

# **Alumni Survey – Classes of 2002 and 2003**

**Office of Institutional Research**

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The Earlham College Classes of 2002 and 2003 were invited to complete the HEDS Alumni survey in the spring of 2008. This report compares responses from Earlham's alumni with alumni from the Class of 2002 from some of our peer institutions. Institutions represented in this report include Pitzer College, Scripps College, Colorado College, Centre College, Hampshire College, Denison University.

The response rate for Earlham was 35% and the gender breakdown consisted of 62% female respondents. For the Peer Group, the average response rate was 19% and 68% of the respondents were female.

Looking at the ethnicity breakdown, whites made up 84.9% of Earlham respondents while 86.9% of the respondents within the Peer Group identified themselves as being white.

For Earlham, 46.9% were married or living with a partner while 49.2% of the Peer Group indicated the same. Along the same line, 8.8% of Earlham respondents indicated that they had 1 or 2 children. For the Peer Group, 6.6% stated that they had 1 or 2 children and one respondent stated that they had more than 2 children.

Table 1 shows the undergraduate majors of the respondents. The majority of respondents from Earlham and the Peer Group majored in Social Science, Humanities or Life Sciences. Differences among the groups were most notable in the number of Arts and Music majors and Life Sciences Majors.

**Table 1**

**Respondents' Undergraduate Major**

|                          | <b>Earlham</b> | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Arts and Music           | 8.8%           | 11.1%             |
| Business/Management      | 5.7%           | 4.6%              |
| Education                | 0%             | 1.8%              |
| Geosciences              | 1.9%           | 1.4%              |
| Humanities               | 18.2%          | 19.6%             |
| Life Sciences            | 12.6%          | 10.0%             |
| Math/Computer Science    | 4.4%           | 3.8%              |
| Physical Sciences        | 3.8%           | 5.7%              |
| Psychology               | 10.7%          | 10.2%             |
| Social Sciences          | 29.6%          | 30.9%             |
| Other Non-Science Fields | 12.6%          | 14.6%             |

When surveyed 5-6 years after graduation, 10.7% of Earlham respondents indicated that their major was unrelated to their career. This compares to 12.5% of the Peer Group that indicated that their major was unrelated to their career. Conversely, 50.9% of Earlham respondents revealed that their major was directly related to their career while 43.8% of the Peer Group indicated the same.

**Table 2****Evaluation of Undergraduate Education****"Extent Enhanced by Undergraduate Experience"**

| <b>Ability/Knowledge</b>                  | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
|   | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| <b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>                  |                    |                   |
| Acquire new skills                        | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Think analytically and logically          | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Formulate creative/original ideas         | 3.6                | 3.6               |
| Academic ability                          | 3.5                | 3.6               |
| <b>SKILLS/LEARNING</b>                    |                    |                   |
| Write effectively                         | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Use quantitative tools                    | 3.1                | 3.0               |
| Appreciate arts, literature, music, drama | 3.3                | 3.4               |
| Gain in-depth knowledge of a field        | 3.3                | 3.4               |
| Read or speak a foreign language          | 2.8                | 2.5               |
| <b>SOCIAL/MORAL AWARENESS</b>             |                    |                   |
| Develop awareness of societal problems    | 3.7                | 3.5               |
| Place current problems in perspective     | 3.6                | 3.5               |
| Understand moral/ethical issues           | 3.6                | 3.5               |
| <b>SELF DEVELOPMENT</b>                   |                    |                   |
| Understand myself                         | 3.5                | 3.4               |
| Function independently, w/o supervision   | 3.4                | 3.5               |
| Develop self-esteem                       | 3.3                | 3.3               |
| Establish a course of action for goals    | 3.4                | 3.4               |
| Intellectual self-confidence              | 3.5                | 3.5               |
| Develop desire for continued learning     | 3.7                | 3.7               |

| RELATIONSHIP SKILLS                              |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|
| Lead/supervise tasks/groups of people            | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Relate well to people of different culture/races | 3.6 | 3.3 |
| Function effectively as member of team           | 3.5 | 3.4 |
| Communicate well orally                          | 3.5 | 3.4 |
| Understand others                                | 3.6 | 3.5 |
| UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY                 |     |     |
| Understanding the process of science             | 3.1 | 2.9 |
| Use technology                                   | 3.0 | 2.9 |

**Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all**

When evaluating the extent to which their critical thinking, self development and understanding of science/technology was enhanced by their undergraduate education, the Earlham respondents and the Peer Group had similar feelings. However, when rating the extent to which their social/moral awareness and relationship skills were enhanced, Earlham respondents gave higher ratings than the Peer Group. Additionally, Earlham respondents gave higher ratings for the extent to which their ability to read or speak a foreign language and their ability to relate well to people of different cultures/races improved.

