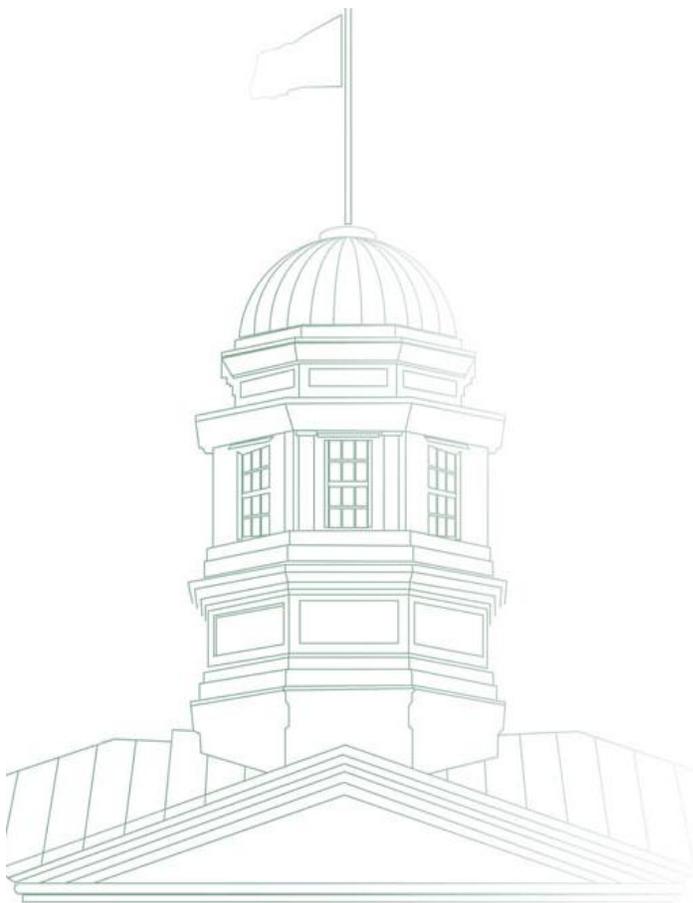# McGill's PhD Outcomes:
Report on 2013 and 2014 Survey Results

This report was prepared by

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

with close collaboration from

Office of Planning and Institutional Analysis

and

University Advancement

Thanks to all who participated in this undertaking.

June 2015

Contents

Introduction

While the education of PhD students has multiple objectives and PhD holders have multiple job opportunities, academic employment has traditionally been the dominant employment goal. At the same time, there have always been more PhDs produced than the number of university positions available. Yet, since the number of PhD degrees awarded worldwide has been steadily increasing without concomitant increases in university positions, it is not surprising that the disparity between the two has been growing (Sinche, 2014). This trend has been receiving considerable attention in higher education media, which has highlighted the need to better understand career pathways of PhD graduates and how well PhD programs are preparing graduates for the labour markets they are entering (Allum, Kent, & McCarthy, 2014; Else, 2015; Maldonado, Wiggers, & Arnold, 2013; Sekuler et al., 2013). Nevertheless, data on PhD outcomes remain scarce, meaning, for instance, that graduate programs are not well positioned to prepare their degree holders for diverse post-PhD employment trajectories (Magner, 2013).

McGill has responded to the shifting landscape of post-PhD employment and the increasing emphasis on the development of professional skills in several ways. McGill's SKILLSETS, hosted by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) and Teaching and Learning Services (TLS), offers a suite of professional development workshops, information sessions, and events designed to complement graduate students' academic training. Another key service is McGill's Career Planning Service (CaPS), which supports graduate students in understanding pathways towards both academic and non-academic careers through events such as Graduate Career Month and Career Development Workshops. Most recently, McGill has been working to develop a better understanding of PhD graduation outcomes, in order to align services and programs with graduate students' needs.

To this end, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) has collaborated with the Office of Planning and Institutional Analysis (PIA) to survey recent graduates from McGill's PhD programs with respect to their graduation outcomes.   This report draws on data from two iterations of *McGill's Tracking Survey of PhD Graduation Outcomes* (2013 and 2014), which each reached out to two cohorts of PhD graduates (2 years and 5 years after graduation). The survey was distributed to 1493 PhD graduates from across the university, with 453 respondents, for a response rate of 30%. There are respondents from across the departments at McGill, with 322 (71%) from the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) and 131 (29%) from the SSH fields (social sciences and humanities). The survey has 39 multiple-choice questions, 1 biographical data question, and 1 open-ended item, and covers topics such as: types of employment; postdoctoral studies; skills and knowledge; community involvement and networking; and success and satisfaction. This report highlights key findings from the two iterations of the survey. In the Figures, data are provided by Faculty for the Faculties of Arts, Engineering, Medicine, and Science, as the number of respondents for each cohort (2 years and 5 years after graduation) was at least 20. Data for McGill's other Faculties (Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Dentistry, Law, Music, Management, Religious Studies, and Education) are grouped together within the category "All PhD respondents".

Data Highlights

Employment Rates

The survey shows an encouraging overall employment trend among the responding PhD holders. While 2 years after graduation, 50% of all PhD respondents were employed, five years after graduation, this number increases to 75% (Figure 1 – Q1 on the survey). The second most common activity for the respondents is "doing a postdoctoral fellowship" and this decreases over time (39% and 14% for the 2-year and 5-year cohorts, respectively) as graduates find employment other than postdoctoral fellowships. Respondents from the Faculty of Medicine show a relatively smallest increase in employment over time, possibly due to doing multiple postdoctoral fellowships, or what one survey respondent from Medicine referred to as "un post-doc éternel".
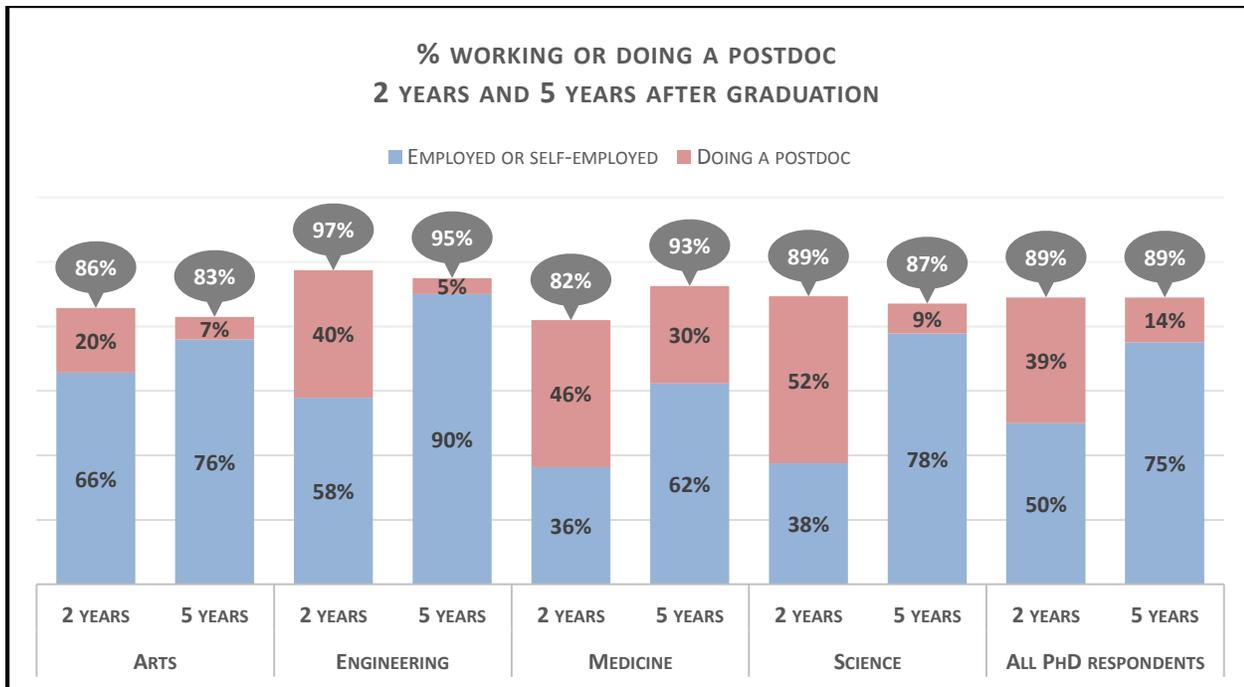
Figure 1: *Percentage of PhDs Working or Doing a Postdoc*

Interestingly, when employment rates and the number of respondents doing a postdoc are combined for all PhD respondents, there is no change over time (89% for both cohorts). This leaves 11% of PhD graduates who are neither employed, nor doing a postdoctoral fellowship, but looking for a job (5%), pursuing further studies (3.5%), caring for family (1%), or doing an unspecified activity (1.5%). Overall, the employment trend for these survey respondents is positive, especially in the 2 to 5 year period post-graduation.

Types of Employers

A key question that many prospective and current graduate students have is what types of job possibilities await them. The survey findings offer insight into this question. The most common type of employers for the survey respondents are found in university or university-related settings. Just over half (53%) of the 2-year cohorts who are employed responded that they work in a university or university-related setting. This increases to 65% for the 5-year cohorts.

