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Teachers College Columbia University

Alumni Survey 2008: Professional Preparation Programs

AUTHORED BY: OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION AND ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

First administered in the fall of 2008, the Alumni Survey was designed to gather preliminary job-related information about Teachers College graduates, graduates' perception of how prepared they felt in meeting the demands of their jobs and how applicable their training had been to their work.

Instrument

The alumni questionnaire was developed by the Office of Accreditation and Assessment in collaboration with representative program faculty. The majority of the questions in the questionnaire are common across all programs. Programs were also invited to add program-specific questions to the questionnaire. The number of questions was limited by the space available on both sides of a standard sheet of paper to keep the survey brief and to increase the likeliness of the response.

The questionnaire included three parts. Part I was composed of questions about alumni's employment, level of preparedness for current jobs, general satisfaction with TC education, and post-graduate professional activities, such as publishing, presenting at professional forums, or participating in professional organizations. These questions were followed by a set of seven questions targeted only at those who worked in preK-12 schools during 2008-2009.

Part II was composed of 26 areas of competence corresponding to the College's five broadly-defined learning goals:

- Inquiry, Scholarship, Research (5 items)
- Professionalism, Lifelong Learning, Professional Development (5 items)
- Communication, Collaboration, Leadership (3 items)
- Diversity, Advocacy, Social Justice (6 items)
- Professional Practice (7 items)

Respondents were asked to rate the 26 areas indicating (a) how important each area was to their current jobs, (b) how competent they felt in the area, and (c) how much of their competence they would attribute to their program of study at TC. A four-point response scale from 1 (barely important, barely competent, very little) to 4 (very important, very competent, very much) was used for each area; and a 'not applicable' option was also offered. The first 19 competencies were common across all programs. The last seven competencies were program-specific.

Part III asked alumni to identify other areas of competence that were important to their jobs, but might not have been captured by the questionnaire. Please see Appendix for a copy of the base (common items) questionnaire.

Target Population and Administration

The target population comprised of school professional preparation programs alumni who were admitted in or after January 2004 and graduated by May 2007. The Teaching of English program was an exception in that its eligible alumni base was expanded to include those who graduated by May 2008; this was done to coordinate with the program-run focus group research project. A total of 1838 alumni from 24 programs preparing teachers, principals, psychologists, and counselors were surveyed. The survey was administered in phases, beginning with the Teaching of English program in October 2008, and closing for all of the 24 participating programs in December 2009.

Every program had a cover letter printed on the program's letterhead and signed by the program coordinator and/or other program faculty members. A program-customized questionnaire, accompanied by a cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Office of Accreditation and Assessment were then mailed out.

Initially, surveys were sent, by post, only to the alumni with U.S. mailing addresses (n=1764). Non-respondents were followed-up in three subsequent postal mailings. The fourth and last follow-up was also conducted through e-mail to include the alumni with foreign addresses, thus bringing the total number surveyed to 1838.

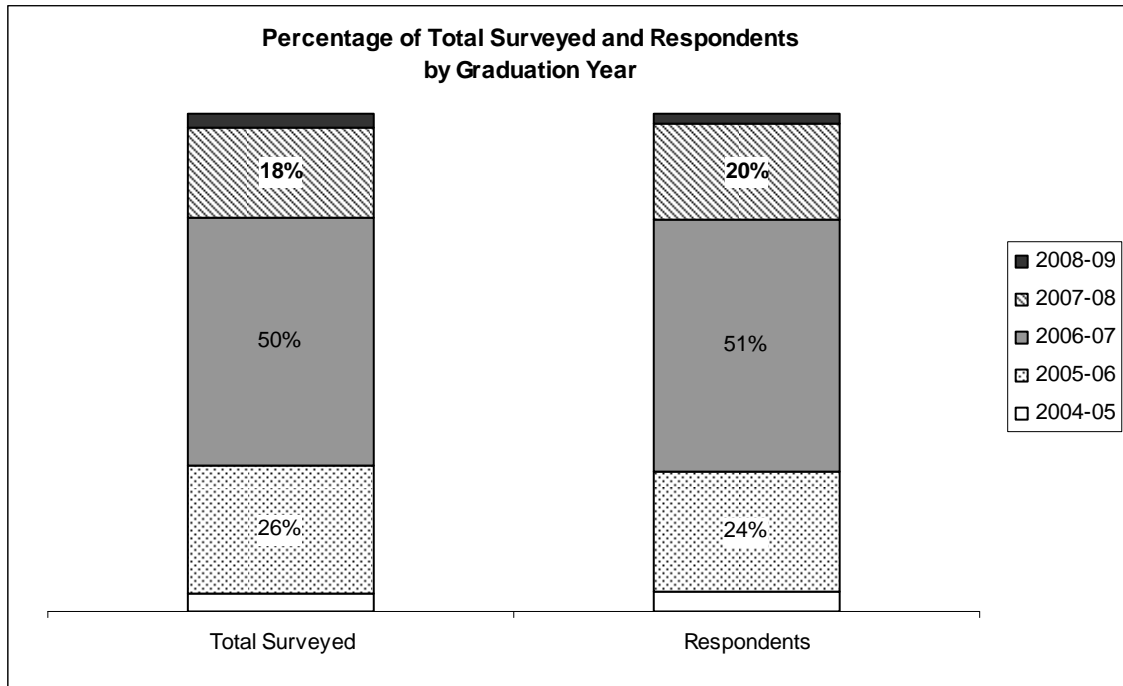
Response Rate

The Office of Accreditation and Assessment received 735 completed surveys from alumni with U.S. mailing addresses, and 14 from those with overseas mailing addresses, giving an overall response rate of 41% for the Teachers College Alumni Survey 2008. The response rates by program are shown in the table below.

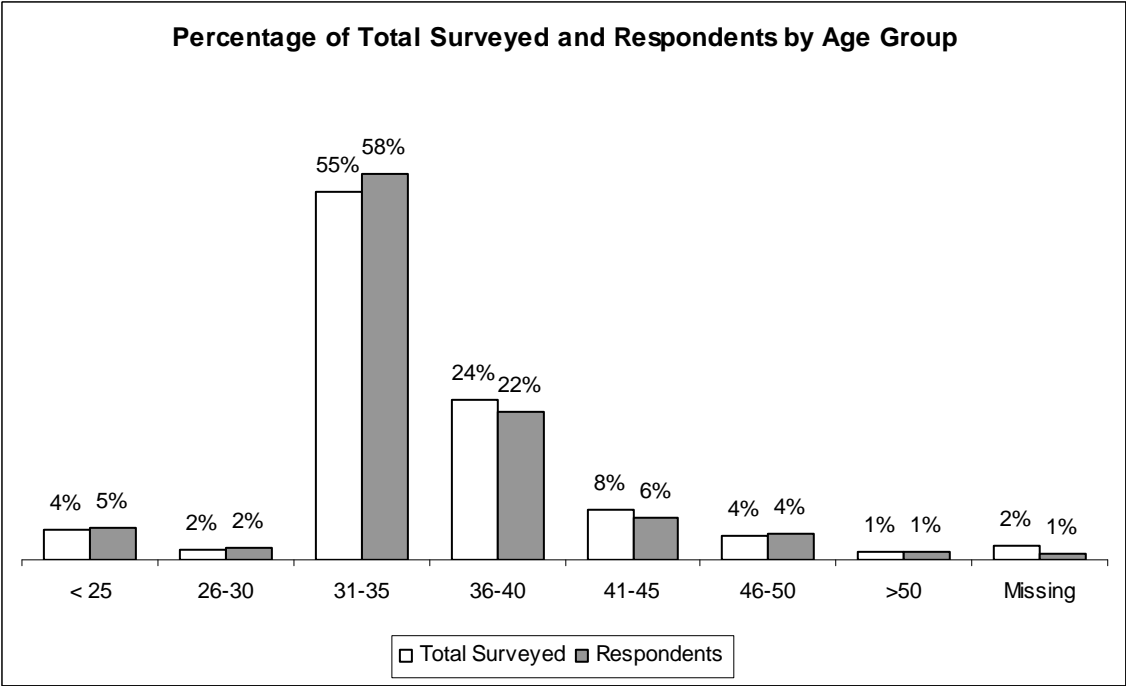
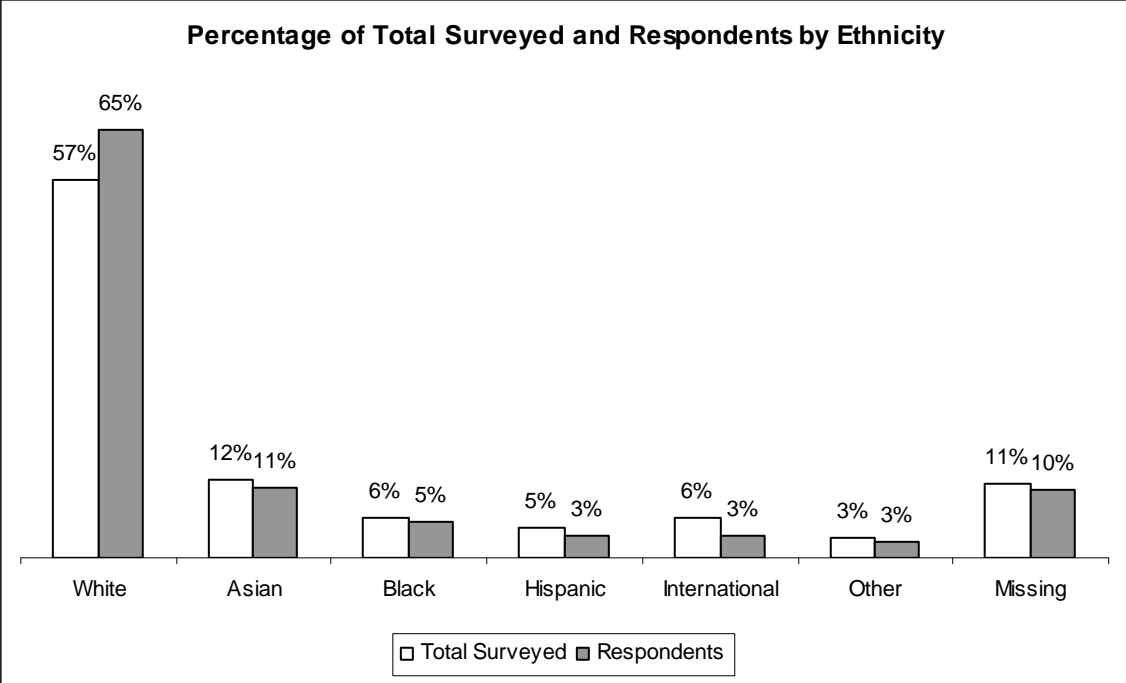
Program	All alumni			Alumni with US mailing addresses			Undeliverable
	n	Number of responses	Response rate	n	Number of responses	Response rate	
Applied Behavior Analysis	22	9	41%	21	9	43%	2
Art and Art Education	46	23	50%	46	23	50%	3
Bilingual/ Bicultural Education	42	17	40%	38	16	42%	2
Blindness and Visual Impairment	2	1	50%	2	1	50%	0
Curriculum and Teaching	61	24	39%	48	22	46%	1
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	23	9	39%	23	9	39%	0
Early Childhood/Special Ed	52	23	44%	46	21	46%	3
Education Leadership	293	137	47%	291	136	47%	3
Elementary Inclusive Education	120	40	33%	118	40	34%	10
Gifted Education	27	11	41%	22	10	45%	3
Intellectual Disabilities/Autism	24	9	38%	24	9	38%	3
Literacy Specialist	45	24	53%	43	24	56%	3
Mathematics Education	101	38	38%	101	38	38%	3
Music and Music Education	87	41	47%	78	40	51%	8
Physical Education	13	4	31%	11	4	36%	1
Reading Specialist	55	18	33%	55	18	33%	2
Science Education	52	22	42%	51	22	43%	2
School Counseling	149	69	46%	143	67	47%	13
School Psychology	22	12	55%	22	12	55%	0
Speech and Language Pathology	60	28	47%	59	28	47%	2
Teaching of ASL	9	6	67%	9	6	67%	1
Teaching of English	304	110	36%	299	108	36%	21
TESOL	77	25	32%	65	23	35%	5
Teaching of Social Studies	152	49	32%	149	49	33%	10
Total	1838	749	41%	1764	735	42%	101

Respondent Characteristics

About half of the respondents graduated in 2006-2007, another quarter in 2005-06, and about 20% in 2007-2008. The distribution of respondents by graduation year closely mirrors the distribution of the total population surveyed as the graph below shows.

