

The 2016 James Madison University Graduate and Undergraduate Alumni Report

Year One Report



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Introduction

For years, the value of a college degree has been determined not by the most important outcomes of a college education, but by the easiest outcomes to measure — namely, job and graduate school placement rates and alumni salaries (usually only from their first job out of college). While these metrics have some merit, they do not provide a holistic view of college graduates' lives, nor do they demonstrate how alumni fare years after their college experience. These outcomes do not reflect the missions of higher education institutions, and they do not reflect the myriad reasons students go to college — principally, to get a great job in which they are truly engaged and to prepare them for meaningful and lifelong contribution to society.

Together, Gallup and Purdue University created an index that examines the long-term success of graduates as they pursue a great job and a great life. This index — the Gallup-Purdue Index — provides insight into the relationship between the college experience and long-term outcomes. This report explores the relationship between James Madison University's (JMU) graduates' experiences and long-term outcomes based on their responses to the JMU undergraduate and graduate college outcomes surveys.



Great Jobs. Great Lives. Great Experiences.

Great Jobs: Workplace Engagement

Workplace Engagement Matters

Workplace engagement is more nuanced than simple job satisfaction. It involves employees being intellectually and emotionally connected with their organizations and work teams because they are able to do what they are best at, they like what they do at work, and they have someone at work who cares about their development.

Gallup's expertise in engagement in the workplace is rooted in more than 30 years of research on 12 measures that best predict employee and workgroup performance. Based on responses to questions that assess these 12 elements of work life, Gallup categorizes workers as engaged, not engaged or actively disengaged. People who are engaged at work are more involved in and enthusiastic about their work. They are loyal and productive. Those who are not engaged may be productive and satisfied with their workplaces, but they are not intellectually and emotionally connected to them. Workers who are actively disengaged are physically present but intellectually and emotionally disconnected. They are unhappy with their work, they share their unhappiness with their colleagues, and they are likely to jeopardize the performance of their teams.

Recent Gallup research shows that only about 30% of Americans are engaged in their jobs, meaning U.S. workplaces are missing immense opportunities to raise their employees' productivity and well-being and the resulting economic benefits from these outcomes. Students express myriad reasons for attending college that reflect the centrality of a higher education degree in achieving one's life goals and competing in a global economy. The two most commonly and persistently cited reasons for attendance are "to learn about things that interest me" and "to get a better job"¹ and by extension of the former, a job to which graduates feel a sense of connection and commitment. Therefore, if higher education does not lead graduates to an engaging job, then it has failed to deliver on a central expectation of students and their families who support them through college.

¹ Pryor, J, Hurtado, S, Saenz, V, Santos, JL, and Korn, W. (2006). *The American Freshman, Forty Year Trends*. Los Angeles: Cooperative Institutional Research Program, Higher Education Research Institute.

Great Lives: Well-Being

Well-Being Is More Than Health and Wealth

Well-being is not only about being healthy or wealthy. Rather, it is about the interaction and interdependence of many aspects of life such as finding fulfillment in daily work and interactions, having strong social relationships and access to the resources people need, feeling financially secure, being physically healthy and taking part in one's community.

Gallup and Healthways developed the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being 5 View to measure these important aspects. This survey, based on findings from the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index and years of joint research, asks 10 questions that gauge well-being in five elements:

- **Purpose Well-Being:** Liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals
- **Social Well-Being:** Having strong and supportive relationships and love in your life
- **Financial Well-Being:** Effectively managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security
- **Community Well-Being:** The sense of engagement you have with the areas where you live, liking where you live and feeling safe and having pride in your community
- **Physical Well-Being:** Having good health and enough energy to get things done on a daily basis

Gallup categorizes individuals as “thriving,” “struggling” or “suffering” in each element according to how they rate that particular facet of well-being in their lives:

- **Thriving:** Well-being that is strong and consistent
- **Struggling:** Well-being that is moderate or inconsistent
- **Suffering:** Well-being that is low and inconsistent

Understanding how people think about and experience their lives is one of the first steps in determining the appropriate interventions that organizations, communities and institutions of higher education need to take to solve their biggest challenges. This research can provide JMU with insights about how to improve the lives of current students in these key areas that are within its control.

Great Experiences: Collegiate Life

Gallup's global research on behalf of hundreds of organizations and institutions examines the populations they serve and their emotional connection to these organizations, determining what drives their engagement and the attributes of those who are engaged against those who are not. With respect to higher education, Gallup is examining college graduates of specific institutions to discover which alumni feel most connected to their alma mater and how their collegiate experiences relate to their sense of connection and commitment.

Because students spend a significant amount of resources preparing for life outside of college, it is crucial to gauge whether the experiences they had in college have promoted a well-lived life. This includes if they perceive that the college was a great fit for them, having had professors who cared about them and made learning exciting and, most importantly, feeling that their school prepared them well for life outside of college.

National Comparisons

This report presents data from JMU graduates who:

- received a bachelor's degree from the institution between 1996 and 2005
- received a master's or doctoral degree from the institution between 1996 and 2005

In this report, results from JMU undergraduate alumni are compared with data from respondents in the national Gallup-Purdue Index study, all of whom obtained a bachelor's degree between 1994 and 2007 from Title IV degree-granting four-year public, private, for-profit and not-for-profit institutions in the U.S. as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Results from JMU graduate alumni are compared with postgraduate degree holders interviewed about their graduate school experiences via a follow-up study of Gallup-Purdue Index respondents, all of whom obtained a postgraduate degree between 1994 and 2007 from Title IV degree-granting public, private, for-profit and not-for-profit institutions in the U.S. as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. JMU alumni are also compared with *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities' alumni (referred to as "alumni from the top 100 universities" in the report) who graduated between 1994 and 2007. Gallup adopted this wider range to increase the sample size of the comparison groups. In particular, JMU alumni are compared with:

- undergraduate alumni who graduated between 1994 and 2007 from *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities
- postgraduate alumni who graduated between 1994 and 2007 from *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities

Finally, JMU alumni are also compared with graduates from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs alumni (referred to as "alumni from similar institutions" in the report) who graduated between 1994 and 2007. Again, Gallup adopted the wider range to increase the sample size of the comparison groups. A full listing of these universities is available at <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>, and in particular, JMU alumni are compared with:

- undergraduate alumni who graduated from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs between 1994 and 2007
- postgraduate alumni who graduated from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs between 1994 and 2007

Comparison Groups

In the Report

1996-2005
JMU Undergraduate
Alumni

vs

1994-2007 *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities, undergraduate alumni



"Top 100 Universities"

1994-2007 Carnegie classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs, undergraduate alumni



"Similar Institutions"

1994-2007 Total Gallup-Purdue Index database of national college alumni, undergraduate alumni



"Alumni Nationally"

1996-2005 JMU
Postgraduate
Alumni

vs

1994-2007 *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities, postgraduate alumni



"Top 100 Universities"

1994-2007 Carnegie classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs, postgraduate alumni



"Similar Institutions"

1994-2007 Total Gallup-Purdue Index database of national college alumni, postgraduate alumni



"Alumni Nationally"



Executive Summary

The JMU study included surveys of 1,385 adults who received a bachelor's degree and 356 adults who received a master's or doctoral degree from the university between 1996 and 2005. The results illustrate how many JMU graduates have great jobs and great lives after college and their attachment to the university after graduation. The study yields important insights for educators, employers, alumni and prospective students about the factors that contribute to great jobs, great lives and great experiences for JMU graduates. It also identifies the areas where JMU alumni are outperforming graduates of other universities and areas of opportunity where JMU can improve.

JMU alumni lead alumni nationally in full-time employment for an employer and also in workplace engagement.

JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are more likely than their respective peer groups nationally to be employed full time for an employer (81% vs. 71% and 76% vs. 72%, respectively). JMU graduates are also more likely than undergraduate and postgraduate alumni from similar institutions (i.e., Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs) at 70% each to be employed full time for an employer. JMU undergraduates have higher rates of full-time employment for an employer than alumni from the *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities (74%), while JMU postgraduate alumni are on par with postgraduates from these universities (76%).

JMU alumni are also more likely than other college graduates nationally to be engaged at work. Forty-eight percent of JMU undergraduate alumni are engaged at work, compared with 39% of undergraduate alumni nationally; 48% of JMU postgraduate alumni are engaged at work, compared with 40% of postgraduate alumni nationally. JMU undergraduates and postgraduates are also more likely than alumni from similar institutions to be engaged at work (48% each vs. 37% and 36%, respectively). While JMU undergraduate alumni are more likely to be engaged at work than alumni from the top 100 universities (41%), JMU postgraduate alumni are similar to this group (46%) in terms of engagement.

