Executive Summary

William Jewell College First-Destination Survey 2025

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The 2025 First-Destination Survey was administered from October 2025 through January 2026. For this survey, the 2025 graduating class is defined as those who graduated in December 2024, May 2025, and July 2025. A Microsoft Forms online questionnaire sent via email was the primary method of contact. Additionally, phone calls, social media contacts, text messages, and faculty contacts were made in an attempt to secure accurate email addresses and core graduate data. Several attempts were made with non-responders to achieve an 84% knowledge rate that includes a 50% survey response rate. Similar to previous reports, below are the definitions that are used in this report and also are aligned with the Standards and Protocols of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).

- Knowledge Rate – Percent of graduates for which the institution has reasonable and verifiable information concerning the graduates' basic post-graduation career activities. This reflects the approach of going beyond simply relying on a survey for obtaining outcomes information.
- Career Outcome Rate – Percent of graduates who are engaged in a career outcome, which includes both full- and part-time work, as well as engagement in a program of continuing education.

The data is presented in spreadsheet and summary format. Spreadsheet format displays data sorted by tabs into categories: alpha, major, employer, institution, job hunters, address, comments, internships, and no response.

Trends

For 2025 graduates, the career outcome rate continues to be in the upper nineties – this year 98.9%. A majority of graduates (68%) are employed within 6-9 months of graduation and 30% are enrolled in graduate school. Students in graduate programs rate their satisfaction high, with this year being at 97%. Graduates' job satisfaction is at 80% and perception that their job relates to their academic major is at 72%. For those employed, 75% are working in-person, 14% are working hybrid, and 11% are working remotely. The percentage for remote work is higher than usual this year, and the number working hybrid continues to align with the trend that NACE research has found that "hybrid work is here to stay" and "employers are expecting about half of their workforce to be hybrid." Many of the positions graduates obtained align with the region's top employing and largest growth industries as listed in the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development 2025 Economic Report for the KC region.

Additionally, graduates continue to report preparedness for critical thinking and problem solving. 89% reported that their jobs required them to use specific critical thinking skills (whose job was their primary career outcome). 93% reported being "very prepared" or "prepared" to perform the critical thinking required for their jobs. 97% reported being "very prepared" or "prepared" to problem solve in their workplace. If looking at this critical thinking figure for all responders, not simply ones whose job was their primary

career outcome, 94% (81/86) reported being "very prepared" or "prepared" to perform the critical thinking required for their jobs. Often, these skills are expressed, not only after a graduate is hired, but also before, as new graduates are in a hiring environment that is described by NACE as increasingly using skill-based hiring practices.

Variations

The average salary of Jewell students is $55,768. Fluctuation with starting salaries at Jewell can be noted from year to year.

Data on the national level indicates it was an especially challenging job market in 2025. According to NACE, Members of the Class of 2025 (13,684 college students nationally) received fewer offers than those graduating with the Class of 2024 and compared to earlier classes, graduates were "more likely to say they were unsure about their plans." This national trend may be a correlation to slightly lower percentages this year with rates related to job satisfaction, perception that job relates to major, and an increase in those job hunting (even if a career outcome was obtained). Of the 26% of respondents who considered themselves to be job hunters, all but two of them who filled out the survey have jobs or are enrolled in graduate school.

Caution

Data confidence depends on the knowledge rate and survey response rates. Motivating students to complete online surveys via email requires accurate email addresses, frequent reminders, resourcefulness in approach and ability to motivate the potential respondent. According to NACE, "Institutions should strive for a minimum knowledge rate of 65 percent." This year's knowledge rate of 84% provides some confidence in drawing sound assumptions and generalizations with regards to the core graduate data. The knowledge rate is most valuable for the most basic question of placement. The survey response rate is more valuable for the more detailed questions. Although substantial effort was made to secure viable email addresses, it is possible that non-responders comprise a significant group, which would impact conclusions.

Conclusion

The first-destination results show an early glimpse of career/income outcomes in a challenging job market and extremely fast changing environment. While this year's first-destination results have variations consistent with national trends, they continue to show the high career outcome rate, strong career outcomes, and student reported preparedness for critical thinking and problem solving that is consistent with past years.

Comparison Chart

Below are some comparative figures for the period of 2019 to 2024.

YEAR	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Knowledge Rate	84%	79%	82%	87%	85%	88%
Survey Response Rate	50%	42%	43%	47%	43%	54%
Career Outcome Rate*	98.9%	99.3%	98.7%	98.8%	99.4%	99%
Av. Starting Salary (FT)	$55,768	$58,721	$58,103	$52,189	$55,302	$46,859
Internships at Jewell	74%	73%	63%	67%	61%	56%
Employed	68%	70%	78%	84%	78%	85%
Employed FT	59%	62%	75%	77%	75%	72%

Employed PT	9%	8%	4%	6%	3%	12%
Grad School	30%	30%	19%	19%	29%	27%
Grad School FT	28%	30%	18%	14%	23%	25%
Grad School PT	2%	0%	1%	4%	6%	2%
Grad School Acceptance Pending	5%	20%	14%	19%	12%	13%
Grad School Acceptance Rate	97%	100%	96%	91%	100%	95%
Job Hunting	26%	11%	14%	18%	12%	8%

*Based on Knowledge Rate. Note: All other figures are based on survey response rate.