

In 2024-2025, we streamlined the HEDS Alumni Survey for Advance Degree Students to make it shorter and reduce drop-out. The survey went from 38 to 30 questions, and the time to take it reduced from ~15 minutes to ~10 minutes. In the following pages, we outline the changes from the original survey to the 2024-2025 survey.



2023–2024 HEDS Advanced Degree Alumni Survey

This is a PDF representation of the online version of the survey. It includes all questions and response options, as well as notes (in italics) about how questions will display to survey takers.

Welcome to the Graduate Program Alumni Survey. Thanks for agreeing to participate!

This survey asks about the quality and impact of your experiences in graduate school. The survey asks you to evaluate the long-term impact of your graduate education on your critical thinking, problem-solving, and other important skills. Finally, the survey asks about employment, satisfaction with your graduate program, and the extent of your debt from graduate school.

Your survey results will be shared with a handful of people at [Institution Name] who work to help students succeed and improve teaching and learning. Anyone who has access to your responses is legally obligated to keep them confidential.

By clicking “Next,” you acknowledge that you have read and considered the above information and agree to participate in the survey. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts. We appreciate it.

[Alumni see a “Next” button here.]

1. Please indicate which of the following describes your current PRIMARY activity:

- ☐ Employed, full time
- ☐ Employed, part time
- ☐ Employed and attending graduate or professional school
- ☐ Graduate or professional school, full time
- ☐ Graduate or professional school, part time
- ☐ Military service
- ☐ Volunteer or national service (Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, etc.)
- ☐ Not employed, but seeking employment, admission to graduate school, or other opportunity
- ☐ Not employed, and not seeking employment or admission to graduate school (caring for family, traveling, volunteering, etc.)
- ☐ Retired



2024–2025 HEDS Advanced Degree Alumni Survey

This is a PDF representation of the online version of the survey. It includes all questions and response options, as well as notes (in italics) about how questions will display to survey takers.

Welcome to the Advanced Degree Alumni Survey. Thanks for agreeing to participate!

This survey asks about the quality and impact of your educational experiences in graduate school at [Institution Name]. The survey asks you to evaluate the long-term impact of your graduate education on your critical thinking, problem-solving, and other important skills. Finally, the survey asks about employment, satisfaction with your graduate program, and the extent of your debt from graduate school.

Your survey results will be shared with a handful of people at [Institution Name] who work to help students succeed and improve teaching and learning. Anyone who has access to your responses is legally obligated to keep them confidential.

The [Institution Name] leader(s) of this survey effort [is/are] [name(s)], and [he/she/they] can be reached at [email address(es)] and/or phone number(s)].

By clicking “Next,” you acknowledge that you have read and considered the above information and agree to participate in the survey. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts. We appreciate it.

[Alumni see a “Next” button here.]

1. Please indicate which of the following describes your current PRIMARY activity:

- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Graduate or professional school
- ☐ Military service
- ☐ Volunteer or national service (Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, etc.)
- ☐ Not employed, but seeking employment, admission to graduate school, or other opportunity
- ☐ Not employed, and not seeking employment or admission to graduate school (caring for family, traveling, volunteering, etc.)
- ☐ Retired

Q1

- The first three “Employed” options were collapsed into a single option.
- The two “Graduate or professional school” options were collapsed into a single option.

Questions 2-18 (not shown) are unchanged.

~~Q19 only appears to alumni who chose a primary activity of "Graduate or professional school" (either full-time or part-time), "Military service," or "Volunteer or national service" in Q1 or skipped it entirely.~~

~~19. Are you currently employed?~~

- ~~☐ Yes~~
- ~~☐ No~~

~~20. How many paying jobs have you had since you earned your graduate degree from this institution?~~

~~Alumni will select from a drop-down menu that lists: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more.~~

~~Q21 only appears to alumni who selected no paying jobs since earning their degree in Q20. They will then skip to Q26.~~

~~21. In the previous question, you indicated you have not had a paying job since earning your graduate degree. Which of the following best describes your situation?~~

- ~~☐ I have not sought a paying job.~~
- ~~☐ I have sought a paying job, but I have not yet found one.~~

~~Q22 appears to alumni who indicate in Q20 that they have had one or more paying jobs since earning their degree. It will also appear, with two additional response options, to those who haven't indicated yet if they've had a paying job since earning their degree. (i.e. They skipped or chose "Graduate or professional school," "Military service," or "Volunteer or national service" in Q1, then skipped both Q19 and Q20.)~~

22. At what point did you secure your first paying job after earning your graduate degree from this institution?

- ☐ The first job I had after earning my degree is the same job I had before enrolling.
- ☐ While enrolled as a graduate student.
- ☐ During the first six months after earning my graduate degree.
- ☐ During the second six months after earning my graduate degree.
- ☐ More than a year after earning my graduate degree.