Jobs in industry are the second most common, with 30% for the 2-year cohorts and 12% for the 5-year cohorts (Figure 2 - Q8 on the survey). The data show a decrease in industry jobs 5 years after graduation in each of the 4 Faculties, and overall. This suggests that some of the recent graduates who find employment in the private sector return to university settings as time goes on. This is most noticeable among graduates from the Faculties of Engineering and Science.

Government jobs represent the third most common type of employer for the survey respondents (9% for the 2-year cohorts and 14% for the 5-year cohorts).

TYPE OF EMPLOYER
2 YEARS AND 5 YEARS AFTER GRADUATION
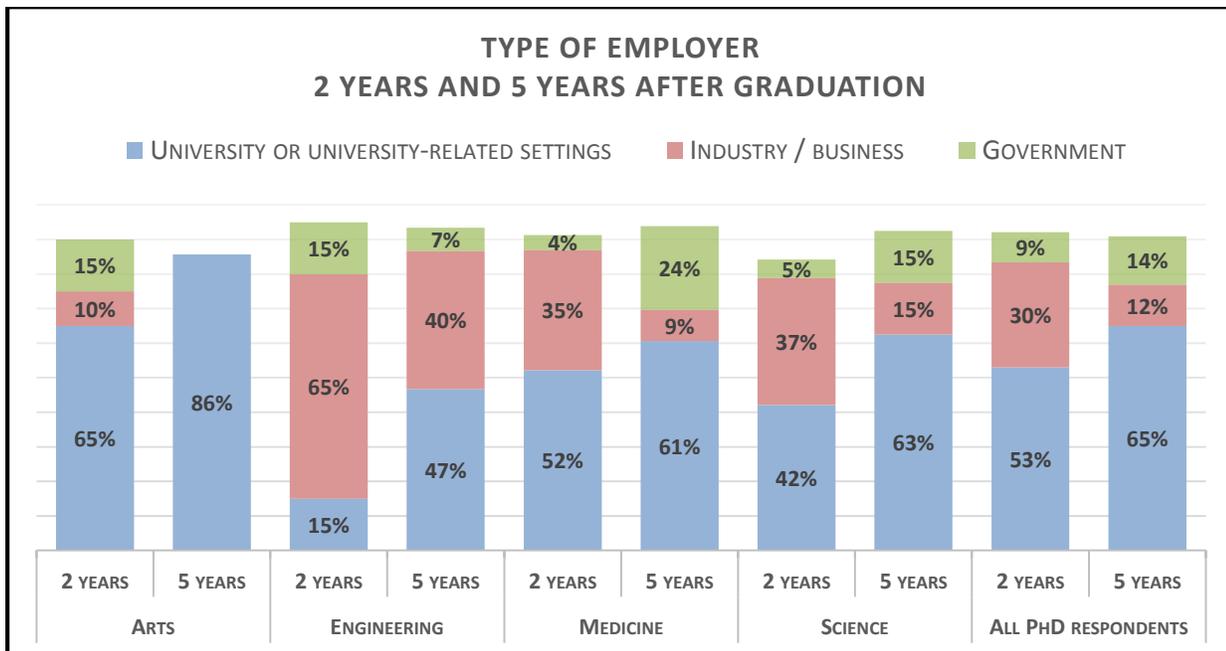
Figure 2: Type of Employer

It is encouraging to note that while there is a range of employment types in the survey category "university and university-related settings", responses to Question 14 on the survey show that, among those respondents who indicated that they are a university educator, over half (65%, for the 2-year and 5-year cohorts combined) have tenure or tenure track positions.

Degree Required for Work and Feeling Overqualified

Even though PhD education is most commonly seen as directed towards academic employment, there is an encouraging increase over time in the number of respondents who feel that their doctoral degree is required for the work they are doing (65% for the 2-year cohorts and 79% for the 5-year cohorts) (Figure 3 – Q5 on the survey). Not only are graduates more likely to have employment 5 years after graduation (as compared to 2 years after graduation), more of them seem to feel that their degree is required for the work they are doing. Likewise, over time, there is a decrease in the number of respondents who feel overqualified for the work they do (25% for the 2-year cohorts and 15% for the 5-year cohorts) (Figure 4 – Q6 on the survey). These findings suggest that PhD respondents feel that their degree has provided education and training needed for their job, and while they may start off at a lower level than what they are qualified for, the trend shows that they feel less overqualified over time.
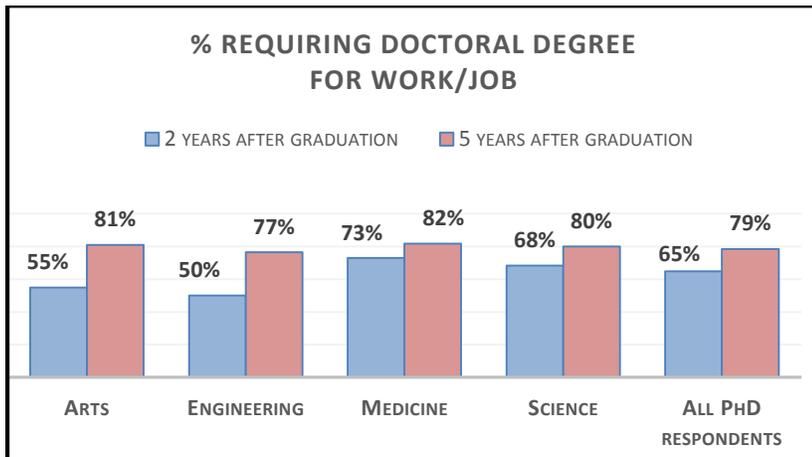
Figure 3: Doctoral Degree Required for Work
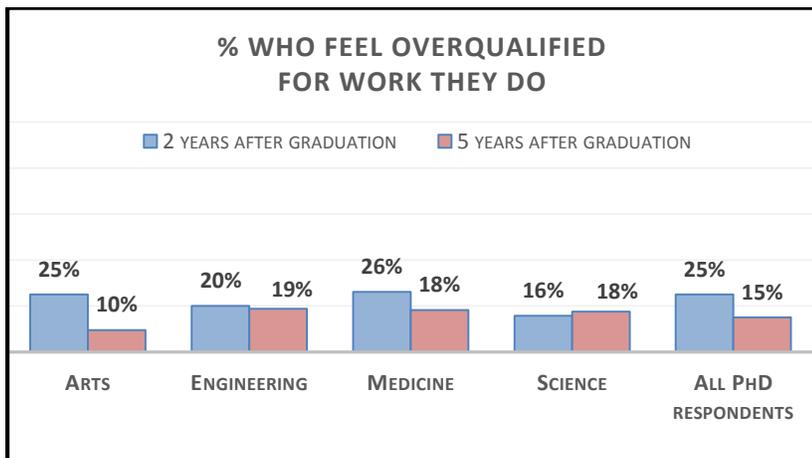
Figure 4: Feeling Overqualified

Work Related to Field of Study and Dependent on Academic Research Skills

While there is a range of employment trajectories for the survey respondents, a strong majority (91%) indicated that their work is related to their field of study and that their work is dependent on their academic research skills (86% and 94%, for the 2- and 5-year cohorts, respectively) (Figure 5 – Q7 on the survey; Figure 6 – Q9 on the survey). Although the same strong majority of respondents do not necessarily have academic jobs, they are finding employment that allows them to draw on the academic research skills and disciplinary expertise they developed during their doctoral degree. This provides some evidence of the transferability of the skills that graduates acquire through their doctoral programs.
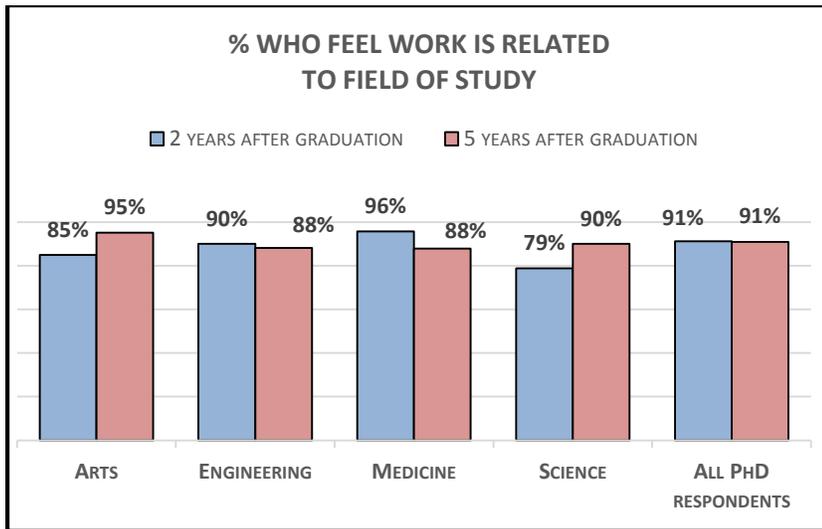
Figure 5: Work Related to Field of Study
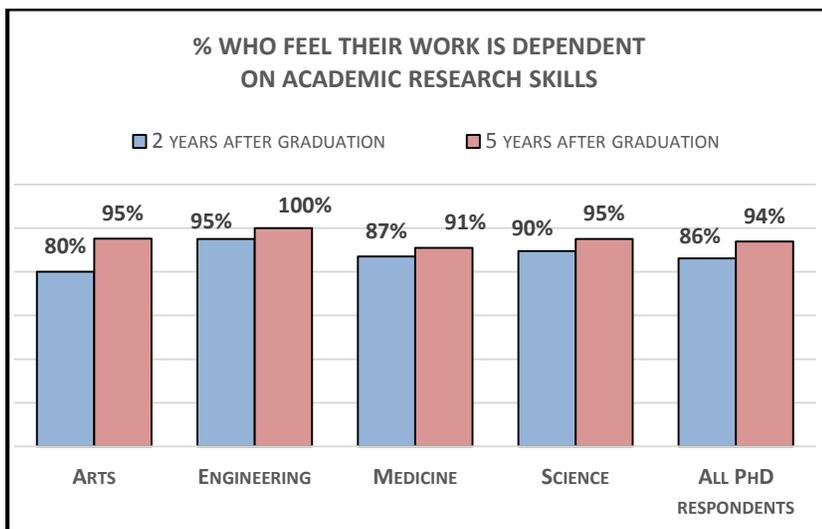
Figure 6: Work Dependent on Academic Research Skills

