



2001 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 survey of 2001 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 activities) and educational outcomes. This year's survey also asked questions regarding the transfer process. This document provides hyperlinks to the survey instruments and to several summary tables.

METHODOLOGY

Population

All students who received a degree from the University of Washington Seattle campus during the 2001 calendar year were included in this study.

Instruments

The [undergraduate questionnaire](#) was printed on two double-sided, scannable forms. The majority of questions were presented using a closed-ended, forced-choice format. For open-ended items, responses were manually entered into the survey database. The first two pages of the survey were the same in 2001 as those used in 1999. The first side contained questions concerning educational and occupational status. On the second page, alumni were asked to rate a variety of skills with regard to their own level of ability, the importance of these skills in relation to their current activities, and their satisfaction with the UW's contribution to their development in those areas. Respondents also provided global ratings of their UW education, assessed the usefulness of programs at the Center for Career Services, and provided information about their volunteer and philanthropic activities. Open-ended questions included current job title, name of employer, field of study, and institution of continuing education.

The third and fourth pages were added in support of a study of student transfer patterns conducted by the WA State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Topics on the third page included questions regarding students' academic planning and aspirations. The fourth page was for students with transfer credits and included questions regarding types of schools attended previously, planning during the transfer process, and the adequacy of information

resources provided during the process. Open-ended questions included number of credits, courses the student thought would transfer but did not, and suggestions for how both the transfer institution and the UW could improve transfer procedures.

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). The transfer questions were not added to the graduate/professional student questionnaire.

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 providing as much time as possible for alumni to become established in post-graduate activities, while at the same time conducting mailings within the one-year forwarding time-frame allowed by the U.S. Postal Service. Graduates who received their degrees winter quarter 2001 were sent questionnaires in mid-January, 2002, and spring quarter graduates were sent questionnaires in mid-March. Summer and autumn quarter graduates were surveyed in early June.

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 were calculated by reducing the size of the original mailing by the number of questionnaires returned as undeliverable. Surveys were classified as undeliverable if the alumni were deceased or their addresses were unavailable or incorrect. Web-based responses totaled 262 undergraduate degree recipients (12.77% of the total for that group) and 141 graduate degree recipients (10.59% of the total).

Survey Response Rates

| | Population N | Undeliv- erable | Completed questionnaires | Percentage returned |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Undergraduate | | | | |
| Winter | 917 | 36 | 310 | 35.2 |
| Spring | 3664 | 111 | 1221 | 34.4 |
| Summer | 1183 | 53 | 299 | 29.5 |
| Autumn | 798 | 41 | 222 | 29.3 |
| TOTAL | 6562 | 242 | 2052 | 32.5 |
| Graduate/Professional | | | | |
| Winter | 411 | 9 | 221 | 55.0 |
| Spring | 1851 | 71 | 890 | 50.0 |
| Summer | 400 | 17 | 181 | 47.2 |
| Autumn | 101 | 4 | 39 | 40.2 |
| TOTAL | 2763 | 101 | 1331 | 50.0 |

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:

[2001 Graduate Survey Departmental Results](#)

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

[Undergraduate Response Frequencies \(Overall\)](#)