

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND EFFECTIVENESS

**Administration of the Alumni/Graduate Survey**  
*Graduates for May 2015*

**Introduction**

The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE) administers the Alumni/Graduate survey to new Tarleton graduates approximately four months after their respective commencement. This assessment is an initiative of Academic Affairs, the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and Career Services.

**Design and Methodology**

*Participants*

The population for this survey research was May 2015 graduates (N=1,141). The Banner Student Information Management System was used to identify the population and obtain accompanying email addresses. The online survey and invitation to participate is managed utilizing Qualtrics and its email distribution function. A copy of the introduction, informed consent, and the survey instrument are provided at the following link.

[https://tarleton.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe1/preview/SV\\_bClCSMheA8frVml](https://tarleton.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe1/preview/SV_bClCSMheA8frVml)

In total 1,141 emails were initially sent with 72 emails returning as undeliverable. Thus a net of 1,069 valid emails were utilized. The survey was launched on October 12, 2015 with an ending date of October 25, 2015. Three reminders were sent to individuals not having completed the survey; the first on October 14<sup>th</sup>, the second on October 19<sup>th</sup>, and a final reminder on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. A total of 167 individuals participated in the survey for a response rate of 15% and a +/- 6.97% margin of error.

*Instrument*

The instrument used in this assessment project was locally developed through feedback from representatives from institutional advancement, academic affairs, and student life. Questions were developed to collect student demographics, aspects of their Tarleton experience, and post-graduation activities.

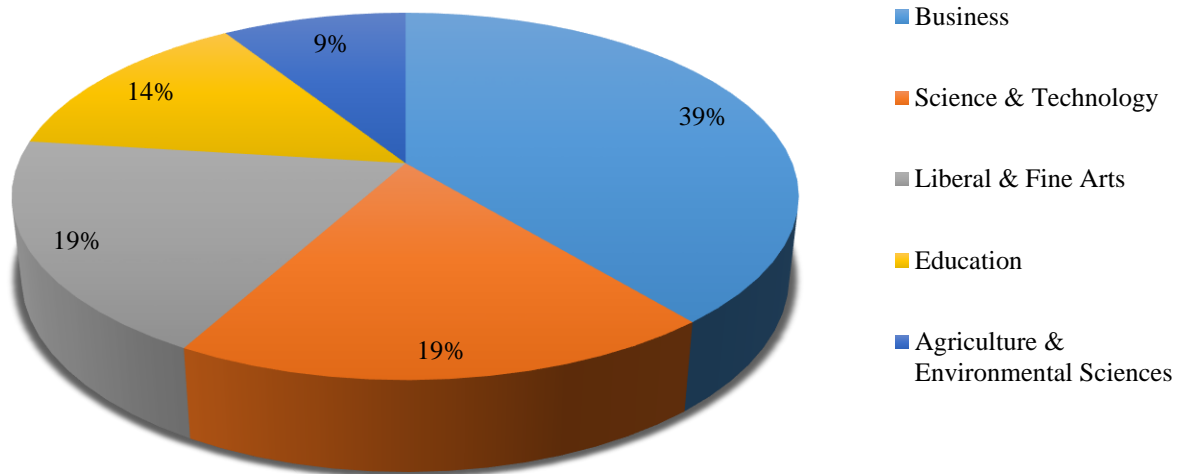
## Findings

### Question 1:

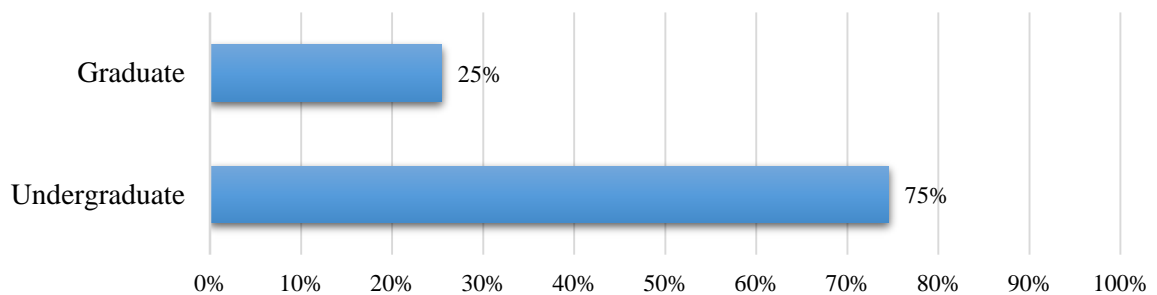
**From which college did you graduate?**

