

Alumni Survey Results:

Executive Summary

Brief methods:

All St. Ambrose University undergraduate alumni within approximately one year of graduation were surveyed fall 2004 to learn their perceptions of 20 general-education skills that may have been developed during their undergraduate careers at SAU. The survey form was developed based on our General Education Goals and Objectives (see Appendix C at the following web site <http://web.sau.edu/assessment/2004.Assessment.Plan.Draft4.27.04.htm> for a copy of the survey form). Alumni were asked to rate the importance of each skill or ability along with their satisfaction with the preparation they received at SAU. The skills were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = low importance or satisfaction; 5 = high importance or satisfaction).

The skills they rated were as follows from the highest to the lowest importance rating:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Communicate well orally | 11. Respect individual differences |
| 2. Listen effectively | 12. Work effectively in a group |
| 3. Think critically | 13. Make health life decisions |
| 4. Solve problems effectively | 14. Think quantitatively |
| 5. Write effectively | 15. Participate in the life of my community |
| 6. Take responsibility for my actions | 16. Recognize freedom of inquiry allows for dissent |
| 7. Make moral and ethical decisions | 17. Appreciate artistic and other events |
| 8. Use computer adequately | 18. Place issues in historical perspective |
| 9. Resolve conflicts effectively | 19. Express self through an artistic medium |
| 10. Locate appropriate sources of information | 20. Communicate in a foreign language |

Brief results: Because of a small response (N = 47), the results of the survey should be interpreted with a great deal of caution.

- 91.3% of alumni were either “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with SAU (6.5% were “somewhat” or “very” dissatisfied)
- 76.6% of alumni would probably/definitely choose to enroll at SAU if they could make the choice all over again (10.6% probably/definitely would not choose SAU).
- Dissatisfied students rated their departments lower in the following areas:
 - Department help with admission into an advanced degree program
 - Department help in finding employment for graduates
 - Number of network opportunities between potential employees and students
 - Intellectual stimulation within the department
- 43% of those surveyed rated all twenty skills a 3 or higher in terms of their level of satisfaction with the preparation they received at SAU. This is slightly less than the 53% from last year's survey.
- 23% rated all twenty skills a 3 or higher in importance at this point in their lives. This is less than the 42% from the previous year.
- The skills receiving the lowest satisfaction ratings tended to be the skills that were perceived to be relatively unimportant. These skills receiving the lowest ratings in satisfaction and importance are: (1) Communicate in a foreign language, (2) Express self through an artistic medium, (3) Place issues in historical perspective, and (4) Appreciate artistic and other events.
- One skill received a low satisfaction rating compared to its importance rating: Resolve conflicts effectively.

Students dissatisfied with SAU rated their departments lower in:

All skills will continue to be monitored through follow-up surveys. In addition, every effort will be made to increase the response rate to a more meaningful level, including web response capability.

The following pages of this report allow you to drill deeper into the results as you see fit. Both descriptive and interpretive results are presented.

SAU General Education Goals: 2004 Importance & Satisfaction Ratings

Fall 2004 (Sample Size = 47 alumni)	Importance		Satisfaction	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Communicate well orally	4.62	5	4.17	4
Solve problems effectively	4.57	5	3.98	4
Take responsibility for my actions	4.53	5	4.11	4
Listen effectively	4.51	5	4.02	4
Make moral and ethical decisions	4.47	5	4.11	4
Think critically	4.47	5	4.06	4
Write effectively	4.46	5	4.15	4
Respect individual differences	4.38	5	3.83	4
Resolve conflicts effectively	4.32	5	3.72	4
Use computer adequately	4.26	5	3.77	4
Work effectively in a group	4.21	4	4.00	4
Make healthy life decisions	4.13	4	3.68	4
Think quantitatively	4.11	4	3.83	4
Locate appropriate sources of information	4.07	4	3.87	4
Participate in the life of my community	3.91	4	3.62	4
Recognize freedom of inquiry allows for dissent	3.83	4	3.64	3
Appreciate artistic and other events	3.43	3	3.57	3
Place issues in historical perspective	3.28	3	3.38	3
Express self through an artistic medium	3.04	3	3.21	3
Communicate in a foreign language	2.41	2	2.81	3

47 SAU graduates examined a list of 20 skills and rated each of them on a scale from 1-5 in terms of:

- (1) How important each skill is to them today
(1 = very unimportant; 5 = very important)
- (2) Their satisfaction with the preparation they received at SAU in each skill
(1 = very dissatisfied; 5 = satisfied)

The table lists the skills in order of their average importance rating. The alumni surveyed believed *communicating well orally* is the most important skill and *communicating in a foreign language* is the least important skill.