JMU alumni are more likely than their peer comparison groups to be thriving in their well-being, and three in four JMU alumni say they volunteered in their community in the last 12 months.

JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are also more likely than alumni in the comparison groups to be thriving in all five elements of well-being — finding fulfillment in daily work and interactions, having strong social relationships and access to the resources people need, feeling financially secure, taking part in one's community and being physically healthy. In addition, a quarter of JMU undergraduate degree alumni (25%) and postgraduate alumni (25%) say they have participated in politically based activities in the last 12 months (e.g., working/volunteering for a political campaign, protests or marches, political discussions). Nearly three in four JMU undergraduate alumni (73%) and 82% of postgraduate alumni say they have participated in community service or volunteer activities in the last 12 months.

JMU alumni think very highly of their alma mater.

JMU alumni are more likely than alumni from the comparison groups to strongly agree that their alma mater prepared them well for life outside of college, that their university is passionate about the long-term success of its students and that their education was worth the cost, with agreement among postgraduate alumni higher than among undergraduate alumni.

Undergraduate reports of experiential learning and faculty support are on par with alumni across the comparison groups, but postgraduate alumni outpace their comparison group peers on these measures.

Gallup assesses whether alumni had three key learning experiences and three forms of emotional support while they were students. If alumni strongly agree that they had all of the experiences that align with each measurement, Gallup categorizes them as having had experiential learning and emotional support during their time in college.

Overall, JMU undergraduate alumni are on par with alumni from the top 100 universities and alumni nationally in terms of having had experiential learning (10% vs. 8% each, respectively), but JMU undergraduate alumni outpace alumni from similar institutions (6%). Among JMU postgraduate alumni, 37% say they had experiential learning, compared with 32% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 28% of alumni from similar universities and 30% of alumni nationally.

Similarly, JMU undergraduate alumni's opinions of feeling emotionally supported while attending college are on par with undergraduate alumni from similar institutions and undergraduate alumni nationally (13% vs. 15% and 14%, respectively). But JMU postgraduate alumni are much more likely than postgraduate alumni in any other comparison group to have had experienced all three forms of support (22% vs. 15% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 12% of alumni from similar institutions and 16% of postgraduate alumni nationally).

Attachment to their alma mater among JMU alumni is much higher than that of their peers across the comparison groups.

Gallup defines JMU alumni attachment to their alma mater as strongly agreeing with two statements: "I can't imagine a world without JMU" and "JMU was the perfect school for people like me." JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are more likely to be attached to their alma mater than are alumni from the top 100 universities, alumni from similar institutions and college graduates nationally. Thirty-eight percent of JMU undergraduate alumni are attached, versus 24% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 15% of alumni from similar institutions and 19% of college graduates nationally. Forty percent of JMU postgraduate alumni are attached versus 17% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 13% of alumni from similar institutions and 15% of college graduates nationally.



Great Jobs: Workplace Engagement

Alumni employment figures say nothing about whether alumni feel intellectually and emotionally connected to their work or feel completely detached and unhappy. If employees are engaged at work, Gallup's research on workplace engagement indicates that they are more likely to be loyal and productive and more likely to have high levels of overall well-being.

Gallup workplace engagement studies show that business or work units that score in the top half of their organization in employee engagement have nearly double the odds of success (based on a composite of financial, customer retention, safety, quality, shrinkage and absenteeism metrics) compared with those in the bottom half.²

Compared with bottom-quartile engagement business units, top-quartile units have:

10% higher customer loyalty/engagement

70% fewer safety incidents

21% higher profitability

28% less shrinkage

20% higher productivity in sales

41% lower absenteeism

40% fewer quality incidents (defects)

58% fewer patient safety incidents

59% lower turnover for low-turnover companies
(those with 40% or lower annualized turnover)

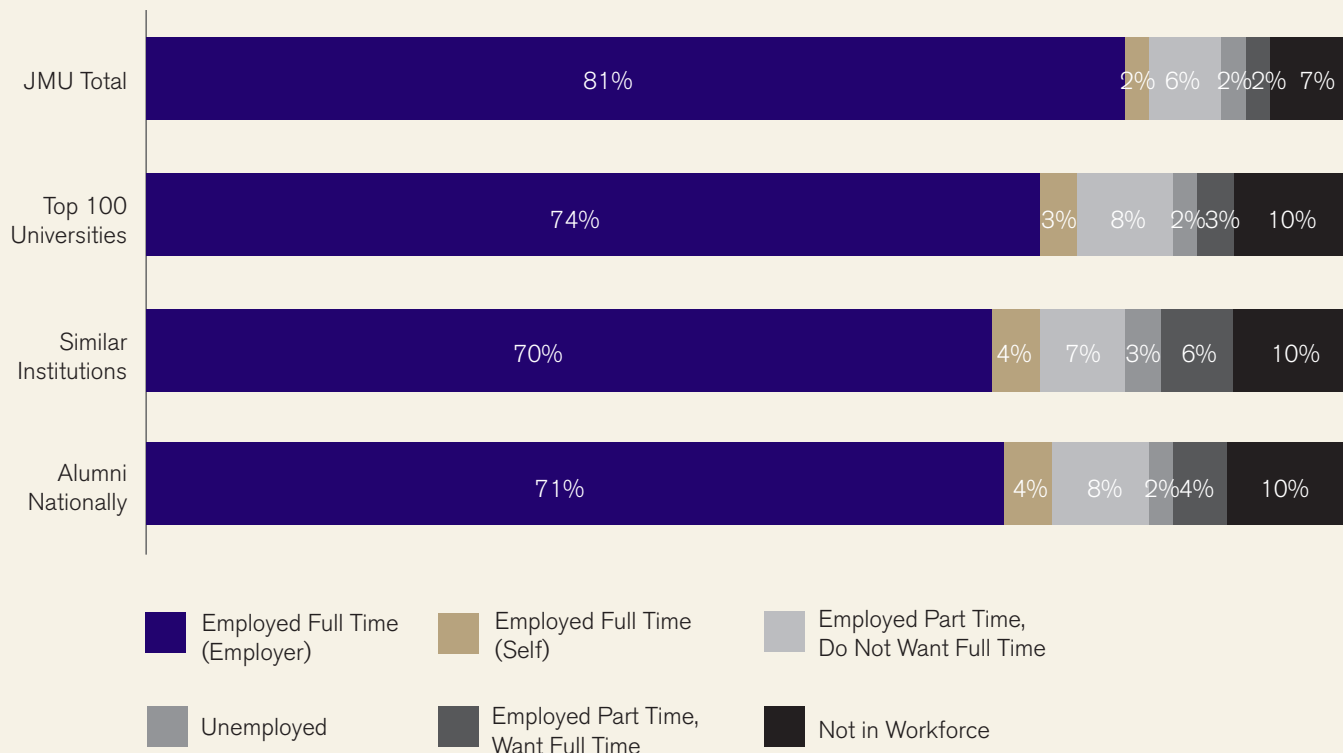
24% lower turnover for high-turnover companies
(those with more than 40% annualized turnover)

JMU undergraduate alumni lead in employee engagement.

JMU undergraduate alumni are more likely than college graduates nationally to be employed full time for an employer (81% vs. 71%, respectively). JMU undergraduates are also more likely than alumni from the top 100 universities (74%) and alumni from similar institutions (70%) to be employed full time for an employer.

² Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L., Agrawal, S., Plowman, S.K., Blue, A. (2016). The Relationship between Engagement at Work and Organizational Outcomes. 2016 Q12 Meta-Analysis: Ninth Edition. Washington, D.C.: The Gallup Organization. Accessible at: www.gallup.com/services/191489/q12-meta-analysis-report-2016.aspx.

