



Survey on the Long-Term Impacts
of Liberal Education on Religious
Studies Majors

Spring 2014

SURVEY RESULTS: UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY



THE AAR SURVEY REPORT FOR UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

The institutional report displays aggregated results for all participating universities. These institutions volunteered to take part in the survey that was administered spring semester 2014. Please see the Survey Participation Tab for a complete list of participating institutions.

RESPONSE RATES	N	%
Your Institution	20	63%
All other Institutions	1520	37%

Understanding the Competency Table

Competency Areas		Mean	Incr.	Same	Dec.
Understanding religion from a variety of theoretical and	Entering "E"	2.35			
	Exiting "X"	5.17	0.63	0.34	0.02

*p<.01

Mean score rating before entering the religious studies program

Mean score rating after graduating from the religious studies program

% increased competency in area since graduating

% competency staying about the same in area since graduating

% decreased competency in area since graduating

Items with mean differences that are larger than would be expected by chance alone are noted in the competency table. The smaller the significance level, the less likely the difference is due to chance. Pairwise comparisons were used to determine differences between entering and exiting competency ratings of your alumni, not between your institution and other participating institutions. (The mean is the arithmetic average of responses on a particular item.)

Understanding the Satisfaction Table

Satisfaction

	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sig.	Effect size
I have applied the skills I learned in religious studies to help resolve problems I've faced in my personal life.	5.19	1.090	4.70	1.278	**	.38

Mean score

Standard deviation which measures the average amount the scores deviate from the mean.

Significance level which indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between your institution's mean score and participating institutions' score.

Effect size which is a measure of "practical significance." An effect size of .2 is considered small, .5 is moderate, and .8 is large.

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

Competency Areas

Survey Questions: *Before you enrolled in your undergraduate program in religious studies, how would you rate your competency level in each of the following areas?*

Immediately after completing your undergraduate program in religious studies, how would you rate your competency level in the following areas?

In the time since completing your undergraduate program in religious studies, has your competency level in each of the following areas increased, stayed about the same, or decreased in the following areas?

Note. E = "Entering" and X= "Exiting" (Mean range: 1= very weak competency to 6=very strong competency)

Survey Items		Your Institution				Other Institutions			
		Mean	Incr.	Same	Dec.	Mean	Incr.	Same	Dec.
Understanding religion from a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches (e.g., historical, sociological)	E	3.10				2.39			
	X	5.05	60%	30%	10%	4.99	57%	34%	8.54%
Understanding of two or more religious traditions	E	4.20				2.89			
	X	5.30	65%	30%	5%	5.20	66%	30%	4.89%
Understanding of religious phenomena within U.S. culture	E	3.35				2.72			
	X	4.95	65%	30%	5%	4.83	66%	31%	3.04%
Understanding the diversity of religious beliefs in U.S. culture	E	3.45				2.94			
	X	5.25	65%	35%	0%	4.91	68%	30%	2.32%
Understanding of religious beliefs within a global context	E	3.50				2.64			
	X	5.30	75%	20%	5%	4.92	70%	27%	3.25%
Reflecting critically on one's self (e.g., one's own beliefs, practices, values)	E	4.30				3.62			
	X	5.60	75%	25%	0%	5.34	76%	21%	2.45%
Working effectively with individuals who are culturally different than you	E	4.15				3.54			
	X	5.35	65%	30%	5%	5.03	74%	24%	1.52%
Examining issues about social and ethical responsibility	E	3.80				3.37			
	X	5.25	75%	25%	0%	5.15	74%	25%	1.32%
Using your knowledge of religion to understand current events	E	3.50				2.96			
	X	5.10	80%	20%	0%	5.08	70%	28%	2.45%
Using your knowledge of religion to understand historical events	E	3.60				2.94			
	X	5.30	65%	30%	5%	5.12	63%	33%	3.9%
Writing clearly and effectively	E	3.90				3.84			
	X	5.20	70%	15%	15%	5.27	69%	28%	3.64%
Speaking clearly and effectively	E	3.75				3.82			
	X	5.15	70%	30%	0%	5.15	71%	27%	2.19%

