

The University of Connecticut

Report on the Alumni Survey - 2001 Graduating Class

Every year since 1979 the Office of Institutional Research has surveyed recent graduates. This survey is one of the few outcome measures the University of Connecticut has for our educational process. While the questionnaire focuses primarily on the academic experience of graduates, it also allows them to report their current activities. During the past twenty years, the survey results have yielded valuable information pertinent to both the graduates' experience at the University and their post-graduate activities.

The present report is an overview of the 2001 responses. It is also available at web site <http://www.oir.uconn.edu/alum01.pdf>. Separate reports will also be generated for each school and for larger departments.

1. Number of Respondents and Response Rates

In Fall 2001, 2,735 questionnaires were sent to graduates who received a bachelor's degree from June 2000 through May of 2001. A follow-up letter was sent to those who did not respond within two months of the initial survey mailing. (There were 2,837 actual degrees conferred, including dual degrees, from July 2000 through June 2001.)

1,134 graduates returned completed questionnaires, for a total response rate of 41%. Over the past several years, the response rate has been in the range of 40% to 45%. Table 1.1 shows the response rate by school for the 2001 survey. The School of Pharmacy has the highest response rate (54%) while Fine Arts has the lowest rate (32%).

Table 1.1: Response Rates, Ranked Within-School/College Percentage

School/College	Number of Graduates	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
Allied Health	78	30	38%
Continuing Studies	230	98	43%
Family Studies	212	98	46%
Engineering	177	62	35%
Education	157	68	43%
Nursing	53	23	43%
Business	456	180	39%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	145	50	34%
Pharmacy	56	30	54%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	1161	459	40%
Fine Arts	112	36	32%

The majority of respondents to the survey are female (65%), as were the majority of all graduates in the 2001 class (57%). The number of female graduates returning the completed surveys was 736 while the number of male graduates returning the completed surveys was 396. Female graduates responded at a higher rate (45%) than males (33%), as has been the case in previous alumni surveys.

Table 1.2 shows the distribution of respondents by age group. Over three-fourths of respondents are in the age category 21-24 years; the same being true for the 2001 graduate (bachelors degree recipients) population. In terms of school or college, Continuing Studies (General Studies majors) has the largest number of respondents (69%) in the age category 35-49 years; within all other schools, the most common age category is 21-24 years.

Table 1.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group (rounded to the nearest decimal)

Age group (years)	Percent Respondents
18 to 20	<1%
21 to 24	79%
25 to 34	13%
35 to 49	6%
Over 50	2%

In terms of ethnic background, the majority of respondents to the survey are white (84%), as were the majority of all graduates of the 2001 class (86%). The percentage of respondents belonging to American minority groups (11%) is similar to the percentage of all 2001 graduates belonging to American minority groups (13%).

In summary, the sample of respondents is fairly representative of the 2001 graduates in terms of gender, age, and ethnicity. Also, the response rates are relatively evenly distributed among the schools and colleges.

2. General Questions

2.1. Freshman Entrance Rate

Overall, 72% of respondents entered UConn as freshmen; 28% entered as transfer students. Table 2.1.1 shows the within-school freshman entrance rates, ranked in descending order.

Table 2.1.1: Freshman Entrance Rate, Ranked Within-School/College Percentages

School/College	Within-School Percentage
Education	88%
Family Studies	84%
Pharmacy	80%
Business	79%
Allied Health	77%
Engineering	76%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	76%
Fine Arts	75%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	66%
Nursing	65%
Continuing Studies	12%

Education has the highest freshman entrance rate (88%), followed by Family Studies (84%). The low freshman entrance rate for Continuing Studies (General Studies majors) is consistent with the nature of the program (junior-senior level program).

2.2. Residence Hall Habitation Rate

Overall, 76% of respondents lived in a residence hall on campus at some point during their time at UConn. Table 2.2.1 shows the residence hall habitation rates for respondents who entered UConn as freshmen and graduated in exactly four years (*four-year respondents*).

