



Recreation Program Alumni Survey 2013

Prepared by

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Background Information

The purpose of the 2013 Recreation Program Alumni Survey was to query alumni from the Recreation program for their perspectives on their relative experience and learning outcomes associated with their involvement in the Recreation Program at Western Washington University. The on-line survey was developed from versions used in years past, but included new questions that were more aligned with recently revised mission, goals, and objectives following reaccreditation for the National Recreation and Park Association-Council on Accreditation. This was done to more directly link the programs' goals and objectives to learning outcomes in preparation for shifting to the new NRPA standards. Faculty reviewed the survey and had opportunity to comment on the content and layout of the questions and answers. A total of 587 alumni were identified from a database made available by the Alumni Office and sent the link to the survey. Of those, 94 emails were returned as not being active or that person was not an alumni, but the wife or husband of an alumni. Therefore, the total sampling frame was 493 alumni. A total of 251 surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 50.9%. The high response rate was a nice surprise. The results of the survey are presented below.

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Figure 1. Percentage of respondents according to the date they graduated the Recreation Program.

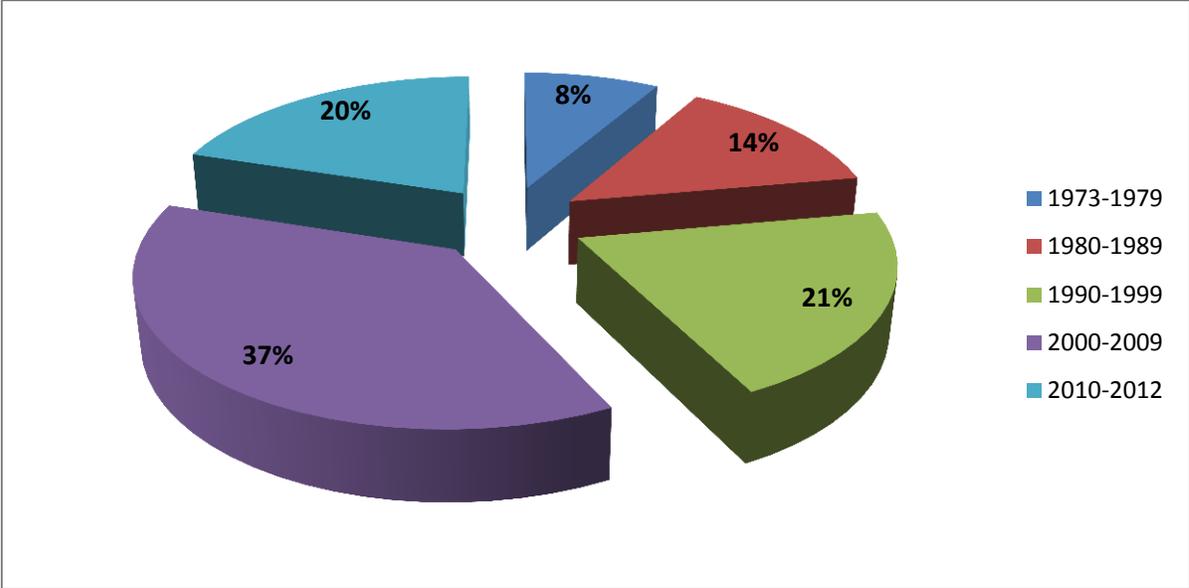


Figure 2. Responses to the question asking alumni to describe their their current employment situation?

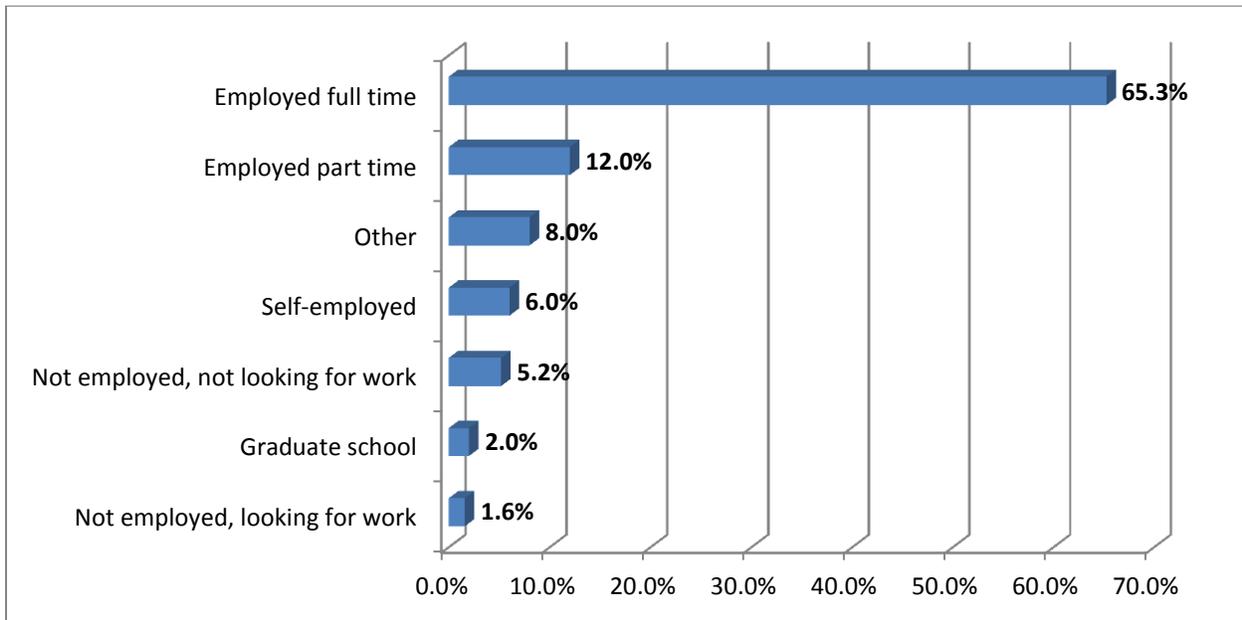


Figure 3. Responses to the question asking alumni if they are currently working in the recreation field.

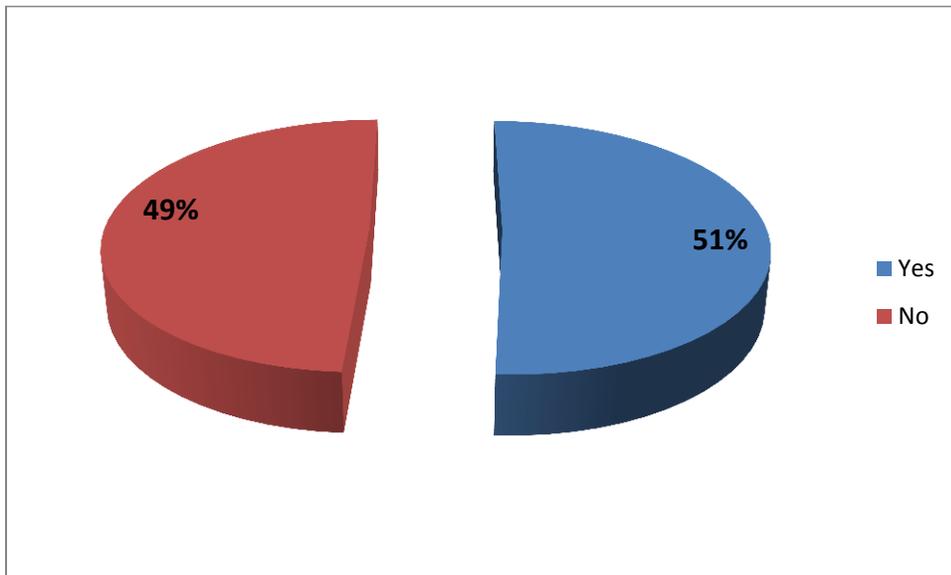


Figure 4. Responses to the question asking alumni whether they would like to be working in the recreation field but have not found the right situation? (Only answered for those indicating that they are not working in the recreation field (N=121))

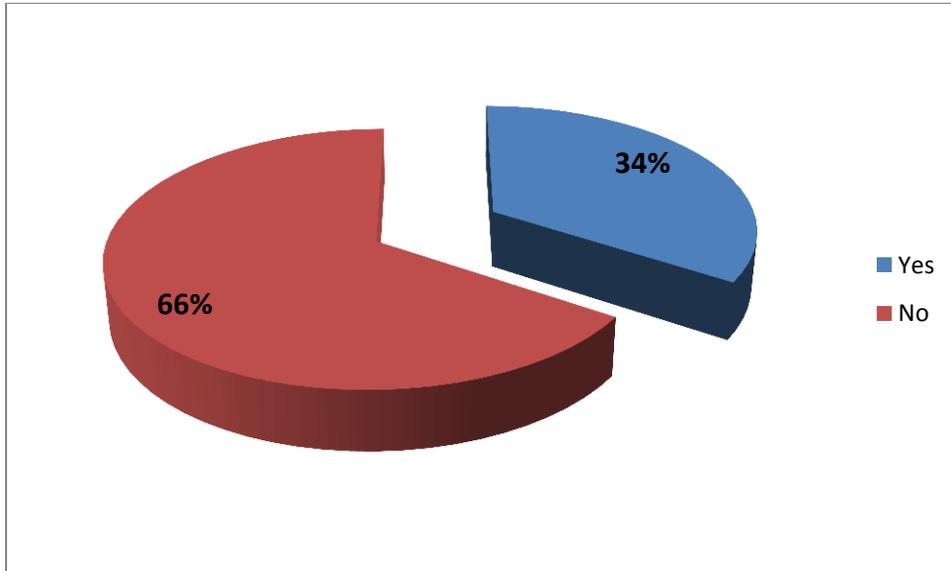


Figure 5. Responses to the question asking to what degree alumni believed the below elements of the Recreation Program were in preparing them for their current or most recent employment position? (Scale is 1=Very effective, 2=Effective, 3=Ineffective, 4=Very ineffective).

