



SURVEY OF GRADUATE STUDENT ALUMNI

SPRING 2021

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 (73.6 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 (42.5 percent) or master's/professional (30.4 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 (11.7 percent), business (25.1 percent), government service (7.4 percent), healthcare (8.7 percent), military (0.9 percent), nonprofit (3.4 percent), self-employed (7.1 percent), volunteer activity such as Peace Corps or missionary work (0.2 percent) and other (5.1 percent).

- Most graduates with TTU graduate degrees (67.9 percent) were employed full-time; 19.8 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were not seeking employment or were retired.
- A majority of graduates (63 percent) with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Texas.
- 54.2 percent of graduates with TTU degrees reported being born in Texas.
- 58.5 percent of graduates with TTU degrees made up to \$100,000 per year, 27.4 percent made between \$100,001 and \$250,000, 4.2 percent made over \$250,000, and 10 percent preferring not to answer.
- A vast majority of graduates with TTU graduate degrees (85.4 percent) felt their graduate degrees were very closely or closely related to their current or most recent job.
- Over 87 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were very satisfied or satisfied with their overall program quality. 89.5 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the intellectual challenge of their program and 86.5 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of faculty.
- Most graduates with TTU graduate degrees (78 percent) were very satisfied (39.3 percent) or satisfied (38.7 percent) with the adequacy of facilities and equipment. The majority of graduates were also very satisfied or satisfied with IT services (54.5 percent), library or electronic resources (76.2 percent), and graduate student life experiences (63 percent). Only 40.5 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 better climate/associations with others (19.0 percent), better career guidance/placement (17.9 percent), an improved program/class availability/accessibility (11.7 percent), improved university infrastructure (11.3 percent) and better professional development (8.8 percent); 25.9 percent felt no improvement was needed.
- Survey demographics, provided at the end of the survey, show age range of participants were fairly evenly distributed with the 25-34 year old range being the large percentage of participants (22.2 percent). Just over half of participants (53.9 percent) were male. 98.8 participants identified with one race while 1.2 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.¹ Graduate degree holders bring increased value to the workforce and to society through their specialized knowledge and problem-solving ability.²

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 fifth 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 1949 and 2019 in five-year increments (e.g., 2019, 2014, 2009, etc.).

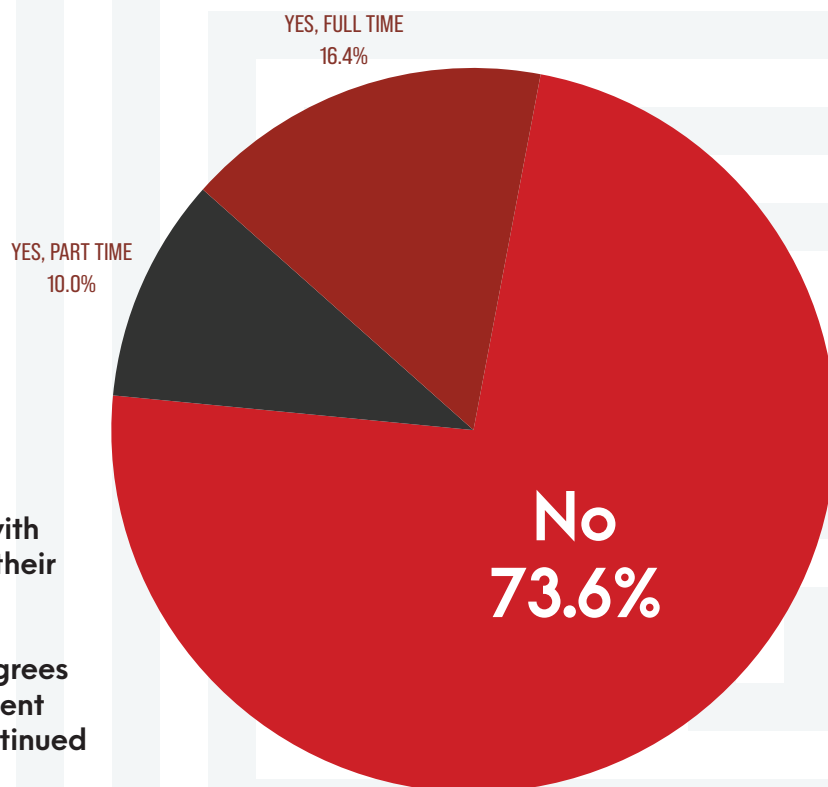
- 5,573 email were sent, and 167 were not delivered due to invalid addresses. 4,218 postcards were mailed to alumni for whom did not have an email address on file and for whom emails were returned due to invalid email address.
- Email requests were initially sent on September 15, 2020. Email reminders were sent on October 2, 2020; October 28, 2020; and November 10, 2020. Responses were collected until November 13, 2020.
- A total of 439 responses were received, yielding a response rate of about 8 percent.
- Of the total responses received, 115 were doctoral degree recipients and 324 were master's degree recipients.

¹ 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.

² 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 (73.6 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees did not continue their education.
- Of the graduates with TTU graduate degrees that continued their education, 16.4 percent continued full time and 10.0 percent continued part time.



WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS?

