

**2002 ALUMNI SURVEY  
OF 1999-2000 GRADUATES**

**SUMMARY REPORT**



Ball State University

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Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research  
October, 2004

AAIR No. ALU-S1-2004



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of 1999-2000 Graduates**

**Summary Report**

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Ball State University

June, 2004

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This survey addresses alumni perceptions of learning at Ball State. Additionally, it provides information about employment, further education, and other departmental experiences.
- The 2002 Ball State Alumni Survey was mailed to 2,444 academic year 1999-2000 baccalaureate degree graduates during the Summer and Fall of 2002. After a third mailing in October 2002, about 36 percent (876 alumni) had responded to the survey.
- Demographic characteristics of respondents, such as age, race, and gender were compared to those of the population of all eligible 1999-2000 graduates. A higher proportion of women alumni responded to the survey than did their male counterparts.
- Graduates who had enrolled with distinctive entry status were slightly more likely to respond than were other graduates. Also, respondents had somewhat higher high school percentile ranks, Ball State GPAs, and averaged slightly higher on ACT English scores than did all 1999-2000 graduates.
- About 85 percent of respondents were employed full-time. More than 84 percent of those employed full-time were employed in their major or in a field they considered to be related to their major. More than nine out of ten full-time employed respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment.
- Also among those employed full-time, over 77 percent reported that a college degree was required for their employment.
- About 69 percent of full-time employed alumni were working in Indiana. About 16 percent were working elsewhere in the Midwest.
- About 21 percent were continuing college course work at the time of the survey, including 16 percent who were pursuing graduate degrees. About 13 percent had completed additional degrees or certification programs since graduating from Ball State in 1999-2000.
- More than 59 percent reported plans to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. About 12 percent indicated they had no plans for further education.
- About 97 percent held positive or very positive attitudes toward Ball State.
- More than 98 percent of all respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily in the areas of intellectual and personal growth. Ninety-six percent reported satisfactory or better preparation for further education. More than nine out of ten indicated they were very well or satisfactorily prepared for a career.

- At least 95 percent of respondents indicated that they were prepared very well or satisfactorily in the areas of understanding computer technology, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, analyzing and evaluating ideas, creative thinking, critical thinking, making informed decisions, self-evaluation, self-reliance, working cooperatively, and lifelong learning.
- More than 92 percent of respondents report that Ball State experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily to understand wellness, the sciences, and the social sciences.
- Also, more than nine out of ten felt at least satisfactorily prepared in skill areas including using library resources, providing leadership, managing time, planning and organizing, conflict resolution, clarifying personal values, and maintaining physical health and well-being.
- Alumni were asked how often they had met with faculty members outside of class. About 16 percent indicated that they often met with faculty outside of class, and about one-half indicated they occasionally met faculty outside of class.
- A majority of respondents indicated they typically studied at least 11 hours per week as a student at Ball State.
- Nearly 30 percent reported working over 20 hours per week, and about 45 percent worked 11-20 hours per week at a job while enrolled. About 11 percent indicated they were not employed while enrolled in their baccalaureate degree programs at Ball State.
- More than 86 percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with their department, the teaching ability of faculty in their department, and with faculty professional expertise.
- At least 91 percent of all employed respondents were using writing skills, quantitative skills, and computer skills on the job.

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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

In the Summer and Fall of 2002, the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research surveyed all Ball State University academic year 1999-2000 baccalaureate degree recipients for whom addresses were obtainable. The *2002 Ball State Alumni Survey* (Appendix A) was mailed to alumni who graduated at the end of the Fall 1999, Spring 2000, or Summer 2000 semesters. Two follow-up mailings were sent to those who did not respond to earlier mailings. The survey was also available online. The final response rate was 35.8 percent—876 of the 2,444 graduates responded.

The survey was designed by the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research 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, and Academic Assessment and Institutional Research.

The primary goal of the survey 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 at least 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, 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. 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 in successive years.

For the second administration in Summer 1994, some items were changed slightly and a section was added that asked about the specific types of writing, computer use, and mathematics that graduates perform 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.

The 1998 version included revised wording of three items about satisfaction with major departments. For the 1999 survey, the questions about the importance of knowledge and skill items were removed in order to shorten the survey. In 2000, the importance items were added back to the

survey. In 2002, the survey was converted to a four page scan form, importance items were removed again to achieve that format, but the remaining content of the survey was not changed.

This report is organized in six sections. Section 1 compares academic and demographic characteristics of respondents to the characteristics of all eligible 1999-2000 baccalaureate graduates. Section 2 describes findings related to further education and employment. Section 3 contains ratings of preparation and importance in several learning 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 is a short summary and discussion.

## SECTION 1

### Demographic and Academic Characteristics

*Summary* This section compares the demographic and academic characteristics of survey respondents and academic year 1999-2000 baccalaureate degree graduates.<sup>1</sup> Statistical tests were used to compare academic characteristics of respondents with those of all graduates. Statistically significant differences were found between respondents and the population of all academic year 1999-2000 graduates on some demographic and academic variables.

A higher proportion of women responded to the survey than did men. Respondents were found to have slightly higher high school percentile ranks, ACT scores, and Ball State GPAs than the 1999-2000 graduating class. Respondents were somewhat more likely than all graduates to have enrolled with an entry status of distinction. These differences were generally slight, but statistically significant. (Tables 1.1-1.3) Respondents were not significantly different from the population of all 1999-2000 graduates when compared by age, high school class size, or SAT verbal or quantitative scores.

- 
- Among 1999-2000 graduates, 57.0 percent were female and 43.0 percent were male. Among respondents, these percentages were 67.9 and 32.1 percent, respectively. Females were more likely to respond to the survey than were males. The differences between the sample and population were statistically significant.
  - Statistically, the differences between the racial characteristics of respondents and all

graduates were not significant. However, the response rate for minority alumni was lower than the response rate of Caucasian alumni. The response rate among African American alumni was 26.3 percent. Other minority alumni responded at a rate of 28.3%, while the response rate for Caucasians was 36.4 percent. (Response rates are not shown in Table 1.1.)

- Respondents were not found to be significantly different from the population when compared by age or high school class size.
- The average GPA was 3.04 for all eligible graduates, and 3.14 for respondents. Although small, this difference in GPA was statistically significant. Sixty percent of respondents earned an average of 3.0 or higher, compared to about 52 percent of all eligible graduates.
- Average high school percentile rank was higher among respondents (69.6) than among all eligible graduates (66.4). The difference was statistically significant.
- The average SAT verbal score was not significantly higher for respondents (508.3) than for all eligible graduates (505.5), nor was the average SAT quantitative score. (Table 1.2)

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<sup>1</sup> Information about the population was extracted from the student database. According to university records, a total of 2,594 students graduated with baccalaureate degrees during academic year 1999-2000. By the Summer of 2002, there were 2,444 alumni with contact information available.

**Table 1.1**  
**Demographic and Academic Characteristics of Respondents**  
**and Academic Year 1999-2000 Graduates**

|                             | <u>Respondents</u><br><i>Percentages</i> | <u>1999-2000 Graduates</u><br><i>Percentages</i> |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>GENDER*</b>              |  |  |
| Female                      | 67.9                                     | 57.0   |
| Male                        | 32.1                                     | 43.0   |
| <b>RACE</b>                 |  |  |
| African American            | 3.0                                      | 4.1  |
| Caucasian                   | 93.8                                     | 92.3   |
| Other Minority              | 1.7                                      | 2.2  |
| Unknown                     | 1.5                                      | 1.4  |
| <b>AGE</b>                  |  |  |
| 22 to 24                    | 48.4                                     | 42.6   |
| 25                          | 28.1                                     | 30.4   |
| 26                          | 8.3                                      | 10.0   |
| 27                          | 3.5                                      | 4.7  |
| 28 and older                | 11.6                                     | 12.6   |
| <i>Mean</i>                 | <i>25.96</i>                             | <i>25.88</i>                                     |
| <b>GPA*</b>                 |  |  |
| Less than 2.5               | 10.5                                     | 15.4   |
| 2.50 to 2.99                | 29.3                                     | 32.6   |
| 3.00 to 3.49                | 33.4                                     | 31.4   |
| 3.50 to 4.00                | 26.7                                     | 20.6   |
| <i>Mean</i>                 | <i>3.14</i>                              | <i>3.04</i>                                      |
| <b>ACADEMIC ENTRY TYPE*</b> |  |  |
| Distinction                 | 9.6                                      | 7.7  |
| Regular                     | 66.6                                     | 68.5   |
| Other                       | 23.9                                     | 23.8   |
| <i>N</i>                    | <i>876</i>                               | <i>2,444</i>                                     |

