

Alumni Survey – Classes of 2004/2005
Office of Institutional Research
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The Earlham College graduating classes of 2004 and 2005 were invited to complete the HEDS Alumni survey in the spring of 2010. This report compares responses from Earlham's alumni with alumni from some of our peer institutions. Also included are responses from the Earlham classes of 2002 and 2003 who were surveyed in 2008. Institutions represented in this report as our "peer group" include Macalester, College of Wooster, Washington and Lee, Centre, Knox, Scripps and University of the South .

The response rate for Earlham was 31% and the gender breakdown consisted of 75.4% female respondents. For the Peer Group, the average response rate was 24.7% and 71.2% of the respondents were female.

Looking at the ethnicity breakdown, whites made up 89.6% of Earlham respondents while 91.1% of the respondents within the Peer Group identified themselves as being white. 86.4% of the Earlham respondents and 71.5% of the peers were financial aid recipients. 64.4% of the Earlham respondents and 67.6% of the peer respondents received merit aid.

For Earlham, 44.8% of the respondents were married or living with a partner while 50.1% of the Peer Group indicated the same. Along the same line, 6.8% of Earlham respondents indicated that they had 1 or 2 children. For the Peer Group, 5.0% stated that they had 1 or 2 children. One Earlham respondent had more than 2 children.

Table 1 shows the undergraduate majors of the respondents.

Table 1
Respondents' Undergraduate Major

	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
Arts and Music	.9%	4.1	8.8%	11.1%
Business/Management	2.6%	4.2	5.7%	4.6%
Education	0%	.5	0%	1.8%
Geosciences	0%	0	1.9%	1.4%
Humanities	13.0%	17.3	18.2%	19.6%
Life Sciences	21.4%	10.6	12.6%	10.0%
Math/Computer Science	5.2%	4.2	4.4%	3.8%
Physical Sciences	4.3%	4.5	3.8%	5.7%
Psychology	7.7%	8.0	10.7%	10.2%
Social Sciences	21.3%	24.1	29.6%	30.9%
Other Non-Science Fields	24.0%	22.9	12.6%	14.6%

When surveyed 5-6 years after graduation, 12.8% of Earlham respondents indicated that their major was unrelated to their career. This compares to 11.5% of the Peer Group that indicated that their major was unrelated to their career. Conversely, 48.7% of Earlham respondents revealed that their major was directly related to their career while 47.0% of the Peer Group indicated the same.

Table 2
Evaluation of Undergraduate Education
"Extent Enhanced by Undergraduate Experience"

Ability/Knowledge	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
CRITICAL THINKING				
Acquire new skills	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Think analytically and logically	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7
Formulate creative/original ideas	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6
Academic ability	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.6
SKILLS/LEARNING				
Write effectively	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7
Use quantitative tools	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0
Appreciate arts, literature, music, drama	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4
Gain in-depth knowledge of a field	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4
Read or speak a foreign language	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.5
SOCIAL/MORAL AWARENESS				
Develop awareness of societal problems	3.7	3.4	3.7	3.5
Place current problems in perspective	3.7	3.4	3.6	3.5
Understand moral/ethical issues	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.5
SELF DEVELOPMENT				
Understand myself	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4
Function independently, w/o supervision	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.5
Develop self-esteem	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3
Establish a course of action for goals	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Intellectual self-confidence	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Develop desire for continued learning	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
RELATIONSHIP SKILLS				
Lead/supervise tasks/groups of people	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1
Relate well to people of different culture/races	3.6	3.3	3.6	3.3
Function effectively as member of team	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4
Communicate well orally	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4
Understand others	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5
UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY				
Understanding the process of science	3.1	2.8	3.1	2.9
Use technology	2.9	2.8	3.0	2.9

Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all

When evaluating the extent to which their critical thinking, skills/learning, and self development were enhanced by their undergraduate education, the Earlham respondents and the Peer Group had similar responses. However, when rating the extent to which their social/moral awareness was enhanced Earlham respondents (much like the Earlham respondents from the Classes of 2002 and 2003) gave higher ratings than the Peer Group. Along these same lines, Earlham

alumni gave higher ratings for the extent to which their ability to relate well to people of difference cultures/races was enhanced by their Earlham undergraduate experience.

How important are these skills in their current activities? Table 3 compares Earlham respondents and the Peer Group. The responses were quite similar from both groups for most skills, however Earlham alumni indicated a slightly greater importance of foreign language skills in their current activities compared to alumni from our peer institutions.

