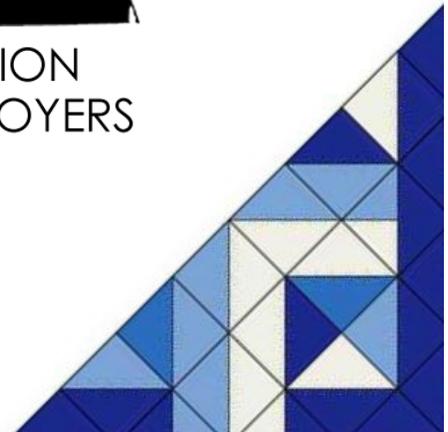


**Virginia Association of Colleges and Employers**  
**Member Quick Poll Results**  
Summer/Fall 2020



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION  
OF COLLEGES & EMPLOYERS

[vace.org](http://vace.org)



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## Introduction and Methodology

As colleges and employers prepare for the new academic year and make plans for Fall 2020 programs, advising, recruiting, and events, the VACE Professional Development Committee wanted to provide a broad picture of choices and challenges across our member institutions and organizations. The VACE Quick Poll Survey was created via Google Forms and modeled after similarly-motivated national surveys sent out this spring and summer by NACE. The survey was distributed to nearly 200 VACE members and affiliates via email on July 21, 2020 and closed on July 31, 2020. Survey results were analyzed and synthesized by Lynn Seuffert and Samara Reynolds from the VACE Professional Development Committee.

## Summary of Responses and Findings

Forty-five individual responses were received from six unique employers and 22 unique institutions of higher education.

**83% of employers' internship programs were impacted by COVID**, either in an inability to hire interns as planned, rescinding internship offers, delaying start dates, and moving planned in-person experiences remote.

Conversely, **no employers had to make major changes to full-time onboarding plans for any May 2020 graduates that had been extended offers** (revoking offers or delaying start dates), though not all respondents had May 2020 graduates in the hiring pipeline. For those onboarding new hires this summer/fall, there will be a mix of approaches regarding in-person, telework, and hybrid formats for their work, depending on the organization and role.

**86% of respondents plan to attend virtual career fairs this fall**, with one pending on their decision. Many will attend the same number of fairs as they would have in a normal academic year, with one recruiter planning to attend more fairs than usual.

**100% of respondents plan to readily give out their contact information to students and potential hires**, either as a new practice or as part of their regular recruiting strategy/approach.

**67% of employer organizations are restricting travel in some way for the upcoming year**, whether for recruiting activities, professional development, or both.

Multiple employer members mentioned hiring freezes at their organizations, and some mentioned concerns that virtual recruiting activities simply cannot replace the value of in-person engagement.

**86% of colleges will be hosting only virtual career fairs for Fall 2020**. None reported plans to host purely in-person fairs at this time.

**73% of colleges are not offering to host any other in-person recruiting activities on campus** (e.g., information sessions, on-campus interviews). The institutions willing to offer on-campus engagement mentioned having safety restrictions and practices in place, based on state, federal, and institutional guidance.

**46% of college respondents said their career services office would offer advising services completely online, while 54% said there would be hybrid service delivery for career advising** (some in-person, some virtual). No institution is currently offering in-person only advising services. For any in-person engagement, respondents mentioned wearing masks, social distancing, using larger-than normal spaces (ex: conference rooms, outside, library) instead of individual offices, cleaning and sanitizing protocols between appointments, and setting up lobby spaces with PPE including directional signs and plexiglass shields. Multiple people mentioned hoping students would take advantage of virtual appointments instead of in-person options, for maximum safety and comprehensive, seamless service.

**Most career services offices will use Zoom (90%) and Handshake (62%) to offer services and events virtually, including career fairs and appointments.** A total of 11 different platforms will be utilized across institutions to accomplish these goals. Career development workshops and programs will be offered in a variety of formats, with the most popular delivery options being live/synchronous online sessions, pre-recorded online sessions, passive programming and email/social media campaigns, specialized employer and program info sessions, and alumni engagement.

**Impacts on staffing and hiring (professional and student) varied widely** by institution size and type, with different schools noting hiring freezes, restrictions on student hiring, furloughs, and more. Some institutions have not had their ability to hire or retain staff impacted at this time.

**77% of offices are under travel restrictions, short-term or long term, at their institution,** including for professional development and/or employer relations.

