

**1996 ALUMNI SURVEY  
OF 1993-94 GRADUATES**

**SUMMARY REPORT**



**Ball State University**

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Office of Academic Assessment

May, 1997

1996 Alumni Survey of 1993-94 Graduates  
Summary Report

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Office of Academic Assessment  
Ball State University

May, 1997



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This survey addresses alumni perceptions of learning at Ball State. Additionally, it provides information about employment, further education, and opinions about departments.
- All 1993-94 baccalaureate degree graduates were surveyed in the Summer of 1996.
- Seven departments worked with the Office of Academic Assessment to write additional questions for their students.
- Demographics of respondents were very similar to those of the population of all 1993-94 graduates. However, respondents had slightly higher high school percentile ranks and Ball State GPAs than did the 1993-94 graduating class.
- Eighty-six percent of respondents were employed full-time. About 79 percent of those employed full-time were employed in their major or in a field related to their major. Eighty-eight percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment.
- Seventy-three percent of full-time employed alumni were working in Indiana. Thirteen percent were working in contiguous states.
- Seventeen percent were continuing college course work at the time of the survey, including 13.5 percent who were pursuing graduate degrees. About fourteen percent had completed additional degrees or certification programs since graduating from Ball State in 1993-94.
- Sixty percent report plans to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. Only about ten percent indicated no plans for further education.
- Nearly 97 percent held positive or very positive attitudes toward Ball State.
- More than 95 percent of all respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them satisfactorily or very well in the areas of intellectual growth, personal growth, and preparation for further education.
- Nine out of ten alumni felt that BSU experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily for their career.
- At least 95 percent rated their preparation very well or satisfactory in the skill areas of writing, analyzing and evaluating ideas, making informed decisions, and working cooperatively.
- More than 94 percent of all respondents indicated that they were prepared very well or satisfactorily in the areas of understanding wellness, social sciences, and humanities.
- At least 80 percent of all alumni surveyed indicated that they were prepared very well or satisfactorily in a variety of knowledge areas such as understanding other cultures, computers, sciences, arts, gender issues, racial issues, morals and ethics, and current events and contemporary issues.
- A majority of respondents rated most knowledge and skill items as “very important.” Understanding computers, using computers at work, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, managing time, and planning and organizing were rated “very important” by more than 80 percent of all respondents.
- More than four out of five alumni agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with their department in general, as well as with faculty professional expertise, teaching ability of faculty, and fairness of grading in departmental courses.
- Ninety-five percent of all respondents were using writing skills on the job and 93 percent

were using quantitative skills on the job. Ninety-two percent were using computer software on the job.

- Results for this survey of 1993-94 graduates were similar to results for 1991-92 graduates. (The later were surveyed in 1994.) In general, 1993-94 graduates had slightly lower ratings of preparation in several areas than did 1991-92 graduates, but had higher ratings of their major departments.

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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

In Summer 1996, the Office of Academic Assessment surveyed all academic year 1993-94 baccalaureate degree recipients. Questionnaires were mailed to alumni who graduated at the end of the Fall 1993, Spring 1994, or Summer 1994 semesters. Two follow-up mailings were sent to those who did not respond to earlier mailings. The final response rate was 55.2 percent—1,698 of the 3,078 graduates responded.

The survey was designed by the Office of Academic Assessment and the Alumni Survey Steering Committee. The committee is composed of faculty and professional staff from the colleges, and from the offices of Career Services, University College, Academic Assessment, and Institutional Research. (Appendix A lists the members of the committee.)

The primary goal of the project was to determine the extent to which Ball State met the needs of its graduates in important areas such as general education, wellness, computer education, racial and ethnic understanding, appreciation for diversity, and understanding and using new technologies.

With approximately two years of post-collegiate experience, alumni were asked to indicate whether their Ball State experiences prepared them or met their needs very well, satisfactorily, or poorly in these areas. Alumni were instructed to consider all activities that may have contributed to their learning, including those outside the classroom.

Traditional questions about employment and further education were also asked. These items addressed alumni employment patterns, the relationship of employment to the major, graduate work at other institutions, professional development and career progress, income, and the geographical location of graduates.

Alumni were also asked for background information about their experiences at Ball State, such as their degree of interaction with faculty and their patterns of enrollment, study, and work.

The survey was first administered in Fall, 1991.<sup>1</sup> In developing the survey, the committee reviewed the university mission statement as a means of identifying important topics. As a result, the instrument focused on areas that have remained important and most of the survey has remained the same. For the second administration in Summer 1994, some items were changed slightly and a section was added which asked about the specific types of writing, computer use and mathematics that graduates use at work. For the administration in summer 1996, the survey was modified to ask graduates about the importance of each knowledge and skill item.

Because many questions which need to be asked of alumni are program specific, departments with an adequate number of graduates were invited to include one to two pages of additional questions to supplement the overall survey. The Office of Academic Assessment worked with seven departments to develop survey supplements.<sup>2</sup> Each supplement was mailed, along with the main survey, to graduates of that department. Information from the supplements was summarized by the Office of Academic Assessment and reported to the participating departments in Spring, 1997.

This report is organized in seven sections. Section 1 compares academic and demographic characteristics of respondents to the characteristics of all 1993-94 baccalaureate

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<sup>1</sup> Prior reports are available from the Office of Academic Assessment.

<sup>2</sup> Supplements were mailed to graduates of programs in Biology, Computer Science, Nursing, Political Science, Modern Languages and Classics, Social Work, and Telecommunications.

graduates. Section 2 describes findings related to further education and employment. Section 3 contains ratings of preparation in several learning areas, and alumni ratings of the importance of those areas. Information about student work experiences and attitudes toward the university are also presented in Section 3. Section 4 covers findings about the major, Section 5 describes data about graduates on-the-job writing, computer use, and mathematics use. Section 6 compares 1996 findings with findings from the 1994 administration of the survey. Finally, Section 7 contains a short summary and additional discussion.

## SECTION 1

### Demographic and Academic Characteristics

*Summary* This section describes demographic and academic characteristics of survey respondents and compares these to the characteristics of academic year 1993-94 baccalaureate degree graduates.<sup>1</sup> Statistical tests were used to estimate the representativeness of the sample.

Respondents were not significantly different from the population of all 1993-94 graduates when compared by gender, race, age, entry status, high school class size, SAT or ACT scores, or college of major.<sup>2</sup> Respondents were found, however, to have higher high school percentile ranks and Ball State GPAs than the 1993-94 graduating class. These differences were slight, but statistically significant. (Tables 1.1-1.2)

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- Although the response rate among females was slightly higher than among males, the gender distribution of the sample did not differ significantly from that of the population.
  - Based on a comparison of the overall distribution by race, the sample and population were not statistically different. However, the response rate for African American alumni was 38 percent, compared to 55 percent for all alumni. The percentage of respondents among other minority groups was 47%.
  - Respondents were not found to be significantly different from the population when compared by age, academic entry status, high school class size, SAT verbal score, SAT Math score, ACT composite, or college of major.
  - The average GPA was 3.02 for the population, and 3.06 for respondents. Although

small, this difference in GPA was statistically significant. Nearly 55 percent of respondents earned an average of 3.0 or higher, compared to 51 percent of the population.

- Average high school percentile rank was slightly higher among respondents (69.1) than among all graduates (67.3). The difference was small but statistically significant.
- The average SAT and ACT scores of respondents were higher than those of the population, but the differences were not statistically significant. (Table 1.2)
- As shown in Table 1.3, response rates varied considerably by college of major, from a low of 41 percent among general studies majors to a high of 66.1 percent in the College of Architecture and Planning. The overall response rate was 55.2 percent. The differences were not statistically significant.

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<sup>1</sup> Information about the population was extracted from the student database. According to university records, a total of 3,255 students graduated with baccalaureate degrees during academic year 1993-94. However, 177 alumni had no valid address information, and consequently did not receive the survey. The population of all graduates described in this section refers to those for whom valid addresses were available (N=3,078).

<sup>2</sup> While a total of 1,698 alumni responded to the survey, 16 responded anonymously, and others could not be identified or had missing data on university records. Anonymous replies are included in the study where possible, but are not available for sample/population comparisons.

**TABLE 1.1**  
**Demographic and Academic Characteristics of Respondents**  
**and Academic Year 1993-94 Graduates**

	<u>Respondents</u> <i>Percentages</i> <i>N</i>	<u>All 1993-94 Graduates</u> <i>Percentages</i> <i>N</i>
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	42.8	45.0
Female	57.2	55.0
<b>RACE</b>		
Black	2.1	3.1
White	96.6	95.4
Other	1.3	1.5
<b>AGE</b>		
22 to 24	41.7	38.8
25	31.6	32.1
26	9.5	11.3
27	3.8	4.3
28 or older	13.4	13.5
mean	26.05	26.18
<b>GPA*</b>		
Less than 2.5	12.2	13.6
2.50 to 2.99	32.9	35.4
3.00 to 3.49	35.7	33.8
3.50 to 4.00	19.1	17.2
mean	3.06	3.02
<b>ACADEMIC ENTRY TYPE</b>		
Distinction	16.7	14.4
Regular	69.0	69.8
Other	14.4	15.8
<b>N<sup>†</sup></b>	1,682	3,078

\* Statistically significant differences exist between respondents and all graduates on this variable. ( $p \leq .05$ )

† Actual Ns were slightly lower for race and entry type variables due to missing data.

**TABLE 1.2**  
**High School Academic Characteristics of Respondents**  
**and Academic Year 1993-94 Graduates**

	<u>Respondents</u>			<u>All 1993-94 Graduates</u>		
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std.dev.</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std.dev.</i>	<i>N</i>
High School Percentile Rank*	69.1	21.2	1538	67.3	21.6	2929
High School Class Size	275.7	172.1	1538	275.2	184.4	2929
SAT Verbal	433.3	87.0	1422	429.6	87.3	2739
SAT Quantitative	505.8	86.3	1447	501.1	85.5	2786
ACT Composite	21.3	4.9	439	21.0	5.1	749

\* Statistically significant differences exist between respondents and the population of all graduates on this variable. ( $p \leq .05$ )

**TABLE 1.3**  
**Ball State Alumni Survey Response Rates**  
**by College of Major**

	<i>N Mailed</i>	<i>N Returned</i>	<i>Percent Returned</i>
<b>COLLEGE</b>			
Applied Sciences and Technology	396	214	49.7
Architecture and Planning	116	80	66.1
Business	571	327	54.7
Fine Arts	152	74	46.3
Sciences and Humanities	978	521	50.0
Teachers College	373	211	55.2
Communication, Information, and Media <sup>†</sup>	337	189	52.6
General Studies	155	66	41.0
<b>N</b>	<b>3078</b>	<b>1698*</b>	<b>55.2</b>

\* Includes sixteen cases which were returned anonymously.

<sup>†</sup> This college was formed on July 1, 1996.



## SECTION 2

### Employment and Further Education

*Summary* Eighty-six percent of 1993-94 alumni were employed full-time. Of those employed full-time, 63 percent found employment prior to or within three months after graduation. Nearly 80 percent of those with full-time jobs held jobs which were within their major or in an area related to their major. More than two-thirds (67.6%) of alumni with full-time jobs indicated these jobs required a college degree. Additionally, 88 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. The most often cited occupations represented among those employed full-time were teachers (all types), sales managers and representatives, (other, non-sales) managers and directors, accountants, and nurses and health care associates. Seventy-nine percent of those working full-time reported earnings of at least \$20,000 per year.

