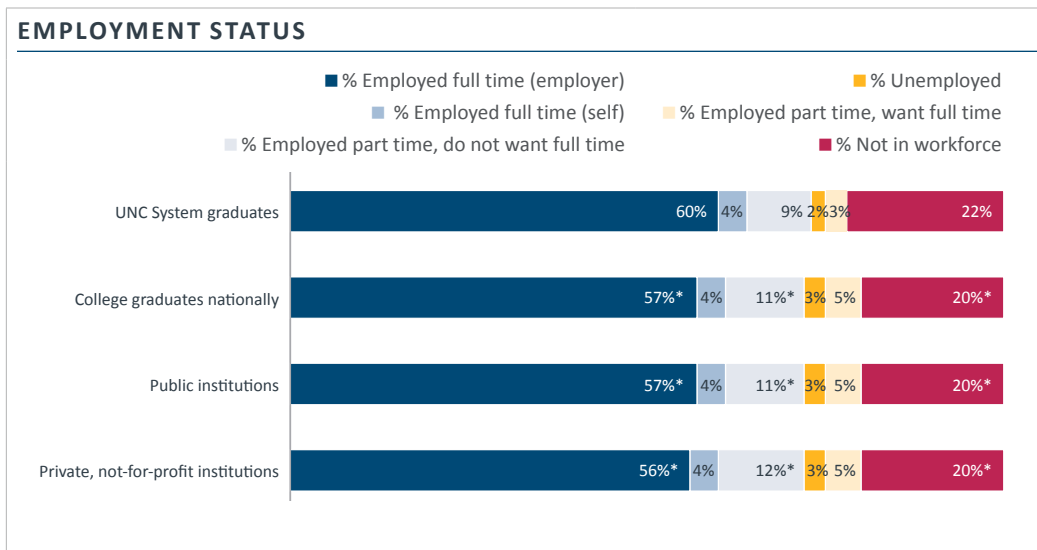
**UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES ARE EMOTIONALLY ATTACHED TO THEIR ALMA MATER AND ARE HIGHLY LIKELY TO BE BRAND AMBASSADORS**

- More than one-third of UNC System graduates (36%) are attached to their alma mater. This is at least 15 percentage points higher than each of the comparison groups.
- UNC System graduates are significantly more likely than comparison groups to say they would recommend their alma mater — 60% say they are extremely likely to recommend their institution to family, friends, or colleagues.

## Great Jobs: Employment and Workplace Engagement

For many Americans, higher education acts as a gateway to economic opportunity and financial prosperity. From 2010 to 2015, 86% of incoming freshman said the ability “to get a better job” was a critical factor in their decision to enroll in college, compared with 73% of incoming freshmen between 2000 and 2009 who said the same.<sup>5</sup> If higher education does not help graduates prepare for and find an engaging job, then it has failed to deliver on a central expectation of students and their families who support them through college.

Three in five UNC System undergraduate alumni (60%) are employed full time by an employer — a higher proportion than all comparison groups. Additionally, 4% of UNC System graduates are self-employed, which parallels reported self-employment in comparison groups. Also similar to comparison groups, two in 10 (22%) UNC System graduates are not in the workforce, and 21% of UNC System graduates report they are retired.

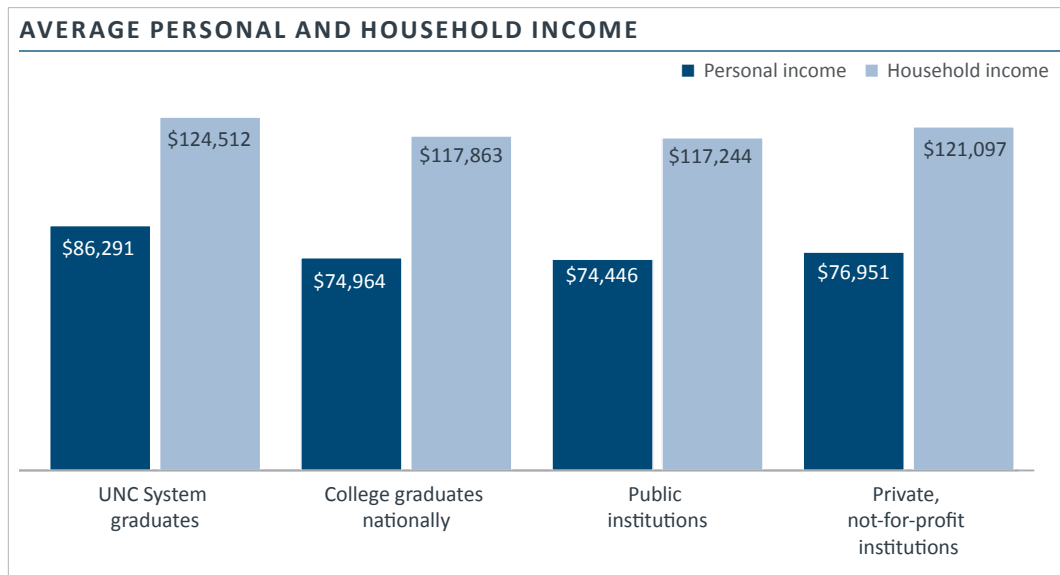


The estimated average annual personal income for UNC System graduates who responded to the survey is \$86,291, compared with \$74,964 for college graduates nationally, \$74,446 for public institution graduates, and \$76,951 for private institution graduates.<sup>6</sup>

5 Eagan, K., Stolzenberg, E., Ramirez, J., Aragon, M., Suchard, M., & Rios-Aguilar, C. (2016). The American freshman: Fifty-year trends, 1966–2015. Retrieved from [www.heru.ucla.edu/monographs/50YearTrendsMonograph2016.pdf](http://www.heru.ucla.edu/monographs/50YearTrendsMonograph2016.pdf)

6 Salary estimates are based on respondents’ answers to a survey item that asks, “What is your total annual PERSONAL income, before taxes?” Respondents select their income category and analysts convert those categorical responses into the midpoint of the category, which is used as the personal income to estimate the overall annual personal income for the groups.

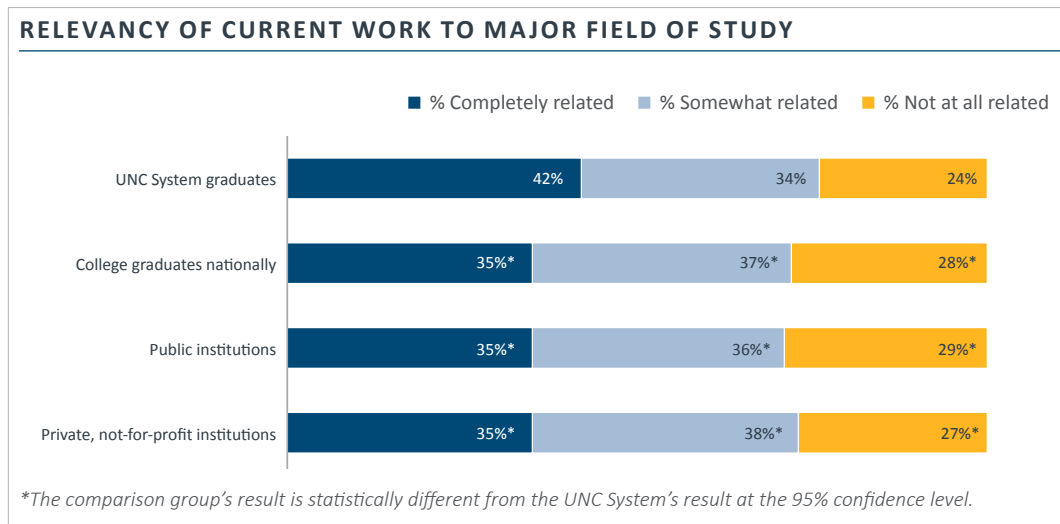
UNC System graduates also report higher average household income. Average household income for UNC System alumni is \$124,512 compared with \$117,863 for college graduates nationally.



### UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES ARE DOING WORK RELATED TO THEIR MAJOR

More than two in five (42%) UNC System graduates are doing work that is completely related to their undergraduate major — much higher than comparison groups.