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

**Table 1.2**  
**High School Academic Characteristics of Respondents**  
**and Academic Year 1999-2000 Graduates**

|                              | <u>Respondents</u> |                 |          | <u>1999-2000 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* | 69.6               | 21.2            | 820      | 66.4                       | 21.9            | 2296     |
| High School Class Size       | 237.2              | 141.2           | 820      | 234.07                     | 139.8           | 2298     |
| SAT Verbal                   | 508.3              | 81.9            | 730      | 505.5                      | 82.7            | 2082     |
| SAT Quantitative             | 510.2              | 85.5            | 730      | 505.0                      | 86.4            | 2082     |
| ACT English*                 | 21.8               | 4.9             | 339      | 21.2                       | 4.7             | 880      |
| ACT Math                     | 21.5               | 4.6             | 339      | 21.0                       | 4.5             | 880      |
| ACT Composite*               | 43.4               | 8.6             | 339      | 42.2                       | 8.4             | 880      |

\* Statistically significant differences exist between respondents and the population of all graduates on this variable. (p≤.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> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| COLLEGE                             |                 |                   |                         |
| Applied Sciences and Technology     | 251             | 95                | 37.8                    |
| Architecture and Planning           | 100             | 41                | 41.0                    |
| Business                            | 268             | 97                | 36.2                    |
| Communication Information and Media | 261             | 92                | 35.2                    |
| Fine Arts                           | 110             | 37                | 33.6                    |
| Sciences and Humanities             | 846             | 292               | 34.5                    |
| Teachers College                    | 399             | 168               | 42.1                    |
| General Studies                     | 209             | 54                | 25.8                    |
| N                                   | 2,444           | 876               | 35.8                    |

- Response rates varied by college from a low of about 26 percent among General Studies majors to a high of 42 percent in the College of Architecture and Planning, and Teachers College, respectively. Differences in response by college were not statistically significant. The overall response rate was 35.8 percent. (Table 1.3)



## SECTION 2

### Employment and Further Education

**Summary** Nearly 85 percent of 1999-2000 alumni were employed full time. Of those employed full-time, about 73 percent found employment prior to or within three months of graduation. Over 84 percent of those with full-time jobs held employment within their major or in an area related to their major. Well over three-fourths of those working full-time indicated that their employment required a college degree. Ninety-one percent of full-time employed respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. The most often cited occupations represented among those employed full-time were teachers (24.1%) (all types), managers and directors (6.9%), sales representatives (4.6%), architects and landscape architects (4.4%), counselors, therapists, speech pathologists, and case

managers (4.3%), account executives (2.5%), and accountants (2.5%). Over 94 percent of those working full-time reported earnings of at least \$20,000 per year. (Figure 6)

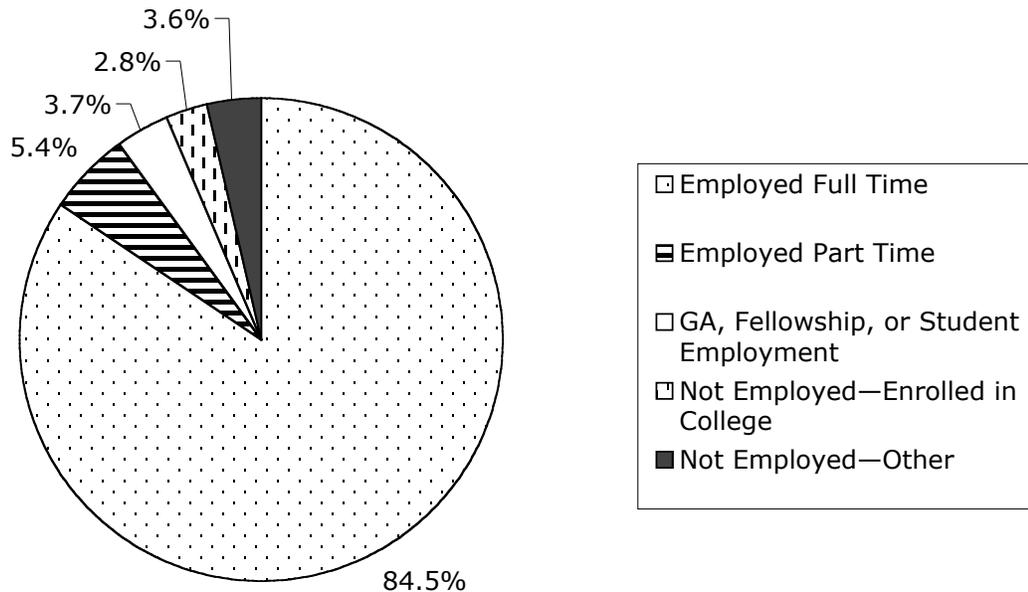
Alumni were asked about their current and anticipated educational activities and plans. At the time of the survey, 21.1 percent were enrolled at a college or university, and 59.2 percent reported they plan to eventually complete a graduate or professional degree. About 88 percent plan to continue their education with some combination of professional development and/or additional college course work.

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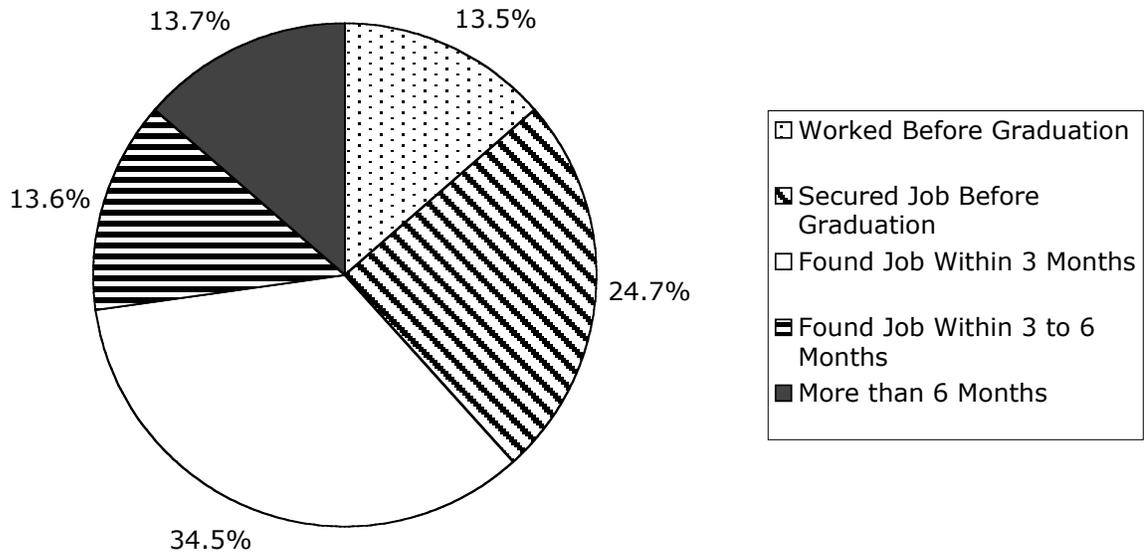
### Employment

- Nearly 85 percent of 1999-2000 alumni respondents were employed full-time. (Figure 1)