(n=164)

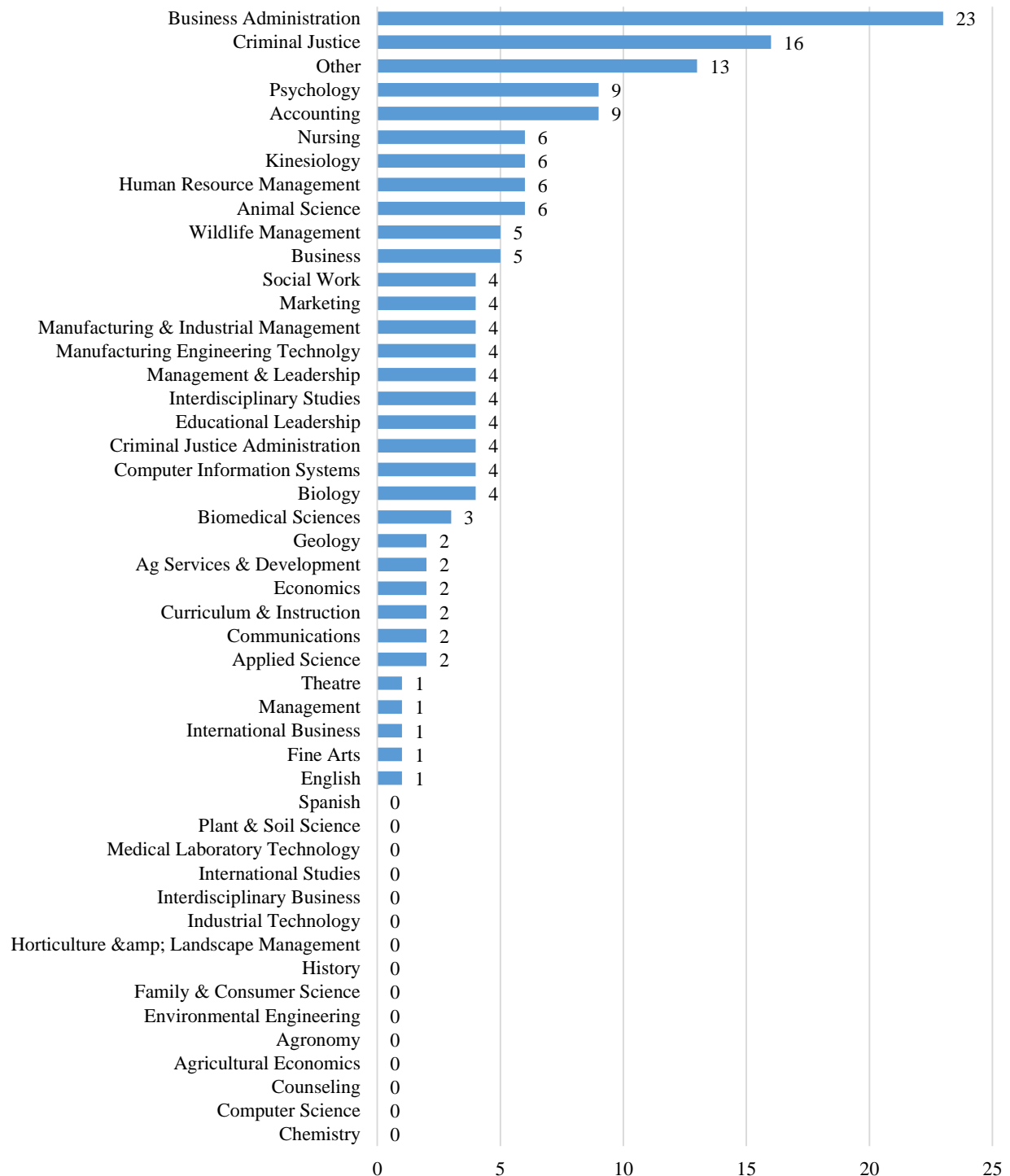
	Response	Percentage
Business	64	39%
Liberal and Fine Arts	31	19%
Science and Technology	31	19%
Education	23	14%
Agriculture and Environmental Sciences	15	9%



