



HEDS Alumni Survey

Fall 2015

Selected Items Related to Collaboration & Communication

Dates of Administration: November 11, 2014 – December 10, 2014

Method of Administration: Web survey (Administered by HEDS)

Response Ratesⁱ

1 year out (Class of 2014)	87/176 = 49.4%
5 years out (Class of 2009)	61/143 = 42.6%
10 years out (Class of 2004)	52/133 = 39.0%
10+ years out	52/137 = 37.8%

Background:

The HEDS Alumni Survey is designed to assess the long-term impact of undergraduate education. The survey asks alumni about the quality and impact of their undergraduate educational experiences, including co-curricular activities such as internships, study abroad, and community service. The survey also asks alumni to evaluate the impact of their undergraduate education on their postgraduate critical thinking and reasoning, Collaboration and communication, and other learning outcomes. Finally, the survey asks about postgraduate employment, college satisfaction, and college debt.

HMC participates in this survey annually, and surveys all alumni 1, 5, and 10 years out, as well as 5% of each class year more than 10 years out. HMC can add up to 20 supplemental questions at the end of the HEDS Alumni Survey that are specific to our institution. Ten of those questions have been reserved for academic departments going through program review, and 10 for the Office of Alumni and Parent Relations.

The results of the alumni survey are used throughout the campus in departmental program reviews to evaluate growth and development on student learning outcomes; in career services to establish career and graduate school activities one year out; and by the college overall in accreditation and assessment activities.

Highlights:

Oral and written communication are central learning outcomes in our Core Curriculum and beyond. We ask students to engage in prepared and purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge and foster understanding in systematically more complex ways not only in their Core coursework, but throughout their time at HMC. Because our curriculum frequently asks students to complete their work in teams, we have included the notion of collaboration with the communication outcome. Our students work in teams in many different settings. For example, a given student may work on separate teams to complete a lab assignment, prepare an oral presentation, or complete a community service project. Furthermore, the people they work with are likely to be different in each of these settings.

- Overall, 8 out of 10 respondents indicated that their ability to write effectively developed quite a bit or very much as a result of their undergraduate experience. More recent respondents were more likely to

indicate their writing skills improved quite a bit or very much (86% and 80% respectively for respondents one and five years out) as compared to respondents 10 years out (76%).

- We see a similar, if more dramatic pattern with respect to oral communication. While 68% of respondents overall indicate their oral communication skills developed quite a bit or very much as a result of their undergraduate experience. If we look at the differences between class years, we see a healthy increase in the percentage of respondents who indicate that their oral communications skills were developed quite a bit or very much (82% for respondents one year out, as compared to 74% for respondents five years out at 60% of those 10 years out).
- Despite growth in skill development for both oral and written communication, only roughly half of respondents indicate what they wrote essays or made oral presentations often or very often. This finding suggests that it may not be the quantity of writing that students do that is responsible for growth, but rather the quality.
- Of the three skills developed, teamwork was consistently highest rated, with 8 out of 10 respondents indicating their skills in this area were developed quite a bit or very much.

To what extent did your experience as an undergraduate contribute to your knowledge, skills and development in the following areas?	All Alumni	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Effective Writing: Conveying accurate and compelling content in clear, expressive, and audience-appropriate written presentations				
Very Little	0.5%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Some	19.9%	12.7%	20.4%	23.8%
Quite a bit	45.4%	45.6%	44.9%	45.2%
Very Much	34.3%	40.5%	34.7%	31.0%
MEAN	3.13	3.25	3.14	3.07
Effective Speaking: Conveying accurate and compelling content in clear, expressive and audience-appropriate oral presentations				
Very Little	3.2%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Some	28.7%	17.7%	24.5%	40.5%
Quite a bit	34.3%	30.4%	34.7%	40.5%
Very Much	33.8%	51.9%	38.8%	19.0%
MEAN	2.99	3.34	3.1	2.79
Teamwork: Contributing to a team, facilitating the work of team members, and fostering a constructive team climate				
Very Little	2.3%	1.3%	2.0%	2.4%
Some	13.0%	8.9%	6.1%	14.3%
Quite a bit	26.9%	24.1%	34.7%	28.6%
Very Much	57.9%	65.8%	57.1%	54.8%
MEAN	3.4	3.54	3.47	3.36

Below are statements about experiences you may have had in your classes as an undergraduate. About how often did you experience each?		All Alumni	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Wrote essays					
Never		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Rarely		9.6%	15.5%	9.4%	0.0%
Sometimes		37.0%	34.5%	32.1%	47.8%
Often		38.3%	35.7%	37.7%	39.1%
Very Often		15.2%	14.3%	20.8%	13.0%
MEAN		3.59	3.49	3.70	3.65
Made oral presentations					
Never		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Rarely		7.8%	3.6%	3.8%	6.5%
Sometimes		40.9%	33.3%	37.7%	45.7%
Often		36.1%	42.9%	43.4%	30.4%
Very Often		15.2%	20.2%	15.1%	17.4%
MEAN		3.59	3.80	3.70	3.59

ⁱ Sent to all alumni in each class with valid email addresses