

2005 Psychology Alumni Survey Results

Executive Summary

The Psychology Division, with support from the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Western Oregon University's Alumni Association, sponsored a survey of recent alumni. We mailed a short survey to all Psychology majors who graduated Western Oregon University between the years of 2001 - 2005. In all 358 surveys were mailed out 39 were returned as undeliverable and 114 completed surveys were returned (a response rate of 36%). A summary highlighting the results of the survey is provided below. For more detailed results, please scroll down to view the survey questions and responses.

Overall,

79% of respondents indicated they are **currently working** for pay.

53% of respondents indicated they are making between **\$20,000 and \$40,000**.

67% of the respondents who were currently working indicated they were working in the fields of **social service or education**.

40% of the respondents indicated they were either in the process of or had completed a **Master's or Terminal degree**.

We asked alumni how satisfied they were with various aspects of the program. On the positive side, 97% of respondents indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of instruction they received. Only 51% of respondents, however, indicated that they were satisfied/very satisfied with their preparation for entering the job market. The Division is in the process of planning follow-up focus groups to determine what types of preparation for the job market students are looking for. Currently, the Psychology Division sponsors a Career Forum that brings back recent WOU Psychology alumni to talk about their career experiences in relationship to the Psychology program. Second, during our academic advising sessions, we stress to our majors that their college education is not necessarily specific job training, but rather an opportunity for them to develop **broad-based competencies** that will serve them well no matter what their profession.

We asked alumni to indicate what impact the Psychology program had on their development of a number of these **broad-based competencies**. The results showed that, for each competency, at least three quarters of the respondents indicated that the Psychology program had some or a great impact on the development of that competency.

Overall, we are very pleased with the results of the survey. We are continuing to analyze the data for ideas of how to make the Psychology program stronger. For example, a number of respondents indicated that applied experiences were very important in their development.

Subsequently, the Psychology Division developed a mentoring program that provides students with more “hands-on” experiences.

Coincidentally, the alumni survey itself has given us the opportunity to provide students with practical experience in the process of program assessment. Two psychology students have been very involved in the process of preparing the mailing as well as entering and analyzing the data. As a result of their involvement, these students presented some of these results at the 2006 Western Psychological Association (WPA) conference. More detailed results are provided below.

Did you participate in any of the following as a psychology major?		
	No	Yes
Practicum	63.7%	36.3%
WOU-Talmadge mentoring program	76.7%	23.3%
Research technician (assistant)	73.5%	26.5%
Teaching assistant	92.2%	7.8%
Psychology Club	66.0%	34.0%
Psi Chi	49.1%	50.9%
WOUPSA (Western Oregon University Psychology Student Association)	77.5%	22.5%

Are you currently working for pay?		
	No	Yes
	20.7%	79.3%

What are your expected total gross earnings from this job for the current year?	% of Respondents
\$20,000 or less	37.9%
\$20,001 to \$30,000	32.2%
\$30,001 to \$40,000	20.7%
\$40,001 to \$50,000	6.9%
\$50,001 to \$60,000	2.3%
\$60,001 to \$70,000	0.0%
\$70,001 to \$80,000	0.0%
\$80,001 or over	0.0%

How satisfied were you with...	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
The <u>variety</u> of courses offered?	0.0%	0.9%	5.3%	66.7%	27.1%
The <u>availability</u> of courses offered?	0.0%	6.3%	12.5%	67.9%	13.3%
The overall <u>quality of instruction</u>	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	34.2%	63.2%
The <u>quality of advising</u> you received from the division	0.0%	4.4%	16.7%	25.4%	53.5%
The <u>accessibility</u> of the Psychology faculty	0.0%	2.6%	7.9%	36.8%	52.7%
Your <u>interactions</u> with the Psychology faculty	0.0%	0.9%	3.5%	31.9%	63.7%
Your <u>preparation for entering the job market</u>	0.9%	17.7%	30.1%	35.4%	15.0%
Your <u>preparation for further academic study</u>	1.8%	9.6%	18.4%	38.6%	31.6%

What impact did majoring in psychology have on your...	No Impact	Slight Impact	Some Impact	Great Impact
Being committed to lifelong learning	4.5%	5.4%	36.6%	53.6%
Acquiring extensive knowledge in an area of study	1.8%	7.1%	42.5%	48.6%
Being prepared for advanced study	5.3%	10.6%	38.9%	45.2%
Using effective verbal and written communication skills	0.9%	4.4%	41.6%	53.1%
Using effective listening skills	0.9%	2.7%	44.2%	52.2%
Using effective leadership skills	4.4%	15.9%	42.5%	37.2%
Working cooperatively in groups	2.7%	10.6%	46.0%	40.7%
Accessing a variety of information sources	1.8%	5.3%	36.3%	56.6%
Thinking critically	0.9%	4.5%	33.0%	61.6%
Analyzing various types of data	2.7%	6.2%	29.2%	61.9%
Drawing conclusions from various types of data	2.7%	4.4%	34.5%	58.4%
Solving problems effectively	9.0%	6.2%	45.1%	39.7%
Understanding professional ethics	1.8%	13.3%	47.8%	37.1%
Appreciating cultural and ethnic differences between	3.5%	15.9%	40.7%	39.9%

To what extent do you feel majoring in psychology has helped you to...	Not at All	Slight Extent	Some Extent	Great Extent
obtain your current position?	6.9%	8.8%	22.5%	24.5%
be successful in your current position?	2.9%	4.9%	20.4%	35.0%
advance in your career?	5.0%	13.9%	20.8%	28.7%
be successful in your personal life?	0.0%	8.3%	16.7%	32.4%

Please tell us about any institutions of higher learning that you attended after completing your psychology degree at WOU or about any programs in which you are currently enrolled.

Fifty-one percent of respondents indicated they had or were currently attending an institution of higher learning after graduating from WOU.

Degree Type	Percentage
No degree type indicated	15.50%
AA	1.70%
Bachelors degree	3.40%
Post-Bacc work	1.70%
Masters degree	72.40%
Terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D, JD, etc)	5.10%

Please tell us about any additional plans for further education by marking the appropriate response below

	No Plans to Start	Intend to Start
another bachelor's degree	95.5%	4.5%
professional certification in your field	56.8%	43.2%
master's degree	23.5%	76.5%

technical or specialist degree
doctoral degree

87.3%
71.1%

12.7%
28.9%