~~These two response options only appear to alumni who have not yet indicated if they have had a paying job since earning their degree.~~

- ~~☐ I have not sought a paying job.~~
- ~~☐ I have sought a paying job, but I have not yet found one.~~

~~Alumni who select "I have not sought a paying job" or "I have sought a paying job, but I have not yet found one" in Q22 skip to Q26.~~

~~Q23 appears to alumni who indicate in Q20 that they have had multiple paying jobs since earning their degree and to those who indicated in Q19 that they are not currently employed and then select one or more paying jobs in Q20. It will also appear to those who haven't indicated yet if they've had a paying job since earning their degree. Response options are shown in randomized order.~~

23. Please indicate whether each of the following descriptions applied to your FIRST paying job after you earned your graduate degree from this institution. (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was related to my graduate degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid enough to support my desired lifestyle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Required me to use skills I gained from my graduate program | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid health insurance benefits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was related to my desired career path | <input type="checkbox"/> Had opportunity for upward mobility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was work I found meaningful | <input type="checkbox"/> Continued until I wished to leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allowed me to continue to grow and learn | <input type="checkbox"/> Was in a desirable location |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, was a satisfying job |

Q19-Q21 have been removed. These questions attempted to learn if an alum was employed even if they didn't select that as their primary activity in Q1.

We now use Q19 (formerly Q22) to ask when alumni had their first paying job after earning their graduate degree.

All respondents now see this question.

19. At what point did you secure your first paying job after earning your graduate degree from [Institution Name]?

- ☐ The first job I had after earning my degree is the same job I had before enrolling.
- ☐ While enrolled as a graduate student.
- ☐ During the first six months after earning my graduate degree.
- ☐ During the second six months after earning my graduate degree.
- ☐ More than a year after earning my graduate degree.
- ☐ I have not had a paying job since earning my graduate degree.

Added a new option: I have not had a paying job since earning my graduate degree.

Q24 and Q25 appear to alumni who either indicated that they are currently employed or haven't confirmed that they are not currently employed (i.e., They skipped or chose "Graduate or professional school," "Military service," or "Volunteer or national service" in Q1, then skipped Q19.)

24. What is your **CURRENT** primary job? (Choose one)

Art, Design, and Entertainment

- ☐ Architect
- ☐ Artist
- ☐ Entertainer
- ☐ Gallery worker
- ☐ Graphic designer
- ☐ Interior designer
- ☐ Museum curator
- ☐ Music/film industry
- ☐ Photographer
- ☐ Other Art, Design, and Entertainment

Communications and Media

- ☐ Broadcasting
- ☐ Editor
- ☐ Journalist
- ☐ Media production
- ☐ Public relations
- ☐ Publisher
- ☐ Writer
- ☐ Other Communications and Media

Community and Social Service

- ☐ Clergy
- ☐ Community organizer
- ☐ Philanthropy or nonprofit worker
- ☐ Social activist
- ☐ Social work
- ☐ Other Community and Social Service

Education and Library

- ☐ Librarian or archivist
- ☐ Preschool/elementary/middle school/high school/secondary administration
- ☐ Preschool/elementary/middle school/high school/secondary teacher
- ☐ Postsecondary administration/staff
- ☐ Postsecondary teacher or researcher
- ☐ School counselor
- ☐ Other Education and Library

Health Care

- ☐ Clinical psychology/psychiatry
- ☐ Dentist
- ☐ Dietician
- ☐ Nurse
- ☐ Optometrist
- ☐ Pharmacist
- ☐ Physical/occupational/speech therapy
- ☐ Physician
- ☐ Veterinarian
- ☐ Other Health Care

Law and Government

- ☐ Diplomat
- ☐ Foreign service
- ☐ Government worker
- ☐ International relations
- ☐ Judge
- ☐ Lawyer
- ☐ Other legal services
- ☐ Politics
- ☐ Public policy
- ☐ Other Law and Government

Management, Business, and Financial

- ☐ Accounting
- ☐ Actuary
- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Executive
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Human resources
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Management
- ☐ Real estate
- ☐ Recruiting
- ☐ Retail services
- ☐ Sales
- ☐ Other Management, Business, and Financial