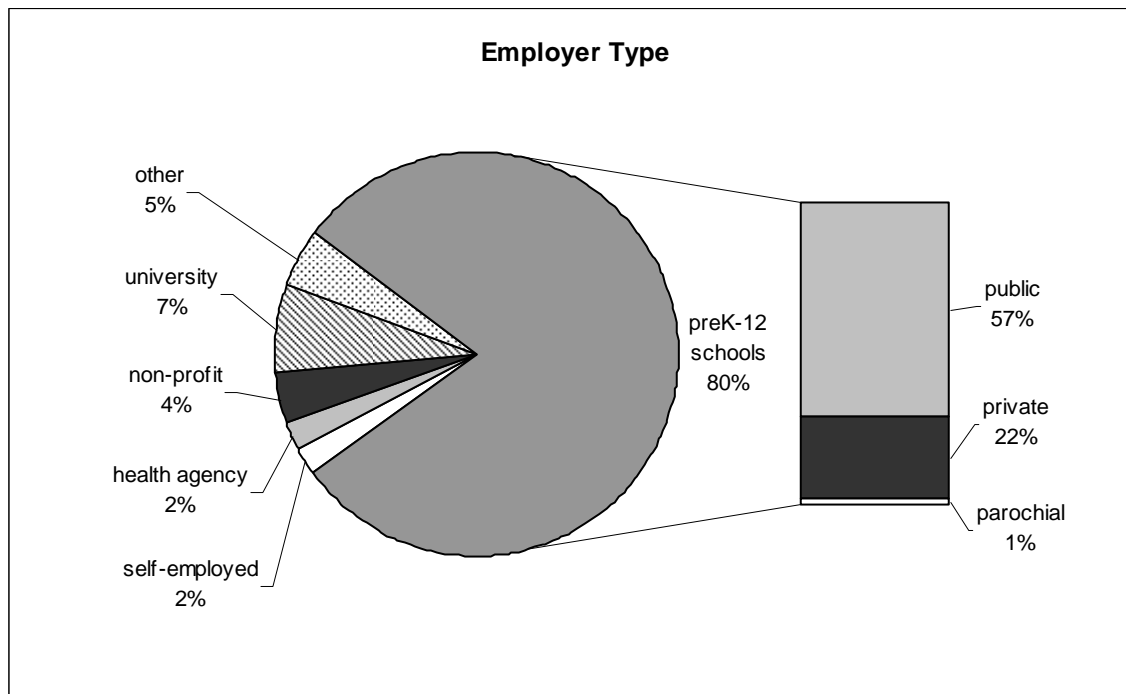


The majority of respondents were White (65%), female (82%), and between 30 and 40 years of age (80%). There was a slightly higher proportion of White (65% vs. 57%) and female (82% vs. 77%) among respondents than the total population surveyed. Less than 20% of respondents were Asian, Black or Hispanic compared to 23% in the total population surveyed. Ethnic composition and age groups of the total surveyed and respondents are shown in the graphs below.



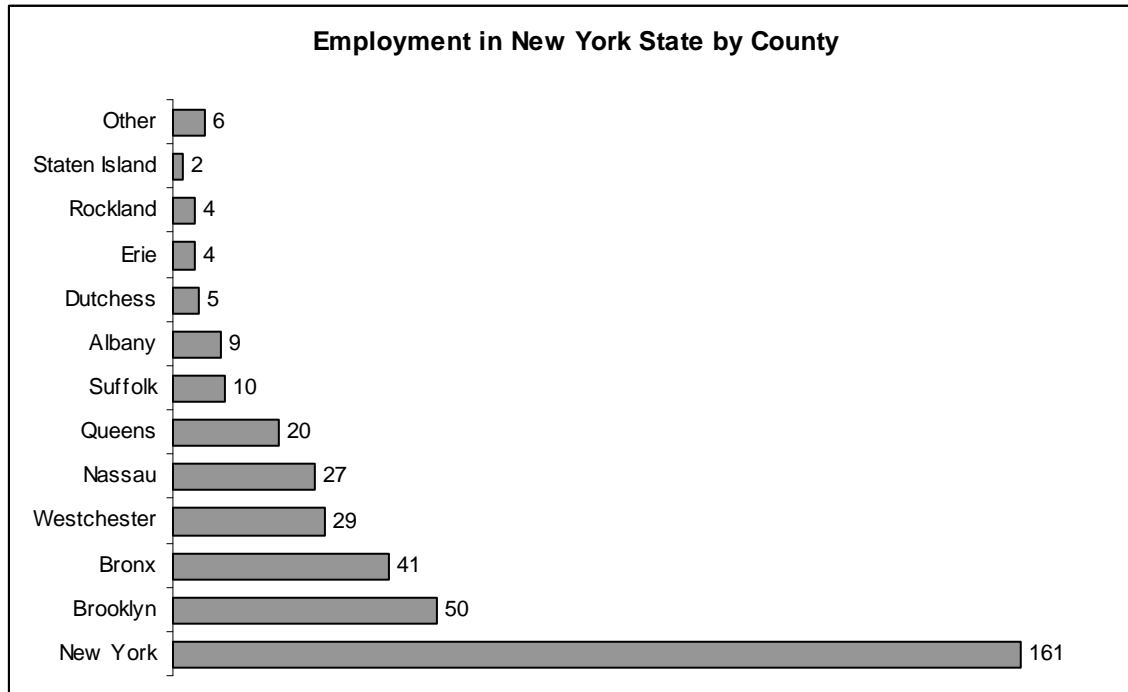
EMPLOYMENT

The majority of alumni who responded to employment-related questions were employed—either full time (89%) or part-time (5%); and about 2% were seeking employment. Over 90% of respondents reported that their current jobs were related to their programs of study at Teachers College. Most respondents (88%) held at least one current and valid teaching, administrative, or professional license or certificate. Of those employed, 80% worked in preK-12 settings. The distribution of respondents by employer type is shown in the graph below.



Most respondents were employed in the tri-state area: 55% in New York, 7% in New Jersey, and 4% in Connecticut. California and Massachusetts were the states of employment for 9% and 4% of respondents respectively. Overall, our respondents worked in 39 states and 18 foreign countries.

Of those who were employed in New York State (n=368), the majority (75%) worked in New York City's five boroughs. Another 18% worked in Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk counties. The graph below shows respondents employment by county.



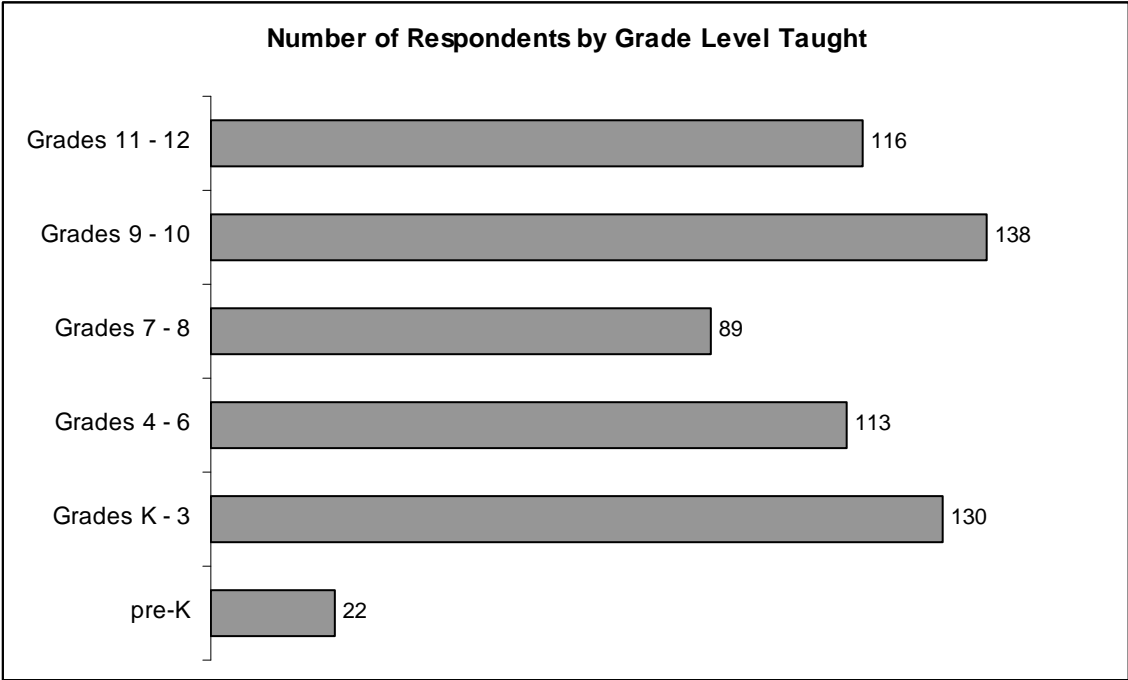
Other big cities that employed more than three of our respondents included Atlanta (4), Boston (4), Chicago (8), Houston (5), Los Angeles (4), Oakland (4), San Francisco (4), Seattle (5), and Washington, DC (10).

Since graduation from their programs, 62% of alumni reported having been a member of a professional association/society; 19% of alumni have presented at a professional conference; 8% have published an article, a book chapter, or a book; and 8% have held a leadership position in a professional association/society.

