SUNY Potsdam's IT Program, Where Did It Take You?

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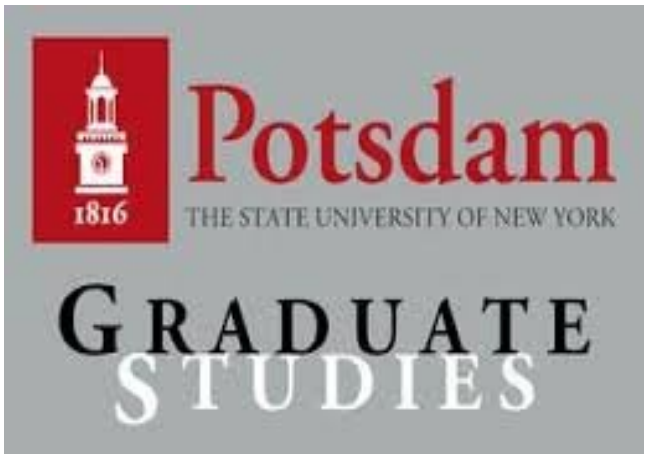


Abstract

This research paper investigates alumni from the IT Graduate Programs at SUNY Potsdam with the purpose of finding out how they've been integrated into society following their successful departure. Major inquiries included the skills they obtained in the program, the professions they entered, and alumni reflections on the program. We compared our IT Graduate Programs to that of similar programs across the nation. We discovered the most valuable skills obtained from the program include Problem Solving Skills (73%), Instructional Design (72%) and Confidence in Using Technology (67%). Among the most common careers of alumni are PreK-12 Teacher, Director and Educational Technology Specialist. An interesting fact that we found during our research is that 36% of respondents currently work with other IT alumni. In addition, only 30% of alumni surveyed feel unsatisfied with their current salary, which reflects the success rate of the program. Overall feedback from the alumni projected a positive response to the program as a whole. This study provided information that was not only useful to our research but also to the SUNY Potsdam IT Program.

Introduction

SUNY Potsdam's Business Administration Department consists of multiple IT programs that our research group investigated. The alumni produced by the IT programs offer inputs and opinions that deserve to be sought out. These programs are Educational Technology Specialist, Technology Educator, Instructional Technology and Media Management, Training and Development, Human Performance Technology, Information Technology, Organizational Leadership, and Organizational Performance, Leadership, and Technology. The creation of a survey to send out to alumni provides current and future students of the program valuable information that pertains to entering the work force and maintaining a profession that has either failed or surpassed their expectations. Professors within the current programs now have access to information regarding their programs, what's working and what's producing negative feedback from individuals who have graduated.

Programs that are similar to SUNY Potsdam's past and present IT programs provide many different definitions for the same type of program. The lengths of these programs always fall within the 30 to 39-credit range. Having current experience in the program, it's evident that learning and improving performance is an objective of the career field in which we are preparing for. You'll find in this paper that many alumni have gone on to pursue careers in that specific field or veered off that path. Having statistical data that provides a consensus within the alumni is beneficial for all who are still involved with the program. SUNY Potsdam's IT programs now have the personal opinions of its alumni to take into consideration for future improvement.

Taking into account how individuals feel about their graduate program after they've completed their degree, shouldn't be overlooked. Post-graduate education is never frowned upon in today's society. The economy continues to produce numbers that resemble the fact that the

more education an individual has, the more income they will achieve as their careers progress. Placing a magnifying glass on SUNY Potsdam's IT alumni and discovering where their degrees have taken them, provides evidence of the benefits and possible areas for improvement in the program.

Literature Review

The purpose of this review is to examine graduate programs similar to the Organizational Performance, Leadership and Technology as well as the Educational Technology Specialist Programs at SUNY Potsdam. In examining similar programs, valuable courses and skills within those programs will also be examined, as they pertain to alumni students' career successes. This will assist in discovering what successes SUNY Potsdam IT alumni have had in their careers, as a result of studying in the IT Field. Facilitating learning and improving performance are just a few of the tasks in this field. Evaluating the successes of the programs that teach these skills are necessary for the continuous improvement of the programs themselves.

Programs, Courses, and Skills

There is confusion surrounding the concept of educational technology/technology leadership. It is a broad and ever changing field that, unless you are directly involved in it, you might not know exactly what it means to be an educational technologist. Responses to the question "What is educational technology?" have changed significantly over time (Simsek, N., 2005). The first studies associated with the field of educational technology date all the way back to the beginning of the twentieth century with the pressure of industrial technology setting in (Simsek, N., 2005). It is something that is taught in the context of higher education in which the key aspects are balance, preparation, judgment and the continuing education needed for the program components (Persichitte, K., 2013).

There's a program called School Leadership that has similar program interests at UCLA. Allison Hansen, who is a graduate of the program, wrote a book review on "Overcoming Disadvantage in Education," written by Stephen Gorard and Beng Huat. This review describes how the authors recognize that there is a lack of research efforts and funding when it comes to improving the educational outcomes for students that come from disadvantaged backgrounds. She highlighted that there should be target areas where more research is needed to design effective interventions. Her area of investigation contains similar skills learned from our IT programs here at SUNY Potsdam. Some examples of the courses at SUNY Potsdam are Technology in Education and Performance Management. Alumni and current students have been trained to take a problem such as improving educational outcomes for students that come from disadvantaged backgrounds and create awareness via proper statistics, model creation, and performance gap inquiry. Michigan State University offers an Educational Technology Certificate, which includes three courses that "emphasize the development of technology skills and advanced mindsets for technology integration in the classroom," (Hagerman, 2013). These courses are offered in several different ways: completely online, a mixture of online and face-to-face, and completely face-to-face. Each mode of instruction emphasizes "the exploration, creation and collaboration" of technological interactions. Between the years 2009 and 2012, completely online was the preferred option.

In an article on the Michigan State University's website, an Education Technology Alumni tells her success story after having completed an ET Online program. Mary Anna Thornton is currently the Assistant Head of Conserve School in Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin. With the skills learned during her program, she started a student e-portfolio system, a school blog, and a teacher website system. According to her testimony, all three are successful and the student

and teacher communities are actively involved. She contributes her success to the Educational Technology program.

Statistics

The table below represents a study in which higher education institutions were surveyed on what courses they offered in the study of educational communications and technology. The disbursement is shown in the data below:

	U.S.	INT'L
Instructional Development	73 (46%)	16 (39%)
Learning Theory	66 (41%)	22 (53%)
Instructional Design	99 (62%)	19 (46%)
Materials Production	18 (11%)	19 (46%)
Media Management	51 (32%)	21 (51%)
Information Systems	32 (20%)	12 (29%)
Telecommunications	4 (.02%)	30 (73%)
Distance Education	51 (32%)	21 (51%)

Table 5. Curricula, subjects within the masters programs

As you can conclude from the table, courses in the area of Instructional Design are included in most of the masters programs in this area (Johnson, J.K., 2006). Alumni of the Educational Technology Program should be aware of the possible salaries that exist out there for those who hold a Masters Degree in the field. According to the Houston Chronicle an article entitled "What Jobs Are Available with a Master's Degree in Educational Technology?" secondary school teachers with degrees in the field average a salary of $56,760 in 2011. Instructional Coordinators with degrees in educational technology earned an average salary of $61,720 per year as of 2011 and for the same year educational administrators that came from the same field earned an annual salary of $97,170. Training and developing managers averaged $99,280 per year in 2011.

Career Paths

SUNY Potsdam's Educational Technology department page gives a relatively broad description of career paths for the program. The description states leadership positions in management, health services, training, social services, and military service as its headlining career paths. If you take a look at other institutions that offer an Educational Technology program, you will come across some more detailed job descriptions that happen to have a zest in the title that makes someone want to pursue the program. The University of Hawaii Manoa offers an Ed Tech program just like SUNY Potsdam but they deliver a list of career choices that are much more versatile and specific. Career paths on their department page that differ from Potsdam's include distance learning developer, technology director, educational video producer, museum education specialist, instructional designer, and web/multimedia designer. The degree of difference is wide. We can't say that all universities Ed Tech career opportunities are promoted better than SUNY Potsdam's. Boise State University's list is just as narrow as the one found at Potsdam.

- Student 42: "I am a middle school teacher and because of this iMet program I am teaching technology to students and doing staff development for my school."
- Student 57: "I started iMet as independent study coordinator/teacher … Two years ago I began working as a full-time special program teacher, helping teachers use technology as part of their teaching.

" • Student 67: "I still teach the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades; however, now I am the technology leader/advisor for our school and principal."

- Student 90: "I was 100% in the classroom. I am now 70/30 with the new title of technology mentor. I have initiated a 21st Century program in my district, created and maintain the district

website, and I am mentoring staff members in integrating technology into their programs." (Cowen, J. 2012).

A research study was conducted by iMET (The Internet Based Master's Degree in Educational Technology Program) in which alumni were surveyed to evaluate the program effectiveness. During this survey, alumni responded with what career path this degree led them to (Cowan, J., 2006). Below is an excerpt from this study which highlights the "Where are they now?" part of the research.

Research Questions

1. What skills are developed in the IT programs at SUNY Potsdam?
2. What careers have completion of this program led to for alumni?
3. What are SUNY Potsdam IT Program Alumni's feelings about their program?

