

# SURVEY OF GRADUATE STUDENT ALUMNI

2020  
SPRING



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
Graduate School™

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Students graduating from Texas Tech University with graduate degrees benefited from expert and supportive faculty and felt they gained the relevant and necessary experience to succeed in their chosen careers. They are innovators and researchers; entrepreneurs; health care providers; educators and university faculty; leaders in business, government and nonprofit sectors; and advancers of the arts and humanities. Their contributions to the workforce enhance society and significantly enrich the local, national and global economies. Below is a synopsis of the survey results:

- Most graduates (75.7 percent) with TTU graduate degrees entered the workforce directly without continuing their education.
- Of those students graduating with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education, most went on to earn doctoral (45.8 percent) or master's/professional (40.5 percent) degrees.

Nearly 30 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in higher education, while just over 70 percent were employed in other sectors, including pre K-12 education (13.1 percent), business (28.1 percent), government service (8.0 percent), healthcare (6.3 percent), military (0.5 percent), nonprofit (4.0 percent), self-employed (6.0 percent), volunteer activity such as Peace Corps or missionary work (0.4 percent) and other (4.1 percent).

- Most graduates with TTU graduate degrees (67.1 percent) were employed full time; 18.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were not seeking employment or were retired.
- A majority of graduates (61.9 percent) with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Texas.
- 51.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees reported being born in Texas.
- 59.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made up to \$100,000 per year, 25 percent made between \$100,001 and \$250,000, 5.7 percent made over \$250,000, and 9.9 percent preferred not to answer.
- A vast majority of graduates with TTU graduate degrees (84.4 percent) felt their graduate degrees were very closely or closely related to their current or most recent job.
- Over 85 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were very satisfied or satisfied with their overall program quality. 87.1 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the or their intellectual challenge of their program and 84.8 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of faculty.
- Most graduates with TTU graduate degrees (80 percent) were very satisfied (41 percent) or satisfied (39 percent) with the adequacy of facilities and equipment. The majority of graduates were also very satisfied or satisfied with IT services (60.8 percent), library or electronic resources (75.7 percent), and graduate student life experiences (71.3 percent). Only 45.7 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with assistance provided in finding employment.
- Graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt their graduate experience would have been enhanced by an improved program/class availability/accessibility (21.0 percent), better career guidance/placement (15.3 percent), better climate/associations with others (10.6 percent), better professional development (9.3 percent) and improved university infrastructure (9.3 percent); 17.4 percent felt no improvement was needed.
- Survey demographics, provided at the end of the survey, show the age range of participants were fairly evenly distributed with the 25-34-year-old age range being the large percentage of participants (22.2 percent). Just over half of participants (55.4 percent) were male. 817 participants identified with one race while 4 participants identified with 2 or more.

# INTRODUCTION

Graduate education plays a critical role in the workforce strategy of the U.S. and is essential for innovation in all fields of endeavor, from the arts and humanities to science, technology, engineering and mathematics.<sup>1</sup> Graduate degree holders bring increased value to the workforce and to society through their specialized knowledge and problem-solving ability.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this survey was to determine the career paths of students following the completion of their graduate program at TTU and to learn if their graduate program (1) met students' expectations, (2) helped students attain their career goals and objectives and (3) provided students with the skills to become successful in their careers. The survey was purposefully brief to encourage maximum participation from alumni, including some who graduated more than 30 years ago. This is the fourth Graduate Student Alumni Survey that Texas Tech University has conducted.

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey was administered by the Texas Tech University Office of Institutional Research to all alumni of record who earned a graduate degree at TTU, had an address on file, and graduated between 1948 and 2018 in five-year increments (e.g., 2018, 2013, 2008, etc.).

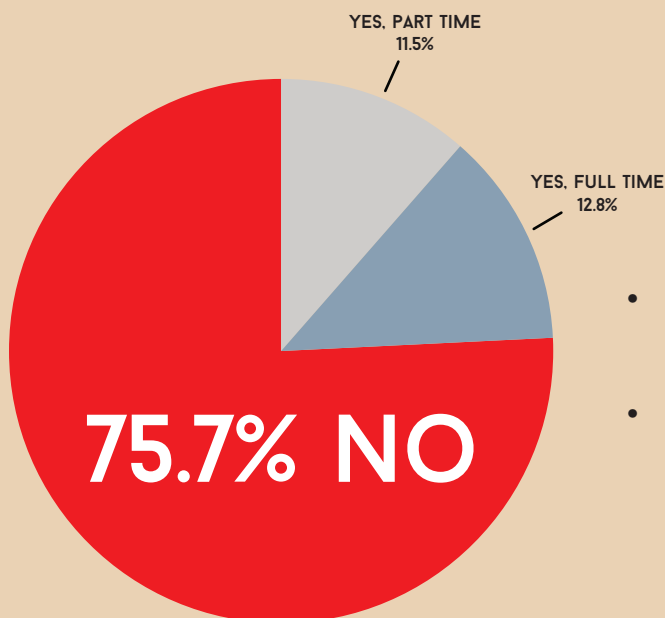
- 5,447 email were sent, and 226 were not delivered due to invalid addresses. Postcards were mailed to alumni for whom did not have an email address on file and for whom emails were returned due to invalid email address.
- Email requests were initially sent on September 16, 2019. Email reminders were sent on October 14, 2019; October 21, 2019; and November 5, 2019. Responses were collected until November 13, 2019.
- A total of 835 responses were received, yielding a response rate of about 9 percent.
- Of the total responses received, 195 were doctoral degree recipients and 640 were master's degree recipients.