Feeling Successful

The graduates who responded to the survey expressed high feelings of success in the work that they do (90% and 95% for the 2-year and 5-year cohorts, respectively) (Figure 7 – Q18 on the survey). This could be due in part to the positive trends in their employment rates as well as their feelings that the work they do is both related to their field of study (i.e., their doctoral degree was worth it even if they do not have tenure-track jobs) and dependent on the academic research skills they obtained and developed during their degrees. In other words, they feel successful possibly because they are putting their skills and expertise to use, both in academic and non-academic jobs.
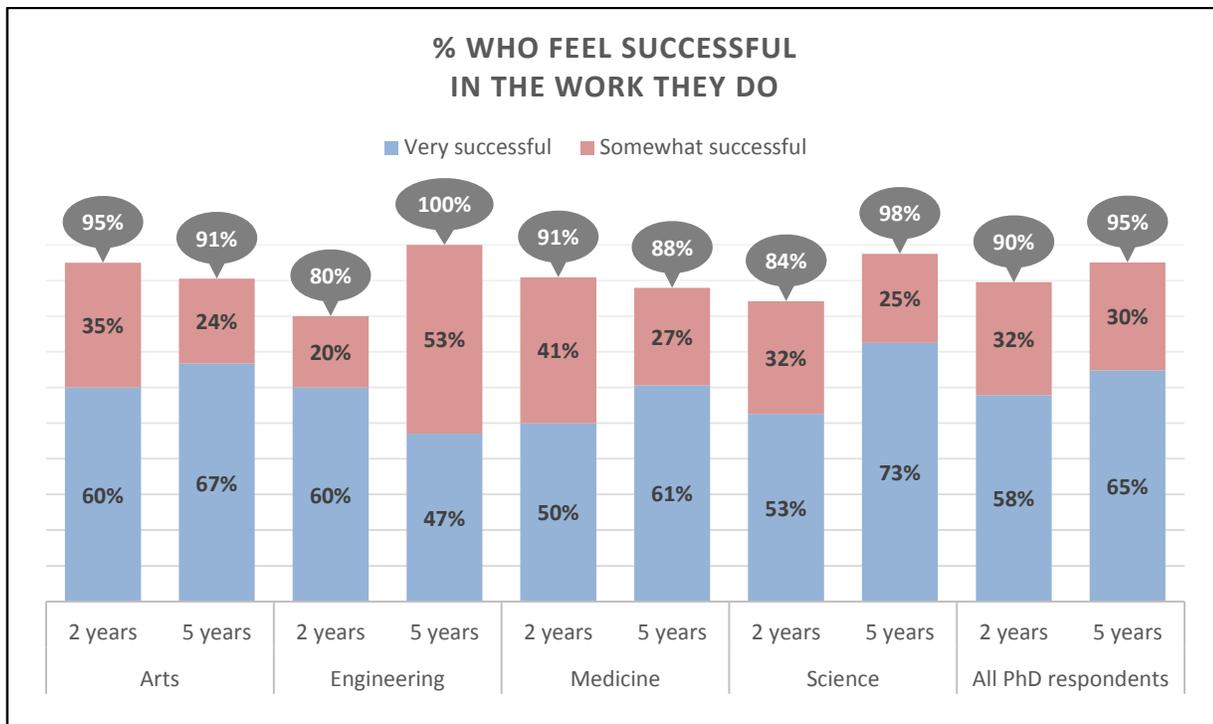
Figure 7: *Feeling Successful*

Interest in Volunteering at McGill

Item 40 on the survey asked respondents to select volunteer activities they would be interested in participating in at McGill to help current students gain skills and to increase their own networking activities.

Just under one third (28%) indicated that they would be interested in volunteering on a committee to enhance the program they graduated from. Of those, 14% said they would be interested in mentoring graduate students through Career and Placement Services (CaPS); 12% indicated that they would post a job or internship on the CaPS website; and 10% replied that they would be interested in leading a workshop for CaPS or SKILLSETS (Teaching and Learning Services).

The responses indicate that there is a rich resource for McGill to tap into with respect to better supporting current graduate students in understanding the diversity of employment trajectories that await them after graduation. The list of these volunteers has been shared with CaPS and Teaching and Learning Services (TLS).

Survey Comments

Of the 453 respondents who completed the survey, 68 (15%) included a comment in response to Item 41 on the survey, which invited respondents to "make a comment of any kind about this survey or your experiences." The comments can be categorized into four themes (note that some comments covered more than one theme, so were counted more than once): 1) positive and/ or constructive feedback on the survey (16); 2) elaboration on survey responses (14); 3) general comments on higher education (13); and 4) alignment of PhD programs with job-market realities and employment outcomes (30). It is revealing that the most prominent type of comment has to do with preparing PhD students for employment outcomes - this is clearly a topic that is of interest and relevance to PhD graduates. Examples of comments related to this theme include:

- "I believe that internships in the industries during the PhD will help in ensuring jobs industry." (Agricultural and Environmental Science)
- "Les doctorants doivent être mieux informés des défis pour accéder aux postes de professeurs." (Law)
- "McGill provided a platform and then it's up to us individuals to make our niche in the world." (Medicine)
- "It is amazing that you care about PhD students and post-docs and the increasing number of us looking outside academia for finding a job." (Medicine)
- "Les étudiants aux études graduées [sic] en sciences de la vie devraient être informés de la réalité d'emploi dans cet domaine." (Medicine)
- "Le type de formation offert dans les universités, qui est très axé sur la science fondamentale, diffère grandement des besoins des entreprises. Je crois que les universités doivent adapter leurs programmes d'études d'avantage aux besoins du marché." (Medicine)

- "I really think that recent PhD graduates who successfully found employment (in industry and academia) should give workshops/presentations to all new PhD students, during their first year, to clearly explain what they should do in order to increase their employment prospects upon graduation." (Engineering)
- "I feel that there is a lot more that McGill's departments could do to prepare PhD students for non-academic jobs. My graduate training was completely geared towards gaining employment in academia." (Science)
- "Graduate students certainly need to be prepared for alternatives to careers in academia." (Science)
- "McGill needs to do more to prepare graduate students for non-academic work. . . . Graduate students are not trained in professionalization for non-academic streams, nor are they advised on what kinds of positions might be available outside the academy." (Arts)
- "Transitioning from the PhD world to the workplace was difficult. . . . there needs to be some sort of alternative programming in place to prepare future grads for other options." (Arts)
- "I learned most of the skills required at my current job from McGill. I am fully satisfied with the PhD program at McGill. Thank you." (Education)

While the number of these comments is small relative to the total respondents, they offer valuable insight into graduates' experiences of transitioning into the job market and reflecting on the skills and knowledge they gained during their PhD degrees. From these comments, it is clear that at least some graduates feel quite strongly that their programs could have better prepared them for the realities of the job market, rather than a singular academic path.

Conclusion

On the one hand, the quantitative data drawn from the survey show a promising picture of employment for this group of McGill PhD graduates, who are, for the most part, employed, doing work that draws on their expertise and skills, and feeling successful. On the other hand, the comments add nuance and depth to our understanding of PhD outcomes and PhD graduate experiences, in particular with respect to how well students felt that their PhD programs prepared them for the realities of the job market post-graduation, with respect to both academic and non-academic jobs. Jobs in industry and government are fairly common options for the PhD graduates who responded to this survey; as such, McGill should increase its efforts to facilitate the development of broadly applicable skills for doctoral students to prepare graduates for academic and non-academic employment opportunities.

Future iterations of the survey might ask respondents to elaborate on their non-academic pathway choices, with respect to research and professional skill development during their PhD programs, as well as the ease of transition from academia to industry.