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

Satisfaction

Survey Question: *Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following:*

(Mean range: 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree) (SD) = standard deviation

Survey Items	Your Institution		Other Institutions		Sig.	Effect size
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
My education in religious studies has made a positive contribution to the quality of my life.	5.40	0.82	5.42	0.95		
I have applied the skills I learned in religious studies to help resolve problems I've faced in my personal life.	5.25	0.91	4.86	1.26		
Overall, I was satisfied with my degree program in religious studies.	5.20	0.7	5.24	1.06		
If I had it to do over again, I would choose religious studies as my undergraduate major.	4.80	1.47	4.72	1.54		

Note. Significant tests not applicable.

Volunteer Work

	Your Institution N = 20		Other Institutions N = 1496	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
During the last 12 months, have you participated in volunteer work or community service activities?	85.0%	15.0%	81.3%	18.7%

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

**Your Institution
Frequencies**

Competency level before enrolling in a religious studies program and competency level after completing the degree.

Note. E = "Entering" and X= "Exiting"

		<i>Very weak competency</i>	2	3	4	5	<i>Very strong Competency</i>	<i>N</i>
Understanding religion from a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches (e.g., historical, sociological)	E	5%	30%	30%	20%	15%	0%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	25%	45%	30%	20
Understanding of two or more religious traditions	E	0%	5%	20%	30%	40%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	15%	40%	45%	20
Understanding of religious phenomena within U.S. Culture	E	0%	20%	40%	25%	15%	0%	20
	X	0%	0%	5%	25%	40%	30%	20
Understanding the diversity of religious beliefs in U.S. culture	E	0%	25%	20%	40%	15%	0%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	10%	55%	35%	20
Understanding of religious beliefs within a global context	E	0%	15%	45%	20%	15%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%	20
Reflecting critically on one's self (e.g., one's own beliefs, practices, values)	E	0%	15%	5%	35%	25%	20%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%	20
Working effectively with individuals who are culturally different than you	E	0%	15%	15%	15%	50%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	10%	45%	45%	20
Examining issues about social and ethical responsibility	E	0%	10%	40%	15%	30%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	5%	65%	30%	20
Using your knowledge of religion to understand current events	E	5%	20%	35%	10%	20%	10%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	15%	60%	25%	20
Using your knowledge of religion to understand historical events	E	0%	25%	20%	30%	20%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%	20
Writing clearly and effectively	E	0%	10%	30%	25%	30%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	15%	50%	35%	20
Speaking clearly and effectively	E	10%	0%	35%	20%	30%	5%	20
	X	0%	0%	0%	15%	55%	30%	20

Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following:

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	2	3	4	5	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>N</i>
My education in religious studies has made a positive contribution to the quality of my life.	0%	0%	5%	5%	35%	55%	20
I have applied skills I learned in religious studies to help resolve problems I've faced in my personal life.	0%	0%	5%	15%	30%	50%	20
Overall, I was satisfied with my degree program in religious studies.	0%	0%	0%	15%	50%	35%	20
If I had it to do over again, I would choose religious studies as my undergraduate major.	5%	5%	5%	20%	20%	45%	20

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

Additional Majors

	Your Institution		Other Institutions	
	N = 20		N = 1500	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Did you have an additional major (double major) as an undergraduate?	70.0%	30.0%	45.8%	54.2%

What was your additional major?

All responses are exported directly into a Word document without any changes to wording, punctuation, or grammar.