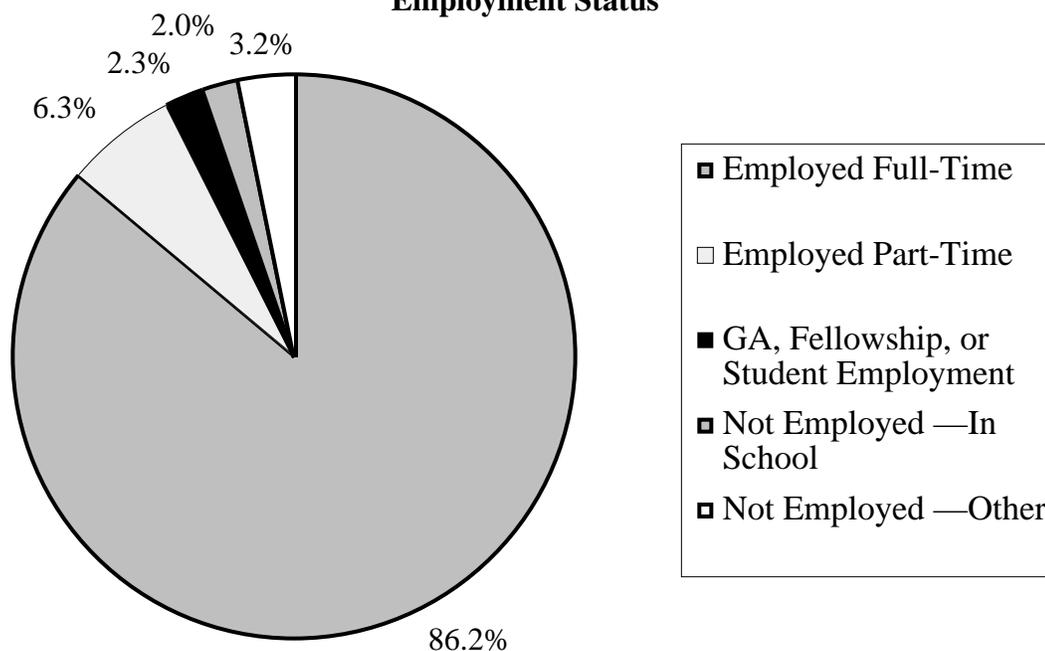
Alumni were asked about their current and anticipated educational activities and plans. Seventeen percent were currently enrolled at a college or university, and 60 percent reported

they plan to eventually complete a graduate or professional degree. Nearly 90 percent plan to continue their education with some combination of professional development and/or additional college course work.

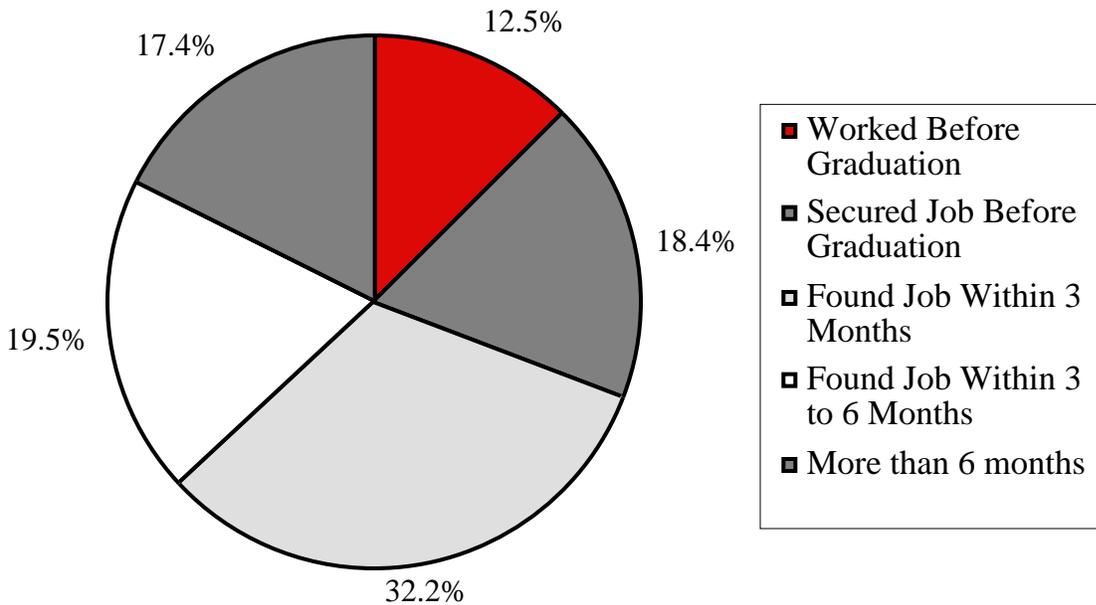
### Employment

- Eighty-six percent of 1993-94 alumni were employed full-time. (Figure 1.)
- Six percent of alumni were employed part-time, and two percent were employed primarily with graduate assistantships, fellowships or student employment.
- About five percent were not employed at the time of the survey. (Figure 1.)
- Of those who were not employed at the time of the survey, 39 percent were enrolled in school, and 16 percent had recently completed graduate degrees.

**Figure 1**  
**Employment Status**



**Figure 2**  
**Length of Time to Find Full-Time Employment**



- About 31 percent of those employed full-time either continued a job that they had before graduation (12.5%) or secured employment before graduation (18.4%). As shown in Figure 2, an additional 32 percent (32.2%) found employment within three months of graduation, while the remainder found employment three or more months after graduation (36.9%).
- About 73 percent of those with full-time jobs were working in Indiana, while nearly 13 percent worked in contiguous states. About 15 percent worked in other, noncontiguous states. (Table 2.1)

**Table 2.1**  
**Location of Employment**  
**Full-Time Employed Alumni Only**

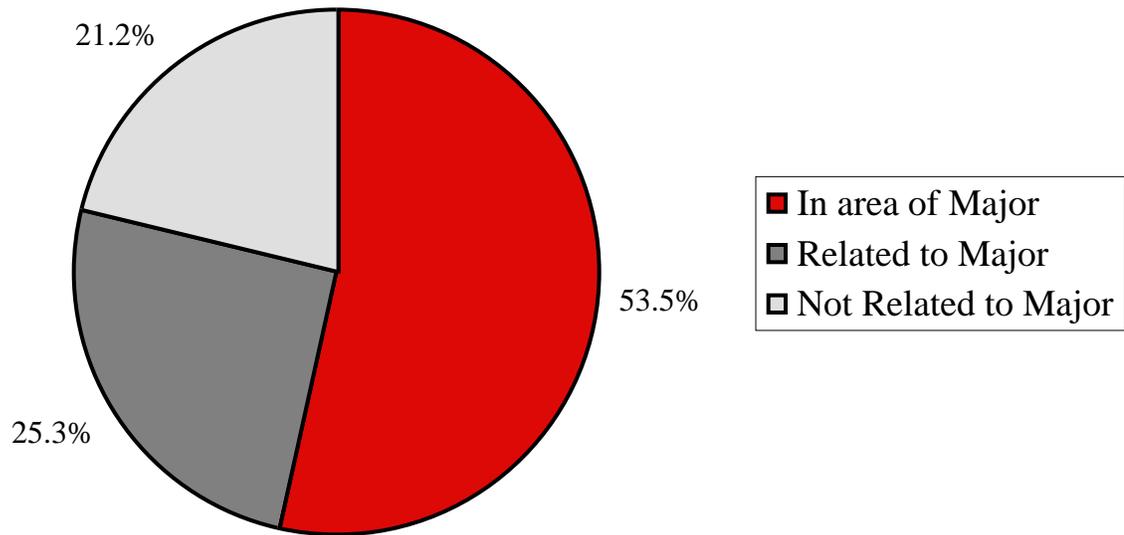
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
Indiana	72.7	1027
Contiguous States	12.7	179
Other States	14.6	206
Total	100.0	1,412

- More than half (53.5%) of all full-time employed alumni were working within their major field of study. An additional 25.3 percent were employed in an area related to their major. (Figure 3.)
- Of the 21.2 percent of full-time employed alumni who were working in areas *not* related to their major, the most frequently cited reason was that they could not find employment within their major. Other

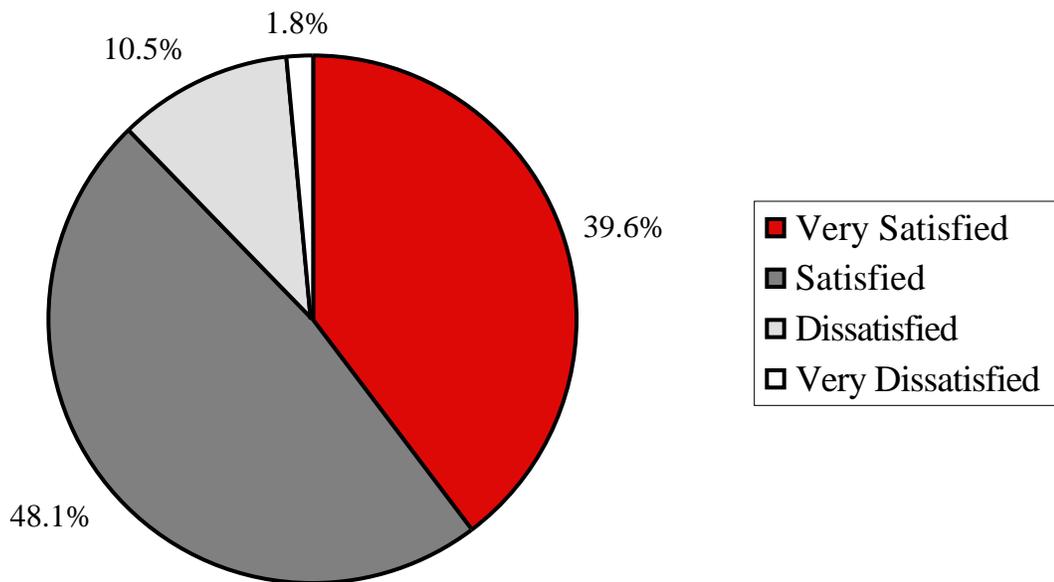
**Table 2.2**  
**Reasons for Working Outside the Major**  
**Full-Time Employed Alumni Only**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
Could not find job in major	36.1	87
Developed new interest	18.7	45
Better pay	10.8	26
Better advancement	5.8	14
Did not plan to work in major	5.0	12
Could not relocate	3.3	8
Not licensed/certified	1.7	4
Other	18.7	45
Total	100.0	241

**Figure 3**  
**Relationship of Employment to the Major**  
**Full-Time Employed Alumni Only**



**Figure 4**  
**Satisfaction with Full-Time Employment**



reasons included developing new interests, and finding better pay outside their major. (Table 2.2)