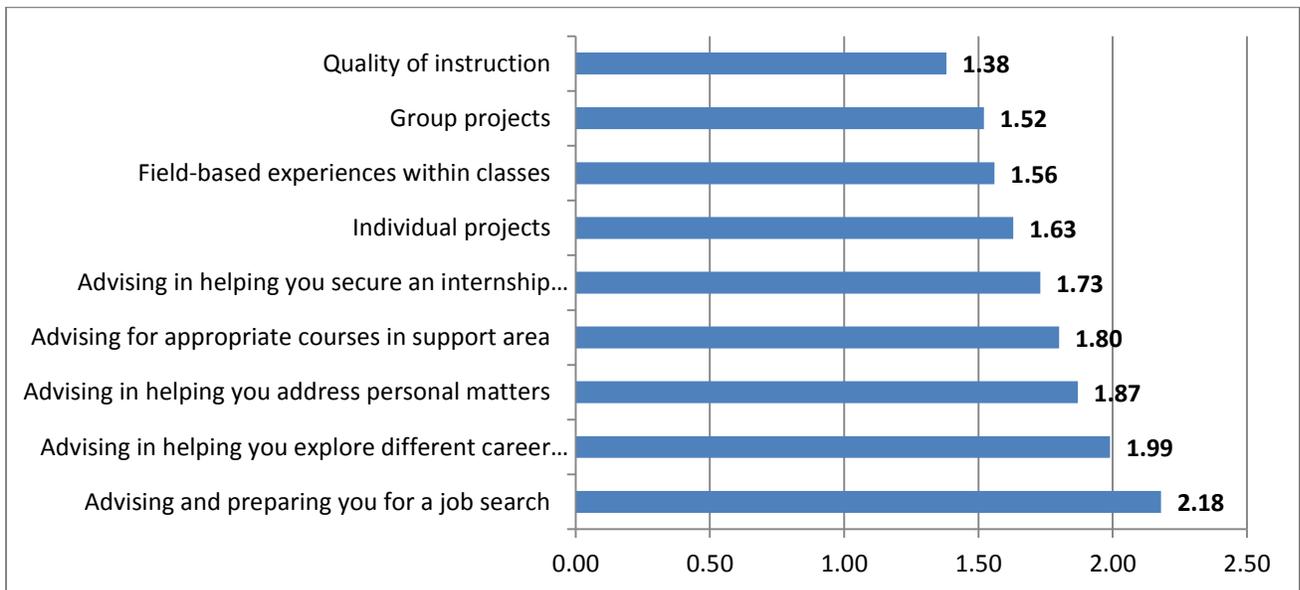


Figure 6: Responses to the question: How satisfied were alumni were with the Recreation Program’s contribution to developing skills and abilities in the below areas (Scale is 1=Very satisfied, 2=satisfied, 3=Unsatisfied, 4=Very unsatisfied).

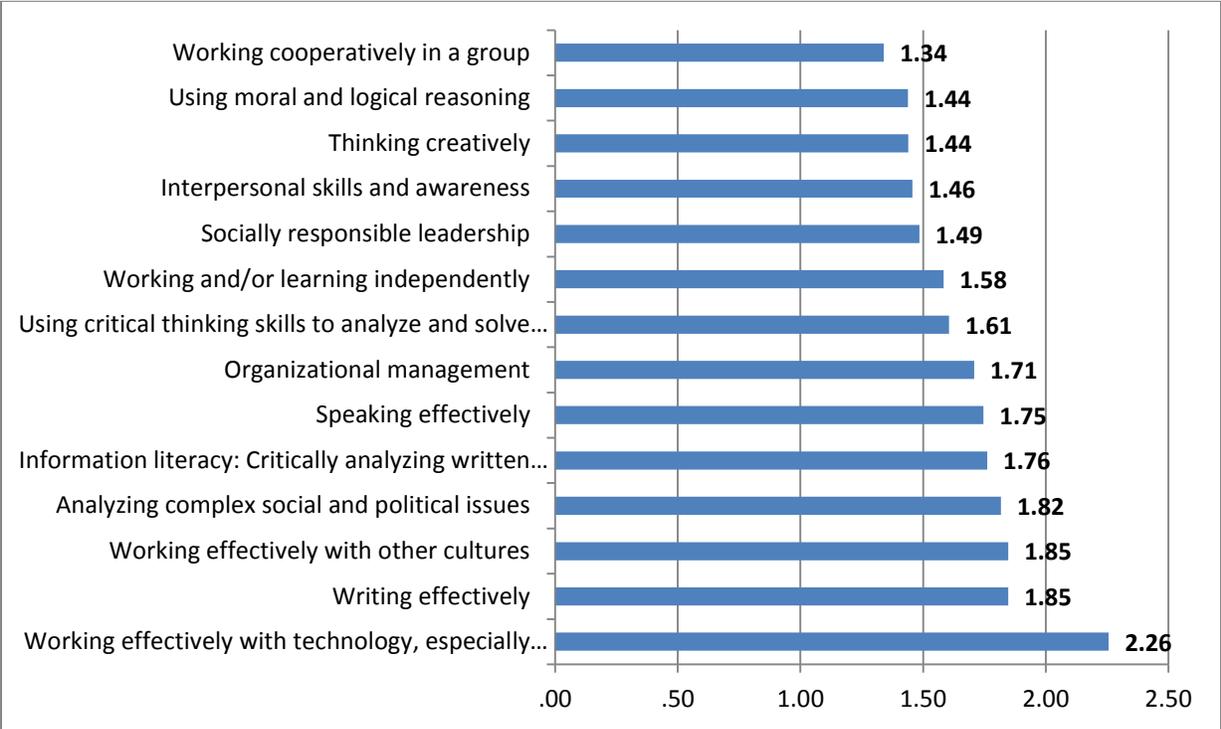


Figure 7. Responses to the question asking respondents to rate which skill and ability was the most relevant and useful for their current or most recent professional position.

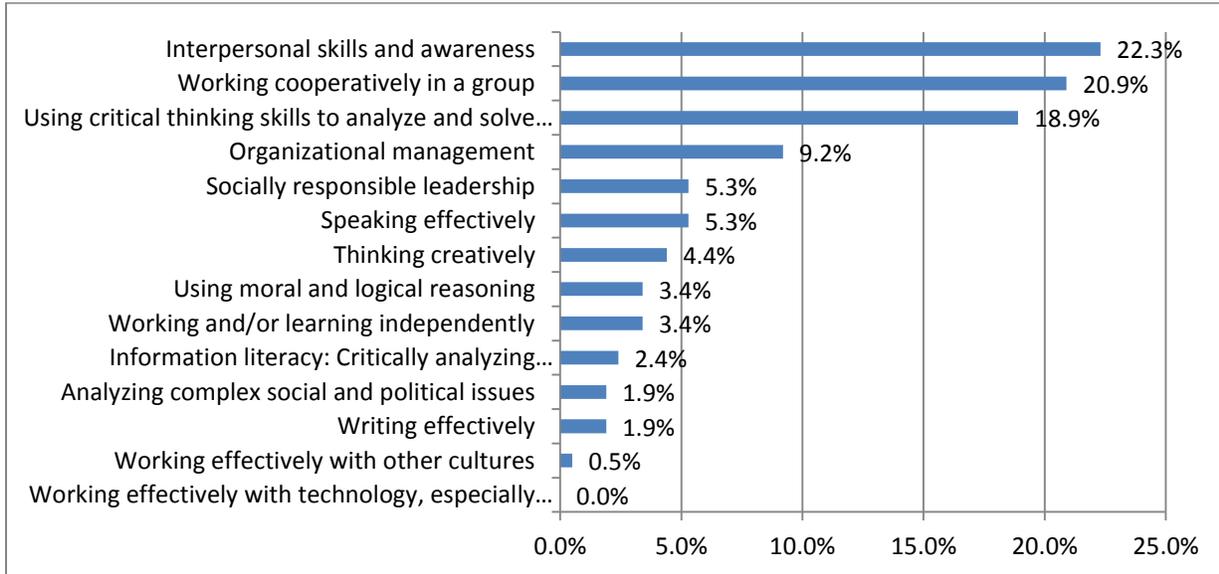


Figure 8. Responses to the question asking how relevant and useful the below courses and topic areas were in preparing alumni for their current or most recent employment situation? (Scale is 1=Very relevant and useful, 2=Relevant and useful, 3=Somewhat relevant and useful, 4=Not at all relevant and useful)



