

Understanding the Supply & Demand for Internship Opportunities

SCHEV Council Meeting
July 15, 2025

How BGI Captures Internships at Scale

- Mapping supply dynamics of internships is challenging because **internships are not well defined**. We **must rely on self-reported job titles** during school that range from roles like baristas and servers, to financial analysts
- BGI analyzes job titles using a keyword search. While some roles may have a high likelihood of being internships (e.g., summer analyst, and research assistant), this project **narrowly defines internships** as work experience in college and must have “intern” or “internship” in the student’s reported job title. In this regard, results are, by definition, highly sensitive to how students report their experiences
- Our approach finds approximately **37% of students report interning in 2023**, which is lower than recent survey studies (see below). How the “internship” definition is relaxed or constrained, colors these results (See Appendix)

Overall internship rates (2023 studies)

- NACE: 62% of seniors ever had an internship
- Gallup: 41% of currently enrolled students had an internship during their BA program
- Strada: 41% of seniors and 22% of juniors had an internship in the past 12 months

Internship rates by major, as a percent of seniors reporting internships in the past 12 months (Strada)

- Business: 61%
- Engineering: 51%
- Health Professions: 34%

Students Themselves Omit “Intern” From Titles

Healthcare is an example, but the pattern likely scales across occupations

Top 10 Job Titles

1. Registered Nurse
2. Certified Nursing Assistant
3. Nursing Student
4. Medical Assistant
5. Patient Care Technician
6. Sales Associate
7. Student Nurse
8. Server
9. Research Assistant
10. Pharmacy Technician



Top 10 Intern Titles

1. Intern
2. Nurse Intern
3. Student Intern
4. Pharmacy Intern
5. Summer Intern
6. Research Intern
7. Dietetic Intern
8. Student Nurse Intern
9. Administrative Intern
10. Public Health Intern

- “Intern” (ranked 11) does not make the top 10 job titles
- Nursing students (3), Student nurse (7), and medical assistants (4) are job titles that likely are internship experience based on analysis of job postings

Preliminary Analysis: Supply of Graduates Having Internships

Expanding the Internship Definition

A flexible definition can work well, but requires alignment on what constitutes an internship experience

From a Tight Internship Definition

We started with a **narrow definition of internships - defined** as work experience in college and must have “intern” or “internship” in the student’s reported job title

37%

Internship Rate



To A Flexible Approach

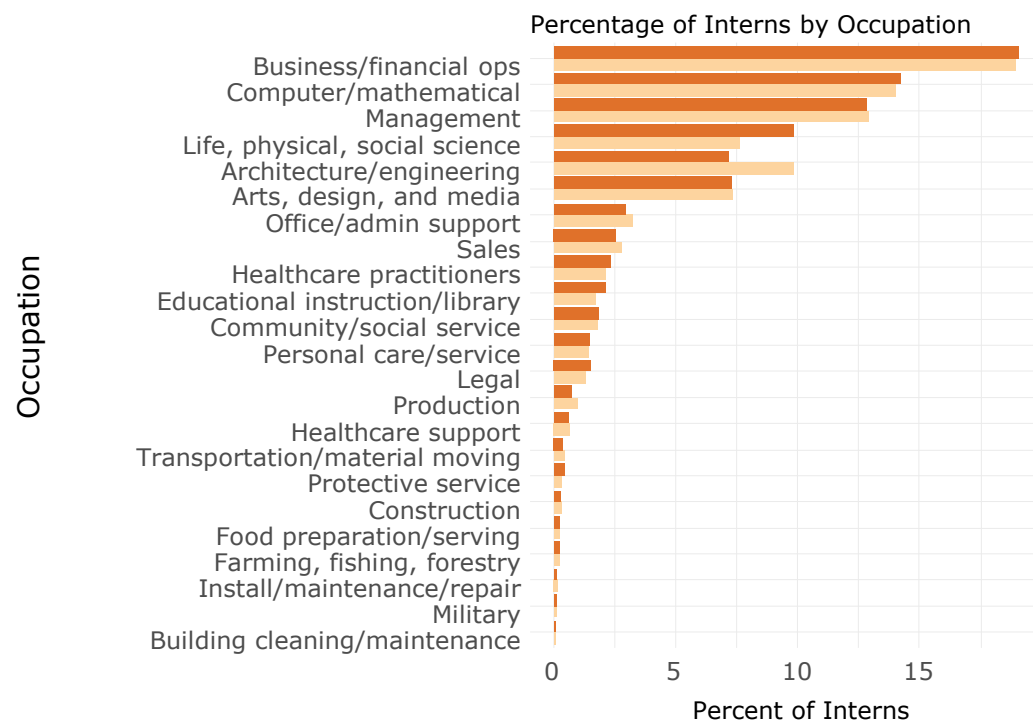
To capture internship experiences where students omit the intern search terms, we went major by major, analyzed the **most common job titles** (across job postings and student profiles) and added terms that overlapped or ranked #1 in profiles.

