

**1997 ALUMNI SURVEY  
OF 1994-95 GRADUATES**

**SUMMARY REPORT**



**Ball State University**

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Office of Academic Assessment

April, 1998

1997 Alumni Survey of 1994-95 Graduates  
Summary Report

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Office of Academic Assessment  
Ball State University

April, 1998



## 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 1994-95 baccalaureate degree graduates were surveyed in the Summer of 1997.
- Demographics of respondents, such as age, race, and gender were similar to those of the population of all 1994-95 graduates. However, a somewhat higher proportion of females responded to the survey than did males. Also, respondents had slightly higher academic averages such as high school percentile ranks, Ball State GPAs, and SAT and ACT test scores than did the 1994-95 graduating class.
- Eighty-four 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. About nine out of ten were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment.
- Seventy-two percent of full-time employed alumni were working in Indiana. Twelve percent were working in contiguous states.
- Eighteen percent were continuing college course work at the time of the survey, including 13.4 percent who were pursuing graduate degrees. About 14 percent had completed additional degrees or certification programs since graduating from Ball State in 1994-95.
- Sixty-one percent reported plans to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. Only about eleven percent indicated no plans for further education.
- Ninety-six 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.
- About 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 understanding wellness, and in the skill areas of writing, analyzing and evaluating ideas, and working cooperatively.
- More than 90 percent of all respondents indicated that they were prepared very well or satisfactorily in the areas of understanding sciences, social sciences, and humanities, and in the skill areas of speaking, listening, problem solving, using library resources, creative thinking, critical thinking, making informed decisions, planning and organizing, self-evaluation, self-reliance, lifelong learning, and maintaining physical health and well-being.
- 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, arts, gender 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 at least 80 percent of all respondents.
- More than 85 percent of alumni agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with their department in general, as well as with the teaching ability and professional expertise of their departmental faculty.

- About 97 percent of all employed respondents were using writing skills on the job. About 94 percent were using quantitative or computer skills on the job.
- When compared to 1994 and 1996 respondents, alumni surveyed in 1997 were more positive toward their majors and were more confident of their knowledge and understanding of wellness. However, alumni rated most other skills and abilities lower in 1996 and 1997 than in 1994.

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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

In Summer 1997, the Office of Academic Assessment surveyed all academic year 1994-95 baccalaureate degree recipients. Questionnaires were mailed to alumni who graduated at the end of the Fall 1994, Spring 1995, or Summer 1995 semesters. Two follow-up mailings were sent to those who did not respond to earlier mailings. The final response rate was 48.8 percent—1,350 of the 2,766 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. The 1997 administration remained virtually unchanged from 1996, with only some minor technical changes.

This report is organized in seven sections. Section 1 compares academic and demographic characteristics of respondents to the characteristics of all 1994-95 baccalaureate 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, while Section 5 describes data about graduates' on-the-job writing, computer, and mathematics use. Section 6 compares 1997 findings with findings from the 1994 and 1996 administrations of the survey. Finally, Section 7 contains a short summary and discussion.

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



## SECTION 1

### Demographic and Academic Characteristics

*Summary* This section compares the demographic and academic characteristics of survey respondents and academic year 1994-95 baccalaureate degree graduates.<sup>1</sup> Statistical tests are used to estimate the representativeness of the sample.

Respondents were not significantly different from the population of all 1994-95 graduates when compared by race, age, high school class size, or college of major.<sup>2</sup> Respondents were somewhat more likely than the population to be female. Respondents were also found to have slightly higher high school percentile ranks, SAT and ACT scores, and Ball State GPAs than the 1994-95 graduating class. Respondents were somewhat more likely than all graduates to have held distinction entry status. These differences were generally slight, but statistically significant. (Tables 1.1-1.3)

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- Among those surveyed, about 56 percent were female and about 44 percent were male. Among respondents, these percentages were about 61 and 39 percent, respectively. Females were more likely to respond to the survey than were males. The differences between the sample and population were statistically significant.
  - Based on a comparison of the overall distribution by race, the sample and population did not differ significantly. However, the response rate for African American alumni was about 31 percent, compared to about 49 percent for all alumni. The response rate among other minority groups was 50%.
  - Respondents were not found to be significantly different from the population when

compared by age, high school class size, or college of major.

- The average GPA was 3.04 for the population, and 3.10 for respondents. Although small, this difference in GPA was statistically significant. Nearly 57 percent of respondents earned an average of 3.0 or higher, compared to 52 percent of the population.
- Average high school percentile rank was slightly higher among respondents (71.8) than among all graduates (69.2). The difference was statistically significant.
- The average SAT and ACT scores were also significantly higher for respondents than for the population. (Table 1.2) SAT verbal and quantitative scores were about seven points higher among respondents, while the average ACT composite score was 0.7 points higher among respondents.
- As shown in Table 1.3, response rates varied considerably by college of major, from a low of about 36 percent among general studies majors to a high of 63 percent in the College of Architecture and Planning. The overall response rate was 48.8 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 3,041 students graduated with baccalaureate degrees during academic year 1994-95. However, 275 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=2,766).

<sup>2</sup> While a total of 1,350 alumni responded to the survey, five responded anonymously. 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 1994-95 Graduates**

	<u>Respondents</u> <i>Percentages</i> <i>N</i>	<u>All 1994-95 Graduates</u> <i>Percentages</i> <i>N</i>
<b>GENDER*</b>		
Male	39.1	43.6
Female	60.9	56.4
<b>RACE</b>		
Black	2.7	4.2
White	95.5	94.0
Other	1.8	1.8
<b>AGE</b>		
22 to 24	42.3	39.5
25	30.4	30.7
26	9.4	10.2
27	3.8	4.7
28 or older	14.1	14.9
<i>mean</i>	<i>26.30</i>	<i>26.34</i>
<b>GPA*</b>		
Less than 2.5	9.7	12.6
2.50 to 2.99	33.2	35.2
3.00 to 3.49	35.3	34.2
3.50 to 4.00	21.8	17.9
<i>mean</i>	<i>3.10</i>	<i>3.04</i>
<b>ACADEMIC ENTRY TYPE*</b>		
Distinction	17.6	14.9
Regular	69.1	69.6
Other	13.3	15.5
<b>N<sup>†</sup></b>	1,345	2,766

\* 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 1994-95 Graduates**

	<u>Respondents</u>			<u>All 1994-95 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*	71.8	19.9	1255	69.2	20.9	2564
High School Class Size	260.5	157.4	1255	258.9	159.3	2564
SAT Verbal*	437.0	85.4	1129	430.0	85.7	2323
SAT Quantitative*	511.7	85.8	1149	504.8	84.5	2361
ACT Composite*	22.3	4.3	344	21.6	4.4	645

\* 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	390	186	47.7
Architecture and Planning	108	68	63.0
Business	446	214	48.0
Fine Arts	141	75	53.2
Sciences and Humanities	956	455	47.6
Teachers College	334	184	55.1
Communication, Information, and Media	232	106	45.7
General Studies	159	57	35.8
<b>N</b>	<b>2,766</b>	<b>1,350*</b>	<b>48.8</b>

\* Includes five cases which were returned anonymously.



## SECTION 2

### Employment and Further Education

*Summary* Eighty-four percent of 1994-95 alumni were employed full-time. Of those employed full-time, 66 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 (67.3%) of alumni with full-time jobs indicated these jobs required a college degree. Additionally, 89 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. The most often cited occupations represented among those employed full-time were teachers (19.8%) (all types), managers and directors (7.5%), nurses (5.8%), architects and landscape architects (4.4%), sales representatives (4.3%), and accountants (4.0%). Eighty-four 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. At the time of the survey, 18 percent were enrolled

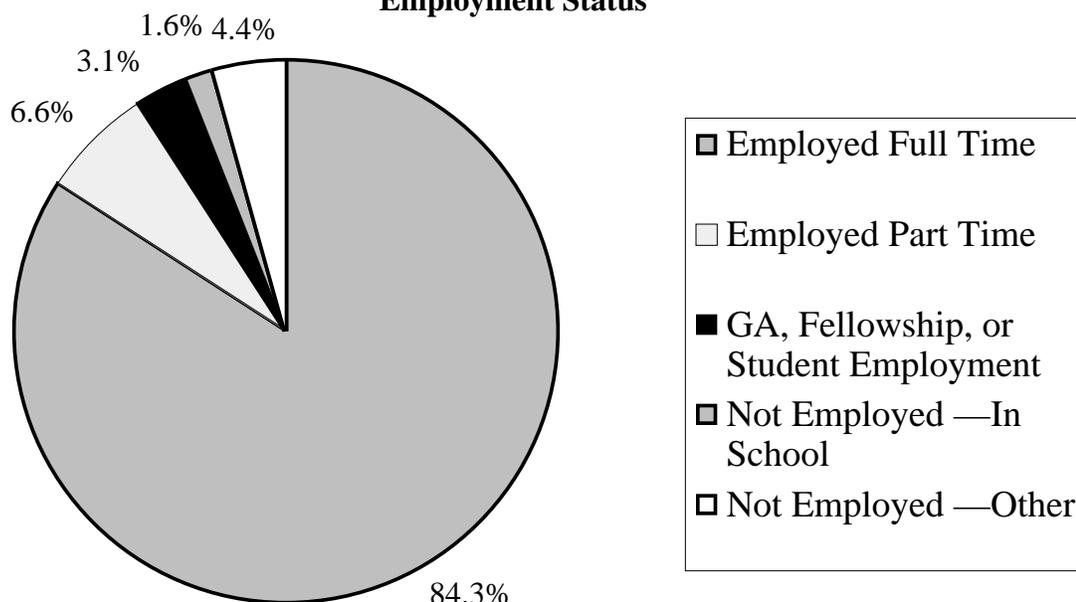
at a college or university, and 61 percent reported they plan to eventually complete a graduate or professional degree. Nearly 90 percent plan to continue their education with some combination of professional development and/or additional college course work.

