

## 1999 University of Washington Graduates, One Year After Graduation: Methodology and Response Frequencies

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### INTRODUCTION

This Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) report outlines the methodology for the year 2000 survey of University of Washington (UW) graduates, nine to twelve months post-graduation. These surveys, which have been conducted annually or biennially since 1978, ask undergraduate and graduate degree recipients about post-graduate activities (especially employment and continuing education) and educational outcomes. This year's questionnaires were very similar to those used in 1997, with the exception that several items were dropped from the undergraduate version. In addition, OEA took advantage of the growing population of Internet users and offered alumni the option to respond to Web-based versions of the surveys. This document provides hyperlinks to the survey instruments and several summary tables.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Population

All students who received a degree from the University of Washington Seattle campus during the 1999 calendar year were included in this study.

#### Instruments

The *undergraduate questionnaire* was printed on a double-sided, scannable form. In order to limit the questionnaire to two pages, the layout was redesigned from the 1997 study, and several items were dropped. The first side contained questions on educational and occupational status. On the second page, alumni rated themselves on a variety of academic skills, and indicated the perceived necessity of those skills in relation to their current activities, the UW's contribution to skill development, and their satisfaction with their skill level. All questions were in closed-ended, forced-choice format, with the exception of written answers about current job title and name of employer, or field of study and institution of continuing education. Written responses were manually entered into the survey database.

[Undergraduate degree questionnaire, first side](#)

[Undergraduate degree questionnaire, second side](#)

The ***graduate/professional student questionnaire*** was a single-page, two-sided, scannable form. Items on the front of the questionnaire were very similar to those on the survey sent to undergraduate degree recipients. The back of the questionnaire contained items that were parallel to, but fewer in number than, those on the undergraduate questionnaire (with some rewording to fit graduate and professional education).

[Graduate/professional degree questionnaire, first side](#)

[Graduate/professional degree questionnaire, second side](#)

## **Mailings**

Although different instruments were used for undergraduate versus graduate or professional degree recipients, the two populations were surveyed simultaneously. Questionnaires were sent to graduates approximately eleven months after they were awarded their degrees, with the intention of allowing as much time as possible for alumni to become established in post-graduate activities, and at the same time to conduct mailings within the one-year forwarding limitation utilized by the U.S. Postal Service. Graduates who received their degrees winter quarter 1999 were sent questionnaires in mid-January, 2000, and spring quarter graduates were sent questionnaires in late April. Summer and autumn quarter graduates were surveyed in mid-July.

Questionnaires were mailed along with a personalized cover letter and self-addressed, stamped envelope for survey return. A second copy of the questionnaire, a personalized letter and a return envelope were sent to all alumni who had not returned completed questionnaires within three weeks of the original mailing to their group.

The cover letter also informed alumni that they could respond to a Web-based version of the survey if they so desired.

The total number of returned questionnaires is shown below. Response rates have been adjusted by reducing the size of the original mailing by the number of questionnaires returned as undeliverable. Web-based responses totaled 163 undergraduate degree recipients (7.2% of the total for that group) and 109 graduate degree recipients (7.7% of the total).

## Survey Response Rate

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	Population N	Undeliverable	Completed Questionnaires	Percentage Returned
<b>Undergraduate --</b>				
<b>Winter</b>	851	50	316	39.5%
<b>Spring</b>	3264	145	1219	39.1%
<b>Summer</b>	1162	40	324	28.9%
<b>Autumn</b>	1097	33	322	30.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	6374	268	2181	35.7%
<b>Graduate/Professional --</b>				
<b>Winter</b>	388	24	229	62.9%
<b>Spring</b>	1632	69	876	56.0%
<b>Summer</b>	547	27	257	49.4%
<b>Autumn</b>	496	18	237	49.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	3063	138	1599	54.7%

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*Note.* The initial population was reduced by the number of alumni who were deceased, declined to participate, or for whom addresses were unavailable or incorrect.

## RESPONSE FREQUENCIES

A formal summary of responses to the *Graduate Survey* has traditionally been sent to each academic department for their respective graduates. Equivalent reports are available in PDF format for this year's survey by department or program:

[1999 Graduate Survey Results](#)

The supplementary data collected from undergraduate degree recipients in correspondence with other student and alumni groups is also available in PDF format:

[Response frequency tables](#)