

The University of Connecticut

Report on the Alumni Survey - 2002 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. For over 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 2002 responses. It is also available at web site <http://www.oir.uconn.edu/alum02.pdf> Separate reports will also be generated for each school and for larger departments.

1. Number of Respondents and Response Rates

In Fall 2002, 2,888 questionnaires were sent to graduates who received a bachelor's degree from July 2001 through June 2002. A follow-up letter was sent to those who did not respond within two months of the initial survey mailing. (There were 2,888 actual degrees conferred, including dual degrees, from July 2001 through June 2002).

1,073 graduates returned completed questionnaires, for a total response rate of 40%¹. 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 2002 survey. The School of Nursing has the highest response rate (48%) while Fine Arts has the lowest rate (27%).

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

School/College	Number of Graduates	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
Nursing	58	26	48%
Allied Health	258	113	45%
Education	223	91	44%
Continuing Studies	167	72	44%
Engineering	147	65	43%
Family Studies	73	35	41%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	482	165	39%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	137	53	35%
Business	76	22	34%
Pharmacy	1159	402	29%
Fine Arts	108	29	27%

The majority of respondents to the survey are female (65%), as were the majority of all graduates in the 2002 class (55%). The number of female graduates returning the completed surveys is 693 while the number of male graduates returning the completed surveys is 380. Female graduates responded at a higher rate (44%) than males (29%), as has been the case in previous alumni surveys.

¹ Calculation of response rate excludes 201 mailed surveys that were undeliverable.

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 2002 graduate (bachelors degree recipients) population. The percentage of respondents who are 25 years or more has increased by about 3% from the previous year. In terms of school or college, Continuing Studies (General Studies majors) has the largest number of respondents (71%) 35 years or above in age; within all other schools, the most common age category is 21-24 years. Over one-third of all respondents in Engineering and nearly one-third of all respondents in Nursing are 25 years or above in age.

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	77%
25 to 34	13%
35 to 49	8%
Over 50	3%

In terms of ethnic background, the majority of respondents to the survey are white (82%). Whites and unknown ethnicities comprised 86% of all 2002 graduates. The percentage of respondents belonging to American minority groups (12%) is similar to the percentage of all 2002 graduates belonging to American minority groups (14%).

In summary, the sample of respondents is fairly representative of the 2002 graduate population in terms of gender, age, and ethnicity.

2. General Questions

2.1. Freshman Entrance Rate

Overall, 69% of respondents entered UConn as freshmen; 31% 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
Allied Health	88%
Fine Arts	86%
Education	81%
Family Studies	80%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	79%
Pharmacy	77%
Business	77%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	74%
Engineering	71%
Nursing	63%
Continuing Studies	12%

Allied Health has the highest freshman entrance rate (88%), followed by Fine Arts (86%) and Education (81%). 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, 73% 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	33	5	28	21	96	12	113	14	118
Percentage	8%	1%	6%	5%	22%	3%	26%	3%	27%

For the four-year respondents, 27% lived in a residence hall for all eight semesters; 8% did not live in a residence hall at any point. A large percentage of four-year respondents (22%) lived in a residence hall for exactly four semesters and another large percentage of four-year respondents (26%) lived in a residence hall for six 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	56%	12%	19%	12%	0%	2%
Allied Health	50%	0%	31%	15%	0%	4%
Liberal Arts & Science	22%	14%	37%	24%	2%	2%
Business	32%	12%	38%	16%	1%	0%
Education	55%	11%	26%	5%	2%	2%
Engineering	62%	21%	15%	1%	0%	0%
Fine Arts	57%	14%	21%	4%	4%	0%
Family Studies	13%	16%	36%	33%	1%	1%
Continuing Studies	20%	2%	9%	36%	6%	26%
Nursing	66%	11%	14%	9%	0%	0%
Pharmacy	73%	9%	9%	0%	0%	9%
Overall (Total)	33%	12%	29%	20%	2%	4%

Overall, nearly one third of all respondents decided their major before entering college while 29% of respondents decided their major as sophomores. Percentage of respondents who decided their major before college has increased by 3% compared to the previous year.

