### Postgraduation Activities Report: Class of 2014

**Findings from the Postgraduation Activities Survey administered by the Luther College Career Center**

**Introduction**

The data collection process for this report took place from May 2014 to January 2015. For those students who had solidified their plans prior to graduation, the Career Center received their information in May 2014. For students who were still unsure about their plans, data were gathered through a survey in November 2014 and follow-up telephone calls and emails to non-respondents in January 2015. Through these efforts the total response rate was 87%.

### Postgraduation Activities

Postgraduation activities of the class of 2014 were divided into six categories:

- **Employed**
- **Graduate School**
- **Continuing Education**
- **Other**
- **Volunteer**
- **Still Seeking**

#### Employment

Data was collected from May 2014 to January 2015. For those students who were employed either full-time (91%) or part-time (9%), the U.S. Department of Labor, full-time employment is defined by working a minimum of 30 hours per week.

#### Graduate School

- **Graduate School**: 61 students (17%), of whom 98% (59 students) were pursuing master's degrees.
- **Continuing Education**: 5 students (1%).
- **Other**: 6 students (2%).
- **Volunteer**: 3 students (1%).
- **Still seeking**: 6 students (2%).

Two of the categories deserve some explanation. Students who were enrolled in graduate school, the largest percentage (49%) related to career goals. If one assumes students enrolled in graduate school and those continuing their education are engaged in "career goal-related" activities, this percentage jumps to 47%.

#### Continuing Education

The "other" category includes students who were not seeking employment, enrolling in graduate school, or serving in the military. Some of these students were traveling, studying for exams such as the CPA exam, or engaged in another activity. Students within the "continuing education" category were enrolled in an undergraduate program to further their education, for example to obtain a teaching license, or were participating in an internship or some other activity to gain the necessary credentials to enter the field of their choice. The "employed" category includes students who were employed either full-time (91%) or part-time (9%).

#### Other

The "other" category includes students who were not seeking employment, enrolling in graduate school, or serving in the military. Some of these students were traveling, studying for exams such as the CPA exam, or engaged in another activity. Students within the "continuing education" category were enrolled in an undergraduate program to further their education, for example to obtain a teaching license, or were participating in an internship or some other activity to gain the necessary credentials to enter the field of their choice. The "employed" category includes students who were employed either full-time (91%) or part-time (9%). The U.S. Department of Labor, full-time employment is defined by working a minimum of 30 hours per week.

#### Further Education

Among the 2014 graduates who elected to attend graduate or professional school, the largest percentage (49%) reported pursuing a master's degree. Other advanced degrees being sought included medical (10%), professional...
master’s (7%), doctorate (19%), other (9%), and law (6%). Iowa and Minnesota were top destination states for students pursuing graduate or professional school studies, with 20% and 16% respectively. Wisconsin followed with 14%, and Illinois attracted 11% of our students pursuing graduate study. The remaining 41% of surveyed students elected to continue their graduate studies in one of 16 other states, as well as four institutions abroad. Approximately 26% of the respondents were attending graduate school at one of the institutions below.

TOP GRADUATE SCHOOL DESTINATIONS (PERCENTAGE OF 2014 LUTHER GRADUATES) University of Iowa……………………………9% University of Minnesota—Twin Cities…………………8% University of Wisconsin—Madison…………………6% Iowa State University………………………4% Creighton University…………………………..3%

Employment Activities
The information below summarizes the careers pursued by 2014 graduates.

TOP CAREER PATHS (CLASS OF 2014 GRADUATES) Education/teaching/administration…………………21% Business/finance/banking…………………………14% Merchandising/sales/marketing…………………13% Computing/inf systems…………………………10% Nursing……………………………………………9% Accounting………………………………………7% Social services……………………………………4% Agriculture/environmental studies……………3% Hotel/restaurant/catering……………………..3% Sports/recreation…………………………………3% Medicine/health-related occupations……………2% Research/development…………………………2% Counseling………………………………………1% Other/various……………………………………8%

Geographic Location of Employment
For those students who decided to join the workforce, the location of employment spans a wide range. Minnesota was the top destination for May 2014 graduates, attracting 39% of the class. Iowa earned second place, with 28%. Wisconsin is home to 12% of graduates, and Illinois, 4%. The remaining 17% of employed graduates found employment outside the four-state region.