44%

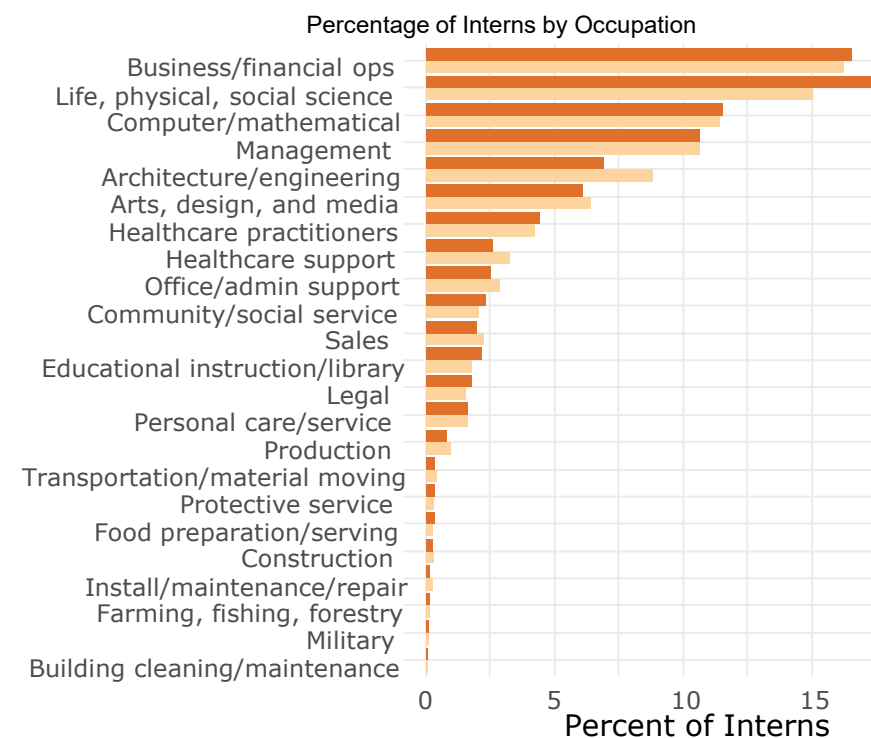
Internship Rate

Business Jobs Remains at Top, With Overall List Relatively Unaffected

Original Definition



Expanded Definition

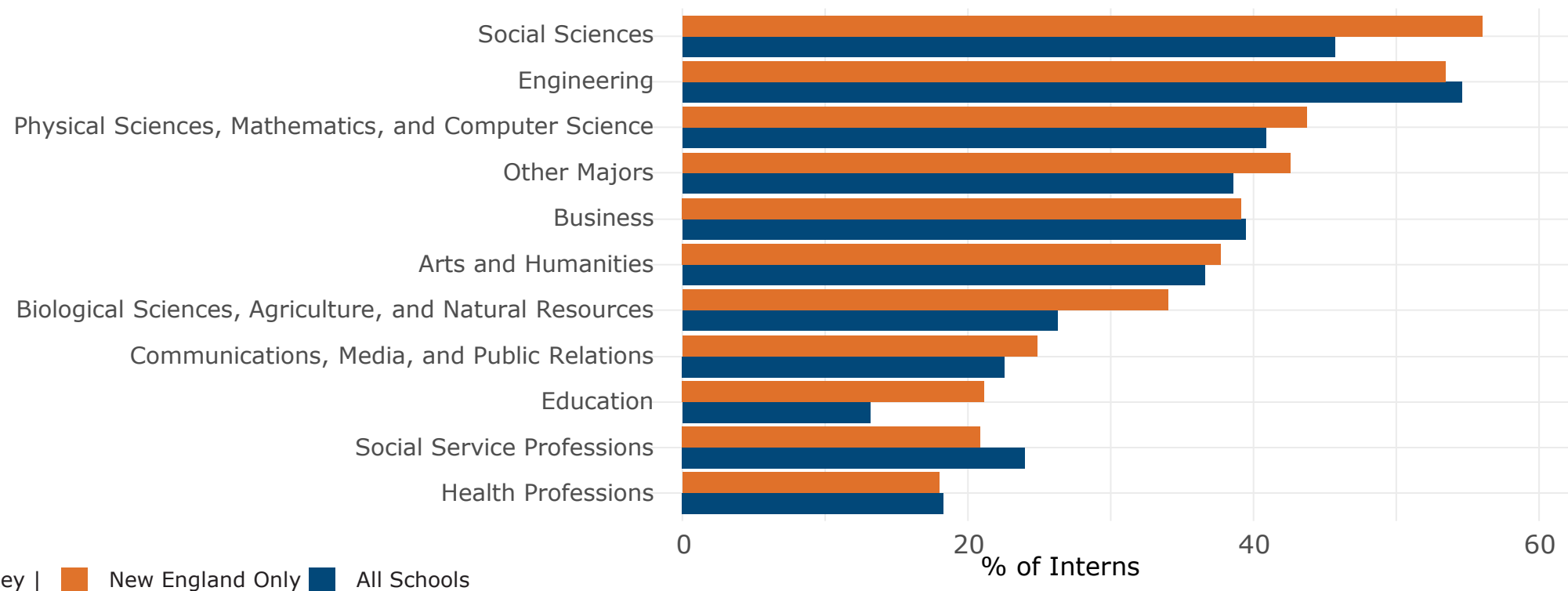


Key | ■ All Schools ■ NE Schools

Among Social Sciences and Engineering Students, Internships are the Norm