PK-12 SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT

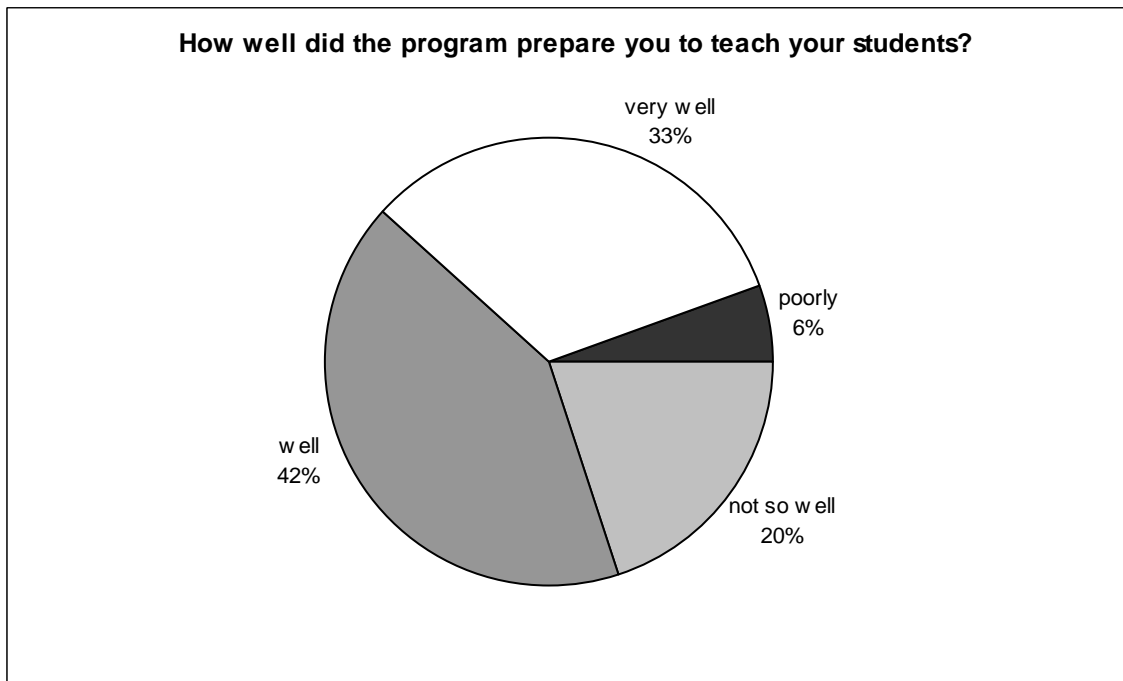
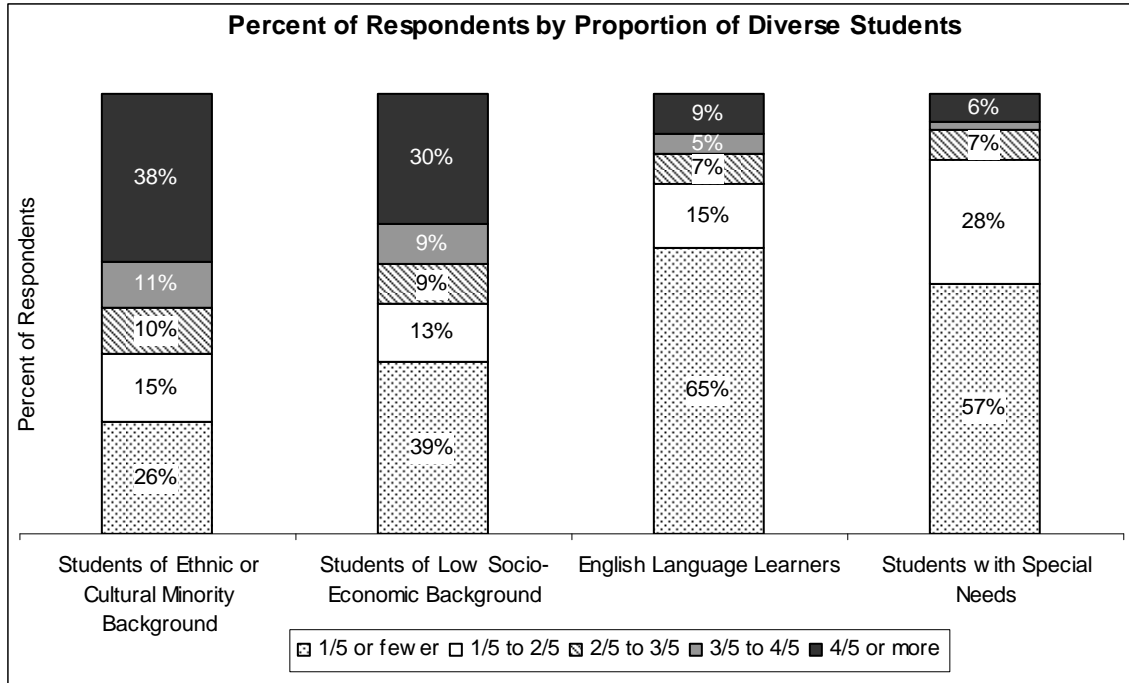
Teacher Education Programs

Eighty-five percent of respondents (n=429) who graduated from teacher preparation programs taught in preK-12 schools within the academic year of 2007-08 or 2008-09. Collectively, they taught grade levels from pre-kindergarten through 12 as shown in the graph below.



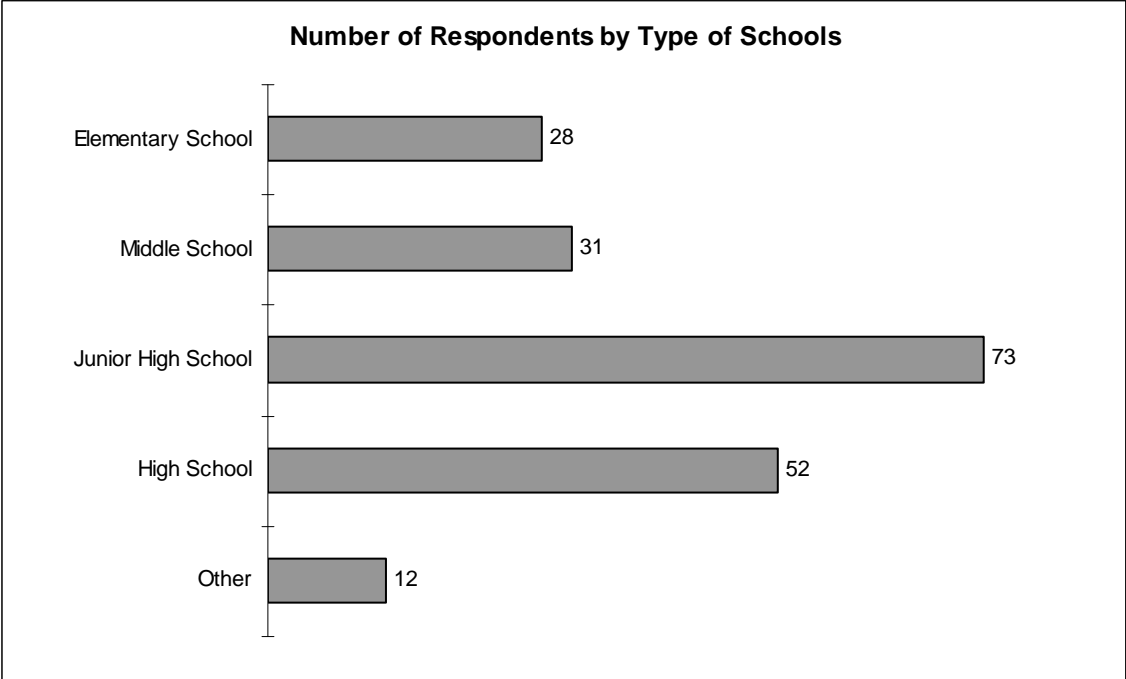
Based on their own estimates, about half (49%) of the respondents taught in classrooms with over 60% ethnic, racial, or cultural minority student population. Over a third of respondents (39%) taught students 60% or more of whom were from low socio economic background. Between 15 and 20 percent of respondents taught students 40% or more of whom were English Language Learners or had special needs.

Given the diversity of their students, three quarters of respondents reported feeling well prepared to address the needs of their students (33%-very well and 42%-well). Another quarter did not feel adequately prepared to deal with diverse student needs in their classrooms. There is a statistically significant correlation between the estimated ethnic, racial or cultural diversity and economic status of students and respondents' satisfaction with the preparation they received from their programs. Respondents who taught less diverse and more affluent students tended to evaluate their preparation more positively than those who did not (Spearman's Rho coefficients of -0.160 for ethnic minority and satisfaction correlation, and -0.180 for low SES and satisfaction correlation).

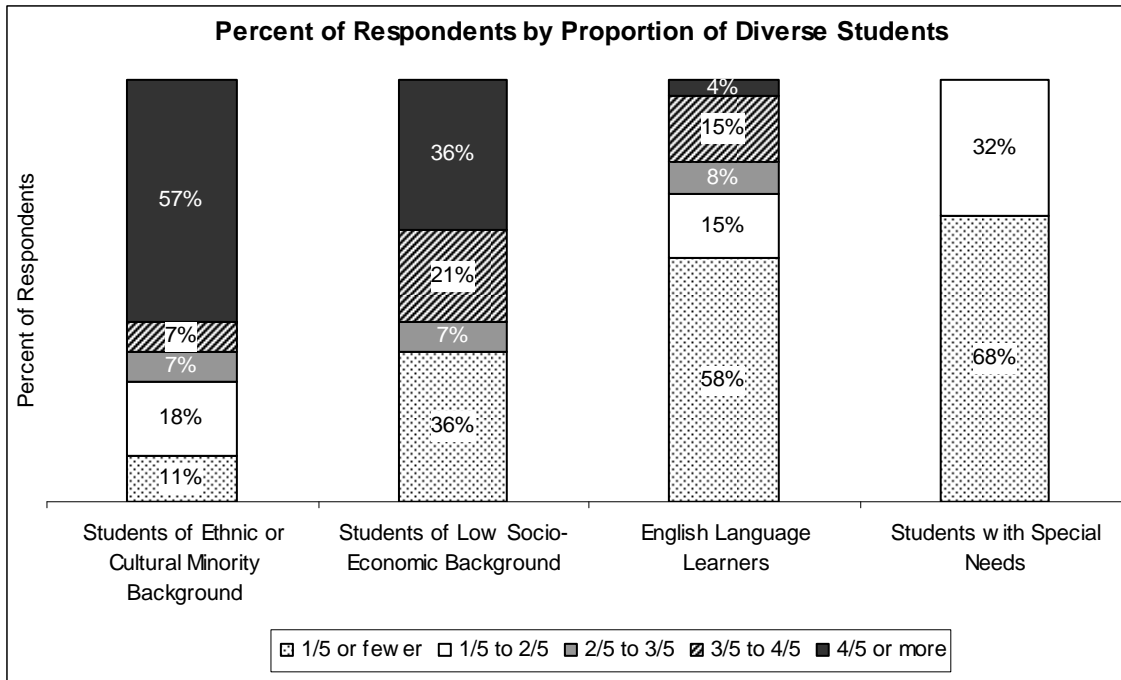


Education Leadership Program

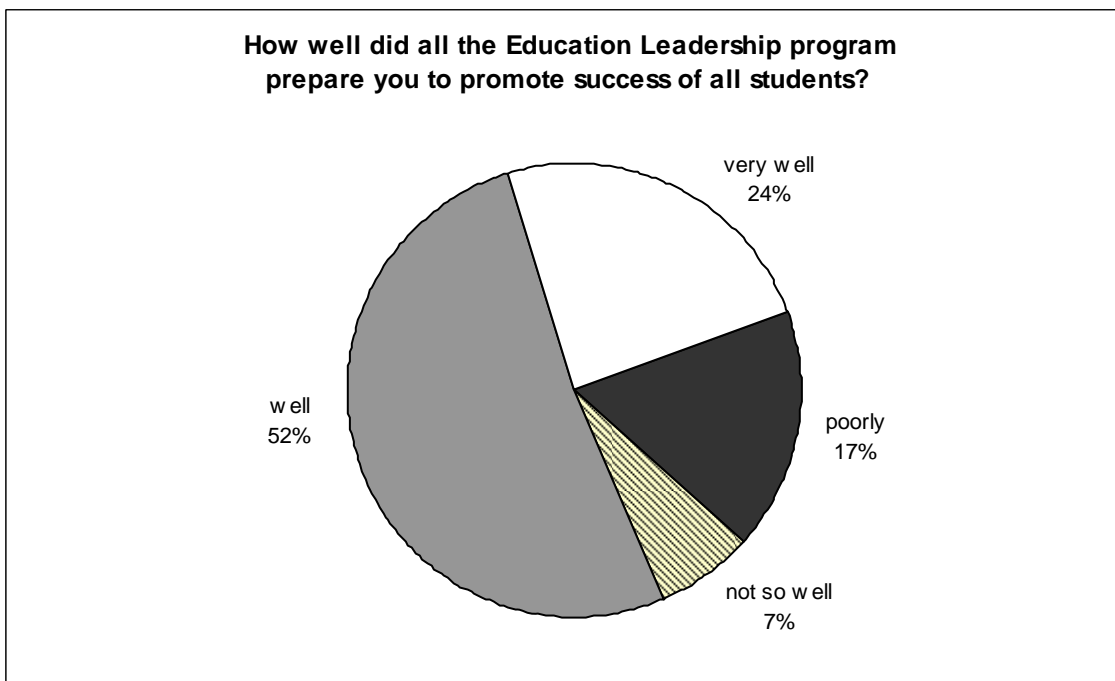
Eighty percent of respondents (n=109) who graduated from the education leadership program reported working in preK-12 schools. Some respondents worked in more than one school type. They served students in elementary, middle and high schools as shown in the graph below.



