

## Summary of Alumni Survey 2003

### March, 2004

The student survey is an integral component of the UHV assessment system. The Student Opinion Survey and the Alumni Survey, two major surveys which assess the satisfaction of the institutional services, are conducted by Student Services and the IR office every other year. The third Alumni Survey was conducted in Fall 2003. (The first two were conducted in 1999 and 2001). The ACT Alumni survey was used as the instrument. The results were analyzed and compared to the national norms provided by ACT.

#### METHODOLOGY:

##### Sampling:

The alumni survey in 2003 was mailed to all the students who graduated from Sp2001 through Sm 2002. A list of alumni provided by the UH Development Office was reviewed and matched with UH RORDAT of students graduating during the same period. The survey was mailed on October 15, 2003 to 634 UHV alumni in the U.S., of which 37% (228) were alumni of School of Arts and Sciences, 29% (195) of Division of Business, and 34% (211) of the Division of Education. 69% of them were female, 61% undergraduates and 39% graduates. A follow-up postcard was sent out three weeks later.

Twenty-eight surveys were rejected due to invalid addresses. By 12/15, 113 valid surveys were received, with a return rate of 19%. Thirty-two percent of them (36) were from School of A&S, 35%(39) from School of Business, 30%(34) from School of Education, and 3%(4) unknown. 72% were females and 50% undergraduates.

Surveys returned after December 15, 2003 were not included in the analysis.

The return rate is low despite the follow-up postcard. However, the returned group proportionally represents the original group except by degree level. It is common that graduate students tend to have a higher response rate than undergraduate students.

##### Instrument:

ACT Alumni Survey includes 5 sections: background information, continuing education, college experiences, employment history, and additional questions. The purpose of the survey is to assess the impact college has on the graduates. Additional questions are designed by individual schools. Two separate sets of questions were distributed to the alumni of the School of Business and the School of Education. The survey is accompanied by a cover letter from the dean of the school from which the student graduated.

#### Analysis:

The results of the total group and 7 sub-groups (School of Education, School of Business, School of Arts and Sciences, undergraduate, graduate, full-time, and part-time) are provided by ACT. The total group and three academic schools are included in the final report. Other sub-groups are available, but are not included due to the volume. If you need such information, please contact IR.

ACT also provides the national norms for the survey. The norms of two sub-groups, public 4-year colleges and 4-year colleges size 2000-5999, were used as comparison data because the institutions included in these two groups are more similar to UHV than institutions in other sub-groups. The results of the total group and three sub-groups (School of Education, School of Business, and School of Arts and Sciences) are compared to the national normative data. The distributions of the scores are provided. Means are calculated when necessary and compared to the normative data.

The results of the current survey are also compared to the previous survey.

#### RESULTS HIGHLIGHT:

##### Section I. Background information:

Of the 113 respondents:

- 50% are undergraduate degree holders and 50% are graduate degree holders.
- 69% are female.
- 69% are White, 8% Black, and 8% Hispanic.
- 38% are over 40 years old.
- Over 96% were in-state students and about 50% of them were enrolled part-time while attending UHV.
- 44% attended UHV for up to 2 years, 40% attended UHV for 3-4 years, and 15% attended UHV for 5 years or more.
- 96% of the respondents are currently living in Texas.
- 20% of the respondents plan to attend UHV in the future, 35% do not plan to attend UHV in the future, and the others are uncertain.

Compared to the national norm, UHV alumni are older and attend UHV for a shorter period of time due to the type of institution it is. A higher percentage of them were part-time students while attending college. A higher percent of them have a Master's degree, and are currently located in state. They are less likely to say that they do not plan to attend this institution in the future.