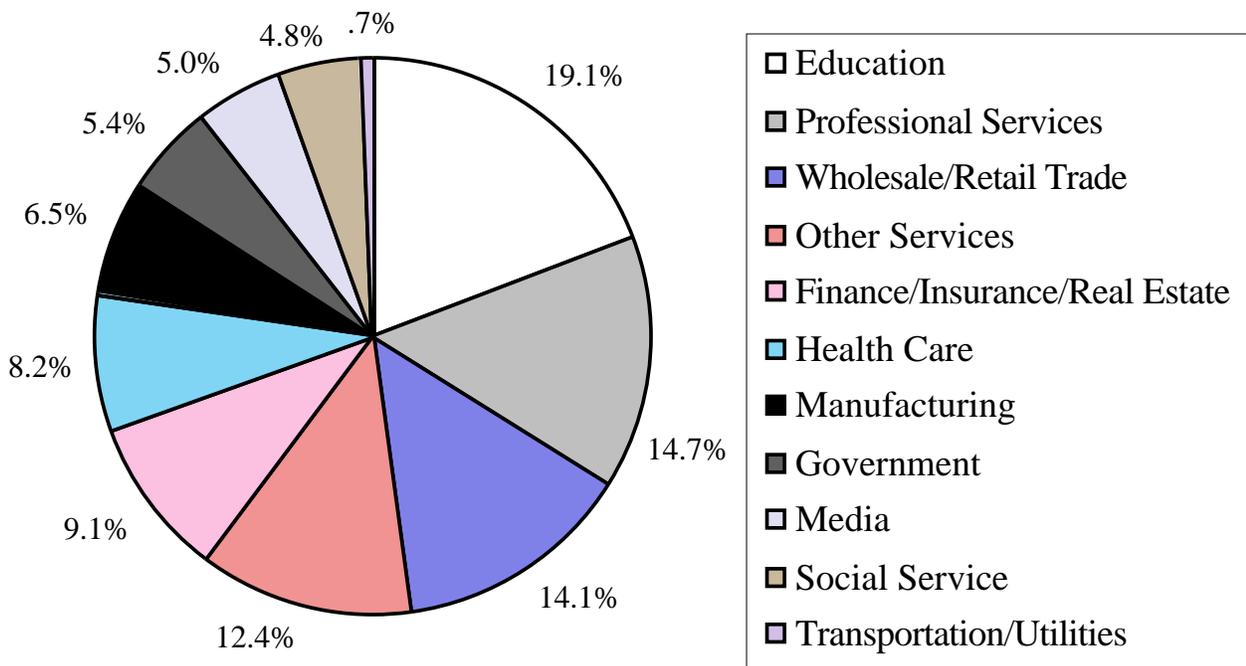
- Among those employed full-time, more than two-thirds (67.6%) indicated that a college degree was required for their employment.
- As can be seen in Figure 4, more than 87 percent of full-time employed alumni were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. About 12 percent indicated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their current employment.

- Figure 5 contains information about the types of organizations and businesses in which alumni found full-time employment. The largest specific categories were education (19.1%), professional services (14.7%), wholesale and retail trade (14.1%), and other services (12.4%).
- Other types of organizations in which alumni found full-time employment included finance, insurance, and real estate (9.1%); health care (8.2%); manufacturing (6.5%); government (5.4%); media (5.0%); and social services (4.8%). (Figure 5)
- Slightly more than one-quarter of full-time employed respondents (26.4%) were earning between \$20,000 and \$24,999 at the time of

the survey. About 21 percent were earning less than \$20,000 and about 53 percent were earning \$25,000 or more in their second year after graduation. Figure 6 contains percentages for each range among those who were employed full-time.

- Teachers (including all full-time primary and secondary school teachers) formed by far the largest occupational category, accounting for almost 17 percent of all full-time employed respondents. (Table 2.3)
- It can also be seen from Table 2.3 that large numbers of alumni report full-time employment as managers and directors, accountants, nurses, social workers, architects, computer programmers, graphic artists, marketers, and other professionals.

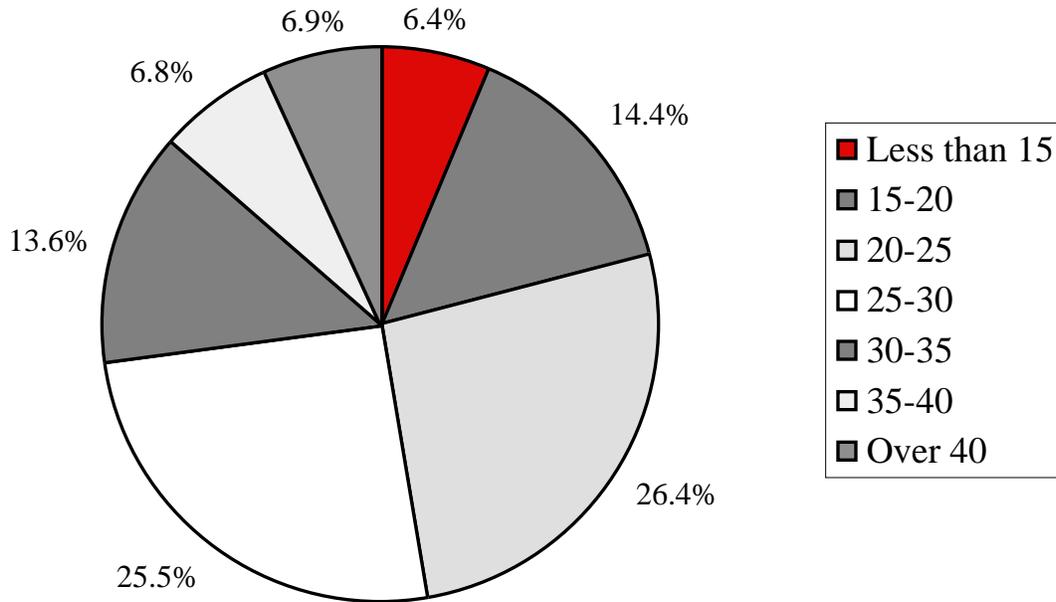
**Figure 5**  
**Type of Organization in Which Alumni Found Employment**



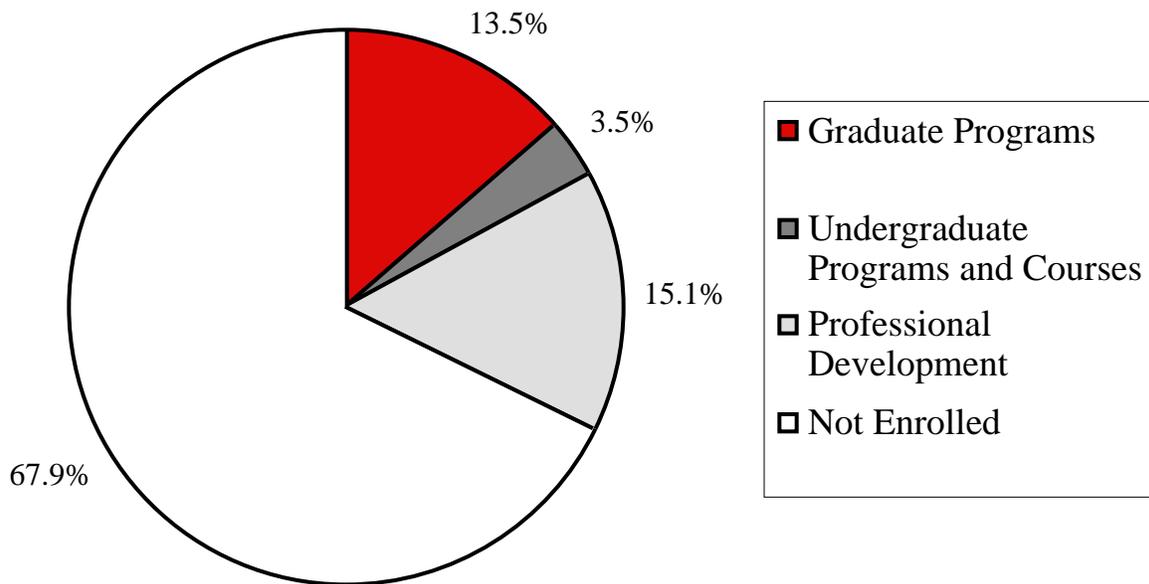
**Table 2.3**  
**Current Occupations of Alumni Employed Full-Time**

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>N</i>
Sales and Retail Managers, Assistant Managers, Buyers, Merchandisers	82	Engineers	13
Sales Representatives, Sales People, and Sales Clerks	72	Self-Employed Managers, Officials, Contractors, and Proprietors	13
Teachers (Elementary Education)	68	Biologists	12
Accountants, Auditors, & Assistant Auditors	65	Technicians-Other	12
Teachers (Other or Mixed Level)	65	TV Producers, Assistant/Associate Producers, News Anchors/ Reporters	12
Managers, Directors, Asst./Assoc. Directors, & Proprietors (not Sales, Retail, Personnel or Assistant Managers)	61	Urban and Regional Planners	12
Nurses, EMTs, Paramedics, Health Care Associates	59	Bank Tellers, Client Assistants, Document Assistants	11
Bank Managers, Officials, Brokers, Analysts, Planners (not Urban Planners/Regional Planners)	58	Advertising Agents & Sales People, Media Buyers	9
Social & Welfare Workers	51	Archaeologists/ Anthropologists/ Museum Workers	9
Architects, Landscape Architects, Interns, GIS, & Draftspersons	45	Chemists	8
Manufacturing Workers (not Managers)	43	Consultants	8
Police, Detectives, Security Agents (not Probation Officers)	35	Military (Members of the Armed Forces)	8
Teachers (Special Education)	35	Secretaries and Word Processing Specialists	8
Graphic Artists	29	Assistant Managers and Manager Trainees (not Sales/ Retail)	7
Computer Programmers, System Analysts, Support Personnel-Help Desk	28	Clerical Workers	7
Paralegals, Legal Assistants, and Law Clerks	28	Data Processing and Data Entry	7
Personnel Managers and Workers, Human Resources	28	Environmental Scientists, Conservationists, and Foresters	7
Sports, Exercise and Fitness Instructors/Officials	28	Food Store Managers, Food Service Managers	7
Account Executives, Account Representatives	27	Technicians- Medical & Dental	7
Teachers (High School)	26	Artists (not Graphic), Entertainers, Musicians, & Writers	6
Administrators & Administrative Assistants	23	Business Services Managers	6
Marketing	23	Insurance Actuaries	6
Teachers (Middle School)	23	Recreation and Group Workers	6
Teachers (Preschool/ Early Childhood Ed)	22	Communications Managers	5
Customer Service Representatives	19	Librarians	5
Editors, Reporters, Photojournalists (newspaper)	19	Communications, Professional and Technical	4
Insurance Adjusters, Agents, Examiners, Investigators, and Underwriters	19	Public Administrators and Officials	4
Counselors, Therapists, & Speech Pathologists	19	Service Workers	4
Probation Officers	14	Student Employment, Graduate Students, Interns	4
Public Relations/ PR	14	Dietitians and Nutritionists	3
		Interior Design	2
		Professional and Technical Workers	2
		All Other Occupations	61
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,423</b>

**Figure 6**  
**Annual Income (in Thousands of Dollars) from Full-Time Employment**



**Figure 7**  
**Current Educational Activities of Alumni**



## Further Education

- Seventeen percent were continuing college course work at the time of the survey. Nearly 14 percent were pursuing graduate degrees, while three and one half percent were taking additional undergraduate course work. Another 15 percent were enrolled in non-collegiate professional development courses. (Figure 7) Most of those who were continuing college course work were also employed full-time.
- About 14 percent had completed additional degrees or certification and training programs since graduating from Ball State.
- Sixty percent reported that they plan to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. Only about one out of ten respondents indicated they had no plans to continue their education. (Table 2.4)

**Table 2.4**  
**Plans for Further Education**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
DO YOU PLAN EVENTUALLY TO...		
Obtain a graduate or professional degree	60.1	983
Obtain another Bachelor's degree	8.7	143
Obtain certification with college course work	11.4	187
Obtain certification with non-college course work	25.9	423
Take additional college courses	7.0	115
Take professional development courses	30.9	505
No plans to continue education	10.4	170
Total responses	154.5*	2,526

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because respondents chose each applicable response. Sixteen hundred and thirty-five (1,635) respondents chose one or more responses.