Undergraduate Alumni Employment

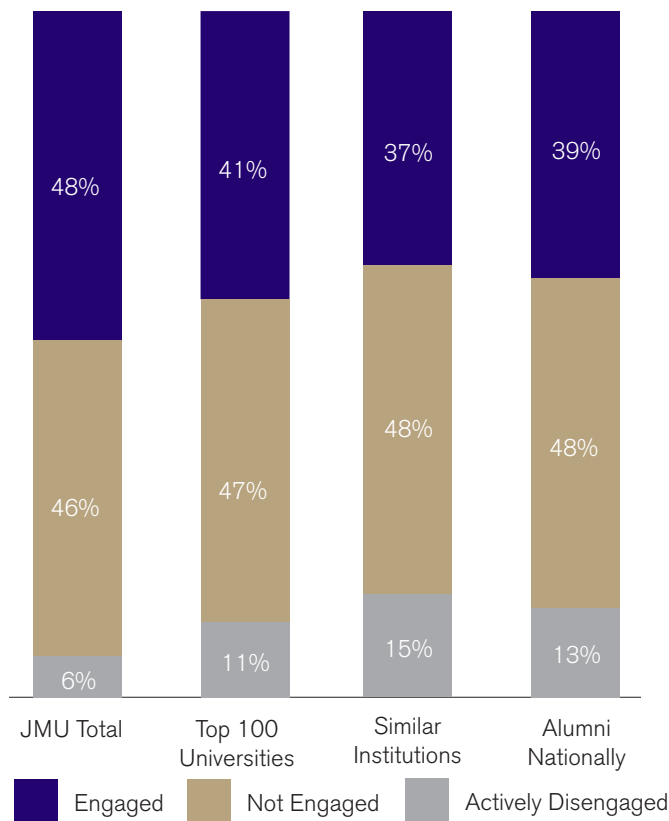


JMU undergraduate alumni who are employed full time for an employer also lead their peer comparison groups in employee engagement (48% of JMU alumni vs. 39% of college graduates nationally, 41% of alumni from the top 100 universities and 37% of alumni from similar institutions).

JMU undergraduate alumni are similar to comparison groups in terms of the percentage who strongly agree that their job gives them the opportunity to do work that interests them and that they have the ideal job for them. Twenty-nine percent of JMU undergraduate alumni are extremely satisfied with their organization as a place to work (indicating a “5” on a five-point scale), compared with 23% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 21% of alumni from similar institutions and 22% of alumni nationally.

Undergraduate Alumni Engagement

Among those who are employed full time for an employer



Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

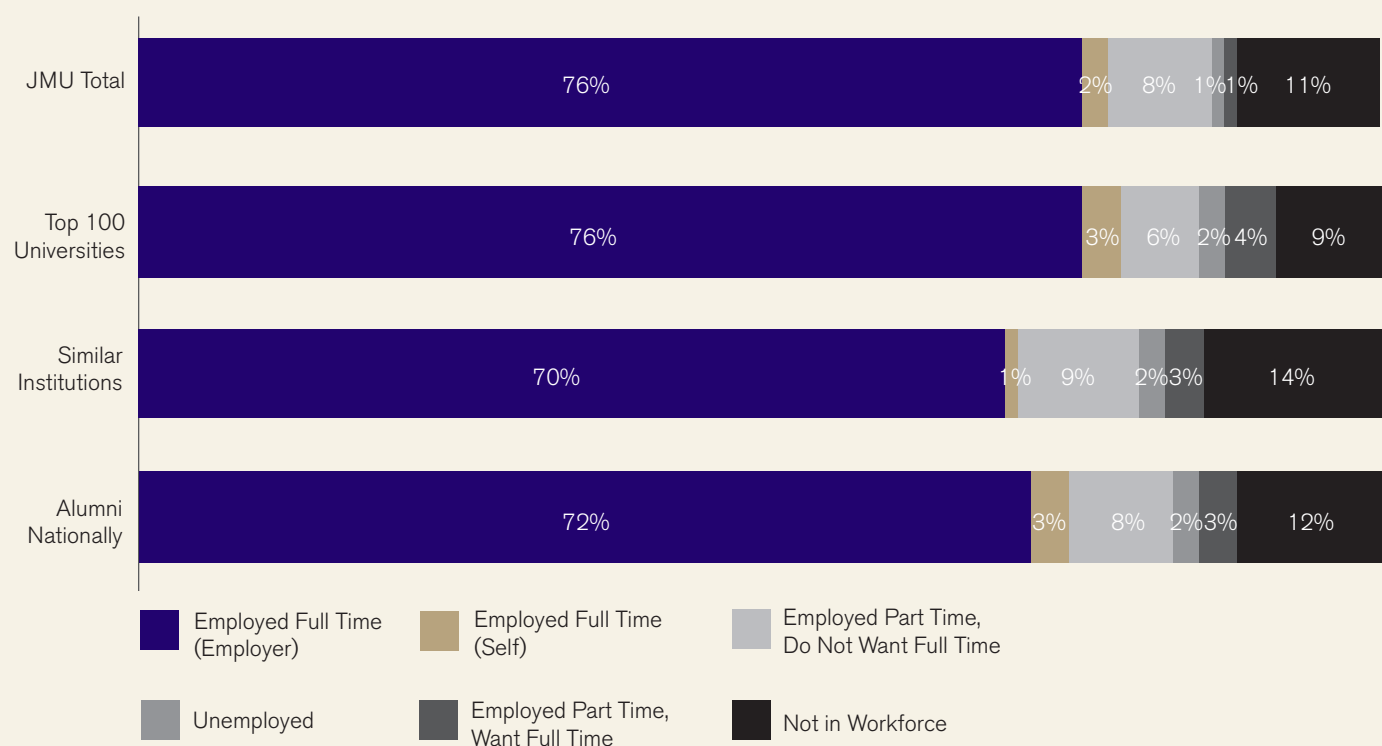
Undergraduate Alumni – Workplace Metrics

	JMU Total	Top 100 Universities	Similar Institutions	Alumni Nationally
My job gives me the opportunity to do work that interests me. (% <i>Strongly agree</i>)	41%	39%	39%	40%
I have the ideal job for me. (% <i>Strongly agree</i>)	29%	26%	27%	27%
On a five-point scale, where 5 means extremely satisfied and 1 means extremely dissatisfied, how satisfied are you with your organization as a place to work? (% <i>Extremely satisfied</i>)	29%	23%	21%	22%

JMU postgraduate alumni workplace engagement is on par with postgraduate alumni from the top 100 universities.

JMU postgraduate alumni have a similar rate of full-time employment for an employer as do alumni from the top 100 universities (both 76%) — JMU postgraduate alumni outpace alumni from similar institutions (70%) and alumni nationally (72%) on this measure. In addition, JMU alumni who completed postgraduate degrees and who are employed full time for an employer experience similar levels of engagement when compared with postgraduate alumni from the top 100 universities (48% vs. 46%, respectively) and higher levels than postgraduate alumni from similar institutions (36%) and postgraduate degree holders nationally (40%).

Postgraduate Alumni Employment

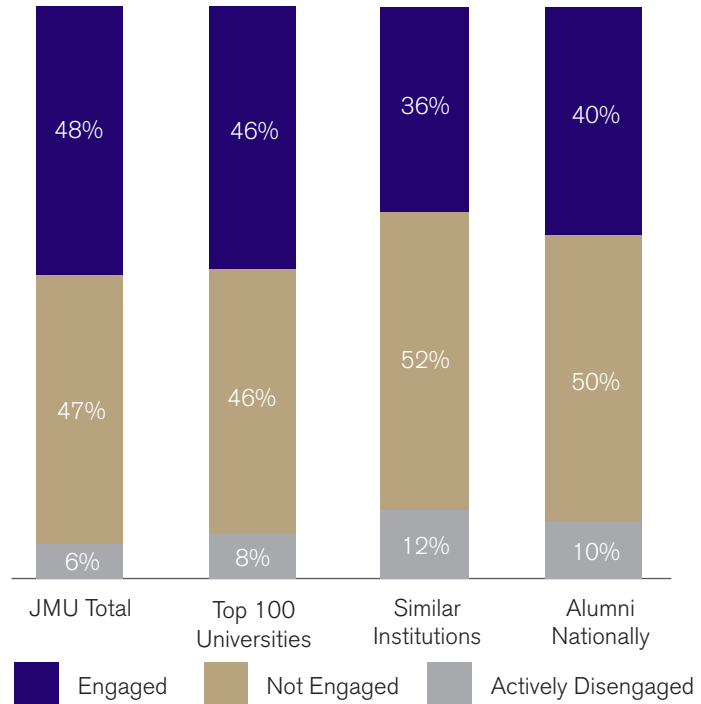


Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Similarly, 26% of JMU postgraduate alumni are on par with the 26% of alumni from the top 100 universities and the 24% of alumni nationally who are extremely satisfied with their organizations as a place to work, compared with 19% of alumni from similar institutions. JMU postgraduate alumni are also on par with the comparison groups in terms of the percentage who strongly agree that their job gives them the opportunity to do work that interests them. While on par with postgraduate alumni from similar institutions, JMU postgraduate alumni are more likely to strongly agree that they have the ideal job for them (37%) than postgraduate alumni from the top 100 universities (30%) and postgraduate alumni nationally (32%).

