Student Assessment Office

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1996 and 1997 Alumni Survey Quantitative Report

As a national liberal arts college, it is important to ask whether Earlham meets the goals it has set for itself. In order to begin to answer this question, solid longitudinal studies of Earlham students and alumni must be conducted. We must determine what specific influences undergraduate experiences have had upon Earlham graduates. Looking for patterns in what these influences are, and what experiences have had the most impact on alumni, helps reveal a clearer picture of how Earlham affects its graduates. With this knowledge in hand, Earlham can find ways to meet its goals for students more effectively.

The present study is intended to examine some of the changes in the lives and beliefs of graduates. This report describes Earlham's classes of 1986 and 1987 through their responses about various aspects of their lives and beliefs since their first year and in the ten years since graduating. Understanding how graduates have changed (and how they have remained the same) is a necessary first step in our attempts to understand Earlham graduates and how they are affected by their college experience.

Information about the classes was obtained through responses to the 1996 and 1997 Alumni Survey. Data collected from their freshman years (1982 and 1983) and senior years (1986 and 1987) were also used for comparisons. The Alumni Survey included a wide variety of questions ranging from demographic characteristics (religion, political orientation, education, income level and occupation) to their satisfaction with Earlham College to questions focused on their values and life goals. This information allowed direct comparisons with data collected from the graduate's first and senior years. Additional questions asked alumni to provide information about activities since graduation.

Description of the Respondents for 1996:

Of the 67 respondents, 38.8% were male and 58.2% were female. Fifty-one percent of the alumni expressed a religious preference. Of those who noted a preference, 22% reported Protestant, 3% Roman Catholic, 12% Jewish, and 24% Quaker. Nineteen percent indicated that they had no religious preference.

Although only 8% of respondents became Quaker while attending Earlham or after graduating, a substantial number (70%) reported adopting at least a fair amount of Quaker ideals as a result of their time at Earlham.

The political orientation of the group leaned predominantly toward the left, as 64% claimed to be liberal or far-left in orientation. Nineteen percent of the alumni considered their political views middle-of-the-road, while only 9% say they are conservative. The liberal character of the Earlham student body was retained in this group of alumni ten years beyond graduation.

When asked about time spend abroad after graduation, 85% of the respondents reported spending some time in a foreign country in the past ten years. One-third of the alumni had spent more than one month in the country they had visited. Of those who had gone on an Earlham foreign study program to a non-English speaking country, over half (60%) reported at least some retained ability to speak the language involved in that program. Eighteen percent reported that they could still engage in casual conversations, and 15% claimed to continue to have a working knowledge of the language. Of all the alumni surveyed, 43% reported using their language skills at least occasionally.

Description of the Respondents for 1997:

Of the 99 respondents, 37% were male and 57% were female (6% did not respond). Sixty-nine percent of the alumni expressed a religious preference. Of those who noted a preference, 18% reported Protestant, 6% Roman Catholic, 10% Jewish, and 19% Quaker. The most frequent response to the question of religious preference was "none" (27%). Although only 3% of respondents became Quaker while attending Earlham or after graduating, a substantial number (91%) of alumni reported adopting at least a fair amount of Quaker ideals as a result of their time at Earlham.

The political orientation of the group leaned predominantly toward the left, as nearly three-fourths claimed to be liberal or far left in orientation. Twenty-two percent of the alumni considered their political views middle-of-the-road, while only 5% say they are conservative. The liberal character of the Earlham student body was retained in this group of alumni ten years beyond graduation.

When asked about time spent abroad after graduation, 88% of the respondents reported spending some time in a foreign country in the past ten years. One-third of the alumni had spent more than one month in the country they had visited. Of those who had gone on an Earlham foreign study program to a non-English speaking country, a little over half (51%) reported at least some

retained ability to speak the language involved in that program. Nine percent reported that they could still engage in casual conversations, and 13% claimed to continue to have a working knowledge of the language. Of all the alumni surveyed, 23% reported using their language skills at least occasionally.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of Earlham majors of the respondents for 1996 and 1997. For 1996, HDSR and International Studies were the most represented majors, compared to HDSR and Biology for the 1997 group.

Table 1

Major	1996	1997	Major	1996	1997
Art	4.5%	1.0%	International Studies	7.5%	5.0%
Biology	6.0%	12.1%	Management	1.5%	2.0%
Chemistry	1.5%	2.0%	Mathematics	3.0%	4.0%
Economics	0%	3.0%	PAGS	0%	4.0%
English	3.0%	5.1%	Philosophy	1.5%	4.0%
Foreign Language	6.0%	4.0%	Political Science	3.0%	3.0%
Geology	0%	6.1%	Psychology	4.5%	5.1%
History	3.0%	2.0%	Religion	0%	3.0%
HDSR	13.4%	10.1%	Sociology/Anthropology	6.0%	8.1%

Alumni were asked to reflect back upon their level of satisfaction with a variety of aspects of the college. They were asked to indicate their feelings about those aspects using the following scale: 0 = No Response; 1 = Very Satisfied; 2 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Ambivalent; 4 = Not Satisfied; 5 = Extremely Unsatisfied. The responses were compiled and mean ratings calculated by multiplying the numerical code for each response by the number of persons choosing that response (excluding the "no response" option). This same method is used to calculate means for all tables in this report. Freshman-senior-alumni comparisons are complicated by the fact that we have freshman data for some alumni who lack senior data and vice-versa. To simplify, separate comparisons (paired-sample t-tests) are made for the freshman and senior groups using only alumni for who matched data were available. Because different subsets of the alumni are used for each comparison, means throughout this report may differ slightly from group to group.

