

2016 Tracer Survey of First Degree Graduates, Class of 2014

September 2016



Between May and June 2016, First degree graduates from the Class of 2014 were asked to participate in an online survey administered by Qualtrics.

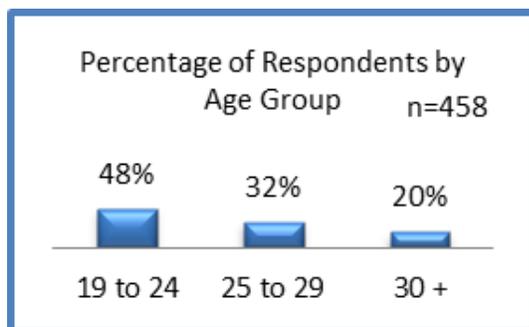
The survey asked graduates about their current employment, previous work experience, further studies, and their personal and professional development. This information will be used for planning and decision making and to gauge UWI's performance in Teaching, Learning and Student Development in the Campus Strategic Plan.

Profile of Respondents

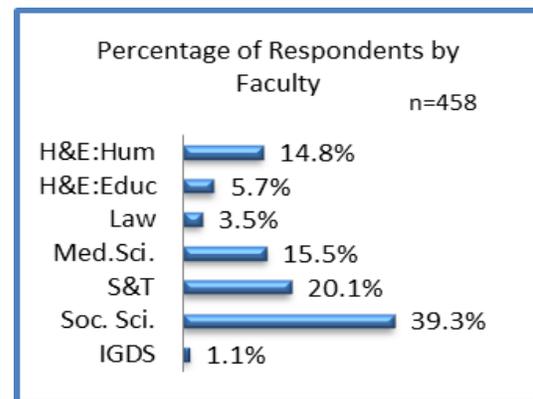
Of the total cohort of First degree graduates (2,495), 458 were traced.

First Degree Graduates, Class of 2014	Number Traced	Response Rate
2,495	458	18%

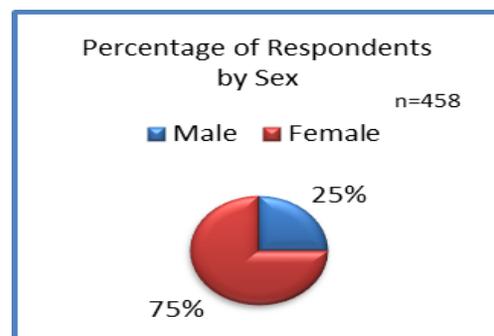
Of the respondents to the survey, 48% were from the youngest age group, 19 to 24. The second largest age group was 25 to 29 year olds (32%) followed by persons aged 30 and over (20%).



Most respondents were from the Faculty of Social Sciences (39.3%) followed by Humanities and Education (20.5%), Science and Technology (20.1%), and Medical Sciences (15.5%). Less than 4% of respondents were from the Faculty of Law (3.5%) and the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (1.1%) respectively.

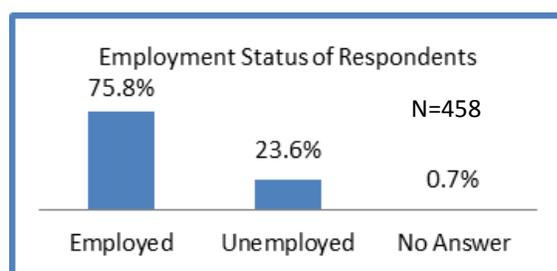


In keeping with the sex distribution at Mona, most respondents to the survey were female (75%) while 25% of respondents were male.



Current Employment

When asked about their employment status, 76% [n=347] of respondents reported employment while 24% [n=108] of respondents reported unemployment.



Among those who were unemployed, approximately 53% cited lack of job opportunities or lack of work experience or lack of employment aligned to their degree as reasons for unemployment. Respondents also cited further studies (33%) and other reasons (11%) for being unemployed.

Reasons for Unemployment	N	%
Did not seek employment	3	2.8
Further studies	36	33.3
No job opportunity	22	20.4
Lack of work experience	14	13.0
Could not find a job related to my degree	21	19.4
Health related reasons	0	0.0
Other	11	10.2
No answer	1	0.9
Total	108	100.0

Most of the employed respondents were engaged in full-time work (93%). Among graduates working in Jamaica [n=275], the median monthly income was \$100,000 with a range of \$13,000 (part-time) to \$400,000. The highest monthly salary in Jamaica was earned by a medical doctor.