Table 2.2.1: Semesters Lived in Residence Halls for Four-Year Respondents

Semesters	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Respondents	36	6	23	19	96	27	80	13	141
Percentage	8%	1%	6%	5%	24%	7%	20%	3%	35%

For the four-year respondents, 35% lived in a residence hall for all eight semesters; 8% did not live in a residence hall at any point. A large group of four-year respondents (24%) lived in a residence hall exactly four semesters.

2.3. Point at which Major Decided

Table 2.3.1 concerns the point at which students decide their major; both overall and within-school/college percentages are given for the time categories.

Table 2.3.1: Point at which Major Decided, Overall and Within-School Percentages

	Before College	As a freshman	As a sophomore	As a junior	As a senior	I don't remember
Agriculture & Natural Resources	44%	8%	14%	24%	6%	4%
Allied Health	50%	13%	23%	7%	0%	7%
Liberal Arts & Science	22%	11%	38%	25%	2%	3%
Business	27%	15%	34%	22%	1%	1%
Education	60%	12%	18%	10%	0%	0%
Engineering	61%	19%	16%	2%	0%	2%
Fine Arts	42%	17%	17%	22%	0%	3%
Family Studies	9%	12%	41%	32%	1%	5%
Continuing Studies	14%	3%	9%	36%	9%	29%
Nursing	50%	14%	18%	14%	0%	5%
Pharmacy	73%	10%	7%	7%	0%	3%
Overall (Total)	30%	12%	29%	22%	2%	5%

Overall, nearly one third of respondents decided their major before entering college; about the same percent of respondents decided their major as sophomores. With the exception of Continuing Studies, almost two-thirds or more respondents within each school or college decided their major before or during their sophomore year. Pharmacy (73%), followed by Engineering (61%), Education (60%), Nursing (50%) and Allied Health (50%), had the highest within-school percent respondents who decided their major before college. One-third or more respondents from Family Studies (41%), Liberal Arts & Sciences (38%) and Business (34%) decided their major during their sophomore year.

2.4. Reasons for Choosing UConn

Respondents were asked their single most important reason for attending UConn. The top three reasons, in terms of percent respondents selecting those reasons, are listed below

Level of tuition and fees (30%)

Location (23%)

Specific programs offered (12%)

Respondents were also asked what they thought, in retrospect, should have been their single most important reason for attending UConn. The top three reasons, in terms of percent respondents selecting those reasons, are listed below.

- Quality of education (43%)
- Variety of Educational programs (15%)
- Specific programs offered (15%)

Compared to the original reasons for selecting UConn, educational programs gain more prominence in students' retrospective reasons for selecting UConn. Charts below shows the 10-year trend of reasons, selected by respondents (originally & in retrospect), for attending UConn.

