KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
Career Planning and Development

Career Planning and Development Technology & Engineering Fair

September 29th – October 1st, 2026

Attendance Overview

3,143

Total Check-ins

Student scans across all three days

2,342

Unique Attendees

Each student counted once

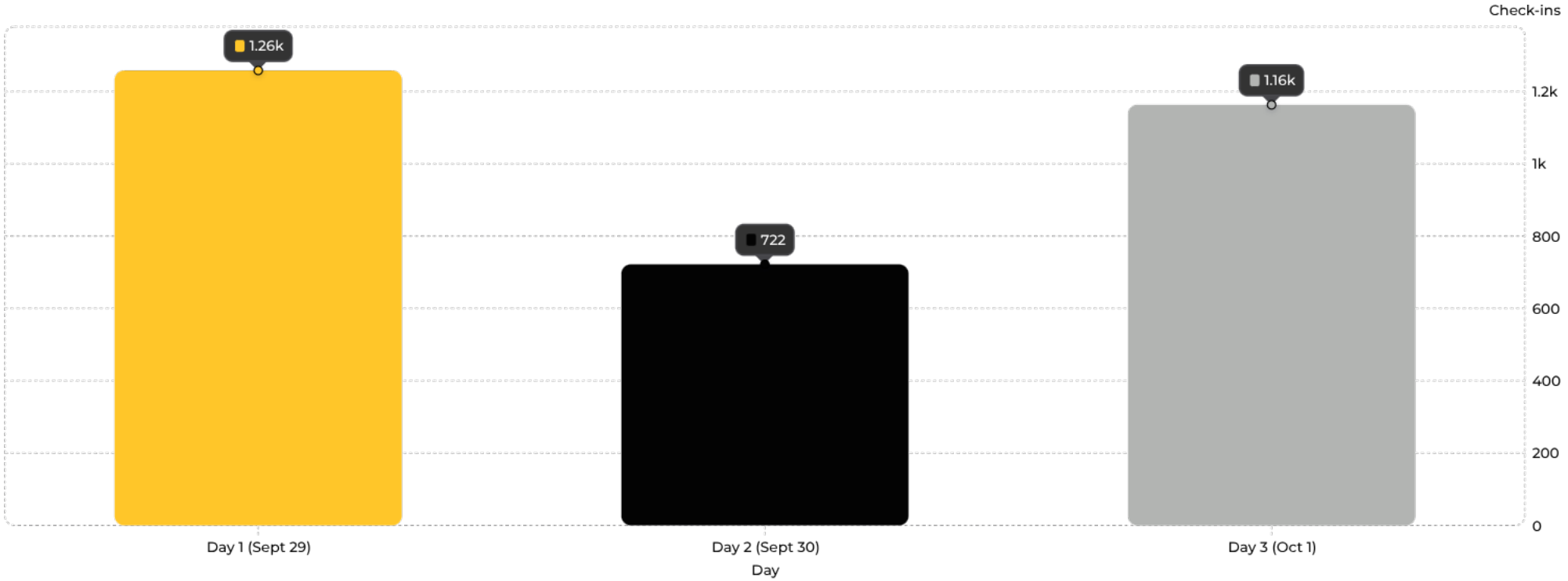
28.1%

Multi-Day Attendees

659 students checked in on more than one day

Check-ins exceed unique attendees because 659 students (28.1%) attended on multiple days. Check-ins rose 2.6% from 3,063 in Fall 2025 to 3,143 in Fall 2026, on the same three-day format.

Student Attendance by Day



Compared with Fall 2025 (1,320 / 680 / 1,063), Day 1 share fell from 43.1% to 40.0%, while Day 2 and Day 3 each grew, so attendance was spread more evenly across the three days.