In a survey of U.S. adults who have had at least some college courses, Gallup found that relevancy strongly predicts perceptions of value and quality. Results show that those who find their coursework to be relevant in their work and day-to-day living report better outcomes. Additionally, those who say their courses were relevant are more likely to say that they received a high-quality education and that it was worth the cost.<sup>7</sup>



7 From College to Life: Relevance and the Value of Higher Education. (May 2018). Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/reports/228101/from-college-to-life.aspx>

**UNC SYSTEM ALUMNI ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE PURSUED ADVANCED DEGREES**

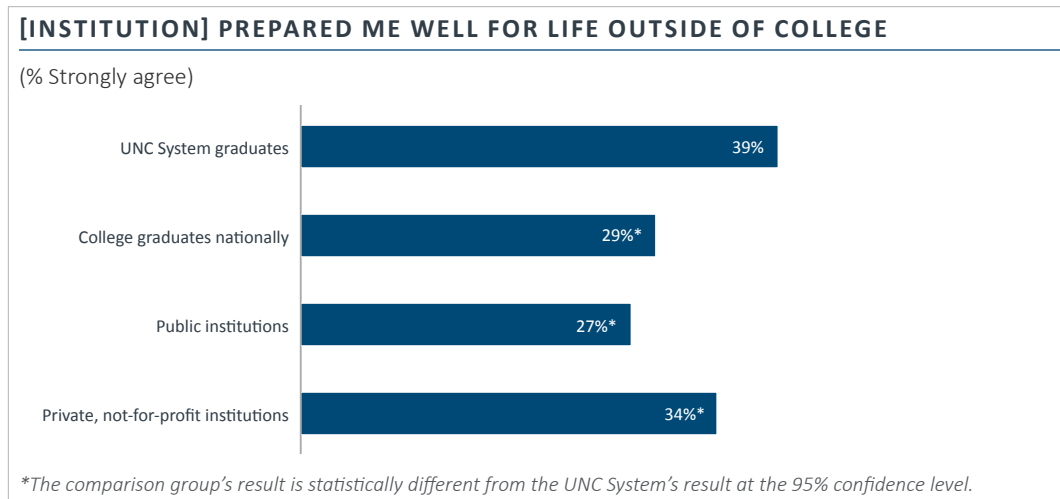
About half of UNC System graduates (49%) who responded to the survey completed postgraduate degrees, far outpacing their peer groups.

Compared to their peer institutions, UNC System alumni are more likely to have earned a Master of Science, Ph.D., and Doctor of Medicine. They are substantially less likely than their comparison groups to have achieved a Master of Arts.

	<b>UNC System Graduates</b>	<b>College Graduates Nationally</b>	<b>Public Institutions</b>	<b>Private, Not-for-Profit Institutions</b>
Completed postgraduate work or degree	49%	36%*	35%*	40%*
Master of Science (MS)	24%	19%*	19%*	18%*
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	13%	12%	11%*	14%*
Master of Arts (MA)	22%	40%*	40%*	40%*
Other master’s degree	17%	8%*	7%*	8%*
Ph.D.	8%	5%*	5%*	6%*
Juris Doctor (J.D.)	6%	6%	6%*	7%*
Doctor of Medicine	3%	2%*	1%*	2%
Other professional degree	6%	3%*	3%*	3%*
<i>*The comparison group’s result is statistically different from the UNC System’s result at the 95% confidence level.</i>				

### THE UNC SYSTEM PREPARED GRADUATES FOR LIFE OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE

Two in five UNC System graduates strongly agree that their university prepared them well for life outside of college (39%), leading other college graduates in this regard. This figure is at least 10 percentage points higher than graduates nationally (29%) and from public institutions (27%) and is five percentage points higher than graduates of private institutions (34%).



Full-time employment for an employer and strong salaries provide graduates with a degree of financial security and opportunities for working relationships that allow them to gain experience and advance in their careers. But employment alone is an incomplete measure of success, as it does not indicate whether these graduates are intellectually and emotionally connected to their work. It is important also to consider their level of workplace engagement, which is a more holistic measure than simple job satisfaction.

Gallup workplace engagement studies show that organizations and work units that score in the top quartile of Gallup's measure of employee engagement have greater odds of success based on financial, customer retention, safety, quality, shrinkage, and absenteeism metrics compared with those in the bottom quartile of employee engagement.<sup>8</sup>

### ABOUT TWO IN FIVE UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES ARE ENGAGED, FULFILLED IN THEIR JOB

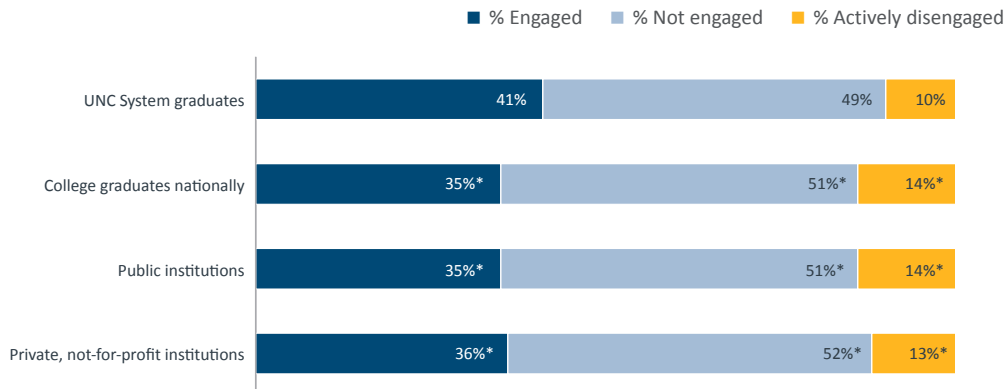
Forty-one percent of employed UNC System graduates are engaged at work — leading all comparison groups; only 10% are actively disengaged, compared with 14% among college graduates nationally.

This level of engagement is strong and consistent among employed UNC System graduates, regardless of their major or when they earned their undergraduate degree.

8 Gallup Q12<sup>®</sup> Meta-Analysis Report. (2016).

### WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

(Among those employed by an employer)



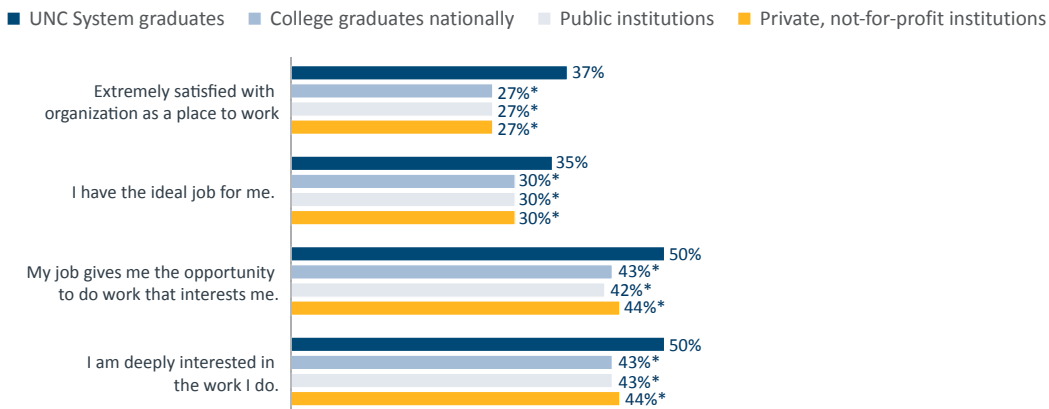
\*The comparison group's result is statistically different from the UNC System's result at the 95% confidence level.

More than one-third of UNC System graduates (37%) are extremely satisfied with their organization as a place to work, about 10 percentage points higher than all comparison groups.

In addition to being more engaged and satisfied than their peers, UNC System graduates are more likely to be fulfilled in their work. That is, they are more likely to strongly agree that they have the ideal job for them (35%), their job gives them the opportunity to do work that interests them (50%), and that they are deeply interested in the work they do (50%).