Anthropology (3 responses)

Broadcast Journalism

English

History (3 responses)

I earned the religious studies degree as a 2nd bachelors after a previous BS, MS, and 13 years after a PhD

International Studies

philosophy

Philosophy

Political science

Social Studies Education

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

Employment	Your Institution		Other Institutions	
		N = 20		N = 1512
Are you currently employed?	Yes	75.0%		83.4%
	No	15.0%		8.6%
	Not seeking employment	10.0%		8.0%
Have you been employed at any time over the last 18 months?	Yes	60.0%		39.2%
	No	40.0%		60.8%

Area of Employment

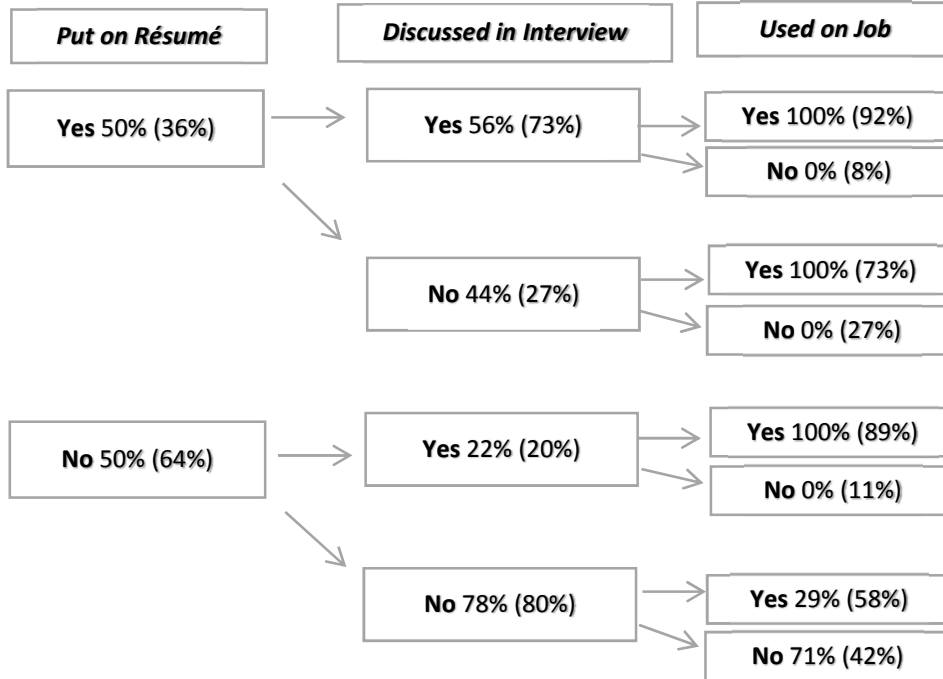
In what general area are you currently employed or were employed at any time over the last 18 months?

	Your Institution	Other Institutions
	N = 18	N = 1336
Agriculture and Natural Resources	0%	1.0%
Arts	0%	3.1%
Business and Finance	16.7%	8.1%
College Faculty & Administration	0%	13.6%
Counseling & Mental Health	5.6%	4.3%
Education K-12	5.6%	9.7%
Government and Public Administration	0%	3.9%
Hospitality and Tourism	16.7%	3.1%
Information Systems & Technology	5.6%	4.3%
Journalism & Publication	0%	1.7%
Law	11.1%	5.8%
Library Work	11.1%	2.5%
Manufacturing & Construction	11.1%	0.9%
Marketing	0%	2.3%
Medicine and Nursing	0%	5.2%
Military	0%	0.5%
Non-Profit or Community Organization	5.6%	8.5%
Religious Organization	11.1%	21.0%
Transportation	0%	0.5%