##### Section II. Continuing Education:

About 50% of the respondents replied to this section. Analysis of their responses follows:

- Four main reasons for continuing education for UHV alumni are (ranked from the most selected) to increase earning power (33%), for self-improvement (20%), to obtain/maintain certification (17%), or to learn a new occupation (17%). Job requirement (11%) was not selected as a major reason for continuing education, especially when compared with the national norm (25%).
- UHV alumni recognize the role UHV plays in preparing them for their continuing education. 96% of those who responded to this item think UHV prepared them adequately, more than adequately, or very well for their continuing education (2.c)
- 24% of the respondents plan to obtain a doctoral or professional degree, and 47% plan to obtain a Master's degree. Both numbers are similar to the norms. 25% have no plan to obtain a higher degree, which is higher than the norm (15%).
- 18% of those responded have accumulated more than 30 SCH after they graduated. 6% have 11 to 30 SCH and 35% have less than 10 SCH, while 41% of them are taking course for non-credit.

Compared to the national norms, UHV alumni evaluated UHV's role highly in preparing them for their continuing education (2c). However, the SCHs accumulated in continuing education by UHV alumni is lower than the norm data (2e). Compared to the norm data, the respondents to the UHV survey have graduated more recently. About 90% of them graduated within two years. This may explain why the UHV alumni have accumulated fewer SCH in continuing education than the national norms, of which 50% of the students had graduated over 3 years ago.

### III. College Experiences:

This section assesses the college choice, alumni experience and college contribution to personal growth.

- 77% of the respondents chose UHV as their first choice of admission.
- 75% would choose to attend UHV if they could start college over.
- 68% would choose the same major if they could start college over.
- 25% think the quality of education provided by UHV is better than other institutions, 43% think it is about the same, while only 4% say that the quality of UHV is worse compared to other colleges.
- 90% believe that their college education has improved the quality of their life.
- The main reason UHV alumni chose to attend UHV is the location (65%). 11% chose UHV because of the programs/academic reputation.
- The alumni listed the following as the funding sources to attend UHV: personal savings (70%), spouse (30%), parents (30%), scholarships (45%), student loans (25%) and grants (25%).

Compared to the national norms, a much higher percentage of UHV alumni attended UHV as the institution of their first choice (3a). UHV alumni are more satisfied with their choice of attending UHV. A higher percentage of UHV alumni think they would choose the same college and the same major if they could start over again (3.b, 3.c). A much higher percentage of UHV alumni chose UHV because of its location, while

a comparatively lower percentage of them chose UHV because of its programs and academic reputation (3f).

- Alumni program and services (3h): Only two questions in this section are relevant to the UHV alumni: university publication and fundraising. 30% of those who responded rank the university publications as very good. 66% of respondents to the survey had no opinion about fundraising. The average scores of these two items are listed below:

(3-point scale from 3 as “Very Good” to 1 as “Poor “)

	UHV	Public Institutions	Institutions 2000-5999
Publication	2.35	2.34	2.37
Fundraising	2.00	2.06	2.12

- Contribution of education of this college to personal growth (3i): Over 50% of respondents think UHV has contributed very much to the following areas: writing effectively (52%) and persisting at difficult tasks (50%). Over 50% of the respondents think that UHV has contributed very little to the areas of caring for one's own physical/mental health (60%), understanding/ appreciating the arts (51%), and managing personal finance (51%).

The top five areas ranked by UHV alumni are: writing effectively, working cooperatively in a group, planning and carrying out projects, persisting at difficult tasks, learning on one’s own, and organizing time more effectively. Following are the average scores and the ranking of UHV contribution to each area:

(3-point scale from 3 as “Very Much” to 1 as “Very Little”)

	UHV Mean & Rank()	Public Institutions Mean & Rank()	Institutions 2000-5999 Mean & Rank()
1. Writing effectively	2.41 (1)	2.35 (5)	2.36 (1)
12. Working cooperatively in a group	2.38 (2)	2.35 (5)	2.36 (1)
15. Planning and carrying out projects	2.36 (3)	2.37 (3)	2.35 (2)
18. Persisting at difficult tasks	2.35 (4)	2.36 (4)	2.32 (4)
6. Learning on one's own	2.32 (5)	2.39 (1)	2.32 (4)
13. Organizing time effectively	2.32 (5)	2.35 (5)	2.33 (3)
2. Speaking effectively	2.31 (6)	2.30 (7)	2.32 (4)
22. Recognizing assumptions, making inferences, reaching correct conclusions	2.30 (7)	2.28 (8)	2.24 (6)
19. Defining and solving problems	2.30 (7)	2.35 (5)	2.32 (4)
3. Understanding written information	2.29 (8)	2.33 (6)	2.29 (5)
17. Understanding different cultures and	2.29 (8)	2.21 (9)	2.13 (8)

