

Student Life Survey: Career Preparation among Ohio State Students

Center for the Study of Student Life

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

INTRODUCTION

In collaboration with Student Life's Buckeye Careers office, the Center for the Study of Student Life developed a set of items that were designed to explore trends in career preparation and preferences among Ohio State undergraduate and graduate/professional students. This report summarizes this data in three major sections. The first section summarizes student participation in a variety of career preparation activities. The second section focuses on trends among students who have not completed any career preparation activities. The third section addresses students' openness to moving to a new geographical location for future career opportunities.

METHODS

The data used in this report are from the 2016 Student Life Survey, administered to random samples of 4,000 Columbus campus undergraduate students, 1,000 graduate/professional students, and 1,000 regional campus undergraduate students in January 2016. A total of 744 Columbus campus undergraduate students (18.6% response rate), 209 graduate/professional students (20.9% response rate), and 176 regional campus students (17.6% response rate) participated in the survey.

Student responses were examined separately by academic level and campus, as these factors were believed to change the nature and meaning of students' career preparation. Statistical comparisons between groups of students with different academic/demographic characteristics were conducted using chi-square tests of independence. All comparisons reported are statistically significant unless otherwise noted.

KEY FINDINGS

- **90.6%** of undergraduate students on the Columbus campus, **87.8%** of graduate and professional students, and **66.7%** of undergraduate students on a regional campus had created a resume to prepare for their career
- Undergraduate students who were 24 years of age or older participated in significantly fewer career preparation activities, on average, than did younger undergraduate students ($M = 4.14$ vs. $M = 5.33$ respectively)
- Students who were current or former members of the military reported lower levels of participation in internship/career-related jobs (**17.5%**) than did civilian students (**34.2%**)
- LGBQ undergraduates had higher rates of participation in online career preparation modules (**12.5%**) than did heterosexual undergraduates (**4.8%**) but lower rates of participation in mock interviews (**7.8%** LGBQ students vs. **20.6%** heterosexual students)
- **58.7%** of first-generation undergraduate students had had someone review their resume, compared with **69.5%** of continuing-generation students
- Among undergraduate students who had not completed any career preparation activities at the time of the survey, **41.9%** reported that they planned to prepare for their career later, **35.5%** reported that they did not know what career they wanted to pursue, and **35.5%** did not know where to begin preparing for their career
- **Over 70%** of undergraduate students and graduate/professional students on the Columbus campus were willing to move for a career opportunity, compared with **57.8%** of undergraduates on a regional campus
- **58.6%** of undergraduates who were 24 years of age or older were willing to move for a career opportunity, compared with **73.3%** of those between the ages of 18-23



DEMOGRAPHIC AND ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Columbus Undergraduate (n = 744)	Columbus Graduate/ Professional (n = 209)	Regional Undergraduate (n = 176)
Years in Program^a			
First-year	27.6%	29.2%	55.7%
Second-year	22.2%	26.8%	18.2%
Third-year	22.2%	15.3%	11.9%
Fourth-year	19.6%	14.8%	4.5%
Fifth + year	8.5%	13.9%	9.7%
Gender^b			
Female	60.2%	62.5%	67.6%
Male	38.6%	36.9%	31.0%
Transgender/Self-Defined	1.2%	0.6%	1.4%
Race/Ethnicity^b			
African American/Black/African	3.0%	3.6%	5.8%
Asian American/Asian	9.0%	24.6%	1.5%
Latino(a)/Hispanic	3.1%	3.6%	2.2%
White/European American	76.9%	62.3%	83.9%
Multiracial/Other race/ethnicity	8.0%	6.0%	6.5%
Sexual Orientation^b			
Heterosexual	90.3%	89.0%	93.9%
LGBQ	9.7%	11.0%	6.1%
First Generation College Student^b			
First generation	32.0%	25.1%	62.6%
Non-first generation	68.0%	74.9%	37.4%
Citizenship^b			
International student	3.5%	20.3%	0.0%
Domestic student	96.5%	79.7%	100.0%
Age^a			
Traditional age (18-23)	89.4%	18.7%	80.7%
Non-traditional age (24+)	10.6%	81.3%	19.3%
Enrollment Status^a			
Full-time	92.2%	74.2%	85.2%
Part-time	7.8%	25.8%	14.8%
Military/Veteran^b			
Military/Veteran	5.4%	1.8%	5.6%
Civilian	94.6%	98.2%	94.4%

a. Source: Student Information System.