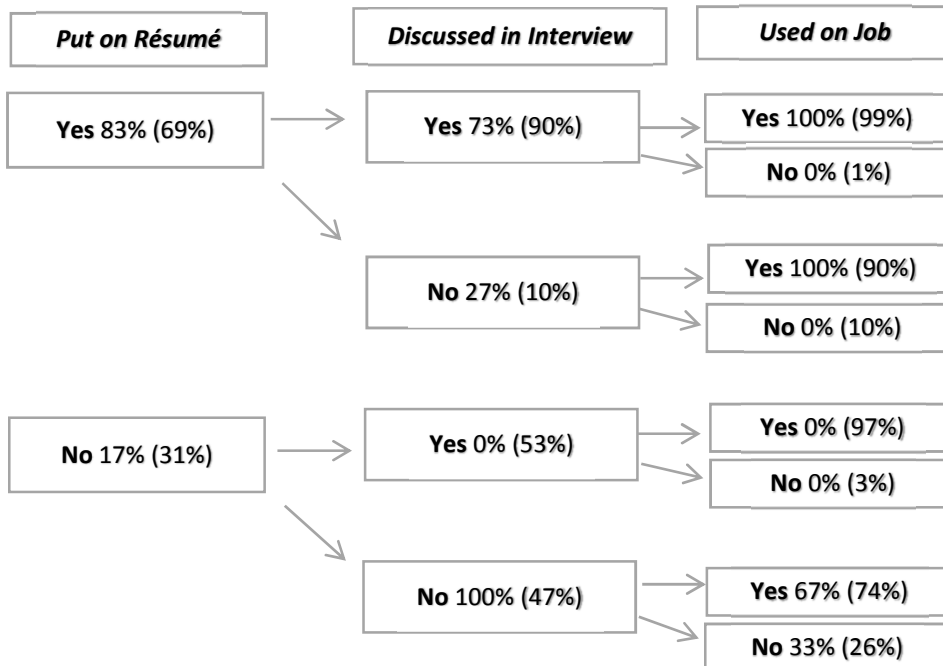
Survey Question: Did you list the following skills you may have acquired during your undergraduate religious studies program on your résumé, discuss these skills during your job interview or use these skills in your current job?

Note. (%) = All other participating institutions' percentage.

