NACE SALARY SURVEY

Final starting salaries for Class of 2019 new college graduates
Data reported by colleges and universities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FEATURING
Actual starting salaries
For all degree levels
ASSOCIATE
BACHELOR’S
MASTER’S
DOCTORAL
ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Summer 2020 Salary Survey report provides actual starting salaries (not projections) for the college Class of 2019 and serves as the final salary report for the Class of 2019.

The figures reported are for base salaries only and do not include bonuses, commissions, fringe benefits, or overtime rates. The report provides the detailed salaries by academic major at the associate, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degree levels, along with breakouts by both geographic region and Carnegie Classification at the bachelor’s degree level based upon the participating institutions. Data were gathered from Class of 2019 graduates through December 31, 2019, and reported to NACE through June 30, 2020.

The salary data presented here were reported to NACE through its national Class of 2019 First-Destination Survey by approximately 356 colleges and universities nationwide, and represent data for almost 729,756 graduates at the associate, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degree levels. Most of the analysis provided here, however, focuses on the data provided for more than 94,740 bachelor’s degree graduates. Of those schools providing salary information, 253 provided salary data by specific program or major; this report contains average salaries for 59 majors at the associate degree level, 256 majors at the bachelor’s degree level, 195 majors at the master’s degree level, and 98 majors at the doctoral degree level. A list of those institutions providing salary data by program or major can be found in the appendix of this report.

Salary Survey (ISSN 1520-8648) is available to individuals holding membership in the National Association of Colleges and Employers; it is also available on a subscription basis. The Salary Survey report is published three times a year—winter, summer, and fall—by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Ave., Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085. For more information, see www.nacweb.org/store/subscription/salary-survey/ or contact NACE at 610.868.1421.
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The final overall average starting salary for the Class of 2019 is $53,889, which is up 5.8 percent over the final average starting salary of $50,944 for the Class of 2018. This is the highest increase in starting salary reported since NACE began collecting starting salary data through its first-destinations survey. The first reported overall average salary for the Class of 2014 stood at $48,127, making the Class of 2019’s average starting salary 12 percent higher. When adjusting for inflation, the overall average starting salary for new college graduates is still up, albeit by just 4 percent.

Graduates earning degrees in computer-related fields continue to earn the highest starting salaries. For the fourth consecutive year, the average starting salary for computer and information sciences tops those of all other disciplines. At $76,986, the overall average starting salary for Class of 2019 computer and information sciences majors is 7.8 percent higher than last year’s average of $71,411 for the these graduates from the Class of 2018. And, while last year’s graduates saw a 1.7 percent decrease in average starting salaries, the current average is still up 5.9 percent over the Class of 2017’s average starting salary of $72,677.

Contributing to the large overall increase for this group is the average starting salary specifically for computer science majors. The average for Class of 2019 computer science graduates stands at $84,010, an 8.3 percent increase over last year’s average of $77,564. Further examination of the individual data reveals that the highest reported average within this major was $118,393 for 70 graduates at one particular institution.

The average starting salary is also higher for Class of 2019 engineering graduates. Their overall average of $70,219 is up 5.4 percent from last year’s average of $66,638. Within the individual reported engineering disciplines, electrical and computer engineering has emerged as the highest paid, with an overall average salary of $86,655. This major was added to the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) list in the 2020 update, thus there is no comparison to the Class of 2018. Meanwhile, petroleum engineers, who were the top-paid major for the Class of 2018, have an average salary that is up 8.8 percent, from $78,801 to $85,770, for the Class of 2019. Also showing a large increase and topping $80,000 is the average starting salary for Class of 2019 computer engineering graduates. Their current average of $82,534 is 7.4 percent higher than last year’s average of $76,881.

As a group, Class of 2019 mathematics and statistics majors saw the largest increase in average starting salary. Their overall average rose 8.5 percent from $61,709 for Class of 2018 graduates to the current average of $66,942. Among the individual majors, the average salary for mathematics graduates grew 8.8 percent from $59,681 in last year’s report to $64,914 this year. Additionally, statistics graduates saw a strong increase in their average starting salary, which rose 5.3 percent from $67,161 to $70,705 for the Class of 2019. This is the second consecutive year that their average starting salary has grown considerably, as the Class of 2018 average ($67,161) was an increase of almost 8 percent over the Class of 2017 average ($62,375).