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Appendix A: Tracking Survey of PhD Graduation Outcomes: 2013 and 2014 Combined Results

Note: Three of the survey items are open-ended questions. See Appendix B (Q10 - Name of Employer), Appendix C (Q29 - Name of Postdoctoral Organization), and Appendix D (Q40 - Other Comments). Section 3 (Q20-27) on Self-employment, and Section 5 (Q 32-34) on Further Studies did not draw large enough responses to include.

Years after graduation	Cohort and survey year	Number of Invitees (A)	Number of Respondents (B)	Response Rate (B/A)
Two years	2011 surveyed in 2013	401	129	32.2%
	2012 surveyed in 2014	428	121	28.3%
Five years	2008 surveyed in 2013	328	100	30.5%
	2009 surveyed in 2014	336	103	30.7%

Note: Margin of error for 2-year cohorts (5.2%) and for 5-year cohorts (5.7%).

Section 1 - Current situation (all graduates)

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q1		Count	%	Count	%
What best describes your current situation?	Employed	115	46.4%	145	72.9%
	Doing a postdoctoral fellowship	96	38.7%	27	13.6%
	Self-employed or freelancing	9	3.6%	4	2.0%
	Pursuing further studies, not including postdoctoral studies	9	3.6%	7	3.5%
	Working as a volunteer or unpaid intern	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Looking for a job	11	4.4%	11	5.5%
	Temporarily on a leave of absence	1	0.4%	1	0.5%
	Caring for the family	2	0.8%	3	1.5%
	Other	5	2.0%	1	0.5%
	Total	248	100.0%	199	100.0%

Note: Only results about employed graduates and graduates doing a postdoctoral fellowship are presented in sections 2 to 4. Sections 6 and 7 address all graduates.

Section 2 - Employment (employed graduates)

Q2		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Are you employed full-time or part-time?	Full-time	109	94.8%	137	95.1%
	Part-time	6	5.2%	7	4.9%
	Total	115	100.0%	144	100.0%

Q3		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Do you have a permanent job?	Yes	74	64.3%	99	69.7%
	No, but I have and expect to have continuous employment (e.g., contract renewal).	34	29.6%	39	27.5%
	No; it is ending in the near future.	7	6.1%	4	2.8%
	Total	115	100.0%	142	100.0%

Q4		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Is it your first job since you graduated with your PhD?	Yes	74	64.3%	73	50.3%
	No, it is my second.	30	26.1%	49	33.8%
	No, it is my third.	8	7.0%	17	11.7%
	No, it is my fourth or more.	3	2.6%	6	4.1%
	Total	115	100.0%	145	100.0%

Q5		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
What is the degree required for the work that you do?	Doctoral	74	64.3%	113	77.9%
	Master's	28	24.3%	23	15.9%
	Bachelor's	6	5.2%	2	1.4%
	Post-secondary	2	1.7%	0	0.0%
	Secondary	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	No specific degree	4	3.5%	6	4.1%
	Don't know	1	0.9%	1	0.7%
	Total	115	100.0%	145	100.0%

Q6

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Considering your experience, education and training, do you consider yourself to be overqualified for the work that you do?	Yes	29	25.2%	22	15.3%
	No	86	74.8%	122	84.7%
	Total	115	100.0%	144	100.0%

Q7

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Is your work related to your field of study?	Yes	105	91.3%	132	91.0%
	No	10	8.7%	13	9.0%
	Total	115	100.0%	145	100.0%

Q8

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
What type of employer are you working for?	University, university-affiliated hospital, university-affiliated medical centre, university research centre or institute	61	53.0%	93	65.0%
	Government (federal, provincial, municipal, state or public service, governmental research centre or institute, etc.)	10	8.7%	20	14.0%
	Community college, CEGEP, or technical institute	6	5.2%	4	2.8%
	Pre-school, elementary, or secondary school	1	0.9%	1	0.7%
	Arts or other cultural institution	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Not-for-profit organization, e.g., non-governmental organization (NGO)	1	0.9%	4	2.8%
	Industry / business (including private research centre or institute)	35	30.4%	17	11.9%
	Other	1	0.9%	4	2.8%
	Total	115	100.0%	143	100.0%

Q9		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
To what extent is your work dependent on your academic research skills?	Not dependent	16	13.9%	9	6.2%
	Somewhat dependent	38	33.0%	37	25.5%
	Very dependent	61	53.0%	99	68.3%
	Total	115	100.0%	145	100.0%

Q11		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
In what country do you work? The following list includes the countries where McGill's graduates most often work after graduation, but if you don't find the country that applies to you, please specify it under "Other".	Canada	70	63.6%	89	64.0%
	China	1	0.9%	3	2.2%
	France	0	0.0%	1	0.7%
	Germany	2	1.8%	3	2.2%
	Iran	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Jordan	0	0.0%	1	0.7%
	Lebanon	2	1.8%	0	0.0%
	Mexico	1	0.9%	0	0.0%
	Netherlands	2	1.8%	0	0.0%
	Switzerland	3	2.7%	2	1.4%
	Turkey	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	United Kingdom	2	1.8%	3	2.2%
	USA	23	20.9%	26	18.7%
	Other	4	3.6%	11	7.9%
	Total	110	100.0%	139	100.0%

Q12		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
What is your principal occupation?	University educator	44	38.6%	60	42.3%
	Educator outside the university setting	7	6.1%	5	3.5%
	Health or helping professional (e.g., nurse, social worker, priest)	5	4.4%	10	7.0%
	Scientist, social scientist, or architect	29	25.4%	34	23.9%
	Writer or creative professional	0	0.0%	1	0.7%
	Business, finance, or sales professional	2	1.8%	3	2.1%
	Legal professional	2	1.8%	1	0.7%
	Administrator/ Administrative support	3	2.6%	5	3.5%
	Other	22	19.3%	23	16.2%
	Total	114	100.0%	142	100.0%

Note: There is a high number of other answers. This seems to indicate that the different categories of occupation are not robust enough. Respondents should have the option to "Select all that apply". Question is being reconsidered for future iterations.

Q13		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
If you are a university educator, what is your job title or rank? Please choose all that apply.	Full professor	0	0.0%	1	2.0%
	Associate professor	3	7.0%	13	22.0%
	Assistant professor	31	70.0%	35	60.0%
	Dean	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Associate dean	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Chair of department	1	2.0%	0	0.0%
	Program director	0	0.0%	2	3.0%
	Other faculty member	9	20.0%	9	16.0%
	Number of respondents	44	100.0%	58	100.0%

Note: Percentages may add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q14		Count	%	Count	%
If you are a university educator, are you tenured or on the tenure track?	Yes	29	66.0%	38	64.0%
	No	15	34.0%	21	36.0%
	Total	44	100.0%	59	100.0%

Q15			Count	Mean	Median	Max.
How many people do you directly supervise?	years after graduation	2	250	5	0	200
		5	203	5	2	95

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q16		Count	%	Count	%
How did you first make the contact that led to your hiring? Please choose all that apply.	At a recruitment or career fair at McGill	1	0.9%	2	1.5%
	Through a McGill alumnus or alumna	6	5.4%	2	1.5%
	Through your supervisor at McGill	6	5.4%	19	14.1%
	Through an internship that led to a job offer	2	1.8%	7	5.2%
	Through a friend or relative	13	11.7%	22	16.3%
	Through a conference	10	9.0%	7	5.2%
	Through online networking	4	3.6%	6	4.4%
	By responding to a job posting	57	51.4%	55	40.7%
	Through a postdoctoral fellowship	2	1.8%	15	11.1%
	By submitting a résumé but not in response to a job posting	5	4.5%	7	5.2%
	By returning to previous employment	11	9.9%	6	4.4%
	Other	5	4.5%	9	6.7%
	Number of respondents	111	100.0%	135	100.0%

Note: Percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

| Q17 | | years after graduation | | | |
| | | 2 | | 5 | |
		Count	%	Count	%
Were you ever a postdoctoral fellow?	Yes	29	25.4%	58	40.3%
	No	85	74.6%	86	59.7%
	Total	114	100.0%	144	100.0%

| Q18 | | years after graduation | | | |
| | | 2 | | 5 | |
		Count	%	Count	%
How successful do you feel given the work that you do?	Unsuccessful	5	4.4%	6	4.1%
	Somewhat successful	36	31.6%	44	30.3%
	Very successful	66	57.9%	94	64.8%
	No opinion	7	6.1%	1	0.7%
	Total	114	100.0%	145	100.0%

| Q19 | | years after graduation | | | |
| | | 2 | | 5 | |
		Count	%	Count	%
How satisfied are you with your income?	Very dissatisfied	13	11.4%	9	6.2%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	21	18.4%	22	15.2%
	Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	6	5.3%	15	10.3%
	Somewhat satisfied	45	39.5%	56	38.6%
	Very satisfied	29	25.4%	43	29.7%
	Total	114	100.0%	145	100.0%

Section 4 - Postdoctoral Studies (graduates currently doing a postdoctoral fellowship)

Note: In 2014, a problem occurred in this section of the questionnaire: 72 postdocs should have answered the following four questions, but couldn't because of a condition that was missing in the online survey. They were all invited by email to complete the missing questions; however, only 23 responded. Their cohort year is not known.