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. Over one-third of the respondents from Family Studies (36%) decided their major during their sophomore year.

Pharmacy (73%), followed by Nursing (66%), Engineering (62%), Fine Arts (57%), Education (55%), and Allied Health (50%), had the highest within-school percent respondents who decided their major before college. Compared to the previous year, this percent is higher by 15% or more for Nursing and Fine Arts.

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 (28%); Location (22%); Quality of educational programs (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 (41%); Specific programs offered (15%); Variety of Educational programs (14%)

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

Chart 2.4.1: Original reason for selecting UConn

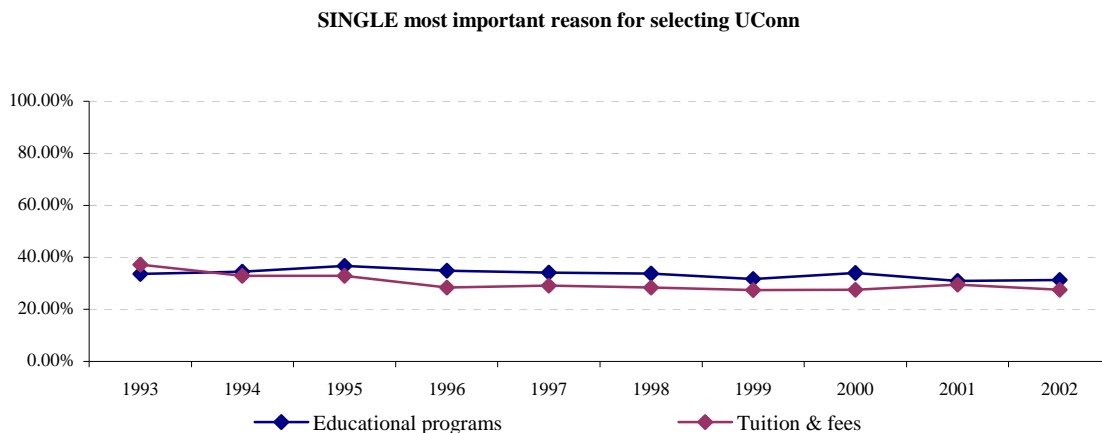
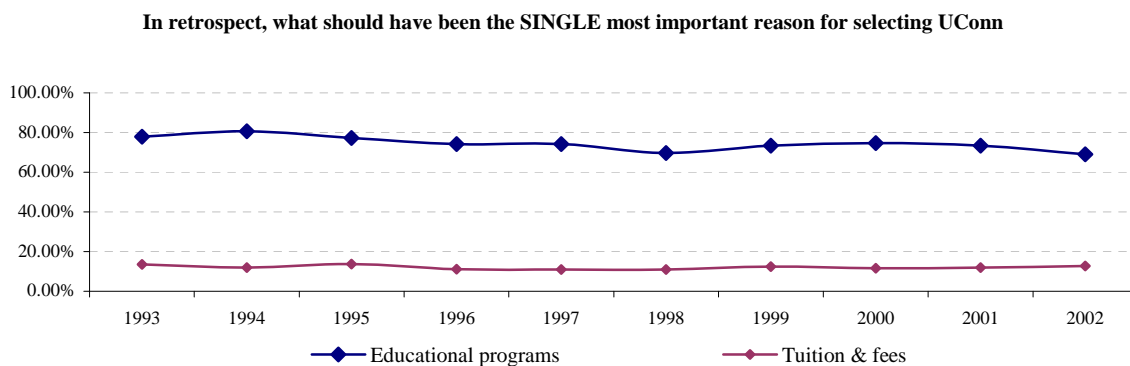


Chart 2.4.2: Retrospective reason for selecting UConn



Note: In the charts above, the categories *Variety of educational programs offered*, *quality of educational programs* and *the specific programs offered* are collapsed into *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
Allied Health	65.4%	Fine Arts	48.1%
Pharmacy	54.5%	Business	40.4%
Education	49.2%	Nursing	39.3%
Continuing Studies	43.3%	Engineering	32.8%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	37.5%	Pharmacy	31.8%
Engineering	32.8%	Liberal Arts & Sciences	29.6%
Business	28.1%	Agriculture & Natural Resources	20.8%
Family Studies	26.8%	Family Studies	19.5%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	25.4%	Education	18.6%
Nursing	17.9%	Allied Health	11.5%
Fine Arts	11.1%	Continuing Studies	5.6%

