

Summary of 2009 Recent Graduate Survey Results

The office of Career Development e-mailed 855 PLU alumni who graduated in December 2008, May 2009, and August 2009 to complete the Recent Graduate Survey. Of those alumni who were contacted, 234 completed surveys resulting in a response rate of 27%, up from 22% in 2008. Asked to indicate degree received, 81% of respondents reported obtaining a bachelor's degree, 16% a master's degree and 3% a teacher's certificate. Listed below are data pertaining to specific variables of interest assessed by the Recent Graduate Survey and a comparison to results from the 2008 Recent Graduate Survey, including tables showing the comparison data for each survey question discussed in this report.

For the 2009 survey, the response rate of 27% should be considered when deciding how to interpret the results and apply them to the recent graduate population as a whole.

Employment

The majority of recent graduates who returned the survey are currently employed full-time and not attending graduate school (51%). In the remaining categories, 20% are employed part-time and not attending graduate school, 10% indicated they are enrolled in graduate school, 5% are volunteering, 1% is in military service, and less than 1% is traveling. Additionally, 9% of recent graduates are seeking employment. These numbers show a change from the 2008 results (see Table 1), when 59% of recent graduates reported being employed full-time and 16% reported being employed part-time. The decrease in graduates being employed full-time, and this increase in part-time employment and those seeking employment, was also evident in comparing the 2007 to the 2008 Recent Graduate Survey results. These numbers in Table 1 are not a complete picture of what our recent graduates are currently doing, as many of them fit into multiple categories. Several of the respondents included in the 'Employed Part-time' category indicated they are also actively seeking full-time employment.

	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Military service	Volunteering	Traveling	Seeking employment	Graduate school
2008 Survey Results	59%	16%	2%	3%	1%	9%	11%
2009 Survey Results	51%	20%	1%	5%	>1%	9%	10%

Table 1: Current Status

In looking at how related their current job is to their college major, the results from this year's survey remained remarkably similar to the 2008 survey results (see Table 2). Just under half of the graduates who are currently employed rate their current job as highly related to their major (46%), 21% rate their job as moderately related, 15% rate their job as slightly related, and 19% rate their job as not at all related to their major. Without knowing the specific majors/career fields of the specific respondents who indicated their current position is "not at all related" to their academic major, it is difficult to determine if this is due to a shortage of jobs in specific career fields or if it is evenly distributed across several majors. Some of the responders in this category may have selected "not at all related" due to current employment in an unrelated field while continuing to seek employment that is more relevant to their field of study. This also doesn't indicate satisfaction level with the current position – students may have actively sought out jobs that pertained more to career interests than academic interests.

	Highly related	Moderately related	Slightly related	Not at all related
2008 Survey Results	47%	21%	15%	18%
2009 Survey Results	46%	21%	15%	19%

Table 2: How related current job is to college major

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Of the recent graduates who responded to the survey, 31% indicated their experience at PLU prepared them for their current job/schooling exceptionally well, 31% reported they were prepared more than adequately, and 28% stated they were adequately prepared. Conversely, 7% indicated less than adequately and 3% reported they were not at all prepared for their current job/schooling. Compared to the 2008 survey results (see Table 3), there was no change in the percentage of those who reported being adequately, less than adequately, or not at all prepared by PLU for their current role. And for those who reported being better prepared by PLU, there was a positive shift toward more respondents feeling exceptionally well prepared for their current role. This would indicate that while the number of alumni who feel less than adequately prepared for their first job out of college is consistent – those who have been helped in some tangible way by PLU to take on their next role are reporting feeling even more prepared than those who graduated the previous year. Without knowing the makeup of the 10% who feel less than adequately, or not at all, prepared, it is difficult to determine the contributing factors. Are they in a job that is really related to their degree field but somehow do not feel that their experience at PLU prepared them for it or are they in an unrelated job that is outside what they felt their time at PLU was preparing them for?

	Exceptionally well	More than adequately	Adequately	Less than adequately	Not at all
2008 Survey Results	27%	36%	28%	7%	3%
2009 Survey Results	31%	31%	28%	7%	3%

Table 3: How well did PLU prepare you for current job/schooling?

In the 2009 Recent Graduate Survey, employed respondents were asked to indicate how they found their job. The results showed that 42% of respondents reported they found their job through networking, 16% utilized online ads, 15% found their job on the employer’s website, 13% found employment through internship/student teaching/work study positions, 3% found their job at the Career & Internship Fair and 1% used newspaper ads. Typical responses from the 10% of respondents who answered “Other” included employed at company before graduation, family business, off-campus career fairs, and self-employment.

	Networking	Internship/ Student teaching/ Work study	Online ads	Company website	Newspaper Ads	CCN	PLU Career & Internship Fair	Other
2008 Survey Results	34%	12%	15%	16%	3%	1%	1%	18%
2009 Survey Result	42%	13%	16%	15%	1%	0%	3%	10%

Table 4: If employed, how current job was found

Salary

Of those currently employed, 10% reported an annual salary of \$55,000 or more; 9% reported an annual salary of \$45,000-\$54,999; 15% reported an annual salary of \$35,000-\$44,999; 16% reported an annual salary of \$25,000-\$34,999; 20% reported an annual salary of \$15,000-\$24,999; and 30% reported an annual salary of \$14,999 or less. As was true of the changes between the 2007 and 2008 results, the most significant change from the 2008 to 2009 results is the increase in alumni reporting an annual salary of \$14,999 or less, which went from 26% to 30%. This could be resulting from the increase in alumni who are working part-time jobs or are working in non-degree related jobs while searching for opportunities in their chosen field. The percentage of

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respondents in the lowest salary category increases even more when only the responses from undergraduate alumni are considered, with the responses submitted by those who obtained a master’s degree filtered out. For the recent graduates answering this question who received either a bachelor’s degree or teacher’s certificate, 35% indicated an annual salary of \$14,999 or less. The other income categories maintained similar percentages with or without the master’s degree graduates, except for the \$55,000 or more option which only 5% of undergraduate degree recipients indicated as their current salary range.