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<sup>1</sup> The Path Forward: The Future of Graduate Education in the United States, 2010, Commission on the Future of Graduate Education in the United States; Pathways through Graduate School and Into Careers, 2012, Commission on the Future of Graduate Education in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Graduate Education: The Backbone of American Competitiveness and Innovation, 2007, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington, DC; Graduate Education and the Public Good, 2008, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington, DC.

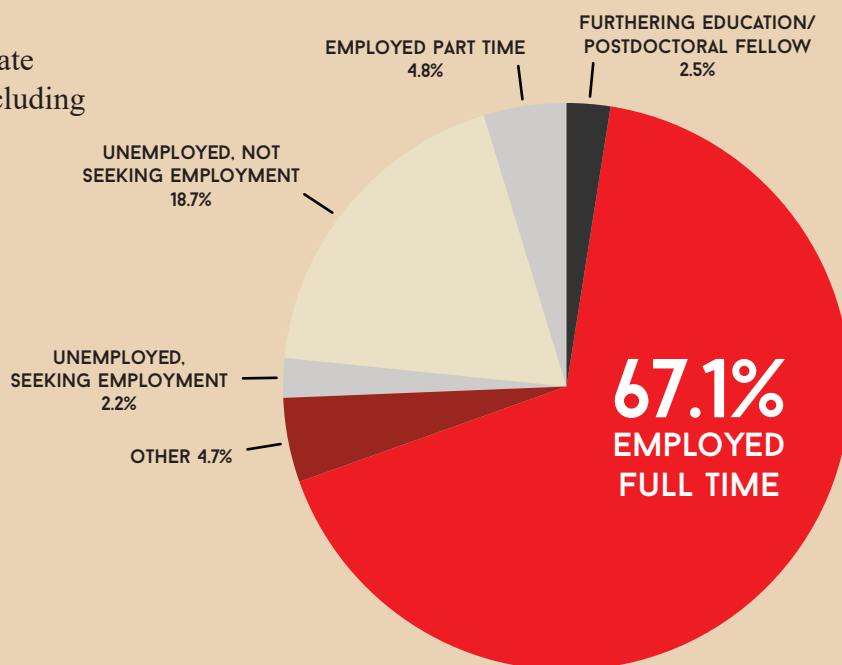
## HAVE YOU ENROLLED AT A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY SINCE RECEIVING YOUR GRADUATE DEGREE FROM TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY?



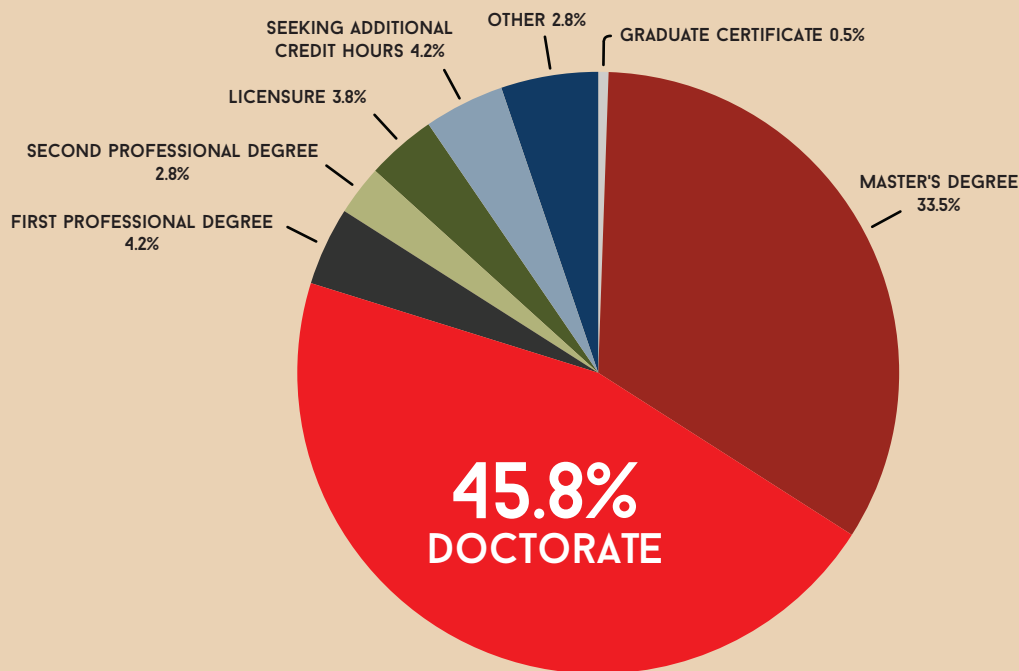
- A majority (75.7 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees did not continue their education.
- Of the graduates with TTU graduate degrees that continued their education, 12.8 percent continued full time and 11.5 percent continued part time.

## WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS?

- A majority (67.1 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed full time.
- 18.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were not seeking employment, including retired individuals.



# WHAT IS THE HIGHEST DEGREE YOU HAVE ACHIEVED OR TOWARD WHICH YOU ARE CURRENTLY WORKING SINCE RECEIVING YOUR GRADUATE DEGREE FROM TTU?



- Almost 46 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a doctorate; 33.5 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a master's degree; 7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a first or second professional degree.
- 4.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU sought or were seeking additional credits rather than a degree, including 0.5 percent seeking a graduate certificate, 3.8 percent seeking some of licensure, 4.2 percent seeking additional credit hours, and 5.2 percent seeking some other type of additional credits.