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

School or college	Educational programs	School or college	Tuition & fees
Allied Health	92.3%	Engineering	20.9%
Education	80.0%	Business	18.6%
Family Studies	78.4%	Fine Arts	17.2%
Pharmacy	76.2%	Liberal Arts & Sciences	14.8%
Nursing	73.3%	Pharmacy	14.3%
Business	71.8%	Agriculture & Natural Resources	11.3%
Continuing Studies	69.9%	Family Studies	8.0%
Fine Arts	65.5%	Continuing Studies	4.9%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	64.2%	Education	4.6%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	63.4%	Nursing	3.3%
Engineering	62.7%	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, 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 23 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	7: Very Important	1: Not helpful	7: Very Helpful	(Mean _{Helpfulness} - Mean _{Importance})	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	(Importance - Helpfulness)	Rank
Obtain career training - knowledge and skills applicable to specific job/work	6.27	3	4.58	19	-1.69	23
Acquire background and specialization for further education in a professional, scientific or scholarly field	6.01	12	4.96	9	-1.05	16
Gain a range of information that might be relevant to a career	6.24	5	5.09	6	-1.15	18
Develop an understanding and enjoyment of literature, art, music and drama	4.96	23	4.55	20	-0.41	1.5
Develop an understanding of diversity and cultural differences	5.27	19	4.58	18	-0.69	7
Write clearly and effectively	6.21	7	5.19	2	-1.02	15
Become fluent in the computing of your discipline	5.84	13	4.84	11	-0.99	14
Obtain a general foundation in computing regardless of your discipline	5.66	14	4.78	13	-0.87	9
Become aware of different philosophies, cultures and ways of life	5.42	16	4.91	10	-0.51	3
Develop your own values and ethical standards	6.03	11	4.72	16	-1.31	21
Understand yourself, your abilities, your interests and personality	6.31	2	4.98	8	-1.33	22
Understand and be able to get along with different kinds of people	6.22	6	5.17	3	-1.06	17
Understand the nature of science and experimentation	5.01	22	4.60	17	-0.41	1.5
Understand new scientific and technical developments	5.14	20	4.48	21	-0.66	6
Become aware of the consequences (benefits/hazards) of new applications	5.04	21	4.30	23	-0.73	8
Learn and apply information technology	5.38	18	4.47	22	-0.91	10.5
Think analytically and logically	6.08	9	5.16	4	-0.91	10.5
Think in quantitative terms, understand probabilities, proportions, etc.	5.38	17	4.75	15	-0.62	4
Learn on your own, pursue ideas and find information you need	6.33	1	5.40	1	-0.92	12
See the importance of history for understanding the present as well	5.43	15	4.79	12	-0.64	5
Know how to speak before groups, actively participate in group discussion, function as a team manager	6.10	8	5.16	5	-0.95	13
Know how to lead and supervise groups of people	6.06	10	4.76	14	-1.30	20
Formulate creative and original ideas	6.26	4	5.00	7	-1.26	19

* 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, is *‘Learn on your own, pursue ideas and find information you need’*. This benefit also ranks highest in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. In 2001, as in 2002, this item received top ranking in terms of perceived importance and helpfulness. However, based on relative helpfulness, its ranking slipped from ninth in 2001 to twelfth in 2002.

The second most highly rated potential benefit, based on perceived importance, is *‘Understand yourself, your abilities, your interests and personality’*. This benefit ranks lower (8th) in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. Based on relative helpfulness, however, this benefit ranks among the lowest (22nd). In terms of perceived importance, the above item was ranked second in 2001 as well.

The third most highly rated potential benefit, based on perceived importance, is *‘Obtain career training – knowledge and skills applicable to specific job/work’*. This benefit ranks among the lowest (19th) in rating for UConn’s helpfulness in providing this benefit. It ranked lowest (23rd) on the relative helpfulness scale. The perceived importance of this item has increased in 2002 compared to 2001 where it was ranked seventh.