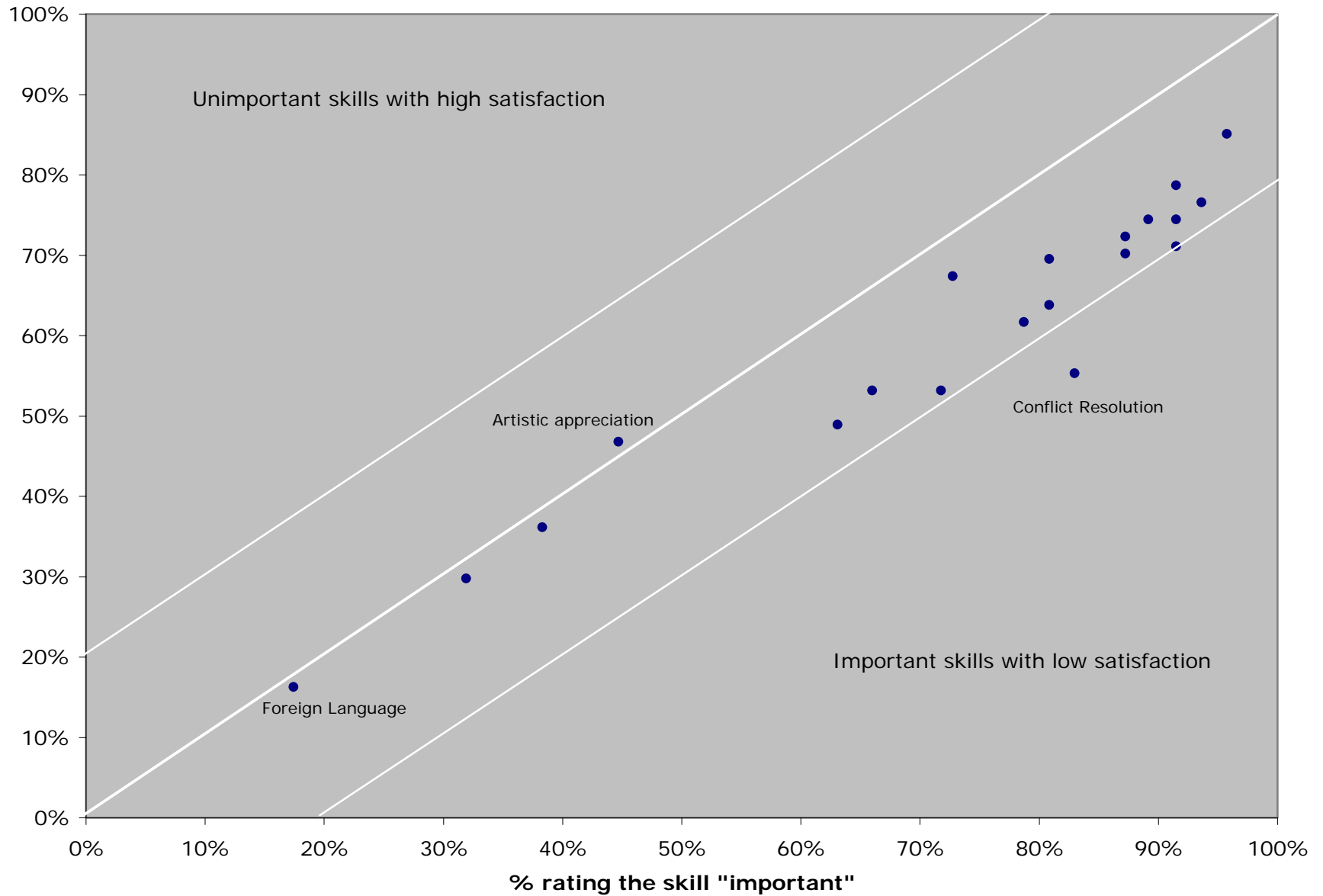
11 of the 47 respondents (23%) rated all twenty skills a 3 or higher in terms of importance. With the exception of *communicating in a foreign language*, each skill was rated a 3 or higher by at least half of those surveyed.

20 of the 47 respondents (43%) of those surveyed seemed satisfied with their preparation in all twenty skills (they rated all twenty skills a 3 or higher in satisfaction). The skills with the highest average level of satisfaction were *communicate well orally* and *write effectively*.

Notice that the skills receiving relatively low average satisfaction ratings were perceived to be the least important skills.

The following scatterplot shows the relationship between importance and satisfaction. If skills were rated equally in both importance and satisfaction, they would fall directly on the main diagonal of the chart.

As you can see, most skills fall to the lower-right of the line. These skills were given relatively low satisfaction ratings, given their importance. The skills with the greatest disparity between satisfaction and importance are (1) *resolve conflicts effectively* and (2) *listen effectively*.