Postgraduate Alumni Engagement

Among those who are employed full time for an employer



Postgraduate Alumni – Workplace Metrics

	JMU Total	Top 100 Universities	Similar Institutions	Alumni Nationally
<i>(% Strongly agree)</i>				
My job gives me the opportunity to do work that interests me.	49%	50%	48%	48%
I have the ideal job for me.	37%	30%	34%	32%
On a five-point scale, where 5 means extremely satisfied and 1 means extremely dissatisfied, how satisfied are you with your organization as a place to work?	26%	26%	19%	24%

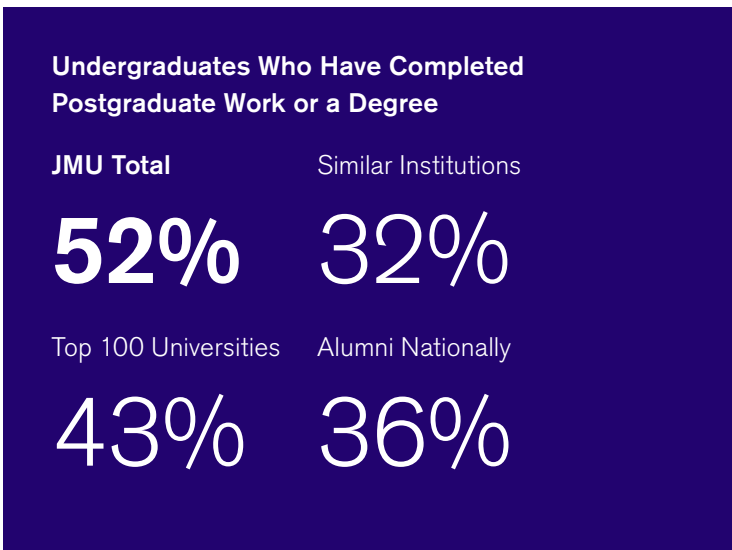
The majority of JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are employed in jobs that are somewhat or completely related to their major.

A large majority of undergraduate alumni, 78%, say their current work is completely or somewhat related to their undergraduate major. This is a greater percentage than alumni in the comparison groups (73% of alumni from each of the comparison groups). This could be, in part, because of the larger percentage of JMU undergraduate alumni who have also completed some postgraduate work or a degree: 52% vs. 43% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 32% of alumni from similar institutions and 36% of college graduates nationally.

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Ninety percent of JMU postgraduate alumni say that their current work is completely or somewhat related to their undergraduate major. This is on par with other alumni in the comparison groups (91% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 89% of alumni from similar institutions and 90% of alumni nationally).

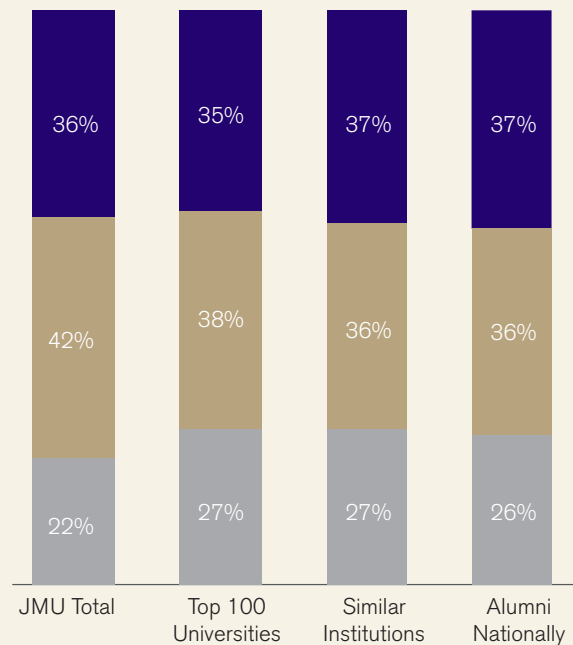
JMU undergraduates are similar to alumni from the top 100 universities, alumni from similar institutions and alumni nationally in the area of work they do at their primary job. However, JMU postgraduates, much like alumni from similar institutions, are more likely to be working in fields related to education (45% and 47%, respectively), compared with 26% of alumni from the top 100 universities and 33% of alumni nationally. JMU postgraduates are less likely than alumni from the top 100 universities and alumni nationally to be working in fields related to law, public policy, science, engineering or architecture.



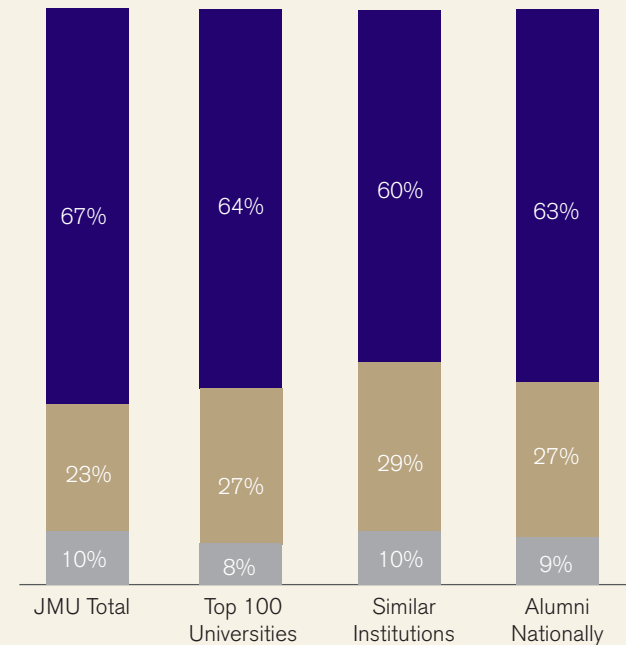
How closely related is your current work to your major(s)?

Among those who are employed full time for an employer

Undergraduate



Postgraduate



Completely Related
 Somewhat Related
 Not at all Related

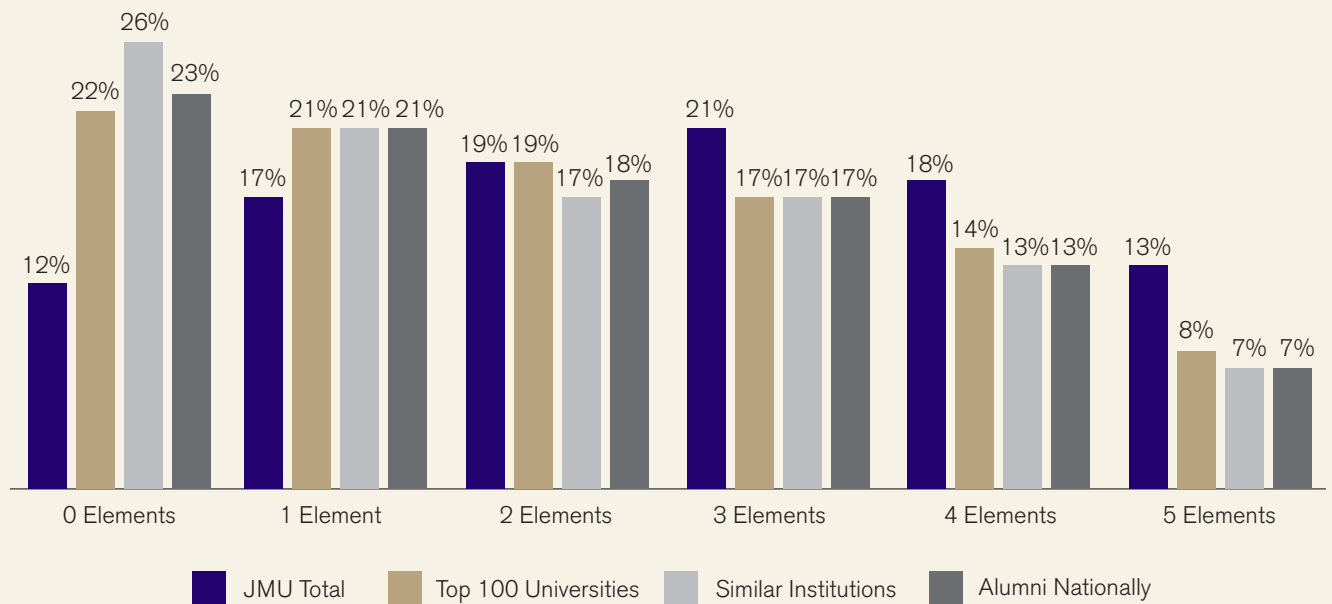
Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.