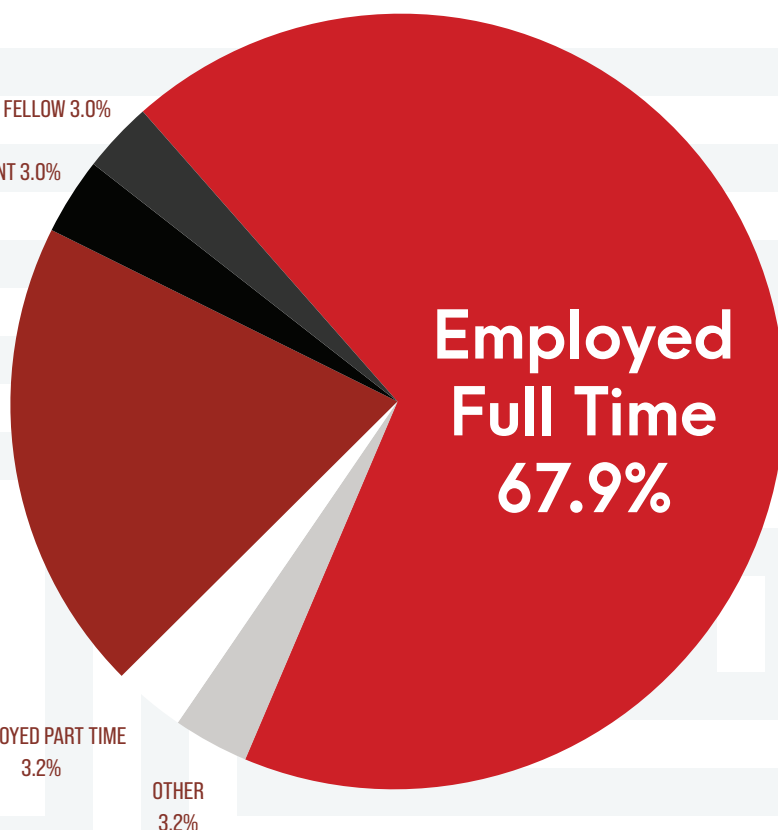
- A majority (67.9 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed full time.
- 19.8 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were not seeking employment, including retired individuals.

FURTHERING EDUCATION/POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW 3.0%
UNEMPLOYED, CURRENTLY SEEKING EMPLOYMENT 3.0%

