

THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND

THINK BIG  WE DO™



Undergraduate Student  
Evaluation of Education at  
The University of Rhode Island

Results from the 2008-2009  
Post-Graduation Survey

**Office of Institutional Research**

**January 2010**

## INTRODUCTION

In 2009 Career Services conducted an online survey of students who had received degrees in August, December, and May of the 2008-09 academic year. This report contains results for one question that asked about the level of satisfaction with how well a URI education prepares students.

Students were contacted up to three times by email between February 1<sup>st</sup> and April 18<sup>th</sup> (2009) for graduates in summer 2008, between May 7<sup>th</sup> and June 3<sup>rd</sup> (2009) for graduates in fall 2008, and between November 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> (2009) for graduates in spring 2009. The survey was conducted in three segments to keep the period between graduation and participation approximately six months for all three degree conferral groups. All response data were combined into one analysis for the academic year.

## RESULTS

Of 2027 baccalaureate degree recipients invited to participate in the survey, 304 submitted answers, yielding a response rate of 15.0%. Demographic data are shown in the Appendix tables. Responding and non-responding groups were compared using appropriate statistical tests (Chi-square and t-test) to evaluate how well the whole population of recently-graduated students was represented. No statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) were found based on gender, residency type, or minority status (self-reported race/ethnicity of Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Native American compared to White); however, respondents did have significantly higher SAT Composite scores and final grade point averages than non-respondents. Also, respondents with degrees from the College of Engineering are over-represented and those from the College of Arts and Sciences are under-represented. Although these differences do not invalidate the survey, the results may be skewed toward the academically more successful and particular majors.

To gauge the level of satisfaction with how well a URI education prepares students, twelve items were addressed. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale. For most of the items, 268 responses were returned. The question was phrased as follows:

*My education at the University prepared me well for (answer choices for each of the following items: 1. Strongly agree, 2. Agree, 3. Neither agree nor disagree, 4. Disagree, 5. Strongly disagree):*

Frequency distribution are shown below – both for all respondents and recalculated excluding the omitted responses. It is unknown why 36 respondents declined to answer these questions. Individual respondents overwhelmingly omitted all items as a block rather than selectively choosing items to answer so distributions are similar for both calculations.

CAREER EMPLOYMENT

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	55	18.1%	20.5%
AGREE (2)	130	42.8%	48.5%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	44	14.5%	16.4%
DISAGREE (4)	25	8.2%	9.3%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	14	4.6%	5.2%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 268 MEAN = 2.30 STDEV = 1.06 MEDIAN = 2.00

FURTHER GRADUATE EDUCATION

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	77	25.3%	28.7%
AGREE (2)	133	43.8%	49.6%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	37	12.2%	13.8%
DISAGREE (4)	16	5.3%	6.0%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	5	1.6%	1.9%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 268 MEAN = 2.03 STDEV = 0.92 MEDIAN = 2.00

APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	57	18.8%	21.3%
AGREE (2)	110	36.2%	41.0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	79	26.0%	29.5%
DISAGREE (4)	18	5.9%	6.7%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	4	1.3%	1.5%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 268 MEAN = 2.26 STDEV = 0.92 MEDIAN = 2.00

BEING INTELLECTUALLY CURIOUS AND A LIFELONG LEARNER

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	73	24.0%	27.1%
AGREE (2)	158	52.0%	58.7%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	26	8.6%	9.7%
DISAGREE (4)	10	3.3%	3.7%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	2	0.7%	0.7%
NO RESPONSE	35	11.5%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 269 MEAN = 1.92 STDEV = 0.76 MEDIAN = 2.00

OPENNESS TO NEW IDEAS

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	79	26.0%	29.5%
AGREE (2)	149	49.0%	55.6%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	31	10.2%	11.6%
DISAGREE (4)	6	2.0%	2.2%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	3	1.0%	1.1%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 268 MEAN = 1.90 STDEV = 0.77 MEDIAN = 2.00

INVESTIGATING THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	72	23.7%	26.9%
AGREE (2)	140	46.1%	52.2%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	44	14.5%	16.4%
DISAGREE (4)	12	4.0%	4.5%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	0	0.0%	0.0%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 268 MEAN = 1.99 STDEV = 0.78 MEDIAN = 2.00

THINKING INDEPENDENTLY AND REFLECTIVELY

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	87	28.6%	32.6%
AGREE (2)	145	47.7%	54.3%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	23	7.6%	8.6%
DISAGREE (4)	10	3.3%	3.7%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	2	0.7%	0.7%
NO RESPONSE	37	12.2%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 267 MEAN = 1.86 STDEV = 0.78 MEDIAN = 2.00

