



Northern Arizona University

**Preliminary Comparison of the 2003 and 2004
Alumni Survey Reports**

**Office of Planning and Institutional Research
Northern Arizona University**

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Northern Arizona University

Preliminary Examination of the 2004 Alumni Survey Results

Background and Purpose

For the past seven years, Northern Arizona University has been surveying its alumni in order to keep track of their graduate school and/or employment activities, and to have them reflect on their experience at the university. In addition to postgraduate activities, the alumni are asked to rate their satisfaction on such topics as the faculty, career preparation, advising, the extent to which they were helped in the development of certain basic skills, and their overall experience. This feedback from alumni allows NAU to shape programs to help the university better meet the academic and personal needs of future students.

The purpose of this preliminary examination is to provide the campus community with a preview of the results and the forthcoming report that will be completed within the next several months.

This fall, 2004, the Social Research Laboratory administered a phone survey to 403 students that had graduated in 2000 or 2001. This sample size yields an error rate below ± 5 percent.

Summary of Responses on the Alumni Survey

Overall Experience Ratings: When alumni were asked how they would rate his or her overall undergraduate experience at NAU, 98% of the respondents reported a rating of either *excellent* or *good*. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the alumni respondents reported that they would still chose to attend NAU.

Employment After Graduating: Forty-seven percent of alumni have or are currently pursuing a graduate or professional degree and 91% of respondents have been regularly employed since graduation. Eighty-five percent of the respondents that have been employed are employed in a job that is related to their field of study.

Academic Experience Ratings: Respondents were asked to evaluation several aspects of their educational experiences at NAU including advising, general academics, faculty, their major field of study, and experiences outside the classroom. These results are summarized in tables 1 – 5 below. Overall satisfaction in the areas of general academics, faculty, major field of study, and experiences outside the classroom are all overwhelmingly positive with the majority of respondents indicating satisfaction ratings in the 90 – 100% range for all indicators.

Table 1. Satisfaction with General Academics

Satisfaction with General Academics	% of R's that were Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
	2003	2004
R's satisfaction with challenge of academic coursework at NAU	96.3%	95.3%
R's satisfaction with variety of courses offered outside of major	94.2%	94.3%
R's satisfaction with ability to register in courses outside of major	90.6%	93.4%

Table 2. Satisfaction with Major Field of Study

Satisfaction with Major Field of Study	% of R's that were Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
	2003	2004
R's overall satisfaction with quality of major department	95.8%	95.0%
R's satisfaction with ability to register for required major courses	95.5%	94.3%
R's satisfaction with challenge of major coursework	92.8%	92.3%
R's satisfaction with preparation in major for career	85.3%	84.1%

Table 3. Satisfaction with Faculty

Satisfaction with Faculty	% of R's that were Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
	2003	2004
R's satisfaction with quality of faculty instruction	95.5%	96.5%
R's satisfaction with availability of faculty	94.5%	97.0%

Table 4. Evaluation of Experiences Outside the Classroom

Experiences Outside the Classroom	% of R's that were Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
	2003	2004
R's satisfaction with social experience at NAU	97.2%	97.4%
R's satisfaction with overall customer service	90.5%	90.2%
R's satisfaction with choice of extra activities available?	90.1%	93.0%
R's satisfaction with campus involvement activities	91.0%	94.6%

Table 5. Alumni Satisfaction with Advising

Alumni Satisfaction with Advising	% of R's that were Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
	2003	2004
R's satisfaction with advising regarding career goals	84.2%	83.4%
R's satisfaction with the academic advising prior to declaring a major	83.4%	83.2%
R's satisfaction with advising in major field	80.4%	83.3%
How often was R's advisor available when needed	77.4%	80.9%

Appendix A loosely groups student comments by category.

Appendix A 2004 Alumni Comments

General Positive Comments

Definitely say that NAU prepared her for a career as a teacher and to function well in society.

Enjoyed her years at NAU.

Good school, great location.

Great four years!

Great learning and social environment.

Great school!

Had multiple advisors. The first three were not so great. Jacob Neils did a really good job of pointing me towards grad. And the future, not so much with classes and requirements. Great help with personal development. Was an RA. Res life was great.

I'm back at NAU getting my second bachelor's degree.

I'm very happy with my degree. It's gotten me into my job that I currently have by attending and graduating from NAU

I absolutely loved it, my only concern was the lack of notoriety of the college. I am from California and nobody knows about NAU. I didn't get many job offers from out-of- state as I did from Arizona.

I enjoyed the time I was there. I don't know much of what is going on, but as of three years ago it was a great school.

I got a really good education and I enjoyed my 4 years at NAU.

I had a good time at NAU, great experience. I like Flagstaff the town, that also made it a good experience. If I went back for my masters, as I majored in geology, I would go back to NAU. The geology dept was great.