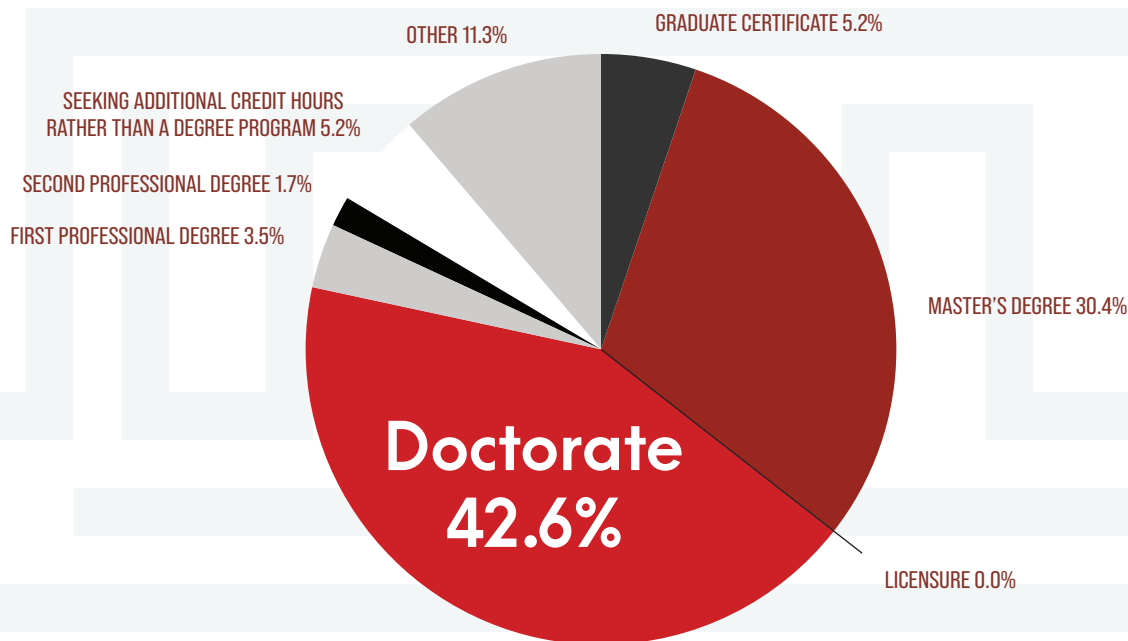
UNEMPLOYED, NOT CURRENTLY SEEKING
EMPLOYMENT (INCLUDES RETIRED) 19.8%

EMPLOYED PART TIME
3.2%

OTHER
3.2%



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



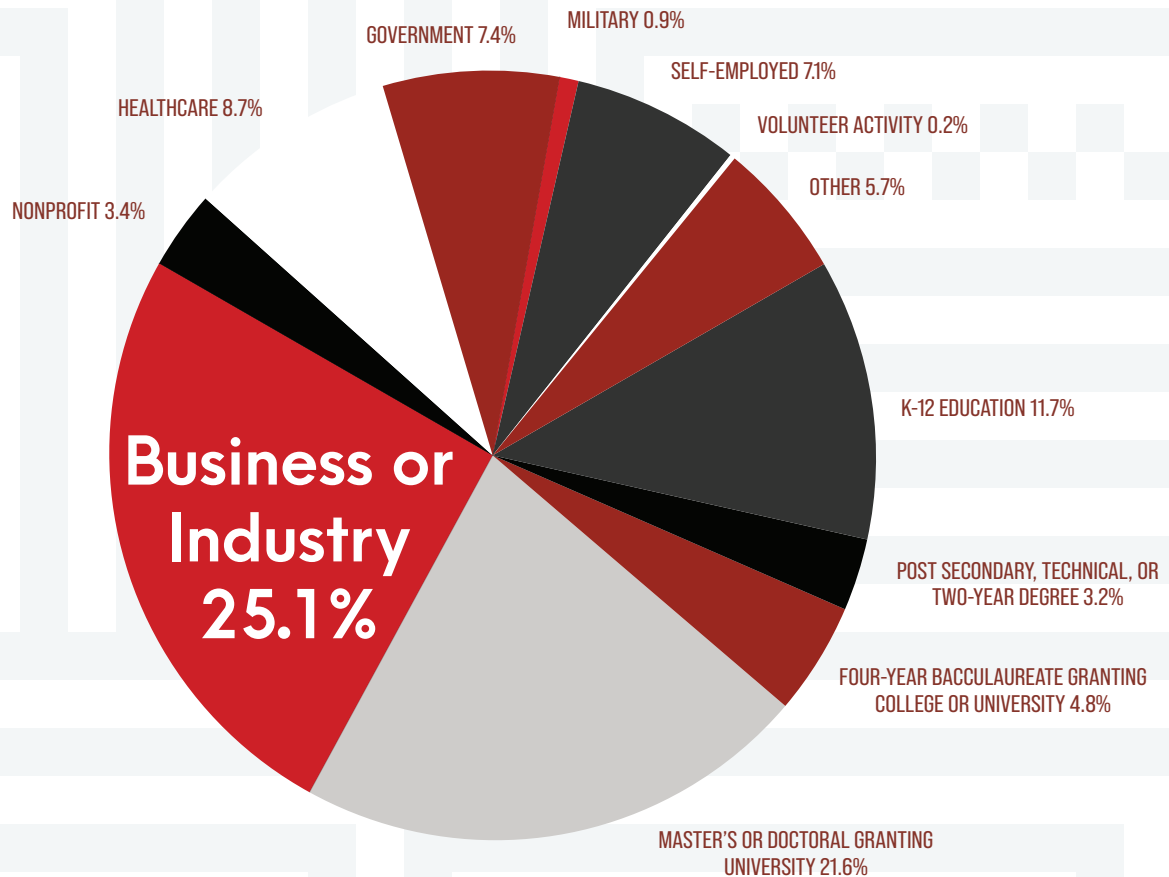
- Almost 43 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a doctorate; 30.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a master's degree; 5.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees who continued their education after leaving TTU obtained or were pursuing a first or second professional degree.
- 21.7 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 5.2 percent seeking a graduate certificate, 0.0 percent seeking some of licensure, 5.2 percent seeking additional credit hours, and 11.3 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:

*Abilene Christian University
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Baylor University School of Law
California State University
Colorado State University
Eastern New Mexico University
Harvard Business School
Harvard Kennedy School
King's College
Louisiana State University
Lamar University*

*Oklahoma State University
Princeton Theological Seminary
Seoul National University
Southern Methodist University
Syracuse University
Texas A&M University
University of North Texas
University of Texas
University of Florida
University of Mississippi
University of South Carolina
Villanova University*

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 21.6 percent at research universities, 4.8 percent at four-year colleges and 3.2 percent at two-year college/technical schools.
- A majority (62.1 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other sectors, including preK-12 education (11.7 percent), business (25.1 percent), government (7.4 percent), healthcare (8.7 percent), military (0.9 percent), nonprofit (3.4 percent), volunteer activity (0.2 percent) and other (5.7 percent).
- 7.1 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were self-employed.
- Individuals with TTU graduate degrees obtained employment at the following entities:

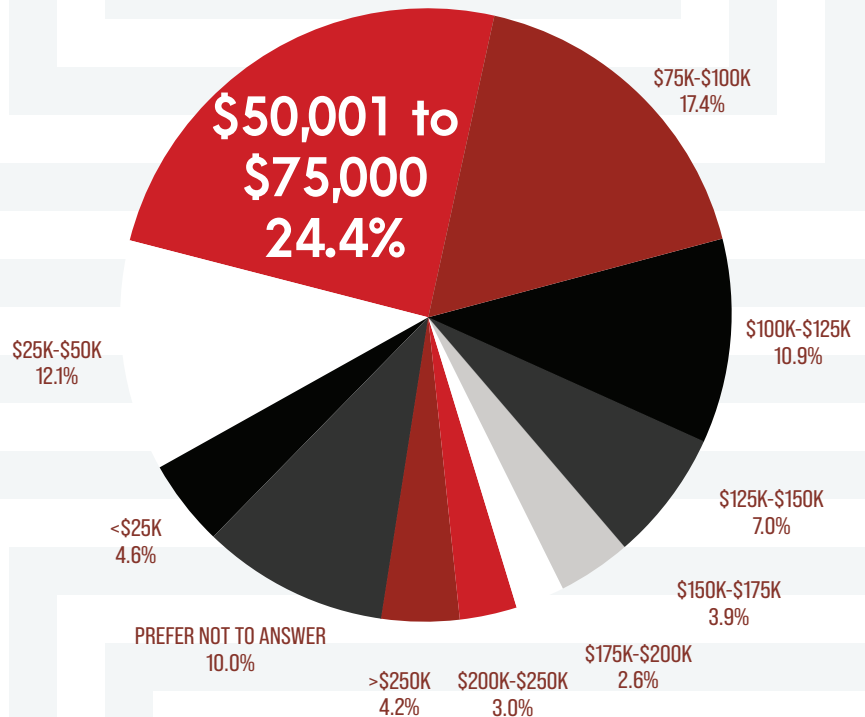
American Momentum Bank
 Baker Hughes
 BASF
 Bayer Crop Science
 Baylor Scott & White Health
 Catanich Professional Services, LLC.
 Centene
 Chevron Phillips Chemical Co.
 Cisco Systems
 Citigroup
 Defense Contract Management Agency

Dell
 Deloitte
 Department of Defense
 FDA
 Frito-Lay
 Goldman Sachs
 Maple Leaf Foods Inc
 McGraw Hill Publishing
 Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
 Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, Inc.
 ProCon Engineering