Methodology

To conduct the research, personal opinions based on career experience were needed. The process of collecting data started with several interviews (Appendix A) of program faculty and program alumni. To aid in the interviews, questions were previously prepared. The information gathered from the interviews helped to generate survey questions that were compiled and sent out to a small selection of alumni for pretest. Upon reflection of their feedback, the survey questions were revised and then the survey was distributed to SUNY IT Alumni. The electronic survey (Appendix B) was created in Google Forms. After receiving Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval, the survey was distributed by email to 243 SUNY Potsdam Graduate IT Program Alumni. The survey was also attached to the Facebook and LinkedIn pages. This sample is representative of all the current email addresses SUNY Potsdam's Alumni office

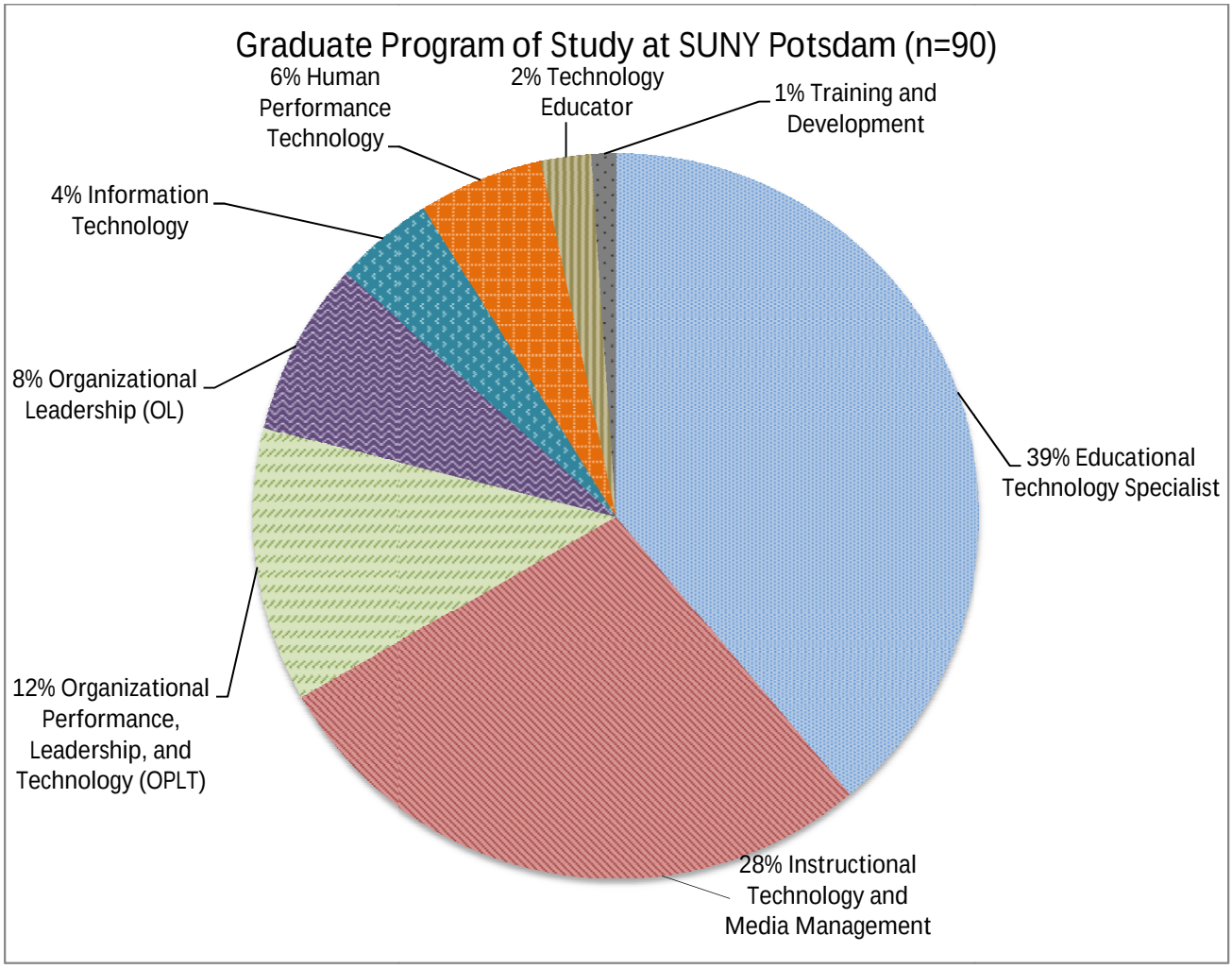
currently maintains. A reminder email with the survey was sent out to the same alumni two weeks later.

Data Analysis

The data received was analyzed to assess how the IT Programs at SUNY Potsdam have affected Alumni's careers. It also provided insight for program faculty in order to make improvements to the program for future students.

The data received showed that 39% of the alumni were in the Educational Technology Specialist Program, followed by 28% in the Instructional Technology and Media Management Program, 12% in the Organizational Performance, Leadership and Technology, and many others (See Figure 1).

Figure 1.



The data shows that 19 SUNY Potsdam IT Alumni are currently in Potsdam, NY and of those 19, 13 have careers at SUNY Potsdam. This data helps to give insight into where Alumni are located and what types of organizations they currently work for or the last organization they worked for (See Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2.

(n=91)

Current Location of IT Alumni

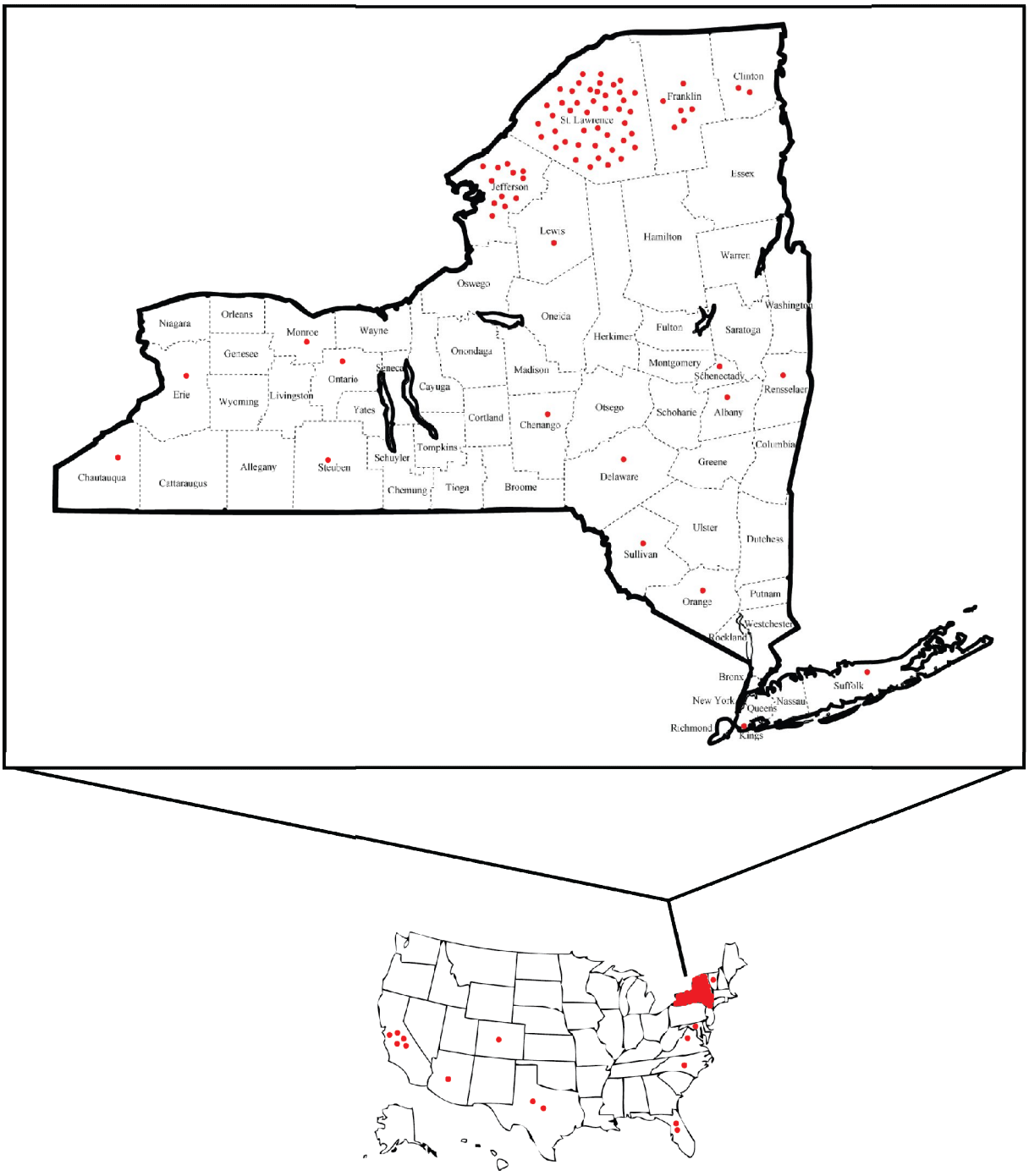
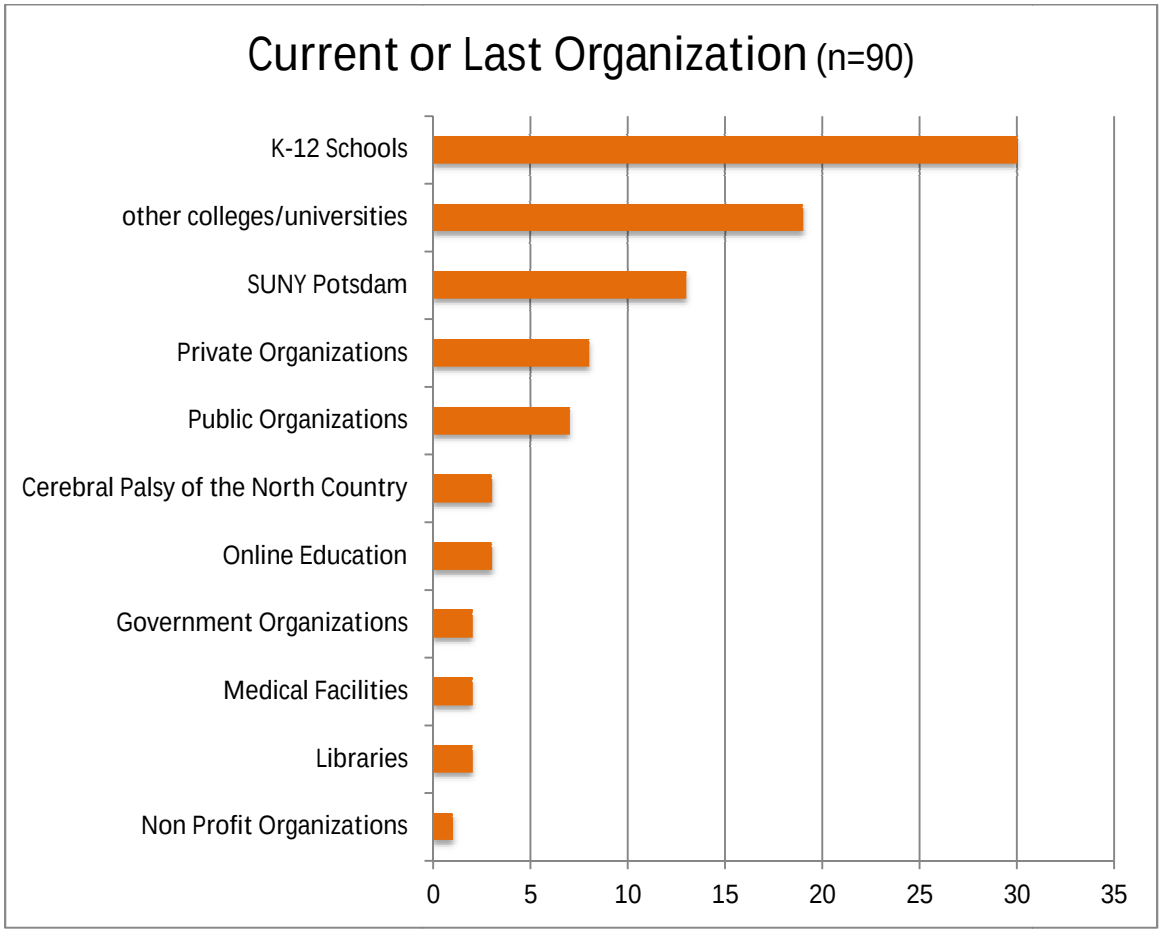


Figure 3.


