

Beyond Graduation Rates: Internships and Student Organization Engagement in the College of Business

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DATA FELLOWS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



Scanning the QR code on your mobile device will allow you to access electronic version of this Data Fellow's project.

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3. Open the website when it pops up on your screen.

Research Questions

Our team sought to answer one overarching research question: When measuring student success, can we measure student success beyond the attainment of specific graduation rate targets? To find an alternative outcome of student success, we ask:

- Are COB graduates employed?
- Does student engagement through internships and/or student organizations lead to employment satisfaction?
- Do internships lead to job offers or job placement prior to or after graduation?
- Are COB graduates satisfied in their jobs?

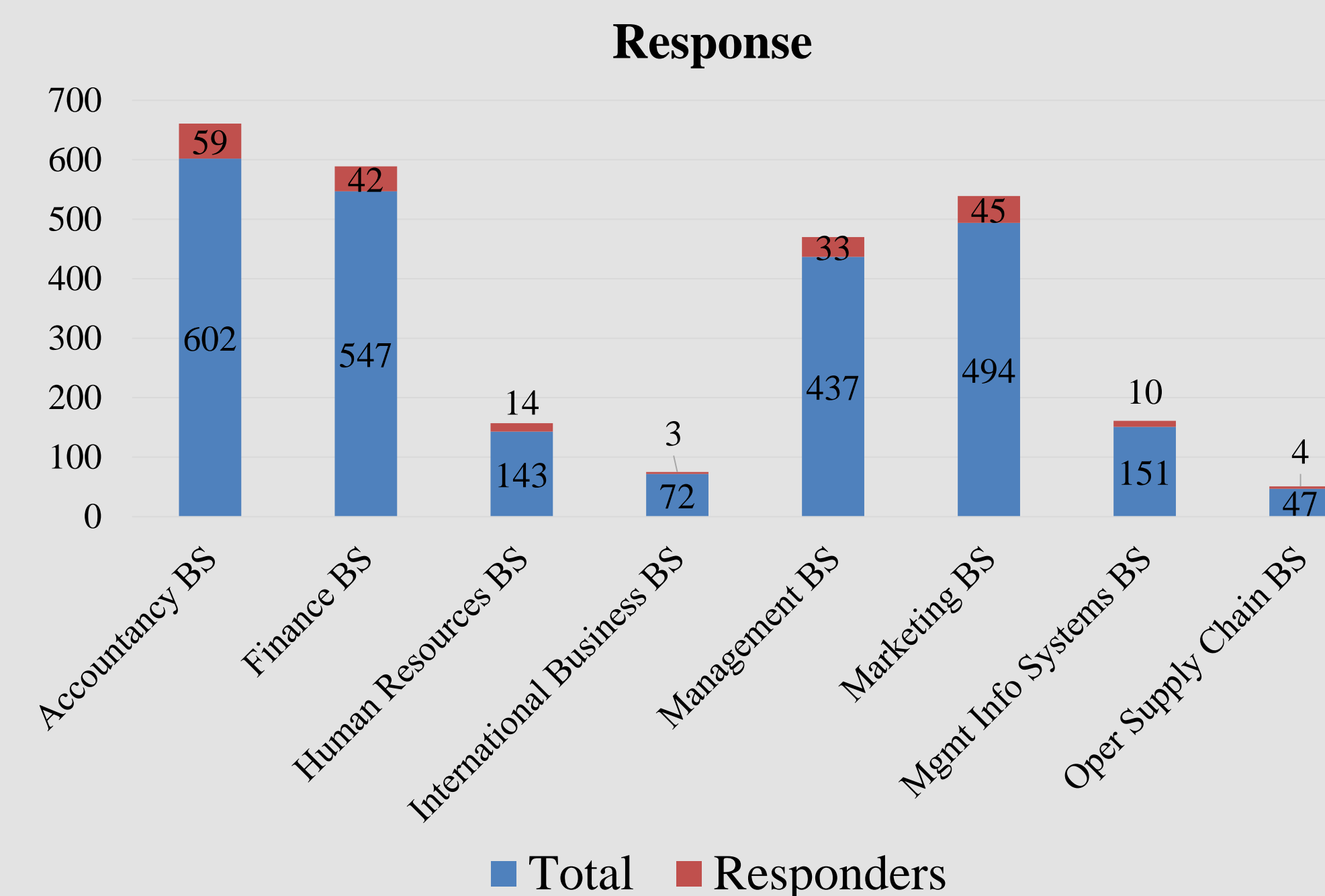
Introduction

The inspiration for the research questions came from the main theme of this year's Data Fellows. A lot of attention has been given to improving graduation rates, tallied by years to graduation. In addition, there are other pressures forcing students to streamline their progress to degree, namely the Associate Degree for Transfer and the 120 unit degree limitation. While at a state university, this approach to saving tax payer money is reasonable, many faculty are uncomfortable with a fact that students have little opportunity to explore additional experiences unless they are explicitly built into the program. In addition, for the College of Business, future employers of our students stress the importance of these experiences and the skills they develop in our students. Anecdotally, we are informed that students value internships, involvement in student organizations, and other experiences. This project aims to examine the value of these in a more systematic manner. Our approach was to survey recent alumni about the levels of engagement while at CSULB and about their careers and job satisfaction.