**Figure 1. Employment Status**



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



- Slightly more than five percent of alumni were employed part-time, and nearly four percent were employed primarily with graduate assistantships, fellowships, or student employment. (Figure 1)
- About three percent were not employed at the time of the survey, but were enrolled in college. Nearly four percent were not employed for other reasons. (Figure 1)
- Thirty-eight percent of those employed full-time either continued a job that they had before graduation (13.5%) or secured employment before graduation (24.7%). As shown in Figure 2, an additional 35 percent found employment within three months of graduation, while about 27 percent found employment three or more months after graduation. (Figure 2)
- Nearly 70 percent of those with full-time jobs were working in Indiana, while about 16 percent worked elsewhere in the Midwest. About 15 percent of the full time employed respondents worked in other areas of the U.S. Six alumni respondents worked full-time outside the U.S. (Table 2.1)
- About 63 percent of all full-time employed alumni were working within their major field of study. About 21 percent were employed in an area related to their major. (Figure 3)

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

|                               | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Indiana                       | 68.7           | 503      |
| Elsewhere in Midwest          | 15.8           | 116      |
| Southeast                     | 6.7            | 49       |
| Southwest                     | 3.1            | 23       |
| Northeast                     | 1.5            | 11       |
| Western USA, Hawaii or Alaska | 3.3            | 24       |
| Foreign Country               | .8             | 6        |
| Total                         | 100.0          | 732      |

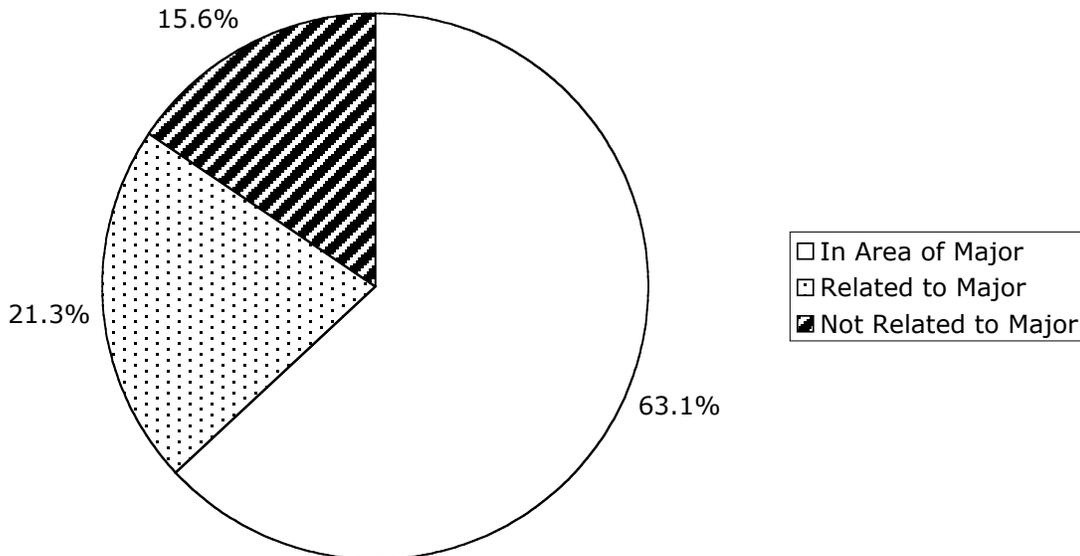
- Of the 15.6 percent of full-time employed alumni who were working in areas *not* related to their major, the most frequently cited reason was that they could not find employment within their major. Other reasons included developing new interests and finding better pay outside their major. (Figure 3 and Table 2.2)

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

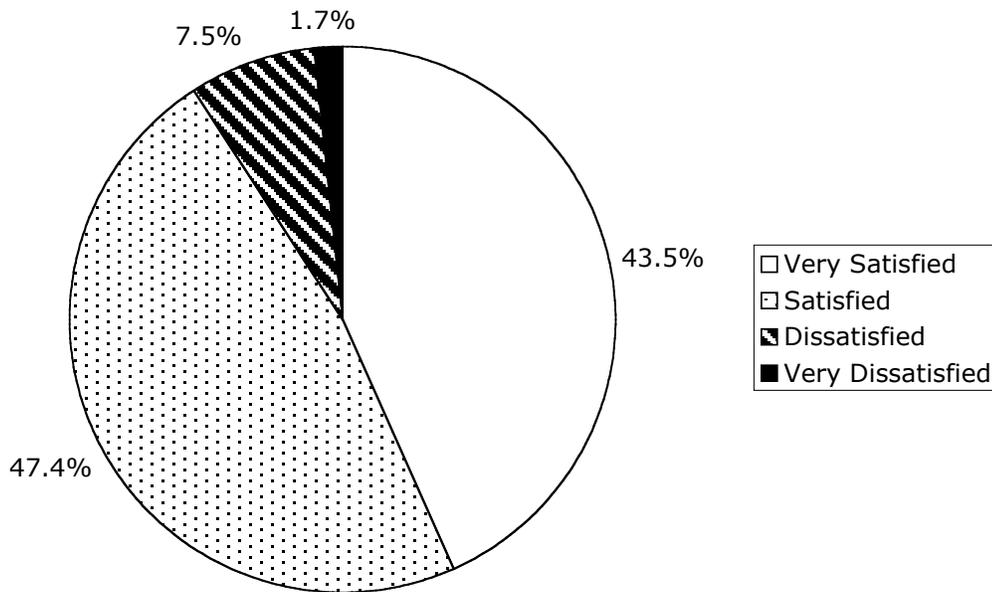
|                               | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Could not find job in major   | 36.8           | 39       |
| Developed new interest        | 17.9           | 19       |
| Better pay                    | 15.1           | 16       |
| Did not plan to work in major | 2.8            | 3        |
| Could not relocate            | 2.8            | 3        |
| Better advancement            | 5.7            | 6        |
| Not licensed/certified        | 3.8            | 4        |
| Other                         | 15.1           | 16       |
| Total                         | 100.0          | 106      |

- Among those employed full-time, 77.4 percent indicated that a college degree was required for their employment.
- More than nine out of ten full-time employed alumni were satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. About nine percent indicated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their current employment. (Figure 4)

**Figure 3. Relationship of Full-Time Employment to the Major**



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

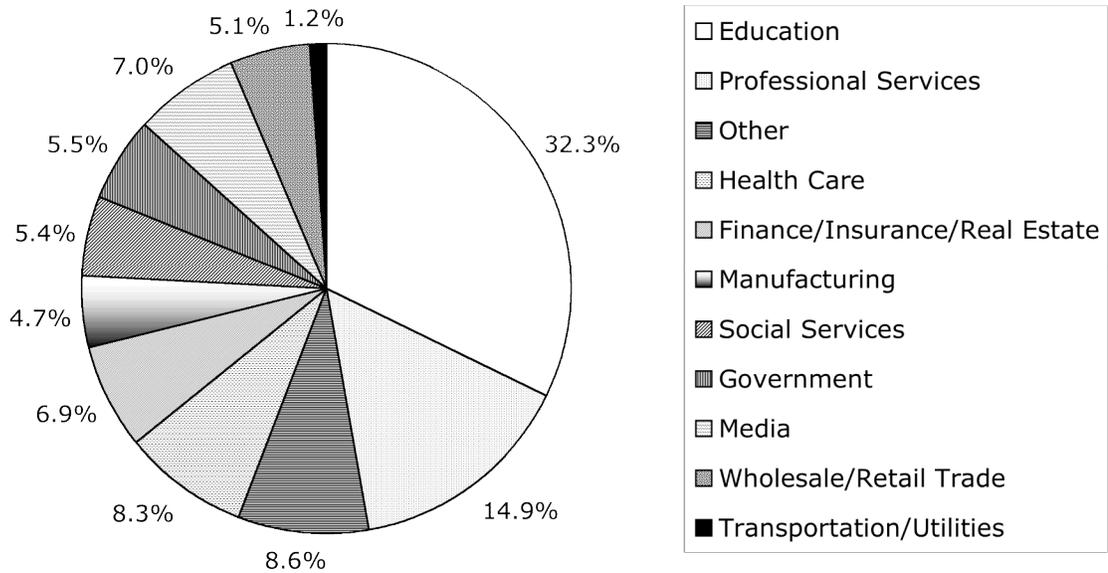


- Figure 5 contains information about the types of organizations and businesses in which alumni found full-time employment. The largest specific categories were education (32.3%), and health care (8.3%).
- Other types of organizations in which alumni found full-time employment include professional services (14.9%), media (7.0%), finance, insurance, and real estate (6.9%), government (5.5%), social services (5.4%), wholesale and retail trade (5.1%), manufacturing (4.7%), and transportation and utilities (1.2%). (Figure 5)
- Fewer than six percent of full-time employed respondents were earning

less than \$20,000 at the time of the survey. About 11 percent were earning between \$20,000 and \$24,999. About 23 percent were earning between \$25,000 and \$29,999. Finally, about 61 percent were earning \$30,000 or more in their second year after graduation. Figure 6 contains percentages for each salary 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 more than 25 percent of all full-time employed respondents. (Table 2.4)

