

Alumni Survey – Class of 1999

Office of Institutional Research

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INTRODUCTION

In February, 2004, the HEDS alumni survey was sent to the Class of 1999. (See [Appendix A](#)). The Alumni Development Office provided mailing addresses for 155 of the 169 graduates. We received responses from 77 of these alumni (24 males and 51 females) resulting in a response rate of 50%.

This survey was also utilized by some of our peer institutions to survey their graduates from the Classes of 1998 and 1999. HEDS prepared a report comparing Earlham to a Peer Group. (See [Appendix B](#) for a list of the institutions in the Peer Group.)

RESULTS

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Although all the Earlham respondents indicated they were white (non-hispanic), five of them gave multiple responses for the ethnicity question. More than half of them (55.3%) were single and almost all (98.7%) had no children. Table 1 shows the majors of the Earlham respondents.

Table 1

Undergraduate Majors

Social Sciences	28.6%
Life Sciences	18.2%
Humanities	16.9%
Psychology	10.4%
Arts and Music	10.4%
Other Non-Science Fields	9.1%
Physical Sciences	5.2%
Math/Computer Sciences	3.9%
Business/Management	1.3%

The majority (64.5%) of these EC alumni were employed full time immediately after graduation. This compares to 66% of the alumni from our peer institutions. The most popular occupation the year following graduation from Earlham was in some type of education (20.9%). This included teaching preschool, elementary school, secondary school, college, research or teaching assistant, or other teacher or instructor positions. Another 15% were working in a managerial or sales position, and 9% were in social work. Currently (5-6 years after graduation) there remain 23.5% of the Earlham alumni of the Class of 1999 working in the field of education with 11.8% in managerial and management related occupations, 11.8% are writers, artists, entertainers or athletes, 4.4% as scientists and mathematicians, 3% in health related occupations, and 2.9% are in administrative support positions. The largest percentage (20.3%) of the alumni from our peer institutions are also currently working as educators. Closely second, 18% are in management related occupations, 7.7% in legal related occupations, 7% in health occupations and 5.8% are writers, artists, entertainers or athletes. Surprisingly, a greater percentage of alumni from Earlham are currently employed in technician occupations (11.8%) than are alumni from our peer group (3.3%).

Eighty-eight percent of the Earlham respondents from the Class of 1999 indicated that their major was indirectly or directly related to their career. Eighty-two percent of the respondents from peer institutions indicated the same.

A small percentage (14.5%) of the EC alum respondents were in graduate school full time immediately after graduation compared to 19.4% of alumni from our peer institutions. However, 33.8% of the Earlham alumni are currently (5 and 6 years after graduation) full time graduate school students and 8.1% are part time graduate students. This compares to 23.7% of the alumni from our peer institutions currently in graduate school full time and 10% are part time graduate students. Most of the Earlham alumni respondents from the Class of 1999 (60.8%) are currently employed full time while 21.6% are employed part time. A higher percentage (71.4%) of the alumni from peer

institutions are currently employed full time than Earlham alumni, and 13% are employed part time.

Ultimately, 34.3% of the Earlham Class of 1999 would prefer to be in the field of education compared to 22.2% of the alumni from our peer institutions. The second most popular occupation listed by 12.9% of Earlham graduates as the career they would ultimately like to have is a writer, artist, entertainer, or athlete. Other occupations listed as ultimate goals for the Earlham grads included becoming involved in a legal related occupation (10%), health diagnosing and treating occupations (7%), managerial positions (7%), social, recreational or religious work (4.3%), and scientists and mathematicians (4.3%); whereas 22.2% of the alumni from peer institutions were interested in becoming educators, 16.6% ultimately desired managerial and management related occupations, 12.7% aspire to become writers, artists, entertainers or athletes, 12% were interested in health related fields, 9% would like to be involved in a legal related occupation, and 7% wanted to be scientists or mathematicians.

Most of the Earlham alumni (42.1%) from the Class of 1999 estimated their current annual income to be between \$20,000 and \$40,000, and 32.5% of alumni from our peer institutions reported the same. Two percent of the peer group alums are making more than \$120,000 annually, whereas none of the Earlham alums had incomes in that bracket.

The alumni were asked to evaluate their undergraduate education. They indicated the importance in their current activities of various abilities and types of knowledge that may be developed in a bachelor's degree program and then indicated the extent those abilities or types of knowledge were enhanced by their undergraduate experience. Table 2 shows the mean scores for Earlham and our peer group.

