

First Destination Survey

Mt San Antonio College Career Center 2025-26

Strategic Planning Workgroup



What is the First Destination Survey?

FAQs for our Career Website

Our office will administer the First Destination Survey (FDS) to capture information regarding how new college graduates fare in their careers within six months of graduation. Started by the **National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)**, the annual initiative provides clear, concise, and consistent information on the outcomes associated with a college education on a national scale. The FDS is designed to provide trends data over time by individual classes to inform the discussion about the value of higher education.

What is the First Destination Survey?

The First Destination Survey, or FDS, is a national survey organized by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Implemented by colleges and universities across the country, the goal of the survey is to collect information related to the post-graduation outcomes of recent graduates within six months of graduation.

Annually, Career Development Center distributes the FDS to gather post-graduation outcomes from undergraduate and graduate students. The FDS analyzes the following post-graduation outcomes:

- Type of employment
- Continuing education
- Still seeking
- Starting salary for those employed full time
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The Mt SAC Career Center is responsible for administering the FDS to students. This includes promotion of the survey, data collection, initial data analysis, and reporting the national data collection effort. Any data a student shares will be aggregated and unidentifiable.

Why should you care about the FDS?

1. Support graduate success

The First Destination Survey (FDS) tracks and celebrates the successes of our graduates, honoring their achievements while enhancing the college's reputation. It also supports students still seeking opportunities and empowers us to advocate for their success, showcasing the positive outcomes of our community.

2. Career Readiness Integration

The information gathered through the FDS empowers both faculty and staff to advocate effectively for student success. By understanding the outcome of our graduates, we can better inform our programs, refine our services, and ultimately contribute to the overall success of our students.

3. Enhanced student engagement

By understanding where graduates find employment or continue their studies faculty can create opportunities for students to connect with alumni, fostering network and mentorship relations that enriched the educational experience.

4. Support Institutional Success

The First Destination Survey is designed to understand more about the employment and continuing education goals and activities of college graduates, providing important information to help inform prospective students and their families as well as the general public about post-graduation outcomes. What is the data used for?

The results inform career coaching strategies, highlight successful graduate outcomes, strengthen employer partnerships, and foster a thriving career development environment on campus. FDS results can enhance our services in multiple ways:

- Identify themes of high demand industries or sectors
- Organize targeted workshops and tailored networking events
- Collaborate with organizations that hire Mt SAC Mounties to expand internship opportunities
- Share an executive summary with different departments such as alumni engagement, admissions, faculty.

5. What is Knowledge Rate?

The percent of graduates for which the institution has reasonable and verifiable information concerning the graduates' post-graduation career activities.

This information comes directly from the graduates via the Handshake First Destination Survey and career consultant outreach. Relevant data, however, may also be provided by employers, or obtained through other sources (e.g., LinkedIn profiles, and other online sources).

What is Career Outcome Rate?

NACE encourages using "career outcome rate" over "placement rate," focusing on graduates engaged in meaningful outcomes. The standards include both full- and part-time work, distinguish voluntary service from employment, and count service programs as career outcomes, positively reflecting on graduates and institutions.

6. How are students encouraged to complete the FDS?

The Mt SAC Career Center promotes FDS completion through career specialists' appointments, automated emails, and outreach from faculty and staff. Your information will be shared anonymously in external reports, excluding internal Mt SAC colleagues.

If you are a recent graduate, please check your Mt SAC email to complete the survey or contact The Mt SAC Career Center at 909-274-4510 if you have any questions or need help accessing the survey.

7. What if a student hasn't gotten a job or into graduate school yet?

That's fine! Even if students haven't secured a job or graduate school acceptance, completing the survey is crucial. The Mt SAC Career Center assists students in finding opportunities post-graduation. Contact our office to schedule a session with a career center specialist.

First Destination Survey Training Courses

Please review the links FDS has provided for our team

[First destination survey course](#)

[Drilled down FDS training video 2025](#)

Live Training in Feb 2026

(Virtual) Handshake Academy Live - FDS and sourced outcomes

From: Feb 17, 2026, 10:00 AM PT

To: Feb 17, 2026, 11:00 AM PT

Instructor: Customer Education Team

Spaces left: 499

First Destination Survey Mt San Antonio College Career Center 2025-26 Strategic Planning Workgroup



Please review the links FDS has provided for our team

HANDSHAKE Academy:

[First destination survey course](#)

[Drilled down FDS training video 2025](#)

Live Training in Feb 2026

- **Virtual January 13th, Tuesday at 1:00pm, W Clint**
Handshake Rep training on FDS
 - **Virtual Handshake Academy Live - FDS and sourced outcomes (register)**
 - **From:** Feb 17, 2026, 10:00 AM PT
1. **Planning and Team Formation** (2025-26) January

The workgroup members for implementing the FDS:

- *Dina Paton, (Continuing Ed)*
 - *Cristina Sandoval (Career Center)*
 - *Kaylynn Lare (Completion Center)*
 - *Lisa Winston, CTE STEM*
 - *IT Representative -When needed for data retrieval---Summer/Fall 2026*
 - *Kim Cerda-Cuevas-Staff Support Career Center*
 - *Katherine Cortez-Staff Support Career Center*
2. **Promotion and Communication Strategy** (2026) Marketing Strategy
 3. **Survey Deployment (2026) April (OFFICIAL LAUNCH DATE 2 mo prior to graduation)**
 4. **Data Collection and Follow-up** (2026)
 5. **Data Analysis and Reporting** (2026-2027)
 6. **Dissemination of Results and Continuous Improvement** (2027)

Key Additional Details

- **Incentives:** Consider offering incentives (gift cards, prizes) to increase response rates. (see budget)
- **Accessibility:** Make sure the survey is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.
-(ACCESS meeting) Will need to meet with ACCESS to support the students and FDS outcomes

Timeline

FDS Implementation Timeline (2026–2027)

Phase	Timeline	<u>Key Activities</u>
Preparation & Training	Jan – Feb 2026	Complete FDS training courses; Attend Handshake Academy Live (Feb 17).
Promotion & Marketing	Early 2026	Develop communication strategy to build student awareness.
Survey Deployment	May 2026	Official Launch .
Data Collection	Mid – late 2026	Follow-up periods and data retrieval with IT support.
Analysis & Reporting	2026 – 2027	Reviewing sourced outcomes and survey responses.
Dissemination	2027	Sharing results for continuous campus improvement.

Phase 1: Planning and Team Formation (January 2026)

January 2026 (First Meeting in January)

- Form a work group of stakeholders on campus
- Define the objectives and goals of the FDS.
- Review best practices and guidelines (NACE, other community colleges).
- Develop project charter and timeline.
- Assign roles and responsibilities.
- Determine budget needs (if any) for incentives, software, etc.
- Begin tailoring drafted survey questions (align with NACE standards) if necessary

February/March 2026

- Identify key stakeholders and secure administrative support.
- Finalize survey questions, NACE compliant questions embedded

Phase 2: Webpage Development and Testing

March 2026:

- Finalize the survey and prepare for deployment.
- Train the team on the survey process and follow-up procedures.



Phase 3: Promotion and Communication Strategy (March- 2026 - May 2026)

- Develop a communication plan (emails, social media, websites, flyers). (Kim/Katherine)
- Create promotional materials (videos, infographics).-HANDSHAKE Academy FDS
- Engage faculty and staff to promote the survey to students
- Highlight on career center webpage and share with marketing team promoting the FDS across campus
- Signage on campus/banner at our career center, signs on campus, wood stakes with FDS information
- Have all established marketing plan executed prior to Cesar Chavez Day, March 31st, 2026

Phase 4: Survey Deployment (May 2026 - January 2027)

- **Launch pre-survey communication to spring graduates.**
- Inform students about the survey, its importance, and any incentives-YouTube videos/Tik Tok quick help FAQs etc).
- Deploy the survey to spring graduates (beginning April).
- Send regular reminders (weekly) throughout May and June. These reminders are automated and customized in advance

June 2026:

- Continue reminders for spring graduates.

Phase 5: Data Collection and Follow-up (May 2026 - March 2027)

- **May 2026 - March 2027:**
 - Monitor response rates and adjust communication as needed.
 - Conduct follow-up with non-respondents (phone calls, additional emails).
 - Collect data from other sources (social media, faculty, etc.) for non-respondents when possible (with proper protocols).

Phase 6: Data Analysis and Reporting (February 2027 - May 2027)

- **February 2027:**
 - Close the survey and clean the data.
- **March 2027:**
 - Analyze the data (descriptive statistics, trends, etc.).
 - Prepare initial reports for internal stakeholders.
- **April 2027:**
 - Finalize the official report.
 - Compare results with national benchmarks if available.
- **May 2027**
 - Present findings to the college community.

Phase 7: Dissemination and Continuous Improvement (June 2027 - August 2027)

- **June 2027:**
 - Share results on websites, college publications, and with accreditors.
 - Use findings for strategic planning and program improvement.
- **July 2027:**
 - Evaluate the FDS process and identify areas for improvement.
 - Begin planning for the 2027 survey (if needed).
- **August 2027:**
 - Archive the 2026 data and documents.
 - Update the process for the next cycle.

Key Performance Indicators & Success Metrics Goals

Metric	Target	Measurement Method
Overall Response Rate	60%+	Survey platform analytics-Handshake

Budget Requirements

Category	Estimated Cost	Notes
Incentives & Prizes	\$3,000	Raffles, Prizes from Bookstore-Swag
Marketing Materials	\$700	Printing, postering, social media, banners-signage
Total	\$3700	



FIRST DESTINATION SURVEY

Class of 2026: Your Future Starts Here!

NACE's First-Destination Initiative captures information regarding how new college graduates fare in their careers within six months of graduation. The annual initiative provides clear, concise, and consistent data on the outcomes associated with a college education on a national scale. Outcomes include 1) types of employment—full or part time, contract, freelance, and so forth; 2) additional education, e.g., accepted to graduate or professional school; 3) still seeking either employment or further education; 4) and starting salary for those employed full time.