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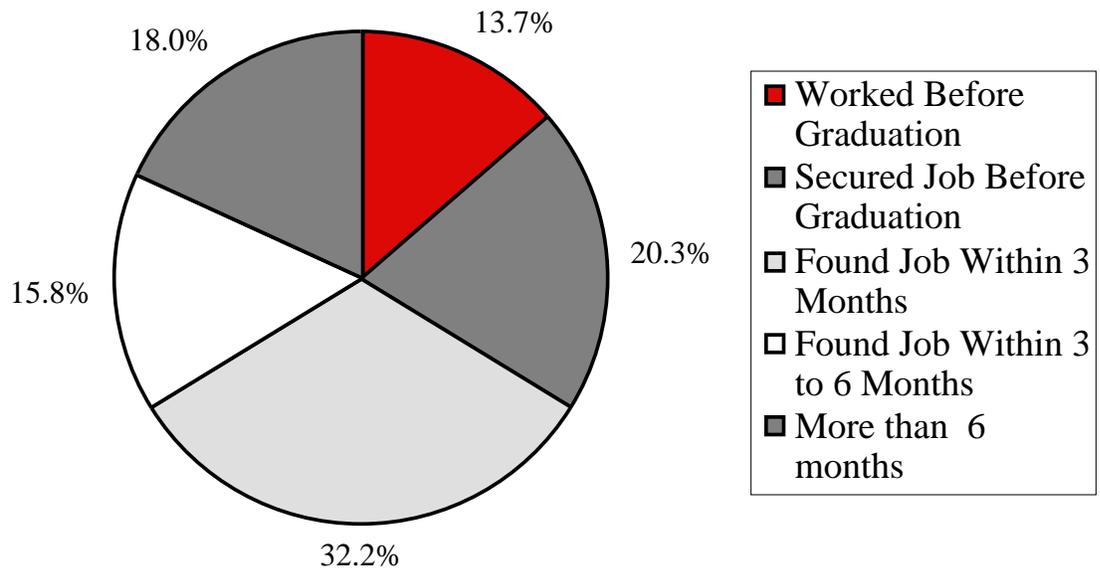
### Employment

- Eighty-four percent of 1994-95 alumni were employed full-time. (Figure 1.)
- Seven percent of alumni were employed part-time, and three percent were employed primarily with graduate assistantships, fellowships, or student employment.
- About six percent were not employed at the time of the survey. (Figure 1.)
- Of those who were not employed at the time of the survey, 35 percent were enrolled in school, and 12 percent had recently completed graduate degrees.

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



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



- Thirty-four percent of those employed full-time either continued a job that they had before graduation (13.7%) or secured employment before graduation (20.3%). As shown in Figure 2, an additional 32 percent (32.2%) found employment within three months of graduation, while about one-third found employment three or more months after graduation (33.8%).
- About 72 percent of those with full-time jobs were working in Indiana, while about 12 percent worked in contiguous states. About 16 percent worked in other, noncontiguous states. (Table 2.1)
- Well over one half (57.4%) of all full-time employed alumni were working within their major field of study. An additional 22 percent were employed in an area related to their major. (Figure 3.)
- Of the 21 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

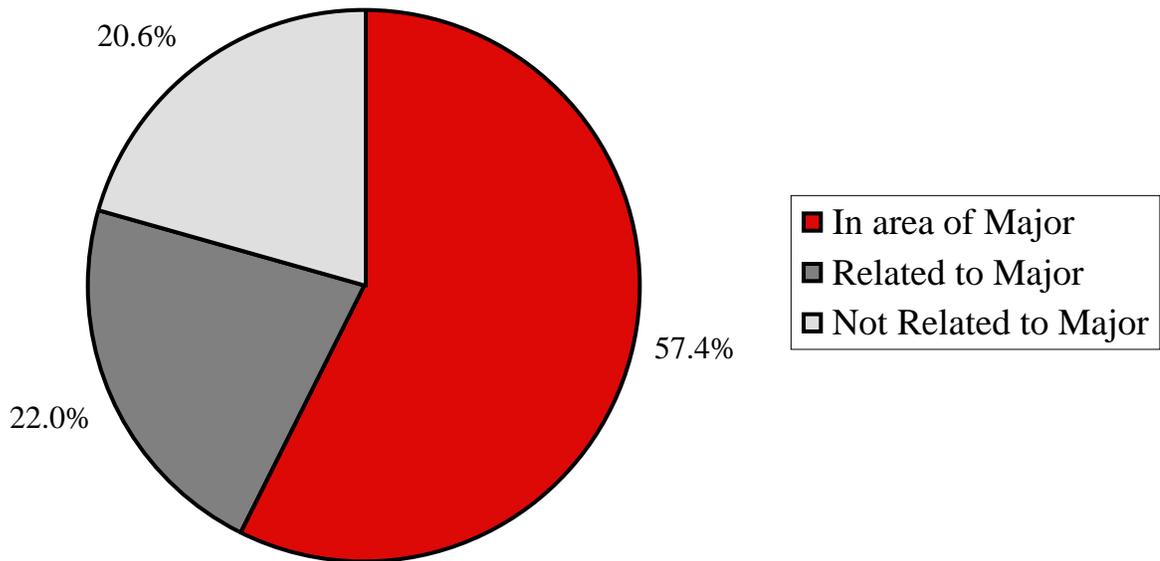
**Table 2.1**  
**Location of Employment**  
**Full-Time Employed Alumni Only**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
Indiana	71.6	800
Contiguous States	12.2	137
Other States	16.2	180
Total	100.0	1,117

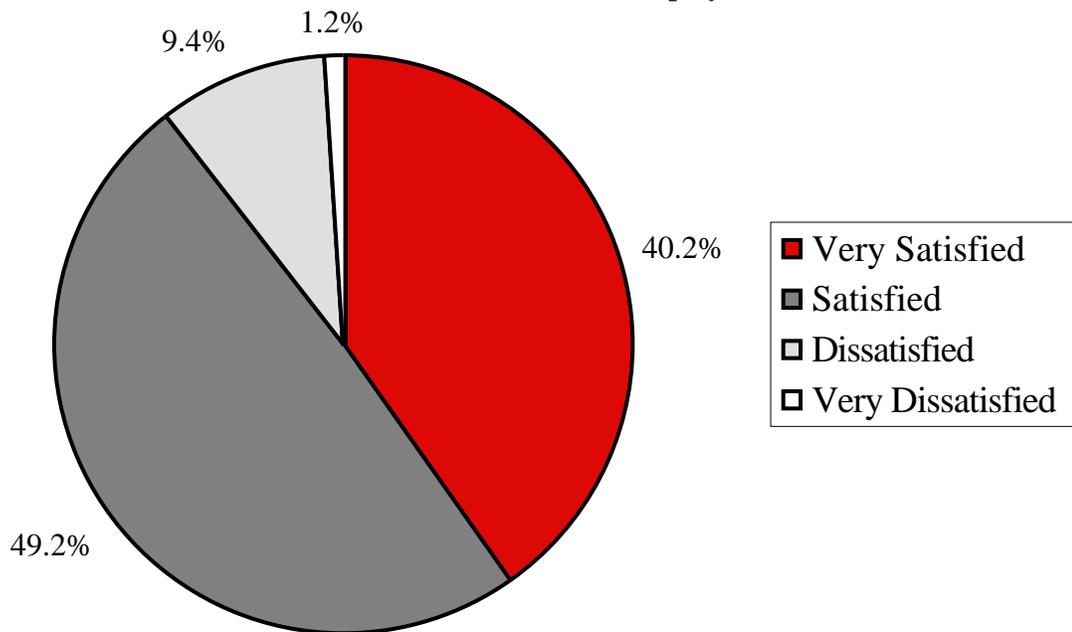
**Table 2.2**  
**Reasons for Working Outside the Major**  
**Full-Time Employed Alumni Only**

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
Could not find job in major	33.5	67
Developed new interest	21.0	42
Better pay	14.0	28
Better advancement	4.0	8
Did not plan to work in major	5.0	10
Could not relocate	4.0	8
Not licensed/certified	2.5	5
Other	16.0	32
Total	100.0	200

