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Law Schools



Beyond the Bachelor's: Undergraduate Perspectives on Graduate and Professional Degrees



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FOREWORD

In 2015, the Association of American Law Schools (AALS), law school deans, the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), and other organizations concerned with legal education and the legal profession began a series of conversations about possible reasons for the sharp decline in law school applicants that started in 2010. One outcome of our investigation was that we uncovered a dearth of knowledge regarding why undergraduates pursue any advanced degree, including law.

A literature review revealed little existing research on the pathway from college to graduate or professional school — a marked contrast to the multitude of studies on how students move from high school to college. It became clear there was a need to find out what undergraduates think about graduate and professional school and their reasons for deciding whether to continue their education after college.

To advance understanding of the pipeline to graduate and professional school, we engaged Gallup to develop and conduct a survey and began recruiting four-year colleges and universities that would provide student email addresses for the survey. The response rate greatly exceeded our expectations. While the initial target was to gather 3,000 undergraduate students' responses from 20 four-year institutions, 22,189 undergraduates from 25 four-year institutions likely to send students on for graduate and professional degrees completed the survey.

We have generated two major reports from this rich data set. The first, *Before the JD: Undergraduate Views on Law School*, focuses on legal education. That report is available on the AALS website (www.aals.org). This, the second report, *Beyond the Bachelor's: Undergraduate Perspectives on Graduate and Professional Degrees*, prepared for college and university presidents, provosts, and graduate deans addresses general undergraduate perspectives on advanced degrees.

It has been a privilege to work with so many academic leaders to provide essential information about undergraduates' views on graduate and professional degrees. We intend this report to be of value to graduate and professional schools and their universities, to students considering an advanced degree, and to everyone who cares about higher education, the research that it produces, and the contributions it makes to the nation.

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This report, and the *Before the JD* project of which it is a part, has also been supported by leaders in the legal education community, and the profession more broadly, who recognized the need to gather data on and disseminate information about this critical topic to the higher education community at large. We are delighted to extend a note of thanks to representatives from the organizations that sponsored the *Before the JD* project, including Chris Chapman (AccessLex Institute), Barry Currier (ABA Section on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar), Kellye Testy (Law School Admission Council), James Leipold (National Association for Law Placement), and Ajay Mehrotra (American Bar Foundation). We are grateful as well to the late Daniel Bernstine of LSAC, who approved the initial grant to AALS. Thanks also to the project academic advisors including Tiffane Cochran, Andrew Cornblatt, Ronit Dinovitzer, Bryant Garth, Deborah Hensler, and Jerome M. Organ. We also thank Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld; Arnold & Porter Foundation; Covington & Burling; Cravath, Swaine & Moore; K&L Gates; O'Melveny & Myers; Paul Weiss; Proskauer Rose; Sidley Austin Foundation; Sullivan & Cromwell; Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz; White & Case; Williams & Connolly; WilmerHale; Clorox; Microsoft; and Qualcomm.



Introduction



Introduction

Numerous benefits are derived from graduate and professional education in the United States. Individuals with advanced degrees generally have lower unemployment rates and earn more over their lifetimes than individuals who have bachelor's degrees or less.¹ Many individuals with graduate or professional degrees hold leadership positions that drive innovation and job creation, sustain the rule of law, and advance research that is vital in a knowledge economy.

Yet at the very time when it could not be more important to the nation for college graduates to earn a graduate or professional degree, a significant number of Americans are questioning whether an investment in higher education is worthwhile at all.²

Beyond the Bachelor's is based on the first known survey in over half a century aimed explicitly at gathering undergraduate perspectives on graduate and professional school using responses from students themselves.³ Given the approximate 38 percent decline in the national pool of law school applicants between 2010 and 2015, the survey began as an effort by the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) to understand how undergraduates think about making choices to pursue graduate study, particularly law.⁴ To place undergraduate views on law school in context, the survey also asked about their views on other advanced degrees. The initial goal was to gather responses from 3,000 undergraduates from 20 four-year institutions of higher education. In the end, the AALS-Gallup partnership produced more than 22,000 responses from undergraduates at 25 four-year institutions. This study fills a void left by other studies, such as *Baccalaureate & Beyond Longitudinal Study*, which have focused either on the decisions of

1 Jennifer Ma, Matea Pender, & Meredith Welch, *Education Pays 2016, The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society*, New York: The College Board, 2016: 17, <https://trends.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/education-pays-2016-full-report.pdf> (last visited August 2, 2018).

2 See, for example, *Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions*, Pew Research Center, July 2017, <http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/07/11101505/07-10-17-Institutions-release.pdf> (last visited August 8, 2018); *Why are Republicans Down on Higher Ed?* Gallup, August 16, 2017, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/216278/why-republicans-down-higher.aspx> (last visited August 8, 2018).

3 James A. Davis, *Undergraduate Career Decisions*, ALDINE Publishing Company, Chicago, 1965.

4 *ABA End-of-year summary: Applicants, admitted applicants, and applications*, American Bar Association, <https://www.lsac.org/lsacresources/data/aba-eoy/archive> (last visited May 10, 2018).

students who already hold a bachelor's degree or on those more narrowly interested in particular academic disciplines or specific institutions.^{5,6}

The resulting data set provides a unique opportunity to examine undergraduate views on graduate and professional degrees, and possible answers to a series of related questions: What do U.S. undergraduates think about continuing their education after college? Which degrees are most popular? What primary sources of advice and information do undergraduates rely on when making decisions about advanced education? What are their main reasons for considering or for not pursuing an advanced degree? Do the reasons vary by degree program?

Beyond the Bachelor's provides a wealth of insight into undergraduate perspectives and values that should be of benefit to colleges and universities, researchers, and others. This report summarizes the principal study outcomes and highlights several findings that deserve special consideration. More insights remain to be discovered to inform the future path of higher education. That work will, in turn, strengthen our higher education system, produce a more educated citizenry, and promote the creation and distribution of knowledge.

5 *Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B)*, National Center for Education Statistics, <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/b&b/> (last visited August 2, 2018).

6 See, for example, Roberta Spalter-Roth and Nicole Van Vooren, *Idealists vs. Careerists: Graduate School Choices of Sociology Majors* (2009), <http://www.asanet.org/research-and-publications/research-sociology/research-briefs/idealists-vs-careerists-graduate-school-choices-sociology-majors> (last visited August 8, 2018); Thomas Edmonds, David Flanagan, & Timothy J. Palmer, *Law School Intentions of Undergraduate Business Students*, *American Journal of Business Education* 6, no. 3 (2013).



Highlights

Highlights

Graduate and professional schools play a crucial role in positioning American higher education institutions as the gold standard for higher learning the world over. Their ability to draw talent, facilitate research, and address national issues is unparalleled.

It was surprising, therefore, to discover how little is known about why undergraduates consider pursuing a graduate or professional degree, especially at a time when some are questioning the higher education value proposition. What we do know is either discipline-specific or based on data from students who have already earned their bachelor's degree. The voices of undergraduates themselves are missing.

Beyond the Bachelor's: Undergraduate Perspectives on Graduate and Professional Degrees takes the first step toward understanding the factors that contribute to whether or not a student considers a graduate or professional degree. A companion piece to the AALS' *Before the JD* study, this report presents survey responses from 22,189 undergraduate students from 25 institutions of higher education across the United States, offering insights that are of value to educators and prospective students alike.

Key Takeaway 1. The pool of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree is more diverse in terms of gender and race/ethnicity than the pool of those unlikely to pursue an advanced degree. However, it has a much higher proportion of students with at least one parent with an advanced degree — a proxy for socioeconomic status — than the pool of undergraduates unlikely to pursue an advanced degree.

- 1) Women are more likely to consider pursuing an advanced degree than men (52% vs. 48%). By contrast, men are more likely than women to be undecided (57% vs. 43%), to be unlikely to pursue a graduate or professional degree (57% vs. 43%), or to have never thought about an advanced degree (59% vs. 41%).
- 2) The pool of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree includes higher percentages of racial/ethnic minorities than students unlikely to do so: Asian students comprise 16 percent of the pool, versus ten percent of those unlikely to pursue an advanced degree; Black undergraduate students represent eight percent versus five percent; and Hispanic students make up 13 percent of those likely to pursue an advanced degree, compared to nine percent of students unlikely to pursue an advanced degree.
- 3) Undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are more likely to have at least one parent with an advanced degree (41%), compared to those unlikely to pursue a graduate or professional degree (29%), and those who have never thought about it (22%).

Key Takeaway 2. Master's degrees (MA/MS) are the most sought-after degrees among undergraduates likely to pursue graduate or professional school.

- 1) Sixty-three percent of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are considering an MA/MS, while one-third (34%) are considering a PhD and one-quarter (23%) an MBA. Fewer are considering a JD (15%) or an MD (14%). The degrees undergraduates are considering vary by their gender, race/ethnicity, and parental education.
- 2) Men likely to pursue an advanced degree report considering an MBA (29%) more often than women (18%), while the reverse is true for other master's degrees (8% vs. 12%) and MDs (12% vs. 17%). A greater proportion of Asian (17%), Black (18%), and Hispanic (18%) undergraduates report considering an MD than White students (12%).
- 3) The JD and PhD stand out from other degrees in terms of differences by parental education, with 18 percent of students who have at least one parent with an advanced degree considering a JD and 37 percent considering a PhD. This compares to 12 percent and 32 percent of undergraduates whose parents do not have a college degree, respectively.

Key Takeaway 3. Undergraduates with at least one parent with an advanced degree are more likely to report seeing or receiving information on graduate and professional degrees than first-generation college students. Asian, Black, and Hispanic students considering an advanced degree are less likely to report seeing or receiving information on graduate and professional degrees than White undergraduates.

- 1) Undergraduates with at least one parent with an advanced degree are most likely to report seeing or receiving information on any graduate and professional degrees. For example, 64 percent of these students report seeing or receiving information about a PhD, compared with 60 percent of students whose parents have a bachelor's degree and 56 percent of students whose parents have less than a bachelor's degree. Asian, Black, and Hispanic students are less likely to report seeing or receiving information on any advanced degrees than White students. For example, 55 percent of

White students report seeing or receiving information about an MD, compared to 48 percent of Asian students, 51 percent of Black students, and 49 percent of Hispanic students.

- 2) Reliance on family as an important source of advice increases as parental education increases. Undergraduates likely to pursue a graduate or professional degree who have at least one parent with an advanced degree are more likely to report relying on family as a source of advice (70%) than students whose parents have a bachelor's degree (52%) or less (38%).
- 3) Undergraduates likely to pursue a graduate or professional degree are most likely to report hearing professors talk about a master's degree (58%) and a PhD (50%), while relatively few (15%) report hearing a professor talk about the JD.

Key Takeaway 4. Of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, passion for or high interest in the work is the top reason for considering a graduate or professional degree. Other reasons vary by degree. Overall cost/potential debt is the primary barrier.

- 1) Of undergraduates likely to pursue any advanced degree, those who are considering an MD are most likely to identify passion/high interest in the work (64%) and the opportunity to be helpful or to give back (42%) as reasons to consider an advanced degree. Students considering an MBA are less likely to identify passion for the work (34%) but are more likely to identify high-paying jobs (50%) and advancement opportunities in the field (47%).
- 2) Men are more likely than women to consider an advanced degree because it has high prestige (22% vs. 17%) and offers an ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology (14% vs. 5%). By contrast, women are more likely than men to consider an advanced degree because they are passionate about or have high interest in the type of work (52% vs. 46%), to advocate for social change (10% vs. 6%), and as an opportunity to give back/be useful (27% vs. 18%).
- 3) First-generation college students likely to pursue an advanced degree are slightly more likely than others to name an opportunity to give back/be useful (26% vs. 22% overall) and to advocate for social change (11% vs. 7%) as top reasons to consider an advanced degree.
- 4) While overall cost/potential debt is the biggest deterrent to considering graduate or professional school (68%) among those likely to do so, undergraduates also report that the time to complete the degree is too long (49%). Poor work-life balance in jobs in the field (30%), graduate school being too hard (23%), and too few jobs in the field pay enough money (21%) are also discouraging factors.
- 5) Of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, women are more likely than men to say that the overall cost of an advanced degree is too high (72% vs. 64%) and that graduate school is too hard (26% vs. 20%). Cost is mentioned more often as a top deterrent by Black (77%) and Hispanic (75%) students than by Asian (58%) or White (68%) students.



Detailed Findings

Section 1. Profile of Potential Graduate and Professional Students

Beyond the Bachelor's begins by comparing four groups of undergraduates: those likely to pursue a graduate or professional degree; those who are undecided; those unlikely to pursue a graduate or professional degree; and those who have never thought about a graduate or professional degree.⁷ This section compares these groups by demographics, academic achievement, and career aspirations.

Demographics

Undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are more likely to be women than undergraduates who are unlikely to pursue an advanced degree (52% vs. 43%) (See Table 1.1). Furthermore, undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are the only group with a higher proportion of women than men. Asian, Black, and Hispanic undergraduates also are more likely than unlikely (16% vs. 10%; 8% vs. 5%; and 13% vs. 9%, respectively) to pursue an advanced degree.

Additionally, undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are more likely than their peers to have at least one parent with an advanced degree: forty-one percent of these students have at least one parent with an advanced degree, compared to 29 percent of their peers unlikely to seek an advanced degree and 22 percent of undergraduates who have never thought about doing so. Findings about parental education and likelihood of pursuing an advanced degree merit special attention. In *Beyond the Bachelor's*, parental education level is used as a proxy measure for socioeconomic status. Many undergraduate students do not know their parents' income, but most are likely to know their parents' levels of education. Of students considering an advanced degree, 26 percent are first-generation college students, compared to 28 percent of those unlikely to pursue an advanced degree, 30 percent of those

⁷ The terms "graduate or professional degree" and "advanced degree" are used interchangeably throughout the report. For clarity, in Detailed Findings, groups of students will be described as follows: the term "likely to pursue an advanced degree" will refer to undergraduates who reported they are somewhat or extremely likely to pursue an advanced degree. "Unlikely to pursue an advanced degree" refers to undergraduates who reported they are somewhat or extremely unlikely to pursue an advanced degree. "Undecided" undergraduates reported they are neither likely nor unlikely to pursue an advanced degree. Undergraduates who answered that they have "never thought about an advanced degree" are reported as their own category.

who are undecided, and 38 percent of those who have never thought about it.⁸ These percentages stand in contrast to the 68 percent of U.S. citizens ages 45–64 (a range in which you would expect to find parents of undergraduate students) who do not have bachelor’s degrees.⁹

Table 1.1: Demographics of Undergraduate Students by Likelihood of Pursuing an Advanced Degree

Q: How likely are you to go to graduate or professional school to obtain a graduate or professional degree (e.g., MBA, other master’s, law, medical, dental, or other PhD) at any point?

	Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Undecided	Unlikely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Have Never Thought About an Advanced Degree
Gender				
Men	48%	57%	57%	59%
Women	52%	43%	43%	41%
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian	16%	14%	10%	15%
Black	8%	6%	5%	6%
Hispanic	13%	12%	9%	17%
White	64%	67%	76%	62%
Parental education				
Less than bachelor’s degree	26%	30%	28%	38%
Bachelor’s degree	33%	39%	42%	40%
Advanced degree	41%	32%	29%	22%
n=	15,850	2,405	3,196	650

8 Throughout the report, the term “first-generation college student” refers to any undergraduate who reported that the highest education level among all parents/stepparents/legal guardians is less than a bachelor’s degree.

9 Camille L. Ryan & Kurt Bauman, U.S. Census Bureau, Educational Attainment in the United States: 2015 (2016), available at <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2016/demo/p20-578.html>. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in the 2011–12 academic year, one-third of students enrolled in postsecondary institutions were first-generation college students. See P. Skomsvold, *Web Tables – Profile of Undergraduate Students: 2011–2012* (NCES 2015–167) (2015), U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2015167> (last visited August 27, 2018).

Academic Achievement

In addition to the demographic differences noted above, undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree also differ from their peers in terms of academic achievement in that they are more likely than their counterparts to report having an undergraduate GPA of 3.40 or higher (44% vs. 39% of undergraduates unlikely to pursue an advanced degree) (See Table 1.2).

These findings are in line with English & Umbach, who found that students demonstrating high levels of academic performance (as measured by GPA) are more likely to aspire to, apply for, and enroll in graduate education.¹⁰

Table 1.2: Academic Achievement by Likelihood of Pursuing an Advanced Degree

Q: How likely are you to go to graduate or professional school to obtain a graduate or professional degree (e.g., MBA, other master's, law, medical, dental, or other PhD) at any point?

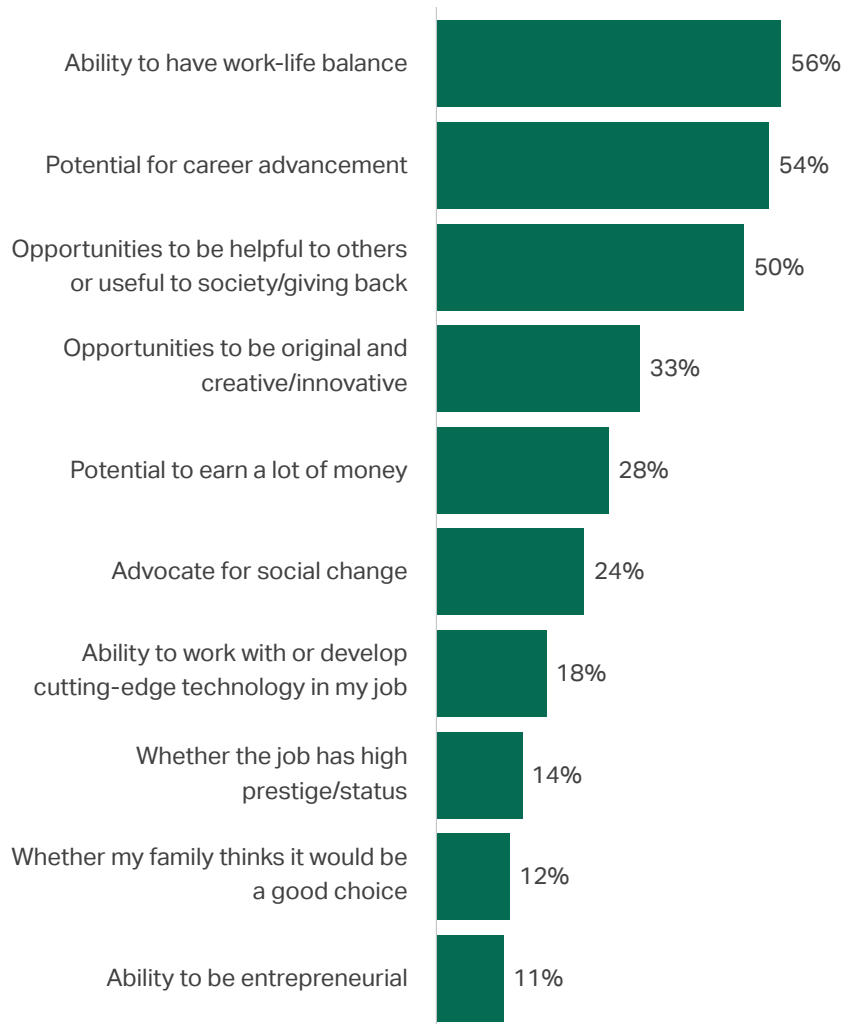
College GPA	Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Undecided	Unlikely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Have Never Thought About an Advanced Degree
<2.39	2%	4%	3%	5%
2.40-2.99	9%	14%	14%	16%
3.00-3.39	20%	21%	24%	18%
3.40-3.79	27%	23%	26%	15%
3.80+	17%	11%	13%	6%
Do not have GPA yet	25%	26%	19%	40%
n=	15,850	2,405	3,196	650

¹⁰ David English & Paul D. Umbach, *Graduate School Choice: An Examination of Individual and Institutional Effects*, 39 *The Review of Higher Education*, 173-211 (2016).

Career Aspirations

A majority of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report that work-life balance (56%) and the potential for career advancement (54%) are extremely important characteristics in selecting a career (See Figure 1.1). While half (50%) of these undergraduates identify the opportunity to give back to society as extremely important; fewer undergraduates report that high prestige or job status (14%) or the potential to earn a lot of money (28%) are extremely important when selecting a career.

Figure 1.1: Importance of Characteristics in Selecting a Career Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (% Extremely Important) (n=15,850)



Students likely to pursue an advanced degree are more likely than their peers who are not to report that three characteristics are extremely important in selecting a career: potential for career advancement (54%); the opportunity to be helpful and give back to society (50%); and advocating for social change (24%) (See Table 1.3). They are also more likely to identify the ability to work with cutting-edge technology (18%) and high prestige (14%) than undergraduates unlikely to pursue an advanced degree. They are, however, not significantly more likely to consider the potential to earn a lot of money extremely important (28% vs. 27%) than students unlikely to pursue an advanced degree.

Table 1.3: Importance of Characteristics in Selecting a Career for Undergraduate Students (% Extremely Important)

Q: How important are each of these characteristics to you when thinking about selecting a career to pursue?

	Total Surveyed Undergraduate Students	Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Undecided	Unlikely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Have Never Thought About
Ability to have work-life balance	57%	56%	57%	60%	57%
Potential for career advancement	51%	54%	47%	44%	42%
Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back	45%	50%	36%	31%	32%
Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative	32%	33%	31%	32%	31%
Potential to earn a lot of money	27%	28%	25%	27%	27%
Advocate for social change	22%	24%	16%	15%	16%
Ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology in my job	17%	18%	15%	13%	12%
Whether the job has high prestige/status	12%	14%	9%	7%	9%
Whether my family thinks it would be a good choice	11%	12%	10%	9%	12%
Ability to be entrepreneurial	11%	11%	11%	11%	13%
n=	22,123	15,850	2,405	3,196	650

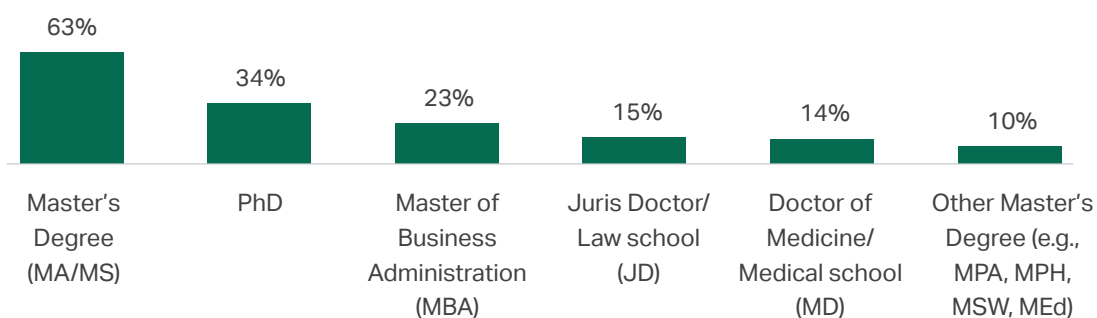
Section 2. The Most Sought-After Advanced Degrees

Of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, nearly two-thirds (63%) are considering an MA or MS degree. This aligns with NCES statistics on advanced degrees conferred in the 2015-16 academic year (the most recent data available), which show that 62 percent of advanced degrees awarded that year were non-MBA master's degrees.¹¹

Nearly one in four (23%) undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are considering an MBA and ten percent are considering other master's degrees (such as MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd) (See Figure 2.1). Additionally, one-third (34%) of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are considering a PhD, while fewer are considering a JD (15%) or MD (14%).

Figure 2.1: Types of Advanced Degrees Considered by Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (n=15,850)

Q: Which types of graduate or professional degree programs are you considering?



¹¹ *Master's degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by field of study: Selected years, 1970-71 through 2015-16* [Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet], U.S. Dept. of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2017), https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_323.10.asp.

Degrees Considered by Demographics

Undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree vary by degree they are considering in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and parental education. With respect to gender, men report considering an MBA (29%) more often than women (18%); the reverse is true for other master’s degrees (8% vs. 12%) and for MDs (12% vs. 17%) (See Table 2.1).

A greater proportion of Asian (17%), Black (18%), and Hispanic (18%) students are considering an MD than White students (12%). Hispanic students (18%) are less likely to report considering an MBA than other students, with more Asian students considering an MBA (28%).

The JD and PhD stand out from other degrees in terms of differences by parental education, with 18 percent of students who have at least one parent with an advanced degree considering a JD and 37 percent considering a PhD. This compares to 12 percent and 32 percent of undergraduates whose parents do not have a college degree, respectively. This finding mirrors the work of Mullen, Goyette, and Soares who found strong effects of parental education on entry into first-professional and doctoral programs, but not master’s degrees.¹² It is also consistent with Posselt and Grodsky, who report that the amount of “educational inheritance” from parents with advanced degrees for doctoral and professional degrees is “striking.”¹³

Table 2.1: Advanced Degrees Considered by Undergraduate Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: Which types of graduate or professional degree programs are you considering?

	Gender		Parental Education			Race/Ethnicity			
	Men	Women	Less than bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Master's Degree (MA/MS)	65%	61%	65%	63%	63%	62%	60%	64%	64%
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	29%	18%	20%	24%	24%	28%	22%	18%	23%
Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)	8%	12%	11%	10%	10%	8%	13%	10%	10%
Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)	15%	14%	12%	13%	18%	8%	16%	15%	16%
Doctor of Medicine/ Medical school (MD)	12%	17%	15%	14%	15%	17%	18%	18%	12%
PhD	36%	31%	32%	30%	37%	32%	31%	37%	33%
Other graduate or professional degree	5%	10%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	8%
n=	6,285	9,294	3,797	5,308	6,656	2,477	822	1,496	10,698

12 Ann L. Mullen, Kimberly A. Goyette, & Joseph A. Soares, *Who Goes to Graduate School? Social and Academic Correlates of Educational Continuation after College*, 76 *Sociology of Education*, 143-169 (2013), <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0038-0407%28200304%2976%3A2%3C143%3AWGTGSS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-O>.

13 Julie R. Posselt & Eric Grodsky, *Graduate Education and Social Stratification*, 43 *Annual Review of Sociology*, 353-378 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-081715-074324>.

Section 3. Sources of Information

This section examines who undergraduates report are the most important sources of advice about graduate and professional school, which degrees they report hearing their professors talk about, and which degrees they report seeing and receiving information about on campus.

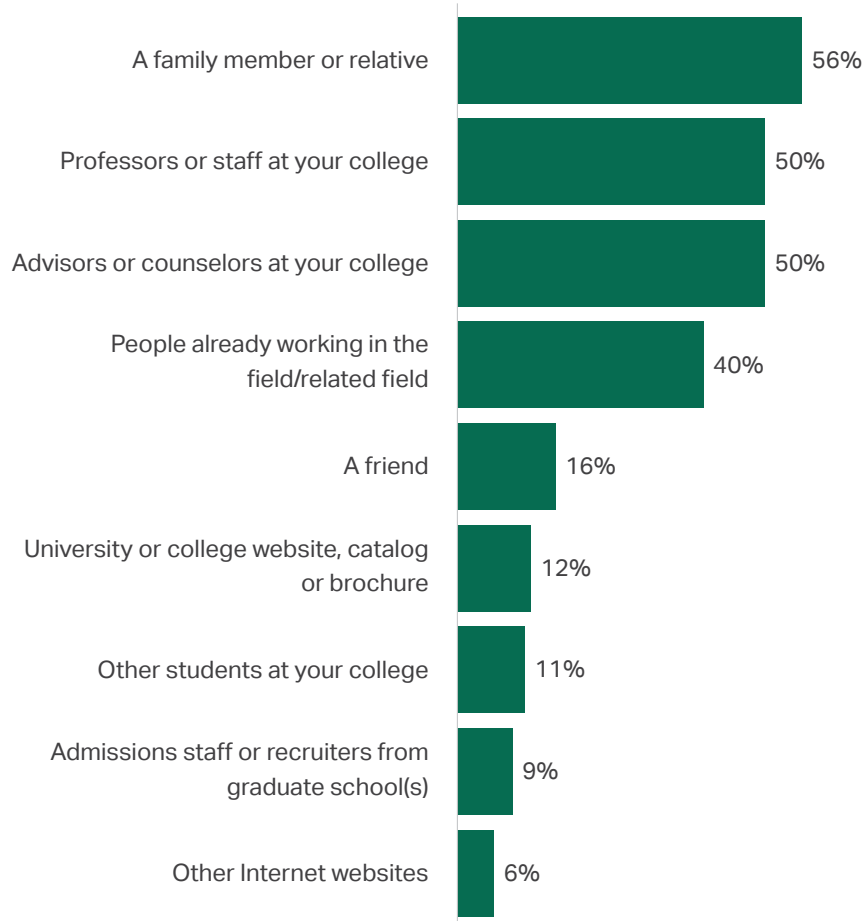
Sources of Advice

A family member or relative (56%) is the most important source of advice for undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, followed by professors or staff (50%) and advisors/counselors (50%) at their college (See Figure 3.1). Professionals working in the field (40%) are also an important source of advice.