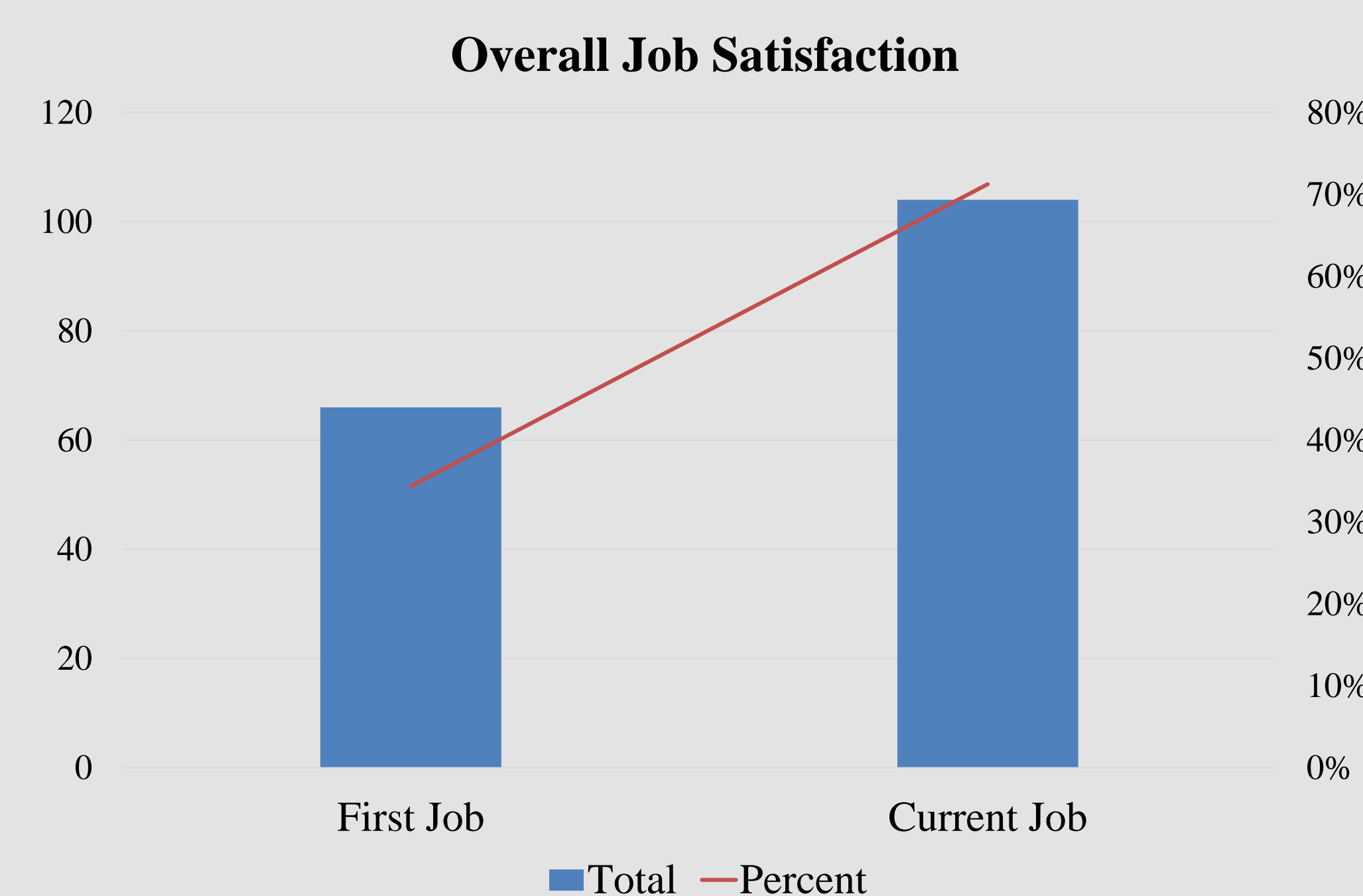