**Figure 5. Type of Organization in Which Alumni Found Full-Time Employment**



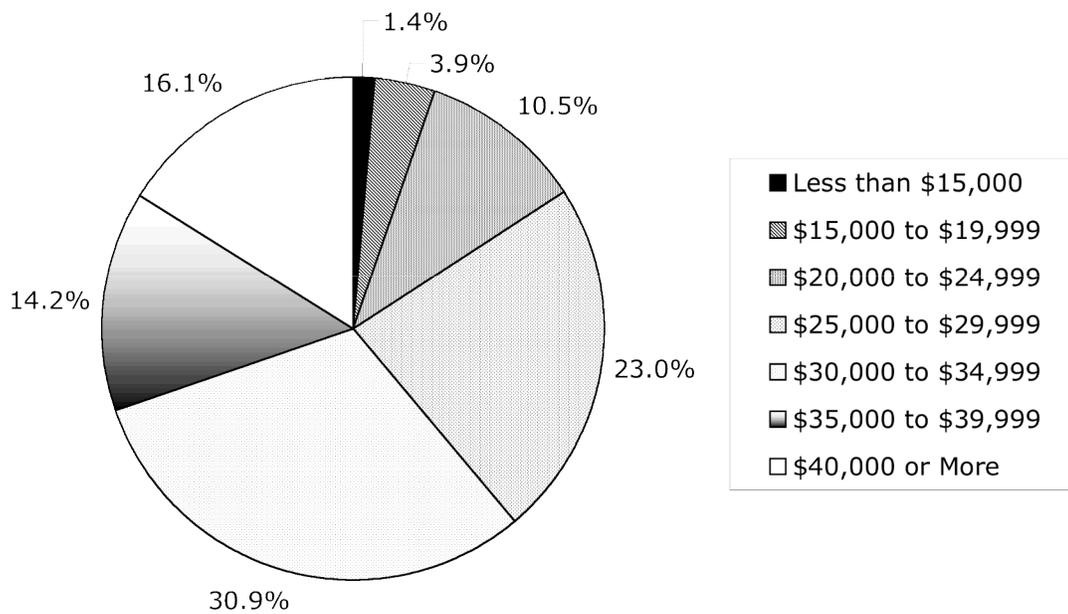
- It can also be seen from Table 2.4 that alumni frequently reported full-time employment as managers and directors, sales representatives, architects, counselors and therapists, account executives, accountants, and sports, exercise and fitness instructors, officials and athletic trainers.

**Further Education**

- About 21 percent were enrolled in college course work at the time of the survey. About 16 percent were pursuing graduate degrees, while about 5 percent were taking additional undergraduate course work. Eleven percent were enrolled in non-collegiate professional development courses. (Figure 7)

- About 13 percent reported that they had completed an additional degree or certification program.
- Among respondents who were enrolled in school, 37 percent reported attending full-time, while 62 percent reported attending school part-time.
- Nearly 60 percent reported that they plan to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. Only about twelve percent of respondents indicated they had no plans to continue their education. (Table 2.3)

**Figure 6. Annual Income from Full-Time Employment**



**Table 2.3  
Plans for Eventual Further Education**

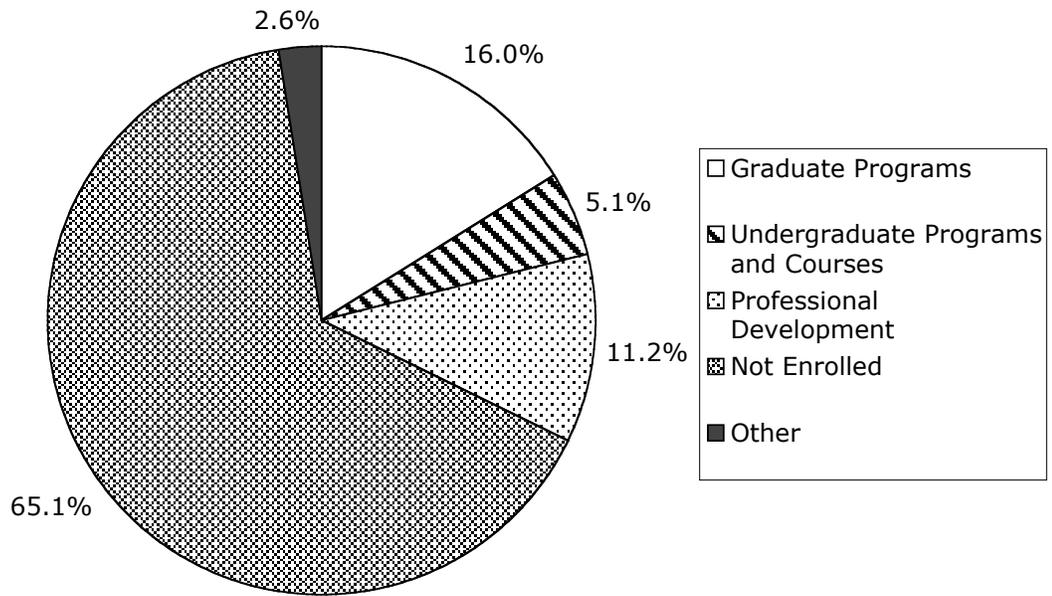
|   | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|---|----------------|----------|
| DO YOU PLAN EVENTUALLY TO...                      |                |          |
| Obtain a graduate or professional degree          | 59.2           | 488      |
| Obtain another Bachelor's degree                  | 9.6            | 79       |
| Obtain certification with college course work     | 9.1            | 75       |
| Obtain certification with non-college course work | 19.4           | 160      |
| Take additional college courses                   | 6.1            | 50       |
| Take professional development courses             | 28.6           | 236      |
| No plans to continue education                    | 12.4           | 102      |
| Total Responses                                   | 144.4*         | 1,190    |

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because respondents could choose more than one response.  
Eight hundred twenty-four (824) respondents chose one or more response.