Admissions staff or recruiters from graduate schools were identified as an important source of advice by only nine percent of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree.

Figure 3.1: Most Important Sources for Advice About Pursuing an Advanced Degree Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (n=15,784)¹⁴

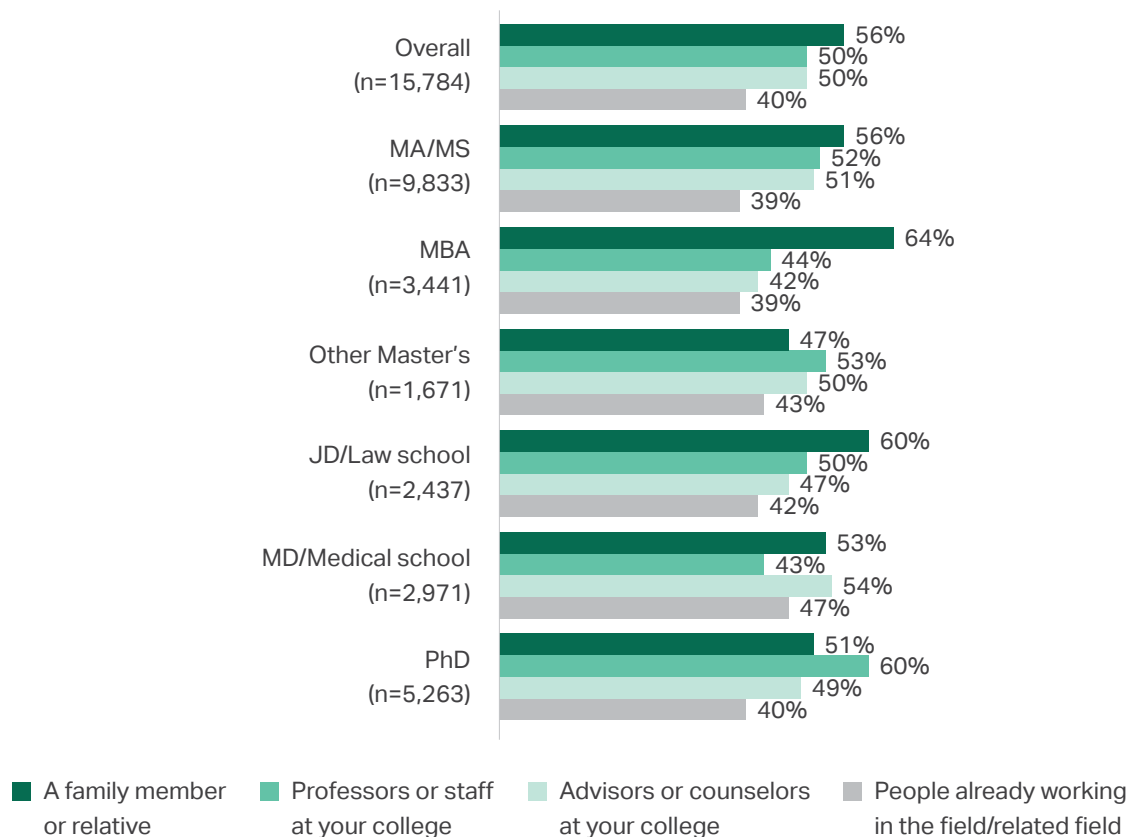
Q: Which of the following are your three most important sources for advice about pursuing a graduate or professional degree? (Three responses allowed)



¹⁴ Responses that yielded less than five percent are not reported in Figure 3.1.

The data show that the four most important sources of advice undergraduates identify vary based on the types of advanced degrees they are considering. Undergraduate students considering an MBA, JD, or MA/MS degrees most often identify family (64%, 60%, and 56%, respectively) as an important source, whereas potential PhD students most often identify professors or staff at their college (60%) (See Figure 3.2). Undergraduates considering an MD are the most likely to name advisors or counselors at their school (54%) as important sources and more likely to name them than professors or staff at their college (43%) or people in the field (47%).

Figure 3.2: Most Important Sources for Advice About Pursuing an Advanced Degree by Degree Considered Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree¹⁵



Demographics

Among undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, sources of advice about pursuing a graduate or professional degree differ according to an undergraduate's gender, race/ethnicity, and parental education. With respect to gender, women are more likely than men to look to advisors/counselors (55% vs. 44%) and people working in the field (43% vs. 37%) (See Table 3.1). Men are more likely than women to report friends as an important source of advice (18% vs. 13%).

15 For full data, please see Table A3.1 in Appendix D: Additional Data Tables

Black undergraduates are least likely to identify professors or staff as a source of advice (42%), and most likely to report admissions staff from graduate programs and advisors or counselors at their college as an important source of advice (16% and 54%). Asian and White students most often report family (57% and 58%) and Asian students (21%) are more likely than other undergraduates to report a friend as an important source of advice.

Table 3.1: Most Important Sources for Advice About Pursuing an Advanced Degree by Undergraduate Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree¹⁶

Q: Which of the following are your three most important sources for advice about pursuing a graduate or professional degree? (Three responses allowed)

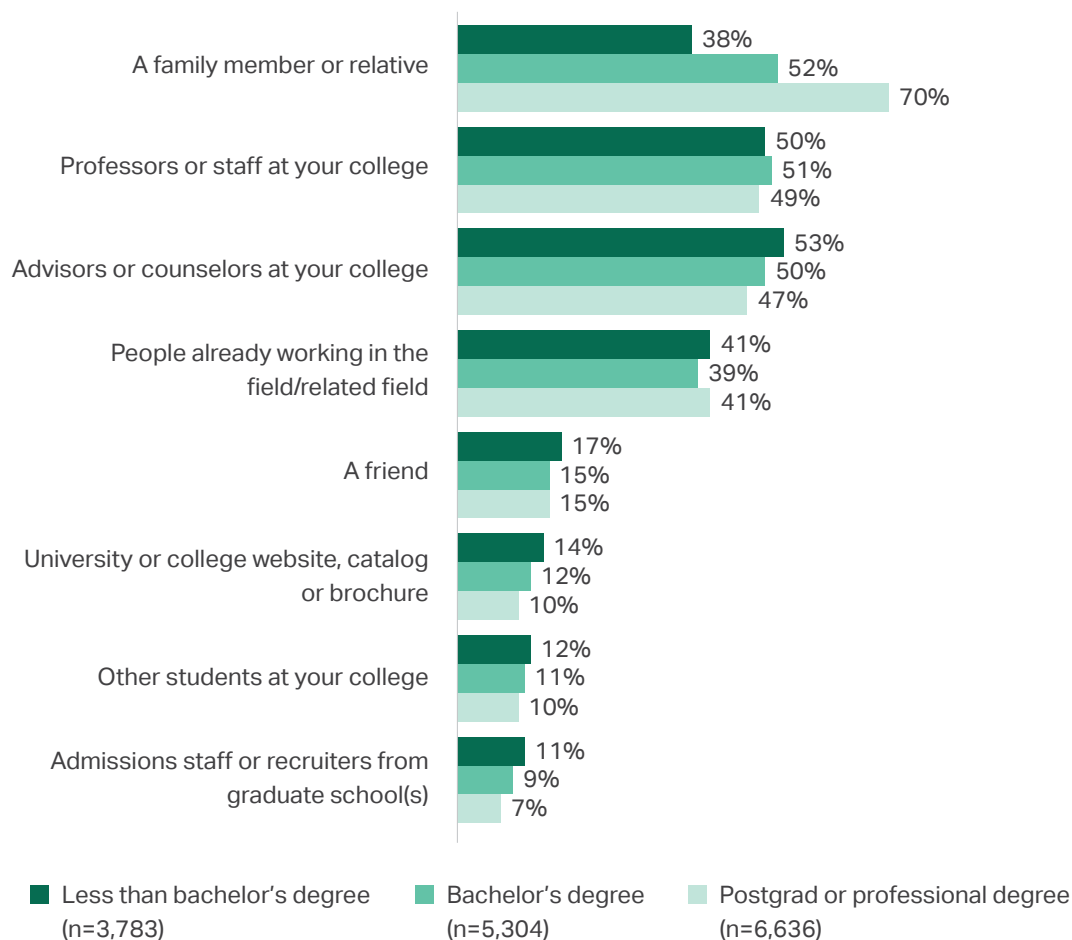
	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Gender		Race/Ethnicity			
		Men	Women	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
A family member or relative	56%	57%	55%	57%	48%	48%	58%
Professors or staff at your college	50%	51%	50%	46%	42%	50%	53%
Advisors or counselors at your college	50%	44%	55%	44%	54%	49%	51%
People already working in the field/related field	40%	37%	43%	37%	39%	37%	42%
A friend	16%	18%	13%	21%	12%	14%	15%
University or college website, catalog or brochure	12%	10%	13%	11%	14%	12%	11%
Other students at your college	11%	13%	9%	13%	9%	12%	10%
Admissions staff or recruiters from graduate school(s)	9%	7%	11%	10%	16%	10%	8%
n=	15,784	6,268	9,273	2,466	820	1,494	10,677

¹⁶ Response options that yielded under ten percent for all groups of students are not reported.

Undergraduates who have at least one parent with an advanced degree most often report that family is an important source of advice about advanced degrees. Seventy percent of these students report family as an important source, compared with 38 percent of first-generation college students (See Figure 3.3). In contrast, advisors or counselors at their college are more often identified as an important source by first-generation college students (53%) than by those who have at least one parent with a bachelor's (50%) or advanced degree (47%).

Figure 3.3: Three Most Important Sources for Advice About Pursuing an Advanced Degree by Parental Education Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: Which of the following are your three most important sources for advice about pursuing a graduate or professional degree? (Three responses allowed)



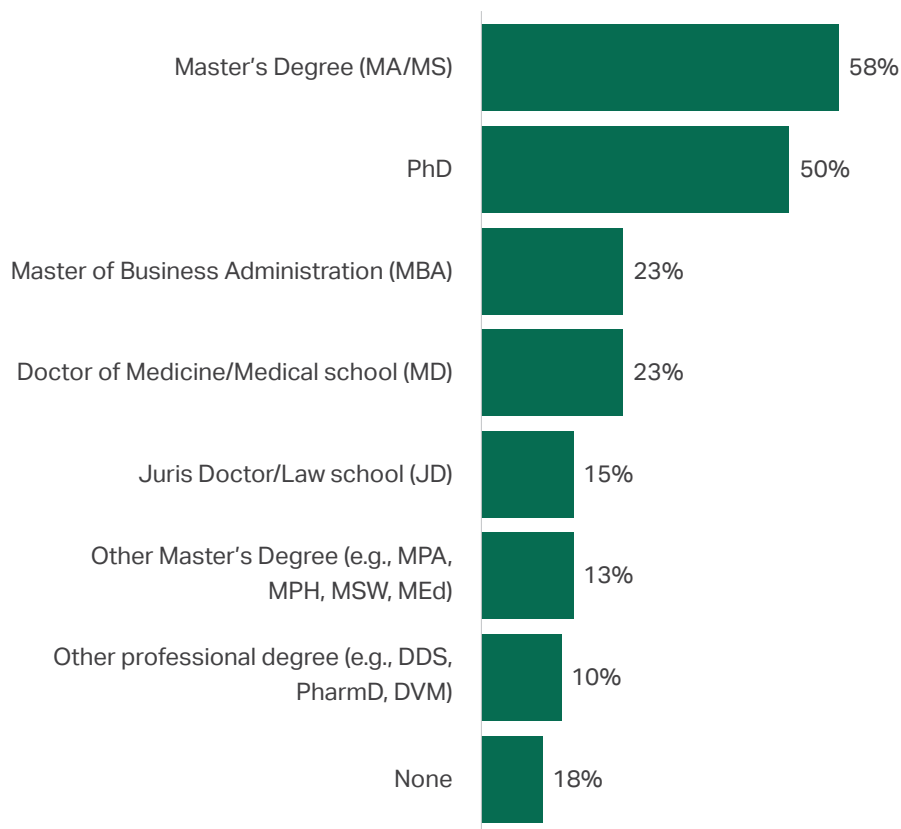
What Students Report Hearing and Seeing on Campus About Advanced Degrees

Beyond the Bachelor's asked undergraduates what they have heard or seen about different advanced degrees on campus.

More than half (58%) of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report hearing their professors talk about MA/MS degrees, and half (50%) report hearing professors talk about PhD programs (See Figure 3.4). Nearly one-quarter (23%) report hearing professors talk about either an MBA or an MD; in contrast, relatively few undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report hearing professors talk about the JD (15%), other master's degrees (13%), or other professional degrees (10%). Almost one in five (18%) report they have not heard their professors talk about any advanced degree.

Figure 3.4: Advanced Degrees That Undergraduates Report Hearing Professors Talk About During College Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (n=15,758)

Q: Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have your professors talked about, either in class or in one-on-one discussions?



The degrees undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report hearing most about vary based on their field of study.¹⁷ Two-thirds (66%) of undergraduates in the business field have heard professors talk about an MBA, while half of those in the health and medical science field (48%) and the biological and agricultural science fields (53%) have heard professors talk about an MD (See Table 3.2).

¹⁷ Hironao Okahana & Enyu Zhou, Council of Graduate Schools, Graduate Enrollment and Degrees: 2006 to 2016 (2017), available at http://cgsnet.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CGS_GED16_Report_Final.pdf. Undergraduate survey respondents were asked to select their major from a list of 89 majors based on a subset of CIP code categories summarized from leading universities' accounts of their majors/fields of study. Students could also write in a major if the list did not reflect theirs. For analysis, these were collapsed into 11 broad fields of study based on the Council of Graduate School's taxonomy of fields of study.

Students in the social and behavioral sciences and the public administration and services fields are more likely than those in other fields to report hearing professors talk about the JD (30%). About a third (30%) of public administration majors have also heard professors talk about other master’s degrees, more than students in other fields of study.¹⁸

Table 3.2: Advanced Degrees That Undergraduates Report Hearing Professors Talk About During College by Undergraduate Field of Study Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree¹⁹

Q: Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have your professors talked about, either in class or in one-on-one discussions?