Among high-practice fields, students in New England typically report greater participation rates than national averages

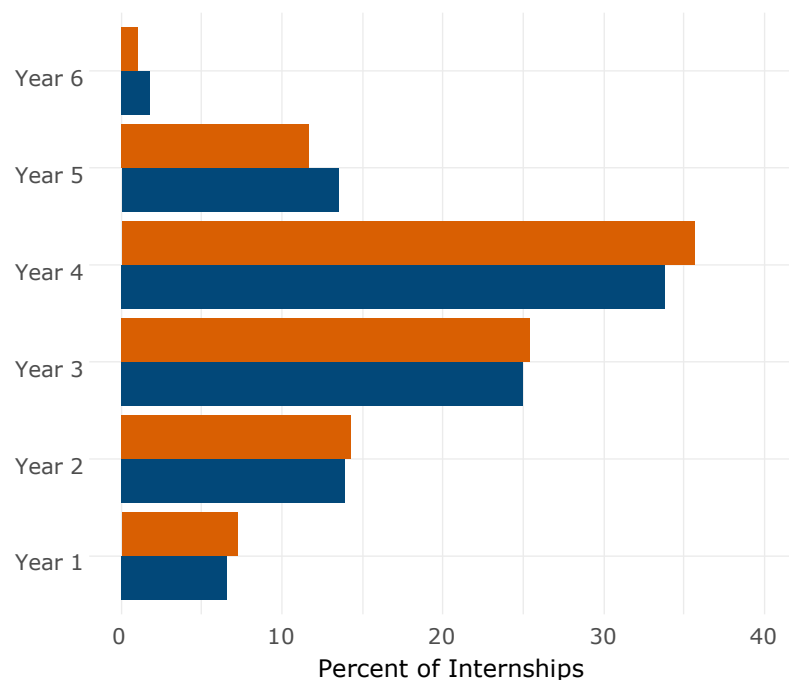
Percent of BA Students Interning by Major



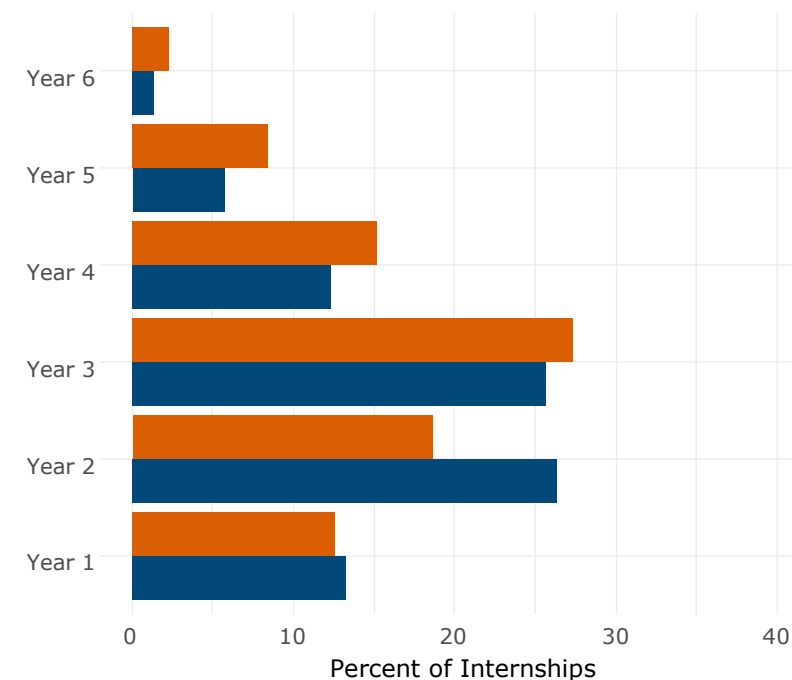
Internships Are Not 101-Level Experiences