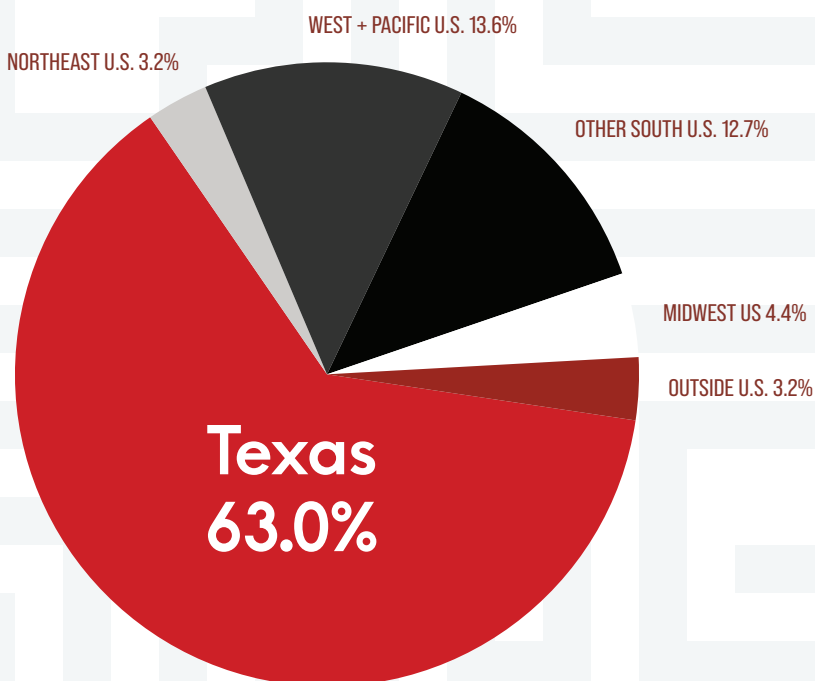
Sandia National Laboratories
 Texas Instruments
 The Boeing Company
 Tiffany & Co.
 US Air Force
 US Army
 US Navy
 United Airlines
 United States Department of Agriculture
 Walt Disney Company

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

- A majority (58.5 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made up to \$100,000 per year.
- 16.5 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made between \$100,001 and \$250,000.
- 4.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees made over \$250,000.
- 10.0 percent preferred not to answer.

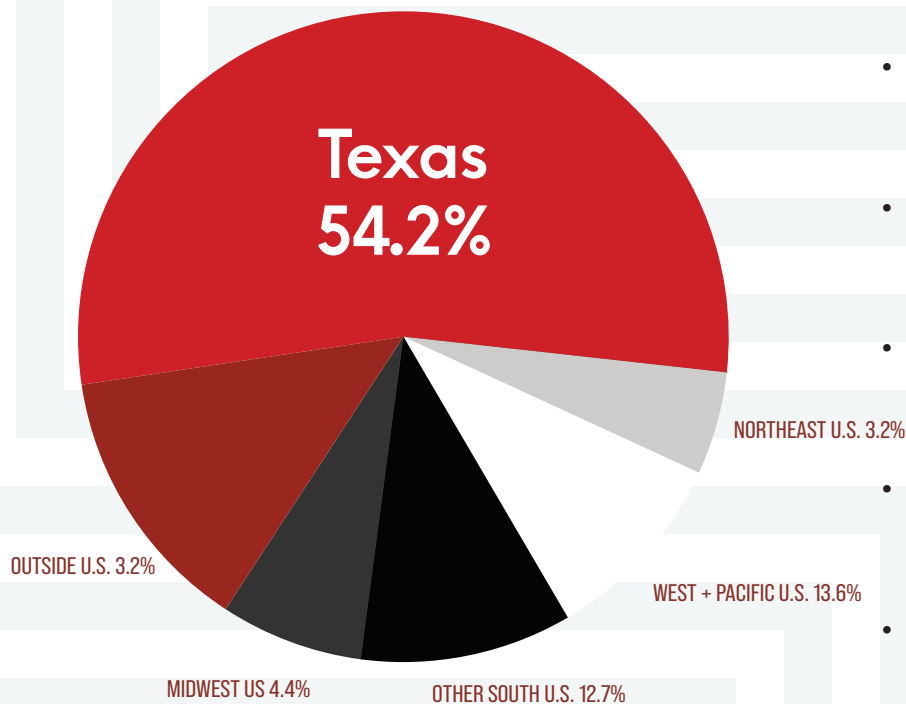


WHAT IS THE LOCATION OF YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYER?



- A majority (63.0 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Texas.
- 3.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in Northeast U.S. states.
- 13.6 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.
- 4.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in other Midwest states.
- 96.8 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were employed in the U.S.

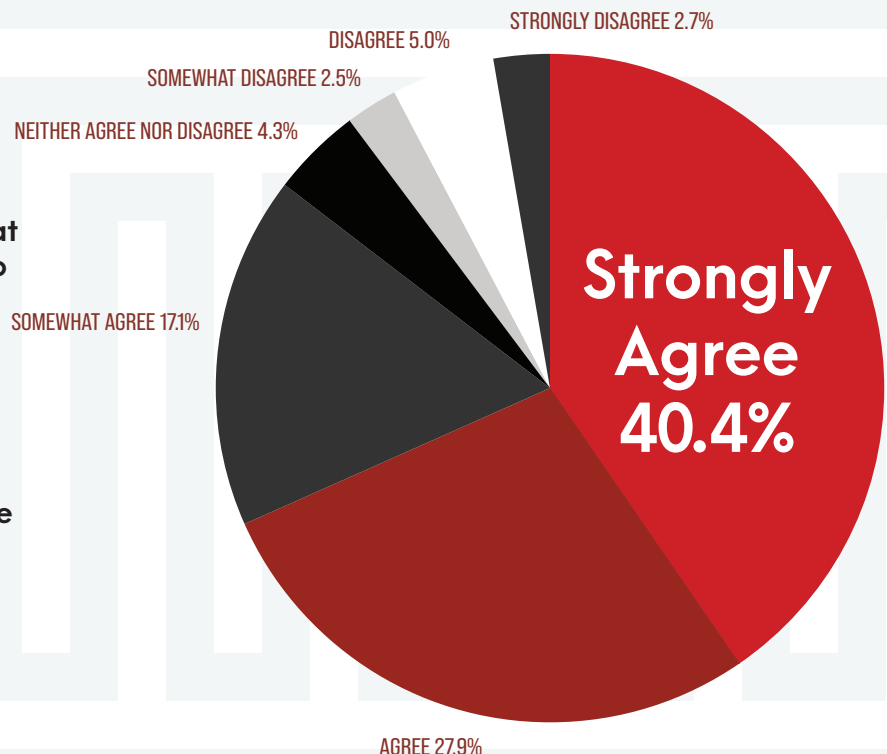
WHAT IS YOUR PLACE OF BIRTH?