	Arts & Hmnty.	Bio. & Ag. Sci.	Business	Education	Engineering	Health & Med. Sci.	Math & Com. Sci.	Phys. & Earth Sci.	Public Admin. & Svcs.	Soc. & Behav. Sci.
Master’s Degree (MA/MS)	60%	53%	50%	66%	66%	59%	60%	55%	51%	60%
PhD	48%	60%	29%	38%	51%	56%	49%	63%	43%	54%
MBA	18%	9%	66%	7%	20%	16%	25%	7%	24%	22%
Doctor of Medicine/ Medical school (MD)	19%	53%	9%	7%	12%	48%	12%	26%	14%	22%
Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)	17%	7%	14%	5%	4%	8%	6%	7%	30%	30%
Other Master’s Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)	13%	12%	12%	20%	7%	21%	6%	6%	30%	17%
Other professional degree (e.g., DDS, PharmD, DVM)	7%	22%	5%	6%	4%	28%	4%	10%	9%	8%
n=	1,450	1,799	1,543	542	1,507	1,167	1,052	853	201	3,768

Beyond the Bachelor’s also asked undergraduates what information they have seen or received about advanced degrees on campus. Eight in ten (80%) undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report seeing or receiving information on MA/MS degrees, while 61 percent report seeing or receiving information about PhD programs (See Figure 3.5). Over half have seen information about MBAs (57%)

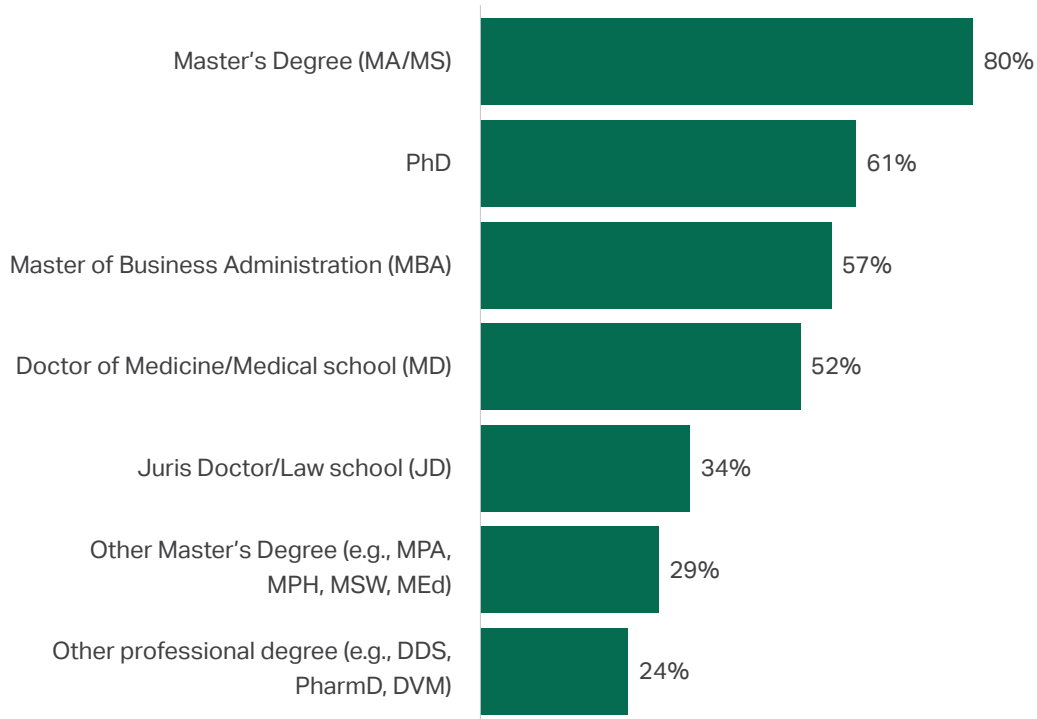
¹⁸ *Beyond the Bachelor’s* analyzed which degrees undergraduates report hearing professors talk about by demographics, but found only very small differences.

¹⁹ Arts and Humanities, Biological and Agricultural Sciences, Business, Education, Engineering, Health and Medical Science, Mathematics and Computer Sciences, Physical and Earth Sciences, Public Administration and Services, Social and Behavioral Sciences

or MDs (52%). Students are less likely to report seeing or receiving information about the JD (34%) or other master's (29%) or professional degrees (24%).

Figure 3.5: Advanced Degrees That Undergraduates Report Seeing or Receiving Information About on Campus Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (n=15,829)

Q: Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have you seen information on, either around campus such as job fairs/graduate school fairs, general notices, or in a counselor's office or through direct mail or email? (Please select all that apply.)



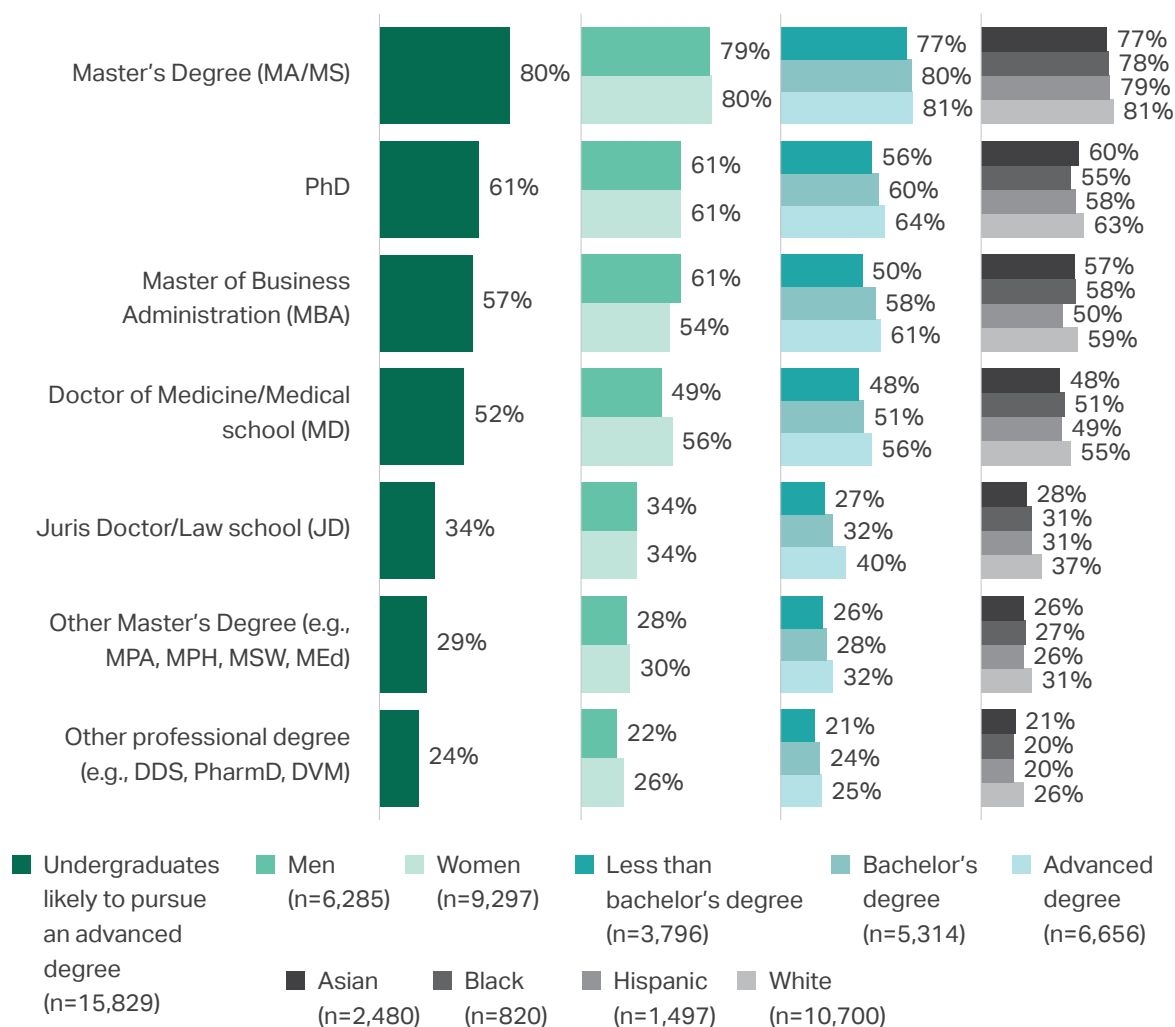
There are some demographic differences in which degrees undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report seeing or receiving information about on campus.

Among undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, men are more likely than women to report seeing or hearing information about the MBA (61% vs. 54%), whereas women are more likely than men to report seeing or receiving information about the MD (56% vs. 49%) (See Figure 3.6). White students likely to pursue an advanced degree are more likely to report seeing or receiving information on all advanced degrees than their Asian, Black, and Hispanic counterparts. Hispanic students are least likely to report seeing or receiving information on MBAs (50% vs. 57% overall).

First-generation college students are less likely to report seeing or receiving information on all graduate and professional degree types than undergraduates with at least one parent with an advanced degree (See Figure 3.6). Undergraduates with at least one parent with an advanced degree are most likely to report seeing or receiving information on all advanced degree types. The greatest difference between these groups is with respect to the JD; only 27 percent of first-generation college students report seeing or receiving information about the JD, compared with 40 percent of undergraduates with at least one parent with an advanced degree.

Figure 3.6: Advanced Degrees That Undergraduates Report Seeing or Receiving Information About on Campus by Undergraduate Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree²⁰

Q: Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have you seen information on, either around campus such as job fairs/graduate school fairs, general notices, or in a counselor's office or through direct mail or email? (Please select all that apply.)



Undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree vary as to which advanced degrees they report seeing or receiving information about on campus by their broad field of study. More than 70 percent of students in each field report seeing or hearing information about master's degrees, and an even greater proportion of students in the fields of education (86%), engineering (86%), and mathematics and computer science (85%) do so (See Table 3.3).

²⁰ Response options that yielded under ten percent for all groups of students are not reported. For full data, please see Table A3.2 in Appendix D: Additional Data Tables.

Seven in ten undergraduates in the biological and agricultural (73%) and health and medical science (71%) fields report seeing or receiving information about MDs, compared to 52 percent of students likely to pursue any advanced degree. Eighty-three percent of undergraduates in the business field report seeing or hearing information about the MBA. Students in arts and humanities (40%), public administration (43%), and social and behavioral sciences (47%) fields are most likely to report seeing or receiving information on the JD.

Table 3.3: Advanced Degrees That Undergraduates Report Seeing or Receiving Information About on Campus by Undergraduate Field of Study Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree²¹

Q: Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have you seen information on, either around campus such as job fairs/graduate school fairs, general notices, or in a counselor's office or through direct mail or email? (Please select all that apply.)

	Arts & Hmnty.	Bio. & Ag. Sci.	Busi-ness	Educa-tion	Engin-eering	Health & Med. Sci.	Math & Com. Sci.	Phys. & Earth Sci.	Public Admin. & Svcs.	Soc. & Behav. Sci.
Master's Degree (MA/MS)	79%	78%	71%	86%	86%	77%	85%	80%	77%	80%
PhD	58%	70%	46%	48%	66%	67%	63%	70%	48%	62%
MBA	54%	46%	83%	40%	59%	53%	59%	45%	48%	58%
Doctor of Medicine/ Medical school (MD)	50%	73%	39%	38%	46%	71%	42%	56%	38%	54%
Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)	40%	28%	34%	21%	25%	29%	26%	28%	43%	47%
Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)	29%	30%	25%	29%	24%	37%	24%	25%	40%	32%
Other professional degree (e.g., DDS, PharmD, DVM)	22%	39%	15%	16%	20%	43%	14%	25%	19%	22%
n=	1,463	1,807	15,586	543	1,518	1,170	1,055	855	202	3,780

21 Arts and Humanities, Biological and Agricultural Sciences, Business, Education, Engineering, Health and Medical Science, Mathematics and Computer Sciences, Physical and Earth Sciences, Public Administration and Services, Social and Behavioral Sciences

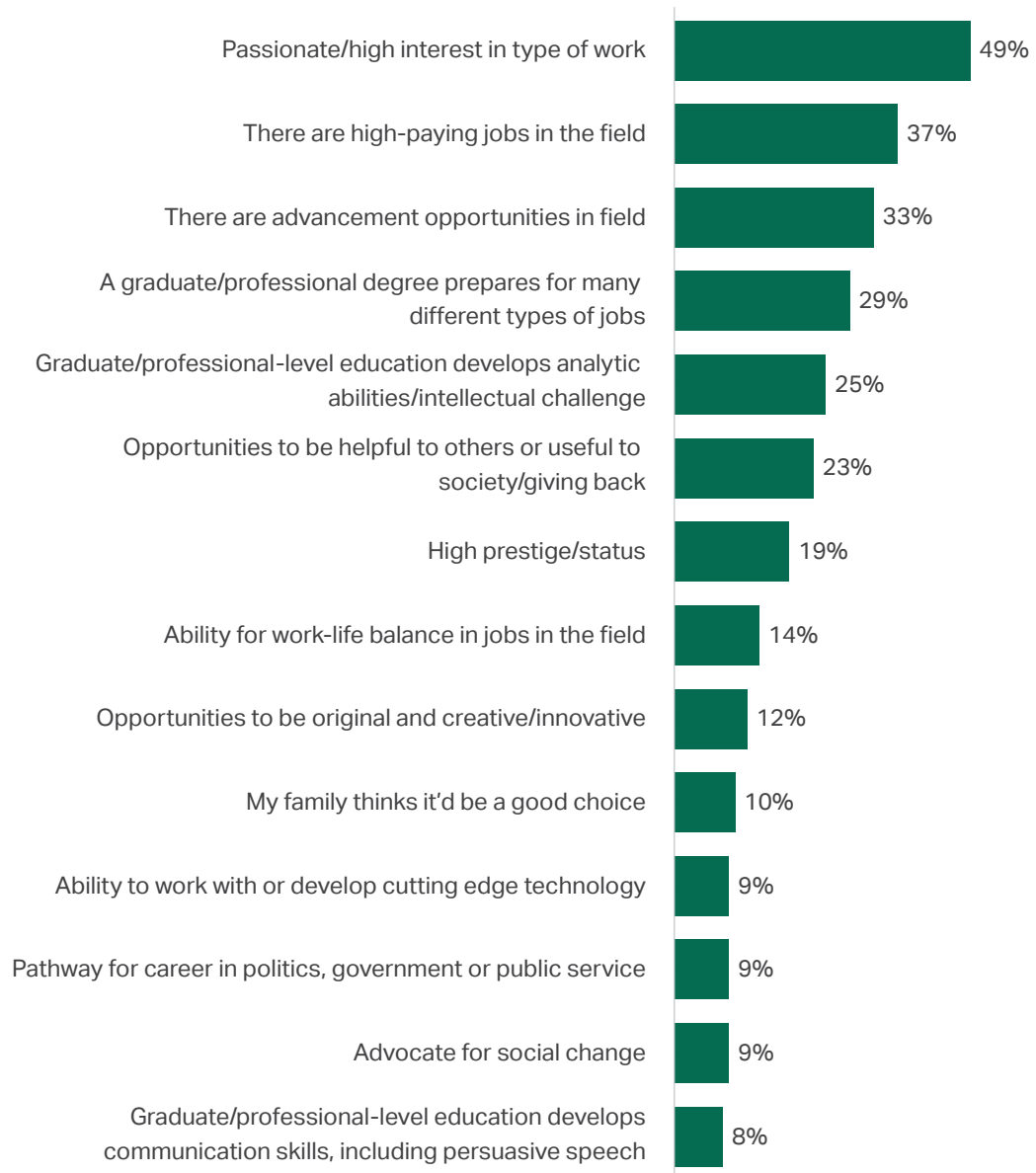
Section 4. Reasons for Considering a Graduate or Professional Degree

Beyond the Bachelor's asked students why they are considering an advanced degree and found differences in motivation based on multiple student characteristics.

Undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree report the top reason for doing so is passion for and high interest in the type of work (49%). These students also identify high-paying jobs in the field (37%), advancement opportunities in the field (33%), and that a graduate/professional degree prepares one for many different types of jobs (29%) as top reasons for considering an advanced degree (See Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Top Reasons for Considering an Advanced Degree Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (n=15,698) (Three responses allowed)²²

Q: What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school, not including law school?



²² Undergraduates who reported considering a JD were asked this well as an additional question relating specifically to the factors for considering a JD. Figure 4.1 displays only responses about pursuing a degree *other than* a JD.

The reasons for considering an advanced degree vary considerably based on the degree undergraduates are considering. Students considering an MD are the most likely to report passion/high interest in the work (64%) and opportunity to be helpful or to give back (42%), as compared to 49 percent and 23 percent of students likely to pursue an advanced degree overall (See Table 4.1). Undergraduates considering a PhD are most likely to report a top reason to consider graduate or professional school is it develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge (32%).

Undergraduates considering an MBA are less likely to identify passion for the work (34%), but are more likely to identify high-paying jobs (50%) and advancement opportunities in the field (47%) than undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree overall. They are least likely to report considering the MBA because it offers an opportunity to be useful and to give back (10% compared to 23% overall).

A pathway to a career in politics, government, or public service is the most commonly identified reason to go to law school for undergraduates considering a JD. Forty-four percent of students considering a JD name this as a top reason for doing so, compared with only nine percent of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree overall. Students considering a JD also name passion for the work (42%) and opportunities to be helpful to others (35%) as top reasons to pursue a law degree.

Table 4.1: Top Reasons for Considering an Advanced Degree by Advanced Degree(s) Considered Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school, not including law school?
 Q: What are your top three factors for considering law school?

	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	MA/MS	MBA	Other Master's	JD ²³	MD	PhD
Passionate/high interest in type of work	49%	49%	34%	55%	42%	64%	59%
There are high-paying jobs in the field	37%	36%	50%	25%	31%	41%	30%
There are advancement opportunities in field	33%	35%	47%	33%	7%	21%	25%
Graduate/professional degree prepares for many different types of jobs	29%	31%	31%	27%	25%	23%	27%
Graduate/professional-level education develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge	25%	26%	25%	22%	25%	22%	32%
Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back	23%	21%	10%	34%	35%	42%	26%
High prestige/status	19%	17%	27%	13%	21%	22%	19%
Ability for work-life balance in jobs in the field	14%	14%	14%	15%	4%	15%	11%
Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative	12%	14%	10%	12%	3%	7%	17%
My family thinks it'd be a good choice	10%	10%	11%	6%	9%	10%	7%
Ability to work with or develop cutting edge technology	9%	11%	7%	5%	1%	8%	13%
Pathway for career in politics, government or public service	9%	9%	8%	16%	44%	3%	9%
Advocate for social change	9%	9%	4%	16%	32%	7%	10%
Graduate/professional-level education develops communication skills, including persuasive speech	8%	8%	11%	8%	15%	4%	7%
n=	15,698	9,796	3,426	1,661	2,415	2,969	5,238

23 Undergraduates who reported considering a JD and any other advanced degree were asked about factors for considering a JD. Table 4.1 displays their responses about reasons for pursuing a JD.

Demographic Differences

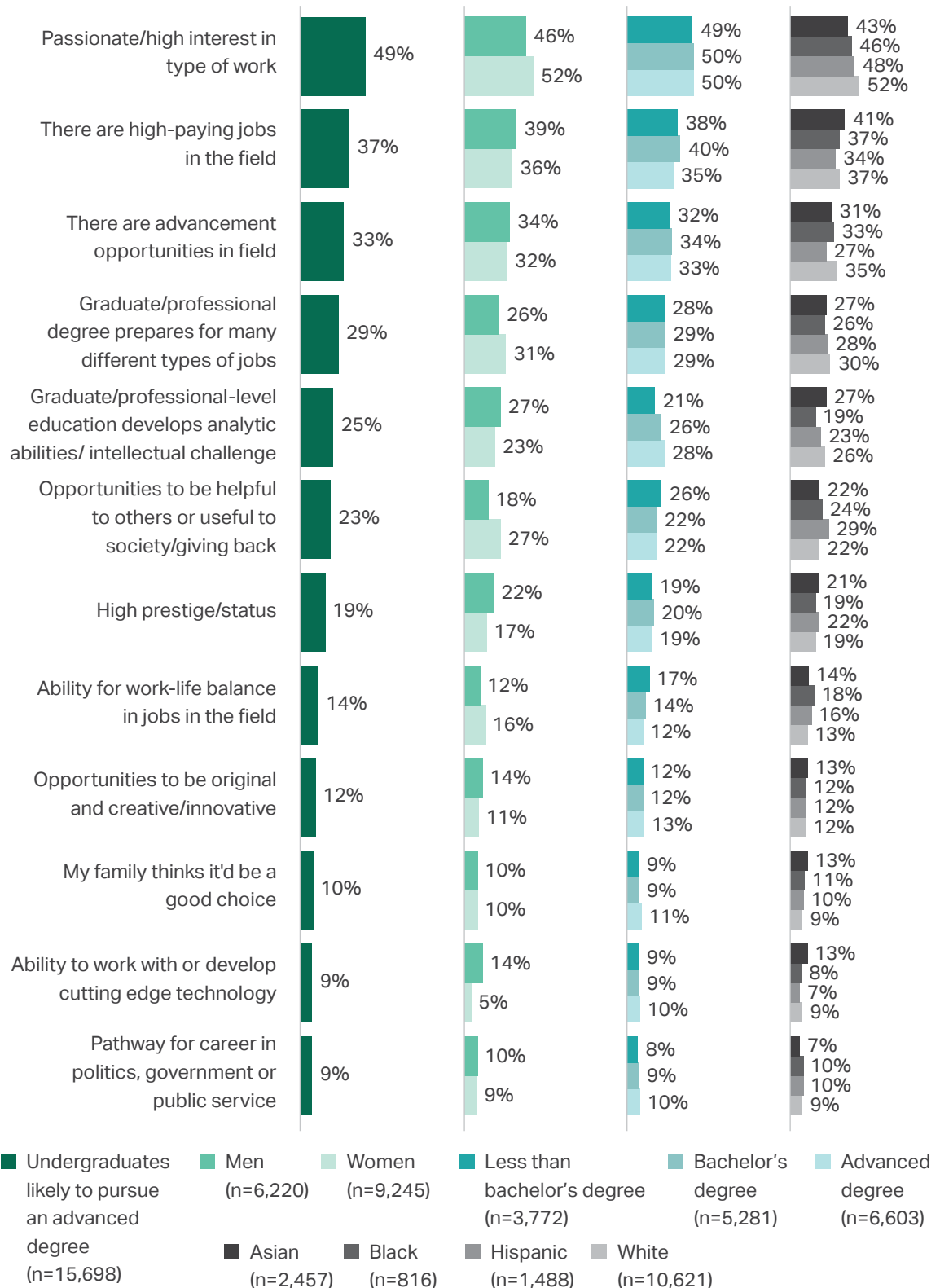
For undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree, the top reasons for considering an advanced degree vary by gender, race/ethnicity, and parental education. Men are more likely than women to consider an advanced degree because it has high prestige (22% vs. 17%) and offers an ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology (14% vs. 5%) (See Figure 4.2). Women are more likely than men to consider an advanced degree because they are passionate about or have high interest in the type of work (52% vs. 46%), as an opportunity to give back/be useful (27% vs. 18%), and to advocate for social change (10% vs. 6%).

Asian students are more likely to name the ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology as a top reason to pursue an advanced degree (13%) compared to other students (9%). Hispanic students are more likely to name opportunities to be helpful to others and useful to society/giving back (29%) as a reason to consider an advanced degree.

First-generation college students likely to pursue an advanced degree are more likely than others to name an opportunity to give back/be useful (26% vs. 22%) and to advocate for social change (11% vs. 7%) as top reasons to consider an advanced degree.

Figure 4.2: Reasons for Considering an Advanced Degree by Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree²⁴

Q: What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school, not including law school?



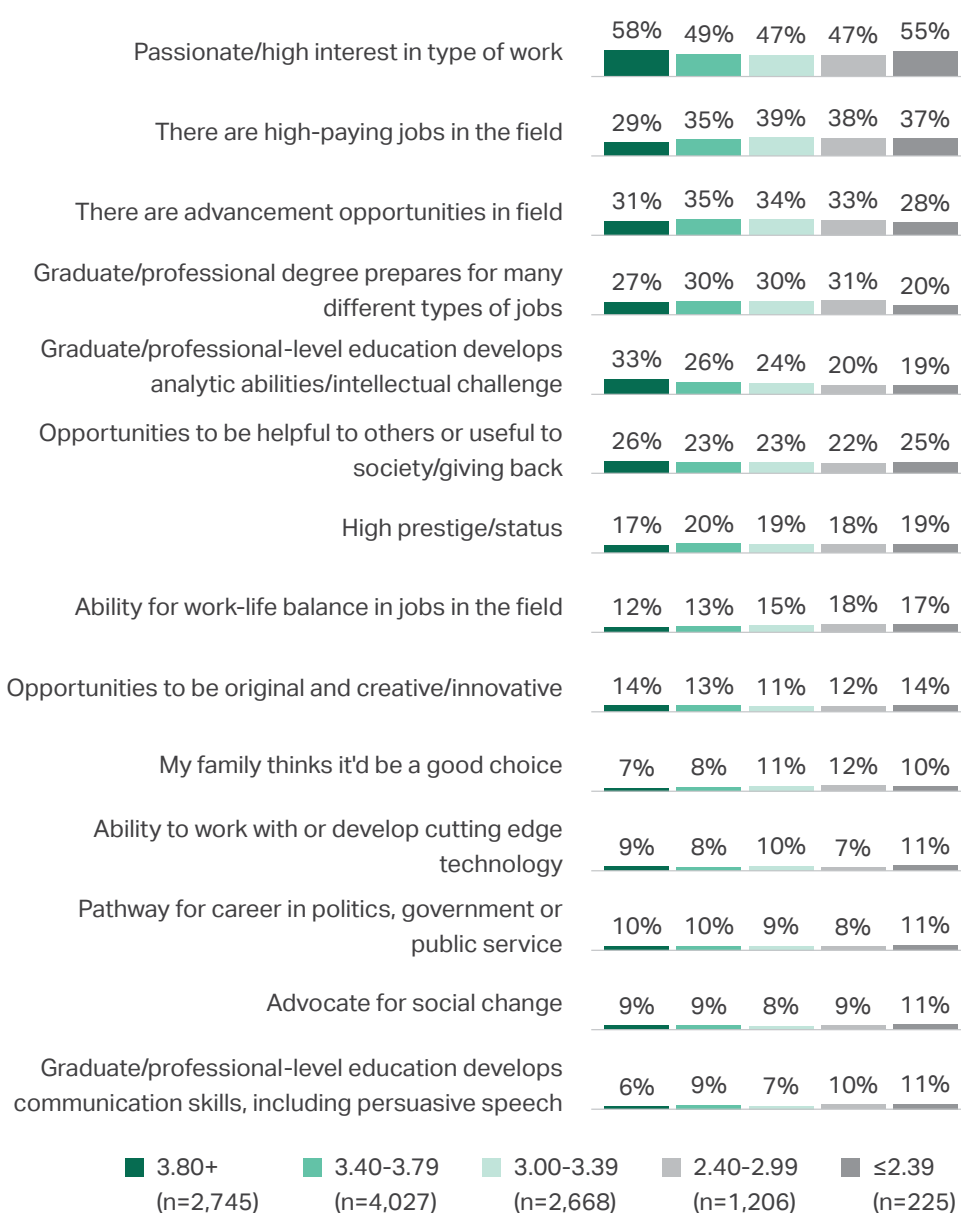
²⁴ Response options that yielded under ten percent for all groups of students are not reported. For full data, please see Table A4.1 in Appendix D: Additional Data Tables.

Academic Differences

Just as the reasons for considering an advanced degree vary by undergraduate demographics, there are variations by academic achievement. Undergraduates who report having higher GPAs more often indicate that “graduate/professional school develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge” is a top reason to consider an advanced degree (59% of those reporting a GPA of 3.4 or above, compared to 39% reporting a GPA below 3.0) (See Figure 4.3). In contrast, students who report having lower GPAs more often identify ability for work-life balance in jobs in the field as a key reason to consider an advanced degree (35% of undergraduates with a GPA below 3.0, compared to 25% of students with a GPA of 3.4 or above).

Figure 4.3: Reasons for Considering an Advanced Degree by Academic Achievement Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree²⁵

Q: What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school, not including law school?



²⁵ For full data, please see Table A4.2 in Appendix D: Additional Data Tables.

