



What Do Economics Majors Do? Report on Job Market Outcomes for Economics Majors, January 2018

To better assess outcomes for TCNJ Economics majors, the Economics Department together with the TCNJ School of Business staff compiled outcomes data for graduates over the last 20 years. We began with data from the TCNJ Registrar and ran online searches for graduates' information, primarily using LinkedIn. During this period, 291 students graduated with a major in Economics. We were ultimately able to locate information 190 of these 291 graduates (65%), however, the percentage was significantly higher for recent graduates. We have summarized the data in a series of tables.

Table 1 shows advanced degree attainment (i.e., any degree beyond a bachelor's degree) and internship rates for economics majors. Across the entire sample, 52% of graduates completed an internship. Internship rates for the 2001-05 cohort are quite low. This may simply be reflection of the elapsed time since graduation. As graduates become more established in their careers, they may no longer see the need to include internship information in their online dossiers. For our data, internship completion rates rise over time and for the most recent cohort (classes of 2016 and 2017), 79% of graduates completed an internship. This internship completion rate does not vary with advanced degree attainment.

Table 1 also shows that 36% of graduates attained an advanced degree. For the 2001-05 cohort, 46% of graduates attained an advanced degree. This number rises to 55% for the 2006-2010 cohort before falling to 32% for the 2011-15 cohort. The drop in advanced degree attainment for the most recent cohort likely reflects the time required to complete a degree.

Table 2 reports that for the entire sample 25% graduates accepted a position at the firm where they completed an internship and 61% of graduates accepted a position at a firm in the same industry group as the firm at which they completed their internship. Firm-level matches are initially quite low – only 5% for the 2006-10 cohort. The two more recent cohorts show significantly higher rates of firm-level matching. This may reflect higher quality internship experiences from the student's viewpoint or economics graduates may be more desirable from the firm's viewpoint. The sample size for the 2001-05 cohort was simply too small to report. In contrast with firm-level matches, the industry-level matching is relatively stable over time.

Table 3 reports advanced degree attainment by advanced degree type, undergraduate degree type, and cohort. For the full sample, the most common advanced degrees are law (J.D. 29%), master's (23%), and MBA (22%). The M.D. and Ph.D. degrees are far less common (7%). The most recent cohort, however, shows significantly higher percentages of M.D. and Ph.D. degrees even though



these degrees take longer to complete than a typical master's or J.D. degree. The percentage of students completing law degrees falls over time. This may simply reflect weak employment opportunities in the legal field. MBA and Master's degrees show reverse trends; MBA attainment rises then falls while Master's attainment falls then rises. Comparing across the final two columns, economics BA graduates are more likely to complete a MD or a master's degree than economics BS graduates, BS graduates are more likely to complete a MBA. We see little clear difference in Ph.D. and JD completion across the economics BA and BS graduates.

Table 4 reports current employment by industry for economics majors by graduation year. The most common industry sector for economics graduates is financial services. Across the entire sample, 36% of graduates currently work in financial services. Examining financial services employment by cohort, we see that in recent years the percentage employed in financial services has risen to 46% from employment levels in the mid to upper 30s. However, among financial services employees, advanced degrees are less common. Only 20% of advanced degree holders in our sample work in financial services. By contrast, 45% of those without an advanced degree work in financial services.

The second most common industry sector for economics graduates based on current employment is government/non-profit (including education). Across the entire sample, 24% of graduates currently work in government/non-profit. Examining government/non-profit employment by cohort we see no real trend. However, among government/non-profit employees, advanced degrees more common. Thirty-nine percent of advanced degree holders in our sample work in government/non-profit. By contrast, 15% of those without an advanced degree work in government/non-profit. Finally, we note that employment in health care and manufacturing, 7% and 8% of employment across the sample, has been falling over time.

Table 5 reports the proportion of economics majors with analyst and managerial positions by graduation year and advanced degree attainment. For the full sample, 24% of graduates reported a current position with analyst in the title, while 30% reported a current position as a manager, director, vice-president, or partner. (Account managers were not included in the count.) Looking across cohorts, the percentage reporting an analyst position falls over time while the percentage reporting a current position as a manager, director, vice-president, or partner rises. Fifty-four percent of the oldest cohort (2001-05) report a current position as a manager, director, vice-president, or partner. This figure declines to zero in the youngest cohort (2016-17). By contrast, 50% of the youngest cohort report a position with analyst in the title while 11% of the oldest cohort report a position with analyst in the title.