### WORK FULFILLMENT AND SATISFACTION

% Extremely satisfied/% Strongly agree

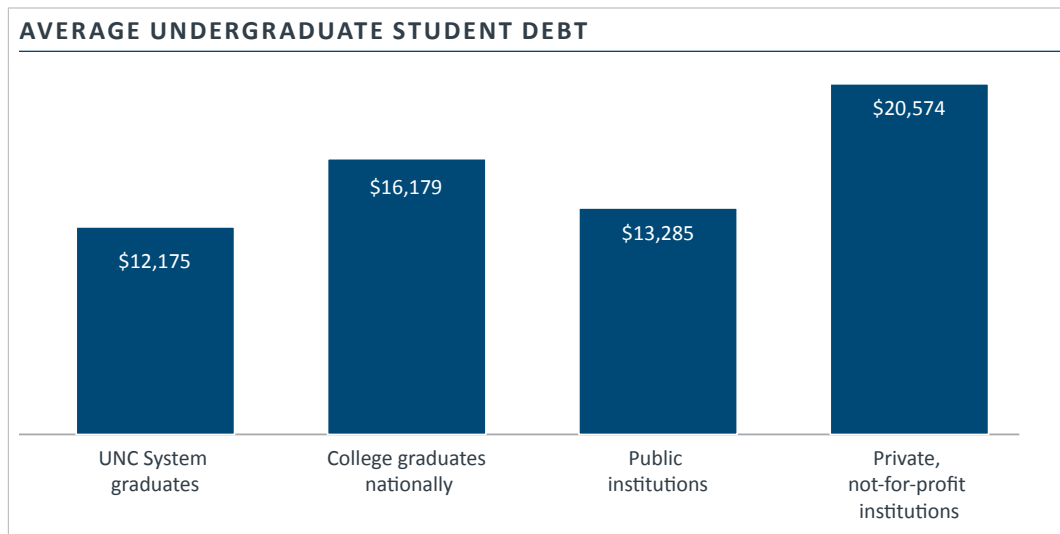


\*The comparison group's result is statistically different from the UNC System's result at the 95% confidence level.

## Educational Value

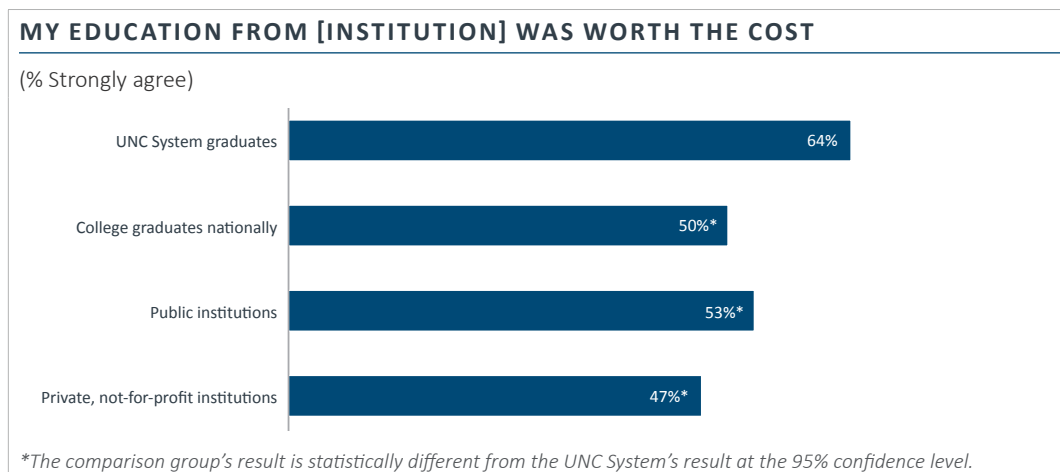
### UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES SURVEYED INCURRED LESS DEBT FOR THEIR EDUCATION

Overall, the average student debt among UNC System graduates who responded to the survey is lower than the debt burden among all comparison groups, particularly among graduates of private institutions. UNC System graduates borrowed, on average, \$12,175 in student loans; this is 25% less than the national average of college graduates.

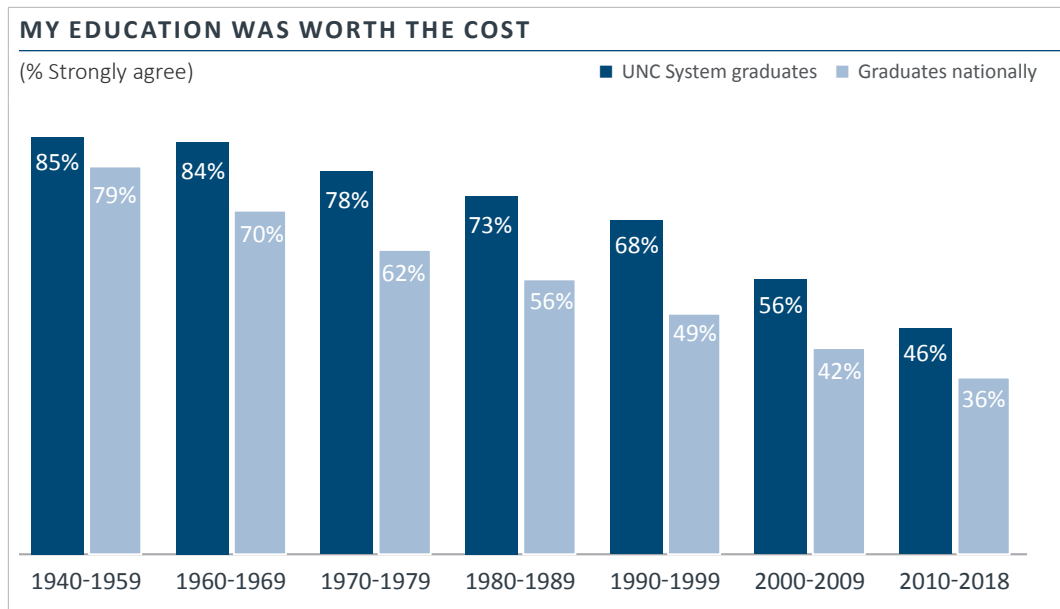


### UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES LEAD COMPARISON GROUPS IN VALUING THEIR EDUCATION

Nearly two in three UNC System graduates (64%) strongly agree that their education was worth the cost, outpacing all comparison groups by more than 10 percentage points.



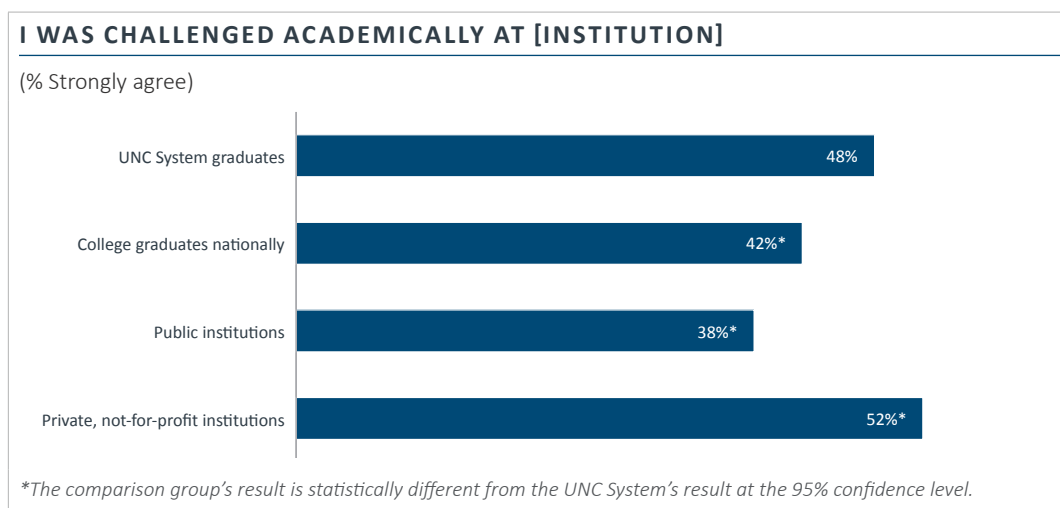
UNC System graduates who received their degree in the last decade are the least likely to strongly agree that their education was worth the cost, a pattern that mirrors that of college graduates nationally. Older alumni might be further along in their careers and making more money, and they usually faced lower costs of attendance than recent graduates. On the other end of the spectrum, recent graduates are more likely to be making student loan payments, which could influence their perceptions of value. They may also be given job duties that do not yet allow them to fully align the value of their education in preparing them for their work responsibilities.