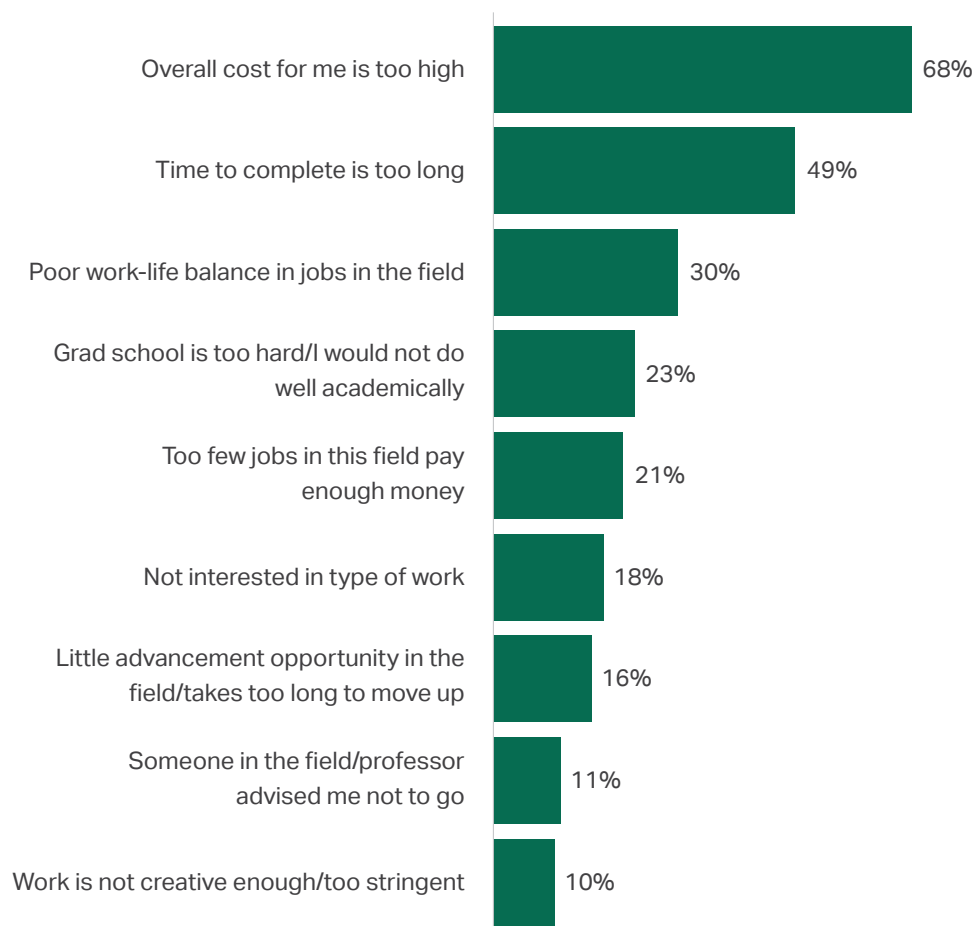
Section 5. Reasons for Not Pursuing a Graduate or Professional Degree

The cost of higher education has been a major topic of discussion in recent years. *Beyond the Bachelor's* asked about cost and other factors that might deter undergraduates from applying to graduate or professional school.

Nearly seven in ten (68%) undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree name overall cost/potential debt as a top reason for potentially not attending graduate or professional school (See Figure 5.1). Almost half (49%) of these students report that the time to complete the degree is too long. Other potentially discouraging factors include work-life balance concerns (30%) graduate school being too hard (23%), and too few jobs in this field pay enough money (21%).

Figure 5.1: Top Factors That Might Prevent Undergraduates From Pursuing an Advanced Degree Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree (n=15,333) (Three responses allowed)²⁶

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school, not including law school?



While overall cost is cited as the top potential deterrent for undergraduates considering all types of advanced degrees, there are some key differences by advanced degree being considered. Time needed to complete the degree is less of a factor for students considering other master's degrees (44%) than students likely to pursue any advanced degree (49%), while too few jobs in the field that pay enough money is a bigger deterrent for these students (27% vs. 21%) (See Table 5.1). Undergraduates considering a JD are most likely to name poor work-life balance in jobs in the field (51%) as a potential deterrent from law school compared to just 30 percent of all students likely to pursue an advanced degree. Undergraduates considering a JD are least likely to name lack of interest in the type of work as a reason not to pursue a law degree (9% compared with 18% of undergraduates considering an advanced degree overall). Students considering an MD are most likely to say that graduate school is too hard or they would not do well academically (30%).

²⁶ Response options that yielded under ten percent for all groups of students are not reported. Undergraduates who reported considering a JD were asked this question as well as an additional question about the factors that might prevent them from pursuing a JD. Figure 5.1 displays only responses about factors that might prevent undergraduates from pursuing a degree *other than* a JD.

Table 5.1: Potential Deterrents for Students Considering an Advanced Degree by Advanced Degree(s) Considered Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree²⁷

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school, not including law school?

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to law school?

	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	MA/MS	MBA	Other Master's	JD ²⁸	MD	PhD
Overall cost for me is too high	68%	69%	65%	72%	63%	69%	66%
Time to complete is too long	49%	50%	53%	44%	13%	50%	51%
Poor work-life balance in jobs in the field	30%	28%	30%	30%	51%	42%	32%
Grad school is too hard/I would not do well academically	23%	24%	16%	20%	25%	30%	23%
Too few jobs in the field pay enough money	21%	22%	19%	27%	17%	17%	24%
Not interested in type of work	18%	17%	20%	17%	9%	18%	16%
Little advancement opportunity in the field/takes too long to move up	16%	17%	21%	16%	10%	12%	16%
Someone in the field/professor advised me not to go	11%	11%	13%	11%	9%	9%	10%
Work is not creative enough/too stringent	10%	10%	11%	10%	16%	9%	11%
n=	15,333	9,589	3,328	1,626	2,385	2,907	5,115

Demographic Differences

Deterrents to pursuing an advanced degree also differ by demographic characteristics. Women are more likely than men to say that the overall cost is too high (72% vs. 64%) and that graduate school is too hard (26% vs. 20%) (See Figure 5.2). Cost is mentioned more often as a top deterrent by Black (77%) and Hispanic (75%) students than Asian (58%) or White (68%) students. Black students are less likely to say that graduate school is too hard (17%) than their Asian (25%), Hispanic (25%), and White (23%) peers.

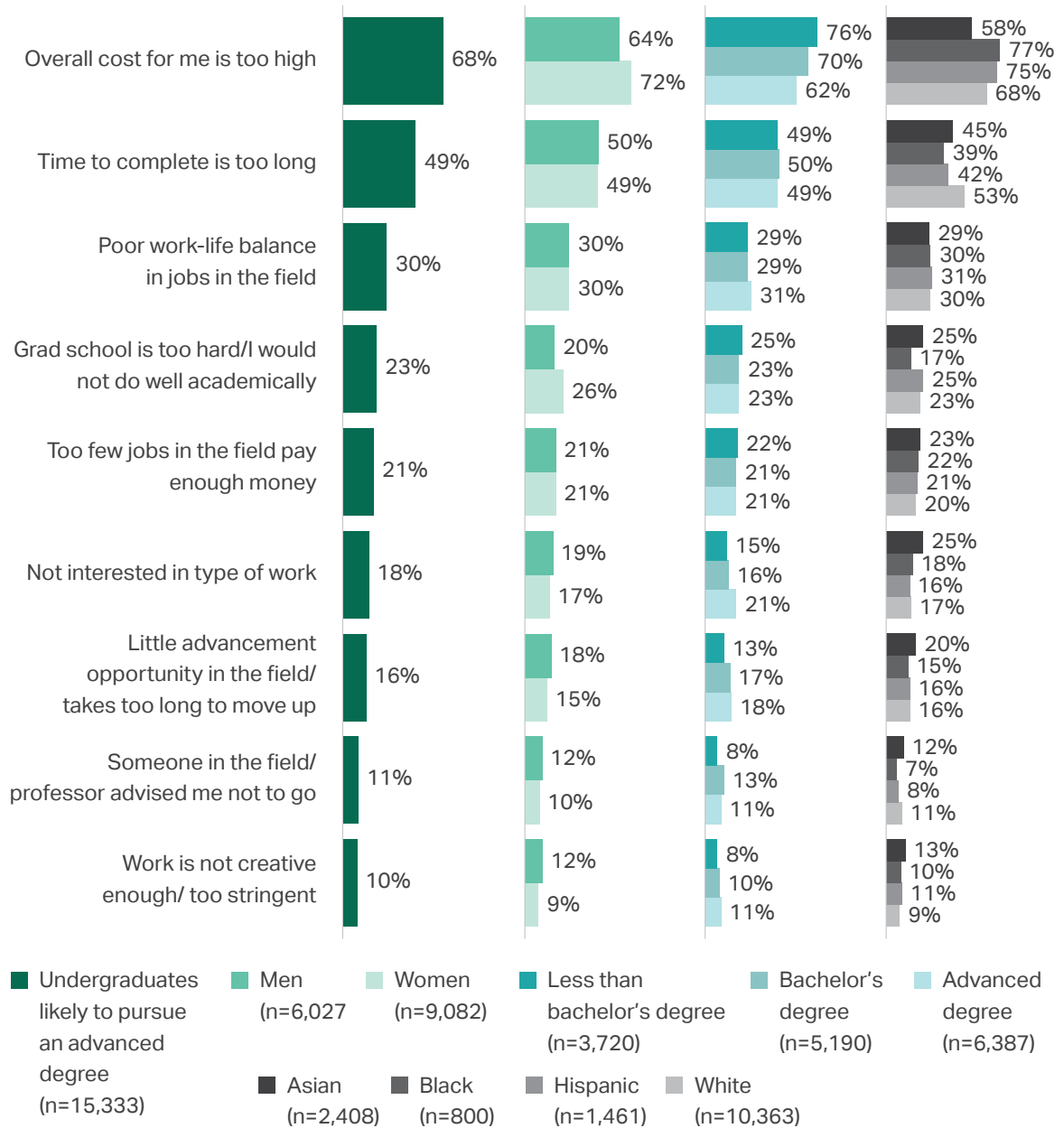
²⁷ Response options that yielded under ten percent for all groups of students are not reported.

²⁸ Data for JD in Table 5.1 comes from a question on the survey that asked undergraduates considering law about the top factors that might prevent them from pursuing a JD. There were several options that were only provided to these students and are not reported in table 5.1.

Cost as a potential deterrent differs by parental education, with first-generation college students (76%) more likely to name cost as a potential reason not to pursue an advanced degree than students with at least one parent with a bachelor's (70%) or an advanced degree (62%).

Figure 5.2: Top Factors That Might Prevent Students From Considering an Advanced Degree by Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree²⁹

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school, not including law school?



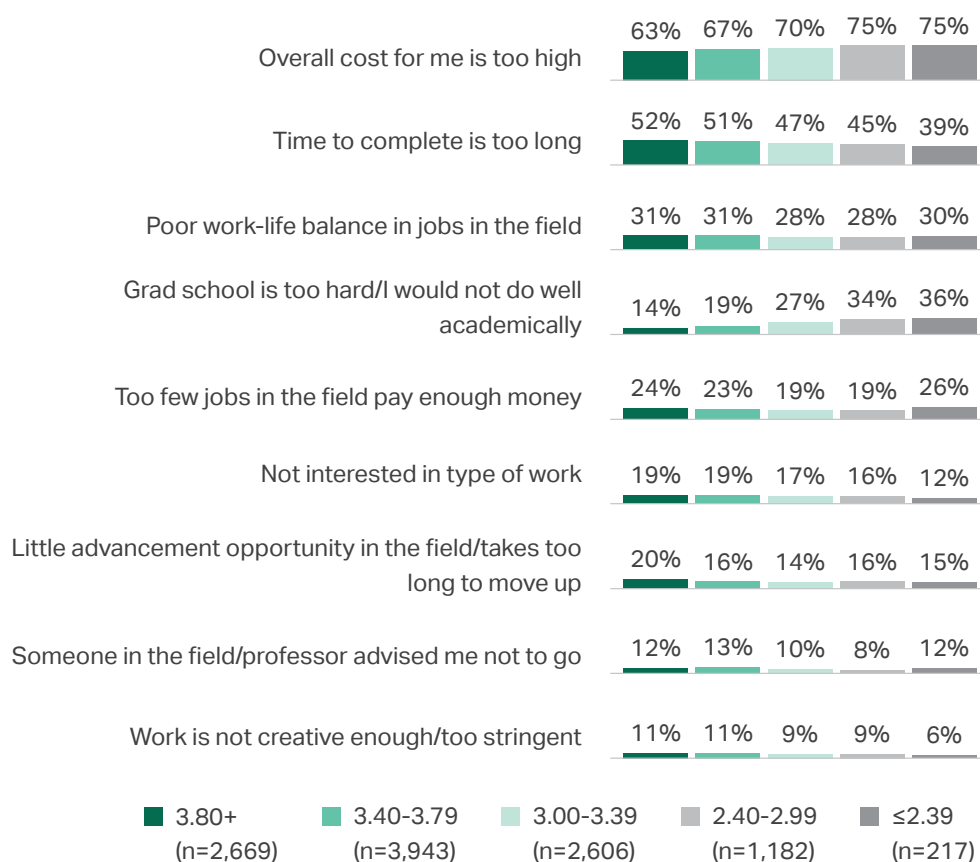
²⁹ Response options that yielded less than ten percent for all groups of students are not reported. For full data, please see Table A5.1 in Appendix D: Additional Data Tables.

Academic Differences

While 63 percent of students who report having GPAs of 3.8 or above name cost/potential debt as a top factor, three-quarters (75%) of those who report GPAs below 3.0 name it as a deterrent (See Figure 5.3). Undergraduates who report having GPAs below 3.0 are also more likely to say that graduate school would be too hard and they would not do well academically (35%) compared to students who report GPAs above 3.8 (14%). In contrast, students who report higher GPAs are more likely to indicate that the length of time it will take to complete an advanced degree is a top deterrent (52% of students with GPAs above 3.8 vs. 39% of those with GPAs of 2.39 or below).

Figure 5.3: Potential Deterrents for Students Considering an Advanced Degree by Academic Achievement Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree³⁰

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school, not including law school?



³⁰ Response options that yielded less than ten percent for all groups of students are not reported. For full data, please see Table A5.2 in Appendix D: Additional Data Tables.



Opportunities and Next Steps



A person is seen in silhouette, standing in a library or study area, looking at a book or document. The background is filled with bookshelves and a large window. The entire image has a light teal overlay.

Opportunities and Next Steps

Beyond the Bachelor's: Undergraduate Perspectives on Graduate and Professional Degrees presents findings from a national survey of college undergraduates conducted by Gallup in the fall of 2017 for the Association of American Law Schools and the Law School Admission Council. This is the first known survey in over half a century aimed explicitly at gathering undergraduate perspectives on graduate and professional school using responses from students themselves.

