

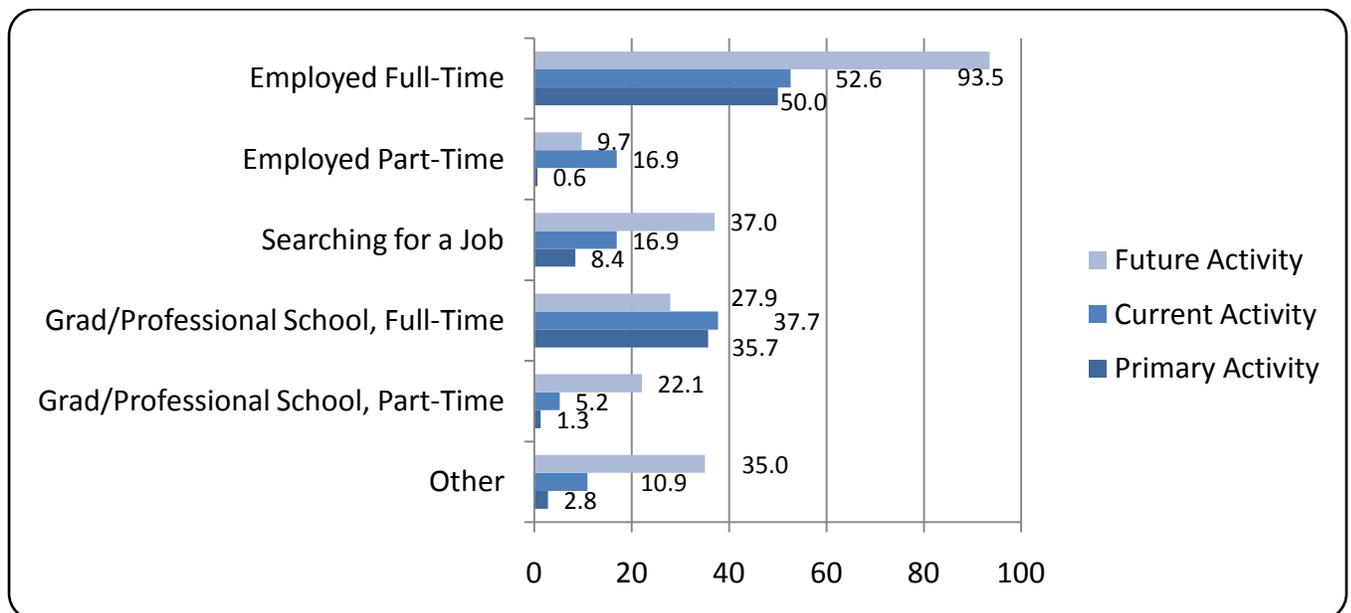
BRIEF: Recent Alumni: Current Activities and Perceptions of UB

In fall 2009, staff from several university offices, including Alumni Relations, Student Affairs, and Career Services, collaborated with staff in the Office of Institutional Analysis to develop questions for a one-year-out survey of university alumni. A link to the survey was e-mailed by staff in Alumni Relations to individuals receiving an undergraduate degree in September, 2007, February, 2008, or June, 2008. This brief presents the results of that survey.

Survey Response and Representation

Of the alumni who received an e-mail invitation, 154 submitted responses. Most of the alumni who responded (76.0%) received their degrees in June, 2008. In contrast to most on-campus surveys, a larger proportion of males than females submitted responses to this survey (53.9% versus 44.8%). Most (93.5%) of the students were either U.S. citizens or permanent residents when they attended UB. In addition, respondents represented seven of the nine academic units offering undergraduate degrees: Architecture and Planning (7), Arts and Sciences (69), Engineering and Applied Sciences (30), Management (37), Medicine and Biological Sciences (4), Nursing (2), and Public Health and Health Professions (4). Only the schools of Pharmacy and Social Work were not represented among the respondents. Because the number of respondents from most of these areas is quite small, results are presented for the full group only and not separated out by academic unit or major program.