**Table 2.4**  
**Occupations of Full-Time Employed Alumni**

| <i>Occupation</i>   | <i>N</i> | <i>Occupation</i>   | <i>N</i>   |
|---|----------|---|------------|
| Teachers (Elementary Education)   | 84       | Technicians (Other)   | 8          |
| Managers, Directors, Asst./Assoc. Directors, & Proprietors (not Sales, Retail, Personnel or Assistant Managers) | 50       | Dieticians and Nutritionists                                    | 7          |
| Teachers, Substitutes, Aides, Principals (Other/Mixed Level)  | 36       | Secretaries and Word Processing Specialists                     | 7          |
| Sales Representatives, Sales People, and Sales Clerks   | 33       | Service Workers   | 7          |
| Architects, Landscape Architects, Interns, GIS, & Draftspersons   | 32       | Technicians (Medical and Dental)                                | 7          |
| Counselors, Therapists, Speech Pathologists, & Case Managers  | 31       | Coordinators  | 7          |
| Teachers (Special Ed.)  | 30       | Communications, Professional and Technical                      | 6          |
| Teachers (High School)  | 19       | Public Relations/PR   | 6          |
| Account Executives  | 18       | Loan Officers/Specialists                                       | 6          |
| Accountants, Auditors, and Assistant Auditors'  | 18       | Artists (not Graphic), Entertainers, Musicians, and Writers     | 5          |
| Sports, Exercise, and Fitness Instructors, Officials, and Athletic Trainers                                     | 16       | Bank Managers, Officials, Brokers, Analysts, and Planners       | 5          |
| Insurance Adjusters, Agents, Examiners, Investigators, and Underwriters   | 15       | Chemists  | 5          |
| Marketing   | 15       | Probation Officers  | 5          |
| Nurses, EMT's, Paramedics, Health Care Associates   | 15       | Advertising Agents, Sales People, Media Buyers, and Copywriters | 4          |
| Administrators and Administrative Assistants  | 14       | Assistant Managers and Manager Trainees                         | 4          |
| Engineers   | 14       | Interior Designers  | 4          |
| Graphic Artists   | 13       | Self Employed Managers, Contractors, and Proprietors            | 4          |
| Sales and Retail Managers, Assistant Managers, Buyers, and Merchandisers  | 13       | Teachers (Preschool, Early Childhood Ed.)                       | 4          |
| Teachers (Middle School)  | 12       | Academic Advisors   | 4          |
| Computer Programmers, System Analysts, Support Personnel-Help Desk  | 11       | Child Care Services`  | 4          |
| Social and Welfare workers  | 11       | Librarians, Archivists, and Historians                          | 3          |
| Military (Members of the Armed Forces)  | 10       | Paralegals, Legal Assistants, and Law Clerks                    | 3          |
| TV Producer, Assis/Assoc Producer, & News Anchor/Reporter   | 10       | Planners  | 3          |
| Consultants   | 9        | Web Page Designers  | 3          |
| Customer Service Representatives  | 9        | Communications Managers   | 2          |
| Research /Data Analysts   | 9        | Environmental Scientists, Conservationists, and Foresters       | 2          |
| Editors, Reporters, and Photojournalists  | 8        | Food Store Managers and Food Service Managers                   | 2          |
| Personnel Managers and Workers, Human Resources   | 8        | Insurance Actuaries   | 2          |
| Police, Detectives, Security Agents, Dispatchers, and Firefighters (Not Probation Officers)                     | 8        | Recreation and Group Workers                                    | 2          |
|   |          | Student Employment, Graduate Students, and Interns              | 2          |
|   |          | Biologists  | 1          |
|   |          | Peace Corp Volunteers   | 1          |
|   |          | <i>All Other Occupations</i>                                    | 11         |
|   |          | <b>Total</b>  | <b>717</b> |

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



## 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.

Alumni were asked whether they would recommend Ball State to others, 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.

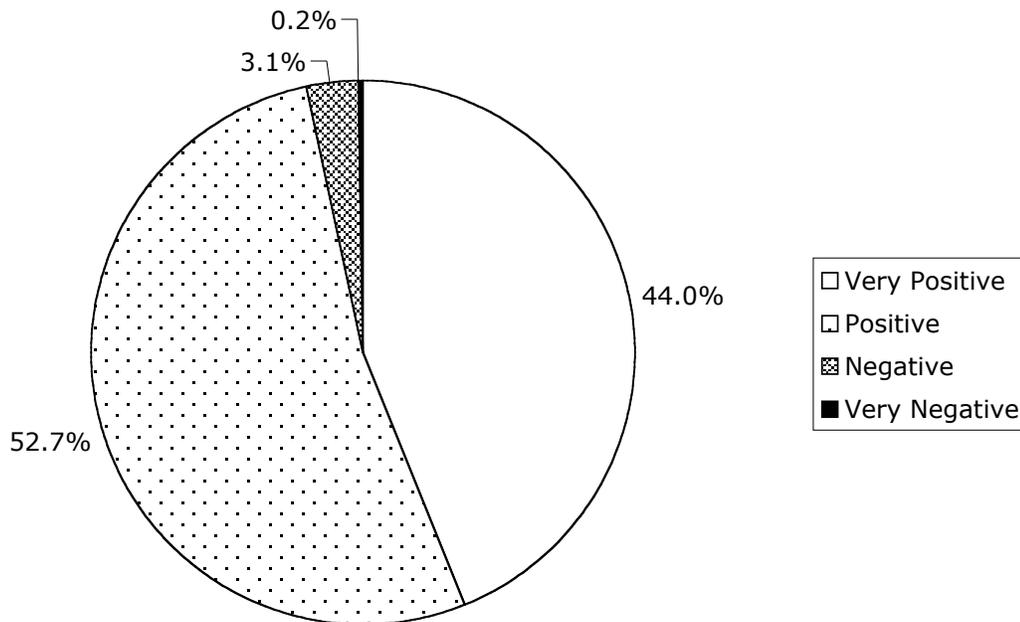
More than 98 percent of all respondents indicated that their experiences

at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily in the area of intellectual growth. At least 96 percent of all respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily in the areas of personal growth and preparation for further education. More than ninety percent felt that BSU experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily for their career.

In each knowledge and skill area, more than 80 percent of all respondents indicated that Ball State experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily. (Table 3.2)

More than 45 percent of students indicated that they participated in internships. About 53 percent indicated that they studied at least 11 hours per week while at Ball State. Over 28 percent indicated they worked more than 20 hours per week while enrolled at Ball State.

**Figure 8. Attitude Toward Ball State**



**General Evaluation of Learning Experiences**

- Greater than 98 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, 96 percent reported they felt very well (45.0%) or satisfactorily (51.0%) prepared. (Table 3.1)
- More than nine out of ten felt they were very well (42.1%) or satisfactorily (48.7%) prepared for their careers. (Table 3.1) Even among those who were not employed full time (about 12 percent of all respondents), 82.7 percent indicated they were very well or satisfactorily prepared in their career area.

**Knowledge and Understanding**

- Computer technology was the knowledge item for which the largest number of alumni felt very well or satisfactorily prepared. Over 95 percent indicated they were very well (31.3%) or

satisfactorily (63.8%) prepared in this area. (Table 3.2)

- Over 94 percent reported that they were very well or satisfactorily prepared in social sciences (94.4%), or the sciences (94.1%).
- About nine out of ten respondents felt very well or satisfactorily prepared in their understanding of wellness (92.9%), other cultures (89.2%) or racial issues (89.4%).
- At least 84 percent of respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily to understand the humanities, the arts, and morals and ethics. (Table 3.2)
- More than eight out of ten rated their preparation in understanding global events “very well” or “satisfactorily.”
- Eight out of ten respondents reported that they were very well or satisfactorily prepared in understanding gender issues, and current events and contemporary issues.

**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>                                  |                       |               |          |
| OVERALL EVALUATION OF EXPERIENCES |   |                       |               |          |
| Intellectual Growth               | 54.0  | 44.2                  | 1.8           | 872      |
| Personal Growth                   | 61.7  | 36.5                  | 1.8           | 872      |
| Preparation for Further Education | 45.0  | 51.0                  | 4.0           | 867      |
| Preparation for Career            | 42.1  | 48.7                  | 9.2           | 870      |

