

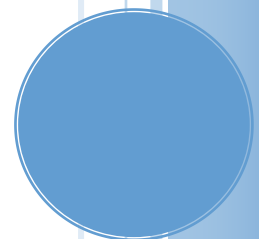
2020 PERU STATE ALUMNI SURVEY

Class of 2015

Five years after graduating with baccalaureate degrees from Peru State, 98.6% of respondents are employed. Sixty-seven percent are working full-time within their degree field, with the average salary being \$54,845, and 48.6% either enrolled in a graduate/professional program or completed an advanced degree (this number is of those that completed the survey).

Kristin Buscher

9/3/2020



Contents

Overview	2
Methodology	2
Response Rate	2
Findings	2
Subpopulation Differences	2
Factors to Enroll	3
Academic and Co-curricular Experiences	5
Career Preparation	6
Employment Outcomes	10
Graduate and Professional Program Outcomes	12
Satisfaction/Perceptions Ratings	14
Alumni Comments	16
References	17

2020 PERU STATE ALUMNI SURVEY

Class of 2015

OVERVIEW

This is the seventh year that this alumni survey has been administered, which was internally developed to assess employment, their experiences at Peru State, and to help measure learning outcomes five years post-graduation; prior to 2013, the ACT Alumni survey was utilized. The development of the survey was accomplished through a collaborative effort involving the assessment committee, the prior Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the prior Director of Assessment, Research, and Retention.

METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire was constructed in-house using SurveyMonkey. PeopleSoft queries were run against the Peru State student information system to identify 255 members of the Class of 2015 and pulled all available email and postal addresses. Over a period of four weeks, three separate invitations to participate in the survey were distributed. An email invitation was sent with a link to the online survey and then they received two reminder emails encouraging them to participate. All communications were spread out over the four weeks. In an effort to increase response rates, any alumni that completed were entered into a drawing to win one of 25 PSC alumni t-shirts.

RESPONSE RATE

Sixty-two responses were received, representing a 24% response rate, which is a 4% decrease compared to last year, but higher compared to 2017 and 2016 (2017 – 21.4%; 2016 – 13.9%).

FINDINGS

Subpopulation Differences

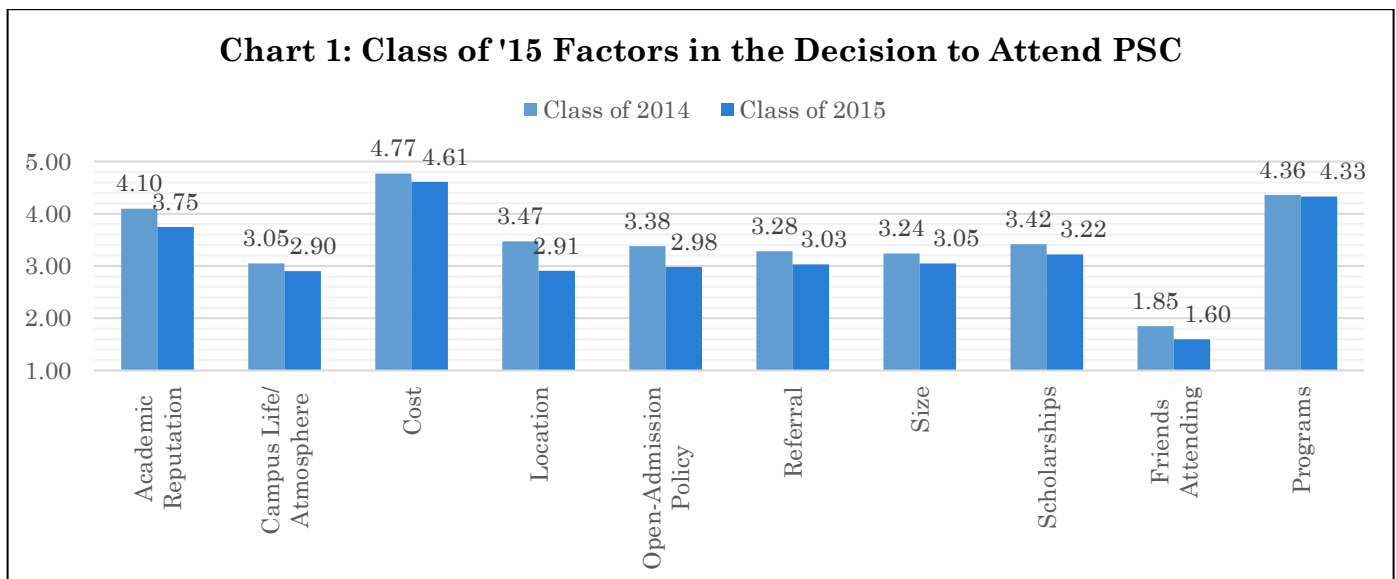
Information on respondents' characteristics as undergraduate students at Peru State was collected to identify differences in perspectives among various subpopulations of students. Percentages do not add up to 100% because some respondents did not answer the question. Table 1 shows the demographics of the alumni and Table 2 identifies certain educational characteristics, found on the next page:

Table 1: PSC Survey Respondent Demographics, 2015 Alumni	
Female	66.1%
Male	27.4%
Under 35 years of age	56.5%
Alumni of Color	14.5%
White	74.2%
First-generation	71.0%

Table 2: PSC Survey Respondent Educational Characteristics, 2015 Alumni	
On-campus only	12.9%
Mostly on campus	35.5%
Mostly online	9.7%
Online only	40.3%
Traditional (attended directly after graduating HS)	33.9%
Non-traditional (No college credit & waited at least 1 year)	16.1%
Transfer Student	50.0%
Identified Peru as college of top choice	50.0%

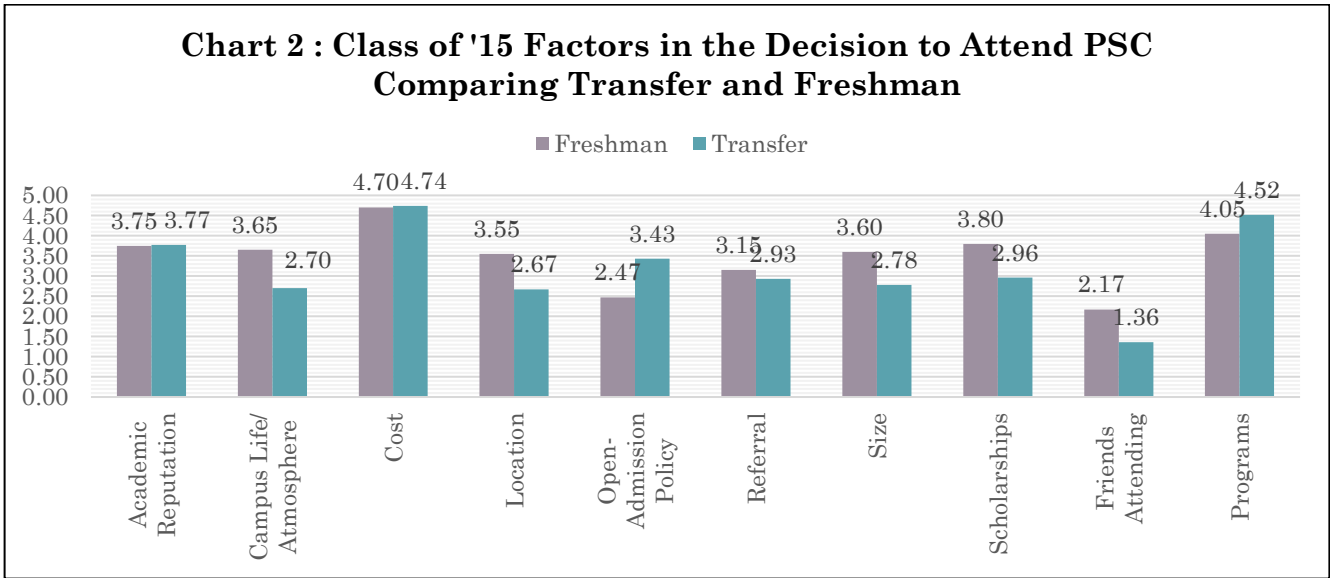
Factors to Enroll

Cost, types of programs available, and academic reputation were the top reasons cited for choosing Peru State. Even though the top reasons are consistent to past years, the 2015 alumni rated these factors higher than past alumni did. Overall ratings are shown in Chart 1 below:



