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Western Alumni, Class of 2003 - Spring 2004 Survey Findings

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WESTERN ALUMNI, CLASS OF 2003
SPRING 2004 SURVEY FINDINGS

(REPORT 2004-02)

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December, 2004

INTRODUCTION

During Spring Quarter of 2004, a random sample of recent graduates of Western Washington University were mailed a survey asking about their current work and educational pursuits, expectations, and their experiences at Western. The survey replicated items from previous surveys conducted on a biennial basis. This report provides the distribution of their responses on each of the survey items.

In all, 527 alumni responded to the survey out of 1340 for a 39% response rate. (Respondents were sent a pre-survey notification letter, followed by the survey, a reminder and a second survey if they'd not yet responded.) Respondents tended to have earned better grades at WWU (3.24 vs. 3.12 for non-responders), be Caucasian (82% versus 72% of non-responders) and be female (66% vs. 50% of non-responders).

WWU ALUMNI, CLASS OF 2003:
FREQUENCIES

The numbering for the tables presented in this report are taken from the original survey form. (See Appendix A) Since not all the data in the original survey is presented here, the sequencing of numbers may skip. Researchers interested in viewing the complete, raw data may contact the Office of Institutional Assessment, Research, and Testing.

1. Are you currently attending school or waiting to attend school?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	146	27.7%
No	381	72.3%
Total	527	100%

2. Are you planning to become a full-time student in the near future?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	66	19.6%
No	271	80.4%
Total	337	100%

3. Which of the following *best* describes you at this time?

	Frequency	Percent
Currently employed for pay or self employed	428	82.0%
Unemployed and looking for work	46	8.8%
Not employed and not looking for work	48	9.2%
Total	522	100%

5. How many hours a week do you normally work?

Frequency	427
Mean	39.2

6. In the next ten years, do you plan to continue your education any further?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	423	84.1%
No	80	15.9%
Total	503	100%

7. What is the highest level of education you plan to attain in the next 10 years?

	Frequency	Percent
Another bachelors degree	9	2.1%
A certification program	63	14.8%
A masters degree	278	65.1%
Beyond masters (PhD, MD, etc.)	77	18.0%
Total	427	100%

	N	Mean
8. In a typical month, how many hours do you spend volunteering in your community?	506	5.49
9a. On an average day, how many hours do you spend using a computer at work?	433	3.53
9b. On an average day, how many hours do you spend using a computer at home?	425	1.77

10. Do you have Internet access from home?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	446	84.6%
No	81	15.4%
Total	527	100%

11. How well has your education at Western prepared you for working with computers?

	Frequency	Percent
Very well	102	20.0%
Moderately	200	39.1%
Somewhat	168	33%
Not at all	41	8.0%
Total	511	100%

12. Now please rate yourself, as accurately as possible, on each of the qualities below.

- First, rate yourself at the time when you initially entered Western.
- Second, rate yourself now.

For each rating, please use a 0-10 scale, where 0 means very little knowledge or ability in that area, 10 means full mastery, and 5 means average mastery for someone of your age and experience.

NOTE: for each of these qualities the score represents the mean.	Initially entered Western	At the time of the Survey
Writing effectively (N=527)	5.98	8.01
Speaking effectively (N=527)	5.74	7.76
Critically analyzing written information (N=525)	5.63	7.95
Defining and solving problems (N=524)	6.17	7.99
Working and /or learning independently (N=527)	6.91	8.47
Working cooperatively in a group (N=527)	6.83	8.23
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods (N=526)	5.33	7.06
Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods (N=518)	5.31	6.93
Understanding and appreciating differing philosophies and cultures (N=527)	6.20	8.33
Understanding the interaction of society and the environment (N=524)	5.83	8.04
Working effectively with technology, especially computers (N=526)	5.91	7.86
Using management or leadership capabilities (N=526)	5.92	7.75
Understanding organizations and how people behave in them (N=521)	5.54	7.62
Using a broad range of knowledge, ideas, and perspectives gained from outside your major field (N=524)	-	7.59
Using the knowledge, ideas and perspectives gained from your major field (N=523)	-	8.07

14. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your major at Western?