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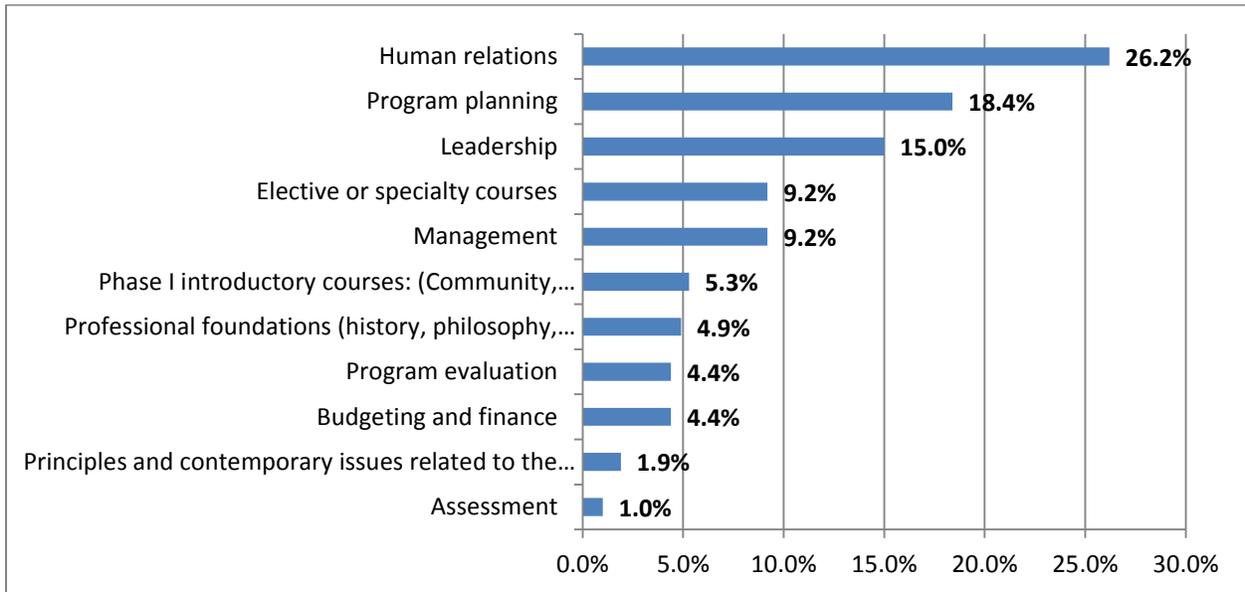


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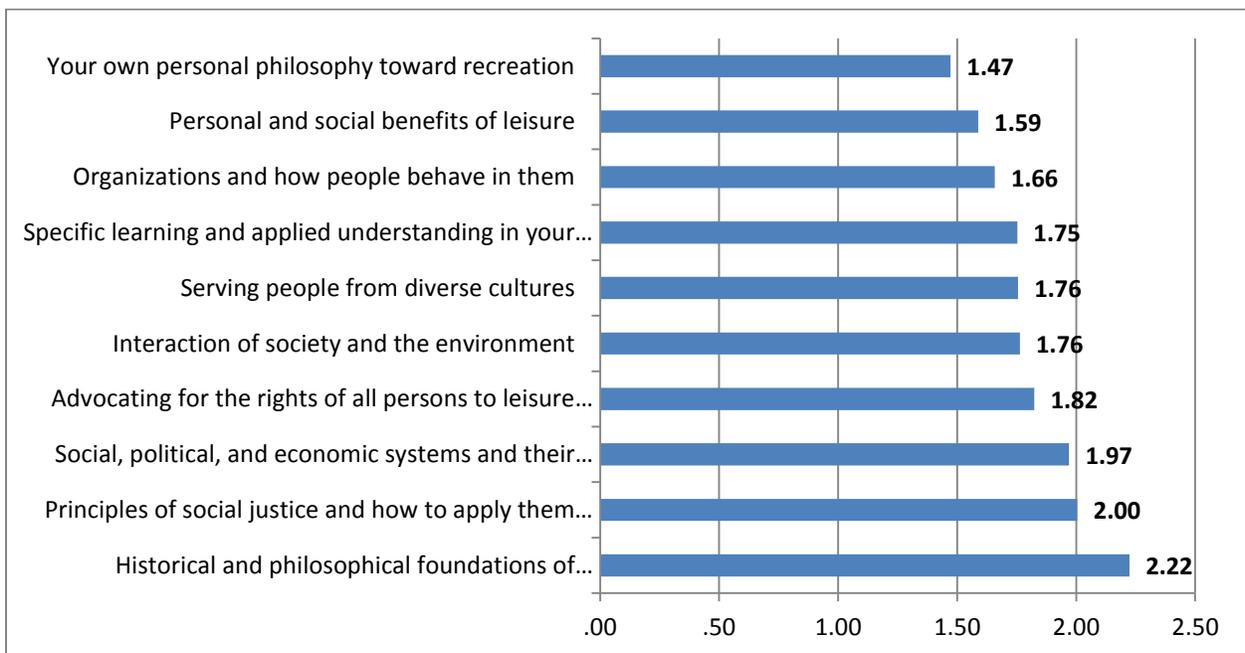


Figure 11. Responses to the question asking alumni to rate the most important course and topic area according to the relevance and usefulness to their current or most recent employment situation.

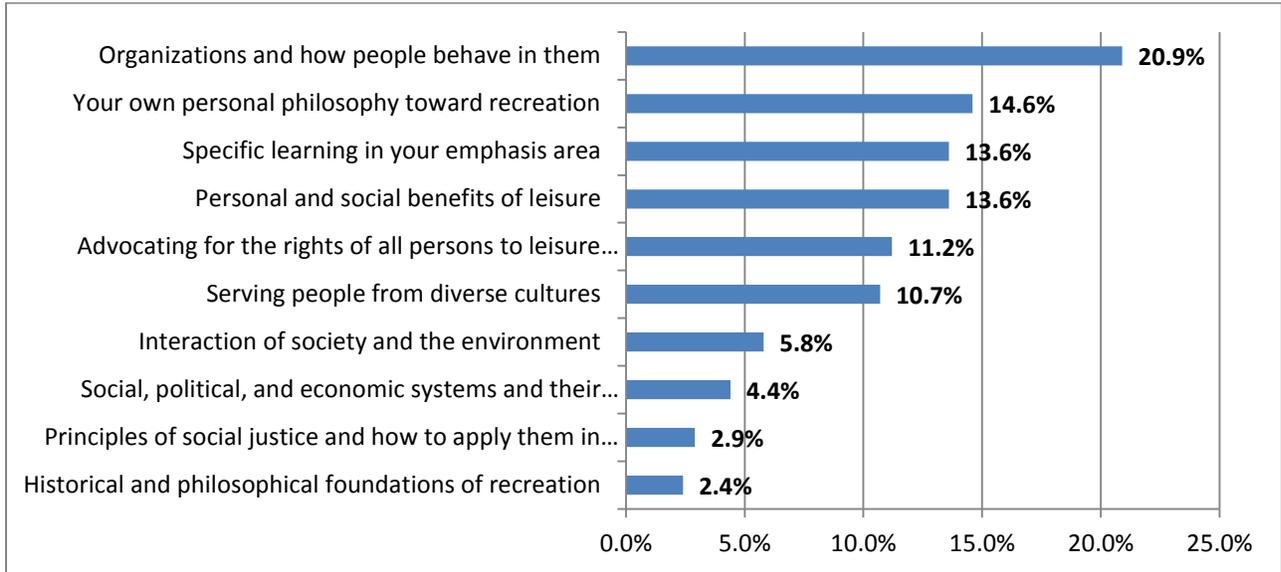


Figure 12. Responses asking alumni to rate the programmatic elements and their importance in the overall education at WWU and the Recreation Program. (Scale is 1=Very important, 2=Important, 3=Somewhat important, 4=Not at all important).