Chart 2.4.1: Original reason for selecting UConn

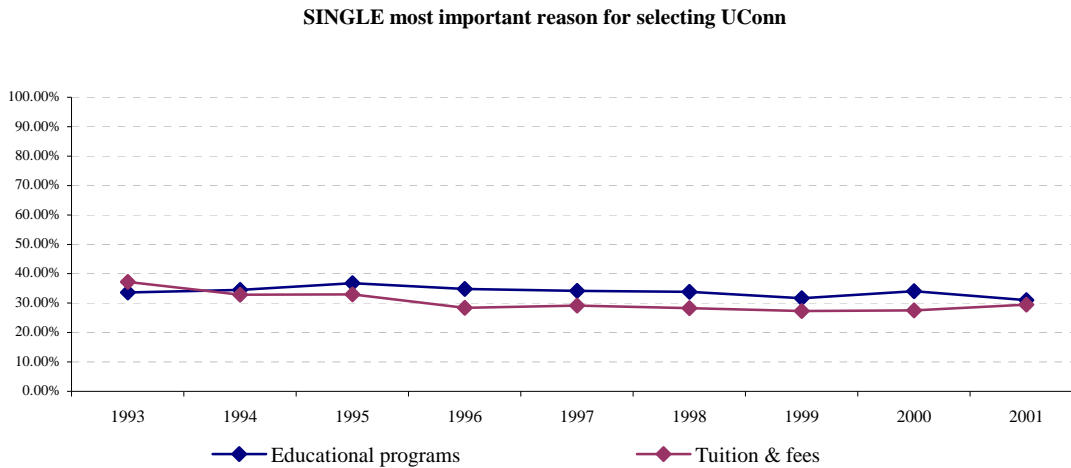
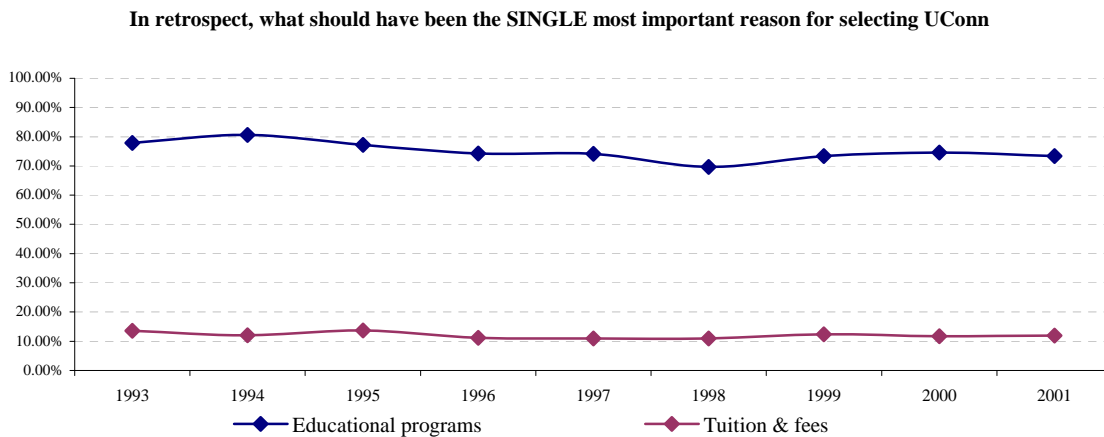


Chart 2.4.2: Retrospective reason for selecting UConn



Note: In the charts above, the categories *Variety of educational programs offered*, *quality of educational programs* and *the specific programs offered* are included in *Educational Programs*.

Tables 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 below show the percentage of respondents by school who chose *Educational programs* and *Tuition & Fees* as the original and retrospective reasons for selecting UConn. The categories *Variety of educational programs offered*, *quality of educational programs* and *the specific programs offered* are collapsed into *Educational Programs*.

Table 2.4.1: **Original** reason for attending UConn (by school or college)

School or college	Educational programs	School or college	Tuition & fees
Pharmacy	75.0%	Liberal Arts & Sciences	35.4%
Allied Health	57.1%	Business	35.0%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	43.2%	Engineering	31.6%
Continuing Studies	41.0%	Agriculture & Natural Resources	27.3%
Education	37.5%	Family Studies	26.7%
Nursing	31.8%	Education	26.6%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	26.5%	Fine Arts	25.0%
Engineering	26.3%	Allied Health	21.4%
Family Studies	25.6%	Nursing	18.2%
Business	25.2%	Pharmacy	17.9%
Fine Arts	25.0%	Continuing Studies	6.0%

Table 2.4.2: **Retrospective** Reason for Attending UConn (by school or college)

School or college	Educational programs	School or college	Tuition & fees
Education	82.1%	Engineering	18.3%
Allied Health	80.0%	Pharmacy	17.2%
Pharmacy	79.3%	Liberal Arts & Sciences	15.0%
Family Studies	77.2%	Fine Arts	14.3%
Business	75.1%	Agriculture & Natural Resources	12.8%
Nursing	72.7%	Business	12.1%
Continuing Studies	72.5%	Nursing	9.1%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	72.3%	Family Studies	7.6%
Fine Arts	71.4%	Education	6.0%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	71.0%	Continuing Studies	3.3%
Engineering	68.3%	Allied Health	0.0%

For each school, percentage of respondents retrospectively selecting Educational programs as the reason for attending UConn is much higher than those who prospectively (originally) selected Educational programs as a reason for attending UConn.

In contrast, for each school except Family Studies, percentage of respondents retrospectively selecting Tuition & fees as the reason for attending UConn is lower than those who prospectively (originally) selected Tuition & fees as the reason for attending UConn.