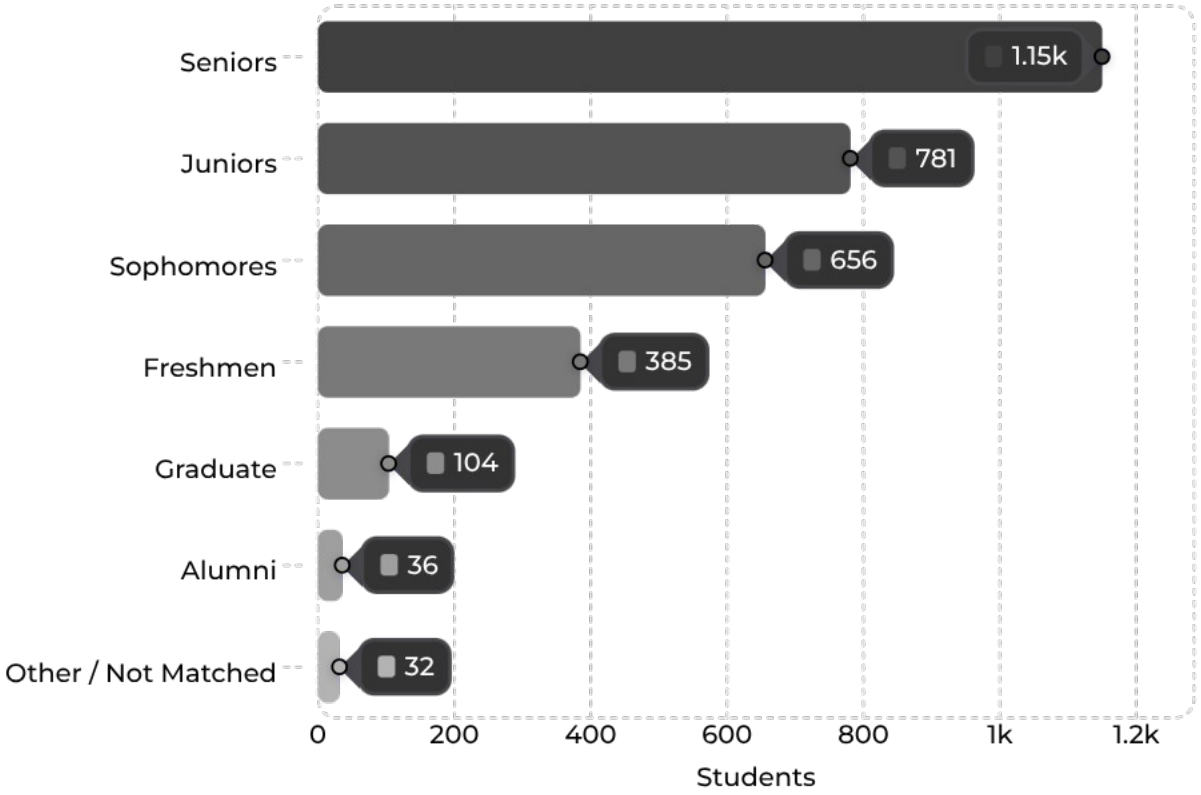
Day Themes & Leading Colleges

- **Day 1**: Computer Technology, Math, Data, Architecture, Construction & Engineering: Southern Polytechnic (53.9%) and Computing & Software Engineering (30.8%) led
- **Day 2:** Architecture, Construction & Structural Design: Southern Polytechnic (77.1%) and Architecture & Construction Management (14.3%) led
- **Day 3**: All Other Engineering Disciplines: Southern Polytechnic made up 91.2% of the day

Repeat Attendance

- 1,683 students (71.9%) attended one day
- 517 students (22.1%) attended two days
- 142 students (6.1%) attended all three days

Student Classification Breakdown



Upper-Division Dominance

Seniors and juniors together represented 61.4% of total attendees (1,930 of 3,143 students), reflecting strong near-term demand for jobs and internships.

Early Engagement is Strong

The 656 sophomores (20.9%) and 385 freshmen (12.2%) signal that students are beginning their career planning well before graduation.

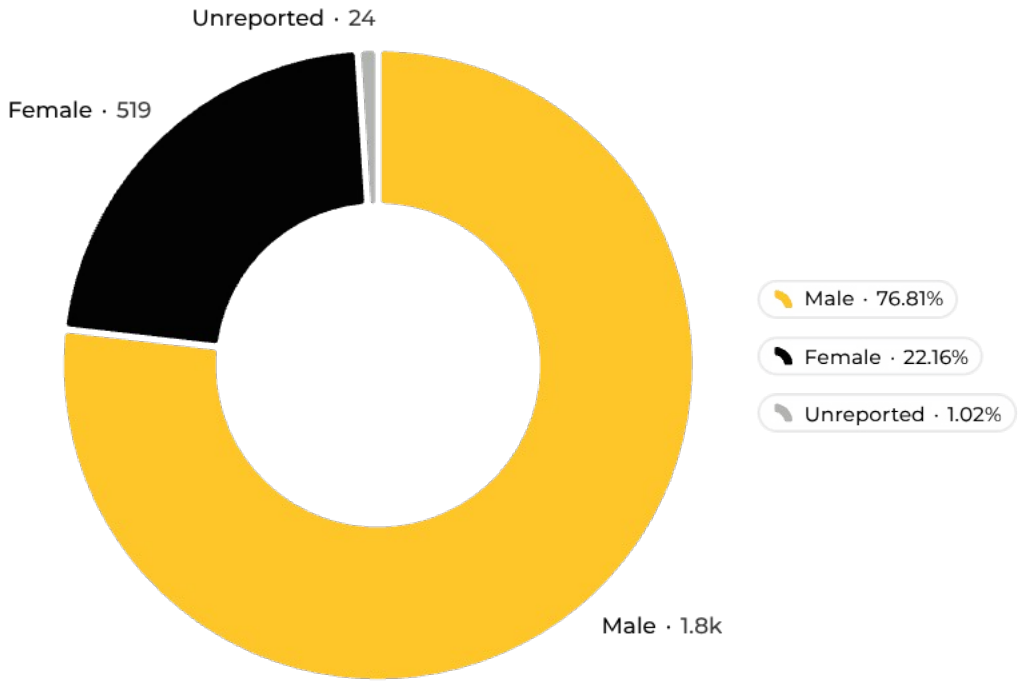
Juniors and seniors made up 55.4% of Fall 2025 attendees, so upper-division share is up about six points.

Shares are based on total check-ins in both years. Fall 2026 includes 31 check-ins (1.0%) with no KSU classification or college on record