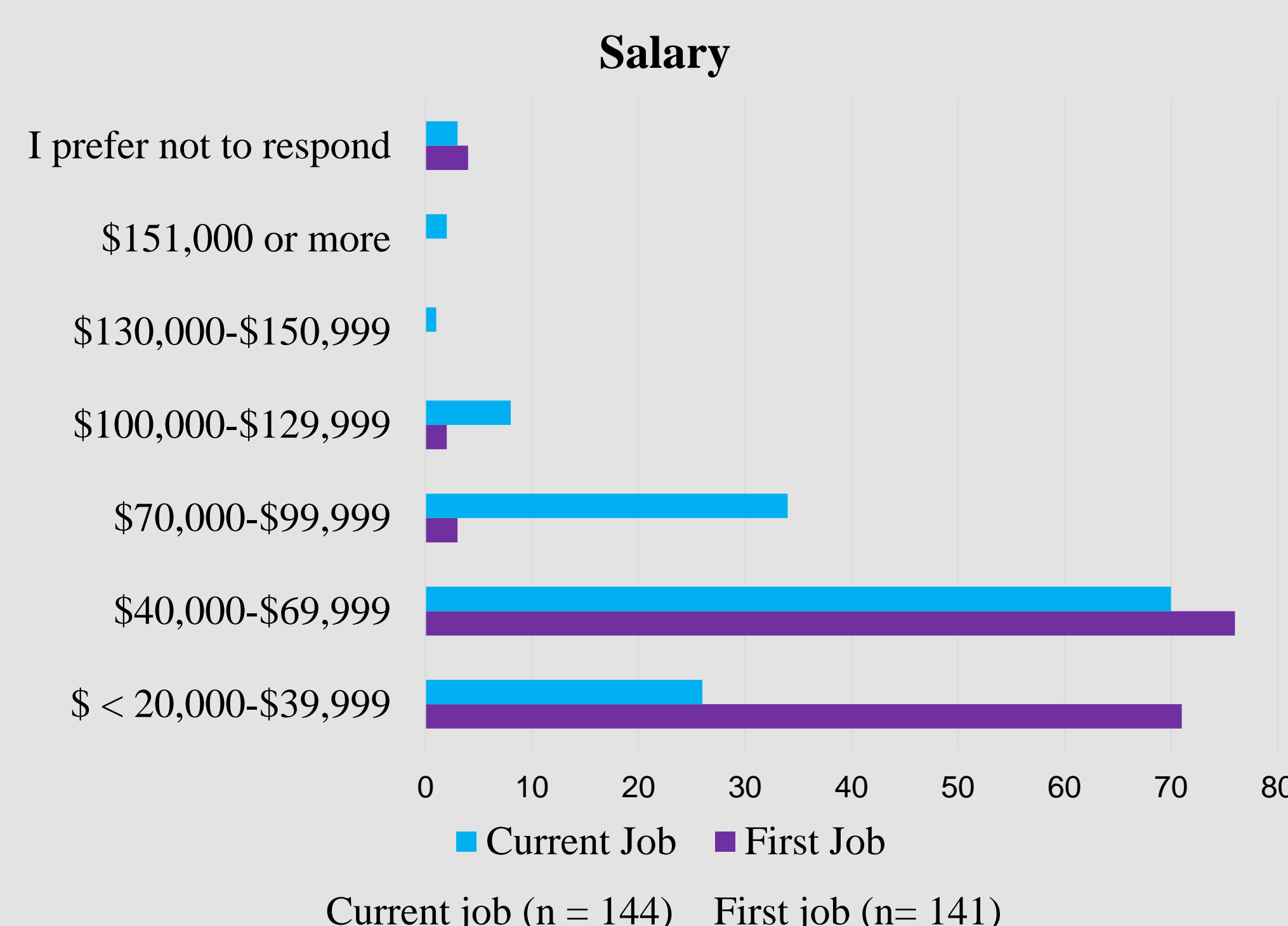
