2010 Employer Surveys

Executive Summary

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Employers have very favorable opinions of UVU’s educational quality and see the institution as comparable to WSU and SUU.
- UVU offers degrees that employers want, but there is demand for new programs in engineering, health professions, and business.
- Supervisors give graduates high marks in job skills and work habits, with weaknesses in math, leadership, and awareness of cultural differences.
- Education is a critical factor in supervisors’ employment decisions about graduates, especially for graduates with bachelor’s degrees.
- On-campus recruiting is largely irrelevant to business’ recruiting strategies.

The 2010 Employer Surveys evaluate employers’ general perception of UVU’s educational quality, the skills and performance of UVU graduates, and recruiting practices among employers. The surveys are based on phone interviews with two groups: 1,087 employers statewide identified from Department of Workforce Services public records and alumni self-reports on the 2008 and 2009 Graduated Alumni Surveys, and 221 individual supervisors of UVU alumni identified on those surveys.

Educational Quality

85% of employers consider UVU’s quality to be good or very good. Employers see UVU as roughly equal to Southern Utah University and Weber State University. Only Brigham Young University, the University of Utah, Utah State University and Westminster College are seen as distinctly better than UVU. UVU compares especially favorably to proprietary institutions. However, despite five years of substantial change at UVU, the rankings are virtually identical to those of the 2003 survey. Four in five employers would be likely or very likely to hire a UVU graduate.

Comparison of Educational Quality

Program and Degree Recommendations

UVU’s repertoire of programs does an outstanding job of addressing the needs of Utah employers. 83% of suggested associate’s degree programs, 81% of suggested bachelor’s degree programs, and 68% of suggested graduate programs are currently offered by the university. Engineering was by far the most commonly suggested new degree at the bachelor’s and graduate level, with medicine and human resources also common. Nursing was the most commonly suggested associate’s degree program, followed closely by marketing and health care.

Commonly Recommended Degrees

* Includes some recommended degrees not currently offered by UVU.
Graduates’ Job Skills

Supervisors rated graduates working for them exceptionally high in oral communication, critical thinking and problem solving, and essential functional skills required for their position. Graduates’ lowest rated skill is in understanding of global issues, but they are also considered weak in math skills, awareness of cultural differences, and leadership. 97% of supervisors were generally satisfied with graduates’ work habits, and there was relatively little variation across the 10 work habits addressed in the survey.

Relevance of Education to Employment Decisions

Eighty-two percent of supervisors reported that the graduates’ responsibilities are very related or moderately related to the graduates’ education. Supervisors believe both that having a degree in general and the specific course of study are moderately or very relevant to employment decisions about UVU graduates. However, supervisors see bachelor’s degrees as substantially more relevant to employment decisions than associate’s degrees. While two-thirds of those with bachelor’s degrees were in jobs that were very related to their education, only 54% of those with associate’s degrees were.

On-campus Recruiting

On-campus recruiting is largely irrelevant to business’ recruiting strategies. 65% of all businesses and 74% of small businesses do not recruit on university campuses. Those firms that do recruit on campus, however, generally see it as an important recruiting strategy, with 25% of employers reporting that it is equally important as or more important than recruiting among the general public. Career services office job boards were the most commonly used method of recruiting on campuses. Career services offices are most utilized by large businesses.

For More Information

Full administrative reports, and data tables are available through the IRI web site: http://www.uvu.edu/iri.

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