b. Source: Student self-reported.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

FINDINGS

PARTICIPATION IN CAREER PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

Students were asked to select from a list the types of career preparation activities that they had done in order to prepare for their career. The following table reports the percentage of students who selected each activity. The most common form of career preparation completed by all three groups of students was creating a resume.

Career Preparation Activities	Columbus Undergraduate (n = 614)	Columbus Graduate/ Professional (n = 172)	Regional Undergraduate (n = 147)
Created a resume	90.6%	87.8%	66.7%
Had my resume reviewed by someone	68.2%	65.1%	49.7%
Visited a career services website (e.g. Buckeye Careers, college-specific career office)	48.2%	34.9%	42.9%
Gone to a career services office on campus	26.7%	25.0%	19.7%
Attended a career fair	45.9%	29.1%	32.7%
Attended a career-related workshop, networking event, employer information session, or a career course	34.0%	37.2%	27.2%
Completed one or more OnPace Modules	6.4%	1.2%	3.4%
Looked at a company or organization's website	68.2%	63.4%	50.3%
Searched for internships or career-related job opportunity	71.8%	54.1%	49.0%
Completed an internship or career-related job	36.3%	40.1%	19.7%
Participated in a mock interview	19.2%	22.1%	17.0%
Participated in a job shadow or informational interview	30.3%	20.9%	32.0%
Other	4.2%	5.2%	9.5%
Selected Other Responses:			
a) Internships/Careers (16)			
b) Field placements/Clinical/Exercises (5)			

The total number of different preparation activities selected by students was calculated as an index of overall involvement in career preparation. On average, undergraduate students on the Columbus campus completed over five different types of career preparation activities. Just over 10 percent of regional campus undergraduates did not select any career preparation activities.

Number of Career Preparation Activities Completed	Columbus Undergraduate (n = 614)	Columbus Graduate/ Professional (n = 172)	Regional Undergraduate (n = 147)
0	2.4%	5.8%	10.2%
1 – 2	14.7%	21.5%	23.8%
3 – 5	35.8%	33.7%	36.1%
6 or more	47.1%	39.0%	29.9%
Average (SD)	5.46 (2.92)	4.81 (2.89)	4.10 (2.93)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Individual Differences in Career Preparation

Statistical comparisons were used to better understand how career preparation varies between groups of students. First, we used t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine whether the average number of career preparation activities completed by students varied based on gender, race/ethnicity, age, first-generation status, campus of enrollment, and the number of years in which students were enrolled in their degree program. These analyses were conducted separately for undergraduate students and graduate/professional students.