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q28a (2013)		Count	%	Count	%
Is this your first postdoctoral fellowship?	Yes	29	76.3%	8	53.3%
	No, it is my second.	9	23.7%	4	26.7%
	No, it is my third or more.	0	0.0%	3	20.0%
	Total	38	100.0%	15	100.0%

Q28b (2014)		Count	%
Is this your first postdoctoral fellowship?	Yes	19	82.6%
	No, it is my second.	4	17.4%
	No, it is my third or more.	0	0.0%
	Total	23	100.0%

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q30a (2013)		Count	%	Count	%
In what country do you work **(postdoc)**? The following list includes the countries where McGill's graduates most often work after graduation, but if you don't find the country that applies to you, please specify it under "Other".	Canada	22	59.5%	5	35.7%
	China	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	France	0	0.0%	2	14.3%
	Germany	1	2.7%	1	7.1%
	Iran	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Jordan	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Lebanon	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Mexico	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Netherlands	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Switzerland	0	0.0%	1	7.1%
	Turkey	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	United Kingdom	2	5.4%	0	0.0%
	USA	12	32.4%	3	21.4%
	Other	0	0.0%	2	14.3%
	Total	37	100.0%	14	100.0%

Q30b (2014)		Count	%
In what country do you work **(postdoc)**? The following list includes the countries where McGill's graduates most often work after graduation, but if you don't find the country that applies to you, please specify it under "Other".	Canada	8	34.8%
	China	0	0.0%
	France	0	0.0%
	Germany	4	17.4%
	Iran	0	0.0%
	Jordan	0	0.0%
	Lebanon	0	0.0%
	Mexico	0	0.0%
	Netherlands	1	4.3%
	Switzerland	0	0.0%
	Turkey	0	0.0%
	United Kingdom	3	13.0%
	USA	6	26.1%
	Other	1	4.3%
	Total	23	100.0%

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q31a (2013)		Count	%	Count	%
How successful do you feel given the work that you do **(postdoc)**?	Unsuccessful	4	10.8%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat successful	17	45.9%	8	57.1%
	Very successful	14	37.8%	5	35.7%
	No opinion	2	5.4%	0	0.0%
	Total	37	100.0%	14	100.0%

Q31b (2014)		Count	%
How successful do you feel given the work that you do **(postdoc)**?	Unsuccessful	1	4.3%
	Somewhat successful	13	56.5%
	Very successful	9	39.1%
	No opinion	0	0.0%
	Total	23	100.0%

Section 6 - Skills and Knowledge (all graduates)

Q35 - Which of these capabilities, identified in the Tri-Agency (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) "Statement of Principles on Key Professional Skills for Researchers" (2007), do you have, require, or want? Please select all that apply.		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Critical and creative thinking	You have the skill.	236	95.9%	185	92.5%
	Your job requires the skill.	163	66.3%	139	69.5%
	You want the skill.	14	5.7%	20	10.0%
	Number of respondents	246	100.0%	200	100.0%
Personal effectiveness	You have the skill.	213	89.9%	173	89.2%
	Your job requires the skill.	147	62.0%	130	67.0%
	You want the skill.	23	9.7%	24	12.4%
	Number of respondents	237	100.0%	194	100.0%
Integrity and ethical conduct	You have the skill.	232	97.1%	187	94.4%
	Your job requires the skill.	140	58.6%	138	69.7%
	You want the skill.	9	3.8%	14	7.1%
	Number of respondents	239	100.0%	198	100.0%
Teaching competence	You have the skill.	166	73.5%	144	78.3%
	Your job requires the skill.	91	40.3%	90	48.9%
	You want the skill.	58	25.7%	40	21.7%
	Number of respondents	226	100.0%	184	100.0%
Leadership	You have the skill.	165	71.7%	140	73.7%
	Your job requires the skill.	110	47.8%	112	58.9%
	You want the skill.	63	27.4%	45	23.7%
	Number of respondents	230	100.0%	190	100.0%
Research management	You have the skill.	176	77.2%	142	78.0%
	Your job requires the skill.	114	50.0%	98	53.8%
	You want the skill.	53	23.2%	43	23.6%
	Number of respondents	228	100.0%	182	100.0%
Knowledge mobilization and knowledge translation	You have the skill.	166	75.8%	123	68.3%
	Your job requires the skill.	121	55.3%	109	60.6%
	You want the skill.	50	22.8%	51	28.3%
	Number of respondents	219	100.0%	180	100.0%

Q35 (Continued) - Which of these capabilities, identified in the Tri-Agency (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) "Statement of Principles on Key Professional Skills for Researchers" (2007), do you have, require, or want? Please select all that apply.

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Societal or civic responsibilities	You have the skill.	129	69.7%	110	72.4%
	Your job requires the skill.	58	31.4%	73	48.0%
	You want the skill.	54	29.2%	38	25.0%
	Number of respondents	185	100.0%	152	100.0%

Note: Percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

Q36 - How helpful were the following services at McGill in helping you gain the skills listed in the previous question?

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
Career Planning Services (CaPS)	Not helpful	49	20.1%	53	26.6%
	Neutral	84	34.4%	54	27.1%
	Very helpful	32	13.1%	23	11.6%
	Not applicable	79	32.4%	69	34.7%
	Total	244	100.0%	199	100.0%
SKILLSETS by Teaching and Learning Services (TLS)	Not helpful	36	14.9%	36	18.4%
	Neutral	72	29.9%	38	19.4%
	Very helpful	39	16.2%	14	7.1%
	Not applicable	94	39.0%	108	55.1%
	Total	241	100.0%	196	100.0%
MyResearch graduate seminars in the Library	Not helpful	44	18.3%	35	17.9%
	Neutral	59	24.5%	36	18.4%
	Very helpful	23	9.5%	12	6.1%
	Not applicable	115	47.7%	113	57.7%
	Total	241	100.0%	196	100.0%

Section 7 - Community Involvement and Networking

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q37		Count	%	Count	%
Were you aware that you can keep in touch with your former classmates and peers at McGill through McGill's Alumni Online Community (aoc.mcgill.ca)?	Yes	86	35.2%	77	38.7%
	No	158	64.8%	122	61.3%
	Total	244	100.0%	199	100.0%

		years after graduation			
		2		5	
Q38		Count	%	Count	%
About your professional activities and community service, please choose all that apply.	You are in a start-up company.	11	10.5%	15	17.2%
	You are a founding member of the organization you are working for.	8	7.6%	4	4.6%
	You are on a board of directors.	15	14.3%	20	23.0%
	You are on a scientific advisory board.	16	15.2%	22	25.3%
	You are on an editorial board.	20	19.0%	16	18.4%
	You are a volunteer.	52	49.5%	44	50.6%
	Other	18	17.1%	7	8.0%
	Number of respondents	105	100.0%	87	100.0%

Note: Percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

Q39		years after graduation			
		2		5	
		Count	%	Count	%
To help current students to gain skills and to increase your networking activities, would you be interested in... Please choose all that apply.	Volunteering on a committee to help enhance the PhD program you graduated from.	73	76.0%	52	72.2%
	Mentoring an undergraduate or graduate student through the Career Planning Service (CaPS).	41	42.7%	23	31.9%
	Posting an internship or job opportunity in your organization on a CaPS webpage.	25	26.0%	31	43.1%
	Leading a workshop at CaPS.	29	30.2%	14	19.4%
	Leading a workshop at Teaching and Learning Services.	23	24.0%	24	33.3%
	Other	1	1.0%	2	2.8%
	Number of respondents	96	100.0%	72	100.0%

Note: Percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

Appendix B: Name of Employer by Faculty (Q10)

1. UNIVERSITY SETTINGS

Faculty of Engineering

Université du Québec à Montréal	2
École de Technologie Supérieure	1
Royal Military College of Canada	1
Syracuse University	1
Université de Sherbrooke	1
Al-Mergheb University	1

Faculty of Law

Université de Montréal	1
University of Ottawa	1

Desautels Faculty of Management

HEC Montréal	1
Illinois Institute of Technology	1
Konkuk University	1
McGill University	1
Queen's University	1
Salisbury University	1
University of Cape Town	1
University of Kent	1
University of Minnesota, Duluth	1
Zhejiang University	1

Schulich School of Music

Brandon University	1
Concordia University, Marianopolis College, McGill University	1
Ohio State University	1
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil	1
University of Otago	1
University of Ottawa	1
Webster University	1

Faculty of Medicine

McGill University (or MUHC)	8
CINVESTAV-Mexico	1
Dartmouth College	1
Jewish General Hospital	1
Lady Davis Inst. for Medical Res.	1
CHUM Research Centre and Université de Montréal	1
Montreal Children's Hospital	1
Mount Sinai School of Medicine	1
SUNY Buffalo	1
Université de Montréal	1
Université de Sherbrooke	1
University of Alberta	1
University of British Columbia	1
University of California, San Diego	1
University of Lausanne	1
University of New South Wales	1
University of Vermont	1
University of Washington	1
Western University	1