How important are these skills in their current activities? Table 3 compares Earlham respondents and the Peer Group. The responses were quite similar from both groups for most skills, however Earlham alumni indicated a slightly greater importance of foreign language skills in their current activities compared to alumni from our peer institutions.

**Table 3****Importance in current activities**

| <b>Ability/Knowledge</b>                  | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
|   | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| <b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>                  |                    |                   |
| Acquire new skills and knowledge          | 3.9                | 3.8               |
| Think analytically and logically          | 3.8                | 3.9               |
| Formulate creative/original ideas         | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Academic ability                          | 3.3                | 3.4               |
| <b>SKILLS/LEARNING</b>                    |                    |                   |
| Write effectively                         | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Use quantitative tools                    | 3.2                | 3.2               |
| Appreciate arts, literature, music, drama | 3.0                | 3.0               |
| Gain in-depth knowledge of a field        | 3.5                | 3.6               |
| Read or speak a foreign language          | 2.7                | 2.5               |
| <b>SOCIAL/MORAL AWARENESS</b>             |                    |                   |
| Develop awareness of societal problems    | 3.5                | 3.5               |
| Place current problems in perspective     | 3.6                | 3.6               |
| Understand moral/ethical issues           | 3.6                | 3.6               |
| <b>SELF DEVELOPMENT</b>                   |                    |                   |
| Understand myself                         | 3.6                | 3.6               |
| Function independently, w/o supervision   | 3.8                | 3.9               |
| Develop self-esteem                       | 3.5                | 3.6               |
| Establish a course of action for goals    | 3.7                | 3.8               |
| Intellectual self-confidence              | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Develop desire for continued learning     | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| <b>RELATIONSHIP SKILLS</b>                |                    |                   |

|  |                |                   |
|--|----------------|-------------------|
| Lead/supervise tasks/groups of people            | 3.4            | 3.4               |
| Relate well to people of different culture/races | 3.7            | 3.7               |
| Function effectively as member of team           | 3.7            | 3.7               |
| Communicate well orally                          | 3.7            | 3.8               |
| Understand others                                | 3.8            | 3.8               |
| <b>Ability/Knowledge</b>                         | <b>Earlham</b> | <b>Peer Group</b> |
| UNDERSTANDING<br>SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY              |                |                   |
| Understanding the process of science             | 2.9            | 2.8               |
| Use technology                                   | 3.4            | 3.4               |

**Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all**

The participants were asked about their satisfaction with various services or aspects of their college. Table 4 shows that Earlham respondents were more satisfied with library resources and ethnic/racial diversity than the alumni from our peer group. Recreation and athletics also received a slightly higher satisfaction rating from Earlham alums.

**Table 4**

**Satisfaction with College Experiences**

| <b>College Experiences</b>            | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                                       | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| <b>ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES</b>           |                    |                   |
| Academic advising                     | 3.3                | 3.3               |
| Contact with faculty                  | 3.8                | 3.7               |
| Quality of teaching                   | 3.8                | 3.8               |
| Courses in major field                | 3.6                | 3.6               |
| Courses outside major field           | 3.5                | 3.5               |
| Independent study/research            | 3.5                | 3.5               |
| <b>CAMPUS SERVICES AND FACILITIES</b> |                    |                   |
| Career services                       | 2.7                | 2.6               |
| Financial services                    | 3.1                | 3.1               |
| Library resources                     | 3.7                | 3.4               |
| Recreation/athletics                  | 3.4                | 3.2               |
| Residential life                      | 3.3                | 3.3               |
| <b>CAMPUS CLIMATE</b>                 |                    |                   |
| Student voice in policies             | 3.3                | 3.2               |
| Campus safety                         | 3.5                | 3.5               |
| Sense of belonging                    | 3.6                | 3.5               |
| Ethnic/racial diversity               | 3.2                | 2.8               |
| Social life on campus                 | 3.2                | 3.3               |

**Scale: 4=Very Satisfied 3=Generally Satisfied 2=Generally Dissatisfied 1=Very Dissatisfied**

To what extent did their undergraduate experience fulfill their original expectations? Table 5 shows all expectations at least moderately and often times greatly fulfilled for both Earlham respondents and the Peer Group respondents, with Earlham respondents giving slightly higher scores for acquiring in-depth knowledge in a particular field, developing competence in career relevant skills, and promoting ability to form relationships.