philosophies			
20. Understanding the interaction of people and environment	2.26 (9)	2.30 (7)	2.24 (6)
21. Leading/guiding others	2.26 (9)	2.20 (10)	2.18 (7)
4. Working independently	2.25 (10)	2.38 (2)	2.33 (3)
9. Following directions	2.00 (11)	2.08 (11)	2.03 (10)
24. Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	1.97 (12)	2.02 (12)	1.98 (11)
10. Understanding consumer issues	1.96 (13)	1.78 (17)	1.81 (15)
8. Using the library	1.93 (14)	2.21 (9)	2.05 (9)
7. Understanding graphic information	1.87 (15)	1.93 (14)	1.91 (12)
14. Recognizing rights as a citizen	1.83 (16)	1.89 (15)	1.81 (15)
16. Understanding and applying math	1.70 (17)	1.86 (16)	1.87 (14)
23. Understanding and appreciating arts	1.65 (18)	1.94 (13)	1.90 (13)
5. Managing personal finance	1.63 (19)	1.76 (18)	1.74 (17)
11. Caring for one's own physical and mental health	1.60 (20)	1.89 (15)	1.80 (16)

#### IV. Employment History:

This section includes current employment status, information about the first job, and information about the current job.

- 80% of the respondents are currently employed full-time, or part-time, or self-employed. 10% are continuing their education.
- About the first job:
  - The major sources (4b) for learning about their first job are employer recruitment (13%), other students (10%), newspaper (8%), and other sources (43%).
  - The major problems related to the first job listed by the UHV alumni are: finding a job where they are paid enough (17%), which they want (17%) or where they want to live (17%).
  - 53% of those who responded to the question of their first job after graduation indicated that they obtained their first job before they graduated, and 35% obtained the first job within 6 months after graduation.
- Only 7% of respondents responded to the questions related to unemployment. 3% indicated that they were unable to find a job, which is similar to the national norms.
- About 90% thought UHV prepared them adequately for their occupations.
- 74% indicated that their current occupations are closely or moderately related to their college majors. 14% indicated that their job is not related to their major at all. The distribution is similar to the pattern of the national norms.
- 48% of the respondents feel that they are currently under-employed, which is much higher than the national norms (32%).

- Generally the respondents are satisfied with their jobs. Following are the average scores for assessing job satisfaction, compared to the normative data.

(5-point scale from 5 as “Very Satisfied” to 1 as “Very Dissatisfied”)

Item	UHV	Public Institutions	Institutions 2000-5999
Challenging	4.01	4.06	4.03
Location	4.03	4.14	4.15
Salary and benefits	3.30	3.34	3.34
Advancement potential	3.18	3.34	3.31
Working conditions	3.68	3.93	3.95
Career potential	3.43	3.63	3.60

#### COMPARISON TO SURVEY 2001:

- Compared to 2001, the 2003 cohort has a higher percentage of minority students. Blacks increased from 5.4% to 8.0%, Asians from 1.2% to 5.3%, and Hispanics from 7.2% to 7.9%. White decreased from 82.5% to 69.0%.
- A higher percentage of the 2003 cohort attended UHV for 4 years or longer compared to the 2001 cohort (33% vs. 22%).
- 77% of the 2003 cohort attended UHV as their first choice, compared to 87% in the 2001 cohort.
- Both cohorts are positive about their college experience: 95% believe that college education has improved their life. Over 75% would choose the same college again.
- 67% of the 2003 cohort ranked the quality of education at UHV is the same as or higher than at other institutions, which is a slightly lower than the response of the 2001 cohort (75%).
- The rankings for the contribution of the college to personal growth are similar: writing effectively has been ranked first for both years. The 2003 cohort ranked learning on one’s own; defining and solving problems; and follow direction higher than the 2001 group. They ranked understanding different cultures and understanding interaction between people and environment lower than the previous cohort.
- The average scores for job satisfaction are lower for the 2003 group in all aspects except for the salary and benefits.