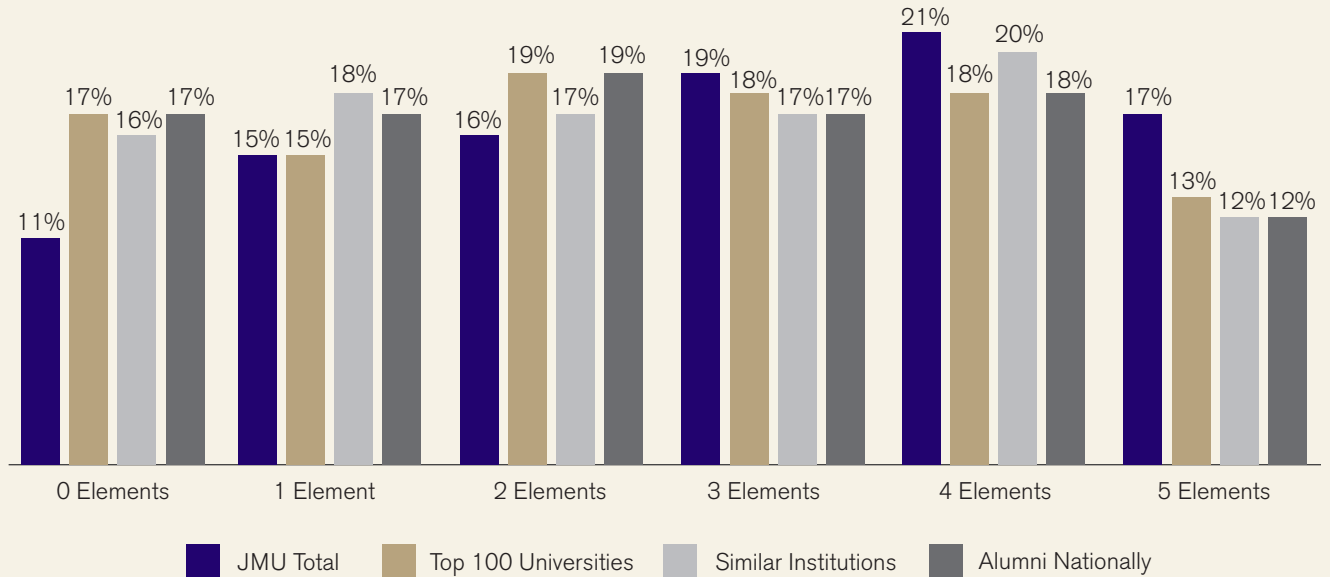
Great Lives: Well-Being

Gallup examines levels of life satisfaction among alumni in addition to asking questions related to five elements of well-being: purpose, social, financial, community and physical. JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are more likely than alumni in the comparison groups to be thriving in all five elements of well-being.

Undergraduate Alumni
% Thriving



Postgraduate Alumni
% Thriving



In particular, JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are more likely than alumni from the top 100 universities, alumni from similar institutions and alumni nationally to be thriving in social and community well-being.

In particular, in the last 12 months, 25% of JMU undergraduate alumni and 25% of JMU postgraduate alumni say they have participated in politically based activities (e.g., working/volunteering for a political campaign, protests or marches, political discussions). Additionally, in the last 12 months, 73% of JMU undergraduate alumni and 82% of JMU postgraduate alumni say they have volunteered or participated in community service or volunteer activities.

Undergraduate Alumni Community Well-Being

JMU Total

54%

Top 100 Universities

44%

Similar Institutions

41%

Alumni Nationally

42%

Undergraduate Alumni Social Well-Being

JMU Total

59%

Top 100 Universities

49%

Similar Institutions

45%

Alumni Nationally

47%

Postgraduate Alumni Community Well-Being

JMU Total

61%

Top 100 Universities

44%

Similar Institutions

50%

Alumni Nationally

47%

Postgraduate Alumni Social Well-Being

JMU Total

59%

Top 100 Universities

52%

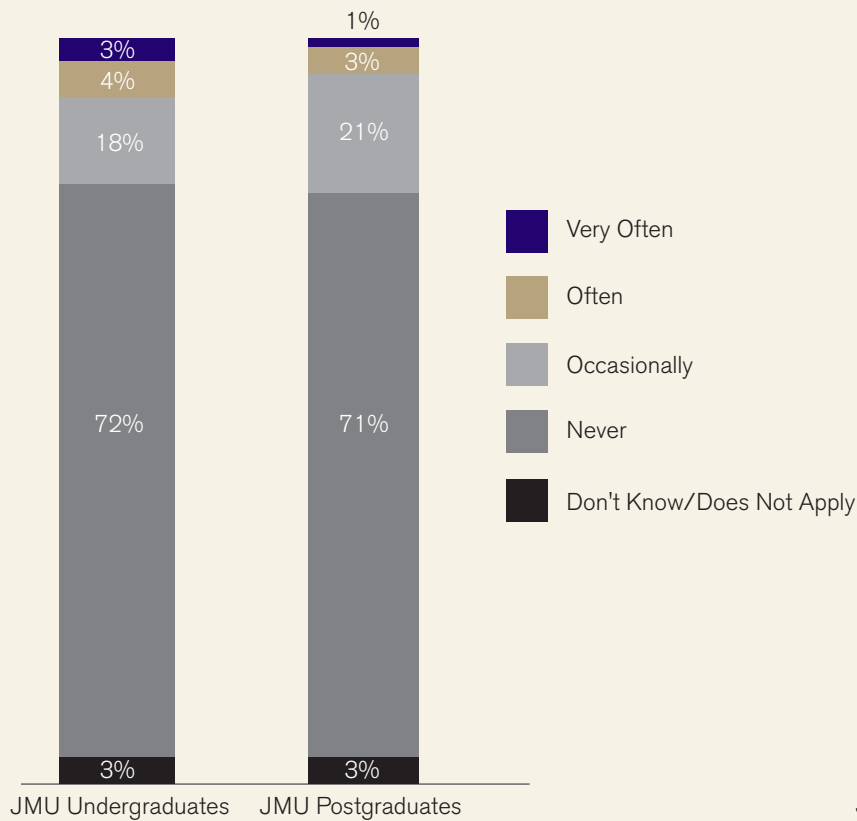
Similar Institutions

53%

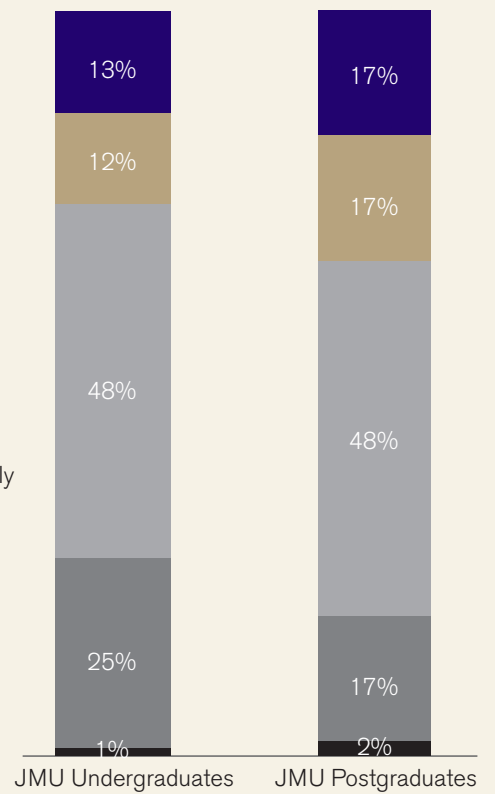
Alumni Nationally

51%

In the last 12 months, how often did you participate in politically based activities, such as working/volunteering for a political campaign, protests or marches, political discussions, etc.?



In the last 12 months, how often did you volunteer or participate in community service or volunteer activities?



Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.



Great Experiences: Collegiate Life

JMU alumni are more likely than alumni from the comparison groups to strongly agree that their alma mater prepared them well for life outside of college. In fact, 42% of JMU undergraduate alumni strongly agree with this statement, compared with 30% of undergraduate alumni from the top 100 universities, 25% of alumni from similar institutions and 27% of college graduates nationally. Similarly, 43% of JMU postgraduate alumni strongly agree that their alma mater prepared them well for life outside of college, compared with 30% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 27% of alumni from similar institutions and 29% of graduates nationally.

Undergraduate Alumni

<i>(% Strongly agree)</i>	JMU Total	Top 100 Universities	Similar Institutions	Alumni Nationally
JMU prepared me well for life outside of college.	42%	30%	25%	27%
JMU is passionate about the long-term success of its students.	30%	23%	21%	24%
I was challenged academically at JMU.	43%	54%	33%	40%
My education from JMU was worth the cost.	57%	50%	42%	44%

Postgraduate Alumni

<i>(% Strongly agree)</i>	JMU Total	Top 100 Universities	Similar Institutions	Alumni Nationally
JMU prepared me well for life outside of college.	43%	30%	27%	29%
JMU is passionate about the long-term success of its students.	36%	23%	20%	23%
I was challenged academically at JMU.	46%	64%	40%	51%
My education from JMU was worth the cost.	62%	55%	49%	51%

JMU alumni are more likely than alumni from the comparison groups to strongly agree that their university is passionate about the long-term success of its students. Among undergraduate alumni, 30% of JMU alumni strongly agree with this statement, compared with 23% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 21% of alumni from similar institutions and 24% of graduates nationally. Among postgraduates, more than a third of JMU alumni (36%) strongly agree with this statement, compared with 23% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 20% of alumni from similar institutions and 23% of postgraduates nationally.

