

Long-Term Educational Outcomes:
Survey of Ohio University Alumni
Classes of 1994 to 1999

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 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999 with a focus on 1998 and 1999 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 1994 to 1999.
- 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 finding a job with desirable characteristics, a tight job market in the graduate's field, 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 1994 to 1999.
- About 40 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 1994 to 1999 the percent of respondents who said they were extremely or very satisfied with their education overall, the quality of instruction, level of rigor and scholarship, and interaction with faculty increased. Respondents also reported increased satisfaction with most of the general education program areas.

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 1997-1998 and 1998-1999. The classes of 1993-1994, 1994-1995, 1995-1996, and 1996-1997 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).

Each class was surveyed about five years after graduating. In summer 2004 the entire classes of 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 who received bachelor's degrees (for which current addresses were available) were surveyed. A total of 5888 questionnaires were mailed to valid addresses, and 2451 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 42 percent. The response rate for the previous four classes was about 42 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.

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Full-time	88%	90%	85%	90%	89%	88%
Part-time	6	6	7	5	6	6
Not Employed	5	4	8	5	5	6
Never Employed	1	0	0	0	0	0

Occupation

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

	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Business/Industry	56%	59%	53%	55%	57%	56%
Education	21	21	21	21	21	21
Nonprofit Org.	10	10	11	12	9	11
Government	9	7	10	9	7	8
Self Employment	4	3	5	3	5	4

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>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
<u>Executive, Managerial, Administrative:</u>						
First Job	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%	15%
Current Job	27	29	26	25	22	23
<u>Teachers, Librarians, Counselors:</u>						
First Job	19	18	19	17	18	20
Current Job	18	15	18	19	18	19
<u>Administrative Support, Production, Construction, Transportation, and Labor:</u>						
First Job	22	23	22	22	20	19
Current Job	20	20	19	16	15	16
<u>Marketing and Sales:</u>						
First Job	13	11	12	12	11	10
Current Job	6	7	8	9	10	9
<u>Writers, Artists, Entertainers, Athletics:</u>						
First Job	9	9	9	9	11	9
Current Job	8	7	7	6	10	8
<u>Natural Scientists:</u>						
First Job	5	5	7	6	8	8
Current Job	5	5	6	6	8	8
<u>Engineering:</u>						
First Job	6	7	6	9	7	7
Current Job	5	6	6	7	6	6
<u>Social Science, Social Workers, Lawyers:</u>						
First Job	4	3	4	4	4	4
Current Job	3	3	4	4	4	4
<u>Technicians:</u>						
First Job	3	4	3	4	5	5
Current Job	2	3	3	3	4	4
<u>Health Diagnosing/Treating Practitioners:</u>						
First Job	3	5	4	3	2	2
Current Job	3	4	3	3	2	3
<u>Military:</u>						
First Job	1	1	1	1	1	1
Current Job	1	1	1	1	1	1

Satisfaction with Present Employment

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

(percent satisfied)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Extremely/Very	74%	73%	73%	72%	72%	71%
Somewhat	24	24	24	24	26	25
Not at All	2	3	3	3	3	4

Satisfaction with Progress Made in One's Career

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

(percent satisfied)	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Extremely/Very	72%	70%	72%	73%	69%	70%
Somewhat	24	26	25	23	27	25
Not at All	4	4	3	4	4	5

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)	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
General Training on the Job	97%	97%	96%	97%	98%	96%
Work Experience/Practicum	93	93	92	95	92	96
Major Courses	95	94	95	95	94	94
Formal Training on the Job	93	92	89	94	93	92
Elective Courses	86	86	83	85	85	88
General Education	84	83	82	83	85	84
Undergrad Research/Ind Study	83	83	83	85	83	83
Extracurricular Activities	81	84	82	84	81	82

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)	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Skills Utilized	73%	71%	72%	73%	73%	72%
Advancement Possible	69	69	68	69	70	68
Education Utilized	63	62	62	64	67	64
Will Remain in Career	66	64	65	65	64	63
Job Fits Long-range Goals	61	61	60	60	61	56
Will Remain with Employer	60	55	57	57	59	56
Have Status/Prestige	56	55	56	54	55	51
Had Related Internship	39	39	40	43	43	46
Had Related Part-time Job	29	32	32	35	32	35
Engage in Policy-Making	38	38	37	35	35	33
Supervise Others	34	36	33	32	31	30

