

Access and Barriers to Internships: Findings from Spring 2021 National Survey of College Internships (NSCI)

Hongwei Yu, PhD

National Survey of College Internships

Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Today's Session

National Survey of College Internships: A Brief Overview

Data Sources: Spring 2021 NSCI Data

Internship Participation: Barriers and Paid/Unpaid Internships

Conclusions and Implications

NSCI Sample and Internship Participation

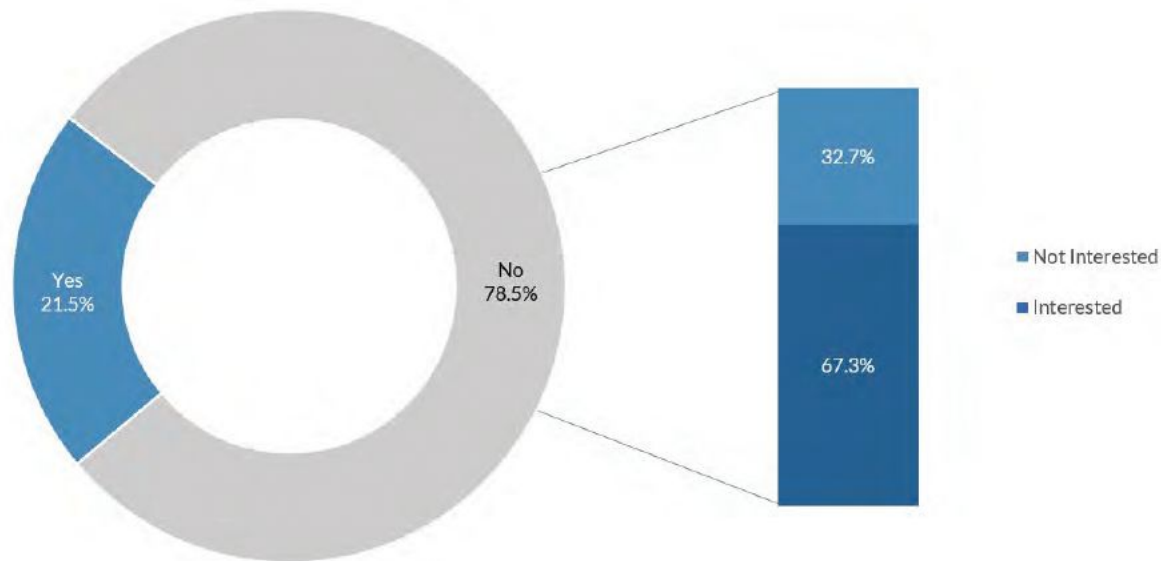
12,201 students responded the survey, and the average response rate is 4.5% across 17 institutions (15, four-year and 2, two-year institutions).

Of the students who answered the survey, 21.5% reported participating an internship.