More generally, analysts are less likely to hold an advanced degree while managers, directors, vice-presidents, and partners are more likely to hold an advanced degree. Of course, some of this



difference may be the simple result of age. Younger cohorts are less likely to have an advanced degree because of the time it takes to complete the degree. Likewise, promotions to manager or partner also occur over time. Consequently, we compare the percentage that report analyst and the percentage that report manager, director, vice-president, or partner positions by cohort for those with and without an advanced degree.

In the oldest cohort, 67% of graduates with an advanced degree report positions as a manager, director, vice-president, or partner while 42% of graduates without an advanced degree report a position as a manager, director, vice-president, or partner. No graduates in the oldest cohort with an advanced degree report an analyst position while 21% without an advanced degree report an analyst position. We see similar differences in the 2006-10 cohort, though they are not as large. In the youngest cohort, once again, advanced degree holders are less likely to report analyst positions (compared to those without advanced degrees). However, advanced degree holders are also less likely to report manager, director, vice-president, or partner positions. This is likely because the advanced degree holders have spent little time in the workforce (compared to those without an advanced degree). All evidence suggests that this percentage will rise over time relative to those without an advanced degree.

Table 6 shows employment transitions between industries for graduates that report at least two positions. Here, we compare initial employment by industry with current employment by industry. Rows must add to one. The row shows the proportion of graduates that had initial employment in industry i that now have current employment in industry j . Thus, row 1, column 1 indicates that 79% of graduates who took their first position in financial services have a current position in financial services. Row 1 column 2 shows that of the graduates who took their first position in financial services, 7% are now working in health care, etc.

While rows must sum to one, columns may sum to values that are either greater or less than one. If the column sum is greater than one, graduates gravitate toward those industries between their initial and current position. Column sums less than one indicate that graduates move away from those industries between their initial and current positions. Thus, graduates move away from consulting, energy/utilities, health care, and retail and graduates move toward financial services, manufacturing, information technology, and government/non-profit.

Table 7 compares outcomes for BA and BS degree holders. Across the entire sample, BS degree holders were more likely to complete an internship (55% versus 44%) and hold an analyst position (30% versus 14%) than BA degree holders. However, BA degree holders were slightly more likely to hold an advanced degree. There was little difference in the proportion that held a manager/director/VP/partner position (30% versus 31%). Moving down the table, we see that the



internship and analyst comparisons (more for BS degree holders) hold up across cohorts. The manager/director and advanced degree comparisons do not hold up across cohorts.

The final table (Table 8) shows that BA degree holders are much less likely to work in financial services (28% versus 41%) than BS degree holders. By contrast, BA degree holders are much more likely to work in government/nonprofit/other (33% versus 17%) than BS degree holders. Other current employment differences between BA and BS degree holders are too small to warrant mention.



Table 1. Graduate School and Internship Rates for Economics Majors by Graduation Year and Advanced Degree Attainment

	Internship	Advanced Degree
Full Sample (n=190)	0.52	0.36
Graduated 2001-05 (n=26)	0.038	0.46
Graduated 2006-10 (n=42)	0.48	0.55
Graduated 2011-15 (n=79)	0.71	0.32
Graduated 2016-17 (n=28)	0.79	
If Advanced Degree (n=69)	0.49	
If No Advanced Degree (n=121)	0.53	
If Advanced Degree & class > 2004 (n=51)	0.65	
If No Advanced Degree & class > 2004 (n=102)	0.64	

Table 2. Firm and Industry Matches for Economics Majors with Internships by Year

	Internship firm and first job match	Internship industry and first job match
Full Sample (n=99)	0.25	0.61
Graduated 2006-10 (n=20)	0.05	0.55
Graduated 2011-15 (n=56)	0.32	0.62



Graduated 2016-17 (n=28)

0.27

0.59

Table 3. Graduate School Type for Economics Majors

	Full Sample (n=69)	2001-05 (n=12)	2006-10 (n=23)	2010-15 (n=25)	BA (n= 24)	BS (n = 42)
MD	0.07	0	0	0.16	0.12	0
JD	0.29	0.58	0.26	0.20	0.33	0.29
MBA	0.22	0.08	0.39	0.12	0.04	0.33
Master's	0.23	0.25	0.17	0.24	0.33	0.19
Ph.D.	0.07	0.08	0.04	0.12	0.08	0.05