Figure 1. Current and Future Vocational Activities of Recent Alumni



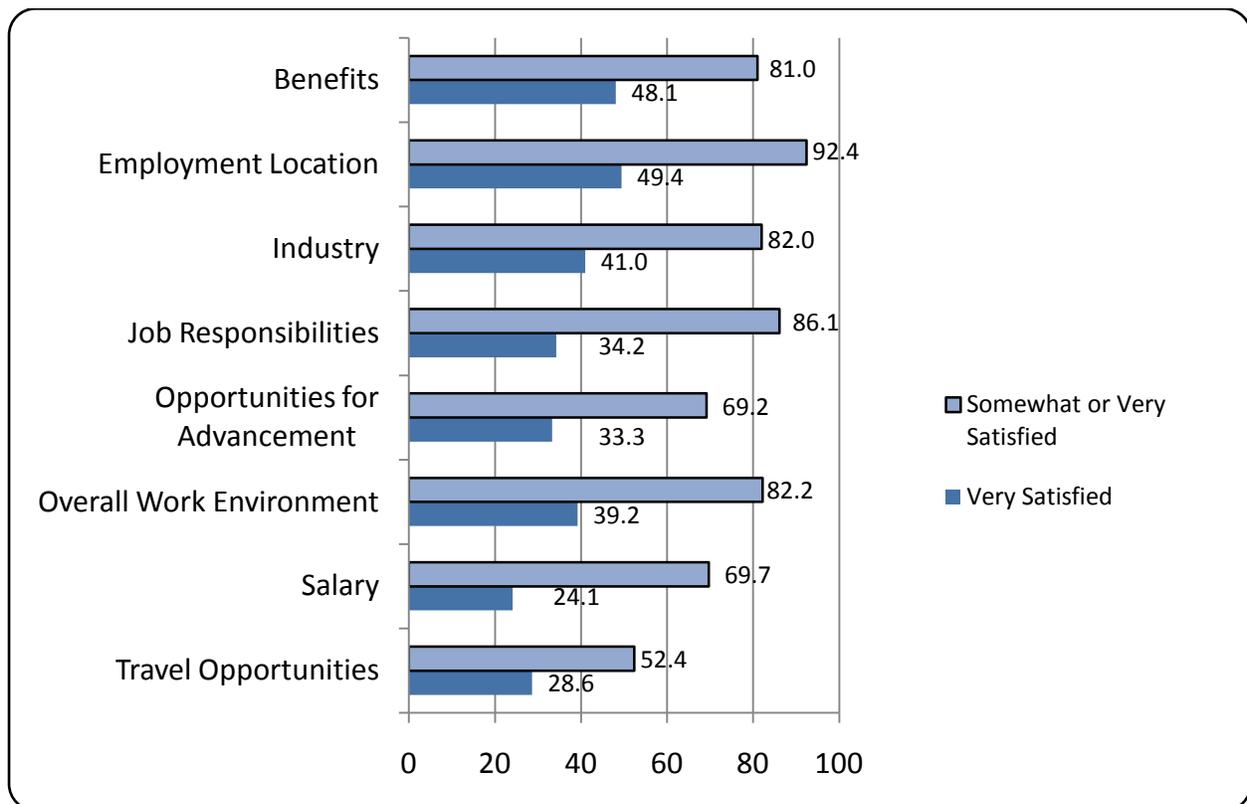
Current and Future Vocational Activities

Respondents were asked to select from a list all of the vocational activities in which they are currently engaged and to select the one they consider to be their primary activity. They were also to select from the same list those activities in which they plan to engage in the next five years. As shown in Figure 1, just over half of the respondents (52.6%) are currently working full-time, and exactly half indicate that this is their primary activity. In the present economy, it is encouraging that fewer than twenty percent are currently searching for a job. Nearly all (93.5%) plan to be working full-time within the next five years. More than 40.0% of respondents (42.9%) are currently enrolled in graduate or professional school on a full- or part-time basis.

Employment

The respondents who are currently employed (69.5%) were asked a series of follow-up questions about their employer, their job duties, and their satisfaction with their current position. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (73.4%) are employed by private companies, and nearly half (46.9%) are employed by large companies of 500 employees or more. Just over three-quarters (76.5%) were hired within six months after degree conferral, with 60.0% indicating that the job search was 3 months or less. Just under two-thirds of respondents believe that their current job duties are very related to their degree program (64.2%). However, 12.3% indicate that the current position is not at all related to their degree program. Most respondents (88.6%) agree that UB prepared them for this position.