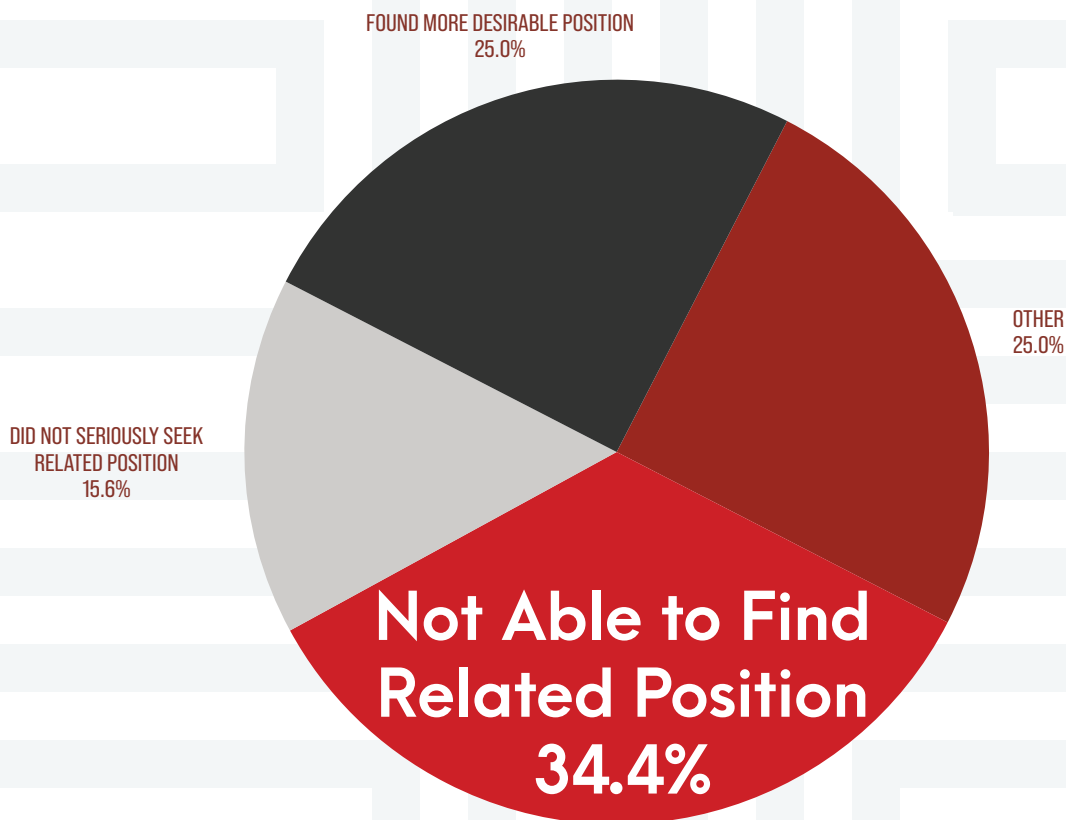
- A majority (54.2 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in Texas.
- 5.1 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in Northeast U.S. states.
- 9.7 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in West U.S. and Pacific states.
- 10.4 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in other Southern U.S. states.
- 7.1 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees were born in other Midwest states.

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

- A vast majority (85.4 percent) of graduates with TTU graduate degrees strongly agreed (40.4 percent), agreed (27.9 percent), or somewhat agreed (17.1 percent) that their degrees were closely related to their current or most recent job.
- Only 10.2 percent of graduates with TTU graduate degrees somewhat disagreed (2.5 percent), disagreed (5.0 percent), or strongly disagreed (2.7 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 10.2 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," 34.4 percent answered "not able to find a position related to my graduate education" and 15.6 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."