The reported average starting salary for Class of 2018 business majors was essentially flat as it slipped 0.8 percent from the previous year to an overall average of $52,040. For the Class of 2019, the tables have turned with the overall average starting salary rising 4.5 percent to $54,399. Among the reported business disciplines, increases in average starting salary occurred nearly across the board. Finance majors saw a noteworthy increase of 5.4 percent, taking their average from $55,138 for the Class of 2018 to $58,125 in this report. Furthermore, while the average starting salaries for business administration/management ($53,944) and accounting majors ($53,652) saw somewhat smaller increases of 3.4 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively, marketing ($47,777) and management sciences (actuarial; $60,492) majors posted increases of nearly 5 percent. Management information systems graduates have one of the highest average salaries within the business category, but their average salary rose just 1.6 percent from $60,156 for the Class of 2018 to the current average of $61,122.

Graduates earning health sciences degrees from the Class of 2019 saw a small bump in their average starting salaries, as the overall average rose 2.6 percent from $52,076 to $53,425. This comes as welcome news since
the average starting salary was down 3.3 percent for health sciences majors in the Class of 2018. Two-thirds of the reported salaries for the health sciences group are registered nursing salaries, and for the Class of 2019, their average salary is up 1.1 percent from $56,794 to $57,416. Next year, the outcome may be greatly improved when the Class of 2020 data is reported, as registered nurses have been essential providers of healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The overall average starting salary to social sciences graduates is up 7.1 percent to $50,099 from the average of $46,797 for the Class of 2018. Driving this notable increase may be the growth seen in the fields of economics and political science. Economics graduates have an average starting salary of $59,179, which is 4.9 percent higher than the average for the Class of 2018 ($56,423). Meanwhile, political science/government majors boast a 7.8 percent rise, upping their average starting salary from $42,355 to $45,676. These two majors account for two-thirds of the entire social sciences category.

In last year’s report, both psychology and visual and performing arts majors from the Class of 2018 had slightly smaller average starting salaries than one year prior, with psychology slipping 1.1 percent and visual and performing arts down 1.4 percent. For these same graduates from the Class of 2019, average starting salaries are much improved, with the average salary for psychology graduates rising 6.7 percent to $37,653 and the average for visual and performing arts increasing 5.4 percent to $39,358.

With the challenges that college and universities are facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, preliminary salary data for the Class of 2020 will not be collected. Thus, NACE will not publish its Fall 2020 Salary Survey report. However, the Winter 2021 Salary Survey report will be released in January 2021, and will report the starting salary projections from NACE employers for the Class of 2021. Employers will also provide their Class of 2021 hiring projections, which will be included in NACE’s Job Outlook 2021 report that will published in early November.
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS
Below is a list of the institutions that supplied salary data that was used in the NACE Summer 2020 Salary Survey. This list includes the 253 schools that provided salary data by specific program or major through the NACE First-Destination Survey.