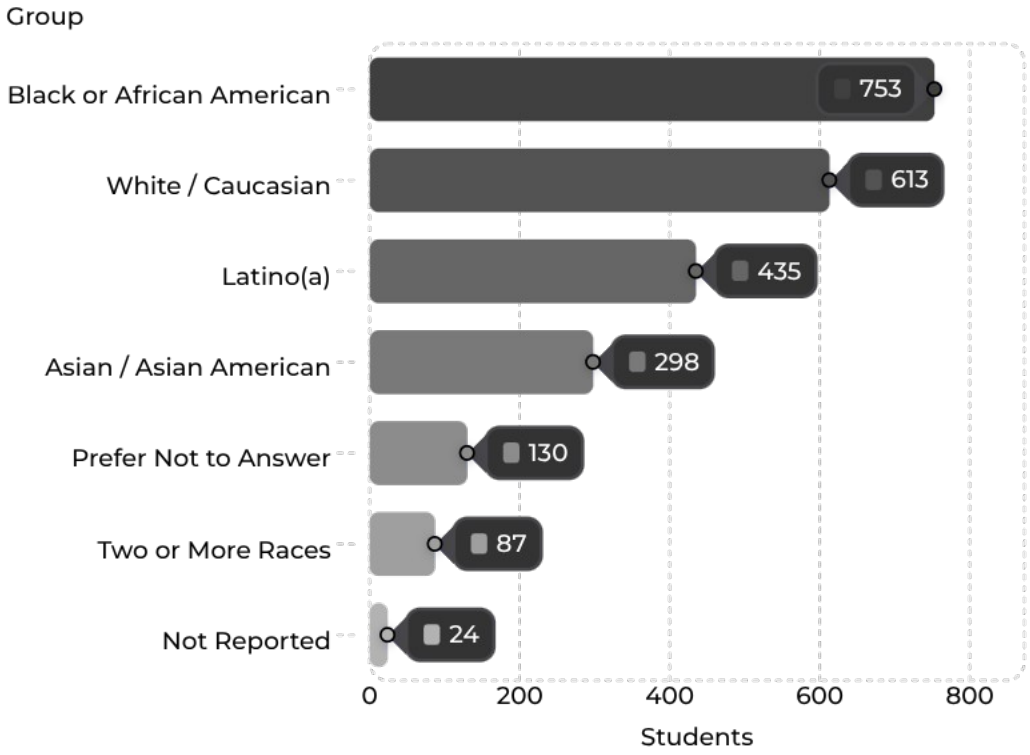
Demographic Distribution

Gender Representation

Based on 2,342 unique attendees

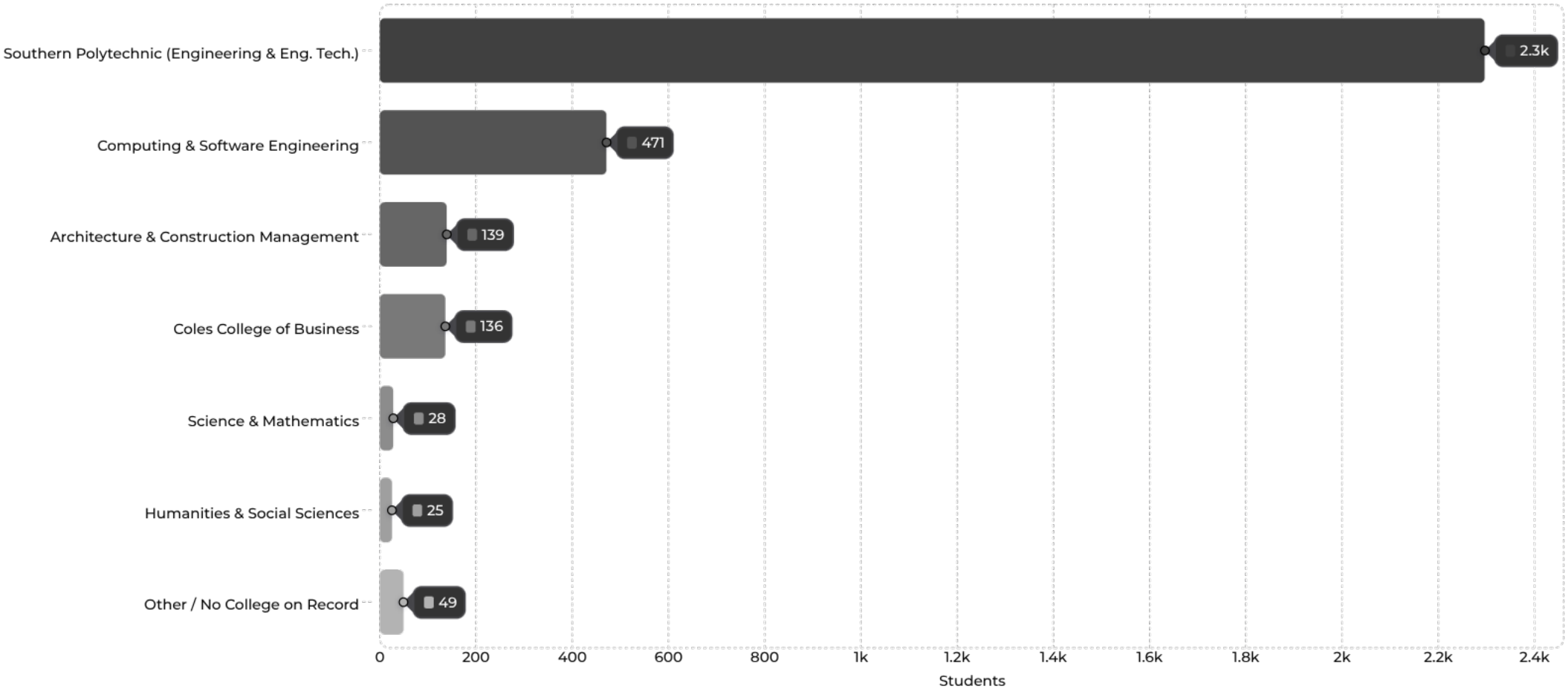


Ethnic Diversity



Shares are based on unique check-ins in both years. Fall 2026 includes 31 check-ins (1.0%) with no KSU classification or college on record

College Representation Across Campus



Southern Polytechnic accounted for 2,296 check-ins (73.0%), up from 1,991 (65.0%) in Fall 2025. Computing & Software Engineering accounted for 471 (15.0%), down from 647 (21.1%).

Key Attendance Insights

Three Days, Three Distinct Crowds

Day 1 drew the most check-ins (40.0%), with Computing & Software Engineering representing 30.8% of that day. 82.4% of all Computing check-ins came on Day 1. Day 2 saw the highest share from Architecture & Construction Management (14.3%), and 74.1% of that college's check-ins came on Day 2.

Strong Repeat Attendance

28.1% of attendees visited on more than one day, and 142 students attended all three days. This level of repeat engagement reflects genuine interest and investment in the fair experience — well beyond a single obligatory visit.

Engineering-Led, Upper-Division Heavy

Southern Polytechnic students accounted for 73.0% of check-ins. Seniors and juniors accounted for 61.4%.