UNDERSTANDING THEORIES AND APPLICATIONS

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	75	24.7%	27.9%
AGREE (2)	161	53.0%	59.9%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	26	8.6%	9.7%
DISAGREE (4)	6	2.0%	2.2%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	1	0.3%	0.4%
NO RESPONSE	35	11.5%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 269 MEAN = 1.87 STDEV = 0.70 MEDIAN = 2.00

THINKING CRITICALLY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	91	29.9%	34.0%
AGREE (2)	143	47.0%	53.4%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	25	8.2%	9.3%
DISAGREE (4)	8	2.6%	3.0%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	1	0.3%	0.4%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 268 MEAN = 1.82 STDEV = 0.75 MEDIAN = 2.00

USING SOCIAL SKILLS FOR TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP

	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	96	31.6%	35.7%
AGREE (2)	126	41.5%	46.8%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	31	10.2%	11.5%
DISAGREE (4)	13	4.3%	4.8%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	3	1.0%	1.1%
NO RESPONSE	35	11.5%	

CONVERTED TO NUMERIC SCALE: N = 269 MEAN = 1.89 STDEV = 0.87 MEDIAN = 2.00

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

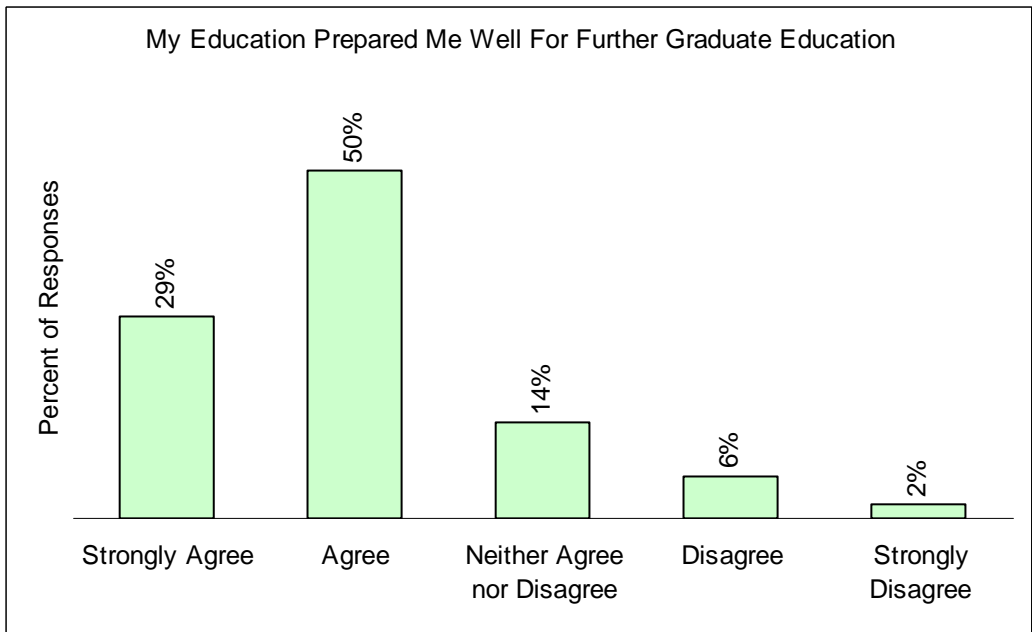
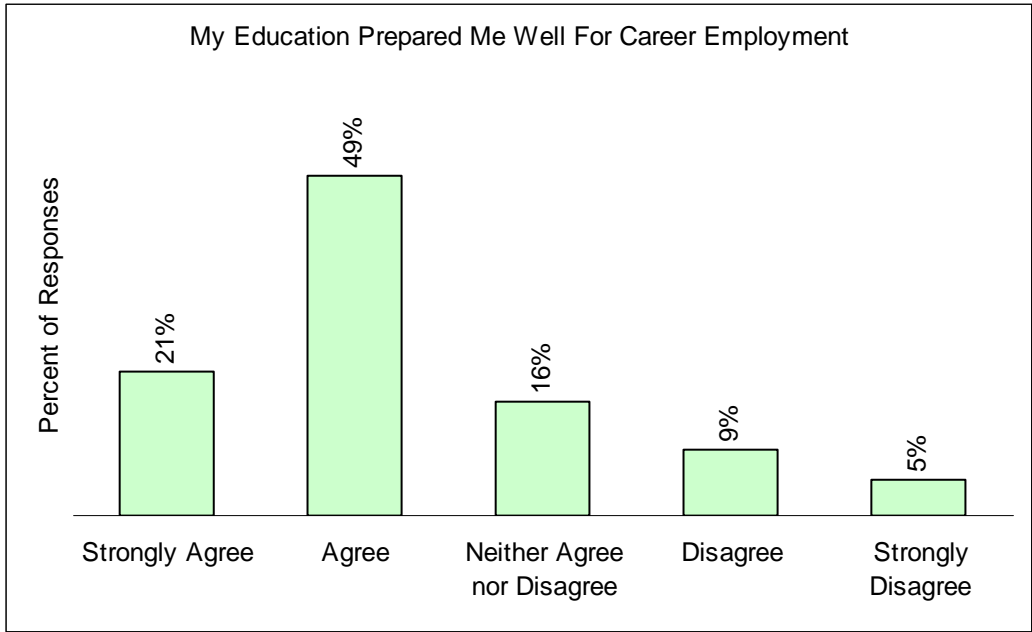
	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	88	29.0%	32.8%
AGREE (2)	141	46.4%	52.6%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	27	8.9%	10.1%
DISAGREE (4)	10	3.3%	3.7%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	2	0.7%	0.7%
NO RESPONSE	36	11.8%	