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

|  | <i>Rating of Preparation in Each Area</i> |   |               | N   |
|--|---|---|---------------|-----|
|  | <u>Very Well</u>                          | <u>Satisfactorily</u><br><i>Percentages</i> | <u>Poorly</u> |     |
| <b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b>         |   |   |               |     |
| Other Cultures                             | 36.2                                      | 53.0  | 10.7          | 869 |
| Computer Technology                        | 31.3                                      | 63.8  | 4.9           | 870 |
| Wellness                                   | 20.8                                      | 72.1  | 7.2           | 867 |
| Sciences                                   | 29.8                                      | 64.3  | 5.8           | 872 |
| Social Sciences                            | 32.4                                      | 62.0  | 5.6           | 864 |
| Humanities                                 | 28.3                                      | 60.1  | 11.6          | 862 |
| Arts                                       | 22.8                                      | 61.5  | 15.7          | 865 |
| Gender Issues                              | 18.8                                      | 61.8  | 19.4          | 864 |
| Racial Issues                              | 25.1                                      | 64.3  | 10.6          | 865 |
| Morals and Ethics                          | 24.9                                      | 64.1  | 11.0          | 871 |
| Current Events and Contemporary Issues     | 17.3                                      | 63.4  | 19.3          | 869 |
| Global Events                              | 21.7                                      | 60.4  | 18.0          | 863 |
| <b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>                |   |   |               |     |
| Writing                                    | 49.1                                      | 46.7  | 4.2           | 867 |
| Speaking                                   | 42.5                                      | 53.9  | 3.6           | 865 |
| Listening                                  | 45.1                                      | 52.6  | 2.3           | 861 |
| Problem Solving                            | 44.5                                      | 52.6  | 2.9           | 861 |
| Analyzing and Evaluating Ideas             | 48.3                                      | 48.7  | 3.0           | 862 |
| Conducting Research                        | 41.0                                      | 48.4  | 10.5          | 863 |
| Using Library Resources                    | 48.0                                      | 45.2  | 6.8           | 867 |
| Using Mathematics                          | 22.5                                      | 64.3  | 13.2          | 863 |
| Creative Thinking                          | 44.6                                      | 50.9  | 4.5           | 864 |
| Critical Thinking                          | 43.8                                      | 53.1  | 3.1           | 866 |
| Using Computer Technology at Work          | 39.0                                      | 50.1  | 11.0          | 865 |
| Providing Leadership                       | 42.9                                      | 49.0  | 8.1           | 864 |
| Persuading Others                          | 26.7                                      | 60.8  | 12.5          | 858 |
| Coping with Stress                         | 26.6                                      | 56.1  | 17.3          | 866 |
| Dealing with the Public                    | 33.8                                      | 54.1  | 12.2          | 864 |
| Managing Time                              | 45.0                                      | 47.5  | 7.5           | 867 |
| Planning and Organizing                    | 47.6                                      | 46.5  | 5.9           | 866 |
| Conflict Resolution                        | 29.7                                      | 61.4  | 8.9           | 862 |
| Interacting with Diverse Groups of People  | 40.1                                      | 49.8  | 10.0          | 867 |
| Making Informed Decisions                  | 42.8                                      | 54.6  | 2.5           | 864 |
| Self-Evaluation                            | 42.9                                      | 52.8  | 4.3           | 863 |
| Self-Reliance                              | 54.8                                      | 42.3  | 2.9           | 863 |
| Working Cooperatively                      | 54.3                                      | 43.5  | 2.2           | 864 |
| Using New Technologies                     | 37.6                                      | 49.6  | 12.8          | 865 |
| Clarifying Personal Values                 | 38.2                                      | 54.5  | 7.2           | 858 |
| Experiencing and Responding to the Arts    | 29.9                                      | 57.6  | 12.5          | 865 |
| Lifelong Learning                          | 46.4                                      | 48.8  | 4.9           | 865 |
| Maintaining Physical Health and Well-Being | 31.3                                      | 61.4  | 7.4           | 867 |

### Skills and Abilities

- The skill items with the highest percentage of responses in the “very well” prepared category included writing (49.1%), analyzing and evaluating ideas (48.3%), using library resources (48.0%), self-reliance (54.8%), and working cooperatively (54.3%). (Table 3.2)
- Greater than 95 percent rated their preparation very well or satisfactory in the skill areas of writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, analyzing and evaluating ideas, creative thinking, critical thinking, making informed decisions, self-evaluation, self-reliance, working cooperatively, and lifelong learning. (Table 3.2)
- More than nine out of ten respondents felt very well or satisfactorily prepared in managing time, planning and organizing, conflict resolution, clarifying personal values, and maintaining physical health and well-being.
- More than 86 percent of all respondents indicated they were very well or satisfactorily prepared in the areas of using mathematics, using computer technology at work, persuading others, dealing with the public, interacting with diverse groups of people, using new technologies, and experiencing and responding to the arts. (Table 3.2)
- Eighty-two percent of all respondents indicated they were “satisfactorily” or “very well” prepared regarding coping with stress—the lowest rated skill item.

### Internships and Employment at Ball State

- A majority of respondents indicated that they held campus employment (55.8%), or off-campus employment (56.8%), while attending Ball State. About 45 percent participated in an internship program. (Table 3.3)

**Table 3.3**

**Internships and Student Employment**

|                       | <i>Percent*</i> | <i>N</i> |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Internship            | 45.1            | 394      |
| Campus Employment     | 55.8            | 487      |
| Off-Campus Employment | 56.8            | 496      |

\*Percent is based on 873 valid cases. N shows the number who indicated internship or employment experience.

### Interaction with Faculty at Ball State

- When alumni were asked how often they met with faculty members outside of class, about 16 percent indicated that they met often, about 50 percent indicated they met occasionally, and over 34 percent indicated they met rarely or never with faculty members outside of class. (Table 3.4)

**Table 3.4**

**Frequency of Interaction with Faculty**

|              | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|--------------|----------------|----------|
| Often        | 15.9           | 136      |
| Occasionally | 49.7           | 424      |
| Rarely       | 31.1           | 265      |
| Never        | 3.3            | 28       |
| Total        | 100.0          | 853      |

**Number of Weekly Study and Work Hours**

- Over 52 percent of alumni reported that they studied 11 or more hours per week while attending classes at Ball State. About 43 percent indicated that they studied five to ten hours per week. About four percent reported studying an average of less than five hours per week. (Table 3.5)
- Seven out of ten respondents indicated that they typically worked 11 or more hours a week while attending classes. Only about 11 percent indicated that they typically did not work while attending classes. (Table 3.5)

**Table 3.5**  
**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        |
| Less than 5 Hours              | 4.4            | 38       |
| 5-10 Hours                     | 42.9           | 367      |
| 11-20 Hours                    | 38.0           | 325      |
| Over 20 Hours                  | 14.5           | 124      |
| Total                          | 100.0          | 855      |
| <b>HOURS WORKED PER WEEK</b>   |                |          |
| Not Employed                   | 10.9           | 93       |
| 10 Hours or Less               | 15.8           | 135      |
| 11-20 Hours                    | 44.7           | 382      |
| Over 20 Hours                  | 28.6           | 244      |
| Total                          | 100.0          | 854      |



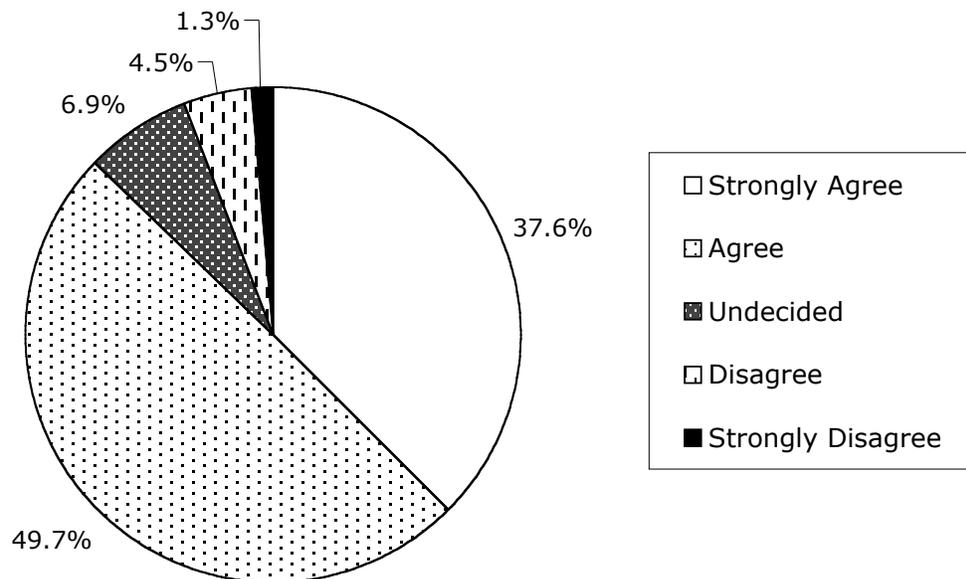
## SECTION 4

### Satisfaction with Departmental Experiences

*Summary* Alumni were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with statements about their department such as “I am satisfied with my department.” Over 85 percent of alumni agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with their department in general, as well as with teaching ability of faculty, faculty professional expertise, opportunities for interaction with faculty, and fairness of grading in departmental courses. At least eight out of ten alumni agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the availability of required courses in their majors, feedback from instructors, and opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction.

