

Long-Term Educational Outcomes:  
Survey of Ohio University Alumni  
Classes of 1998 to 2003

Office of Institutional Research

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## Survey of Alumni: Executive Summary

- The Survey of Alumni collects information from Ohio University bachelor's degree recipients through a mailed questionnaire about five years after they graduated. This report presents results from surveys of the classes of 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003 with a focus on 2002 and 2003 graduates.
- Upward mobility in occupation is apparent. Comparisons between first employment position and current position revealed movement toward management positions within five years.
- Most of the respondents reported being satisfied with the quality of instruction at Ohio University, their employment, and the progress they made in their career; these ratings remained consistent from 1998 to 2003.
- Most of the respondents said that their skills were utilized in their employment, that they had prospects for further advancement in their current employment, that they planned to remain in their career, that their education was utilized in their employment, that their employment fit their long-range goals, that they had status and prestige in their employment, and that they would remain with their current employer.
- Most respondents reported being employed in business or education. About 95 percent of the respondents reported being employed, either full- or part-time.
- The greatest reported problems in seeking employment were a tight job market in the graduate's field, finding a job with desirable characteristics, a generally tight job market, and not knowing what to do.
- Various competencies were rated for their necessity and for how well Ohio University helped develop them. The competencies most frequently indicated as being necessary were the abilities to communicate orally, acquire new skills and understanding on one's own, and evaluate and choose between alternative courses of action.
- The competencies most frequently indicated as being developed at Ohio University were the abilities to think analytically, acquire new skills and understanding on one's own, and team work.
- The abilities to use the computer as an analytical tool, apply knowledge from one's major to new problems, and cope with complex moral and ethical issues increased in reported necessity and/or development at Ohio University from 1998 to 2003.
- About 49 percent of the respondents reported completing one or more additional degrees soon after graduating from Ohio University; most of these were master's degrees.
- When asked if they would make changes in their educational program, respondents most frequently said they would have an internship while in college, be more flexible in their career goals, and participate in more community service activities.
- From 1998 to 2003 most of the respondents said they were extremely or very satisfied with their education overall, the quality of instruction, and the level of rigor and scholarship at Ohio University.

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Survey of Alumni is designed to collect outcomes information on Ohio University graduates about five years after graduation. The Survey of Alumni, the Career and Further Education Study, (designed to collect information on graduates about one year after graduation), the First-Year Treatment Study, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Student Involvement Study, the First-year Marketing Study, and the Retention/Graduation Rate Studies, assess the impact of Ohio University's programs on its undergraduates. Most of these studies were implemented in 1981 as a result of suggestions made by the President and the Institutional Impact Committee. They were recommended to be continued in the 1995 Institutional Impact and Assessment Plan, and by subsequent university-wide assessment committees. At least one specialized accreditation agency, Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), requires long-term outcomes assessment, such as the Survey of Alumni.

The Office of Institutional Research conducts the Survey of Alumni. The focus of this report is on bachelor's degree graduates from the classes of 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. The classes of 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 are presented for comparison. A copy of the questionnaire is attached to the end of this report.

## DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study collects information on a three-part questionnaire. The first part asks questions about types of jobs held, salary, employment satisfaction, and various competencies needed and developed. The second part of the questionnaire asks about graduates' programs of study and current satisfaction with their programs. Graduates are asked about additional degrees completed after leaving Ohio University, and graduates are asked to assess their experience with the general education program at Ohio University. The third part of the questionnaire allows each academic college to ask college-specific questions. This report presents results from the first and second parts of the questionnaire in terms of all colleges combined. Results from the first and second parts of the questionnaire are also broken down by academic college and department and are given to each college. The college-specific results from the third part of the questionnaire are given to the appropriate academic college. College- and department-specific results are also available on the Institutional Research web site ([www.ohiou.edu/instres/indexrestrict.html](http://www.ohiou.edu/instres/indexrestrict.html)).

Each class was surveyed about five years after graduating. In summer 2008 the entire classes of 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 who received bachelor's degrees (for which current addresses were available) were surveyed. A total of 5402 questionnaires were mailed to valid addresses, and 1687 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 31 percent. The response rate for the previous four classes was about 36 percent. Second and third follow-up mailings were conducted. Demographic information was obtained on the respondents, and they were found to be representative of the graduating classes in terms of sex, academic college, and race. A test for possible non-response bias did not reveal the existence of such bias in the results.