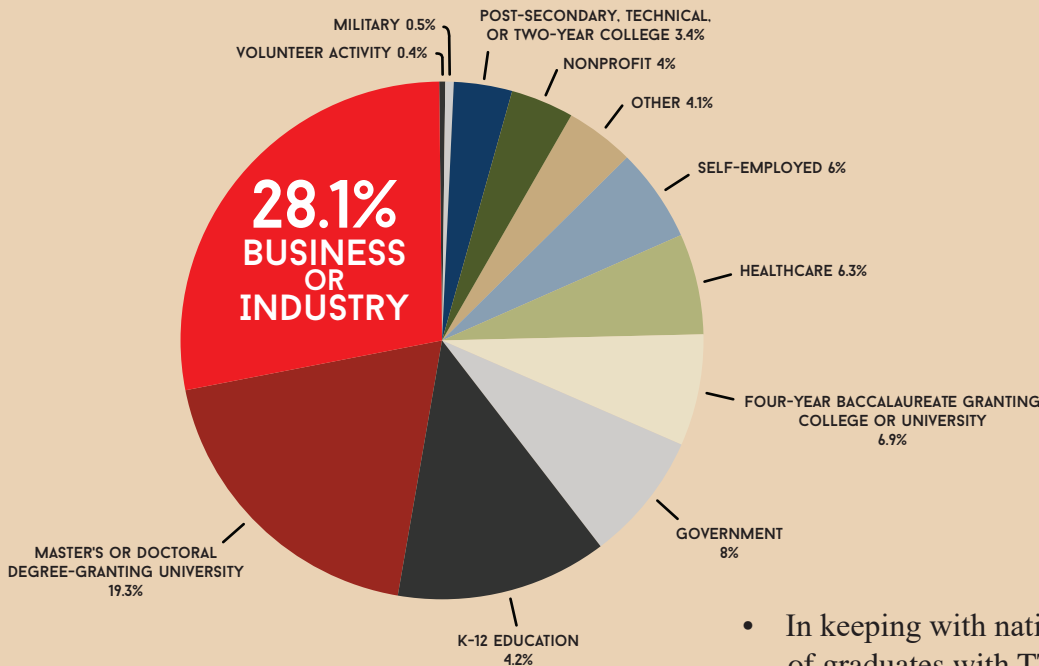
Representative institutions at which graduates with TTU graduate degrees continued their education after leaving TTU are as follows:

*Arizona State University*  
*Clemson University*  
*Cornell University*  
*Criswell College*  
*Drexel University*  
*George Washington University*  
*Georgetown University Law Center*  
*Harvard University*  
*Louisiana State University*  
*Michigan State University*  
*Ohio State University*  
*Oklahoma State University*

*Southern Methodist University*  
*Sul Ross State University*  
*Syracuse University*  
*Tarleton State University*  
*Texas A&M University*  
*University of Delaware*  
*University of Georgia*  
*University of Iowa*  
*University of Maryland*  
*University of Missouri*  
*University of Nebraska*  
*University of Texas*



# WHICH CATEGORY BEST DESCRIBES THE SECTOR OF YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT?



- In keeping with national trends, nearly 30 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in higher education, including 19.3

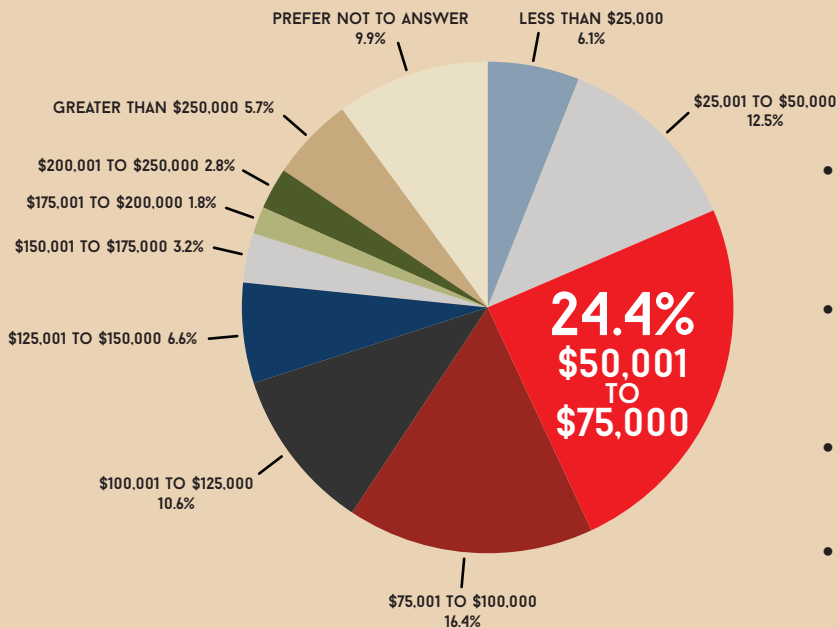
percent at research universities, 6.9 percent at four-year colleges and 3.4 percent at two-year college/technical schools.

- A majority (64.5 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other sectors, including preK-12 education (13.1 percent), business (28.1 percent), government (8.0 percent), healthcare (6.3 percent), military (0.5 percent), nonprofit (4.0 percent), volunteer activity (0.4) and other (4.1 percent).
- 6.0 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were self-employed.