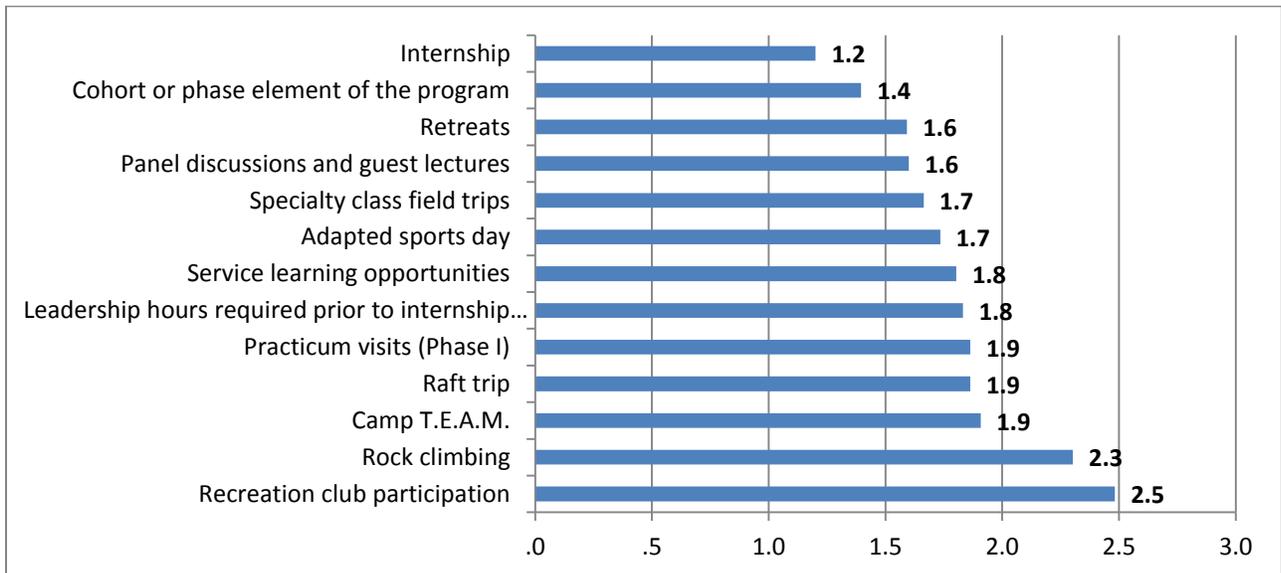


Figure 13. Percentage of alumni who indicated an emphasis area in the Recreation Program

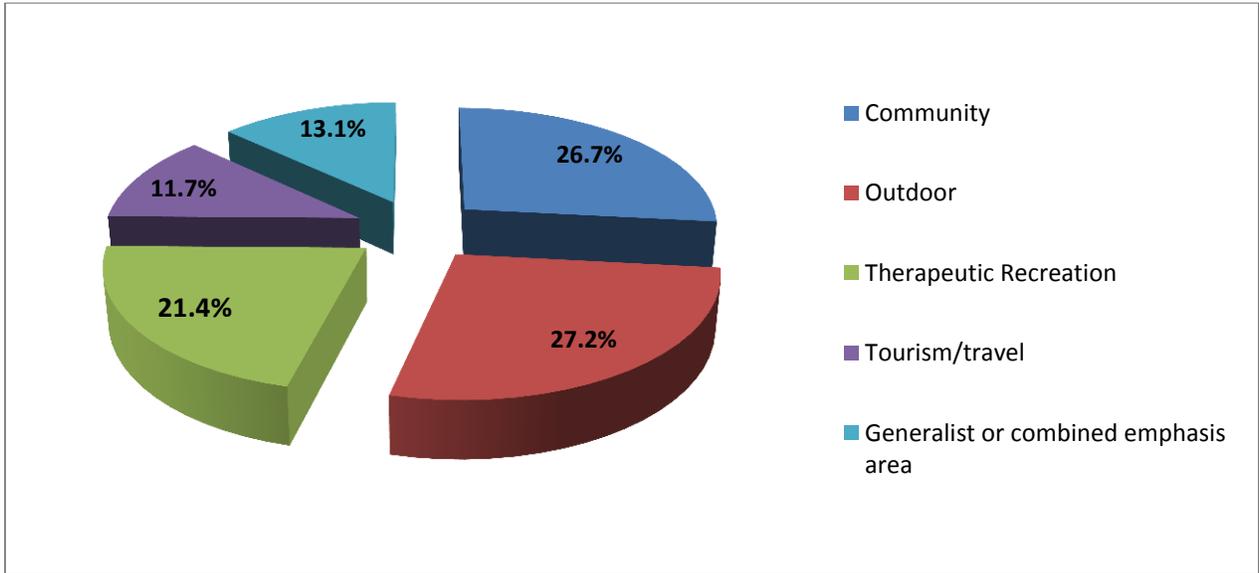


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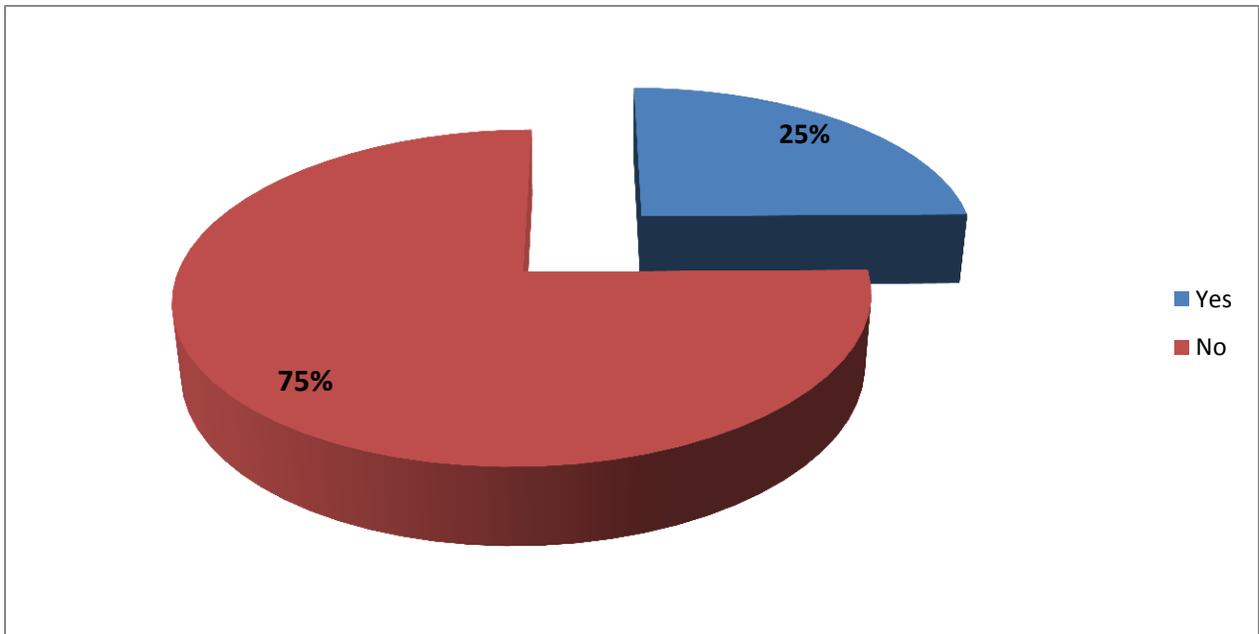


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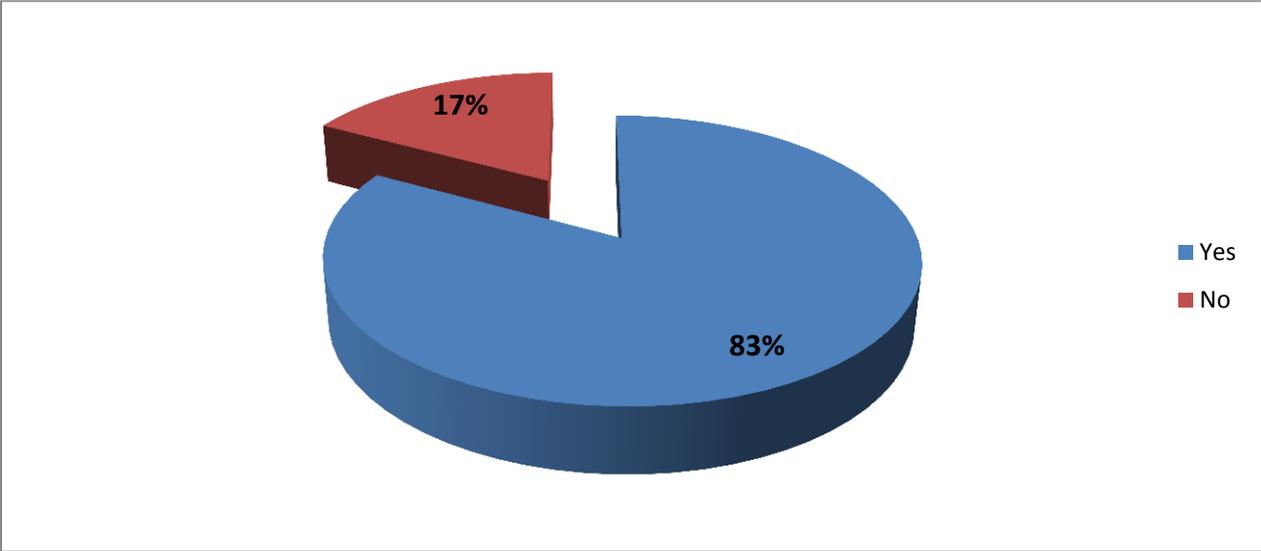


Figure 16 Percentage of alumni who indicated they had attended graduate school, certificate programs, or other educational experiences since graduation.