Employer Feedback

Note:This section reflects employers who completed the post-event survey. We received 139 responses from 137 organizations, a response rate of 65.6% of the 209 unique employers who attended. Two organizations submitted responses for two different fair days. Because not every respondent answered every question, each figure uses the number of responses to that specific question as its denominator.

Employer Participation Overview

209

Employers Attended

218 employers attended a single day; 9 organizations attended two days

70

Avg. Students Met

Estimated using range midpoints; 75% of employers met 50+ students

98.6%

Would Return

136 of 138 respondents said yes; 2 responded "maybe"

90.6%

Returning Employers

126 of 139 were returning attendees

The most common student engagement range was 51–75 students per employer (42 responses).

Why Employers Choose KSU Career Fairs

Returning Employers *(126)* — *Multi-select options*

1. Relevant majors at KSU: 109 responses (86.5%)
2. Current recruitment needs: 86 (68.3%)
3. Reputation of KSU's Career Fairs: 68 (54.0%)
4. Diversity of KSU students: 48 (38.1%)
5. Networking opportunity: 30 (23.8%)
6. Value relative to cost: 23 (18.3%)
7. Colleague recommendation: 17 (13.5%)

5 of 8 write-ins mentioned KSU alumni or interns already on their teams.

First-Time Employers *(13)* — *Multi-select options*

1. Relevant majors at KSU: 8 (61.5%)
2. Current recruitment needs: 8 (61.5%)
3. Diversity of KSU students: 5 (38.5%)
4. Reputation of KSU's Career Fairs: 4 (30.8%)
5. Networking opportunity: 3 (23.1%)
6. Colleague recommendation: 2 (15.4%)

Relevant majors and recruiting needs ranked #1 and #2 for both groups. Fair reputation ranked 3rd for returning employers (54.0%) but 4th for first-timers (30.8%).

Employer Satisfaction with Operations

Top Performers

KSU Staff Support (4.80) and Check-In Process (4.75) were the highest-rated areas, both reflecting the quality of on-the-ground execution.

Opportunity Area

Venue & Logistics was the lowest-rated category (4.36 out of 5), with 13 employers dissatisfied. This aligns directly with employer comments about space, parking, and temperature — detailed in the Improvement Opportunities section.



Event Organization

4.61 / 5 average rating



Pre-Event Communication

4.61 / 5 average rating



Venue and Logistics

4.36 / 5 average rating



Check-In Process

4.75 / 5 average rating

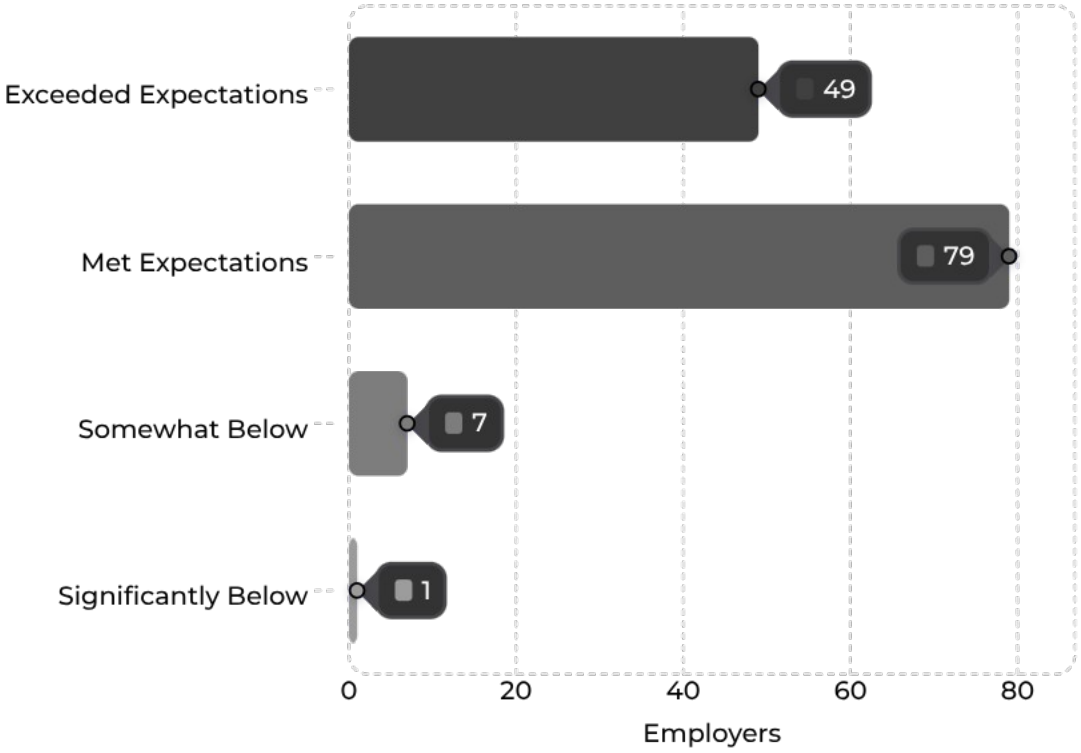


KSU Staff Support

4.80 / 5 average rating

Meeting Employer Recruiting Goals

Goal Alignment (136)



Strong Recruiting Outcomes

94.1% of employers (128 of 136) reported that the quality and quantity of students they met either met or exceeded their recruiting expectations, with 36.0% saying results actually exceeded what they anticipated.

Candidate Follow-Up Intent

91.2% of employers (125 of 137) identified specific candidates they plan to follow up with. The remaining 12 employers indicated they would review candidates after the event, meaning every responding employer left with meaningful recruiting leads.

100% of responding employers left the fair with follow-up plans, either specific candidates or post-event reviews.

Quality of Student Interactions

Strengths

Employers rated students very highly on professional appearance (4.53), resume quality (4.38), and communication skills (4.29), with at least 97.8% giving a positive rating on each dimension. KSU students present themselves well.