Individuals with TTU graduate degrees obtained employment at the following entities:

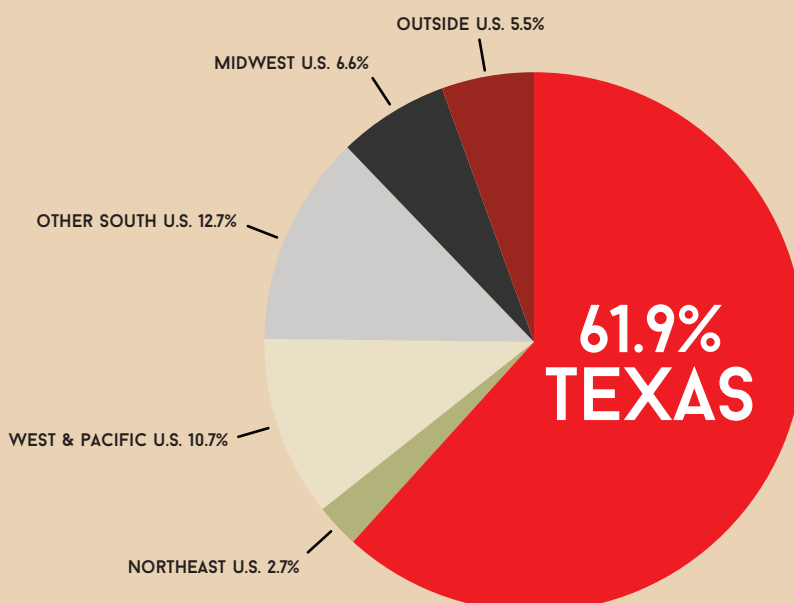
2M Companies LLC	IBM	Siam Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.
Aerotek	Intel	TEKsystems
Agri-Tech	Johnson & Johnson	Telefonix, Inc.
American Airlines	Lockheed Martin Corporation	Terracon Consultants, Inc.
Arizona State Parks	Merrill Lynch	Texas Instruments
Beijing University of Chemical Technology	NASA	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Berkley Research Group Consulting	National Sorghum Producers	TransUnion
Best Buy Co. Inc.	National Weather Service	Uber/Lyft
Boeing	Neiman Marcus	United States Air Force
Brinker International	Nelson Global Products	United States Army
California Department of Water Resources	Pantex	United States Department of Commerce
Cambridge University	Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, Inc.	United States Environmental Protection Agency
Farmers Insurance	Pearson	United States Navy
Ford Motor Company	PricewaterhouseCoopers	United States Patent & Trademark Office
General Motors Company	Progressive Insurance Corporation	Vanguard
Halliburton	Qualcomm	VisionQuestion Biomedical, Inc.
HomeGoods	Savannah River National Laboratory	

## WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT ANNUALIZED 12-MONTH SALARY?



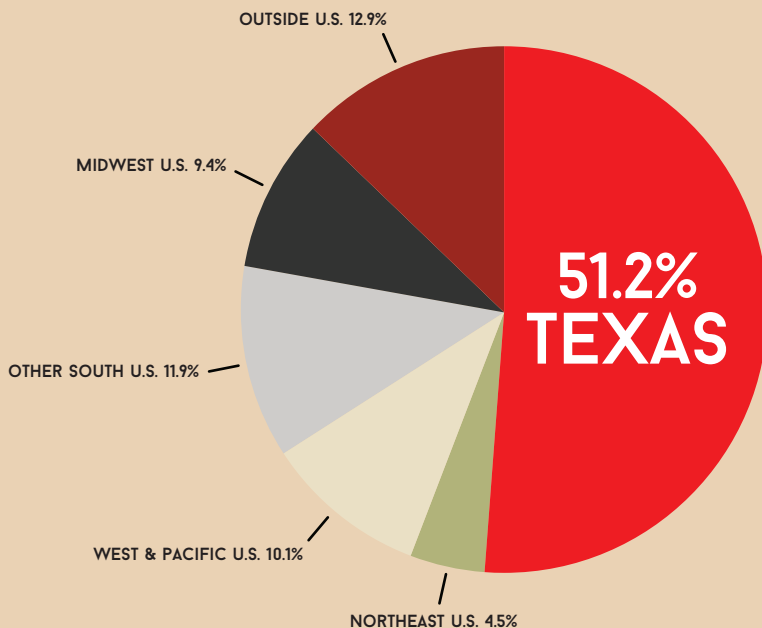
- A majority (59.4 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made up to \$100,000 per year.
- 25 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made between \$100,001 and \$250,000.
- 5.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made over \$250,000.
- 9.9 percent preferred not to answer.

## WHAT IS THE LOCATION OF YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYER?



- A majority (61.9 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Texas.
- 2.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Northeast U.S. states.
- 10.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in West U.S. and Pacific states.
- 12.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other Southern U.S. states.
- 6.6 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other Midwest states.
- 94.5 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in the U.S.