Table 3
Importance in current activities

Ability/Knowledge	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
CRITICAL THINKING				
Acquire new skills and knowledge	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.8
Think analytically and logically	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9
Formulate creative/original ideas	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Academic ability	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4
SKILLS/LEARNING				
Write effectively	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7
Use quantitative tools	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2
Appreciate arts, literature, music, drama	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0
Gain in-depth knowledge of a field	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6
Read or speak a foreign language	2.7	2.4	2.7	2.5
SOCIAL/MORAL AWARENESS				
Develop awareness of societal problems	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5
Place current problems in perspective	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6
Understand moral/ethical issues	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6
SELF DEVELOPMENT				
Understand myself	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6
Function independently, w/o supervision	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9
Develop self-esteem	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6
Establish a course of action for goals	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8
Intellectual self-confidence	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7
Develop desire for continued learning	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
RELATIONSHIP SKILLS				
Lead/supervise tasks/groups of people	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4
Relate well to people of different culture/races	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.7
Function effectively as member of team	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7
Communicate well orally	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.8
Understand others	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY				
Understanding the process of science	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.8
Use technology	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4

Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all

The participants were asked about their satisfaction with various services or aspects of their college. Table 4 shows that while their satisfaction is similar to the satisfaction of the peer group, Earlham respondents were slightly more satisfied with student voice in policies, recreation/athletics, and ethnic/racial diversity. They were slightly less satisfied with independent study/research, career services, and social life on campus.

Table 4
Satisfaction with College Experiences

College Experiences	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES				
Academic advising	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3
Contact with faculty	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7
Quality of teaching	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8
Courses in major field	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6
Courses outside major field	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5
Independent study/research	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
CAMPUS SERVICES AND FACILITIES				
Career services	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.6
Financial services	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Library resources	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.4
Recreation/athletics	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.2
Residential life	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
CAMPUS CLIMATE				
Student voice in policies	3.3	3.1	3.3	3.2
Campus safety	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5
Sense of belonging	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.5
Ethnic/racial diversity	3.3	3.1	3.2	2.8
Social life on campus	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.3

Scale: 4=Very Satisfied 3=Generally Satisfied 2=Generally Dissatisfied 1=Very Dissatisfied

To what extent did their undergraduate experience fulfill their original expectations? Table 5 shows all expectations were at least moderately and often times greatly fulfilled for both Earlham respondents and the Peer Group respondents, with Earlham respondents giving somewhat higher scores for acquiring in-depth knowledge in a particular field.

Table 5
Fulfillment of Expectations

Expectation	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
Enhance your intellectual growth	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8
Acquire in-depth knowledge in a particular field	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.4
Develop competence in career relevant skills	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
Foster your personal growth	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7
Promote your ability to form relationships	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4

Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all

The mean score of their rating of overall satisfaction with their undergraduate education was 3.7 for both Earlham respondents and the Peer Group (scale: 4=very satisfied, 1=very dissatisfied). For Earlham respondents, 77.1% indicated they were very satisfied with their Earlham education while 75.7% of the Peer Group indicated the same. Only 67.5% of the respondents from the Classes of 2002 and 2003 were very satisfied with their Earlham education.

Would graduates encourage others to attend their chosen undergraduate institution? 76.3% of the Earlham respondents from the Classes of 2004 and 2005 revealed that they definitely would encourage others to attend Earlham. Only 68.6% of the respondents from the Classes of 2002 and 2003 said they definitely would encourage others to attend Earlham. None of the Earlham respondents from the Classes of 2004 and 2005 indicated that they definitely would not encourage others to attend Earlham but three respondents said they probably would not. 78.3% of the Peer Group respondents stated that they definitely would encourage others to attend their undergraduate institution, but fifteen alumni from the Peer Group revealed that they probably would not encourage others to attend their undergraduate institution and two definitely would not.

The alumni were asked to indicate their level of involvement in extracurricular activities and then to evaluate the contribution of these various activities to their personal or professional life after graduation. Table 6 shows the mean scores.

The greatest difference between alumni from Earlham and the Peer Group is seen in Earlham respondents' involvement in study abroad programs.

Table 6
Level of Involvement in Activities

Level of Involvement	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES				
Student or campus government	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6
Intercollegiate athletics	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.7
Intramural sports	1.6	1.9	1.8	1.9
Student publications	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Performing arts/music	2.2	1.9	2.2	1.9
Political organization or club	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.9
Community service	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.5
Religious groups	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.5
ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES				
Internships	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1
Study abroad	3.0	2.3	2.9	2.6
Work on faculty research	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6
Independent study	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.4
EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES				
On-campus employment	2.9	2.6	2.9	2.8
Off-campus employment	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8

Scale: 4=Extensive 3=Moderate 2=A Little 1=None

Table 7 shows that, for the Earlham graduates, their participation in a study abroad program made a larger contribution to their personal or professional life after graduation compared to alumni from our Peer Group. As was true with the classes of 2002 and 2003, the Earlham classes of 2004 and 2005 were more likely than peer group alumni to feel that their participation in religious groups contributed to their development.