The number of applicants to graduate and professional schools is generally strong (law school was an exception earlier this decade when it experienced a 38% decline in applicants). In the global-knowledge economy, there will be an increased number of jobs requiring graduate and professional degrees in the coming decades. If colleges and universities in the United States are to continue to perform effectively, now is the time to better understand the demand for advanced degrees.

The data reveal that colleges and universities need to make stronger efforts to level the path to an advanced education for all students, including those whose parents do not have advanced degrees. *Beyond the Bachelor's* found that only 26 percent of undergraduates likely to pursue an advanced degree are first-generation college students. Higher percentages have at least one parent with a bachelor's degree (33%) or an advanced degree (41%).

To encourage more first-generation students to pursue advanced degrees, colleges and universities need to do more to assure that information equitably reaches all undergraduates. First-generation college students as well as Asian, Black, and Hispanic undergraduates are less likely to report seeing or receiving information about graduate and professional degrees. By contrast, undergraduates with at least one parent with an advanced degree are most likely to report seeing or receiving information on all types of advanced degrees. This gap is largest with respect to the JD — only 27 percent of first-generation college students report seeing or receiving information about the JD, compared with 40 percent of undergraduates who have at least one parent with an advanced degree. Colleges and universities might consider expanding career and educational programs designed to increase knowledge of opportunities about graduate and professional school among first-generation and under-represented minority student populations.

Colleges and universities also have an opportunity to better understand both the reasons for undergraduates to consider pursuing a graduate or professional degree, and how those reasons vary by degree program. This information will enable graduate and professional schools to provide more relevant information to prospective students and, where appropriate, to revise their curricula to better meet the goals of incoming students.

Finally, colleges and universities need to address the two most prominent barriers to attending graduate and professional school that undergraduates cite — cost and the length of time to complete the degree. Again, there is variation by degree program.

The data collected by *Beyond the Bachelor's* provide a wealth of insight into undergraduate views and values from which colleges, universities, researchers, and prospective students alike can benefit. This report has summarized key findings and highlighted several areas that emerged from the data and deserve consideration. More insights remain to be uncovered in the data to inform the future path of graduate and professional education and of higher education in general. Our goal is for this and future reports to be of value to everyone who cares about access to higher education, the research that it produces, and the contributions that it makes to the nation and the world.

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APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

Results for the *Beyond the Bachelor's* report are based on a survey conducted with a sample of 22,189 undergraduates at four-year institutions granting bachelor's degrees in the United States. The following offers an overview of the sampling strategy, data collection, data processing, and non-response bias methodologies used by this study. A more comprehensive discussion of the methodology is available on the AALS website (www.aals.org).

Sampling Strategy

In order to maximize the number of eligible undergraduates most likely to pursue a graduate or professional degree, Gallup and AALS defined the undergraduate sample using *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges 2017*, which groups U.S. institutions based on their degree of admissions competitiveness. The sampling frame included all four-year bachelor's degree-granting institutions with at least 1,500 students enrolled from the top four Barron's selectivity tiers, plus 20 institutions from the fifth-most competitive tier that are large sources of law school applications. This process resulted in the selection of 204 four-year colleges and universities enrolling approximately 2.3 million undergraduates. Of the 204 selected institutions, 25 ultimately agreed to participate in the study and provide student email addresses to Gallup for the survey. All 212,342 bachelor's degree-seeking students enrolled in these 25 institutions were eligible for inclusion in the study.

Data Collection

Students at participating institutions were emailed survey invitations describing how to complete the survey via the web between Oct. 2 and Nov. 7, 2017. Gallup received returned surveys from 30,328 of the 212,342 undergraduates (14% return rate). After removing students under age 18 and those with data missing on the key demographics used for weighting, analysis was completed using data for 22,189 undergraduates.

Data Processing

Data were weighted to correct for unequal selection probability, non-response, and, as appropriate, differences in student characteristics. Undergraduate student data were weighted to match national demographics of age, gender, and race/ethnicity within Barron's selectivity tier using data on the student populations from the 204 institutions constituting the undergraduate population based on the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database.

Nonresponse Bias

To examine the potential non-response bias effects, Gallup performed an alternate non-response analysis based on data obtained from the respondents to the undergraduate survey. The analysis, which compared the "early" respondents to the "late" respondents on selected variables of interest, resulted in few differences, leading the project team to determine that there was no need for additional adjustments for non-response bias.

Margin of Error

The total 22,189 undergraduate student data have a margin of sampling error of ± 0.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Error ranges for subsets of this population, such as undergraduates considering pursuing an advanced degree or specifically, a law degree, will be larger.

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Association of American Law Schools Before the JD Undergraduate Student Survey

I. Screening Questions

D1 What is your age in years?

16 16 years or younger

17 17

18 18-

96 96

97 97 or older

98 Prefer not to answer

S1 Which of the following best describes your current year in school?

1 Freshman/first year student

2 Sophomore

3 Junior

4 Senior

5 Fifth year senior

6 Sixth year senior

7 Seventh year or more

8 I am not currently enrolled in college/university

Skip: (If code 8 in S1 OR code 16, 17, or 98 in D1, Set to WEB NOT QUALIFIED and Continue; Otherwise, Skip to Q1)

II. Career Considerations

Q1 How important are each of these characteristics to you when thinking about selecting a career to pursue?

	5	4	3	2	1	8
	Extremely important				Not at all important	Don't Know
Q1A	Potential to earn a lot of money					
Q1B	Potential for career advancement					
Q1C	Ability to have work-life balance					
Q1D	Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative					
Q1E	Ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology in my job					
Q1F	Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back					
Q1G	Advocate for social change					
Q1H	Ability to be entrepreneurial					
Q1I	Whether the job has high prestige/status					
Q1J	Whether my family thinks it would be a good choice					

III. Perceptions of Law vs. Other Careers

Q2 Next, please think about what you have seen or heard about these occupations/careers and select the statements that you feel describe each of the occupations/careers. (Select as many or as few as apply for each occupation/career.)

		Q2A	Q2B	Q2C	Q2D	Q2E
		Engineering/ Science/ Technology	Lawyer	Physician/ Surgeon	Entrepreneur	Financial Services (e.g., Investment Banking/ Finance)
1	Job pays a lot of money					
2	Job offers career advancement opportunities					
3	Ability to have work-life balance					
4	Opportunity to be original and creative/innovative					
5	Ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology					
6	Opportunity to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back					
7	Advocate for social change					
8	Ability to be entrepreneurial					
9	Job has high prestige/status					
10	My family thinks it would be a good choice					
11	None of these <i>(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes in column)</i>					

Q3 How positively or negatively do you feel the media, including TV, movies, newspapers, and Internet sites portray each career/occupation?

	5	4	3	2	1	8
	Extremely positively				Extremely negatively	Don't see this career/ occupation in the media
Q3A	Engineering/Science/ Technology					
Q3B	Lawyer					
Q3C	Physician/Surgeon					
Q3D	Entrepreneur					
Q3E	Financial Services (e.g., Investment Banking/ Finance)					

Q4 Please select the statements that describe your feelings about each of these specific occupations. (Select as many or as few as apply for each one.)

		Q4A	Q4B	Q4C	Q4D	Q4E
		Engineering/ Science/ Technology	Lawyer	Physician/ Surgeon	Entrepreneur	Financial Services (e.g., Investment Banking/ Finance)
1	I don't have the ability to do this kind of work					
2	I probably couldn't make as much money at this type of work as I'd like to make					
3	I would have to invest more time and money in preparing for this occupation than I feel I could afford					
4	I have one or more personal friends, or family friends, in this field					
5	My parents would disapprove of my going into this field					
6	My personality isn't suited for work in this field					
7	My friends/peers want to work in this field					
8	This is my mother's and/or father's occupation					
9	None of these <i>(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes in column)</i>					

Q5 Which of the following best describes your field(s) of study at (response in SB)? *(Please select all that apply.)*

(Programmer Note: Display pull down menu with list of 89 undergraduate major options, plus Other and Don't Know)

IV. Pathway to Career/Graduate Degree

Q6 When did you first learn that some careers require graduate or professional degrees?

- 1 During grade school or earlier
- 2 During junior high/middle school
- 3 During high school
- 4 In college
- 5 Don't recall

Q7 Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have you seen information on, either around campus such as job fairs/graduate school fairs, general notices, or in a counselor's office or through direct mail or email? *(Please select all that apply.)*

- 1 Master's Degree (MA/MS)
- 2 Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- 3 Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)
- 4 Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)
- 5 Doctor of Medicine/Medical school (MD)
- 6 PhD
- 7 Other professional degree (e.g., DDS, PharmD, DVM)
- 8 I haven't seen any information about these degrees *(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes)*
- 9 Don't know *(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes)*

Q8 Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have your professors talked about, either in class or in one-on-one discussions? Please do not include discussions you have had with your advisor(s). *(Please select all that apply.)*

- 1 Master's Degree (MA/MS)
- 2 Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- 3 Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)
- 4 Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)
- 5 Doctor of Medicine/Medical school (MD)
- 6 PhD
- 7 Other professional degree (e.g., DDS, PharmD, DVM)
- 8 None *(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes)*
- 9 Don't know *(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes)*

V. Potential Selection of a Graduate Program/Professional Degree

Q9 How likely are you to go to graduate or professional school to obtain a graduate or professional degree (e.g., MBA, other master's, law, medical, dental, or other PhD) at any point?

- 5 Extremely likely
- 4 Somewhat likely
- 3 Neither likely nor unlikely
- 2 Somewhat unlikely
- 1 Extremely unlikely
- 6 Haven't ever thought about obtaining a graduate or professional degree

Skip: (If code 3, 4 or 5 in Q9, Continue; Otherwise, Skip to Q13)

(There is no Q10)

Q11 Which types of graduate or professional degree programs are you considering? *(Please select all that apply.)*

- 1 Master's Degree (MA/MS)
- 2 Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- 3 Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)
- 4 Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)
- 5 Doctor of Medicine/Medical school (MD)
- 6 PhD
- 7 Other graduate or professional degree (Please specify) *(Programmer: Allow 210 characters)*
- 9 Don't know *(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes)*

Q12 Which of the following are your three most important sources for advice about pursuing a graduate or professional degree? *(Programmer: Allow 3 responses)*

- 1 A family member or relative
- 2 A friend
- 3 Community leader such as a priest or minister
- 4 High school counselor
- 5 High school teacher, athletic coach or other extracurricular coach/adviser
- 6 Other students at your college
- 7 Professors or staff at your college
- 8 Advisors or counselors at your college
- 9 College coach or extracurricular advisor
- 10 Admissions staff or recruiters from graduate school(s)
- 11 Graduate school fair that you attended
- 12 Employer(s) or coworker(s)
- 13 People already working in the field/related field
- 14 Military recruiter or military career office
- 15 College guidebook (e.g., Fiske, U.S. News, Princeton Review)
- 16 University or college website, catalog or brochure
- 17 Other Internet websites
- 18 Other (Please specify) *(Programmer: Allow 120 characters)*
- 19 None/No one *(Programmer: If selected, uncheck all other boxes)*

(Programmer: Error Message:) You can only select up to three responses.

Q13 Of your close friends in college, how many do you expect will pursue a graduate or professional degree?

- 1 All
- 2 Most
- 3 Some
- 4 Few
- 5 None
- 6 Do not have any close friends at my college

Skip: (If code 4 in Q11_4, Continue; If code 3, 4, or 5 in Q9, Skip to Text before Q15A; Otherwise, Skip to Note before Q17)

Q14A What are your top three factors for considering law school? *(Programmer: Allow 3 responses)*

- 1 There are high-paying jobs in the field
- 2 There are advancement opportunities in field
- 3 Ability for work-life balance in law jobs
- 4 Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative
- 5 Passionate/high interest in type of work
- 6 Ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology
- 7 Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back
- 8 High prestige/status
- 9 A legal education prepares for many different types of jobs
- 10 Advocate for social change
- 11 A legal education develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge
- 12 A legal education develops communication skills, including persuasive speech
- 13 Following in familial footsteps
- 14 My family thought it would be a good choice
- 15 Pathway for career in politics, government or public service
- 16 Other (Please specify) (Allow 200 characters)

(Programmer: Error Message:) You can only select up to three responses.

Q14B What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to law school? (Programmer: Allow 3 responses)

- 1 Too few jobs in this field pay enough money
- 2 Little advancement opportunity in the field/takes too long to move up
- 3 Poor work-life balance in law jobs
- 4 Work is not creative enough/too confined/too stringent
- 5 Not interested in legal work
- 6 No ability to work with or develop cutting-edge technology
- 7 Don't want to defend guilty people
- 8 Family/friends advise against it
- 9 Law school is too hard/I would not do well academically
- 10 Three years is too long
- 11 Overall cost/potential debt is too high
- 12 Lawyers are seen as corrupt or conniving
- 13 Prefer another career field
- 14 My family does not think it would be a good choice
- 15 Someone in the legal field/professor advised me not to go to law school
- 16 Other (Please specify) (Allow 200 characters)

(Programmer: Error Message:) You can only select up to three responses.

(If code 4 in Q11_4, display:) Next, please think about the factors you are considering in deciding to go to graduate or professional school (other than law school).

(Otherwise, display:) There are many different factors that people consider when deciding whether to go to graduate or professional school or not. For the following questions, please think about the factors you are considering in deciding to go to graduate or professional school.

Q15A What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school [(If code 4 in Q11_4, display:), not including law school]? (*Programmer: Allow 3 responses*)

- 1 There are high-paying jobs in the field
- 2 There are advancement opportunities in field
- 3 Ability for work-life balance in jobs in the field
- 4 Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative
- 5 Passionate/high interest in type of work
- 6 Ability to work with or develop cutting edge technology
- 7 Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back
- 8 High prestige/status
- 9 A graduate/professional degree prepares for many different types of jobs
- 10 Advocate for social change
- 11 Graduate/professional-level education develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge
- 12 Graduate/professional-level education develops communication skills, including persuasive speech
- 13 Following in familial footsteps
- 14 My family thinks it'd be a good choice
- 15 Pathway for career in politics, government or public service
- 16 Other (Please specify) (*Allow 200 characters*)

Q15B What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school [(If code 4 in Q11_4, display:), not including law school]? (*Programmer: Allow 3 responses*)

- 1 Too few jobs in the field pay enough money
- 2 Little advancement opportunity/takes too long to move up
- 3 Poor work-life balance in jobs in the field
- 4 Work is not creative enough/too stringent
- 5 Not interested in type of work
- 6 No chance for using technology
- 7 HOLD
- 8 Family/friends advise against it
- 9 Graduate/professional school is too hard/I would not do well academically
- 10 The time needed to complete graduate/professional school is too long
- 11 Overall cost for me is too high
- 12 HOLD
- 13 HOLD
- 14 My family does not think it would be a good choice
- 15 Someone in the field/professor advised me not to go to pursue a graduate or professional degree
- 16 Other (Please specify) (*Allow 200 characters*)

(Programmer: Error Message:) You can only select up to three responses.