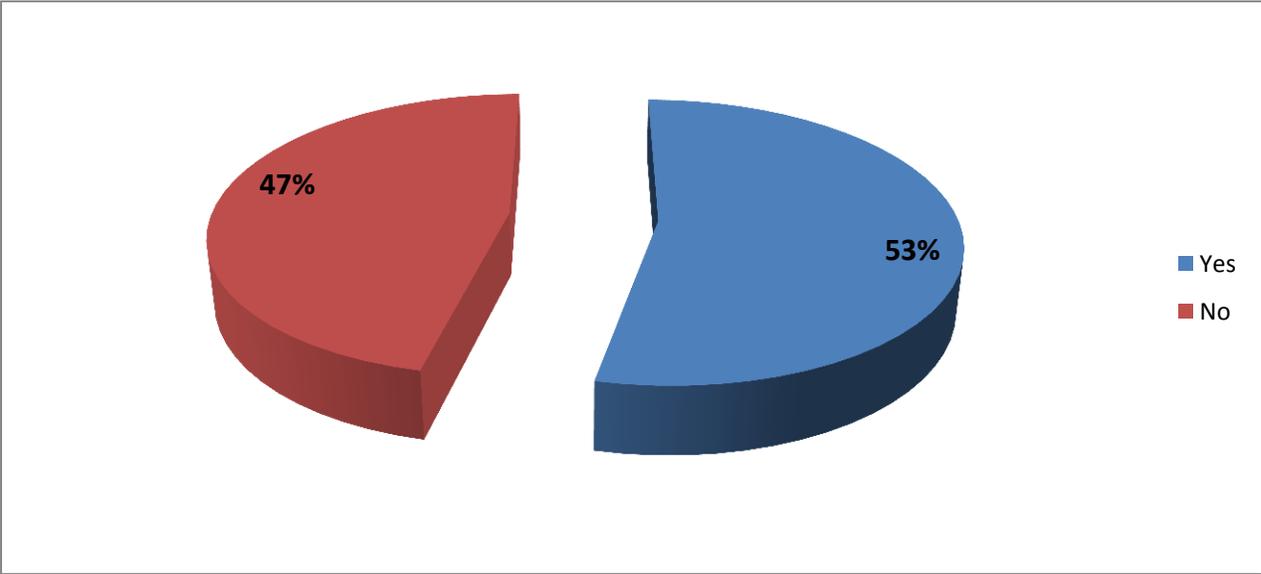


Figure 17. Percentage of alumni who indicated the importance of certification to their professional development and advancement.

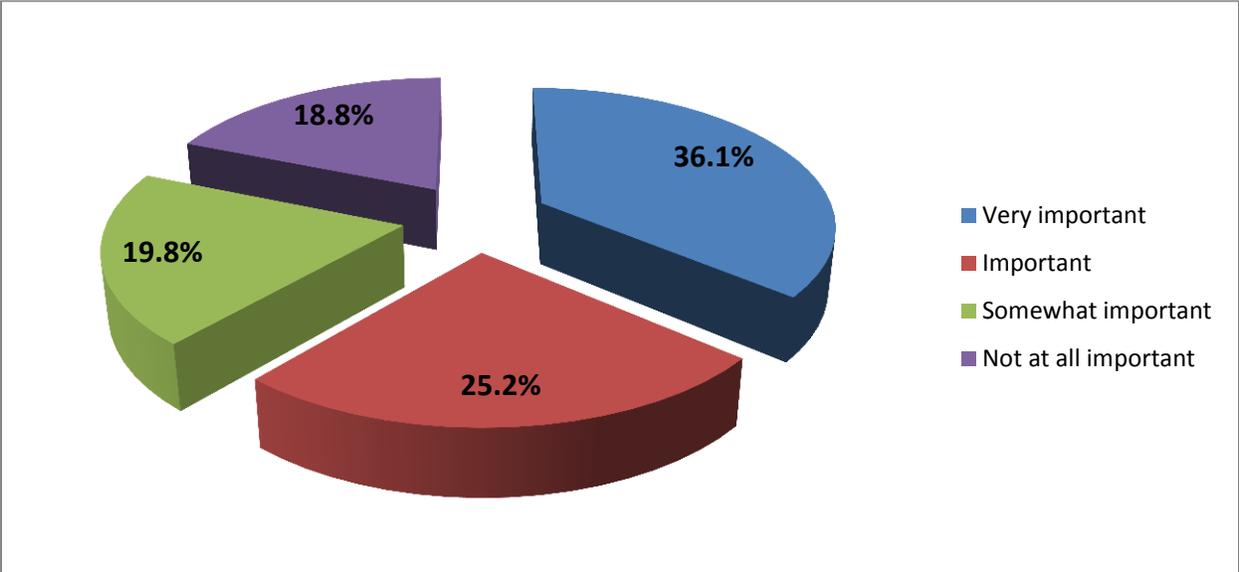


Figure 18. Percentage of alumni who indicated they currently had certification, did not have certification, or were currently working toward it.

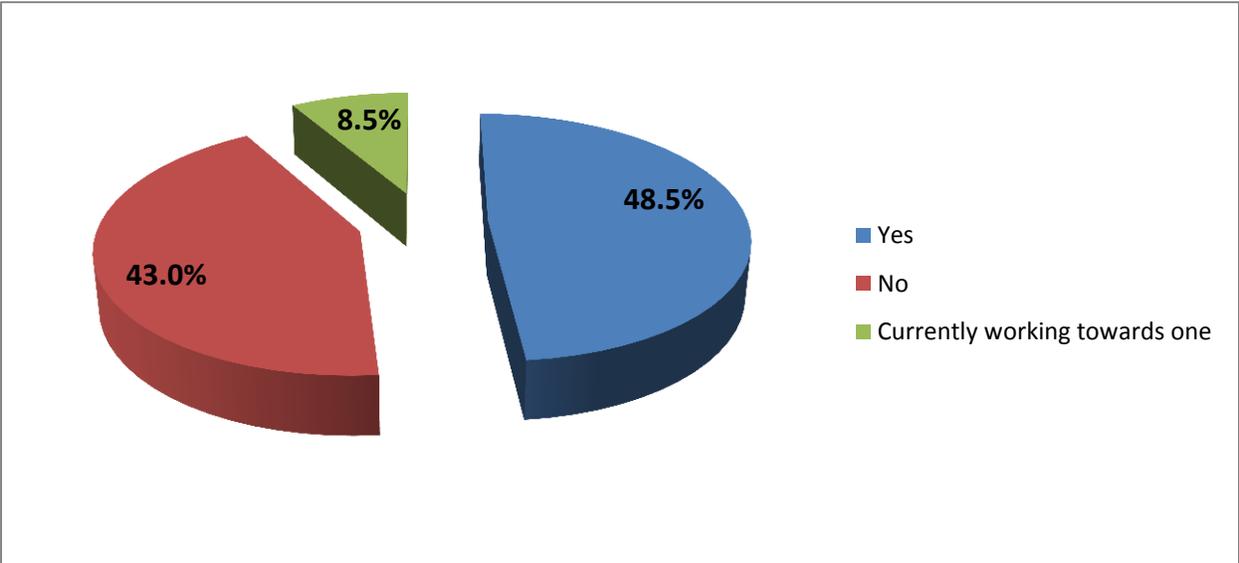
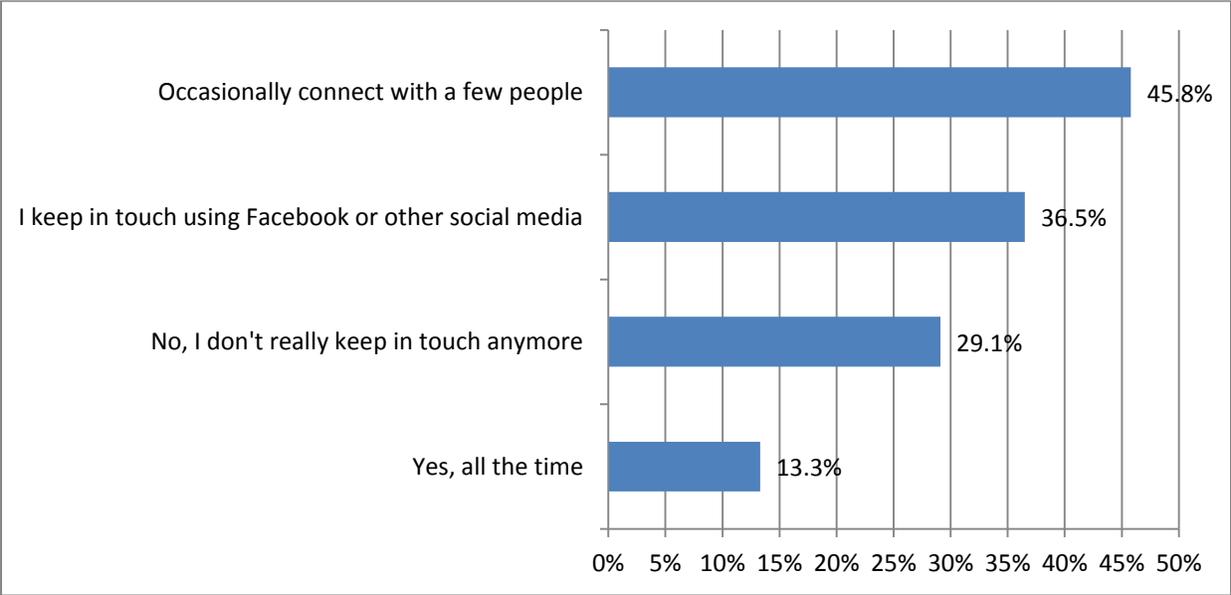


Figure 19. Percentage of alumni by each category when asked whether they currently kept in touch with other Phase students or alumni.