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



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

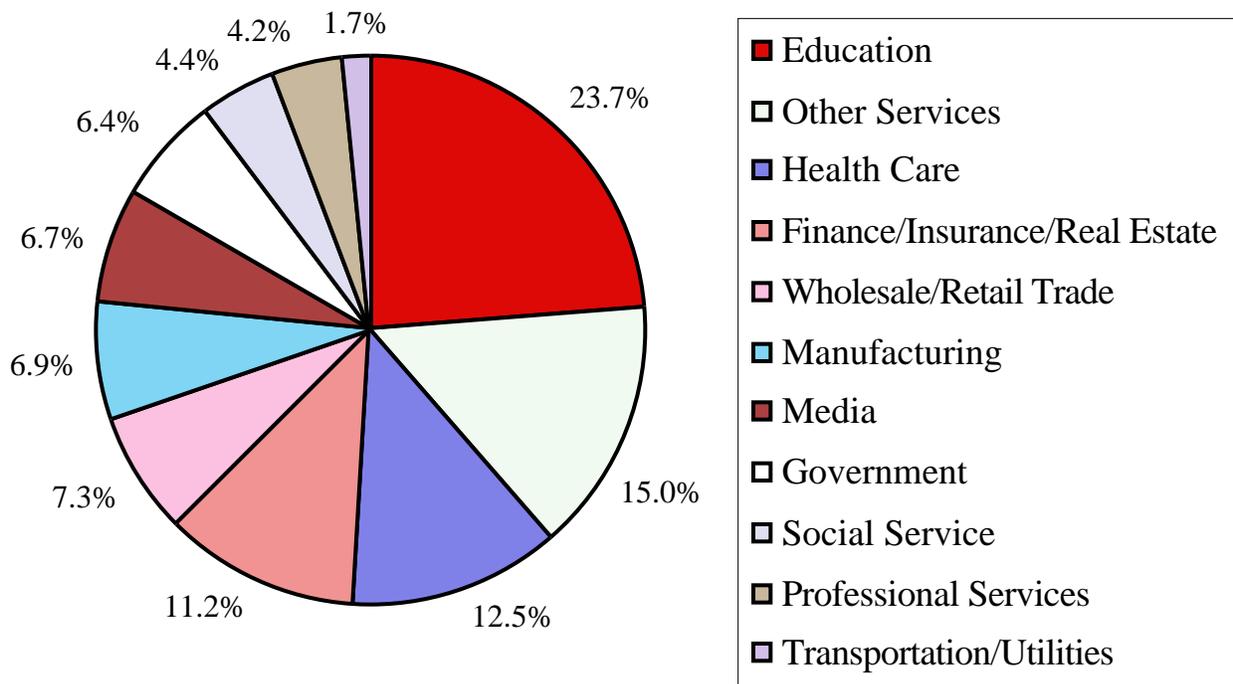


reasons included developing new interests, and finding better pay outside their major. (Table 2.2)

- Among those employed full-time, more than two-thirds (67.3%) indicated that a college degree was required for their employment.
- As can be seen in Figure 4, more than 89 percent of full-time employed alumni were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. Less than 11 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 (23.7%), other (miscellaneous) services (15.0%), health care (12.5%), and finance, insurance, and real estate (11.2%).
- Other types of organizations in which alumni found full-time employment included wholesale and retail trade (7.3%); manufacturing (6.9%); media (6.7%); government (6.4%); social services (4.4%); and professional services (4.2%). (Figure 5)
- Teachers (including all full-time primary and secondary school teachers) formed by far the largest occupational category, accounting for almost 20 percent of all full-time employed respondents. (Table 2.3)
- It can also be seen from Table 2.3 that alumni frequently reported full-time employment as managers and directors, nurses, sales representatives, architects, accountants, social and welfare workers, sales managers, graduate assistants, bank managers, counselors and therapists, and computer programmers.
- About 16 percent of full-time employed respondents were earning less than \$20,000 at the time of the survey. About one-quarter (24.5%) were earning between \$20,000 and \$24,999, and about 60 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.

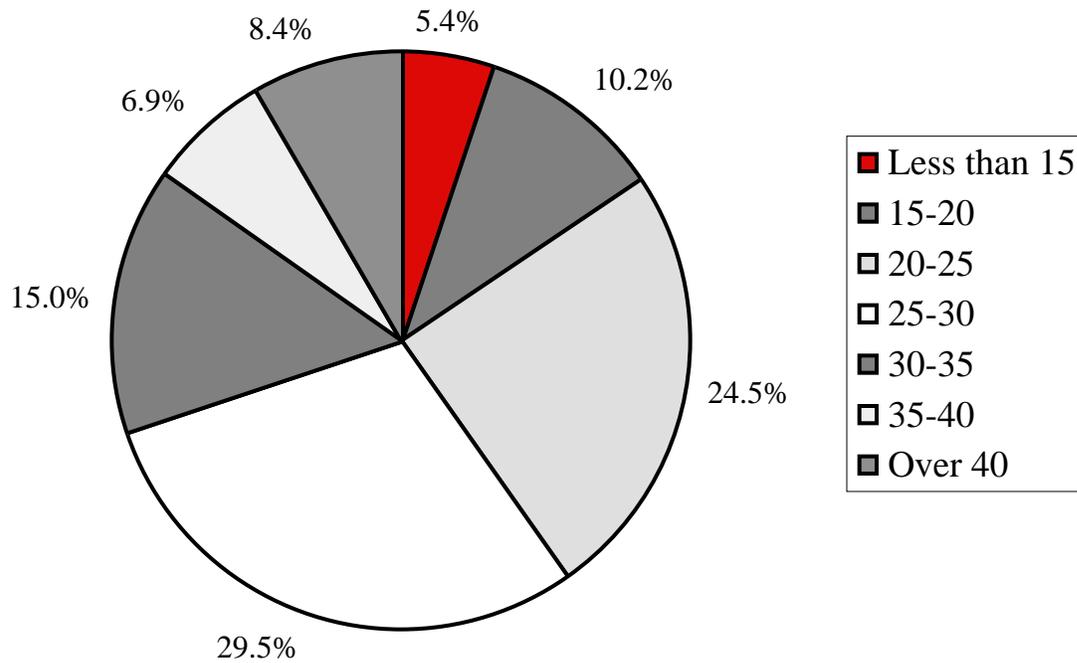
**Figure 5**  
**Type of Organization in Which Alumni Found Employment**



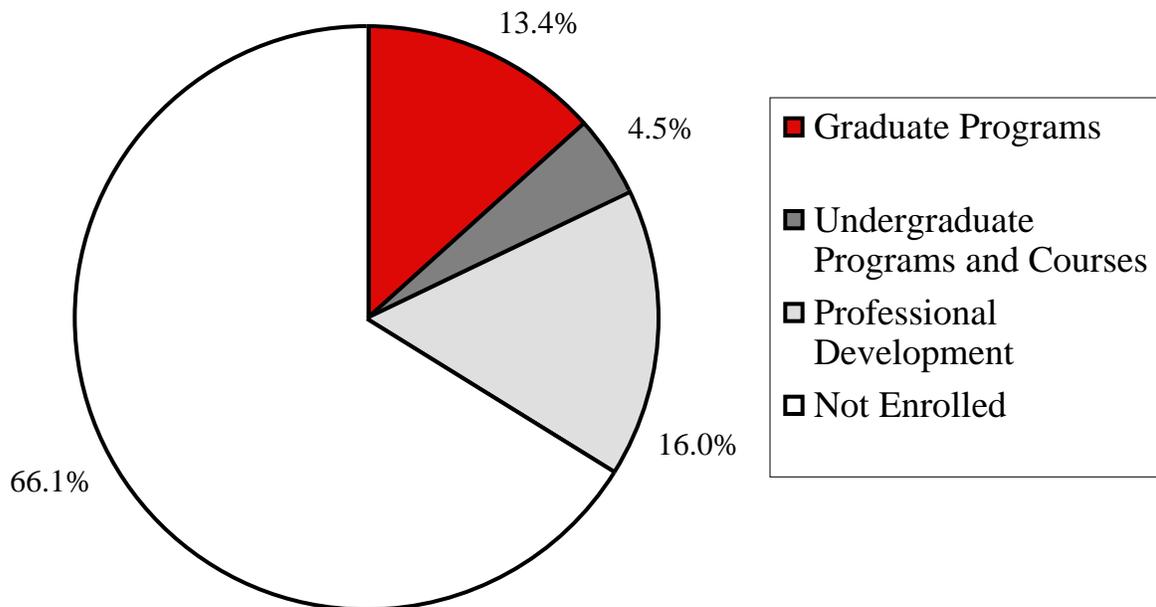
**Table 2.3**  
**Current Occupations of Alumni Employed Full-Time**

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>N</i>
Managers, Directors, Asst./Assoc. Directors, & Proprietors (not Sales, Retail, Personnel or Assistant Managers)	84	Secretaries and Word Processing Specialists	13
Teachers (Elementary Education)	77	Technicians-Other	13
Nurses, EMTs, Paramedics, Health Care Associates	65	Consultants	13
Architects, Landscape Architects, Interns, GIS, & Draftspersons	49	TV Producers, Assistant/Associate Producers, News Anchors/ Reporters	13
Sales Representatives, Sales People, and Sales Clerks	48	Teachers (Preschool/ Early Childhood Ed)	11
Accountants, Auditors, & Assistant Auditors	45	Advertising Agents & Sales People, Media Buyers	10
Teachers (Other or Mixed Level)	44	Clerical Workers	10
Social & Welfare Workers	37	Communications, Professional, Technical and Managers	10
Sales and Retail Managers, Assistant Managers, Buyers, Merchandisers	36	Editors, Reporters, Photojournalists (newspaper)	10
Teachers (High School)	35	Insurance Actuaries	10
Teachers (Special Education)	34	Artists (not Graphic), Entertainers, Musicians, & Writers	8
Bank Managers, Officials, Brokers, Analysts, Planners (not Urban Planners/Regional Planners)	28	Food Store Managers, Food Service Managers	8
Engineers	22	Service Workers	8
Counselors, Therapists, & Speech Pathologists	22	Assistant Managers and Manager Trainees (not Sales/ Retail)	7
Computer Programmers, System Analysts, Support Personnel-Help Desk	21	Military (Members of the Armed Forces)	7
Insurance Adjusters, Agents, Examiners, Investigators, and Underwriters	21	Technicians- Medical & Dental	7
Teachers (Middle School)	20	Chemists	6
Graphic Artists	18	Environmental Scientists, Conservationists, and Foresters	6
Paralegals, Legal Assistants, and Law Clerks	18	Self-Employed Managers, Officials, Contractors, and Proprietors	6
Police, Detectives, Security Agents (not Probation Officers)	18	Dietitians and Nutritionists	4
Sports, Exercise and Fitness Instructors/Officials	18	Librarians	4
Manufacturing and Construction Workers (not Managers)	17	Urban and Regional Planners	4
Personnel Managers and Workers, Human Resources	16	Data Processing and Data Entry	3
Customer Service Representatives	15	Public Administrators and Officials	3
Probation Officers	15	Public Relations/ PR	3
Marketing	14	Biologists	2
Account Executives, Account Representatives	13	Interior Design	2
Administrators & Administrative Assistants	13	Student Employment, Graduate Students, Interns	2
		All Other Occupations	54
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,120</b>