College experiences can also influence perceptions of educational value. Specifically, Gallup has found that having supportive and motivating relationships with professors increases the odds of saying a college education is worth the cost. Strong agreement with any of the support items almost doubles the odds that alumni will strongly agree that their education was worth the cost.<sup>9</sup>

### NEARLY HALF OF UNC SYSTEM ALUMNI WERE CHALLENGED ACADEMICALLY

UNC System graduates are more likely than college graduates nationally and from public institutions to report that their undergraduate experience was academically rigorous, with 48% strongly agreeing that they were challenged academically. The highest level of perceived academic rigor is among graduates of private institutions (52%).



9 Gallup, Inc. (2015). Great jobs, great lives: The relationship between student debt, experiences and perceptions of college worth. Gallup-Purdue Index 2015 Report. Washington, D.C.: Gallup.



Among UNC System graduates, those who strongly agree they were challenged academically are almost two times more likely than those who do not strongly agree to say their education was worth the cost. Similarly, graduates who strongly agree they were challenged academically are 2.6 times more likely to say they were prepared for life outside of college.

	<b>Strongly Agree Challenged Academically</b>	<b>Do Not Strongly Agree Challenged Academically</b>
Strongly agree my education from [Institution] was worth the cost	85%	44%
Strongly agree [Institution] prepared me well for life outside of college	57%	22%

These findings suggest that students view their college experience positively when they are challenged academically. When challenged, they ultimately perceive their education to be more valuable and are more likely to credit their institution with preparing them to succeed after graduation.

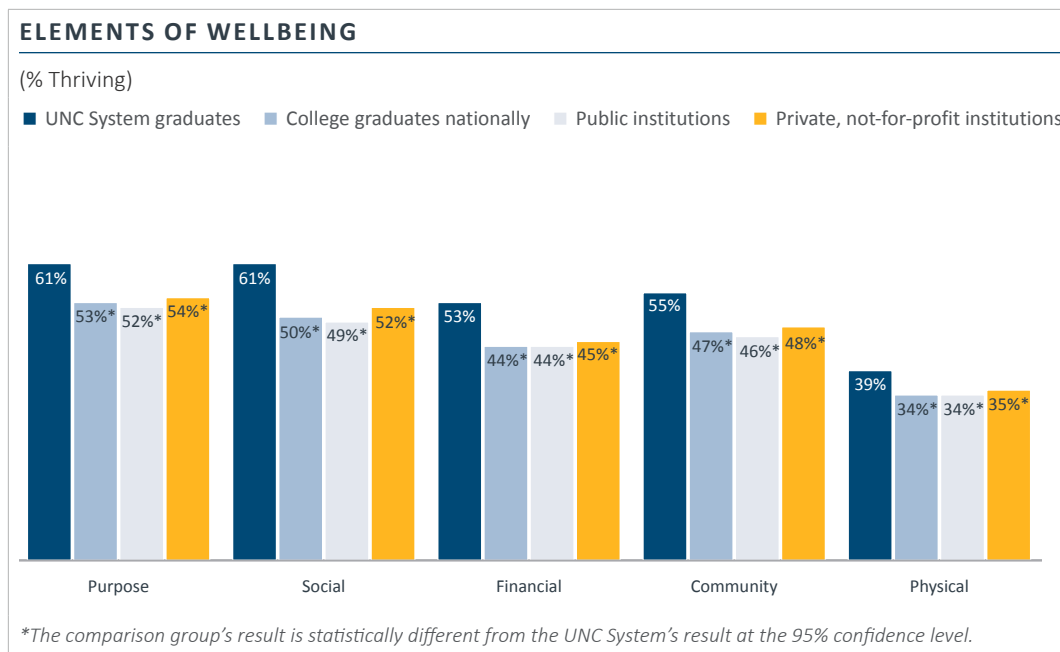
## Great Lives: Wellbeing

Wellbeing is not only about being happy or wealthy, nor is it merely synonymous with physical health.<sup>10</sup> Rather, it is about the interaction and interdependence among many aspects of life that Gallup measures in five elements: purpose wellbeing, social wellbeing, financial wellbeing, community wellbeing, and physical wellbeing.

Overall, UNC System graduates who responded to the survey fare remarkably well in their wellbeing. They are more likely than all comparison groups to be thriving in each of the five elements of wellbeing. They are also more likely than all groups to be thriving in at least four wellbeing elements.

### UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES OUTPACE COMPARATIVE INSTITUTIONS IN THRIVING IN ALL ELEMENTS OF WELLBEING

For each of the five wellbeing elements, UNC System alumni are more likely to be thriving than their peers from the comparison groups. Sixty-one percent are thriving in both purpose and social wellbeing, while slightly more than half are thriving in community (55%) and financial wellbeing (53%). Purpose wellbeing is particularly important, as Gallup’s wellbeing research has shown levels of purpose wellbeing have a disproportionate impact on one’s overall wellbeing.<sup>11</sup>

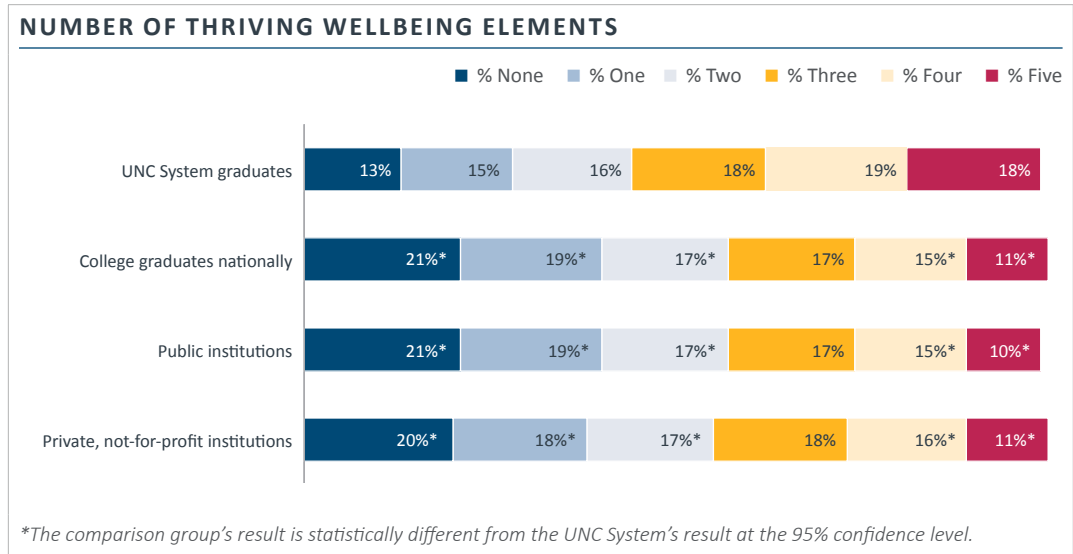


10 Witters, D. (Nov. 8, 2017). Americans’ Well-Being Declines in 2017. Retrieved from [https://news.gallup.com/poll/221588/americans-declines-2017.aspx?g\\_source=CATEGORY\\_WELLBEING&g\\_medium=topic&g\\_campaign=tiles](https://news.gallup.com/poll/221588/americans-declines-2017.aspx?g_source=CATEGORY_WELLBEING&g_medium=topic&g_campaign=tiles)

11 Rath, T., & Harter, J. (2010). Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements. Gallup: New York.

### NEARLY ONE IN FIVE UNC SYSTEM ALUMNI ARE THRIVING IN ALL FIVE WELLBEING ELEMENTS

Based upon responses to the Well-Being Index items, 18% of UNC System graduates are thriving in all five wellbeing elements. This statistic is much higher than all comparison groups. Another 19% of UNC System alumni are thriving in four of the five elements of wellbeing.



## College Experiences of UNC System Alumni

Gallup's research on U.S. college graduates debunks the widespread belief that the kind of institution a person attends — private or public, large or small, highly selective or not — is the most meaningful factor in setting them up for a fulfilling career and a great life. Instead, Gallup's examination of alumni outcomes suggests that how they went to college — i.e., what they experienced during college — matters more.