Group Differences in Average Number of Career Preparation Activities Completed

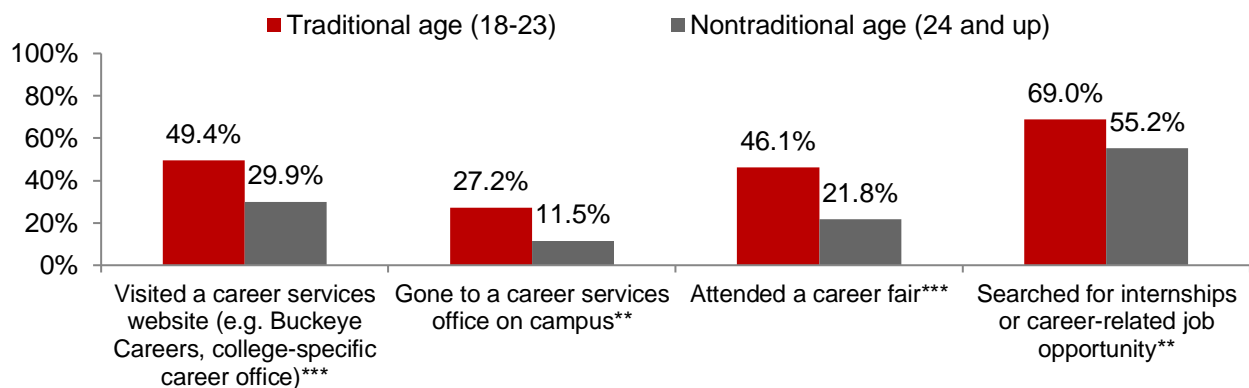
	Undergraduate (<i>n</i> = 744)	Graduate/ Professional (<i>n</i> = 209)
Gender (Sig.)	*	
Female	5.02	4.70
Male	5.48	5.00
Race/Ethnicity (Sig.)		
African American/Black/African	4.60	3.33
Asian American/Asian	5.63	4.73
Latino(a)/Hispanic	5.38	3.67
White/European American	5.32	4.94
Multiracial/Other	4.65	5.40
First-Generation (Sig.)		
First generation	5.01	4.53
Non-first generation	5.42	4.85
Citizenship (Sig.)		
International student	5.38	4.26
Domestic student	5.25	4.95
Age (Sig.)	***	
Traditional age (18-23)	5.33	5.18
Non-traditional age (24+)	4.14	4.74
Years in Program (Sig.)	***	
First-year	3.87	4.83
Second-year	5.13	5.00
Third-year	6.21	4.46
Fourth-year	6.35	4.88
Fifth + year	5.28	4.74
Campus (Sig.)	***	--
Columbus Campus	5.46	--
Regional Campuses	4.10	--

Among undergraduate students, statistically significant differences in career preparation were detected on the basis of gender, age, number of years enrolled, and campus of enrollment. Note that observed differences may be conflated; for example, lower participation rates among regional campus students may reflect the fact that the regional campuses serve a disproportionate percentage of first-year students. None of the group differences observed within the graduate/professional student sample were statistically significant.

p* < .05, *p* < .01, ****p* < .001

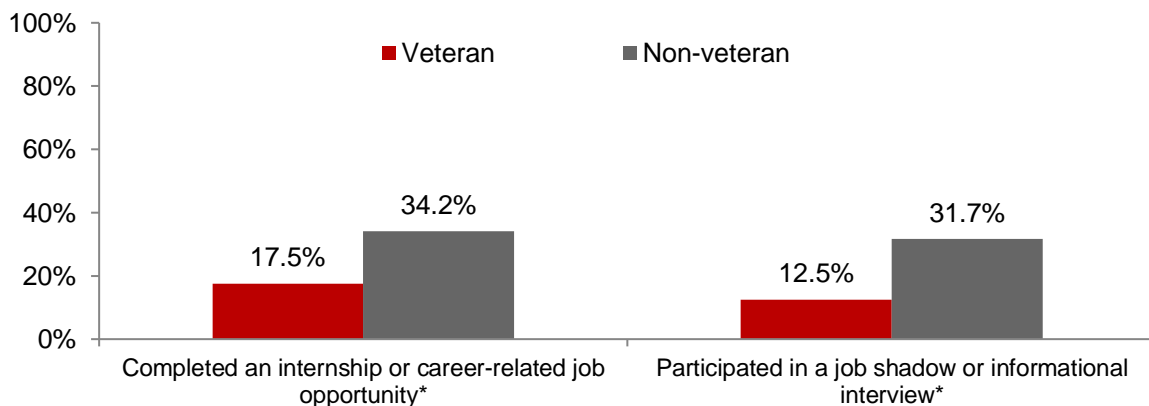
Additional comparisons were used to determine whether participation in specific career preparation activities varied based on demographic and academic characteristics. Among undergraduate students, age was associated with differences in participation rates for several career preparation activities. Undergraduate students over 23 years of age were less likely than younger students to report visiting a career services website, going to a career services office, attending a career fair, or searching for internships/career-related job opportunities online.