Current or Last Organization (n=90)
K-12 Schools
other colleges/universities
SUNY Potsdam
Private Organizations
Public Organizations
Cerebral Palsy of the North Country
Online Education
Government Organizations
Medical Facilities
Libraries
Non Profit Organizations
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35

The data shows what types of job titles the IT Alumni currently hold. This gives insight into what types of jobs the IT Programs may have led to. (See Figure 4.) This information is supported by the survey question that directly asked respondents "Would you be in your current career had you NOT gone through the IT program?" Fifty-six percent of respondents said "No" (See Figure 5).

Figure 4

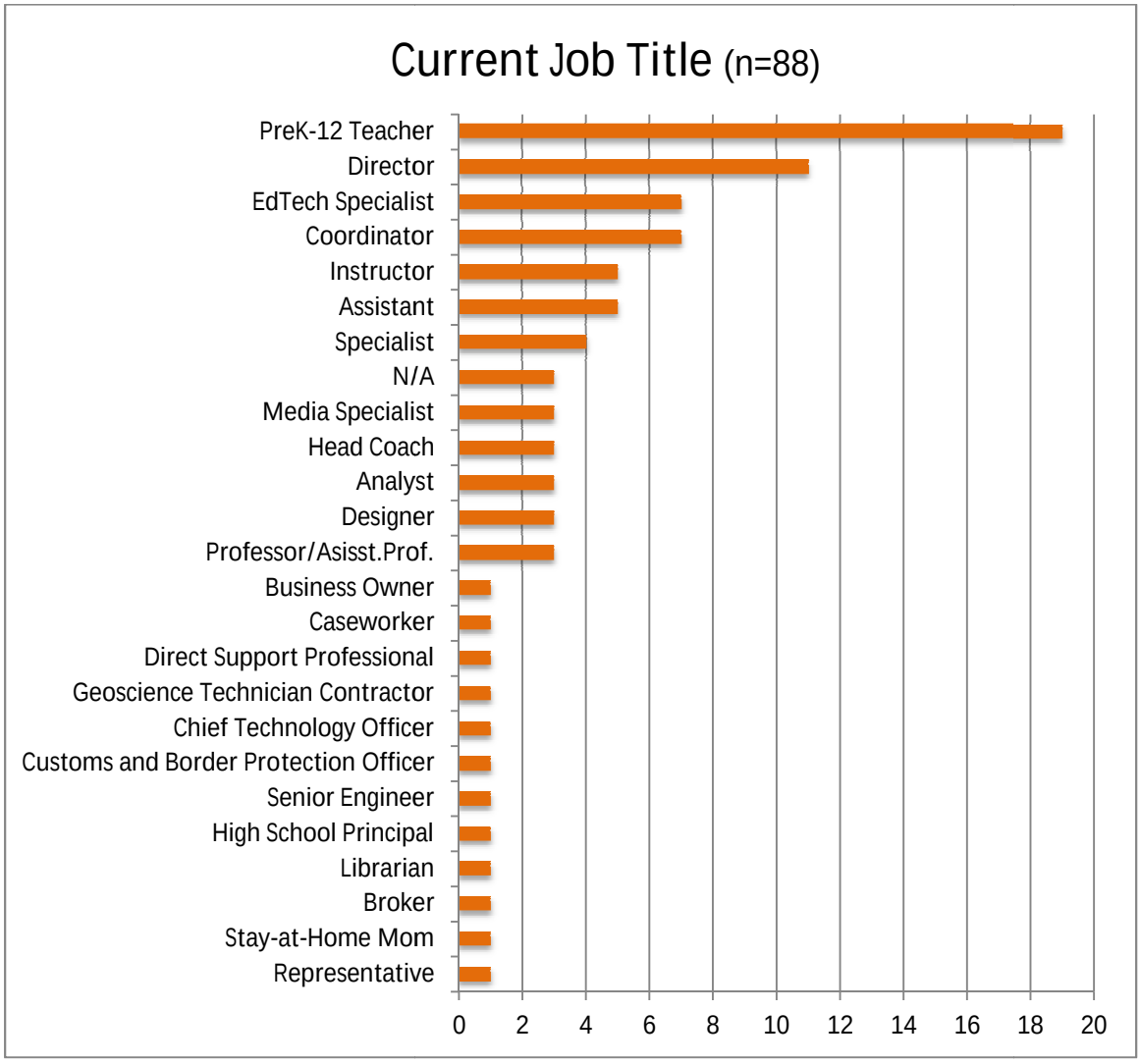
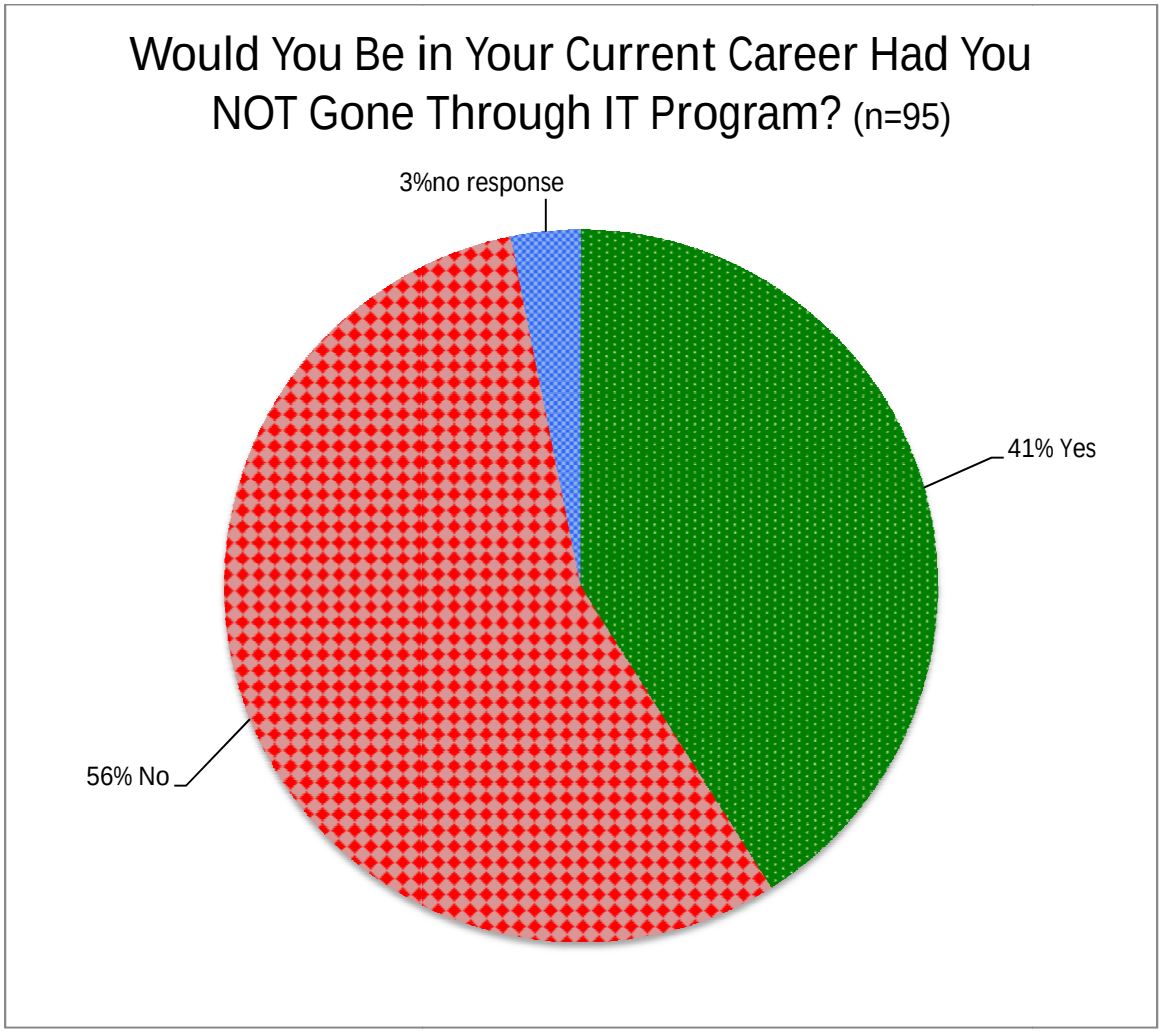
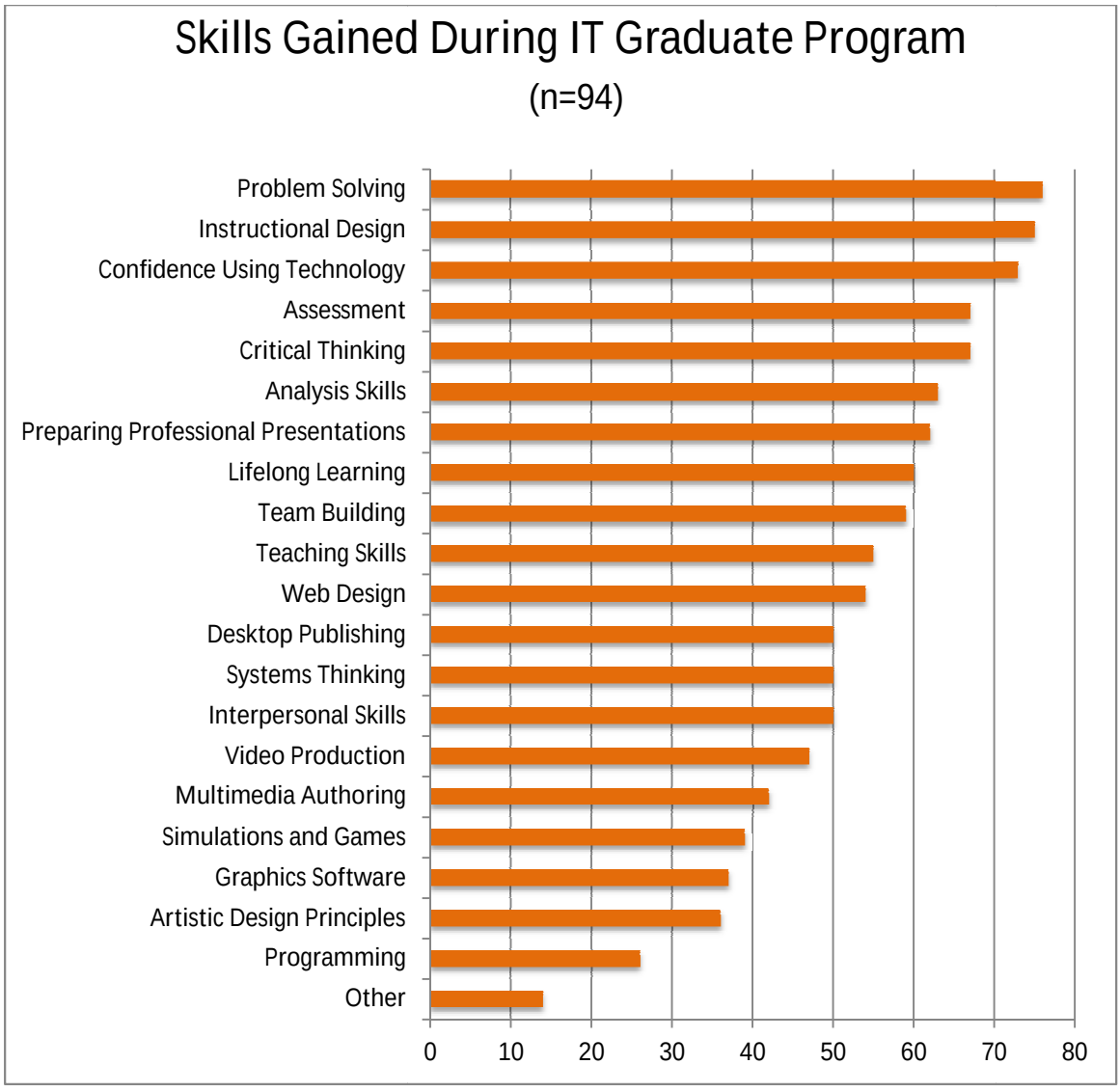