Based on their own estimates, about two-thirds (64%) of the respondents worked in schools with over 60% of students of ethnic, racial, or cultural minority background. Over half of the respondents (57%) worked in schools with students 60% or more of whom were from low socio economic background. About a quarter of respondents (27%) worked in schools with more than 40% of students who were English Language Learners.

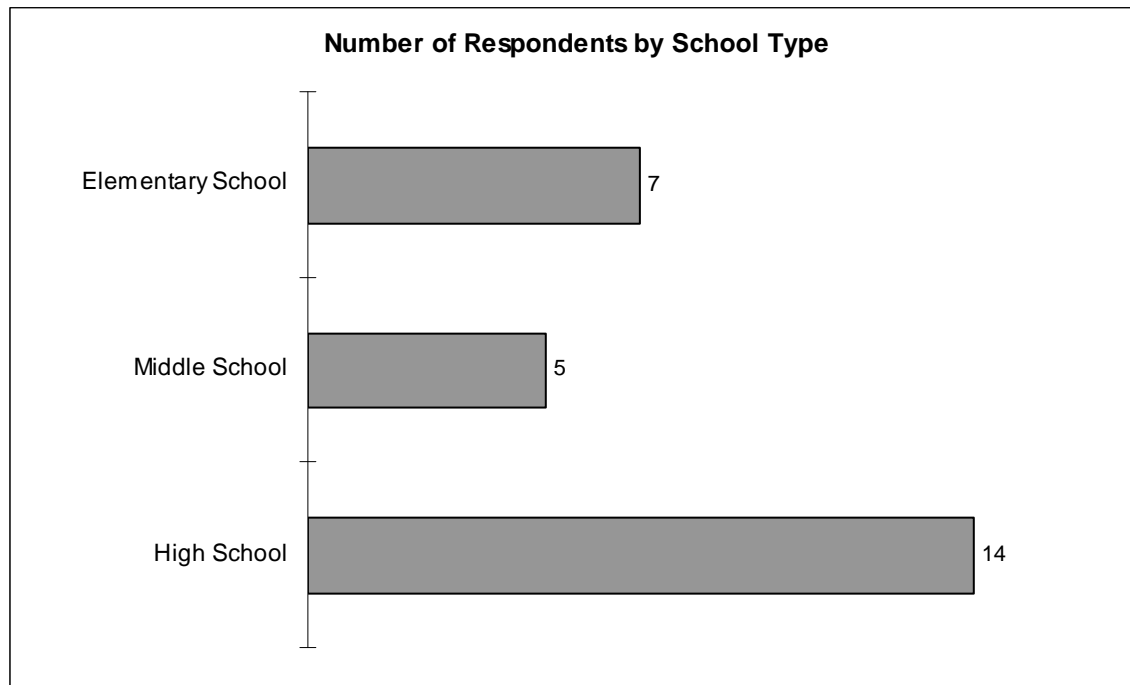


Given the diversity of their students, three-quarters of the respondents (76%) reported feeling well prepared to address the needs of their students (24%-very well and 52%-well). About a quarter of respondents did not feel adequately prepared to address the needs of the diverse students in their schools. Respondents who worked in schools with less diverse and more affluent students tended to evaluate their preparation more positively than those who did not (Spearman's Rho coefficients of -0.092 for ethnic minority and satisfaction correlation, and -0.106 for low SES and satisfaction correlation).



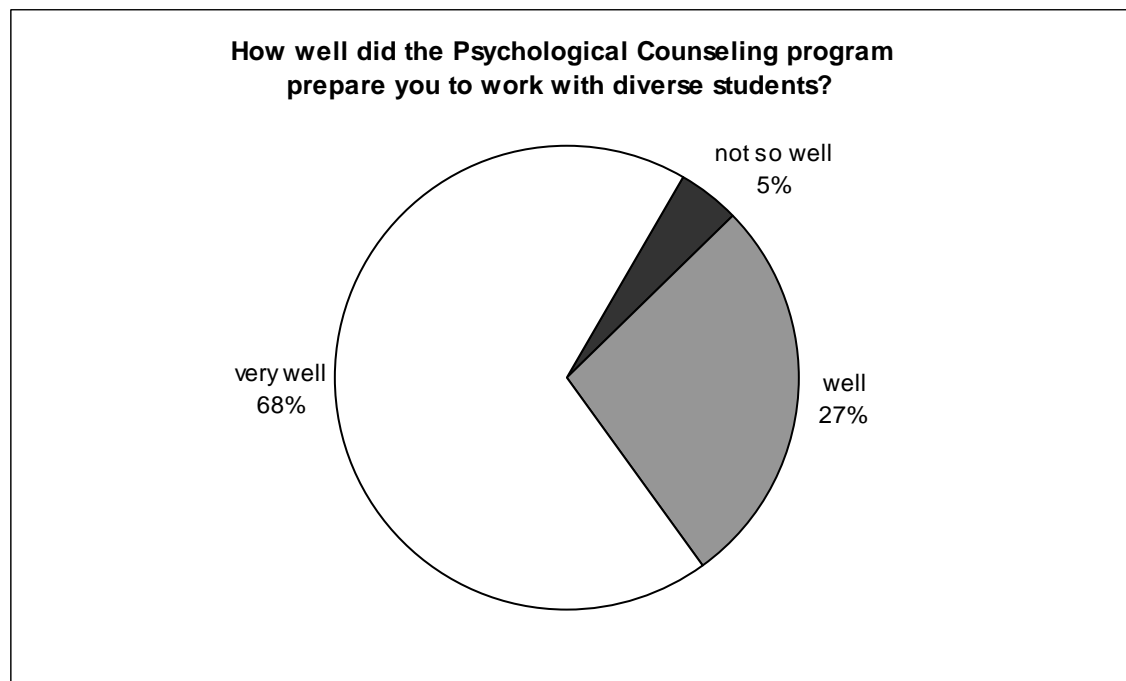
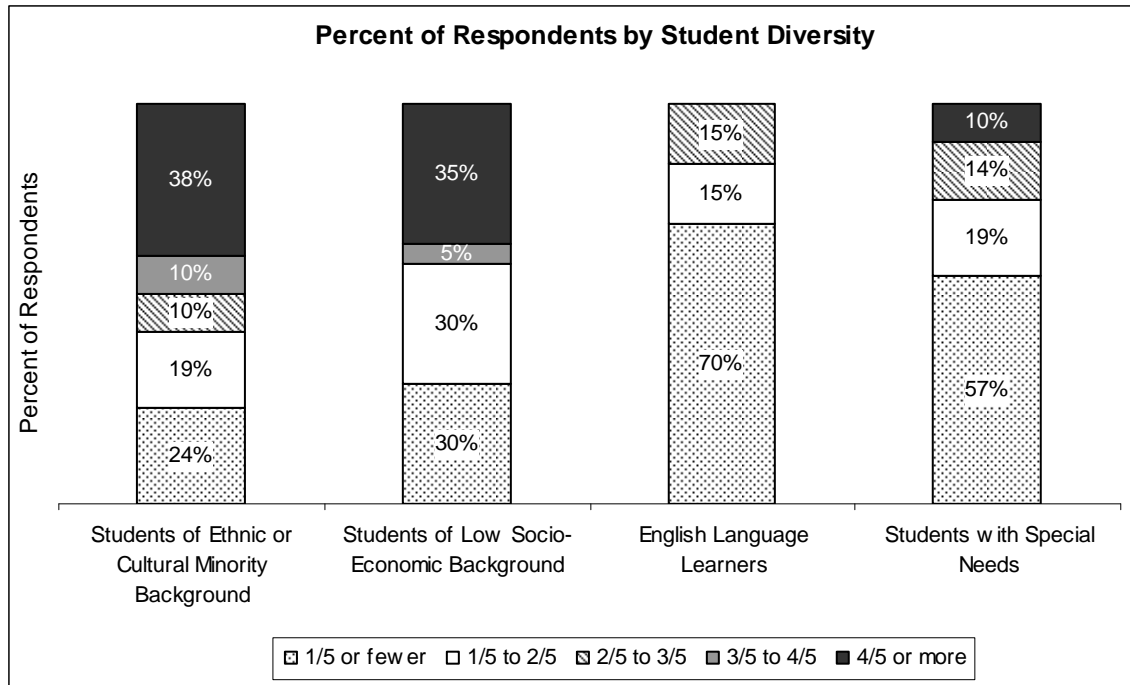
Psychological Counseling Program

Twenty-nine percent of respondents (n=20) who graduated from the psychological counseling program worked in preK-12 schools. Some respondents worked in more than one school type. They served students in elementary, middle, and high schools as shown in the graph below.



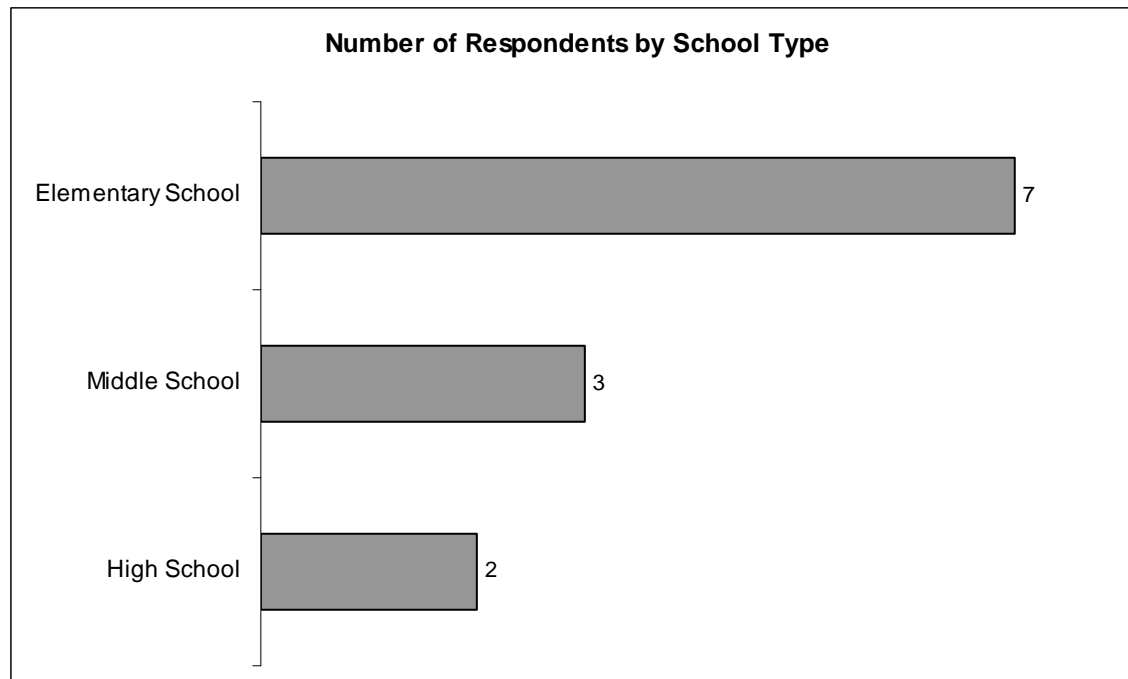
About half (48%) of the respondents estimated having worked with students 60% or more of whom were of ethnic, racial, or cultural minority background. Over a third (40%) of respondents worked with students 60% or more of whom were from low socio economic background. Less than a quarter of respondents (15% and 24% respectively) worked with students 40% or more of whom were English Language Learners or had special needs.