**73% of colleges have career services staff returning to working in the office in some capacity (on rotations or full-time) on or before the start of fall classes.** 2 offices will remain fully virtual for the foreseeable future, and 4 were still deciding or waiting on institutional direction at the time of survey response.

The changes and impacts to career services offices' way of doing business as we head into Fall 2020 have caused stress and strain on a few different fronts. These shifts and sense of uncertainty are also forcing teams to remain flexible and nimble, and try new ways of reaching students and making a difference.

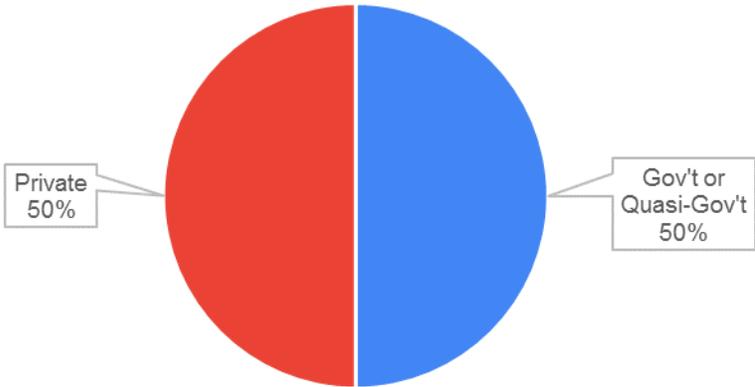
# Employer Member Responses

## Survey Participants

VACE received seven responses from six employers.

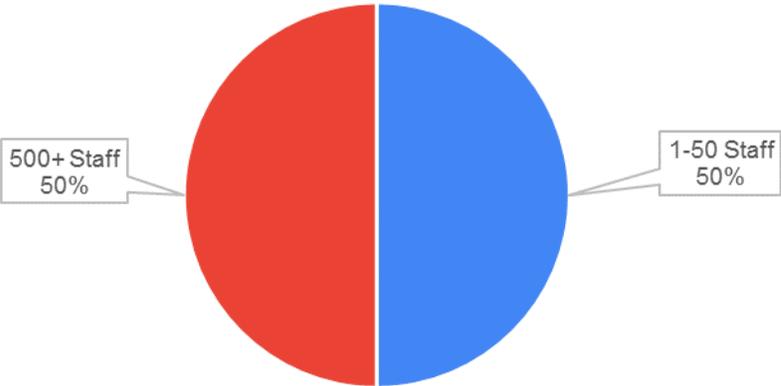
Three employers were government or quasi-governmental organizations. Three were private sector employers.

Type of Employer



Three employers had 1-50 staff members and three had 501+ staff members.

Size of Employer



## Responses

Question 1: Did you hire any interns for Summer 2020?

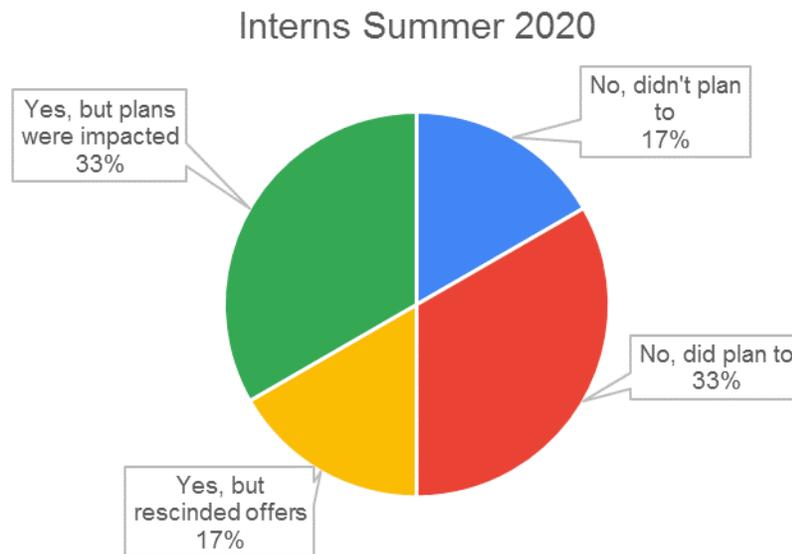
1 = No, but we hadn't planned to

2 = No, and we had planned to

1 = Yes, we hired interns, but then rescinded the offers due to COVID-19

1 = Yes, they are working remotely with delayed start or shorter duration

1 = Yes, some paid interns started on time; some interns hired later are working a combination of remote and in-person for academic credit



