



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

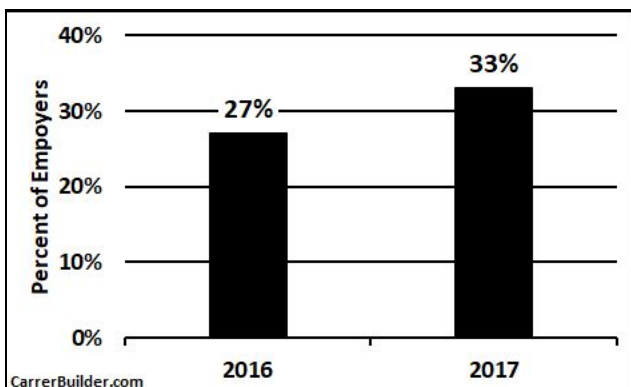


Who Are Graduate Students?

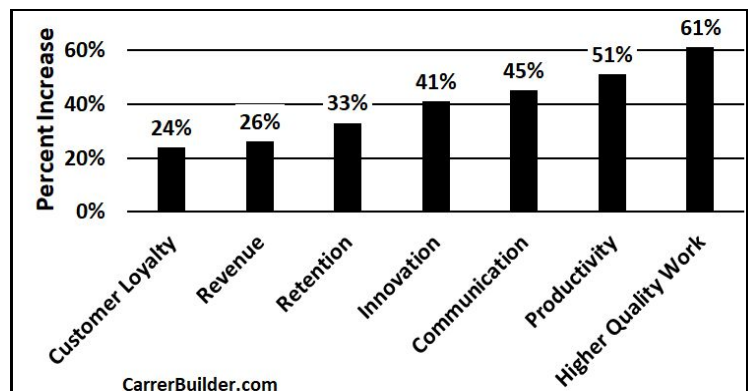
Graduate students are different from other students. Instead of a primary focus on taking courses and passing major exams, they spend most of their time teaching classes and conducting research. The focus is not on licensure, but on the development of communication, critical thinking, and research skills under the direction of a research advisor. Graduate student training is not directed toward entry into a single specific field, like medicine or dentistry. Instead, because they are in such high demand, they can - and do - go into almost any sector: industry, government, research, education, and more. **60% of the predicted fastest growing occupations require training beyond an undergraduate degree**, including both health care and research fields in addition to cutting-edge technological innovation in other fields, such as artificial intelligence.

It takes an average of eight years for a student to complete both a masters and doctoral degree. Most students work approximately 60 hours a week as they teach and mentor undergraduate students, complete training requirements, conduct research, and engage in professional development opportunities. During this time, they are usually prohibited from working elsewhere and instead have to rely on a stipend that is often below minimum wage, forcing some students to supplement their income with loans.

Employers Hiring Master's Degrees



Effects of Hiring Employees with Advanced Degrees



The continued strength of the US workforce requires graduate students to complete their training in reasonable time and with reasonable support. To do this, graduate students need:

- Increased access to **research funding and financial aid**, particularly for low-income and underrepresented groups;
- Increased **mental health and student-parent resources** and support;
- **Expanded protections** for full-time graduate and professional students, including measures to protect against harassment, discrimination, and exploitative work practices;
- Increased attention given to the **quality of training** they receive under their research advisors, including **increased transparency**.