Gallup has identified six key support experiences and experiential learning opportunities that are linked to higher levels of wellbeing and increased odds that a graduate strongly agrees their college experience prepared them well for life after college.<sup>12</sup>

### UNC SYSTEM HIGHER THAN NATIONAL COMPARISON AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS ON ALL SUPPORT METRICS

Research has shown that supportive experiences, such as mentoring, have a positive impact on academic achievement and persistence and help prepare students to be successful in the workplace.<sup>13</sup> Gallup classifies respondents as having felt supported while in college if they strongly agree that they had professors who cared about them, had at least one professor who made them excited about learning, and had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams.

Gallup research has shown that among alumni who are classified as having felt supported, the odds of thriving in all five wellbeing elements are 1.5 times higher than among those who did not feel supported, and the odds of being engaged at work double.<sup>14</sup> Overall, 19% of UNC System alumni surveyed felt supported during their undergraduate experience. This percentage is significantly higher than college graduates nationally (14%) and from other public institutions (12%), but lower than alumni from private institutions (20%). With about two in 10 UNC System graduates strongly agreeing on these three important support elements, there is an opportunity to focus on key relationships that facilitate a positive undergraduate experience.

In examining each of the three support experiences, UNC System graduates are the most likely to strongly agree that they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning (71%), while 33% strongly agree that their professors cared about them as people. Both of these outcomes are higher than college graduates nationally (64% and 28%, respectively), and graduates of public institutions (61% and 23%, respectively).

Among UNC System graduates, 28% strongly agree they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams. This percentage is significantly higher than all comparison groups. The roles mentors have in a student's undergraduate experience can be extensive, from offering advice on general professional and career development to providing psychological support.<sup>15</sup> Mentors are not restricted only to faculty members such as professors, but may also include staff, senior or graduate students, peers, and friends. They can also be people whom students know

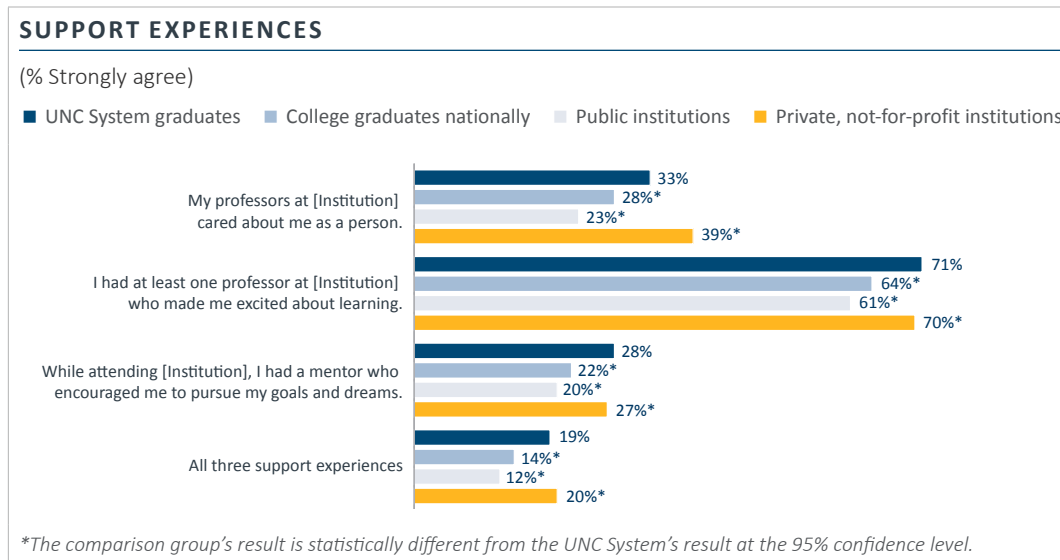
12 Seymour, S. & Lopez, S. (2015). "Big Six" college experiences linked to life preparedness. Retrieved from <http://news.gallup.com/poll/182306/big-six-college-experiences-linked-life-preparedness.aspx>

13 Campbell, C., Smith, M., Dugan, J., & Komives, S.R. (2012). Mentors and college student leadership outcomes: The importance of position and process. *The Review of Higher Education*, 35 (4), 595-625.

14 Gallup, Inc. (2015). Great jobs, great lives: The relationship between student debt, experiences and perceptions of college worth. Gallup-Purdue Index 2015 Report. Washington, D.C.: Gallup.

15 Crisp, G., & Cruz, I. (2009). Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. *Research in Higher Education*, 50(6), 525-545.

outside of college, such as family members and employers. Regardless, undergraduate students with mentors tend to perform better academically and show more persistence in completing their education than those without mentors.<sup>16</sup>



**UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES ARE CONSISTENT WITH PEERS IN HAVING ACCESS TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

In addition to supportive experiences, Gallup examines the experiential learning opportunities that allow students to develop and apply their skills in real-world situations. Gallup classifies graduates as having had experiential learning opportunities if they had an internship or job that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom, worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete, and were extremely active in extracurricular activities.

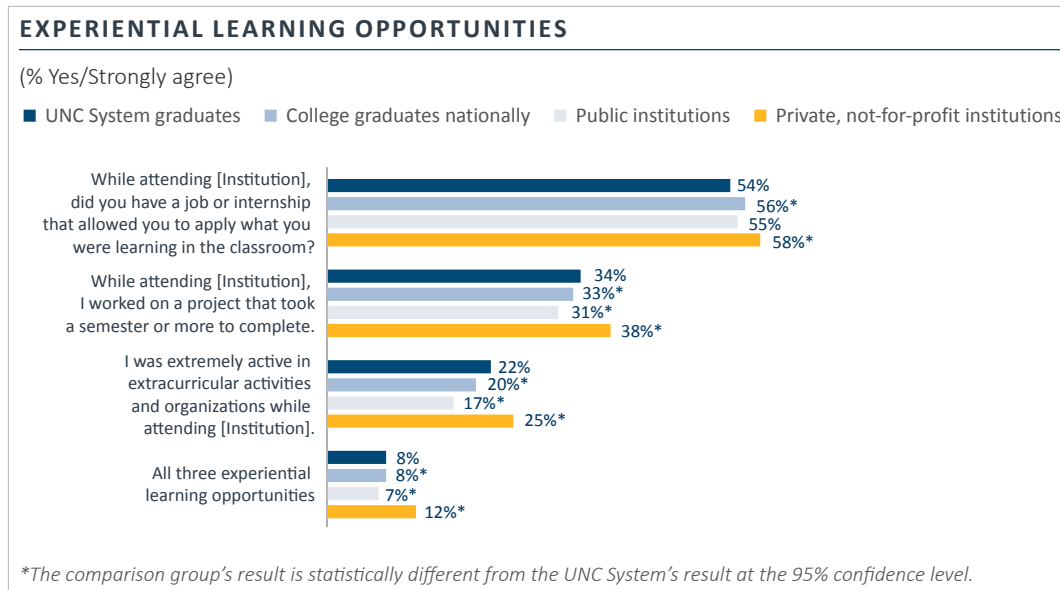
When looking across the experiential learning items, 8% of UNC System graduates say yes to or strongly agree with all three. This is consistent with college graduates nationally (8%) and slightly higher than graduates from public institutions (7%), but lower than alumni from private institutions (12%). Not only are experiential learning opportunities important for students so they can better position themselves for full-time work after graduation; they also are linked to graduates’ engagement at work and wellbeing after college. Gallup research among alumni nationally has shown that the odds of thriving in all five wellbeing elements or being engaged at work are 1.4 times and 2.0 times higher, respectively, if alumni report having had access to experiential learning in college.<sup>17</sup>

In examining individual experiential learning opportunities, UNC System graduates are most likely to say they had a job or internship that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom (54%). This figure is lower than those for all comparison groups. Among the three experiential learning opportunities, UNC System graduates are least likely to strongly agree that they were extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations (22%), but this figure is higher than that of graduates from other public institutions.

16 Crisp, G., & Cruz, I. (2009). Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. *Research in Higher Education*, 50(6), 525-545.

17 Gallup, Inc. (2015). Great jobs, great lives: The relationship between student debt, experiences and perceptions of college worth. Gallup-Purdue Index 2015 Report. Washington, D.C.: Gallup.