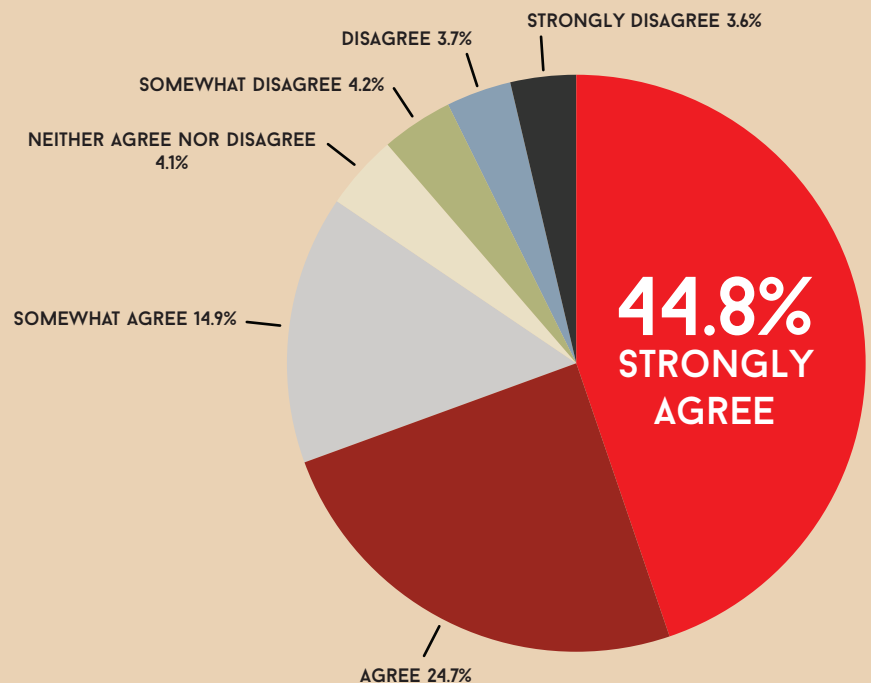
## WHAT IS YOUR PLACE OF BIRTH?



- A majority (51.2 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in Texas.
- 4.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in Northeast U.S. states.
- 10.1 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in West U.S. and Pacific states.
- 11.9 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in other Southern U.S. states.
- 9.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in other Midwest states.
- 87.1 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in the U.S.

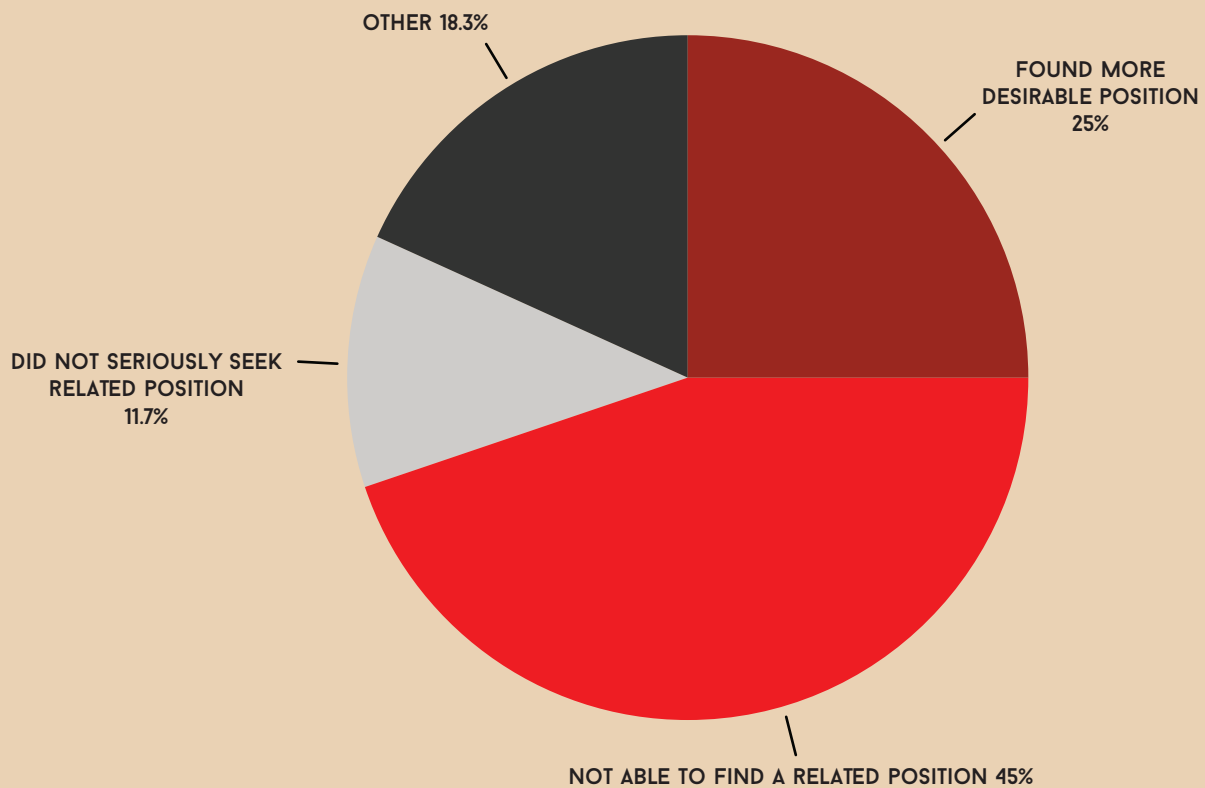
## IS MY CURRENT OR MOST RECENT JOB CLOSELY RELATED TO MY GRADUATE DEGREE?

- A vast majority (84.4 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees strongly agreed (44.8 percent), agreed (24.7 percent), or somewhat agreed (14.9 percent) that their degrees were closely related to their current or most recent job.
- Only 11.5 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees somewhat disagreed (4.2 percent), disagreed (3.7 percent), or strongly disagreed (3.6 percent) that their degrees were closely related to their current or most recent job.