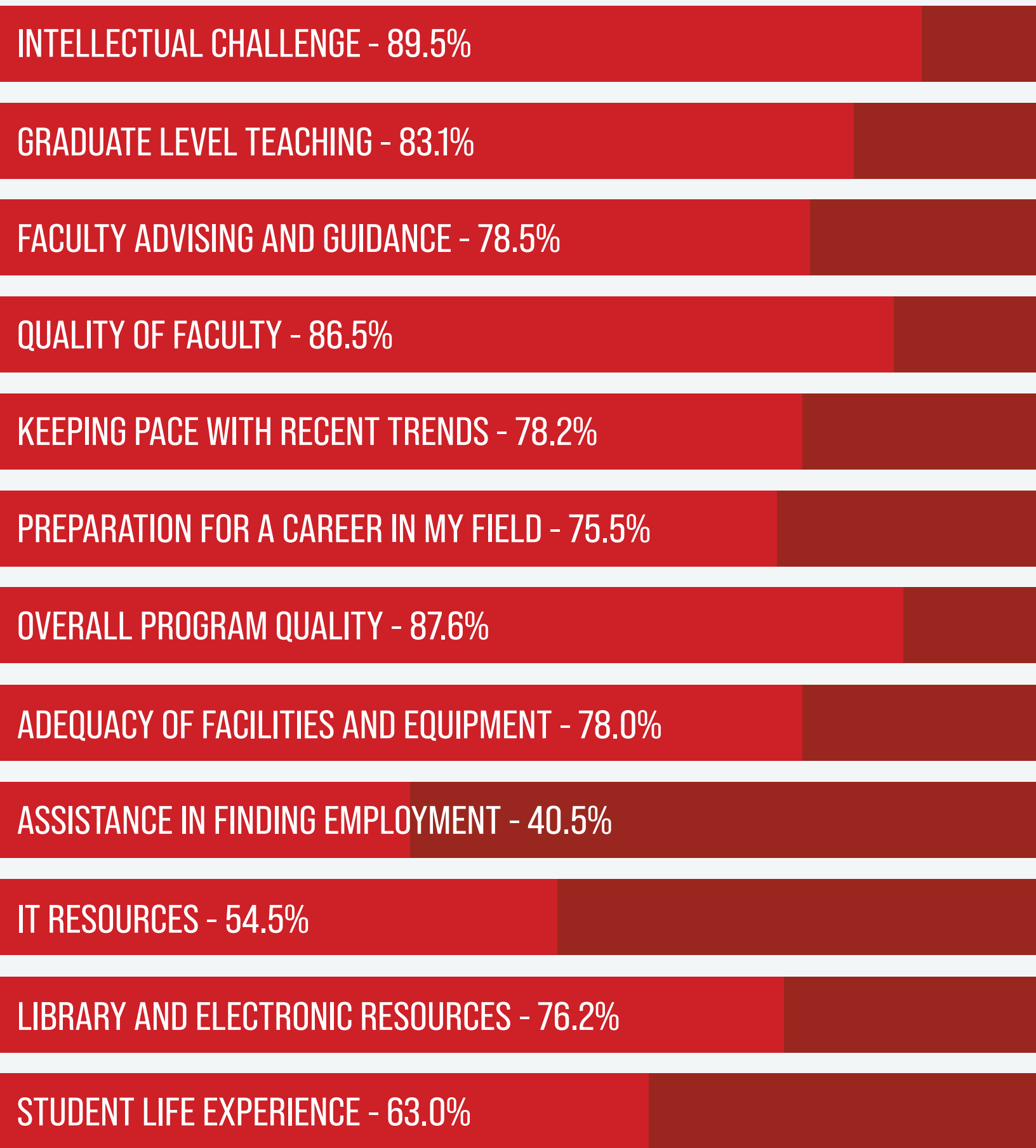
"Personal circumstances did not allow me to become an academic."

"Post retirement job."

"I have been a stay-home parent."

"I started in the oil industry. My position was related directly to my degree. I am now involved in private investments that are not directly related to my degree."

HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM? PERCENTAGES REFLECT THOSE WHO RESPONDED VERY SATISFIED OR SATISFIED.



EXPERIENCES MENTIONED BY GRADUATES WITH TTU GRADUATE DEGREES

“Doing independent research and then preparing my Master’s thesis, with guidance from faculty, was very valuable in preparing me for a career that involves similar tasks - research, detailed analysis, and report preparation..”

“As someone who was working full time and attending virtually, the ability to complete school work in my off time..”

“Top-notch professors.”

“Exposure to the professional scientific and academic arenas of agriculture. I was prepared to engage professionally after graduation.”

“Faculty are very friendly and hospitable, especially my advisor. All classes during graduate school were rather productive; whenever I had a question in class, I asked without hesitation and learned the answer of my question.”

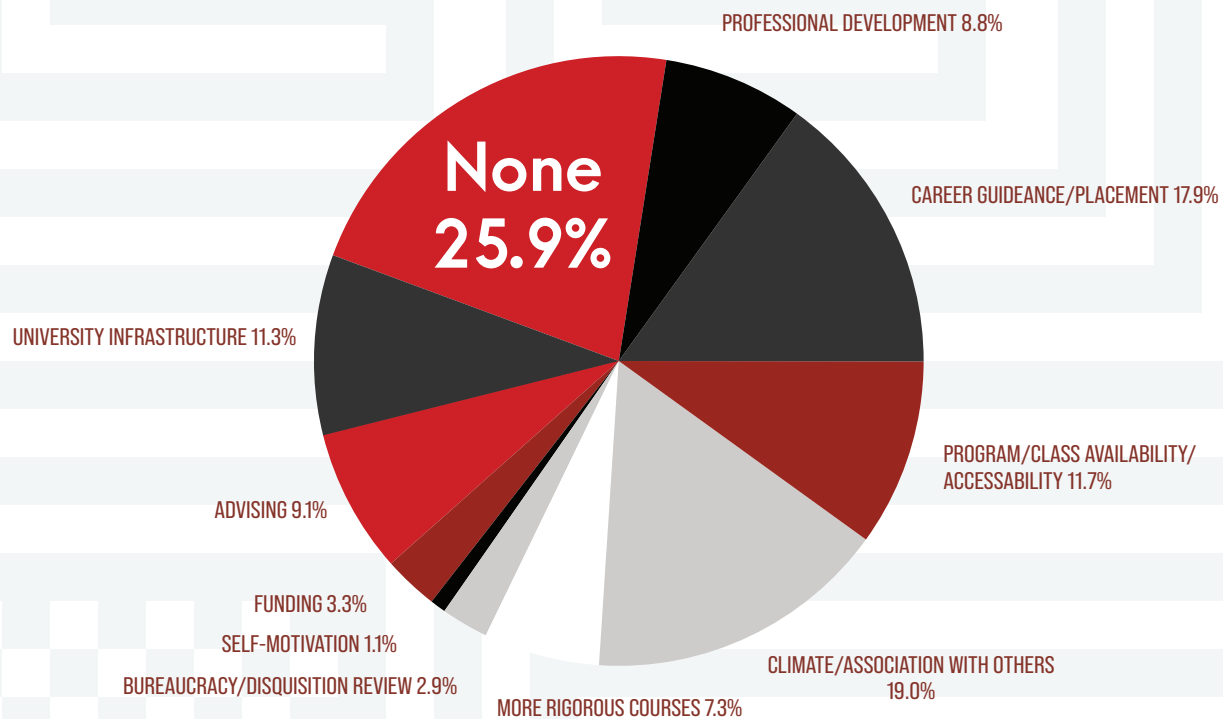
“Freedom to pursue my interests in research within the boundaries of my advisor.”