## SECTION 3

### Ball State Experiences

*Summary* Alumni were asked to reflect on their preparation with respect to several important areas of knowledge and skills. They were asked whether their experiences met their needs very well, satisfactorily, or poorly in areas such as writing, mathematics, critical thinking, and using computers. In addition, on the 1996 survey, alumni were asked to rate the importance of each of these knowledge and skill items.

Alumni were asked whether they would recommend Ball State, about their general attitude toward the university, and about interaction with faculty. Finally, alumni were asked about internship experiences, and about the number of hours they studied and worked in a typical week at Ball State.

More than 95 percent of all respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them satisfactorily or very well in the areas of intellectual growth, personal growth, and preparation for further education. Nine out of ten alumni felt that BSU experiences prepared them satisfactorily or very well for their career.

In each knowledge and skill area, at least 73 percent of all respondents indicated that Ball State experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily. (Table 3.2)

Alumni indicated that all knowledge and skills listed on the survey were important to them. Only three knowledge and skill items were rated as “not important” by more than ten percent of the respondents. Most knowledge and skill items were considered somewhat important or very important by more than 95 percent of all respondents. (Table 3.3) The knowledge items with the highest ratings of importance were using computers, morals and ethics, current events, and wellness. Skill areas with the high-

est ratings of importance were listening, writing, speaking, and problem solving. (Figure 9)

As shown in Figures 9 and 10, respondents' ratings of importance were higher than their ratings of preparation for all knowledge and skill items included on the survey.

About one-half indicated that they participated in internships, had frequent or occasional after-class meetings with faculty, and studied an average of at least eleven hours a week. Twenty-five percent indicated they worked 20 or more hours per week while enrolled at Ball State.

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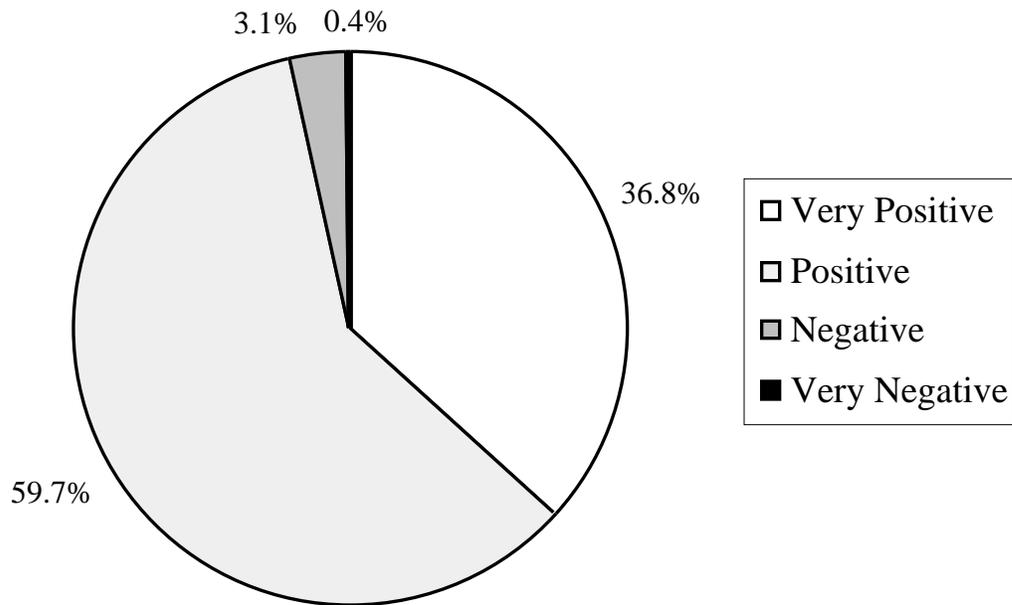
### General Evaluation of Learning Experiences

- More than 97 percent indicated that intellectual and personal growth needs were met very well or satisfactorily. The majority of respondents felt very well prepared in these two areas.
- When asked about preparation for further education, more than 95 percent reported they felt satisfactorily (56.5%) or very well (39.1%) prepared. (Table 3.1)
- Ninety percent rated career preparation very well (37.6%) or satisfactorily (52.5%). Even among those who were not employed full time (about 14% of all respondents), 83 percent indicated they were very well or satisfactorily prepared in the career area. (Table 3.1)

### Knowledge and Understanding

- Wellness was the knowledge item for which alumni felt most prepared. Nearly forty percent indicated that they were very well prepared in this area.

**Figure 8**  
**Attitude Toward Ball State**



**Table 3.1**  
**Evaluation of Overall Experiences at Ball State**

	<i>Rating of Growth or Preparation in each area</i>			<i>N</i>
	<u>Very Well</u>	<u>Satisfactorily</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	
	<i>Percentages*</i>			
<b>OVERALL EVALUATION OF EXPERIENCES</b>				
Intellectual Growth	53.0	45.6	1.4	1668
Personal Growth	63.5	34.2	2.3	1674
Preparation for Further Education	39.1	56.5	4.4	1646
Preparation for Career	37.6	52.5	9.9	1653

- Roughly 3 in 10 alumni felt very well prepared regarding their understanding of computers (29.9%). Most respondents (51.6%) rated their understanding of computers as satisfactory. (Table 3.2)
- At least 94 percent indicated they were prepared very well or satisfactorily regarding knowledge and understanding of wellness, social sciences, and humanities.
- More than 85 percent of the respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily to understand other cultures, the sciences, morals and ethics, and current events and contemporary issues. (Table 3.2)

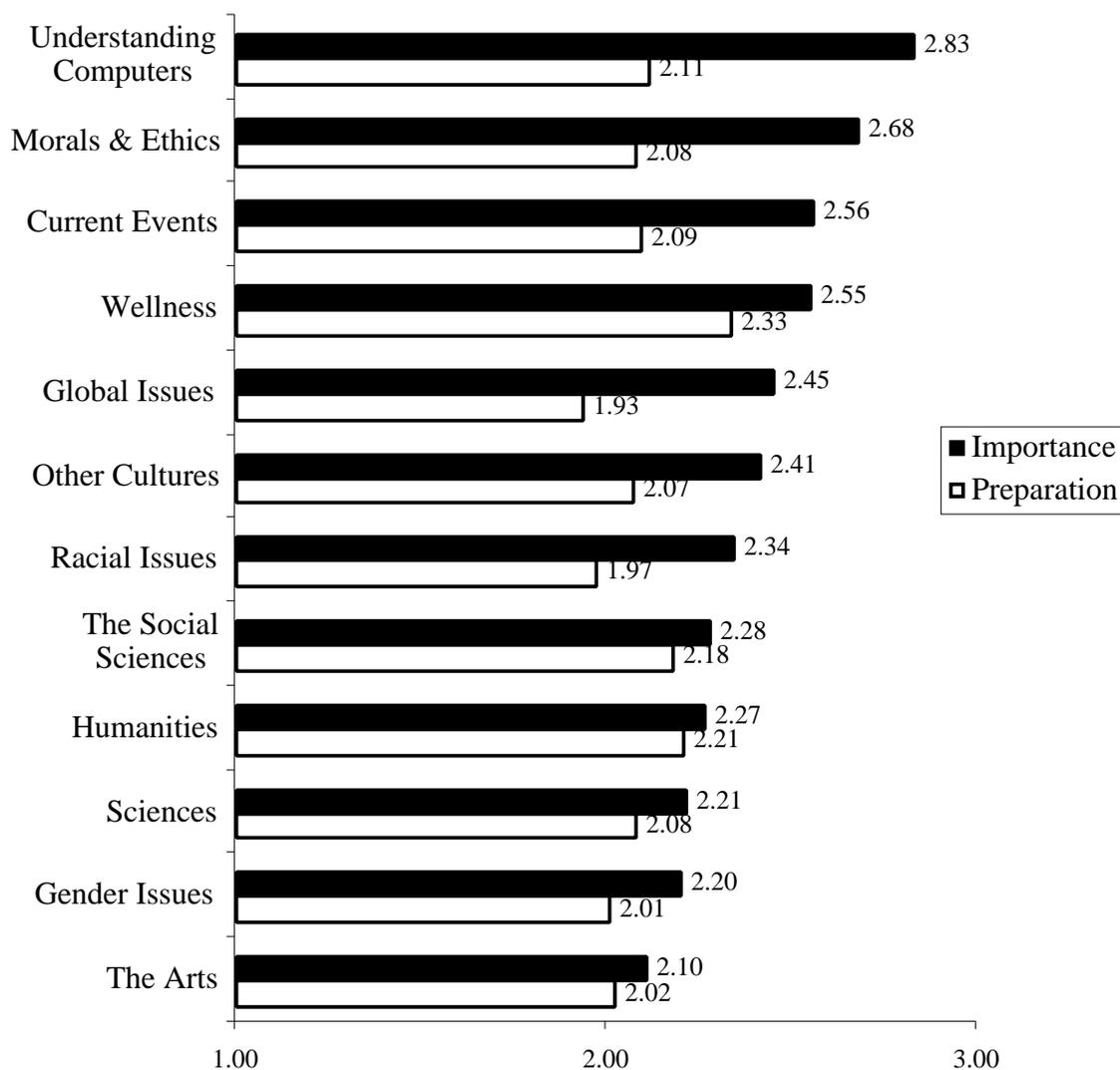
**Table 3.2**  
**Evaluation of Experiences at Ball State**

	<i>Rating of Preparation in each area</i>			<i>N</i>
	<u>Very Well</u>	<u>Satisfactorily</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	
	<i>Percentages*</i>			
<b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b>				
Other Cultures	21.4	64.2	14.3	1666
Computers	29.9	51.6	18.5	1664
Wellness	37.8	57.6	4.6	1666
Sciences	18.1	71.6	10.4	1660
Social Sciences	23.3	71.1	5.5	1658
Humanities	26.6	67.6	5.9	1655
Arts	20.4	61.6	18.0	1662
Gender Issues	18.1	64.8	17.2	1654
Racial Issues	16.8	63.2	20.0	1654
Morals and Ethics	22.4	62.7	14.9	1647
Current Events and Contemporary Issues	22.6	64.2	13.2	1660
Global Events	14.5	64.4	21.1	1660
<b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>				
Writing	44.2	51.6	4.2	1665
Speaking	41.6	52.8	5.6	1664
Listening	39.9	55.0	5.1	1663
Problem Solving	39.7	54.8	5.5	1661
Analyzing and Evaluating Ideas	41.9	53.7	4.3	1660
Conducting Research	34.2	51.5	14.3	1655
Using Library Resources	46.8	45.6	7.5	1661
Using Mathematics	19.9	63.0	17.1	1662
Creative Thinking	42.0	51.8	6.2	1657
Critical Thinking	37.3	56.6	6.1	1658
Making Informed Decisions	34.1	61.6	4.2	1652
Using Computers at Work	32.3	44.8	23.0	1658
Providing Leadership	34.5	53.6	11.9	1658
Persuading Others	21.7	61.0	17.3	1658
Coping with Stress	20.7	53.0	26.3	1656
Dealing with the Public	29.5	54.8	15.7	1656
Managing Time	37.4	50.2	12.3	1656
Planning and Organizing	41.6	50.4	8.0	1658
Conflict Resolution	21.4	63.4	15.2	1652
Interacting with Diverse Groups of People	35.6	49.7	14.7	1655
Self-Evaluation	30.2	60.1	9.7	1655
Self-Reliance	44.3	50.3	5.4	1655
Working Cooperatively	49.3	46.5	4.2	1658
Using New Technologies	27.0	52.3	20.7	1652
Clarifying Personal Values	25.5	62.2	12.3	1651
Experiencing and Responding to the Arts	20.4	57.2	22.5	1656
Lifelong Learning	37.5	56.1	6.4	1654
Maintaining Physical Health and Well-Being	38.4	55.9	5.7	1658