Faculty of Dentistry

Mansoura University	1
McGill University	1
Universidad de Los Andes, Chile	1

1. UNIVERSITY SETTINGS (Continued)

Faculty of Education		**Faculty of Arts**	
McGill University	5	McGill University	3
Concordia University	2	Mount Allison University	2
SUNY Cortland	1	Concordia University	2
SUNY Potsdam	1	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	2
Syracuse University	1	Drew University	1
The University of Texas at Austin	1	German Youth Institute	1
Université de Montréal	1	GESIS Leibniz-Inst. für Sozialwissenschaften	1
University of Calgary	1	Gunma Prefectural Women's University	1
York University	1	Bishop's University	1
		Clark University	1
Faculty of Science		Saint Mary's University	1
McGill University	8	State Islamic University, Indonesia	1
University of Southampton	2	The Open University	1
University of Toronto	2	University of Calgary	1
ETH Zurich	1	University of Florida	1
Indian Institute of Technology Patna	1	University of International Business and Economics	1
Isfahan University of Medical Science, Iran	1	Dalhousie University	1
Chengdu University	1	University of Oklahoma	1
McMaster University	1	University of Ottawa	1
Michigan State University	1	University of the Philippines	1
Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre	1	University of Toronto	1
Saint Mary's University	1	University of Western Ontario	1
Saskatchewan Cancer Agency	1	Washington and Lee University	1
Stanford University	1	Wayne State University	1
Technological Research Centre of Thessaly	1	Wilfrid Laurier University	1
Université de Montréal	1		
University of Alabama	1	**Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Science**	
University of British Columbia	1	Botswana College of Agriculture	1
University of Chicago	1	Lebanese American University	1
University of Copenhagen	1	Arid Agricultural University Rawalpindi	1
Concordia University	1		
École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne	1		
Yale University	1		

2. GOVERNMENT/ EDUCATION (non-university)

Faculty of Engineering

National Research Council Canada (NRC-CNRC)	2
Natural Resources Canada	1
Hydro Québec's Research Institute (IREQ)	1
Private CEGEP in Montreal	1
SNC-Lavalin	1

Faculty of Law

The World Bank	1

Faculty of Dentistry

Cancer Care Ontario	1

Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Science

Government of Alberta	1
Institut national de santé publique du Québec	1
NRC-CNRC	1

Faculty of Education

British Columbia Government	1
Centre for addiction and mental health	1
CRD Foster	1
IWK Health Centre	1
Kativik School Board	1
Montreal Children's Hospital	1
Pembroke Public Schools	1

Faculty of Arts

Algonquin College	1
GIZ (German International Cooperation)	1
John Abbott College	1
Turbo Consulting	1
Vanier College	1

Faculty of Medicine

Government of Canada	2
Health Canada	2
Government of Saskatchewan	1
Creativ-Ceutical	1
Institut National d'Excellence Santé et Services Sociaux	1
John Abbott College	1
Mitacs	1
NRC-CNRC	1
Public Health Ontario	1
Shadd Health and Business Centre	1

Faculty of Science

College Sainte-Anne	1
Environment Canada	1
FPInnovations	1
Government of Canada	1
Health Canada	1
Institut Supérieur d'Électronique et du Numérique	1
International Court of Justice	1
London Health Sciences Centre	1
Museum für Naturkunde, Leibniz	1
National Research Council Canada (NRC-CNRC)	1
Public Safety Canada	1
Service Correctionnel Canada	1
The Wellcome Trust	1

3. PRIVATE SECTOR

Faculty of Engineering	
ABB Corporate research	1
AkerSolutions	1
Booz & Company	1
Canon	1
Elekta	1
Exponent	1
Honeywell Aerospace	1
Intel Corporation	1
Jabez Technologies	1
Novelis Inc.	1
Octasic Inc.	1
Pratt & Whitney Canada	1
Rolls-Royce Canada	1
Smit Ovens	1
Telecon Design	1
Van-Rob KIRCHHOFF Automotive	1

Faculty of Arts	
In the Chat Communications	1
United Farmers of Alberta, Political Party	

Faculty of Religious Studies	
The Salvation Army Ethics Centre	1

Schulich School of Music	
Audiokinetic Inc.	1
St. John Lutheran Church	1
Whatcom Symphony Orchestra	1

Faculty of Medicine	
Astellas	1
Celerion	1
European Research & Project Office GmbH	1
Gamma-Dynacare	1
Masimo Corporation	1
Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada	1
PeriGen inc.	1
Qualcomm Canada	1

Faculty of Science	
Agilent Technologies	1
Bayer	1
CHANGE Cognitive Behavioural Psychology Clinic	1
D-Wave Systems	1
Facebook	1
Gilead Sciences	1
Intel Corporation	1
Mitel Networks	1
Oepfelbaum IT Management AG	1
PHEMI Health Systems Inc.	1
Rogers Communications Inc.	1
Safe Engineering Services and Technologies	1
Scientific Certification Systems	1

Desautels Faculty of Management	
Banque Nationale	1

Appendix C: Postdoctoral Organizations by Faculty (Q29)

Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Science

McGill University	1
Rutgers University	1
Université de Montréal	1
Université du Québec à Montréal	1

Faculty of Engineering

McGill University	2
A US National Laboratory	1
Technishe Universität Berlin	1
Tufts University	1
University of Toronto	1

Faculty of Law

McGill University	1
Université de Montréal	1
Université Laval	1

Faculty of Medicine

McGill University	4
Université de Montréal	2
McGill University/ Lady Davis Research Institute	1
Montreal General Hospital	1
McGill University Health Centre	1
Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School	1
Centre de recherche du CHUL (Centre hospitalier de l'Université Laval)	1
Harvard Medical School/Children's Hospital Boston	1
Isis Pharmaceuticals	1
La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology	1
National Institute on Aging/National Institutes of Health, Baltimore, MD, US	1
Saint-Petersburg State University	1
University of Alberta	1
University of Hawaii	1

Faculty of Arts

Max Planck Institute	1
UCSF - UC Berkeley	1
Université de Montréal	1

Faculty of Science

A.U.G. Signals Ltd.	1
INRIA	1
McGill University	1
McMaster University	1
Michigan State University	1
Trent University	1
Universität Zürich	1
Université Paris Descartes	1
University of Alberta	1
University of Glasgow	1
University of Pennsylvania	1
Wayne State University	1
York University	1

Schulich School of Music

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	1

Faculty of Dentistry

University of Toronto	1

Appendix D: General Comments by Faculty (Q40)

Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

1. Although I got a post-doc right out of my PhD, without support from CaPS, I would like their support NOW, as a look for a job after my post-doc.
2. For two years after my graduation I tried to find a job related to research, here in the Montreal area, but I was not successful! (I was successful in Alberta but could not go.) I applied for many jobs here, but I never received a phone call. The only thing that helped me make some money during this time, were my knowledge and experience with experimental design and statistical analysis. I started a company with my husband last year in April. Four months ago I had an interview and I got a contract the same day. Now I develop solutions for statistical forecasting (demand planning) in SAP-APO-DP for a manufacturing company. I know I am a good researcher but I graduated at a very bad time. In fact, any time after 2008 was and still is a very bad time for a fresh researcher (issued from the immigration?). My colleagues and friends are doing post doc after post doc, forever! I would rather work for the industry even if the job is not related to research. My PhD was very useful for myself; I am a better person! However, professionally ... it got me in debt and did not help me get "the job". Nonetheless, the people who hired me are proud they have a doctor doing their stats :).
3. Hopefully this will help PhD graduates find a job sooner.
4. I believe that internships in the industries during PhD will help in ensuring jobs in industry. Everybody knows that Canadian PhD are under paid and they aspire to go to USA in order to get better job value and future prospects. I believe that making 1 or 2 internships necessary before comprehensive exam and final defense of PhD will help in making of a fruitful career. Otherwise PhD`s if not interested in academia, have no other option. They have to leave their stream and start working in other fields.
5. I'm doing a postdoc, but it's unrelated to my PhD work.
6. My personal experience: 1) McGill is employing multiple tools to bridge graduate students to business companies, research institutes etc. The objective is to favour McGill graduates finding a professional job. But, most graduates students are SUPER disconnected with the outside world (job market). Either they are too lab-enclosed or too-research oriented. In short, they live in an isolated world. Very often, these students graduate and end up jobless. Students need to do networking in the course of the MSc or PhD program, and NOT when their program is over.   2) Sadly, McGill departments and professors just do not care about the future of their students. All that matters is 'Publications' and 'Results'.
7. Need continuous update on what is happening at McGill and available scholarships in Canada to bring more students from overseas to McGill.
8. This survey is not what I expected. It seems a disguised way of drawing people into volunteering for McGill.

Faculty of Law

1. Les doctorants doivent être mieux informés des défis pour accéder aux postes de professeurs. Le doctorat est une formidable aventure intellectuelle mais dont les issues professionnelles sont difficiles et auxquelles il faut être bien préparé.

