



Beyond High School

The University of Washington Study Newsletter

January 2003

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MT. TAHOMA
STADIUM
WILSON

CLASSES OF
2000 &
2002

Greetings From The University Of Washington !

You might remember us as the UW research team that came to your high school in the spring of your senior year. We asked you to fill out a survey about your plans for life after high school. You might also remember that we gave a movie pass to each student who completed a survey. The research project is still going strong. We have completed surveys of the Class of 2000 and the Class of 2002. We also conducted a brief follow-up survey of the Class of 2000 in the spring of 2001. We are currently planning to conduct a similar follow up survey with the Class of 2002 early next year.

Through this newsletter, we hope to stay in touch with you and to report on some interesting results from our studies. We will also tell you a little bit about us – the UW Beyond High School research team. In the coming years, we hope to conduct additional follow up surveys, perhaps five years after graduation. We will let you know our plans through this annual newsletter.

We have established a website where all members of the Tacoma Classes of 2000 and 2002 can send us their current mail and email addresses.

Thanks very much for your cooperation with our project. We could not do our work without you.

Sincerely,

Charles Hirschman,
UW Professor of Sociology and Project Director
University of Washington

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I. Some Survey Results:

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- Diversity

II. Meet The Project Team

STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR CLASSMATES

One of the most important aspects of our work is to try to keep up to date contact information for each of you. This is not an easy task since young people tend to move around a lot. We have established a website where you can log in and report your contact information – address, phone, and email address. Simply go to <http://depts.washington.edu/uwbhs> and log in to complete the form. **For all of you who give permission to share your email address, we will make available a list of names and email addresses to other members of your class.** You will be asked to log in with your email address and a password (your high school mascot).

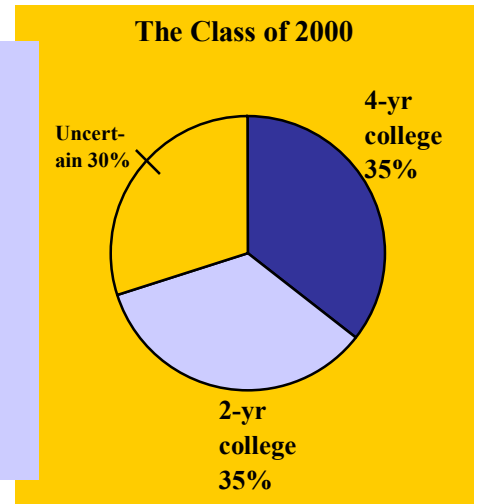
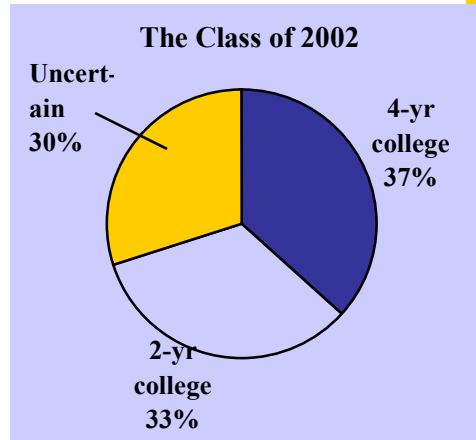
<http://depts.washington.edu/uwbhs>

SOME INTERESTING SURVEY RESULTS

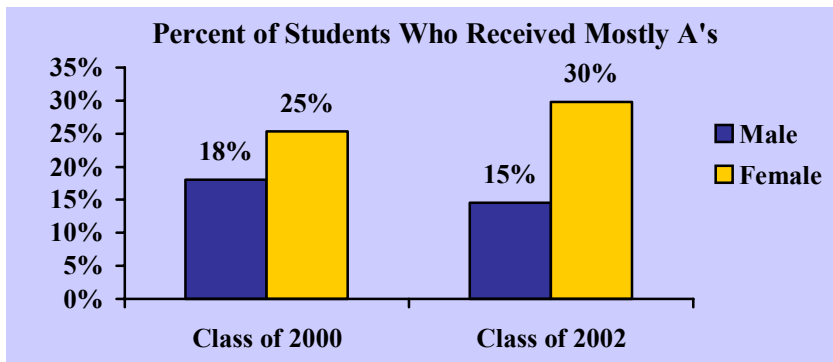
College Plans of Classes of 2000 & 2002

The percentage of students pursuing a college education has remained the same between the 2000 and the 2002 cohorts. Approximately:

- 1/3rd plan for a 4-yr college
- 1/3rd plan for a 2-yr college
- 1/3rd have no plans for college or are uncertain about college

