



Department of Psychology • <http://www.arc.siu.edu> • 618-453-3536

## 2018-2019 Applied Psychology Alumni Survey Report

**Client(s):** Meera Komaraju, Ph.D., Interim Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Eric Jacobs, Ph.D., Interim Department Chair  
Southern Illinois University  
E-mail: [meerak@siu.edu](mailto:meerak@siu.edu)  
Phone: (618) 453-3555

**Evaluation Team:** Millicent Weber, B.S., Project Lead  
Allysha Kochenour, M.S., Project Co-lead  
Emily Galeza, B.A., Project Personnel  
Jessica Liberman, Intern

**Project Supervisor:** Kristin Pankey, M.S., Director  
Applied Research Consultants (ARC)<sup>1</sup>  
Southern Illinois University  
Life Sciences II, Mail Code: 6502  
Carbondale, IL 62901

**Date:** December 17, 2018

---

<sup>1</sup> **Applied Research Consultants (ARC)** is a service and training organization within the Department of Psychology. ARC has provided professional services in applied research, evaluation, and consulting to local, regional, and national clients since 1981. Find us on the web at: <http://www.arc.siu.edu>.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction.....	3
II.	Method.....	3
III.	Results.....	4-5
IV.	List of Tables .....	6
Tables 1-5:	Alumni Survey Results .....	7-8
Appendix A:	Invitation to Survey .....	9
Appendix B:	Survey Screenshots .....	10-12
Appendix C:	References.....	13

## **I. Introduction**

As early as the 1930s, leading colleges used alumni surveys to obtain information about graduates' professional degree attainment and employment (Pace, 1979). Evaluating alumni outcomes is essential in assessing graduate students' cognitive and professional development and evidence has long shown that alumni surveys can serve as efficient tools for program evaluation, as well as for strategic program planning when implementing changes to an existing curriculum (Cabrera, Weerts, & Zulick, 2005; Davidson, Inpornjivit, & Sellers, 2004; Pike, 1994; Volkwein, 2010). Furthermore, in order to better determine if program components are functioning properly and whether individual and institutional goals are being met (Volkwein, 2010), feedback from alumni surveys can be incorporated into performance and accountability systems.

The Applied Psychology program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) is an eclectic combination of industrial/organizational psychology and applied social psychology for students who seek careers in business and industry, government, not-for-profit organizations, independent consulting, and/or academic careers. The program follows a scientist-practitioner model, which represents different degrees of emphasis on either research or practice. Research indicates that such models of graduate training are essential to the growth of psychology as a scientific discipline (Belar, 2000; Horn et al., 2007; Lane & Corrie, 2007). A central feature of the Applied Psychology Program is the student-run consulting firm, Applied Research Consultants (ARC). ARC is a 2-year vertical practicum that provides training in survey design and research methodology, program evaluation, organizational development and restructuring, as well as traditional academic research (Cundiff, Nadler, & Scribner, 2011).

In an effort to determine the effectiveness of various program components, and to aid in the continuous improvement of the Applied Psychology program, Dr. Meera Komarraju, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, requested that alumni of the program be surveyed about their thoughts, opinions, and experiences in relation to their time in the Applied Psychology program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The following report details the survey methodology, data analysis, and results of the Applied Psychology Alumni Survey at SIUC. The survey invited Applied Psychology alumni to provide information about their career outcomes, how their experiences at SIUC contributed to those outcomes, and any suggestions they had for improving the program. The main goal of this survey was to assess alumni opinions regarding program strengths and potential growth opportunities.

## **II. Method**

A large portion of alumni who graduated with either Master's or Doctoral degrees from the Applied Psychology Program were asked to complete the survey in order to provide feedback and suggestions for improving the program. Qualtrics survey development software was used to design the survey instrument and collect the data online. The official survey invitation, which included the online survey link, was distributed on Wednesday,

September 12, 2018. The survey link was active for a total of four weeks with reminder emails being sent weekly. Emails were sent to 55 alumni and 30 responses were received, resulting in a 54.5% response rate. Although 30 alumni responded, not all responses were complete. Therefore, sample sizes varied from question to question. The survey covered six main topic areas: (1) First Job, (2) Current Job, (3) Salary, (4) Conferences, (5) Program Outcomes, and (6) Demographics.