### Question 2: Which degree did you most recently receive from Tarleton? (n=165)



### Question 3: What was your major? (n=164)



**Question 4:**

***Which Tarleton location did you primarily attend?***

*(n=164)*

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Stephenville</i>	96	59%
<i>Fort Worth</i>	39	24%
<i>Waco</i>	22	13%
<i>Midlothian</i>	7	4%

**Question 5:**

***What is your gender?***

*(n=165)*

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Female</i>	96	58%
<i>Male</i>	67	41%
<i>Prefer Not to Say</i>	2	1%

**Question 6:**

***Did you graduate in the time frame you expected?***

*(n=164)*

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Yes</i>	146	89%
<i>No</i>	18	11%

**Question 7:**

***Which of the following barriers were applicable to your situation?***

*(Multiple Responses Allowed)(n=32)*

	<b><i>Response</i></b>
<i>Financial</i>	10
<i>Family commitments</i>	6
<i>Academic preparedness</i>	4
<i>Availability of courses</i>	3
<i>Change of major</i>	7
<i>Other</i>	2

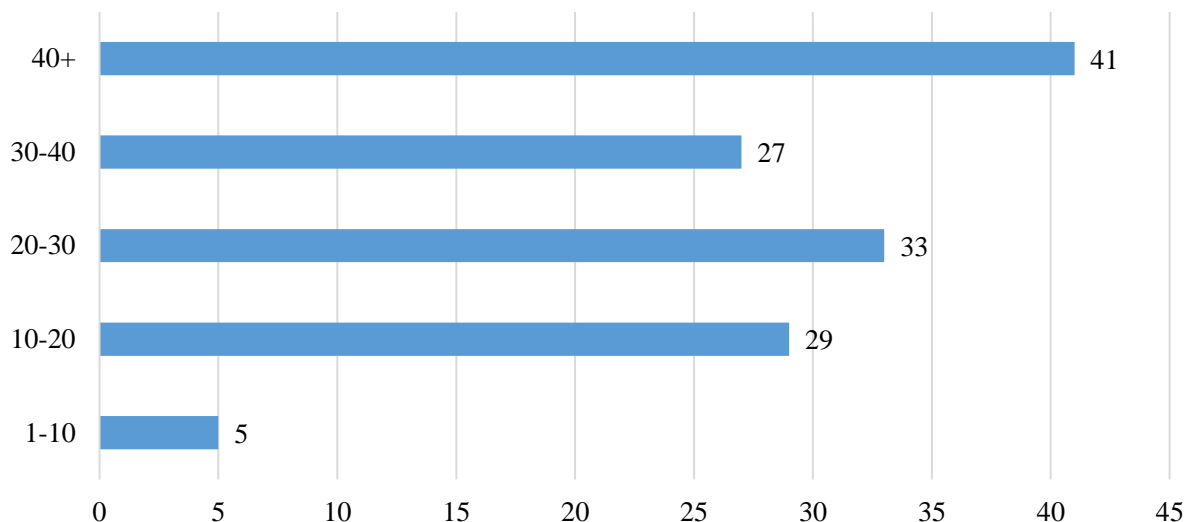
***Other***

- No support
- All of the above

**Question 8:**

*Did you work (on or off campus)  
during your enrollment at  
Tarleton? (n=164)*

	<i>Response</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	135	82%
No	29	18%

**Question 9: How many hours per week did you work? (n=135)****Question 10:**

*Did you have an internship? (n=164)*

	<i>Response</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes - Required for my degree	29	18%
Yes - Not required for my degree	23	14%
No	112	68%

