

Tracking the Pathways of Students During Their Transition to the Early Career Workforce
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The Workforce Program at the American Geosciences Institute has developed the National Geoscience Student Exit Survey in order to determine the relevant experiences in undergraduate and graduate school, as well as the immediate career plans of students finishing their bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in the geosciences. Specifically, the survey addresses the students' education background, decision points for obtaining a geoscience degree, their geoscience co-curricular experiences, and their future plans for either entering graduate school or entering the workforce immediately after graduation. This work will begin to highlight the sets of experiences and expertise that the typical student graduating with a geoscience degree gained, as well as the industries that are effective at recruiting and the industries where students want to gain employment. Over time there may be some regional differences in these areas, along with differences based on the students' areas of focus for their degree. AGI's National Geoscience Student Exit Survey has been through a two-year piloting phase, and it was recently made available to any undergraduate or graduate department in the United States for spring 2013 graduates.

This survey will be followed up with a second longitudinal survey effort that will look closely at the career paths of early career geoscientists. Recent graduates will have the opportunity to take this survey yearly for the first 5-7 years in the workforce, and they will provide responses to questions about their current job position, location, salary information, and skills gained while in the workforce. This survey will be able to provide a profile of the early career geoscientist, as well as identify the industries that are able to retain these new members to the workforce for an extended period of time. This survey came about due to concern of a high percentage of attrition of new geoscientists from the geoscience workforce after one or two years in the workforce. This survey will begin collecting data this summer.

As these two surveys gain more awareness in the geosciences community, I would like to be offering the Exit Survey to students at 2-year institutions. Some minor modifications may need to be executed before rolling it out to 2-year institutions. One of the major challenges I am dealing with in regards to these surveys is obtaining department participation. While many departments agree to participate and see the merit in this study, there is still difficulty encouraging students to participate. Before arriving to this meeting, I will have been able to review some of the major data points of this most recent data collection for the Exit Survey and would be happy to talk to anyone about my preliminary findings. If you have any questions about these surveys, or would like to discuss the modifications of the Exit Survey for 2-year institutions, please feel free to contact me at cwilson@agiweb.org.