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*
- *Write clearly and effectively*
- *Understand and be able to get along with different kinds of people.*

Table 3.1.2 shows the overall (all benefits) mean rating for UConn’s helpfulness by school. Nursing has the highest mean rating while Pharmacy 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
Nursing	5.15
Allied Health	5.08
Engineering	5.00
Business	4.94
Education	4.84
Agriculture & Natural Resources	4.81
Liberal Arts & Sciences	4.80
Family Studies	4.78
General Studies	4.75
Fine Arts	4.62
Pharmacy	4.53

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	5.58	Continuing Studies	5.39	Family Studies	6.19
Business	4.85	Business	4.96	Agriculture & Natural Resources	6.00
Nursing	4.80	Family Studies	4.87	Education	5.80
Engineering	4.72	Liberal Arts & Sciences	4.80	Liberal Arts & Sciences	5.78
Liberal Arts & Sciences	4.70	Education	4.74	Continuing Studies	5.75
Education	4.65	Allied Health	4.69	Allied Health	5.73
Pharmacy	4.64	Nursing	4.69	Pharmacy	5.73
Agriculture & Natural Resources	4.53	Pharmacy	4.68	Engineering	5.64
Family Studies	4.47	Agriculture & Natural Resources	4.62	Business	5.58
Allied Health	4.38	Fine Arts	4.55	Fine Arts	5.45
Fine Arts	4.10	Engineering	4.46	Nursing	5.09

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 suggest an average perception of about right number of courses as major field requirements (overall mean 3.76) and of too many courses as general education requirements (overall mean 4.87)

Among schools and colleges, respondents from Business had the lowest average perception of few courses as major field requirements, followed by Agriculture & Natural Resources and Fine Arts. Allied Health, followed Fine Arts and Family Studies, had the highest average perception of too many courses as general education requirements. Overall, all schools or colleges have an average perception of too many courses as general education requirements.

3.3 Recommendation Rates

Overall, 94% 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
Continuing Studies	98.11%
Business	96.18%
Allied Health	96.00%
Family Studies	95.56%
Education	93.44%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	93.09%
Engineering	92.65%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	90.20%
Pharmacy	90.00%
Fine Arts	88.46%
Nursing	87.50%

4. Post-Graduate Experiences

4.1 Employment Rates

Overall, 84% of respondents are employed either full-time or part-time, 35% are in graduate school either full-time or part-time; 94% are either employed or have entered graduate school; 6% 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	47	94	135
Part-time	68	11	8
Not in graduate school	563	61	61

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 (91%) and Agriculture & Natural Resources graduates (86.5%). While 69% of Allied Health graduates are employed, all Allied Health graduates are either employed or in graduate school.

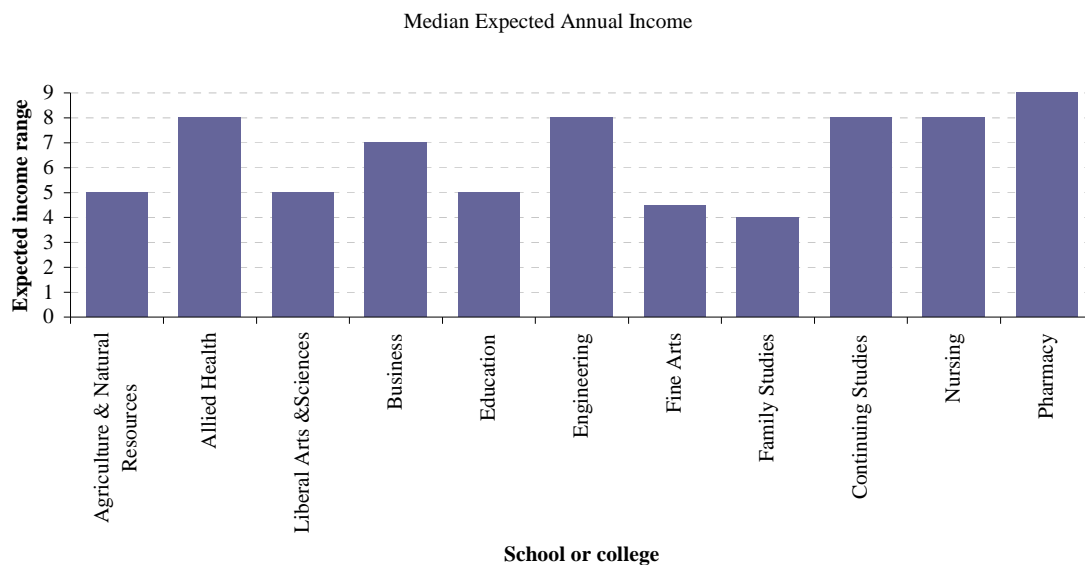
The percentage of graduates who are either employed or in graduate school is high for Allied Health (100%), Education (100%), Pharmacy (100%), and Nursing (100%); data supports the integrated undergraduate-graduate nature of some or all of the programs offered by these schools. On the other hand, the percent graduates who are neither employed nor in graduate school is high for Engineering (9%), followed by Continuing Studies (8%) and Family Studies (8%).