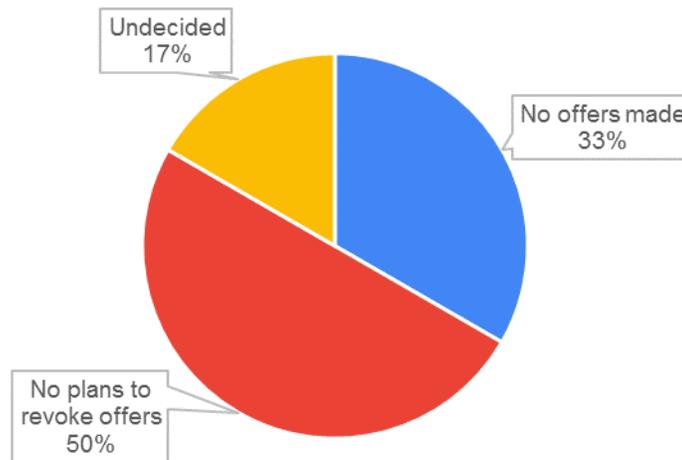
Question 2: Has your organization revoked or do you plan to revoke full-time offers to graduates from the Class of 2020?

3 = No we do not plan to revoke offers

1 = We are still deciding whether this will be a necessary step

2 = We did not hire any new employees from the Class of 2020

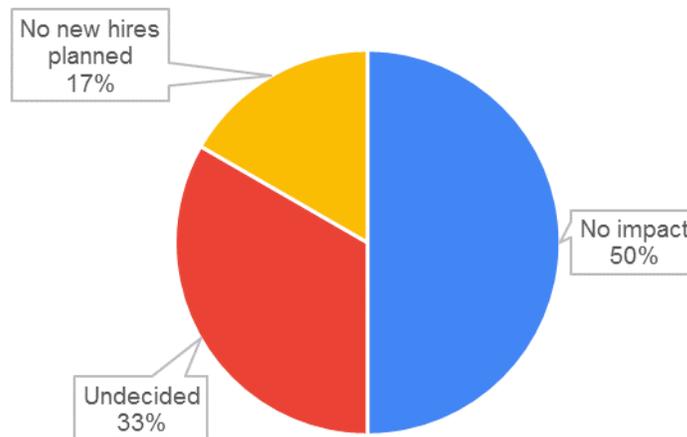
### Impact on Full-Time Offers



Question 3: Are you delaying start dates for new hires, including those recruited from the Class of 2020?

- 3 = No
- 2 = Decision pending
- 1 = N/A - we have not made any new hires in the past few months

### Impact on New Hire Start Dates



Question 4: For any new hires you have made or are in the process of making, do you plan to start full-time hires working remotely?

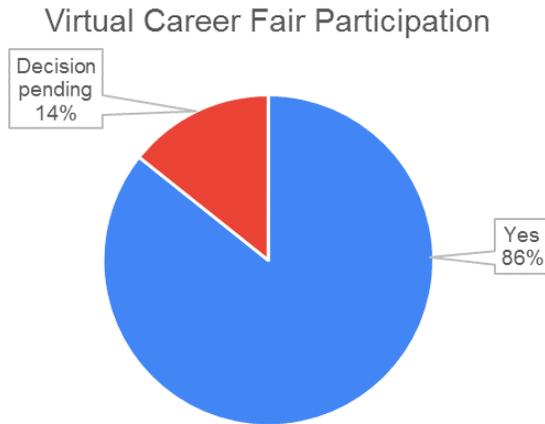
- 1 = No, the role will be fully in-person
- 1 = Yes, hybrid telework and in-person
- 2 = Depends on the job function; some will work hybrid telework and in-person; some positions will require in-person only
- 1 = Yes, new hires are working remotely at this time but once the office opens we will transition to in-person
- 1 = We have not made any new hires in the past few months

Question 5: Are you planning to participate in any virtual career fairs this upcoming academic year?

Because this question refers to each recruiter personally, we included all seven responses.