Availability of courses		
	Frequency	Percent
Very	77	16.1%
Mostly	241	50.4%
Somewhat	132	27.6%
Not at all	28	5.9%
Total	478	100%
Quality of instruction		
Very	110	23.0%
Mostly	268	55.9%
Somewhat	95	19.8%
Not at all	6	1.3%
Total	479	100%
How well you were challenged to do your very best		
Very	125	26.1%
Mostly	235	49.1%
Somewhat	107	22.3%
Not at all	12	2.5%
Total	479	100%
How well you learned problem solving & critical thinking		
Very	112	23.6%
Mostly	235	49.5%
Somewhat	117	24.6%
Not at all	11	2.3%
Total	475	100%
Departmental and/or faculty advising concerning courses		
Very	109	23.4%
Mostly	129	27.7%
Somewhat	145	31.1%
Not at all	83	17.8%
Total	466	100%
How well the department facilitated students' progress through the major		
Very	103	21.8%
Mostly	150	31.7%
Somewhat	144	30.4%
Not at all	76	16.1%
Total	473	100%

17. Overall, how satisfied are you with the following?

Undergraduate courses at Western			Western and Bellingham as a place to live		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Very	77	15.2%	Very	359	73.3%
Mostly	339	67.0%	Mostly	95	19.4%
Somewhat	82	16.2%	Somewhat	30	6.1%
Not at all	8	1.6%	Not at all	6	1.2%
Total	506	100%	Total	490	100%
Professors at Western			The amount of ethnic and cultural diversity in the student body		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Very	116	22.1%	Very	85	17.1%
Mostly	327	62.4%	Mostly	166	33.3%
Somewhat	77	14.7%	Somewhat	188	37.8%
Not at all	4	0.8%	Not at all	59	11.8%
Total	524	100%	Total	498	100.0%
Academic advising at Western			Western Washington University, in total		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Very	53	10.6%	Very	163	31.2%
Mostly	134	26.9%	Mostly	305	58.3%
Somewhat	196	39.4%	Somewhat	50	9.6%
Not at all	115	23.1%	Not at all	5	1.0%
Total	498	100%	Total	523	100%
Career and employment advising at Western					
	Frequency	Percent			
Very	31	6.9%			
Mostly	97	21.6%			
Somewhat	191	42.4%			
Not at all	131	29.1%			
Total	450	100%			

18. If you could make your college choice over, would you still choose to enroll at WWU?

	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	272	54%
Probably would	192	38%
Probably not	30	6%
Definitely not	10	0%
Total	504	100%

What type of work do you do?

Arts related	17	Business related (cont.)	
Graphic design	4	Mortgages	1
Reporter/Journalist	2	Permit Manager/Corporate Officer	1
Art gallery	1	Project Coordinator	1
Artist	1	Purchasing, scheduling, and sales	1
Broadcasting	1	Real estate	1
Choreographer	1	Service coordinator	1
Creative writer (video games)	1	Supervisor	1
Fashion design	1	Tourism industry	1
Museum professional	1	Management	
Photographer/photo processor	1	Management	3
Print production	1	Manager	2
Product/web design	1	Manager (retail)	1
Theatre	1	Office work	
Business related	181	Administrative assistant	9
Finance		Secretarial or clerical	9
Finance	2	Administrative	4
Financial advisor	2	Office assistant	4
General		Legal Assistant	3
Accountant/Auditor	13	Receptionist	3
Customer service	7	Office manager	2
Marketing	7	Planning Analyst	1
Insurance	5	Production assistant	1
Bank teller	3	Restaurant and/or hotel industry	
Banking	3	Waiting tables	14
Business owner	3	Barista	5
Paralegal	3	Manager	3
Account manager	2	Bartender	1
Property management	2	Cook	1
Public relations/marketing	2	Guest service assistant	1
Account executive	1	Hospitality	1
Actuary assistant	1	Retail and/or Sales	
Actuary: insurance	1	Sales	15
Analyst at SAIC	1	Retail	10
Assistant buyer	1	Retail store manager	5
Associate planner	1	Internet-sales	1
Consulting	1	Pharmaceutical sales rep	1
Contract representative	1	Sales & operations coordinator	1
Contracts manager	1	Sales administration	1
Credit Manager	1	Sales support	1
Event coordinator	1	Sales/fundraising	1
Executive assistant	1		
Intern	1		
Inventory control manager	1		
Investments	1		

What type of work do you do? (cont.)