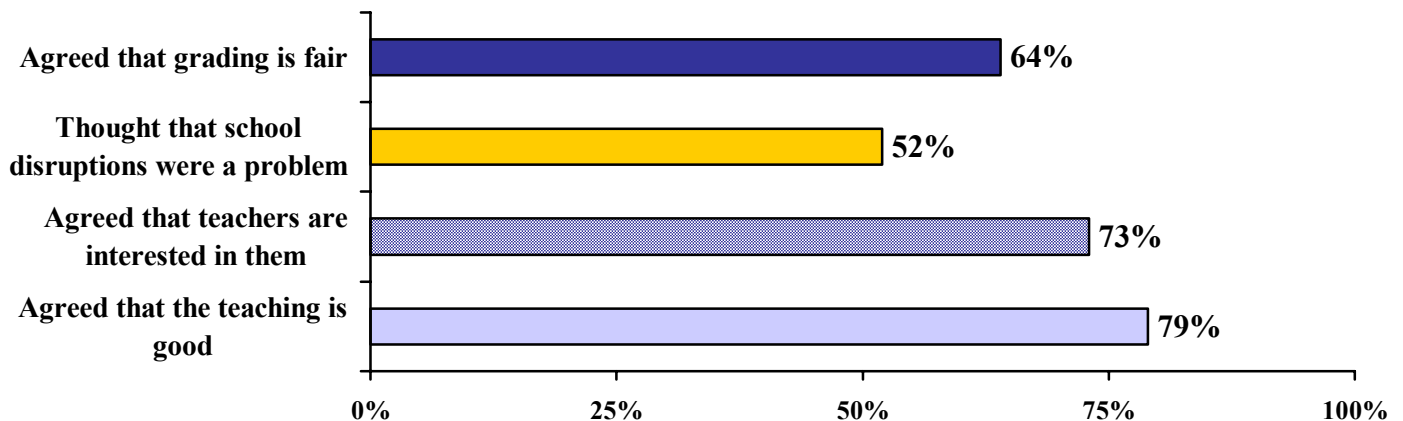


Grades & Gender



On average, more young women reported having mostly A's than young men. 25-30% of young women reported receiving mostly A's, compared to 15-18% of young men.

What Do The Students Think of Their High Schools?



SOME INTERESTING SURVEY RESULTS

Jobs While Seniors

More than 50% of Tacoma high school students were working during their senior year. Students reported working in food service, sales, and care-giving positions. The descriptions of important duties and activities at these jobs were varied including:

Keeping track of money	Sports event set-up	Supervising
Guarding/Security	Waiting tables	Tutoring
Keeping children safe	Gardening	Delivery
Making sure that people are happy		

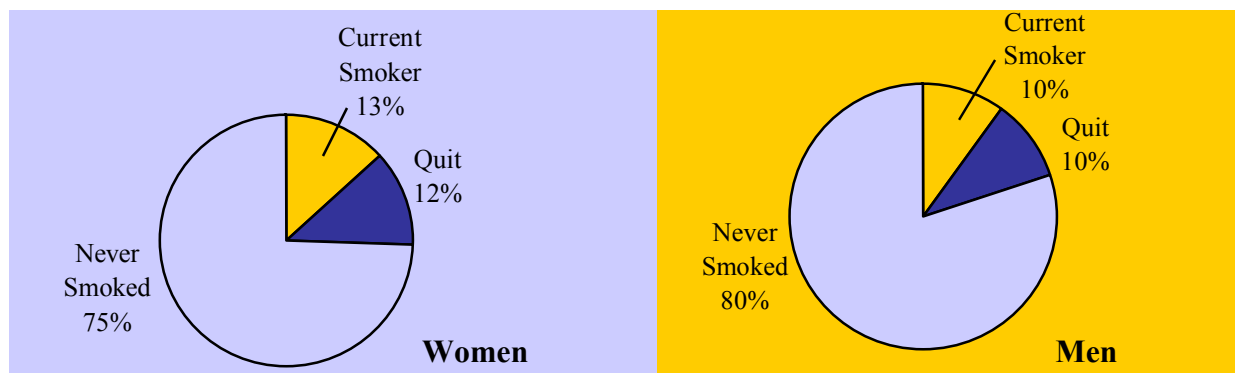
Career Plans

The majority of students thought that when they reached age 30, they would be working in the traditional occupations such as teacher, business person, or police officer, but a few of you have plans for something a little different. Some of the most interesting occupation plans reported were:

Animator	Body piercer	Comic book artist
FBI Agent	Going to Mars	Lobbyist
Missionary	Pro wrestler	Rock star
Senator	Space medicine	Voice actor

Health: Smoking

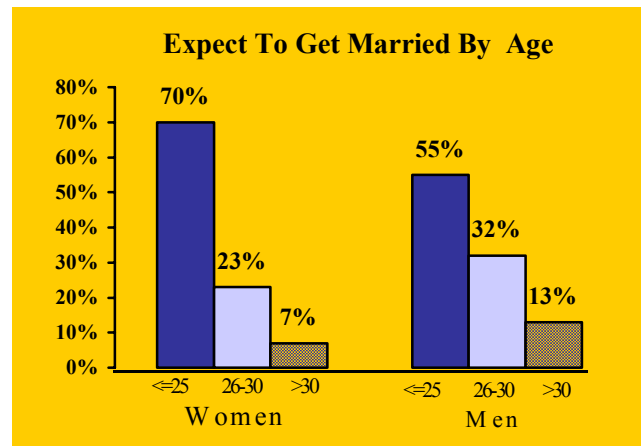
According to the WA Dept. of Health, 28% of 12th graders smoked in WA high schools in the year 2000. Compared to the State results, a significantly lower percentage of Tacoma seniors smoke. Only 12% were smokers at the time of the survey, while 77% had never smoked. A few more women smoked than men.



SOME INTERESTING SURVEY RESULTS

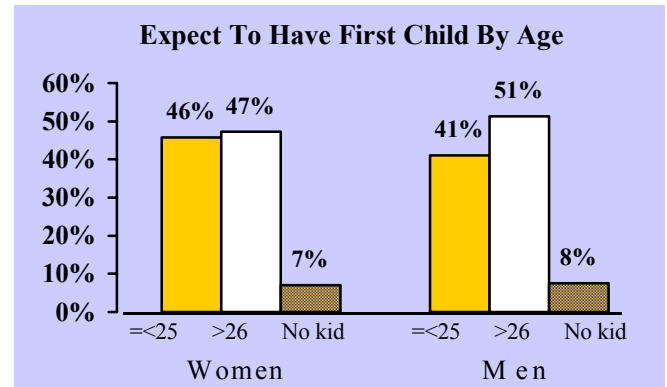
Marriage Age

Almost all Tacoma High School seniors expected that they would get married eventually; **70% of the women students expect to marry by age 25, but only 55% of men thought they would marry before that age.** These figures are similar to the current average age at marriage of all Americans, which is about 25.



Age at First Child

Both young men and young women have similar expectations about at what age they expect to have their first child. Almost 50% of women surveyed expect to have their first child by their 25th birthday. Another 47% expect to have their first child after 26 years of age. The figures for men are about the same. Less than 10% expect to remain childless.



Tacoma Student Diversity

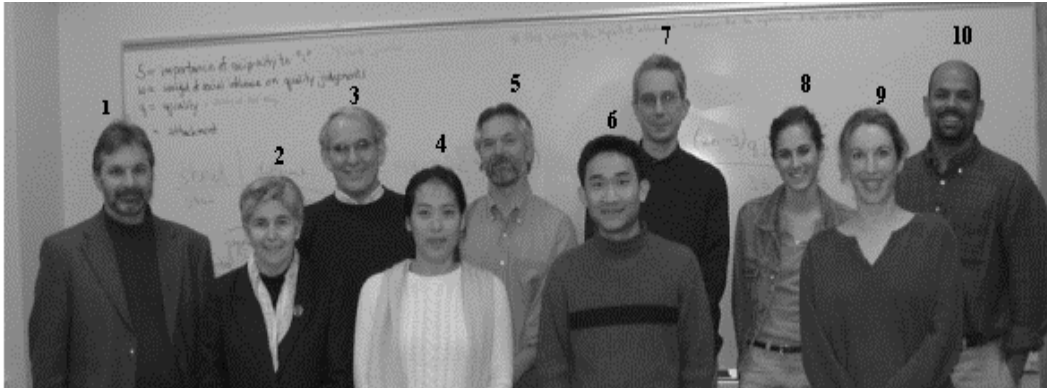
- 27% of Tacoma senior students reported speaking a language other than English at home
- According to the 2000 Census, a language other than English is spoken in 14% of Washington State households
- Cambodian, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese were most frequently listed as spoken languages among Tacoma school seniors
- Tacoma is ranked #7 out of all US cities for the highest percentage of multiracial residents



PROMISE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

All of the individual survey responses in our study are treated as strictly confidential. Names and all identifying information are removed from the data files. Our research is focused on averages and overall patterns, not individual responses. We do try to keep up to date contact information (addresses, telephone number, email address) for each respondent so that we can conduct surveys in future years. This contact information is kept in locked cabinets separate from all our other data files .