Tables 2a and 2b list the satisfaction ratings for the entire alumni sample by year. Table 2c compares the mean ratings of satisfaction as alumni to the means those same students reported as seniors.

Table 2a

Satisfaction with Institutional Components Entire 1996 Alumni Sample					
Various aspects of college **(how do you feel about...)**	**Very Satisfied** **(%)**	**Somewhat Satisfied** **(%)**	**Ambiv-alent** **(%)**	**Not Satisfied** **(%)**	**Extremely Unsatisfied** **(%)**
...the extracurricular activities available?	30	51	9	8	0
...the housing process in dealing with your needs fairly?	34	40	12	10	2
...the Service Learning Program/EVE in giving opportunities for community service?	8	24	51	3	2
...the office of Student Development in addressing your social and personal issues?	6	22	48	8	8
...the Career Services' available resources?	6	33	45	6	3
...the actual housing process?	19	43	18	12	5
...the afternoon discussions/lectures provided by Co-Curricular Studies?	9	24	48	3	0
...the social life on campus?	33	39	15	13	0
...the scheduled social events?	18	48	24	10	0
...the organized religion on campus?	18	28	10	6	2
... academic preparation for future plans?	52	28	10	6	2
...student participation in administration?	12	31	34	15	5
...the individual counseling program?	3	19	46	9	5
...opportunities for off-campus programs?	64	19	12	2	0
...campus policies and security procedures?	6	60	24	8	2
...the convocation program?	36	51	13	0	0
...the financial aid office in dealing with your needs fairly?	37	19	24	2	3
...your advisor in helping with academic planning?	30	37	18	10	5
...your advisor in helping with personal issues?	10	22	46	10	6
...experiences on off-campus programs?	45	13	18	6	2

Table 2b

Satisfaction with Institutional Components Entire 1997 Alumni Sample					
Various aspects of college **(how do you feel about...)**	**Very Satisfied** **(%)**	**Somewhat Satisfied** **(%)**	**Ambiv-alent** **(%)**	**Not Satisfied** **(%)**	**Extremely Unsatisfied** **(%)**
...the extracurricular activities available?	38	44	12	2	0
...the housing process in dealing with your needs fairly?	32	47	10	9	0
...the Service Learning Program/EVE in giving opportunities for community service?	8	16	58	2	0
...the office of Student Development in addressing your social and personal issues?	10	23	49	5	5
...the Career Services' available resources?	10	20	46	14	4
...the actual housing process?	16	37	27	11	3
...the afternoon discussions/lectures provided by Co-Curricular Studies?	7	24	43	2	1
...the social life on campus?	32	43	14	9	0
...the scheduled social events?	20	52	21	6	0
...the organized religion on campus?	17	31	43	1	2
... academic preparation for future plans?	52	29	14	3	1
...student participation in administration?	18	32	32	11	2
...the individual counseling program?	7	18	56	3	2
...opportunities for off-campus programs?	71	18	6	2	0
...campus policies and security procedures?	14	40	31	8	0
...the convocation program?	39	32	21	3	0
...the financial aid office in dealing with your needs fairly?	31	23	25	4	2
...your advisor in helping with academic planning?	30	32	21	13	3
...your advisor in helping with personal issues?	18	16	43	12	5
...experiences on off-campus programs?	15	57	8	18	2

From Tables 2a and 2b, it can be seen that alumni from both classes are, in retrospect, most satisfied with off-campus study programs and the academic

preparation they received for their future plans. In addition, the 1997 group also reported high satisfaction with the kinds of extra-curricular activities that were available. Both groups were most unsatisfied with their advisors and with the office of Student Development in addressing social and personal needs. Nearly all of the ratings, however, indicate that alumni are mostly satisfied with these aspects of the college.

Table 2c

Satisfaction with Institutional Components Comparison of Senior and Alumni Data (lower numbers indicate greater satisfaction)						
Various aspects of college **(how do you feel about...)**	**Mean Ratings as Seniors** **1986**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni** **1996**	**Mean Ratings as Seniors** **1987**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni** **1997**
...the kinds of extracurricular activities available?	2.40	*	1.67	2.05	**	1.55
...the housing process in dealing with your needs fairly?	2.75	**	1.44	2.57	*	2.00
...the Career Services' available resources?	2.07		2.40	2.33		2.71
...the actual housing process?	2.93	*	2.00	2.68		2.40
...the social life on campus?	2.31		1.81	2.50	**	1.93
...the scheduled social events?	2.87		2.20	2.19		2.07
...the organized religion on campus?	3.00	*	2.21	2.48		2.40
...your academic preparation for future plans?	1.93		1.47	1.79		1.67
...student participation in college administration?	3.27	**	2.07	3.14		2.48
...the financial aid office in dealing with your needs fairly?	1.87		1.53	2.31	**	1.62
...your advisor in helping in your academic planning?	1.94		2.19	1.90		2.12
...your advisor in helping you with personal issues?	2.67		2.87	2.40		2.64

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = $p<.05$; ** = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.001$, in two-tailed tests.