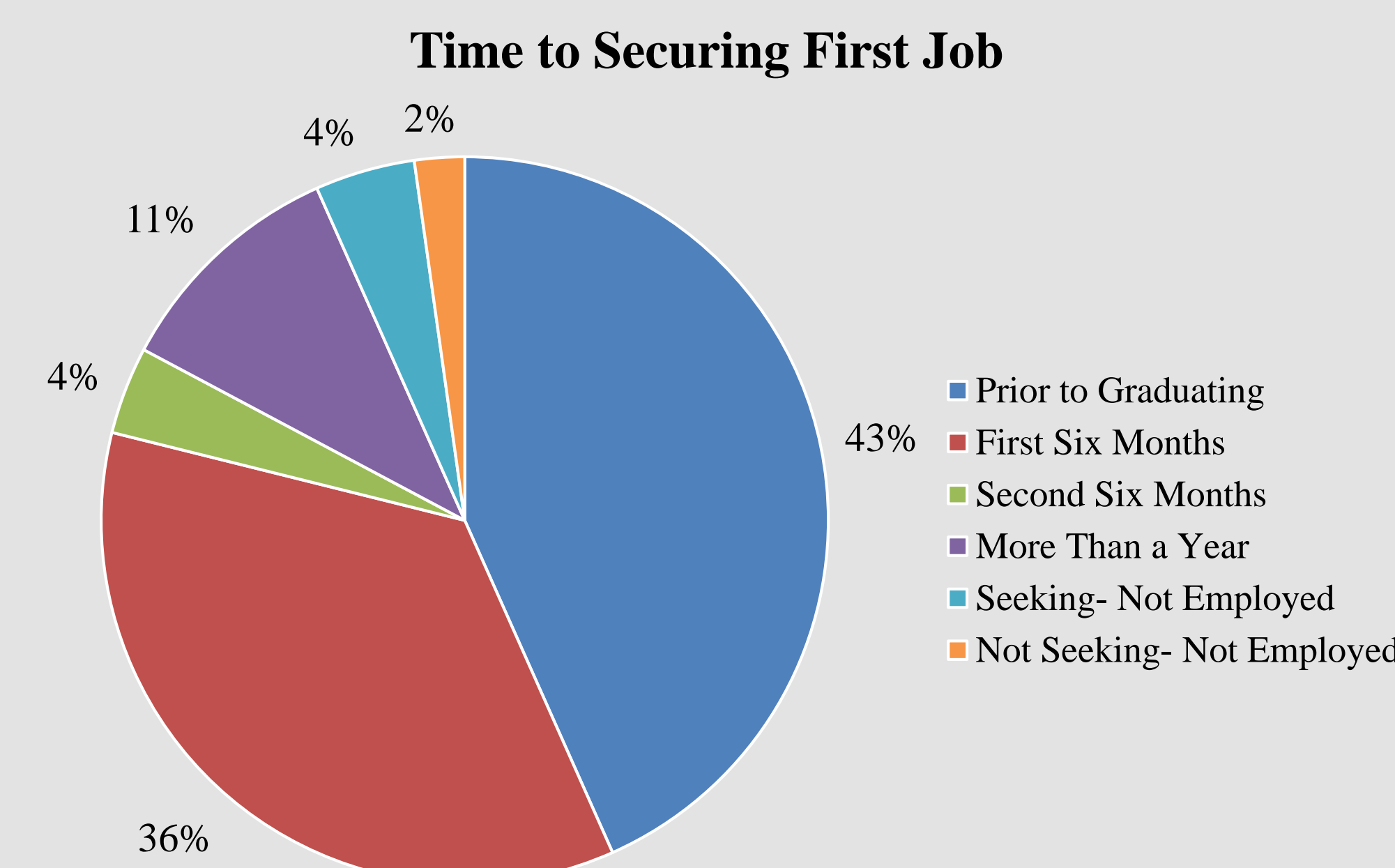