Based on the diversity of their students, ninety-five percent of the respondents reported feeling well prepared to address the needs of their students (68%-very well and 27%-well). Respondents who worked with less diverse and more affluent students tended to evaluate their preparation more positively than those who did not (Spearman's Rho coefficients of -0.362 for ethnic minority and satisfaction correlation, and -0.263 for low SES and satisfaction correlation).



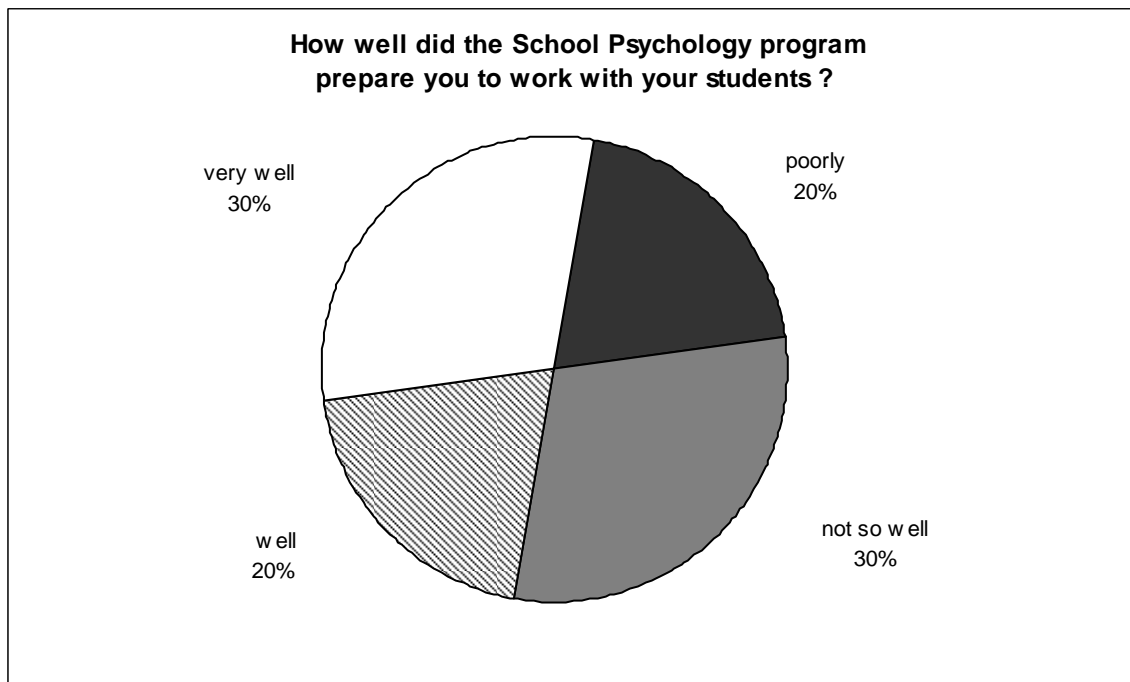
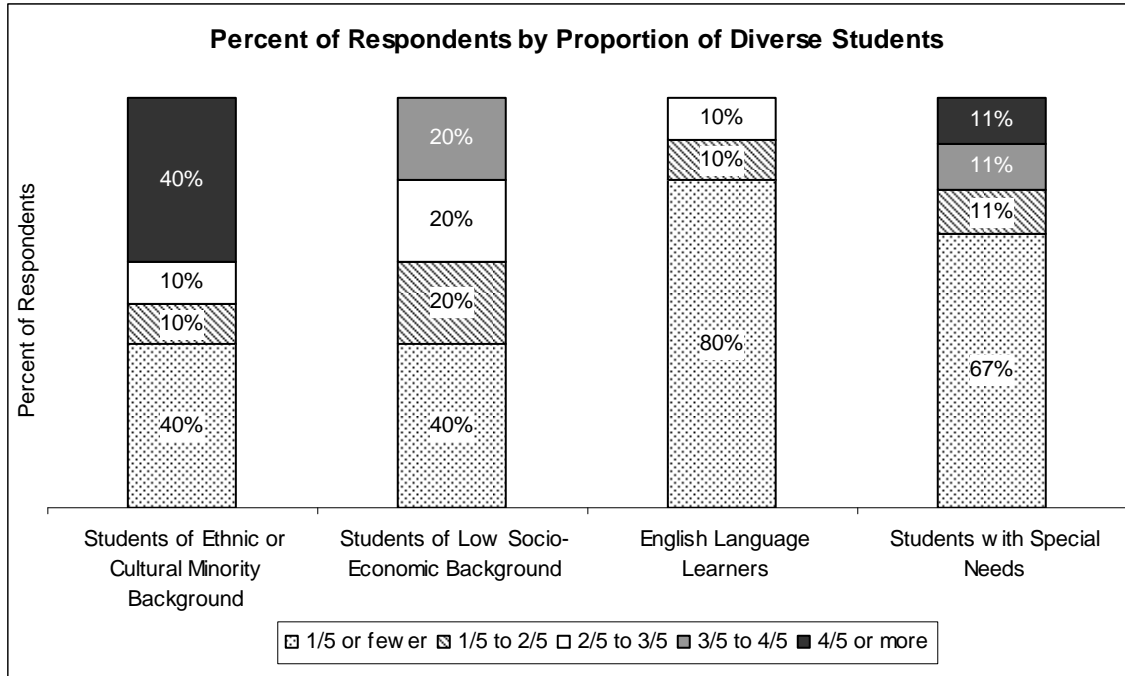
School Psychology Program

All 12 respondents who graduated from the school psychology program worked in preK-12 schools. They served students in elementary, middle and high schools as shown in the graph below.



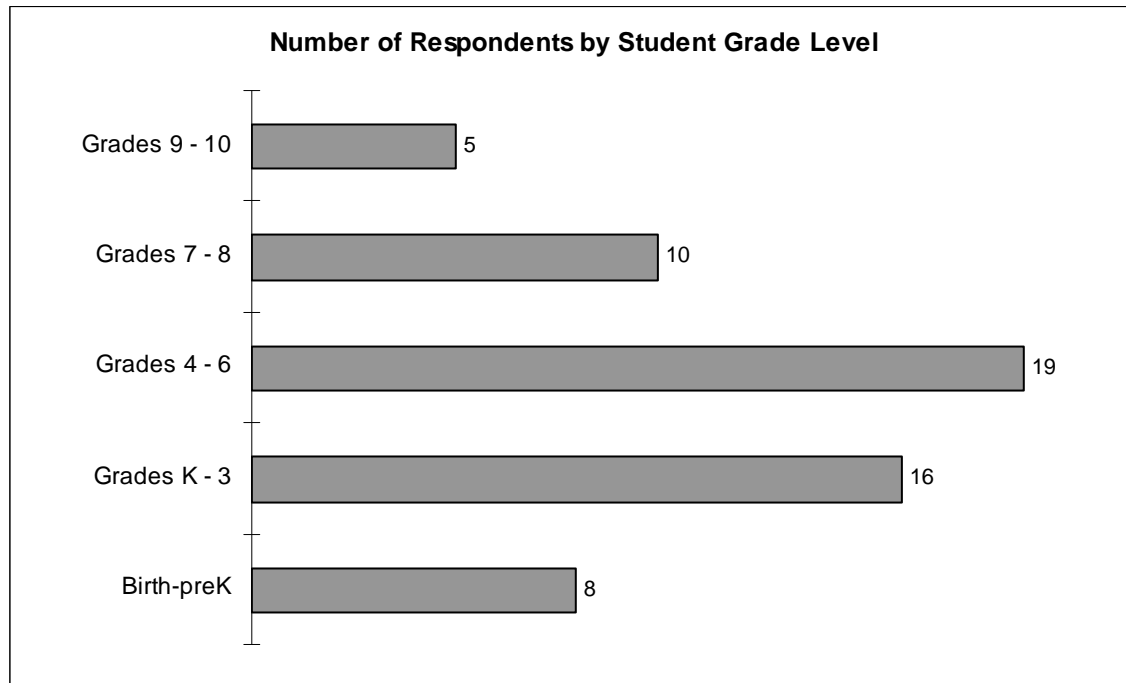
Based on their estimates, 40% of respondents worked with students 60% or more of whom were of ethnic, racial, or cultural minority background. Only 20% of respondents worked with students 60% or more of whom were from low socio economic background. Only 10% of respondents worked with students 40% or more of whom were English Language Learners, and 22% worked with students 40% or more of whom had special needs.

Given the diversity of their students, half of the respondents reported feeling well prepared to address the needs of their students (30%-very well and 20%-well). Another half did not feel adequately prepared to address the needs of diverse students. Respondents who worked with less diverse and more affluent students tended to evaluate their preparation more positively than those who did not (Spearman's Rho coefficients of -0.033 for ethnic minority and satisfaction correlation, and -0.065 for low SES and satisfaction correlation).



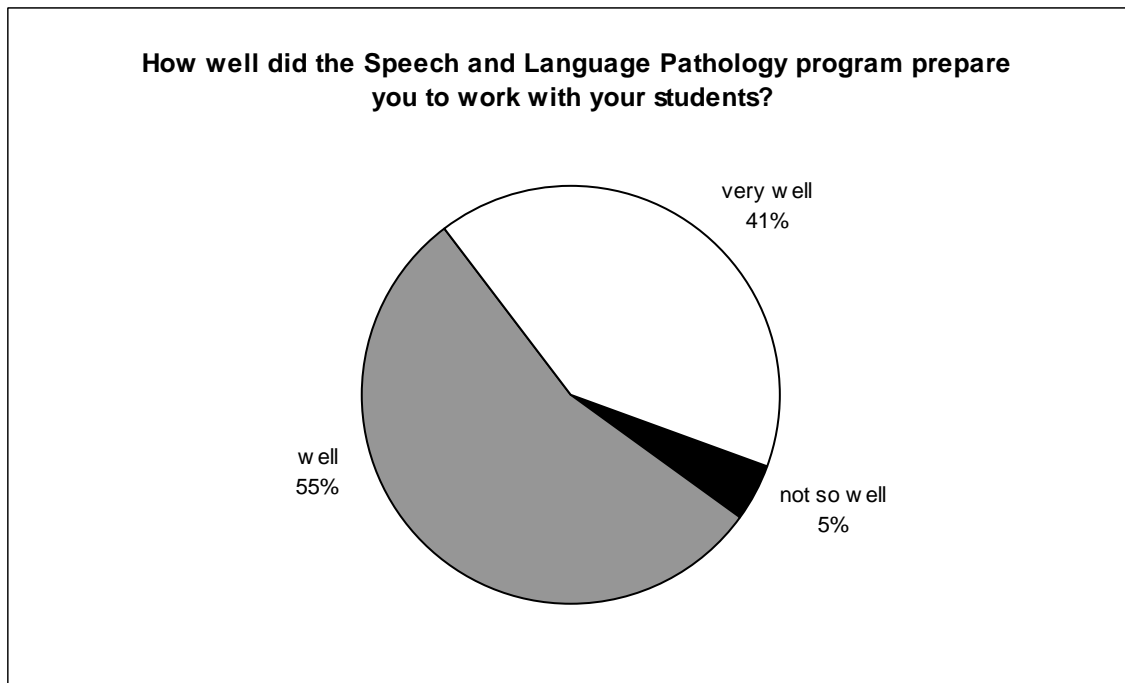
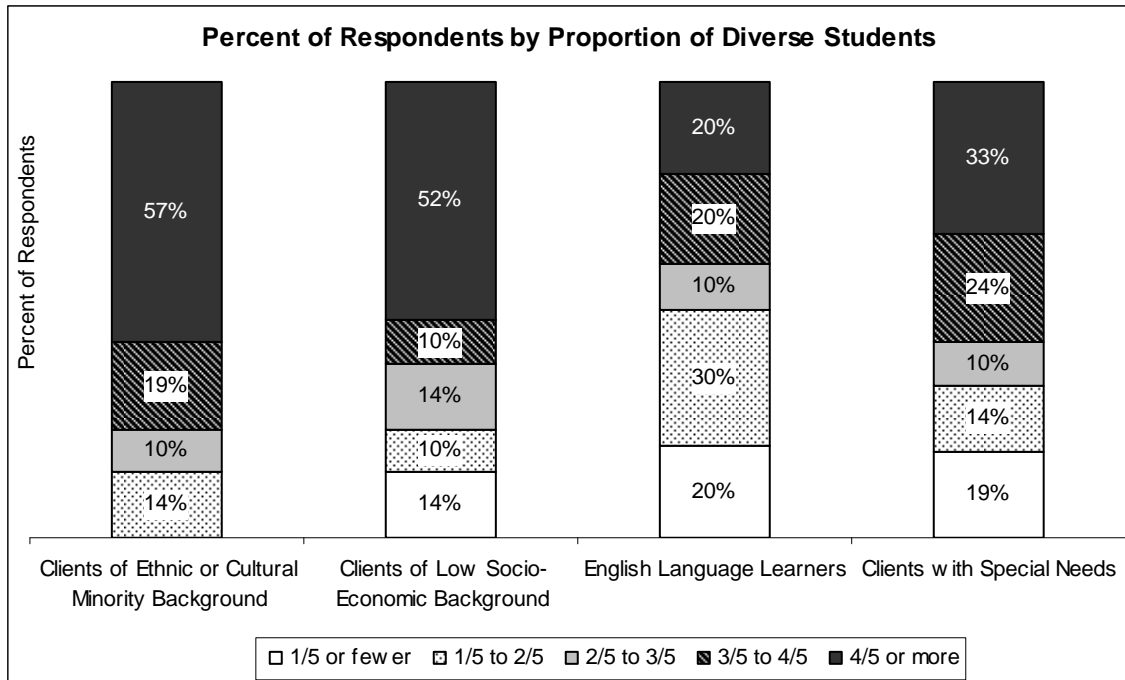
Speech and Language Pathology Program