## IF YOUR CURRENT/MOST RECENT POSITION IS/WAS NOT RELATED TO YOUR GRADUATE DEGREE, WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION?



- Of the 12 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who felt their graduate degrees were minimally related or not related at all to their employment, 25 percent answered “found more desirable position in another field,” 45 percent answered “not able to find a position related to my graduate education” and 11.7 percent answered “I have not seriously sought a position related to my graduate degree” as the main reasons.
- “Other” reasons identified for why current/most recent position was not related to graduate degree include the following:

*“I chose a different field.”*

*“After teaching several years, I pursued a different field as a challenge.”*

*“I came out of retirement to help run a small business totally unrelated to my graduate degrees.”*

*“I should have majored in business instead of being influenced by teachers.”*

*“After completing 28 successful years in public, I entered the real estate profession and am currently in network marketing.”*

## HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS OF YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM?\*



INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE	87.1%
GRADUATE-LEVEL TEACHING	83.6%
FACULTY ADVISING AND GUIDANCE	75.5%
QUALITY OF FACULTY	84.8%
KEEPING PACE WITH RECENT TRENDS	79.9%
PREPARATION FOR A CAREER IN MY FIELD	76.6%
OVERALL PROGRAM QUALITY	85.1%
ADEQUACY OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT	80.0%
ASSISTANCE IN FINDING EMPLOYMENT	45.7%
IT RESOURCES	60.8%
LIBRARY AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCES	75.7%
STUDENT LIFE EXPERIENCE	71.3%

\*Percentages reflect TTU graduates that selected very satisfied or satisfied.

## QUOTES FROM GRADUATES ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES

**"AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES  
AND HIGH-QUALITY FACULTY"**

**"ABILITY TO CREATE MY OWN RESEARCH  
PROJECT AND HAVING A PROFESSOR  
INSTRUCTOR WHO PROVIDED EXCELLENT  
ASSISTANCE AND GUIDANCE"**

**"ALL THE COURSES I TOOK WERE CURRENT WITH THE FIELD OF  
STUDY AT THAT TIME AND WERE PROGRESSIVE FOR THE COLLEGE.  
AT THE TIME IT WAS CHALLENGING BECAUSE IT WAS NOT THE NORM  
IN THE FIELD, BUT SHORTLY BECAME STANDARD PRACTICE. FUTURE  
TEACHER TRAININGS BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WERE THINGS I  
ALREADY HAD EXPERIENCED IN GRAD SCHOOL AT TEXAS TECH"**