“I enjoyed the flexibility of the online program and I enjoyed the interaction with other students using the online forums. I also found most of the professors to be very helpful and fun to get to know.”

“Facilities provided for graduate students were good.”

“The most positive aspect of my graduate program was the skills and experience that I acquired that enabled me to drive my career forward immediately.”

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 climate/associations with others (19.0 percent), career guidance/placement (17.9 percent), program/class availability/accessibility (11.7 percent) and improved university infrastructure (11.3 percent).
- Graduates with TTU graduate degrees also felt their graduate experience would have been improved by professional development (8.8 percent), improved advising (9.1 percent), more rigorous courses (7.3 percent), enhanced stipends/ financial assistance (2.3 percent), self-motivation (1.1 percent), and more effective communication/reduced bureaucracy (2.9 percent).
- 25.9 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:

"Although it was online, I believe there were ways to make me feel more a part of the TTU family. There were several times I was forgotten."

"Faculty were for the most part excellent. I believe the rigors could be strengthened."

"Have better advising for students."

"I expected more contact with my faculty advisor; in fact, I don't recall meeting with her more than twice during my program."

"I wish I had been offered more career counseling and assistance with planning for the next phase of my life."

"I would prefer if we could add more research for graduate students instead of more courses."

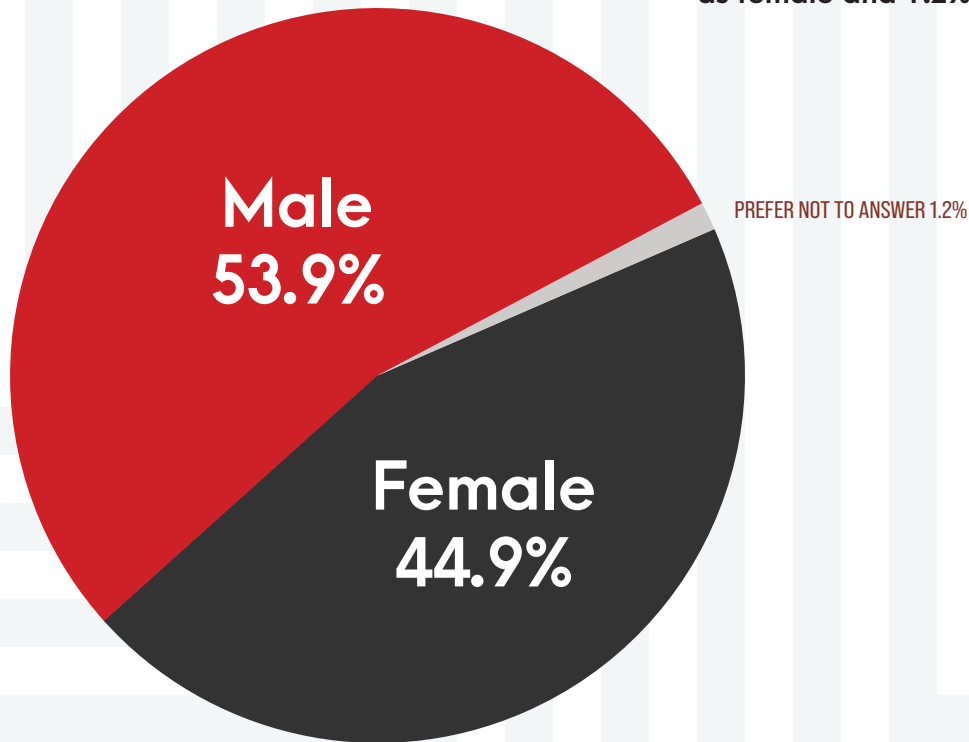
"Making more online options available."

"Increase the amount of teaching lab space to better serve the growing population of students."

"More resources preparing graduate students for not finding a career in education, more transparency about the limited number of positions available at the PhD and faculty level."

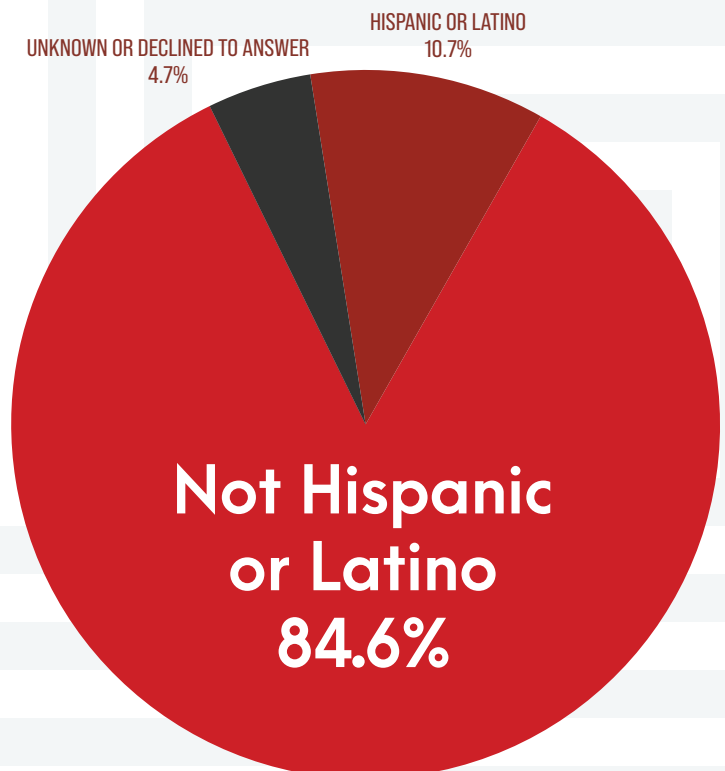
WHAT IS YOUR SEX?