I had a great time when I was up there. I learned a lot and developed quite a few relationships.

I had a really wonderful undergrad at NAU I am at the graduate program at Univ of Washington and I was prepared or more prepared than other students and they were coming from big name universities.

I just really appreciated being at a smaller school, professors were more available. Also I worked for residence life and they did a really good job trying to get students involved. It was effective.

I just think it's a great environment to go to school in.

I just think really highly of NAU. And would recommend it to others.

I like NAU, small school, very great teachers, very good engineering dept.

I liked the small class sizes in my major; the instructors are very interested on a personal level of their student's growth. I really liked living in the all girls dorm.

I love it.

I loved NAU.

I loved NAU. If NAU had better job opportunities I would still be there.

I miss NAU.

I really enjoyed my four years at NAU. It was a great experience and I met my wife there. It couldn't have been better.

I really enjoyed NAU because people were always available.

I recommend NAU to everyone.

I registered to U of A for a week and by far NAU is a more person-oriented school.

I thought the experience was fine.

It's a great campus and she always recommends it to her students.

It's the best school ever, I'm trying to get my brother to go there. I couldn't have been more happy going to NAU.

It was a nice campus (she got a degree in education).

It was a satisfying experience.

It was everything I needed for my schedule. It met all my needs at the time.

Liked it, no criticism.

Appendix A

2004 Alumni Comments

Loves NAU she likes the small school and the environment.
Loves NAU.
NAU is a good experience and recommends it to anyone who lives in Arizona.
NAU is the best school in the state of Arizona.
NAU was a great university.
Outstanding experience non-typical students.
Outstanding experience.
Overall NAU is a good school for students to attend, academically their programs are up to date with technology.
The campus life is great. Everyone from different corners of the USA come to the school and the atmosphere is laid-back.
Overall, I was very happy. If it wasn't for my advisors and the staff, I would have been lost.
Really felt like I was treated as an individual not as a number.
Recommends NAU to everyone. Has a good overall choice of academics delivery systems are a lot of choices.
Financial aid office does a very good job. Tech support have been more than helpful. Library staff was very helpful.
Sent my daughter to NAU because I was so pleased... I loved my experience.
The overall atmosphere at NAU is very positive and I would like to return to that setting again.
This makes me remember NAU. I had a great time at NAU.
Very good school.
Very helpful at NAU.
Very nice experience and I hope to come back over the web to get my masters.
Very positive experience. Recommended to other people.
Very satisfied with NAU.

Faculty Specific Comments

CJ Smith was really inspirational and that is the reason why I am doing what I'm doing
Dr. Adkins, Dr. Allan, Dr, Kilpatrick did an extremely good job.
Dr. Aldaz is a wonderful and great teacher and great advisor.
Found NAU experience satisfying mostly from the professors.
I enjoyed the one-on-one with the professors.
I had phenomenal instructors in the music department.
I really enjoyed, sociology and social work faculty did a very good job!
I think some NAU instructors should be less conservative and open to other ideas.
It's a very good school with good contact with professors. The social residence environment could use some work and keep the campus beautiful.
Lacks professor qualities. Professor at his community college sank in more. NAU could improve in having better professors.
Most teachers were fine...but had a few condescending remarks such as "honey."
One thing that sets NAU apart from the other Arizona universities is that it's more personable in the sense that the classes are smaller and the teachers actually know who you are.
Pam Frotty, Dr. Abrey, environmental history 405 professor were the key components of my positive experience at NAU.
Patrick Hannon was a very good teacher and advisor at the time.

Statewide / Satellite Programs

Appreciate opportunity for state-wide programs.
Attended NAU in Yuma, AZ. They need to have more social clubs in the NAU branch there. And more diversity and more activities. She says they only have two clubs.

Appendix A

2004 Alumni Comments

Because I wasn't on the main campus a lot of the questions don't apply. Since NAU has a spread of campuses in the state they might want to take that into consideration on the next survey. But I was happy with my experience and my profs at NAU.

Cac in college (NAU branch) lacked communication w/ campus in Flagstaff. Campus here is better. There's no communication as far as w/ the campus in Flagstaff. For ex: they would never help him out w/ coursework. Comments I would add would be for extension courses and degrees would have to have more choices/options of classes. I found classes I would like to take were only offered every three semesters or so. I am talking about the satellite camp.

For the distant students increasing the variety of degrees offered.

I'm glad that they have the satellite program for people in rural communities.

I attended NAU Yavapai and I feel like that program should expand and more attention should be paid to it as well.

I did my grad work in the state wide program, my professors were adjunct, I feel like I was cheated out of those classes b/c they weren't in touch with the programs or what was going on in the classes in comparison to the full-time faculty.

