WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY 2008 SURVEY OF
ALUMNI WHO GRADUATED BETWEEN SUMMER, 2006,
AND SPRING, 2007 • TECHNICAL REPORT

REPORT 2009-02

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Executive Summary

Since 1990, Western's Office of Survey Research (OSR) has surveyed alumni biennially. Alumni who are one to two years past graduation are invited to participate. They reflect on their experiences at Western, and on their current situation regarding family, education, and employment. OSR uses a mixture of online and telephone survey methodologies, then, when applicable, links survey results with Western's student records, thus expanding their usefulness to researchers.

The 2008 alumni survey was administered to graduates earning their bachelor's degrees between the summer of 2006 and spring of 2007. Of the 3,028 eligible alumni, OSR received valid responses from 1,093 (response rate of 36%). The full survey asked questions regarding financial status, plans for postgraduate education, and issues of employment search and job characteristics. Alumni were also asked retrospective questions regarding their Western experience, including the challenges they faced, impediments to timely graduation, their level of satisfaction with Western's student services and their satisfaction with their major. In addition, alumni were asked to rate their academic competencies when they entered Western and how they rate those same competencies now. A second report based on the same Alumni survey, entitled "Western Washington University 2008 Survey of Alumni who Graduated between Summer, 2006, and Spring, 2007, Department Report," presents a sample of findings disaggregated by the college and department level, and may be accessed at: http://www.wwu.edu/socad/osr/AlumniSurveys.shtml.

As with any survey, readers should be concerned with sample selection bias; that is, bias which arises because survey responders are not a random selection from the population. While sample selection bias for Western's alumni survey has been mitigated through proper survey techniques, its presence should always be considered when evaluating data. With that said, the first two tables of this report presents descriptive statistics of all alumni (based on Western's student records) compared to alumni survey respondents for the university as a whole and for each college. These comparisons generally reveal that survey respondents are similar to the population of alumni. For instance, 58% of all graduates between summer, 2006, and spring, 2007, were women—as were 58% of alumni survey respondents. Similar comparisons can be found for minorities (all graduates=16% v. survey respondents=15%), transfers (43% v. 42%), Running Start students (9% v. 9%), and average age at graduation (24.5 v. 24.4). These figures suggest that there is little reason to believe significant sample selection bias occurs on observables.

Generally speaking, this survey confirms beliefs about Western's overall strengths and suggests areas of improvement. For instance, alumni highly commend the knowledge, expertise and teaching ability of the faculty and rate the challenge level of their courses as being very high. The 88% of alumni who are currently employed also appear highly satisfied with their job. At the same time, alumni were not as satisfied with opportunities for involvement in faculty research, department internships and departmental career advising. When asked about factors that delayed their graduation, alumni most frequently responded with "scheduling conflicts" followed by "full courses."

Nearly all data sets can have more finely honed statistical analyses—this set of Alumni Survey data included. That being said, the analyses in this report are sufficient for most of those who rely on findings to help their decision making. For help with understanding the data as presented in this report, or with delving deeper into the data, please contact OSR.

CLARIFYING NOTES

The WWU Office of Survey Research (OSR), in an effort to clarify and accurately communicate the results of surveys, frequently uses the following techniques and symbols.

1. When two related questions are asked and the second builds on the first, the results are typically combined to efficiently communicate results. For example, if one question asks whether or not a student participated in something and then branches so that "no" answers skip a question while "yes" answers are asked how often they participated, results from the two questions are combined to give a valid percent for "no," and then for each "yes" frequency category in one table.
2. When a question has a response option of "other," and then gives respondents an opportunity to describe their "other" response, OSR categorizes the descriptions and includes those that are frequently mentioned in the table, along with a percent of respondents who gave that description. These additional responses are listed.
3. When the survey branching pattern dictates that groups of students answer different versions of the same questions, the responses are sometimes totalled and presented in one table. This is indicated by a statement in the table heading which details which questions were combined.
4. Percents are calculated as the number of respondents who chose the option divided by the number responding to the question.
5. If the number of observations (N) for a question is slightly less than the N for the survey, but no explanation is given, the smaller N is due to respondents choosing not to answer that question, or only partially completing the survey

DATA COLLECTION:

- Data were collected online beginning May 20, 2008.
- An invitation email was sent to external email addresses on file. Email reminders were sent on May 23rd, May 30th, June 23rd, and July 3rd. A refusal option was included on the June 23rd and July 3rd reminders, which linked to a refusal survey.
- Phone surveys began on June 4th, and continued Sunday through Thursday afternoons and evenings, with occasional mornings, excepting holidays, until July 10th.

RESPONDENTS:

- OSR received 1093 responses.
- OSR confirmed contact with 1600 alumni, who either responded, refused by survey, or were contacted in person on the phone.
- Online responses: 739.
- Phone responses: 333.
- Responded to refusal survey: 21.
- Did not respond: 507.
- Could not confirm contact: 1428.
- Some questions were excluded from the phone version of the survey, and most questions were excluded from the refusal survey.