Figure 5


Would You Be in Your Current Career Had You NOT Gone Through IT Program? (n=95)
3%no response
41% Yes
56% No

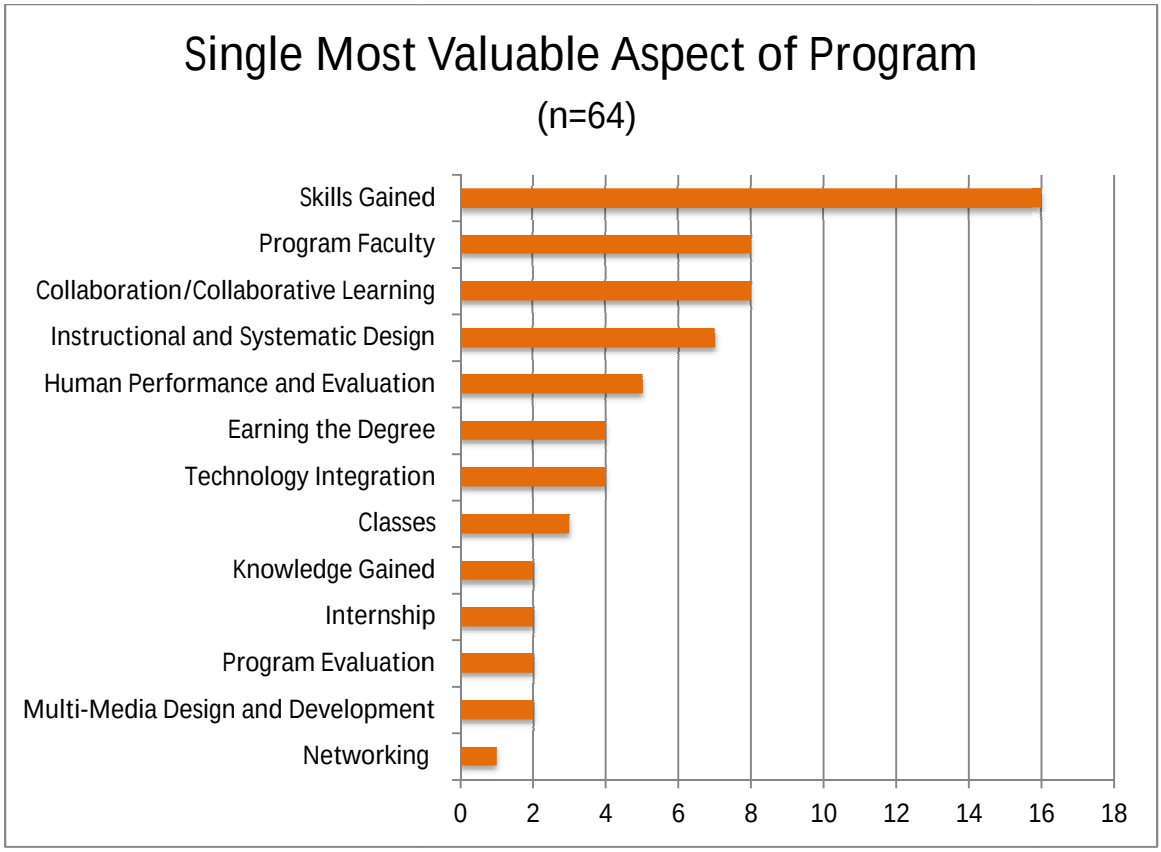
The data shows what skills respondents gained from the IT Graduate Programs. Over 60% of respondents said they gained Problem Solving Skills, Confidence Using Technology, Analysis Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Instructional Design Skills, and Assessment Skills (See Figure 6).

Figure 6



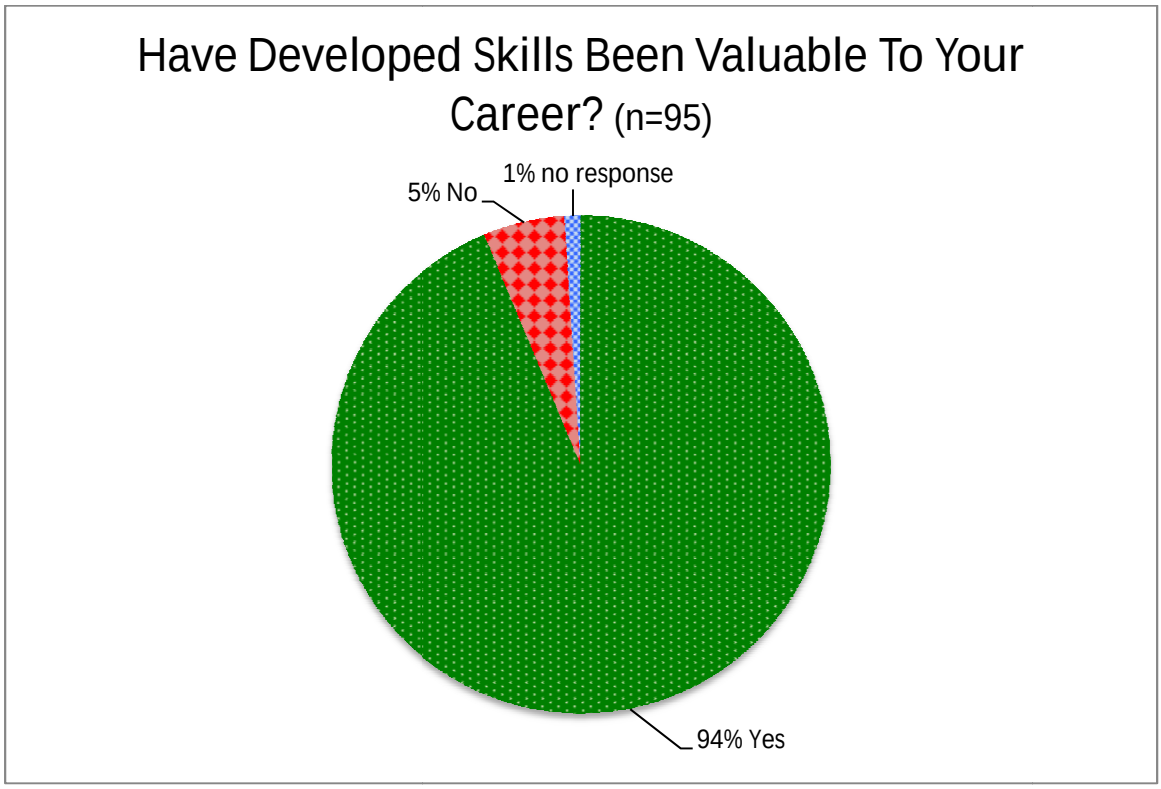
The data shows what respondents believe to be the single most valuable aspect of the program. Of the 95 respondents, 16 believe the most valuable aspect to be the skills gained from the program. Followed by eight who said the Program Faculty, as well as the 8 who believe the collaborative learning aspect to be the most valuable in the program (See Figure 7).

Figure 7.