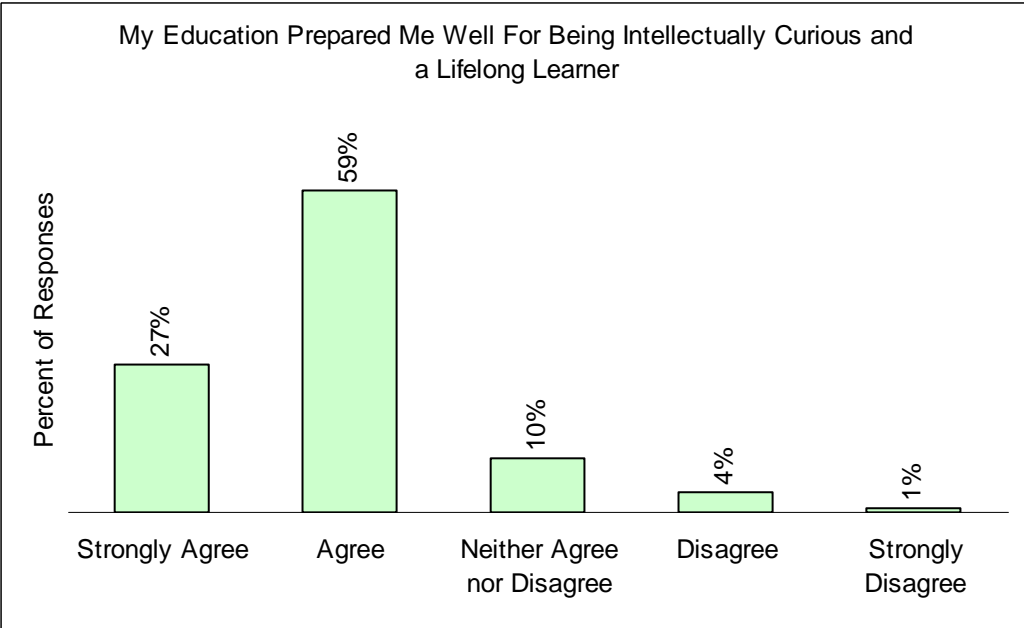
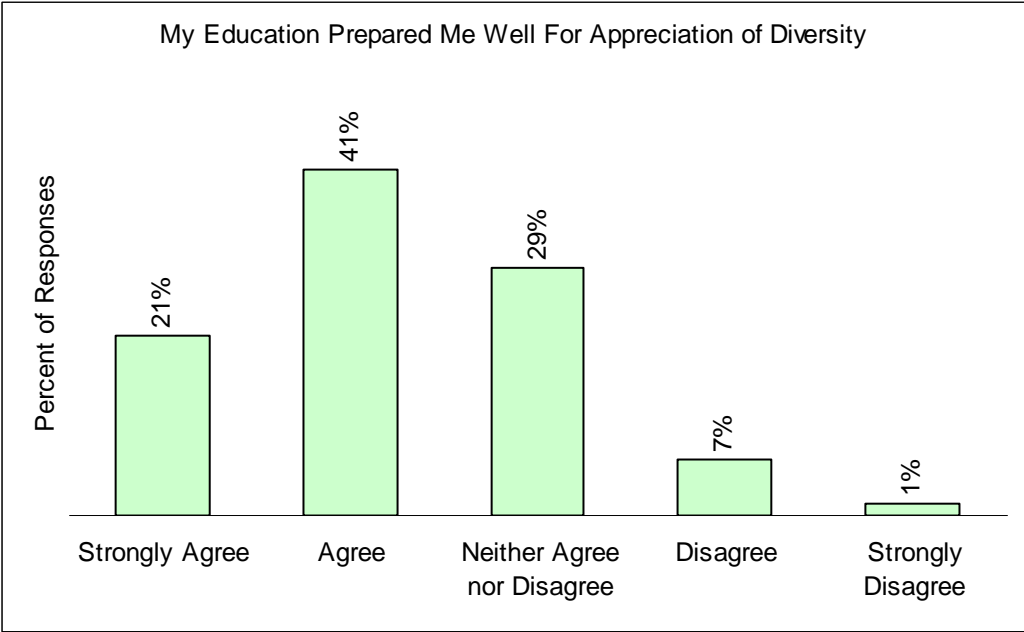
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