Clearest Opportunity: Employer Research

Industry knowledge was the lowest-rated dimension at 3.82 out of 5, 24 employers (17.4%) rated it Poor or Very Poor. Employer comments noted that students arrived knowing little about the company. A pre-fair workshop on employer research and sector-specific talking points is the most actionable next step.



91%

Professional Appearance

4.53 / 5 average rating



88%

Resume Quality

4.38 / 5 average rating



86%

Communication Skills

4.29 / 5 average rating



76%

Preparation & Industry Knowledge

3.82 / 5 average rating

Employer Voices

"This was the most students I have seen at a KSU career fair before."

"The students are passionate and genuinely interested in what we do. It was a pleasure meeting so many."

"This is a fair we attend every semester! We love being here. The students are eager and active."

"The support staff from the first moment upon arrival has been superb."

"Check in was very easy and the person was very welcoming. Everything was organized very well."

"We met a handful of really great candidates that will be a good fit."

"Students are very attentive, represent themselves well."

Employer Improvement Opportunities

Themes drawn from 79 employer suggestions. Some comments addressed more than one theme.

Parking, Shuttle & Load-In

23 comments

- Closer or on-site parking for employers
- Designated drop-off point for booth materials before parking offsite
- Storage solutions on shuttle routes
- Clearer parking instructions distributed before event day

Space, Layout & Temperature

28 comments

- Crowded floor and tight booth spacing
- Insufficient room for student queues
- Noise and warm gym conditions
- Requests for larger venue, wider aisles, line dividers, better ventilation

Food and Alignment

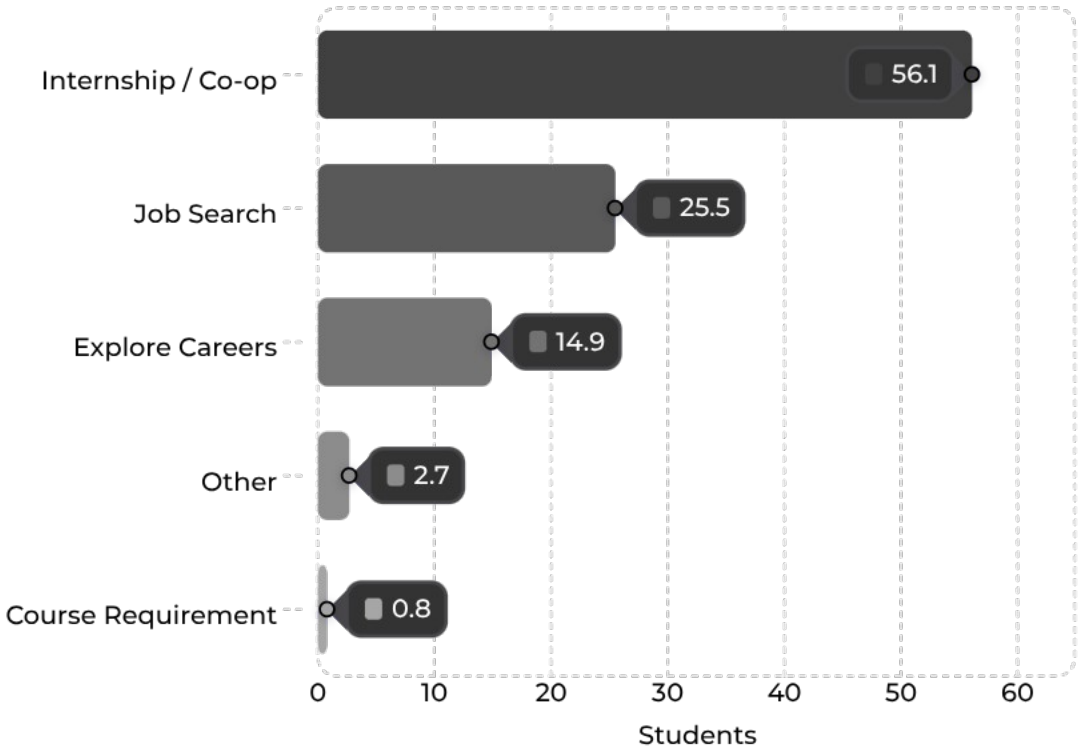
21 comments

- More snack and drink options; water refill stations
- Dietary options at lunch; protected break time
- Color-coded name tags showing majors (5 comments)
- Better alignment of employers and student majors by day (5 comments)

Student Feedback

Note: This section reflects students who completed the post-event survey. We received 533 responses, representing 22.8% of the 2,342 unique attendees. Not all respondents answered every question; percentages and totals are calculated from the number of responses to each individual question.