## EMPLOYMENT

Eleven questions related to employment. They asked descriptive information about employment status, employment satisfaction, occupation, and annual salary. Questions were asked about problems encountered in seeking employment, competencies necessary in one's current occupation, and the effectiveness of Ohio University in developing those competencies. The following tables provide results for these categories.

### Employment Status

Graduates were asked to indicate their current employment status.

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Full-time	89%	88%	90%	89%	90%	91%
Part-time	6	6	4	5	4	5
Not Employed	5	6	5	6	5	5
Never Employed	0	0	0	0	0	0

Occupation

Graduates were asked to indicate the occupational area in which they were currently working.

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Business/Industry	57%	56%	56%	56%	52%	51%
Education	21	21	19	23	23	25
Nonprofit Org.	9	11	11	10	11	12
Government	7	8	9	7	11	9
Self Employment	5	4	5	4	3	3

First Job and Current Job

Graduates were asked to report their first profession or job title and their current profession or job title. Responses were categorized according to the federal Department of Commerce occupational classification system.

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
<u>Executive, Managerial, Administrative:</u>						
First Job	14%	15%	15%	15%	17%	17%
Current Job	22	23	25	27	25	25
<u>Teachers, Librarians, Counselors:</u>						
First Job	18	20	15	20	22	23
Current Job	18	19	16	19	20	23
<u>Administrative Support, Production, Construction, Transportation, and Labor:</u>						
First Job	20	19	24	22	24	21
Current Job	15	16	22	18	21	19
<u>Engineering</u>						
First Job	7	7	8	9	5	5
Current Job	6	6	6	8	5	5
<u>Writers, Artists, Entertainers, Athletics:</u>						
First Job	11	9	10	9	8	10
Current Job	10	8	7	7	6	9
<u>Marketing and Sales:</u>						
First Job	11	10	9	10	11	12
Current Job	10	9	8	6	9	7
<u>Natural Scientists:</u>						
First Job	8	8	7	5	5	5
Current Job	8	8	5	4	4	5
<u>Social Science, Social Workers, Lawyers:</u>						
First Job	4	4	3	3	4	3
Current Job	4	4	4	4	4	4
<u>Technicians:</u>						
First Job	5	5	4	3	2	4
Current Job	4	4	2	3	2	1
<u>Health Diagnosing/Treating Practitioners:</u>						
First Job	2	2	3	2	3	1
Current Job	2	3	4	3	3	3
<u>Military:</u>						
First Job	1	1	1	1	2	1
Current Job	1	1	0	1	1	1

Satisfaction with Present Employment

Graduates were asked to rate their satisfaction with their current job.

(percent satisfied)	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Extremely/Very	72%	71%	77%	76%	72%	76%
Somewhat	26	25	20	22	25	21
Not at All	3	4	2	2	3	4

### Satisfaction with Progress Made in One's Career

Graduates were asked to rate their satisfaction with their career progress.

(percent satisfied)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Extremely/Very	69%	70%	73%	70%	70%	72%
Somewhat	27	25	25	27	25	23
Not at All	4	5	3	5	5	6

### Acquisition of Job-Related Skills and Knowledge

Graduates were asked to rate aspects of their job and their academic preparation in helping them acquire skills and knowledge needed to perform their current job.

(percent helpful)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
General Training on the Job	98%	96%	98%	97%	97%	97%
Major Courses	94	94	96	95	95	94
Work Experience/Practicum	92	96	93	94	93	92
Formal Training on the Job	93	92	94	93	92	94
General Education	85	84	88	87	86	86
Undergrad Research/Ind Study	83	83	81	87	82	84
Elective Courses	85	88	85	85	83	82
Extracurricular Activities	81	82	79	83	82	81

### Statements Applying to Employment

Graduates were asked to review 11 statements and indicate which ones were descriptive of their present employment situation.