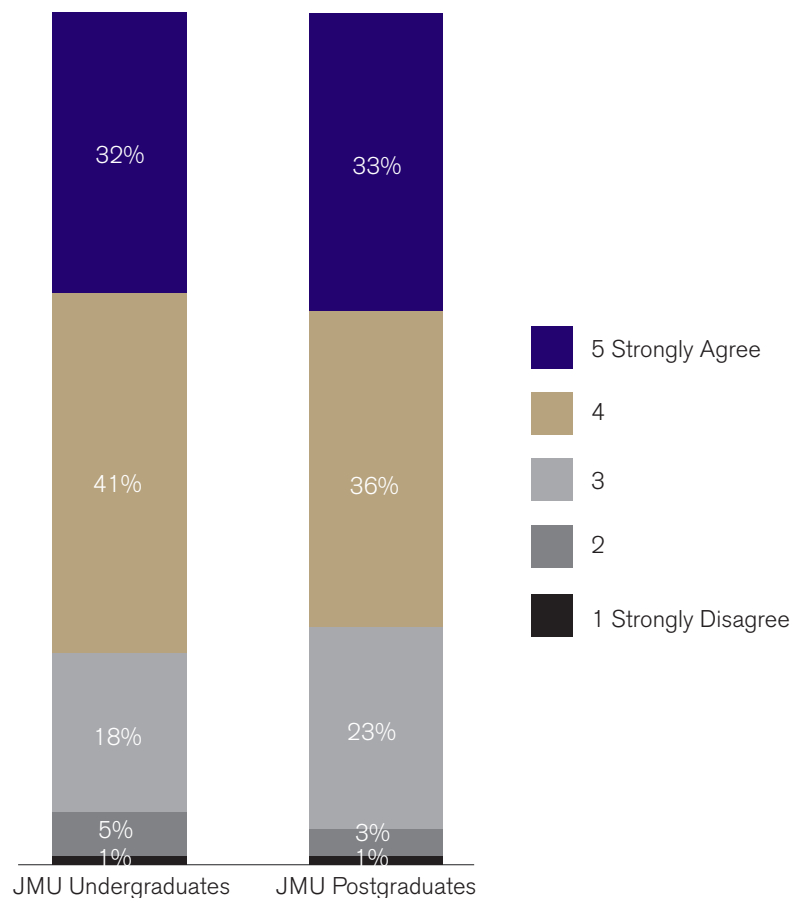
JMU undergraduate alumni are more likely than alumni from similar institutions and alumni nationally to strongly agree that they were challenged academically during their time in college (43% vs. 33% and 40%, respectively), but less likely than alumni from the top 100 universities (54%). When compared with postgraduate alumni from similar institutions, 46% of JMU postgraduate alumni strongly agree that they were challenged academically, outpacing the 40% of alumni from similar institutions who say the same. However, JMU postgraduate alumni are less likely than alumni from the top 100 universities (64%) and alumni nationally (51%) to strongly agree that they were challenged academically.

JMU alumni are more likely than their peers to strongly agree that their education was worth the cost, with agreement among postgraduate alumni higher than among undergraduate alumni. While 57% of JMU undergraduate alumni strongly agree that their education was worth the cost (compared with 50% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 42% of alumni from similar institutions and 44% of alumni nationally), 62% of JMU postgraduate alumni strongly agree with this statement (compared with 55% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 49% of alumni from similar institutions and 51% nationally).

Furthermore, about a third of JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni (32% and 33%, respectively) strongly agree that JMU prepared them to make well-informed ethical decisions in their lives.

In the 2015 national Gallup-Purdue Index study of more than 30,000 college graduates, Gallup assessed the influence of important collegiate experiences while controlling for the possible effects of graduates' personality types, which could influence how they evaluate their (retrospective) college experiences and their current lives. For this analysis, Gallup used the Ten Item Personality Measure (TIPI)³ to assign respondents a score on five personality dimensions: conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience.

JMU prepared me to make well-informed ethical decisions in my life.



3 Samuel D. Gosling, Peter J. Rentfrow, and William B. Swann, "A Very Brief Measure of the Big-Five Personality Domains," *Journal of Research in Personality* 37, no. 6 (2003): 504-528.

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Relationships between college experiences and outcome measures were then adjusted to account for the effects of different personality types.

Regardless of personality type, the odds that a college graduate is engaged at work increase if he or she strongly agrees to having had each of six critical college experiences. For example, if graduates strongly agree that they had a mentor in college who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams, the odds that they are engaged in their jobs are 1.9 times higher than those who do not strongly agree.

Based on the national undergraduate study, the odds of being engaged at work are:

Support

1.7x higher if ... My professors at [University Name] cared about me as a person.

1.9x higher if ... I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.

1.7x higher if ... I had at least one professor at [University Name] who made me excited about learning.

2.0x **Higher if all three**

Experiential Learning

1.8x higher if ... I had an internship or job that allowed me to apply what I was learning in the classroom.

1.6x higher if ... I was extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while attending [University Name].

1.7x higher if ... I worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.

2.0x **Higher if all three**

These key experiences identified in the 2015 national Gallup-Purdue Index study are consistent with the findings of JMU's 1998-2008 Report on the Decade. Between 1998 and 2008, the student-to-faculty ratio at JMU decreased from 19.2:1 to 16.4:1 — and student perceptions of the university as supportive have risen from 57% to 74%. Furthermore, student satisfaction with the university's concern with them as individuals has increased from 72% to 76%. Over the last decade, JMU has not only placed emphasis on pursuing research but has also made an effort to offer unprecedented research opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students.⁴ As is described in more detail in the following paragraphs, these positive changes could be factors in the levels of support that JMU undergraduate alumni report (which are on par with alumni from similar institutions and alumni nationally and higher than alumni from the top 100 universities). The same goes for the level of support reported by JMU postgraduate alumni, who are much more likely than postgraduate alumni in any other comparison group to have experienced all three forms of support. These changes also may affect the level of experiential learning JMU undergraduate alumni report, which is on par with alumni from the top 100 universities and alumni nationally, and higher than alumni from similar institutions. The positive changes may also help explain JMU postgraduate alumni besting all comparison groups in strongly agreeing that they had a job or internship that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom.

⁴ Retrieved from http://www.jmu.edu/president/wm_library/DecadeReport.pdf

JMU undergraduate alumni were very active in student life.

JMU undergraduate alumni are on par with undergraduate alumni in all comparison groups in terms of the percentage who strongly agree that they had an internship or job that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom (32% vs. 33% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 33% of alumni from similar institutions and 33% of alumni nationally).

JMU undergraduate alumni are more likely than any other comparison group to strongly agree that while earning their degree, they worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete (40% vs. 37% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 33% of alumni from similar institutions and 37% of alumni nationally) and that they were extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while attending college (33% vs. 23%, 17% and 21%, respectively). Gallup defines having experiential learning as strongly agreeing with these three statements; overall, JMU undergraduate alumni are on par with alumni from the top 100 universities and alumni nationally in terms of having had experiential learning (10% vs. 8% each, respectively), but JMU undergraduate alumni outpace alumni from similar institutions (6%).