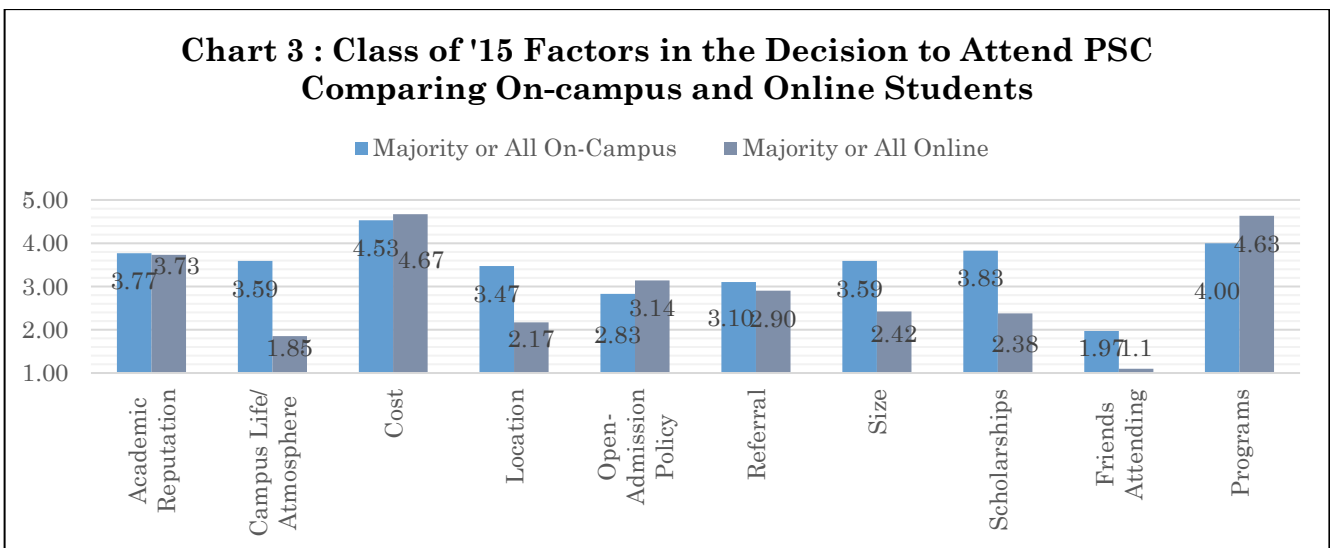
In comparing to last year, respondents rated all factors lower, but still consider Cost, Programs, and Academic Reputation as the top three, same as previous years. The national trend is very similar and in fact the top two factors are financial aid and academic reputation and they have stayed consistent over time. (Ruffalo Noel Levitz, 2019).

When disaggregating by freshman versus transfer students, they all agree on the same top two reasons for choosing Peru State College (Programs and Cost), but their third top reasons were different; transfers was academic reputation and freshman was size followed closely by scholarships. Location and atmosphere were much more important to the freshman than transfer students were, but that could be because 60% of the transfer students took mainly online courses versus 13% of freshman. This can all be seen in Chart 2 on page 4.



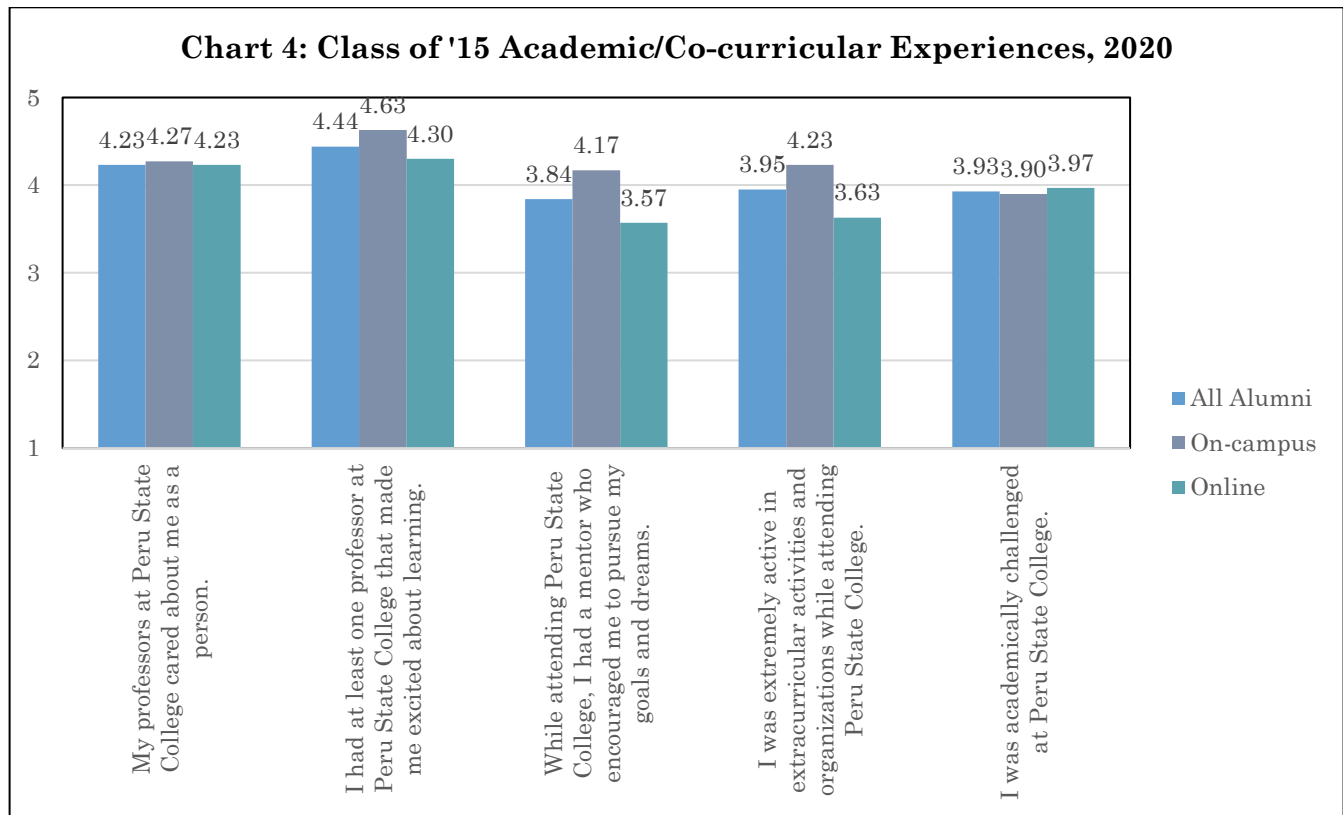
When disaggregating by those who took majority of their classes online versus on-campus, the top two reasons are the same which are cost and program, but their third choices are different. The freshmen rated scholarships as the third highest factor in their decision to attend PSC and the transfers rated academic reputation as the third highest (freshman also rated academic reputation high). It is not surprising that the freshman rated scholarships higher than the transfer students because the freshman have more options for scholarships.