Sixty-four percent of respondents (n=18) who graduated from the speech and language pathology program worked in preK-12 schools. Many respondents worked with students in multiple grade-level categories. They served students from birth to tenth grade as show in the graph below.



Seventy-six percent of respondents estimated having worked with more than 60% of students who were of ethnic, racial, or cultural minority background. Sixty-two percent of respondents worked with students 60% or more of whom were from low socio economic background. Half of the respondents worked with students 40% or more of whom were English Language Learners. Sixty-seven percent of respondents worked with students 40% or more of whom had special needs.

Ninety-six percent of respondents reported feeling well prepared to address the needs of their students as diverse as they were (55%-very well and 41%-well). Respondents who worked with less diverse and more affluent students tended to evaluate their preparation more positively than those who did not (Spearman's Rho coefficients of -0.188 for ethnic minority and satisfaction correlation, and -0.177 for low SES and satisfaction correlation).

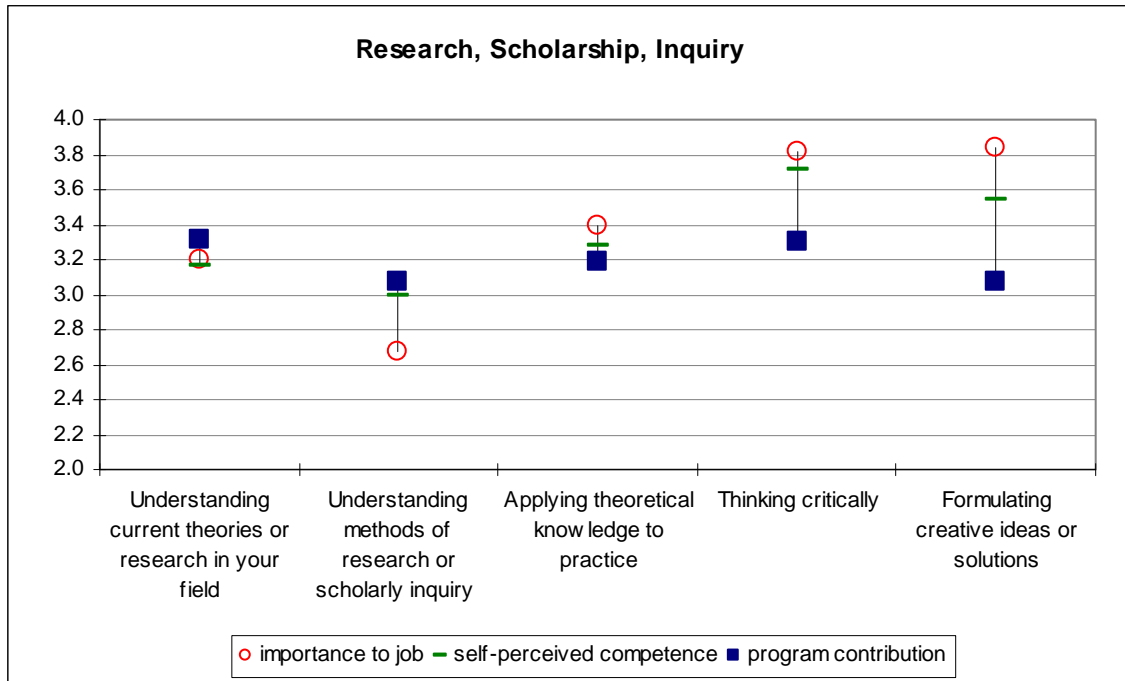


LEARNING GOALS

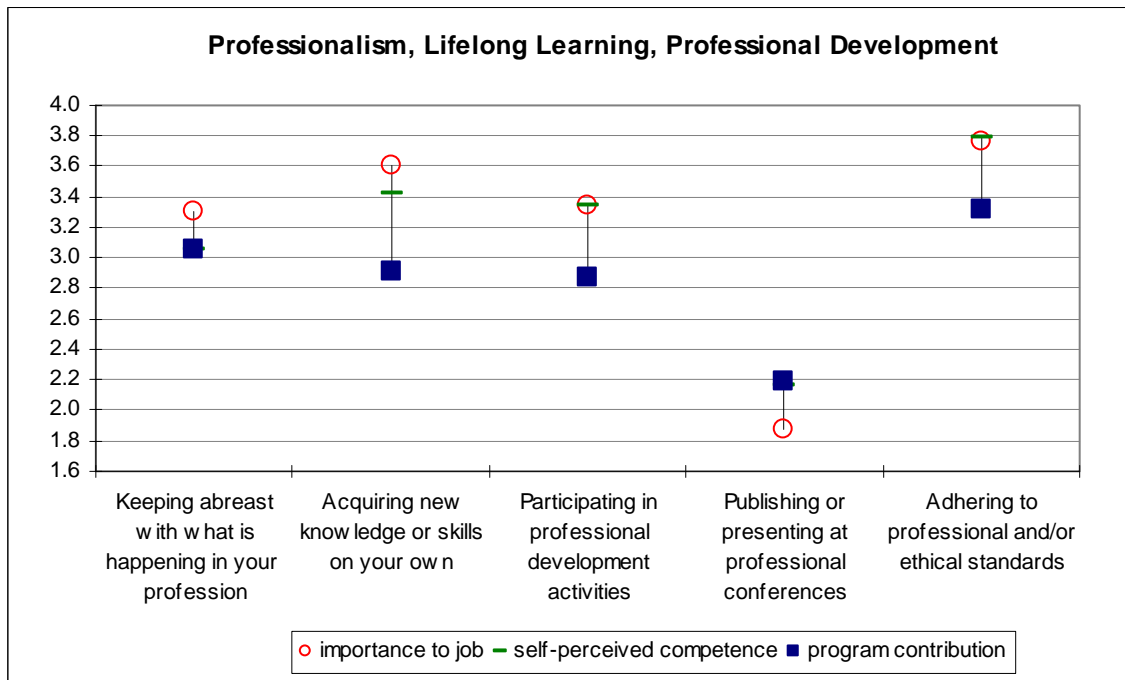
Respondents were asked to rate 26 areas of competence (i.e., learning outcomes) to indicate how important each area was to their current jobs, how competent they felt in the area, and how much their programs contributed to their competence in each area. Each area of competence was rated using a four-point scale from 1 (low) to 4 (high). The first 19 competencies are common across all. The last seven competencies are specific to individual programs. The following graphs show the results of the respondents' ratings for the first 19 competencies which are common across all programs. The table below displays the mean ratings.

Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions	Importance to job	Self-perceived competence	Program contribution
1. Understanding current theories or research in your field	3.2	3.2	3.3
2. Understanding methods of research or scholarly inquiry	2.7	3.0	3.1
3. Applying theoretical knowledge to practice	3.4	3.3	3.2
4. Thinking critically	3.8	3.7	3.3
5. Formulating creative ideas or solutions	3.8	3.5	3.1
6. Keeping abreast with what is happening in your profession	3.3	3.1	3.1
7. Acquiring new knowledge or skills on your own	3.6	3.4	2.9
8. Participating in professional development activities	3.4	3.4	2.9
9. Publishing or presenting at professional conferences	1.9	2.2	2.2
10. Adhering to professional and/or ethical standards	3.8	3.8	3.3
11. Communicating your ideas	3.8	3.6	3.2
12. Being an effective team member	3.8	3.7	3.2
13. Motivating other people in your job	3.4	3.4	2.7
14. Appreciating cultural diversity	3.6	3.7	3.4
15. Getting along with people of different backgrounds	3.7	3.8	3.3
16. Valuing perspectives different from your own.	3.7	3.7	3.3
17. Working with diverse people/populations	3.6	3.7	3.3
18. Recognizing social problems/inequalities	3.4	3.5	3.3
19. Advocating for students and/or their families	3.5	3.4	2.9