Primary Reasons for Attending



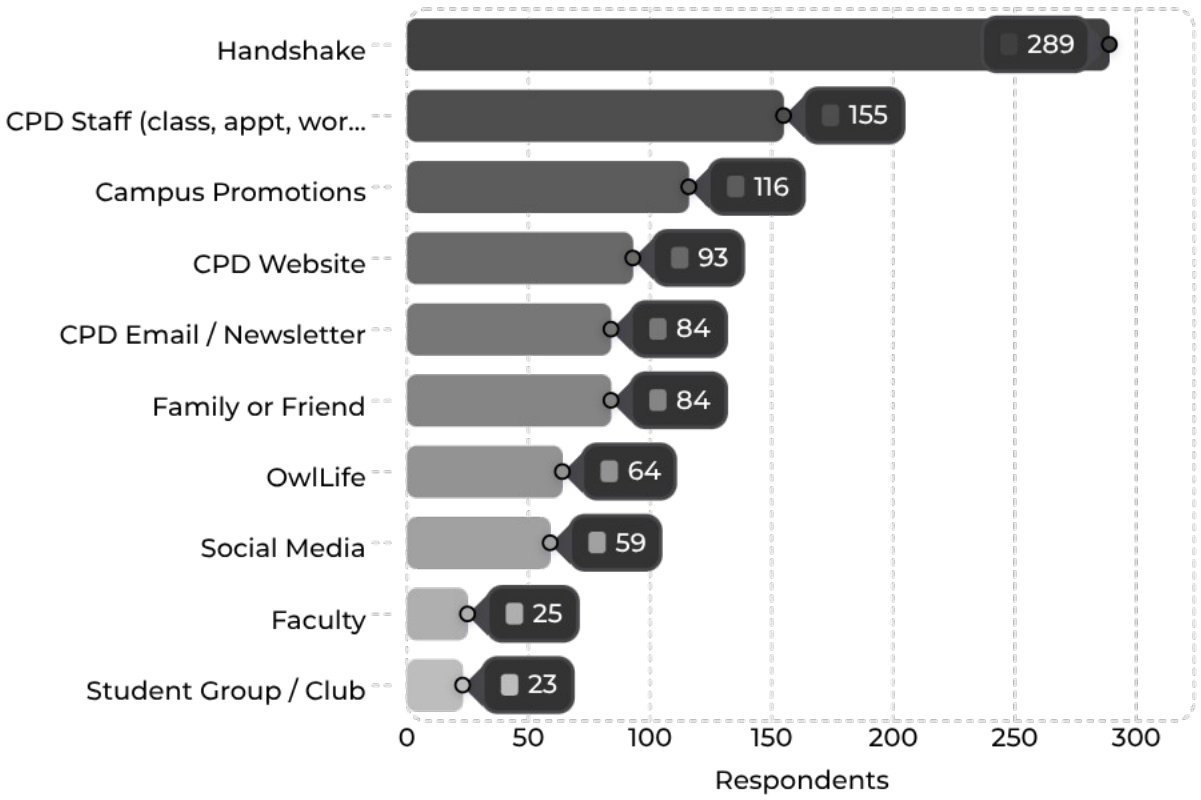
Placement-Driven Attendance

56.1% respondents (293) of attendees came specifically seeking an internship or co-op opportunity. Combined with those seeking full-time employment (25.5%), 81.6% of students arrived with a specific placement goal in mind.

Voluntary Engagement

14.9% came to explore career options, a good indicator of early-stage students. Notably, only 0.8% attended due to a course requirement, confirming that the overwhelming majority chose to attend on their own initiative.

How Students Heard About the Fair



Handshake Leads by a Wide Margin

Handshake was the top discovery channel at 55.0% (289 of 525 multi-select responses), far ahead of every other channel. Handshake is an essential communication tool for fair promotion.

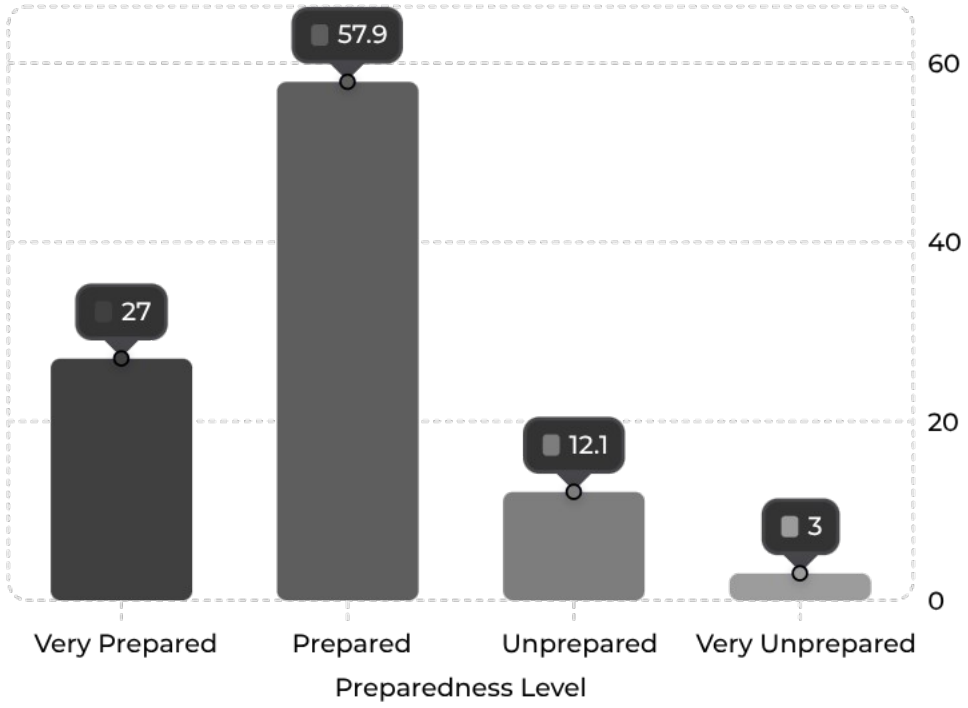
CPD Staff as a Channel

Direct CPD outreach, including class presentations, advising appointments, and workshops was second at 29.5% (155 responses), underscoring the value of in-person and embedded staff touchpoints.

Peer and Family Referral

Word-of-mouth (family or friend referral) tied with email at 16.0% (84 responses each), suggesting peer networks are an underutilized promotion channel worth activating more formally.

Student Preparedness Levels



Strong Overall Readiness

84.9% of respondents (443 of 522) felt prepared or very prepared going into the fair, a good indicator that students are taking career readiness seriously.