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	Allied Health	100.0	Allied Health	0.0
Business	90.6	Education	100.0	Education	0.0
Agriculture & Natural	86.5	Nursing	100.0	Nursing	0.0
Fine Arts	86.2	Pharmacy	100.0	Pharmacy	0.0
Continuing Studies	85.6	Business	95.0	Business	5.0
Engineering	81.4	Agriculture & Natural	94.2	Agriculture & Natural	5.8
Liberal Arts & Sciences	79.9	Liberal Arts & Sciences	93.5	Liberal Arts & Sciences	6.5
Family Studies	79.1	Fine Arts	93.1	Fine Arts	6.9
Allied Health	69.2	Family Studies	92.3	Family Studies	7.7
Pharmacy	68.2	Continuing Studies	92.0	Continuing Studies	8.0
Education	43.8	Engineering	91.4	Engineering	8.6

Overall, 70% 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 median expected annual income of respondents who are employed full-time (by school or college).

Chart 4.4.1: Median expected annual income of respondents employed full time



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=\$40,001-50,000; 9=More than \$50,000)

The chart shows Pharmacy graduates as having the highest median expected annual income (more than \$50,000) (*Note: The median expected annual income calculated for Pharmacy graduates is based on two graduates only*). Allied Health, Engineering, Continuing Studies and Nursing graduates have the next highest median expected annual salary range (\$40,001-50,000). Family studies graduates have the lowest median expected annual income (\$20,001-25,000).

4.2 Use of UConn Career Services

Among employed respondents, 43% used Career Services. Table 4.2.1 shows that Business (80%) and Engineering (63%) have the highest percentages and Allied Health has the lowest percentage of using the service (13%). The relatively low percent usage of career services by Education, Allied Health, Nursing, 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	80%
Engineering	63%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	42%
Family Studies	37%
Education	29%
Fine Arts	28%
Agriculture & Natural Resources	27%
Nursing	24%
Pharmacy	20%
Continuing Studies	12%
Allied Health	11%

4.3 Type of Employment

Respondents either chose from a list of eleven general types of employer or specified an employer type (*category 'Other'*). Table 4.3.1 shows the percentage of respondents who are employed full-time in each employer type for the last three years. Percent respondents employed in Business have decreased from over 40% in 2000 and 2001 to 31% in 2002. However, percent respondents employed in Education and Health industry have increased. Results across other specific employer types remained stable in 2002 compared to 2001; percent respondents selecting the 'Other' category have increased by three percent.

Table 4.3.1: Percent employed by type of employer

Type of Employer	2000	2001	2002
Business	44%	42%	31%
Health Industry	14%	14%	15%
Education	11%	12%	15%
Non-profit	6%	6%	5%
Media	4%	3%	4%
State/Local Government	4%	3%	4%
Factory/Industry	7%	3%	4%
Self-employed	2%	2%	2%
Federal Government	1%	1%	1%
Military Service	1%	1%	1%
Agriculture	1%	1%	1%
Other	5%	14%	17%

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.