One in three UNC System graduates (34%) strongly agrees they worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete, which is higher than percentages among undergraduate alumni nationally (33%) and public institution alumni (31%), but lower than private institution alumni (38%).



**THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES DIFFERS BY MAJOR**

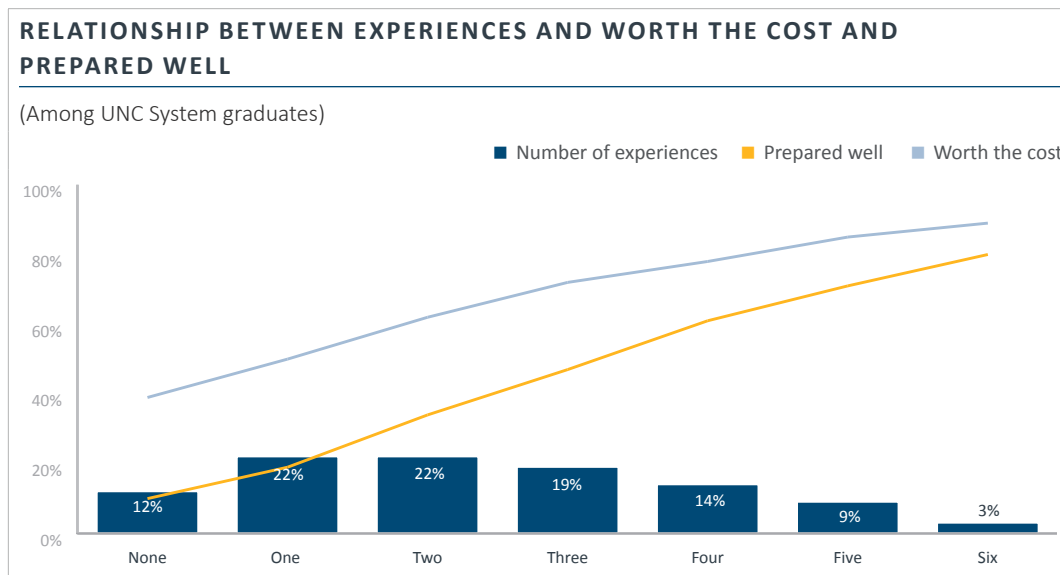
UNC System graduates overall compare well against their peers on the support items, though results vary substantially for the six key experiences by graduates’ broad fields of study. Gallup grouped reported majors into five core program areas, including sciences, social sciences, business, arts and humanities, engineering, and all other majors. UNC System alumni with majors in the arts and humanities are most likely to strongly agree with all of the support items, particularly when compared with those majoring in business and engineering, which tend to score much lower on these items.

UNC System engineering majors are most likely to have had a job or internship during their undergraduate studies (60%), while this incidence is lower among arts and humanities and business majors (47% and 49%, respectively). Engineering majors are also most likely to strongly agree they worked on a long-term project (49%).

<b>SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BY MAJOR</b>							
(% Strongly agree)							
	<b>UNC System Graduates Overall</b>	<b>Sciences</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Arts &amp; Humanities</b>	<b>Engineering</b>	<b>Other</b>
Cared about as a person	33%	34%	35%	29%	36%	26%	37%
Professor made me excited about learning	71%	72%	72%	64%	78%	66%	71%
Mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams	28%	31%	29%	22%	31%	20%	29%
Job or internship applying what learned in classroom (% Yes)	54%	56%	57%	49%	47%	60%	63%
Worked on project that took a semester or more to complete	34%	36%	32%	25%	34%	49%	33%
Extremely active in extracurricular activities	22%	19%	21%	23%	25%	19%	25%

### UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCES ARE LINKED TO PERCEIVED VALUE OF A UNC SYSTEM EDUCATION AND PREPAREDNESS FOR LIFE OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE

Generally, UNC System graduates who had more support and experiential learning as undergraduates are more likely to strongly agree that their education was worth the cost and to strongly agree that their education prepared them well for life after college.



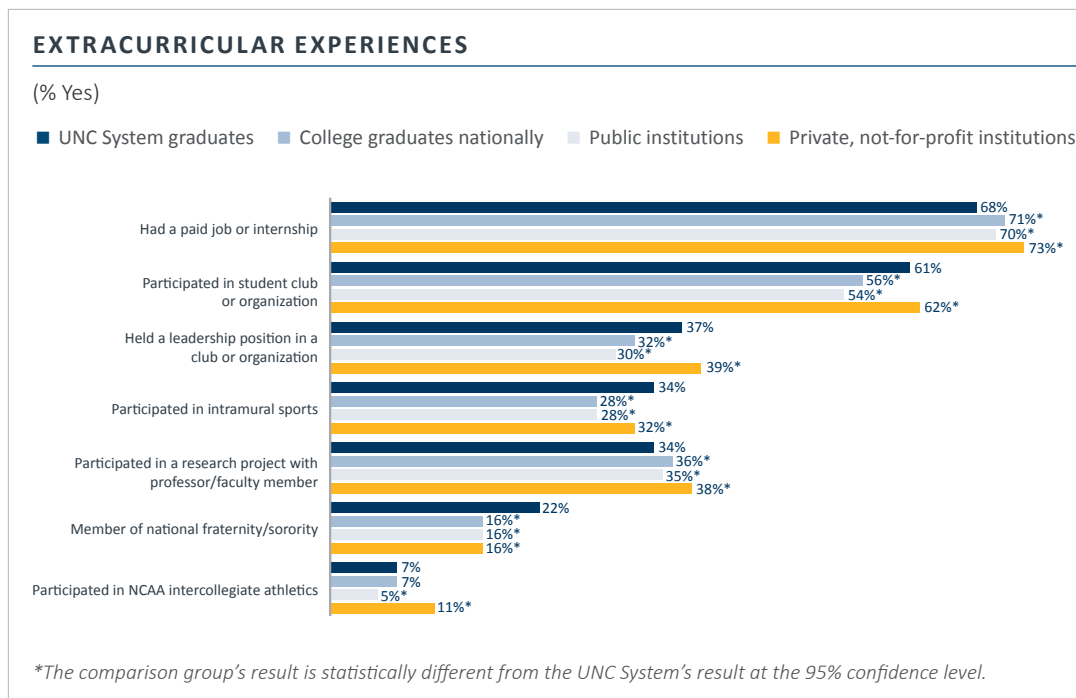
### UNC SYSTEM ALUMNI TOOK ADVANTAGE OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities complement a university’s academic curriculum and expand students’ educational experience. These activities provide a setting to interact with other students and support increased learning and development.

While UNC System graduates are less likely than their peer groups to have had a paid job or internship while in college (68%), they are more likely than college graduates nationally and graduates of public institutions to have participated in a student club or organization (61%), held a leadership position in a club or organization (37%), and to have participated in intramural sports (34%).

Being a member of a national fraternity or sorority is particularly common among UNC System graduates, as one in five (22%) reports being a Greek life member, compared to 16% among all peer groups.





### THREE IN FOUR UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES VISITED CAREER SERVICES; HALF FOUND IT HELPFUL

Career Services offices have an important role in higher education — providing students with personal and career development to build lifetime employability.<sup>18</sup> Institutions that effectively help students transition from college to career empower those students with personal and career development so that they can interact with employers professionally and productively.<sup>19</sup>

About three in four UNC System graduates (73%) visited their career services office at least once. This number is much higher than all comparison groups. Moreover, UNC System graduates (49%) are more likely than comparison groups to say it was helpful or very helpful.