From Table 2c, it can be seen that feelings about several of these areas have changed since graduation. The greatest positive changes in feelings of

satisfaction for both the 1986 and 1987 graduates occurred in relation to extracurricular activities and the housing process. The 1986 graduates also noted significantly greater satisfaction in terms of organized religion on campus and student participation in administration, while the 1987 graduates reported significant changes in the social life on campus and the financial aid office. In general, most alumni were more satisfied with aspects of Earlham when looking back ten years than they were as seniors. Even as seniors, however, students tend to be satisfied with these aspects of Earlham, only to become more satisfied upon reflecting back 10 years later.

An important aspect of surveying alumni is to learn about the behavior dimensions of their lifestyles and what activities they are currently engaged in. This information allows us to begin examining the relationships between such psychological variables as values, attitudes, beliefs and goals, and behavioral choices. One of the aims of a liberal education is to increase the degree of congruence between the cognitive and affective domains and the behavioral domain. Examining and demonstrating whether this aim is being achieved is the goal of the following paragraphs.

One set of questions examined the nature and extent of contact which alumni had maintained with the Earlham community during the past ten years. For example, the survey inquired about visits back to Earlham since their graduation and found that a vast majority (75% for 1996 and 81% for 1997) had made at least one or two visits. While 13% of the 1996 group reported visiting the campus frequently since graduation, only 4% of the 1997 group had made frequent returns to campus (previous ratings of frequent visits range between 9% and 19% in the past ten years of alumni surveys). Consistent with past years, alumni maintain contact with their Earlham professors, with approximately 58% of the 1996 group and 65% of the 1997 group indicating that they had corresponded with one or more of their Earlham professors over the last ten years. Approximately twenty-five percent of both groups reported that they had corresponded several times, indicating a high level of continuing involvement. It is important to remember that these numbers may not accurately represent involvement levels of all the alumni, as those responding to the survey may be more likely to keep consistent correspondence with professors and friends in general. Also, it is likely that level of visitation and correspondence will decrease over time – many contacts with professors probably involved requests for letters of recommendations, graduate school planning, etc.

Another form of contact with the Earlham community comes through associations with friends met during their undergraduate experience. For the

1996 group, 43% reported frequent visits with Earlham friends, 76% reported at least occasional visits, and 24% reported that they rarely or never had contact with former classmates in the last ten years. For the 1997 group, the percentages were even higher, with 60% reporting frequent visits, 85% reporting occasional visits, and only 13% reporting little or no contact with classmates. These findings show that a large number of alumni, ten years after graduation, are still frequently involved with one or more of the friends they met at Earlham. Moreover, they maintain a fairly extensive network of continuing friendships over a much greater distance. Clearly, the Earlham community extends far beyond the actual campus.

In still another way, the Earlham experience of these alumni extends to their lives now. When asked whether they have continued their involvement in any of the same types of organizations as those in which they were active at Earlham, 49% of the 1996 group and 36% of the 1997 group responded "yes." Two of the more popular types of organizations involved in were athletic groups (12% for 1996 and 14% for 1997) and artistic groups (5% for 1996 and 8% for 1997). Somewhat surprisingly, given the politically active reputation of the Earlham student body, few of the alumni surveyed have remained involved in social service organizations, with only 3% involvement for both groups. Additionally, only 6% of the 1996 group and 2% of the 1997 group reported involvement in a religious organization.

An additional kind of continuing involvement with Earlham was examined – contributing financially to the college. Approximately 70% of both groups indicated having contributed financially to Earlham since graduating. This contribution seems to serve as a positive indicator of alumni intent to continue a substantial level of interest and investment in the Earlham community. This behavior may also be understood as an additional reflection of alumni satisfaction with their Earlham education.

