

**SUMMARY REPORT OF EMPLOYER SURVEYS-1999**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SCIENCES STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Procedure**

The Department of Human Sciences mailed 103 surveys to employers of graduates from the following program areas: child development and family; fashion merchandising; foods, nutrition and dietetics; general home economics and general home economics (with teacher certification); hospitality administration and interior design. Employer surveys were identified by program area. The major sections of the survey included demographics (questions 1-11); effectiveness of academic training (questions 12-25); and professional competencies (varied by program). A six item Likert scale was used for responses to effectiveness of academic training ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree and not applicable. A five item Likert scale was used for responses to professional competencies ranging from excellent to poor and not applicable (See employer surveys in Appendix A).

The list of respondents was obtained from program coordinators by area. The standard cover letter sent with each survey is shown in Appendix B. Employers were also sent an employer record form, a Par Score Test Form - 200, and a return envelope. The test form was used by the SFA computer center to analyze results of the survey. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to compile mean, standard deviation and frequency distribution of the results. Employers had approximately two weeks to return the survey to the Department of Human Sciences. The administrative assistant was designated to compile the returned surveys. No follow-up surveys were conducted.

**Results and Discussion**

Twenty-two of the 103 surveys were returned by the target date. The response rate for the surveys was 21%. Responses from each program area were as follows: interior design (9); food, nutrition and dietetics (8); child development and family (3); and general home economics (2). One survey identified as fashion merchandising was not usable. Two surveys received after the target date were not included in the results. Three surveys were returned to the Department of Human Sciences indicating an invalid employer address.

A summary of demographic information from the employer surveys is shown in Table 1. Most of the respondents were not graduates of SFA. Results indicated that more companies hired SFA graduates (60%) compared to companies who hired SFA intern or practicum students (40%). Thirteen of the employers indicated that two to four graduates were hired within the last five years. The most likely avenues through which employers might contribute to the Department of Human Sciences included intern placement (90%), guest presentation (85%), and student recruitment (70%). Forty-five percent indicated advisory capacity as a means of contribution. Otherwise, committee service, annual giving, matched gift and scholarship contribution were least favored by respondents.

Table 2 provides information on the effectiveness of academic training. Overall positive academic experience and areas related to major course work were rated positively. There were more unsure responses for the areas of effective advising, career advancement, realistic portrayal of profession, workplace trends and interpersonal skills.

The Professional Competencies section of the survey was compiled for the Food, Nutrition and Dietetics Program (Table 3) and the Interior Design Program (Table 4). The other program areas were not included in these results because of the minimal number of respondents. The Food, Nutrition and Dietetics Program respondents indicated that competencies related to communication and management were rated lower than the food, nutrition and community areas. The Interior Design Program respondents rated all competencies as average or above with four competencies rated as excellent.

## **Recommendations**

**Inappropriate employer addresses and not having a specific contact person were two problems in the mailing of the survey that could have contributed to the low response rate. A specific contact person for each employer facility is recommended if possible.**

**Although each program was identified on the survey instrument, the scantrons were not coded by program. Therefore, individual scantrons could not be readily identified by program for analyses.**

**Table 1.****Summary of demographic information of employer surveys****(n=20)\*****SFA graduate**

Yes (n) (%)	3 (15%)
No (n) (%)	17 (85%)

**Association with SFA programs**

Company hires SFA graduates (n) (%)	12 (60%)
Company hires SFA intern/ practicum students (n) (%)	8 (40%)

**Number of SFA students hired****in the past 5 years**

One (n) (%)	2 (10%)
Two (n) (%)	4 (20%)
Three (n) (%)	6 (30%)
Four (n) (%)	3 (15%)
Five (n) (%)	1 ( 5%)
Six or more (n) (%)	2 ( 10%)
None (n) (%)	2 (10%)

**Avenues through which you might  
contribute to the Dept. of Human Sciences****Intern placement**

Yes (n) (%)	18 (90%)
No (n) (%)	2 (10%)

**Student recruitment**

Yes (n) (%)	14 (70%)
No (n) (%)	6 (30%)

**Guest presentation**

Yes (n) (%)	17 (85%)
No (n) (%)	3 (15%)

**Advisory capacity**

Yes (n) (%)	9 (45%)
No (n) (%)	11 (55%)