THE OFFICE OF SURVEY RESEARCH

The OSR provides high quality survey research that supports the mission of Western in a cost-effective manner. In particular, OSR surveys students, alumni, employers, and the campus community to provide valuable assessment data; it includes, but is not limited to, data analysis and reports which can be used for improvement of programs, instruction, faculty scholarship, and information services.

(Descriptions use the most frequently chosen response option)

A woman is typically single but could be living with a romantic partner. She searched for a permanent job in her academic field and eventually found work in a related field. Her job is categorized as "other professional", or as administrative support, or she is working in a science, engineering or computer field. She earns on average about $30-34K a year.

A man is typically single, living with a friend or housemate. He searched for a permanent job in his academic field and eventually found work in a related field, primarily in the management, business and financial area, or in a science, engineering and computer field. He earns on average about $35-39K a year.

Both men and women are somewhat satisfied with their current job and want to stay in the same type of work for the next ten years. They have found that their employers emphasize strong oral communication, the capability to work or learn independently, the ability to define and solve problems, strong task/organizational/data management talents, and an ability to cooperate well/work in teams.

Our alumni rate themselves as having the fullest level of mastery in the following skills and abilities: working or learning independently, awareness of cultural and personal differences, the ability to work cooperatively in a group, ability to define and solve problems, the ability to critically analyze written information, writing skills, and the ability to work effectively with technology, including computers.

Our alumni plan to attend graduate school in the next five years. Most likely they will apply for Master's degree programs related to their major (not necessarily in the same field as their major). Overall they feel adequately prepared for graduate school, in their major and outside their major.

Regarding their major, Western alumni are most satisfied with the knowledge and expertise of faculty, opportunities for class interaction and projects, challenge level of courses, and quality of instruction. They are least satisfied with opportunities for involvement in faculty research, department internships and service learning opportunities, and department advising for careers.

Our graduates rate the following services at Western with the highest satisfaction: student recreation/athletic center, Academic Technology and User Services, Intramural Athletics, Intercollegiate Sports Clubs, and non-credit recreational, fitness and sports classes

Sometimes while attending Western, our graduates faced certain challenges which interfered with the quality of their educational experience, including feeling overwhelmed, uncertainty about the future, financial problems or worries, and problems with motivation or study habits. They also found certain obstacles to be an impediment to the timely completion of their degree, including scheduling conflicts, work schedules or outside workloads, full courses, poor or inadequate general advising, and the inability to get access to courses in their major.

Two students sum up their experiences:

"I absolutely loved every aspect of my Western experience and believe it provided me with both a strong educational background and a great group of life-long friends. The only thing missing…was adequate preparation for entering the job market. I believe Western should place a much heavier focus on preparing students for the real world…Students should be more forced to do internships and there should be more help in finding internships."

"I am in dental school and am finding that I am much better prepared than students from major universities in various parts of the country. The main complaint I have about Western is scheduling conflicts/lack of class availability and lack of counseling about classes. Overall, I think the classes are very appropriate… but the management of scheduling for these classes could be improved."

Alumni Characteristics

	General Studies	Business	Woodring	Fairhaven	Fine Arts	Humanities & Social Science	Huxley	Science & Tech	WWU
Number of graduates (N)	143	485	315	115	163	1307	153	350	3032
% Female	52%	38%	90%	67%	56%	65%	56%	33%	58%
% Minority	16%	16%	15%	23%	14%	16%	10%	12%	16%
% Transfers	37%	39%	64%	52%	42%	39%	33%	45%	43%
% Running Start (RS) frosh	6%	9%	5%	10%	7%	9%	13%	8%	9%
Mean age at graduation	25.0	23.6	29.8	27.2	24.9	23.4	24.5	23.7	24.5
Median age at graduation	23.0	23.0	24.0	24.0	23.0	22.0	23.0	23.0	23.0
Mean WWU GPA	2.67	3.00	3.54	-	3.27	3.18	3.26	3.10	3.16
Mean yrs to degree: frosh	5.2	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.0	4.4	4.7	4.8	4.6
Mean yrs to degree: RS	4.7	4.3	4.2	5.1	3.9	3.8	4.5	4.1	4.1
Mean yrs to degree: transfers	4.1	2.7	2.7	3.7	3.5	2.7	3.1	3.3	3.0