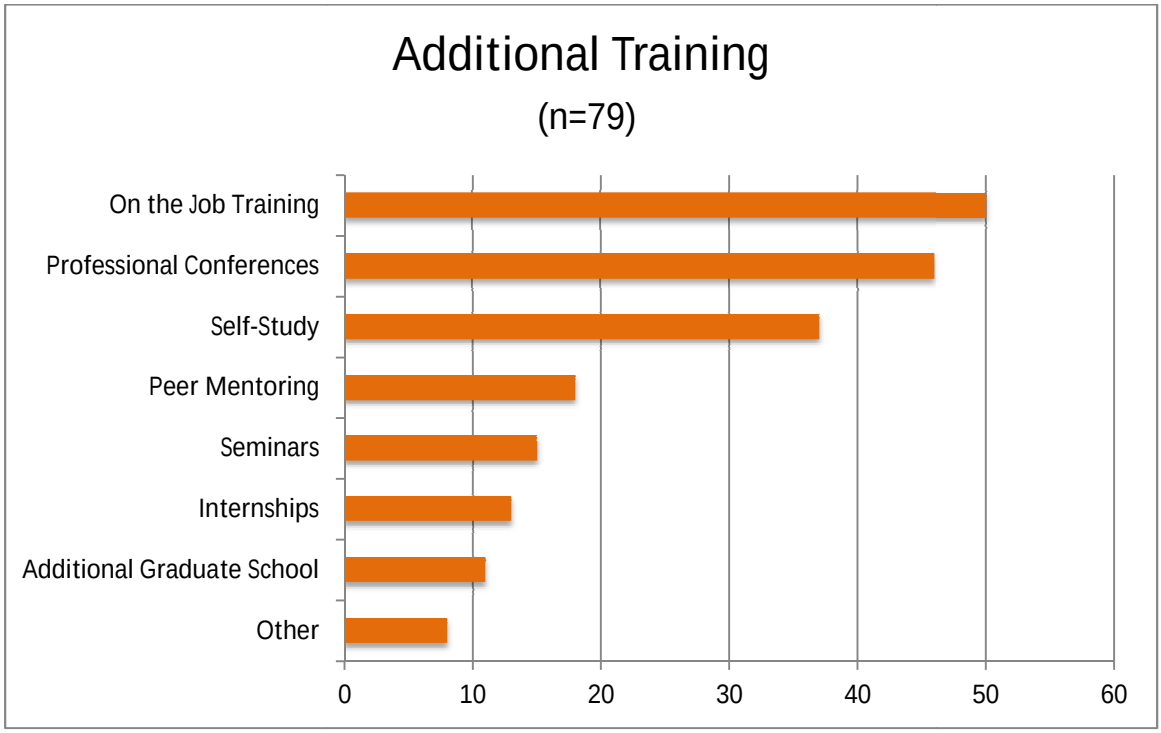
The data shows that 94% of the respondents believe that the skills developed in the SUNY IT Programs have been valuable to their careers (See Figure 8).

Figure 8.



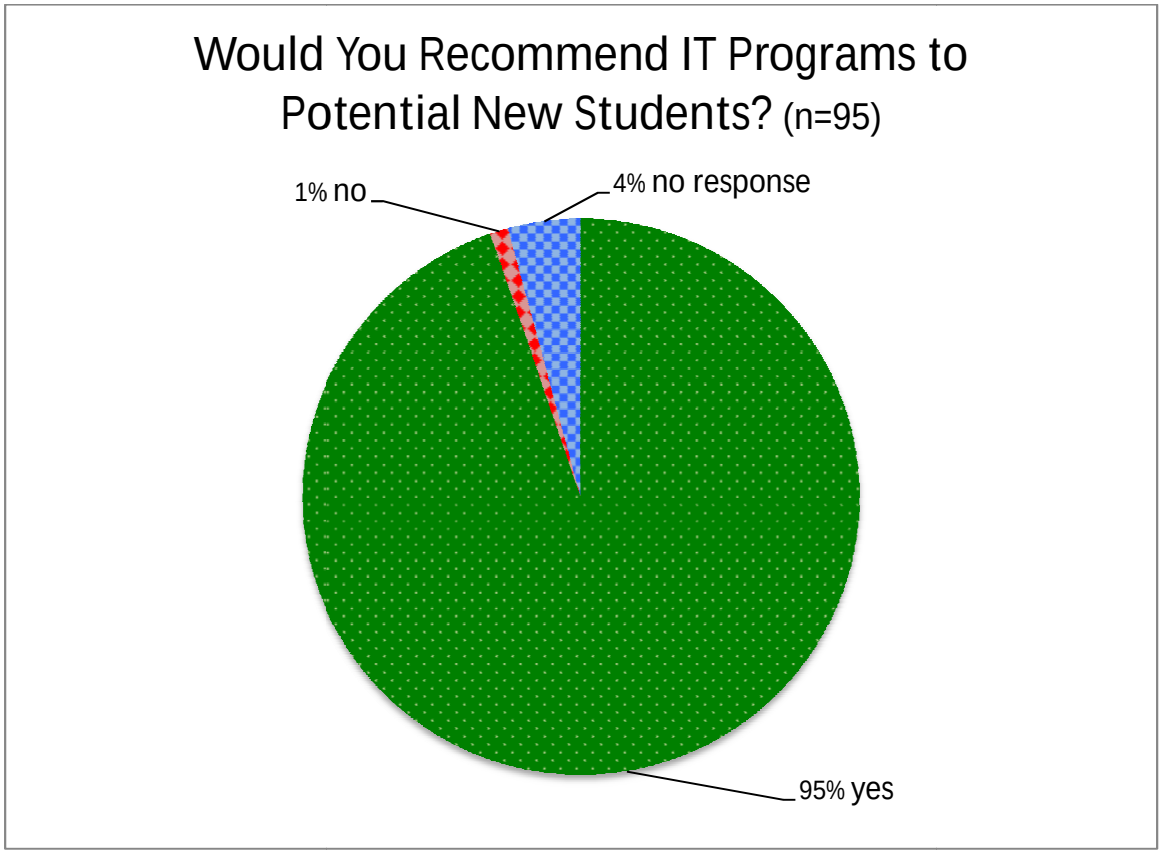
The data shows that a majority of the respondents participated in On-the-Job Training, Professional Conferences and Self-Study as additional avenues of training outside of the IT Graduate Program at SUNY Potsdam (See Figure 9).

Figure 9.



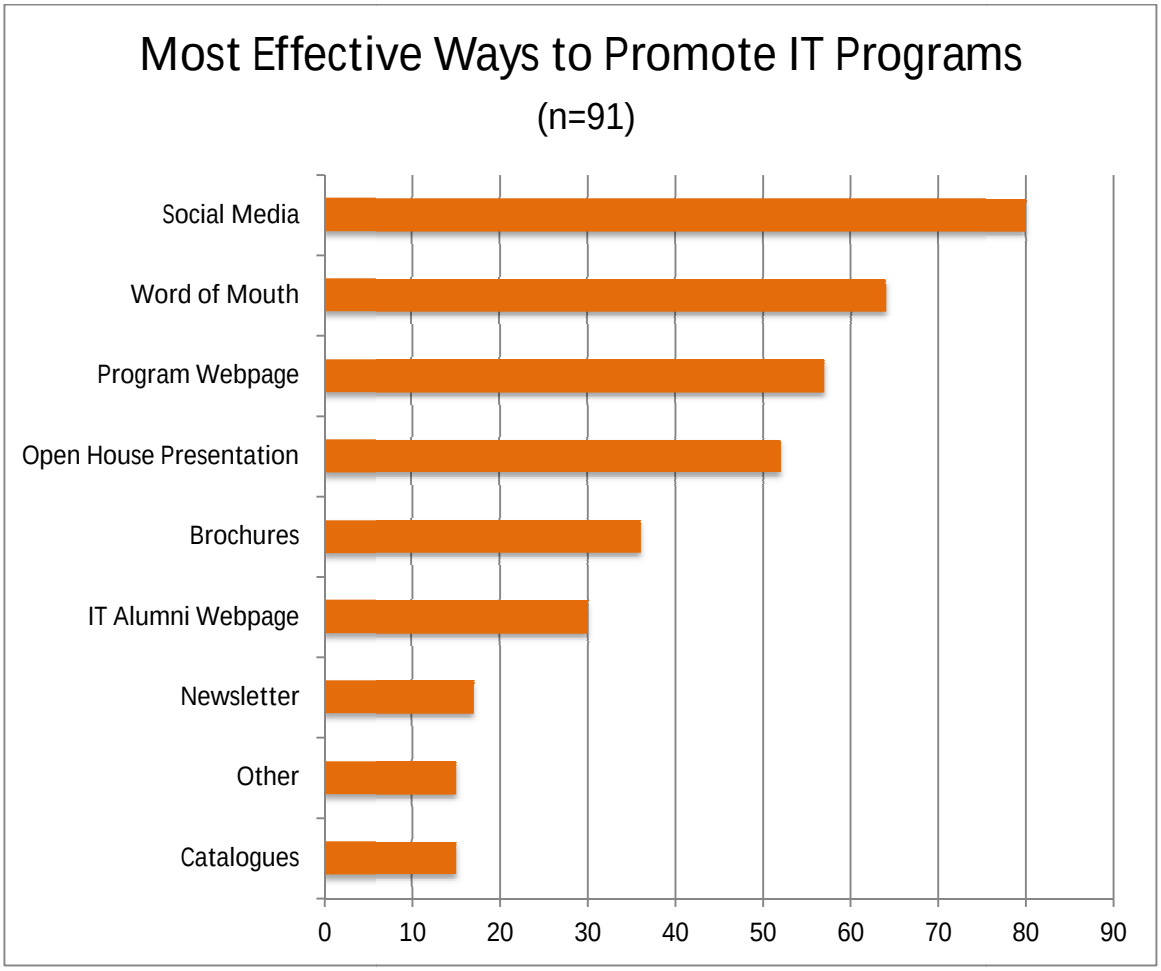
The data shows that 95% of respondents would recommend the IT Programs to Potential New Students (See Figure 10).

Figure 10.



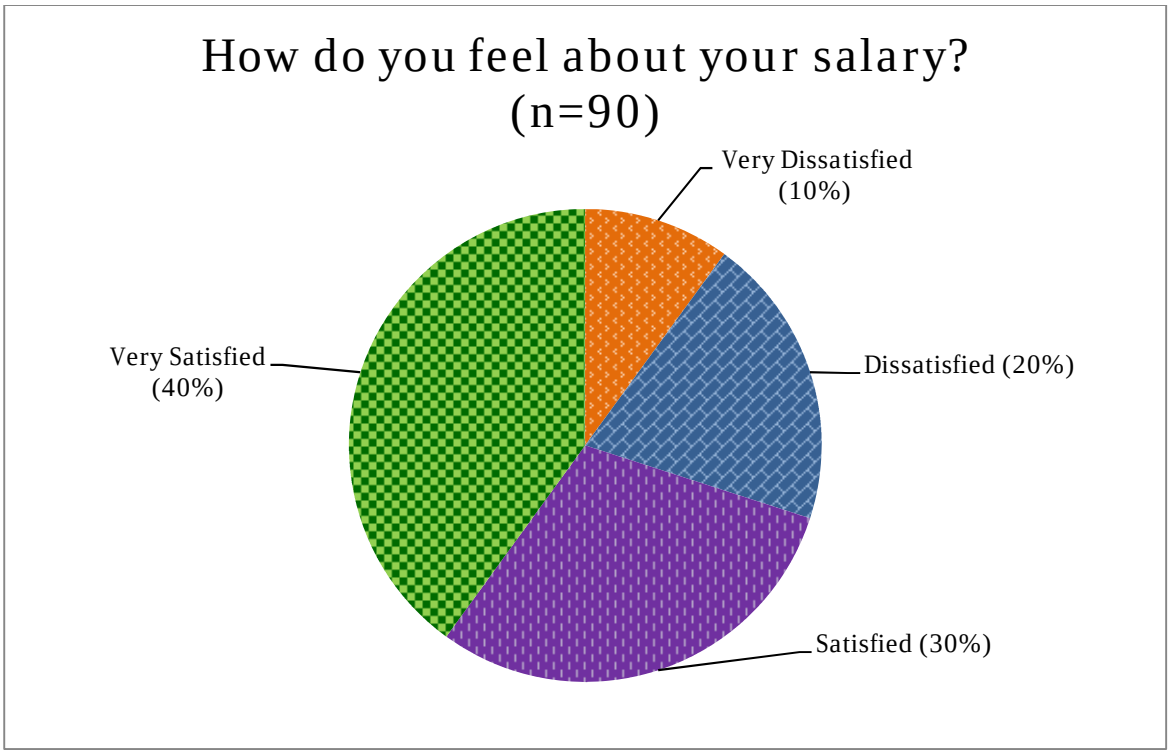
The data shows that respondents believe the most effective ways for promoting the IT programs to potential new students are by Word of Mouth and Social Media (See Figure 11).