Seventy-three percent agreed or strongly agreed that their departmental courses had prepared them for employment. More than two-thirds agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with faculty advising in their department. At least six out of ten respondents agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences, opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences, and opportunities to learn computer applications related to their major. Over 55 percent of those surveyed expressed satisfaction with preparation for graduate or professional school, opportunities to receive advice about planning a career, and opportunities to receive advice about obtaining a job. (Table 4.1)

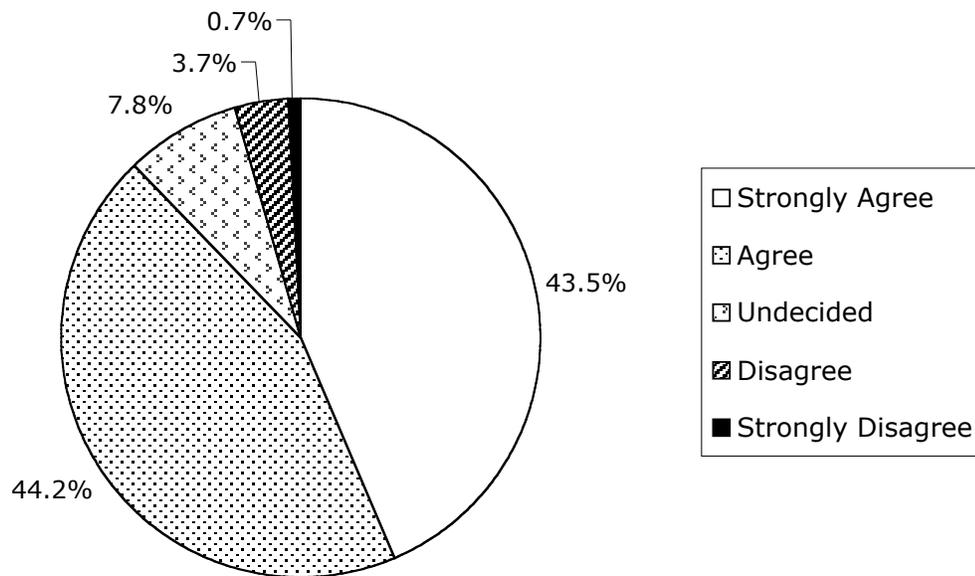
**Figure 9. Satisfaction with Major Department**



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

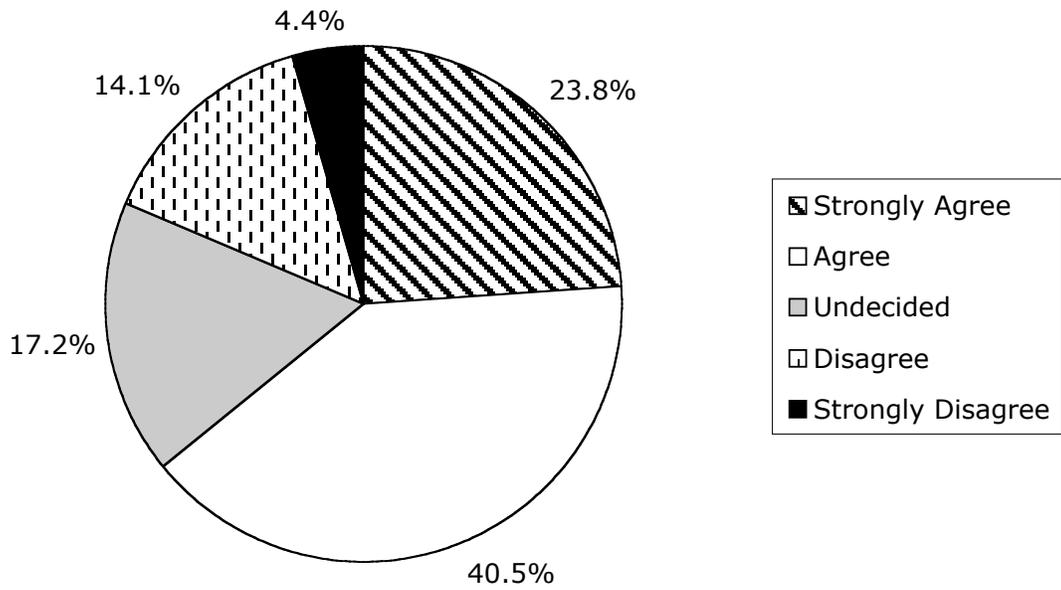
|   | Strongly<br>Agree  | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly<br>Disagree | <i>N</i> |
|---|--------------------|-------|-----------|----------|----------------------|----------|
|   | <i>Percentages</i> |       |           |          |                      |          |
| <b>I am satisfied...</b>  |                    |       |           |          |                      |          |
| with my department.   | 37.6               | 49.7  | 6.9       | 4.5      | 1.3                  | 861      |
| with teaching ability of faculty in my department.                                  | 39.1               | 47.5  | 7.4       | 5.2      | 0.7                  | 861      |
| with professional expertise of departmental faculty.                                | 43.5               | 44.2  | 7.8       | 3.7      | 0.7                  | 859      |
| with opportunities for interaction with departmental faculty.                       | 42.0               | 44.5  | 8.7       | 4.3      | 0.5                  | 859      |
| with the availability of required courses in my major.                              | 35.1               | 49.7  | 6.6       | 7.1      | 1.5                  | 860      |
| with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences.      | 25.5               | 36.5  | 18.8      | 14.3     | 4.9                  | 858      |
| with opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences. | 27.7               | 36.1  | 18.1      | 13.2     | 4.8                  | 855      |
| that the courses in my department prepared me for employment.                       | 29.5               | 43.7  | 14.2      | 9.2      | 3.5                  | 859      |
| that the courses in my department prepared me for graduate or professional school.  | 24.3               | 32.5  | 34.3      | 6.8      | 2.0                  | 839      |
| with the fairness of grading in departmental courses.                               | 33.4               | 52.3  | 7.9       | 5.3      | 1.0                  | 861      |
| with feedback from instructors about my academic progress.                          | 31.9               | 47.7  | 11.7      | 7.6      | 1.2                  | 860      |
| with opportunities to learn computer applications related to my major.              | 23.8               | 40.5  | 17.2      | 14.1     | 4.4                  | 860      |
| with opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction in my department.        | 30.2               | 52.6  | 10.6      | 5.1      | 1.4                  | 857      |
| with faculty advising in my department.   | 26.4               | 41.1  | 15.1      | 13.2     | 4.2                  | 859      |
| with opportunities to receive advice about planning my career.                      | 21.5               | 36.6  | 19.1      | 16.3     | 6.4                  | 857      |
| with opportunities to receive advice about obtaining a job.                         | 20.1               | 35.3  | 20.0      | 16.9     | 7.7                  | 856      |

**Figure 10. Satisfaction with Professional Expertise of Faculty in Major Department**



- Satisfaction with the department in general, faculty teaching ability, faculty professional expertise, and availability of faculty had the highest positive ratings of all departmental items. More than 86 percent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with these items. (Table 4.1)
- At least eight out of ten respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the availability of required courses in their major (84.8%), fairness of grading (85.7%), feedback from instructors about academic progress (79.6%), and opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction in the department (82.8%). (Table 4.1)
- Nearly three-quarters (73.2%) agreed or strongly agreed their departmental courses prepared them for employment.
- About 68 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with faculty advising in their department.
- Over six out of ten respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with information provided about internships, practicums, or co-op experiences (62.0%), opportunities to participate in internships, practicums, or co-op experiences (63.8%), and opportunities to learn computer applications related to their major (64.3%).
- Nearly six out of ten alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with preparation for graduate or professional school (56.8%), opportunities to receive advice about planning a career (58.1%), and opportunities to receive advice about obtaining a job (55.4%). (Table 4.1)

**Figure 11. Satisfaction with Opportunities to Learn Computer Applications in the Major**



## SECTION 5

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

*Summary* All respondents were asked to indicate the writing, quantitative, and computer skills they use on the job. At least 91 percent of all employed respondents routinely use writing skills on their jobs. More than sixty percent write notes, letters, and memos at work.