Conclusion and Observations

Sample Demographics

- A total of 22% of this sample graduated from the program prior to 1990 and 78% of the sample graduated between 2000 and 2012
- The largest segment of the sample were graduates between 2000 and 2009 (37%)
- The two most represented option areas were Outdoor (27.2%) followed closely by Community (26.7%). Therapeutic Recreation (21.4%) followed with Tourism (11.7%) the smallest segment.

Employment

- The majority were employed full-time (65.3%), with 18% self-employed or were working part-time. A small percentage were going to graduate school (2%) or were unemployed looking for work (1.6%).
- Slightly more than half (51%) were working in the recreation field, and 49% were not. We have the ability to look into the types of work they were doing from qualitative responses.
- When asked if they would like to work in the recreation field (for those that were not, 49% of the sample), 66% indicated they would not, while 34% said they would, but they had not found the right situation. That means that 41 respondents of the 251 would like to be working in the recreation field but have not found the right situation.

Attitudes Toward Elements of the Recreation Program

Respondents were asked to what degree they believed various elements of the Recreation Program helped prepare them for their current or most recent employment position.

- The top three factors that averaged in the *Very Effective* range (1.38 – 1.56) of the scale were the “Quality of Instruction,” “Group Projects,” and “Field Experiences within Classes.” The lowest ranked item that averaged in the *Effective to Ineffective* range (2.18) was “Advising in and Preparing for a Job Search.”

Attitudes Toward Skill and Knowledge Development in the Recreation Program

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the Recreation Program’s contribution to developing skills and abilities in various areas that were related to goals and objectives of the program.

- The top three rated items were “Working cooperatively in groups,” “Using moral and logical reasoning,” “Thinking creatively,” and “Interpersonal skills and awareness.” All items were ranked in the *Very Satisfied* range.
- The lowest ranked items were “Writing effectively,” “Working effectively with other cultures,” and “Working effectively with technology.” Working effectively with technology was the only one with an average over 2.0 (2.26), indicating dissatisfaction.
- “Interpersonal skills and awareness,” “Working cooperatively in groups,” and “Using critical thinking skills” were the top three ranked most relevant skills and abilities learned respectively.

- Other topic areas that were ranked as relevance and usefulness to their current employment situation were the “Development of their own personal philosophy of recreation,” understanding the “Personal and social benefits of leisure,” and learning about “Organizations and how people behave in them.”
- The two lowest ranked items were the “Historical and philosophical foundations of leisure,” and “Principles of Social justice and how to apply them.”
- Learning about “Organizations and how people behave in them” was the most important topic learned in relation to their current employment situation.

The Relative Importance of Specific Courses and Programmatic Elements

Alumni were asked to rate the relative importance of specific courses to their current employment situation.

- Human Relations, Leadership, and Program Planning were the three highest ranked courses.
- Foundations (201), Principles and Contemporary Issues (480) and Introductory Courses were the three lowest rated courses.
- Internship, the Cohort or Phase, retreats and Panel Discussion and Guest Lectures were the highest rated Programmatic elements
- Recreation Club, Rock Climbing and Camp Team were the three lowest rated elements. It should be noted that only Rock Climbing (2.3) and Recreation Club (2.5) were rated over 2.0, indicating a *Important* to *Somewhat Important* rating .

Other Conclusions

- Three-quarters of the respondents had not participated in an alumni event.
- The vast majority (83%) indicated they would like to participate if they were able.
- More than half (53%) had advanced training, education, or certification credentials and 61.% indicated that this was *Important* or *Very Important* to them.
- A total of 81% indicated they occasionally keep in touch with Phasers, using various means, including social media. Slightly less than a third (29.1%) do not keep in touch at all.

Figure 20. Open Ended Responses from the Question: Is there anything else that you want to tell us ?

<p>It was excellent, and I would do it all over again if I could. I am currently looking into my masters at Gonzaga in Organizational leadership and business.</p>
<p>For me our individual project and learning about types of management were the most important parts of the Rec program.</p>
<p>It was a wonderful time of my life in college and the recreation program was still in its infancy i.e. prior to Jim Moore and Charlie and Jill. So the quality of the program I attended was good but I believe that it has improved immensely over the past 35 years. I worked in the field for almost 30 years and now I work in education after being 'retired' for 3.5 years.</p>
<p>The unique thing about this Recreation Program is that I left it not just more prepared professionally than when I started, but I left it a better person than when I started. I recommend this program to people frequently.</p>
<p>I love this program, it was so impactful in my professional development. I loved the critical lens of this program, emphasis in social justice and the phase/cohort environment for learning.</p>
<p>Conceptually the course material is well founded. I have had a difficult time feeling prepared in finding a career within the recreational field that utilized what i studied. My current occupation while in the recreational field would be better supported with a business degree.</p>
<p>Networking, networking, networking has been a very beneficial aspect from the phase</p>
<p>It was a great program...keep up the good work!</p>
<p>It changed my life!</p>
<p>I married a co-phaser! I wish I would have double majored or at least minored in another subject area. The phase was one of the best experiences of my life. I am thankful for the top notch professors that we were able to learn from and work with.</p>
<p>Although I didn't go into the recreation field the lessons I learned through the program have been beneficial wherever I have worked. Management and working in group most noticeably. As a project manager for a hospital system I use those skills every single day.</p>
<p>The Rec. Program changed my life in a very positive way. I entered it as a very shy, insecure person with big dreams and left it with confidence and a readiness to tackle those dreams. Thank you, Rec. Faculty!!</p>
<p>I learned that my interest is in working with people not in an office so chose a lower paying job to be in the outdoor environment and am very happy in my position as courtesy patrol supervisor.</p>

<p>Each of the instructors participated in a time of my life that i was highly motivated to find my own personal berings. My almost daily memories are occupied by the nuggets of insights and perspectives of my instructors. never underestimate the impact of your words and actions no matter how trivial. Phase transcends all that we do ,recreation is a cornerstone of of our motivations and i treasure the insights i have acquired</p>
<p>I have used the skills from the rec program as a volunteer with Camp Fire, church youth group, and other organizations I have been involved in.</p>
<p>This program changed my life in the most positive way. I reference things I learned in rec everyday in not only my sailing instruction job but also as a marketing specialist at a Yacht Brokerage. Almost everything I learned has been applicable. Rec is so much more then a major, it is an opportunity to grow... I met my best friend in rec, I fell in love in rec, and most importantly I grew up in rec, into a person that I love and respect.</p>
<p>The group leadership training has been extremely important in all my current endeavours.</p>
<p>This was one of the greatest/most defining times of my life. The structure of the Phase, quality of instruction, and emphasis on teamwork makes this program stick out above others i ever looked at. I advise every young person i come into contact with that has an interest in Recreation to seriously consider the WWU Recreation Program. I miss my time in the Phase.</p>
<p>The Recreation Program at WWU was such an amazing learning experience for me. It solidified everything that was important to be and more. I am still very passionate about the importance of recreation and improving people's lives with it. Unfortunately I live in an area where jobs in recreation are limited and it has been a challenge getting my foot in the door. Spending is being cut so the only jobs available that would get me started are for High School applicants and are part time (no benefits and poor pay). When there are jobs available, a lot of times they are filled with people who might not have the same education as me, but have 10-20 years experience (which seems like it trumps education at this point). For now I am working to pay bills, but I keep my eyes out all the time for new opportunities to change people's lives, one "chase the chicken" experience at a time! Thank you for a wonderful educational experience and a program I will always cherish.</p>
<p>I loved every second of it. If it hadn't been for the Recreation program, I would have dropped out of college and never gone back. When I think of Western, I think of the Recreation Program.</p>
<p>Even though I am not directly working in the Recreation Field, I feel like experiences gained (in the field projects, group projects, presentations, debates, the phase, etc.) have taught me so much more, which can be used in every day life!</p>
<p>I loved it and am so lucky and appreciative that I got to be a part of it. I would not trade the experience for anything! Thank you!</p>