In spring of 2018 and 2020, we administered the Ruffalo Noel Levitz student satisfaction surveys to both on-campus and online students, and they were asked about the factors that influenced their decision to enroll. The online students ranked convenience, work schedule, and cost as the top three factors. The on-campus students ranked cost, financial aid, and academic reputation as the top three factors (Ruffalo Noel Levitz, 2020). Cost continues to be the top reason that our current students and alumni decided to participate, followed by the programs. The on-campus students put higher emphasis on the scholarships, which is the same as our freshman, where our online students put higher emphasis on the academic reputation. Majority of respondents that indicated that they were freshman also indicated that they took majority or all of their courses on-campus. Please see the comparison below in Chart 3:



Academic and Co-curricular Experiences

The following aspects of a college experience were found to have a significant impact on alumni satisfaction and success post-graduation especially with their job/career (Gallup, 2018), showing in chart 4:



When comparing the on-campus students to the online students, there are significant differences related to the questions about having at least one professor making them excited about learning and having a mentor encouraging them to pursue their goals and dreams.

Table 3 compares these statements by each school. Arts and Science alumni rate these highest, followed by Education, and then Professional Studies.

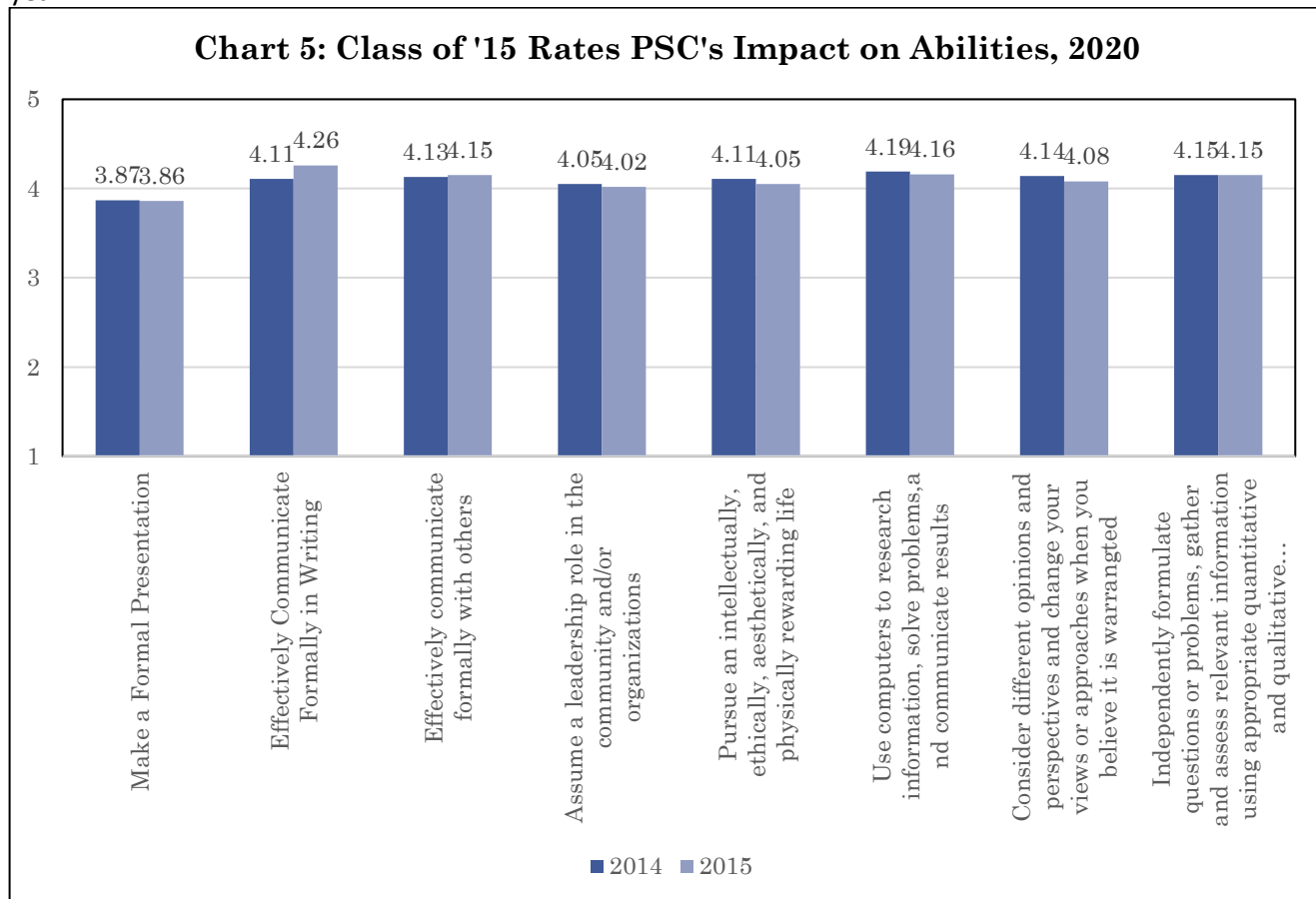
Table 3: Academic/Co-curricular Experiences by School, 2015 Alumni					
	Caring Professors	Excited About Learning	Had an Encouraging Mentor	Extremely Involved	Academically Challenged
AS	4.40	4.70	4.60	4.30	4.00
ED	4.20	4.60	3.95	4.05	3.90
PS	4.40	4.27	3.50	3.77	3.93

Since majority of our online programs are in Professional Studies, it was important to disaggregate those alumni responses by modality. Table 4, shows the differences:

Table 4: Academic/Co-curricular Experiences by School, 2015 Professional Studies Alumni (Modality)					
	Caring Professors	Excited About Learning	Had an Encouraging Mentor	Extremely Involved	Academically Challenged
On-campus	4.40	4.60	3.60	4.20	3.60
Online	4.21	4.25	3.54	3.63	4.00