	\$14,999 or less	\$15,000-\$24,999	\$25,000-\$34,999	\$35,000-\$44,999	\$45,000-\$54,999	\$55,000 or more
2008 Survey Results	26%	19%	19%	15%	8%	13%
2009 Survey Results	30%	20%	16%	15%	9%	10%

Table 5: Salary

Resources

The recent graduates were asked to identify what resources they used to plan their next step after graduation. Respondents were allowed to select more than one resource if applicable so the percentages reflect the respondents’ selection of multiple categories. Of those recent graduates who responded, 75% reported utilizing faculty members to plan their next step; 27% used the Career, Internship & Graduate Program Fair; 18% used the Career Development website; 18% used alumni; 17% used handouts (resume writing, cover letters, interviewing, etc.); 11% used workshops (resume writing, job search, interviewing, etc.); 10% used one-to-one career counseling; 10% used College Central Network; 8% used assessment tools (MBTI, Strong Interest Inventory, etc.); 8% used the Wang Center; 6% indicated they used academic internships; 1% used the Ramstad career library; and 13% marked “other.” Nine of the thirteen resource categories remained within four percentage points of the 2008 Recent Graduate Survey results, but larger changes did occur in a handful of categories: Faculty, Workshops, Handouts, and Alumni (see Table 7).

	Career counseling	Faculty members	Workshops	Academic Internships	CCN	Career Development website	Ramstad Career Library	PLU Career & Internship Fair	Handouts	Assessment tools	Alumni	Wang Center	Other
2008 Survey Results	14%	68%	21%	6%	6%	22%	4%	29%	27%	8%	13%	8%	10%
2009 Survey Results	10%	75%	11%	6%	10%	18%	1%	27%	17%	8%	18%	8%	13%

Table 7: Resources used to plan next step after graduation

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Where are our graduates working?

- ABC kidz
- Affiliated Computer Services
- Americorps (6)
- Apple Physical Therapy
- ARMC
- Auburn School District (2)
- aXseum Solutions LLC
- Bellevue School District
- BELO Corp - Northwest Cable News
- Bethel Christian School
- Bethel School District (3)
- Boys & Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound (2)
- Buckle
- Cabela's
- Cascade Regional Blood Services
- Central Door & Hardware
- Chevy's Fresh Mex
- City of Olympia
- City Year Louisiana
- Clover Park School Dist (2)
- Coffee Rush
- Columbia Basin Herald
- Community Schools Collaboration
- Continuant Inc
- Dallas, Yamhill-Carlton School Districts
- Defense Accounting Systems
- Department of Social and Health Service
- Diversified Financial Benefits
- Dwyer Pemberton & Coulson
- Earth Ministry
- Elger Bay Grocery
- Ethicon Endo-Surgery Johnson & Johnson Co.
- F.E.W. County Social Services
- Fahlman, Olson & Little PLLC
- FareStart
- Foss Waterway Management
- Franciscan Medical Group
- Franklin Pierce School Distr.(3)
- Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
- Gordon Trucking, Inc.
- Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare
- Harrison School District 2
- Hart Insurance
- Hawaiian Chip Company
- Highline School District (3)
- Iliad Antik
- Institute of International Education
- Johns Hopkins University
- Jubitz Corporation
- KPMG
- Lake Washington School District (2)
- Latin America Working Group
- Lutheran Volunteer Corps
- Lutherhaven Ministries
- Ministere de l'Education Nationale
- Moss Adams, LLP.
- Motorola
- Multicare (3)
- New Horizons In-Home Care
- Northern Pacific Coffee Company
- Northwest Justice Project
- Northwest Leadership Foundation (3)
- Novelty Hill - Januik Winery
- Office Team
- Orcas Island Middle and Elementary School
- Oregon Dept of Human Services
- PLU (3)
- Parkering Danmark
- Peace Community Center (3)
- Peace Corps
- Pearl Bar and Dining
- Pease Construction
- Penelope's Espresso
- Philip D Hingston, Inc PC
- Phillips Real Estate Services
- Portland Children's Museum
- Primary Children's Medical Center
- Providence St. Peter Hosp(2)
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Pyramid Breweries
- Rain On Me Productions
- Ram Restaurant/Brewery
- REACH Ministries
- Rebound of Whatcom County
- Ross
- Route 16 Running & Walking
- RSM McGladrey
- Seattle Repertory Theatre
- ServiceMaster
- Sherwin Williams Company
- Shred It of Western Washington
- SiteCrafting, Inc.
- Smith Firm PC
- Sound Family Medicine
- South Bay Press
- Spokane Diocese
- St Francis Hospital
- St. Clare Hospital (2)
- St. Joseph Medical Center (3)
- Stanley Associates
- Starbucks Coffee
- Tacoma Community House
- Tacoma Goodwill Industries
- Target (2)
- The Beer Essentials
- The Hope Clinic of the Emory Vaccine Center
- The News Tribune
- The Student PIRGs
- Tom Matson Chrysler Jeep Dodge Hyundai
- TreeTop
- Tulsa Public Schools / Teach For America
- University of Washington
- US Army (2)
- US Geological Survey
- Valley Medical Center
- Value Village
- VMC
- Volt Services
- Washington Shell Fish, Inc
- WA State Service Corps
- Wells Fargo Financial
- Whatcom County Health Dept - Medical Reserve Corps