**"COMMUNICATION WITH THE  
FACULTY, AND PREPARATION FOR  
EMPLOYMENT"**

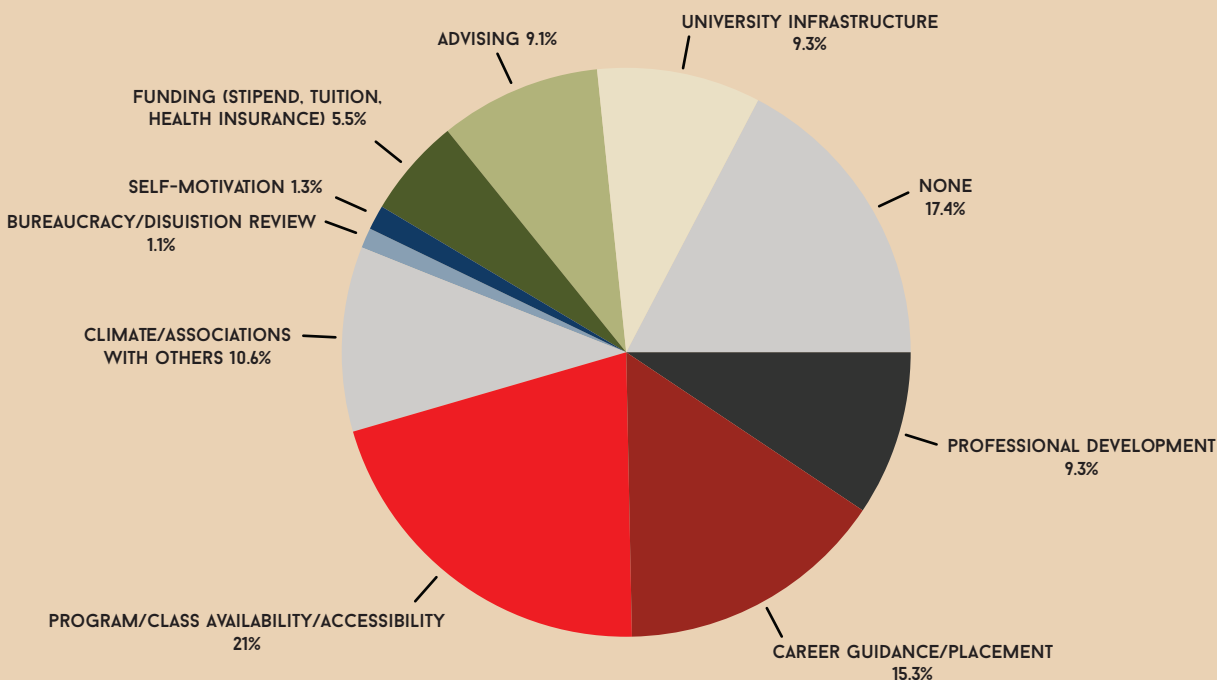
**"EXCELLENT MENTORSHIP  
FROM FACULTY ADVISORS"**

**"EXPERIENCE GAINED PARTICIPATING  
IN FELLOW STUDENT AND OTHER  
PROFESSORS' RESEARCH"**

**"FACULTY HAD REAL-WORLD BUSINESS  
EXPERIENCE, WHICH GAVE ME THE  
CONFIDENCE TO START MY OWN  
BUSINESS"**

**"I REALLY ENJOYED GETTING EXPERIENCE TEACHING MY OWN  
CLASSES. I DID NOT KNOW I WOULD BE TEACHING MY OWN  
CLASSES BEFORE I ARRIVED, BUT I ENJOYED IT. I HAD THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH AND STUDY ABROAD ONE SUMMER. THAT  
WAS AN AMAZING ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME CHANCE THAT I THANK  
THE GRADUATE PROGRAM FOR. I MET AMAZING FELLOW STUDENTS  
WHO HAVE BECOME LIFELONG FRIENDS"**

# WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR GRADUATE EXPERIENCE COULD HAVE BEEN ENHANCED?



- Graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt their graduate experience would have been improved by greater program/class availability/accessibility (21 percent), career guidance/placement (15.3 percent), and climate/associations with others (10.6 percent).
- Graduates with TTU graduate degrees also felt their graduate experience would have been enhanced by professional development (9.3 percent), improved university infrastructure (9.3 percent), improved advising (9.1 percent), enhanced stipends/financial assistance (5.5 percent), self-motivation (1.3 percent), and more effective communication/reduced bureaucracy (1.1 percent).
- 17.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees felt no improvement was needed.

Specific recommendations mentioned by graduates with TTU graduate degrees for enhancing the graduate experience include the following:

*“Understanding more about the industry outside of state and federal agencies that graduates can be employed in would have been helpful.”*

*“Career guidance and job assistance could be enhanced.”*

*“Stronger working projects with employers as part of applied learning/applied analytics in the education process.”*

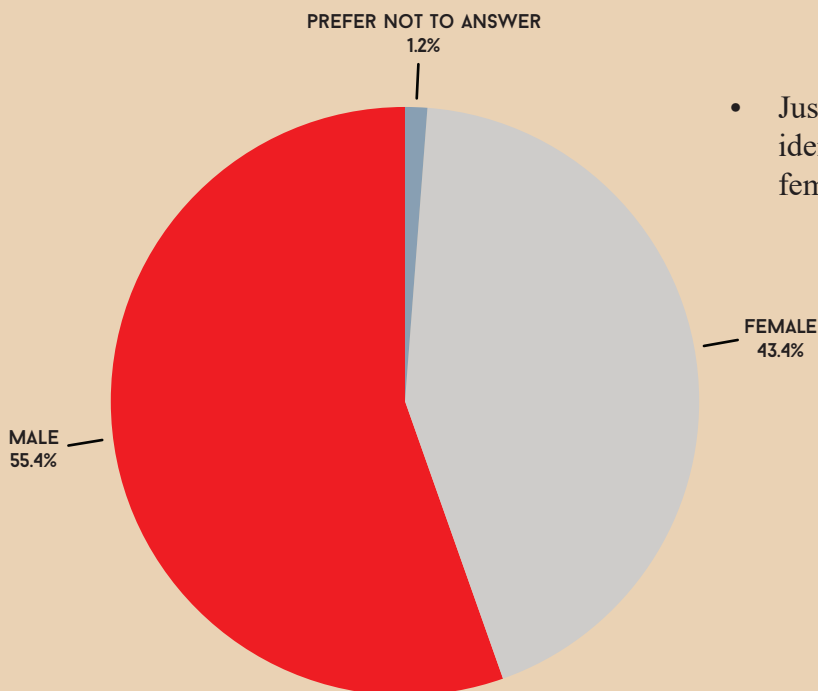
*“Better communication between my advisor and myself, and between the advisor and the department head.”*

*“It’s hard to know how to navigate the whole doctoral experience and whom to contact for certain things.”*

*“It would have been very helpful to have more financial support from the program. I was a graduate student and most PhD level programs across the country cover tuition and provide a stipend. The program at TTU required students to cover tuition.”*

*“More ‘real-world’/practical application of topics presented.”*

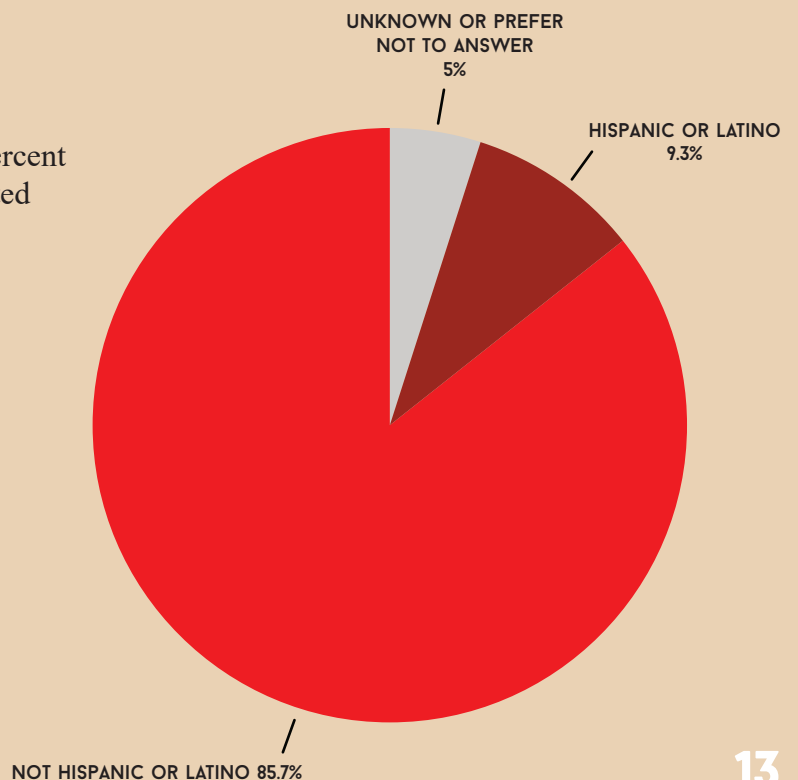
## WHAT IS YOUR SEX?