**Table 5**

**Fulfillment of Expectations**

| <b>Expectation</b>                               | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|
|  | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| Enhance your intellectual growth                 | 3.8                | 3.8               |
| Acquire in-depth knowledge in a particular field | 3.5                | 3.4               |
| Develop competence in career relevant skills     | 3.1                | 3.0               |
| Foster your personal growth                      | 3.7                | 3.7               |
| Promote your ability to form relationships       | 3.5                | 3.4               |

**Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all**

The mean score of their rating of overall satisfaction with their undergraduate education was 3.7 for both Earlham respondents and the Peer Group (scale: 4=very satisfied, 1=very dissatisfied). For Earlham respondents, 67.5% indicated they were very satisfied with their Earlham education while 70.8% of the Peer Group indicated the same.

Would graduates encourage others to attend their chosen undergraduate institution?

Among Earlham respondents, 68.6% revealed that they definitely would encourage others to attend Earlham. None of the Earlham respondents indicated that they definitely would not encourage others to attend Earlham and only one respondent said they probably would not. Along the same lines, 72.3% of the Peer Group respondents stated that they definitely would encourage others to attend their undergraduate institution. On the other

hand, four alumni from the Peer Group revealed that they definitely would not encourage others to attend their undergraduate institution.

The alumni were asked to indicate their level of involvement in extracurricular activities and then to evaluate the contribution of these various activities to their personal or professional life after graduation. Table 6 shows the mean scores.

The greatest difference between alumni from Earlham and the Peer Group is seen in Earlham respondents' involvement in study abroad programs and performing arts/music activities where Earlham alumni reported more involvement.

**Table 6**

**Level of Involvement in Activities**

| <b>Level of Involvement</b>       | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                                   | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| <b>EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES</b> |                    |                   |
| Student or campus government      | 1.5                | 1.6               |
| Intercollegiate athletics         | 1.8                | 1.7               |
| Intramural sports                 | 1.8                | 1.9               |
| Student publications              | 1.5                | 1.5               |
| Performing arts/music             | 2.2                | 1.9               |
| Political organization or club    | 2.0                | 1.9               |
| Community service                 | 2.4                | 2.5               |
| Religious groups                  | 1.7                | 1.5               |
| <b>ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES</b>        |                    |                   |
| Internships                       | 2.2                | 2.1               |
| Study abroad                      | 2.9                | 2.6               |
| Work on faculty research          | 1.6                | 1.6               |
| Independent study                 | 2.2                | 2.4               |
| <b>EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES</b>      |                    |                   |
| On-campus employment              | 2.9                | 2.8               |
| Off-campus employment             | 1.8                | 1.8               |

Table 7 shows that, for the Earlham graduates, participation in religious groups made a larger contribution to their personal or professional life after graduation compared to alumni from our Peer Group.

**Table 7**

**Contribution of Activities to Personal/Professional Development**

| <b>Contribution to your development</b> | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
|   | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| <b>EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES</b>       |                    |                   |
| Student or campus government            | 1.9                | 1.8               |
| Intercollegiate athletics               | 2.2                | 2.0               |
| Intramural sports                       | 1.7                | 1.8               |
| Student publications                    | 1.8                | 1.8               |
| Performing arts/music                   | 2.4                | 2.3               |
| Political organization or club          | 2.2                | 2.2               |
| Community service                       | 2.8                | 2.8               |
| Religious groups                        | 2.1                | 1.8               |
| <b>ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES</b>              |                    |                   |
| Internships                             | 2.7                | 2.7               |
| Study abroad                            | 3.3                | 3.2               |
| Work on faculty research                | 2.0                | 2.0               |
| Independent study                       | 2.5                | 2.6               |
| <b>EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES</b>            |                    |                   |
| On-campus employment                    | 2.6                | 2.6               |
| Off-campus employment                   | 2.1                | 2.1               |

**Scale: 4=Extensive 3=Moderate 2=A Little 1=None**

Table 8 shows to what extent these graduates felt their undergraduate experience prepared them for various post-graduation activities. The table shows little difference in level of preparedness for post-graduation activities.

**Table 8**

**Level of Preparedness for post-graduation Activities**

| <b>Activities</b>            | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                              | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| Post-baccalaureate education | 3.3                | 3.4               |
| Current career               | 3.1                | 3.2               |
| Social and civic involvement | 3.2                | 3.1               |
| Interpersonal relationships  | 3.2                | 3.1               |

**Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all**

To determine the amount of involvement these graduates have had with their alma mater, they were asked how frequently they participated in various activities that were sponsored by their undergraduate institution. Table 9 shows that the alumni respondents from our Peer Group were more likely to contribute to or solicit for the annual fund than Earlham alumni.