As another form of behavioral assessment, alumni were asked whether or not they had engaged in a variety of behaviors during the preceding ten years. If they had not participated in a particular behavior, they were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would do so in the future. Reponses for both groups are reported in Tables 3a and 3b:

Table 3a

Occurrence or Likelihood of Occurrence of Various Activities 1996 Alumni Sample				
	Percentage estimating that future occurrence is...			
Activity	**Already Occurred**	**Very Likely**	**Some-what Likely**	**Not Likely**
Participate in a committed intimate relationship	93	5	3	0
Contribute financially to Earlham	69	6	15	10
Begin purchasing your own home	66	18	10	6
Get married	64	13	12	9
Perform significant volunteer service	58	9	25	12
Seek major career advancement	45	8	25	18
Make major contributions to charity	49	15	24	10
Change jobs to earn more money	55	10	12	21
Make spirituality an important part of your life	54	5	22	21
Change career fields	54	13	8	25
Move to a new location because of your job	28	8	19	43
Try out several jobs to explore career options	36	3	15	43
Have children	51	18	22	9
Travel extensively because of job requirements	24	3	20	52
Be very politically active	28	3	31	36

Table 3b

Occurrence or Likelihood of Occurrence of Various Activities 1997 Alumni Sample				
	Percentage estimating that future occurrence is...			
Activity	**Already Occurred**	**Very Likely**	**Some-what Likely**	**Not Likely**
Participate in a committed intimate relationship	89	5	7	0
Contribute financially to Earlham	70	9	12	9
Begin purchasing your own home	58	19	19	4
Get married	55	21	15	8
Perform significant volunteer service	53	11	30	7
Seek major career advancement	44	3	25	25
Make major contributions to charity	43	12	30	14
Change jobs to earn more money	40	6	26	25
Make spirituality an important part of your life	39	8	31	19
Change career fields	37	10	9	40
Move to a new location because of your job	36	2	19	41
Try out several jobs to explore career options	33	2	11	50
Have children	31	34	19	14
Travel extensively because of job requirements	25	4	19	51
Be very politically active	17	1	40	37

The above table suggests some noteworthy findings about the life choices of Earlham alumni. For example, approximately 70% of both classes have already made financial contributions to Earlham. Moreover, an additional 6% for 1996 and 9% for 1997 indicated that they are very likely to give to the college at a later time. The data also suggest that these alumni have been more likely to give money to Earlham than to make major charitable contributions to other organizations in the future. Also noteworthy is the percentage of alumni who either have already performed or are likely to perform volunteer service.

However, the proportion of alumni who have been politically active reflects a lower number than in past years. Only 3% of the 1996 group and only 1% of the 1997 group indicate that it is very likely that they will be politically active later in life.

In terms of family choices, the majority continue to see marriage as a major feature of their current or future lives. Approximately half of the 1996 group and one-third of the 1997 responding alumni have already had children. An additional 18% for 1996 and 34% for 1997 state it is very likely they will have children in the future. Finally, 54% of the 1996 alumni sample and 39% of the 1997 group have already found spirituality to be an important part of their lives, which shows the lasting importance of the spiritual values that are often a part of the Earlham experience.

Another facet of this study is the longitudinal data comparing attitudes and values of alumni at the times of their entrance into Earlham, their graduation, and ten years after graduation. How stable are attitudes and values over time? Do the distinctive patterns observed among students while enrolled at Earlham persist as they move into the larger society into adult responsibilities and life patterns?

Table 4a compares the mean ratings of attitudes on lifestyles for alumni to the mean ratings for the same students as first years (1996 alumni sample and 1982 first year data, 1997 alumni sample and 1983 first year data). Table 4b compares the mean ratings for alumni to the mean ratings for the same students as seniors (1996 alumni samples and 1986 senior data, 1997 alumni sample and 1987 senior data).

Table 4a

ATTITUDES ON LIFESTYLES Comparison of First Year and Alumni Data (Lower numbers indicate stronger agreement)						
Issue	**Mean Ratings as First Years** **1982**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni** **1996**	**Mean Ratings as First Years** **1983**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni** **1997**
Abortion should be legalized.	1.73		1.50	1.80	**	1.33
Activities of married women are best confined to home and family.	3.73		3.60	3.49	***	3.92
Couples should live together before getting married.	2.47		2.23	2.32		2.34
Parents should be discouraged from having large families.	2.13		2.63	2.38		2.28
Sex is ok if two people really like each other but have only known each other for a short time.	2.50		2.47	2.46	**	2.13
Women should receive the same salary and opportunities for advancement as men in comparable positions.	1.10	*	.97	1.11		1.05
Marijuana should be legalized.	2.97	*	2.50	2.79	**	2.43
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.	3.40		3.60	3.23	***	3.87

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = p<.05; ** = p<.01; *** = p<.001, in two-tailed tests.

The above ratings indicate that Earlham alumni have tended to retain the liberal views that they held as freshman. In general, when a significant change can be

seen, the change most often indicates an even greater liberal stance. For example, alumni disagreed more strongly with the idea of having laws prohibiting homosexual relationships than when freshman. Also, there was a significantly higher agreement with the legalization of abortion, the legalization of marijuana, and the need for a national health care system. These findings are consistent with past groups of alumni.