Survey Respondent Characteristics

	General Studies	Business	Woodring	Fairhaven	Fine Arts	Humanities & Social Science	Huxley	Science & Tech	WWU
Number of graduates (N)	51	185	108	35	59	441	60	153	1093
% Female	45%	39%	89%	74%	53%	67%	60%	34%	58%
% Minority	19%	18%	18%	16%	12%	16%	6%	12%	15%
% Transfers	35%	37%	63%	54%	54%	38%	27%	46%	42%
% Running Start (RS) frosh	2%	7%	5%	9%	9%	10%	13%	11%	9%
Mean age at graduation	24.2	23.9	28.6	30.6	24.7	23.4	24.4	23.5	24.4
Median age at graduation	23.0	23.0	23.5	24.0	23.0	22.0	23.0	23.0	23.0
Mean WWU GPA	2.58	3.06	3.57	-	3.37	3.26	3.29	3.13	3.21
Mean yrs to degree: frosh	5.4	4.5	4.5	4.7	5.6	4.3	4.6	4.7	4.6
Mean yrs to degree: RS	4.7	4.3	3.5	5.3	3.7	3.4	5.0	4.0	3.9
Mean yrs to degree: transfers	4.9	2.7	2.8	2.7	3.3	2.7	2.9	3.3	3.0

Personal Information

What is your current living situation? (N=736)

Living independently alone or with children	17%				
Living independently with a friend or housemate	25%				
Living independently with a romantic partner	36%				
Living in an institutional setting (e.g., college dormitory)	1%				
Living with parents	16%				
Living with other relative apart from parents	2%				
Other (Please Specify:	1%				
Living with romantic partner and children	2%				
Living with romantic partner and relative or friend, no children	0%				
In transition/homeless	1%				

What is your current marital status? (N=738)

Single, Never married	66%				
Single, Divorced	3%				
Single, Widowed	0%				
Single, Cohabiting	13%				
Married	18%				

	No	**Yes**
Do you have any dependent children living with you currently? (N=739)	92%	8%

Financial Information

What is your current educational indebtedness? (N=1024)

None	44%
Less than $2,500	3%
$2,500 - $4,999	4%
$5,000 - $7,499	5%
$7,500 - $9,999	5%
$10,000 or more	40%

Citizenship and Service

To what extent have you been involved in each of the following civic activities? (N=1063)

	Not at all	A Little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Volunteering for civic organizations	46%	22%	17%	9%	6%
Political causes and activities	62%	19%	13%	5%	2%
Environment causes and activities	51%	23%	17%	7%	3%
International causes and activities	68%	14%	11%	4%	3%
Ecological practices	49%	15%	20%	10%	6%

Job Search

How well did your education at Western prepare you for success in the job market? (N=968)	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very well	Extremely well
	3%	7%	37%	46%	8%

Since graduating from WWU have you sought out a permanent part-time or full-time job? (N=1072)

No	14%					
Yes: part-time	8%					
Yes: full-time	62%					
Yes: Both part- and full-time	16%					

Those who have NOT sought permanent full-time employment since graduating (N=233)

What was your primary reason for not pursuing permanent full-time employment after graduating? (N=227)

Already employed in a permanent job	12%		
Chose to pursue my education further	56%		
Didn't feel adequately prepared	3%		
Married and chose to be a homemaker for the immediate future	5%		
Family obligations	2%		
Joined Peace Corp or a similar type of service organization	1%		
Illness or poor health	1%		
Other:	21%		
Travel	5%		
Already employed in a position I liked	1%		
Chose a seasonal or part time position for different reasons	6%		
Miscellaneous "other" responses included: starting business, indecision, planning to move, waiting for spouse to graduate, economy, retired, volunteered instead, not typical for the profession, contracting			

Job Search (cont.)

Those who HAVE sought permanent full-time employment since graduating (N=839)

	No	Yes
Did you seek permanent employment in your academic field? (N=839)	25%	75%

Why did you choose not to seek employment in your academic field (choose all that apply)? (N=213)

Didn't feel adequately prepared	18%		
No good-paying jobs in field	33%		
Didn't know enough about the job market	25%		
Wasn't interested in a career in my field	27%		
Other:	12%		
Travel	1%		
I obtained a General Studies Degree	2%		
Lack of positions in field	8%		
Planning to pursue my education further	9%		

> Miscellaneous "other" responses included: military, found a better job in another field, planning to do so, nepotism, not enough time, hates cubicles, location choice, wanted to wait

For each of the career services listed below, please indicate whether or not you used it and how helpful it was to your job search. (N=597)

	Used Service (N)	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
WWU Career Services	334	5%	16%	22%	9%	4%
WWU Job and Career Fairs	338	11%	19%	14%	9%	3%
Campus wide visits from company recruiters	215	10%	10%	8%	5%	2%
Academic department staff	431	5%	14%	21%	22%	10%
Faculty in your discipline	486	3%	10%	20%	27%	20%

Current Employment		
Are you currently employed? (N=1086)	No	Yes
	12%	88%

Those who are NOT employed (N=131)

Have you had any permanent part-time or full-time jobs since graduating from WWU? (N=128)	No	Yes
	53%	47%