**Table 3.3**  
**Importance of Knowledge and Skill Areas**

	<i>Rating of Importance of each area</i>			<i>N</i>
	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not</u>	
	<u>Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	
	<i>Percentages*</i>			
<b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b>				
Other Cultures	47.6	46.1	6.3	1608
Computers	83.9	15.2	0.9	1608
Wellness	59.9	35.3	4.8	1606
Sciences	30.7	60.0	9.3	1599
Social Sciences	34.0	59.7	6.3	1602
Humanities	33.5	59.7	6.8	1595
Arts	27.7	55.0	17.3	1606
Gender Issues	33.4	53.1	13.5	1601
Racial Issues	44.0	46.3	9.8	1608
Morals and Ethics	70.2	27.4	2.4	1596
Current Events and Contemporary Issues	58.1	39.8	2.1	1607
Global Events	49.3	46.7	4.0	1603
<b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>				
Writing	86.2	13.5	0.4	1620
Speaking	85.1	14.1	0.8	1622
Listening	88.0	11.7	0.2	1619
Problem Solving	84.4	15.2	0.3	1620
Analyzing and Evaluating Ideas	78.8	20.8	0.4	1613
Conducting Research	44.5	49.8	5.6	1611
Using Library Resources	45.5	49.7	4.8	1613
Using Mathematics	43.7	50.0	6.3	1613
Creative Thinking	71.1	28.2	0.7	1611
Critical Thinking	73.8	25.6	0.6	1613
Making Informed Decisions	74.3	25.3	0.4	1608
Using Computers at Work	81.1	17.2	1.7	1613
Providing Leadership	70.5	28.2	1.3	1610
Persuading Others	45.5	49.6	4.9	1611
Coping with Stress	75.4	23.0	1.6	1612
Dealing with the Public	67.5	30.8	1.7	1613
Managing Time	82.7	16.9	0.4	1611
Planning and Organizing	82.9	16.9	0.2	1609
Conflict Resolution	66.8	31.7	1.4	1610
Interacting with Diverse Groups of People	66.5	31.0	2.5	1615
Self-Evaluation	61.6	37.0	1.4	1610
Self-Reliance	72.9	26.3	0.8	1611
Working Cooperatively	74.4	25.0	0.6	1614
Using New Technologies	70.1	28.5	1.4	1613
Clarifying Personal Values	61.8	35.7	2.5	1608
Experiencing and Responding to the Arts	32.2	51.4	16.4	1608
Lifelong Learning	72.8	26.2	1.0	1609

**Figure 9**  
**Preparation and Importance of Knowledge Areas: Mean Ratings**

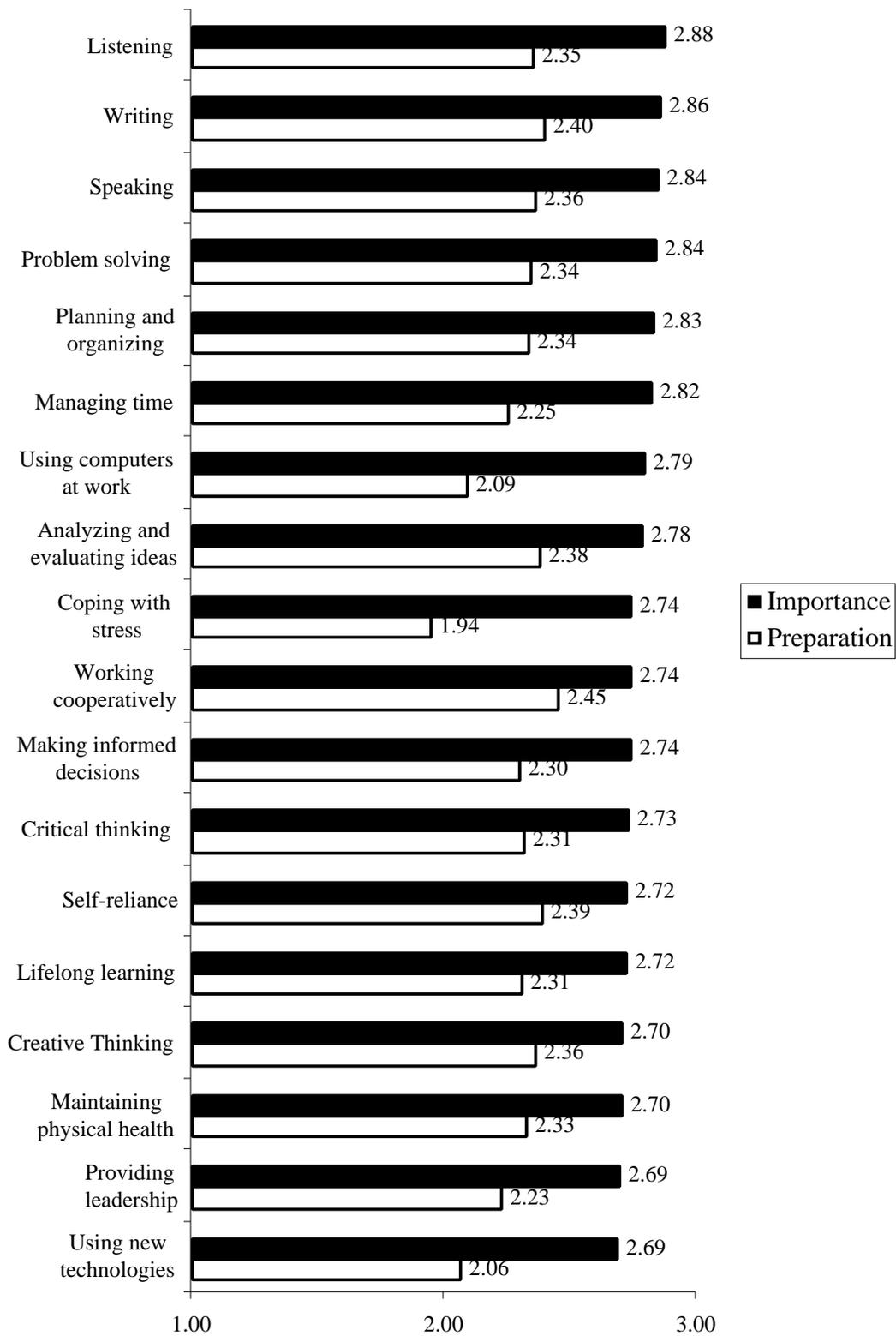


Importance: Where 1=Not Important, 2=Somewhat Important, and 3=Very Important  
 Preparation: Where 1=Poorly, 2=Satisfactorily, and 3=Very Well

**Skills and Abilities**

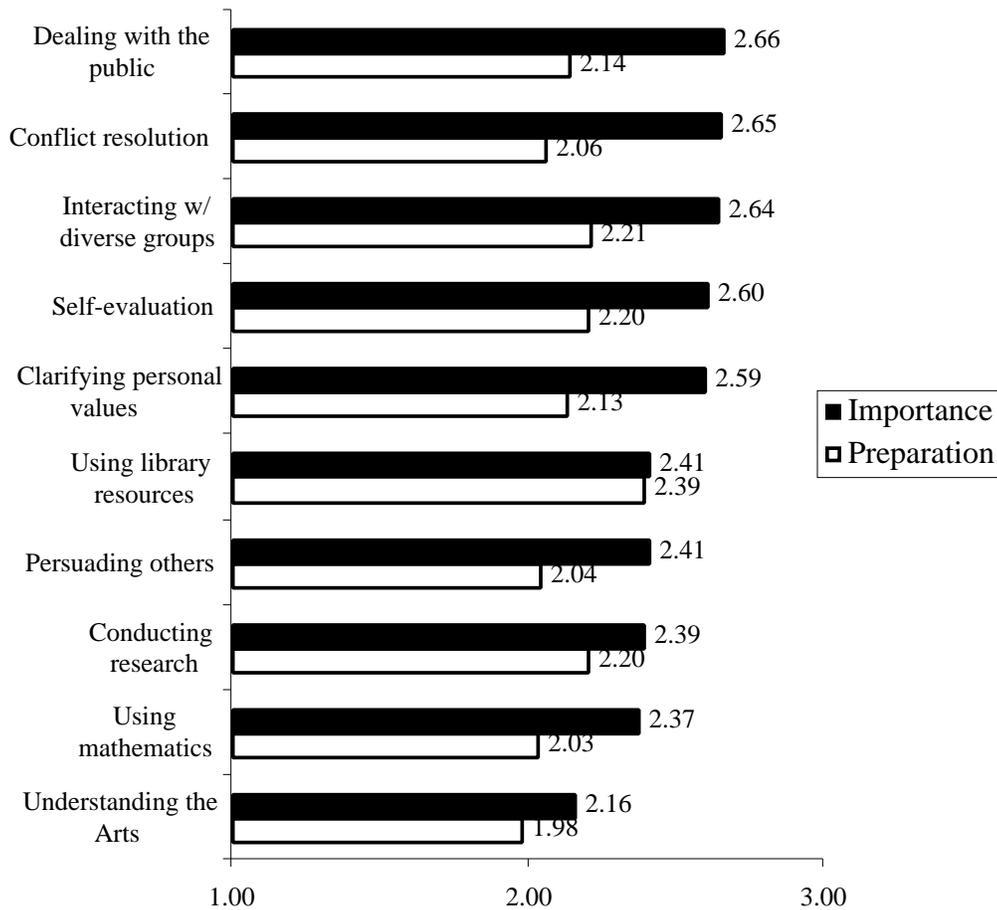
- The skill items with the highest percentage of responses in the very well category included writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, analyzing and evaluating ideas, using library resources, creative thinking, planning and organizing, self-reliance, and working cooperatively. Forty to 50 percent indicated they were very well prepared in these areas, and less than 10 percent indicated they were poorly prepared. (Table 3.2)
- On most skill and ability items, more than 90 percent of alumni rated their preparation very well or satisfactory. (Table 3.2)
- At least 95 percent rated their preparation satisfactory or very well in the skill areas of writing, analyzing and evaluating ideas, making informed decisions, and working cooperatively. (Table 3.2)

**Figure 10**  
**Preparation and Importance of Skills: Mean Ratings**



Importance: Where 1=Not Important, 2=Somewhat Important, and 3=Very Important  
 Preparation: Where 1=Poorly, 2=Satisfactorily, and 3=Very Well

**Figure 10 (Continued)**  
**Preparation and Importance of Skills: Mean Ratings**



Importance: Where 1=Not Important, 2=Somewhat Important, and 3=Very Important

Preparation: Where 1=Poorly, 2=Satisfactorily, and 3=Very Well

- Critical thinking, making informed decisions, self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and maintaining physical health and well-being were additional skill areas where at least nine out of ten respondents felt satisfactorily or very well prepared.
- For the skill areas of using computers at work, coping with stress, using new technologies, and experiencing and responding to the arts, more than 73 percent of all respondents indicated they were very well or satisfactorily prepared.

**Importance of Knowledge and Skills**

- A majority of respondents rated most knowledge and skill items as “very important.” Understanding computers, using computers at work, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, managing time, and planning and organizing were rated “very important” by more than 80 percent of all respondents.
- Each knowledge area shown in Figure 9 averaged higher on importance than on preparation.

