



STRATEGIC NATIONAL ARTS ALUMNI PROJECT

DataBrief

DataBrief provides arts educators and arts policy makers with highlights of SNAAP data and insights into the value of arts-school education. Contact us for more information.

Using a SNAAP Data Report to Answer Questions about Arts Alumni

SNAAP has released the [2011, 2012, & 2013 Aggregate Frequency Report](#) which contains the response frequencies for over 92,000 arts alumni who graduated from the 140 postsecondary institutions and 13 high schools that participated in SNAAP in the corresponding years.

The report is divided according to the topical areas of the [SNAAP questionnaire](#)—Education, Institutional Experiences, Career, Current Work, Arts Engagement, Respondent Characteristics, and Facts and Figures. Respondent Characteristics, including demographic questions and academic majors, are also presented. It provides the count or total numbers of alumni responding to each question in the SNAAP survey at each level (high school, undergraduate, and graduate) as well as the counts and percentages of alumni selecting each of the possible response options.

In this DataBrief, we provide an overview of the report and highlight examples of data that can be gleaned from the response frequencies.

Investigating Institutional Experiences

The SNAAP questionnaire asks a range of questions about arts graduates' experiences at their institutions: opportunities to perform, exhibit, or present their work, satisfaction with instructors, academic advising, career advising, etc. These questions appear in the *Institutional Experiences* section of the Aggregate Frequency Report (pages 24-32).

- *Sample Question:* How satisfied are arts alumni with the opportunity to work in artistic disciplines other than their own?
 - *Answer:* 74% of undergraduate (UG) alumni reported being "somewhat" or "very satisfied" with their ability to work in other artistic disciplines

while at school, whereas 62% of graduate level (GR) alumni are similarly satisfied (p. 24, #12.2)

- **Sample Question:** How well prepared were arts high school (HS) alumni for further education?
 - **Answer:** 74% of HS alumni reported they were "very well" prepared for further education, with only 1% saying "not well at all" (p. 27, #13)

The SNAAP survey tracks a series of 16 skills and competencies, including critical thinking, clear writing, persuasive speaking, and entrepreneurial skills.

- **Sample Question:** What are the top two skills that arts alumni say they developed at their institutions?
 - **Answer:** 62% of all alumni said that their institutions helped them acquire *creative thinking and problem solving* "very much" and 59% of all alumni said they acquired *artistic technique* "very much" (pp. 27-30, #14.4 and #14.10)
 - **Note:** The aggregate report breaks out response percentages by level (high school, undergraduate, graduate). To determine overall percentages for all alumni, add the number responding for all three levels for a specific response option (numerator) and divide by the sum of the total number responding for all three levels (denominator).

Additionally, the *Institutional Experiences* section captures the extent to which alumni utilized institutional support services since graduating, such as advising, careers services, and continuing education, among others.

- **Sample Question:** What types of services do arts alumni most utilize from their institutions?
 - **Answer:** Since leaving their institution, 40% of HS alumni, 28% of UG alumni, and 33% of GR alumni took advantage of networking opportunities offered by their institutions. Even more utilized "continued access to mentors and teachers": 43% of HS alumni, 33% UG, and 49% GR (p. 32, #18.4 and #18.6).

Investigating Careers of Arts Alumni

A wide range of data in the Aggregate Frequency Report shed light on the lives of arts alumni after they leave their institutions. The *Career* and *Current Work* sections (pages 33-58) provide information related to current and former occupations, job satisfaction, relevance of arts training to their employment, most valued skills in current jobs, etc. The data can help depict the immediate career paths for individuals who receive an undergraduate degree versus those who receive a graduate degree in the arts.

- **Sample Question:** How long did it take to find employment following graduation?
 - **Answer:** 69% of GR alumni reported finding employment prior to leaving their institution or within the first four months of graduation, whereas 62% of UG alumni reported the same (p. 33, #20)
- **Sample Question:** How closely related was that first work to their artistic training?
 - **Answer:** 62% of GR alumni reported that their first job or work experience was closely related to their training, compared to 47% of UG alumni (p. 33, #21)

The data also suggest that arts alumni find work in a variety of occupational areas, both inside and outside of the arts.

- *Sample question:* What kinds of careers outside the arts are available for people with an intensive arts education?
 - *Answer:* The top 3 occupations outside of the arts pursued by UG arts alumni are Education, training, and library (37%), Sales (30%), and Communications (29%); for GR alumni the top 3 non-arts occupations are Education, training, and library (52%), Office and administrative support (27%), and Communications (26%). (p.34, #22)

A myriad of other questions can be answered that illustrate the lives and careers of arts graduates.

- *Sample question:* What percentage of those respondents who either currently or previously worked as a professional artist were at some point self-employed in their capacity as artists?
 - *Answer:* All but 4% of current or past professional artists have at some point been self-employed, an independent contractor, or a freelance worker in their capacity as an artist (p. 38, #32)
- *Sample question:* What percentage of all arts alumni have ever worked as arts administrators?
 - *Answer:* 38% (p. 35, #24)
- *Sample Question:* What is the most frequent reason that arts alumni report for leaving the arts as a profession?
 - *Answer:* Higher pay or steadier income in other fields is the number one reason that arts alumni move to other occupations (HS 19%; UG 20%; GR 15%) (p. 37, #28)

Beyond the Aggregate Frequency Report

As described above, the [2011, 2012, & 2013 Aggregate Frequency Report](#) is a good resource for quickly referencing data on the educational experiences, lives, and careers of arts alumni.

In addition, the visually graphic [SnaapShot](#) has just been updated with the most recent data.

SNAAP also offers other customized services to address your research interests. For example, if you would like more in depth analysis on a particular topic, SNAAP can provide customized/tailored reports—please contact us for a "Special Analysis" quote.

Alternatively, qualified researchers can purchase access to raw de-identified SNAAP data through a data sharing agreement. For further details, contact snaap@indiana.edu.

SNAAP's 2014 Annual Report is set for release in Fall 2014. It will focus on the educational and career experiences of recent graduates, providing much needed information for arts educators, professionals, and advocates interested in promoting the next generation of arts alumni.



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