Those who ARE employed (N=953)

Which of the following job categories best fits your current occupation? (N=927)		
Management, Business and Financial Workers	21%	
Science, Engineering and Computer Professionals	21%	
Healthcare Practitioner Professionals	7%	
Other Professional Workers	19%	
Technicians	2%	
Sales Workers	5%	
Administrative Support Workers	15%	
Construction and Extractive Craft Workers	1%	
Installation, Maintenance and Repair Craft Workers	0%	
Production Operative Workers	0%	
Transportation and Material Moving Operative Workers	1%	
Laborers and Helpers	2%	
Protective Service Workers	0%	
Service Workers, except Protective	6%	

How closely is this job related to your major at WWU? (N=937)	Same field	Related field	Different field
	39%	30%	30%

Current Employment (cont.)

Please indicate how important the following skills are in your current job. (N=953)

	Not At All	Somewhat	Moderately	Very
Strong writing skills	13%	18%	27%	42%
Strong oral communication skills	1%	6%	11%	83%
Ability to critically analyze written information	9%	14%	25%	52%
Ability to define and solve problems	2%	5%	18%	75%
Ability to work or learn independently, without supervision	2%	5%	18%	76%
Ability to cooperate well, work in teams, etc.	2%	9%	18%	72%
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	40%	25%	17%	19%
Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods	28%	26%	22%	24%
Awareness of cultural and personal differences among people	5%	20%	20%	56%
Working effectively with technology, including computers	6%	11%	22%	61%
Strong interpersonal management skills	3%	11%	24%	61%
Understanding organizations and how people behave in them	7%	15%	26%	52%
Strong task/organizational/data management skills	4%	9%	21%	66%

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very
How valuable were the courses you took in your major at Western in preparing you for this job? (N=940)	9%	11%	35%	45%
How valuable were your other courses and experiences at Western in preparing you for this job? (N=922)	9%	20%	49%	22%

How satisfied are you with the job you are currently in? (N=945)	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
	5%	10%	31%	40%	15%

How likely are you to stay in the same type of work for the next ten years? (N=632)	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very
	27%	13%	25%	36%

Current Employment (cont.)					
Date employed (N=649)					
Before August 06	9%				
August-06	3%				
September-06	1%				
October-06	1%				
November-06	1%				
December-06	1%				
January-07	3%				
February-07	2%				
March-07	3%				
April-07	3%				
May-07	3%				
June-07	7%				
July-07	7%				
August-07	10%				
September-07	9%				
October-07	7%				
November-07	4%				
December-07	2%				
January-08	5%				
February-08	6%				
March-08	1%				
April-08	6%				
May-08	8%				

Current Employment (cont.)

Work status (N=960)

Part-time	18%				
Full-time	82%				

Location of job (N=963)

Island, Skagit, Whatcom County	23%				
Snohomish, King, Pierce County	35%				
Western Washington	24%				
Eastern Washington	2%				
Alaska	1%				
Arizona	1%				
California	2%				
Oregon	2%				
Elsewhere	9%				

Gross income (N=940)

Under $20,000	23%				
$20,000 - $24,999	12%				
$25,000 - $29,999	13%				
$30,000 - $34,999	17%				
$35,000 - $39,999	11%				
$40,000 - $44,999	8%				
$45,000 - $49,999	6%				
$50,000 - $54,999	6%				
$55,000 - $59,999	2%				
$60,000 - $64,999	0%				
$65,000 - $69,999	1%				
$70,000 - $74,999	1%				
$75,000 - $79,999	1%				
$80,000 or more	1%				

Current Employment (cont.)					
Benefits (N=941)					
None	26%				
Dental only	0%				
Health only	6%				
Retirement only	0%				
Dental and health	15%				
Dental and retirement	0%				
Health and retirement	1%				
Dental, health, retirement	51%				

Post-graduation Education

Which of the following best describes your educational plans for the foreseeable future? (N=1083)

I am currently enrolled in a college or university program	18%
I have been accepted into a college or university program but have not yet enrolled	5%
I plan to enter a college or university program in the next five years	38%
I plan to enter a college or university program, but not within the next five years	5%
I do not plan to enroll in a college or university anytime in the forseeable future	12%
I am uncertain about my future educational plans	22%

Those who are attending or plan to attend graduate school in the foreseeable future. (N=630)

Type of program

	Enrolled or accepted (N=264)	Plan to enroll (N=443)
Bachelor's degree	5%	3%
Certification program	12%	8%
Master's degree	60%	68%
Professional degree	8%	7%
PhD program	7%	9%
Other	8%	5%

Post-graduation Education (cont.)