Table 4. Current Employment by Industry for Economics Majors by Graduation Year

	Overall (n=190)	2001-05 (n=26)	2006-10 (n=42)	2011-15 (n=79)	2016-17 (n=28)	If Advanced Degree (n=69)	If No Advanced Degree (n=121)
Financial Services	0.36	0.38	0.31	0.35	0.46	0.20	0.45
Health Care	0.07	0.15	0.07	0.06	0	0.13	0.04
Consulting	0.03	0	0.05	0	0.04	0.01	0.03
Real Estate	0.02	0	0.02	0.01	0	0.03	0.01
Retail	0.06	0	0.11	0.06	0.07	0.01	0.09



Logistics	0.02	0	0.02	0.01	0.07	0	0.03
Manufacturing	0.08	0	0.14	0.09	0.04	0.10	0.07
Energy/Utilities	0.01	0.04	0	0	0	0.01	0.01
Information Technology	0.08	0.09	0.05	0.1	0.07	0.09	0.09
Government/Nonprofit/Other	0.24	0.08	0.21	0.26	0.18	0.39	0.15

Table 5. Proportion of Economics Majors with Analyst and Managerial Positions by Graduation Year and Advanced Degree Attainment

	Analyst	Manager/Director/VP/ Partner
Full Sample (n=190)	0.24	0.30
Graduated 2001-05 (n=26)	0.11	0.54
Graduated 2006-10 (n=42)	0.14	0.50
Graduated 2011-15 (n=79)	0.26	0.14
Graduated 2016-17 (n=28)	0.50	0
If Advanced Degree (n=69)	0.13	0.36
If No Advanced Degree (n=121)	0.30	0.26
If Advanced Degree & 2001-05 (n=12)	0	0.67
If No Advanced Degree & 2001-05 (n=14)	0.21	0.42
If Advanced Degree & 2006-10 (n=23)	0.09	0.52



If No Advanced Degree & 2006-10 (n=19)	0.21	0.47
If Advanced Degree & 2011-15 (n=25)	0.20	0.04
If No Advanced Degree & 2011-15 (n=54)	0.30	0.19

Table 6. Employment Transitions Between Industries for Economics Graduates Reporting Two or More Positions

		Current Employment							
		Financial Services	Health Care	Consulting	Retail	Manufacturing	Energy/Utilities	Information Technology	Government /Nonprofit/ Other
Initial Employment	Financial Services	0.79	0.07	0	0	0	0.04	0.11	0
	Health Care	0	0.50	0	0.17	0.17	0	0	0.17
	Consulting	0.43	0.14	0	0.14	0	0	0.14	0.14
	Retail	0	0	0.33	0.17	0	0	0.33	0.17
	Manufacturing	0	0	0	0	0.80	0	0.20	0



Energy/Utilities	0	0	0	0.25	0.50	0.25	0	0
Information Technology	0.11	0	0.11	0	0.22	0	0.22	0.33
Government/Nonprofit/Other	0.18	0.07	0.07	0.02	0.07	0	0.11	0.48

Table 7. Outcomes by Degree Type (BA versus BS)

	BA	BS
Full Sample (BA = 64 & BS = 122)		
Internship	0.44	0.55
Advanced Degree	0.38	0.34
Analyst	0.14	0.30
Manager/Director/VP/Partner	0.30	0.31
Graduated 2001-05 (BA = 7 & BS =19)		
Internship	0	0.05



Advanced Degree	0.43	0.47
Analyst	0	0.16
Manager/Director/VP/Partner	0.28	0.63
Graduated 2006-10 (BA = 16 & BS = 26)		
Internship	0.38	0.54
Advanced Degree	0.44	0.61
Analyst	0.06	0.19
Manager/Director/VP/Partner	0.50	0.50
Graduated 2011-15 (BA = 27 & BS = 49)		
Internship	0.59	0.77
Advanced Degree	0.41	0.24
Analyst	0.15	0.35
Manager/Director/VP/Partner	0.15	0.14

Table 8. Current Employment by Industry for Economics Majors by Degree Type

	BA (n = 64)	BS (n = 122)
Financial Services	0.28	0.41
Health Care	0.06	0.07



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Consulting	0.03	0.02
Real Estate	0.03	0.08
Retail	0.05	0.07
Logistics	0.03	0.02
Manufacturing	0.06	0.09
Energy/Utilities	0	0.02
Information Technology	0.09	0.09
Government/Nonprofit/Other	0.33	0.17