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



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



## Further Education

- Eighteen percent were continuing college course work at the time of the survey. About 13 percent were pursuing graduate degrees, while four and one half percent were taking additional undergraduate course work. Another 16 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-one percent reported that they plan to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. Only about 11 percent of 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	60.7	795
Obtain another Bachelor's degree	8.6	113
Obtain certification with college course work	10.5	138
Obtain certification with non-college course work	26.2	343
Take additional college courses	7.3	95
Take professional development courses	32.2	421
No plans to continue education	10.7	140
Total responses	156.2*	2,045

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because respondents could choose more than one response. Thirteen hundred and nine (1,309) 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. They also were asked to indicate 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 their 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. Nearly 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 71 percent of all respondents indicated that Ball State experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily. (Table 3.2)

In general, 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 mean ratings of importance were understanding com-

puters, morals and ethics, current events, and wellness. Skill areas with the highest mean ratings of importance were listening, writing, problem solving, speaking, managing time, and planning and organizing. (Table 3.3 and Figure 9)

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

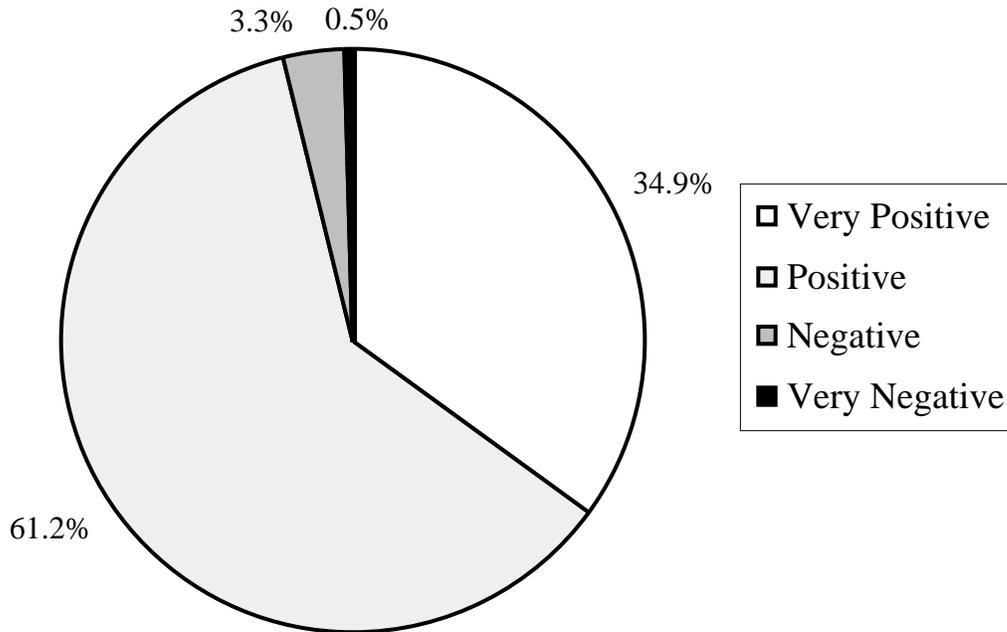
More than one half indicated that they participated in internships, were employed on-campus or off-campus, and studied an average of at least 11 hours a week. Twenty-six percent indicated they worked 20 or more hours per week while enrolled at Ball State.

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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 very well (38.3%) or satisfactorily (56.9%) prepared. (Table 3.1)
- About 90 percent felt they were very well (38.0%) or satisfactorily (51.5%) prepared for their careers. Even among those who were not employed full time (about 16% of all respondents), 89 percent indicated they were very well or satisfactorily prepared in their career area. (Table 3.1)

**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	54.1	44.2	1.6	1336
Personal Growth	60.1	36.9	2.9	1340
Preparation for Further Education	38.3	56.9	4.8	1321
Preparation for Career	38.0	51.5	10.5	1329

**Knowledge and Understanding**

- Wellness was the knowledge item for which alumni felt most prepared. About thirty-six percent indicated that they were very well prepared in this area.
- More than one in four alumni felt very well prepared regarding their understanding of computers (27.0%). Most respondents (53.8%) rated their understanding of computers as satisfactory. (Table 3.2)
- At least 93 percent indicated they were prepared very well or satisfactorily regarding knowledge and understanding of social sciences, and humanities.
- More than nine out of ten respondents felt satisfactorily or very well prepared in their understanding of the sciences. (Table 3.2)
- Greater than 85 percent of the respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily to understand other cultures, or current events and contemporary issues. (Table 3.2)

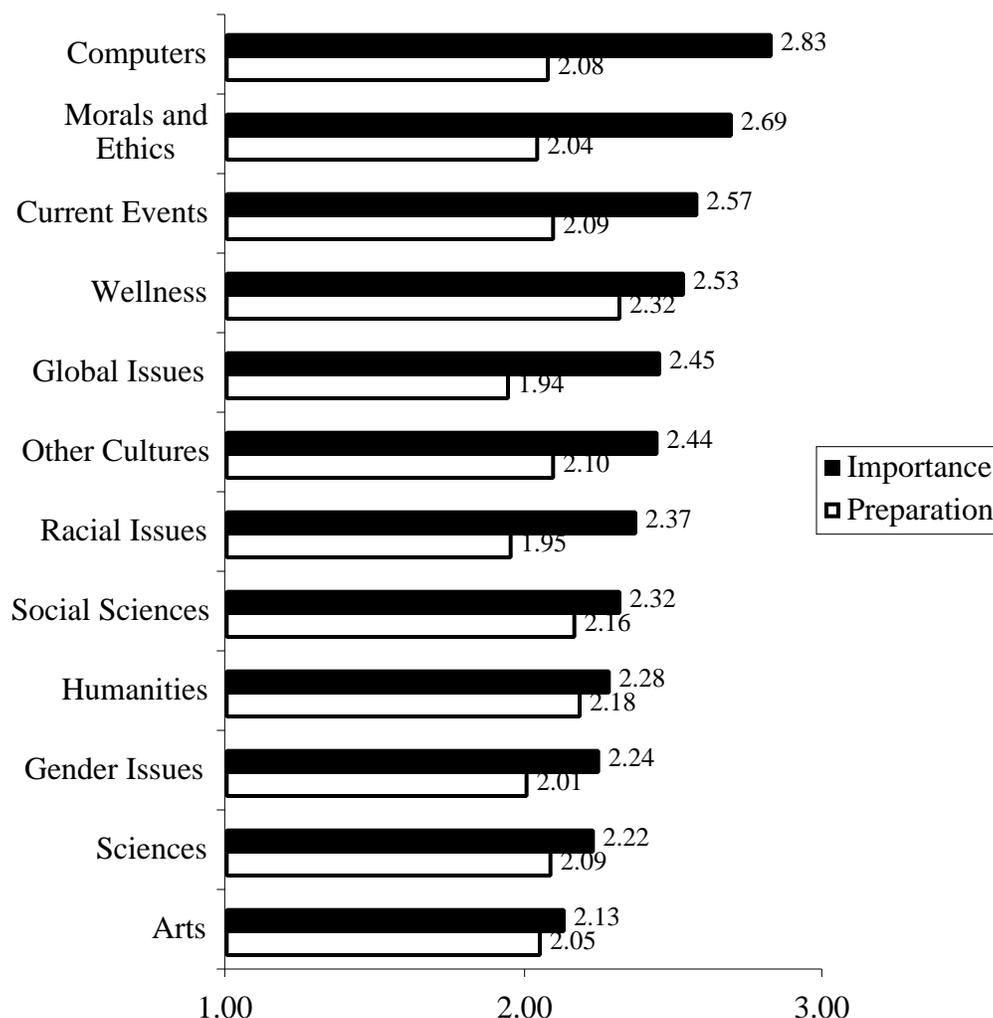
**Table 3.2**  
**Evaluation of Experiences at Ball State**

	<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	24.1	61.6	14.3	1334
Computers	27.0	53.8	19.1	1339
Wellness	35.6	60.5	3.9	1338
Sciences	18.4	71.8	9.8	1326
Social Sciences	22.8	70.5	6.7	1326
Humanities	25.1	68.3	6.6	1329
Arts	21.3	62.0	16.7	1328
Gender Issues	18.2	64.2	17.6	1329
Racial Issues	16.2	62.9	20.9	1330
Morals and Ethics	20.9	62.6	16.5	1328
Current Events and Contemporary Issues	22.6	64.1	13.3	1330
Global Events	14.6	65.0	20.4	1330
<b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>				
Writing	43.8	51.2	5.0	1325
Speaking	41.3	52.1	6.6	1326
Listening	40.0	53.8	6.3	1326
Problem Solving	40.4	54.1	5.5	1322
Analyzing and Evaluating Ideas	40.8	54.9	4.2	1325
Conducting Research	31.6	54.2	14.2	1319
Using Library Resources	43.8	47.8	8.3	1323
Using Mathematics	20.9	61.9	17.2	1317
Creative Thinking	40.0	53.3	6.6	1326
Critical Thinking	40.4	53.5	6.1	1321
Making Informed Decisions	33.9	60.5	5.6	1320
Using Computers at Work	30.4	46.6	23.0	1324
Providing Leadership	34.9	52.1	13.0	1324
Persuading Others	22.5	58.9	18.6	1320
Coping with Stress	19.5	52.2	28.3	1316
Dealing with the Public	25.3	55.6	19.1	1316
Managing Time	37.2	48.5	14.3	1323
Planning and Organizing	42.7	47.7	9.6	1325
Conflict Resolution	23.1	60.2	16.6	1322
Interacting with Diverse Groups of People	35.1	51.4	13.4	1324
Self-Evaluation	32.4	58.7	8.9	1321
Self-Reliance	44.5	50.1	5.4	1321
Working Cooperatively	47.7	48.7	3.6	1322
Using New Technologies	27.0	51.3	21.7	1318
Clarifying Personal Values	25.6	59.7	14.7	1314
Experiencing and Responding to the Arts	21.8	55.3	22.9	1317
Lifelong Learning	37.6	54.7	7.7	1319
Maintaining Physical Health and Well-Being	35.2	58.4	6.3	1326