Students participating in internships at both the BA and AA/AS levels are most frequently doing so in the latter half of their academic programs

Percent of BA Students Interning by Year



Percent of AA/AS Students Interning by Year



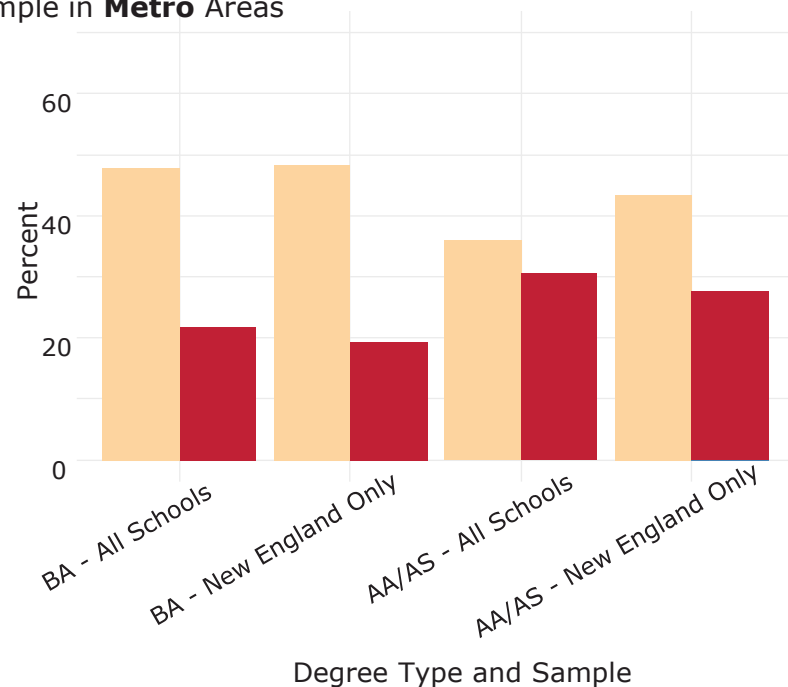
Key | ■ New England Only ■ All Schools

Location Matters, but Students are Willing to Look Farther Afield for Internship Opportunities

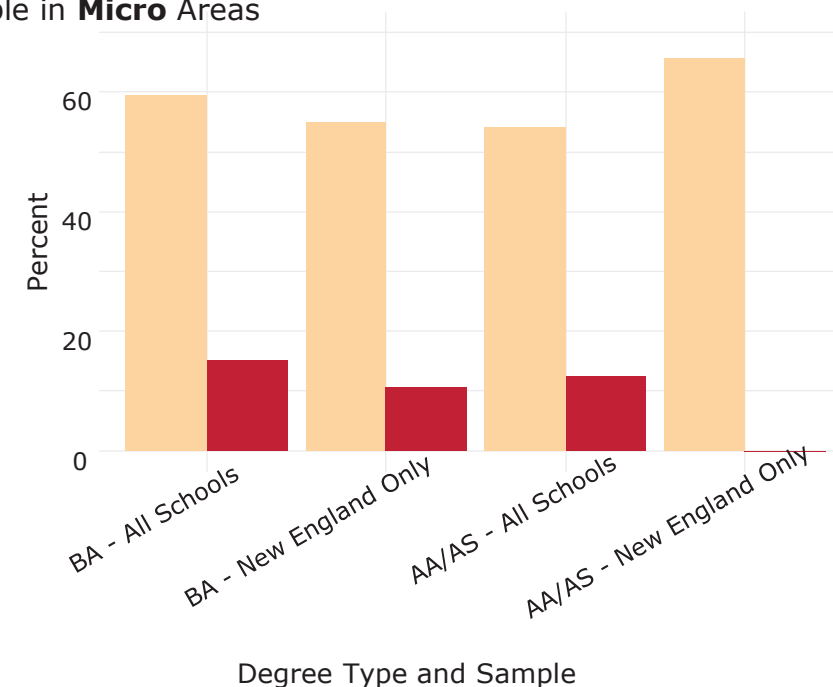
Larger economic regions see higher local intern shares, but in micro areas like traditional “college towns” students have to travel for the opportunity