Figure 11.



This data represents the alumni's feelings on their current salary. Respondents were asked to identify their satisfaction on a four-point scale with 1 being very dissatisfied and 4 being very satisfied. We found that 30% of alumni are dissatisfied with their salary and 70% are satisfied with their current pay (See Figure 12).

Figure 12



Conclusion

Educational Technology Specialist, Technology Educator, Instructional Technology and Media Management, Training and Development, Human Performance Technology, Information Technology, Organizational Leadership, and Organizational Performance, Leadership, and Technology Programs at SUNY Potsdam produce alumni every year who join a job market with essential skills that employers are looking for. Other programs in the United States offer similar courses to ones found at SUNY Potsdam. The success rate of these programs and how they promote themselves are areas of interest. The research questions associated with this paper were resolved in a manner that's consistent with honest alumni input. Our findings are described below:

1. **What skills are developed in the IT programs at SUNY Potsdam?**

   From our research, we discovered that there are a number of skills that students developed from the program. This tells us that the programs are not cookie cutter; each individual student took away a wide variety of skills that are beneficial to their particular situation. The top five skills reported from alumni were:

   1. Problem Solving Skills
   2. Instructional Design Skills
   3. Confidence in Using Technology
   4. Assessment Skills
   5. Critical Thinking Skills

   All of those mentioned above can be interpreted and applied to various circumstances

This shows that 94% of alumni say that the skills they developed from the program have been helpful in their career (Figure 8).

2. **What careers have completion of this program led to for alumni?**

After surveying program alumni we were able to see the numerous careers that the alumni's degrees have earned them. Again, this tells us that there is no one specific job that these programs prepare you for. They provide students with the skills and experiences that can be implemented in a variety of career field. The top five careers of alumni include:

1. PreK-12 Teacher
2. Director
3. Educational Technology Specialist
4. Coordinator
5. Instructor

Among other careers of SUNY Potsdam's IT program alumni are, in a general sense, Professor, Director, Coordinator, Instructor and Assistant (for a full list, see Figure 4).

3. **What are SUNY Potsdam IT Program Alumni's feelings about their program?**

The feedback that we received from alumni has been significantly positive in respect to the program. 55% of our survey takers say they wouldn't even be in their current career if it weren't for earning their degree from the program (Figure 5). Even better, 95% of

alumni say that they would recommend these programs to someone (Figure 10). This says a lot about the quality and benefits of the program if all but 1% of those who responded to the question would advocate the program to others. If they didn't feel strongly about the competence of SUNY Potsdam and it's IT programs then they would have answered "no" to that question. Another example of the affection alumni feel towards the program is best represented in the answers to the question "what was the most valuable aspect of the program?" These raw answers can be found in Appendix C. As represented in the data described above, alumni of SUNY Potsdam's IT programs have a positive outlook on their experience and the program as a whole.

From conducting this research study we were able to better understand the current alumni population and the outcome of earning a degree from these programs. We discovered the variety of skills and careers developed while learning what the alumni opinions of the program were. In addition the program now has some updated alumni data. Overall, the program includes a variety of skill development, experiences and real-world situations that help to prepare its students to apply their knowledge in a wide range of careers and situations.

Limitations

While conducting our research, our project faced a couple of drawbacks. First, our direct population (alumni who received e-mails) was 243 and we received 95 responses. This produced a known participation rate of about 28%. However our entire population is unknown, as a link to the survey was posted onto the alumni Facebook page and LinkedIn. Since everyone's situation is different, they're opinion about their career and their graduate degree may vary greatly. Another limitation we discovered was that from question to question a varied percentage of

respondents did not provide answers; it would have been beneficial to have answers to every question from all participants.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. What skills did you gain from this program?

2. Which of those skills do you believe to be the most valuable and why?

3. What career did this program lead you to, is it related to this program?

4. What skills provided by this program are essential to your career?

5. What courses do you believe to have been the most beneficial or prepare you best for your current career?

6. Why do you think there is a misconception on what this program is about?

Appendix B

Survey

SUNY Potsdam ICT/OLT/ITMM Alumni Survey

Please read and answer the following questions carefully, while being as concise as possible.

Gender

- o Male
- o Female
- o Other

How old are you? (eg: 26)

Which IT program were you in?

- o Educational Technology Specialist
- o Technology Educator
- o Instructional Technology and Media Management (ITMM)
- o Training and Development
- o Human Performance Technology (HPT)
- o Information Technology
- o Organizational Leadership (OL)
- o Organizational Performance, Leadership, and Technology (OPLT)
- o Other:

What year did you graduate? (eg: 2009)

Where do you currently live? (city, state)

What organization do you work for or what is the name of the last organization you worked for?
Please give the information in the following format: company name, city, state

If you are currently employed, what is your current job title?
Leave blank if you are currently not employed. Indicate "retired" if you are retired.

Do you feel you would be in your current position if you had NOT gone through your IT program?

- o Yes
- o No

Since you graduated from the program, how many job TITLES have you had?
For example, if you were promoted, and received a new job title, that would be two job titles.

- o 1
- o 2
- o 3
- o 4
- o 5
- o 6
- o 7
- o 8
- o 9
- o 10 or more
- o N/A

Since you graduated from the program, how many different organizations have you worked for?

- o 1
- o 2
- o 3
- o 4
- o 5
- o More than 5
- o N/A

Which of the following skills did you attain from the IT program?
Check all that apply, and for other list as many as you need to in the box provided.

- ☐ Problem Solving
- ☐ Interpersonal Skills
- ☐ Confidence Using Technology
- ☐ Analysis Skills
- ☐ Critical Thinking
- ☐ Systems Thinking
- ☐ Lifelong Learning
- ☐ Programming
- ☐ Web Design
- ☐ Artistic Design Principles
- ☐ Graphics Software
- ☐ Desktop Publishing
- ☐ Multimedia Authoring
- ☐ Video Production
- ☐ Simulations and Games
- ☐ Preparing Professional Presentations
- ☐ Team Building
- ☐ Instructional Design
- ☐ Assessment
- ☐ Teaching Skills
- ☐ Other: ☐

Have the skills that you developed been valuable to your career?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Based on your response to the previous question, would you care to explain why?

What was the single most valuable aspect of your program?
Please explain why.

Did you receive any additional training to prepare you for your current position?
Check all that apply.

- ☐ Additional Graduate School
- ☐ On the Job Training
- ☐ Peer Mentoring
- ☐ Self-Study
- ☐ Seminars
- ☐ Professional Conferences
- ☐ Internships
- ☐ Other: ☐

How do you feel about your salary?

	1	2	3	4	
Very Dissatisfied	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very Satisfied

Would you recommend any of our current OLT programs to potential new students?
note: We currently offer "Educational Technology Specialist, K-12," "Educational Technology Specialist, non-K-12," and "Organizational Performance, Leadership, and Technology."

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Which of our current registered, but inactive programs do you feel we should make active again?
Check all that apply.

- ☐ Organizational Leadership
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Other: ☐

Which format do you think would be most effective for promoting the IT program to potential students?
Check all that apply.

- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Program Webpage
- ☐ IT Alumni Webpage
- ☐ Open House Presentation
- ☐ Brochures
- ☐ Catalogues
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Word of Mouth
- ☐ Other: ☐

Do you currently work with any other SUNY Potsdam IT Alumni?
Select yes or no. If yes, please explain in the box provided.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Do you maintain contact with students who attended graduate school at SUNY Potsdam with you?
Select yes or no. If yes, please explain in the box provided.

- ○ Yes

- o No

Would you be interested in a program reunion?

- o Yes
- o No

Would be interested in an IT Alumni newsletter?

- o Yes
- o No

Do you think it would be beneficial for alumni to offer professional advice and mentoring to current students?

- o Yes
- o No

If you answered yes to the previous question, what do you feel are appropriate communication channels?
Check all that apply. If you answered "no" to the previous question, check N/A.

- o Social Media
- o E-Mail
- o Blog
- o Video Conference
- o Phone
- o Linked-In
- o Newsletter
- o N/A
- o Other:

Do you think an Alumni Advisory Council would be beneficial for current IT students and alumni?

An Alumni Advisory Council would work with current faculty and staff in the program to generate new ideas and strengthen alumni relations.

- o Yes
- o No

Would you be interested in being listed on our Alumni Web Page? http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/SOEPS/BusinessAdmin/alumni.cfm If yes, please e-mail "betrusak@potsdam.edu" to indicate your interest.

- o Yes
- o No

Would you participate in an Alumni Advisory Council if one existed?
If you are interested in serving on the Alumni Advisory Council, or otherwise staying connected with current students or faculty, please e-mail "betrusak@potsdam.edu" to indicate your interest. This information will be collected and kept separate from your survey responses.

- o Yes
- o No

Appendix C

Free Response Question Summary

What was the single most valuable aspect of your program?

Interpretation

Feedback received from alumni produced opinions that, although each was written differently, we made a few general consensuses about the most valuable aspect of the program. These aspects include: collaborative learning, program faculty, assessment, technology integration, multi-media design etc.

Data Summary

See Figure 7 for a summarized representation of this data.

Actual Response

Al Januszewski

Certainly assesment, as noted above.