	% Visited Career Services		Helpfulness of Career Services**		
	% Visited	% Very helpful	% Helpful	% Very helpful	
UNC System graduates	73%	33%	16%	49%	
College graduates nationally	59%*	28%*	17%*	45%	
Public institutions	57%*	28%*	19%*	47%	
Private, not-for-profit institutions	64%*	29%*	15%	44%	

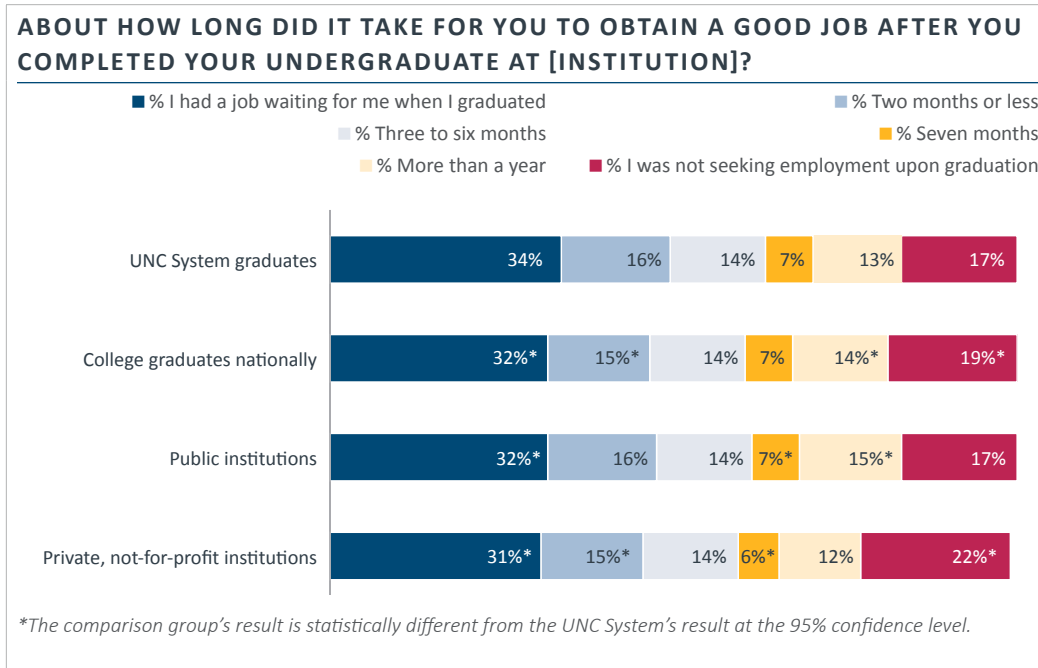
\*The comparison group's result is statistically different from the UNC System's result at the 95% confidence level.  
 \*\*Among those who visited career services at least once.

18 Chan, A., & Derry, T. (2013). A roadmap for transforming the college-to-career experience. Retrieved from [http://prod.wp.cdn.aws.wfu.edu/sites/74/2013/05/A-Roadmap-for-Transforming-The\\_college-to-Career-Experience.pdf](http://prod.wp.cdn.aws.wfu.edu/sites/74/2013/05/A-Roadmap-for-Transforming-The_college-to-Career-Experience.pdf)

19 Hanover Research. (2014). 21st century recruiting and placement strategies. Retrieved from <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/21st-Century-Recruiting-and-Placement-Strategies.pdf>

### UNC SYSTEM ALUMNI REPORT THEY NEEDED LESS TIME TO FIND A “GOOD JOB”

The majority of UNC System graduates report finding a “good job” within six months of earning their undergraduate degree. Nearly two in three UNC System alumni (64%) say that they obtained a good job within six months of graduation, including one-third (34%) who say this job was waiting for them. This compares favorably to all comparison groups.



Support and experiential learning may reduce the time needed to obtain a good job. About two in five (39%) UNC System graduates who had all three support experiences say they had a good job waiting for them upon graduation. More than two in five (43%) who experienced all three learning opportunities say they had a good job waiting for them when they graduated.

## Institutional Attachment and Brand Ambassadorship

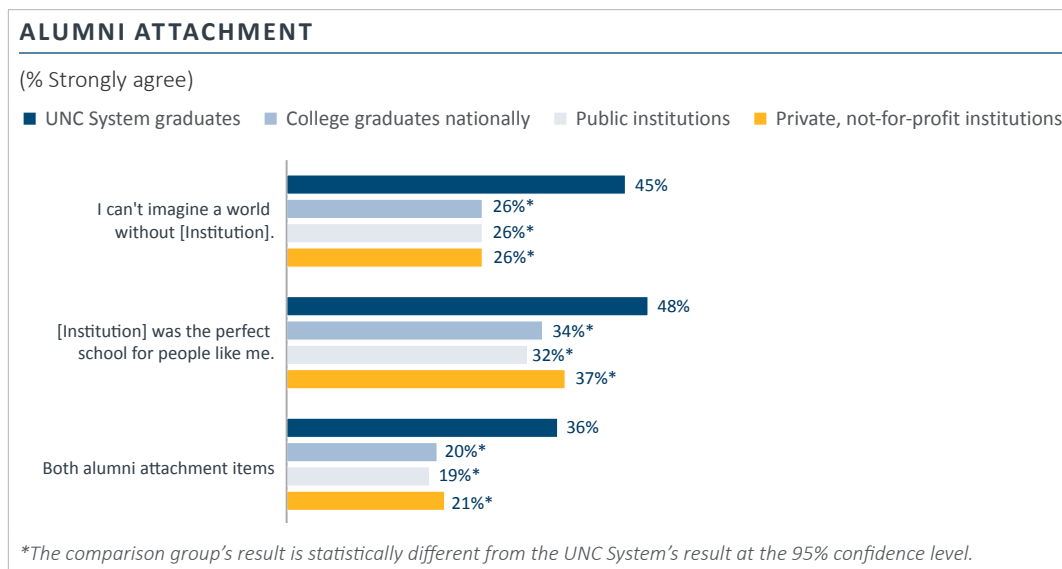
Gallup also explored the connection between alumni and their alma mater by examining their level of agreement with two statements: “[Institution] was the perfect school for people like me,” and “I can’t imagine a world without [Institution].” Graduates who strongly agree with both statements are considered emotionally attached to their alma mater.

### ONE IN THREE UNC SYSTEM GRADUATES IS EMOTIONALLY ATTACHED TO THEIR ALMA MATER

Overall, 36% of UNC System graduates are attached to their alma mater. This is at least 15 percentage points higher than each of the comparison groups.

There is some variation in alumni attachment. Black graduates are most likely among all racial and ethnic groups to be attached (44%) to their institution, and older (65+) graduates (42%) are more likely than younger alumni to be attached. Graduates who strongly agree that their education prepared them well for life after college and that their education was worth the cost are more likely to be attached to their institution (62% and 49%, respectively) than those who do not strongly agree to these items. Additionally, those graduates who experienced three or more of the six support and experiential learning opportunities are also more likely than their peers to be attached to their institution (51%).

In contrast, alumni less likely to be attached are transfer students (30%), unemployed graduates (30%), recent graduates (2010-2018, 31%), and alumni who experienced one or fewer of the support and experiential learning opportunities (20%).



### UNC SYSTEM ALUMNI ARE HIGHLY LIKELY TO BE BRAND AMBASSADORS FOR THEIR ALMA MATER

In addition to being attached to their institution, UNC System graduates are significantly more likely than comparison groups to say they would recommend their alma mater — 60% say they are extremely likely to recommend their institution to family, friends, or colleagues.

Respondents are asked to say how likely it is that they would recommend their institution on a zero to 10 scale, where zero is “not at all likely,” and 10 is “extremely likely.” This item is used to establish a Net Promoter Score (NPS) for alumni. The NPS can be used as a proxy for gauging the alumni’s advocacy for their institution.

- Promoters respond with a score of nine or 10 and are typically loyal and enthusiastic.
- Passives respond with a score of seven or eight. They are satisfied, but not happy enough to be considered promoters.
- Detractors respond with a score of zero to six. They are unhappy and may even discourage others from attending UNC System schools.

More than seven in 10 UNC System alumni (71%) are “promoters,” while only one in 10 (10%) are “detractors.” The NPS (promoters minus detractors) for UNC System institutions is +61 — a significantly higher score than all comparison groups.