Career Preparation

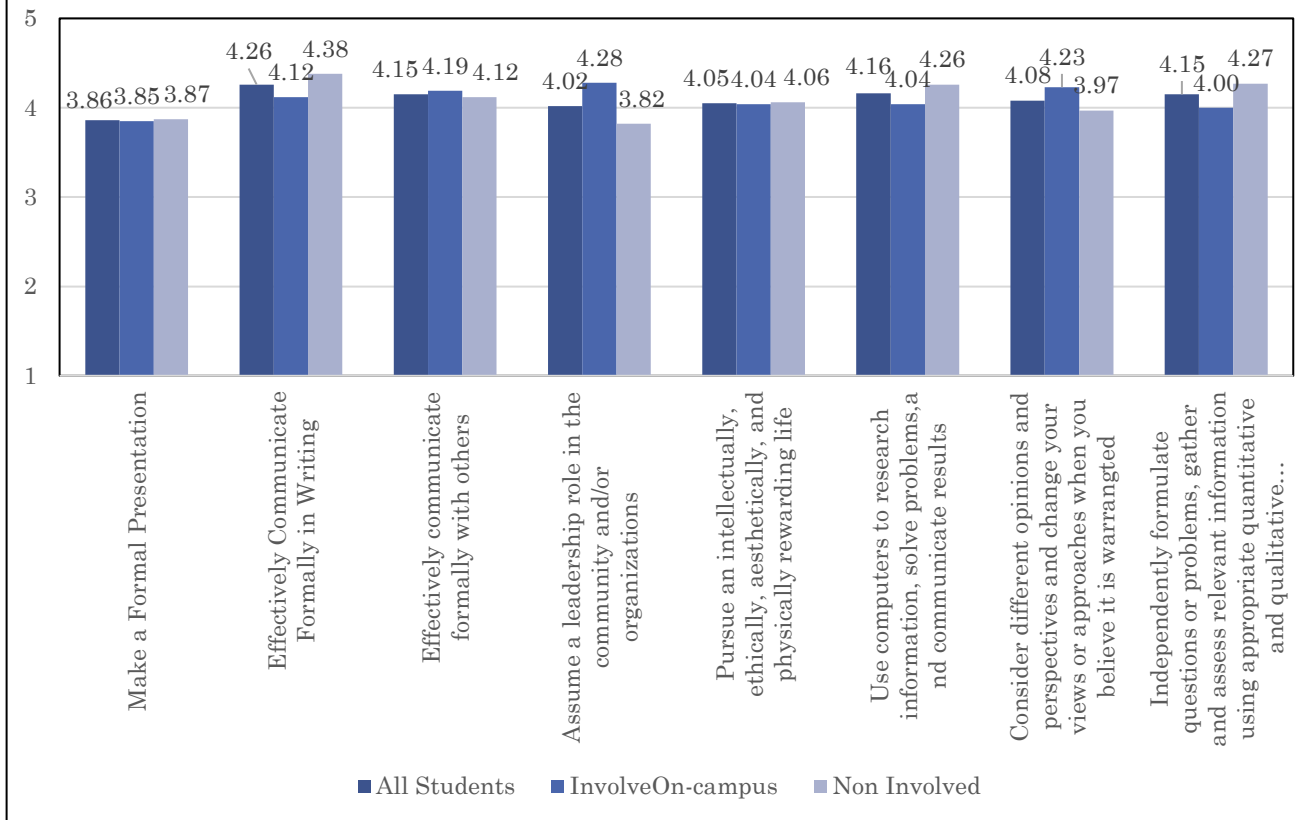
Overall ratings of the college’s impact on various abilities are summarized below in Chart 5, comparing to past year:



In comparing to the results of last year’s survey, class of 2015 alumni who participated in the survey rated their education at Peru State College’s impact on the identified abilities (the institutional learning goals) similar to the class of 2014 participants. The biggest gap was related to their communication through writing, where we saw a slight increase from last year (0.15).

They rate most of these abilities at similar levels except for making a formal presentation, which indicates that we as an institution should be working to better prepare students to make a formal presentation.

Chart 6: Class of '15 Rates PSC's Impact on Abilities, 2020



Alumni were also asked if they were involved in a leadership role or student club or organization while at Peru State, and the results reflect a big difference between those involved on-campus versus those that were not for the learning outcomes, particularly related to assuming a leadership role and considering different opinions and perspectives. These differences are reflected in Chart 6.

There were some differences between how on-campus students rated online students. The online alumni rated communicating in writing, using computers to find information to solve problems, and gather and assess information using relevant qualitative and quantitative techniques. The areas that the on-campus students rated higher was related to the ability to assume a leadership role and consider different opinions and perspectives. These differences are reflected in Chart 7.

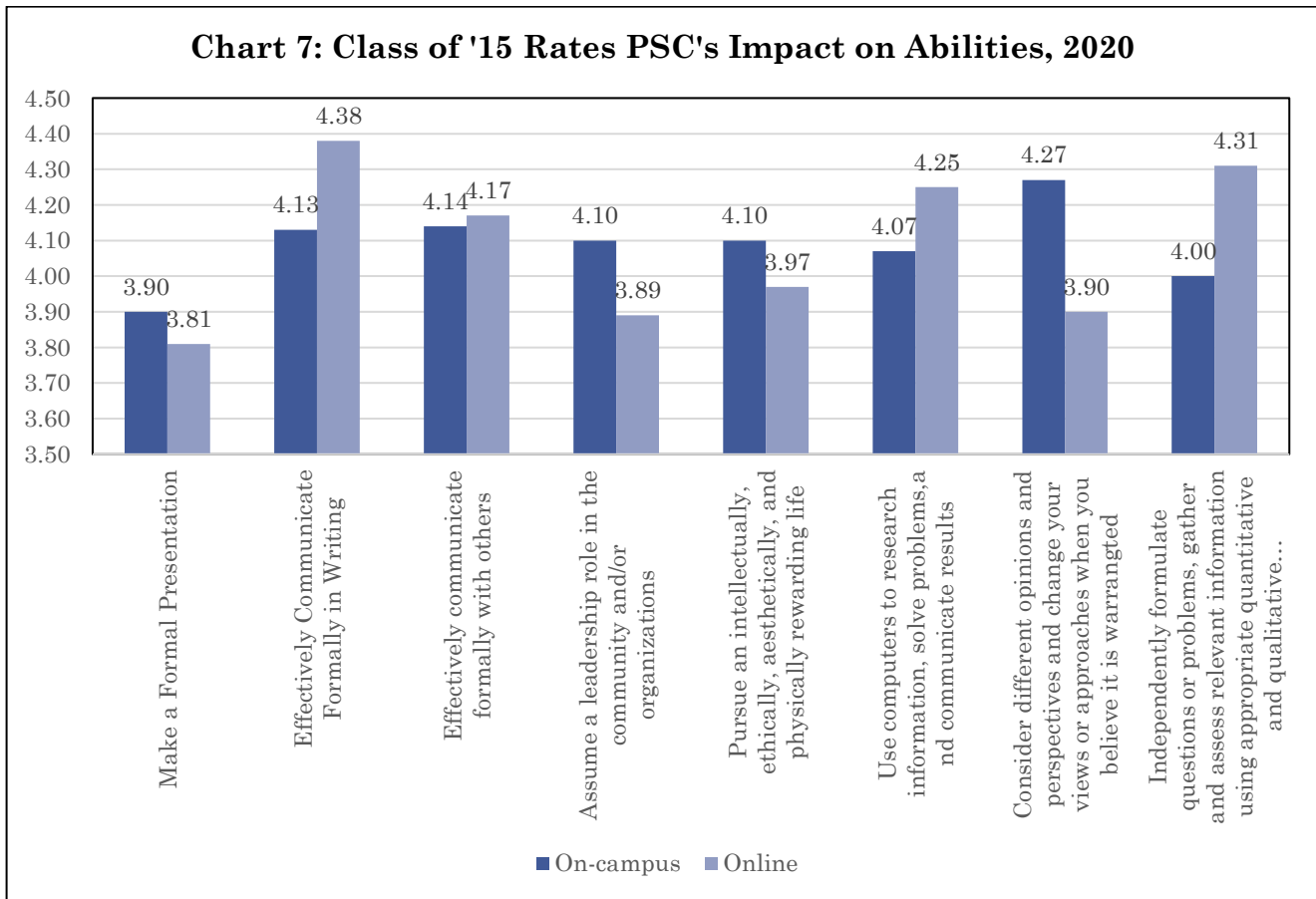


Table 5 details the scores to the same learning outcomes by each school. For the majority of the learning outcomes, the Arts and Science students rated the impact as the highest followed by Education and then Professional Studies. This varies from year to year.