Table 4b

ATTITUDES ON LIFESTYLES

Comparison of Senior and Alumni Data

(Lower numbers indicate stronger agreement)

Issue	Mean Ratings as Seniors 1986	Signifi-cance of Diff.	Mean Ratings as Alumni 1996	Mean Ratings as Seniors 1987	Signifi-cance of Diff.	Mean Ratings as Alumni 1997
Abortion should be legalized.	1.38		1.44	1.19		1.19
Activities of married women are best confined to home and family.	3.88		3.56	3.71		3.98
Couples should live together before getting married.	2.31		2.19	1.60	***	2.24
Parents should be discouraged from having large families.	1.94		2.50	2.12		2.21
Sex is ok if two people really like each other but have only known each other for a short time.	2.13		2.38	1.86		2.12
Women should receive the same salary and opportunities for advancement as men in comparable positions.	1.06		.94	1.05		1.00
Marijuana should be legalized.	2.31		2.56	2.40		2.43
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.	3.75		3.50	3.90		3.95

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = p<.05; ** = p<.01; *** = p<.001, in two-tailed tests.

The above data suggest that many of the respondents' views have not changed as greatly during the ten years they have been away from Earlham as the 14 years since freshman year. Less change is evident than in the previous comparison between freshman and alumni attitudes. One might conclude that most attitudinal changes on lifestyle issues occurred during their four years at Earlham. Presumably, these changes are due to the influence of ideas and experiences they encountered in classes and co-curricular life. It is impressive that these alumni's strongly liberal attitudes have remained fairly constant (or have even become more liberal) despite immersion in the less idealistic "real world."

Tables 4c and 4d examine the same attitudes on lifestyles for the entire alumni sample from both years (as opposed to just the respondents for whom we could match first year and senior data). Table 4c looks at all the respondents for 1996 and Table 4d looks at the 1997 group.

Table 4c shows that large numbers of the 1996 alumni group agree strongly with the idea that abortion should be legalized and women should receive the same salary and opportunities for advancement as men do. Many disagree strongly with the idea that the activities of married women are best confined to home and family, and that it is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.

Table 4c

Attitudes on Lifestyles Entire 1996 Alumni Sample				
Issue	**Agree Strongly(%)**	**Agree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Strongly (%)**
Abortion should be legalized.	69	10	5	10
Activities of married women are best confined to home and family.	0	3	22	69
Couples should live together before getting married.	9	46	21	12
Parents should be discouraged from having large families.	12	28	31	22
Sex is ok if two people really like each other but have only known each other for a short time.	21	34	27	15
Women should receive the same salary and opportunities for advancement as men in comparable positions.	90	8	0	0
Marijuana should be legalized.	13	46	19	18
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.	2	8	8	79
People should not obey laws which violate their personal views.	5	30	39	21

Table 4d

Attitudes on Lifestyles Entire 1997 Alumni Sample				
Issue	**Agree Strongly(%)**	**Agree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Strongly (%)**
Abortion should be legalized.	74	15	4	4
Activities of married women are best confined to home and family.	0	1	3	96
Couples should live together before getting married.	14	55	22	8
Parents should be discouraged from having large families.	16	42	30	8
Sex is ok if two people really like each other but have only known each other for a short time.	26	39	22	12
Women should receive the same salary and opportunities for advancement as men in comparable positions.	96	2	1	0
Marijuana should be legalized.	13	43	24	18
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.	1	1	8	89
People should not obey laws which violate their personal views.	4	22	42	29

Table 4d shows that nearly all respondents from the 1997 alumni sample strongly believe that women should receive comparable salaries as men, and the majority also believe that women should not be confined to the home and family. Alumni, as a whole, were also strongly opposed to laws against homosexual relationships and in favor of legalizing abortion. Individuals within the alumni sample share mixed feelings on issues such as the legalization of marijuana, discouraging parents from having large families, and the acceptability of two people having sex even if they have only known each other a short time. Levels of agreement vary widely with each issue.

Table 5a compares alumni views on a variety of political issues to the views that they held on the same issues as entering first year students at Earlham. It is interesting to note the differences here between the 1996 and 1997 alumni groups. For the 1996 group, this analysis reveals that many of their attitudes about the role of government and institutions have remained constant over the fourteen years since they were first year students. There are very few significant differences. This group disagreed significantly more with the idea that the government is not doing enough to protect the consumer and not doing enough to control pollution. They also disagreed more with the statement that inflation is our biggest domestic problem. In contrast, they believed more strongly that there should be a national health care system. The 1997 alumni sample on the other hand was not as consistent, as substantial changes can be seen in several areas. For example, these alumni also agreed more strongly about the current need for a national health care plan than they did as first years. In addition, this group agreed more strongly that wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes. Just as the 1996 group, these alumni also revealed a decreased agreement with the idea that inflation is our biggest domestic problem. Alumni also disagreed more now that there is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals.

Table 5a

ATTITUDES ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONS Comparison of First Year and Alumni Data (Lower numbers indicate stronger agreement)						
Issue	**Mean Ratings as First Years 1982**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1996**	**Mean Ratings as First Years 1983**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1997**
The Federal government is not doing enough to protect the consumer from faulty goods and services.	2.11	*	2.46	2.03	*	2.31
The Federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution.	1.37	*	1.67	1.43		1.54
The Federal government should do more to discourage energy consumption.	1.66		1.76	1.57		1.64
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals.	2.83		2.83	2.36	**	2.77
Inflation is our biggest domestic problem.	2.62	***	3.66	2.61	***	3.61
The death penalty should be abolished.	1.93		2.18	2.07		1.92
National health care is needed to cover everyone's medical costs.	2.11	*	1.68	2.16	***	1.70
Divorce laws should be liberalized.	2.65		2.88	2.28		2.43
The wealthy should pay a larger share of taxes.	1.59		1.81	1.87	**	1.49
Busing is okay to achieve racial balance in schools.	2.00		2.32	2.10		2.21
College officials should have the right to regulate student behavior off campus.	3.33		3.00	2.90	**	3.43

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = p<.05; ** = p<.01; *** = p<.001, in two-tailed tests.

