# Chapter VIII: ALUMNI SURVEY

*Who takes it?* University alumni five and ten years after graduation.

*When is it administered?* February.

*What office administers it?* Assessment & Testing Office.

*Who originates the survey?* ACT and Truman State University.

*When are the results typically available?* Late summer.

# What type of information is sought?

The Alumni Survey first asks demographic information on the former students. The alumni are also asked when they graduated and what their highest planned degree is. Other information is sought about why Truman was selected and how they financed their college education. Alumni are then asked to rate various aspects of their University and curricular experience and their satisfaction with different services on campus; how their major affected their knowledge, abilities, and attitudes; how their experience affected their ability to continue their education (if they did) and to select and carry out their employment; whether they are willing to have their employer be sent a survey; and whether they wish to add any additional comments.

*From whom are the results available?* Assessment and Testing Office in Violette Hall 1130.

## To whom are the results regularly distributed?

University averages are sent to the President, Provost, Deans, Assessment Committee Chair, selected administrators, and to the campus community through this *Almanac*.

Are the results available by college/school or discipline? Yes, if requested.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities? No.

# **TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY** FY08 ALUMNI SURVEY FY 1997 AND FY 2002 GRADUATES **SUMMARY OF RESPONSES**

# **ALUMNI SURVEY SUMMARY**

The fiscal year 2008 Alumni Survey was mailed to alumni who graduated in fiscal year 1997 or 2002 with either a baccalaureate or graduate degree from Truman. A total of 2,504 surveys were mailed. 368 or 14.7% of the surveys were completed, so the results of this survey should be viewed with this response rate in mind. A complete SPSS report of the survey is available from the Assessment & Testing Office in Violette Hall 1130. This report is 55 pages in length and may be shared electronically in an SPSS file if desired.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The survey was completed by alumni, consisting of 30.2% males and 69.8% females, predominately white, non-Hispanics between the ages of 24 and 34. Among respondents 34.9% of the alumni currently hold baccalaureate degrees while 50.1% hold master's degrees and 13.5% hold doctoral or professional degrees. During their years at Truman, 68.1% were classified as in-state and 31.0% were classified as out-of-state residents. Only 8.2% of the respondents transferred to Truman from another college or university. 62.3% attended Truman for four years or less while 25.3% attended for five years and 12.4% attended for 6 or more years. The primary and secondary reasons why alumni completed their degree at Truman were the institution's academic reputation and its cost/overall affordability respectively. 50% of the alumni now reside in the state of Missouri and 20.2% reside in a bordering state.

### COLLEGE EXPERIENCES

Of the 368 alumni, 82.7% would probably or definitely choose to attend Truman again if they could start college over. Regarding their major 64.3% would probably or definitely choose to graduate with the same major, while 20.9% would probably or definitely not choose the same major. Attitudes toward Truman were positive as 88.4% felt that their college education prepared them well for their career and 91.2% felt that it prepared them well for post-baccalaureate study. Relative to other institutions, over 80.8% felt that their academic preparation was better than their current work colleagues' and 73.6% felt it was better than the students' in their post-baccalaureate educational programs. 91.6% of the alumni believe that they understand the purpose of liberal arts and sciences, and 95.6% believe that they were able to perform as well or better than their colleagues who may have earned degrees with non-liberal arts backgrounds and heavy discipline emphasis.

When asked to rate Truman's alumni association's programs and services, alumni rated the publications, homecoming activities/reunions, fund raising programs, and alumni chapter activities as at least fair and working towards good. Alumni were also asked how frequently they participated in a variety of activities during the past five years. At some point, 94.2% have read the <u>Truman Review</u>; 85.0% have visited Truman's website, 61.2% have visited campus, 50.8% contributed to or solicited for the annual fund, and 50.1% have read the *Index*. However, 91.6% have never attended an alumni function on campus, 82.7% have never attended an alumni function off campus, and 90.5% have never attended an alumni chapter-related event as a member. As might be expected from the lack of attendance, 96.1% have never served on an

alumni-related committee, 83.8% have never attended sporting events, and 49.2% have never contributed to or solicited for the annual fund. However 94.5% have maintained some contact with other alumni, 57.3% with faculty members, and 27.7% with administrators or staff.