Table 5: Learning Outcomes by School, 2015 Alumni								
	Formal Presentation	Comm in Writing	Comm w/others	Leadership role	Rewarding Life	Computers to Find Information	Different Opinions	Assess Info
AS	4.00	4.30	4.50	4.20	4.40	4.11	4.50	4.20
ED	3.85	4.20	4.10	4.11	4.10	4.15	4.10	4.20
PS	3.81	4.30	4.07	3.90	3.90	4.22	3.93	4.11

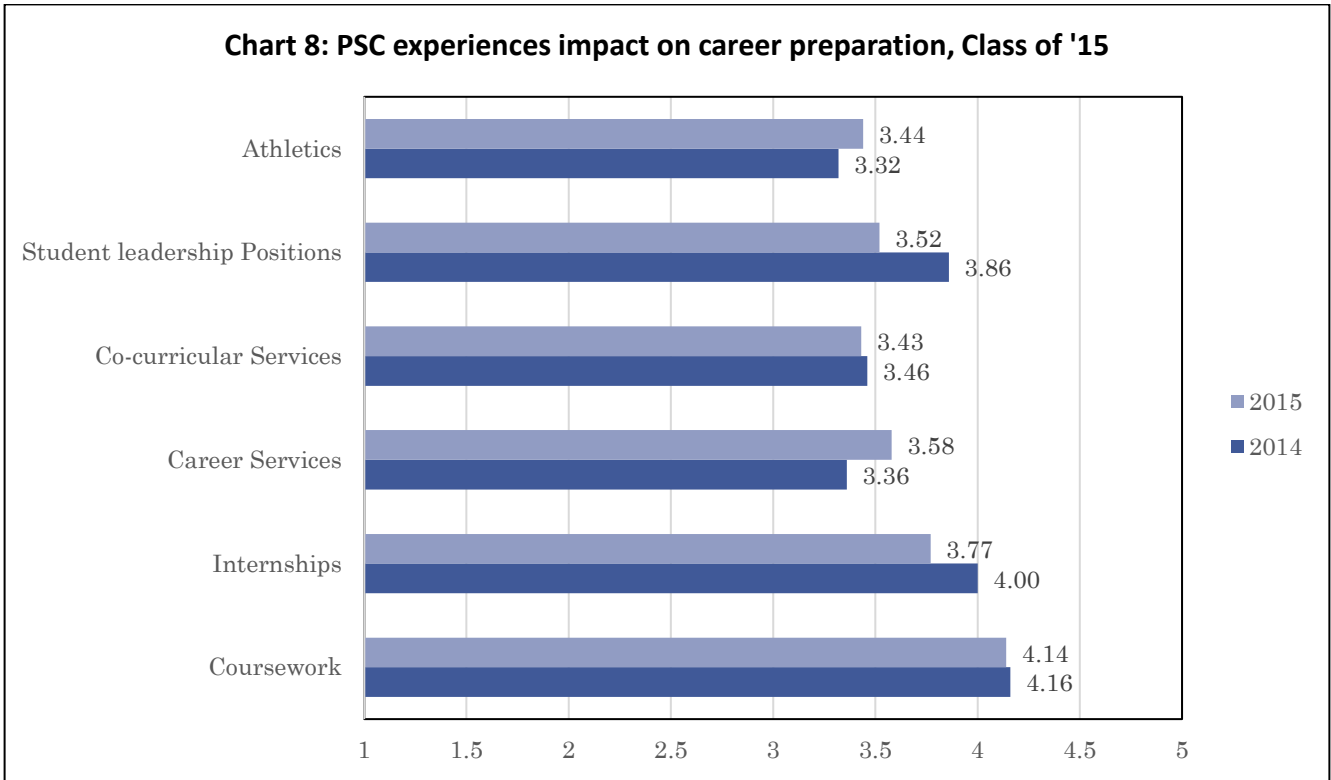


Chart 8 showcases how well alumni felt certain experiences at Peru State college prepared them for their career. It is evident that both coursework and internships had the biggest impact on career preparation for both the class of 2014 and class of 2015. There were some differences between how the alumni from these two classes rated the impact of these experiences.

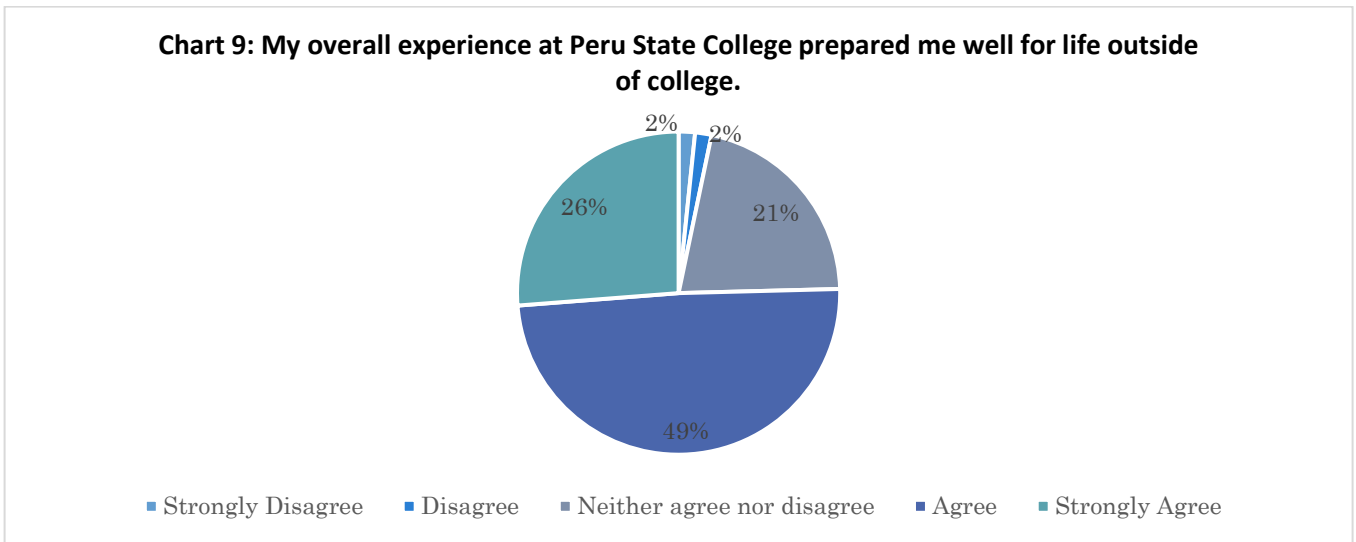
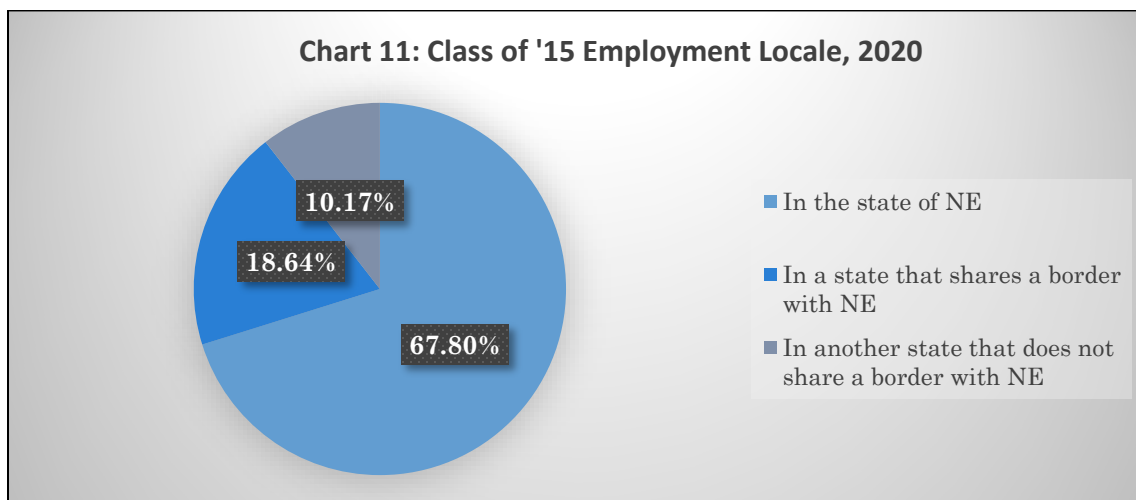
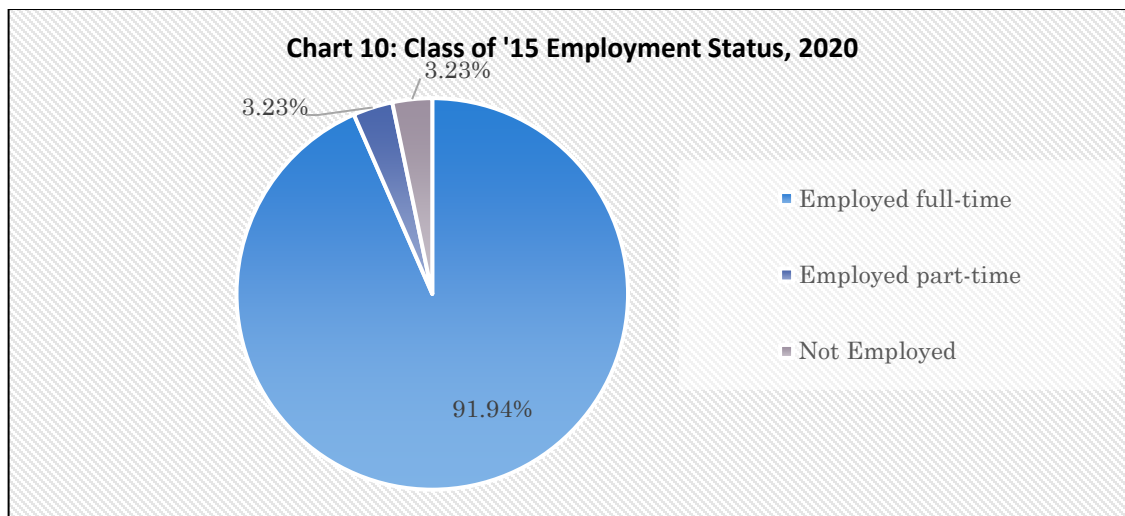