Start date

	Enrolled or accepted (N=168)	Plan to enroll (N=264)
Fall 06	4%	-
Winter 07	5%	-
Spring 07	2%	-
Summer 07	3%	-
Fall 07	32%	-
Winter 08	9%	-
Spring 08	5%	-
Summer 08	5%	2%
Fall 08 - Summer 09	28%	16%
Fall 09 - Summer 10	5%	40%
Fall 10 - Summer 11	1%	22%
Fall 11 or later	2%	19%

Relationship of graduate program to undergraduate major at Western

	Enrolled or accepted (N=264)	Plan to enroll (N=424)
Same field	39%	39%
Related field	40%	47%
Different field	20%	13%

Post-graduation Education (cont.)

Adequacy of preparation in major

	Enrolled or accepted (N=261)	Plan to enroll (N=408)
Not at all	3%	3%
Minimal	9%	10%
Adequate	31%	36%
Very adequate	31%	39%
Extremely adequate	26%	12%

Adequacy of preparation outside major

	Enrolled or accepted (N=251)	Plan to enroll (N=395)
Not at all	6%	6%
Minimal	13%	16%
Adequate	43%	49%
Very Adequate	29%	23%
Extremely Adequate	9%	6%
Since graduating from WWU, have you been involved in any professional activities or received any awards related to your major area of study? (N=739)	**Yes**	**No**
	22%	78%

If yes, please describe any major related professional acitivites or awards in the spaces provided below. (N=131)

| Respondents listed 123 professional activities and 43 awards. | | |

Time to Degree

To what extent would you say that you have found each of the following to be an impediment to the timely completion of your degree or a factor leading to a less than ideal educational experience at WWU? (N=1058)

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot
Scheduling conflicts	18%	33%	36%	13%
Full courses	26%	31%	29%	13%
Problems transferring courses	68%	19%	8%	4%
Other registration problems	52%	30%	14%	4%
Financial problems	54%	23%	17%	7%
Work schedule or outside work loads	37%	29%	27%	7%
Uncertainty about educational interests and goals	42%	24%	23%	11%
Poor or inadequate general advising	39%	26%	25%	11%
Poor or inadequate major advising	49%	25%	19%	7%
Number of credits required for your major	57%	25%	13%	5%
Grade or credit restrictions on desired major	65%	21%	10%	4%
Access to courses in your major	43%	28%	21%	8%
Academic problems (grades, probation, warning)	77%	15%	6%	2%
Family problems or issues	68%	17%	11%	4%
Other: responses included personal setbacks (such as illness)	87%	3%	3%	7%

Competencies - College Entry

Please rate yourself on each of the qualities listed below. For each rating, 0 means very little knowledge or ability in that area, 5 means average mastery, and 10 means full mastery. First think back to when you first entered college. (N=1059)

College Entry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Writing skills	-	-	4%	6%	10%	21%	18%	23%	12%	4%	2%
Oral communication skills	-	1%	2%	9%	12%	24%	18%	16%	11%	4%	2%
Ability to critically analyze written information	-	-	3%	9%	12%	23%	19%	18%	10%	4%	2%
Ability to define and solve problems	-	-	2%	4%	8%	22%	22%	18%	14%	5%	4%
Ability to work or learn independently	1%	2%	5%	7%	13%	12%	19%	19%	13%	9%	-
Ability to work cooperatively in a group	-	-	1%	4%	8%	16%	16%	21%	17%	10%	8%
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	1%	2%	7%	10%	15%	25%	14%	14%	7%	3%	1%
Ability to communicate scientific ideas to others effectively	2%	3%	8%	14%	15%	25%	14%	12%	5%	2%	1%
Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods	2%	3%	6%	11%	14%	25%	14%	15%	6%	3%	1%
Awareness of cultural and personal differences among people	-	1%	2%	8%	9%	22%	14%	17%	13%	7%	6%
Working effectively with technology, including computers	-	1%	2%	6%	7%	17%	16%	22%	15%	9%	6%
Understanding the differences in disciplinary knowledge and ways of thinking	-	1%	3%	9%	12%	25%	18%	18%	11%	3%	1%
Strong interpersonal management skills	-	2%	3%	8%	11%	22%	17%	17%	12%	5%	3%
Understanding (knowledge of) organizations and how people behave in them	1%	2%	5%	9%	13%	20%	19%	17%	8%	3%	2%
Strong task/organizational/data management skills	-	1%	4%	7%	12%	21%	16%	18%	11%	5%	4%

Competencies - College Graduation

Please rate yourself on each of the qualities listed below. For each rating, 0 means very little knowledge or ability in that area, 5 means average mastery, and 10 means full mastery. Now think back to when you graduated from college. (N=1059)