Faculty of Medicine

1. Great initiative! Mitacs works with universities across Canada - including McGill - to deliver industry-facing research internships for graduate students and postdocs, which includes identifying ways to collect data on student outcomes. Do you plan to make any of these results public? Thanks.
2. I am currently a postdoc at Stanford University and would be happy to help current students connect with potential employers/mentors here in the bay area.
3. I did my PhD in Neurosciences at the Douglas Mental Health Institute in Verdun and I feel I underuse many activities downtown to improve CV and other skills. They need more advertising.
4. I think it is not the actual degree we avail but the critical thinking and confidence, a strong mentor-mentee relationship, as well as other skills acquired during the graduate school phase of life in addition to one's own proactiveness, eagerness, sincerity, and resilience as well as staying true to one's principles. McGill provided a platform and then it's up to us individuals to make our niche in the world. That would sum up how I feel about my experience thus far.
5. I think my training has served me well thus far, providing me with the necessary techniques and competitive edge, however I am still looking for a faculty position.
6. I would be interested if there would be a network service where the candidates can have an information of the potential positions in Canadian colleges or other research institutions.
7. It is amazing that you care about PhD students and post-docs and the increasing number of us looking outside academia for finding a job. I really appreciate that.
8. It would be helpful if PhD supervisors helped guide the student's career path, from post-doc to professorship. They know their student best, and could help in finding a good fit.
9. Les étudiants aux études graduées en sciences de la vie devraient être informés de la réalité d'emploi dans ce domaine. À moins de faire un post-doc éternel... je ne connais pas beaucoup de diplômés qui ont un emploi intéressant... il serait peut-être temps de revoir la formation ou du moins d'informer les étudiants de ce qui les attend car les emplois reliés au domaine d'études sont très très rares... au Canada du moins.
10. Like many in health sciences research, I ended up pursuing a medical degree and residency, but fully plan on including academic research in my eventual clinical practice.
11. Some services were useful, but not "very useful". Survey should have more options in the likert scale
12. Suite à l'obtention de mon diplôme, j'ai fait un premier stage postdoctoral dans une grande entreprise pharmaceutique. Afin de faire ce dernier et de le poursuivre, j'ai due appliquer à des bourses d'excellence que j'ai obtenues. En ce sens, mon expérience à l'université McGill m'a été très utile. Toutefois, malgré ces succès, j'ai beaucoup de difficultés à me trouver un travail stable. Les entreprises engagent des stagiaires ayant des bourses car ces mesures leurs permettent de faire des économies. Dans le secteur des biotechnologies et des entreprises pharmaceutiques, la mode est aux compressions budgétaires et aux coupures de postes. D'ailleurs, plusieurs grandes entreprises de la région ont fermé leurs portes ou ont supprimé un grand nombre de postes. D'un autre côté, les universités forment un extrêmement grand nombre d'étudiants, grandement supérieur aux besoins du marché, ce qui le sature. Dans ce contexte, un grand nombre de gradués (même parmi ceux ayant

complété un niveau doctoral et qui comptent un grand nombre d'année d'études) doivent changer de domaine à nouveau et retourner aux études. D'un autre côté, le type de formation offert dans les universités, qui est très axé sur la science fondamentale, diffère grandement des besoins des entreprises. Je crois que les universités doivent adapter leurs programmes d'études d'avantage aux besoins du marché.

13. The items in the survey were very limited and in my opinion they do not address the real problem exist in academia.

14. There are globally too many PhD students graduating and not enough research jobs. It is not a productive use of research dollars and human capital to train graduate students only to lose them after 5 years, and at the very moment they become finally productive as researchers in their fields. Governments should force McGill and other universities to reduce the number of graduate students it trains and instead hire more permanent full-time professional researchers and scientific staff that stay for the long run.

15. With a PhD in sciences I found that at the moment jobs are very scarce and even though I have graduated from McGill I'm having such a hard time to even get an assistant position from any McGill professors.

Faculty of Engineering

1. "Knowledge mobilization and knowledge translation" - not even sure what that is.
2. A McGill PhD is North America's best bang for the educational buck.
3. Based on my experience, it is important for McGill graduate students to acquire a good knowledge of French (in addition to English) should they plan to work in Quebec, or in Canada in general.
4. Honestly, I'm not really sure what this survey is for. I have no idea how you're going to extract useful information from these extremely general questions so that university resources, program designs, workshops, etc. can respond more effectively to employment and further research goals. The first question about our current situation is misleading because you should also assess how much time it took graduates to find said job (or for how long they've been searching). Also, not asking for more details to those with a postdoctoral fellowship is a bit insulting. These positions are real jobs too and they're hard to get. The reality is that the job market (academia and industry) is still awful, competition is ridiculous and my PhD program certainly didn't prepare me to develop the skills that industry or academia is truly looking for. The program was completely disconnected from reality (for the record, I was in mechanical engineering). My PhD co-supervisors were great, but they've been in their position for 10+ years, so they don't know what it's like to look for a job nowadays. I really think that recent PhD graduates who successfully found employment (in industry and academia) should give workshops/presentations to all new PhD students, during their first year, to clearly explain what they should do in order to increase their employment prospects upon graduation. I sure wish someone would've told me what I was in for back then (of course, I realize it's partly my fault for not inquiring about any of that on my own...). I'd be interested to do mentoring for and give presentations to new PhD students at McGill, but I'm doing a postdoc in Europe now, so that probably wouldn't work out, unfortunately. Despite my comments, I'm glad to see McGill University is trying to improve their PhD programs. I'm sure not all Departments are as disconnected as mine was.
5. I am very glad to participate at the survey.
6. I commented that I feel somewhat successful, but not really very successful because after completing my PhD I moved back to Toronto and tried to find a job in consulting or in the government. More than a year of looking, applying and interviewing and I was still unemployed. It was very frustrating and

demoralizing. I managed to get this postdoc position because I knew someone in this research group at UofT who was aware of my situation and that I needed work. However, it is a very temporary position (I am on my second 3-month contract, which will expire at the end of June. I do not know if I will be given another contract). Although I was not initially looking for academic positions, I have started to apply for them, which has changed my career outlook towards teaching and research in an academic setting. I feel very stressed and uncertain about my future and career prospects. Perhaps I was naive, but I thought that obtaining a PhD would make me more desirable, however I sometimes feel the opposite is true. I do not regret pursuing a PhD - I am fiercely proud of my accomplishments - and I had a wonderful experience at McGill, but I find myself in a very undesirable situation. I feel it is important for you to be aware that it is very difficult right now for some of us holding doctorate degrees.

7. I did not do graduate studies to improve my chances of getting a job, I did them to learn about things I was interested in and to acquire skills I wanted for the purpose of my own personal fulfillment. If you gear your programs mainly towards preparing students for a job, you will deny them of a lot of what I went to McGill for. A lot of the skills and knowledge required to do my job can be acquired via internships or already existing types of masters' projects. If all I wanted were those skills, then I would not have done a PhD at McGill. I recommend you ensure professors and students continue to have opportunities to explore broad topics in a variety of ways. If I can speak about my former department, Mechanical Engineering, I would say that the direction it tended to take in the last few years is not one that would have attracted me to McGill. The emphasis is now on obtaining contracts and publishing papers. Some of the best and most difficult research often results in few publications relative to the amount of work done (even experimental work typically results in fewer publications than numerical computation work in the same amount of time), so opportunities to work on certain difficult topics are fading. Besides, some of the most interesting topics don't have many sources of funding since they are too new to have any chance of being applicable in the near term. Focusing on obtaining many contracts and much contract money makes such topics more and more difficult to explore. The current approach of my former department is thus closing the door on opportunities such as the one I had when I left the industry to return to McGill to do a PhD. It is sad that future students will not have the opportunity I had. I hope you do not promote more of this approach and in fact reverse the trend, for the sake of your students now and in the future.

8. My experience at McGill prepared me well for the working world. However, one of the major advantages I have in my current position is that I had worked for 5 years prior to doing my Master and PhD. This may be something that should be encouraged.

9. The survey is very necessary. It seems that I went back to McGill. Thanks, McGill!

10. The survey questions do not ask why we chose non-academic careers. It also did not ask if there are any mismatches between the skills learned in a Ph.D. program vs the skills required to work in the industry.

Desautels Faculty of Management

1. I graduated with a PhD at the age of 50 years old. McGill was one of the very few universities to accept senior PhD candidates. Within 6 months I had 3 job offers while junior candidates were still struggling to find a job. The tenure was fairly easy to get.

2. Wonderful experience doing my doctoral work at McGill. Appreciated the flexibility, freedom, and long timeline. Stay in very good touch with my supervisor and a number of faculty/student colleagues from my time at McGill. Could not be more delighted with the university position I now hold in South Africa. Everything I was looking for. Thank you.

Schulich School of Music

1. I was recently awarded a Post-doc at a foundation I had been applying to for 2-3 years. Very happy that things are moving forward now. I had my doubts about a job in academic life and was ready to expand a business I own.