**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	48.6	46.8	4.9	1293
Computers	83.5	15.6	0.9	1297
Wellness	56.4	39.8	3.7	1295
Sciences	31.4	59.5	9.0	1283
Social Sciences	36.7	58.6	4.7	1286
Humanities	34.3	59.5	6.1	1287
Arts	29.7	53.9	16.5	1288
Gender Issues	36.6	51.0	12.4	1289
Racial Issues	45.6	46.1	8.3	1289
Morals and Ethics	70.9	26.8	2.3	1291
Current Events and Contemporary Issues	59.5	38.1	2.4	1293
Global Events	48.7	47.6	3.7	1291
<b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>				
Writing	86.7	12.9	0.4	1294
Speaking	86.0	13.6	0.5	1291
Listening	89.5	10.5	0.0	1292
Problem Solving	85.9	13.9	0.2	1291
Analyzing and Evaluating Ideas	78.3	21.3	0.4	1290
Conducting Research	46.1	48.7	5.2	1289
Using Library Resources	44.7	50.1	5.2	1290
Using Mathematics	42.5	51.0	6.5	1284
Creative Thinking	74.7	24.7	0.6	1295
Critical Thinking	76.5	23.1	0.5	1291
Making Informed Decisions	75.6	24.3	0.2	1290
Using Computers at Work	80.3	18.7	0.9	1292
Providing Leadership	72.7	26.4	0.9	1291
Persuading Others	48.5	47.4	4.0	1286
Coping with Stress	76.8	21.9	1.3	1286
Dealing with the Public	70.2	28.0	1.9	1284
Managing Time	84.1	15.5	0.4	1288
Planning and Organizing	83.5	16.2	0.2	1288
Conflict Resolution	68.3	30.4	1.3	1289
Interacting with Diverse Groups of People	68.1	29.4	2.5	1294
Self-Evaluation	63.7	34.8	1.5	1289
Self-Reliance	74.4	24.6	1.0	1287
Working Cooperatively	75.2	23.9	0.9	1291
Using New Technologies	70.8	27.8	1.4	1289
Clarifying Personal Values	60.0	37.2	2.8	1286
Experiencing and Responding to the Arts	33.0	50.6	16.4	1288
Lifelong Learning	70.9	27.6	1.5	1287
Maintaining Physical Health and Well-Being	68.3	29.7	1.9	1285

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

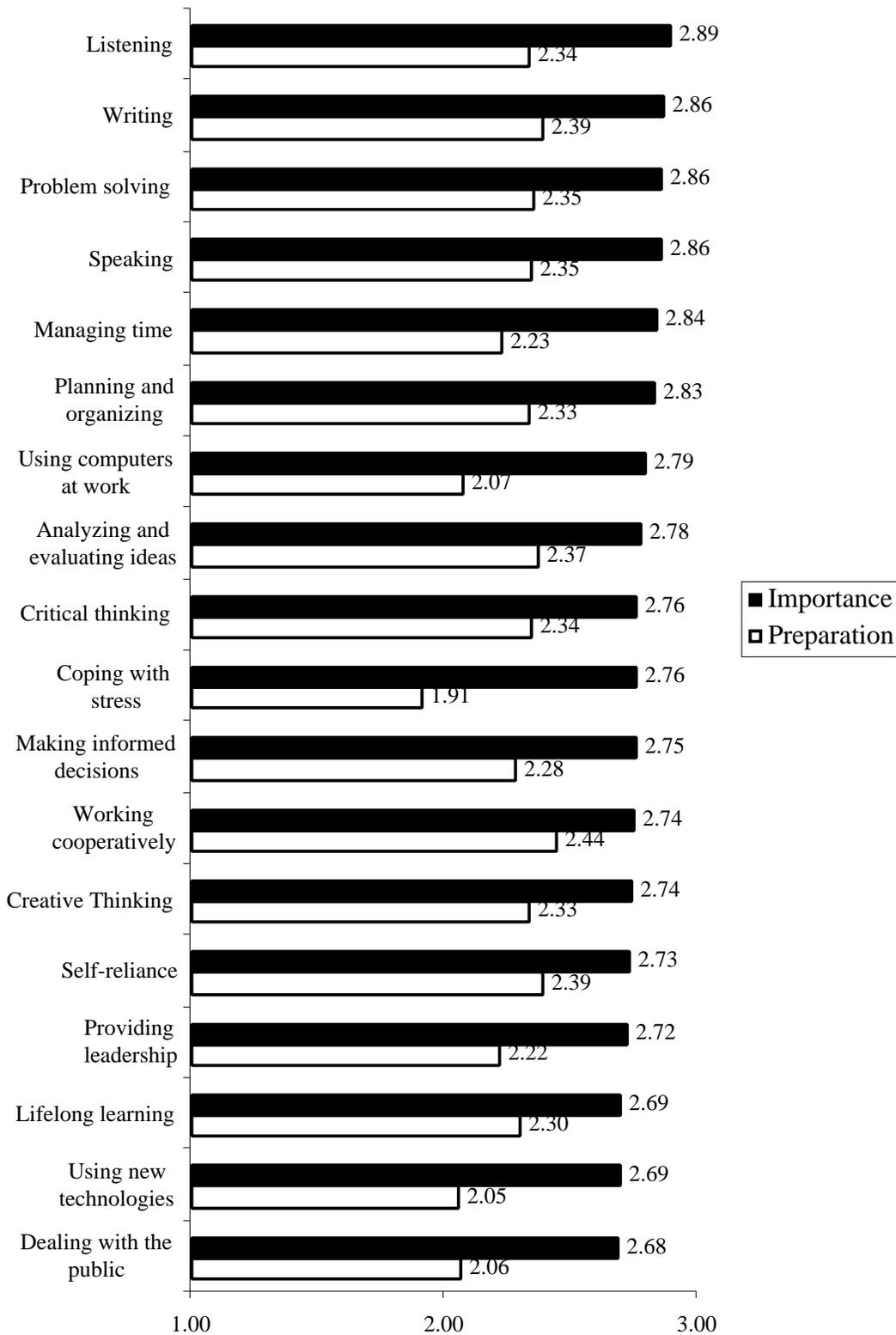


Importance: Where 1=Not Important, 2=Somewhat Important, and 3=Very Important  
 Preparation: Where 1=Poorly, 2=Satisfactorily, and 3=Very Well

### Skills and Abilities

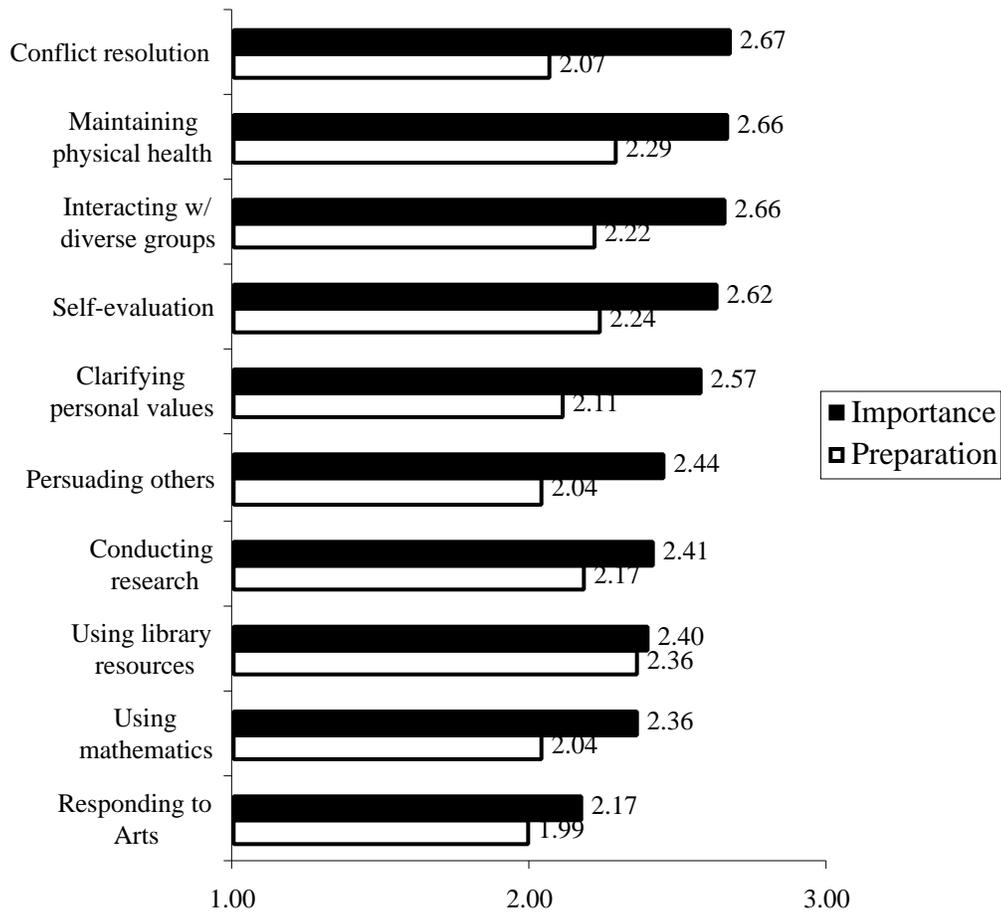
- The skill items with the highest percentage of responses in the “very well” category included writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, analyzing and evaluating ideas, using library resources, critical thinking, creative thinking, planning and organizing, self reliance, and working cooperatively. At least 40 percent indicated they were very well prepared in these areas, and less than 10 percent indicated they were poorly prepared. (Table 3.2)
- At least 95 percent rated their preparation satisfactory or very well in the skill areas of writing, analyzing and evaluating ideas, and working cooperatively. (Table 3.2)
- 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.