Computer related	16	Engineering	6
Computer tech	3	Engineer	2
IT	2	Design Engineer	1
Software engineer	2	Engineering technician	1
Computer Programmer	1	Industrial design	1
Computer systems analyst	1	Test engineer	1
Computer systems architect	1	Government	3
Electronic communication specialist	1	County program coordinator	1
Software development	1	Social insurance specialist	1
System operator	1	Social security representative	1
Systems trainer	1	Graduate school related	5
Tech support	1	Grad school RA	1
Technician	1	Grad school TA	1
Church related	6	Graduate assistant	1
Youth Pastor	2	Graduate student	1
Missionary	2	Student	1
Church worker	1	Health industry	14
Campus ministry	1	Caregiver	3
Education	85	Physical therapy technician	2
School administration		Nursing assistant	2
Admissions advisor	1	Physical therapist aide	1
Assistant for testing center	1	Pharmacy intern	1
Teaching		Medical transcriptionist	1
Teacher	43	Infant care	1
Teacher assistant	12	Counseling assistant	1
Substitute teacher	10	Certified nurse assistant	1
Preschool/headstart teacher	3	Adult day health assistant	1
Special education teacher	3	HR and/or social work	20
Tutor	2	Social work	7
Community health educator	1	Human resources/services	6
Health educator	1	AmeriCorps	3
Naturalist/teacher	1	Human Resource Management	2
Para-educator	1	Family services advocate	1
Reading tutor (para-professional)	1	Social work - program manager	1
Teacher/ Youth Care Worker	1		
Teacher: Americorps	1		
Teacher: Peace Corps	1		
Teaching and Research Assistant	1		
Teaching and Sales (2 jobs)	1		

What type of work do you do? (cont.)

Law-enforcement related	5	Other	9
Detention manager	1	Conservation	1
Immigration officer	1	Environmental restoration	1
Law enforcement	1	Environmental service	1
Security Assistant	1	Non-profit	1
Security Overseas	1	Residence hall director	1
Technology	12	Self employed	1
Chemist	2	Teen advocate	1
Research assistant	2	Volunteer coordinator	1
Environmental technician	1	Work on campus	1
Genetics lab technician	1	Unskilled	5
Geology/engineer assistant	1	Bike messenger	1
Labratory analyst	1	Cashier	1
Quality control lab technician	1	Checker	1
Quality Engineer	1	Produce clerk	1
Researcher	1	Warehouse shipper	1
Veterinary technician	1		
Trades	20	TOTAL	404
Maintenance	3		
Automotive technician	2		
Bus driver	2		
Baker	1		
Bike messenger	1		
Commercial Fishing	1		
Finish carpenter	1		
Fuel supervisor	1		
General contractor	1		
Handyman	1		
Insulation technologist	1		
Junior landscape architect	1		
Nanny	1		
Plant nursery staff	1		
Plumber	1		
Yard clean up	1		

APPENDIX A:
ALUMNI SURVEY FORM

First, we would like to ask some questions about your current activities.

1. Are you currently attending school or waiting to attend school? Yes skip to 3 No
2. Are you planning to become a full-time student in the near future? Yes No
3. Which of the following *best* describes you at this time?
I am currently employed for pay or self employed.
I am unemployed and looking for work. skip to 6
I am not employed and not looking for work at this time. skip to 6
4. What type of work do you do?
(e.g. accountant, teacher) _____
5. How many hours a week do you normally work? _____ HOURS/ WEEK

-
6. In the next ten years, do you plan to continue your education any further? Yes No skip to 8
7. What is the highest level of education you plan to attain in the next 10 years? (choose one)
Another bachelors degree
a certification program
a masters degree
or any degree beyond a masters such as a PhD, MD or JD
8. In a typical month, how many hours do you spend volunteering in your community, if at all?
_____ HOURS/ month

On an average day, approximately how many hours, if any, do you spend using a computer...

- 9a. At work? _____ hours (please use zero for none and decimals to indicate partial hours – e.g. 2.5 etc.)
9b. At home? _____ hours
10. Do you have Internet access from home? Yes No
11. How well would you say your education at Western prepared you for working with computers?
Very well Moderately well Somewhat well Not at all well Don't know

12. Now please rate yourself, as accurately as possible, on each of the qualities below.

- First, rate yourself at the time when you initially entered Western (scale at left).
- Second, rate yourself now (scale at right).