6 = Yes

1 = Decision pending



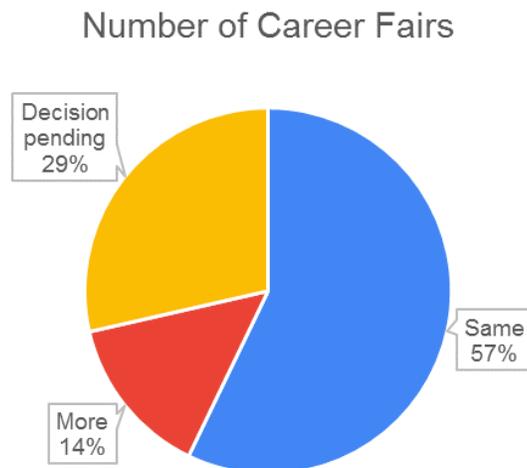
Question 6: Do you plan on attending more, fewer, or the same number of career fairs this year, knowing some may be virtual?

Because this question refers to each recruiter personally, we included all seven responses.

4 = I will attend the SAME number of career fairs as last year

1 = I will attend MORE fairs this year

2 = Decision still pending

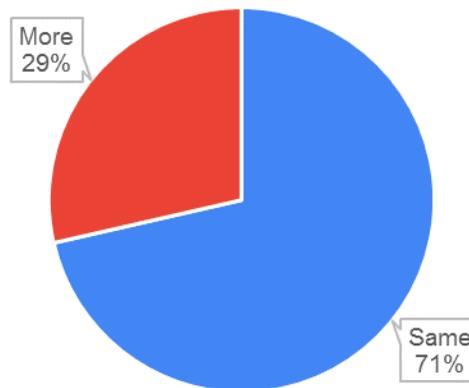


Question 7: Given the constraints on campus events and meetings, will you as a recruiting professional and employer representative be more or less open to giving students other means to contact you directly for networking purposes this year?

Because this question refers to each recruiter personally, we included all seven responses.

- 5 = Will give out my contact info regularly, as I always have
- 2 = More likely to give out my contact information than usual

### Likelihood of Disseminating Contact Info



Question 8: How is your office/organization approaching travel requests related to professional development and recruiting for the upcoming year?

- 1 = Travel costs are unrestricted at this time
- 1 = Travel is restricted but not necessarily for budget/cost reasons.
- 1 = Travel costs are being supported for recruiting purposes only (not for professional development)
- 1 = As of right now we are unable to attend any on-campus events this coming Fall but we will continue to review this
- 1 = Travel budgets are restricted through at least July 2021
- 1 = To be determined

Question 9: If not referenced above, how have current circumstances (and known or unknown economic impacts) impacted your recruiting strategy and planning for the academic year ahead, if at all?

*Three employers responded:*

This has been the time of the unknown and navigating uncharted waters! As local government, we have been on a hiring freeze (except for "essential positions") since March. We have had large candidate pools with quality candidates willing to work, which has been one positive outcome.

Hiring freeze due to budgetary impact caused by Covid-19. We will only hire positions that are essential. Internships will most likely be for academic credit (unless we have grant funding or programs that pay the students).

We will miss the opportunity to meet students in person! We have every intention of being on campus when invited, whenever it is deemed as appropriate by the college. The in-person component of our recruitment process is critical to the way we hire. Virtual won't replace that.

## Career Services/Higher Education Member Responses

### Survey Participants

VACE received 38 responses from 22 institutions of higher education.

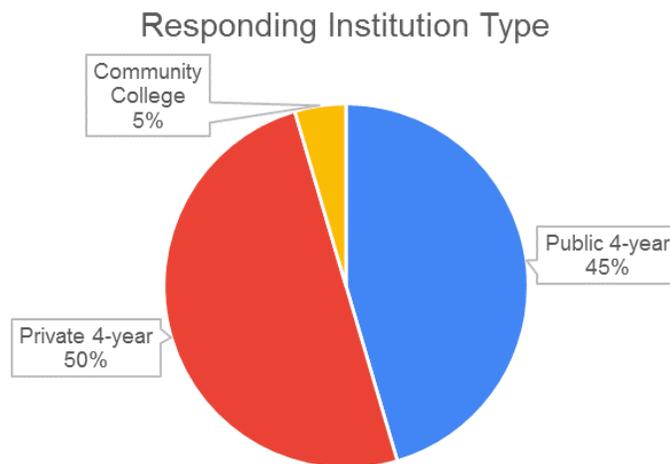
The institution type represented by the 38 respondents follows:

Institution Type	Number of Responses
Public 4-year	24
Private 4-year	13
Community College	1
Total	38

Within four-year institution participants, responses were received from centralized career services offices of all but one institution and from three school-level career services offices. Responses from other institution types were submitted by centralized career services offices.

