Texas Tech Alumni Survey
Spring 2019
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Students graduating from Texas Tech University with graduate degrees benefited from expert and supportive faculty and felt they gained the relevant and necessary experience to succeed in their chosen careers. They are innovators and researchers; entrepreneurs; health care providers; educators and university faculty; leaders in business, government and nonprofit sectors; and advancers of the arts and humanities. Their contributions to the workforce enhance society and significantly enrich the local, national and global economies. Below is a synopsis of the survey results:

- Most graduates (72.1 percent) with TTU graduate degrees entered the workforce directly without continuing their education.
- Of those students graduating with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education, most went on to earn doctoral (42.3 percent) or master’s/professional (44.2 percent) degrees.
- Over twenty-nine percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in higher education, while 70.8 percent were employed in other sectors, including Pre K-12 education (17.4 percent), business (28.3 percent), government service (5.8 percent), healthcare (5.8 percent), military (0.7 percent), nonprofit (3.4 percent), self-employed (6.3 percent), and other (3.1 percent).
- Most graduates with TTU graduate degrees (65 percent) were employed full-time; 19 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were not seeking employment or were retired.
- A majority of graduates (61 percent) with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Texas.
- A vast majority of graduates with TTU graduate degrees (74.1 percent) felt their graduate degrees were very closely or closely related to their current or most recent job.
- Over 85 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were very satisfied or satisfied with their overall program quality. 88.4 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the intellectual challenge of their program and 84.7 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of faculty.
- Graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt their graduate experience would have been enhanced by greater degree/course offerings (21.8 percent), better career guidance/placement (14.1 percent), an improved university infrastructure (10.1 percent), and better professional development (9.8 percent); 23.3 percent felt no improvement was needed.
INTRODUCTION

Graduate education plays a critical role in the workforce strategy of the U.S. and is essential for innovation in all fields of endeavor, from the arts and humanities to science, technology, engineering and mathematics\(^1\). Graduate degree holders bring increased value to the workforce and to society through their specialized knowledge and problem-solving ability\(^2\).

The purpose of this survey was to determine the career paths of students following the completion of their graduate program at TTU and to learn if their graduate program (1) met students’ expectations, (2) helped students attain their career goals and objectives and (3) provided students with the skills to become successful in their careers. The survey was purposefully brief to encourage maximum participation from alumni, including some who graduated more than 30 years ago. This is the first Graduate Student Alumni Survey that Texas Tech University has conducted.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey was administered by the Texas Tech University Office of Institutional Research to all alumni of record who earned a graduate degree at TTU, had an address on file, and graduated between 1940 and 2017 in five-year increments (e.g., 2017, 2012, 2007, etc.).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The survey was a collaboration between the Texas Tech University Graduate School and the Texas Tech University Office of Institutional Research. Kim Cappillino, Cari Carter, Cassidy Reynolds, and Donna Rogers, all of the Graduate School, and Mary Elkins and Vicki West of Institutional Research, contributed to the development of the survey. Mary Elkins, and Kerri Ford, Institutional Research, administered the survey and compiled the raw data.

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Have you enrolled at a college or university since receiving your graduate degree from Texas Tech University?
(557 responses, 3 skipped question)

- A majority (72.1 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees did not continue their education.
- Of the graduates with TTU graduate degrees that continues their education, 16.3 percent continued full-time and 11.6 percent continued part-time.

What is your current employment status?
(558 responses, 2 skipped question)

- A majority (66.2 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed full-time.
- 18 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were not seeking employment, including retired individuals.
If you have enrolled at a college or university since receiving your graduate degree from TTU, what is the highest degree you have achieved or toward which you are currently working?

(156 responses, 404 skipped question)

- Almost 43 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a doctorate; 37.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a master’s degree; 7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a first or second professional degree.

- 7.6 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU sought or were seeking additional credits rather than a degree, including 1.9 percent seeking a graduate certificate, 1.9 percent seeking some type of licensure, 3.8 percent seeking additional credit hours, and 5.8 percent seeking some other type of additional credits.

- Representative institutions at which graduates with TTU graduate degrees continued their education after leaving TTU are as follows:

  - Arizona State University
  - Collin College
  - Lubbock Christian University
  - Southern Methodist University
  - Texas A&M University
  - Texas State University
  - Texas Tech University
  - University of Colorado
  - University of North Texas
  - University of Texas at Austin
  - Wichita State University
  - Texas Tech University HSC
  - Texas Tech University School of Law
  - Texas Woman’s University
Which category best describes the sector of your current or most recent employment?
(552 responses, 8 skipped question)

- In keeping with national trends 29.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in higher education, including 20.1 percent at research universities, 5.8 percent at four-year colleges and 3.3 percent at two-year college/technical schools.
- A majority (64.5 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other sectors, including preK-12 education (17.4 percent), business (28.3 percent), government (5.8 percent), healthcare (5.8 percent), military (0.7 percent), nonprofit (3.4 percent), and other (3.1 percent).
- 6.3 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were self-employed.
- Individuals with TTU graduate degrees obtained employment at the following entities:

AT&T
Boeing
BWXT Nuclear Fuel Services
Chevron
Department of Veteran Affairs
General Motors
IBM
Intel Corporation
Los Alamos National Laboratory
PepsiCo
Price Waterhouse Cooper
Sandia National Laboratories
Schlumberger
Southwest Airlines
Spectrum Science & Software Inc.
Stryker
Texas Instruments
United States Treasury
USDA
United Technologies Aerospace Systems
What is the location of your current or most recent employer?
(517 responses, 43 skipped question)

- A majority (61.1 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Texas.
- 7.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Northeast U.S. states1.
- 8.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in West U.S. and Pacific states2.
- 11.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other Southern U.S. states3.
- 6 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other Midwest states4.
- 93.9 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in the U.S.

1Includes NY, PA, NJ, CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, and ME
2Includes NM, AZ, CO, UT, NV, WY, MT, ID, OR, WA, CA, HI, and AK
3Includes OK, LA, AR, GA, FL, NC, SC, TN, KY, WV, MD, DE, DC, VA, AL, and MS
4Includes KS, MO, IL, IN, OH, MI, WI, IA, NE, SD, ND, and MN
My current or most recent job is closely related to my graduate degree?
(554 responses; 6 skipped question)

- A vast majority (85.1 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees strongly agreed (46.5 percent), agreed (21.8 percent), or somewhat agreed (16.8 percent) that their degrees were closely related to their current or most recent job.

- Only 12.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees somewhat disagreed (3.6 percent), disagreed (5.1 percent), or strongly disagreed (3.7 percent) that their degrees were closely related to their current or most recent job.
If your current/most recent position is/was not related to your graduate degree, what best describes your situation?
(558 responses; 2 skipped question)

- Of the 12 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who felt their graduate degrees were minimally related or not related at all to their employment, 23.3 percent answered “found more desirable position in another field”, 44.2 percent answered “not able to find a position related to my graduate education” and 16.3 percent answered “I have not seriously sought a position related to my graduate degree” as the main reasons.

- “Other” reasons identified for why current/most recent position was not related to graduate degree include the following:
  
  “My graduate degree was in English, and I knew I did not want to be a professor, so I sought career paths (nonprofit and working for institutions that allowed me to apply my skills in different ways.”
  “Years of growing career moved me out of my field at TTU.”
  “Retired from career; work part-time intermittently.”
  “I was promoted from my field of study into university administration.”
  “I was working in this position during graduate school and have not been able to secure another job since graduating.”
How satisfied were you with the following academic elements of your graduate program? Percentages reflect those who responded very satisfied or satisfied.

(515 responses; 45 skipped question)

- Graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt the most positive aspect of their graduate experience was the overall quality of their program (85.7 percent). Intellectual challenge (88.4 percent) and quality of faculty (84.7 percent) were ranked just under quality.

- Specific positive experiences mentioned by graduates with TTU graduate degrees include the following:
  
  “I was provided every opportunity that a mother of 3 boys going back to school could dream of.”
  
  “I completed the distance learning program, which allowed me to work and go to school full time.”
  
  “Positive relationships with faculty.”
  
  “I got a very high standard education experience and I couldn’t find any area where there should be a change.”
  
  “Top notch education and advising.”
  
  “Professors that were willing to take the time to have one to one session when needed.”
  
  “I feel that I still have support from both faculty and fellow students that benefit me today.”
What aspects of your graduate experience could have been enhanced?
(348 responses; 212 skipped question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Guidance/Placement</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program/Class Availability/Accessibility</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climate/Associations with Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bureaucracy/Disquisition Review</td>
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<td>Self Motivation</td>
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<td>Funding (Stipend, Tuition, Health Ins.)</td>
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<td>University Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt their graduate experience would have been improved by greater climate/supportive environment (15.5 percent), enhanced professional development (12.4 percent), and greater program/class availability/accessibility (13.7 percent).

• Graduates with TTU graduate degrees also felt their graduate experience would have been improved by greater career guidance (10.8), more effective communication/reduced bureaucracy (5.0 percent), enhanced stipends/financial assistance (4.0 percent), improved advising (8.0 percent), and improved university infrastructure (9.0 percent).

• 21.3 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt no improvement was needed.

• Specific recommendations mentioned by graduates with TTU graduate degrees for enhancing the graduate experience include the following:

  “Not much of any direction in career planning other than directing others toward academic teaching. A real weakness of the program where there were many strengths.”

  “More engagement with business and industry.”

  “My academic field is transdisciplinary, and I was met with resistance from more traditional faculty.”

  “More exposure to international opportunities.”

  “By involving more into research with the professor.”
Ackowledgements

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