I like the web courses. Makes classes more available (took them after undergraduate degree).

I really appreciate that they have the statewide program otherwise I wouldn't have been able to get a degree without it.

I really like the extended courses, but I can't afford it because of the tuition increase. But I really like how NAU has the availability to take classes throughout the state.

I wish that NAU Yuma would do a lot more for their students the way NAU flag does.

In Yuma too few degrees are offered. Degrees offered don't have same flexibility, choices for classes, as in Flagstaff. Severely disappointed in Yuma courses, Yuma degrees aren't as valuable as NAU degrees. Same prices as flag, but not good.

It would be nice if they could get the valley students more involved in more extracurricular activities. Or if they had more activities for them at that campus in Scottsdale.

Keep adding web courses, then people can get online education.

Lives in Yuma but thinks that because tuition prices are going up. They are not thinking about Yuma schools and how they are affected.

More long distance classes.

Need to be a bit more organized with their statewide program.

Need to revamp the entire business at NAU Yuma. Would be able to take extra classes for a degree but they weren't offered.

Very good experience. Glad they have statewide program. Keep adding classes to statewide program.

Would like more choice in fine arts/visual arts in the statewide program.

Student Service Related Comments

Administration in general should be more supportive towards the Greek system.

Advisor was Mel Mcknight and was very good.

As far as my experience at NAU the key to my success was the multicultural student center.

Clubs availability to go to more field trips.

Customer service at parking services was never very good, also more hands on critical experience in the nursing department.

Difficult to register for classes.

I'm glad you're asking q's about the advising because that was the most lacking of my experience at NAU.

I don't think the university puts enough emphasis on extracurricular activities (Greek life/student government), you can learn more outside the classroom than you do inside (real life experiences), more supportive of outside org.

Appendix A

2004 Alumni Comments

I think NAU's advisement for students is poor and I think NAU's residence life is poor, but other than that it's okay.

I think that there should be more counseling with career choices. In other words, more help translating academic knowledge into real world experience.

I think that they are definitely making an effort now to improve advising and everything in general.

I thought it was very well organized, I never had any problems getting answers to my questions, and the people were very amiable, the staff was very good.

I was very happy with my whole experience except for my academic advisor.

I would just say do more for career placement and exposure to different companies.

If they want to call me and ask me more about my academic advisor I could definitely fill them in.

More computers available in classrooms.

Parking services are ridiculous.

Registrar and the people who work there were very helpful and they would go out of their way to make you feel comfortable.

Satisfied with counseling until they changed counsels. Kept on changing counselors. Keep counselors constant.

Signing up for courses and getting advisement, clerical stuff was difficult as an out of state student.

The advisors were not that helpful at all. The advisors were always busy or not available. I ended up taking a lot of classes I didn't need to. Some professors were good others weren't.

The departments didn't seem to work as a whole, the departments would always send me somewhere else, not a lot of clarity as to who to see about a problem.

The only problem I had was that on snow days the maintenance people piled the snow on the handicap spots. So it was really hard for the handicap parking spaces to be available.

Though, overall was good, bring in more people from certain industries to talk to students to help the transition from school to career, CEO's or recent graduates to teach skills and less group work.

Tonya Muae academic advisor, campus in Phoenix, she was outstanding.

Trying to get credit from previous university coursework was a hassle. People working at the transcripts office were not helpful at all.

Would be happy if they replaced a really bad advisor, *****. ***** nothing was ever done while she was there. Basically, advisors need more professionalism.

Major / Program Specific Comments

Being a teacher I have always recommended people to go to NAU because of the education I received. Been told that I am better prepared than grads from U of A. The tech making our own website. Very satisfied w/ NAU. Will attend for masters.

Biology doesn't have dedicated science advisor. More out state tuition.

Business and management majors...there is not much diversity in that field. They brainwashed students w/ right-wing curriculum. Punished students with other opinions. Business is very prejudiced in general.

Care more about student teaching. Sedona internship program, teachers took too much power, I did not like that. More based on how much money you have and want to spend on your assignment.

College of business was extremely slanted towards republican values. I feel they were brainwashing students and reprimanding those with other ideals.

Did more "on-hand" on the job for more experience in my major (management).

Education department was excellent.

Education programs in general are lacking in preparing teachers to teach. However, NAU is better than most in helping people become teachers. (she was in the satellite program in Nogales).

Education staff was very good but the web programs need for example: mini program classes to help develop skills for students that are not that comfortable using the web.

English dept. Is very well organized.

Appendix A 2004 Alumni Comments

Everything up to student teaching was great. During student teaching the college of education just failed me. They weren't interested in my feelings. ***** ruined my college career.