College Graduation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Writing skills	-	-	-	-	1%	4%	5%	18%	36%	28%	9%
Oral communication skills	-	-	-	-	1%	4%	8%	18%	31%	27%	11%
Ability to critically analyze written information	-	-	-	-	-	4%	5%	18%	31%	32%	10%
Ability to define and solve problems	-	-	-	-	-	3%	6%	16%	29%	33%	13%
Ability to work or learn independently	-	-	-	-	1%	2%	3%	11%	26%	33%	24%
Ability to work cooperatively in a group	-	-	-	-	-	3%	7%	13%	26%	31%	19%
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	-	-	1%	3%	5%	11%	14%	17%	25%	16%	7%
Ability to communicate scientific ideas to others effectively	-	-	2%	3%	6%	12%	15%	18%	23%	14%	5%
Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods	-	1%	2%	3%	5%	11%	12%	21%	24%	16%	5%
Awareness of cultural and personal differences among people	-	-	-	1%	-	3%	3%	13%	23%	34%	22%
Working effectively with technology, including computers	-	-	-	-	1%	4%	6%	14%	28%	30%	17%
Understanding the differences in disciplinary knowledge and ways of thinking	-	-	-	-	1%	6%	8%	18%	32%	24%	9%
Strong interpersonal management skills	-	-	-	1%	1%	7%	9%	17%	26%	27%	11%
Understanding (knowledge of) organizations and how people behave in them	-	-	-	1%	1%	6%	11%	18%	29%	25%	9%
Strong task/organizational/data management skills	-	-	-	1%	1%	5%	9%	16%	28%	26%	14%

Academic Major and Major Department

How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your primary major and department within which it was located? (N=1036)

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Mostly	Very
Course Availability	2%	6%	20%	46%	25%
Knowledge and Expertise of Faculty	1%	1%	8%	35%	55%
Quality of Instruction	1%	2%	12%	46%	40%
Course requirements and Sequences	1%	3%	19%	45%	33%
Opportunities for Class Interaction and Projects	0%	2%	14%	37%	46%
Challenge Level of Courses	0%	2%	13%	41%	43%
Department Internships and Service Learning Opportunities	11%	16%	25%	21%	27%
Opportunities for Independent Study and Research	8%	17%	23%	24%	28%
Opportunities for Involvement in Faculty Research	22%	22%	23%	17%	16%
Overall Department Climate	2%	4%	17%	38%	39%
Department Advising for Courses	6%	9%	23%	28%	35%
Department Advising for Careers	12%	16%	27%	22%	23%
Adequacy of Lab or Studio Space and Equipment	5%	9%	22%	36%	29%
Adequacy of Technology and Software Available	3%	5%	18%	37%	37%
Library Resources in Your Field	3%	7%	20%	36%	34%
Classroom Space and Technology	3%	8%	20%	37%	32%

Major Change

Did you ever change your intended major while at Western? (N=1064)	No	Yes: once	Yes: more than once
	70%	23%	7%

Those who changed their intended major while at Western (N=312)

Thinking back to the last time that you changed your major, to what extent was each of the following one of the reasons for doing so. (N=312)

	Not At All	Minor Reason	Major Reason
Unable to meet the requirements for admission to the major (difficuilties in meeting admissions requirements)	71%	15%	14%
Too hard to get into required courses	70%	18%	12%
Would have taken too long to complete	62%	17%	22%
Material was too difficult to master	70%	20%	10%
Professors were unfriendly, unfair, or unprofessional	74%	16%	10%
Later career or employment prospects were not good enough	63%	23%	14%
Changed my interests	16%	21%	63%
Workload in courses was too great	72%	20%	9%
Department advising was inadequate or lacking	65%	21%	14%

What was this major interest you changed from? (N=316)			
Accounting	4%	Management	4%
Anthropology / Archaeology	3%	Manufacturing Engineering Technology	1%
Art	3%	Mathematics	2%
Biochemistry	1%	Music	2%
Biology	12%	Philosophy	1%
Chemistry	3%	Physical Education and Health	1%
Communcation	3%	Physics	1%
Communication Sciences & Disorders	0%	Planning & Environmental Policy	0%
Computer Science	4%	Plastics Engineering Technology	0%
Decision Sciences	0%	Political Science	2%
East Asian Studies	1%	Psychology	6%
Economics	1%	Recreation	1%
Electronics Engineering Technology	0%	Secondary Education	4%
Elementary Education	4%	Sociology	3%
English	2%	Special Education	1%
Environmental Science	1%	Other:	11%
Environmental Studies	1%	Business	3%
Exercise and Sports Science	1%	Engineering	1%
Finance & Marketing	4%	Fairhaven	1%
Financial Economics	1%	Graphic design	1%
French	0%	Industrial design	0%
General Studies	1%	International business	1%
Geology	1%	Japanese	0%
History	1%	Law and diversity	0%
Human Services	0%	Music education	0%
Industrial Design	1%	Pre-med or pre-nursing	1%
Industrial Technology	0%	Speech pathology	0%
Journalism	4%	Secondary education	0%
Linguistics	0%		

Challenges

During your time at Western, to what extent did any of the following interfere with the quality of your educational experience? (N=533)