**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

- For the skill areas of using computers at work, coping with stress, using new technologies, and experiencing and responding to the arts, more than 71 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.

- As shown in Figure 9, each knowledge area 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.
- Twenty-seven percent indicated they felt very well prepared in the area of understanding computers, but nearly 84 percent felt that

it was very important. For morals and ethics, 71 percent rated it very important, but only 21 percent felt very well prepared.

- As shown in Figure 10, each skill area averaged higher on importance than on preparation.
- Differences in alumni ratings of preparation and importance in skill areas were greatest in response to managing time, using computers at work, coping with stress, using new technologies, dealing with the public, 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

- About one half of all respondents indicated that they participated in an internship program (51.4%), held campus employment (51.1%), or off-campus employment (52.1%) 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 17 percent indicated that they met often, nearly one half indicated they had met occasionally, and about 34 percent indicated they had met rarely or never with faculty members outside of class. (Table 3.5)

### Number of Weekly Study and Work Hours

- About 60 percent of alumni reported that they studied 11 or more hours per week while attending classes at Ball State. Thirty-six percent indicated that they studied five to ten hours per week. (Table 3.6)

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

	<i>Percent*</i>	<i>N</i>
Internship	51.4	694
Campus Employment	51.1	690
Off-Campus Employment	52.1	703

\* Percent is based on 1,350. 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	17.1	227
Occasionally	49.3	656
Rarely	28.6	381
Never	5.0	66
Total	100.0	1,330

**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	1.1	15
Less than 5 Hours	2.7	36
5-10 Hours	36.2	476
11-20 Hours	41.5	546
Over 20 Hours	18.4	242
Total	100.0	1,315
<b>HOURS WORKED PER WEEK</b>		
Not Employed	17.5	230
10 Hours or Less	16.1	212
11-20 Hours	40.2	528
Over 20 Hours	26.2	344
Total	100.0	1,314

- Nearly two-thirds of all respondents (66.4%) indicated that they typically worked 11 or more hours a week while attending classes. Only 17.5 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, opportunities for interaction with faculty, and fairness of grading in departmental courses. More than three-quarters of all respondents indicated satisfaction with the availability of required courses in their major, feedback from instructors, and opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction.

More than two-thirds agreed that their departmental courses had prepared them for employment, and 58 percent agreed that departmental courses had prepared them for graduate or professional school. More than one half of those surveyed expressed satisfaction with departmental 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. About forty-two percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am satisfied with departmental assistance in planning my career.” (Table 4.1)

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- About 84 percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the fairness of grading in their departmental courses. (Table 4.1)
- About eight out of ten agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with opportunities for interaction with faculty (81.6%), the availability of required courses in their major (79.1%), and opportunities for evaluation of instruction (77.7%).
- More than six out of ten alumni agreed (40.0%) or strongly agreed (23.3%) that they were satisfied with faculty advising in their major department. Twenty-two percent did not agree that they were satisfied with faculty advising in their departments.
- Nearly 60 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that departmental courses prepared them for graduate or professional school (58.1%).
- More than one half of all respondents agreed they were satisfied with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences (55.4%), and with opportunities to participate in such programs (57.4%).
- A majority of respondents agreed (32.5%) or strongly agreed (18.5%) they were satisfied with computer training for their career. One-third of the respondents disagreed with the statement. (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 (54.2%) or strongly agreed (31.2%) that they were satisfied with their department in general. Six percent were undecided about their satisfaction with their department, and about eight percent disagreed (6.1%) or strongly disagreed (2.3%) with the statement.
- Departmental assistance in planning a career and obtaining a job were the departmental items with which respondents most often expressed dissatisfaction. Forty-two percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with departmental assistance in planning a career, and 29 percent were satisfied with departmental assistance in obtaining a job. Conversely, about 36 percent disagreed they were satisfied with career planning assistance, and nearly one half (49.5%) disagreed when asked if 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.	31.2	54.2	6.2	6.1	2.3	1326
with teaching ability of faculty in my department.	33.6	53.8	6.5	4.8	1.3	1325
with professional expertise of departmental faculty.	36.5	49.9	8.4	4.1	1.1	1326
with opportunities for interaction with departmental faculty.	36.2	45.4	10.8	6.1	1.5	1328
with the availability of required courses in my major.	31.9	47.2	8.1	10.1	2.7	1323
with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	21.6	33.8	18.1	19.2	7.2	1252
with opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	26.0	31.4	19.2	16.6	6.8	1246
that the courses in my department prepared me for employment.	24.2	43.8	16.1	10.9	5.1	1312
that the courses in my department prepared me for graduate or professional school.	20.7	37.4	30.7	7.3	3.8	1022
with the fairness of grading in departmental courses.	28.9	55.0	9.1	4.5	2.6	1323
with feedback from instructors about my academic progress.	28.6	48.3	13.0	8.1	1.9	1326
with computer training for my career.	18.5	32.5	15.5	23.7	9.7	1294
with opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction in my department.	26.5	51.3	13.8	6.4	2.1	1315
with faculty advising in my department.	23.3	40.0	15.0	13.7	8.1	1311
with departmental assistance in planning my career.	13.9	27.6	22.1	24.6	11.7	1278
with departmental assistance in obtaining a job.	9.3	20.1	21.1	27.7	21.8	1179

## SECTION 5

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

*Summary* More than 93 percent of respondents were using writing, computer, and quantitative skills on the job. Alumni reported using a wide variety of skills in each of these areas, as 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 (71.7%) employed alumni indicated that they sometimes write memos as part of their job responsibilities, while 57 percent reported writing business letters. (Table 5.1)
- About 48 percent reported writing electronic mail at work, and 32 percent reported proposal writing. Nearly one-quarter reported writing field notes. Twenty-two percent were writing promotional materials, 18 percent were writing product documentation, and 17 percent were writing research reports. Fewer respondents reported writing product specifications (14.2%), or sales letters (11.9%). (Table 5.1)

#### Quantitative Tasks on the Job

- Eighty-six percent of all employed respondents reported using basic arithmetic skills on the job, while one half (50.0%) reported using decimal, fraction, and ratio skills at work. Financial calculations were the third most often used quantitative skill reported on the survey. More than one-third (37.6%) reported 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	71.7	891
Business Letters	57.1	709
Electronic Mail	48.4	601
Proposals	32.1	399
Field Notes	24.9	309
Promotional Materials	21.6	268
Product Documentation	18.2	226
Research Reports	17.4	216
Product Specifications	14.2	176
Sales Letters	11.9	148
Sales Brochures	10.7	133
Lab Reports	6.2	77
Other	27.9	347
None	3.2	40
<b>Total*</b>	<b>365.5</b>	<b>4540</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	86.3	1070
Decimal, Fraction and Ratio Skills	50.0	620
Financial Calculations	37.6	466
Algebra	21.5	267
Geometry	15.4	191
Higher Mathematics Applications	11.2	139
Other	3.5	44
None	6.5	80
<b>Total*</b>	<b>232.0</b>	<b>2877</b>

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

- Less than one-fourth indicated the use of algebra (21.5%) or geometry (15.4%) on the job. About 11 percent of respondents used higher mathematics applications on the job. (Table 5.2)

### Computer Tasks on the Job

- About 94 percent of employed respondents used computers on the job. Word processing was the type of application most used—83 percent reported using word processing software on the job. (Table 5.3)
- E-mail and communications software were used by slightly more than six out of ten employed respondents (61.3%). (Table 5.3)
- About four out of ten respondents used spreadsheets (46.7%), databases (41.6%), information retrieval (35.9%), and graphics software (36.6%). (Table 5.3)
- Lesser-used computer software included computer tutorial programs (14.3%), financial analysis software (12.1%), statistics software (12.2%), programming (9.5%), and other types of software (13.0%). (Table 5.3)

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

	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>
<b>COMPUTER TASKS</b>		
Word Processing	83.4	1038
E-Mail/communications	61.3	762
Spreadsheets	46.7	581
Database	41.6	518
Graphics	36.6	455
Information Retrieval	35.9	446
Computer Based Tutorials	14.3	178
Statistics	12.2	152
Financial Analysis	12.1	151
Programming	9.5	118
Other	13.0	162
None	6.4	79
<b>Total*</b>	<b>373.0</b>	<b>4640</b>

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

## SECTION 6

### Comparison of Findings: 1994 through 1997

*Summary* In this section of the report, 1994, 1996 and 1997 Alumni Survey findings are compared by year to highlight similarities and differences. (The survey was not conducted in 1995). Findings from 1994 refer to the 1991-92 graduating class, 1996 findings refer to the 1993-94 graduating class, and findings from 1997 refer to the 1994-95 graduating class. Alumni received the surveys about two years after graduation.