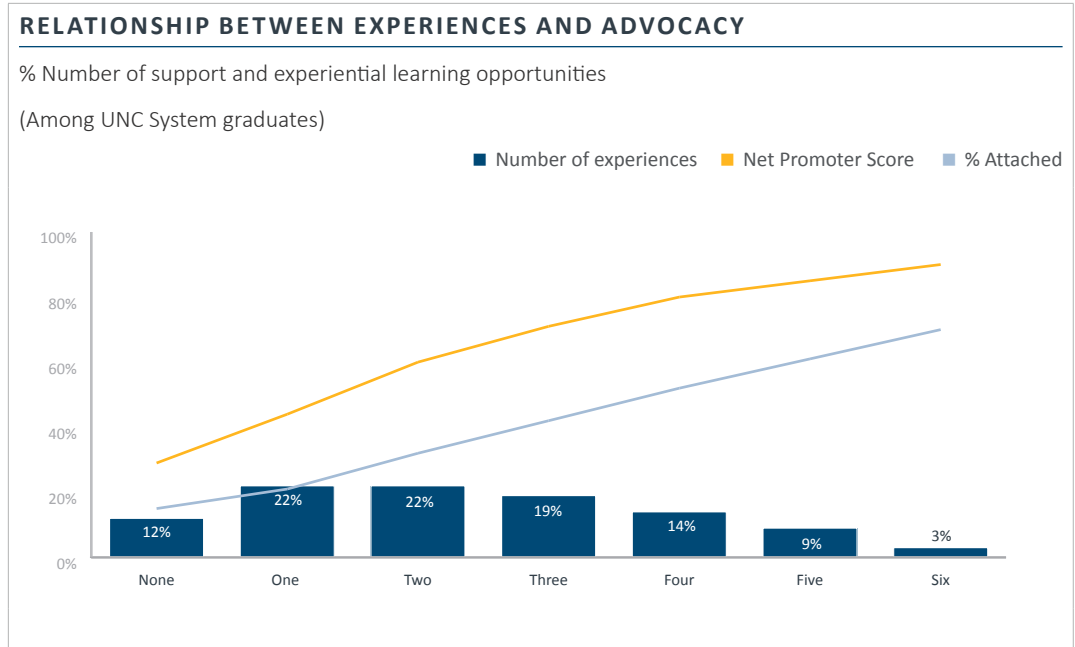
UNC System “promoters” are most prevalent among alumni who are doing work that is completely related to their major (75%), graduates who have an advanced degree (74%), non-transfer students (73%), and particularly among graduates who have experienced at least three of the support and experiential learning opportunities (83%).

<b>RECOMMEND/NET PROMOTER SCORE</b>				
	<b>UNC System Graduates</b>	<b>College Graduates Nationally</b>	<b>Public Institutions</b>	<b>Private, Not-for-Profit Institutions</b>
Extremely likely to recommend [Institution]	60%	42%*	43%*	40%*
Net Promoter Score	+61	+32*	+37*	+29*
Promoters (9-10)	71%	54%*	56%*	52%*
Passives (7-8)	18%	25%*	25%*	25%*
Detractors (0-6)	10%	21%*	19%*	23%*

*\*The comparison group’s result is statistically different from the UNC System’s result at the 95% confidence level.*

### UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCES ARE LINKED TO UNC SYSTEM EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT AND ADVOCACY

UNC System graduates who had more support and experiential learning in college are more likely to be emotionally attached to their alma mater and to have a higher Net Promoter Score.



A plurality of respondents report one or two of six key experiences. These graduates are less inclined to strongly advocate for their institutions than are those who report experiencing five or six.





# APPENDIX

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## Methodology

Results for the University of North Carolina System alumni study are based on web surveys conducted Nov. 15, 2018-Feb. 1, 2019, with a sample of 77,695 UNC System undergraduate alumni. This sample comprises alumni who graduated between 1940 and 2018 for whom there was an email address on file. The survey participation rate is 10%. Data are weighted to known targets for the total number of graduates for the 16 participating institutions.

### GALLUP ALUMNI SURVEY

Results for the Gallup Alumni Survey (formerly known as the Gallup-Purdue Index, the study used for comparison purposes) are based on web surveys conducted Feb. 4-March 7, 2014; Dec. 16, 2014-June 29, 2015; and Aug. 22-Oct. 11, 2016, with a random sample of 29,560 respondents, 30,151 respondents, and 11,483 respondents, respectively. Respondents hold a bachelor's degree or higher and are aged 18 and older with internet access, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The 2014 Gallup Alumni Survey sample was compiled from two sources: the Gallup Panel and the Gallup Daily tracking survey. The 2015 and 2016 Gallup Alumni Survey samples were recruited via the Gallup Daily tracking survey. The Gallup Panel is a proprietary, probability-based longitudinal panel of U.S. adults who are selected using random-digit-dial (RDD) and address-based sampling methods. The Gallup Panel is not an opt-in panel. The Gallup Panel includes 60,000 individuals, and Panel members can be surveyed by phone, mail or web. Gallup Panel members with a college degree and access to the internet were invited to take the Gallup Alumni Survey online. The Gallup Daily tracking survey sample includes national adults with a minimum quota of 70% cellphone respondents and 30% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using RDD methods. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household based on which member had the most recent birthday. Gallup Daily tracking respondents with a college degree who agreed to future contact were invited to take the Gallup Alumni Survey online.

Gallup Alumni Survey interviews are conducted via the web in English, only. Samples are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. The data are weighted to match national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education, and region. Demographic weighting targets are based on the most recent Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older U.S. bachelor's degree or higher population.

All reported margins of sampling error for the Gallup-Purdue Index of all college graduates include the computed design effects for weighting.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from national comparison institutions, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 0.5$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from public institutions, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 0.7$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from private, not-for-profit institutions, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 0.9$  percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.



## **ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM**

The University of North Carolina System is a multi-campus university dedicated to serving North Carolina and its people through world-class teaching, research and scholarship, and outreach and service. Today, more than 225,000 students are enrolled on 16 university campuses across the state and at the NC School of Science and Mathematics, the country's first public, residential high school for gifted students.

The UNC System has evolved into one of the strongest and most successful systems of public higher education in the nation. Its centuries-old roots remain central to its modern role. Today's mission — to discover, create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address the needs of individuals and society — remains true to the University's founding ideal of shared knowledge in a free society.

## **ABOUT GALLUP**

Gallup delivers forward-thinking research, analytics, and advice to help leaders solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 75 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of the world's constituents, employees, and customers than any other organization. Gallup consultants help private- and public-sector organizations boost organic growth through measurement tools, strategic advice, and education. Gallup's 2,000 professionals deliver services at client organizations, through the web, and in nearly 40 offices around the world.

**DATABASE COMPARISON GROUPS DEMOGRAPHICS**

The respondent profile for the UNC System survey of undergraduate alumni is similar in many respects to that of college graduates nationally. Notably, a higher proportion of recent graduates from the UNC System completed the survey than is represented in the national college alumni database. This relative over-representation could be due to better contact information for recent graduates versus those from earlier decades. Additionally, the UNC System respondent profile includes a higher proportion of alumni with postgraduate work or degrees than that of graduates nationally.

<b>Comparison Groups Demographics</b>	<b>UNC System Alumni</b>	<b>College Graduates Nationally</b>	<b>Public Institutions</b>	<b>Private, Not-for-Profit Institutions</b>
Total N (unweighted)	77,695	71,183	44,824	23,714
Male	48%	48%	49%	46%
Female	52%	52%	51%	54%
Average age	47.7	47.6	47.7	47.3
<b>Race/Ethnicity:</b>				
White	77%	80%	80%	82%
Black	18%	9%	9%	9%
Hispanic	2%	7%	7%	5%
Asian	2%	3%	3%	3%
Other race	1%	1%	1%	1%
First-generation student	47%	48%	50%	42%
<b>Education Level:</b>				
Bachelor’s	51%	64%	65%	60%
Post graduate work or degree	49%	36%	35%	40%

Comparison Groups Demographics	UNC System Alumni	College Graduates Nationally	Public Institutions	Private, Not-for-Profit Institutions
<b>Employment Status:</b>				
Working full time for employer	60%	57%	57%	56%
Employed full time (self)	4%	4%	4%	4%
Employed part time (do not want full time)	9%	11%	11%	12%
Employed part time (want full time)	3%	5%	5%	5%
Unemployed	2%	3%	3%	3%
Not in work force	22%	20%	20%	20%
<b>Graduation Years:</b>				
1940-1949	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
1950-1959	1%	2%	2%	3%
1960-1969	7%	7%	7%	8%
1970-1979	14%	15%	16%	13%
1980-1989	15%	17%	17%	16%
1990-1999	17%	20%	21%	20%
2000-2009	20%	23%	23%	24%
2010-2018	25%	16%	14%	16%

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