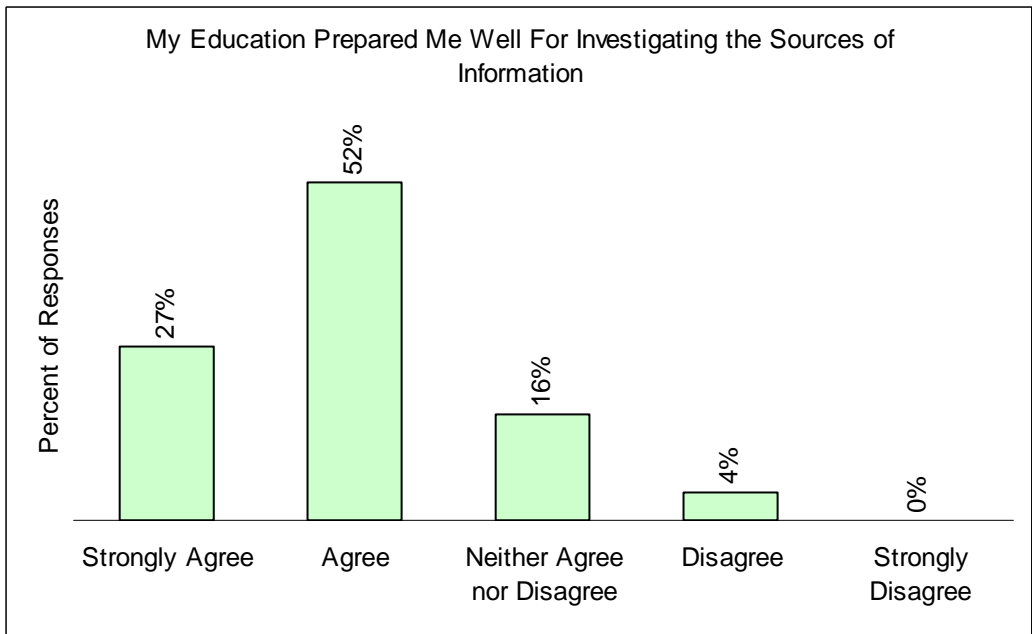
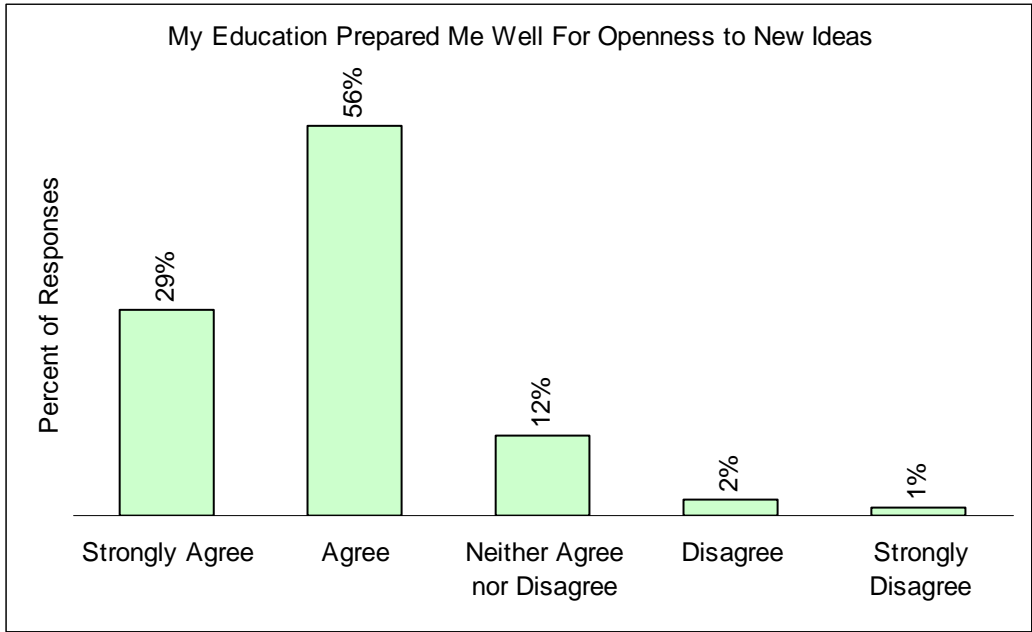
USING SKILLS, TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES

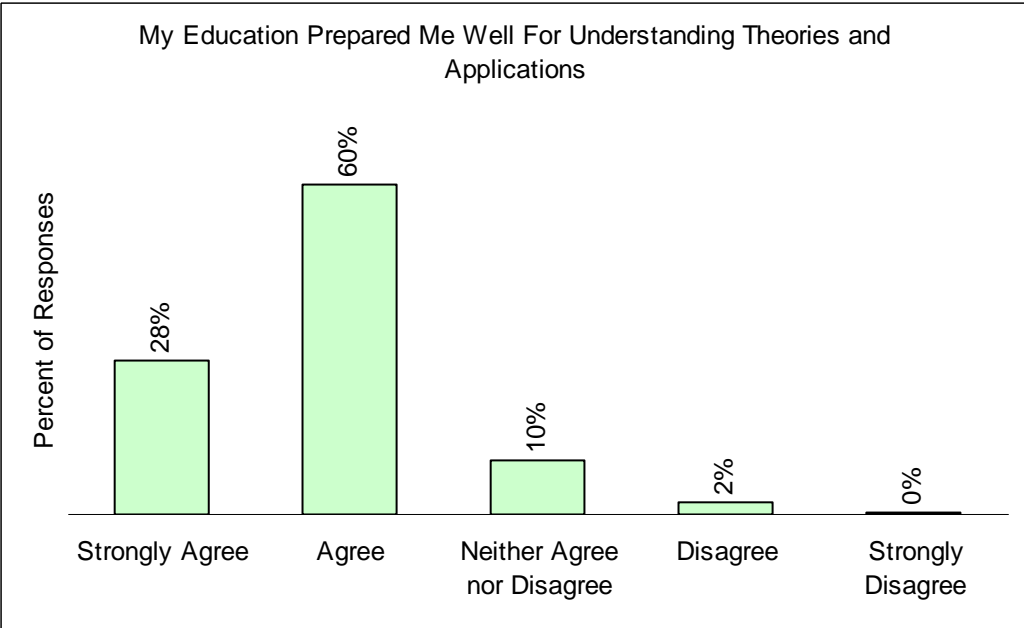
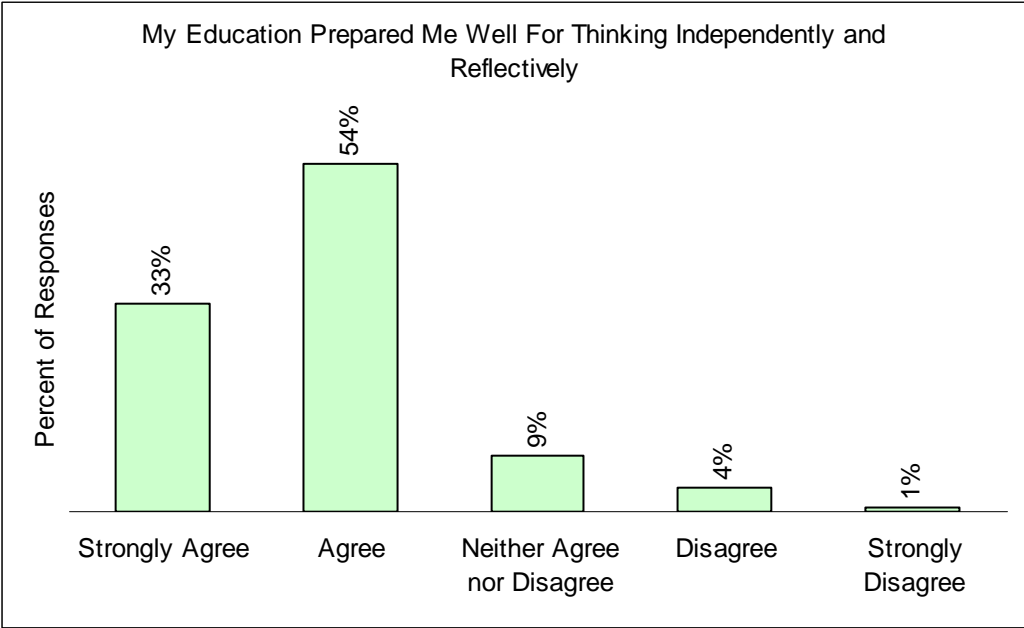
	NUMBER	PERCENT	OF RESPONSES
STRONGLY AGREE (1)	81	26.6%	30.1%
AGREE (2)	150	49.3%	55.8%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (3)	23	7.6%	8.6%
DISAGREE (4)	12	4.0%	4.5%
STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)	3	1.0%	1.1%
NO RESPONSE	35	11.5%	