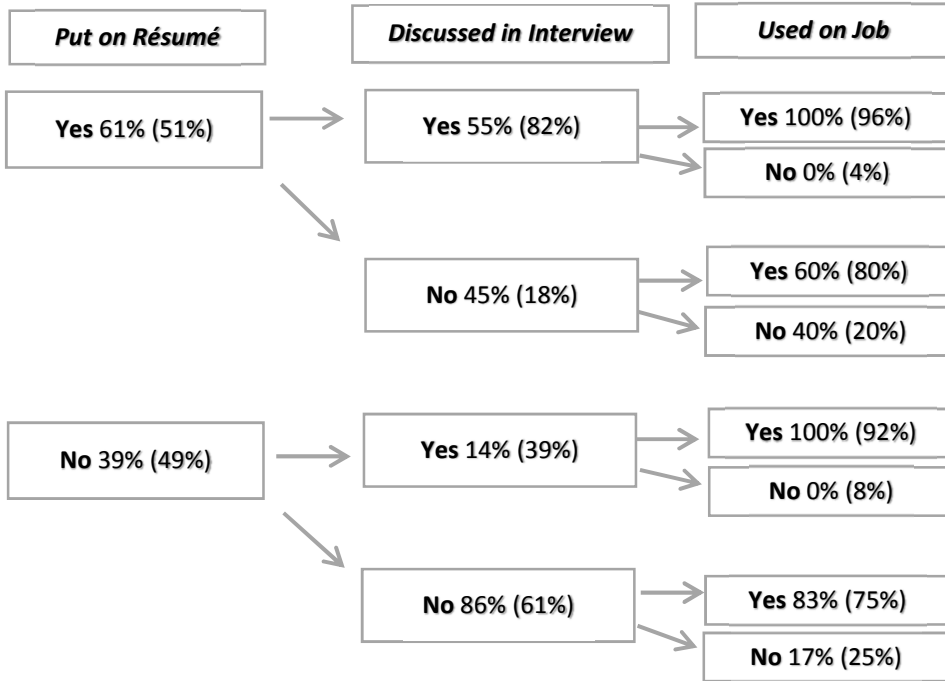
Research Competencies



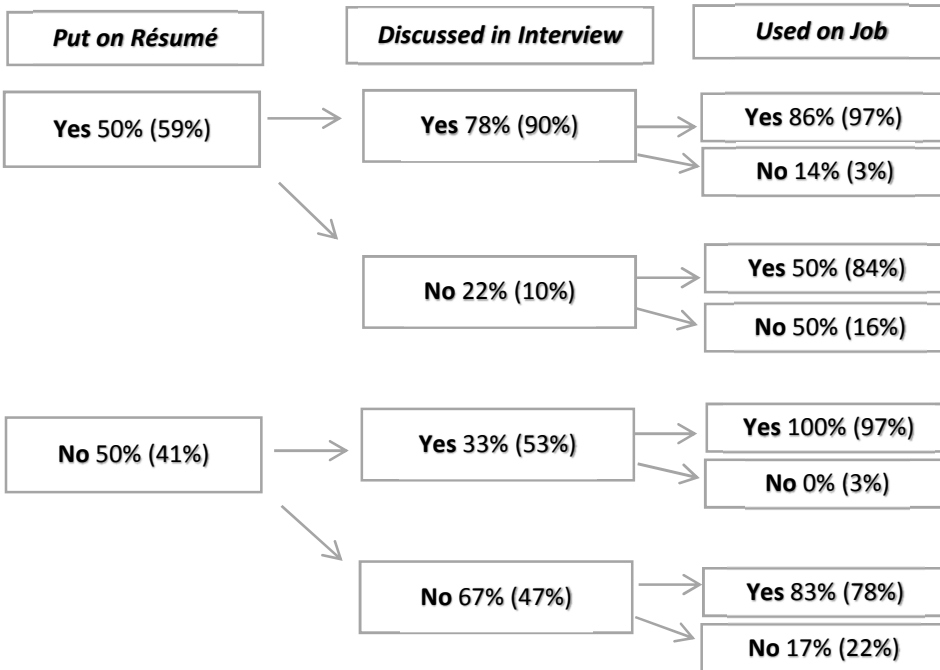
Communication Competencies (Reading and Writing)



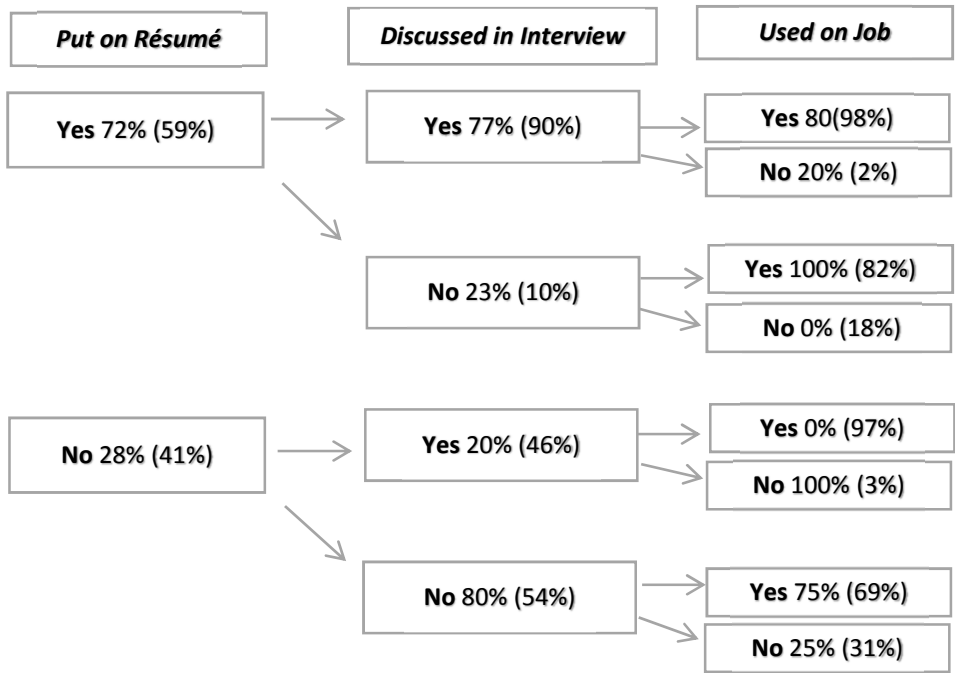
Ability to Interpret Data/Information in a Critical Manner