Career Preparation by Age (Undergraduates)



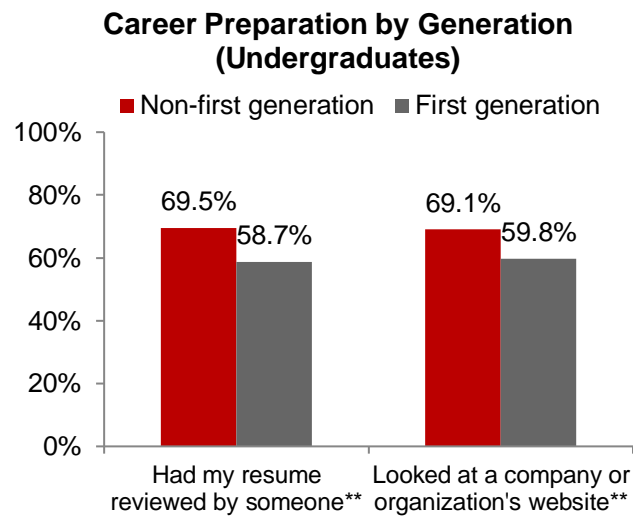
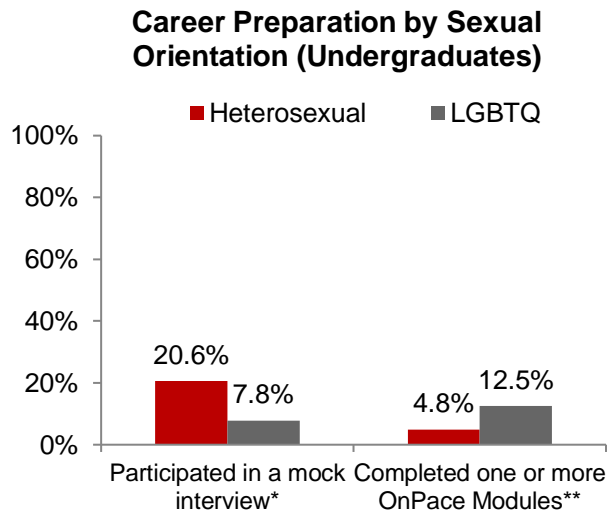
Undergraduate students who were current/previous members of the United States military were less likely to indicate competing an internship or career-related job opportunity or participating in a job shadow.

Career Preparation by Military/Veteran Status (Undergraduates)