Table 7
Contribution of Activities to Personal/Professional Development

Contribution to your development	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES				
Student or campus government	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8
Intercollegiate athletics	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.0
Intramural sports	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8
Student publications	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8
Performing arts/music	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3
Political organization or club	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.2
Community service	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.8
Religious groups	2.2	1.9	2.1	1.8
ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES				
Internships	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.7
Study abroad	3.5	3.0	3.3	3.2
Work on faculty research	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.0
Independent study	2.5	2.8	2.5	2.6
EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES				
On-campus employment	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6
Off-campus employment	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.1

Scale: 4=Extensive 3=Moderate 2=A Little 1=None

Table 8 shows to what extent these graduates felt their undergraduate experience prepared them for various post-graduation activities. Alumni from the Classes of 2004 and 2005 felt more prepared for social and civic involvement than the Classes of 2002 and 2003 and alumni from our peer institutions.

Table 8
Level of Preparedness for post-graduation Activities

Activities	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
Post-baccalaureate education	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4
Current career	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2
Social and civic involvement	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.1
Interpersonal relationships	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.1

Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1=Not at all

To determine the amount of involvement these graduates have had with their alma mater, they were asked how frequently they participated in various activities that were sponsored by their undergraduate institution. Table 9 shows that overall Earlham alumni are slightly less involved with their alma mater than graduates from peer institutions with the exception of visiting Earlham's web site and maintaining contact with faculty members and administrators. Earlham Classes of 2004 and 2005's participation in fundraising for the college is significantly less than the peer group.

Table 9
Involvement with Alma Mater

Activity	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
Read campus publications	2.9	3.1	2.9	3.1
Visited the institution's Web site	2.9	2.8	3.0	2.9
Visited campus for any purpose	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.3
Attended alumni functions on campus	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.6
Attended alumni functions off campus	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.6
Attended alma mater sporting events	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Served as an alumni admissions volunteer	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.2
Participated in a career advisory program	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2
Participated in alumni continuing education program	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Participated in an alumni community service program	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.1
Contributed to or solicited for the annual fund	1.8	2.7	1.6	2.2
Maintained contact with other alumni	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6
Maintained contact with faculty members	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5
Maintained contact with administrators	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.5

Scale: 4=Frequently 3=Occasionally 2=Briefly 1=Never

Among Earlham respondents, 82.9% indicated that they strongly or very strongly identified with their alma mater while 79.0% of the Peer Group indicated the same.

Table 10 shows alumni involvement in organizations since graduation. While responses are quite similar overall, Earlham graduates from the classes of 2004 and 2005 appear to be slightly more involved in organizations than the classes of 2002 and 2003.

Table 10
Involvement in Organizations

Organization	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
	Mean Scores			
Civic/Community	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3
Cultural/Arts	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.3
Educational Service (e.g., PTA)	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.5
Political	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.9
Professional	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.5
Recreational (e.g., sports club)	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Religious	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.7
Service (e.g. Rotary, Kiwanis)	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.3
Youth (e.g. Little League, Scouting)	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5

Scale: 4=Greatly 3=Moderately 2=A Little 1= Not at All

Currently, among Earlham respondents, 64.3% are working full time, 33.9% are attending graduate school full time and 11.2% are attending graduate school part time. Within the Peer Group, 63.8% are working full time, 29.9% are attending graduate school full time and 6.8% are attending graduate school part time.

Table 11 indicates the percentage of respondents who have received or are currently enrolled in a particular graduate program. Fewer Earlham graduates have earned law or medical degrees within five or six years of graduating compared to peer group graduates, but a higher percentage of Earlham respondents are currently enrolled in master's degree programs compared to the Peer Group. Also, Earlham respondents were less likely to be enrolled in a doctorate degree program five or six years following graduation. This confirms the belief that Earlham graduates are more likely to defer graduate school to pursue other interests prior to furthering their education. The responses could look quite different if they were asked to report 8 or 9 years after graduation.