Figure 2. Satisfaction with Various Aspects of Current Position



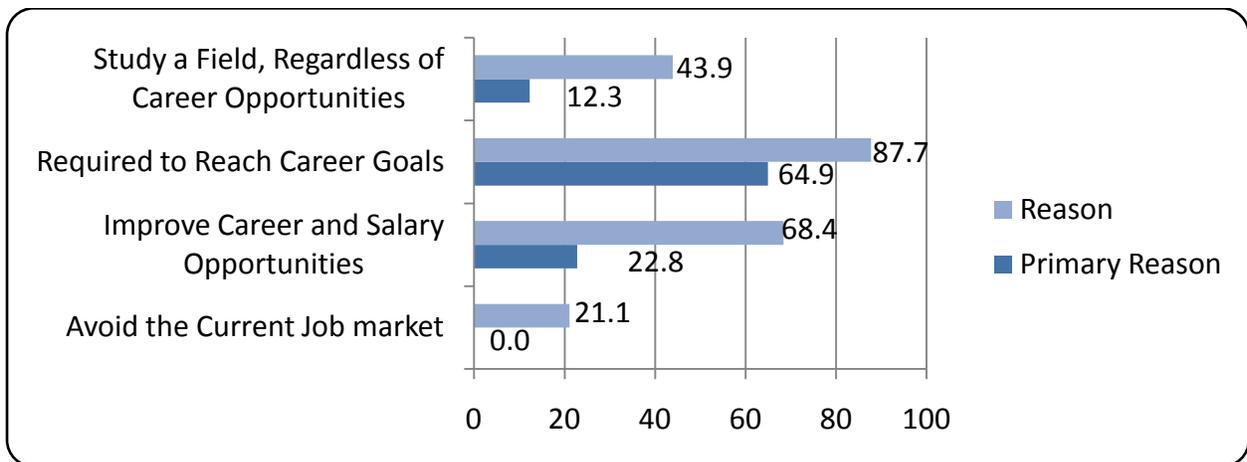
Respondents were asked to rate their degree of satisfaction with various aspects of their position (shown in Figure 2). When including all of those respondents who indicate that they are at least somewhat satisfied, the areas of greatest satisfaction are benefits (81.0%), employment location (92.4%), the industry itself (82.0%), job responsibilities (86.1), and overall work environment (82.2%). Opportunities for advancement, salary and travel opportunities are rated less highly. When only those who rate themselves as very satisfied are considered, the strongest areas of satisfaction are benefits and employment location, with nearly 50.0% of working students indicating that they are very satisfied in each of these areas. Only about a third of working students are very satisfied with job responsibilities (34.2%) and opportunities for advancement (33.3), while only 24.1% indicate they are very satisfied with salary. These results are not surprising since most respondents are in their first entry-level position.

Graduate and Professional School

Those students currently enrolled in graduate or professional school (42.9%) were also asked a series of follow-up questions. A majority of students who indicate that they are in graduate or professional school are in master’s programs (70.2%), with the second largest group of students enrolled in Ph.D. programs (17.5%). Of those who are in professional programs, 10.5% are working toward law degrees, 1.8% are working toward an M.D. degree, and 5.3% are working toward other medical degrees, such as D.D.S., Pharm.D., etc. Most students (91.2%) indicate that their undergraduate program at UB is somewhat or very related to their graduate/profession program, with 49.1% indicating that the undergraduate program is very related. In addition, 94.8% of these respondents believe that UB prepared them adequately to succeed in their graduate program.

Figure 3 displays respondents’ reasons for pursuing a graduate or professional degree. The primary reason cited is that the degree is required in order to reach career goals (64.9%). It is encouraging to note that no one indicated as the primary reason that they enrolled in graduate/professional school to avoid the current job market.

Figure 3. Reasons for Pursuing a Graduate/Professional Degree



Activities at UB

Table 1 displays the proportion of respondents engaging in a variety of activities while they were enrolled at UB. The students who responded to the present survey were not likely to have worked full-time, while around a third worked part-time. Nearly 75.0% were involved in student clubs and organizations and nearly half were involved in volunteer or community service activities. Almost a third of the students participated in an internship or co-op while they were enrolled, and 7 respondents engaged in both for-credit and not-for-credit internships.