Statement/Descriptor (percent responding)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Skills Utilized	73%	72%	76%	76%	71%	73%
Advancement Possible	70	68	74	73	70	71
Education Utilized	67	64	67	68	67	65
Will Remain in Career	64	63	70	66	64	68
Job Fits Long-range Goals	61	56	66	64	63	62
Will Remain with Employer	59	56	64	60	61	61
Have Status/Prestige	55	51	56	55	54	52
Had Related Internship	43	46	43	44	40	43
Had Related Part-time Job	32	35	34	34	38	33
Engage in Policy-Making	35	33	39	31	32	28
Supervise Others	31	30	36	30	31	27

### Problems Encountered in Seeking Employment

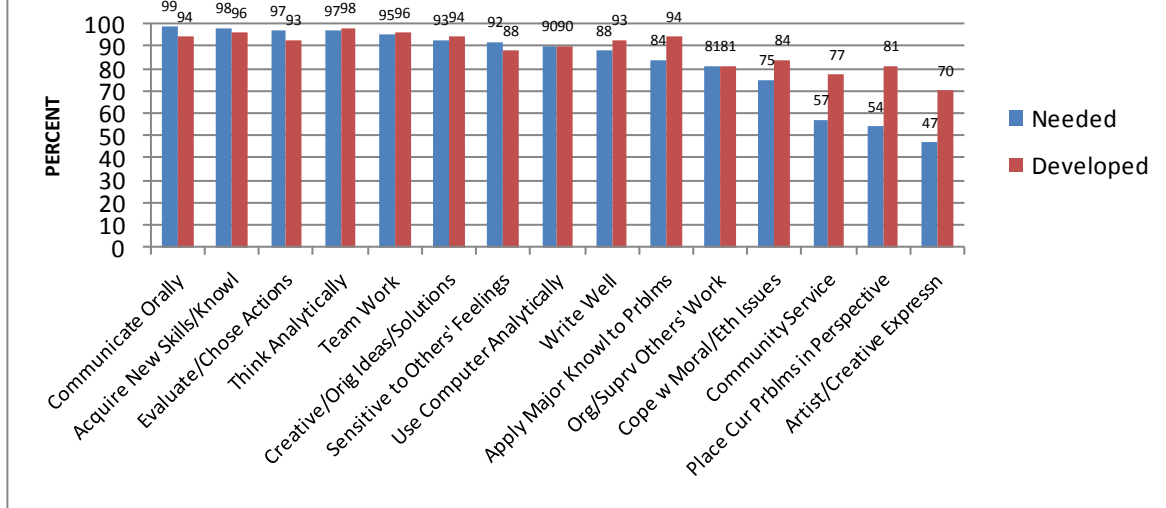
Graduates were asked to identify, from a list, the greatest problems which they encountered in seeking employment after graduation.

Problem Areas	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Desirable Characteristics	29%	27%	26%	21%	17%	20%
Tight Job Market in Field	14	16	16	19	20	22
Generally Tight Job Market	7	7	9	17	20	15
Not Knowing What to do	18	17	20	17	13	17
Skill Qualifications	10	9	10	8	9	8
Not Knowing Where to Look	7	8	8	6	5	5
Spouse Location	6	6	4	3	5	4
Education Qualifications	3	4	3	3	3	3
Sex Discrimination	0	0	0	0	--	--
Racial Discrimination	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Competencies Needed and Developed

Graduates were asked to indicate which of 15 different abilities or competencies were necessary in their current occupation and to rate how effective Ohio University was in developing them. The results for 2002 and 2003 combined are presented graphically in Figure 1.

## COMPETENCIES RATED AS NEEDED AND DEVELOPED AT OHIO UNIVERSITY: 2002 & 2003



The results from 1998 to 2003 are in descending order of reported need:

(percent responding)	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
<b>The Ability to Communicate Effectively Orally</b>						
Needed	99%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%
Developed at O.U.	93	93	94	94	95	94
<b>The Ability to Acquire New Skills and Understanding on One's Own</b>						
Needed	99%	98%	99%	98%	98%	98%
Developed at O.U.	96	95	95	96	95	96
<b>The Ability to Evaluate and Choose between Alternatives</b>						
Needed	98%	96%	98%	97%	97%	97%
Developed at O.U.	92	92	94	95	93	93
<b>The Ability to Work in a Team Setting</b>						
Needed	95%	96%	96%	97%	95%	96%
Developed at O.U.	94	95	97	96	97	96
<b>The Ability to Think Analytically</b>						
Needed	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%
Developed at O.U.	97	98	98	97	98	98
<b>The Ability to Formulate Creative and Original Ideas and Solutions</b>						
Needed	94%	94%	95%	95%	94%	93%
Developed at O.U.	93	93	93	95	94	94
<b>Sensitivity to the Feelings and Perceptions of Others</b>						
Needed	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	93%
Developed at O.U.	86	87	87	89	87	89
<b>The Ability to Use the Computer as an Analytical Tool</b>						
Needed	90%	89%	91%	91%	88%	92%