The integration of technology into education.
gaining the degree

The single most valuable aspect of the program was the small class sizes that supported individual growth and exploration.

Working with others because it can be a frustrating process. In general in the workplace employees do their part (or they'll be fired) but there are instances where people don't pull their weight, or don't function at the quality that is needed. Learning and practicing how to cope and work through such scenarios during my education is beneficial in the work I do every day.

The classroom discussions - facilitated online or in person - very valuable.

Assessment

"There were many valuable aspects of the Ed. Tech. program, but I would have to say that the single most valuable aspect were the opportunities I received while working with others.
Tony provided me and my peers with many opportunities to explore, create and solve problems. He is a fantastic motivator. Yeah, there were times when he ""voluntold"" us to do things, but those are the moments made us better. We needed those opportunities to push us.
Those opportunities also required us to work in groups and collaborate. This gave us ownership of our learning, and prepared me for the job I am currently in. Employers are looking for people

who are creative, flexible and good collaborators. This program had all of these aspects and more. "
Getting a full grasp of purpose driven multi-media design and development in a very knowledgeable and supportive environment. To be honest, I have no idea where I would be without going through the program.

Professors that cared!

Actually holding a masters degree. I had several requirements waved during my admission to the MBA program at Clarkson because I held a masters degree, this was tremendously helpful. I would not have been able to get into the program at Clarkson had this not been the case. Additionally I would not have received as much funding through scholarships if I didn't have this degree so it was tremendously helpful.

Instructional and systematic design - Those skills can be applied to graphic/web design, teaching, training, distance learning, and management.

Besides the people, (which I enjoyed because it was smaller and more intimate, it was like a little family), I also valued the skills I obtained through courses with Ed Schneider (Web Development) and working in Al J. courses were extremely valuable because I got to take on more of a leadership role and learned how to develop and analyze appropriate measurement tools.

Instructional Design- I design courses for employees every day, and without this information I would not be as valuable to my company as I am today.

The ability to recognize a problem, assess needs, put together a plan of attack, and analyze the results among various stakeholder groups.

Systems thinking. I think I naturally have always been a "systems thinker" but via instruction I was able to identify this and now I continuously build upon it.

This is an impossible question to answer. There was literally wasn't any aspect of the program that was not valuable. If I HAD to pick, I would say the excellent teaching, coaching, and mentoring of the Professors that I had really helped me develop as a professional. Dr. Anthony Betrus, Dr. Alan Januszjewski, and Steve Canning were amazing at guiding myself and my fellow classmates.

Interaction with quality instructors.

The single most valuable aspect of my program would have to be the fact I was pushed, encouraged and excited to further my organization, learning and creativity. I recall countless hours at a computer perfecting a project or revising a paper so that it was professional quality and I could be proud of it. I loved what I was learning and what I did. I loved the people I worked with and the staff that was there to support us.

The variety of classes were valuable. To getting the job.

Learning how to critically examine human performance and ways to improve it.
Developing relationships with people who have and will always be a part of a team on improving the use of technology in classrooms.

Big picture thinking skills. This has been invaluable in my career.

I can't pinpoint a single aspect of the program, but I was very successful within the program because of the incredible professors and their personable nature to help and guide. Also, the group of grad students I worked with were supportive and dedicated to working hard on all of our projects. It was a great environment to learn and explore new things!

The breadth of knowledge provided throughout the program has proven useful in many situations since, and feel it provides a wide range of job opportunities for graduates to pursue with their degree.

Hands on learning of needs assessment.

Instructional Design, for sure. It was the hardest class, students didn't like the professor, but I excelled and learned so much. Assessment was also very useful. I appreciated being able to get my degree while working and having a small child.

Networking - my educational and professional relationships with the professors in the department directly led to me being referred for my current position.

Program evaluation to determine what areas are in need of improvement in the schools I work in.
The Systematic Design of Instruction...Learning to adapt to alternate ways of thinking

Group project - working with other in the programs with different but similar plans and backgrounds.
Knowing I can apply what I learned to new programs/ apps/data.... And feel confident doing it.... Can figure it out:)

Learning how to properly assess programs, the many components of what makes an organization function and how to enhance those components to help a program improve.

The technology integration aspect, both in the classroom and on a more administrative level, I feel was key in getting my hired in the positions in both schools I worked in, and was a solid background to allow me to slide into my current position in the private sector.

The faculty is the most valuable part. They each have inspired me in his/her own way.

Introducing different softwares and online resource that can do different jobs and solve different problems so when I am required to do a project, I know what tools that I need.

"I gained valuable analytical skills. I am interested in the field of Human Resources specifically Talent Management. I have been reading everything I can find on the subject.

The current degree in Information and Communication Technology with a concentration in Organizational Leadership. The degree should simply be, Organizational Leadership. "

Working with teams - nearly every course I took required this. Not always easy, in fact challenging at times, I appreciate that I had multiple intensive team projects. Invaluable experience that I don't believe is taught well in most undergraduate programs.

Learning different types of software that could be applied to classrooms and lesson plans, very important when working with teachers and getting them to integrate technology.

Working with others on projects. Programming

The behind-the-scenes integration of a variety of skill sets. On the front-end, what most people see, is most common and easily visible. However, the back-end, what isn't clearly visible, is the connections from one discipline to the next that caught my attention. From the initial assessment on how-to begin a project, through the final assessment on how-to process feedback in order to implement effective changes was a BIG part of what I walked away with.

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As part of the Ed Tech Specialist certification I was set up with an internship at St. Lawrence University. I felt the work that I did there and the contacts that I made helped me take everything from theory to reality.

"I think exposure to lots of media creation tools and very different experiences and instructional formats in the classes were very helpful.

The educational technology jobs out there right now are so varied in what they entail, I think that having a broad background is a great foundation to have before getting a job - then you can build on it as your job requires. "

Learning that people learn in different ways. It has helped me develop my own teaching techniques and given me a different perspective on the U.S. public school system.

I feel the most valuable asset has been the team building aspect. Working with others and understanding group process has been very valuable to me.

Learning how different people learn and the instructional styles available for each of those types of people has been very valuable to me.

The experience gained in the internship, as it was a chance to put together all the skills and knowledge from the previous parts of the program.

I was introduced to new things in the program and each course pushed me to learn something new. Even though I was scared to screw things up and not get things right, I learned every step of the way. It put me in the shoes of my students when they learn something brand new that they may not be comfortable with.

Critical thinking. Dr. Al, Dr. Betrus, and Eric Sharlow were pivotal in changing me from someone who participated in "groupthink" to learning to question, approach situations/problems from a variety of perspectives. Those experiences made me a better person, on a whole. Instructional design allowed me to develop educational programs related to performance improvement

Group work, real life projects.

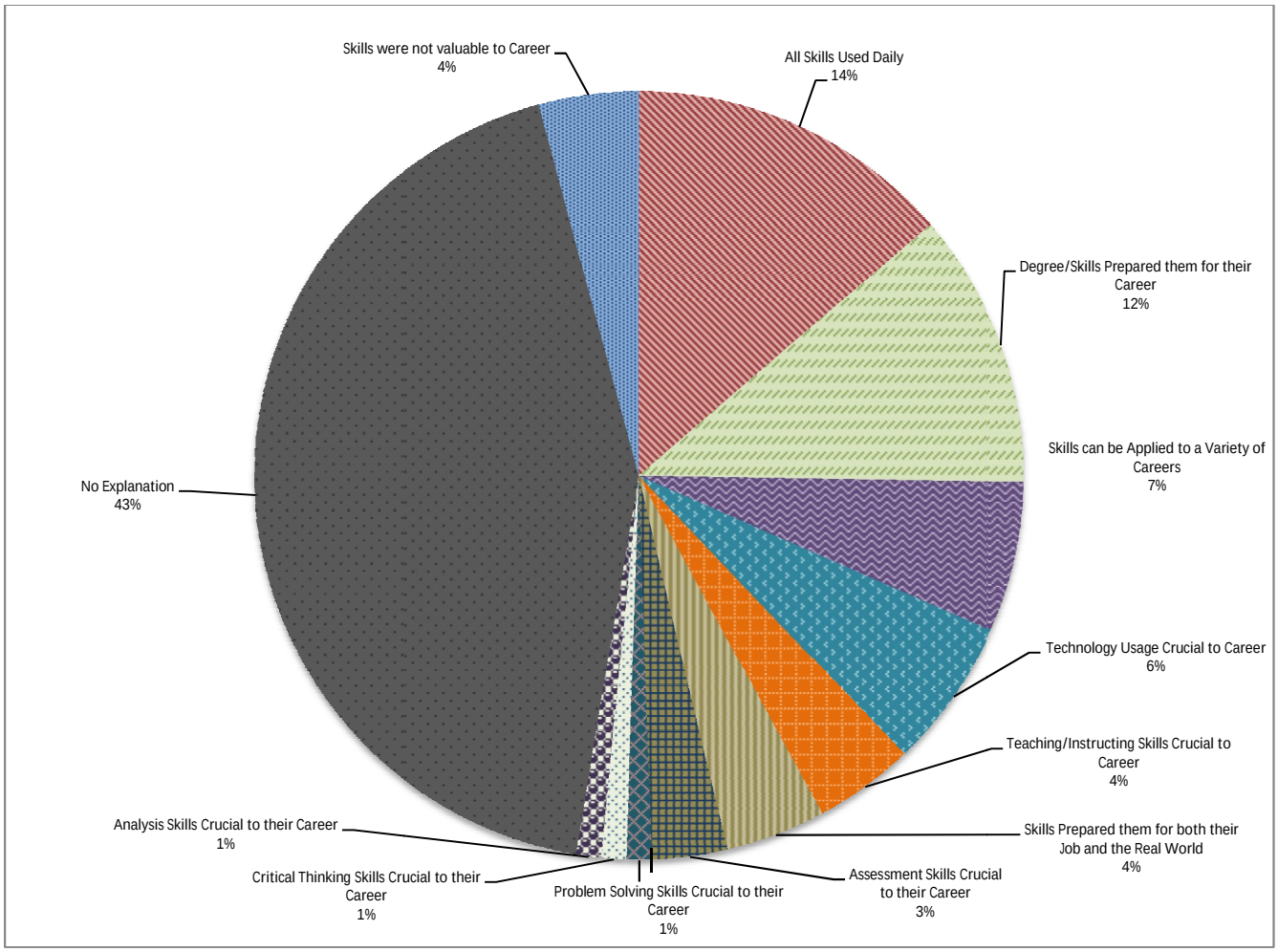
Have the skills you gained from the program been valuable to your career? EXPLANATION

Interpretation

94% of all individuals surveyed said that the skills they developed during the program have been valuable to their career, while 5% didn't find them to be valuable. The other 1% of our population left this question blank. This particular question allowed individuals to explain their answer in a free response question. Below are their explanations.