**Committee service**

Yes (n) (%)	2 (10%)
No (n) (%)	18 (90%)

**Annual giving**

Yes (n) (%)	3 (15%)
No (n) (%)	17 (85%)

**Matched gift**

Yes (n) (%)	1 (5%)
No (n) (%)	19 (95%)

**Scholarship contribution**

Yes (n) (%)	4 (20%)
No (n) (%)	16 (80%)

**\*missing two**

**Table 2.****Summary of effectiveness of academic training of employer surveys (n=20)\***

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/</b>	<b>Agree/</b>	<b>Unsure/</b>	<b>Disagree/</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree/</b>	<b>NA</b>
Overall positive academic experience (n)	5	11	1			3
High quality of instruction (n)	3	13	2			2
Easy access to faculty (n)	2	6	7			5
Effective advising process (n)		4	9		1	6
Relevant areas/majors of study (n)	3	10	3		1	3
Appropriate course content (n)	1	11	4		1	3
Courses that develop critical thinking (n)	2	4	7	1	1	5
Awareness of computer-based technology (n)	4	7	4		1	4
Information on career opportunities (n)	2	6	8		1	3
Advise on paths for career advancement (n)		5	9	1	1	4
Realistic portrayal of profession (n)	1	7	8		1	3
Discussion of workplace trends (n)		4	11		1	4
Opportunities for student leadership (n)	1	7	7			5
Enhancement of interpersonal skills (n)		5	7	2	1	5

\*missing two

**Table 3.**

<b>Competencies met by program area (Food, Nutrition and Dietetics) (n=8)</b>				
<b>Professional Competencies</b>	<b>Rating (NA = Not Applicable)</b>			
Human physiology, microbiology and biochemistry	25% Excellent	63% Good	13% NA	
Human nutrition in health and disease	25% Excellent	63% Good	13% NA	
Food nutrient composition, sources of data	13% Excellent	75% Good	13% NA	
Food science, food preparation techniques	25% Excellent	75% Good	13% NA	
Menu planning for optimal nutrition	38% Excellent	50% Good-Aver	13% NA	
Principles of behavioral and social sciences		75% Good-Aver	25% NA	
Socioeconomic/cultural/psychological influences	13% Excellent	76% Good-Aver	13% NA	
Nutrition care delivery in community programs		75% Good-Aver	25% NA	
Effective communication/documentation	13% Excellent	63% Aver-Good	13% Poor	13% NA
Computers for data processing/information management		76% Good-Aver	25% NA	
Research methodology, statistical analysis	13% Excellent	68% Good-Aver	25% NA	
Educational principles, teaching methods	2% Excellent	63% Good-Aver	13% NA	
Interviewing and counseling techniques		88% Good-Aver	13% NA	
Organization and management principles		73% Good-Aver	25% Poor	13% NA
Human relations and group dynamics		75% Good-Aver	13% Poor	13% NA
Financial management		50% Average	25% Poor	25% NA
Human resource management	13% Excellent	63% Average	25% NA	
Quality assurance		73% Good-Aver	25% Poor	13% NA
Nutritional assessment/planning/intervention/evaluation	13% Excellent	76% Good-Aver	13% NA	
Procurement/food production/distribution/service	13% Excellent	68% Good-Aver	13% Poor	13% NA
Political and legislative process	13% Excellent	51% Good-Aver	25% Poor	13% NA
Laws/regulations/standards of dietetics	13% Excellent	63% Good-Aver	13% Poor	13% NA
Merchandising/promoting food and nutrition	13% Excellent	63% Good-Aver	13% Poor	13% NA
Nutrient needs for life cycle stages	38% Excellent	38% Good-Aver	13% NA	

**Table 4.**

<b>Competencies met by program area (Interior Design)</b>		<b>(n=9)</b>			
<b>Professional Competencies</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>(NA = Not Applicable)</b>			
Theory		78 % Good	11 % Average	11 % NA	
Basic and Creative Arts		67 % Good	22 % Average	11 % NA	
Interior Design	11 % Excellent	78 % Good			11 % NA
Technical Knowledge	33 % Excellent	44 % Good	11 % Average	11 % NA	
Communication Skills		33 % Good	56 % Average	11 % NA	
Profession		56 % Good	33 % Average	11 % NA	
History	11 % Excellent	44 % Good	33 % Average	11 % NA	
Information Gathering Techniques/ Research	11 % Excellent	33 % Good	44 % Average	11 % NA	

## Department of Human Sciences

## EMPLOYER SURVEY

## Food, Nutrition &amp; Dietetics Program

**Demographics**

**Instructions:** For each item below, please describe your status by shading a response on the Par-SCORE Test Form-200 answer sheet. Use a #2 pencil.