Selected Employers
Students pursued their work across a wide variety of regional, national, and international organizations. The list below highlights the names of a few of the employing organizations, arranged by broad industry groupings, followed by the number of Luther graduates they employed. The list is not exhaustive, but it does provide an overview of the range of hiring organizations.

SELECTED EMPLOYERS OF 2014 GRADUATES—NUMBER OF HIRES Business: Securian……………………………………3 Deloitte…………………………………………3 Hormel…………………………………………..3 Enterprise………………………………………3 Social Sciences/Education: Minnesota schools……21 Iowa schools…………………………………14 Wisconsin schools…………………………6 Illinois schools……………………………..6 Sciences: Mayo Clinic…………………………10 University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics………5 Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center………1 St. Luke’s Hospital, Cedar Rapids………..1 Technology: Epic……………………………………13 Securian………………………………………2 Fastenal…………………………………….1 Google……………………………………….1

Volunteer Service
Six percent of the class of 2014 pursued volunteer service as their initial career path after leaving Luther. To be classified in this category, students must have committed to at least 10 months of consecutive service.

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS (NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS IN 2013) AmeriCorps……………………………………12 Minnesota Reading Corps ……………………12 Lutheran Volunteer Corps……………………3 Urban Servant Corp…………………………..2 Minnesota Alliance with Youth………………2 World Teaching Organization in Costa Rica…………………………………………………………1 Other graduates chose a variety of regional nonprofits across the country.

Salary Information
Students were asked to report their annual starting salary. From these data, average salaries grouped by Luther majors were calculated. These averages by major were used to calculate an overall salary average. Please note that far fewer students reported salary data than any other aspect of the survey; only 34% of employed students provided salary information.

The following information highlights the average starting salaries by area of study and selected occupations, respectively. Salary data is presented in two ways to help readers understand that graduates pursue career paths both related and unrelated to their majors. For example, English majors seek opportunities as writers and editors, as well as positions in business and banking. Salaries in the survey varied greatly by major, geographic location, and industry or occupation. Students studying science disciplines commanded the highest average starting salaries ($46,247). Lowest mean salaries were in the fine arts ($31,250) and social science fields ($29,623). However, because of the modest response rate on salary data, caution should be exercised in making assumptions or drawing conclusions about salary from these data.

AVERAGE STARTING SALARY BY AREA OF STUDY Business1………………………………………..42,000 Fine arts2…………………………………………31,250 Health3………………………………………..31,500 Humanities4……………………………….33,096 Sciences5…………………………………….46,247 Social sciences………………………………29,623
1 Accounting, management, economics 2 Art, theatre/dance, music 3 Athletic training, health, physical education 4 Communication, English, environmental studies, languages, philosophy, religion 5 Biology, chemistry, computer science, mathematics, physics

Conclusions
The class of 2014 graduated as the U.S. economy’s unemployment rate has gradually improved from a 7.9% rate January 2013 to 6.6% as of January 2014. Luther graduates have consistently found employment, entered graduate school, and have sought volunteer opportunities at the same rate over the past seven years, in spite of a sluggish economy.

Postgraduation Status according to Major
The table on the last page provides a summary of much of the data on which this report is based. The table is organized according to majors. Students who majored in more than one area are represented in the table in each of the majors they obtained. Therefore, the distribution of majors listed in the table does not correspond to the number of 2014 graduates. Raw numbers are outside of the parentheses in each category, when available.

A Final Word about Careers
In today’s society, we are surrounded by numbers and statistics. We use this information to make and/or justify decisions. Therefore, it is very easy and tempting to examine and use numbers as the sole information in the career decision-making process. If only it were that simple. Pinning down a career, as with many decisions in life, is a difficult process. Many factors must be considered in the selection process, some of which are very difficult to quantify.

Ultimately, the selection of one’s life work is about the identification of one’s self, values, interests, gifts, and passions. The discovery of one’s sense of vocation is a process that data cannot capture. Rather, it’s a process that will evolve in our graduates’ lives over time. It also involves the feeling of being called to work and serving in sometimes unpredictable ways. Charts, graphs, and numbers simply cannot capture this.

The staff in the Career Center—in partnership with faculty, staff, alumni, parents, employers, and friends of Luther College—support students as they become self-sufficient in the career planning process, leading to a meaningful life and satisfying work.

Stop by the Career Center to meet the staff and learn about the services and resources available to students.

For more detailed information, please visit the Career Center website www.luther.edu/careers/info/about/reports or call (563) 397-1025 to request a hardcopy from the Career Center.