Chart 9 asks a summative question regarding how their overall experience at Peru State College prepared them for life after college. 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their experience at Peru State College prepared them well.

Employment Outcomes

Among all respondents, the employment rate was 95.2%, and the full-time employment rate was 91.9%. 72.6% were employed within their degree field, with 58.6% holding full-time positions within their degree field. As shown below, 68.9% were working within the state of Nebraska (out of those employed). Chart 10 breaks down employment in 2020 and Chart 11 identifies the employment locale for the class of 2015.



94.7% of the respondents holding full-time employment answered the question related to their salary, which asked them to share their annual salary. The average salary in Nebraska for 2019 was \$48,250 (US DOL, 2019) compared to the average salary of those that responded to the question working in Nebraska, which was \$56,534 for full-time employees.

The total average for all alumni regardless of their employment locations was \$58,069. More information regarding full-time employed alumni's salaries are in Table 6 below:

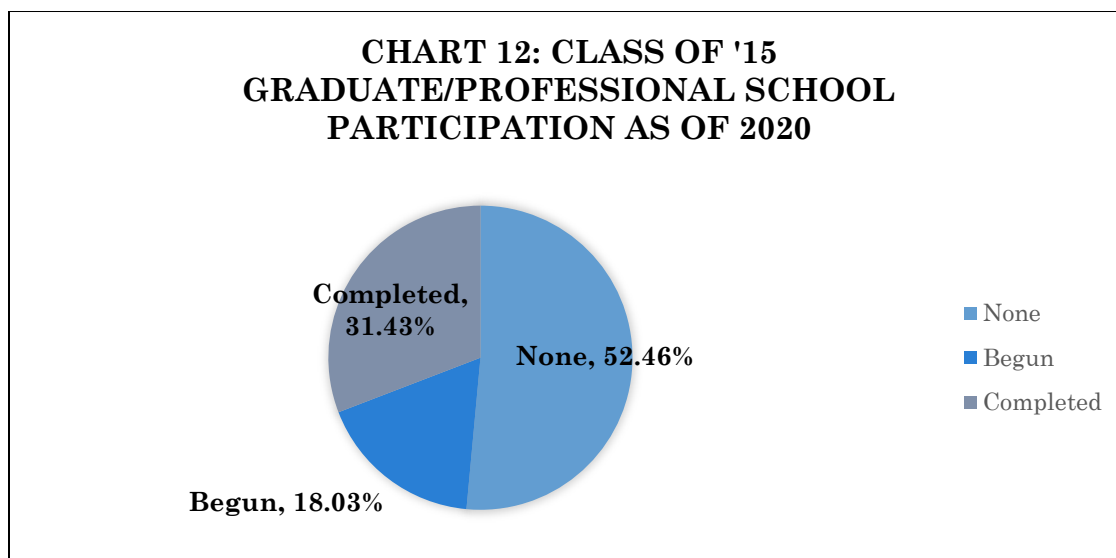
Salary Range	N	Percentage
Less than \$25,000	N = 0	
\$25,000 to \$34,999	N = 5	9.3%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	N = 19	35.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	N = 20	37.0%
\$75,000 or more	N = 10	18.5%

Subgroup	Ave Salary	Min/Max
Working in Degree Field	\$57,065	\$28,000/\$150,000
Not Working in Degree Field	\$59,884	\$26,200/\$135,000
Working in Nebraska	\$56,534	\$26,200/\$150,000
Working in a State Bordering Nebraska	\$50,182	\$25,000/\$125,000
Working in a State Not Bordering Nebraska	\$78,357	\$28,000/\$135,000
No Graduate/Professional Studies	\$58,304	\$25,000/\$150,000
Graduate/Professional Studies Begun but Not Completed	\$61,750	\$43,000/\$125,000
Graduate/Professional Studies Completed	\$55,529	\$38,000/\$105,000
On-campus	\$48,490	\$25,000/\$125,000
Online	\$66,720	\$38,000/\$135,000
Freshman	\$57,639	\$30,000/\$125,000
Transfer	\$54,129	\$25,000/\$126,000

The alumni who end up working in a state not bordering Nebraska report a higher income, but those working in a state bordering Nebraska report a lower income. Also, online students tend to report higher income than those that took classes on-campus. That may be because they had a start in their career before beginning their academic program at Peru State College.

Graduate and Professional Program Outcomes

As shown in chart 12, 47.5% of all respondents had begun or completed graduate or professional degree programs. Of these, 85.3% said Peru State had prepared them “exceptionally well” (51.7%), “very well” (20.7%), or “moderately well” (24.1%) for their continuing education. Survey respondents were asked which academic college they graduated from; 1 Arts and Science, 16 Education, 12 Professional Studies.



National Student Clearinghouse

Starting in 2017, the Office of Institutional Research started sending names of alumni through the National Student Clearinghouse to determine which ones had already received their advanced degrees or were currently enrolled in a graduate/professional program. This is more reliable data because it provides information on all graduates, rather than relying on self-reported responses from only a portion of alumni (those who complete the survey). Out of the 272 graduates, 56 completed a graduate/professional degree (20.6%) and 38 have enrolled (either currently or at one point) in a program, but have not graduated (14.0%).