Table 5b compares the senior and alumni attitudes on the role of governments and institutions. Again, the 1997 group shows change on more issues, and a greater degree of significance in these changes than the 1996 group. Both groups of alumni agree more strongly now than as seniors that college officials have the right to regulate student behavior off campus. The 1996 group also showed stronger disagreement as alumni with issues such as the government doing enough with environmental pollution issues and stronger disagreement with the idea that the death penalty should be abolished. The 1997 group of alumni also disagreed significantly more now that college grades should be abolished. These alumni also recorded stronger disagreement with the federal government's involvement with environmental pollution, that divorce laws should be liberalized, and again, that inflation is our biggest domestic problem. For the most part, however, the majority of attitudes about the role of government and institutions remained constant between senior year and ten years later for both groups.

Table 5b

ATTITUDES ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONS Comparison of Senior and Alumni Data (Lower numbers indicate stronger agreement)						
Issue	**Mean Ratings as Seniors 1986**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1996**	**Mean Ratings as Seniors 1987**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1997**
The Federal government is not doing enough to protect the consumer from faulty goods and services.	2.38		2.38	1.95		2.26
The Federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution.	1.19	*	1.56	1.29	**	1.64
The Federal government should be doing more to discourage energy consumption.	1.69		1.50	1.55		1.62
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals.	2.94		2.56	2.90		2.79
Inflation is our biggest domestic problem.	3.13		3.44	3.12	***	3.69
The death penalty should be abolished.	1.63	*	2.13	1.74		1.71
National health care is needed to cover everyone's medical costs.	1.63		1.69	1.64		1.64
Divorce laws should be liberalized.	2.50		2.63	1.90	**	2.38
The wealthy should pay a larger share of taxes.	1.44		1.69	1.48		1.48
Busing is okay to achieve racial balance in schools.	1.88		2.31	1.90		2.10
College officials should have the right to regulate student behavior off campus.	3.69	**	3.19	3.45	***	2.86
Faculty promotions should be based in part on student	1.81		1.81	1.45		1.57

evaluations.						
College grades should be abolished.	2.88		3.19	2.55	***	3.05
Student publications should be cleared by college officials.	3.19		2.94	3.33		3.14
College officials should have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus.	2.19		2.31	3.52	**	3.00
Students from disadvantaged social backgrounds should be given preferential treatment in college admissions.	2.19		2.31	2.36		2.07
College graduates should be able to demonstrate minimal competency in written English and math.	1.06		1.13	1.31		1.36

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = p<.05; ** = p<.01; *** = p<.001, in two-tailed tests.

Tables 5c and 5d examine the same attitudes on the role of government and institutions for the entire alumni sample from both years (as opposed to just the respondents for whom we could match first year and senior data). Table 5c looks at all the respondents for 1996 and Table 5d looks at the 1997 group.

Table 5c

Attitudes on the Role of Government and Institutions Entire 1996 Alumni Sample				
Issue	**Agree Strongly (%)**	**Agree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Strongly (%)**
The Federal government is not doing enough to protect the consumer from faulty goods and services.	3	51	36	8
The Federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution.	51	39	6	3
The Federal government should do more to discourage energy consumption.	48	33	10	6
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals.	15	31	24	27
Inflation is our biggest domestic problem.	0	5	36	55
The death penalty should be abolished.	36	22	19	19
National health care is needed to cover everyone's medical costs.	55	28	6	8
Divorce laws should be liberalized.	6	25	39	19
The wealthy should pay a larger share of taxes.	48	30	12	8
Busing is okay to achieve racial balance in schools.	9	36	30	18
College officials should have the right to regulate student behavior off campus.	3	18	36	42
Faculty promotions should be based in part on student evaluations.	31	60	8	0
College grades should be abolished.	5	12	39	43
Student publications should be cleared by college officials.	3	13	48	33
College officials should have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus.	9	21	36	28
Students from disadvantaged social backgrounds should be given preferential treatment in college admissions.	10	45	16	21
College graduates should be able to demonstrate minimal competency in written English and math.	82	10	2	3