3. Evaluation of Academic Experience

3.1. Helpfulness of UConn

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of 21 potential benefits of a college education and the extent to which they believed UConn helped to provide each benefit. Table 3.1.1 gives rating averages and ranks for, both, benefit importance and perceived helpfulness of UConn. Relative helpfulness (*average perceived helpfulness rating minus average benefit importance rating*) is also given and ranked.

Table 3.1.1: Benefit Importance, Perceived Helpfulness of UConn, and Relative Helpfulness, Rating Averages and Ranks.

	Perceived Importance		Helpfulness of UConn		Relative UConn Helpfulness*	
	1: Not Important Important	7: Very	1: Not helpful Helpful	7: Very	(Mean _{Helpfulness} - Mean _{Importance})	Rank
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	(Importance - Helpfulness)	Rank
Obtain career training	6.29	7	4.58	19	-1.61	21
Acquire background and specialization for further education	6.00	12	4.98	10	-1.01	14
Gain a range of information that might be relevant to a career	6.23	5.5	5.07	8.5	-1.16	16
Develop an understanding and enjoyment of literature, art, music and drama	4.97	19	4.64	17	-0.34	2
Write clearly and effectively	6.23	5.5	5.19	4.5	-1.04	15
Become fluent in the computing of your discipline	5.85	13	4.85	12.5	-1.00	13
Obtain a general foundation in computing regardless of your discipline	5.65	14	4.73	16	-0.92	10.5
Become aware of different philosophies, cultures and ways of life	5.58	15	5.09	6.5	-0.49	3
Develop your own values and ethical standards	6.10	9	4.83	14	-1.27	20
Understand yourself, your abilities, your interests and personality	6.31	2	5.09	6.5	-1.22	19
Understand and be able to get along with different kinds of people	6.29	3	5.36	2	-0.92	10.5
Understand the nature of science and experimentation	4.92	20	4.60	18	-0.32	1
Understand new scientific and technical developments	5.04	18	4.38	20	-0.66	6
Become aware of the consequences (benefits/hazards) of new applications	4.91	21	4.20	21	-0.71	7
Think analytically and logically	6.04	10.5	5.21	3	-0.83	8
Think in quantitative terms, understand probabilities, proportions, etc	5.28	17	4.76	15	-0.52	4
Learn on your own, pursue ideas and find information you need	6.35	1	5.49	1	-0.86	9
See the importance of history for understanding the present as well	5.44	16	4.86	11	-0.58	5
Know how to speak before groups, actively participate in group discussion	6.12	8	5.19	4.5	-0.94	12
Know how to lead and supervise groups of people	6.04	10.5	4.85	12.5	-1.20	17
Formulate creative and original ideas	6.28	4	5.07	8.5	-1.21	18

* Difference between UConn's helpfulness in providing this benefit and the perceived importance of this benefit

The most highly rated potential benefit, based on perceived importance, was *‘Learn on your own, pursue ideas and find information you need’*. This benefit also ranked highest in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. However, based on relative helpfulness, it ranked ninth.

The second most highly rated potential benefit, based on perceived importance, was *‘Understand yourself, your abilities, your interests and personality’*. This benefit ranked lower (6.5) in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. Based on relative helpfulness, however, this benefit ranked among the lowest (19).

The third most highly rated potential benefit, based on perceived importance, was *‘Understand and be able to get along with different kinds of people’*. This benefit ranked 2nd in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. It ranked much lower (10.5) on the relative helpfulness scale.

The three most highly rated potential benefits of UConn education, in terms of UConn’s helpfulness in providing them, are

Learn on your own, pursue ideas and find information you need

Understand and be able to get along with different kinds of people

Think analytically and logically

Among the other potential benefits, *‘Obtain career training’* ranked 7th in perceived importance but a low 19th in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. In terms of relative helpfulness, this item ranked last (21) (worst).

Table 3.1.2 shows the overall (all benefits) mean rating for UConn’s helpfulness by school. Pharmacy has the highest mean rating while College of Agriculture & Natural Resources has the lowest.