Problems Encountered in Seeking Employment

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

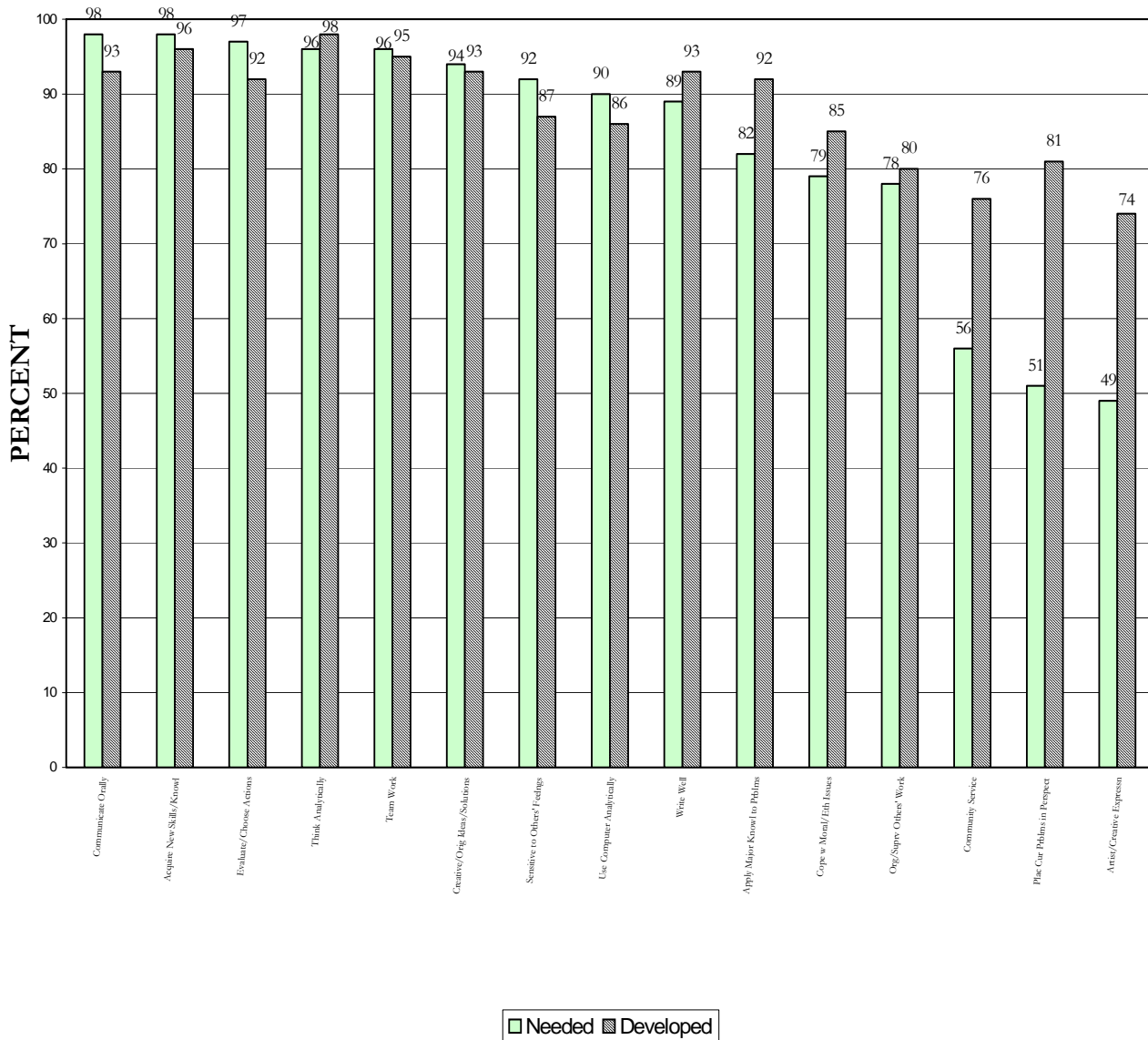
Problem Areas	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Desirable Characteristics	24%	24%	26%	27%	29%	27%
Not Knowing What to do	15	15	18	20	18	17
Tight Job Market in Field	23	21	17	16	14	16
Skill Qualifications	10	10	11	12	10	9
Not Knowing Where to Look	7	7	6	7	7	8
Generally Tight Job Market	10	6	6	4	7	7
Spouse Location	4	5	6	4	6	6
Education Qualifications	3	3	3	5	3	4
Sex Discrimination	0	0	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 1998 and 1999 combined are presented graphically in Figure 1.