Key | ■ Different County ■ Same County

Share Working in Same vs Different County by Degree and Sample in **Metro** Areas



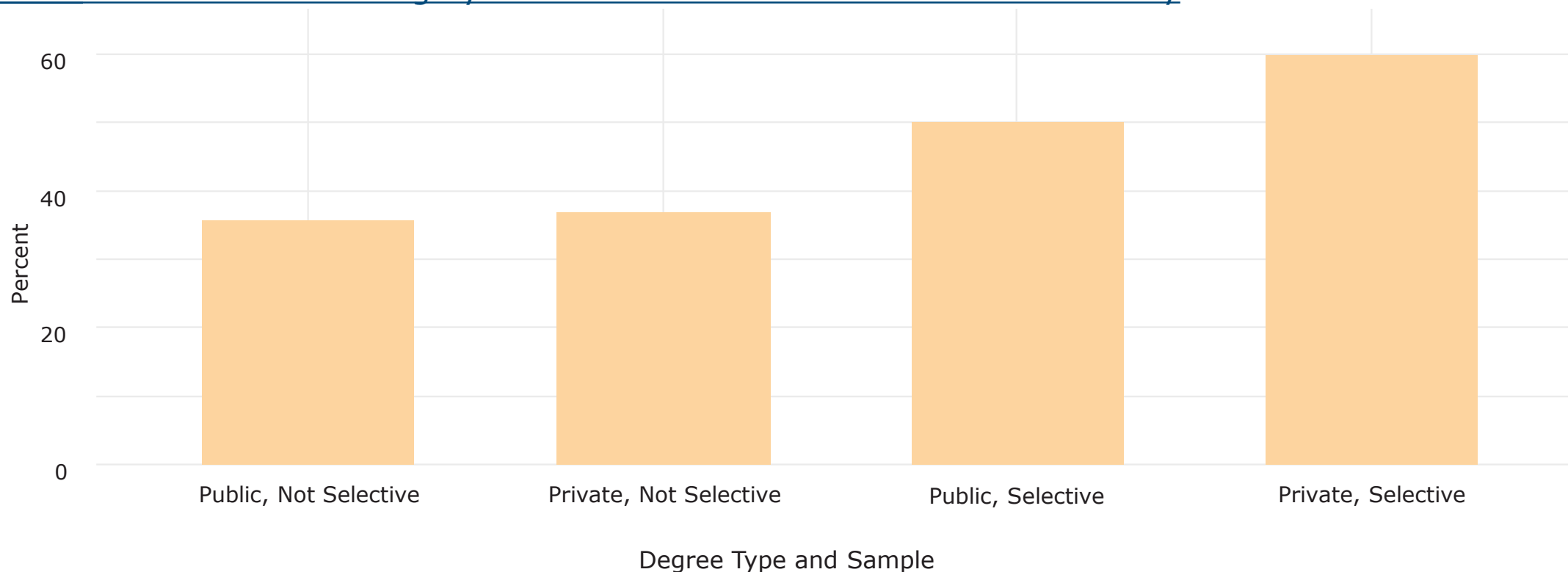
Share Working in Same vs Different County by Degree and Sample in **Micro** Areas



School Selectivity Shapes Likelihood of Interning

Students at private, selective institutions are more than 50% more likely to have an internship than peers at non-selective schools. Is this a school or student effect?

Share of Students Interning by Institutional Form of Control and Selectivity



Preliminary Analysis: Demand for Graduates Having Internships

How We Analyze Internship Postings Data

1

Leverage Enriched Job Posting Data

- We rely on job postings collected and enriched by Lightcast, which aggregates data from over 65,000 online sources and deduplicates postings across sites.