- In Figure 9, it can be seen that differences in alumni ratings of preparation and ratings of importance were greatest in response to understanding computers and morals and ethics. Differences between mean importance and mean preparation were smallest in areas such as understanding humanities, social sciences, sciences, and the Arts.
- Thirty percent indicated they felt very well prepared in the area of understanding computers, but nearly 85 percent felt that it was very important. For morals and ethics, 70 percent rated it as very important, but only 22 percent felt very well prepared.
- Each skill area shown in Figure 10 averaged higher on importance than on preparation.
- Differences in alumni ratings of preparation and importance in skill areas were greatest in response to coping with stress, using computers at work, using new technologies, and conflict resolution. (Figure 10)
- Some skill areas where alumni ratings of preparation were comparable to ratings of importance include using library resources, conducting research, and experiencing and responding to the Arts. (Figure 10)

#### **Internships and Employment at Ball State**

- Nearly one-half of all respondents indicated that they participated in an internship program (49.5%), held campus employment (47.5%), or off-campus employment (49.6%) while attending Ball State.

#### **Interaction with Faculty at Ball State**

- When alumni were asked how often they had met with faculty members outside of class, about 15 percent indicated that they met often, nearly one-half indicated they had met

**Table 3.4**  
**Internships and Student Employment**

	<i>Percent*</i>	<i>N</i>
Internship	49.5	840
Campus Employment	47.5	806
Off-Campus Employment	49.6	842

\* Percent is based on 1,698. N shows the number who indicated internship or employment experience.

**Table 3.5**  
**Frequency of Interaction with Faculty**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
Often	15.2	252
Occasionally	48.3	803
Rarely	32.4	538
Never	4.1	68
Total	100.0	1,661

**Table 3.6**  
**Number of Weekly Study and Work Hours at Ball State**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
<b>HOURS OF STUDY PER WEEK</b>		
Not at All	.1	2
Less than 5 Hours	7.6	126
5-10 Hours	40.3	669
11-20 Hours	38.0	632
Over 20 Hours	14.0	233
Total	100.0	1,662
<b>HOURS WORKED PER WEEK</b>		
Not Employed	16.9	272
10 Hours or Less	17.4	281
11-20 Hours	41.3	666
Over 20 Hours	24.5	395
Total	100.0	1,614

occasionally, and about 37 percent indicated they had met rarely or never with faculty members outside of class. (Table 3.5)

### **Number of Weekly Study and Work Hours**

- Fifty-two percent of alumni reported that they studied 11 or more hours per week while attending classes at Ball State. Forty percent indicated that they studied five to ten hours per week. (Table 3.6)
- Nearly two-thirds of all respondents (65.8%) indicated that they typically worked 11 or more hours a week while attending classes. Only 16.9 percent indicated that they typically did not work while attending classes. (Table 3.6)



## SECTION 4

### Satisfaction with Departmental Experiences

*Summary* Alumni were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with statements about their department such as “I am satisfied with my department.” More than four out of five alumni agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with their department in general, as well as with faculty professional expertise, teaching ability of faculty, and fairness of grading in departmental courses. More than three-quarters of all respondents indicated satisfaction with opportunities for faculty interaction, the availability of required courses in their major, feedback from instructors, and opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction.

Two-thirds agreed that their departmental courses had prepared them for employment, and six out of ten agreed that departmental courses had prepared them for graduate or professional school. More than one-half of those surveyed expressed satisfaction with computer training for their career, faculty advising in their department, and opportunities for participation in internships and practicums. Alumni were less likely to agree that they were satisfied with departmental assistance in obtaining a job. Forty percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am satisfied with departmental assistance in planning my career.” (Table 4.1)

- Faculty teaching ability and professional expertise had the highest positive ratings of all departmental questions. More than 86 percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the teaching ability of faculty in their department as well as with faculty professional expertise. (Table 4.1)
- More than four out of five alumni agreed (54.1%) or strongly agreed (29.4%) they were satisfied with their department in general. Eight percent were undecided about their satisfaction with their department, and about eight percent disagreed (6.4%) or strongly disagreed (1.9%) with the statement.
- About 85 percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the fairness of grading in their departmental courses. (Table 4.1)
- Almost eight out of ten agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with opportunities for interaction with faculty (79.5%), opportunities for evaluation of instruction (78.6%), and the availability of required courses in their major. (77.7%)
- More than six out of ten alumni agreed (40.7%) or strongly agreed (22.2%) they were satisfied with faculty advising in their major department. Twenty percent did not agree that they were satisfied with faculty advising in their departments.
- A majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that departmental courses prepared them for graduate or professional school (59.8%), and trained them for using computers in their careers (53.7%). However, nearly one-third of the respondents disagreed when asked if they were satisfied with computer training for their career. (Table 4.1)
- More than one-half of all respondents agreed they were satisfied with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences (52.4%), and with opportunities to participate in such programs. (54.7%)
- Departmental assistance in planning a career and obtaining a job were the departmental items with which respondents most often expressed dissatisfaction. Forty percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with departmental assistance in planning a career, and 27 percent were satisfied with departmental assistance in obtaining a job. Conversely, about 40 percent disagreed they were satisfied with career planning assistance, and more than half (52.8%) disagreed they were satisfied with assistance in obtaining employment.

**Table 4.1**  
**Satisfaction with Department of Major**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided <i>Percentages</i>	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	<i>N</i>
<b>I am satisfied...</b>						
with my department.	29.4	54.1	8.2	6.4	1.9	1661
with teaching ability of faculty in my department.	31.5	54.9	7.3	5.3	1.0	1658
with professional expertise of departmental faculty.	34.7	52.0	8.2	3.8	1.2	1664
with opportunities for interaction with departmental faculty.	35.1	44.4	12.1	7.2	1.2	1654
with the availability of required courses in my major.	29.6	48.2	9.2	11.1	2.0	1661
with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	20.3	32.2	17.7	21.8	8.2	1580
with opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	23.7	31.0	17.6	20.1	7.6	1579
that the courses in my department prepared me for employment.	24.7	43.1	15.3	11.0	5.9	1627
that the courses in my department prepared me for graduate or professional school.	20.5	39.4	30.0	7.0	3.2	1300
with the fairness of grading in departmental courses.	25.1	59.4	8.6	4.9	1.9	1662
with feedback from instructors about my academic progress.	26.2	49.9	13.4	9.0	1.4	1663
with computer training for my career.	18.2	35.5	14.3	21.6	10.4	1631
with opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction in my department.	24.8	53.8	13.6	6.2	1.6	1642
with faculty advising in my department.	22.2	40.7	16.9	13.8	6.3	1655
with departmental assistance in planning my career.	13.6	26.4	20.2	27.6	12.3	1608
with departmental assistance in obtaining a job.	8.8	18.1	20.3	30.4	22.4	1476

## SECTION 5

### Writing, Quantitative Skills, and Computer Skills Performed on the Job

*Summary* More than nine out of ten respondents were using writing, computer, and quantitative skills on the job. Alumni reported using a wide variety of skills in each of these areas, summarized below.

#### Writing Tasks on the Job

- Memos and business letters were by far the most often cited types of writing used by alumni in the course of their employment. More than seven out of ten (72.4%) employed alumni indicated that they sometimes write memos on the job, while 55 percent reported writing business letters.
- About 40 percent reported writing electronic mail at work, and 36 percent reported proposal writing. Nearly one-quarter reported writing field notes. Twenty-two percent were writing promotional materials, 18 percent were writing research reports, and about 17 percent were writing product documentation. Nearly 15 percent were writing sales letters (14.9%), or product specifications (13.7%). (Table 5.1)

#### Quantitative Tasks on the Job

- Eighty-six percent of all employed respondents reported using basic arithmetic skills on the job, while approximately one-half (50.5%) used decimal, fraction, and ratio skills at work. Financial calculations were the third most often used quantitative skill reported on the survey. Nearly 2 out of 5 graduates (38.2%) reported they were using financial calculations at work.

**Table 5.1**  
**Writing Tasks Performed on the Job**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
<b>WRITING TASKS</b>		
Memos	72.4	1149
Business Letters	55.4	879
Electronic Mail	39.8	631
Proposals	35.7	566
Field Notes	24.1	383
Promotional Materials	21.8	346
Research Reports	18.0	286
Product Documentation	16.5	262
Sales Letters	14.9	236
Product Specifications	13.7	217
Sales Brochures	11.9	189
Lab Reports	4.6	73
Other	30.0	476
None	4.6	73
<b>Total*</b>	<b>363.6</b>	<b>5766</b>

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because alumni could chose more than one response.

**Table 5.2**  
**Quantitative Tasks Performed on the Job**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
<b>QUANTITATIVE TASKS</b>		
Basic Arithmetic Skills	85.6	1346
Decimal, Fraction and Ratio Skills	50.5	794
Financial Calculations	38.2	600
Algebra	22.6	356
Geometry	14.7	231
Higher Mathematics Applications	9.9	156
Other	3.5	55
None	7.0	110
<b>Total*</b>	<b>232.1</b>	<b>3648</b>

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because alumni could chose more than one response.

- Less than one-fourth indicated the use of algebra (22.6%) or geometry (14.7%) on the job. About ten percent of respondents used higher mathematics applications on the job. (Table 5.2)

### Computer Tasks on the Job

- More than 91 percent of employed respondents used computers on the job. Word processing was the type of application most used—78 percent reported using word processing software on the job.
- E-mail and communications software were reportedly used by about one-half of all employed respondents (50.3%),
- About 35 to 40 percent used spreadsheets (41.0%), databases (37.3%), information retrieval (35.8%), and graphics software (35.4%).
- Lesser-used computer software included computer tutorial programs (15.7%), financial analysis software (12.9%), statistics software (11.4%), programming (6.9%), and other types of software (11.2%).

**Table 5.3**  
**Computer Tasks Performed on the Job**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
<b>COMPUTER TASKS</b>		
Word Processing	77.9	1234
E-Mail/communications	50.3	797
Spreadsheets	41.0	649
Database	37.3	591
Information Retrieval	35.8	567
Graphics	35.4	561
Computer Based Tutorials	15.7	249
Financial Analysis	12.9	205
Statistics	11.4	181
Programming	6.9	109
Other	11.2	177
None	8.3	131
<b>Total*</b>	<b>344.1</b>	<b>5451</b>

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because alumni could chose more than one response.

## SECTION 6

### Comparison of Findings: 1994-1996

*Summary* In this section of the report, 1994 and 1996 Alumni Survey findings are compared by year to highlight similarities and differences. Findings from 1994 refer to the 1991-92 graduating class, while findings from 1996 refer to the 1993-94 graduating class. Alumni received the surveys about two years after graduation.

When compared to 1994 respondents, alumni surveyed in 1996 were generally more positive toward their major but rated their skills and abilities lower.

For each survey report, statistical comparisons were made between academic and demographic characteristics of respondents and all alumni. For both the 1994 and 1996 surveys, cumulative GPA and high school percentile rank were slightly higher among respondents than among all graduates. (Section 1 contains additional demographic and academic information about the 1996 survey.)

- Respondents reported significantly higher incomes in 1996 than in 1994. The 1996 survey showed higher percentages of respondents in all income ranges over \$25,000 and lower percentages of respondents in lower income ranges, than did the 1994 survey.
- Although a smaller percentage of 1996 respondents were attending graduate school (13.5%) than were 1994 respondents (15.5%), the difference was not statistically significant. The percentage of respondents who were involved in professional development programs rose from 14.1 percent in 1994 to 15.1 percent in 1996, but the increase was also not statistically significant.