Out of the 94 students who attended or is attending graduate school, 26 of them attended Peru State College. The following is a breakdown of where alumni attended and the programs:

Table 8: 2015 PSC Alumni Graduate/Professional School Attendance			
COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY	PROGRAM	LOCATION	#
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS – UNKNOWN SUBJECT	AZ	1
AUBURN UNIVERSITY	MS - FISH AQUACULT & AQUATIC SC	AL	1
BELLEVUE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	NE	2
	MASTERS IN MANAGEMENT INFO SYS		1
	MASTERS IN BUSINESS ANALYTICS		1
	MASTERS IN CLINICAL COUNSELING		1
	MASTERS IN JUSTICE ADMIN & CRIME MGMT		1
CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	MASTERS IN EXERCISE SCI HEALTH PROMO	PA	1
CAPELLA UNIVERSITY	MASTERS – UNKNOWN SUBJECT	MN	1
	MASTERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION		1
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE	NE	1
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY PORTLAND	DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION	OR	1
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY-IRVINE MCAA	MASTERS COACHING ATHLETICS ADMIN	CA	1

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	NE	1
DOANE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	NE	1
	MASTERS IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION		1
	MASTERS IN SCHOOL COUNSELING		1
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	KS	1
FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS – UNKNOWN SUBJECT	KS	2
	MASTERS IN PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (CJ)		1
GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY	MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PSYCHOLOGY	AZ	1
INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON	DOCTORATE OF BIOCHEMISTRY (PHD)	IN	1
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN SECONDARY MATH EDUCATION	VA	1
	MASTERS IN PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING		1
MIDLAND UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	NE	1
MORNINGSIDE COLLEGE	MASTERS – READING SPECIALIST	IA	1
NEBRASKA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	NE	1
NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS	CA	1
NORTHWESTERN MO STATE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN ED LEADERSHIP K-12	MO	1
NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE	MASTERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	IA	1
PERU STATE COLLEGE	MASTERS IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION	NE	19
	MASTERS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL & ECON DEV		7
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN BIOLOGY	TX	1
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN ACCOUNTANCY	CA	1
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY	MASTERS IN PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANCY	NY	1
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS	MASTERS IN HEALTH SPORT & EXERCISE SCI	KS	1
UNIVERSITY OF MASS-DARTMOUTH	MASTERS OF PUBLIC POLICY	MA	1
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY	MASTERS IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY	NE	1
	MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN INSTRUCTIONAL TECH		1
	MASTERS IN HIGHER ED STUDENT AFFAIRS		1
	MASTERS OF ARTS – SCHOOL PRINCIPAL		1
	MASTERS OF ARTS IN HISTORY		1
	MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN BIOLOGY		1
	MASTERS – UNKNOWN SUBJECT		1
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA	MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	NE	1
	MASTERS OF ARTS IN MUSIC		1
	MASTERS IN CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIM JUST		1
	MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK		1
	MASTERS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION		1
	MASTERS IN HEALTH PHYSICAL ED & REC		1
	MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION		1
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER	DOCTORATE IN PHARMACY		1
	MASTERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH		1
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN	MASTERS IN APPLIED HEALTH	NE	1
	MASTERS IN ARCHITECTURE		1
	JURIS DOCTORATE		1
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA	MASTERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE	FL	1
UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD	MASTERS IN ORG DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP	TX	1
UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTHWEST	MASTERS IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING	NM	1
WAYNE STATE COLLEGE	MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION	NE	2
	MASTERS OF ORGANIZATIONAL MANGEMENT		1
	MASTERS – UNKNOWN SUBJECT		3

Satisfaction/Perceptions Ratings

Alumni were asked what they would do if they could go back in time, 85.3% said they definitely or probably would choose to get their bachelor’s degree at Peru State again, and 68.9% said they definitely or probably would choose the same major/program.

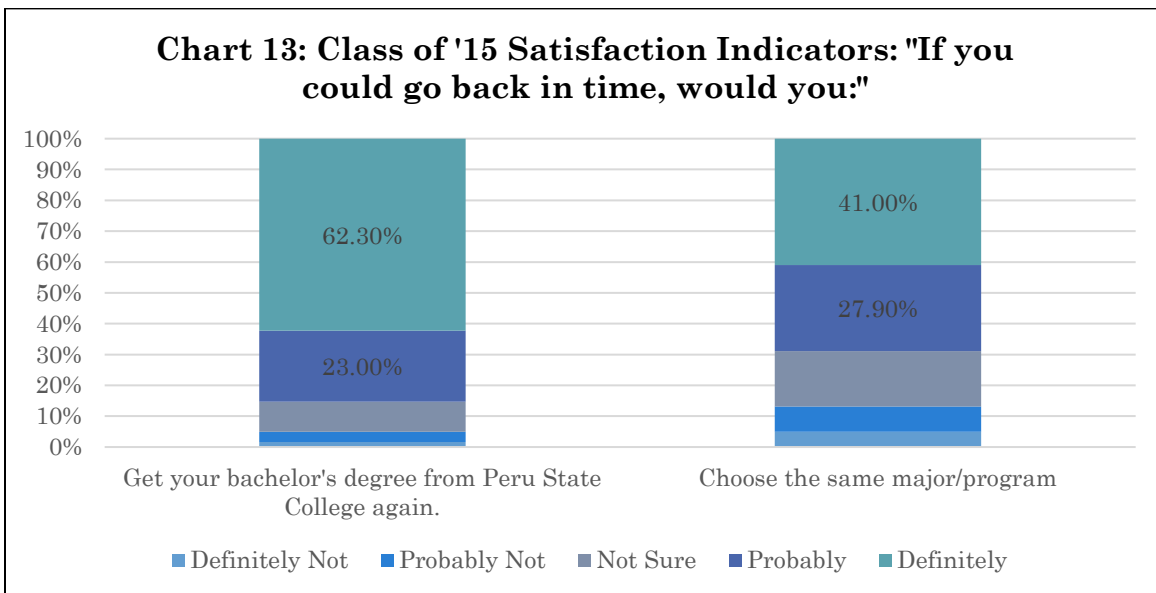
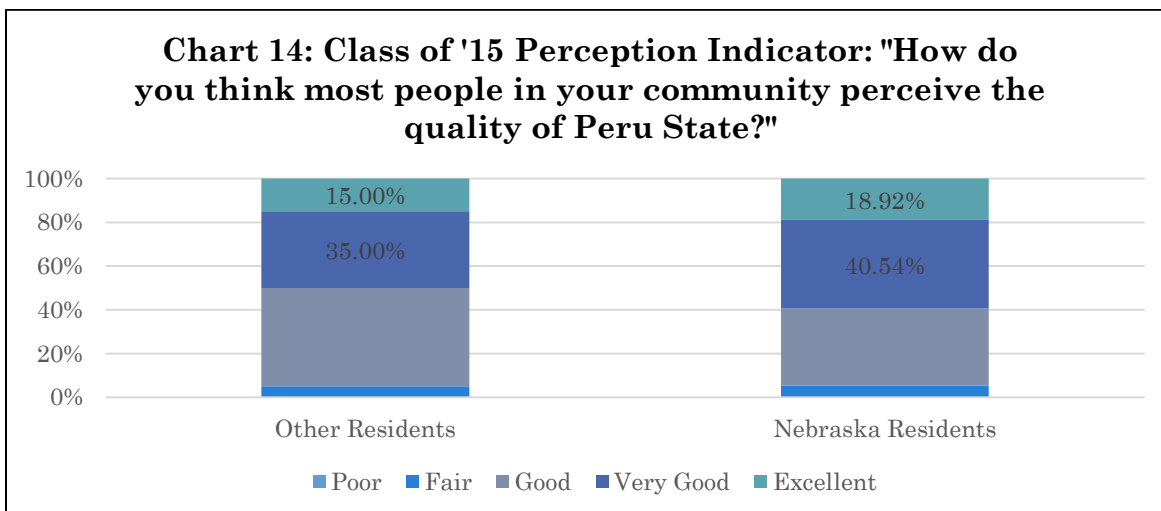