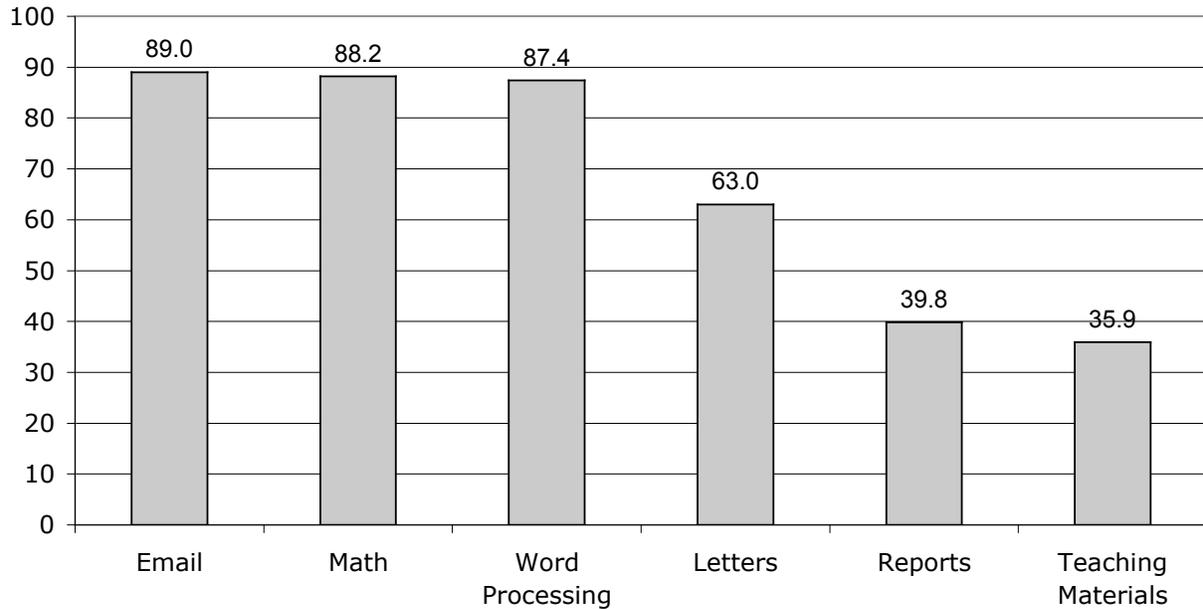
The vast majority of respondents reported using some quantitative or computer skills on the job. Over 96 percent use some computer skills, and over 92 percent use some quantitative skills as a part of their employment. Alumni report on a wide variety of skills in each of these areas, as summarized below.

### Writing Tasks on the Job

- Notes, letters, and memos were the most often cited types of writing used by alumni in the course of their employment. About sixty percent of employed alumni indicated that they write memos as a part of their job responsibilities, and slightly more wrote notes or letters. About 48 percent indicated that they wrote documentation, and about 40 percent wrote reports. (Table 5.1)
- Over 24 percent reported that they routinely perform proposal writing at work. (Table 5.1)

**Figure 12. Use of Selected Computer, Quantitative, and Writing Tasks at Work**

(Percentages)



- About 26 percent reported writing newsletters. About 19 percent indicated writing guides or manuals. Fewer than nine percent indicated that they did not perform writing tasks on the job. (Table 5.1)

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

|                      | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|----------------------|----------------|----------|
| <b>WRITING TASKS</b> |                |          |
| Notes                | 61.0           | 478      |
| Letters              | 63.0           | 493      |
| Memos                | 60.0           | 470      |
| Documentation        | 48.3           | 378      |
| Reports              | 39.8           | 312      |
| Teaching materials   | 35.9           | 281      |
| Proposals            | 24.4           | 191      |
| Newsletters          | 26.4           | 207      |
| Guides/Manuals       | 19.2           | 150      |
| Brochures            | 17.4           | 136      |
| Specifications       | 14.6           | 114      |
| Other                | 8.9            | 70       |
| None                 | 8.8            | 69       |
| Total*               | 427.7          | 783      |

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because alumni could choose more than one response. N shows the total number of cases responding.

### Quantitative Tasks on the Job

- Eighty-eight percent of all employed respondents reported using basic arithmetic skills on the job, while less than one-half (45.1%) reported using decimal, fraction, and conversions skills at work. Financial calculations were the third most often used quantitative skill reported. About one-third (31.2%), reported using financial calculations at work. (Table 5.2)
- Less than one-fourth indicated the use of algebra (21.4%) or geometry (18.1%) on the job. Over six percent of respondents used higher mathematics applications on the job. (Table 5.2)

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

|                                  | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| <b>QUANTITATIVE TASKS</b>        |                |          |
| Basic math skills                | 88.2           | 688      |
| Decimals, fractions, conversions | 45.1           | 352      |
| Financial calculations           | 31.2           | 243      |
| Statistics                       | 25.4           | 198      |
| Algebra                          | 21.4           | 167      |
| Geometry                         | 18.1           | 141      |
| Higher mathematics applications  | 6.3            | 49       |
| None                             | 7.7            | 60       |
| Other                            | .8             | 6        |
| Total*                           | 244.1          | 780      |

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because alumni could choose more than one response. N shows the total number of cases responding.

### Computer Tasks on the Job

- Ninety-six percent of employed respondents reported that they used computers on the job. Word processing was used by 87 percent of employed respondents. (Table 5.3)

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

|                       | <i>Percent</i> | <i>N</i> |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------|
| <b>COMPUTER TASKS</b> |                |          |
| Word Processing       | 87.4           | 686      |
| E-mail/communications | 89.0           | 699      |
| Web browsing          | 70.2           | 551      |
| Spreadsheets          | 57.5           | 451      |
| Databases             | 41.9           | 329      |
| Information retrieval | 24.2           | 190      |
| Graphics              | 26.0           | 204      |
| Desktop publishing    | 21.3           | 167      |
| Tutorials/educational | 20.6           | 162      |
| Financial analysis    | 14.6           | 115      |
| Statistics            | 10.3           | 81       |
| Programming           | 6.5            | 51       |
| C.A.D.                | 6.8            | 53       |
| Other                 | 4.2            | 33       |
| None                  | 3.6            | 28       |
| Total*                | 484.1          | 785      |

\* Percentages total to greater than 100% because alumni could choose more than one response. N shows the total number of cases responding.

- E-mail and/or communications software were used by 89 percent of all employed respondents (Table 5.3)
- Seventy percent of all employed respondents reported using web browsers on the job. Fifty-seven percent of all employed respondents used spreadsheet software at work. Databases were used by about 42 percent of all employed respondents, while information retrieval was used on the job by about 24 percent of employed respondents. (Table 5.3)
- Desktop publishing (21.3%) and graphics software (26.0%) were used by less than 30 percent of all employed respondents.
- Lesser-used computer software included computer based tutorial and educational programs (20.6%), financial analysis software (14.6%), statistics software (10.3%), programming (6.5%), C.A.D. software (6.8 %), and other types of software (4.2%). (Table 5.3)



## SECTION 6

### Summary and Discussion

The Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research 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 and/or to have made substantial progress towards graduate degrees. To meet these objectives, alumni who graduated approximately two years prior to the survey date were chosen. The 2002 survey was the eighth administration of the Ball State Alumni Survey.

The surveys show that about 91 percent of graduates with full-time jobs are satisfied or very satisfied with their employment. Also, about 84 percent of full time positions are considered to be related to their educational pursuits. About 69 percent of those with full time employment are working in Indiana, and 59 percent of all new full-time employment reported on the survey is found prior to graduation or within three months after graduation.<sup>1</sup>

About 16 percent of all respondents were enrolled in graduate or professional degree programs, and about 13 percent had completed an additional degree or certification program.

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. Respondents were instructed to consider all activities they participated in at Ball State, including those outside the classroom.

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.

Additional information from this survey is available upon request.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure is not in a table. It includes only those employed full time, who *secured* new employment prior to or after graduation, and does not include employment *held* prior to graduation. Eight hundred (800) new, full-time jobs were reported.