Table 5d

Attitudes on the Role of Government and Institutions Entire 1997 Alumni Sample				
Issue	**Agree Strongly (%)**	**Agree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Somewhat (%)**	**Disagree Strongly (%)**
The Federal government is not doing enough to protect the consumer from faulty goods and services.	16	43	32	6
The Federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution.	62	28	8	2
The Federal government should do more to discourage energy consumption.	55	35	7	3
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals.	14	28	38	18
Inflation is our biggest domestic problem.	0	5	33	61
The death penalty should be abolished.	44	20	22	13
National health care is needed to cover everyone's medical costs.	41	46	11	2
Divorce laws should be liberalized.	11	27	43	11
The wealthy should pay a larger share of taxes.	59	28	11	2
Busing is okay to achieve racial balance in schools.	11	46	36	5
College officials should have the right to regulate student behavior off campus.	3	32	30	33
Faculty promotions should be based in part on student evaluations.	41	51	7	1
College grades should be abolished.	2	14	44	37
Student publications should be cleared by college officials.	1	17	36	43
College officials should have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus.	2	28	30	38
Students from disadvantaged social backgrounds should be given preferential treatment in college admissions.	13	47	36	4
College graduates should be able to demonstrate minimal competency in written English and math.	81	13	4	1

Tables 5c and 5d show many similarities between the 1996 and 199 alumni groups. Both groups most strongly agree the government is not doing enough to control pollution, that the government should do more to discourage energy consumption, that wealthy individuals should pay a larger share of taxes, and that college grads should be able to demonstrate minimal competency in English and math. Both groups disagreed that inflation is the biggest domestic problem. In addition the 1996 group also strongly disagreed that college officials should be able to regulate student behavior off campus and that college grades should be abolished. The 1997 group strongly disagreed with the idea that student publications should be cleared by college officials. Most of these percentages accurately reflect the liberal stance with which many alumni identify.

In addition to their opinions about certain lifestyle and government questions, alumni rated their views on the importance of various personal life goals. The priority of these goals was also assessed when the subjects were freshman and seniors in college.

Table 6a

IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS LIFE GOALS Comparison of First Year and Alumni Data (Higher numbers indicate greater importance)						
Goal	**Mean Ratings as First Years 1982**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1996**	**Mean Ratings as First Years 1983**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1997**
Becoming accomplished in the performing arts.	3.00	***	1.07	3.02	***	1.52
Becoming an authority in my field.	2.30		2.20	2.12	**	2.46
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my field.	2.60	*	2.10	2.49		2.27
Influencing the political structure.	2.80	**	1.87	2.82	***	1.97
Influencing social values.	2.47		2.57	2.61	***	2.72
Raising a family.	2.63	*	3.27	2.39	***	3.16
Having administrative responsibility for the work of others.	3.30	***	1.73	3.12	***	1.68
Being very well off financially.	3.13	***	1.80	2.82	***	1.98
Helping others who are in difficulty.	1.93	**	2.79	2.07	***	2.92
Making a theoretical contribution to science.	3.27	***	1.43	3.43	***	1.28
Writing original works (poems, novels, etc.).	3.23	***	1.63	3.20	***	1.70
Creating artistic works (painting, sculpture, etc.).	3.13	***	1.87	3.22	***	1.87
Being successful in a business of my own.	3.17	***	1.83	3.25	***	1.68
Being involved in programs to clean up the environment.	2.23		2.30	2.62	**	2.17
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	1.93	***	3.30	1.95	***	3.25
Participating in community action programs.	2.47		2.37	2.58		2.66
Helping to promote racial understanding.	2.17	*	2.67	2.08	***	2.80
Keeping up to date with political affairs.	2.50		2.50	2.08	**	2.67

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = $p<.05$; ** = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.001$, in two-tailed tests.

From Table 6a, it is evident that the importance of most of the life goals has significantly changed for both groups of alumni since their first year in college. For many alumni, the relative importance of most life goals decreased between their first year and 10 years after graduating. Both alumni groups reported similar changes, although there are a few interesting differences between the two groups. For both groups, items that were rated as significantly less important as alumni as they had been as first years include the artistic goals, influencing the political structure, having administrative responsibility, making a theoretical contribution to science, becoming successful in one's own business and being very well off financially. The 1996 group also rated obtaining recognition from colleagues as less important, while the 1997 group found being involved in programs to clean up the environment to be less important as alumni than as first year students.

There were also a few goals that were more important as alumni than as first year students. Importance increased for both groups for goals such as raising a family, helping others in difficulty, developing a meaningful life philosophy and promoting racial understanding. The 1997 group also showed significant increases in importance in becoming an authority in their field, influencing social values, and keeping up to date with political affairs. All of these differences clearly reflect a changing focus in the lives of alumni since they first started college.