In addition to providing outcomes for individual classes, First-Destination Initiative is designed to provide trends data over time to inform the discussion about the value of higher education. -NACE 2026

Custom Survey Questions:

The workgroup has added specialized questions across multiple areas, including CTE, Continuing Education, Transfer, and Completion. While standardized questions cannot be edited, we can add customized questions to tailor the survey and elicit specific, valuable data for each department. **The First Destination Survey** typically takes about five to ten minutes to complete. It is designed to be a brief online survey that graduating students complete shortly before graduation, providing insights into their post-graduation plans.

NACE Compliant Standard Questions

What are you primarily doing after graduation?

1. **Working**
2. **Volunteering**
3. **Continuing Education**
4. **Military**
5. **Fellowship**
6. **Still Looking**
7. **Not Seeking**

Working

1. How many hours per week are you working?
 - Over 30 Hours a week (Full Time)
 - Under 30 Hours a week (Part Time)
2. Type of employment
 - Organization/Company
 - Entrepreneur
 - Freelancer
 - Fellowship
 - Temporary/Contract Work Assignment
 - Faculty Tenure
 - Faculty Non-Tenure
3. What is your job?
 - Who is your employer?
 - What industry is your employer in?
 - What city is this position located in?
4. Tell us about your job?
 - What is your position?
 - Were you already working in this position during school?
 - *Yes or No*
 - Is this an internship?
 - *Yes or No*
 - Did you get this job through Handshake?
 - *Yes or No*
 - What is your job function?
5. How are you compensated?
 - Base Salary
 - *Monthly Stipend*
 - *Hourly Wage*

- *Annual Salary*
- Signing Bonus (*not required*)
- Other guaranteed compensation (*not required*)
- When did you get this offer?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
- When did you accept it?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
- When is your start date?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*

Volunteering

1. Which organization are you volunteering for?
 - *Name of organization*
2. What city is this position located in?
 - *Select a city*
3. Please tell us about your position
 - What is your position?
 - What is your job function?
 - Did you get this job through Handshake?
 - *Yes or No*
4. Tell us about your Volunteering offer
 - When did you get this offer?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
 - When did you accept it?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
 - When is your start date?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*

Continuing Education

1. Tell us about your continuing education
 - What's the name of the institution?

- What city is this institution located in?
- 2. What will you be studying?
- 3. What's the degree you're pursuing?
 - *(Dropdown) Associates, Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, Postdoctoral Studies, Non-Degree Seeking*

Military

1. Which service branch are you joining?
 - *Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Navy, Marine Corps*
2. Tell us about your military service
 - *Enlisted, Warrant Officer, Officer*
3. What city is this position located in?
4. What is your *branch* specialization? *(not required)*
5. How are you compensated?
 - Base Salary
 - *Monthly Stipend*
 - *Hourly Wage*
 - *Annual Salary*
 - Currency
 - When did you get this offer?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
 - When did you accept it?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
 - When is your start date?
 - *Yyyy-mm-dd*

Fellowship

1. Is this fellowship educational or for work?
 - *Educational, Work*

Educational

1. What's the name of the fellowship?

2. Tell us about your continuing education
 - What is the name of the institution?
 - What city is this institution located in?
3. What will you be studying?
4. What's the degree you're pursuing?
 - *(Dropdown) Associates, Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, Postdoctoral Studies, Non-Degree Seeking*

Work

1. What is the name of your Fellowship?
2. How many hours per week are you working?
 - Over 30 Hours a week (Full Time)
 - Under 30 Hours a week (Part Time)
4. Please tell us about your employer
 - Who is your employer?
 - What industry is your employer in?
 - What city is this position located in?
5. Please tell us about your position
 - What is your position?
 - Were you already working in this position during school?
 - *Yes or No*
 - Is this an internship?
 - *Yes or No*
 - Did you get this job through Handshake?
 - *Yes or No*
 - What is your job function?
6. Are you authorized to permanently work in the U.S.? *(not required)* **Note April 2019:** *we just officially removed a question related to work authorization from the survey. It will not be included in any surveys created in the future and for anyone filling out an existing survey from today onwards. Any legacy data from this question will still be available for reporting purposes. This question was previously optional for respondents to answer, but there was strong support from schools for not including it at all - we appreciate everyone's feedback!*

7. How are you compensated?

- Base Salary
 - *Monthly Stipend*
 - *Hourly Wage*
 - *Annual Salary*
- Signing Bonus (*not required*)
- Other guaranteed compensation (*not required*)
- Currency
- When did you get this offer?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
- When did you accept it?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*
- When is your start date?
 - *yyyy-mm-dd*

Still Looking

1. Are you looking for continuing education or employment?

- Continuing Education, Employment

Not Seeking

1. What are you doing while you are not actively seeking a job?

- *Taking time off*
- *Taking a gap year*
- *Traveling*
- *Other*