

DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**ALUMNI SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS* – FALL 2010**

Respondents were from the graduating Class of 2008 – Survey was taken 18 months post graduation
Surveys were sent electronically via email (year prior they were sent via postal mail)
Response rate was 100% (all 14 alumni responded)

Note: All scores reported below are on a 5-point scale with 1 low and 5 high

- All were employed full time with salaries ranging from \$45,000->\$66,000 with modal response in the range of \$56-\$60,000. Most had found a job prior to or within 2 weeks of graduation and all within 6 months after receiving 1-14 job offers; 64% (n=9) received a job offer from a Fieldwork II site. More than not were offered a sign-on bonus, school loan payment, or scholarship. Nine (56%) are employed in the State of Ohio; other states of employment included MD, IL, FL, TN, & CO. When entering the workforce all felt somewhat prepared or very prepared.
- The majority (71%; n=10) continue to be members of their state occupational therapy association and more than half (54%; n=7) are members of their national occupational therapy association. Websites of both associations are visited by half or slightly more of the respondents on a monthly or annual basis.
- Of the four roles for which their education prepared them, graduates indicated they felt most prepared for the role of practitioner (4.5) and least for that of manager (3.8).
- When comparing their degree of preparation with the four categorical score areas of the NBCOT exam, graduates felt the most prepared in the area of upholding professional standards and responsibilities (4.7) and least in the area of gathering information regarding occupational performance (4.4). Overall, all felt either somewhat prepared or very prepared to take the examination.
- Of five content areas emphasized during their course of study, graduates found themselves applying information in the area of client-centered practice most often (100% used it daily) while application of assistive technology/adaptive equipment was used the least (5 used it daily, 2 weekly, 3 monthly, 3, annually, and 1 not at all).
- A majority (79%; n=11) felt satisfied or very satisfied with the professional behavior program and all rated their own professional behavior average or above when to colleagues who graduated from other universities.
- When asked about the education they received, 93% (n=13) felt satisfied or very satisfied; one felt neutral.
- Thirteen of the 14 alumni also responded to the question whether or not they would select Xavier's program again. Of those, 11 (78%) said they would; two would not (14%). Reasons for again selecting the program included assistance in getting a job, love of school/program/professors, excellence in assistive technology training, and the presence of well-rounded program. One person stated, "1. I love Xavier. Great school for my needs. 2. I loved the OT department. I loved the professors and their visible and genuine wants for me to progress to become a therapist. So many of them were willing to come in early or stay late to help me learn the material. I felt confident knowing that there were individuals who had my back." Reasons for not again selecting the program included a perceived focus on traditional undergraduate students and desire for a heavier medical component.
- Thirteen of the 14 alumni indicated whether or not they would recommend Xavier's program to others. Of those, 12 said they would (86%); one would not (7%). Reasons to recommend included strength of program, high degree of preparation for the certification exam and clinical practice, overall shorter

length of program compared to others, assistive technology training available, community connections gained. One person commented, “I think it was good overall, small and attentive classes, great professors, very professional.” Several persons stated reservations in recommending the program to non-traditional students as it appeared a challenge for them; additionally one noted a potential repeat of already developed professional behaviors, and one person pointed out feeling under-prepared in the area of anatomy/neuro.

- When asked to identify a specific strength of the program 12 (86%) of the graduates identified one to several strengths. Included were the following: community experiences, small class size, accessibility to professors, emphasis on research and professional behavior/ethics, instructor dedication and excellence, assistive technology, pediatric curriculum. One person stated, “The instructors’ dedication to our success was outstanding. Each day we had a new experience either in the field or by bringing the field to us.”
- When asked to identify a specific suggestion to improve the program, eleven (79%) offered at least one suggestion which included but was not limited to the following: lessen the focus on professional behavior, condense HOCS courses, technology, and/or professional issues courses to make room for more anatomy/physiology/neuro, place anatomy and kinesiology courses later in program to coincide with diagnosis course to improve application, emphasize concrete interventions, offer more courses like the Domains & Processes course, better assist struggling students.
- Nine of 13 responders indicated they remain affiliated with Xavier’s program (64%) while 4 indicated they do not (29%). Examples of affiliation included working on a manuscript, talking to professors on a professional level, loaning of material and advice, serving in role of fieldwork educator, coordinating assistive technology projects, connecting with Pi Theta Epsilon honor society, and continuing education opportunities. Several cited reasons why they don’t keep in touch including lack of time, not receiving communication from the Department, previous struggle through the program, and living at a distance.

* For further survey details contact the Department of Occupational Therapy at xuot@xavier.edu

Note: This Alumni Survey is one of approximately 30 ways Xavier’s Department of Occupational Therapy evaluates its program. The results affirmed the program’s strength in preparing students for the role of practitioner by the preponderance of hands-on learning, community-engaged learning experiences, and instructor’s dedication – these portions will be retained and continuously upgraded. Additionally, the results of this survey informed the program in the following ways: 1). A test of retained prior knowledge from required courses will be initiated for three courses: Anatomy & Physiology, Kinesiology, & Conditions Influencing Participation prior to the course that occurs later in the curriculum and is most closely associated with that content; in respective order the associated courses are: Kinesiology, Adaptations and Technology II, & Domains & Processes I & II; 2). Lab checkouts of range of motion and manual muscle testing along with a review of hands and upper extremity anatomy were added to the course *MOCT 603 Domains & Processes II* to further support mastery of this content; 3). The Department’s alumni contact information will be aligned with that from Xavier’s Development Office in hopes of reaching more alumni to inform of events and opportunities.

Alumni Survey Highlights/Master’s Program; Fall 2010; CRS