MEET THE UW PROJECT TEAM



Since we are asking about you, you might wonder who we are. The UW Beyond High School research team consists of UW faculty, project staff, graduate and undergraduate students. We have come to the UW from places as far away as Nepal & Vietnam and as close as Everett, Mukilteo, & Fife. Here is a picture of our current research team and a little bit about each one of us.

1. [Gunnar Almgren](#) is an associate professor in the UW School of Social Work. Originally from Mukilteo, Gunnar received his PhD in Sociology at the University of Washington, and after a stint at the University of Chicago, he returned home to the UW.
2. [Patty Glynn](#) is the project computer programmer. Patty is originally from Everett. She received an MA in Public Administration from the University of Georgia. After working for several more years on the East Coast, Patty happily returned to the Northwest, and to the UW.
3. [Charles Hirschman](#) (a face that many of you probably recognize) is the project director and professor of Sociology. After growing up in Ohio, he studied at the University of Wisconsin Madison. He taught at Duke and Cornell before settling in Seattle in 1987.
4. [Maya Magarati](#) is a graduate student in Sociology and project research assistant. She comes to our project all the way from Nepal. She holds a BHS in Nutrition from Australia and MA in Sociology from the UW.
5. [Jerald Herting](#) is a research associate professor in Psychosocial and Community Health, and Sociology. Jerry hails from Fife. After receiving his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the UW, he taught at Stanford before returning to the UW.
6. [Duc Ngo](#) is a UW undergraduate with a double major in Sociology and Microbiology and is graduating this spring. He is an undergraduate project assistant. Duc attended Chief Sealth High School. He is planning to go to Medical School.
7. [Stewart Tolnay](#) is a professor of Sociology, and also a native of Everett. After receiving his PhD from the UW in the early 1980s, he taught at the University of Georgia and the University of Albany in New York. Stew rejoined the UW faculty two years ago.
8. [Gioia Rizzo](#) is a San Francisco native. She left the Bay Area to pursue two undergraduate degrees at the UW, one in Sociology and the other in Public Health. Gioia also works in the office as an undergraduate project assistant.
9. [Julie Miller](#) is the office manager. She is from the Bay Area, but relocated to southern California where she earned her BA in Art History from University of California-San Diego.
10. [Amon Emeka](#) is a graduate student in sociology and a project research assistant who graduated from South Kitsap High School in Port Orchard. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison for his MS in Sociology and later taught sociology at a college in northern California.

Susan Wierzbicki Goes on to Fame and Fortune

Many of you from the Tacoma Class of 2000 may remember Susan Wierzbicki, pictured here. Susan worked as a graduate student research assistant on the project from its founding in 1999 to 2001. Susan earned her PhD in 2001 and is now a professor of Sociology at the University of California-Irvine. Susan returned for a few weeks in the spring of 2002 to conduct in-depth interviews at several Tacoma High Schools. We asked Susan to tell us a bit about her careers, past and present.



Susan wrote:

It was fun to rejoin the project last spring. I interviewed more than 40 graduating seniors about their plans for going to college, entering the service, or building a career. The interviews were wonderful, and I thank all of you who took the time to talk with me.

Your dreams about your future careers made me think back to when I graduated from high school 25 years ago. Besides a fascination with journalism, I cannot recall having any particular aspirations. I enrolled in college with plans to try out for the school newspaper, but I was lucky and discovered my first career. The college newsroom practically became my second home. After graduation, I wanted nothing more than to work for a newspaper. For about 12 years, I had a great career as a reporter and editor for the daily paper in St. Louis.

After a few years, I began to develop new interests and questions that would lead to my second career. I wrote many stories about population shifts and how demography influenced where people lived and what they did. Gradually I realized that to really understand and write about population trends, I needed to return to the university. So after talking with my husband, I swallowed hard and applied to graduate school. I quit my job at the newspaper, sold my house, and moved to Seattle. With my husband taking over many parenting duties, I was able to concentrate full time on my studies. I earned a Ph.D. at the University of Washington in 2001 and I now work as an assistant professor at the University of California-Irvine and I love my job. Although I sometimes had doubts that it would all work out, I am really glad that I was able to make a mid-career change. I wish you the courage to take career risks and the perseverance to see your efforts through.

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