**Table 6.1**  
**Annual Income from**  
**Full-Time Employment**  
**Comparison of 1996 and 1994 Respondents\***

	1996	1994
	<i>Percent</i>	
<b>ANNUAL INCOME</b>		
Less than \$15,000	6.4	9.3
\$15,000-\$19,999	14.4	21.2
\$20,000-\$24,999	26.4	30.9
\$25,000-\$29,999	25.5	20.0
\$30,000-\$34,999	13.6	9.0
\$35,000-\$39,999	6.8	4.2
\$40,000 or more	6.9	5.5
<b>N</b>	1,401	1,280

\* The 1996 survey was mailed to 1993-94 graduates, and the 1994 survey was mailed to 1991-92 graduates.

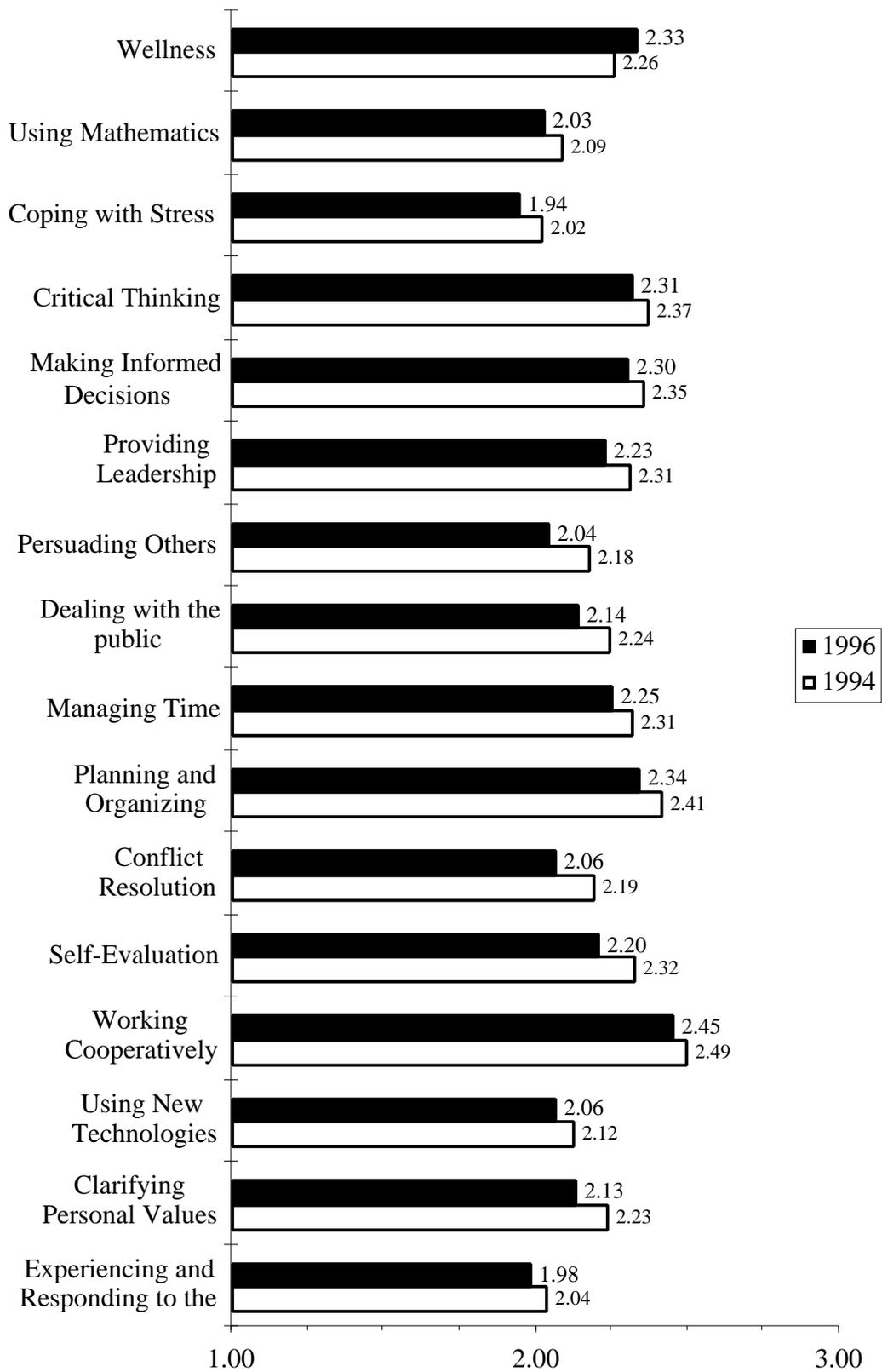
- The ratings of preparation for most skill and knowledge items did not change significantly from 1994 to 1996. Skill and knowledge items where statistically significant 1994-1996 differences exist are shown in Table 6.2 and Figure 11.
- Mean scores for items with significant changes between 1994 and 1996 are shown in Figure 11. The greatest changes from 1994 to 1996 occurred for persuading others, conflict resolution, and self evaluation items, where the percentage of alumni who felt very well prepared dropped about seven to eight percentage points from 1994 to 1996.
- Knowledge of wellness was rated very well or satisfactory by a higher proportion of respondents in 1996 than in 1994. The ratings for all other skill and knowledge items where significant differences were observed declined slightly from 1994 to 1996. (Table 6.2 and Figure 11.)

**Table 6.2**  
**Alumni Evaluation of Experiences at Ball State**  
**Comparison of 1996 and 1994 Responses\***

	<i>Percentage Rating Preparation in each area</i>			N
	Very Well	Satisfactorily	Poorly	
Wellness				
1996	37.8	57.6	4.6	1666
1994	31.7	62.2	6.1	1597
Using Mathematics				
1996	19.9	63.0	17.1	1662
1994	23.1	62.7	14.2	1594
Coping with Stress				
1996	20.7	53.0	26.3	1656
1994	24.9	51.7	23.4	1591
Critical Thinking				
1996	37.3	56.6	6.1	1658
1994	42.1	53.0	5.0	1595
Making Informed Decisions				
1996	34.1	61.6	4.2	1652
1994	39.3	56.6	4.1	1595
Providing Leadership				
1996	34.5	53.6	11.9	1658
1994	38.9	52.8	8.3	1596
Persuading Others				
1996	21.7	61.0	17.3	1658
1994	29.8	58.1	12.1	1585
Dealing with the Public				
1996	29.5	54.8	15.7	1656
1994	36.2	51.7	12.1	1597
Managing Time				
1996	37.4	50.2	12.3	1656
1994	42.2	46.9	10.9	1597
Planning and Organizing				
1996	41.6	50.4	8.0	1658
1994	47.0	47.4	5.6	1597
Conflict Resolution				
1996	21.4	63.4	15.2	1652
1994	28.6	61.4	10.0	1586
Self Evaluation				
1996	30.2	60.1	9.7	1655
1994	38.1	55.9	6.0	1595
Working Cooperatively				
1996	49.3	46.5	4.2	1658
1994	51.0	47.2	1.8	1597
Using New Technologies				
1996	27.0	52.3	20.7	1652
1994	27.3	57.6	15.1	1593
Clarifying Personal Values				
1996	25.5	62.2	12.3	1651
1994	30.1	62.8	7.0	1590
Experiencing and Responding to the Arts				
1996	20.4	57.2	22.5	1656
1994	23.7	56.3	20.0	1587

\* Differences are statistically significant. ( $p \leq .05$ )

**Figure 11**  
**Knowledge and Skill Items: Comparison of 1996 and 1994 Means**



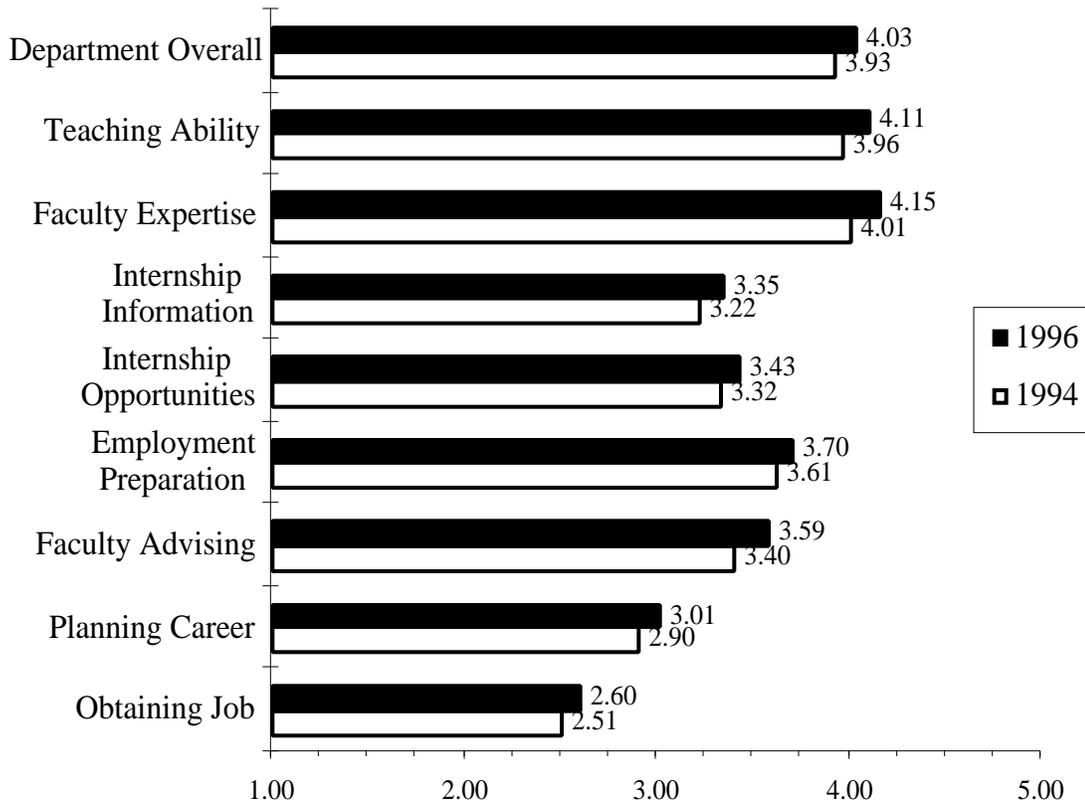
Where 1=Poorly Prepared, 2=Satisfactorily Prepared, and 3=Very Well Prepared

**Table 6.3**  
**Satisfaction with Department of Major**  
**Comparison of 1996 and 1994 Responses\***

	<i>Year</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	<i>N</i>
		<i>Percentages</i>					
<b>I am satisfied...</b>							
with my department.	1996	29.4	54.1	8.2	6.4	1.9	1661
	1994	24.7	56.6	7.9	8.4	2.4	1585
with teaching ability of faculty in my department.	1996	31.5	54.9	7.3	5.3	1.0	1658
	1994	25.4	56.7	8.0	8.3	1.6	1581
with professional expertise of departmental faculty.	1996	34.7	52.0	8.2	3.8	1.2	1664
	1994	27.5	55.1	9.7	6.3	1.5	1584
with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	1996	20.3	32.2	17.7	21.8	8.2	1580
	1994	15.8	31.1	21.6	22.6	8.9	1533
with opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	1996	23.7	31.0	17.6	20.1	7.6	1579
	1994	20.0	30.5	20.4	20.1	9.0	1523
that the courses in my department prepared me for employment.	1996	24.7	43.1	15.3	11.0	5.9	1627
	1994	19.5	46.2	16.1	12.7	5.5	1542
with faculty advising in my department.	1996	22.2	40.7	16.9	13.8	6.3	1655
	1994	16.8	40.3	17.6	16.5	8.8	1571
with departmental assistance in planning my career.	1996	13.6	26.4	20.2	27.6	12.3	1608
	1994	10.0	25.4	23.1	28.0	13.5	1530
with departmental assistance in obtaining a job.	1996	8.8	18.1	20.3	30.4	22.4	1476
	1994	7.2	16.0	22.9	27.9	26.0	1412

\* Differences are statistically significant. ( $p \leq .05$ )

**Figure 12**  
**Satisfaction with Department: Comparison of 1996 and 1994 Means\***



Where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree

- Departmental items where significant differences occurred between 1994 and 1996 are shown in Table 6.3 and Figure 12. All nine of these items were rated more positively in 1996 than in 1994.
- The largest increases in departmental satisfaction were in response to items about faculty advising, teaching ability, and professional expertise. The percentage of alumni who strongly agreed that they were satisfied with these aspects of their major departments increased from five to seven percentage points from 1994 to 1996. (Table 6.3)



## SECTION 7

### Summary and Discussion

The Office of Academic Assessment and the Alumni Survey Steering Committee conducted this project to provide information about alumni attitudes toward Ball State and its programs. The project is part of an overall assessment plan and is coordinated with other assessment projects.