- Just over half of participants (53.9 percent) identified as male, while 44.9 percent identified as female and 1.2% preferred not to answer.

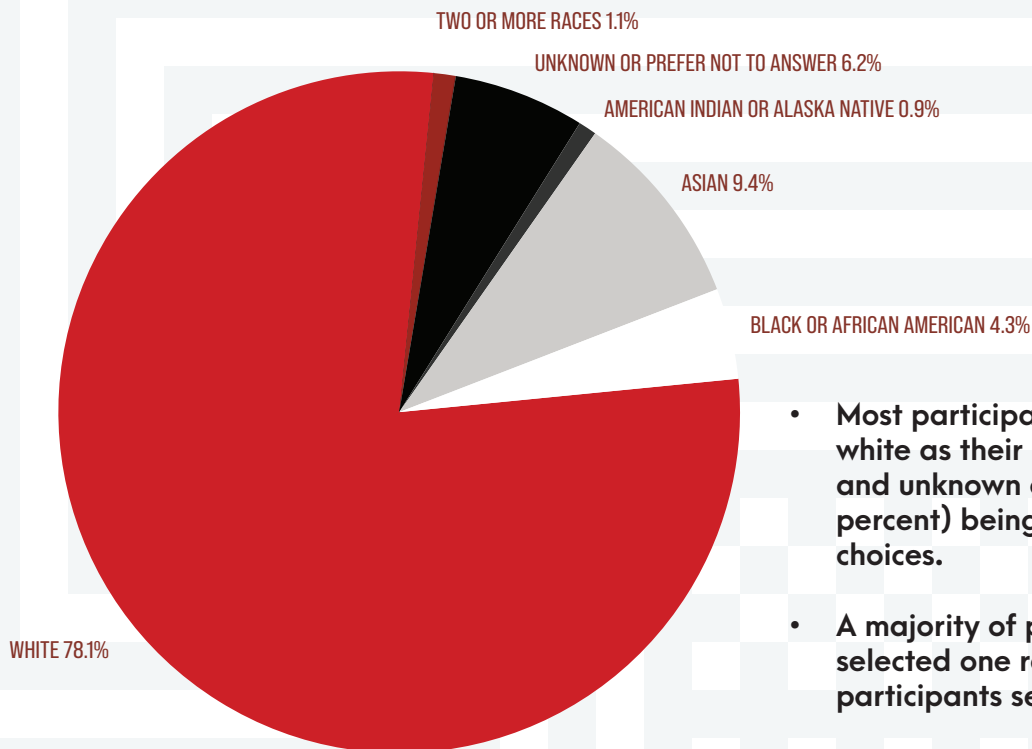


WHAT IS YOUR ETHNICITY?

- A vast majority (84.6 percent) of participants selected Not Hispanic or Latino, whereas 10.7 percent selected Hispanic or Latino and 4.7 percent selected unknown or prefer not to answer.

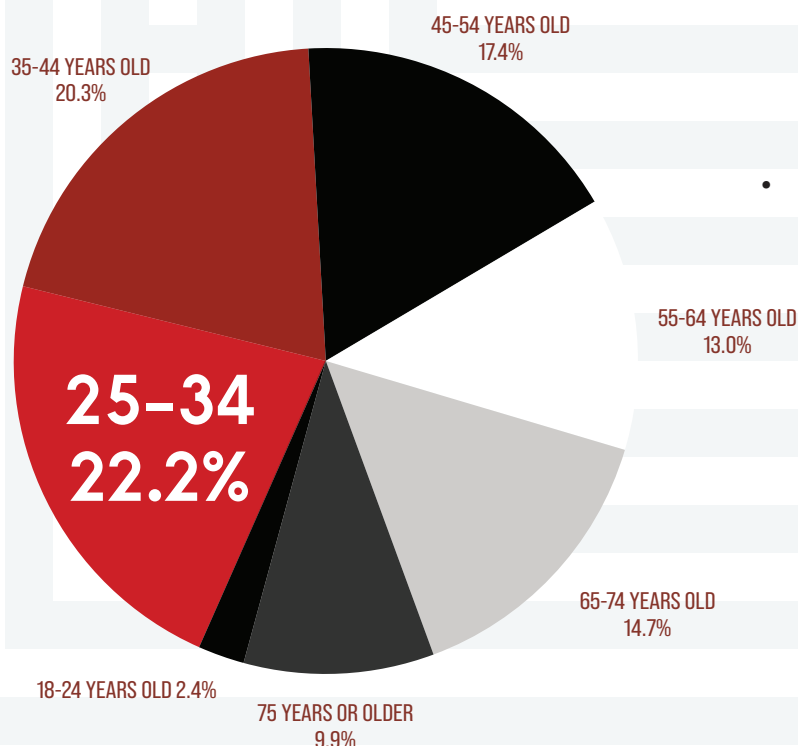


WHAT IS YOUR RACE?



- Most participants (78.1 percent) selected white as their race with Asian (9.4 percent) and unknown or prefer not to answer (6.2 percent) being the next most selected choices.
- A majority of participants (98.8 percent) selected one race, whereas 1.2 percent of participants selected two or more races.

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



- Ages represented by survey were fairly even with 22.2 percent being 25-34 year old being represented slightly more than other age ranges including 35-44 years old (20.3 percent) and 45-54 years old (17.4 percent), 65-74 years old (14.7 percent), and 55-64 years old (13.0 percent).
- Less-represented age ranges included 75 years and older (9.9 percent) and 18-24 years old (2.4 percent).





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