### III. Results

A majority of Applied Psychology alumni currently hold non-academic/industry jobs (53.6%) in a variety of settings. Of the alumni who currently hold academic jobs, 61.5% work in public universities. Regardless of the type of job our alumni hold, the average number of years they have held their current position is four years with the minimum amount of time being less than six months and the maximum being thirteen years. This indicates that we received responses from alumni at many different points in their careers.

**Field of First Job.** Alumni were asked about the field and title of their first job. A total of 58.6% of our alumni accepted a full-time job offer before graduation. About 81.8% of our alumni reported working in Non-Academia/Industry for their first job, as opposed to Academia (13.6%). The top four Non-Academia/Industry categories that alumni reported their first jobs were in were as follows: Government (33.1%), Medical/Healthcare (11.1%), Technology (11.1%), and Consulting (11.1%). However, when including research and testing consulting, the Consulting industry made up 22.3% of responses. Examples of alumni's first job titles included Research Associate, Senior Research and Evaluation Analyst, Human Resource Generalist, and Survey Methodology Consultant (See Table 1).

**Satisfaction with Quality of Components.** Alumni were asked about their level of satisfaction with the quality of training on various components within the Applied Psychology Program. Alumni were most highly satisfied with two specific components: Research Design and Methodology, and Descriptive Statistics, with a majority (70.0%) of alumni indicating they were extremely satisfied with the training the program provided on both components. The training components alumni were least satisfied with were: Publishing Research and Presenting to Non-Academics. Ten (33.3%) alumni indicated they were moderately satisfied with the quality of training on Publishing Research and eight (26.7%) alumni indicated they were moderately satisfied with the quality of training on Presenting to Non-Academics. See Table 2 for average ratings of the four components.

**Importance of Components.** Alumni were also asked about how important they thought various components of the program were. The two most important components indicated by alumni were Communicating with Others in a Professional Manner and Working Collaboratively with Others, with a majority (79.3% and 75.9% respectfully) of alumni indicating that these components were both *extremely important*. The two least important components were Publishing Research and Working in a Lab(s). Six (20.0%) alumni indicated that Publishing Research was *not important* and nine (31.0%) alumni

indicated that Working in a Lab(s) was *not important*. Average ratings for these four components are presented below, with higher values indicating higher importance.

**Gender and Ethnicity.** Of the alumni who responded to the survey, thirteen were female (46.4%), twelve were male (42.9%), and two preferred not to answer (10.7%). The alumni who responded to the survey were primarily White/Caucasian (77.8%), followed by Black or African American (3.7%), Asian (3.7%), and Bi-Racial or Multi-Racial (3.7%). Three alumni preferred not to answer (11.1%) (See Tables 4 and 5).

SAMPLE

## List of Tables

Table #	Table Title	Page #
<b>Alumni Survey: Tables 1-5</b>		
<b>Table 1</b>	Field of first job.	<b>7</b>
<b>Table 2</b>	Satisfaction with quality of components.	<b>7</b>
<b>Table 3</b>	Importance of components.	<b>7</b>
<b>Table 4</b>	Gender.	<b>8</b>
<b>Table 5</b>	Ethnicity.	<b>8</b>

## Alumni Survey Results

Tables 1-5 provide detailed frequencies and valid percentages for alumni responses to each item. The Applied Psychology Alumni Survey contained 5 questions.

Table 1. *Field of first job.*

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent
Academia	3	13.64
Non-Academia/Industry	18	81.82
Postdoctoral Position	1	4.55
Total	22	100.00

Table 2. *Satisfaction with quality of components.*

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent	<i>M</i>
Extremely Satisfied	21	70.0	
Very Satisfied	7	23.3	
Moderately Satisfied	2	6.7	
Slightly Satisfied	0	0.00	
Not Satisfied	0	0.00	
Total	30	100.0	4.63

Table 3. *Importance of components.*

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent	<i>M</i>
Extremely Important	6	20.7	
Very Important	3	10.3	
Moderately Important	6	20.7	
Slightly Important	4	13.8	
Not Important	9	31.0	
Total	29	100.00	2.69

Table 4. *Gender.*

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	12	46.15
Female	12	46.15
Prefer not to Answer	2	7.69
Transgender	0	0.00
Non-binary	0	0.00
Total	26	100.00

Table 5. *Ethnicity.*

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.00
Asian	1	3.70
Black or African American	1	3.70
Hispanic/Latino	0	0.00
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.00
White/Caucasian	21	77.78
Bi-Racial or Multi-Racial	1	3.70
Prefer Not to Answer	3	11.11
Total	27	100.00



## Appendix A – Invitation to Survey

Dear Applied Psychology Program Alum,

We are reaching out to you to ask about your thoughts, opinions, past experiences, and current experiences in relation to your time in the Applied Psychology program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC). It is our hope that by asking former students like you to share their thoughts and opinions, we can aid in the continuous improvement of the Applied Psychology program and help current students in the program better prepare themselves for their post-graduation endeavors.