The institution type of the 22 institutions follows:

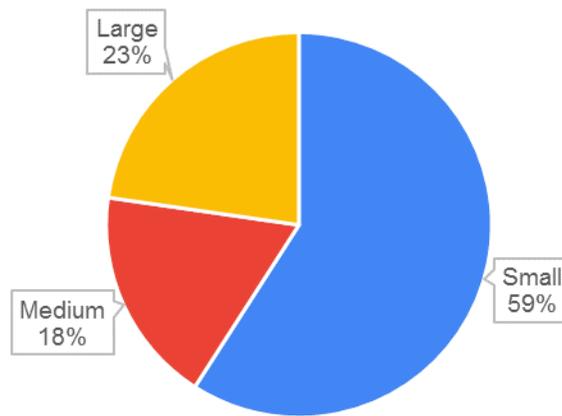
Institution Type	Number of Institutions
Public 4-year	10
Private 4-year	11
Community College	1
Total	22



Size of responding institutions

Institution Type	Number of Students	Number of Institutions
Public 4-year	Small (5,000 or fewer)	3
	Medium (5,001-15,000)	3
	Large (15,001 or more)	5
Private 4-year	Small (5,000 or fewer)	10
	Medium (5,001-15,000)	1
	Large (15,001 or more)	0
Community College	Medium (5,001-15,000)	1
Total		22

Responding Institution Size



**Responses**

Question 1: How are you planning to host career fairs this fall semester?

- 19 = All Virtual
- 1 = Hybrid (virtual and in-person options for the same fair)
- 2 = We will not be hosting any career fairs this fall

Question 2: Is your office planning to host employer partners for any other in-person recruiting activity this fall (on-campus interviews, information sessions, etc.)? If so, please share details of what options you will be offering on campus.

Of the 21 institutions that indicated that career fairs would be all virtual for fall semester or that they would not offer career fairs, three indicated that they would welcome employers in-person on campus, with restrictions on size of meetings and requirements for social distancing, masks, and tracking for future contact tracing if needed. Another responded that they were allowing

on-campus activities with employers, but that most employers have chosen virtual engagement options. Two others indicated that they had not yet decided. The 15 other institutions were not hosting employers on campus.

The institution that indicated they would offer hybrid career fairs responded that all other employer activities would occur virtually.

Question 3: If you are having employer partners come to campus, are you planning to have recruiters sign waivers related to COVID risk, contact tracing, etc.?

3 = Yes  
2 = Maybe

Question 4: How will your office deliver career advising services this fall?

On this question, three institutions had plans that varied between schools within the university and the centralized career services offices. Eleven institutions indicated they would deliver services using a hybrid options and eight indicated that all services would be delivered online.

In summation, 26 responses were included in this calculation, with 14 (54%) offering hybrid services and 12 (46%) offering online services only.

Question 5: If offering any in-person career advising (appointments, drop-ins, etc.), please share details of how you are planning to adequately protect advisors and students (ex: social distancing options, personal protective equipment (PPE), etc.)?

All responses are included below, lightly edited. If more than one respondent from the same institution commented, those comments are combined into a single paragraph, separated by ellipses.

All students and faculty/staff are required to wear masks at all times except when alone in their own offices. Meetings must be arranged in advance and all parties will abide by the social distancing requirements in place as mandated at that time.

We plan to make use of large meeting spaces that will allow for appropriate distancing and dual displays for individual appointments. Our office lobby and public spaces have been reconfigured to offer the same. . . . We are encouraging students to do virtual appointments, but for those that request an in-person appointment, we are using our larger interview rooms that allow for 2 people to stay 6 feet apart and there is a TV screen for projection. Both the student and the advisor will wear a mask throughout the meeting and all surfaces will be cleaned after the meeting.

Requiring masks, not sharing computers/devices, appropriate physical distance, strict cleaning/sanitizing protocols

Using all required precautions issued by the State of Virginia - 8' social distancing - limited #s of people using the office, PPE, signage, sneeze guards. . . . According to all local, regional, and national standards including social distancing, PPE, etc.

Has not been determined yet - will follow campus guidelines when released

In office: social distancing, masks required Outside: Tents and Walk n' Talks

We are only meeting with students in our resource center which allows for adequate spacing. Masks are required by everyone inside a building and for outside when not able to space 6 feet apart.

Social distancing options, PPE, Plexiglas (This is only in our drop-in area). We still do not have expectations for appointments if they are supposed to be in-person or virtual.

Appointments will be in open area to provide 6 feet distancing. Face masks are being provided for all staff. If students do not have their own masks, they will be provided.