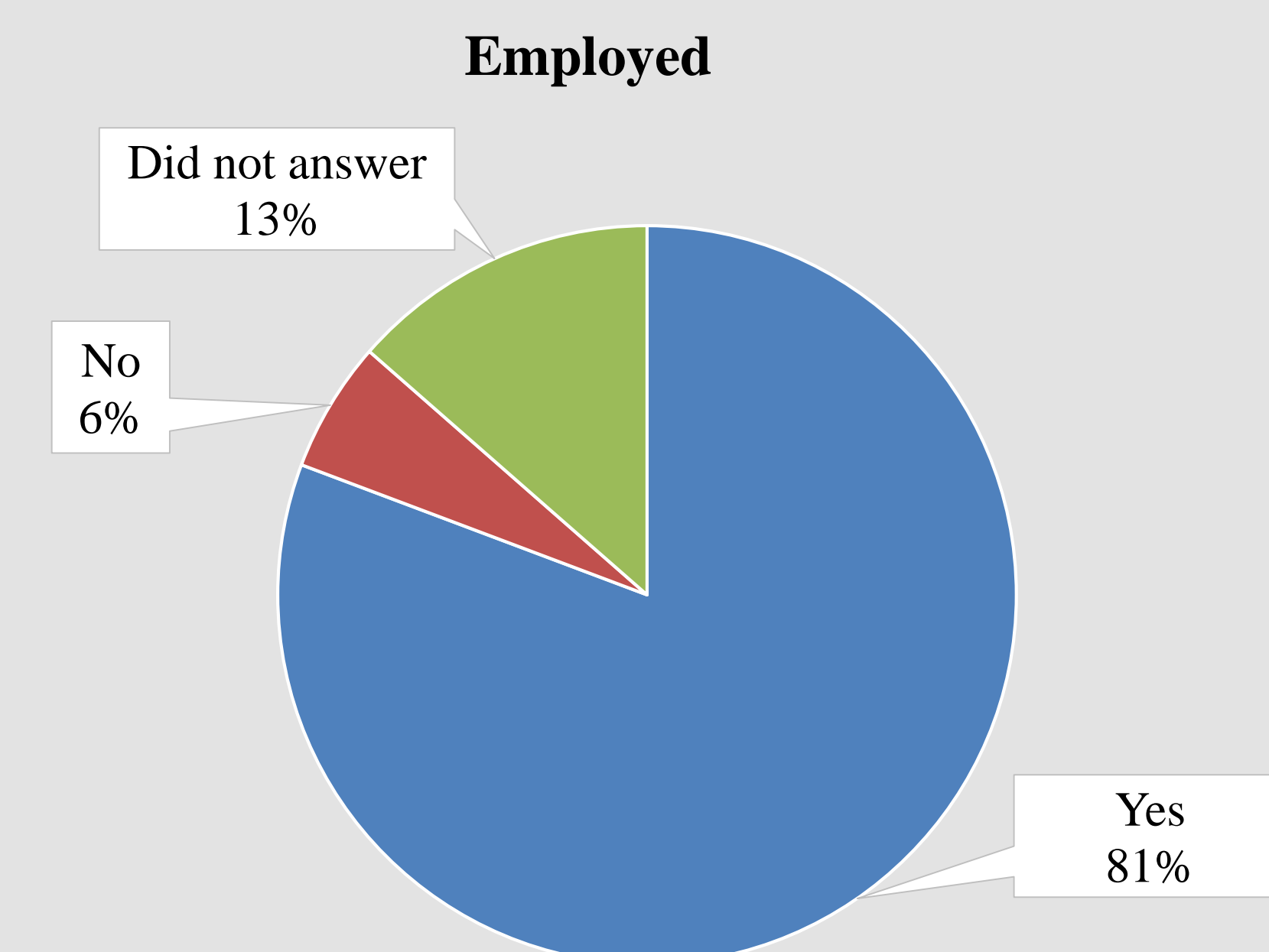