Table 6b

IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS LIFE GOALS Comparison of Senior and Alumni Data (Higher numbers indicate greater importance)						
Goal	**Mean Ratings as Seniors 1986**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1996**	**Mean Ratings as Seniors 1987**	**Signifi-cance of Diff.**	**Mean Ratings as Alumni 1997**
Becoming accomplished in the performing arts.	3.38	***	1.06	2.95	***	1.55
Becoming an authority in my field.	2.50		2.25	2.49		2.49
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my field.	2.38		2.13	2.72		2.36
Influencing the political structure.	2.56	*	1.50	2.69	**	1.93
Raising a family.	2.19	**	3.31	1.98	***	3.05
Having administrative responsibility for the work of others.	2.88	**	1.75	3.26	***	1.60
Being very well off financially.	3.13	**	1.81	3.10	***	1.88
Helping others who are in difficulty.	2.13		2.75	1.83	***	2.83
Making a theoretical contribution to science.	3.25	***	1.50	3.26	***	1.14
Writing original works (poems, novels, etc.).	3.31	***	1.44	2.81	***	1.57
Creating artistic works (painting, sculpture, etc.).	3.19	**	1.88	2.76	***	1.79
Being successful in a business of my own.	3.44	***	1.56	3.21	***	1.69
Being involved in programs to clean up the environment.	2.38		2.25	2.57	*	2.14
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	1.88	**	3.25	1.62	***	3.05
Participating in community action programs.	1.50	*	2.19	1.40	***	2.25
Helping to promote racial understanding.	2.19		2.63	1.81	***	2.64
Keeping up to date with political affairs.	2.06		2.31	1.88	***	2.43

Note- Asterisks represent significance according to the following scale: * = p<.05; ** = p<.01; *** = p<.001, in two-tailed tests.

From the comparison of senior data to alumni data, it is again evident that the importance of many of the life goals has significantly changed for alumni since their senior year in college. The changes in the life goals for both groups almost identically mirror the changes from the first year to the time of the alumni survey, indicating that most of the changes in life goals take place after graduation.

Tables 6c and 6d examine the importance of these life goals for the entire alumni sample from both years (as opposed to just the respondents for whom we could match first year and senior data). Table 6c looks at all the respondents for 1996 and Table 6d looks at the 1997 group.

Table 6c

Importance of Various Life Goals Entire 1996 Alumni Sample				
Goal	**Not Important (%)**	**Somewhat Important (%)**	**Very Important (%)**	**Essential (%)**
Becoming accomplished in the performing arts.	75	21	2	2
Becoming an authority in my field.	16	45	30	9
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my field.	15	54	28	2
Influencing the political structure.	27	49	18	6
Influencing social values.	3	33	48	15
Raising a family.	10	13	21	54
Having administrative responsibility for the work of others.	54	28	15	3
Being very well off financially.	27	55	16	2
Helping others who are in difficulty.	0	34	45	21
Making a theoretical contribution to science.	75	19	5	2
Writing original works (poems, novels, etc.).	48	24	19	6
Creating artistic works (painting, sculpture, etc.).	46	24	13	16
Being successful in a business of my own.	46	34	9	9
Being involved in programs to clean up the environment.	22	49	16	10
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	0	13	31	54
Participating in community action programs.	13	45	31	9
Helping to promote racial understanding.	6	37	28	27
Keeping up to date with political affairs.	6	45	36	12

Table 6d

Importance of Various Life Goals Entire 1997 Alumni Sample				
Goal	**Not Important (%)**	**Somewhat Important (%)**	**Very Important (%)**	**Essential (%)**
Becoming accomplished in the performing arts.	64	26	7	3
Becoming an authority in my field.	10	43	35	10
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my field.	16	37	40	4
Influencing the political structure.	32	47	16	5
Influencing social values.	8	37	39	15
Raising a family.	15	12	28	44
Having administrative responsibility for the work of others.	13	47	36	4
Being very well off financially.	24	49	20	7
Helping others who are in difficulty.	0	31	47	21
Making a theoretical contribution to science.	74	17	7	1
Writing original works (poems, novels, etc.).	49	29	16	5
Creating artistic works (painting, sculpture, etc.).	41	28	21	7
Being successful in a business of my own.	48	30	12	9
Being involved in programs to clean up the environment.	12	55	23	9
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	2	18	40	38
Participating in community action programs.	5	51	34	9
Helping to promote racial understanding.	5	31	48	16
Keeping up to date with political affairs.	4	41	30	24

Tables 6c and 6d show that both groups view raising a family and developing a meaningful life philosophy as very important life goals. The 1997 group also views keeping up to date with politics to be important, more so than the 1996 group. Goals that are not important to the groups include the artistic goals, making contributions to science, and becoming successful in one's own business. The 1996 group also placed less importance on having administrative responsibility than the 1997 group.

Paired with the comparative findings outlined previously, these findings suggest that many of these Earlham alumni's values are likely to change dramatically after graduation. This finding differs greatly from years past, where most data suggest that values are held relatively constant from the time students are freshmen to when they are ten year alumni.

This report provides a limited glimpse into two groups of Earlham alumni – the classes of 1896 and 1987. The overall findings are somewhat consistent with previous data, though differs significantly in other areas. However, the data suggest that Earlham students are distinctive in their attitudes, values and behavioral traits when they arrive on campus. Moreover, these alumni tend to be satisfied with their Earlham experience. The developmental outcomes found in this study are largely compatible with Earlham's mission and goals. While the data does not allow us to draw clear causal conclusions, they proved support for the claim that Earlham does affect its students profoundly, and that alumni remain consistent in many of the attitudes and behaviors they learned while at Earlham College.