2. Re: the interagency guidelines. It's really not clear what (if anything) most of these mean. So I left them blank. (Yes, I could wade through SSHRC/NSERC/CIHR bureaucracy and try to sort it out, but I have more important work to do). Re: the services at McGill. I didn't answer this because I didn't make use of them as a graduate student. Perhaps I ought to have, but at that time, I was busy being a graduate student. I wonder what career services might be available to alumni? Some further thoughts on job satisfaction: I've had an extraordinary run of postdocs and other grants, which have taken me to the US (Columbia and Harvard), Belgium (KU Leuven), and Germany (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg and the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg). I got an excellent graduate education at McGill, and my postdoctoral education has been, if anything, equally formative. For these intellectual and cultural experience, I'm profoundly grateful. On the other hand, I have limited job security, make about 50% of what my colleagues in tenure-track positions are making, and have moved across the continent or around the world at my own expense three times in the last four years. This isn't really financially or psychologically sustainable. Of course, it could be a lot worse: I could be scraping by adjuncting, or be completely unemployed. (I have some idea what that's like: I spent 3 months unemployed after finishing my Ph.D., and then another 6 in odd-job teaching gigs. And I see others of my colleagues, many of whom seem no less capable than those who have jobs, stuck in the adjunct trap.) In part, we simply had the misfortune of graduating into the teeth of the 2008 recession. But demographics, government funding patterns, and university labour practices often seem to be against us too. I don't know what the solution is. But it seems that there really ought to be a better way for a society to exploit the abilities of its would-be intelligentsia.

3. You should allow us to choose more than one option. I teach full time, but my work is made up of part time contracts at 3 institutions, as well as income as a self-employed worker.

Faculty of Dentistry

No comments

Faculty of Science

1. Apart from a few postdoc positions, there are virtually no opportunities for PhD graduates in Montreal, at least in my field (Computer Science). There are many non-research positions in the industry, and I have applied to so many of them (hundreds...), but I got rejected on so many occasions. The often-cited reasons are: "you're over-qualified". "What relationship is there between your studies and the job? You have a PhD, and we do simple repetitive tasks". "Mismatch between job and candidate qualifications". On average it takes around 5 to 6 years to complete a PhD. What is disappointing for a PhD graduate in Montreal, is that after all the effort, and time spent to complete the PhD, one ends up (in terms of employability) in a worse position than someone who just graduated with a Bachelor degree or a college DEC! The situation (PhD employability) seems to be a lot better in other North-American cities, and I'm sure it is possible to improve things in Montreal as well. If the McGill leadership can help in that regard, by working with government and private sector, it would be much appreciated.
2. Au cours de mon doctorat à McGill, grâce notamment à mon superviseur, j'ai acquis des connaissances indispensables à tout chercheur quel que soit le domaine. Ses conseils en matière de rédaction d'articles et sa rigueur sont des compétences qu'il m'a transmises avec patience et que j'applique aujourd'hui encore au quotidien, bien que j'aie changé de domaine.
3. I already had completed a 21 year career in aerospace engineering before returning to McGill and getting the Diploma in Environment and the Ph.D. in Human Geography. The research and lecturing I do now is for my own satisfaction.
4. I feel that there is a lot more that McGill's departments could do to prepare PhD students for non-academic jobs. My graduate training was completely geared towards gaining employment in academia. After my post-doc, I was fortunate to land a great non-academic job, but it was really tough to know what was out there and what working outside academia would actually be like. Although my academic training helps me in my current job, there were plenty of skills that I had to learn on the fly that could have been covered or touched upon in a PhD program.
5. I have been unemployed since leaving McGill over 1.5 years ago and have met so many other graduates (from other institutions) in my situation. I have only recently obtained a postdoctoral position in another country that will begin in a few months. Graduate students certainly need to be prepared for alternatives to careers in academia.
6. I'm proud of McGill.
7. In the list of skills, I am not sure what the terms "leadership" and "knowledge mobilization" mean and am not convinced that there is a definition sufficiently widely recognized for any results involving those questions to be useful.
8. McGill University is not only a global research and academic leading institute but also a place of innovation excellence where inspiring ideas stand the test of time.
9. Mentorship by supervisors appears to me to be the biggest issue. Some of the PIs here are totally incompetent at leading a research group, and there does not appear to be any real oversight.
10. My four years as a PhD student were very valuable as they gave me time to learn deep stuff about math and physics, without constant thoughts about securing my monetary subsistence. I also learned to write well, which is the skill I currently use most.

11. The economic recession in Canada has caused many people with advanced degrees (Master's, Ph.D.) to either be unemployed for lengthy periods or accept jobs well below their qualifications. It took me 2 years to find my current job, which I am overqualified for. I had no choice since I did not have any income for those 2 years (graduate stipend was cut off prematurely by my supervisor) and I was getting tired of eating $0.99 Kraft dinners each night.   I blame Stephen Harper and Pauline Marois for this, they are forcing highly educated people out of Canada. Have it their way then! I'm moving to a country where a Ph.D. is actually recognized as a positive asset.
12. Without knowledge of the tri-council principles it was very hard to answer the question. I am not entirely sure what "knowledge transition" means. Does publishing a paper count? Likewise "societal responsibility." Does my job require that? Of course! What job doesn't require one to be socially responsible? Am I socially responsible? I have no idea what criteria constitute one as being socially responsible.

Faculty of Arts

1. I can tell the survey instrument is designed to tap into graduates in academic and non-academic post simultaneously. This is a bit odd; I didn't feel that the survey really measured my experience well, in part because I am on the conventional tenure-track after doing one year as a post doc. Given the importance of this question, not only for my own personal outcomes but for students I may supervise in the future, more detailed, separate surveys for academic and non-academic post-graduation outcomes might be useful. It's also worth noting that I had not been offered the tenure-track post I hold now, I would have had no options in the past hiring year. The job prospects in my field declined dramatically in the months after I was hired. I feel very fortunate to have been offered my post when I was.
2. I should have attended workshop arranged by teaching and Learning services at McGill
3. I want to note that while I didn't get any use out of Career and Planning Services' offerings, the career prep services in my department at McGill (English Literature) were quite comprehensive - I received help with my resume, got guidance on how to navigate the academic job market, and even participated in a mock interview. My experiences since graduating have shown me that having a Ph.D. is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, I have never had trouble finding work, since employers think they need Ph.Ds. On the other hand, I have felt overqualified for every job I have held since I graduated, since most jobs do not require Ph.D.-level skills (despite what they may think). In this respect, I do not feel "successful," as one question asked. I learned many useful skills during my doctorate, but use very few of them.
4. McGill needs to do more to prepare graduate students for non-academic work. The reality of today's job market is that there are few academic or desirable academic positions available. That does not mean that there aren't jobs available to MAs or PhDs. However, graduate students are not trained in professionalization for non-academic streams, nor are they advised on what kinds of positions might be available outside the academy. I think this is unfortunate and reflects poorly on the school.
5. McGill rocks.
6. McGill's global reputation is what allowed me to walk into a tenure track position upon graduation. Everything should be done to ensure McGill stays on the forefront of scholarship, research and teaching -- despite the cuts and savage destruction of everything that McGill and Canada stands for by this current Harper government.
7. Thank you for conducting this survey.

8. The "Knowledge and Research Skills" rubric is hard to answer. I believe that I have the named skills to varying degrees but want to continue to improve. Therefore, the once I list under "want" are those that I feel I want to work on most right now, not that I don't have them at all.

9. The English department definitely needs to acknowledge that few of its PhD graduates will become TT professors and to suggest alternate possibilities in its proseminar courses. Also, given that my first full-time job after graduation was an LTA with a 3/3 course load, there needs to be much more pedagogical training in the PhD program -- i.e. seminars on how to build a syllabus, how to create a teaching portfolio, how to prepare for full-time teaching (without burning out), etc. The department prepares PhD students for TT jobs at major research institutions that simply don't exist anymore.

10. The questions in this survey, and the terminology used, is very opaque and make it difficult to understand what is really being asked. Some of the follow up questions make assumptions (e.g. I checked that I was doing a post-doc, and later questions assumed I was at a company). I'm not sure you can get any kind of meaningful information from this vague survey.

11. Too much emphasis on tri-council funding

12. Transitioning from the PhD world to the workplace was difficult. I spent 2 years as an underemployed sessional. I soon realized that finding sustainable work in the academe was impossible (within and outside Canada). It was only through studying business at Sheridan College and through extensive networking that I was able to find employment. If institutions are accepting so many doctoral students knowing that that careers will not lead to academia, there needs to be some sort of alternative programming in place to prepare future grads for other options.

13. When I went on the job market in 2009, I had had a CGS SSHRC and was seen as an excellent candidate for jobs. However, it took me four years of temporary work to finally find a permanent position. This was not unusual and I don't think PhDs are aware of the sacrifices they might need to make post-PhD in this regard. I had to move to 3 different cities, 3 different countries to secure the jobs I did get. I am now in a very successful and rewarding position, but it did require a lot of personal sacrifice.

Faculty of Education

1. I don't remember taking this in 2010. I'd be glad to be more connected in relevant ways. I wish a lot more of these skills had been taught in grad school.

2. I find myself overqualified for most employment opportunities, yet simultaneously underqualified (from a publications perspective) to use my PhD teaching in Universities - most frustrating.

3. I learned most of the skills required at my current job from McGill. I am fully satisfied with the PhD program at McGill. Thank you.

4. Regarding rank, Asst. Prof. for the moment. Tenure & promotion case currently under review.