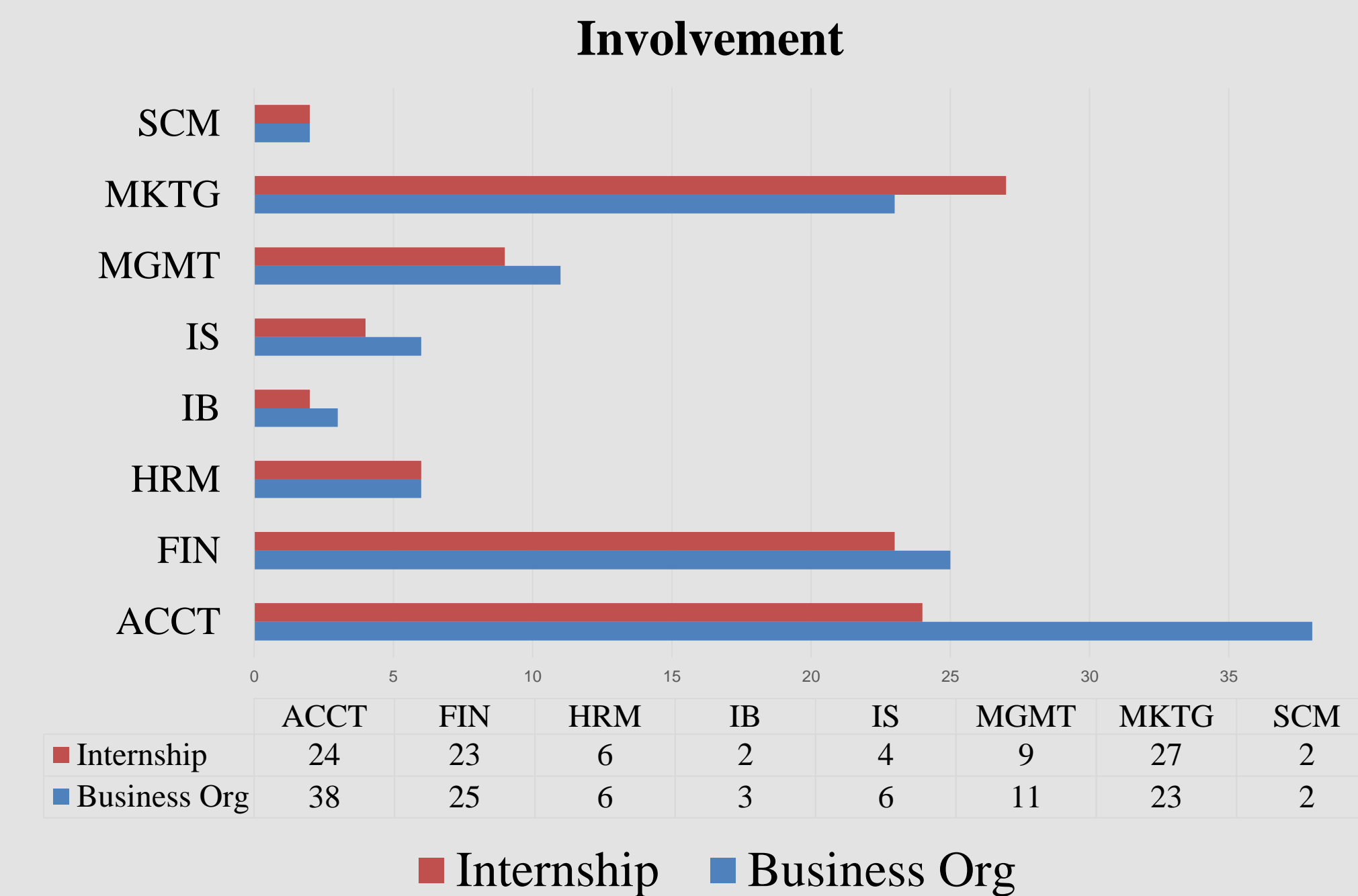
Methods