Abilene Christian University
Adelphi University
Alfred University
Alma College
American University
Anderson University
Aquinas College
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Azusa Pacific University
Baker College of Owosso
Baylor University School of Business
Belmont University
Binghamton University - SUNY
Biola University
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
Bob Jones University
Boston College
Boston University
Bridgewater College
Butler University
Cabrini University
California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo
Cameron University
Carnegie Mellon University
Cedar Crest College
Champlain College
Chapman University
Colby-Sawyer College
College of Coastal Georgia
College of the Holy Cross
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University - Fort Collins
Colorado State University Pueblo
Columbia University
Mailman School of Public Health
Concordia College at Moorhead
CUNY Bernard M Baruch College
Curry College
Davenport University
Delaware Valley University
DeSales University
Doane University
Eastern Illinois University
Emory-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach
Emory-Riddle Aeronautical University - Prescott
Emory-Riddle Aeronautical University - Worldwide Campus
Emerson College
Endicott College
Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University
Florida State University
Fontbonne University
Fordham University
Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering
George Fox University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Golden Gate University
Gonzaga University
Grand View University
Hartwick College
Hastings College
Hofstra University
Illinois State University
Illinois Wesleyan University
Indiana State University
Indiana University - South Bend
Judd Leighton School of Business & Economics
Indiana Wesleyan University
Iona College
Ithaca College
Jacksonville University
Kalamazoo College
Kansas State University
Kennesaw State University
Kent State University at Kent
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
La Roche University
Lafayette College
Le Moyne College
Lehigh Carbon Community College
Lehigh University
Lewis & Clark College
Lewis University
Loyola University - New Orleans
Manhattanville College
Mansfield University
Marquette University
Marshall University
Maryville College
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Massachusetts Maritime Academy
Mayville State University
Mercer University
Miami University - Oxford
Miami University - Regionals
Michigan Technological University
Midland University
Milwaukee School of Engineering
Missouri University of Science and Technology
Mitchell Technical Institute
Montana Technological University
Moravian College
Morehead State University
Morgan State University
Mount Holyoke College
Mount Marty College
Muhlenberg College
Nazareth College
Nevada State College
New Jersey Institute of Technology
New Mexico State University
New York University
North Central College
North Dakota State University
Northeastern University
Northwestern College
Oakland University
Oglethorpe University
Ohio Dominican University
Oklahoma State University
Olivet Nazarene University
Otterbein University
Our Lady of the Lake University
Pace University - New York City Campus
Pacific Lutheran University
Pennsylvania Highlands Community College
Pepperdine University
Presbyterian College
Princeton University
Principia College
Purdue University
Purdue University Fort Wayne
Purdue University Global
Purdue University Northwest
Radford University
Ramp College of New Jersey
Randolph-Macon College
Rice University
Robert Morris University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rochester University
Rocky Mountain College
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Rutgers University - Camden
Rutgers University New Brunswick
Saint Joseph’s University
Seattle University
Seton Hill University
Shawnee State University
Shenandoah University
Simmons University
South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
Southern Illinois University - Carbondale
Southern Illinois University - Carbondale, College of Business and Analytics
Southern Methodist University - Cox School of Business
Southern Wesleyan University
Spring Arbor University
Springfield College
St. Ambrose University
St. John Fisher College
St. Lawrence University
St. Mary’s College of Maryland
St. Norbert College
Stockton University
SUNY at Purchase College
Syracuse University
Tennessee State University
Tennessee Technological University
Texas A&M University-San Antonio
Texas Wesleyan University
Texas Woman’s University
The King’s College
The Ohio State University
The University of Alabama at Birmingham
The University of Southern Mississippi
The University of Texas at Austin - Engineering
The University of Tulsa - Collins College of Business
The University of West Alabama
Troy University
Tusculum University
University of Arizona
University of Arkansas
University of California - Berkeley
University of California - Santa Barbara
University of California, Riverside
University of Central Missouri
University of Connecticut, School of Business
University of Dallas
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Denver
University of Houston - C.T. Bauer College of Business
University of Houston - Downtown, Marilyn Davies College of Business
University of Idaho
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Illinois Springfield
University of Iowa
University of Kentucky
University of La Verne
University of Miami
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, College of Science and Engineering
University of Missouri - Columbia
University of Missouri-St. Louis
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
University of Nebraska at Kearney - College of Business & Technology
University of New Hampshire
University of North Carolina - Asheville
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
University of Oklahoma
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Pittsburgh at Bradford
University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
University of Redlands
University of Richmond
University of Saint Francis - Fort Wayne
University of San Diego
University of Scranton
University of Southern California
University of St. Thomas - St. Paul Campus
University of Tennessee - Knoxville
University of Tulsa
University of Utah
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh
University of Wisconsin - River Falls
University of Wisconsin - Stout
University of Wyoming
Upper Iowa University
Ursinus College
Utah State University
Vanguard University
Virginia Commonwealth University
Washburn University
Washington University in St. Louis
Wellesley College
West Texas A&M University
West Virginia University - John Chambers College of Business and Economics
West Virginia Wesleyan College
Western Colorado University
Westmont College
Whitworth University
Widener University
William & Mary
Wisconsin Lutheran College
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Wright State University
Xavier University
Youngstown State University