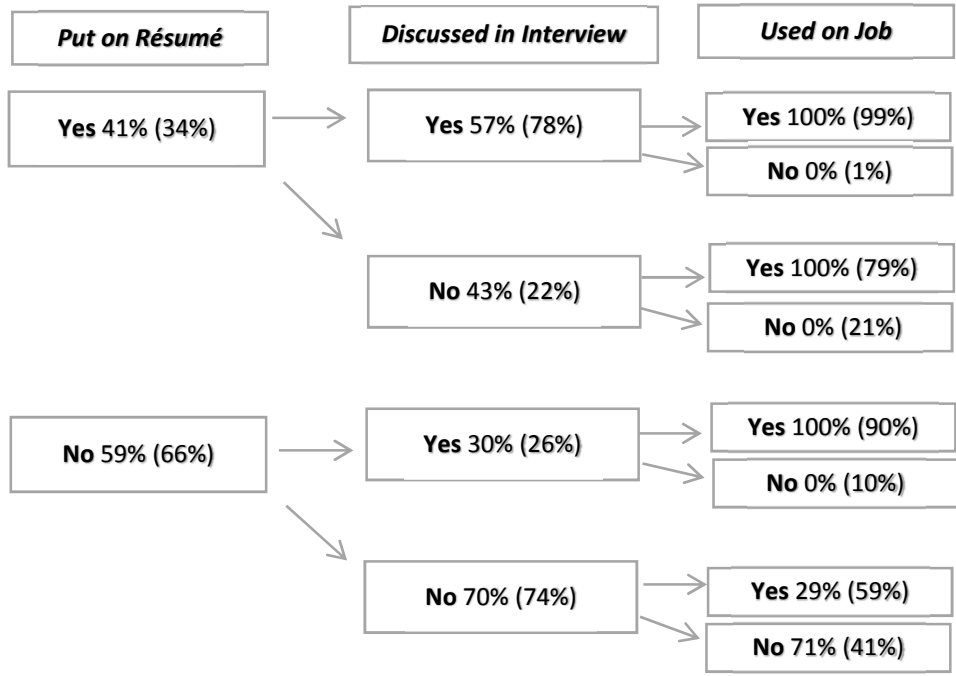
Ability to Analyze Problems from Different Perspectives



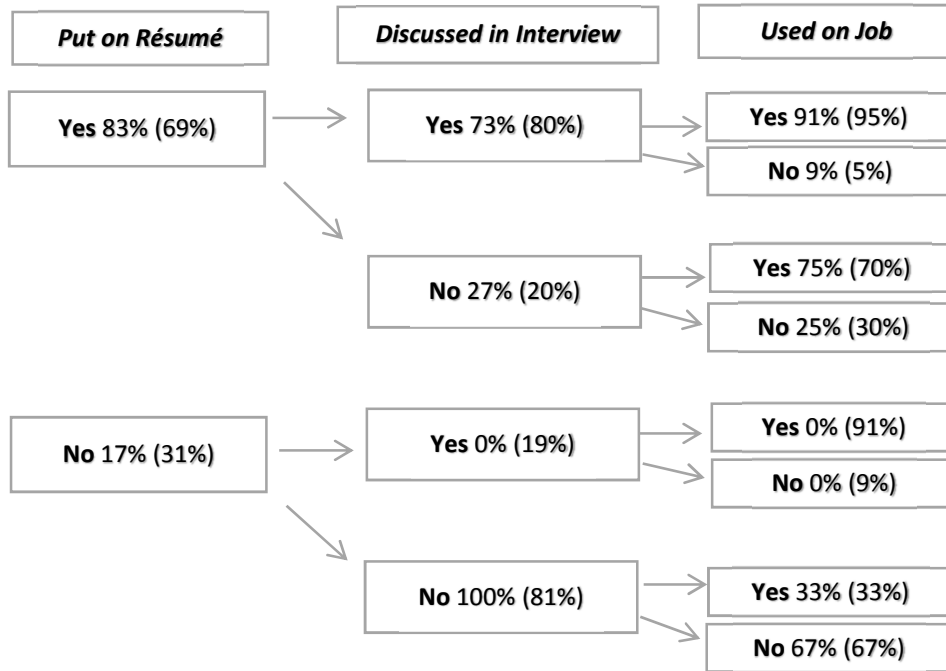
Ability to Work with Diverse Populations