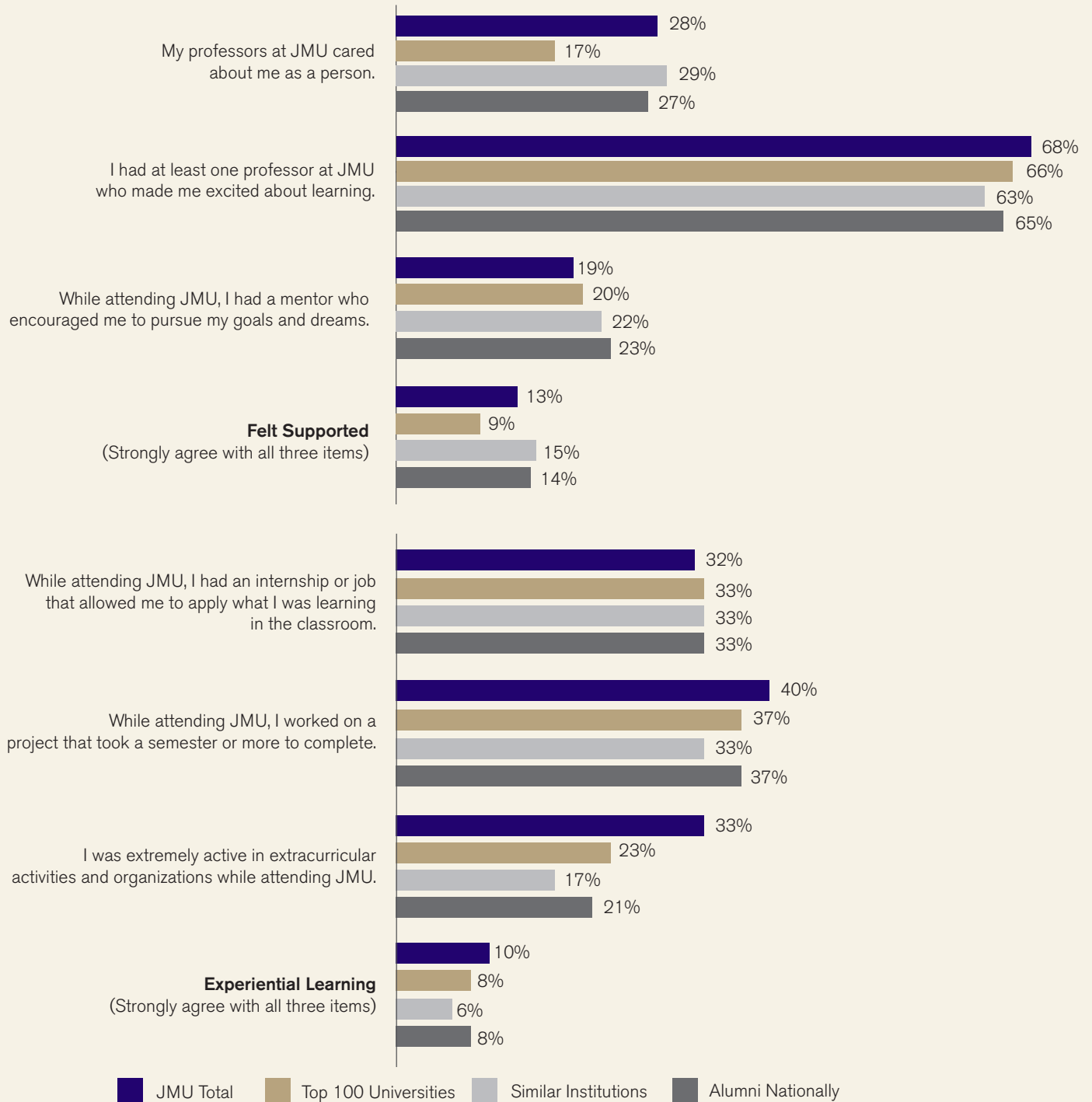
Additionally, JMU undergraduate alumni are more likely than their peer comparison groups to say they participated in a student club or organization while attending college (74% vs. 66% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 50% of alumni from similar institutions and 56% of alumni nationally).

If a graduate strongly agrees that their professors cared about them as a person, that they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning and that they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams, Gallup categorizes them as having received emotional support while attending college.

JMU undergraduate alumni are on par with undergraduate alumni from similar institutions and alumni nationally in terms of the percentage who felt emotionally supported while attending college (13% vs. 15% and 14%, respectively). This is higher than the percentage of undergraduate alumni from the top 100 universities who experienced support while attending college (9%). In particular, 68% of JMU undergraduate alumni strongly agree that they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning, which is on par with alumni from the top 100 universities (66%) and higher than alumni from similar institutions (63%) and alumni nationally (65%).

Undergraduate Alumni

(% Strongly agree)

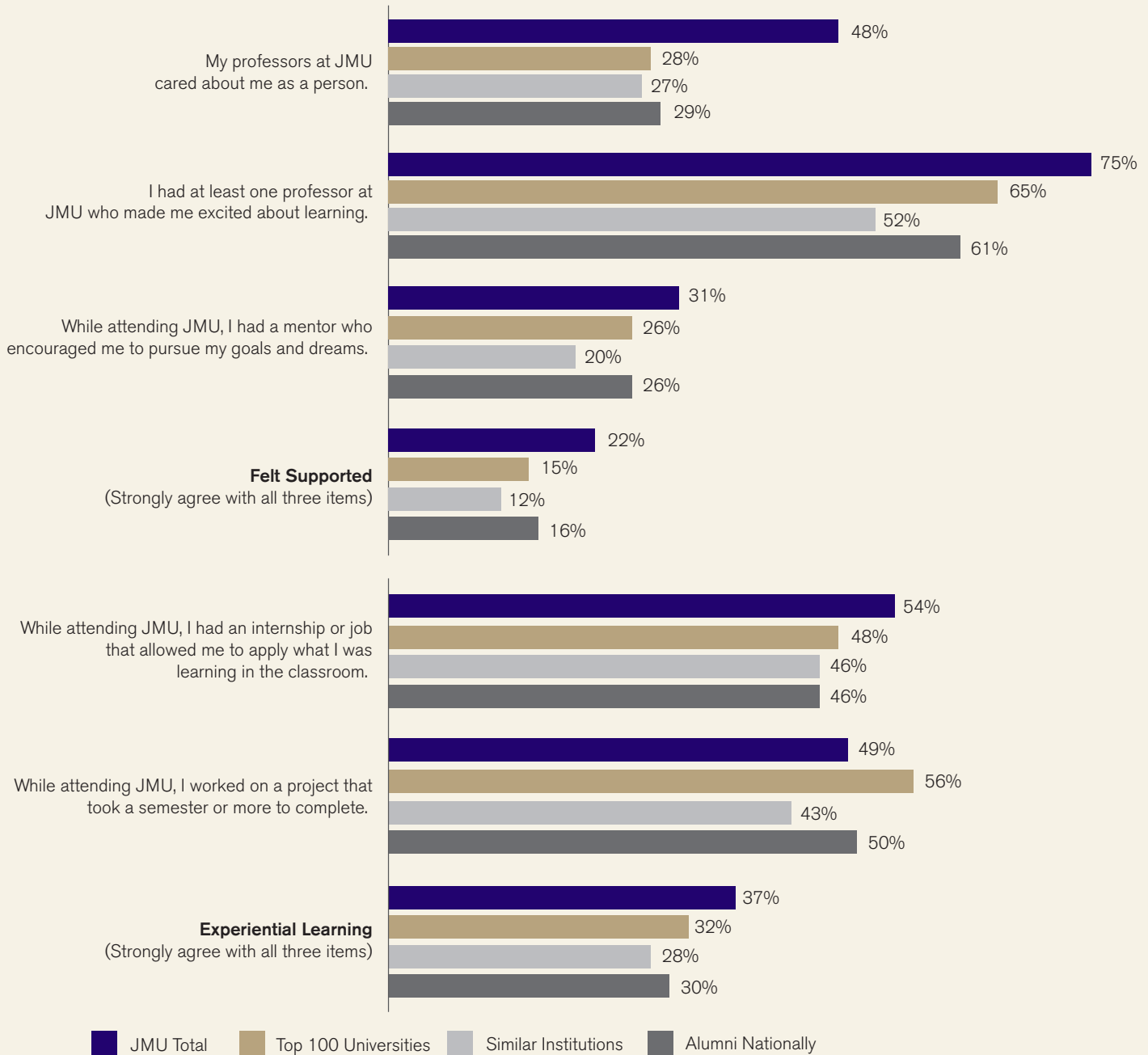


JMU postgraduate alumni report a high level of experiential learning and support from professors.

Thirty-seven percent of JMU postgraduate alumni strongly agree that they had a job or internship that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom and that they worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete, compared with 32% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 28% of alumni from similar universities and 30% of alumni nationally. (In the national study of postgraduate alumni, respondents were not asked if they were extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations while attending graduate school.) In particular, 54% of JMU postgraduate alumni strongly agree that while attending JMU, they had an internship or job that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom, which is greater than the 48% of alumni from the top 100 universities, the 46% of alumni from similar universities and the 46% of alumni nationally.

JMU postgraduate alumni are much more likely than postgraduate alumni in any other comparison group to have experienced all three forms of support (22% vs. 15% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 12% of alumni from similar institutions and 16% of postgraduate alumni nationally). In particular, 48% of postgraduate alumni strongly agree that their professors at JMU cared about them as a person, and 75% strongly agree that they had at least one professor at JMU who made them excited about learning, which is at least 10 percentage points greater than postgraduate alumni in other comparison groups.

Postgraduate Alumni
(% Strongly agree)



Extracurricular activities can help make alumni feel prepared for life after college.