Natural Resources

- ☐ Agricultural worker
- ☐ Conservationist
- ☐ Environmental scientist
- ☐ Other Natural Resources

Protection Services

- ☐ Law enforcement officer
- ☐ Military occupations
- ☐ Other Protection Services

Science, Technology, and Engineering

- ☐ Computer programmer/analyst
- ☐ Engineer
- ☐ Information systems
- ☐ Lab technician
- ☐ Scientific researcher
- ☐ Other Science, Technology, and Engineering

Service and Recreational

- ☐ Chef
- ☐ Food service industry
- ☐ Hospitality
- ☐ Sports and recreation
- ☐ Travel/tourism
- ☐ Other Service and Recreational

Other

- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ I am not currently employed

This question has now been changed to "In what area is your CURRENT primary job?"

We now only ask about the **broad job categories** and NOT the specific options under each.

Q20 and Q21 appear only to alumni who chose "Employed," "Military Service," or "Volunteer or national service" in Q1.

20. In what area is your **CURRENT** primary job? (Choose one)

- ☐ Art, Design, and Entertainment
- ☐ Communications and Media
- ☐ Community and Social Service
- ☐ Education and Library
- ☐ Health Care
- ☐ Law and Government
- ☐ Management, Business, and Financial
- ☐ Natural Resources
- ☐ Protection Services (including military occupations)
- ☐ Science, Technology, and Engineering
- ☐ Service and Recreational
- ☐ Other: _____

Please note, this question now *only* appears to those who confirmed that they were employed in some manner in Q1. Previously, respondents who had not confirmed their employment saw it as well.

Response options in Q25 are shown in randomized order.

25. Please indicate whether each of the following descriptions applies to your CURRENT job. (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Relates to my graduate degree
- ☐ Required me to use skills I gained from my graduate program
- ☐ Is related to my desired career path
- ☐ Is work I find meaningful
- ☐ Allows me to continue to grow and learn
- ☐ Pays enough to support my desired lifestyle
- ☐ Pays health insurance benefits
- ☐ Has opportunity for upward mobility
- ☐ Is likely to continue until I wish to leave
- ☐ Is in a desirable location
- ☐ Overall, is a satisfying job

~~This response option only appears to those who have not yet confirmed whether or not they are currently employed.~~

~~☐ I am not currently employed~~

26. About how often do you currently engage in community service or volunteer work for organizations?

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Several times a year
- ☐ Once or twice a year
- ☐ Less than once a year

~~27. If you would like to elaborate on any of your responses on this survey or share other information about any aspect of your experience as a graduate student at this institution, please use the space below.~~

Response
option
removed.

Demographic Information

In the next section, we ask questions about your identity. You may choose not to respond to any of these questions. We use responses to these questions to develop a picture of how an individual's background and identity are related to their experiences.

28. What kind of degree or certificate did you receive from this institution?

- ☐ Post-Baccalaureate certificate
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Post-Master's certificate
- ☐ Doctoral degree (e.g., DBA, DDS, DO, DVM, EdD, JD, MD, PhD, PharmD, PsyD)
- ☐ Other degree or certificate: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

29. Which of the following best describes your primary area of study? (Choose one)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture and Environmental Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics, Statistics, and Data Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical and Health Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Sciences | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion and Theology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications, Media, and Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Science and Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service Professions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Other field of study: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humanities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law and Legal Professions | |

Response options in Q21 are shown in randomized order.

21. Please indicate whether each of the following descriptions applies to your CURRENT job. (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Relates to my graduate degree
- ☐ Required me to use skills I gained from my graduate program
- ☐ Is related to my desired career path
- ☐ Is work I find meaningful
- ☐ Allows me to continue to grow and learn
- ☐ Pays enough to support my desired lifestyle
- ☐ Pays health insurance benefits
- ☐ Has opportunity for upward mobility
- ☐ Is likely to continue until I wish to leave
- ☐ Is in a desirable location
- ☐ Overall, is a satisfying job

22. About how often do you currently engage in community service or volunteer work for organizations?

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Several times a year
- ☐ Once or twice a year
- ☐ Less than once a year

Demographic Information

In the next section, we ask questions about your identity. You may choose not to respond to any of these questions. We use responses to these questions to develop a picture of how an individual's background and identity are related to their experiences.