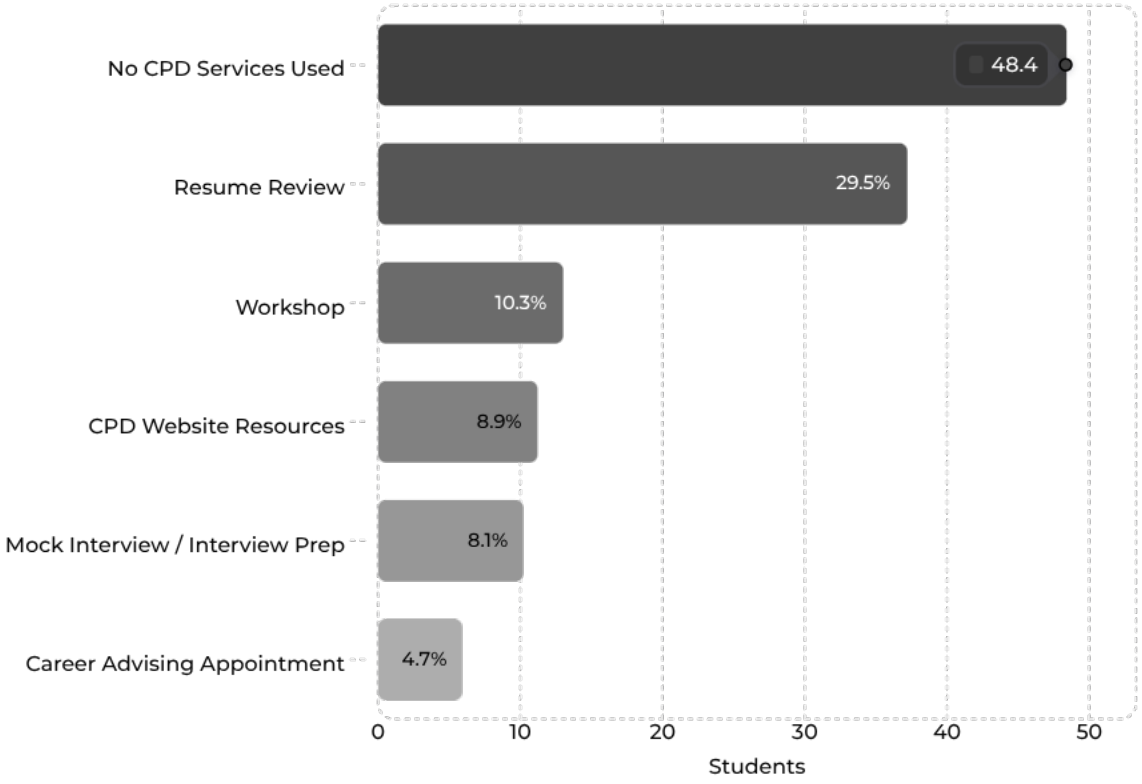
A Target Audience for Outreach

The 79 students who felt unprepared represent a clear target for pre-fair engagement, skill-building workshops, and earlier CPD touchpoints.

Service Usage Had No Meaningful Difference

Preparedness was nearly identical for students who used CPD services (84.7%) and those who did not (85.0%), suggesting that both expanding access and reaching non-users are worth testing.

Preparation Resources Used



Nearly Half Arrived Without CPD Support

48.4% of respondents (246 of 508) used no Career Planning & Development service before the fair, making non-users the single largest segment. This represents a significant opportunity to expand pre-fair touchpoints and lower barriers to service access.

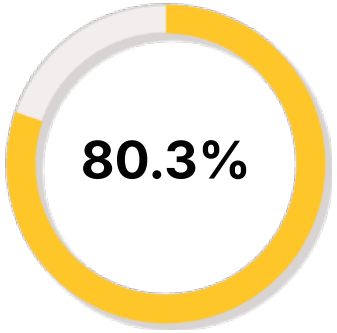
Resume Review Was the Most-Used Service

Resume review was the most commonly used resource at 37.2% (189 students). Workshops (13.0%), CPD website resources (11.2%), mock interviews (10.2%), and career advising appointments (5.9%) each served smaller but meaningful subgroups.

Since preparedness levels were nearly identical for users and non-users, it is important to consider whether outreach or convenience, not awareness, is the true barrier.