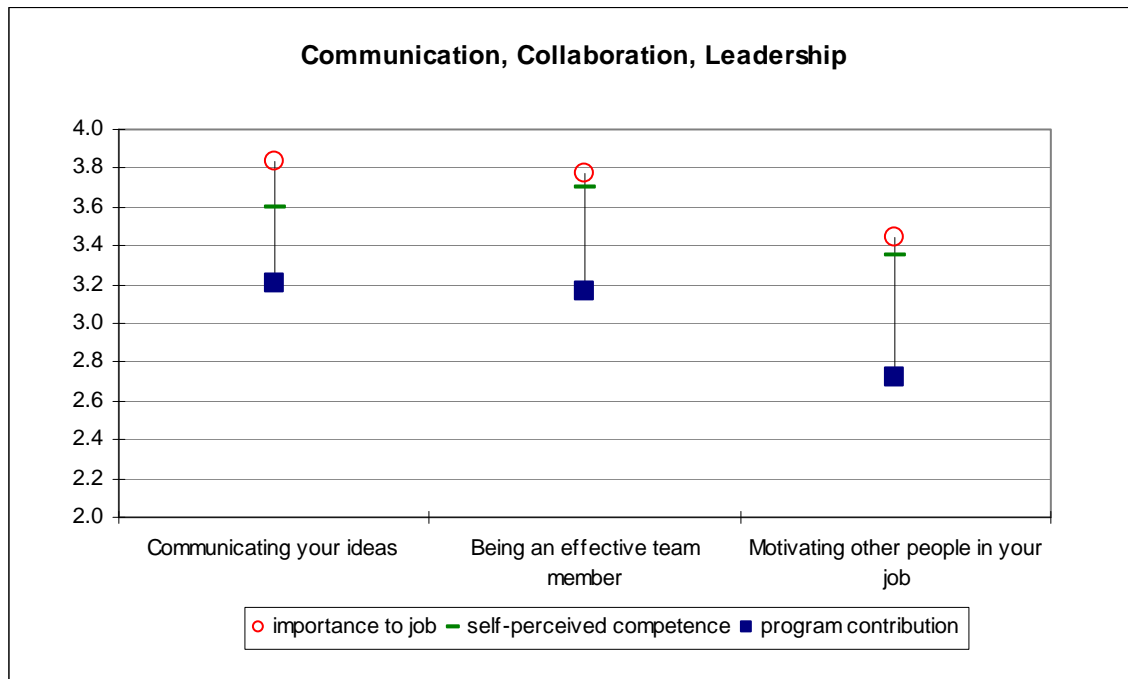
Research, Scholarship, Inquiry



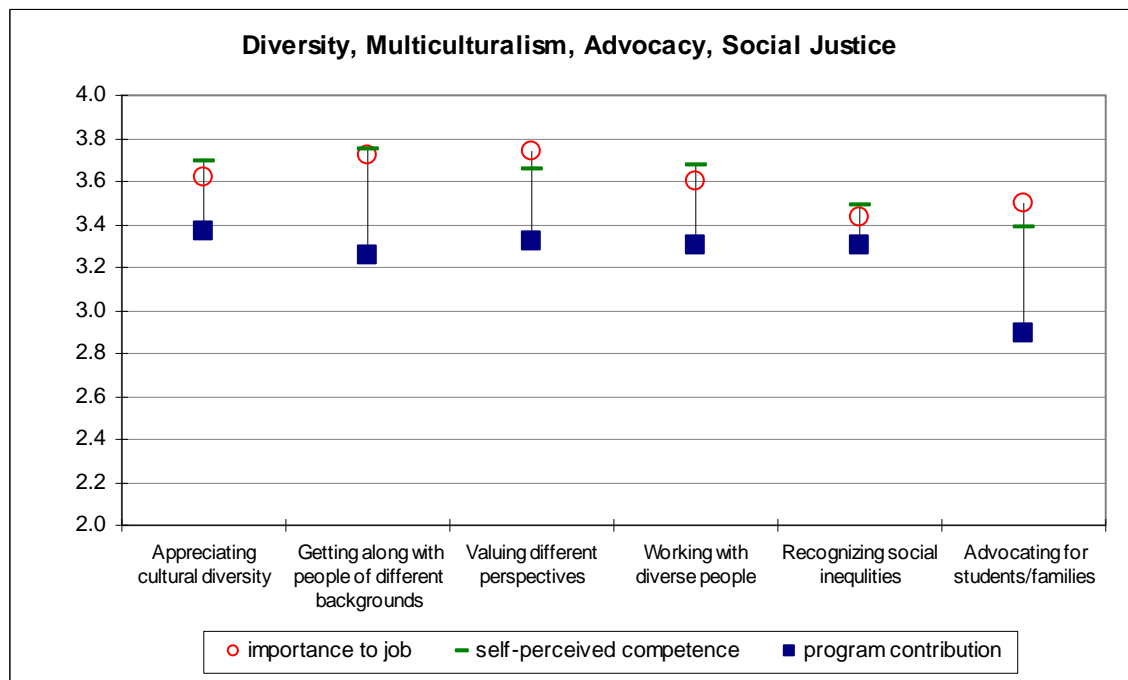
Professionalism, Lifelong Learning, Professional Development