Table 3.1.2: Mean UConn’s helpfulness in providing potential benefits of education (by school or college)

School or college	Mean UConn helpfulness
Pharmacy	5.27
Engineering	5.17
Continuing Studies	5.08
Allied Health	4.97
Education	4.97
Family Studies	4.92
Business	4.90
Liberal Arts & Sciences	4.83
Nursing	4.79
Fine Arts	4.79
Agriculture & Natural Resources	4.73

Scale: 1 – Not helpful 7 – Very helpful

3.2 Satisfaction Ratings

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction in the areas of general education requirements, required courses outside of their major field, and required courses in their major field Table 3.2.1 summarizes the average ratings by school in order of their rank.

For each school, *‘Overall experience with courses in your major field’* received the highest average rating among the three items.

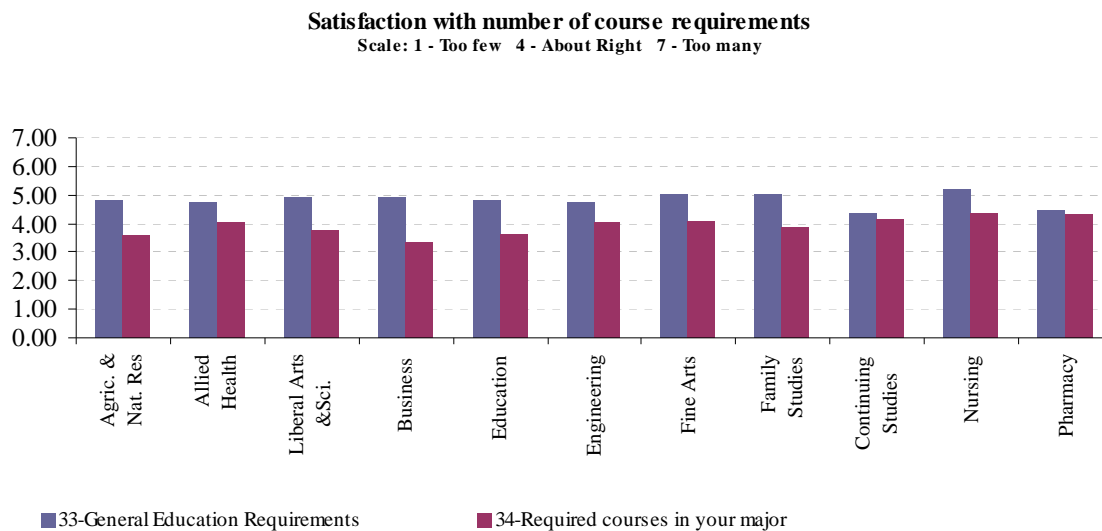
Table 3.2.1: Mean satisfaction with UConn experience (by school or college)

Overall experience with general education requirements		Overall experience with required school/college courses outside your major		Overall experience with courses in your major field	
	Mean		Mean		Mean
Continuing Studies	5.74	Continuing Studies	5.58	Family Studies	6.08
Pharmacy	5.20	Family Studies	5.02	Allied Health	6.07
Engineering	4.92	Liberal Arts & Sciences	4.91	Continuing Studies	5.81
Liberal Arts & Sciences	4.77	Pharmacy	4.90	Liberal Arts & Sciences	5.80
Business	4.66	Agriculture & Natural Resources	4.82	Fine Arts	5.63
Family Studies	4.62	Business	4.82	Business	5.63
Allied Health	4.60	Allied Health	4.70	Engineering	5.59
Fine Arts	4.58	Fine Arts	4.67	Agriculture & Natural Resources	5.55
Agriculture & Natural Resources	4.56	Engineering	4.60	Pharmacy	5.53
Education	4.47	Education	4.54	Education	5.35
Nursing	4.32	Nursing	4.17	Nursing	5.23

Scale: 1 – Extremely Dissatisfied 7 – Extremely Satisfied

Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the number of course requirements in general education and in their major field. Chart 3.2.1 shows the mean satisfaction with number of course requirements within each school or college.