**Table 9**

**Involvement with Alma Mater**

| <b>Activity</b>                                     | <b>Earlham</b>     | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
|   | <b>Mean Scores</b> |                   |
| Read campus publications                            | 2.9                | 3.1               |
| Visited the institution's Web site                  | 3.0                | 2.9               |
| Visited campus for any purpose                      | 2.2                | 2.3               |
| Attended alumni functions on campus                 | 1.6                | 1.6               |
| Attended alumni functions off campus                | 1.4                | 1.6               |
| Attended alma mater sporting events                 | 1.4                | 1.4               |
| Served as an alumni admissions volunteer            | 1.1                | 1.2               |
| Participated in a career advisory program           | 1.1                | 1.2               |
| Participated in alumni continuing education program | 1.0                | 1.0               |
| Participated in an alumni community service program | 1.0                | 1.1               |
| Contributed to or solicited for the annual fund     | 1.6                | 2.2               |
| Maintained contact with other alumni                | 3.7                | 3.6               |
| Maintained contact with faculty members             | 2.5                | 2.5               |
| Maintained contact with administrators              | 1.6                | 1.5               |

**Scale: 4= Frequently 3=Occasionally 2= Briefly 1=Never**

Among Earlham respondents, 76.9% indicated that they strongly or very strongly identified with their Alma Mater while 76.1% of the Peer Group indicated the same.

Table 10 shows alumni involvement in organizations since graduation. Earlham respondents are more involved in religious organizations than the Peer Group but less involved in professional organizations.

**Table 10**  
**Involvement in Organizations**

| Organization                         | Earlham     | Peer Group |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
|                                      | Mean Scores |            |
| Civic/Community                      | 2.3         | 2.3        |
| Cultural/Arts                        | 2.2         | 2.3        |
| Educational Service (e.g., PTA)      | 1.4         | 1.5        |
| Political                            | 1.9         | 1.9        |
| Professional                         | 2.2         | 2.5        |
| Recreational (e.g., sports club)     | 2.1         | 2.1        |
| Religious                            | 1.9         | 1.7        |
| Service (e.g. Rotary, Kiwanis)       | 1.3         | 1.3        |
| Youth (e.g. Little League, Scouting) | 1.5         | 1.5        |

**Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1= Not at All**

Currently, among Earlham respondents, 69% are working full time, 23.9% are attending graduate school full time and 12.9% are attending graduate school part time. Within the Peer Group, 71.1% are working full time, 26.7% are attending graduate school full time and 8.3% are attending graduate school part time.

Table 11 indicates the percentage of respondents who have received or are currently enrolled in a particular graduate program. A much higher percentage of Earlham respondents are currently enrolled in master's degree programs compared to the Peer Group, while a higher percentage of alumni from the peer group have already received

their Master's degree. Also, Earlham respondents were less likely to be enrolled in a doctorate degree program five or six years following graduation.

**Table 11**

Degrees

| <b>Degree</b>                           | <b>Earlham</b> | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|---|----------------|-------------------|
| Master's received                       | 21.9%          | 30.6%             |
| Enrolled in Master's                    | 28.8%          | 23.8%             |
| Professional degree received            |                |                   |
| Law degree received                     | 1.9%           | 6%                |
| Medical degree received                 | <1%            | 1.4%              |
| Enrolled in professional degree program |                |                   |
| Enrolled in law program                 | 1.9%           | 2.3%              |
| Enrolled in medical program             | 1.9%           | 2.1%              |
| Doctorate degree received               | 4%             | 6%                |
| Enrolled in a doctorate degree          | 6.8%           | 9%                |

Table 12 shows the current annual income of the respondents. More respondents within the Peer Group indicated that their current annual income was between \$40,000 and \$99,999 or more than \$120,000 compared to the Earlham respondents. A higher percentage of Earlham respondents indicated they earned between "no earned income" and \$40,000. More respondents from Earlham also earned between \$100,000 and \$119,999.

**Table 12**

**Current Annual Income**

|                        | <b>Earlham</b> | <b>Peer Group</b> |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| No earned income       | 7.5%           | 6.8%              |
| Less than \$19,999     | 23.1%          | 15.5%             |
| \$20,000 to \$39,999   | 36.9%          | 30.9%             |
| \$40,000 to \$59,999   | 21.9%          | 30.5%             |
| \$60,000 to \$79,999   | 4.4%           | 8.0%              |
| \$80,000 to \$99,999   | 1.9%           | 3.0%              |
| \$100,000 to \$119,999 | 3.1%           | 2.3%              |
| More than \$120,000    | 1.3%           | 2.9%              |

The data collected from the HEDS Alumni Survey of the Earlham Classes of 2002 and 2003 has allowed Earlham to compare its alumni with its peers. Careful analysis of this information can allow Earlham College to assess and improve the overall educational experience.

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