2

Define the Analysis Timeframe

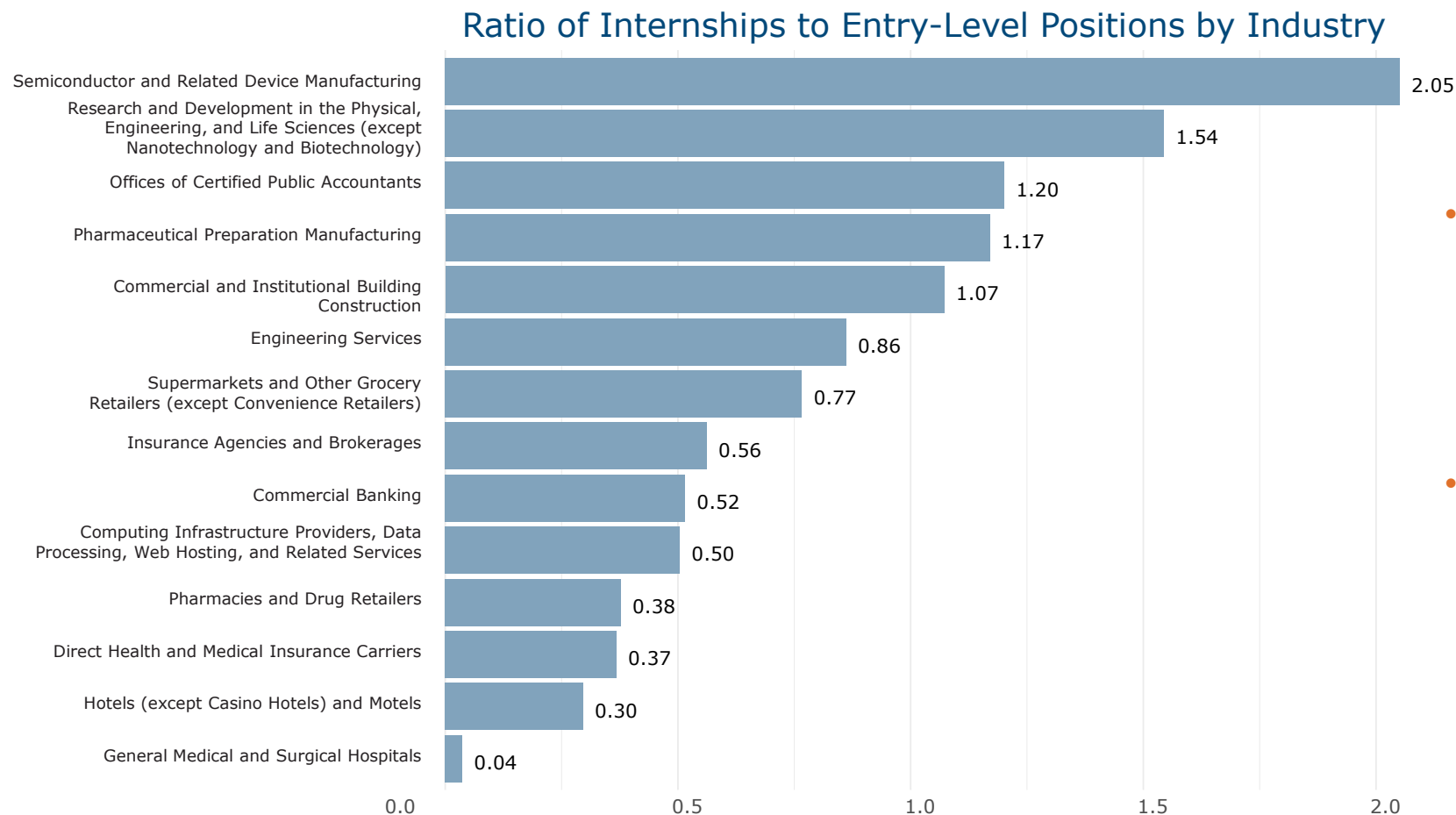
- We focus on job postings from August 1st, 2023 to July 31st, 2024 to align with the 2023–2024 Academic Year.

3

Calibrate with Official Labor Market Data

- We use the BLS's monthly Job Openings and Turnover Survey job posting numbers to upweight or down-weight our postings, ensuring our view of labor demand is as representative as possible.

At the Sectoral Level, High Intern-to-Hire Ratios Signal Both Opportunity and Competition



- There are two internships available for every job in the semiconductor industry, in line with the high competition for top talent
- By contrast, that ratio is flipped in commercial banking, with two jobs for every internship – highlighting the need for greater internship opportunity