For each rating, please use a 0-10 scale, where 0 means very little knowledge or ability in that area, 10 means full mastery, and 5 means average mastery for someone of your age and experience.

<u>When you entered Western</u>		<u>Now</u>
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	a. Writing effectively.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	b. Speaking effectively	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	c. Critically analyzing written information	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	d. Defining and solving problems	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	e. Working and/or learning independently	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	f. Working cooperatively in a group	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	g. Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	h. Understanding and applying quantitative principles /methods	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	i. Understanding and appreciating differing philosophies/cultures	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	j. Understanding the interaction of society and the environment	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	k. Working effectively with technology, especially computers	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	l. Using management/leadership capabilities	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	m. Understanding organizations and how people behave in them	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Currently , how would you rate yourself...		
	a. Using a broad range of knowledge, ideas, and perspectives gained from outside your major field	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
	o. Using the knowledge, ideas and perspectives gained from your major field	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Now we have some questions about your experiences at Western.

13. Did you have more than one major at Western? Yes skip to 15 No

14. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your major at Western:

- | | <u>Very</u> | <u>Mostly</u> | <u>Somewhat</u> | <u>Not
at all</u> | <u>Don't
Know</u> | <u>Not
Applicable</u> |
|--|-------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| a. The availability of courses | | | | | | |
| b. The quality of instruction | | | | | | |
| c. How well you were challenged to do
your very best | | | | | | |
| d. How well you learned problem solving
and critical thinking | | | | | | |
| e. Departmental/faculty advising
concerning courses | | | | | | |
| f. How well the department facilitated
students' progress through the major | | | | | | |

Skip to 17

For Students with Multiple Majors:

15a. What was your first major?

(first major): _____

15b. What was your second major?

(second major): _____

16a. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your first major at Western:

- | | <u>Very</u> | <u>Mostly</u> | <u>Somewhat</u> | <u>Not
at all</u> | <u>Don't
Know</u> | <u>Not
Applicable</u> |
|--|-------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| a. The availability of courses | | | | | | |
| b. The quality of instruction | | | | | | |
| c. How well you were challenged to do
your very best | | | | | | |
| d. How well you learned problem solving
and critical thinking | | | | | | |
| e. Departmental/faculty advising
concerning courses | | | | | | |
| f. How well the department facilitated
students' progress through the major | | | | | | |

16b. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your second major at Western:

- | | <u>Very</u> | <u>Mostly</u> | <u>Somewhat</u> | <u>Not
at all</u> | <u>Don't
Know</u> | <u>Not
Applicable</u> |
|--|-------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| a. The availability of courses | | | | | | |
| b. The quality of instruction | | | | | | |
| c. How well you were challenged to do
your very best | | | | | | |
| d. How well you learned problem solving
and critical thinking | | | | | | |
| e. Departmental/faculty advising
concerning courses | | | | | | |
| f. How well the department facilitated
students' progress through the major | | | | | | |
-

17. Overall, how satisfied are you with

- | | <u>Very</u> | <u>Mostly</u> | <u>Some-
What</u> | <u>Not
At all</u> | <u>Don't Know/
Not Applicable</u> |
|---|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Undergraduate courses at Western | | | | | |
| b. Professors at Western | | | | | |
| c. Academic advising at Western | | | | | |
| d. Career and employment advising at Western | | | | | |
| e. Western/Bellingham as a place to live | | | | | |
| f. The amount of ethnic and cultural diversity
in the student body | | | | | |
| g. Western Washington University, in total | | | | | |

18. If you could make your college choice over, would you still choose to enroll at WWU?

- Definitely yes
- Probably would
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Don't know

Please add any additional comments here:

Thank you for your participation!

**To return your questionnaire,
please use the postage-paid envelope provided, or send to:**

**Office of Survey Research
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225-9081**

Questions? Contact Dr. Pamela Jull, Director at (360) 650-3618 or Pamela.Jull@wwu.edu

Mailing Sequence Number: _____

(This number is essential to prevent repeated mailings after your survey has been returned. It will not compromise the confidentiality of your questionnaire.)