- |   |                 |   |        |       |
|---|-----------------|---|--------|-------|
| 1. SFA graduate                                     |                 | Avenues through which you might contribute to the |        |       |
| a. Yes  | b. No           | Department of Human Sciences                      |        |       |
| 2. Association with SFA programs                    |                 | 4. Intern placement                               | a. Yes | b. No |
| a. Company hires SFA graduates                      |                 | 5. Student recruitment                            | a. Yes | b. No |
| b. Company hires SFA intern/practicum students      |                 | 6. Guest presentation                             | a. Yes | b. No |
| 3. Number of SFA students hired in the past 5 years |                 | 7. Advisory capacity                              | a. Yes | b. No |
| a. One  | e. Five         | 8. Committee service                              | a. Yes | b. No |
| b. Two  | ab. Six or more | 9. Annual giving                                  | a. Yes | b. No |
| c. Three  | ac. None        | 10. Matched gift                                  | a. Yes | b. No |
| d. Four   |                 | 11. Scholarship contribution                      | a. Yes | b. No |

**Effectiveness of Academic Training**

**Instructions:** From your prior experience with SFA students and faculty, please indicate your opinion of how well the department serves its students by evaluating the general criteria listed below. Select a response for each item by referencing the following scale. If you lack knowledge on a particular item, please shade "Not Applicable."

- a. Strongly Agree    b. Agree    c. Unsure    d. Disagree    e. Strongly Disagree    ab. Not Applicable

**The department provided:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 12. Overall positive academic experience   | 19. Awareness of computer-based technology |
| 13. High quality of instruction            | 20. Information on career opportunities    |
| 14. Easy access to faculty                 | 21. Advise on paths for career advancement |
| 15. Effective advising process             | 22. Realistic portrayal of profession      |
| 16. Relevant areas/majors of study         | 23. Discussion of workplace trends         |
| 17. Appropriate course content             | 24. Opportunities for student leadership   |
| 18. Courses that develop critical thinking | 25. Enhancement of interpersonal skills    |

**Professional Competencies**

**Instructions:** Please indicate your opinion of how well the Food, Nutrition & Dietetics Program prepares its students in the specific professional competencies listed below. Use the following rating scale:

- a. Excellent    b. Good    c. Average    d. Poor    e. Not Applicable

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 26. Human physiology, microbiology, biochemistry         | 38. Interviewing and counseling techniques                  |
| 27. Human nutrition in health and disease                | 39. Organization and management principles                  |
| 28. Food nutrient composition, sources of data           | 40. Human relations and group dynamics                      |
| 29. Food science, food preparation techniques            | 41. Financial management                                    |
| 30. Menu planning for optimal nutrition                  | 42. Human resource management                               |
| 31. Principles of behavioral and social sciences         | 43. Quality assurance                                       |
| 32. Socioeconomic/cultural/psychological influences      | 44. Nutritional assessment/planning/intervention/evaluation |
| 33. Nutrition care delivery in community programs        | 45. Procurement/food production/distribution/service        |
| 34. Effective communication/documentation                | 46. Political and legislative process                       |
| 35. Computers for data processing/information management | 47. Laws/regulations/standards of dietetics                 |
| 36. Research methodology, statistical analysis           | 48. Merchandising/promoting food and nutrition              |
| 37. Educational principles, teaching methods             | 49. Nutrient needs for life cycle stages                    |

## Department of Human Sciences

## EMPLOYER SURVEY

## Interior Design Program

Demographics

Instructions: For each item below, please describe your status by shading a response on the Par-SCORE Test Form-200 answer sheet. Use a #2 pencil.

