



After Olin

The Graduates of 2007 Five Years Later

a report of the Institutional Research & Evaluation Office

An Introductory Note

As a relative newcomer to Olin, I enjoyed reviewing the responses to the survey of the graduates of 2007. It was my first opportunity to get to know a group of Oliners. Even though I haven't met many of you, your thoughtful responses have provided me a window into who you are, what you're doing and, most importantly, what Olin means to you. Thank you to all who took the time to reflect on your time at Olin and all the many questions we asked you.

Jeremy Goodman, Director of Institutional Research & Evaluation

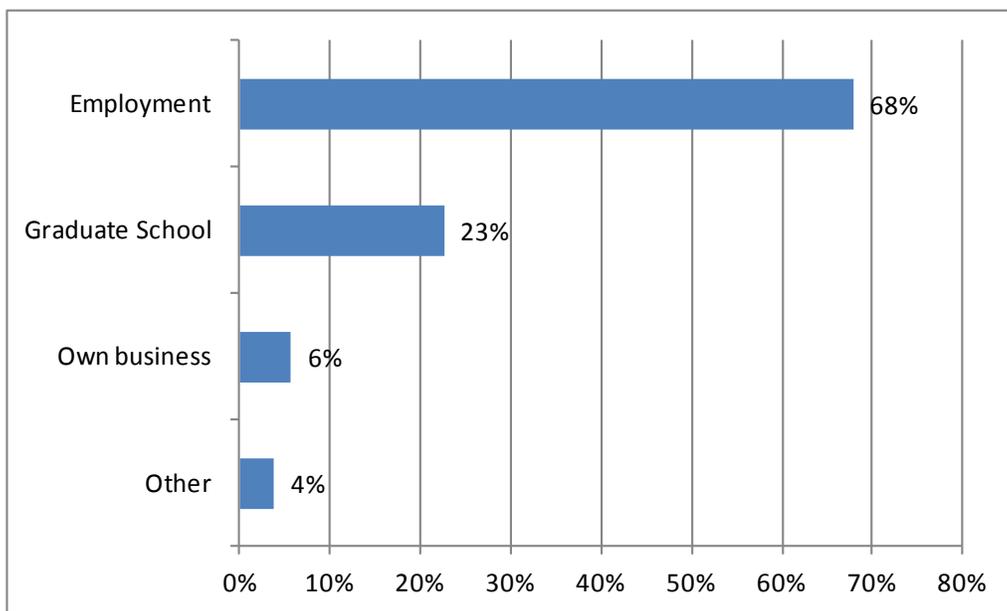
Who Are You?

Of the 71 who graduated in May 2007, 53 took the time to respond to the survey, an impressive 75% response rate. 79% of women (23) responded, while 71% of men (30) filled out the survey. ME graduates were the most likely to respond, with 88% of them reporting. Among the responses were 23 ME majors, 18 E majors of various concentrations, and 12 ECE majors.

On a more personal level, 63% of you consider yourself single. The men are more likely to be single than the women at the moment (70% vs. 48%). Two of you have reported children, which is a great start on the next generation of Oliners. You are spread out geographically, but 58% of you live on the West Coast or in the Northeast, while about 4% live outside of the US.

How Do You Spend Your Days?

You are using your time for so many different things, including dancing, climbing, writing, running marathons, and community service, but when asked what your primary activity is, here is how you answered as a group:

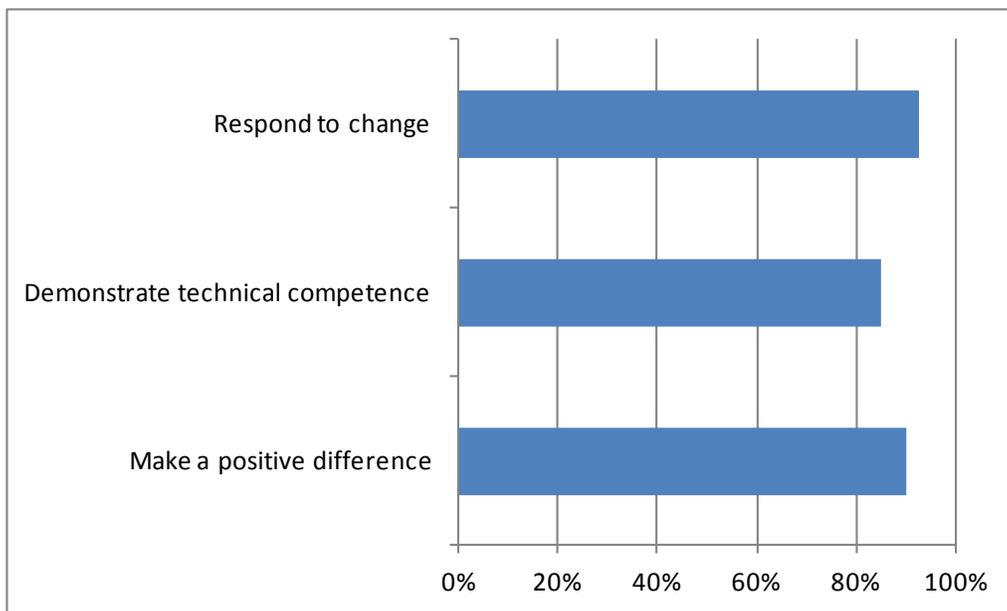


As you can see, most of you consider employment to be your primary activity. 81% of those who are employed are in a position that is directly related to their field of study at Olin. At 90%, most of you believe that the organization you work for is a good fit for an Oliner (though 41% see room for improvement). Of those few of you who are working outside the engineering fields, two of you have pursued careers in the performing arts.

Those of you going to graduate school have received or are working on a total of 17 master's degrees and six doctorates. Your degrees are in engineering of all stripes, business and physics. Eight of those degrees are currently in progress, so we wish you good luck in completing them! Most of you reported feeling well prepared for graduate studies, though the most common challenge reported was difficulty adjusting to a non-Olin style of education. A few of you mentioned math preparation as well, which reinforces the reasons why the faculty are continuing to implement a new math curriculum.

What You're Thinking About Olin

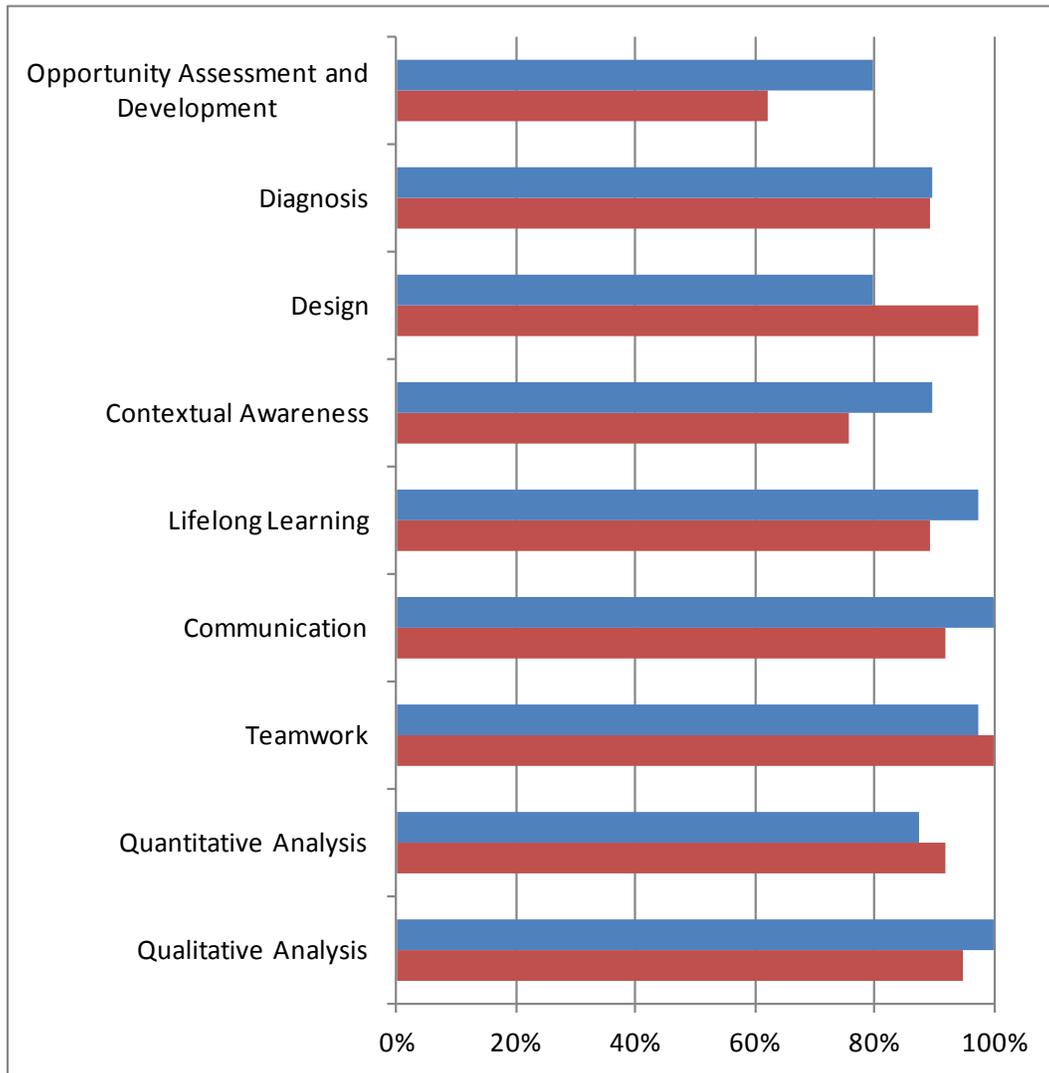
The data you give us is very important for us in determining if the outcomes of an Olin education match what we believe we have prepared you for. There are three main goals that Olin hopes its graduates achieve over time. Here is how you felt about them:



We are excited to see that so many of you feel that you have realized the outcomes of an Olin education! As you may have heard, we are currently reviewing these goals and hope to have a revised set soon. Keep an eye out for opportunities to offer your feedback as to what they should be.

We also asked you about the infamous Olin Competencies, which are those specific areas which we hope you have developed by the time you graduate. The next chart is going to show you how you feel about both the importance of the Olin Competencies (the blue bars) and your own achievement of them (the red bars). There are a couple of things that make us pretty happy about these charts. The first is that the things that you find to be important match up pretty well with what Olin finds to be important; that is, there are no short blue bars. The second thing we are glad to see is that the

red bars, by and large, reflect a significant belief that you did in fact develop in the competency areas while here at Olin.



Depending on the outcomes of our review of the program goals, the Olin Competencies may also be revised in the future. The feedback you've submitted through this survey, especially the written comments, has been an important part of the reflection process so far.

But enough about what I have to say. Here is what you told us, in your own words:

- “Olin went from being one of the most important things in my life to an important part of my background.”
- “I think that part of what makes Olin work is that everything is interconnected.”
- “One of the reasons I feel that Olin did right by me is because ****the school let me see it fail, assess, and change to cause improvement****. If an institution can do that, then surely so can I!”
(On a side note: I hope we at Olin continue to do that and that you will all continue to be part of that assessment and improvement process!)
- “I’ve come to appreciate its pedagogical awesomeness a lot more. And I’ve become aware of how weird a place it is compared to most of the engineering education world -- which is both

a blessing and a curse. I'm glad to learn of the wide world outside the bubble, but it's definitely made me appreciate the safety of the nest where I grew up."

- "I think Olin prepared me well, but I don't think I have yet been in situations sufficiently challenging to require me to live up to that potential. I am now seeking opportunities that will enable me to do so."
- "I work in consulting, where the ability to "recognize needs, design solutions, and engage in creative enterprises" is a day-to-day requirement. I am one of only a handful of my colleagues that don't have a graduate degree, but I am regarded as someone who has strong technical and contextual skills, is a strong problem-solver and leader, and works well in a team."
- "Honestly, while I was at Olin and when I first graduated, I thought I strongly disliked engineering and felt like I needed space from the school. In the past couple years, I realized that I actually love engineering and am now genuinely looking forward to returning for the first time in five years."
- "I think that the most valuable things that Olin helped me develop and the things that set me apart from my peers are the abilities to think critically, problem solve, and consider things holistically. From the beginning, Olin set out to foster these capabilities in its students and I find it remarkable that, at least in my anecdotal evidence, Olin has been so successful."
- "While I'm not starting my own companies or purely organically working on solutions to save the planet, I have chosen a profession where I do good."
- "Olin uniquely prepares people for startups, and we should send more of our students there and encourage them to choose that path."
- "After being in the real world, especially in other academic environments, I appreciate even more the strong cooperative atmosphere, the level of trust and honesty, and the hands-on approach that encouraged students to actually build and program rather than just learning textbook material."
- "I couldn't have hoped for a better collegiate experience. I met some of the best friends of my life, gained an incredible amount of knowledge, in a forward looking environment with AMAZING FACULTY who truly show their passion for students and for what they do."

The feedback you give us continues to amaze me in terms of its depth and breadth. I can only capture a slice of it in this report, but I look forward to continuing to analyze it and put it to work for the good of all the Olin Community.

If you have any questions about this report or assessment at Olin in general, please feel free to contact me at jeremy.goodman@olin.edu or 781-292-2373.