When compared to 1994 and 1996 respondents, alumni surveyed in 1997 were more positive toward their majors and were more confident of their knowledge and understanding of wellness. However, alumni rated most other skills and abilities lower in 1996 and 1997 than in 1994.

For each survey report, statistical comparisons were made between academic and demographic characteristics of respondents and all alumni. For all three survey administrations, cumulative GPA and high school percentile rank were slightly higher among respondents than among all graduates. The 1997 respondents were also found to score higher than the population of all 1994-95 graduates on SAT and ACT test scores, and had a significantly higher proportion of females. (Only about 56 percent of all graduates were female but among respondents the figure was nearly 61 percent. Section 1 contains additional demographic and academic information about the 1997 survey.)

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- In each successive survey, respondents reported significantly higher incomes. The survey showed progressively higher percentages of respondents in income categories over \$25,000 and lower percentages of respondents in income categories less than \$25,000. (Table 6.1)

**Table 6.1**  
**Annual Income from Full-Time**  
**Employment: Comparison of 1994, 1996,**  
**and 1997 Respondents**

	1994	1996	1997
	<i>Percent</i>		
<b>ANNUAL INCOME</b>			
Less than \$15,000	9.3	6.4	5.4
\$15,000-\$19,999	21.2	14.4	10.2
\$20,000-\$24,999	30.9	26.4	24.5
\$25,000-\$29,999	20.0	25.5	29.5
\$30,000-\$34,999	9.0	13.6	15.0
\$35,000-\$39,999	4.2	6.8	6.9
\$40,000 or more	5.5	6.9	8.4
N	1,280	1,401	1,105

- Although a smaller percentage of 1996 and 1997 respondents were attending graduate school (13.5% and 13.4%, respectively) than were 1994 respondents (15.5%), the difference was not statistically significant. The percentage of respondents who were enrolled in professional development programs rose from 14.1 percent in 1994 to 15.1 percent in 1996, and 16.0 percent in 1997, but the increase was also not statistically significant.
- Table 6.2 shows 20 knowledge and skills items which experienced significant changes in ratings from 1994 through 1997. Nineteen of these items were skills, while only one was a knowledge item.
- Wellness and a related skills item, “maintaining physical health and well-being,” were the only items which were rated highest in 1996 or 1997. (Table 6.2 and Figure 11)
- Mean scores for items which changed significantly between 1994 and 1997 are shown in Figure 11. The greatest changes in mean

**Table 6.2**  
**Alumni Evaluation of Experiences at Ball State**  
**Comparison of 1994, 1996, and 1997 Responses\***

	<i>Percentage Rating Preparation in each area</i>			N
	Very Well	Satisfactorily	Poorly	
Wellness				
1997	35.6	60.5	3.9	1338
1996	37.8	57.6	4.6	1666
1994	31.7	62.2	6.1	1597
Lifelong Learning				
1997	37.6	54.7	7.7	1319
1996	37.5	56.1	6.4	1654
1994	39.8	55.4	4.8	1591
Conducting Research				
1997	31.6	54.2	14.2	1319
1996	34.2	51.5	14.3	1655
1994	37.1	50.9	12.0	1594
Using Mathematics				
1997	20.9	61.9	17.2	1317
1996	19.9	63.0	17.1	1662
1994	23.1	62.7	14.2	1594
Coping with Stress				
1997	19.5	52.2	28.3	1316
1996	20.7	53.0	26.3	1656
1994	24.9	51.7	23.4	1591
Making Informed Decisions				
1997	33.9	60.5	5.6	1320
1996	34.1	61.6	4.2	1652
1994	39.3	56.6	4.1	1595
Providing Leadership				
1997	34.9	52.1	13.0	1324
1996	34.5	53.6	11.9	1658
1994	38.9	52.8	8.3	1596
Persuading Others				
1997	22.5	58.9	18.6	1320
1996	21.7	61.0	17.3	1658
1994	29.8	58.1	12.1	1585
Dealing with the Public				
1997	25.3	55.6	19.1	1316
1996	29.5	54.8	15.7	1656
1994	36.2	51.7	12.1	1597
Managing Time				
1997	37.2	48.5	14.3	1323
1996	37.4	50.2	12.3	1656
1994	42.2	46.9	10.9	1597
Planning and Organizing				
1997	42.7	47.7	9.6	1325
1996	41.6	50.4	8.0	1658
1994	47.0	47.4	5.6	1597
Conflict Resolution				
1997	23.1	60.2	16.6	1322
1996	21.4	63.4	15.2	1652
1994	28.6	61.4	10.0	1586

**Table 6.2 (Continued)**  
**Alumni Evaluation of Experiences at Ball State**  
**Comparison of 1994, 1996, and 1997 Responses\***

	<i>Percentage Rating Preparation in each area</i>			N
	Very Well	Satisfactorily	Poorly	
Self Evaluation				
1997	32.4	58.7	8.9	1321
1996	30.2	60.1	9.7	1655
1994	38.1	55.9	6.0	1595
Working Cooperatively				
1997	47.7	48.7	3.6	1322
1996	49.3	46.5	4.2	1658
1994	51.0	47.2	1.8	1597
Using New Technologies				
1997	27.0	51.3	21.7	1318
1996	27.0	52.3	20.7	1652
1994	27.3	57.6	15.1	1593
Clarifying Personal Values				
1997	25.6	59.7	14.7	1314
1996	25.5	62.2	12.3	1651
1994	30.1	62.8	7.0	1590
Listening				
1997	40.0	53.8	6.3	1326
1996	39.9	55.0	5.1	1663
1994	44.8	51.7	3.5	1602
Interacting with Diverse Groups				
1997	35.1	51.4	13.4	1324
1996	35.6	49.7	14.7	1655
1994	39.2	49.5	11.3	1594
Self-reliance				
1997	44.5	50.1	5.4	1321
1996	44.3	50.3	5.4	1655
1994	50.1	46.3	3.6	1594
Maintaining Physical Health and Well-Being				
1997	35.2	58.4	6.3	1326
1996	38.4	55.9	5.7	1658
1994	32.8	60.9	6.3	1592

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

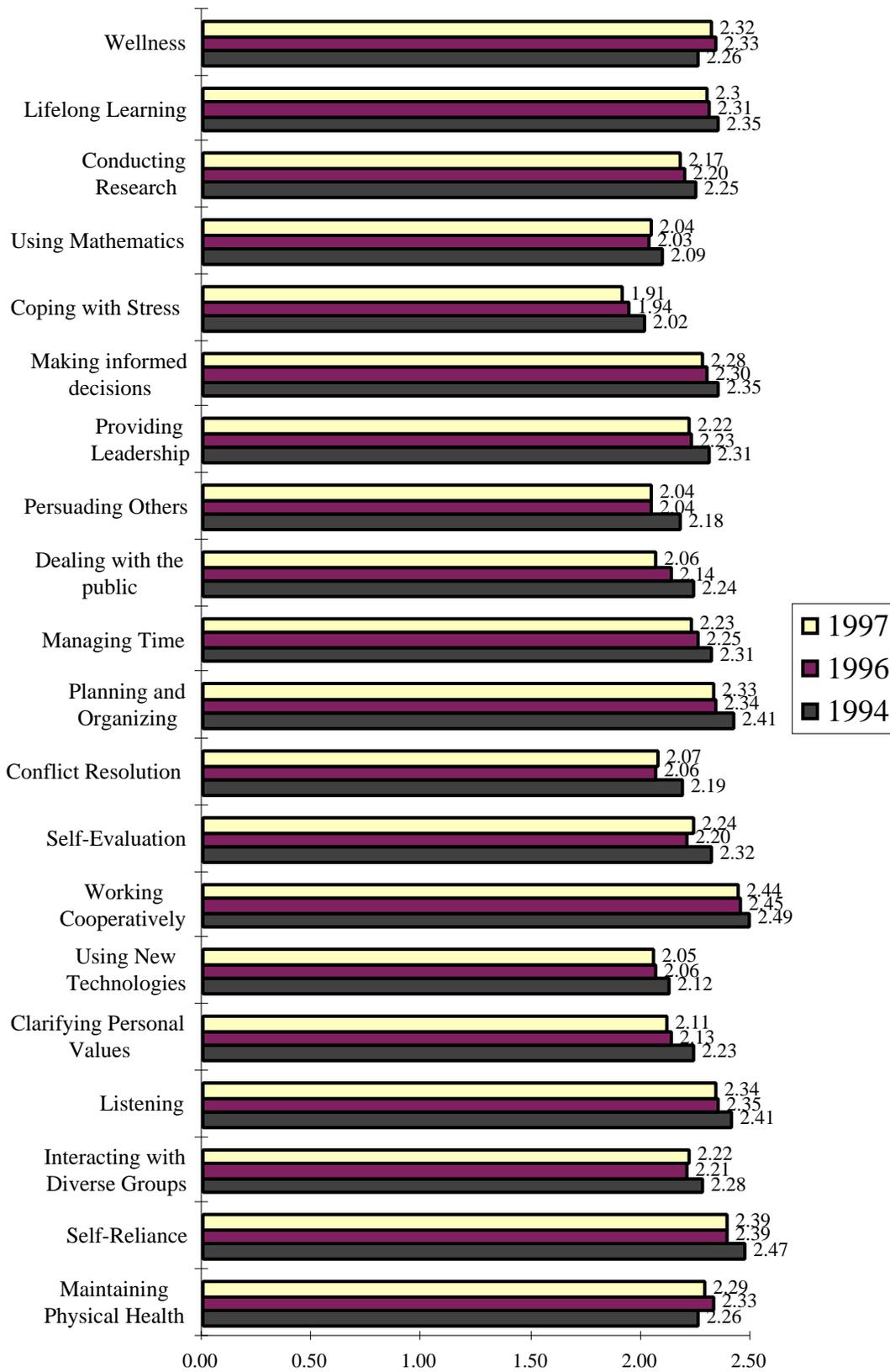
ratings of skills and knowledge items occurred for persuading others, dealing with the public, conflict resolution, self-evaluation, and clarifying personal values.