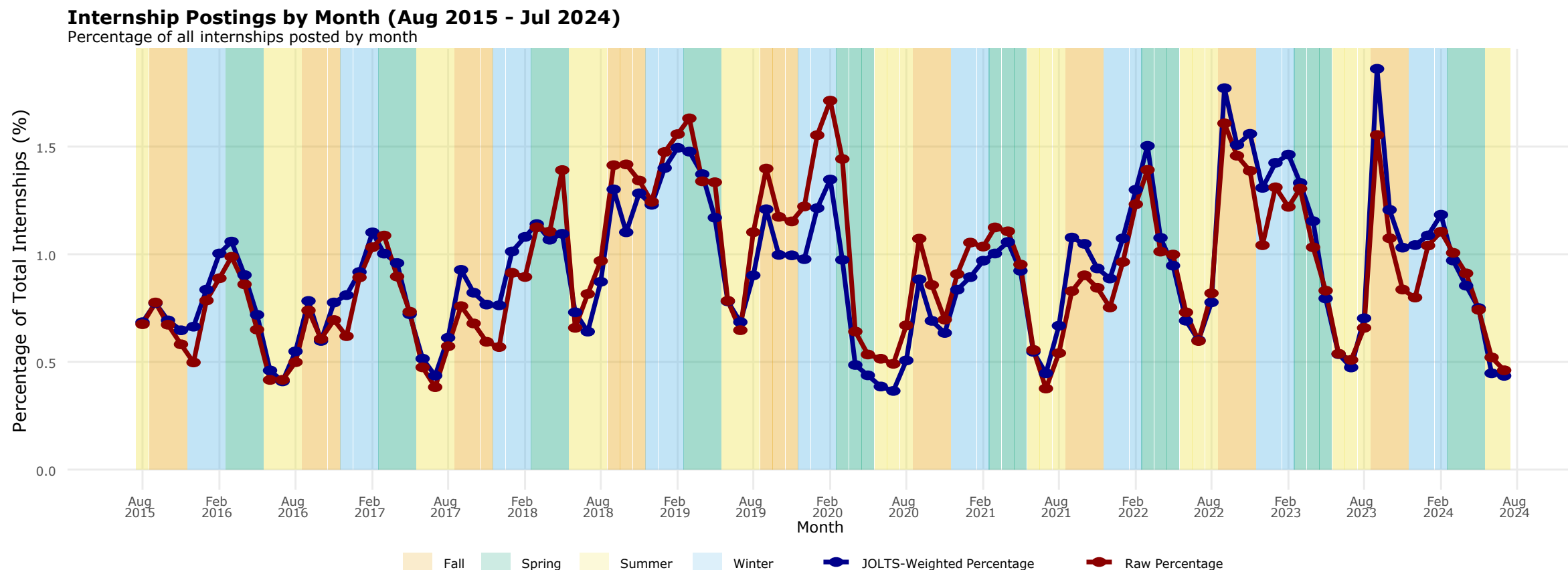
Note: A Ratio of 1 means there are an equal number of internship and full-time job postings

Ratio (Internship to Entry-Level Postings)

Source: Burning Glass Institute analysis of Lightcast data

Intern Application Season is Starting Sooner Than Ever

Pre-COVID, internship postings peaked end of winter / early spring. Recent academic years have seen postings peaks a full season earlier.