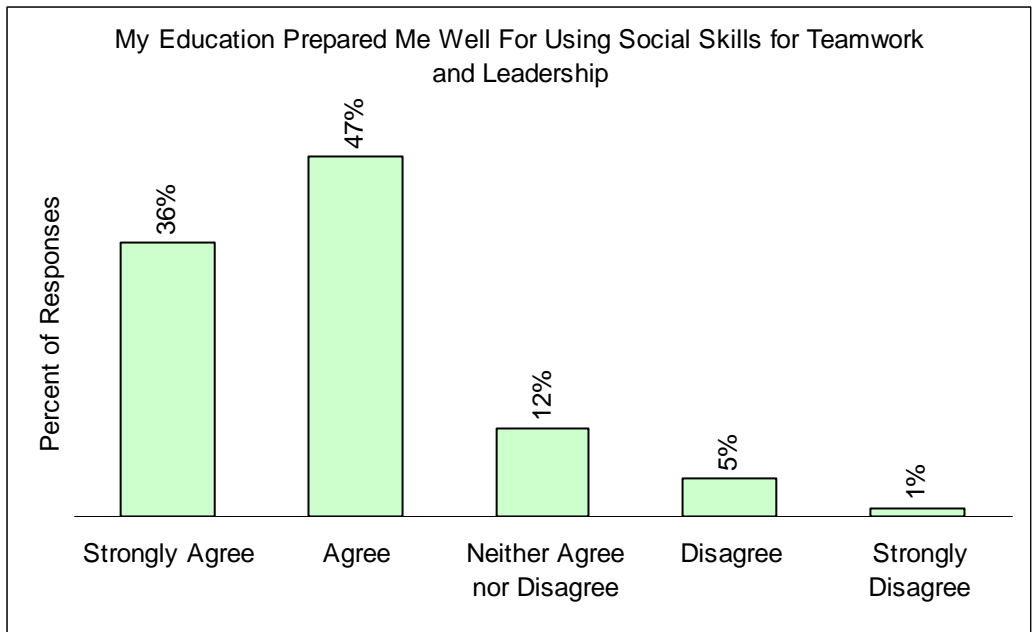
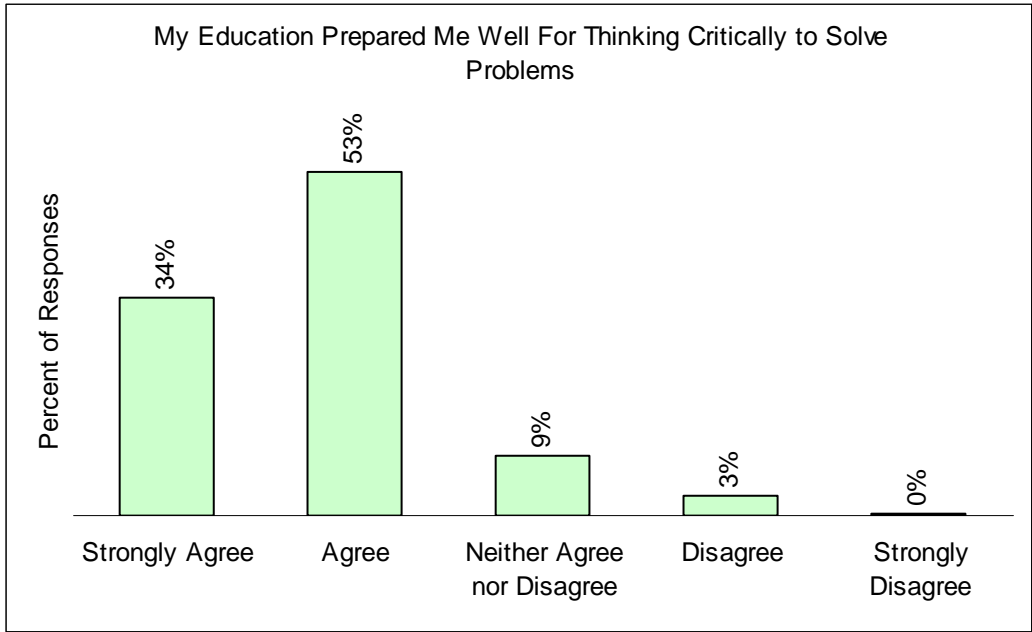
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