01. Identified alumni cohorts to survey using Beach Data (Tableau)
02. Conducted literature review that included research articles on the impact internships have on students.
03. Researched published job satisfaction survey instruments and identified variables for job satisfaction scale.
04. Built master Qualtrics survey to disseminate to alumni with IRB approval.
05. Identified alumni that participated in experiential courses through CMS (i.e. ACCT 352, CBA 493, FIN 499A).
06. Disseminated survey to alumni based on major and course participation.
07. Used SPSS to run regression & correlation analysis on survey results.
08. Analyzed and evaluated results based on team hypotheses.

Results



A total of 2,493 alumni were surveyed by email. 210 surveys were returned (8% response rate).



Conclusion / Discussion

- Our results found that the majority of our respondents are employed and found employment either while still at CSULB or within the first six months of graduation.
- Results were inconclusive regarding participation in an internship and job placement/satisfaction. However, we were able to establish a positive relationship between student participation in a business organization and career satisfaction.
- We determined that over 80% of internships obtained by our graduates were paid.
- Students participating in at least one internship also reported being employed while studying at CSULB. Of those employed, 70% reported working 11-30 hours per week.
- Majority of graduates reported that both first and current positions were related to their field of study at CSULB.
- 63% of respondents reported that they found their internship through means outside of the College.
- 71.3% of our respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with their current job.

Implications for Action

- It is important to our College and stakeholders to find where students are after graduation. Findings show students that their time in the College of Business will result in tangible career benefits.
- Findings suggest that graduation rates are an incomplete picture of student success. A link between student engagement and career outcomes may help other colleges improve student participation in major-related student organizations to promote future career satisfaction.
- Findings indicate that closer collaboration amongst student leaders, faculty, advising staff, and the Student Center for Professional Development is needed in order to increase student engagement.
- Our College needs to develop creative approaches to accommodate students with limited access to campus/resources in order to fully participate in co-curricular experiences.

Next Steps / Future Directions

- Fellows will share survey results with COB faculty and Student Center for Professional Development. Distribute survey to students participating in our mentoring programs and share survey with mentors. Additional survey data we would like to incorporate into future iterations of this survey:
- What skills did you learn in your internship or your organization that you did not learn in class?
 - Did participation in an internship lead to first job?
 - What specific skills have you learned at CSULB that have helped you in your career?
 - What skills did you wish you had learned while at CSULB?
 - A measure of self-efficacy as a control variable.