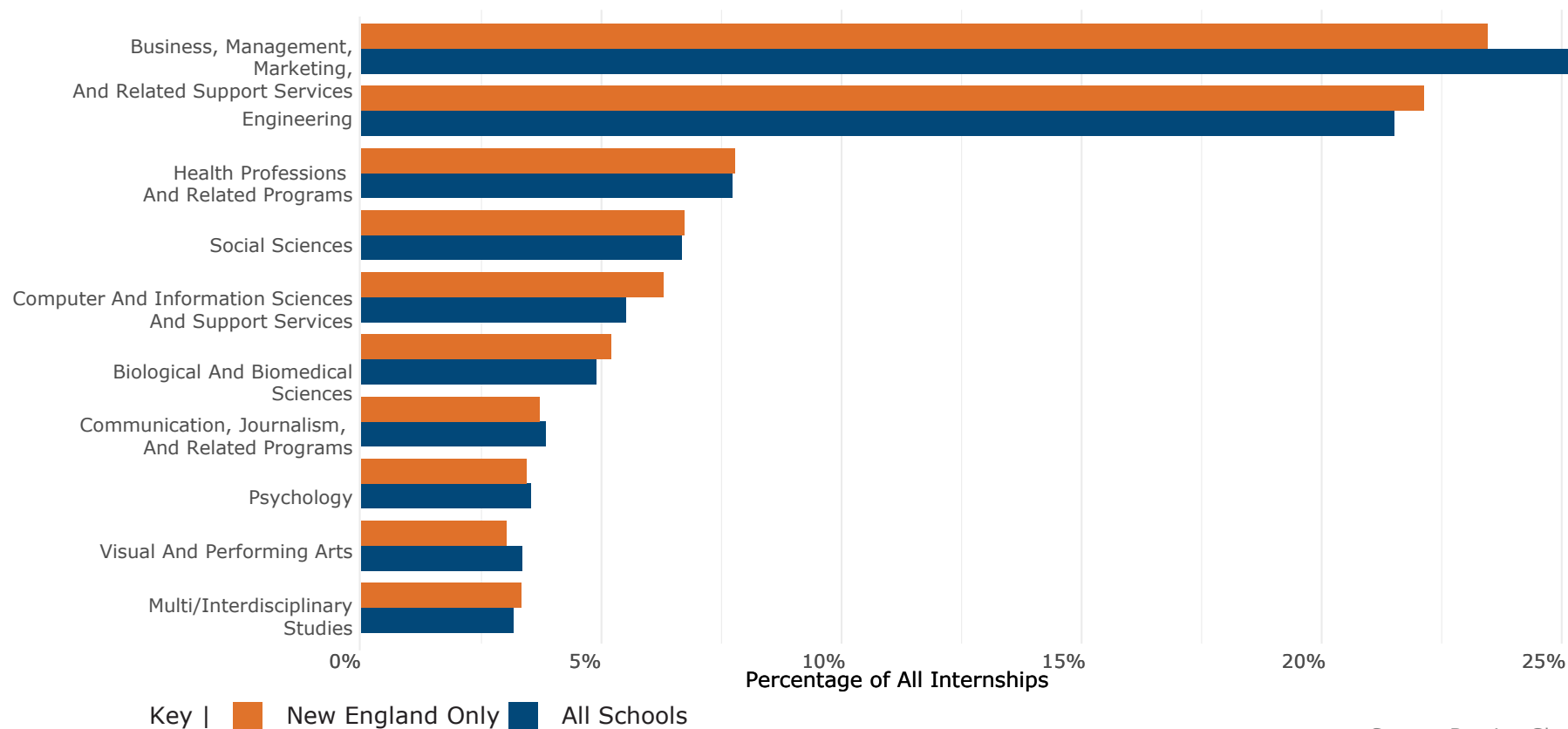


Source: Burning Glass Institute analysis of Lightcast data

Employers Hang out the Help Wanted Sign for Business and Engineering Students

Majority of Internship Posts Align With Business and Engineering Fields of Study

Top 10 Academic Programs for Internships: National vs New England



Source: Burning Glass Institute analysis of Lightcast data

Preliminary Analysis: Workforce Benefits to College Grads Who Hold Internships

Sample, Model, and Caveats

Sample:

- Cross-section of BA students who graduated from a U.S. University between 2016-2019, 2021-2022¹
- All students enrolled in U.S. schools with at least 5% coverage (relative to IPEDS)
- Results robust to using IPEDS school x major weights (similarly signed results)
 - Recommendation to not use weights since this is a convenience sample. Weighting assumes a representative sample. If the sample is not, weights could increase bias/noise especially for outliers.

Model:

OLS regression, controlling for student demographics (female, race white), fixed effects for graduation year, school, and major (CIP2), and standard errors clustered at the school

Caveats:

This analysis does not rely on quasi-experimental or exogenous variation in internship participation. As such, the **estimated effects likely overstate** the benefits of interning, since students who self-select into internships may differ systematically from those who do not (e.g., in motivation, preparation, or access to networks). These results should be interpreted with caution. The effects are most plausibly informative for marginal students, particularly those facing information asymmetries or attending institutions where internships are less common.

1. 2021-2022 graduates are not observed 5-year after graduation, and are therefore excluded from models where the outcomes is 5 years since graduation

We Examine Indicators That Serve as a Measure of Student Outcomes

All outcomes calculated within 1-, 3-, and 5- years post-graduation



Employed

Indicator for whether a student is employed



Grad School

Indicator for whether a student is enrolled in graduate school



Underemployment

Indicator for whether you are employed in an occupation where a bachelor's or more is not required (according to BLS). If unemployed, you are considered underemployed



Occupational
Alignment

Indicator for whether you are employed in an aligned occupation relative to your major. If unemployed, you are considered not aligned



Company Switch

Indicator for whether you are employed at more than one company over the relative time horizon

We Find That Internships Improve Student Outcomes and Their Effects Last Well Beyond Their First Job

All outcomes calculated within 1-, 3-, and 5- years post-graduation



Employed

Interns are ~3 percentage points **more likely to be employed** 1-, 3-, and 5-years post-graduation



Grad School

Interns are ~5 percentage points **more likely to be enrolled in graduate school** 1-year post graduation, though this difference fades 3- and 5- years out



Underemployment

Interns are ~7 percentage points **less likely to be underemployed** 1- year out, this shrinks slightly to ~5 percentage points 3- and 5- years out



Occupational Alignment

Interns are ~7 percentage points **more likely to be in an aligned occupation**, with the effect remaining 3- and 5- years post-graduation



Company Switch

Interns are ~7 percentage points **more likely to switch companies** 3- and 5-years post-graduation



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