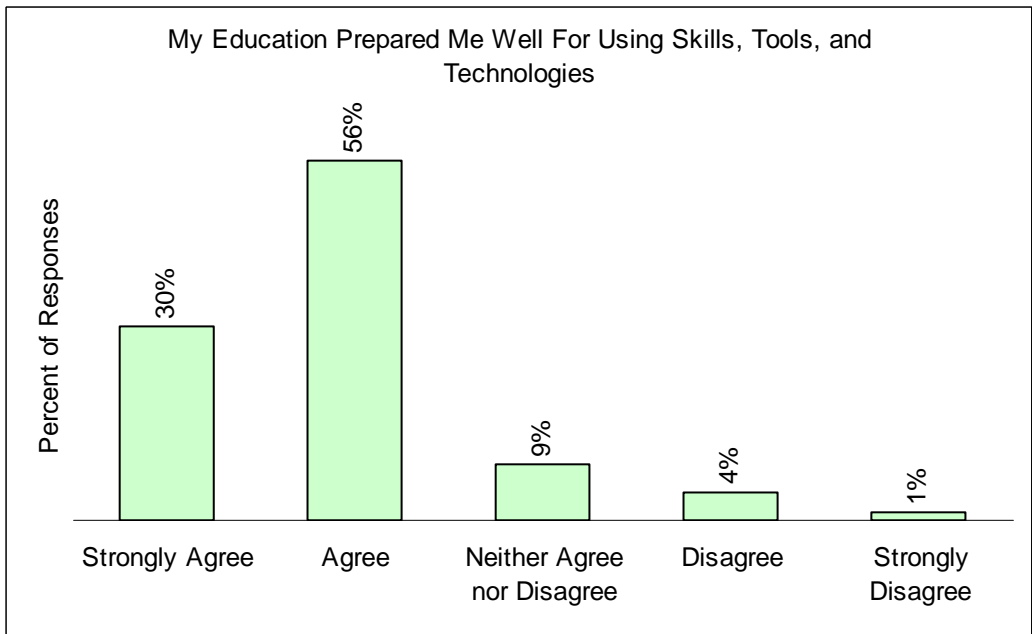
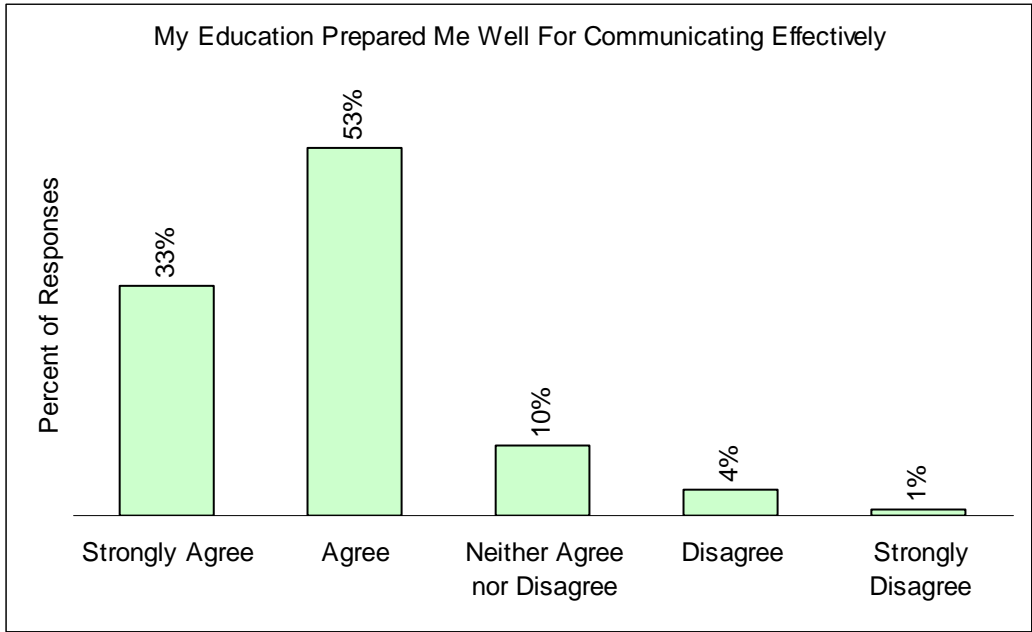