In-person appointments, if needed, will be conducted either outside while maintaining 6 feet distancing, or in a room that is over 36 square feet and allows for 6 feet of social distancing and a mask will be required for everyone.

Social distancing, masks required, meetings only in an open library area (not our offices), we will have a large TV hooked to a computer we can project on so we can show students resources, we will wipe down the space after the student leaves. We hope to drive more students to virtual appointments.

Following our school's protocols (maintaining distance, wearing of masks, hand-washing, etc.)

If the student must meet in person, we will use our conference room. No offices.

For drop-in advising (truly quick questions), we will have advisors sitting over 6 feet apart from students, all parties wearing masks, in our conference room, and then have advisors wipe down the space between students. Otherwise, we will have advisors on-duty for questions via phone, email, or Google Chat sent by the front desk. . . . Using both social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) . . . Social distancing and PPE.

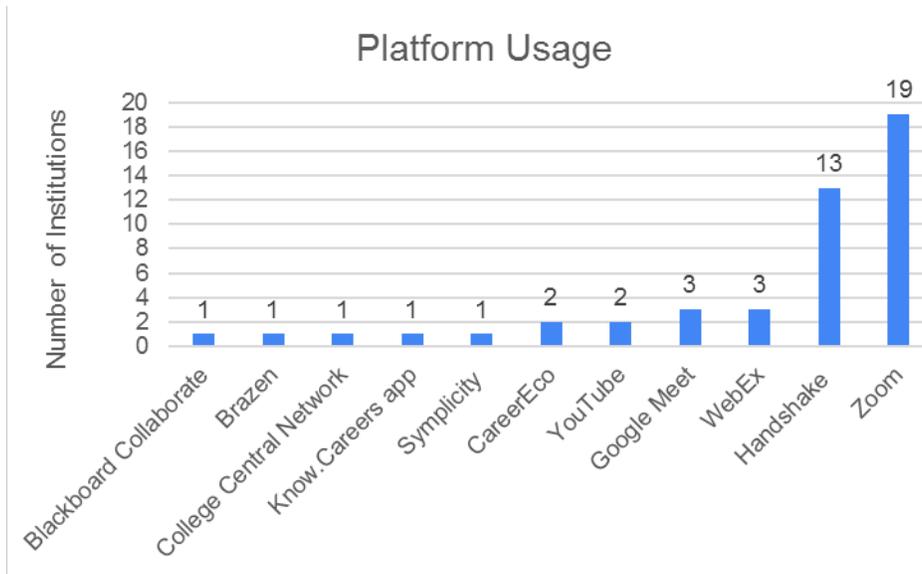
Our building will be open only to answer a student question if the student walks in our building; staff will work remotely, in the office, or partial remote and on campus.

We will have drop-in meetings in a conference room where there can be social distancing, everyone will be required to wear masks, cleaning between meetings. Lobby will be set up for social distancing and only a certain number of students allowed in at a time. Plexiglas barrier set up at front desk. Single direction in and out of the office. . . . We will limit the number of advisors in the office at one given time, both the staff member and student will have to wear masks, and we will practice social distancing by having the employee and student 8 feet apart. After appointments, the staff member will have to disinfect the meeting space and wash their hands.

Question 6: If offering virtual career fairs, information sessions, interviews, and/or recruiting events, what platform(s) will you be using to make these possible? Check all that apply.

Responses were received from 21 institutions. One institution that will not be offering career fairs this fall did not respond to this question. Respondents could choose more than one answer. Three institutions will use a single platform, Zoom. The remaining 18 institutions will use two or more platforms.

Together, institutions will use a total of 11 different platforms.

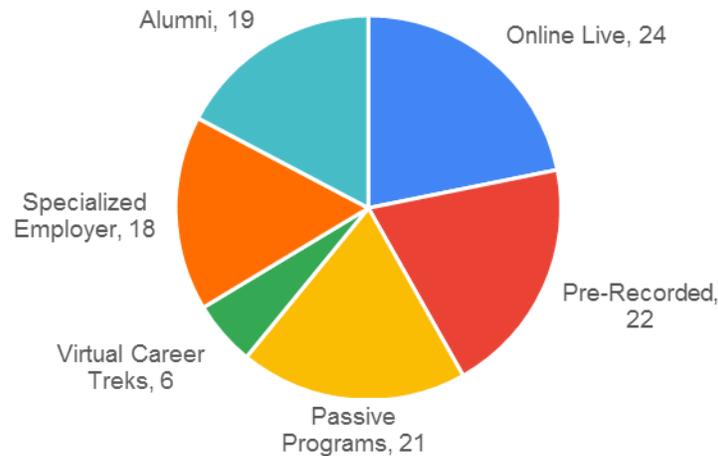


Question 7: If planning for additional virtual career development programs, workshops, and events, what formats will you be offering? Check all that apply.