In general, alumni felt that the Liberal Studies Program or co-curriculum education/experiences at Truman were adequate. In particular, the alumni felt that Truman was more than adequate with respect to growing socially and personally from co-curricular experiences, using writing as a mode of learning, growing intellectually from co-curricular experiences, growing socially and personally from on-campus work, growing socially and personally through on-campus residential experiences, developing study and time management skills, and integrating approaches or methods from two or more disciplines. The area where alumni felt Truman was a little less than adequate was recognizing the unethical use of technology including copyright and privacy issues.

Alumni were also asked how satisfied they were with the experiences and services at Truman. Overall, alumni seem to be more than satisfied with most services/experiences on campus. In particular, alumni appear to be really satisfied with faculty enthusiasm for classes in the major, the friendliness of campus, the accessibility of instructors in their respective majors, their sense of belonging to the campus, overall impression of courses in the major, the overall quality of instruction in the major, opportunities to be involved in student life and co-curricular activities, and intellectual climate on the campus. Alumni were less than satisfied, however, with the helpfulness of the Career Center in assisting them with career plans, the academic advising by residence hall/RCP advisors, the services available at the Career Center, and the helpfulness of faculty assisting them with career plans.

The alumni indicated that their major more than adequately prepared them with respect to their attitude of believing that learning is a life-long process, their ability to think critically, understanding multiple perspectives, finding information by interpreting and applying findings, and ability to apply knowledge in defining problems and solving them, and knowledge of the subject matter in their major. The alumni were asked how adequately their Truman experience provided them with knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in a variety of areas. Alumni indicated that they were adequately prepared in all of the areas and especially prepared with respect to thinking critically, performing effectively in their current position, writing effectively, applying concepts from their area of study, getting along with others, and combining knowledge from multiple areas to solve problems.

# CONTINUING EDUCATION

Since graduating from Truman, 65.8% of the alumni responding to the survey indicated that they have attended graduate or professional school. The major reasons cited for continuing their education were to satisfy job/career requirements (24.4%), to increase their earning power/potential for promotion (22.8%), and to prepare for a new occupation (21.2%). Of those continuing their education, 39.7% plan to obtain a masters degree and 42.6% plan to obtain a doctorate or professional degree.

# EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

The alumni were asked to indicate current employment status. The majority of the alumni (73.1%) indicated that they are employed full-time. 4.9% are employed part-time, 4.1% are continuing their education (formal study), 5.5% are employed and continuing their education, 6.0% are not employed outside of the home, and 5.5% are self-employed. When asked from which source they learned about the first full-time job they held after graduating, 15.3% of the alumni learned of the job from a newspaper/trade publication, 13.9% from the internet, 10.2% were recruited by the employer, and 9.9% from the Career Center/Career Expo.

Some alumni noted that finding a job that paid enough, finding the kind of job they wanted, deciding what they wanted to do, knowing how to find job openings, finding a job where s/he wanted to live were slight challenges they faced while obtaining their first job after graduation. Over 40% of the alumni indicated that they obtained a job prior to leaving college, 15% obtained a job in less than one month, and 20.9% within 1 to 3 months. While 10.4% took over 12 months to find their first full-time job. The majority of the alumni have held 1 to 3 full-time jobs since completing their most recent degree from Truman.

47.8% of the alumni indicated that their current occupation is highly related to their major at Truman and 19.9% indicated that their current occupation is not related to their major. Alumni are mostly satisfied with the challenge, location, working conditions, career potential, and benefits of their present job, but are not quite satisfied with their salary and advancement potential.

When asked to indicate the three areas that they would be most interested in financially supporting at Truman if they are able to do so, the top three areas selected were scholarships, their division or major, and where the need was greatest. Almost 46% of the alumni indicated that they would be interested in taking Truman courses offered on the web, and 59.5% indicated that they would like to receive the Truman Newsletter via e-mail. Some are also willing to assist current students as 36.7% marked that they would be willing to serve as a resource for current students seeking career information.