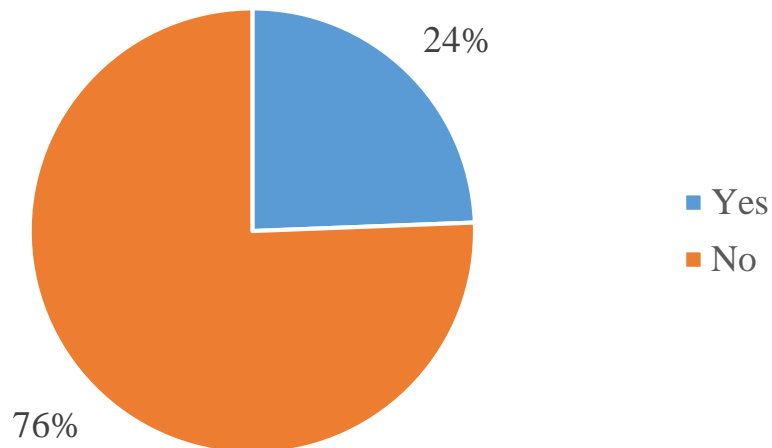
**Question 11:**

*During your time at Tarleton, did you  
hear of the Keeping It R. E. A. L. or  
Applied Learning  
Experience? (n=163)*

	<i>Responses</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	65	40%
No	98	60%

**Question 12:**

**Did you participate in the Keeping It R. E. A. L.” or Applied Learning Experience during your time at Tarleton? (n=164)**



***If yes, how many experiences did you complete? (n=40)***

	Responses	Percentage
1	12	30%
2	6	15%
3	11	27.5%
More than 3	11	27.5%

***If no, what was the biggest barrier to your participation in the program?(n=135)***

	Responses	Percentage
Time	29	22%
Availability of Experiences	3	2%
Lack of interest	6	4%
Lack of information about the program	64	48%
I did not believe it would have increased future opportunities for me	3	2%
Other	30	22%

**Question 12 cont'd:****Other**

- Didn't know about it.
- Distance learner
- Didn't know about it. Was online student but that wasn't an option to select.
- Was in a graduate program
- Never heard of it
- Not sure if I participated
- Did not complete 3rd experience

**Question 13:**

*Since leaving Tarleton, which statements are applicable to you? (check all that apply) (total responses=237)*

	<b>Response</b>
<i>I found employment in an area related to my degree</i>	82
<i>Other</i>	16
<i>I am pursuing additional undergraduate study</i>	3
<i>I am employed in an area unrelated to my degree.</i>	29
<i>I am still searching for employment.</i>	39
<i>I started or assumed ownership of a business.</i>	2
<i>I have started or am raising a family</i>	12
<i>I am serving in the military</i>	3
<i>I am pursuing volunteer service</i>	5
<i>I am pursuing graduate study</i>	46

**Other**

- Military spouse
- I am still in the position I held while in school; currently seeking new employment opportunities.
- I am employed in an area related to my degree
- I am pursuing CPA certification.
- I am taking care of elderly parents
- I plan to pursue a doctorate
- I am pursuing my diagnostician certification and am currently employed in an area related to my degree
- I'm washing dishes for a living
- I was already employees in my degree area
- MBA in mind for upcoming year. Taking CFA level 1 exam in December to gain more knowledge in my field.

**Question 14:**

***When did you obtain your first career related position?***  
(n=28)

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Before graduation</i>	7	25%
<i>One month after graduation</i>	2	7%
<i>Two Months after graduation</i>	1	4%
<i>Three Months after graduation</i>	6	21%
<i>Remaining with same employer (undergrad)</i>	7	25%
<i>Remaining with same employer (graduate)</i>	1	4%
<i>Other (specify below)</i>	4	14%

***Other***

- Working in job related to my major
- N/A
- I haven't found a job at all

***If you are NOT working in a job related to your major, please check ONE statement which best describes why you are not working in a job related to your major (n=53)***

	<b><i>Response</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>I am continuing my college education.</i>	9	17%
<i>I am unable to find a job in my field.</i>	19	36%
<i>I am working in another field while continuing to look for a position related to my major.</i>	8	15%
<i>I have not seriously sought employment.</i>	3	6%
<i>I have found another job in another field.</i>	3	6%
<i>I am caring for my family.</i>	4	7%
<i>Other</i>	7	13%

***Other***

- Not a career
- Still haven't.
- still searching



**Question 15:**

***Total number of years  
employed at current business:***

*(n=109)*

	<b><i>Response</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Less than 1 year</i>	72	66%
<i>1 to 5 years</i>	19	17%
<i>6 to 10 years</i>	11	10%
<i>11 to 15 years</i>	2	2%
<i>16 to 20 years</i>	3	3%
<i>20 to 25 years</i>	2	2%
<i>More than 25 years</i>	0	0%