- |   |                 |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| 1. SFA graduate                                     |                 | Avenues through which you might contribute to the |                 |
| a. Yes  | b. No           | Department of Human Sciences                      |                 |
| 2. Association with SFA programs                    |                 | 4. Intern placement                               | a. Yes    b. No |
| a. Company hires SFA graduates                      |                 | 5. Student recruitment                            | a. Yes    b. No |
| b. Company hires SFA intern/practicum students      |                 | 6. Guest presentation                             | a. Yes    b. No |
| 3. Number of SFA students hired in the past 5 years |                 | 7. Advisory capacity                              | a. Yes    b. No |
| a. One  | e. Five         | 8. Committee service                              | a. Yes    b. No |
| b. Two  | ab. Six or more | 9. Annual giving                                  | a. Yes    b. No |
| c. Three  | ac. None        | 10. Matched gift                                  | a. Yes    b. No |
| d. Four   |                 | 11. Scholarship contribution                      | a. Yes    b. No |

Effectiveness of Academic Training

Instructions: From your prior experience with SFA students and faculty, please indicate your opinion of how well the department serves its students by evaluating the general criteria listed below. Select a response for each item by referencing the following scale. If you lack knowledge on a particular item, please shade "Not Applicable."

- a. Strongly Agree    b. Agree    c. Unsure    d. Disagree    e. Strongly Disagree    ab. Not Applicable

**The department provided:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 12. Overall positive academic experience   | 19. Awareness of computer-based technology |
| 13. High quality of instruction            | 20. Information on career opportunities    |
| 14. Easy access to faculty                 | 21. Advise on paths for career advancement |
| 15. Effective advising process             | 22. Realistic portrayal of profession      |
| 16. Relevant areas/majors of study         | 23. Discussion of workplace trends         |
| 17. Appropriate course content             | 24. Opportunities for student leadership   |
| 18. Courses that develop critical thinking | 25. Enhancement of interpersonal skills    |

Professional Competencies

Instructions: Please indicate your opinion of how well the Interior Design Program prepares its students in the specific professional competencies listed below. Use the following rating scale:

- a. Excellent    b. Good    c. Average    d. Poor    e. Not Applicable
26. Theory (design elements/principles, color, 3-D spatial composition, human behavior, proxemics, design planning, stylistic design)
  27. Basic & Creative Arts (2-D/3-D design fundamentals, creative arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.)
  28. Interior Design (design process, 3-D spatial development, human factors, space planning, furniture selection, application of elements/principles, finish materials, decorative elements, lighting)
  29. Technical Knowledge (furniture/cabinetry detailing, materials, codes and regulations, specifications, estimation, installation, construction systems, building systems, metric system, environmental concerns)
  30. Communication Skills (visual/oral presentations, writing skills, working drawings, word processing, CADD, computer graphics, other media such as video or photography)
  31. Profession (design organizations, related professions, business practices, ethics, relations with industry, project management, contract administration)
  32. History (interiors, art, architecture, furniture, textiles, accessories)
  33. Information Gathering Techniques/Research (surveys, literature search, observations, reference materials, awareness of research contributing to the body of knowledge in design)





**Department of Human Sciences**  
P. O. Box 13014, SFA Station • Nacogdoches, Texas 75962-3014  
Starr at Raguet • Human Sciences North Building, Room 101  
(409) 468-4502 - Office • (409) 468-2140 - FAX

---

April 28, 1999

FIELD(Name)  
FIELD(Title)  
FIELD(Company)  
FIELD(Department)  
FIELD(Address)  
FIELD(City, State Zip)

Dear FIELD(Salutation):

Stephen F. Austin State University is revitalizing its commitment to high quality learning and improvement in higher education. Part of this revitalization effort involves the assessment of each department's effectiveness in educating students. To this end, the faculty of the Department of Human Sciences has developed the following questionnaire and requests your input in this assessment effort.

Your participation in the survey is voluntary, but will be appreciated greatly. You play an invaluable role in employing graduates of programs in the Department of Human Sciences (formerly the Department of Home Economics). Data provided as a result of this survey will be utilized in strengthening the academic and internship components of the curriculum. No information will be released which will identify individual respondents. Please return the completed form in the envelope provided by **May 11, 1999**. For data scanning purposes, please do not fold the form. Postage will be paid by the department.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and continued support of SFA graduates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gloria E. Durr".

Gloria E. Durr  
Chair