When asked about job satisfaction [n=347], 58% of employed respondents were satisfied with their jobs, while 34% were not satisfied with their jobs. Eight percent (8%) of respondents did not answer the question.

Previous Work Experience

Graduates [n=458] were asked about employment experience while studying at UWI. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents said they were able to gain work experience while studying at UWI, while 35% were not able to gain work experience while studying at UWI.

At the time of graduation, 47% [n=214] of respondents were employed full-time, while 16% [n=73] were employed part-time. Approximately 86% [n=63] of the part-time employed were seeking full-time work. Among the remaining respondents, 23% [n=105] were unemployed but seeking employment, 5% [n=23] were unemployed and not seeking employment, while 9% [n=43] did not answer the question.

Status Upon Graduation	N	%
Working full-time/accepted full-time job offer	214	46.7
Working part-time but seeking full-time work	63	13.8
Working part-time but NOT seeking full-time work	10	2.2
Not working but seeking employment	105	22.9
Not working and not seeking employment	23	5.0
No answer	43	9.4
Total	458	100.0

In the case where respondents were seeking employment at graduation [n=168], 45% found employment in six months or less. Another 20% found employment within seven to twelve months, while 9% found work after more than one year. Four percent of respondents were still unemployed at the time of the survey, while 22% of respondents did not answer the question.

Further Studies

When asked about further studies [n=458], 37% of respondents said they were pursuing or pursued further studies, while 55% have not. Of all respondents [n=458], 65% indicated their intention to enrol in graduate studies in the near future, while 12% did not intend to pursue graduate studies. Approximately 23% of respondents did not answer the question.

Among those who intended to enrol [n=299], 47% said UWI would be their first choice, while 51% said UWI would not be their first choice for graduate studies. The remainder (2%) did not answer the question.

When asked why UWI would not be their first choice for graduate studies, responses [n=151] comprised wanting a new experience (n=33), the programme was not offered at UWI (n=29), they were disappointed with UWI (n=15), they were planning to migrate (n=10), and other reasons which included the cost of graduate studies (n=41). Twenty-three respondents (n=23) did not give a reason.

Personal and Professional Development

The last section of the survey asked graduates about UWI's contribution to their personal and professional development. Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (low to high) UWI's contribution to seven attributes reflective of the ideal UWI graduate.

Attributes	N	Mean score /5
Critical and creative thinking skills.	404	3.63
Effective communication & interpersonal skills.	403	3.72
Information technology skills.	404	3.18
Innovative and entrepreneurial skills.	401	2.70
Globally aware and well-grounded in our regional identity.	404	3.25
Socially, culturally and environmentally responsible.	404	3.45
Strong ethical values.	403	3.40

Note: (1) very little contribution to (5) very strong contribution.

The results showed that respondents gave higher ratings to UWI's contribution to "effective communication and interpersonal skills" (3.72 out of 5) and "critical and creative thinking skills" (3.63) and lower ratings to "information technology skills" (3.18) and "innovative and entrepreneurial skills" (2.70).

Summary and Conclusion

The *Tracer Survey of First Degree Graduates, Class of 2014* is the sixth survey conducted by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research at the Mona Campus. Previous surveys were conducted for the Classes of 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2013.

The sixth survey shows a dramatic decline in the employment rate which decreased from 90% for the 2007 cohort to 76% for the 2014 cohort. For the Class of 2014, 12% of students exited the university with little employment prospects upon graduation.

For this reason, the Mona Campus has been trying to promote innovation and entrepreneurial skills in the curriculum to assist students in starting their own enterprises upon graduation. There has also been a thrust towards more internships and practicums to expose students to the world of work while studying at UWI.

The 2016 survey reflected that 57% of respondents were able to gain work experience while studying at UWI and this percentage should continue to grow in future surveys.

As with previous surveys, graduates continue to give higher ratings to UWI's contribution to their reasoning and communication skills and lower ratings to information technology skills and innovative and entrepreneurial skills. The Mona Campus will continue its thrust towards innovation and entrepreneurship and exposure to the latest technology both inside and outside the classroom.