<p>It was really great. My disadvantage was my narrow focus. I knew exactly what I wanted to do in life so I didn't challenge myself, especially with my internship. If I could go back in time, I would have done an internship that was out of my comfort zone. As I recall, Ron tried to talk me out of the internship I chose. He was wise and I was young and kinda not very wise. After about a decade after being in my chosen career, life intervened and I changed my path to fit my family situation. I've been out of the rec field since, save for a 2-term stint on the City of Auburn's Arts, Parks, & Recreation Board. Ron, Charlie, Jim & Jill were great. Good times.</p>
<p>Good general education. I wasn't sure what I wanted as an undergrad. The program gave me a good basis in group dynamics and working with people which is important in most fields. I have had many years of general and specialty education since and still find myself thinking of specific lessons from the Rec program as a basis for a decision I am making today.</p>
<p>Wonderful program; skills learned can be applied to so many work environments.</p>
<p>Internships are crucial and any opportunities to network. Also tactics and tools for personal awareness and growth- the change from college to 'the real world' is an extremely hard transition.</p>
<p>I cherish the program and all it gave me. As you might glean from my answers, my most precious learnings centered around interpersonal skills as they are used in all areas of my life and I'm constantly thanking Jill, Jim, Ron & Charlie for making us do all the role playing that many of us thought was 'silly'. They were right - we were wrong. I'm glad they had us do it! :-D</p>
<p>I am incredibly thankful that I went through the Phase. I created friendships and networks that are still thriving to this day. It also helped me to feel as if I were truly part of a strong community, not just another face on campus. It helped me to grow closer to the type of person I want to be.</p>
<p>It was amazing! Enlightening, motivating, and inspired me to pursue a lifelong career in outdoor recreation! I love that once you're a "phaser," you're always a phaser, and that the professors are always willing to mentor/advise - even years after graduation. Thank you to all!!!</p>
<p>It was a fantastic time. I felt like I learned a lot and have continued to use this knowledge in both my professional and personal life.</p>
<p>I loved the rec program and the phase. It was an awesome experience.</p>
<p>Wonderful preparation for a quality life.</p>
<p>I truly enjoyed being a part of the Recreation Program. The experience while in the phase was a great support to myself and helping me to learn. I was able to push myself as a student and because of the design of the program faculty were able to encourage my strengths as well. I am currently supervising my second intern and I would not feel equipped to this on without my strong educational background in the field. Seeing how other programs prepare their students, it's hard not to compare to WWU. Thank you for all the time, energy and passion you put into the program.</p>

<p>I value the class work that was given to u in regards to how it fits into our professional lives and worldly understanding. That being said I do with there were more hard skills focused classes to be able to tie in the class work to outdoor experiences I stead of just the retreats and teaching games. Overall the</p>
<p>I am not in the recreation field, but I loved my experience in the phase.</p>
<p>I live in Mount Shasta but I still love Bellingham and am very grateful for the Rec program. I would very much enjoy getting back in touch with some friends from my Phase.</p>
<p>Outstanding program! Incredible staff, great mentors and role models. Met some wonderful people too.</p>
<p>I loved everything about it. The community it provides and the foundation it built for me!</p>
<p>It was one of the best experiences in my life. When I look back on my time at Western I always smile thinking on the recreation program and all the people in my phase. It significantly changed my life for the better. I love going to work every morning and am so glad I found the recreation field.</p>
<p>I don't think there is anything quite like the Phase; it is a wonderful being led by amazing faculty.</p>
<p>It was good in helping me become a State Park Ranger but I retired after 15 years because of the emphasis had changed to law enforcement. I went to a new career as the Lab Director at my local hospital. The Science based electives I used for my Recreation degree helped me move in a new direction. I loved being a Park Ranger but didn't like being a cop</p>
<p>Good program back in 77, but would have been better if I had graduated later when recreation classes were more focused on specialty areas. Spent 32 years working with very intense mental health clients.</p>

<p>I worked in the Recreation field my first 10 years away from Western. The program showed too heavy of an emphasis on municipal Recreation and not enough on Not for Profits and Commercial. The budget class was a joke. Budget and Finance should show up in every course along with public speaking and meeting facilitation. The reality in the field is that you have to manage finances, show competence amongst your colleagues, while at the same time demonstrate that you have vision moving forward. The instructors during my time in the phase had poor pedagogical skills (with the exception of Charlie Sylvester) and consistently demonstrated that they had been out of the field for too long, or were dipping their toes into part time efforts where the revenue side of the budget was already in place. My opinion on these matters has grown and developed since working in the field and having to match my "training" and education to the demands on the job. Sadly, I relied more heavily on work experience and less on instruction or guidance I received in my undergraduate program. I should add that my survey results reflect program participation several years ago so social justice and equity were either not touched on or minimized. I am however curious how the program is marketing itself to folks interested in geriatric programs given the number of retirees leaving the work force. The phase needs to beef up the commercial programming and talk more about operating programs that appeal to older active Americans including motorcycle trips, wine tasting, etc. Society has changed, and I am hopeful the phase is keeping up.</p>
<p>Charlie made a significant impact in showing me the importance and true value of Recreation in our lives. I appreciate the phase set up n helped me feel part of a true family at wwu.</p>
<p>I do not work in the industry and have not for a long time but my education from the Recreation Program has benefited me greatly throughout my career. I have fond memories of my time in program...and it would be fun to see my group of "Phasers" again at an event.</p>
<p>Looking back, I feel like I was kind of babied. I rarely felt genuinely pushed to my full potential, and I don't feel like I learned a whole lot. However, I did gain a lot of awareness of certain demographics affluence, human relations, and project research, which I greatly enjoyed.</p>
<p>I wish I could do it all over again! It will always be an incredible milestone in my life.</p>
<p>I would have liked to have had more of a focus on Ecotourism, how it relates to business practices, and job search tips/ job search expectations. I wish I had been better prepared for how to look for a career type job or how to market myself. Other than that, the program was fantastic and I rave about it to others.</p>
<p>It was a great experience and education. I think integrating some various certification courses into the curriculum or at least more awareness for the value of certifications would be highly beneficial to future students. Cant get a job with no certs it seems. Keep up the good work. It was impactfull to all areas of my life.</p>
<p>No.</p>

Ron Riggins and Jim Moore both had a tremendous influence on my life. I am most certainly a better teacher, coach, husband, and father because of the lessons they shared and examples they set.

I can't say it enough, the Recreation Program and staff at WWU were who helped make me the person I am today. I enjoy the success that I have today based on the things I learned in the "Phase" I continue to use principles and skills learned from my experience and am shaped by the philosophies of Dr. Sylvester and Dr. Riggins. I am truly blessed and thankful that I was able to experience the lessons learned in Carver and although I don't work in a recreation field, every day I go to work I can apply what I learned. Feel free to contact me anytime about the Recreation Program at WWU.

Dean Shelton

Captain/Paramedic

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I couldn't be happier with my experience in the Recreation Program at WWU. It was the best learning environment I have ever experienced. The learning was incredibly practical to all aspects of my life, not solely my career. The warmth and passion the professors shared was contagious. The community created in the phase was genuine and supportive and greatly contributed to my success. I will forever strive to bring the energy, compassion, insight, togetherness, joy and wisdom found in Carver 110 to all future aspects of my life.

It was a wonderful experience but I will not ultimately be working in any of the fields associated with Recreation. I have, unfortunately, met with a great deal of skepticism about my degree and am going back to school for a second degree that will open more doors for me. I appreciated everything the program had to offer but the things that have been truly relevant to my life post-graduation have had more to do with the broader concepts that the Phase taught, and far less to do with Recreation.

Living off campus and working I was very out of any social peer activities. I had no friends in the program.

I've never had a second thought about graduating with a degree in recreation. It has led me down the right path in life

My niece is now in the program! I was very satisfied with the program and the phase experience in general.

Some of my best educational and social experiences of my life. Keep up the good work.

I miss it already, and I can't imagine what college would have been without it.

<p>I didn't intend to leave the recreation field. But our Phase 4 was during 9/11. Our industry tanked. I decided to go into teaching, and my Rec degree has become the best foundation for great success as a teacher of elementary and middle school grades. I 'walk the wheel of awareness' all the time, and I challenge my students out of their comfort zones daily!!</p>
<p>I had an excellent experience with Ron, Jim and Jill. My love and passion for the field of recreation the past 32 years has a lot to do with the phase program. Thanks</p>
<p>I would recommend the program to anyone! My mom always said the program was more like a graduate program with the quality of our education along with the meaningful and genuine relationships we built with our professors and classmates. I completely agree! There's been times post graduation I question whether I'm using my degree. Four years later, with numerous amazing experiences along the way, I'm working full time for the organization where I did my internship. It's been an awesome experience and I'm in the field of therapeutic/outdoor recreation where I couldn't ask for anything much better. Thank you to all of the professors in the WWU program and the program itself.</p>
<p>I loved that time, even though it could be quite demanding. I don't work in the field now but gaining confidence in myself and my ideas has helped in what I do now.</p>
<p>I think the internship was one of the most important parts of going through this program. I believe that students as well as the professors should really promote a well balanced and reputable organization for the internship. Many of the students that I know didn't do anything on their internship and I felt like it was a waste. I AM and always grateful that my phase attended the WRPA Conference and that professors emphasized the importance of networking. I wouldn't be where I am today without that skill.</p>
<p>It was the most incredible thing ever, and I will never ever forget it. It changed my life.</p>
<p>Awesome.</p>
<p>One of the best decisions of my life. I wish I had had more guidance in choosing an internship, mine turned out really horrible but it helped me figure out what I did not want to do. My Rec degree has helped me in many aspects of my life. Now I am a stay a home mom but I make sure my baby exercises and is going to be involved in the outdoors and Community Recreation programs. I had done more a Community emphasis instead of Outdoor, I found I already knew most of the outdoor curriculum and worked as a adventure wilderness therapy guide for a year then worked for 3+ years in a Community Rec setting.</p>
<p>I loved the phase and hope to be invited to alumni events in the future. I have never been invited or received any information until this survey and look forward to future communications.</p>