Table 2**Evaluation of Undergraduate Education**

Ability/knowledge	Earlham		Peer Group
	Importance in current activities	Extent enhanced by undergraduate experience	Extent enhanced by undergraduate experience
CRITICAL THINKING	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Acquire new skills and knowledge	3.9	3.7	3.6
Think analytically and logically	3.8	3.7	3.6
Formulate creative/original ideas	3.6	3.4	3.4
Academic ability	3.2	3.6	3.5
SKILLS/LEARNING			
Write effectively	3.4	3.7	3.5
Use quantitative tools	3.0	2.9	3.0
Appreciate arts, literature, music, drama	3.1	3.2	3.3
Gain in-depth knowledge of a field	3.6	3.4	3.2
Read or speak a foreign language	2.6	2.8	2.4
SOCIAL/MORAL AWARENESS			
Develop awareness of societal problems	3.4	3.8	3.2
Place current problems in perspective	3.5	3.6	3.1
Understand moral/ethical issues	3.5	3.7	3.2
SELF DEVELOPMENT			
Understand myself	3.7	3.5	3.3
Function independently, w/o supervision	3.9	3.4	3.4
Develop self-esteem	3.5	3.3	3.2
Establish a course of action for goals	3.8	3.3	3.3
Intellectual self-confidence	3.6	3.6	3.4
Develop desire for continued learning	3.6	3.7	3.5
RELATIONSHIP SKILLS			
Lead /supervise tasks/groups of people	3.3	3.3	3.0
Relate well to people of dif. culture/races	3.6	3.3	3.1
Function effectively as member of team	3.6	3.4	3.2
Communicate well orally	3.7	3.4	3.2
Understand others	3.8	3.5	3.3
UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY			
Understanding the process of science	2.6	3.0	2.8
Use technology	3.3	2.8	2.7

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

Using the perspective gained since they graduated, the alumni from the Class of 1999 was asked how satisfied they are with various services or aspects of Earlham. Table 3 shows their degree of satisfaction compared with alumni from peer institutions.

Table 3

Satisfaction with College Experiences

College Experiences	Earlham	Peer Group
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Academic advising	3.2	3.1
Contact with faculty	3.8	3.6
Quality of teaching	3.9	3.7
Courses in major field	3.4	3.4
Courses outside major field	3.5	3.4
Independent study/research	3.5	3.5
CAMPUS SERVICES AND FACILITIES		
Career services	2.8	2.6
Financial services	3.3	3.2
Library resources	3.6	3.3
Recreation/athletics	3.1	3.2
Residential life	3.3	3.4
CAMPUS CLIMATE		
Student voice in policies	3.5	3.0
Campus safety	3.7	3.4
Sense of belonging	3.7	3.4
Ethnic/racial diversity	2.8	2.8
Social life on campus	3.3	3.2

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

Table 4 shows to what extent their undergraduate experience fulfilled their original expectations in various areas.

Table 4
Expectations

Expectations	Earlham	Peer Group
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Enhance your intellectual growth	3.9	3.7
Foster your personal growth	3.7	3.6
Promote your ability to form relationships	3.6	3.4
Acquire in-depth knowledge in a particular field	3.4	3.3
Develop competence in career relevant skills	2.9	2.9

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

Seventy-eight percent of the Class of 1999 was very satisfied with their overall undergraduate education compared to 64% of the alumni from our peer group. Eight-one percent of the Earlham alumni respondents indicated that they definitely would encourage others to attend Earlham. Sixty-four percent of our peer group alumni indicated the same.

The alumni were asked to evaluate their level of involvement in various activities while an undergraduate and then evaluate the contribution of each activity to their personal or professional life after graduation. Table 5 shows the mean scores for Earlham and our peer group.

Table 5**Contribution of Activities to Development**

Activities	Earlham		Peer Group
	Level of Involvement	Contribution to your development	Contribution to your development
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Student or campus government	1.4	1.6	1.8
Intercollegiate athletics	1.8	1.8	2.0
Intramural sports	1.6	1.5	1.7
Student publications	1.6	1.7	1.7
Performing arts/music	2.5	2.7	2.2
Political organization or club	2.2	2.4	2.0
Community service	2.6	2.6	2.6
Fraternity/sorority	1.0	1.0	2.0
Religious groups	1.8	2.2	1.4
ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES			
Internships	2.2	2.6	2.6
Study abroad	3.2	3.4	2.8
Work on faculty research	1.8	2.2	1.7
Independent study	2.3	2.7	2.5
EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES			
On-campus employment	2.7	2.6	2.6
Off-campus employment	1.6	1.6	1.6

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

Table 6 shows to what extent these graduates felt their undergraduate experience prepared them for various post-graduation activities.

Table 6

Level of Preparedness for Post-graduation Activities

Activities	Earlham	Peer Group
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Post-baccalaureate education	3.5	3.2
Interpersonal relationships	3.4	3.0
Current career	3.3	3.1
Social and civic involvement	3.3	2.9

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 alma mater. Table 7 shows the degree of involvement of Earlham alumni compared to that of the alumni from our peer institutions.