Knowledge of Ethical Standards



Participation in Community Service or Charitable Projects



AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

Education - Religious Studies	Your Institution		Other Institutions
		N = 20	N = 1512
Are you currently enrolled in a graduate program in theology, religion, or religious studies?	Yes	10.0%	7.7%
	No	90.0%	92.3%
What degree(s) are you pursuing? (Check all that apply.)			
	M.Div.	0.0%	29.1%
	M.T.S.	0.0%	3.4%
	M.A.	50.0%	23.1%
	Ph.D.	50.0%	29.9%
	Th.D.	0.0%	1.7%
	Other	0.0%	17.9%

Note. Percentages may equal more than 100.0% because of multiple selections.

All responses are exported directly into a Word document without any changes to wording, punctuation, or grammar.

Other Degree:

At what institution are you pursuing your degree(s)?

Claremont Graduate University
International Buddhist College

	Your Institution		Other Institutions
		N = 20	N = 1494
Have you in the past pursued a graduate program in theology, religion, or religious studies?	Yes	15.0%	35.2%
	No	85.0%	64.8%
What degree(s) did you earn? (Check all that apply.)			
	M.Div.	0%	46.9%
	M.T.S.	33.3%	5.5%
	M.A.	66.7%	34.1%
	Ph.D.	0%	8.9%
	Th.D.	0%	0.6%
	Did not finish program.	0%	9.8%
	Other	0%	10.2%

Note. Percentages may equal more than 100.0% because of multiple selections.

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Other Degree:

At what institution did you pursue your degree(s)?

Eastern Mennonite University
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
University of Denver

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

Education - Other		Your Institution N = 18	Other Institutions N = 1353
Are you currently enrolled in a graduate program outside of religious studies?	Yes	38.9%	
	No	61.1%	
What degree(s) are you pursuing? (Check all that apply.)			
	J.D.	57.1%	9.30%
	M.A.	28.6%	27.80%
	M.B.A.	0%	4.60%
	M.D.	0%	3.30%
	M.F.A.	0%	2.00%
	M.P.H.	0%	2.00%
	M.S.	14.3%	7.30%
	M.S.N.	0%	0.70%
	M.S.W.	0%	5.30%
	M.S.L.S.	0%	2.00%
	Ph.D.	28.6%	21.20%
	Other	0%	20.50%

Note. Percentages may equal more than 100.0% because of multiple selections.

All responses are exported directly into a Word document without any changes to wording, punctuation, or grammar.

Other Degree:

At what institution are you pursuing your degree(s)?

- Ave Maria School of Law
- Emory
- Florida Institute of Technology
- University of Durham
- University of Kentucky College of Law
- University of Utah; utah state
- Utah State

What program(s) are you enrolled in at the above institution?