JMU undergraduate alumni and JMU postgraduate alumni participate in different types of extracurricular activities. For example, 399 out of the 1,385 respondents in this survey who obtained an undergraduate degree say they were a member of a national fraternity or sorority (29%), but only 39 out of the 356 respondents who obtained a postgraduate degree report being a member (11%). However, alumni may find extracurricular activities to be very helpful in preparing them for life after college, regardless of the types of activities in which

they participated.⁵ In particular, 31% of JMU undergraduate alumni who say they participated in a national fraternity or sorority indicate that it was very helpful in preparing them for life after college, and undergraduate alumni who say they held a leadership position in a club or organization (such as student government, a fraternity or sorority, or an athletic team) are even more likely to say it was very helpful in preparing them for life after college (42%).

Twenty-five percent of undergraduate alumni who say they participated in a student club or organization consider it to be very helpful, and 27% of undergraduate alumni who say they completed a research project with a professor or faculty member (such as a project they participated in as part of a class they took or a thesis) indicate that it was very helpful in preparing them for life after college.

While more than a third of undergraduate⁶ and postgraduate⁷ degree alumni who say they had a paid job or internship indicate that it was very helpful in preparing them for life after college, postgraduate degree alumni are more likely than undergraduate alumni to indicate that it was very helpful (51% vs. 36%, respectively).

**JMU Undergraduates: How helpful were each of the following in preparing you for life after college?
(% Very Helpful)**

31%

National fraternity or sorority

25%

Student club or organization

36%

Paid job or internship

42%

Leadership position in a club or organization such as your student government, a fraternity or sorority, or an athletic team

27%

Research project with a professor or faculty member

JMU Postgraduates:

51%

Paid job or internship

⁵ Only responses with a sample size above 90 are considered.

⁶ n size = 355

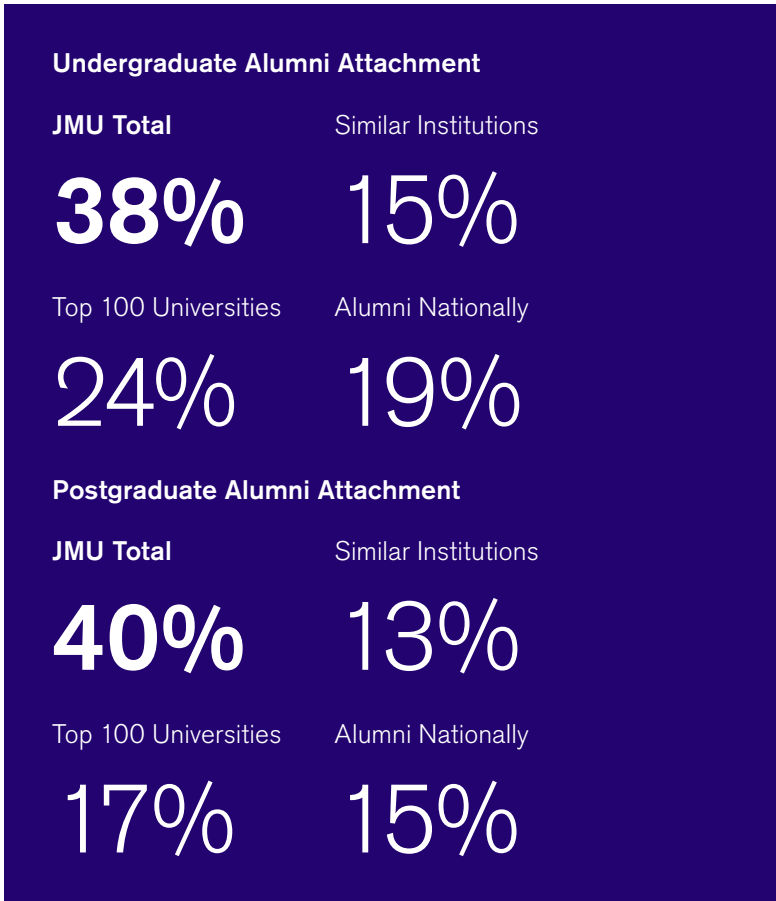
⁷ n size = 94



Alumni Attachment

Gallup explores the connection between alumni and their alma mater by measuring their level of agreement with two statements: “I can’t imagine a world without [University name]” and “[University name] was the perfect school for people like me.” Graduates who strongly agree with both items are considered “emotionally attached” to their alma mater.

JMU undergraduate and postgraduate alumni are more attached to their alma mater than are alumni from the top 100 universities, alumni from similar institutions and alumni nationally. In fact, 38% of JMU undergraduate alumni are emotionally attached to their alma mater, compared with 24% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 15% of alumni from similar institutions and 19% of college graduates nationally. In addition, 40% of JMU postgraduate alumni are attached to their alma mater, compared with 17% of alumni from the top 100 universities, 13% of alumni from similar institutions and 15% of postgraduates nationally.





About

About James Madison University

James Madison University is a public, comprehensive university and is named for James Madison, acknowledged “Father of the U.S. Constitution” and 4th President of the United States. The university places great emphasis on the quality of the undergraduate student experience in its bachelor’s-level programs and offers a complementary array of distinguished master’s, educational specialist and doctoral programs aimed at meeting specific state, national and global needs. JMU provides a total education to students — one that has a broad range of the liberal arts as its foundation and encompasses an extensive variety of professional and pre-professional programs, augmented by a multitude of learning experiences outside the classroom. With a low student-to-faculty ratio and a tradition of close relationships between professors and their students, the value and quality of the JMU experience has been recognized repeatedly in many national publications.

Enhancing quality in student learning is a priority for JMU. A national study found that 81% of employers want colleges to place more emphasis on “critical thinking and analytic reasoning,” and 75% want more emphasis on “ethical decision making” (Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn, AAC&U and Hart Research Associates (2010)). In 2013, JMU launched a major universitywide effort called The Madison Collaborative: Ethical Reasoning in Action with the purpose of teaching ethical reasoning skills to every student at the university. First-year students are introduced to The Madison Collaborative during orientation, and exposure continues through campus programming, the General Education curriculum and courses in majors. It teaches students how to apply a set of reasoning skills to evaluate implications of different courses of action in their personal, professional and civic lives. The Madison Collaborative ties directly to the university’s mission: We are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.

About Healthways

Healthways is an independent, global well-being company that provides comprehensive improvement solutions to increase performance and lower healthcare costs in its client populations. Dedicated to creating a healthier world one person at a time, Healthways uses the science of well-being and behavior change to produce and measure well-being improvement for its customers. Healthways provides personalized support to individuals to optimize each participant’s health and productivity and to reduce health-related costs, and also advises leaders on how to maximize well-being across an organization.



Methodology

Results for the JMU study are based on web surveys conducted April 25-May 24, 2016, with a sample of 1,340 undergraduate and 242 graduate alumni (response rates were 12% and 13%, respectively). The sample of alumni email addresses was provided by JMU. Alumni were included in the study if the institution had an email address on file and alumni graduated between 1996 and 2005.

Results for the Gallup-Purdue Index, the national study used for comparison purposes, are based on web surveys conducted Dec. 16, 2014-June 29, 2015, with a random sample of 30,151 respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher, aged 18 and older, with internet access, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The Gallup-Purdue Index sample was recruited via the Gallup Daily tracking survey. The Gallup Daily tracking survey sample includes national adults with a minimum quota of 60% cellphone respondents and 40% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using RDD methods. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday. Gallup Daily tracking respondents with a college degree, who agreed to future contact, were invited to take the Gallup-Purdue Index survey online.

Gallup-Purdue Index interviews are conducted via the web, in English only. Samples are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. The data are weighted to match national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education and region. Demographic weighting targets are based on the most recent Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older U.S. bachelor's degree or higher population.

All reported margins of sampling error for the Gallup-Purdue Index of all college graduates include the computed design effects for weighting.

Results are based on comparison groups of individuals with undergraduate or postgraduate degrees. An overall margin of sampling error and margin of sampling error for employee engagement was considered for each comparison group.

For results based on the total national sample of those with a bachelor's degree who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on the total national sample of those with a postgraduate degree who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a postgraduate degree who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree from *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a postgraduate degree from *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 4.6 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a postgraduate degree from *U.S. News and World Report's* Top 100 National Universities who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 5.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a postgraduate degree from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 5.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a postgraduate degree from the Carnegie 2010 Classification: Master's Colleges and Universities – Larger Programs who graduated between 1994 and 2007, the margin of sampling error is ± 6.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

GALLUP®

World Headquarters

The Gallup Building
901 F Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

t +1.877.242.5587

f +1.202.715.3045

www.gallup.com