Satisfaction With SAU

If you could make your undergraduate college choice again, would you still choose to enroll at SAU?

	2004 (N=47)
Yes, definitely	42.6%
Yes, probably	34.0%
I don't know	12.8%
Probably not	8.5%
Definitely not	2.1%

In general, how satisfied are you with SAU?

	2004
Very satisfied	50.0%
Somewhat satisfied	41.3%
Uncertain	2.2%
Somewhat dissatisfied	4.3%
Very dissatisfied	2.2%

As expected, the alumni dissatisfied with SAU would not choose to enroll at SAU if they were again given the chance.

Attitudes Towards Departments

The alumni surveyed earned degrees from the following departments:

Major #1	Major #2
Accounting	
ARTE	
ATTR	
BAMT	
Biology (5)	
Business (3)	
Business Admin. (2)	CAN, Accounting
CIS (2)	
Criminal Justice (4)	Sociology
Elementary Education (4)	Spanish
ENED (2)	English
Finance	
History	Philosophy/Theology
International Accounting	Spanish
ITBU	Finance
Mathematics	Theology
MGOR	
Marketing / Public Relations (3)	Psychology, German
Nursing	
PETE	
PRMC	
Psychology	
Public Relations, Marketing	
Radio / TV	Journalism
Sociology	
Theater (2)	Computer Science

The following page displays alumni attitudes towards their departments.

How adequate do you think the following features were within your major department or program?

	2004	
	% Unsatisfied	% Satisfied
Overall, how satisfied were you with your major?	0.0%	94.5%
Intellectual stimulation within the department	5.3%	84.2%
Departmental flexibility in meeting the needs of individual students	1.7%	82.8%
Faculty interest in academic development of students majoring in department	6.9%	79.3%
Communication between faculty members & students regarding student needs & concerns	5.2%	79.3%
Faculty interest in personal development of students majoring in department	12.3%	75.4%
Preparation for employment in a related field	12.3%	61.4%
Information provided by department academic advisor	14.3%	60.7%
Preparation for advanced degrees in a related field	24.6%	52.6%
Opportunity for involvement with department clubs/organizations	10.5%	49.1%
Department help with admission into an advanced degree program	24.1%	46.3%
Variety of resources with which to research careers	28.6%	41.1%
Number of network opportunities between potential employers and students	35.7%	30.4%
Department help in finding employment for graduated	34.5%	21.8%

	Mean
	2004
Overall, how satisfied were you with your major?	4.60
Faculty interest in academic development of students majoring in department	4.31
Departmental flexibility in meeting the needs of individual students	4.26
Communication between faculty members & students regarding student needs & concerns	4.21
Intellectual stimulation within the department	4.12
Faculty interest in personal development of students majoring in department	4.09
Information provided by department academic advisor	3.73
Preparation for employment in a related field	3.68
Opportunity for involvement with department clubs/organizations	3.61
Preparation for advanced degrees in a related field	3.39
Department help with admission into an advanced degree program	3.26
Variety of resources with which to research careers	3.25
Number of network opportunities between potential employers and students	2.93
Department help in finding employment for graduated	2.78

In order to determine why some students were dissatisfied with SAU, the following information was analyzed:

	Students satisfied with SAU	Students dissatisfied with SAU	Difference
Overall, how satisfied were you with your major?	4.7	4.0	0.7
Faculty interest in academic development of students majoring in department	4.3	3.8	0.5
Departmental flexibility in meeting the needs of individual students	4.3	3.2	1.1
Communication between faculty members & students regarding student needs & concerns	4.3	3.4	0.9
Intellectual stimulation within the department	4.3	3.0	1.3
Faculty interest in personal development of students majoring in department	4.1	3.8	0.3
Information provided by department academic advisor	3.8	2.8	1.1
Preparation for employment in a related field	3.8	2.8	1.0
Opportunity for involvement with department clubs/organizations	3.7	2.8	0.9
Preparation for advanced degrees in a related field	3.5	2.6	0.9
Department help with admission into an advanced degree program	3.4	1.8	1.6
Variety of resources with which to research careers	3.3	2.8	0.5
Number of network opportunities between potential employers and students	3.1	1.6	1.5
Department help in finding employment for graduates	2.9	1.4	1.5

Students dissatisfied with SAU rated their departments lower in:

- (1) Department help with admission into an advanced degree program
- (2) Department help in finding employment for graduates
- (3) Number of network opportunities between potential employees and students
- (4) Intellectual stimulation within the department
- (5) Information provided by academic advisor
- (6) Departmental flexibility in meeting the needs of individual students