- Eleven departmental items where significant differences occurred between 1994 and 1997 are shown in Table 6.3 and Figure 12.
- The percentage of respondents who strongly agreed with each item increased successively from 1994 through 1997 for every item

except preparation for employment (which dropped slightly from 24.7 percent in 1996 to 24.2 percent in 1997). (Table 6.3)

- When looking at mean ratings in Figure 12, the largest increases in departmental satisfaction were in response to items about internship opportunities and information, faculty teaching ability and professional expertise, and career planning and help in obtaining employment.

**Figure 11**  
**Knowledge and Skill Items: Comparison of 1994, 1996, and 1997 Means\***



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

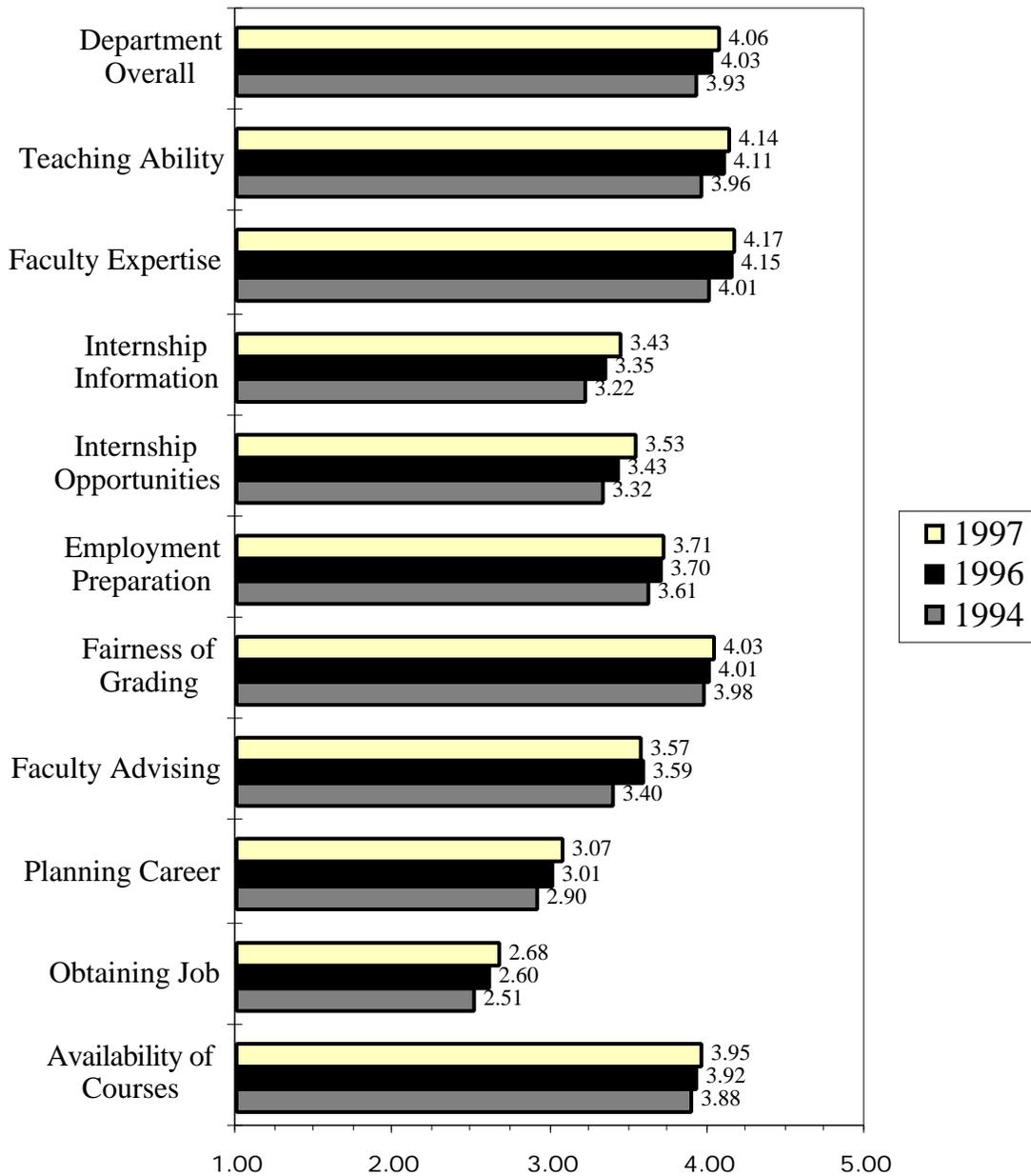
\* Differences are statistically significant. ( $p \leq .05$ )

**Table 6.3**  
**Satisfaction with Department of Major**  
**Comparison of 1994, 1996, and 1997 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.	1997	31.2	54.2	6.2	6.1	2.3	1326
	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.	1997	33.6	53.8	6.5	4.8	1.3	1325
	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.	1997	36.5	49.9	8.4	4.1	1.1	1326
	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.	1997	21.6	33.8	18.1	19.2	7.2	1252
	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.	1997	26.0	31.4	19.2	16.6	6.8	1246
	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.	1997	24.2	43.8	16.1	10.9	5.1	1312
	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 fairness of grading in in departmental courses.	1997	28.9	55.0	9.1	4.5	2.6	1323
	1996	25.1	59.4	8.6	4.9	2.0	1662
	1994	22.6	61.4	9.0	5.1	1.9	1584
with faculty advising in my department.	1997	23.3	40.0	15.0	13.7	8.1	1311
	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.	1997	13.9	27.6	22.1	24.6	11.7	1278
	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.	1997	9.3	20.1	21.1	27.7	21.8	1179
	1996	8.8	18.1	20.3	30.4	22.4	1476
	1994	7.2	16.0	22.9	27.9	26.0	1412
with the availability of required courses.	1997	31.9	47.2	8.1	10.1	2.7	1323
	1996	29.6	48.2	9.2	11.1	2.0	1661
	1994	26.4	51.8	8.3	10.9	2.7	1582

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

**Figure 12**  
**Satisfaction with Department: Comparison of 1994, 1996, and 1997 Means\***



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

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

## 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 have begun careers. To meet these objectives, alumni who graduated approximately two years prior to the survey date were chosen. The 1997 survey was the fourth administration. For each administration of the survey, all baccalaureate graduates within an entire academic year were surveyed.

The surveys show that about 80 percent of graduates with full-time jobs are finding satisfactory employment in positions related to their educational pursuits. about 84 percent are finding employment in Indiana or neighboring states, and most new full-time jobs are found within three months after graduation. Also, many alumni are continuing their education 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 for respondents 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**

### **1997 Ball State Alumni Survey**



# 1997 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 principal 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 1994-95, 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

- What is your general attitude toward Ball State?  
 Very Positive     Positive     Negative     Very Negative
- 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"/>
- 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.

- 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"/>

## Skills and Knowledge (Continued)

Please indicate how well *your* experiences at Ball State prepared you in the following skill and ability areas. (*Consider all activities that you participated in at Ball State, including those outside the classroom.*) Check the second column to indicate your view of the importance of each skill or ability.

5. How well did your experiences at Ball State prepare you in these areas, and how important is each area to you?

	Very Well	Satisfactorily	Poorly	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Analyzing and evaluating ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Conducting research	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Using library resources	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Using mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Creative thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Critical thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Using computers at work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Providing leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Persuading others	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Coping with stress	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Dealing with the public	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Managing time	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Planning and organizing	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Interacting with diverse groups of people	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Making informed decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Self-evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Self-reliance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Working cooperatively	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Using new technologies	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Clarifying personal values	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Experiencing and responding to the arts	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Lifelong learning	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Maintaining physical health and well-being	<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. How many hours a week did you typically work while you were taking classes?

*(Please enter "0" if you were typically not employed.)*

number of hours

--	--

4. How many hours a week did you typically study outside the classroom?

number of hours

--	--

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 Mathematical Sciences</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 and Dance Performance</li> <li>44 Urban Planning</li> <li>45 Other</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

## About Your Major (Continued)

Each question in this section refers to the department you identified as your *primary major* on the previous page. Please choose the response that *best describes your experiences* in that department.

<b>I am satisfied . . .</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
1. with my department.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. with the teaching ability of faculty in my department.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. with the professional expertise of departmental faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. with opportunities for interaction with departmental faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. with the availability of required courses in my major.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. with opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8. that the courses in my department prepared me for employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9. that the courses in my department prepared me for graduate or professional school.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
10. with the fairness of grading in departmental courses.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
11. with feedback from instructors about my academic progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
12. with computer training for my career.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
13. with opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction in my department.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
14. with faculty advising in my department.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
15. with departmental assistance in planning my career.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
16. with departmental assistance in obtaining a job.	<input type="checkbox"/>					

**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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**Thank you for completing the survey. Please return it promptly in the enclosed, postage-paid envelope.**

