

What Can You Do with an Undergraduate Degree in Psychology?

Psychology Department: Alumni Survey

Description of Project

We developed a survey about undergraduate alumni's employment experiences.

500 surveys were mailed. Response rate was 23%.

Data reflect responses of 65 alumni who graduated between 1998—2004.

Respondents' ages ranged from 20—47 (md. 23)

Table 1

Most Frequent Job Categories	%
Mental Health / Counseling: Mental health associate / Social services / Case management / Advocacy / Community services coordinator	43
Research / Marketing / Data Analyses: Research assistant / Marketing director	11
Clerical: Administrative assistant	11
Business: Manager / Executive / Administrator / Business owner / Investments coordinator	9
Education: Preschool teacher / Educator young adults / Teacher (other)	9
Human Resources: Personnel / Training / Labor-relation specialists / HR Associate	6

Educational Objective:

Undergraduate Career Planning and Development:

Students should emerge from the major with realistic ideas about how to implement their psychological knowledge, skills, and values in occupational pursuits in a variety of settings.

Results

Jobs. Table 1 shows the most frequent job categories. Table 2 shows skills respondents report using on the job. Table 3 shows skills respondents report needing more of.

At the time of the survey, 39% of the respondents were still in the first job they got after college, and 31% who changed jobs did so because they received an offer for a higher position and/or higher pay elsewhere.

Salary & Job Satisfaction. For respondents who were working full time (89%) the salaries ranged from \$16,000 – \$40,000 per year (Md. \$24,000). Most respondents reported being very satisfied (50%) or somewhat satisfied (44%) with their jobs. Only 6% reported being dissatisfied.

Use of Results

Faculty, especially advisors, use these results to better inform students about what types of jobs are available for Psychology majors at the B.S. level. Students are encouraged to take PSY 358 (a course that prepares students for future careers) and to complete Co-op jobs. Many respondents indicated that those were useful activities.

Raising Awareness of Options

To raise students' awareness, faculty created posters to display in the Cammack building. The poster outlines the types of jobs available to students with BS in Psychology, and advertises the PSY 358 course mentioned above.

Table 2

<u>Skills used on the job</u>	%
How to think critically about issues / problem solving	90
Understanding and relating to a variety of different people	89
Presenting information to others	76
Interviewing skills	75
Behavior modification	62
Therapy / counseling skills	57
Analyzing data	52
Understanding / using research	50
Conducting research	40

Table 3

<u>Information/Skill Needed</u>	%
Make PSY 358 mandatory: More information about jobs / Career guidance	16
Therapy skills: Interviewing / Discussing disabilities with clients / Assessments / Behavior modification / Substance abuse issues	15
Make Co-op mandatory: More hands-on experience / Networking	12
Emphasize the importance of graduate degrees	10
Computer skills	5