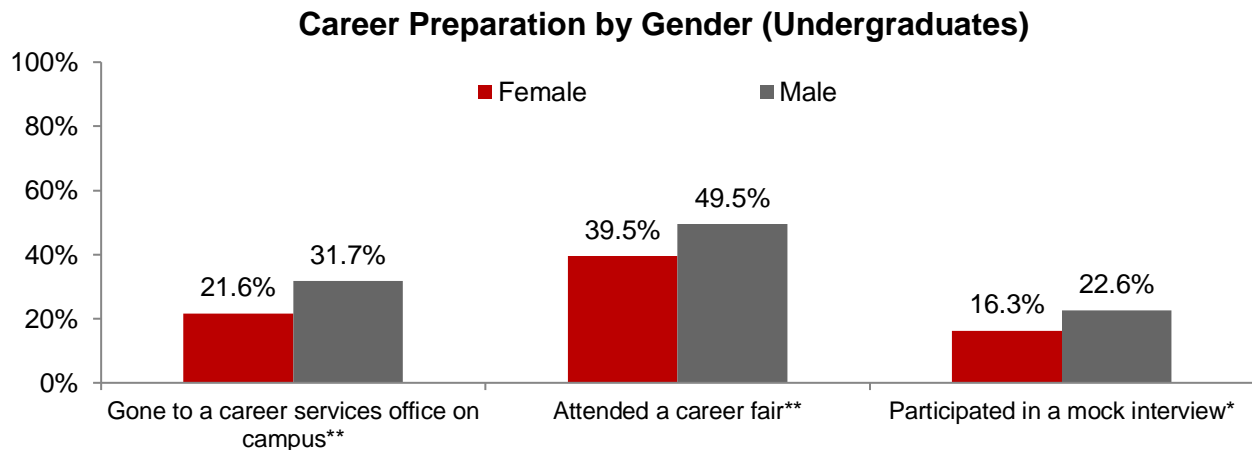


Additional comparisons suggest that sexual orientation and first-generation status are associated with differences in career preparation. Undergraduate students who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning (LGBQ) were less likely to report participating in a mock interview than heterosexual students, though they were more likely to report completing one or more OnPace Modules. First-generation undergraduate students were less likely than continuing-generation undergraduate students to report having their resume reviewed or looking at a company/organization's website for career opportunities.

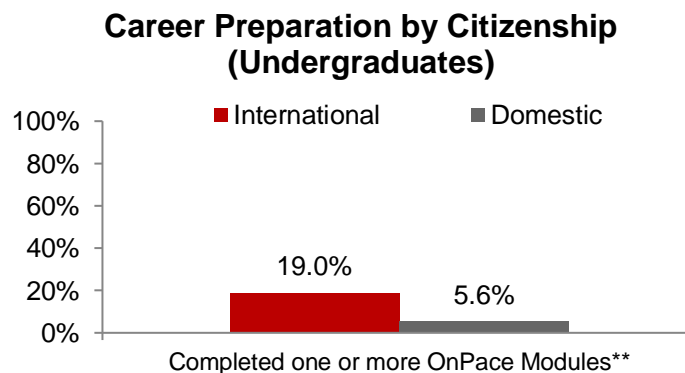
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$



Male and female undergraduate students reported different rates of participation in career preparation activities. Overall, a greater proportion of male than female students reported going to a career office on campus, attending a career fair, and participating in a mock interview.



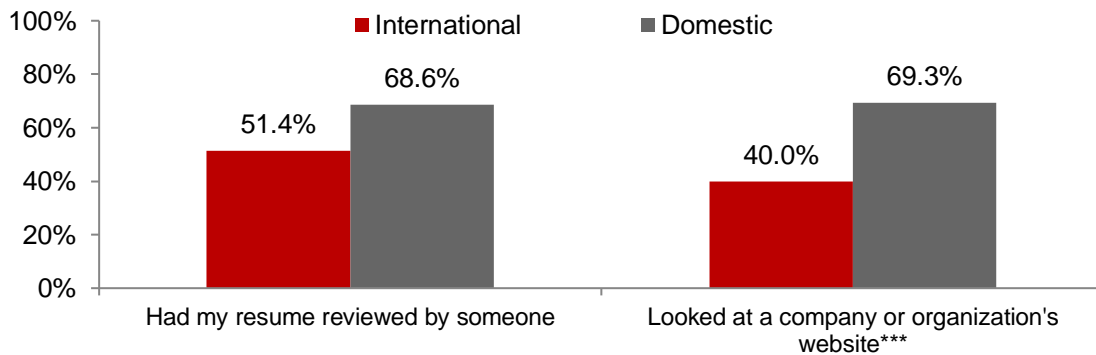
Finally, although less than one-tenth of all undergraduate students completed an OnPace module, nearly 20 percent of international undergraduate students reported having done so.



* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

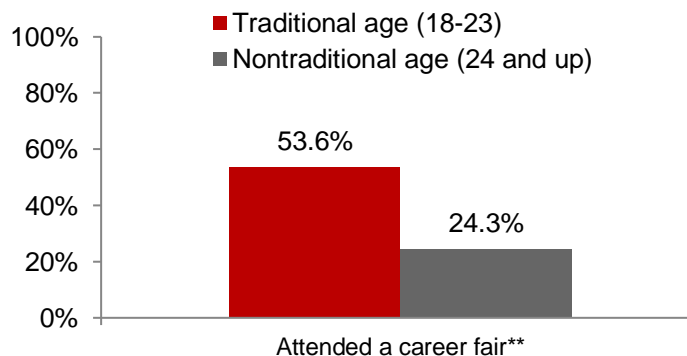
There were fewer statistically significant differences in career preparation activities among graduate/professional students. Due to the smaller size of the graduate/professional student sample, it is possible that the statistical tests used were unable to detect significant differences due to lack of statistical power. However, comparisons did indicate some statistically significant differences in career preparation based on citizenship and age. As the following chart indicates, international graduate/professional students were less likely to report looking at an organization's website for career opportunities. Furthermore, a larger percentage of domestic students than international students reported having their resume reviewed, although the difference was only marginally significant ($p = .06$).

Career Preparation by Citizenship (Graduate/Professional)



In addition, graduate/professional students over the age of 23 were less likely to report attending a career fair than younger graduate/professional students.

Career Preparation by Age (Graduate/Professional)



* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$



REASONS FOR LACK OF CAREER PREPARATION

Students who indicated that they had not participated in any of the prior career activities were asked to select their reasons for not completing any of those activities. The most common reason was because students planned to start preparing for their career later, followed by not know what career they wanted to pursue or not knowing where to begin.

Reasons for Not Participating in Career Preparation (<i>n</i> = 31)	Freq.	Percent
I plan on starting to prepare for my career later	13	41.9%
I don't know what career I want to pursue yet	11	35.5%
I don't know where to begin	11	35.5%
I am preparing for my career in other ways	8	25.8%
I am too busy	6	19.4%
I don't know where to find on-campus resources (for example, career counselor or advisor)	3	9.7%
I am planning on going to graduate or professional school (for example, law school, medical school) after graduation	3	9.7%
I don't know how to find off-campus opportunities (for example, finding an internship)	1	3.2%
I don't think those activities would be useful in preparing for my career	0	0.0%
I don't plan to enter the workforce after graduation	0	0.0%

Note: This item was displayed for students who did not indicate completing any career preparation activities.

Those students who indicated that they planned on starting to prepare for their career later were asked to indicate when they planned on starting their career. The following table summarizes reasons given by at least two different students in response to this question.

Selected Responses: When do you plan on starting to prepare for your career? (<i>n</i> = 13)
a) Junior year (3)
b) Within the next semester or year (3)
c) Sophomore year (2)

Note: This item was displayed for students who indicated that they planned to start preparing for their career later.

MOVING FOR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Survey participants were asked to indicate whether or not they were willing to move for a career opportunity. Over 70.0 percent of both graduate and undergraduate students on the Columbus campus and over half of regional campus students were willing to move for a career opportunity.

Willing to Move for Career Opportunity?	Columbus Undergraduate (n = 615)	Columbus Graduate/ Professional (n = 172)	Regional Undergraduate (n = 147)
Yes	74.9%	70.3%	57.8%
No	3.6%	7.0%	10.9%
Maybe	21.5%	22.7%	31.3%

Possible Locations for Career Opportunities

Students who indicated potentially being willing to move were asked in two separate items to indicate which areas/regions to which they were willing to move. Columbus campus students indicated being willing to move to areas of Ohio outside of Columbus, followed by the Far West and Mideast. Students at the regional campuses were also willing to move to the Mideast, but also indicated that they were willing to move to the Great Lakes region or the Southeast.