- Q16** How likely are you to go to law school?
- 5 Extremely likely
 - 4 Somewhat likely
 - 3 Neither likely nor unlikely
 - 2 Somewhat unlikely
 - 1 Extremely unlikely
 - 6 Haven't ever thought about applying to law school

Skip: (If code 1 or 2 in Q9, Continue; Otherwise, Skip to X1)

- Q17** Which of the following best explains why you do not anticipate pursuing a graduate or professional degree? *(Select all that apply.)*
- 1 No desire to do so
 - 2 Can get a good job without further schooling
 - 3 Financial obstacles/cost is too high/potential debt
 - 4 Low grades in college
 - 5 Family responsibilities
 - 6 I want to get practical experience first
 - 7 I don't think I have the ability to do well in graduate/professional school
 - 8 I lack the necessary undergraduate course prerequisites
 - 9 I'm tired of being a student
 - 10 Military service
 - 11 Other (Please specify) *(Allow 200 characters)*

VI. Personal Attributes

X1 On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please rate your level of agreement with the following items. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other. I see myself as:

	5	4	3	2	1	8
	Strongly Agree				Strongly disagree	Don't know/Does not apply
X1A	Extraverted, enthusiastic.					
X1B	Critical, quarrelsome.					
X1C	Dependable, self-disciplined.					
X1D	Anxious, easily upset.					
X1E	Open to new experiences, complex.					
X1F	Reserved, quiet.					
X1G	Sympathetic, warm.					
X1H	Disorganized, careless.					
X1I	Calm, emotionally stable.					
X1J	Conventional, uncreative.					

D2 Which of the following would you describe yourself as?

- 1 Man
- 2 Woman
- 3 Transgender
- 8 Prefer not to answer

D3 What is your current marital status?

- 1 Single/Never been married
- 2 Married
- 3 Separated
- 4 Divorced
- 5 Widowed
- 6 Domestic partnership/Living with partner (not legally married)
- 8 Prefer not to answer

D4 Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin - such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish origin?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know

- D5** Which of the following describes your race? (You may select one or more.) *(Programmer: Check boxes) (Programmer: Allow five responses)*
- 1 White
 - 2 Black or African American
 - 3 Asian
 - 4 American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - 6 Don't know *(Programmer: If this option is selected, uncheck all other boxes)*
- D9** What is the highest education level your parent/parents completed? (Please select the highest level among all your parents/stepparents/legal guardians)
- 1 Less than a high school diploma (Grades 1 through 11 or no schooling)
 - 2 High school graduate (diploma or GED certificate)
 - 3 Technical, trade, vocational, or business school or program after high school
 - 4 Some college but no degree
 - 5 Two-year associate degree (e.g., AAS)
 - 6 Four-year bachelor's degree (e.g., BS, BA, AB)
 - 7 Some postgraduate or professional schooling after graduating college, but no postgraduate degree (e.g., some graduate school)
 - 8 Postgraduate or professional degree (e.g., MA, MS, PhD, MD, JD)
- D10** Were you born in the United States or in another country?
- 1 Born in the United States
 - 2 Born in another country
 - 8 Don't know
- D11** Were one or both of your parents born in the United States?
- 1 Yes, both parents were born in the United States
 - 2 Only one parent was born in the United States
 - 3 No, neither parent was born in the United States
 - 4 Don't know
 - 5 Prefer not to answer

D12 What is your current undergraduate GPA at (response in SB)?

- 1 3.80 or higher
- 2 3.60-3.79
- 3 3.40-3.59
- 4 3.20-3.39
- 5 3.00-3.19
- 6 2.80-2.99
- 7 2.60-2.79
- 8 2.40-2.59
- 9 2.20-2.39
- 10 2.00-2.19
- 11 Below 2.00
- 12 I do not have a GPA yet
- 13 Don't recall

D13 What was your highest composite ACT Score?

- 1 33-36
- 2 30-32
- 3 27-29
- 4 25-26
- 5 23-24
- 6 21-22
- 7 19-20
- 8 15-18
- 9 10-14
- 10 1-9
- 11 Don't recall
- 12 I did not take the ACT

D14A In what year did you take the SAT? If you took the SAT more than once, please tell us about the SAT you most recently took.

- 1 March 2016 or earlier
- 2 After March 2016
- 8 Don't recall
- 9 I did not take the SAT

Skip: (If code 1 in D14A, Continue; If code 2 in D14A, Skip to D14C; Otherwise, Skip to D17)

D14B What was your highest total SAT score? By total SAT score, we mean your combined score for Critical Reading (multiple choice and essay) and Math out of a total of 2400 possible points.

- 1 2300+
- 2 2120-2299
- 3 1970-2119
- 4 1810-1969
- 5 1650-1809
- 6 1510-1649
- 7 1350-1509
- 8 900-1349
- 9 600-899
- 10 Don't recall

Skip: (All in D14B, Skip to D17)

D14C What was your highest total SAT score? By total SAT score, we mean your combined score for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, and Math out of a total of 1600 possible points. Please do not include your SAT Essay scores.

- 1 1560+
- 2 1490-1559
- 3 1390-1489
- 4 1290-1389
- 5 1190-1289
- 6 1090-1189
- 7 990-1089
- 8 700-989
- 9 400-699
- 10 Don't recall

(There is no D15 or D16)

D17 What is your parent/guardian's total annual household income, including all sources of personal income and that of others living in your household (Your best guess is fine.)

- 1 Less than \$35,000
- 2 \$35,000 - \$59,999
- 3 \$60,000 - \$74,999
- 4 \$75,000 - \$89,999
- 5 \$90,000 - \$109,999
- 6 \$110,000 - \$129,999
- 7 \$130,000 - \$149,999
- 8 \$150,000 - \$174,999
- 9 \$175,000 - \$224,999
- 10 \$225,000 or more
- 11 Don't know
- 12 Prefer not to answer

Programmer: Set Participation Code in OMS to "Web Long Complete"

APPENDIX C: LIST OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Bucknell University
College of Mount Saint Vincent
Colorado College
Denison University
Drexel University
Hamilton College
Indiana University-Bloomington
North Carolina State University at Raleigh
Rowan University
Sewanee-The University of the South
Smith College
Temple University
The University of Richmond
University of California-Irvine
University of Chicago
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
University of Southern California
University of Tulsa
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Wake Forest University
Wesleyan University

APPENDIX D: ADDITIONAL DATA TABLES

Table A3.1: Four Most Important Sources of Advice About Pursuing an Advanced Degree by Degree Considered Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: Which of the following are your three most important sources for advice about pursuing a graduate or professional degree? (Three responses allowed)

	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree	Master's Degree (MA/MS)	Master of Business Administration (MBA)	Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)	Juris Doctor/ Law School (JD)	Doctor of Medicine/ Medical School (MD)/Other Advanced Medical Degree (Dentist, PsyD, PharmD, DO, AuD, DVM)	PhD
A family member or relative	56%	56%	64%	47%	60%	53%	51%
Professors or staff at your college	50%	52%	44%	53%	50%	43%	60%
Advisors or counselors at your college	50%	51%	42%	50%	47%	54%	49%
People already working in the field/ related field	40%	39%	39%	43%	42%	47%	40%
n=	15,784	9,833	3,441	1,671	2,437	2,971	5,263

Table A3.2: Advanced Degrees That Undergraduates Report Seeing or Receiving Information About on Campus by Undergraduate Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: Which, if any, of the following types of graduate or professional degree programs have you seen information on, either around campus such as job fairs/graduate school fairs, general notices, or in a counselor's office or through direct mail or email? (Please select all that apply.)

	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree		Gender		Parental Education			Race/Ethnicity			
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Less than bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Master's Degree (MA/MS)	80%	79%	80%	77%	77%	80%	81%	77%	78%	79%	81%
PhD	61%	61%	61%	56%	60%	64%	64%	60%	55%	58%	63%
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	57%	61%	54%	50%	58%	61%	61%	57%	58%	50%	59%
Doctor of Medicine/Medical school (MD)	52%	49%	56%	48%	51%	56%	56%	48%	51%	49%	55%
Juris Doctor/Law school (JD)	34%	34%	34%	27%	32%	40%	40%	28%	31%	31%	37%
Other Master's Degree (e.g., MPA, MPH, MSW, MEd)	29%	28%	30%	26%	28%	32%	32%	26%	27%	26%	31%
Other professional degree (e.g., DDS, PharmD, DVM)	24%	22%	26%	21%	24%	25%	25%	21%	20%	20%	26%
n=	15,829	6,285	9,297	3,796	5,314	6,656	2,480	820	1,497	10,700	

Table A4.1: Reasons for Considering an Advanced Degree by Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school, not including law school?

	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree							Race/Ethnicity					
		Gender		Parental Education			Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
		Men	Women	Less than bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree							
Passionate/high interest in type of work	49%	46%	52%	49%	50%	50%	46%	48%	52%	43%	46%	48%	52%
There are high-paying jobs in the field	37%	39%	36%	38%	40%	35%	37%	34%	37%	41%	37%	34%	37%
There are advancement opportunities in field	33%	34%	32%	32%	34%	33%	33%	27%	35%	31%	33%	27%	35%
Graduate/professional degree prepares for many different types of jobs	29%	26%	31%	28%	29%	29%	26%	28%	30%	27%	26%	28%	30%
Graduate/professional-level education develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge	25%	27%	23%	21%	26%	28%	19%	23%	26%	27%	19%	23%	26%
Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back	23%	18%	27%	26%	22%	22%	24%	29%	22%	22%	24%	29%	22%
High prestige/status	19%	22%	17%	19%	20%	19%	19%	22%	19%	21%	19%	22%	19%
Ability for work-life balance in jobs in the field	14%	12%	16%	17%	14%	12%	18%	16%	13%	14%	18%	16%	13%
Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative	12%	14%	11%	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%
My family thinks it'd be a good choice	10%	10%	10%	9%	9%	11%	11%	10%	9%	13%	11%	10%	9%
Ability to work with or develop cutting edge technology	9%	14%	5%	9%	9%	10%	8%	7%	9%	13%	8%	7%	9%
Pathway for career in politics, government or public service	9%	10%	9%	8%	9%	10%	10%	10%	9%	7%	10%	10%	9%
Advocate for social change	9%	6%	10%	11%	7%	8%	12%	12%	8%	7%	12%	12%	8%
Graduate/professional-level education develops communication skills, including persuasive speech	8%	8%	9%	9%	9%	7%	11%	10%	8%	9%	11%	10%	8%
n=	15,698	6,220	9,245	3,772	5,281	6,603	816	1,488	10,621	2,457	816	1,488	10,621

Table A4.2: Reasons for Considering an Advanced Degree by Academic Achievement Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: What are your top three factors for considering graduate or professional school, not including law school?

	Undergraduate GPA				
	3.80+	3.40-3.79	3.00-3.39	2.40-2.99	<2.39
Passionate/high interest in type of work	58%	49%	47%	47%	55%
There are high-paying jobs in the field	29%	35%	39%	38%	37%
There are advancement opportunities in field	31%	35%	34%	33%	28%
Graduate/professional degree prepares for many different types of jobs	27%	30%	30%	31%	20%
Graduate/professional-level education develops analytic abilities/intellectual challenge	33%	26%	24%	20%	19%
Opportunities to be helpful to others or useful to society/giving back	26%	23%	23%	22%	25%
High prestige/status	17%	20%	19%	18%	19%
Ability for work-life balance in jobs in the field	12%	13%	15%	18%	17%
Opportunities to be original and creative/innovative	14%	13%	11%	12%	14%
My family thinks it'd be a good choice	7%	8%	11%	12%	10%
Ability to work with or develop cutting edge technology	9%	8%	10%	7%	11%
Pathway for career in politics, government or public service	10%	10%	9%	8%	11%
Advocate for social change	9%	9%	8%	9%	11%
Graduate/professional-level education develops communication skills, including persuasive speech	6%	9%	7%	10%	11%
n=	2,745	4,027	2,668	1,206	225

Table A5.1: Top Factors That Might Prevent Students From Considering an Advanced Degree by Demographics Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school, not including law school?

	Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree		Parental Education			Race/Ethnicity			
	Men	Women	Less than bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Overall cost for me is too high	68%	72%	76%	70%	62%	58%	77%	75%	68%
Time to complete is too long	49%	49%	49%	50%	49%	45%	39%	42%	53%
Poor work-life balance in jobs in the field	30%	30%	29%	29%	31%	29%	30%	31%	30%
Grad school is too hard/I would not do well academically	23%	26%	25%	23%	23%	25%	17%	25%	23%
Too few jobs in the field pay enough money	21%	21%	22%	21%	21%	23%	22%	21%	20%
Not interested in type of work	18%	17%	15%	16%	21%	25%	18%	16%	17%
Little advancement opportunity in the field/takes too long to move up	16%	15%	13%	17%	18%	20%	15%	16%	16%
Someone in the field/professor advised me not to go	11%	10%	8%	13%	11%	12%	7%	8%	11%
Work is not creative enough/too stringent	10%	9%	8%	10%	11%	13%	10%	11%	9%
n=	15,333	9,082	3,720	5,190	6,387	2,408	800	1,461	10,363

Table A5.2: Potential Deterrents for Students Considering an Advanced Degree by Academic Achievement Among Undergraduates Likely to Pursue an Advanced Degree

Q: What are the top three factors that might prevent you from going to graduate or professional school, not including law school?

	Undergraduate GPA				
	3.80+	3.40-3.79	3.00-3.39	2.40-2.99	<2.39
Overall cost for me is too high	63%	67%	70%	75%	75%
Time to complete is too long	52%	51%	47%	45%	39%
Poor work-life balance in jobs in the field	31%	31%	28%	28%	30%
Grad school is too hard/I would not do well academically	14%	19%	27%	34%	36%
Too few jobs in the field pay enough money	24%	23%	19%	19%	26%
Not interested in type of work	19%	19%	17%	16%	12%
Little advancement opportunity in the field/takes too long to move up	20%	16%	14%	16%	15%
Someone in the field/professor advised me not to go	12%	13%	10%	8%	12%
Work is not creative enough/too stringent	11%	11%	9%	9%	6%
n=	2,669	3,943	2,606	1,182	217

Response options that yielded less than ten percent for all groups of students are not reported.



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