- Board Certified Behavior Analyst Program to obtain BCBA certification.
- J.D.
- Juris Doctorate; Ave Maria International Law Journal; Religious Liberty Practicum
- Law; political science
- Phd archaeology

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

		Your Institution N = 20	Other Institutions N = 1473
Have you in the past pursued a degree outside of religious studies?	Yes	25%	42.3%
	No	75%	57.7%
What degree(s) did you earn? (Check all that apply.)			
	J.D.	0%	12%
	M.A.	25%	25.3%
	M.B.A.	25%	4%
	M.D.	0%	1.7%
	M.F.A.	0%	2.9%
	M.P.H.	0%	0.8%
	M.S.	50%	10.1%
	M.S.N.	0%	0.3%
	M.S.W.	0%	7.1%
	M.S.L.S.	0%	1.7%
	Ph.D.	25%	8.1%
	Did not finish program.	25%	10.3%
	Other	50%	23.6%

Note. Percentages may equal more than 100.0% because of multiple selections.

All responses are exported directly into a Word document without any changes to wording, punctuation, or grammar.

Other Degree:

BS (2 responses)

At what institution did you pursue your degree(s)?

Black Hills State University

Edinburgh, snhu, Oxford

San Jose State University

Univ of Colo & Utah State

Utah State

AAR Alumni Survey Findings_USU

		Your Institution N = 20	Other Institutions N = 1503
Gender	Female	45%	56.0%
	Male	55%	44%
Ethnicity/Race	Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	0%	0.2%
	Asian	0%	2.6%
	Black	0%	1.8%
	Hispanic - Latino(a)	0%	2.8%
	Pacific Islander	0%	0.1%
	White	95%	89.8%
	Two or more	5%	2.6%

In what year did you receive your undergraduate degree in religious studies?	Your Institution N = 20	Other Institutions N = 1466
Before 1970	0%	6.6%
1970-1989	0%	20.2%
1990-1999	0%	16.6%
2000-2004	0%	16.6%
2005-2009	15%	23.8%
2010-2013	85%	16.2%

Respondent Comments

The following statements are in response to the comment section in the online survey. All responses are exported directly into a Word document without any changes to wording, punctuation, or grammar.

Survey Question: Please tell us about other competencies that were acquired in or inspired by your undergraduate religious studies program that you have listed on your resume, discussed during a job interview, or used on the job.

I was already employed in this position while I earned the degree. Some members of my congregation have noted that my credibility, and authoritative presentation of materials have increased. *(1 Count)*

Leadership, and coordination skills. Making meetings efficient, and communicating around and through differences in perspective and opinion. *(1 Count)*

Cultural understanding and non-judgmental worldview. *(1 Count)*

Respondent Comments

The following statements are in response to the comment section in the online survey. All responses are exported directly into a Word document without any changes to wording, punctuation, or grammar.

Survey Question: We appreciate any comments you would like to make regarding the strengths and weaknesses of your undergraduate major in religious studies.

They have difficulty recruiting female students. I am grateful they allowed a class in Shamanism. The Religious Studies Club could have used more faculty and administrative support. The research methodology course could use more promotion. Was a well rounded program with great faculty *(1 Count)*

The strong Mormon Studies Focus needs some balance. Availability of courses outside RELS and HIST was often poor. *(1 Count)*

The required theory class was more useful in my undergrad program because the teacher was a historian who only knew the basics about authors and theories. In both graduate programs, the professors teaching the required theory class were both philosophers who had disdain for social scientific approaches. *(1 Count)*

The Religious Studies program helped me ask and journey through many important, formative questions like, "Who am I?" and "What do I believe?" While it did not provide practical job skills, as my be expected, asking those questions and thinking on deep, critical levels has added much satisfaction to my life and well-being. *(1 Count)*

**The following institutions participated in the Spring 2014
administration of the AAR Survey:**

Alma College
Bard College
Barton College
California State University, Chico
California State University, Fullerton
Canisius College
Catawba College
College of Charleston
East Carolina University
Eckerd College
Florida International University
High Point University
Houghton College
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Kalamazoo College
Lake Forest College
La Salle University
Maryville College
McGill University
Notre Dame of Maryland University
San Diego State University
Truman State University
University of Iowa
University of Northern Iowa
University of Minnesota
University of Vermont
Utah State University
Western Michigan University
Wartburg College