Communication, Collaboration, Leadership

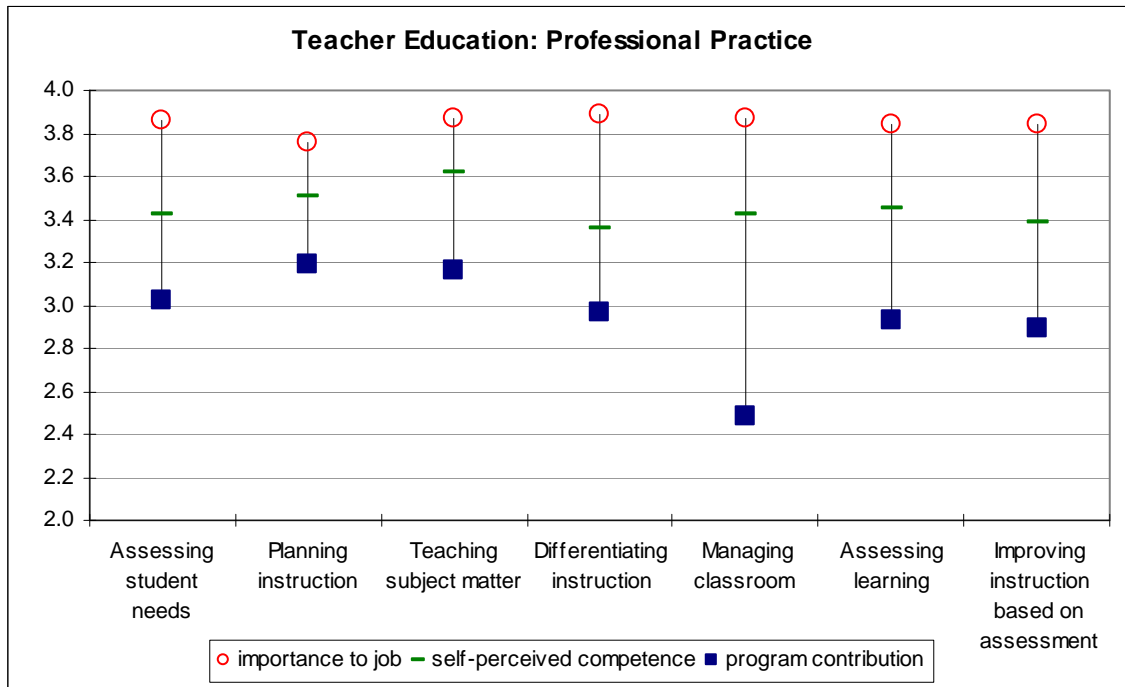


Diversity, Multiculturalism, Advocacy, Social Justice

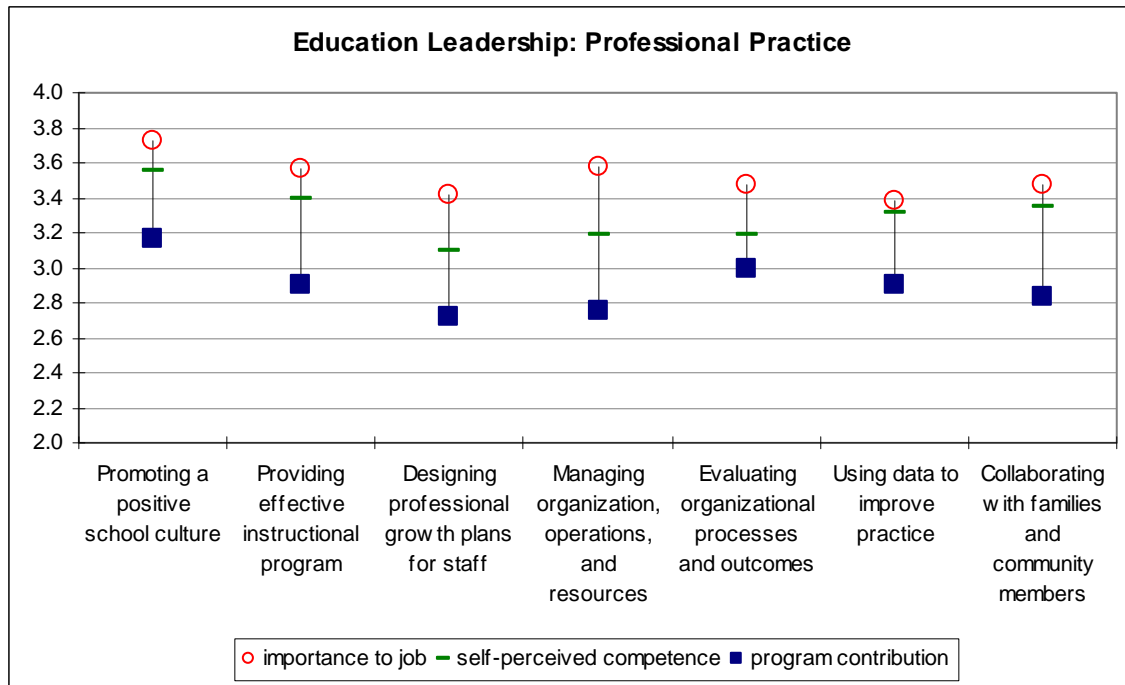


Professional Practice

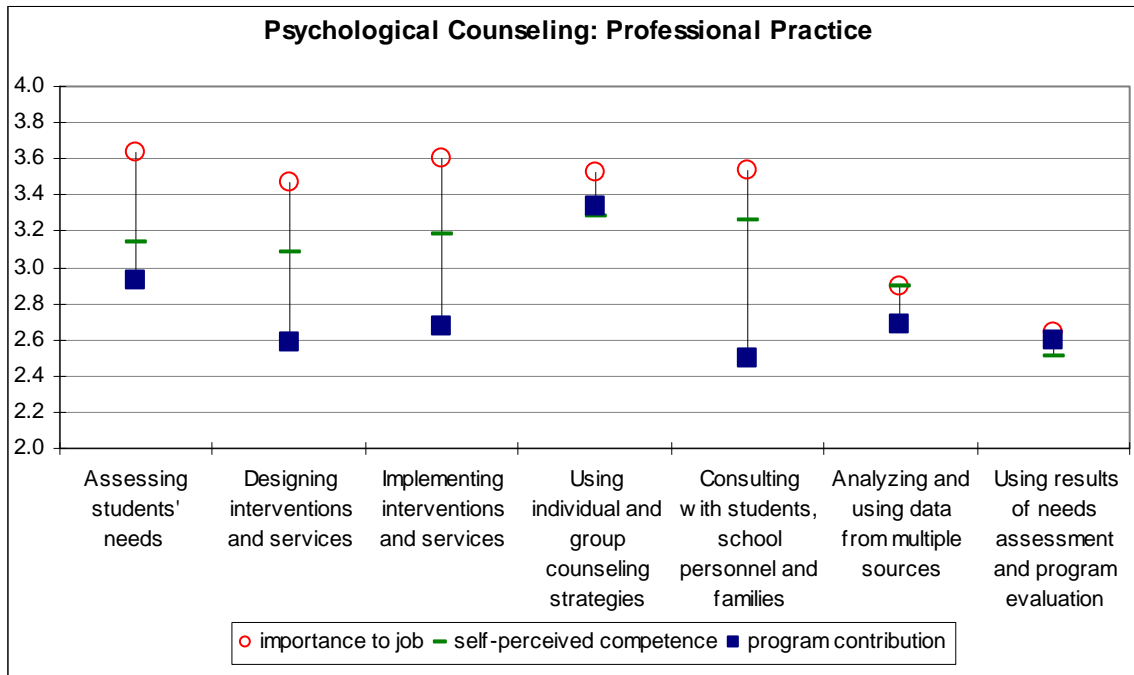
Teacher Preparation Programs



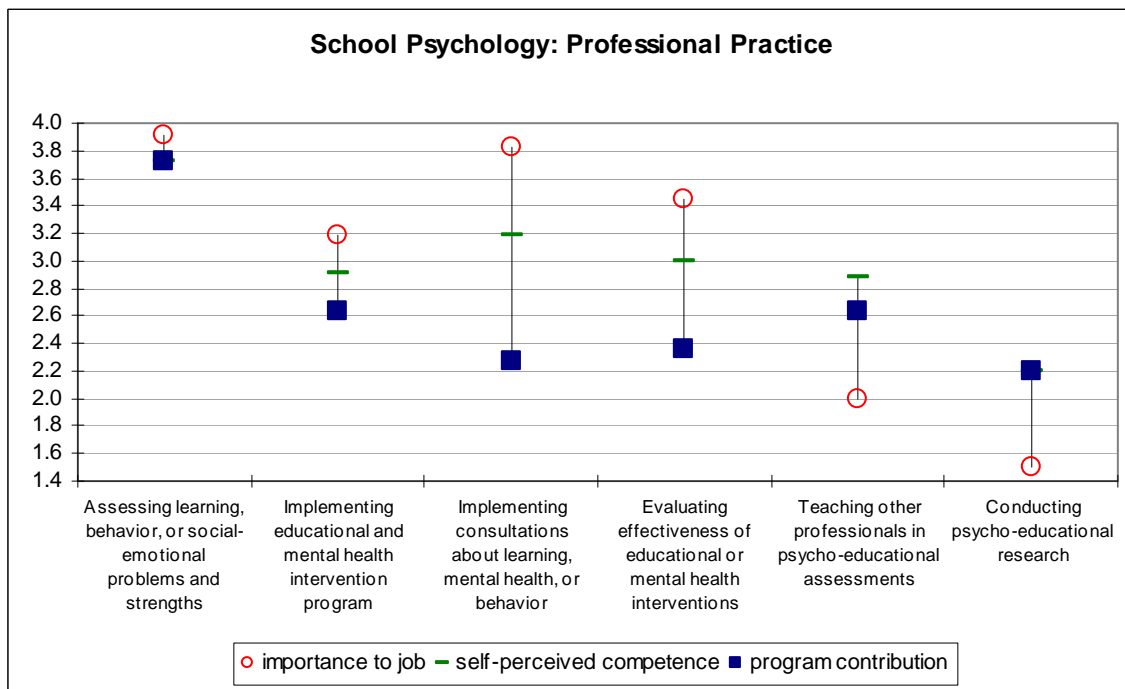
Education Leadership Program



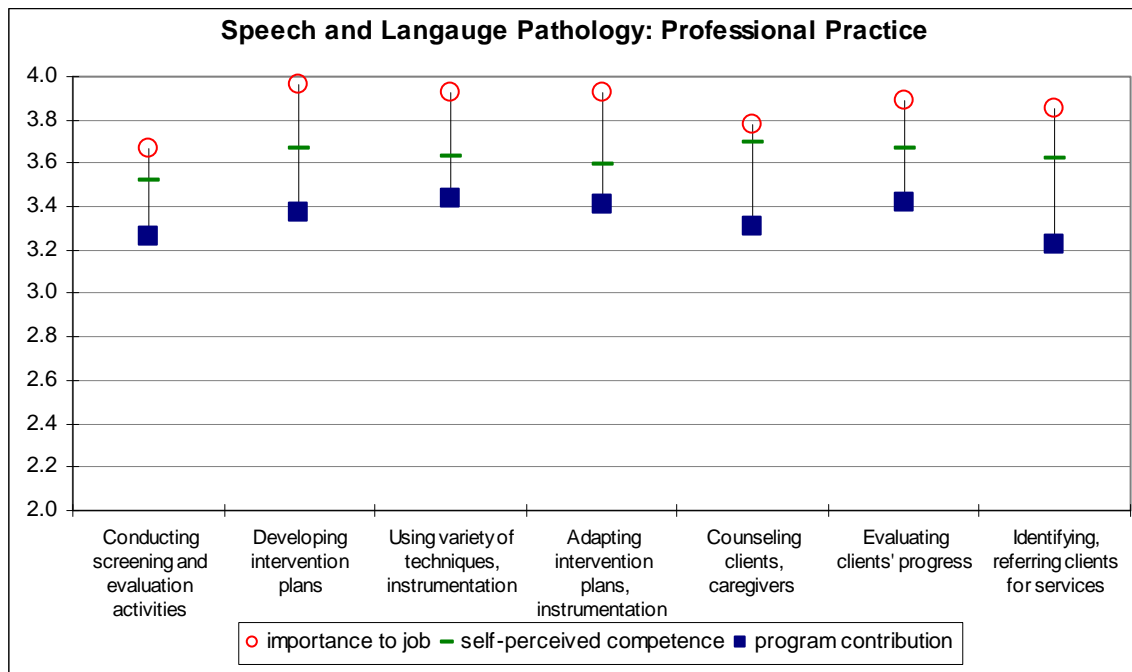
Psychological Counseling Program



School Psychology Program

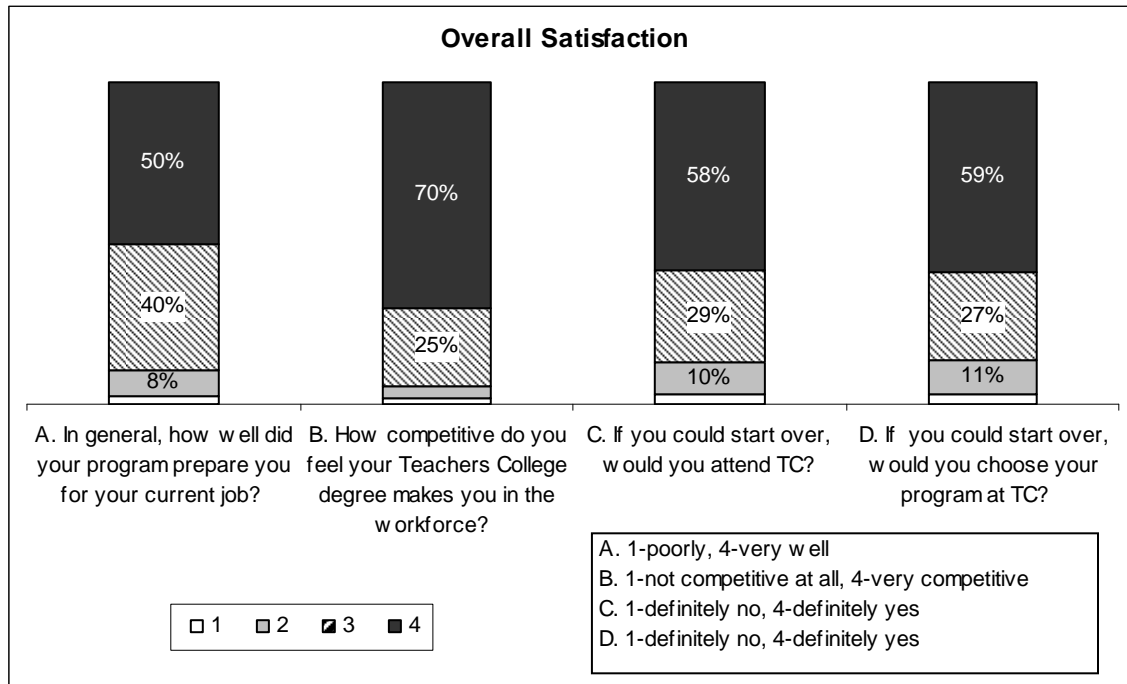


Speech and Language Pathology Program



OVERALL SATISFACTION

The majority (90%) of respondents felt well or very well prepared by their program. Almost all (95%) felt their Teachers College degree made them competitive or very competitive in the workforce. If they could start over, 87% of respondents would probably or definitely attend Teachers College, and 86% would probably or definitely choose the same program of study at Teachers College.



APPENDIX

Survey of Teachers College Alumni 2009: {program name}

SECTION I

1. What current and valid teaching/administrative certificates do you have?

1.
2.
3.
4. list all others:.....

2. Are you currently employed?

1. Yes, working full-time
2. Yes, working part-time
3. No, but am seeking employment (skip to # 8)
4. No, and am not seeking employment (skip to # 8)

3. How would you classify your primary employer?

1. PreK-12 school: public
2. PreK-12 school: private
3. PreK-12 school: parochial
4. Self-employed or private practice
5. Health agency (e.g., hospital, clinic)
6. Non-profit (non-government)
7. College or university
8. Other

4a. Zip code of your place of employment:

4b. If outside USA, which country are you working in?
.....

5. What is your job title?
.....

6. How related is your current job to your program of study at TC?

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|------------------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
| Unrelated | | | Directly related |

7. In general, how well did the {program name} program prepare you for your current job?

- | | | | | |
|--------|----|----|-----------|------------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | Don't Know |
| Poorly | | | Very Well | |

8. How competitive do you feel your Teachers College degree makes you in the workforce?

- | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|------------------|------------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | Don't Know |
| Not at all | | | Very Competitive | |

9. If you could start over, would you attend TC?

- | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----------------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
| Definitely not | | | Definitely yes |

10. If you could start over, would you choose the {program name} program at TC?

- | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----------------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
| Definitely not | | | Definitely yes |

Since graduation from the {program name} program, have you:

11. been a member of a professional association/society, e.g.?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

12. presented at a professional conference?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

13. published an article, a book chapter, or a book?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

14. held a leadership position in a professional association/society?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

If you taught in a preK-12 school within the last academic year, please answer #15-21. If not, please skip to #22.

15. What grade(s) did you teach?

16. What subject area(s) did you teach?

Approximately what percent of your students were:

17. ethnic/racial/cultural minority?

18. from low socio-economic backgrounds?.....

19. English Language Learners?

20. with special needs (other than)?
.....

21. How well did the {program name} program prepare you to teach your students, as described in your responses to #17-20?

- | | | | |
|--------|----|----|-----------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
| Poorly | | | Very well |

Please continue to Section II.

If you are currently NOT employed, please skip part A of Section II.

SECTION II:

A: How important are the following abilities/skills to your current job?

B: How competent do you feel you are in each of the following abilities/skills?

C: How much would you attribute your competence in each ability/skill to your program of study?

<i>Please circle your responses.</i>	A: importance to job	B: your competence	C: your program's contribution
Ratings	1. barely or not important 2. 3. 4. very important	1. barely or not competent 2. 3. 4. very competent	1. very little 2. 3. 4. very much
1. Understanding current theories <u>or</u> research in your field	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
2. Understanding methods of research <u>or</u> scholarly inquiry	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
3. Applying theoretical knowledge to practice	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
4. Thinking critically	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
5. Formulating creative ideas or solutions	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
6. Keeping abreast with what is happening in your profession	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
7. Acquiring new knowledge <u>or</u> skills on your own	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
8. Participating in professional development activities	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
9. Publishing or presenting at professional conferences	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
10. Adhering to professional and/or ethical standards	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
11. Communicating your ideas	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
12. Being an effective team member	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
13. Motivating other people in your job	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
14. Appreciating cultural diversity	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
15. Getting along with people of different backgrounds	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
16. Valuing perspectives different from your own	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
17. Working with diverse people/populations	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
18. Recognizing social problems/inequalities	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
19. Advocating for students and/or their families	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
20. Assessing learning, social, or emotional needs of students	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
21. Developing stimulating lessons/curriculum plans	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
22. Teaching subject area concepts, knowledge, and skills	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
23. Teaching students with different skill levels in the same classroom	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
24. Using effective classroom management strategies	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
25. Assessing student progress and performance	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
26. Using assessment results to make instructional decisions	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A

SECTION III (If you are currently not employed, please answer question 3 only)

1. What other skills/competencies are important to your current job?

2. How much did the {program name} contribute to your development in the areas you listed above in question 1?
 very little 1. 2. 3. 4. very much

3. If you could make any suggestions to the {program name}, what would they be?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!