23. What kind of degree or certificate did you receive from [Institution Name]?

- ☐ Post-Baccalaureate certificate
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Post-Master's certificate
- ☐ Doctoral degree (e.g., DBA, DDS, DO, DVM, EdD, JD, MD, PhD, PharmD, PsyD)
- ☐ Other degree or certificate: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

24. Which of the following best describes your primary area of study? (Choose one)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture and Environmental Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics, Statistics, and Data Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical and Health Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Sciences | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion and Theology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications, Media, and Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Science and Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service Professions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Other field of study: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humanities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law and Legal Professions | |

30. What is your gender?

- ☐ Man
☐ Woman
☐ Nonbinary, please self describe: _____
☐ Prefer not to respond

31. Are you transgender?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to respond

Added an "Unsure" response option to Transgender question.

25. What is your gender?

- ☐ Man
☐ Woman
☐ Nonbinary, please self describe: _____
☐ Prefer not to respond

26. Are you transgender?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure
☐ Prefer not to respond

32. What was your citizenship status during the time you were enrolled as a graduate student?

- ☐ U.S. citizen
☐ U.S. permanent resident but not a U.S. citizen
☐ Not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
☐ Prefer not to respond

27. What was your citizenship status during the time you were enrolled as a graduate student?

- ☐ U.S. citizen
☐ U.S. permanent resident but not a U.S. citizen
☐ Not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
☐ Prefer not to respond

33. Are you Hispanic or Latino/a?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to respond

34. Please indicate the race or races with which you identify. (Choose one or more)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
☐ White
☐ Prefer not to respond

Q33 & Q34 have been combined and expanded into a single race/ethnicity question.

28. What is your race and/or ethnicity? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
For example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, Aztec, Maya, etc.
☐ Asian
For example, Chinese, Asian Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Pakistani, Hmong, Afghan, etc.
☐ Black or African American
For example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, Trinidadian and Tobagonian, Ghanaian, Congolese, etc.
☐ Hispanic or Latino
For example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Cuban, Dominican, Guatemalan, Colombian, Honduran, Spaniard, etc.
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
For example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Iraqi, Israeli, Moroccan, Yemeni, Kurdish, etc.
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
For example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, Chuukese, Palauan, Tahitian, etc.
☐ White
For example, English, German, Irish, Italian, Polish, Scottish, French, Swedish, Norwegian, etc.
☐ Some other race or ethnicity: _____
☐ Prefer not to respond

35. What is your current age?

- ☐ Younger than 25
☐ 25–34
☐ 35–44
☐ 45–54
☐ 55–64
☐ 65–74
☐ 75–84
☐ 85 or older
☐ Prefer not to respond

We removed the demographic questions about age (Q35), marital status (Q37), and dependents (Q38) and...

Added a NEW "Parental Education" question.

29. What is the highest level of education completed by either of your parents or those who raised you?

- ☐ Did not finish high school
☐ High school diploma or GED
☐ Attended college but did not complete degree
☐ Associate's degree (AA, AS, etc.)
☐ Bachelor's degree (BA, BS, etc.)
☐ Master's degree (MA, MBA, MS, etc.)
☐ Doctoral or professional degree (PhD, JD, MD, etc.)
☐ Prefer not to respond

36. Which of the following most accurately describes your current personal annual income before taxes? Please report your personal income, not your total household income.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No earned income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$140,000–\$159,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$160,000–\$179,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000–\$39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$180,000–\$199,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000–\$59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000–\$219,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000–\$79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$220,000–\$240,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000–\$99,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> More than \$240,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000–\$119,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$120,000–\$139,999 | |

30. Which of the following most accurately describes your current personal annual income before taxes? Please report your personal income, not your total household income.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No earned income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$140,000–\$159,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$160,000–\$179,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000–\$39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$180,000–\$199,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000–\$59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000–\$219,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000–\$79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$220,000–\$240,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000–\$99,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> More than \$240,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000–\$119,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$120,000–\$139,999 | |

37. What is your current relationship status? (Choose one)

- ☐ Living with partner
☐ Married
☐ Separated or divorced
☐ Single
☐ Widowed
☐ Other relationship status: _____
☐ Prefer not to respond

38. How many dependent children do you have?

- ☐ None
☐ 1 or 2
☐ More than 2
☐ Prefer not to respond

[If your institution chooses to add supplemental questions they will be inserted here, preceded by this statement.]

The following questions were provided by [Institution Name]. Of course, like the rest of the survey, you may choose to skip any of these questions.

[The following message appears after alumni click the "Submit" button.]

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions on our Advanced Degree Alumni Survey! We appreciate your feedback. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact [Survey Liaison Name], [Survey Liaison Title], at [Survey Liaison Email].