<p>While the management end was weak and the tech/computer stuff was pretty much non-existent (a few business classes taught by business profs would help), the life skills and values emphasized were useful for anyone in any profession and I would recommend the program to anyone with even the slightest interest. To have teachers who are so passionate about the subject is inspiring.</p>
<p>I am glad to see that it has grown and continued to update. Dr. Ron Peterson, who created the program should be applauded. I have friended the woman who started the program at Ohio State. She has since retired. She too thinks highly of him. Great experience.</p>
<p>Since I graduated over 30 years ago, some things have changed and most liely gotten better with age</p>
<p>I graduated so long ago that most of this does not apply as the program was much different, times were different, and requirements were very different. Thank goodness for change.</p>
<p>Thanks for the experience, I am a better person because of it.</p>
<p>I was there so long ago... But I worked as a park ranger in interpretation for about 11 years after. It was a good preparation for the job...one I'd like to go back to.</p>
<p>I have become increasingly aware that what the Recreation Program accomplished for its participants was the development of practical pastoral skill sets for given arenas. For me, the arena's of focus were, youth, the outdoors, and travel. I am finding that these skills happily apply to every day life whether defined as "work" or not.</p> <p>I would encourage the program to continue to dive deep into questions of purpose, meaning, value... the "why" of what we do. The program excelled at teaching me "how" but I a increasingly being challenged to articulate "why" to myself and others. There was definitely opportunity for this in the program and I want to affirm that and encourage continuation of that. Just a heads up... these questions usually lead to questions of life, God, spirituality, meaning, faith, etc.... as I am sure you can guess.</p> <p>Keep up the good work. My experience in the program was one of the best parts of my life to date, I love dearly many phase members and keep up with them, received great education and encouragement from faculty and wouldn't trade the experience for almost anything.</p> <p>Last thought... Life seems like one big trust fall most days. It's a good thing we practiced. :)</p>
<p>Social media has been a huge part of my job, and it is something that wasn't really covered in the phase. I think that it would be nice to talk more about the role of social media in recreation jobs, have some guidance on best practices for social media, and the effects of social media on recreation</p>
<p>the program developed my skills to enter the business world when Recreation jobs were not available to me</p>
<p>I loved my time in the Recreation Program. Even though recreation is not where my career is headed now, I still think the experience was extremely valuable. One thing I would add if possible is doing a better job of connecting students with employers. Maybe a career fair?</p>

Amazing program!
I was one of the pioneers - the group that saw Jim Moore and Ron Riggins arrive to take the helm of our Phase II. Thank-you WWU (it was WWSC when I started school) for a well-rounded education.
Great program, well organized which builds strong leadership and provides an important service to communities around the country and world.
A previous faculty member did our management class, and I find myself consistently wishing it had been a better course. The Rec program prepared me _exceptionally_ well for my current job but not when it comes to management strategies and training, systems development, organizational culture etc.
I have worked in the youth development field in management and for the past 15 years as an Executive Professional. The more that the department can connect the curriculum to real job settings, that will help. Internship and fieldwork was so valuable for me. I would like to stay in touch with some graduates from my class thru social media. Is there a facebook page for alumni?
I am thankful to have had such a unique opportunity, and felt very supported through the whole Phase experience. Even now, I feel like I could call for help and support if I needed it-either from staff, or classmates.
Sorry I left a few answers blank, I don't recall some of the program content, it was not taught when I was a student or I did not participate as I transferred into Phase 2.
Although I did not go on to a career in recreation... it was a very important part of my life. Glad I did it.
Wonderful program, I use a lot of what I learned in my classroom and with the youth groups I help run at my church. Some of the best memories I have from WWU!
Great program, great professors, great lifestyle
I was in one of the first programs and enjoyed the experience although most of what the survey covers was not available. I left recreation field after 15 years to pursue a career in Fire Command.
Nope.

<p>Involvement of professors with their students was very important. I'm still in contact with one professor in the program (we currently serve on a board of directors together). Professors in the Rec program (at least when I was in the program) were very involved with their students and were very interactive. It was nice. I had friends in other programs at WWU and professors didn't even know their name!!! I know it seems like a small thing, but it was huge for me. I was a very quiet student and having professors who actually took the time to do simple things like learn my name...it made me much more comfortable in class and much more willing to get actively involved in my education.</p>
<p>Charlie Rocks :-)) and loved the phase</p>
<p>I am currently a program manager at Microsoft where I run a new hire training program. Although it is not "recreation" I use a lot of the skills I learned during the Phases. It is very much event type planning in a corporate environment and I know my rec background is what makes me successful at this job. Thanks!</p>
<p>I wish the class lists could be posted online somewhere . . . I remember people's first names but not their last names, so it's tough to track them down and get in touch.</p>
<p>I graduated in 1973, prior to what is happening now with the rec. program. It is hard to remember exactly what classes I took....40 years is a loooooooong time.</p>
<p>Loved everything about it!!</p>
<p>Good job! One question: It doesn't seem like I ever receive an invitation to the banquet. Both my phase as a whole and one of our phase members each received an award, and it was years later that I learned about honors. Not a pressing issue, but I would have liked to attend at least those two.</p>
<p>I think it would be really beneficial to have some classes on facility management. Rental Halls, Picnic shelters are a large part of my job now and it's a seperate side of recreation that we didn't go over. Also, the CLASS software is used in most cities and could be nice for them to see it before graduation. Post graduation and looking for a job was really difficult and it took me a long time to find a job in the field. I didn't feel like I had much support from the professors during this time. I think it was mostly because of the current work load they have with the current phase, so I understood. Otherwise, it was a very fun 2 years and I recommend it to people all the time.</p>
<p>I look back on my Rec Phase experience with extreme and gratitude for Charlie/Jill/Ron and my classmates...both for my professional development and for being a wonderful environment for personal discovery and growth. Thank you!</p>
<p>Keep it up!</p>

While not in the field of recreation - Phase was a great learning system and fun time - There are many aspects of the program and my degree that I can apply today both professionally and with my own recreation (family) -- Still smile when think of Ron, Jim, Charlie and Jill, many of our trips, experiences and friends from my program.

Was one of the best experiences of my life. Although I am not practicing, I still have used a lot of the information throughout my life.....

Unforgettable. Amazing. The best. Thank you.

I think there should be more required classes. I'm not prepared for the business world I need a broader background in management, HR, accounting, database experience, grant writing, marketing and video production, social media. More clinical and internships should be required. I'd suggest an administrative and leadership/facilitation internship.

It was a great idea on paper, but has been completely useless in the job market that started to tank just before I graduated. It took me 2 years of constant searching to get a job that paid as well as the one I had before going to WWU, and it is totally outside of recreation. I am now a member of the leisureless masses we were taught to help. Some days knowing that something better is out there is motivating and helpful, but many days it is just demoralizing, depressing, and annoying. I wish my professional dreams had come true and that I could rate the program higher; I really enjoyed it, but it did nothing for me occupationally.

I loved every minute of it. It was challenging yet enjoyable.
PS. I miss all of you!! :)

I chose Recreation because I had to declare my major and I didn't really know what I wanted to do. My roommate was a Rec major and she kind of talked me into it. Although I enjoyed the program, it has never really "done anything" for me. I was too shy to seek Academic Advice from someone to help match my skills and passions with a degree. After working in my field for 4 years, I became a Secretary and have worked at WWU for a long time. I was always kind of embarrassed that I never became "somebody" - perhaps you can help other floundering students to seek Academic Advice instead of just going through the motions to obtain a 4-year degree. I am too busy in my personal life as a working mother to take advantage of the importance of Recreation in my personal life. It's been a struggle. I sure wish I would have had a little bit of support or help from an Advisor at WWU to help steer me in a direction that could have helped me find a career I would be proud of - and could make a decent living at.

Although I am not working in the field, I benefited greatly from the skills learned during my education and internship that provided the foundation for a successful career, as well as for use in my volunteer efforts and involvements.

I'm not using my recreation degree any more, but I would say it was a very important part of my path. It gave me skills to teach environmental ed for many years, which then led me to become a teacher, and now I'm a curriculum developer and editor. Plus, recreation shaped my views on the workplace and the importance of leisure, which is super necessary in a busy work life. I don't regret earning this degree for a second; it's shaped me immensely.

love the recreation program! :)

I loved it! It was wonderful !! Great memories. I am no longer working in the Rec. field but did for many years. I am now working as a massage therapist and love that. Thanks for the memories and good times!

I'm not sure if you have plenty of internship opportunities for students, however connecting with former students like myself, still working in the field would be an excellent resource for internships. I work for Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation. We have adaptive programming and community recreation programming for over 1 million residents. We do internships with other agencies, but have not at this time with WWU. Glad to hear the program is going so well. I greatly value my experience in the R & P program at Western.

graduating in 1974 I do not know what the phase program is. No one has ever explained it to those of us prior. Most of the questions really don't pertain to my experience.