Student Employment Survey

2014
# Table of Contents

**Executive Snapshot**  3

**Employment Survey Data**  4

- Where students work  4
- Salary  5
- Benefits  6
- Areas of experience  7
- Securing employment  8
- Demographic information  9
Executive Snapshot
In December of 2014 the Practice Department conducted its annual employment survey of students currently enrolled in one of the BAC’s on-site degree-granting programs in architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, and design studies. This survey was distributed through the online software platform SurveyMonkey.

The following summary represents the overall data collected by 213 respondents (34% of the active student population) enrolled during the fall academic semester of 2014:

- Since 2013, the percentage of respondents actively employed in design-related settings has increased by approximately 12%.
  - 64% of respondents reported working in a design-related setting at the time the survey was conducted.
  - 15% of respondents were unemployed but actively seeking employment.
  - 13% of respondents were employed in a non-design related setting.

- The majority of respondents (72%) reported working for an architecture, interior architecture, or landscape architecture design firm. 67% of employed respondents were working 40 or more hours per week while enrolled as full-time students.

- The hourly rates provided by respondents from each discipline varied based on Skill Level, prior experience, and current design industry standards. The average hourly rates reported by respondents from each discipline* were:
  - $17 – 20/hour (Architecture)
  - $14 – 17/hour (Interior Architecture)
  - $15 – 18/hour (Landscape Architecture)
  - $17 – 20/hour (Design Studies)

  *Within each of these disciplines, respondents with advanced Skill Levels (6, 7, or 8) reported higher earnings than the average hourly wage. Architecture degree candidates in particular reported earning more than $30/hour while concurrently enrolled in coursework at the BAC.

- 70% of respondents employed in a design-related setting indicated having at least one BAC connection within their company. Additionally, 54% of respondents reported having directly obtained their current position through a BAC source (i.e. Practice Lab or a referral from a BAC student, graduate, or staff member).

- 73% of employed respondents enjoyed at least one employee benefit. Among the top benefits enjoyed were: health insurance (60%), contributions towards 401k (56%), dental insurance (47%), and flex time (35%).

- Notably, 32% of all survey respondents reported having participated in at least one Gateway Project in previous semesters. Of these participants, an overwhelming 94% are now actively employed in a design-related office.
Employment Survey Data

The data collected by this survey is primarily used to provide prospective employers and current/prospective students with a snapshot of where matriculating BAC students acquire professional design experience, along with the average wages received by respondents from each discipline. Survey results are also used by the Practice Department to measure the impact of inter-network connections (such as the resources provided by the Practice Department and other BAC sources) on students actively seeking employment, and to assess possible ways of improving the quality of services provided by the department.

Where students are working

BAC students acquire professional skills and experience in non-classroom design settings that range from architecture, landscape, and interior architecture design firms to less conventional design-related settings, among which include construction companies, facility management corporations, and planning agencies.

Did you know?

While design firms continue to dominate as the primary source of employment, many students are acquiring professional skills and experience in less traditional design settings. Among the most highly reported areas of employment for 2014 were: construction management, A/V design-build, engineering (software), design retail and consulting, and real estate.
Salary
The average hourly wages reported by respondents from each discipline were:

- $17 – 20/hour (Architecture)
- $14 – 17/hour (Interior Architecture)
- $15 – 18/hour (Landscape Architecture)
- $17 – 20/hour (Design Studies)

The salaries earned by BAC students are affected by a number of factors. Chief among these are:

- Discipline (Architecture/Interior/Landscape/Design Studies)
- Skill Level and Experience
- Type of Organization (i.e. design firm, retail store, consulting company)
- Size of Organization (number of employees)
- Location (urban, suburban, rural)

The data collected internally by the Practice Department reveals that, on average, students with an intermediate Skill Level (4-6) who are working for medium (between 20 – 50 employees) to large (more than 50 employees) design firms in the city of Boston receive higher earnings than the average wages reported by survey respondents. Additionally, location plays a critical role in salary determination, with city-based firms typically offering higher salaries than organizations and companies in surrounding areas.

For tips and best practices related to questions about salary, contact the Practice Department to speak with one of our knowledgeable staff. This is particularly recommended for students who are faced with discussing compensation matters that typically arise during the interview and hiring process.

Hours per Week
BAC students may assume part-time or full-time positions as they concurrently work toward the satisfaction of their academic and Practice requirements. 67% of employed respondents reported working full-time (40 hours per week) or overtime (up to 60 hours per week), while 33% reported working part-time or freelance/per diem positions (10 – 39 hours per week).
Employee Benefits
In addition to paid wages, many students who are employed by design offices are entitled to receive standard employee benefits. 73% of respondents reported enjoying at least one of the following benefits:

*Percentages do not reflect the overall number of respondents as they were asked to select all the benefits that applied to them.

*Health Insurance
*Retirement (401k)
*Dental Insurance
*Flex Time
*Work from Home
*Transportation
*Tuition Reimbursement
*Family-friendly policies (e.g. child care service)
*No benefits

*Percentages do not reflect the overall number of respondents as they were asked to select all the benefits that applied to them.
Areas of Experience

Areas of experiential learning typically fall into one of several main categories. The top three areas in which respondents reported gaining professional design experience were: design development (76%), CAD/drafting (74%), and construction documentation (65%). Respondents were asked to select all areas that applied to their current position.

Note: The areas highlighted in the chart above were identified based on their alignment to some of the standard licensure requirements common to each program, and do not represent a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which students practice professionally. Additional areas reported by respondents included, but were not limited to: code research, 3D modeling/rendering, schematic design, SketchUp, fabrication, marketing/graphics/website design, software development, gardening.
**Source of Employment**

Of the respondents employed in a design-related setting, 36% reported having secured employment directly through a referral from a member of the BAC community. 19% of respondents reported using Practice Lab, the BAC’s online job database, to obtain their current position.

There continues to be a strong correlation between where students are working and pre-existing connections to the BAC. 70% of employed respondents indicated having at least one, if not more, BAC connection within their workplace.
Demographics
The following tables represent the demographic makeup of the 213 survey respondents. Ethnicity, age range, and gender information is consistent with the results of the previous annual employment survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>64.22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>13.73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6.86%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 - 25 years</td>
<td>41.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 30 years</td>
<td>37.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 35 years</td>
<td>11.74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>36 - 45 years</td>
<td>7.04%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44.13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I prefer not to say</td>
<td>3.29%</td>
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