Another way to assess aggregate opinion is by find the difference between the proportions of positive (“strongly agree” plus “agree”) and negative opinions (“strongly disagree” plus “disagree”). Non-responses are discarded and the percent of neutral opinions ignored. In every case opinions were strongly positive (above +50), especially items related to thinking and understanding. Items with the least positive responses involved preparation for a career and the appreciation of diversity.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pos/Neg differential</u>
Career Employment	+54.5
Further graduate education	+70.4
Appreciation of Diversity	+54.1
Being intellectually curious and l lifelong learner	+81.4
Openness to new ideas	+81.8
Investigating the sources of information	+74.6
Thinking independently and reflectively	+82.5
Understanding theories and applications	+85.2
Thinking critically to solve problems	+84.0
Using social skills for teamwork and leadership	+76.6
Communicating effectively	+81.0
Using skills, tools and technologies	+80.3

## APPENDIX

### UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS RECEIVING DEGREES BETWEEN AUGUST 2008 AND MAY 2009.

2027 TOTAL STUDENTS SURVEYED YIELDED 304 RESPONSES FOR A RESPONSE RATE = 15.0%.

SURVEYED:	NUMBER	PERCENT			
FEMALE	1203	59.3%			
MALE	824	40.7%			
HISPANIC	75	3.7%			
NATIVE AMERICAN	7	0.3%			
BLACK	83	4.1%			
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	55	2.7%			
WHITE	1523	75.1%			
NON-RESIDENT ALIEN	8	0.4%			
NOT REPORTED	276	13.6%			
IN-STATE	1242	61.3%			
REGIONAL	62	3.1%			
OUT-OF-STATE	711	35.1%			
FOREIGN	10	0.5%			
UNKNOWN	2	0.1%			
AUGUST DEGREE CONFERRAL	283	14.0%			
DECEMBER DEGREE CONFERRAL	416	20.5%			
MAY DEGREE CONFERRAL	1328	65.5%			
SAT-CRITICAL READING	N = 1583	MEAN = 541	STDEV = 78.3	MEDIAN = 540	
SAT-MATHEMATICS	N = 1583	MEAN = 553	STDEV = 79.5	MEDIAN = 550	
SAT-COMPOSITE	N = 1583	MEAN = 1093	STDEV = 141.1	MEDIAN = 1090	
HS CLASS RANK	N = 1207	TOP TENTH = 20.4%	TOP HALF = 90.1%		
URI GRADE POINT AVERAGE	N = 2027	MEAN = 3.11	STDEV = 0.44	MEDIAN = 3.11	

RESPONDING:	NUMBER	PERCENT
FEMALE	178	58.5%
MALE	126	41.5%
HISPANIC	6	2.0%
NATIVE AMERICAN	0	0.0%
BLACK	9	3.0%
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	11	3.6%
WHITE	229	75.3%
NON-RESIDENT ALIEN	0	0.0%
NOT REPORTED	49	16.1%
IN-STATE	172	56.6%
REGIONAL	11	3.6%
OUT-OF-STATE	121	39.8%
FOREIGN	0	0.0%

UNKNOWN	0	0.0%		
AUGUST DEGREE CONFERRAL	39	12.8%		
DECEMBER DEGREE CONFERRAL	53	17.4%		
MAY DEGREE CONFERRAL	212	69.7%		
SAT-CRITICAL READING	N = 244	MEAN = 563	STDEV = 74.7	MEDIAN = 560
SAT-MATHEMATICS	N = 244	MEAN = 580	STDEV = 77.0	MEDIAN = 585
SAT-COMPOSITE	N = 244	MEAN = 1142	STDEV = 133.0	MEDIAN = 1145
HS CLASS RANK	N = 194	TOP TENTH = 26.8%	TOP HALF = 92.3%	
URI GRADE POINT AVERAGE	N = 304	MEAN = 3.26	STDEV = 0.41	MEDIAN = 3.29

NON-RESPONDING:	NUMBER	PERCENT		
FEMALE	1025	59.5%		
MALE	698	40.5%		
HISPANIC	69	4.0%		
NATIVE AMERICAN	7	0.4%		
BLACK	74	4.3%		
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	44	2.6%		
WHITE	1294	75.1%		
NON-RESIDENT ALIEN	8	0.5%		
NOT REPORTED	227	13.2%		
IN-STATE	1070	62.1%		
REGIONAL	51	3.0%		
OUT-OF-STATE	590	34.3%		
FOREIGN	10	0.6%		
UNKNOWN	2	0.1%		
AUGUST DEGREE CONFERRAL	244	14.2%		
DECEMBER DEGREE CONFERRAL	363	21.1%		
MAY DEGREE CONFERRAL	1116	64.8%		
SAT-CRITICAL READING	N = 1339	MEAN = 537	STDEV = 78.3	MEDIAN = 540
SAT-MATHEMATICS	N = 1339	MEAN = 548	STDEV = 79.0	MEDIAN = 550
SAT-COMPOSITE	N = 1339	MEAN = 1084	STDEV = 140.7	MEDIAN = 1080
HS CLASS RANK	N = 1013	TOP TENTH = 19.2%	TOP HALF = 89.7%	
URI GRADE POINT AVERAGE	N = 1723	MEAN = 3.09	STDEV = 0.44	MEDIAN = 3.07