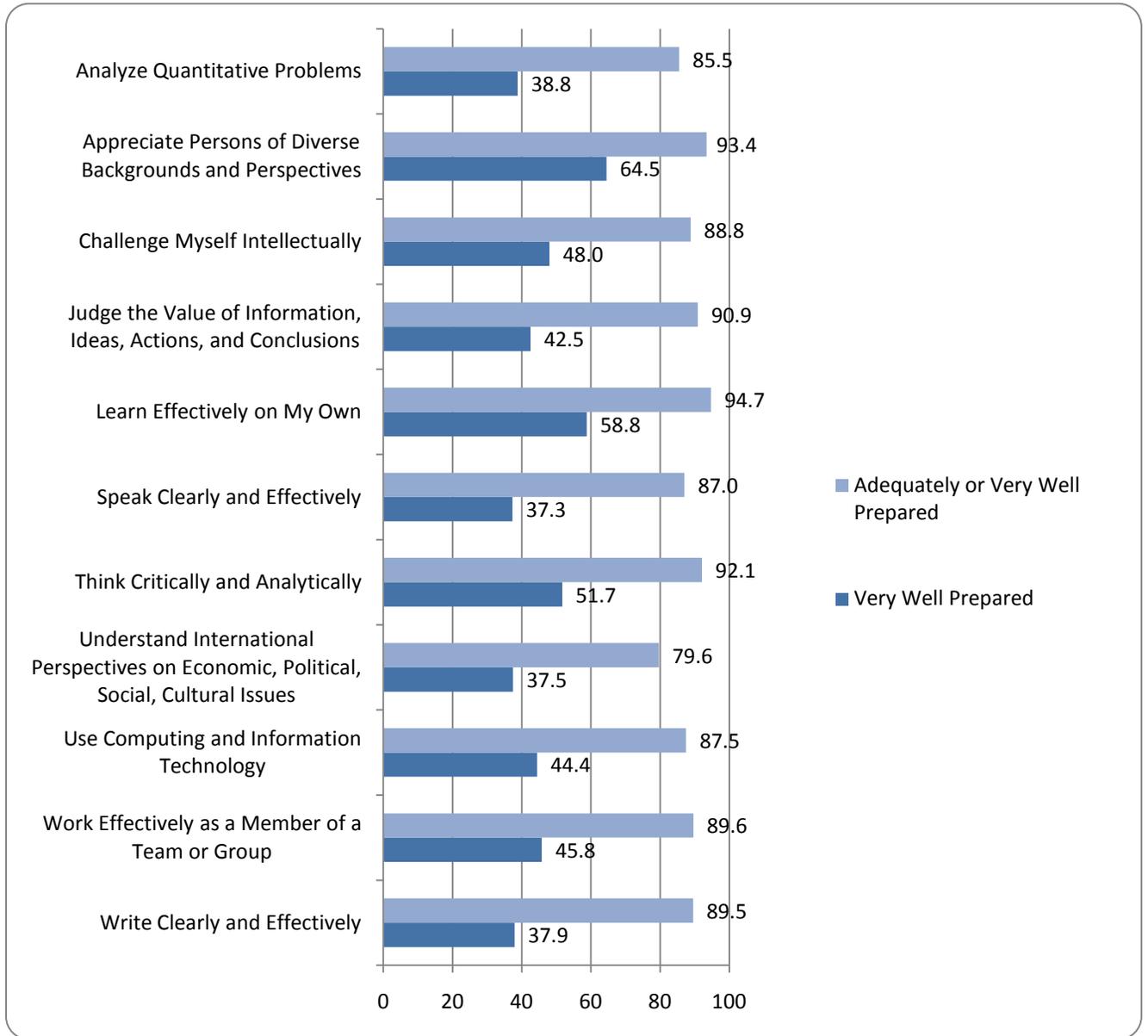
Table 1. Undergraduate Activities of Survey Respondents

Activity	Percent Involved
Campus-Wide Social Activities and Events	41.6
Employment, Full-Time, Off-Campus	2.0
Employment, Full-Time, On-Campus	1.0
Employment, Part-Time, Off-Campus	45.0
Employment, Part-Time, On-Campus	34.2
Greek Letter Organizations	18.8
Intercollegiate Athletics	10.7
Internships or Co-Ops for Credit	32.2
Internships not for Credit	30.9
Intramural Athletics	30.2
Peer Education Programs	17.4
Student Clubs and Organizations	72.5
Student Government	6.7
Volunteer or Community Service Activities	54.4
Work Study	14.8

Perceived Quality of UB

Most of the respondents (88.8%) indicate that they would probably or definitely choose to attend UB again. The degree to which they feel that UB prepared them adequately or very well for a variety of job and life tasks is displayed in Figure 5. Most respondents (at least 80.0% or higher) indicate that they have been prepared adequately or very well for the eight tasks assessed, with over 90.0% of respondents indicating that UB has at least prepared them adequately well to appreciate persons of diverse backgrounds and perspectives, judge the value of information, ideas, actions, and conclusions, learn effectively on their own, and think critically and analytically. The area where students feel least prepared is in understanding international perspectives on a variety of issues. The proportion of respondents indicating that they have been *very well* prepared in each of these areas ranges roughly between 40.0 and 65.0% , with appreciate persons of diverse backgrounds and perspectives as the area most frequently cited as being well prepared.

Figure 5. Skills Preparation at UB



Conclusions

Because of the small number of students responding to this survey, it is difficult to make broad conclusions about the impact of the undergraduate experience at UB on vocational activities of recent alumni. Although the majority of these respondents indicate that UB prepared them at least adequately well for their current position and/or graduate/professional school, this administration of the survey should be considered a trial run, and a creative marketing plan should be developed in order to market the survey to alumni and identify incentives that will encourage greater response.