Data Summary

Have the skills you gained from the program been valuable to your career? EXPLANATION (n=54)



Actual Response

I could not have gone on to get my doctorate at Indiana University without the ITMM program.

"Problem Solving-Probably the biggest thing I have to do in my job is solve problems. On the field, in the team room, etc... Having an ability to diagnose and deal with issues is paramount to my own performance levels.

Confidence Using Technology/Video Production- I have become much more proficient in using video editing softward (specifically imovie). This assists me greatly in breaking down video of our own games and the games of our opponents. Instead of having to show players full games, I can just clip them using software.

Critical Thinking- I have become much more ""distant"" in my decision making. I have learned to step back and think about several different factors when it comes to making a choice. Sometimes I used to react on emotion or a ""gut"" feeling. I have become much more analytical in my thinking. As an analogy: I now see a building piece by piece, not as a single structure.

Assessment- Probably the biggest think I learned in the program. How to diagnose what is going wrong and why. If things are going well, why? And how can we make sure we continue on the same path.

Teaching Skills- I have modeled my teaching strategy based on the values that the OPLT faculty exemplified. Much more constructivist in nature."

All of the skills are used daily in one form or another and integrated into teaching.

I use the skills daily, as I work in Distance and Online Learning training faculty to build online courses or work a LMS.

As a college professor who teaches technology courses, the education I received at SUNY Potsdam was fundamental to me getting my job and has been the foundation of keeping my job.

Everything I learned and all of the projects I engaged in continued to shape me as a professional.

My graduate work better prepared me for my role at the college and my role in the community. So much is self taught in life - this graduate program put it into perspective and gave working examples to apply to every day life. LOVED it.

I have done 2-3 assessments in my department.

The position I am currently in uses all of the skills that I learned during the Ed. Tech. program at SUNY Potsdam.

If it where for not the wide array of courses and a progressive mindset towards technology that I was exposed to during my graduate studies I am not sure I would have fully been prepared to go into design and development with the proper tools.

Education prepares "deadlines, research, forward thinking, self confidence, dependability, motivation, goal setting, responsibility, teamwork, etc" making a living is easy! Having skills to make a difference is the paycheck for your soul!

I am currently enrolled in the Clarkson MBA program. Some of these skill may not be directly related to my current work and job trajectory however are still valuable non the less. I have found through my MBA program that teaching may be an effective career choice for me and I would not have had the skill to do so if it were not for the program. Additionally I had several requirements waved during my admission to the MBA program at Clarkson because I held a masters degree, this was tremendously helpful.

The skills that you develop can be applied to various careers. Virtually every field requires critical thinking, interpersonal, and problem solving skills. Any good manager is going to utilize team building and assessment skills to become good leaders while advancing in their careers.

I used what I learned from the program and implemented it at my current location.

I went into the program with zero teaching experience, now I train people world wide on a daily basis.

Before returning to the region a year ago to be closer to family I had spent my last 10 years working as the Director of School Library Systems at Champlain Valley Educational Services in Plattsburgh, NY. My program at Potsdam prepared me for the tasks of that job on an almost daily basis. I worked on numerous committees and served on several statewide organizations that required Needs Assessment, Planning, and Analysis Skills to make particular initiatives work.

I use these skills everyday to enlighten myself and others with emphasis on problem solving using technology and systems thinking.

I am currently working as an entrance and retention counselor for students who are looking to go back to school. I am constantly troubleshooting problems, using my counseling skills, and ultimately making decisions that are in the best interest of the student. It is allowing me to have meaningful interactions with students and really getting to take the role of a mentor for many. I believe the program strengthened my skills and talents and has made me a better educator.

In the past few years, I have worked in classrooms with age ranging between 3 to 6 years old. In those daycare classrooms, they have limited technology and discourage excess screen time. However, I had created a few interactive kiosks and child-geared PowerPoints that the children really enjoyed. Unfortunately, I worked a lot of hours for that job and needed to compose any of these extras on my own time at home. With a growing family of my own, I didn't have that type of time anymore. A lot of the skills presented throughout my studies may not of been new to me, but they were still exciting. As a stay at home mom, I use these skill in more of a meaningful

way, such as video editing home movies, digital scrap booking and even prepping projects for my children to do.

I became a high school Business teacher!

I am in a field that requires constant needs assessment so the material was very relevant.

I am in charge of the website for my school and upload early learning curriculum for the entire school district

Although I am currently not in the workforce, I have used several skills I obtained from the Ed Tech Specialist program both in the work place (elementary school classrooms) and in my personal life. Technology is everywhere and this program gave me the skills and confidence to use/fix a variety of software/hardware.

I have found applications during my work experience for most all of course work completed during the program.

Too skilled for most entry level job, not enough real world experience for others.

I do believe studying assessment, instructional design, effective instruction, and having the freedom to do a final research project on a work-related project was very beneficial. A M.S.Ed has proved useful and I am glad I did it! Training and development can be used in so many different ways.

My career requires me to develop technology curriculum. Without these skills, I would not be able to do so.

I use the skills that I learned in the Ed Tech program each and every day to ensure I do my job properly.
Employers seek the critical thinking and analysis skills that I honed at Potsdam coupled with the presentation skills. "Always present FIRST" "Never follow a better ACT"

They have proven most beneficial as applied to course instruction. Preparation of materials, student expectations and interaction.

Technology is ever changing. I am not afraid of learning new technology programming or software. Hello smart board, edmoto, Schoology,etc

Unfortunately I haven't had much opportunity to utilize a lot of what I learned. I have helped undergraduate students with projects, which I wouldn't have been able to if it wasn't for the information I gained through the program (assessment and focus grouping).

The world was moving toward more technology integration in every way - not just in education.

Learning how to build a network, use desktop publishing apps effectively, and have a general understanding of technology has helped me in become gainfully employed in 3 different states.

All the checked skills have either helped me become qualify for the job or enabled me to do a great job.
All the skills that I learned from this program have been in use every day in my job. My job requirement is to develop and maintain the company's website, design all the marketing materials and edit the videos. It needs me to know all the graphics software, web design / development, desktop publishing and video production skills.

My degree is Information and Communication Technology my did not give me the basic skills for ICT.

My degree appears to be more accepted in the school system. My search is not over I will continue to apply to the educational field.

It was important for me to earn a graduate degree. The program was a convenient, yet challenging, way to ensure advanced education experience. I thoroughly enjoyed the OL coursework and am confident I use the gained skill set on a daily basis in my current role.

Since I graduated I have used many of the skills that were developed by the ICT program. Lifelong learning through the use of tutorials, when I designed my own web-site I used many design steps that were taught by the ICT program, and preparing for professional presentations allowed me to be a better instructor.

This program sharpened my tech skills and gave me new job opportunities that I wouldn't have otherwise had.

Using analysis skills allows me to better design my courses and course material for our grad students based upon their needs.

The best thing that I did for my career was taking a year off and going back to Potsdam full-time. More than anything it allowed me time to hone my skills and develop more enthusiasm about the field as well as really starting to feel confident in my abilities. I don't believe my undergraduate degree hit on any of the topics that were covered at Potsdam, so prior to my time in Potsdam all of my Ed Tech "stuff" was self-taught.

"I have found that for my position I am more of a Swiss Army Knife than a scalpel - there are lots of tasks and tools I am familiar with and execute but very few that I particularly specialize in. Therefore, I found the wide array of media creation courses very useful - they were enough to get me started and then I can learn the rest (or improvise) as needed. I use what I learned in Desktop Publishing and Web Design frequently. I make a lot of handout materials that explain how to use different educational technologies, and it is a delicate balance trying to make those handouts as clear to understand, pleasant to look at, and printer-friendly as possible. Web design is an important skill for when I work on webpages to deliver content, as well as for

understanding how to use other web-based tools. For example, understanding how HTML and web hosting works is very helpful when we need to troubleshoot why a web-based tool is not working as expected. Graphics software also supports both the publishing and web design elements. Video production I am only starting to use more - we are beginning to create more videos to support the more difficult programs that can be less straightforward to understand from a printed how-to.Multimedia authoring I haven't used much, but sometimes having a very basic understanding of how programs / coding works can be helpful when troubleshooting. Instructional design is used in a very basic level for delivering workshops - determining objectives, then assessments, then the instruction is extremely helpful. It also supports the BOCES-supported framework of Backwards Design (which pretty much says the same thing as the model we used in the course.)Network architecture is useful when communicating with techs and trying to figure out computer problems. Program evaluation and research methods not so much...we have been spending a lot of time thinking about how to write good questions and look at data for the new Data-Driven Instruction initiative in many districts, though. "

"First, we are the sum of all of our parts. My education at SUNY Potsdam (the program as a whole) is a significant part of who I am.
Second, learning the basics of teaching has been very valuable. Such as gaining the attention of the audience, and knowing about the audience during instruction development."

I utilize all of the skills I learned through the OL program almost daily. We are constantly going through change, change process, preparing for presentations, building teams, working within an organization, and using critical and analytical skills.

From the time I started the program until now I have held three very different positions (Human Resources/Training, Higher Education Career Counseling, and Higher Education Schedule Building) and every one of those jobs has allowed me to use the training/instructional aspect of my job.

Without the skills/experience I gained in the program, I would not be in the tech field, I would have most likely been a classroom teacher. These skills have prepared me for my current job and for further promotion with in my field.

I have been able to incorporate more technology use in the classroom with my students. As a team, we have introduced students to new ways to use technology. I am already familiar with a lot of the technology and software we have introduced to the students because of this program.

I cannot think of one thing that I have NOT used in the Human Performance Technology program. Everything from critical thinking skills to simulations and games have been utilized in both my previous career as an Instructional Designer to my current career as a community college instructor. The program was invaluable to me and I continue to apply different aspects in each future course I teach.

Tripled my salary, accepted position at academic medical center. Served there 9 years, then returned to nearly same position / same hospital to be closer to grandchildren .. but double the salary I left. Had I not left and returned, my salary would not have increased.

Project management, leadership skills, group work, team building.

Appendix D

SUNY Potsdam IT Resources

SUNY Potsdam Educational Technology Specialist Program Page:

http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/majors/educationtechnologyspecialist.cfm

SUNY Potsdam Information and Communication Technology Program Page:

http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/majors/informationandcommunicationtechnology.cfm

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