Felt the fine art program is neglected, feel it could be a good program, feels a lot of attention and money went to theatre, but not the art department. In general, the staff was low and the class selection was shrinking, low moral of staff.

Hotel restaurant program was just starting out, it was very beneficial.

I am really upset with the way the college of business professors treated students who were not republican. They were very biased towards republicans and treated students with democratic views disrespectfully.

I don't want to see the engineering department closed.

I think that I could have used more time in the classroom during my education programming.

I think the college of education was amazing, I moved back to California and the teachers in California didn't receive half the education I received at NAU.

I think the education department should raise its bar. The education department has lowered its bar so far that anyone can get a degree regardless of intelligence. They should broaden their outlook. The classes were repetitive.

I think the history dept. Is excellent and Cynthia Kosso is an excellent teacher. Everything else with the school needs some improvement.

I was a computer information systems major and I was dissatisfied with the relevancy of the computer technology, we were taught out-of-date software. The career advising wasn't as good as it should have been either.

I was a music major and I loved the music program, especially the choral faculty.

I would say that they need to bring people in from professional areas because their business department is pretty bad.

If I were to do it again, I would choose sociology because I loved all of the sociology profs. More sociology should be emphasized at NAU.

Improvement the allied health profession, I had problems enrolling into dental school.

In general all of the classes I took in the sciences and arts and everything in the education program was so far below my expectations I can't even rate it.

In parks and rec department, used a lot of computer classes that were pathetic and a waste of time. ***** would put everything on the internet and then re-read. It was repetitious and not for the real world.

Nursing was undergoing a lot of changes, hence the dissatisfaction in my answers.

Religious studies department was excellent. Praise to all professors at the religious studies board. Humanities in general was good.

Rumors poly tech., leave it a four year college not a tech.

School of communication's computer programs were not applicable in the real world. Was a little behind.

School of communication was excellent.

Science - needs more undergraduate student work, need to get students involved more (undergrads).

She likes the experience the women's studies department the psychology department languages-not enough variety-the department needs more faculty. NAU is a good diverse campus and it's very tolerant.

Speech pathology, I recommend they bring that stuff over.

The college of education needs to warn students about teaching. It is very competitive and not all teachers are able to work with others.

The English department is excellent and they're doing a great job over there.

The music program needs to have more finance to give more education to students. Teachers are great but they need more money to back up music program. Faculty need more finance to stay at NAU.

The nursing faculty was excellent and you go through the program as a group so you really get to know each other. I was going through a difficult time in my life and everyone was very supportive and understanding. I can't say enough.

The reason why some of my answers were very dissatisfied was one of my nursing classes almost lost their

Appendix A

2004 Alumni Comments

accreditation. 7 out of 25 students failed the boards the first time.

The recreation management program was outstanding and so were all of the professors. I recommend the program to anyone who shows the slightest bit of interest in it.

This survey is based for freshmen going all the way through. I scored low for some things I didn't need or want to experience. I think the physics and astronomy department was very good and I'd recommend them to anybody.

Area that NAU should improve / Other Comments

Better football team.

I just wish it wasn't so expensive to live there. When I moved off-campus I had problems just trying to survive. Once I went back for my second degree funding stopped except 4 loans. Wish there were more opportunity for 2nd degree.

I transferred credits from three different universities and NAU accepted all of them. I was very pleased, NAU was very accommodating, housing department should have contracts for one semester not only for whole year-I was upset about that.

Likes the faculty and the criminal justice department. However, advising for SBS was awful. The faculty in terms of preparation. Edu. NAU didn't prepare him at all. NAU could never prepare him for what he's doing right now getting law degree.

Lived in a rural community and lacked the social/academic skills. I wasn't really prepared for NAU. My education was 2nd choice. I struggled with academics. If I had paid attention to work study, I would have had more skills and be successful.

Make it cost less and don't have kids right after graduation.

More availability of classes like cultural classes an example would be more Chicano studies, African American studies, and for dorms making them more apartment style and comfortable for the students to live in.

More graduate degree programs.

Most of my answers only apply to my two departments--religious studies and philosophy--because I did my liberal studies at other schools.

The social research lab at NAU was very good.

The study abroad program was excellent.

The survey is too long, you guys have to send this by mail next time.

The university and department I came from was in the top 5 schools in the nation. It was more of a choice to come to Flagstaff rather than to the university.

Who sees these comments? [answered office of alumni relations].

It was very difficult to register for classes online and the availability of courses was slim.

NAU is not focused enough in developing fine arts programs and events. These are crucial to the development of the university's students and the community as a whole.

Started in 94 transferred to another college, came back. Catalogs, registration, technology implementation was very poor. Long lines during registration because technology wasn't ready. Not impressed with engineering major.