As an alum, your thoughts and opinions are very valuable to us, and your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated. The survey should take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete, but the survey does **not** need to be completed in one sitting. Your answers will be automatically saved each time you move to a new page within the survey, and you can continue the survey at a later time.

The deadline to complete the survey is **Monday, October 15, 2018 by 11:59pm CST**. To start the survey, click the link below or enter the web page address in your preferred Internet browser.

[Follow this link to the Survey:](#)  
[\\${!://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#)

This survey is hosted by Applied Research Consultants (ARC) on behalf of Dr. Meera Komarraju, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and on behalf of the Applied Psychology faculty. Your answers are voluntary, and all responses and contact information will be kept confidential. When the results are summarized, your answers will not be associated with your e-mail address or name.

If you have any questions, please contact ARC by e-mail at [arcmail@siu.edu](mailto:arcmail@siu.edu).

We appreciate your time and consideration in completing this important survey. It is only through feedback from individuals like yourself that we can enhance the Applied Psychology program.

Sincerely,



Kristin Pankey, M.S.  
Director, Applied Research Consultants  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

## Appendix B— Survey Screenshots



Which field is your current job in? If both Academia and Non-Academia/Industry, choose the field you spend more time on.

Academia

Non-Academia/Industry

Postdoctoral Position (Post-Doc)

< >

Next

The table below contains a list of components that may have been a part of your training in the Applied Psychology program at SIUC. For components that you feel were not part of your training, please select the "Not Applicable" option.

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the quality of each training component.

	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	Not Applicable
Descriptive Statistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inferential Statistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statistical Modeling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Design and Methodology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate the level of importance of each training component in relation to the job(s) you have held since graduating from SIUC.

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important	Not Applicable
Descriptive Statistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inferential Statistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statistical Modeling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Design and Methodology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which term best describes your gender identity?

Male

Female

Transgender

Non-Binary

Other (Please Specify)

Prefer Not to Answer

What is your ethnicity?

<input type="radio"/>	American Indian or Alaska Native
<input type="radio"/>	Asian
<input type="radio"/>	Black or African American
<input type="radio"/>	Hispanic/Latino
<input type="radio"/>	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
<input type="radio"/>	White/Caucasian
<input type="radio"/>	Bi-Racial or Multi-Racial
<input type="radio"/>	Other
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	Prefer Not to Answer

## References

- Belar, C. D. (2000). Scientist-practitioner  $\neq$  science + practice: Boulder is bolder. *American Psychologist*, 55(2), 249-250.
- Cabrera, A. F., Weerts, D. J., & Zulick, B. J. (2005). Making an impact with alumni surveys. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2005(126), 5-17.
- Cundiff, N., Nadler, J., & Scribner, S. (2011). Teaching evaluation: A student-run consulting firm. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 23(1), 109–113.
- Davidson-Shivers, G. V., Inpornjivit, K., & Sellers, K. (2004). Using alumni and student databases for program evaluation and planning. *College Student Journal*, 38(4), 510-521.
- Horn, R. A., Troyer, J. A., Hall, E. J., Mellott, R. N., Sue Coté, L., & Marquis, J. D. (2007). The scientist-practitioner model: A rose by any other name is still a rose. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 50(6), 808–819.
- Lane, D. A., & Corrie, S. (2007). *The modern scientist-practitioner: A guide to practice in psychology*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Pace, C. R. (1979) *Measuring outcomes of college: Fifty years of findings and recommendations for the future*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Pike, G. R. (1994). The relationship between alumni satisfaction and work experiences. *Research in Higher Education*, 35(1), 105-123.
- Volkwein, J. F. (2010). Assessing alumni outcomes. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2010(S1), 125-139.