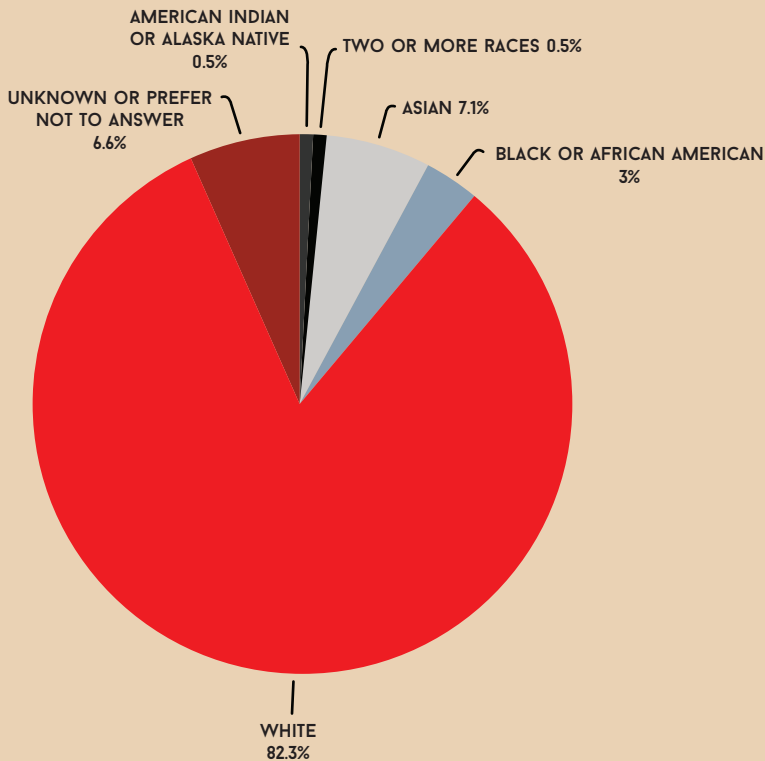
- Just over half of participants (55.4 percent) identified as male, while 43.4 percent identified as female and 1.2% preferred not to answer.

## WHAT IS YOUR ETHNICITY?

- A vast majority (85.7 percent) of participants selected Not Hispanic or Latino, whereas 9.3 percent selected Hispanic or Latino and 5 percent selected unknown or prefer not to answer.

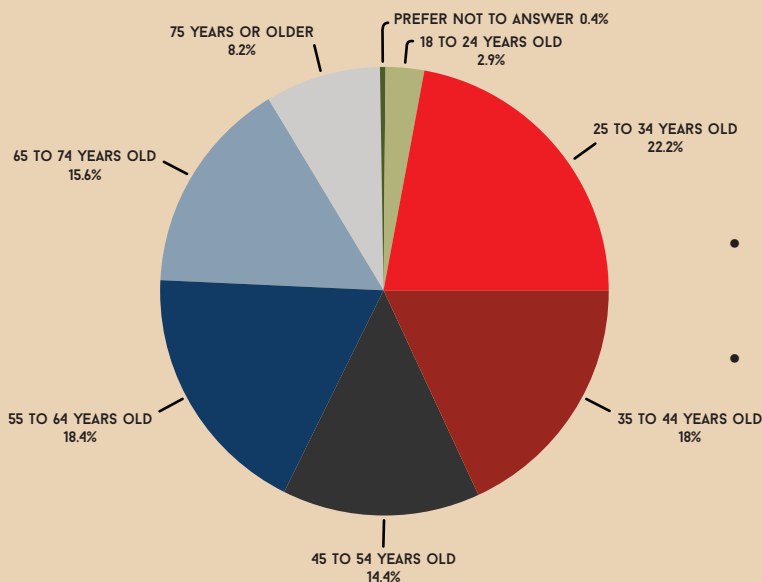


## WHAT IS YOUR RACE?



- Most participants (82.3 percent) selected white as their race with Asian (7.1 percent) and unknown or prefer not answer (6.7 percent) being the next most selected choices.
- A majority of participants (99.5 percent) selected one race, whereas 0.5 percent participants selected two or more races.

## WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



- Ages represented in the survey were fairly evenly distributed, with 25-34-year-olds (22.2 percent) being represented slightly more than other age ranges, including 55-64 years old (18.4 percent) and 35-44 years old (18 percent), 65-74 years old (15.6 percent), and 45-54 years old (14.4 percent).
- Less-represented age ranges included 75 years and older (8.2 percent) and 18-24 years old (2.9 percent).
- Only 0.4 percent preferred not to answer.







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