Chart 3.2.1: Mean satisfaction with number of course requirements



The ratings suggests an average perception of about right number of courses as major field requirements (overall mean 3.77) and of too many courses as general education requirements (overall mean 4.86)

Respondents from the School of Business had the lowest average perception of few courses as major field requirements, followed by College of Agriculture & Natural Resources and School of Education. School of Nursing, followed by School of Family Studies and School of Fine Arts, had the highest average perception of too many courses as general education requirements. Overall, all schools or colleges has an average perception of too many courses as general education requirements.

3.3 Recommendation Rates

Overall, 93% of the respondents would recommend UConn to friends or relatives. Table 3.3.1 summarizes the UConn recommendation rates by school in order of their rank.

Table 3.3.1: Percent respondents who would recommend UConn (by school or college)

School or college	% who would recommend UConn
Family Studies	98.92%
Allied Health	96.67%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	95.92%
Nursing	95.00%
Continuing Studies	94.57%
Education	93.75%
Business	93.33%
Engineering	93.33%
Pharmacy	93.10%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	91.80%
Fine Arts	90.91%

4. Post-Graduate Experiences

4.1 Employment Rates

Overall, 83% of respondents are employed either full-time or part-time, 32% are in graduate school either full-time or part-time; 96% are either employed or have entered graduate school. Only 4% of respondents are, both, unemployed and not in graduate school. The percentages above are based on valid responses only. Table 4.4.1 shows the cross-tabulated table of graduate school enrollment vs. employment status.

Table 4.4.1: Employment and/or Graduate/Professional school

Graduate school	Employment		
	Full-time	Part-time	Not employed
Full-time	55	71	138
Part-time	81	5	3
Not in graduate school	629	76	47

Table 4.4.2, on the next page, is a summary of the employment and graduate school characteristics by school or college.

All Nursing graduates are employed, followed by Business graduates (95%) and Engineering graduates (88.7%). While 80% of Family Studies graduates are employed, all Family Studies graduates are either employed or in graduate school.

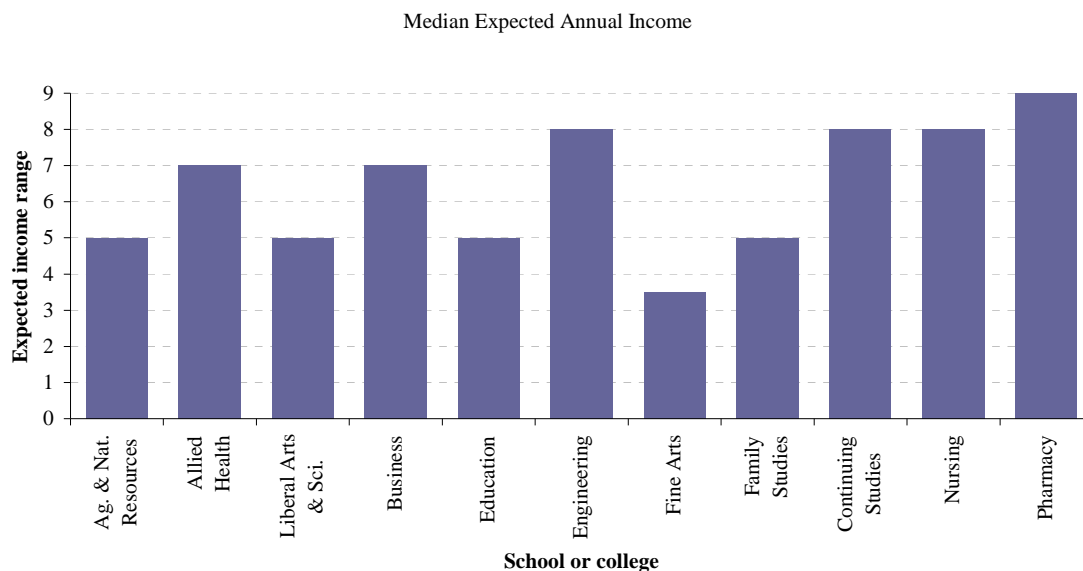
The percentage of graduates who are either employed or in graduate school is high for Education (100%), Pharmacy (100%), and Allied Health (100%). This is consistent with the integrated undergraduate-graduate nature of some or all of their programs. On the other hand, the percent graduates who are neither employed nor in graduate school is high for Fine Arts (14.7%), followed by Continuing Studies (9%) and Agriculture & Natural Resources (6%).