	Not at all	Hardly at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot
Feelings of loneliness	40%	24%	21%	10%	5%
Spiritual dilemmas or issues	62%	19%	9%	8%	2%
Feeling overwhelmed	11%	14%	32%	30%	14%
Uncertainty about the future	17%	16%	27%	27%	13%
Financial problems or worries	27%	20%	22%	19%	12%
Missing classes or assignments	46%	28%	16%	8%	2%
Unfair treatment by professors, instructors or TAs	56%	25%	11%	7%	1%
Problems dealing with the administration (e.g., registrar)	52%	23%	13%	9%	2%
Drinking or drug use on campus	76%	15%	6%	2%	1%
Being the victim of a crime	89%	6%	2%	1%	1%
Problem with motivation or study habits	26%	21%	27%	19%	7%
Level of work involvement	38%	22%	21%	15%	4%
Involvement in Associated Students activities	72%	16%	5%	4%	2%

Student Services

Below is a list of student support services provided by Western. If you used any of these services at any time while at Western, please indicate your level of satisfaction. (N=530)

	Used Service (N)	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Orientation and First Year Programs for Freshmen	247	4%	7%	19%	43%	26%
Transfer Advising and Support	198	6%	14%	18%	35%	28%
Financial Aid Office	293	6%	9%	15%	43%	28%
Registrar's Office	454	6%	12%	20%	42%	21%
Academic Advising and Tutorial Services	285	7%	14%	16%	37%	26%
Library Collections and Services	431	1%	3%	11%	42%	43%
Academic Technology and User Services (Computer Labs and Help Desk)	437	1%	3%	8%	43%	46%
Writing Center	139	10%	9%	22%	39%	21%
Career Services Center	251	8%	9%	21%	41%	21%
Counseling Center	128	6%	12%	20%	25%	38%
Alcohol, Drug, and/or Sexual Assault Services	45	9%	9%	36%	36%	11%
Student Health and/or Self-Care Center	345	4%	10%	8%	37%	41%
Student Assistance Services (Grievances, Hardships, etc.)	42	7%	5%	24%	24%	40%
University Residence Halls and Programs	314	4%	14%	11%	48%	23%
Student Disability Resources	43	5%	2%	26%	37%	30%
Viking Union	437	1%	3%	13%	46%	37%
Ethnic Student Center	56	4%	5%	14%	45%	32%
AS Bookstore	482	4%	9%	16%	46%	26%
Intramural Athletics and Intercollegiate Sports Clubs	226	2%	1%	9%	40%	48%
Student Recreation/Athletic Center	426	2%	2%	5%	22%	69%
Non-Credit Recreational, Fitness and Sports Classes	169	2%		7%	38%	53%

Service Work

Since graduating, have you worked in the Peace Corps or a similar type of service organization? (N=1063)	No	Yes
	97%	**3%**

Are you planning to work in the Peace Corps or similar type of service activity in the foreseeable future? (N=746)	No	Yes
	91%	**10%**

Those who HAVE worked in the Peace Corps or similar service organization. (N=32)

What was the name of this organization?

Peace Corps	16%	
AmeriCorps	53%	
Student Conservation Association	3%	
Religious Mission	6%	
Other: included Youth Care, Yanapuma Foundation, University, Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services, Footsteps, Catholic Relief Services, Americorps Students in Service	22%	

When did you begin your service in this organization? (N=24)

August 2006	4%	
September 2006	4%	
October 2006	13%	
March 2007	4%	
April 2007	4%	
May 2007	4%	
June 2007	8%	
July 2007	8%	
August 2007	8%	
September 2007	17%	
October 2007	8%	
February 2008	4%	
March 2008	4%	
May 2008	8%	

Service Work (cont.)		
	No	**Yes**
Are you still working for this organization? (N=25)	36%	64%
Those who PLAN to work in the Peace Corps or similar service organization (N=367)		
What is the name of the service organization you hope to work in? (N=67)		
Peace Corps	54%	
AmeriCorps	13%	
Teach for America	3%	
Religious Mission	6%	
Lutheran World Relief	1%	
Haven't decided	8%	
Other: included Youth Dynamics Adventures, WWOOF, volunteer fire department, Mercyships, Kiwanis, JET, International Solidarity Movement, TEA, Amnesty Int., literacy programs	15%	

Armed Forces		
	No	**Yes**
Since graduating, have you served in the armed forces? (N=1063)	99%	1%
Those who HAVE served in the armed forces since graduating, which branch? (N=5)		
Army	20%	
Air Force	20%	
Marines	20%	
National Guard	40%	
When did you begin your service in this branch of the military?		
Before August 2006	60%	
March 2007	20%	
March 2008	20%	
	No	**Yes**
Are you still serving in this branch of the armed forces?	-	100%
Those who have NOT served in the armed forces since graduating (N=767)		
	No	**Yes**
Are you planning to join and serve in the armed forces sometime in the foreseeable future? (N = 767)	99%	1%
In what branch of the armed forces do hope to serve? (N=5)		
Army	40%	
Air Force	60%	