Following are the selected aspects of comparison between 2001 and 2003 survey.

	2003	2001
3.a Indicate your rating of this college at the time you applied for admission.		
1st choice	77.0	86.7
2nd choice	15.9	8.4
3rd choice	3.5	1.8
4th choice	1.8	1.2
Blank	1.8	1.8
Total	100	100
3.b If you could start college over, would you choose to attend this college?		
Definitely yes	41.6	40.4
Probable yes	33.6	39.8
Uncertain	12.4	13.3
Probably no	6.2	4.2
Definitely no	2.7	0.6
Blank	3.5	1.8
Total	100	100
3.c If you could start college over, would you choose to graduate with the same major?		
Definitely yes	41.6	48.8
Probably yes	26.5	26.5
Uncertain	10.6	7.8
Probably no	14.2	10.8
Definitely no	5.3	3.6
Blank	1.8	2.4
Total	100	100
3.d How does the quality of education at this college compared with that of other colleges?		
Better	24.8	29.5
About the same	43.4	44
Worse	4.4	2.4
Unable to judge	24.8	22.3
Blank	2.7	1.8
Total	100	100
3.e Regardless of the financial benefits, has your college education improved the quality of your life?		
Definitely yes	66.4	70.5
Probably yes	23.0	21.7
Uncertain	3.5	4.2
Probably no	3.5	
Definitely no	1.8	0.6
Blank	1.8	3
Total	100	100

3i. Contribution of education of this college to personal growth  
(3-point scale from 3 as “Very Much” to 1 as “Very Little”)

	2003	2001
1. Writing effectively	2.41 (1)	2.41(1)
12. Working cooperatively in a group	2.38 (2)	2.35(4)
15. Planning and carrying out projects	2.36 (3)	2.40(2)
18. Persisting at difficult tasks	2.35 (4)	2.35(4)
6. Learning on one's own	2.32 (5)	2.25(10)
13. Organizing time effectively	2.32 (5)	2.31(6)
2. Speaking effectively	2.31 (6)	2.33(5)
22. Recognizing assumptions, making inferences, reaching correct conclusions	2.30 (7)	2.28(7)
19. Defining and solving problems	2.30 (7)	2.25(10)
3. Understanding written information	2.29 (8)	2.27(8)
17. Understanding different cultures and philosophies	2.29 (8)	2.33(5)
20. Understanding the interaction of people and environment	2.26 (9)	2.36(3)
21. Leading/guiding others	2.26 (9)	2.26(9)
4. Working independently	2.25 (10)	2.24(11)
9. Following directions	2.00 (11)	1.75(16)
24. Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	1.97 (12)	1.93(13)
10. Understanding consumer issues	1.96 (13)	1.80(14)
8. Using the library	1.93 (14)	2.02(12)
7. Understanding graphic information	1.87 (15)	1.78(15)
14. Recognize rights as a citizen	1.83 (16)	1.75(16)
16. Understanding and applying math	1.70 (17)	1.74(17)
23. Understanding and appreciating arts	1.65 (18)	1.63(19)
5. Managing personal finance	1.63 (19)	1.60(20)
11. Caring for one's own physical and mental health	1.60 (20)	1.66(18)

4o. Satisfaction with the current job  
(5-point scale from 5 as “Very Satisfied” to 1 as “Very Unsatisfied”)

	2003	2001
Challenging	4.01	4.21
Location	4.03	4.22
Salary and benefit	3.30	3.25
Advancement potential	3.18	3.23
Working condition	3.68	3.91
Career potential	3.43	3.58

