Alumni Survey Highlights

In Spring 2001, about 1,000 FAU alumni from 1995 and 1997 responded to a survey on their activities since graduation, their self-assessment of the skills and abilities gained at FAU, and their satisfaction with various aspects of their educational experience. By surveying alumni who have been gone for three or five years, we hoped to learn how perceptions of their FAU educational experience might evolve over time.

The overall response rate to this mail-out survey was 20%. Alumni from 1997 were slightly more likely to respond than 1995 alumni, and master's degree recipients responded more frequently than baccalaureate grads. Education and Nursing grads were slightly overrepresented in the sample. The sample was representative of the 1995 and 1997 alumni on gender and race/ethnicity.

How rewarding was your FAU education?

When asked to what extent their FAU education had been personally rewarding, three-quarters of alumni said "Very much". About half said their education had been very rewarding professionally. Financial rewards were more elusive. About half said their FAU education was somewhat rewarding financially, about one-quarter said very rewarding, and one-quarter found very few financial rewards.

Most likely to find personal rewards: College of Liberal Arts grads.
Most likely to find professional rewards: College of Education grads.
Most likely to find financial rewards: Colleges of Engineering and Nursing grads.

86% of alumni would recommend FAU to friends or relatives considering college.

What are they doing now?

78% Employed full-time
10% Employed part-time
6% Self-employed
14% Pursuing graduate/professional education
11% Caring for home and family
2% Unemployed, but looking
2% Not seeking employment

Where are they working?

27% School, college or university
24% National/Multinational corporation
20% Local or regional business
11% Governmental agency
7% Nonprofit organization
6% Self-employed
5% Other

Source: Graduating Senior Survey
Additional Education

One-third of alumni continued their formal education after graduating from FAU, most in graduate school. About 5% went into professional programs like law, medicine, or pharmacy, and several went back for a second bachelor’s degree. 80% went back to school for career-related reasons, and 20% for personal satisfaction.

1995 baccalaureate grads: 43% now hold graduate or professional degrees
1997 baccalaureate grads: 27% now hold graduate or professional degrees

Satisfaction with FAU

Alumni are MOST satisfied with:
Instruction in their major (95%)
Relationship with other students (94%)
Overall quality of FAU degree (93%)
Relationship with faculty (91%)
(Percent 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' of those who responded)

Alumni are LEAST satisfied with:
Sense of 'community' or 'belonging' at FAU (32%)
Academic advising (28%)
Concern for you as an individual (27%)
Preparation for the job market (24%)
(Percent 'Dissatisfied' or 'Very Dissatisfied' of those who responded)

Graduates from these colleges are MOST satisfied with:
Instruction in the major: College of Liberal Arts and College of Architecture, Urban & Public Affairs
Applicability of major courses to career goals: College of Architecture, Urban & Public Affairs, College of Education
Relationship with the faculty: College of Nursing, College of Architecture, Urban & Public Affairs
Preparation for the job market: College of Education, College of Engineering
Making you competitive for career advancement: College of Nursing, College of Education

Change from 1995 to 1997: Alumni from 1997 expressed more satisfaction with all aspects of their FAU education than those who graduated in 1995. Biggest increases in satisfaction; Relationship with faculty, relationship with other students, overall quality of FAU degree.

Source: Graduating Senior Survey
Alumni Survey Highlights

Continued

**Importance of Skills and Abilities**

(1 = Not important at all  4 = Essential)

Think analytically and logically (3.7)
Set priorities and manage time (3.7)
Write clearly and logically (3.7)
Read with comprehension and efficiency (3.7)
Critically evaluate information for decision making (3.7)
Awareness of global issues and events (3.1)
Understand and apply math concepts (3.0)
Apply scientific knowledge and skills (2.8)
Appreciate great works of music, art and drama (2.5)

**Where did FAU have the most impact?**

(1 = None  4 = A great deal)

Work with a team or group (3.2)
Think analytically and logically (3.2)
Write clearly and logically (3.1)
Give effective oral presentations (3.1)
Critically evaluate information for decision making (3.1)
Awareness of global issues and events (2.7)
Possessing your own values and ethical standards (2.7)
Apply scientific knowledge and skills (2.7)
Appreciate great works of music, art and drama (2.1)

**Difference between Importance and FAU Impact**

How does FAU impact change over time?

Both graduating seniors and alumni were asked to estimate the impact of their FAU education on a set of skills and abilities considered to be important outcomes of a college education.

Perception of FAU impact on these abilities **increased** over time:

- Read with comprehension and efficiency
- Write clearly and logically
- Understand and apply math concepts and statistical reasoning

Perception of FAU impact on these abilities **declined** over time:

- Appreciation of cultures and groups other than your own
- Apply scientific knowledge and skills
- Appreciate great works of music, art and drama

Source: Graduating Senior Survey
How often are you involved in these activities?

Comments

In response to the open-ended question, "What would you like to see changed at FAU to help future students?" over half of alumni gave suggestions for improvements. Most were related to academic programs, curriculum or advising. In contrast to comments received on the Student Satisfaction and Graduating Senior Surveys, the comments from alumni tended to be focused on the link between education and employment:

**Improve the quality of education**
- Hire more capable professors with experience in their fields, better teaching skills
- Expand programs into more diversified areas to enhance employment opportunities
- Focus less on "book knowledge" and theory, more on current market demands
- Provide course content more directly related to current practice and the requirements of the "real world"
- Place more emphasis on communications, oral presentations, technical writing skills
- Provide more evening and weekend courses for nontraditional students

**Strengthen advising**
- Ensure that advisors are knowledgeable and give accurate information
- Hire advisors more willing and eager to assist students
- Train students in job-hunting and interviewing skills
- Career services should help build better connection with employers

Provide better career development programs, emphasizing internships, co-ops, international educational opportunities

See complete survey results at http://iea.fau.edu/AlumniSurvey/alumni.asp

Source: Graduating Senior Survey