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Accounting and M.B.A. graduates affected least as college recruiting activity declines

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MISSOULA--

If the '60s was the decade of the engineer and scientist, will the '70s be the decade when the financial and management expert moves into the limelight?

This is one question which might be asked in the wake of final statistics for the 1969-70 college recruiting season compiled by the College Placement Council (CPC). The data were released today by Charles E. Hood, placement director at the University of Montana, one of the 141 participating institutions in the CPC's salary survey.

"The engineer and scientist is still in demand and, at the bachelor's level, continues to command the top dollar in beginning salaries," Hood said. "This part of the picture is not likely to change appreciably in the decade ahead, for projections indicate that engineering enrollments will not match employer needs."

In the current soft market, however, the greatest employer interest appears to be in the accounting and Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) areas, Hood added.

"Actually, this is a relative thing, for recruiting activity in 1969-70 declined across the board," Hood said. "But accounting majors, M.B.A.'s, and students in other nontechnical disciplines experienced smaller drops in the number of offers reported than candidates in technical categories."

The declining job market was evident throughout this year, but the Council's third and final salary survey report for 1969-70 reveals the situation worsened as the season progressed. Hood released the following information:

Hard hit was the offer volume at the bachelor's degree level, a volume which last season had gone up 11 per cent. This year, however, it went down 34 per cent. The decline at the doctoral level was even greater, with volume dropping 45 per cent, following on the heels of a 31 per cent loss last year.
Master's degree candidates fared somewhat better. Last season the demand volume fell 35 per cent. This year the drop was only 14 per cent, principally because M.B.A. activity during the last months of the season buoyed the average. The nine engineering and science disciplines at the master's level more closely reflected the bachelor's and doctoral picture, experiencing a 30 per cent decline in volume. This is in contrast to losses of 2.5 per cent for M.B.A.'s with a nontechnical undergraduate degree and 17 per cent for those with a technical background.

At the bachelor's level, volume in the 10 engineering and science curricula was down 40 per cent, while the nontechnical figure slipped only 14 per cent. The nontechnical volume was influenced considerably by the accounting discipline, but even accounting, which had experienced a meteoric rise in the last three years, fell off. It finished the year with a 7 per cent decrease in volume after being 9 per cent ahead of last year's pace as recently as March.

The Council, Hood said, emphasized that the percentage decrease in volume pertains to a decrease in recruiting activity and cannot be related directly to a decrease in the number of jobs available for college graduates. Compared with more competitive years, most employers found it necessary to make fewer offers in 1969-70, and students--aware of the softened economy--were reported to be accepting offers faster and earlier than in recent years.

Data for the College Placement Council study, limited to male students, cover actual offers made by business and industrial firms as submitted by 141 representative colleges and universities from coast to coast, including nine reporting offers to cooperative program students only.

The Council, headquartered in Bethlehem, N.J., is the nonprofit national service organization for the college placement and recruitment field, serving approximately 1,300 colleges and 2,100 employers.

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