Figure 1

COMPETENCIES RATED AS NEEDED AND DEVELOPED AT OHIO UNIVERSITY: 1998 & 1999



The results from 1994 to 1999 are in descending order of reported need:

(percent responding)

The Ability to Acquire New Skills and Understanding on One's Own

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Needed	99%	98%	99%	98%	99%	98%
Developed at O.U.	94	96	95	95	96	95

The Ability to Communicate Effectively Orally

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Needed	98%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%
Developed at O.U.	92	92	91	91	93	93

The Ability to Evaluate and Choose between Alternatives						
Needed	97%	97%	97%	97%	98%	96%
Developed at O.U.	91	93	91	92	92	92
The Ability to Work in a Team Setting						
Needed	96%	97%	95%	96%	95%	96%
Developed at O.U.	93	94	94	95	94	95
The Ability to Think Analytically						
Needed	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%
Developed at O.U.	97	95	97	97	97	98
The Ability to Formulate Creative and Original Ideas and Solutions						
Needed	96%	95%	96%	94%	94%	94%
Developed at O.U.	90	92	93	93	93	93
Sensitivity to the Feelings and Perceptions of Others						
Needed	93%	92%	92%	90%	92%	92%
Developed at O.U.	83	86	87	86	86	87
The Ability to Use the Computer as an Analytical Tool						
Needed	87%	87%	86%	87%	90%	89%
Developed at O.U.	68	73	76	80	85	87
The Ability to Write Well						
Needed	89%	89%	91%	91%	90%	88%
Developed at O.U.	92	93	92	92	94	92
The Ability to Apply Knowledge from One's Major to New Problems						
Needed	82%	81%	82%	82%	82%	83%
Developed at O.U.	90	91	92	94	92	93
The Ability to Organize and Supervise Work of Others						
Needed	79%	80%	80%	78%	78%	79%
Developed at O.U.	73	77	75	79	79	81
The Ability to Cope with Complex Moral and Ethical Issues						
Needed	71%	71%	77%	73%	80%	77%
Developed at O.U.	80	82	84	85	85	85
The Ability to Participate in Community Service Activities						
Needed	52%	56%	52%	56%	55%	56%
Developed at O.U.	70	71	70	71	75	78
The Ability to Place Current Problems into Historical, Cultural, and Philosophical Perspective						
Needed	50%	49%	52%	51%	52%	51%
Developed at O.U.	78	79	81	82	81	81
The Ability to Convey Meaning through Artistic Expression						
Needed	50%	48%	47%	45%	50%	48%
Developed at O.U.	73	74	71	71	75	74

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)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Associate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bachelor's	7	8	8	9	6	9
Master's	7	7	8	7	8	8
Doctorate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	0	0	1	0	0	1
None	86	85	83	84	87	85

Degrees Completed at Another Institution (percent of total degrees)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Associate	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Bachelor's	1	1	1	1	1	1
Master's	17	16	17	18	19	18
Doctorate	0	0	1	1	1	1
Professional	5	3	5	3	4	3
None	76	79	73	74	74	76

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)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Overall Satisfaction with Education	75%	78%	79%	80%	83%	82%
Quality of Instruction	74	75	77	75	78	77
Interaction with Students	75	75	75	78	78	76
Relevance to Career Goals	64	66	69	67	70	69
Level of Rigor and Scholarship	60	61	63	63	67	64
Interaction with Faculty	56	59	58	59	64	61
Flexibility/Adaptability to Student Needs	50	53	53	57	58	58
Inspiration and Encouragement	45	48	47	47	53	50
Academic Advising and Guidance	42	46	45	43	47	43
Career Services	21	24	28	26	29	33

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)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Tier I, Freshman Writing	55%	59%	52%	53%	57%	54%
Tier I, Junior Writing	57	57	53	54	56	58
Tier I, Quantitative Reasoning	50	51	52	51	53	52
Tier II, Breadth of Knowledge	55	58	56	56	60	59
Tier III, Synthesis	42	44	46	45	51	46

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)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Have an Internship	71%	68%	71%	69%	73%	70%
Have More Flexibility in Career Goals	43	43	43	43	44	45
Participate in More Community Service Activities	41	40	42	41	42	44
Change Specialization with Field	39	41	39	37	38	40
Change Major Field	40	38	34	36	36	40
Take Different Elective Courses	41	41	42	43	39	39
Do It All the Same Way	38	37	38	40	40	38
Gain More Work Experience	11	12	13	12	11	11
Attend an Institution Other than Ohio University	8	8	9	10	8	8
Not Enroll at All	1	1	1	2	1	1