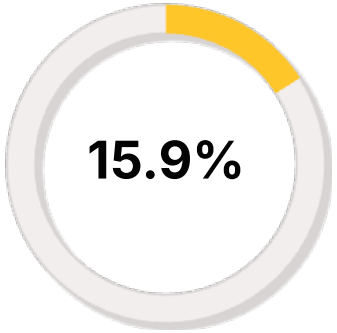
Data refelcts multi-select options

Student Connection Success



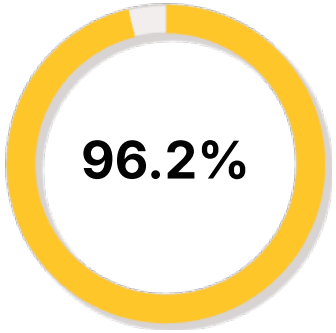
Made Connections

419 students identified specific employers or opportunities to follow up with



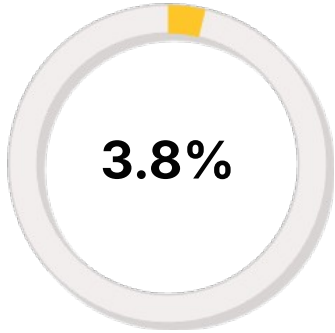
Plan to Review

83 students will review materials collected at the fair before reaching out



Total Potential Rate

Combined share of students who left with at least one lead to pursue

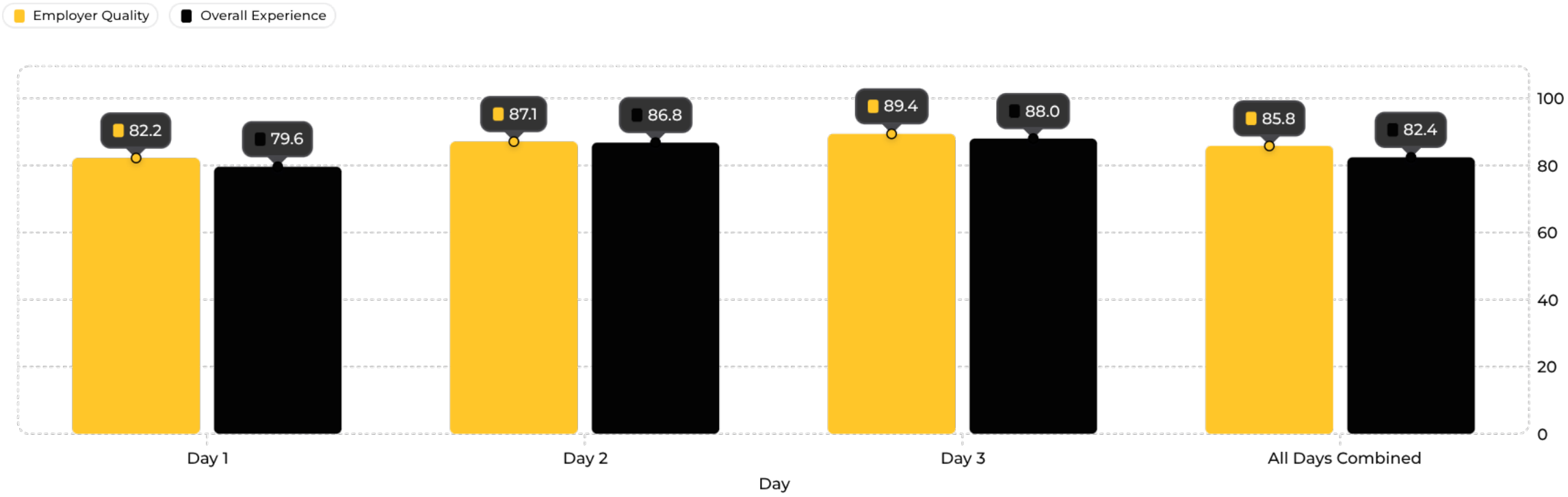


No Connections

20 students; targeted outreach may help identify barriers for this group

Four in five students (80.3%) connected with employers they intend to pursue. Adding those who plan to review their materials, the total potential connection rate reaches 96.2%, a compelling data point for employer partners and institutional partners.

Student Satisfaction Ratings



Strong Overall Scores

Employer Quality averaged 85.8% (93.2% satisfied), and Overall Experience averaged 84.2% (90.5% satisfied). Both are well above the 80% threshold across the full event.

Day 1 Gap: A Crowding Signal

Day 1 scored notably lower versus the other days. Day 1 had the highest check-ins and 23.3 student check-ins per employer. Day 2 with 8.7, and Day 3 with 14.4.

On-Site Interview Conversion

21.8%

On-Site Interview Rate

114 of 523 responding students secured an interview during the fair itself

27.8%

Best Day: Day 3

45 of 162 Day 3 respondents secured an on-site interview, the highest rate of any day

80.3%

Follow-Up Intent

The more meaningful near-term indicator — students identifying specific opportunities to pursue

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On-site interview rates by day: Day 1 - 18.3% (40 of 219), Day 2 - 20.4% (29 of 142), Day 3 - 27.8% (45 of 162). On-site interview conversion should be read as one of several success indicators. Securing a same-day interview depends on employer hiring timelines, open positions, and candidate fit. Many connections lead to interviews, applications, and longer-term relationships that are not captured in immediate statistics.

Student Voices

"All of the people representing the companies were very kind and welcoming."

"I felt very underprepared for the job fair, but talking to the companies made me feel much better about my position."

"I finally got an idea as to how to approach a switch in career path."

"I spoke with multiple different employers and talked about possible job opportunities in the future."

"Finding environmental engineers who do exactly what I studied gave me hope that I'll be able to apply my knowledge in the workforce."

"I got to talk to two companies I have been interested in. I also met great people while waiting.

"The employers were very helpful and insightful in their answers about the companies they work at and how I can make myself more impactful when talking to them."

Student Improvement Opportunities

Themes drawn from 139 student suggestions. Some comments addressed more than one theme.

Venue Size & Crowding

78 comments (43.6%), the clearest theme. Students asked for a larger venue, wider aisles, and less crowding. Several noted that noise made it difficult to hear employers. Suggestions included spreading attendance across more days and limiting entry at peak times.

Lines & Wait Times

29 comments (16.2%). Students reported long waits at popular booths and at check-in. Suggestions included formal line management systems, designated queue areas at every table, and faster registration, especially on Day 1.

Employer Mix & Listing Accuracy

32 comments (17.9%). Students requested more employers overall, more software and cybersecurity options on the technology day, clearer day names, and accurate employer lists in Handshake. Heat and air conditioning issues were also cited (9 comments).

Looking Ahead: What Both Audiences Told Us

Space is the Shared Pain Point

Venue size and crowding was the top student theme (78 comments, 43.6%) and a leading employer theme (28 comments). Venue & Logistics was also the lowest-rated employer operations item (4.36 out of 5) and correlates directly with Day 1's lower student satisfaction scores. Addressing venue capacity is the single highest-leverage improvement for the next iteration of this fair.

Employer Research is the Clearest Student-Prep Gap

Industry knowledge was the lowest-rated student quality by employers, with 17.4% of employers rating it Poor or Very Poor. Employers and students alike flagged this gap in open-ended comments. A targeted pre-fair workshop on employer research, sector-specific talking points, and company-specific preparation is the most actionable next step CPD can take.

Logistics for Employers Need Attention

Parking and load-in (23 comments) and food and breaks (21 comments) were the top operational requests from employers, distinct from student concerns. Clearer pre-event parking instructions, a dedicated load-in drop-off zone, and improved meal and hydration options for recruiters would meaningfully improve the employer experience and support return intent.