The subject group for this study was chosen so that respondents would not be too far removed from their experiences at Ball State, but would also have ample time to begin careers. To meet these objectives, alumni who graduated approximately two years prior to the survey date were chosen. The 1996 survey was the third administration of the survey. For each administration of the survey, all baccalaureate graduates within an entire academic year were surveyed.

These surveys show that about 80 percent of graduates with full-time jobs are finding satisfactory employment in positions related to their educational pursuits, and that many alumni are continuing their education after graduation. Also, more than 85 percent are finding employment in Indiana or neighboring states, and most new full-time jobs are found within three months after graduation.

A three point scale was used to elicit alumni attitudes toward the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Alumni were asked whether their needs were met very well, satisfactorily, or poorly in areas such as general education, computer skills, speaking, and writing. This three point scale reveals the general opinion respondents have toward their progress in each area, works well as a clear estimate of alumni opinion, and requires little time and effort to complete.

The survey was designed to determine if alumni felt that they had progressed in several important learning areas. Alumni were also asked about the importance they placed on each skill.

Generally, findings about skills and knowledge areas were very positive. Departmental findings were also very supportive of the University's mission as a premiere teaching institution.

It is hoped that findings from these and other surveys will generate constructive discussion throughout campus. Additional information from this survey is available upon request.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Members of the Alumni Survey Steering Committee**

Jeannine Harrold, Director, Career Services

Tom Lowe, Dean, University College

Catherine Palomba, Director, Institutional Research and Academic Assessment (Ex-officio)

Brian Pickerill, Assistant Director, Office of Academic Assessment

Marilyn Ryan, Associate Director of Graduate Programs, School of Nursing

Lawrence Smith, Chair, Elementary Education

Ronald Spangler, Professor, Landscape Architecture

Janice Replogle, Director of Undergraduate Programs, College of Business

Carl Warnes, Chair, Department of Biology



## **APPENDIX B**

### **1996 Ball State Alumni Survey**

# 1996 Ball State Alumni Survey

Please read the instructions carefully for each section. In particular, pay attention to italicized words. If a question does not apply to you, simply skip it and go on. Your answers will be held strictly confidential. Your participation is important, and is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

<b>Section I</b> <b>Career and Educational Experiences Since Graduation</b>
--

Section I is about your current activities in the areas of employment and further education.

## Current Employment

1. What is your *current* employment status? (*Please refer to your principle employment—check only one.*)
  - Employed full-time
  - Employed part-time
  - Graduate assistantship, fellowship, or student employment
  - Not employed (*Please indicate the reason in the blank, then skip to Further Education question #1.*) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your current occupation? (*Please be descriptive and specific.*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. In which state are you currently working? (*Please use the 2-letter abbreviation.*) 

--	--
4. How long did it take you to find your first full-time job after graduation?
  - Held job before graduation
  - Secured job before graduation
  - Within 3 months of graduation
  - 3 to 6 months after graduation
  - More than 6 months after graduation
5. Was a 4-year college degree required in order to obtain your principal job?     Yes     No
6. Would you describe your employment as:
  - In area of BSU major (*Skip to question #8.*)
  - In area related to BSU major (*Skip to question #8.*)
  - In area not related to BSU major
7. What is the main reason you are working in an area not related to your major at Ball State?
  - Never planned to work in my field
  - Developed a new career interest
  - Better pay
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
  - Could not find a job I wanted
  - Would have to relocate for a job in my field
  - Better opportunity for advancement
  - I have not obtained licensure, registration, or certification required for my field.
8. How satisfied are you with your *current* employment?
  - Very Satisfied
  - Satisfied
  - Dissatisfied
  - Very Dissatisfied

9. Which one category *best* describes the type of organization in which you work?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale / retail trade          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government (not education) | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation / public utilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health care                | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance / insurance / real estate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media (radio, TV, print)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social services                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                       |

10. What is your annual income (before taxes) from your primary job (*indicated in question #2 above*)? (*We realize this is a personal question, but your willingness to answer helps us learn what graduates can expect to earn. Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.*)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$15,000   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000 to \$39,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$19,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 to \$44,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to \$24,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$45,000 to \$49,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 to \$29,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to \$59,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 to \$34,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$60,000        |

### Further Education

1. Since graduating in 1993-94, have you *completed* any additional degree or certification program? If so, please indicate the field of study. If a degree program, please indicate the degree. (e.g. MA, BA...)

- No       Yes (field of study) \_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_\_\_\_

2. What best describes your current educational activities? (*Check only one.*)

- Enrolled in a master's degree program
- Enrolled in a doctoral degree program (other than medical, dental or legal)
- Enrolled in or admitted to a professional degree program (medical, dental, legal)
- Enrolled in another undergraduate degree program
- Taking one or more college courses
- Taking professional development courses (not necessarily college courses)
- Not taking any courses (*Skip to question #5.*)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. If currently enrolled, indicate your field of study in the space below. (*For example, political science, photography, nursing, etc.*)

\_\_\_\_\_

4. If enrolled in school, are you currently enrolled:     full-time     part-time

5. Do you plan eventually to... (*Check all that apply. Include your current degree objectives.*)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> obtain a graduate or professional degree?         | <input type="checkbox"/> obtain another bachelor's degree?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> obtain certification through college course work? | <input type="checkbox"/> take professional development courses? (not necessarily college courses) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> obtain certification through non-college work?    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> take some additional college courses?             | <input type="checkbox"/> I have no plans to continue my education.                                |

## Section II Ball State Experiences

### Attitude toward Ball State

1. What is your general attitude toward Ball State?
- Very Positive     Positive     Negative     Very Negative
2. Overall, how did your experiences at Ball State meet your needs in the following areas?
- |                                   | Very Well                | Satisfactorily           | Poorly                   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Intellectual Growth               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Personal growth                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preparation for further education | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preparation for career            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
3. Would you recommend Ball State to someone who wanted to major in your field?
- Yes     No     Don't know

### Knowledge and Understanding

Please indicate how well *your* experiences at Ball State helped further your understanding in the following areas. (*Consider all activities that you participated in at Ball State, including those outside the classroom.*) Also, check the second column to indicate your view of the importance of each area.

4. *How well did your experiences at Ball State help you to understand the following areas, and how important is each area to you?*

	Very Well	Satisfactorily	Poorly		Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Other cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The social sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The humanities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Racial issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morals and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current events and contemporary issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Global events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Section III  
Background Information**

1. While you were a student at Ball State, were you mainly enrolled full-time or part-time?  
 Full-time       Part-time
  
2. Did you participate in any of the following activities while you were at Ball State?  
*(Check all that apply.)*  
 internship, practicum, or co-op  
 campus employment  
 off-campus employment
  
3. About how many hours a week did you *typically* work while you were taking classes?  
 Not employed while taking classes       11-20 hours a week  
 10 or fewer hours a week       over 20 hours a week
  
4. About how many hours a week did you *typically* study, outside the classroom?  
 Not at all       11-20 hours a week  
 Less than 5 hours a week       over 20 hours a week  
 5-10 hours a week
  
5. How often did you meet with faculty members outside of class?  
 Never       Rarely       Occasionally       Often

**Section IV  
About Your Major**

1. Please indicate the department(s) in which you received your major(s) at Ball State. If you have *two* majors, list the department of the major which is most closely related to your employment or desired employment as your “primary major.”  
*(Place numbers from the list below into the appropriate boxes.)*

primary major department

secondary major department, if any

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Accounting</li> <li>2 Anthropology</li> <li>3 Architecture</li> <li>4 Art</li> <li>5 Biology</li> <li>6 Business Education &amp; Office Admin.</li> <li>7 Chemistry</li> <li>8 Computer Science</li> <li>9 Criminal Justice and Criminology</li> <li>10 Economics</li> <li>11 Elementary Education</li> <li>12 English</li> <li>13 Family and Consumer Sciences</li> <li>14 Finance</li> <li>15 General Studies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 Geography</li> <li>17 Geology</li> <li>18 History</li> <li>19 Industry and Technology</li> <li>20 International Business</li> <li>21 Journalism</li> <li>22 Landscape Architecture</li> <li>23 Management</li> <li>24 Marketing</li> <li>25 Mathematics</li> <li>26 Modern Languages and Classics</li> <li>27 Music</li> <li>28 Natural Resources and Env. Mgmt.</li> <li>29 Nursing</li> <li>30 Philosophy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>31 Physical Education</li> <li>32 Physics and Astronomy</li> <li>33 Physiology and Health Science</li> <li>34 Political Science</li> <li>35 Psychological Science</li> <li>36 Secondary Education</li> <li>37 Social Work</li> <li>38 Sociology</li> <li>39 Special Education</li> <li>40 Speech Communication</li> <li>41 Speech Pathology and Audiology</li> <li>42 Telecommunications</li> <li>43 Theatre</li> <li>44 Urban Planning</li> <li>45 Other</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|



**Section V**  
**Writing, Mathematics, and Computer Skills on the Job**

This section of the survey is for *employed alumni only*. If you are not currently employed, please skip to the "Additional Comments" section below.

1. What types of writing tasks do you routinely perform at work? (*Check all that apply.*)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> none                   | <input type="checkbox"/> business letters | <input type="checkbox"/> promotional materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> memos                  | <input type="checkbox"/> lab reports      | <input type="checkbox"/> field notes           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> product specifications | <input type="checkbox"/> sales letters    | <input type="checkbox"/> sales brochures       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> proposals              | <input type="checkbox"/> research reports | <input type="checkbox"/> e-mail                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> product documentation  | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____     |  |

2. Which of the following quantitative skills do you routinely use at work? (*Check all that apply.*)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> none                    | <input type="checkbox"/> decimal, fraction and ratio skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> basic arithmetic skills | <input type="checkbox"/> higher mathematics applications    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> algebra                 | <input type="checkbox"/> financial calculations             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> geometry                | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____                       |

3. Which types of computer programs do you routinely use at work? (*Check all that apply.*)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> none                  | <input type="checkbox"/> computer based tutorials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> word processing       | <input type="checkbox"/> graphics                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e-mail/communications | <input type="checkbox"/> programming              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> data base             | <input type="checkbox"/> statistics               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> financial analysis    | <input type="checkbox"/> information retrieval    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spreadsheets          | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____             |

**Additional Comments**

Please add any additional comments on this page.

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**Thanks for completing the survey. Please return it promptly in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. If you received any departmental survey supplements, please complete them also and return all surveys in the return envelope.**