Table 7

Involvement with Alma Mater

Activity	Earlham	Peer Group
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Maintained contact with other alumni	3.7	3.5
Read campus publications	3.3	3.3
Visited the institution's Web site	2.9	2.8
Maintained contact with faculty members	2.6	2.2
Visited campus for any purpose	2.2	2.3
Contributed to or solicited for the annual fund	1.7	2.4
Maintained contact with administrators	1.5	1.4
Attended alumni functions on campus	1.5	1.6
Attended alumni functions off campus	1.3	1.6
Attended alma mater sporting events	1.2	1.4
Served as an alumni admissions volunteer	1.1	1.2
Participated in an alumni community svc. program	1.1	1.0
Participated in a career advisory program	1.1	1.2
Participated in alumni continuing education prog.	1.0	1.0

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

Eight-five percent of the respondents from the Class of 1999 indicated that they strongly or very strongly identified with their alma mater compared to 66% of the alumni from our peer institutions.

To what extent have the alumni voluntarily participated in organizations since graduation? Table 8 gives this information.

Table 8

Involvement in Organizations

Organization	Earlham	Peer Group
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Professional	2.2	2.4
Cultural/Arts	2.4	2.1
Civic/Community	2.3	2.2
Recreational (e.g., sports club)	2.0	2.2
Religious	1.8	1.7
Political	1.9	1.6
Educational Service (e.g., PTA)	1.5	1.4
Youth (e.g. little league, scouting)	1.4	1.5
Service (e.g. Rotary, Kiwanis)	1.2	1.3

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

Of the 36 Earlham alumni from the Class of 1999 who are currently pursuing further education, 19.4% are working toward a master's degree in education. Another 16.7% are working toward a professional degree in law and 11% are working on master's degrees in Humanities and Arts. This is somewhat similar to alumni from our peer institutions where 13.8% of their alumni are working toward master's degrees in education. However, the peer institutions' alums differ from Earlham's in that 12.3% are working toward master's degrees in business. Of the 49 Earlham alumni who indicated they have plans in the future to obtain higher degrees, 12.2% indicated a desire for a doctoral degree in education and 10.2% have plans to pursue a master's degree in education. Additionally, 10.2% of the alumni respondents from Earlham hope to obtain a doctoral degree in the Social Sciences, and 8.2% hope to obtain a master's degree in Humanities or Arts. Alumni from the peer group institutions are more interested in business with 15.6% indicating an interest in pursuing an MBA in the future. An additional 13% of these peer group alumni hope to attain a professional law degree and 12% hope to obtain a master's degree in Humanities or Arts.

Most of the Earlham respondents (81.8%) were recipients of financial aid while at Earlham. This figure is compared to 78.1% of the respondents at peer institutions who were recipients of financial aid. The majority of these alumni (71.4%) took out loans for their undergraduate study. Table 9 shows the effect of these educational loans

Table 9

Effect of Undergraduate Loans

Effect	Earlham	Peer Group
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Allowed me to get a degree at an otherwise unaffordable institution	2.4	2.4
Focused job search on higher paying fields	1.4	1.5
Postponed or canceled post-baccalaureate education	1.3	1.4

Scale: 3=To a great extent 2=Somewhat 1=Not at All

We chose to add supplemental questions to this survey. These questions are unique to Earlham and therefore we did not receive comparison data for other colleges.

The Class of 1999 was given a list of general education goals, and asked to rate the degree to which Earlham has helped them develop those competencies. The following table shows the mean scores for these items.

Table 10

Development of General Education Competencies

	<i>Mean score</i>
Proficiency in a non-native language	2.8
Awareness of one's self as a creator of art	2.4
Understanding of distinctive disciplinary frameworks	2.4
Awareness of one's self as a biological organism	2.4
Understanding of the methods and knowledge of science	2.4
Appreciation of artistic works	2.3
Global and cross-cultural knowledge	1.9
Personal creativity and confidence in one's own ideas	1.9
Understanding of interdisciplinary approaches	1.9
Skills in group and cooperative learning	1.9
Ability to think about problems using different disciplines	1.9
Skills in gathering and evaluating information from diverse sources	1.8
Awareness of one's self as a moral person	1.7
Awareness of one's self as a political and social being	1.7
In your experience, to what extent has Earlham fulfilled its liberal arts mission?	1.7
Ability to interpret works, ideas, or cultures from different perspectives	1.7
Communication Skills-written and oral	1.7
A desire and the skills to be a lifelong learner	1.7
A sense of the responsibility that comes with knowledge	1.6

Scale: 1=greatly 2=moderately 3=somewhat 4=slightly 5=not at all

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