**Question 16:**

***Approximate salary earned  
per year?***

*(n=109)*

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Less than \$20,000</i>	21	19%
<i>\$20,000-\$29,999</i>	19	17%
<i>\$30,000-\$39,999</i>	16	15%
<i>\$40,000-\$49,999</i>	25	23%
<i>\$50,000-\$59,999</i>	9	8%
<i>\$60,000 and over</i>	19	18%

**Question 17:**

***After Graduation, did you  
remain within a 50 mile  
radius of Stephenville?***

*(n=160)*

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Yes</i>	58	36 %
<i>No</i>	102	64%

If no, why?

- Job availability
- My home is not near Stephenville
- Distance learner
- Online. Live in Denton.
- Did not attend the Stephenville campus. Why is this the only option if you have distant learning centers?
- Like to live in city area
- moved to a new town for new degree

**Question 18:**

***Did you intend to pursue another degree, license, or certification?***

*(n=160)*

	<b><i>Responses</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Yes</i>	111	69%
<i>No</i>	49	31%

**If Yes above, please indicate what other schools or universities are you considering?**

- Tarleton
- I am a graduate student at Tarleton
- Baylor
- Not decided yet
- I am getting my masters at the University of North Texas in Denton
- Texas A& M
- University of North Texas
- I have not considered any other schools, but am seeking CPA certification
- Texas State University, University of Texas, University of Texas in San Antonio
- Georgia State University

**Question 19:**

***Did you apply to a professional school (i.e. law, medical, veterinary, etc.)?***

*(n=111)*

	<b><i>Response</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Yes</i>	11	10%
<i>No</i>	100	90%

**Question 20:**

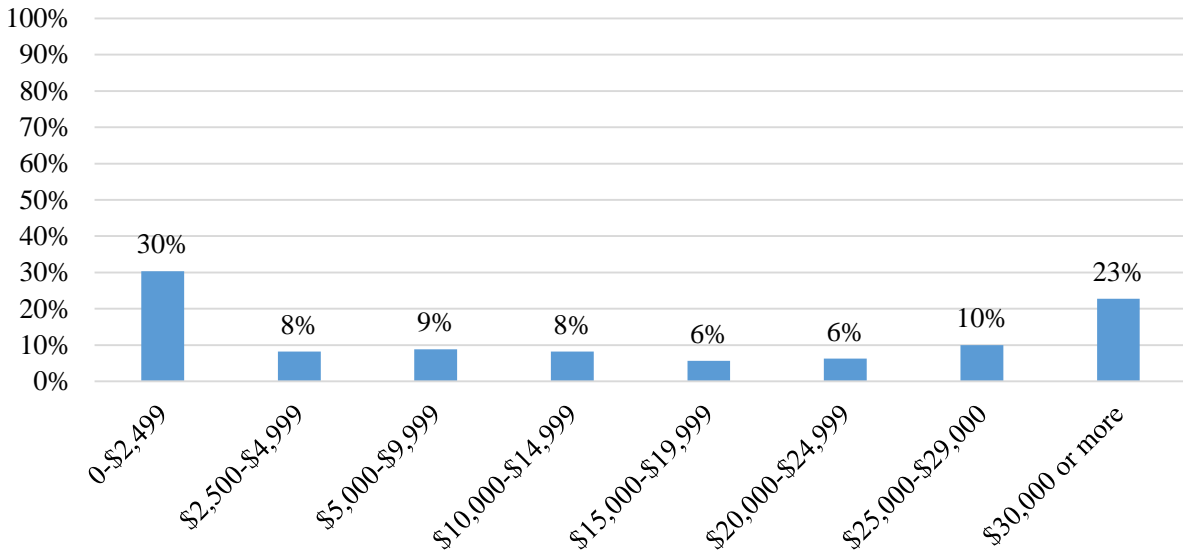
***Did you get accepted to the professional School? (n=9)***

	<b><i>Response</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
<i>Yes</i>	5	56%
<i>No</i>	4	44%