Developed at O.U.	85	87	88	89	89	91
The Ability to Write Well						
Needed	90%	88%	89%	90%	88%	89%
Developed at O.U.	94	92	93	94	93	94
The Ability to Apply Knowledge from One's Major to New Problems						
Needed	82%	83%	84%	84%	85%	83%
Developed at O.U.	92	93	94	92	94	94
The Ability to Organize and Supervise Work of Others						
Needed	78%	79%	79%	81%	82%	79%
Developed at O.U.	79	81	80	80	79	83
The Ability to Cope with Complex Moral and Ethical Issues						
Needed	80%	77%	80%	74%	75%	76%
Developed at O.U.	85	85	85	87	83	86
The Ability to Participate in Community Service Activities						
Needed	55%	56%	53%	55%	57%	58%
Developed at O.U.	75	78	76	81	77	76
The Ability to Place Current Problems into Historical, Cultural, and Philosophical Perspective						
Needed	52%	51%	51%	52%	53%	54%
Developed at O.U.	81	81	81	83	81	81
The Ability to Convey Meaning through Artistic Expression						
Needed	50%	48%	44%	48%	45%	48%
Developed at O.U.	75	74	73	74	71	70

#### PROGRAM OF STUDY

Part two of the questionnaire contained questions about the graduates' programs of study and about other degrees earned after graduating from Ohio University. One section asked graduates to evaluate their undergraduate major at Ohio University. Another section asked the graduates what changes, if any, they would make in their major program of study if they could do it over.

#### Additional Degrees Completed

Graduates were asked to report any additional academic degrees obtained from Ohio University or other institutions since receiving their bachelor's degree from Ohio University.

Degrees Completed at Ohio University (percent of total degrees)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Associate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bachelor's	6	9	5	5	6	9
Master's	8	8	10	8	5	5
Doctorate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	0	1	0	1	0	1
None	87	85	84	85	88	84

#### Degrees Completed at Another Institution

(percent of total degrees)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Associate	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Bachelor's	1	1	1	1	1	1
Master's	19	18	25	23	26	23
Doctorate	1	1	0	1	1	1
Professional	4	3	4	4	4	4
None	74	76	67	69	65	69

#### Ratings of Undergraduate Major

Graduates were asked to rate their undergraduate major program in the following areas. They are presented in descending order of reported satisfaction.

Undergraduate Major Program Areas (percent extremely/very satisfied)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Overall Satisfaction with Education	83%	82%	81%	82%	81%	78%
Quality of Instruction	78	77	78	80	78	78
Interaction with Students	78	76	81	77	77	80
Relevance to Career Goals	70	69	68	69	69	69
Level of Rigor and Scholarship	67	64	62	67	66	62
Interaction with Faculty	64	61	59	64	64	66
Flexibility/Adaptability to Student Needs	58	58	61	59	60	62
Inspiration and Encouragement	53	50	50	53	52	53
Academic Advising and Guidance	47	43	43	48	47	47
Career Services	29	33	31	32	33	32

General Education Program

Graduates were asked to rate their undergraduate general education program, consisting of Tier I (first-year writing, junior writing, and quantitative reasoning), Tier II (breadth of knowledge), and Tier III (synthesis).

General Education Program Areas (percent extremely/very satisfied)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Tier I, Freshman Writing	57%	54%	58%	52%	52%	54%
Tier I, Junior Writing	56	58	59	55	55	58
Tier I, Quantitative Reasoning	53	52	58	52	55	53
Tier II, Breadth of Knowledge	60	59	63	60	58	58
Tier III, Synthesis	51	46	55	50	51	53

Possible Changes Based on Hindsight

This set of questions asked the graduates to consider possible changes they might make, given the perspective of their experience and knowledge, if they were enrolling again in a major program of study for the bachelor's degree. They are presented in descending order of those indicating there was an excellent or good chance they would change.

Possible Changes in Major Program of Study (percent excellent/good chance)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Have an Internship	73%	70%	69%	73%	72%	71%
Have More Flexibility in Career Goals	44	45	45	45	43	42
Participate in More Community Service Activities	42	44	44	43	46	47
Take Different Elective Courses	39	39	45	43	40	36
Do It All the Same Way	40	38	39	43	38	43
Change Specialization within Field	38	40	38	35	37	37
Change Major Field	36	40	38	35	36	37
Gain More Work Experience	11	11	11	13	12	11
Attend an Institution Other than Ohio University	8	8	8	9	10	11
Not Enroll at All	1	1	1	2	2	2