

Sources of career advice

Report by Institutional Research, Assessment, and Policy Studies (IRAPS)

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The UCSC First Destination Survey is administered to all graduating seniors throughout the year. A collaborative effort by IRAPS and UCSC's Career Center, the survey covers students' plans after graduation and their use of and satisfaction with the Career Center services. One of the recently added questions is about students discussing their career plans with various advisors and people in their social networks. Below we summarize the results from two cohorts of students who graduated in 2015/16 and 2016/17 (combined).¹

The major implication of our analysis is that students need to be more systematically encouraged to discuss career plans with faculty advisors and staff advisors. Even though as many as one in two students talked to instructors and faculty advisors about career plans, a third of graduates have *never* discussed their career plans with an UCSC faculty or staff advisor. Also, first generation students were less likely to discuss their career plans with instructors/faculty advisors but as likely as their peers to discuss their careers with staff advisors *and* with people in their social networks.

Overall findings are as follows (also Table 1):

- Two-thirds have discussed their career plans with advisors including faculty, major advisor, college advisor, and Career Center staff.
 - One in two students discussed their career plans with instructors and faculty advisors.
- The majority (80%) have discussed their career plans with their social networks including friends outside of UCSC, parents and/or other family members, UCSC students, and UCSC alumni.
 - Friends outside of UCSC and family members were the most common people students talked to about their plans.
- Only 8% of students did not discuss their career plans with anyone (either faculty, staff, friends or family).

Findings by Academic Division (also Table 2):

- Significant differences across the academic divisions were found in the proportion of students who spoke with their academic advisors about career plans. However, students in all academic divisions were similarly likely to seek career advice from their social networks.
 - More Humanities and Arts majors (58%-60%) discussed their career plans with *instructors and faculty advisors* than did SOE students (38%).

¹ Results only include spring quarter graduates.

- More students in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts, and those with double majors² (33-37%) discussed their career plans with their *major advisors* than did SOE students (18%).
 - More Humanities, PSci, and Social Sciences majors (18-24%) discussed their career plans with *Career Center advisors* than did SOE students (9%).
 - SOE students were significantly less likely to speak with *any one advisor*, mentioned above, compared to students in *all* other divisions: 52% of SOE students vs. 65-73% in other divisions and double majors.
 - SOE students were as likely as students in other divisions to discuss their career plans with people within their social networks.
- Some differences in transfer students' experiences: while transfer students and first time freshmen were similarly likely to discuss their career plans with faculty and staff advisors, transfer students were less likely to do so within their social networks.

Findings by students' background characteristics

- Gender. Men were less likely to discuss career plans with Career Center advisors *and* with people within their social networks.
- First generation status. First generation students compared to their peers were less likely to discuss career plans with instructors and faculty advisors (44% versus 52% of non-first generation peers). They were as likely to discuss their plans with other advisors and within their social networks.
- EOP status. No differences were found.
- Ethnicity:
 - Asian American (40%) and Hispanic/Latinx (45%) students were significantly less likely to speak with faculty compared to White, non-Hispanic (56%) students.
 - Hispanic/Latinx (15%) and White, non-Hispanic (16%) students were significantly less likely to speak with the Career Center advisors compared to Asian American students (24%).
 - No differences by ethnic background in students speaking about their career plans with major advisors, college advisors, or people within their social networks.

² In this report "double majors" refers to students with two majors in different academic divisions.

Table 1. Have you discussed your career plans during your studies at UCSC with any of the following? (Select all that apply)		
	%	n=1,611
Instructors and faculty advisors	49%	785
Major advisor	28%	458
College advisor	21%	332
Career Center advisor	18%	292
At least 1 of the above advisors	66%	1065
All 4 advisor types	3%	54
Resource Center staff (i.e., EOP, STARS, Ethnic Resource Centers, LSS, etc.)	6%	95
Other staff at UCSC	6%	91
Friends outside of UCSC	70%	1120
Parents or other family members	66%	1063
UCSC students	56%	535
UCSC alumni	26%	415
At least 1 of the above social networks	80%	1288
All 4 social networks	9%	142
Other	1%	20
No one	8%	136

Table 2. Have you discussed your career plans during your studies at UCSC with any of the following? (Select all that apply)							
By Academic Division							
	Humanities	Arts	SocSci	PBSci	SOE	Double Majors³	Total
Instructors and faculty Advisors	58%	60%	48%	49%	38%	52%	49%
Major Advisors	37%	33%	29%	27%	18%	36%	28%
Career Center Advisors	20%	12%	18%	24%	9%	19%	18%
Social Networks	81%	74%	80%	80%	81%	80%	80%
Total N	169	90	641	388	223	100	1611

³ Students with two majors in different academic divisions.