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development. As a graduate of our University, Truman is very interested in receiving your insight and opinions concerning your experiences at Truman. The Alumni Survey has a long history of serving as an indicator of institutional effectiveness, and your completion of it would be extremely helpful to your University. This survey is being sent to all alumni who graduated five or ten years ago to determine how well the University prepared you for your future work and life-long learning needs.

The alumni and their contributions to society as a whole continue to be a true source of pride for our faculty, staff, and students. We greatly appreciate your continued support of the Truman community, and we would greatly appreciate any information that you may wish to provide.

Your participation in this survey is yet another sign of the outstanding alumni that represent this University. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project, and best wishes to you in the future.

Sincerely,

Darbara Mu

Barbara Dixon, President

SECTION I - BACKO	SROUND INFORMATIC	ON .
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in a 16. Rate your academic preparation compared to your current work colleagues and/or as compared to . students in your post-baccalaureate educational program. . ÷. a. Work Colleagues b. Students in Educational Program O Definitely better O Definitely better . O Somewhat better O Somewhat better O No difference O No difference e. O Somewhat worse O Somewhat worse O Definitely worse н. O Definitely worse ÷. O Not applicable O Not applicable ×. ÷. ×. a 17. How well do you believe you understand the purpose of liberal arts and sciences? . iii. н O Very well O Poorly ÷. O Well O Not at all н. O Uncertain ×. a, ii. 18. As you began your further study or full-time employment, did you find that having a degree from ÷. a liberal arts institution was an advantage to you? That is, were you able to perform as well or better than your colleagues who may have earned degrees with non-liberal arts backgrounds and heavy discipline emphasis? O Not as well O Better than O Unable to judge O As well 19. What were your primary and secondary reasons for completing your degree at Truman? Primary reason: Secondary reason: O Size of school ○ Size of school O Size of program ○ Size of program O Social atmosphere O Social atmosphere Type of programs available
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<ul> <li>① ① ② ③ ④ Understanding particular cultures through the study of foreign languages</li> <li>① ③ ④ ④ Growing socially and personally from co-curricular experiences</li> </ul>		
① ② ③ ④ Growing socially and personally from co-curricular experiences	~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Understanding particular cultures through the study of foreign
		Growing socially and personally from co-curricular experiences
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0=Does not apply 1=Very inadequately 2	2=Inadequately 3=Adequately 4=Very adequately
0       1       2       0       4       Think critically         0       1       2       3       4       Get along with ot         0       1       2       3       4       Contribute as a ci         0       1       2       3       4       Contribute as a ci         0       1       2       3       4       Exercise leadershi         0       1       2       3       4       Demonstrate com         0       1       2       3       4       Myrite effectively         0       1       2       3       4       Appreciate divers         0       1       2       3       4       Demonstrate matl         0       1       2       3       4       Detestatat and <th>thers itizen of the community ip puter literacy it effectively sity ormation h and computational ability ig habits of healthy, balanced living d literature mportance of and utilize historical information al value system nd ethical decisions oformation and reasoning an behavior ral influences dge from multiple areas to solve problems</th>	thers itizen of the community ip puter literacy it effectively sity ormation h and computational ability ig habits of healthy, balanced living d literature mportance of and utilize historical information al value system nd ethical decisions oformation and reasoning an behavior ral influences dge from multiple areas to solve problems
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	school since graduating from Truman?
<ul> <li>6. Have you attended graduate or professional s</li> <li>Yes (Please continue with question 27)</li> <li>No (Please skip to Section IV-Employment His</li> </ul>	school since graduating from Truman? story)
<ul> <li>ECTION III - CONTINUING EDUCATIO</li> <li>Have you attended graduate or professional s <ul> <li>Yes (Please continue with question 27)</li> <li>No (Please skip to Section IV-Employment His</li> </ul> </li> <li>7. What is the major reason you continued your <ul> <li>To satisfy job/career requirements</li> <li>To prepare for a new occupation</li> <li>To increase earning power/potential for promot</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	school since graduating from Truman? story) r education? Mark only one.
<ul> <li>6. Have you attended graduate or professional s <ul> <li>Yes (Please continue with question 27)</li> <li>No (Please skip to Section IV-Employment His</li> </ul> </li> <li>7. What is the major reason you continued your <ul> <li>To satisfy job/career requirements</li> <li>To prepare for a new occupation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	school since graduating from Truman? story) r education? Mark only one. O To obtain or maintain a license or certification For general self-improvement O Other, specify:

please move to Section IV.	r study was not taken as a degree-seeking student,
Area of degree study pursued:	
University attended for degree study:	
Degree attained or anticipated:	
Date of receipt of the degree received or anticipated	l:
ECTION IV - EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	
	d to your employment since you graduated from
ruman. <u>Complete only the parts of this section</u>	which apply to you.
20 Which of the following best describes and t	21 Erom which course did you have about the
30. Which of the following best describes what you are currently doing? Mark only one.	31. From which source did you learn about the first full-time job you held after graduating
<ul> <li>○ Employed full-time</li> <li>○ Employed part-time</li> </ul>	from Truman? Mark only one.
<ul> <li>Self-employed (farm or business owner, etc.)</li> </ul>	O University faculty advisor
<ul> <li>Serving in the armed forces</li> <li>Full-time service (Peace Corp, AmeriCorp, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Faculty at the university</li> <li>Parent or relative</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Continuing my education (formal study)</li> </ul>	○ Newspaper/trade publication
<ul> <li>Employed and continuing my education</li> <li>Not amployed outside of the home</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Internet</li> <li>Professional meeting</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Not employed outside of the home</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	O Internship
	O Another student/friend
	<ul> <li>Recruited by employer</li> <li>Public/private employment agency</li> </ul>
	O Other
32. Indicate whether each of the following was a sig	gnificant challenge, slight challenge, or not a
problem in obtaining your first job after gradua	
3=Significant challenge 2=Slight	challenge 1=Not a problem
③ ① ① Deciding what I w	
3     3     2     0     Knowing how to fi     3     2     0     Scheduling intervi	
	ews vita, or letter of introduction
③ ② ① Finding a job that j	paid enough
3 0 Completing job ap	
	vhich I was prepared
(3) (1) Finding a job when	
<ul> <li>③</li> <li>②</li> <li>①</li> <li>①</li> <li>①</li> <li>①</li> <li>①</li> <li>①</li> <li>①</li> <li>Finding the kind o</li> </ul>	
	nation

	<ul> <li>Obtained the job prior to leaving</li> <li>C Less than one month</li> <li>O 1 to 3 months</li> </ul>	college	<ul> <li>4 to 6 months</li> <li>7 to 12 months</li> <li>Over 12 months</li> </ul>		
34.	Indicate the number of different degree from Truman.	full-time job	es you have held si	nce completing	g your most recent
	O One O Two	() Three	○ Four	○ Five or m	ore
35.	How closely related is your curre	ent occupatio	n to your major at	Truman?	
	○ Highly related ○ Moder	ately related	○ Slightly 1	elated C	) Not related
36.	Indicate your satisfaction with th	ne following a	aspects of your pre	esent job:	
	1=Very dissatisfied	2=Dissatisfie	d 3=Satisfied	4=Very satisfied	E
			Challenge Location Salary Benefits Advancement poten Working conditions Career potential	tial	
37.	Please indicate the <u>three</u> areas w Truman if you are able to do so:	hich you wou	ld be <u>most</u> interes	ted in financial	lly supporting at
	<ul> <li>Where the need is greatest</li> <li>Scholarships</li> </ul>	O Loan			
	O Recruitment of students	O Capit O Staff	al support for buildi support/recognition	ngs/renovations	
	<ul> <li>○ Your division or major</li> <li>○ Faculty salaries</li> </ul>	() Athle	tics		
38.	Truman is beginning to offer cou in taking Truman courses throug O Yes O No	rses on the w h this method	eb. As an alumnu 1?	s/alumna, wou	ld you be interested
	If yes, what topics would interes	t you?			
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