All 22 institutions responded to this question and all chose more than one option, for a total of 110 responses. Responses from schools within institutions are included. Options for responses were:

- Online Live - Presentation, Panel, or Discussion
- Pre-Recorded (shared on website, YouTube, social media, etc.)
- Passive Programs and Email/Social Media Campaigns
- Virtual Career Treks/Employer "Visits"
- Specialized Employer & Program Info Sessions
- Alumni Career Chats/Group Informational Interviews

## Virtual Formats



Question 8: How has COVID-19 impacted staffing for your team? Check all that apply.

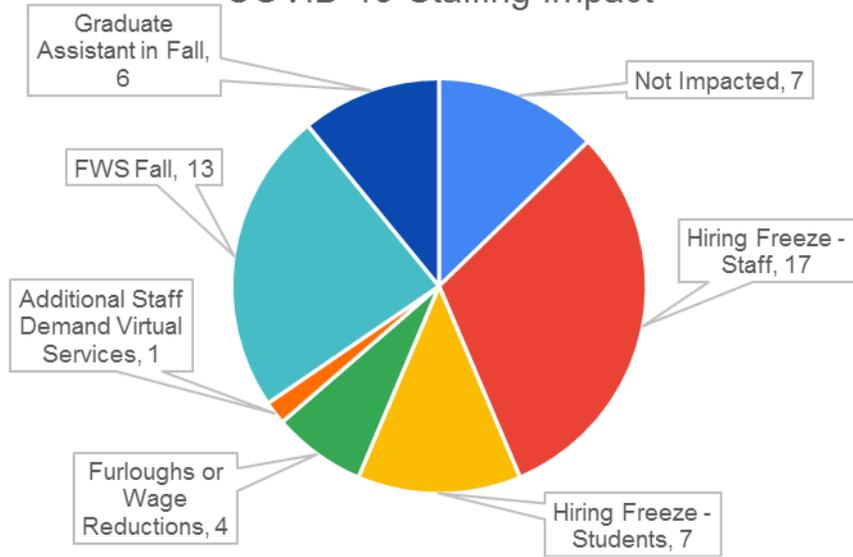
All 22 institutions responded to this question and 16 chose more than one option, for a total of 59 responses. Responses from schools within institutions are included. Options for responses were:

- Our staffing has not yet been impacted
- We are under a hiring freeze for full-time staff
- We are under a hiring freeze for student staff
- We have experienced furloughs or wage reductions
- We were given funding for additional staff/hiring to support increased demand for virtual services
- We will be hiring Federal Work Study student support for Fall 2020
- We will bring on a Graduate Assistant in Fall 2020

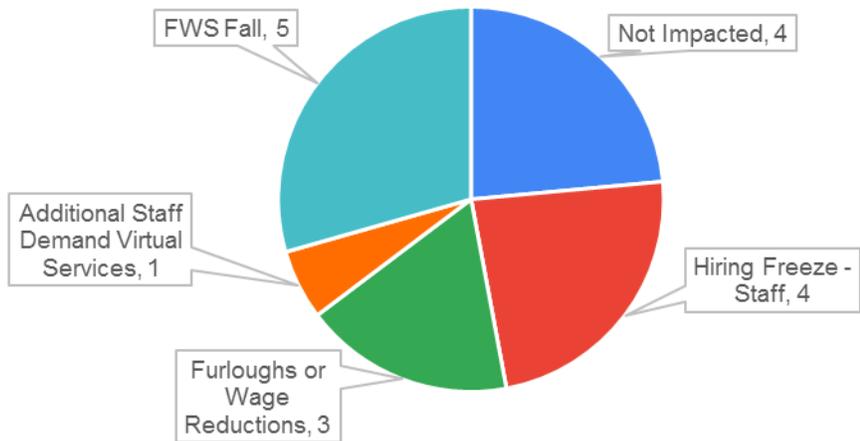
Additional responses included:

- Some positions are being allowed to be hired
- Staff members decided to retire or resign for reasons related to COVID-19
- All plans for increasing the staff size is on hold
- Furloughs are coming in the Fall we think