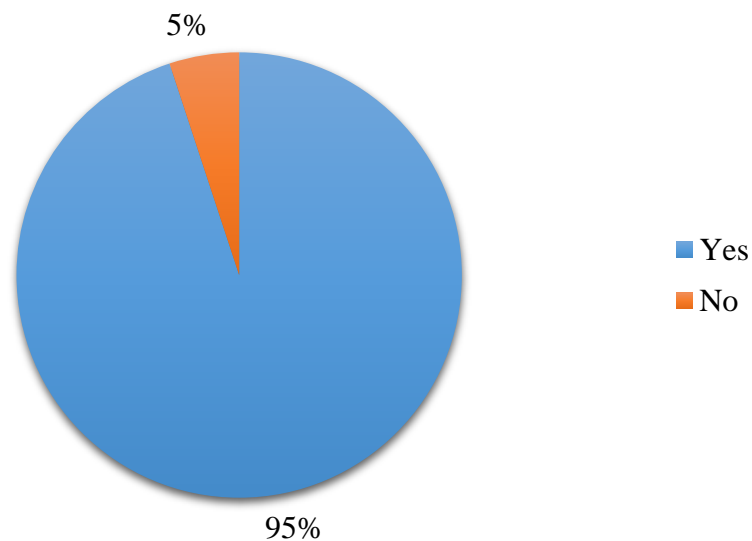
**If Yes, what school?**

- Texas A and M University Veterinary school
- TMATE Tarleton SW Ft Worth Campus
- Baylor University, Hankamer School of Business
- Still waiting

**Question 21: How much debt did you incur to finance your Tarleton education? (n=158)**



**Question 22: Would you refer a friend or family member to Tarleton State University based on your experience? (n=158)**



### Questions 23:

#### What would you change about your Tarleton experience?

- Dissertation defense was ruined by dysfunctional relationships among staff members which spilled over to me.
- A lot.
- More incentives for commuters. Transition from college to employment programs. When you guys finish the campus in Fort Worth, add an environmental policy graduate program.
- Leadership could be stronger and more honest. Financial aid office is an absolute messy nightmare.
- I would've not wasted a whole year in another graduate program. I should've asked the program coordinator more questions about the graduate program instead of assuming. As a result, I would've got to concentrate in Finance. Because I switched programs and wanted to graduate on time, I didn't get to have a concentration.
- The schools focus needs to be reevaluated.

### Questions 24:

#### Did you have a life-changing experience while at Tarleton, and, if so, would you briefly describe it?

- Being an RL! It opened my eyes and changed my perspective on a lot of things!
- Throughout my time at Tarleton I became a foster parent and we adopted our son.
- Everything about Tarleton State University was life-changing. For anyone, college is the most important four years of our lives thus far. We learn so incredibly much and we develop ourselves as personally, professionally and spiritually. Tarleton gave me opportunities in all of those categories to grow and be my best. My professors were incredibly encouraging and always willing to help me out. I love this school and it will always go down as a turning point in my life.
- I absolutely loved my time at Tarleton. The passion the education teachers have for their profession of turning college students into teachers is incredible. The traditions and people here I hold close to my heart. Even though college can be hard I wouldn't trade my experience.
- I accomplished a goal that I had put off for a very long time. I was 43 years old when I graduated and I proved to myself and my kids that I could do it.
- I enjoyed the education I received at Tarleton. My life changing experience was being a first generation graduate. Tarleton has improved my life forever.
- Yes, I got higher education from the school where my parents were graduated.
- Yes. Involved in paradigm ministry, started really following God's will for my life
- just graduating with Master's degree
- I had some bad experiences, but my good ones were far overwhelming compared to the bad. I made so many friends there, learned to believe in myself and my own abilities. This was something I had never really done before. The outstanding support I received from professors was amazing. They expected greatness from me and also believed that I could deliver it. A few in particular, (Dr xxx, Dr xxx, Dr xxx, Dr xxx, Dr xxx, just to name the most supportive and influential) were the reason why I did NOT give up on graduating, even when I thought it was a hopeless cause. I can now take this same supportive drive and share it with my own students in a way that I only once thought was a crazy dream. I cannot begin to explain how much Tarleton means to me. I came from nothing and now I have a degree, something no one thought I could ever accomplish, even myself at one point in time. Its hard to dig yourself out of poverty. Most people who do not come from that place do not understand how hard it is, but I can now stand as an example to my students, it CAN be done, because I DID IT!