NSCI Sample and Internship Participation

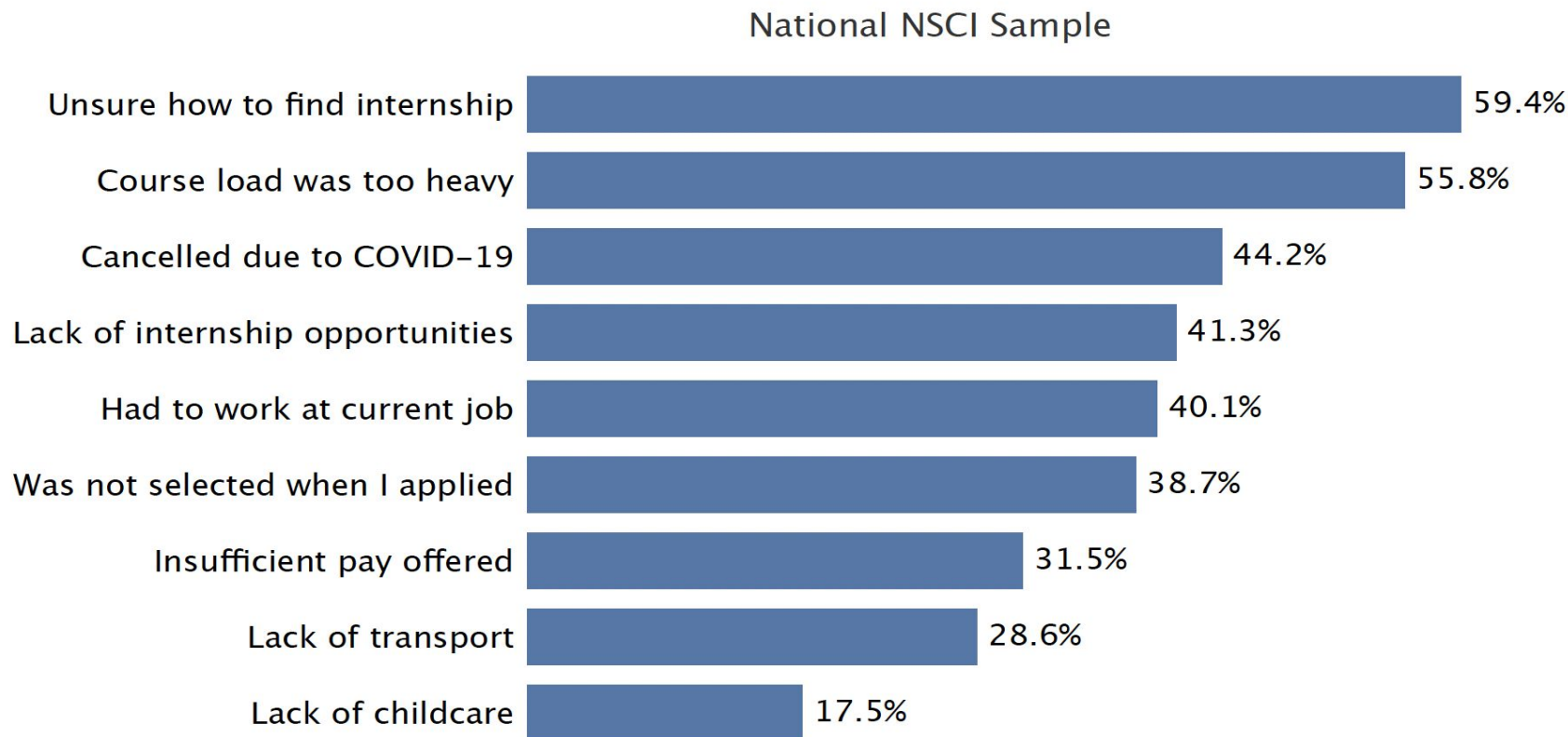
Figure 1. Percentage of non-interns who were interested/not interested in pursuing an internship



Among these non-interns, two thirds of respondents (n=6,407) had wanted to take an internship but could not, due to a variety of obstacles.

Barriers to Internship Participation

Figure 2. Percentage of students reporting individual obstacles to an internship

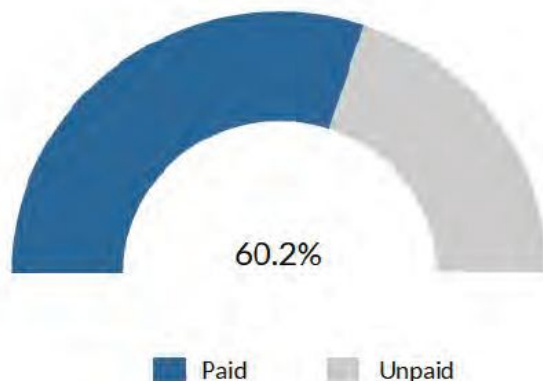


Unpaid/Paid Internship

Table 1. Internship compensation by key student characteristics

	Internship Compensation			
	Paid		Unpaid	
Total	1,570	60.2%	1,037	39.8%
Gender				
Woman	987	54.3%	830	45.7%
Man	555	75.9%	176	24.1%
Another gender identity	28	47.5%	31	52.5%
Race				
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5	41.7%	7	58.3%
Asian or Asian-American	196	53.0%	174	47.0%
Black or African American	51	56.7%	39	43.3%
Hispanic, Latinx, or Chicano/a	104	56.5%	80	43.5%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	100.0%		
White	1091	62.3%	661	37.7%
Two or more races/Ethnicities	97	63.4%	56	36.6%
Others	25	55.6%	20	44.4%
First-Generation Status				
First-generation college students	268	53.8%	230	46.2%
Continuing-generation college students	1,302	61.7%	807	38.3%

Figure 3. Percentage of internships by compensation



Conclusions

- **Students encountered significant barriers that prevented them from internship participation.**
- **Work at current job and insufficient pay are important obstacles.**
- **Unpaid internships are prevalent, and are disproportionately pursued by students of color, women, and low-income students.**

Implications

- **Developing campus-wide support system.**
- **Adopting work-based learning in curriculum design.**
- **Fostering college and industry collaborations to provide more paid internship opportunities.**

Questions and Answers



National Survey of **College Internships**

**Registration in Fall 2022 NSCI, and
NSCI Website Coming Soon!**