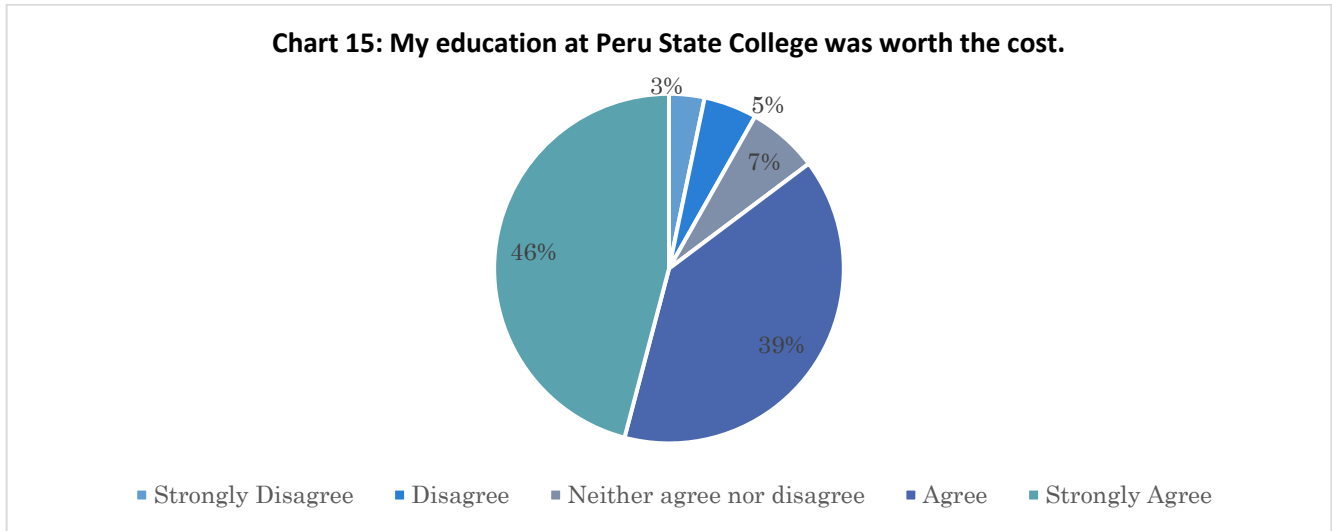
Table 9: 2015 Alumni Satisfaction by School on Alumni Survey, 2020

School	Get your bachelor’s degree from PSC again	Choose the same major/ program
Arts and Sciences	4.60	3.80
Education	4.40	4.05
Professional Studies	4.37	3.90
All Students	4.41	3.92

Alumni were also asked how their community perceives the quality of education provided by Peru State College. Those that were from Nebraska felt their community had a higher perception than those that lived out-of-state. The results are displayed in Chart 14:



Lastly, alumni were asked whether they felt that their education at Peru State College was a worthwhile investment. 85% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was worth the cost. The overall results are shown in Chart 15:



Alumni Comments

Additional comments were provided by nearly one-third of respondents, and these are presented (as written) in the table below:

Table 10: Additional Comments from Class of '15 on Alumni Survey, 2020
I was lost from day one as far as a plan. I wanted to be a teacher I spent money on classes I took to be a teacher that I don't need because I can't become a teacher with this entry exam not being passable. Standardize testing is a good way to lose out on the teachers that will work the hardest. All because they couldn't pass a test. It is a shame that I wasted so many credit hours in the wrong classes. I could have graduated a lot sooner if I would have signed up for the right major from day one. (Majority on-campus)
The online business program allowed me to get the same quality, affordable education that I would have gotten in person, but do it around my life schedule while working full time.
I miss my time at Peru State, it was an amazing experience! Professors and all staff were amazing!
Not only did I receive a top-notch education at Peru State, but the instructors were also phenomenal as well. I really felt like they cared about me and truly wanted to see me succeed. I would highly recommend Peru State to anyone looking to earn their college degree.
Peru was a culture shock for me but I made lifelong friendships with people from different backgrounds. That made my college experience greater than I could've hoped for.
Hands down the best college experience anyone could ask for! Great professors, competitive athletic programs, and just an all-around phenomenal environment to be a part of. I'm grateful for the opportunity to attend Peru State College when I did.
I did most all of my studies on line. That was one of the main decisions I went to Peru State.
I chose Peru based on cost and the transfer of credits from SSC Milford. {Business instructor} is the FINEST advisor and academic I have ever encountered. {Business Instructor} made my experience stellar and is why I recommend Peru State College to others.
My situation was unique in the sense that I had a scholarship for Peru State College for Elementary Education when I graduated high school in 1997. I dropped out just months after starting. I ended up getting an associate degree from Metropolitan Community College and started towards my bachelor degree from University of Nebraska in Omaha. I later decided to transfer back to Peru State to finish this degree after 2010 (not quite sure on re-enrollment year). I have always loved Peru State College and was glad to finish my bachelor degree at the same college I originally started all those years ago.
Loved it!
I had a great experience.
It was a good time.
Expand online masters programs.
Professors like {History Instructor}, {Science Instructor}, {Psychology Instructor}, and {English Instructor} are what make Peru State College such a valuable experience. I had so many professors challenge me and take an interest in my education. Attending a small college allowed me to work closely with these wonderful professors. Every time I've managed to get back to campus, it's a delight to reconnect with them. The library was also invaluable and I can't go back without saying hi to {Library Staff Member}.
Don't rely on the college to be able to help you pass your state teaching test! They don't know how to help you do that. Your high school does a better job of preparing you for then the college does.
{Academic Dean} was very instrumental and encouraging during my courses at Peru State.
Their school incorporates programs for working adults which is what sold me on this school.
I would recommend PSC to any student pursuing an education in any field of study offered. The campus community and atmosphere, with small classes and caring faculty, was invaluable to my success.
As you review the answers to my questions, keep in mind that my degree at PSC was my second bachelor's in a related field. The ONLY reason I pursued the degree was to satisfy an employer's ridiculous requirement. I left that employer

shortly after attaining the degree. I worked in the field for 20 years prior to starting PSC coursework. My experience was very non-traditional. There were some very good instructors. Some admin didn't quite know how to deal with someone with my experience though. Some courses were a complete waste of my time and my company's money as I didn't learn anything new. The college refused to accept prior learning and hours from other schools on what I considered no brainer transfers and took hours that I thought were longshots. Overall, it was a good experience. I learned many things, but it came at a high personal cost.

The teaching staff was amazing. I was academically challenged. This degree was perfect for me. I went on to pursue my Master's Degree in Clinical Counseling at Wayne State. I wasn't the typical traditional student, as I completed my Bachelor's online. Many of my college peers were traditional students that graduated from Wayne with their Bachelor's. At first, I was nervous about that. However, when classes started, I realized I had the same degree of knowledge they did. I learned this as we begin discussion during our classes. I became confident with my degree that I received at Peru.

REFERENCES

- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. (2019). *May 2019 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: Nebraska*. Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ne.htm#00-0000
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz. (2019). *2019 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report: United States*. Retrieved from: https://learn.ruffalonl.com/rs/395-EOG-977/images/2019_National_Student_Satisfaction_Report_RNL-005.pdf