Table 4.4.2: Employment and Graduate School Rates (by School or college)

% Respondents employed Full-time or Part-time		% Respondents either employed or in graduate school		% Respondents neither employed nor in graduate school	
Nursing	100.0	Family Studies	100.0	Family Studies	0.0
Business	95.0	Education	100.0	Education	0.0
Engineering	88.7	Pharmacy	100.0	Pharmacy	0.0
Continuing Studies	88.5	Nursing	100.0	Nursing	0.0
Liberal Arts & Sciences	84.1	Engineering	98.4	Engineering	1.6
Fine Arts	82.4	Business	96.6	Business	3.4
Family Studies	80.0	Allied Health	96.6	Allied Health	3.4
Pharmacy	80.0	Liberal Arts & Sciences	94.9	Liberal Arts & Sciences	5.1
Agriculture & Natural Resources	78.0	Agriculture & Natural Resources	94.0	Agriculture & Natural Resources	6.0
Allied Health	63.3	Continuing Studies	91.3	Continuing Studies	8.7
Education	44.1	Fine Arts	85.3	Fine Arts	14.7

Overall, 75% of the respondents felt their degree was helpful when applying for their current job, and 73% considered their job career related. Chart 4.4.1 below shows the expected annual income of respondents by school or college.

Chart 4.4.1: Median expected annual income



Expected annual income range:

(1=Less than \$10,000; 2=\$10,001-15,000; 3=\$15,001-20,000; 4=\$20,001-25,000; 5=\$25,001-30,000; 6=\$30,001-35,000; 7=\$35,001-40,000; 8=\$40,000-50,000; 9=More than \$50,000)

Pharmacy school graduates have the highest median expected annual salary range (more than \$50,000). Engineering, Continuing Studies and Nursing graduates have the next highest median expected annual salary range (\$40,000-50,000). Fine Arts graduates have the lowest median expected annual salary range (\$15,001-20,000).

4.2 Use of UConn Career Services

Among employed respondents, 46% used Career Services. Table 4.2.1 shows that Business (75%) and Engineering (67%) have the highest percentages and Pharmacy has the lowest percentage of using the service (13%). The low percent usage of career services by Education, Allied Health and Pharmacy graduates may be attributed, at least in part, to the integrated undergraduate-graduate nature of all or some of their programs.

Table 4.2.1: Percent usage of career services (by school or college)

School or college	% Respondents who used career services
Business	75%
Engineering	67%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	47%
Family Studies	47%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	35%
Fine Arts	32%
Education	31%
Allied Health	26%
Nursing	22%
Pharmacy	13%
Continuing Studies	10%

4.3 Type of Employment

Respondents either chose from a list of eleven general types of employer or specified another employer type. Table 4.3.1 shows the percentage of respondents who are employed full-time in each employer type for 2000 and 2001. The results are generally stable across the two years, except for 'Factory/Industry' (decrease of 4%) and 'Other' category (increase of 9%). In 2001, the largest percentage of respondents (42%) held a position in business, followed by the health industry (14%) and education (12%).

Table 4.3.1: Percent employed by type of employer

Type of Employer	2000	2001
Business	44%	42%
Health Industry	14%	14%
Education	11%	12%
Non-profit	6%	6%
Media	4%	3%
State/Local Government	4%	3%
Factory/Industry	7%	3%
Self-employed	2%	2%
Federal Government	1%	1%
Military Service	1%	1%
Agriculture	1%	1%
Other	5%	14%

5. Further Elaboration

Recent Alumni Survey data are the only source of information about UConn's graduates and their opinions on various aspects of UConn. We would be happy to extend our analysis upon request. Besides completing the questionnaire, many respondents commented on various aspects of University life. Due to the variety of the topics covered, the comments are not summarized here but are available in separate files in the Office of Institutional Research. Departments and offices are welcome to look at these comments.