Table 11
Degrees

Degree	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
Master's received	35.6%	33.5%	21.9%	30.6%
Enrolled in Master's	25.4%	20.2%	28.8%	23.8%
Professional degree received				
Law degree received	1.7%	6.5%	1.9%	6%
Medical degree received	1.7%	2.4%	<1%	1.4%
Enrolled in professional degree program				
Enrolled in law program	3.4%	3.6%	1.9%	2.3%
Enrolled in medical program	3.4%	2.6%	1.9%	2.1%
Doctorate degree received	1.7%	2.4%	4%	6%
Enrolled in a doctorate degree	8.5%	13.4%	6.8%	9%

Table 12 shows the current annual income of the respondents. The percentage of students with incomes over \$60,000 is significantly less among Earlham graduates than graduates from our peer institutions. As reported by the Classes of 2004 and 2005, 21.4% of the alumni from the peer group colleges are earning over \$60,000 compared to 8.6% of Earlham graduates..

Table 12
Current Annual Income

	Earlham Classes of 2004/2005	Peer Group Classes of 2004/2005	Earlham Classes of 2002/2003	Peer Group Classes of 2002/2003
No earned income	13.7	8.5	7.5%	6.8%
Less than \$19,999	16.2	15.0	23.1%	15.5%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	34.2	28.6	36.9%	30.9%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	27.4	26.5	21.9%	30.5%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	5.1	10.3	4.4%	8.0%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	2.6	6.5	1.9%	3.0%
\$100,000 to \$119,999	0	2.0	3.1%	2.3%
More than \$120,000	.9	2.6	1.3%	2.9%

CONCLUSION

These data provide some insight into the nature of students' learning experiences at Earlham College. Although this is all self-report data, with all the limitations that such evidence has, nonetheless, the reflective perceptions of our graduates does provide one view of the outcomes of an Earlham education.

In terms of the enhancement of specific competencies or knowledge, graduates view their Earlham education, generally, as similar to how graduates of peer institutions see their experience with their alma mater. While there are few areas where Earlham alums deem their experience more positively than graduates of the peer institutions, there is a consistent pattern of Earlham alumni rating the impact of Earlham as slightly more positive. In some areas, our graduates give Earlham a bit higher rating than do the alumni of our peers. This is particularly true of social/moral awareness and relating to people of different races or cultures, areas that represent important aspects of Earlham's mission and goals. Our graduates also rate these same areas as slightly more important than our peer institutions' alumni do.

The satisfaction reported by our alumni regarding various aspects of their undergraduate experience also reflects a generally positive view. However, the comparison with peer alumni in this instance is more mixed – more positive in some instances (contact with faculty, library resources, recreation/athletics, ethnic/racial diversity, social life on campus, student voice in policies) and less positive in others (academic advising, quality of teaching, courses in/outside the major, independent study/research, career services, campus safety). In all cases, though, these differences are minimal. The best conclusion is that the satisfaction of Earlham graduates with their undergraduate experience is comparable with the ratings given to peer institutions by their alumni.

These alumni reported on the extent of their involvement with various kinds of extracurricular activities and, in general, Earlham grads resemble those at peer institutions. Our alumni do show significantly more engagement with study abroad and somewhat more involvement with performing arts/music, religious groups, and on-campus employment.

We might derive some comfort from the fact that more than three-fourths of our graduates definitely would encourage others to enroll at Earlham, a figure that is roughly comparable with the reported view of our peers' alumni. In terms of their continuing involvement with Earlham, our grads tend to resemble graduates of peer institutions. There is one exception, however. Earlhamites report being less engaged with alumni functions on- and off-campus and less likely to have contributed to or solicited for the annual fund. This suggests a need for Earlham to give more attention to our younger alumni.

Finally, the survey examined graduates' enrollment in and completion of various types of post-baccalaureate education. Five years after graduation, these alumni were somewhat more likely to be involved in Master's programs, but less likely to be enrolled in doctoral programs. Earlham alumni were also less likely to have received a law or medical degree although they were more likely to be currently enrolled in both types of professional programs. These data suggest that our students may aim more often for terminal Master's degrees (e.g. in education, business, ministry, social work, library science, etc.) and that, when they do pursue doctoral work, they may be more likely to take a break after graduating from Earlham and/or to stretch out their doctoral study. Given the longstanding pattern of Earlham undergraduates according

less importance to earning higher incomes, it is not surprising to find that the reported annual incomes of these alumni, five years after leaving Earlham, tend to be lower than that of our peers' alumni. This appears to be a function of our graduates' career and life choices rather than of a lower value of an Earlham degree.

In sum, this alumni survey provides considerable support for Earlham's liberal education claims. It does not, however, set Earlham apart from its peer institutions in any consistent way. At best, these data may reflect our success with those students for whom Earlham is a good match, while our peer institutions can make the same claim for their students.