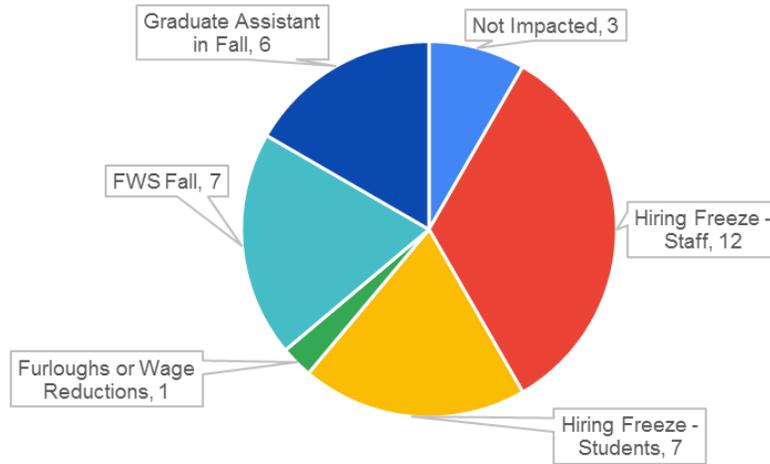
### COVID-19 Staffing Impact



### COVID-19 Staffing Impact - Private 4-Years



## COVID-19 Staffing Impact - Public 4-Years



### Discussion:

Some institutions that chose, “We are under a hiring freeze for student staff,” also said they were hiring FWS and graduate assistant student support for the fall.

Other institutions indicated that, while they were under a hiring freeze for staff and/or students, their staffing has not yet been impacted.

It was difficult to determine whether significant differences in responses were attributable to an institution’s size or status as a public or private institution. No private institution indicated that they were under a hiring freeze for students, while seven public institutions indicated that they were. Three private institutions had experienced furloughs or wage reductions; one public institution said the same, with an additional public institution projecting furloughs in the fall.

Small institutions apparently have widely varying experiences, being more likely to have experienced furloughs and wage reductions and also more likely to not have been impacted.

	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Not Impacted	5	1	1	7
Hiring Freeze - Staff	6	4	7	17
Hiring Freeze - Students	2	1	4	7
Furloughs or Wage Reductions	4	0	0	4
Additional Staff Demand Virtual Services	1	0	0	1
FWS Fall	5	4	4	13
Graduate Assistant in Fall	0	1	5	6
Total	23	11	21	55

Question 9: How is your office/campus approaching travel requests related to professional development and employer relations for the upcoming year?

Below are the responses for 22 institutions.

- 2 = Unrestricted
- 4 = None thru Dec., allowed in 2021
- 4 = None thru Dec., spring undecided
- 7 = None through July 2021
- 3 = Travel policy not decided

The remaining two institutions responded as follows:

- Travel is being greatly reduced and must be pre-approved; we expect most travel funds will be cut
- University wide travel freeze; travel costs will only be supported if focused on employer relations (not professional development)

Question 10: Is your staff planning to return to campus (in-person) this fall?

Below are the responses for 22 institutions. If respondents from the same institution provided different answers, the least restrictive answer was tallied (e.g., one responded that staff would return in full and another responded that rotations would begin, the latter response is reflected below).

- 6 = Yes, we will return in full by the start of classes
- 9 = Yes, we will begin rotations of staff on-campus (vs. telework) by the start of classes
- 2 = We do not have plans to return in-person at this time (all staff set to telework indefinitely)
- 4 = Decisions are still pending at the University, Division, or Department level
- 1 = We already started rotations for on-campus work (July 6th)

Question 11: Any additional information to share on how COVID-19 is impacting your office's planning and processes ahead of Fall 2020?

*Eight responses were received and all are included below.*

We are continuously evaluating our plan as we get information from the President's Office. As of now, the Career Services Office plans to present most information and presentations virtually.

I have been furloughed since May 15th and will be returning August 1st. Since I am a single person office, I have not been able to make plans for the fall.

Pray we get this under control as nation...soon.

We are in person, but making everything hybrid so it can go 100% virtual at any point if necessary. Communication support to students will make or break us.

We are losing a member of Career Services to fill in a gap for another area within the university since there is a hiring freeze.

Increase in online presence and engagement activity

It's constantly changing with what's happening in the world and we are adjusting as best we can.

Budget cuts, added costs for live webinar closed captioning, new and exciting ways to do business!!!