Department Findings

Human Services

To what extent would you say that your human services degree helped you in the following ways? (N=45)

	Not at all	Very little	Some	A good amount	A lot
Preparation for graduate study	2%	-	27%	36%	36%
Understanding of current issues	2%	-	9%	41%	48%
Ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations	2%	-	11%	29%	58%
Understanding and appreciating diversity	7%	5%	9%	18%	61%
Ability to access information from electronic and print sources	2%	-	13%	38%	47%
Understanding how to collaborate with agencies in the community	2%	2%	11%	24%	60%
Preparation for life in general	-	4%	17%	39%	39%
Ability to meet the challenges of being a human services professional	-	-	-	46%	54%

Mathematics

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Extremely
To what extent did you find the math courses at Western to be stimulating and enjoyable? (N=14)		14%	14%	43%	29%

Philosophy

How satisfied were you with: (N=12)

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
The content of the courses required for the philosophy major?	-	-	-	17%	83%
The organization of requirements, course sequences and course prerequisites in the philosophy department?	-	-	8%	8%	83%

Sociology

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
How satisfied were you with your capstone course? (N=36)					
	-	11%	6%	17%	67%

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Extremely
How relevant were the core courses in Sociology to your capstone? (N=40)					
	-	5%	30%	50%	15%
How valuable has the capstone been in preparing you for further educational or occupational pursuits? (N=40)	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Extremely
	8%	25%	30%	25%	13%

	No	Yes
If the Sociology Department had a Masters Degree program, would you have been interested in applying for it? (N=40)		
	33%	68%

	Sociology (cont.)					
In what areas of study? (N=40. Asked to check all that apply.)						
	Criminology	33%				
	Family and Life Course	33%				
	Community	28%				
	Social Organizations	35%				
	Race, Ethnicity, and Gender	45%				
	Demography and Population Studies	20%				
	Theory and Methods	10%				
Would you prefer that such a graduate program be more applied or more preparatory for advanced study in sociology? (N=27)						
	Applied	78%				
	Preparatory	22%				

	General Studies	
Why did you choose General Studies as a major? (N=38)		
	Tried to declare a major in another field, but couldn't meet entry requirements	21%
	Wanted to declare a major in another field, but couldn't finish requirements without staying in school longer	21%
	Declared a major in another field, but couldn't finish requirements without staying in school longer	13%
	Wanted to declare a major in another field, but couldn't do well in one or more courses	8%
	Declared a major in another field, but didn't do well in one or more courses	3%
	Wasn't interested in any other major	3%
	Wanted an interdisciplinary major	16%
	Other responses included: needed to graduate quickly due to financial problems, decided to go on to professional school but wanted a degree from Western, unsure of plans	16%

General Studies (cont.)					
What other major field did you most want to declare or try to declare before declaring as a General Studies major? (N=31)					
Anthropology/Archaeology	3%				
Biology	6%				
Communcation	6%				
Decision Sciences	3%				
Economics	3%				
Environmental Science	3%				
Exercise and Sports Science	6%				
Finance & Marketing	3%				
Geology	3%				
History	3%				
Industrial Technology	3%				
Journalism	3%				
Management	6%				
Physics	3%				
Psychology	16%				
Sociology	16%				
Other responses included: international business, pre-medicine, and psychology/pre-physical therapy	10%				
How many quarters did you spend trying to meet the requirements for entry into and/or complete the course requirements for other majors before deciding to declare General Studies as your major? (N=31)					
None	3%				
One Quarter	7%				
Two Quarters	10%				
Three Quarters	23%				
Four Quarters	7%				
Five Quarters	3%				
Six or More Quarters	48%				

General Studies (cont.)					
How would you rate the quality and value of your General Studies degree relative to other degrees granted by WWU? (N=38)					
Much less valuable	16%				
Somewhat less valuable	37%				
Just as valuable	37%				
Somewhat more valuable	5%				
Much more valuable	5%				
How beneficial would you say each of the following would be for improving the experience and outcomes of being a General Studies major at WWU? (N=38)					
	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Extremely
Providing a dedicated advisor to General Studies majors	8%	16%	13%	29%	34%
Providing a capstone course focused on careers for General Studies majors	13%	11%	29%	21%	26%
Internship and service learning opportunities dedicated to General Studies majors	13%	5%	24%	32%	26%
Providing writing proficiency courses specifically for General Studies majors	18%	11%	34%	24%	13%
Reserving seats for General Studies majors in upper division courses	-	11%	16%	24%	50%
Making it easier for General Studies majors to take independent studies	5%	5%	32%	34%	24%