Areas Willing to Move to for Career Opportunity	Columbus Undergraduate (n = 589)	Columbus Graduate/ Professional (n = 160)	Regional Undergraduate (n = 128)
Ohio – outside of Columbus	74.2%	60.0%	--
International Location	45.5%	51.2%	34.1%
New England: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont	51.8%	42.5%	40.3%
Mideast: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania	61.1%	55.0%	51.9%
Great Lakes: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin	55.5%	48.8%	54.3%
Plains: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota	24.8%	16.3%	30.2%
Southeast: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia	56.4%	48.1%	63.6%
Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas	41.6%	31.3%	36.4%
Rocky Mountain: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming	48.9%	37.5%	35.7%
Far West: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington	62.5%	59.4%	47.3%

Note: Shaded areas indicate the top three locations for each column.



Preferred Locations for Career Opportunities

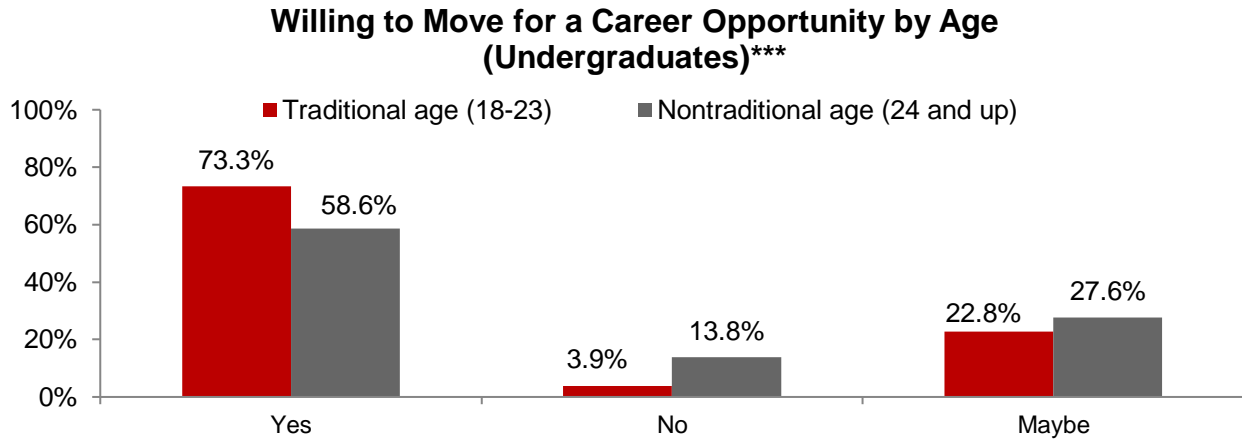
Students were also asked to indicate the areas to which they most preferred to move. Columbus campus undergraduate students most preferred to move to areas of Ohio outside of Columbus, followed by the Far West and Southeast regions. Graduate/professional students were most interested in moving to the Far West, followed by areas of Ohio outside of Columbus and international locations. Students on the regional campuses preferred to move to the Southeast, followed by the Great Lakes region. The third choice for regional campus students was a tie between international locations, the Midwest region, and the Far West.

Areas MOST Prefer to Move to for Career Opportunity	Columbus Undergraduate (n = 589)	Columbus Graduate/Professional (n = 157)	Regional Undergraduate (n = 127)
Ohio – outside of Columbus	30.7%	19.7%	--
International Location	9.0%	12.7%	11.0%
New England: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont	3.6%	7.0%	3.9%
Mideast: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania	10.9%	8.9%	11.0%
Great Lakes: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin	6.0%	4.5%	17.3%
Plains: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota	0.5%	1.9%	5.5%
Southeast: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia	14.1%	10.2%	30.7%
Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas	2.8%	3.2%	2.4%
Rocky Mountain: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming	4.8%	5.7%	7.1%
Far West: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington	17.6%	26.1%	11.0%

Note: Shaded areas indicate the top three locations for Columbus campus undergraduate and graduate/professional students and the top two locations for regional campus students.

Individual Differences in Willingness to Move

Comparisons were used to determine whether willingness to move varied between groups of students. A statistically significant difference in willingness to move was found based on age. Traditional-age (18-23) undergraduate students were more willing to move for a career opportunity than nontraditional (24+) age students.



* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

