



Wisdom to make a difference.

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Findings from the Class of 2020 One-Year-Out Alumni Survey

Each year, Keene State College administers a one-year-out survey to alumni who graduated during the previous year. In October 2021, Keene State College surveyed alumni who received bachelor's degrees in fiscal year 2020. The primary purposes of this annual survey were to assess rates of employment, enrollment in graduate education, and to assess alumni satisfaction with how well their KSC degree prepared them for what they are currently doing. This report summarizes the findings obtained from the Class of 2020 and compares them to findings from prior graduating classes.

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KEY FINDINGS

- Within a year following graduation, all respondents (100%) were either employed, in graduate study or both.
- Alumni satisfaction levels have declined substantially from the 2019 graduating class. The percentage reporting being satisfied with their KSC education and the percentage who would recommend KSC to friends or siblings fell to 68% from 90% and 92% respectively. 64% said that their KSC education had prepared them well for what they are doing now, down from 90% last year. This decline may be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in a very small response rate to this survey.
- The percentage employed or enrolled in graduate school remains high. None of the respondents reported that they were unemployed and seeking employment, only unemployed by choice while attending graduate school.
- 17% of respondents reported that they obtained their current positions before they graduated, although 48% took more than 6 months after graduation to find their current positions and 56% agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic made finding a job more difficult.
- 64% of respondents reported that their KSC education, as a whole, prepared them well or very well for their current work. 78% said that their major or majors prepared them well or very well.
- 20% of respondents reported that they had enrolled in one or more graduate education programs at some point after graduating from Keene State College. Of these, 80% were master's degree programs.
- 23% of respondents indicated they were likely or very likely to stay engaged with KSC through attending on-campus events, 27% through attending College events held near where they live, and 24% indicated they would volunteer through the KSC Alumni Association.

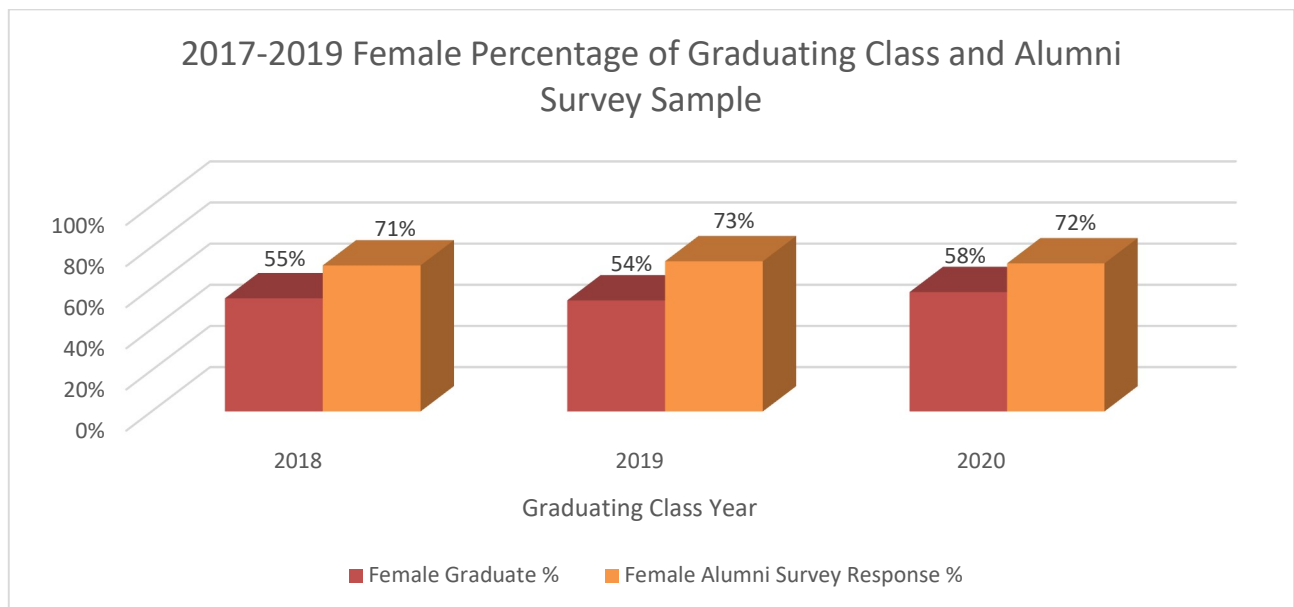
DETAILED FINDINGS

Potential Impact of Sample Bias on Findings

There were 782 unduplicated bachelor's and master's degree recipients in fiscal year 2020, and the College had valid email contact information with permission for 202 of these (27% of the class). The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment sent survey invitations through email to these alumni, and 32 provided usable responses for an overall response rate of 16%. Given this low response rate, it is possible that the sample bias influenced the survey's findings. For example, because women are more likely than men to complete online surveys, the findings may be more representative of female alumnae than of the population as a whole.

Consistent with this general pattern, the Class of 2020 was 58% female, but the sample was 72% female. Nevertheless, this pattern of female overrepresentation occurred in each of the most recent three Alumni Surveys, so this type of sample bias does not impede prior year comparisons (Figure 1). Further, across the full set of alumni surveyed in the past three years, men and women did not significantly differ in their employment status or being either employed or enrolled in graduate school.

Figure 1



Another possible reason the response rate could bias the survey's findings would be if employed students are more likely to complete the survey than unemployed students. Pride in one's post-graduate employment may motivate alumni to complete the survey.

Satisfaction with KSC Education

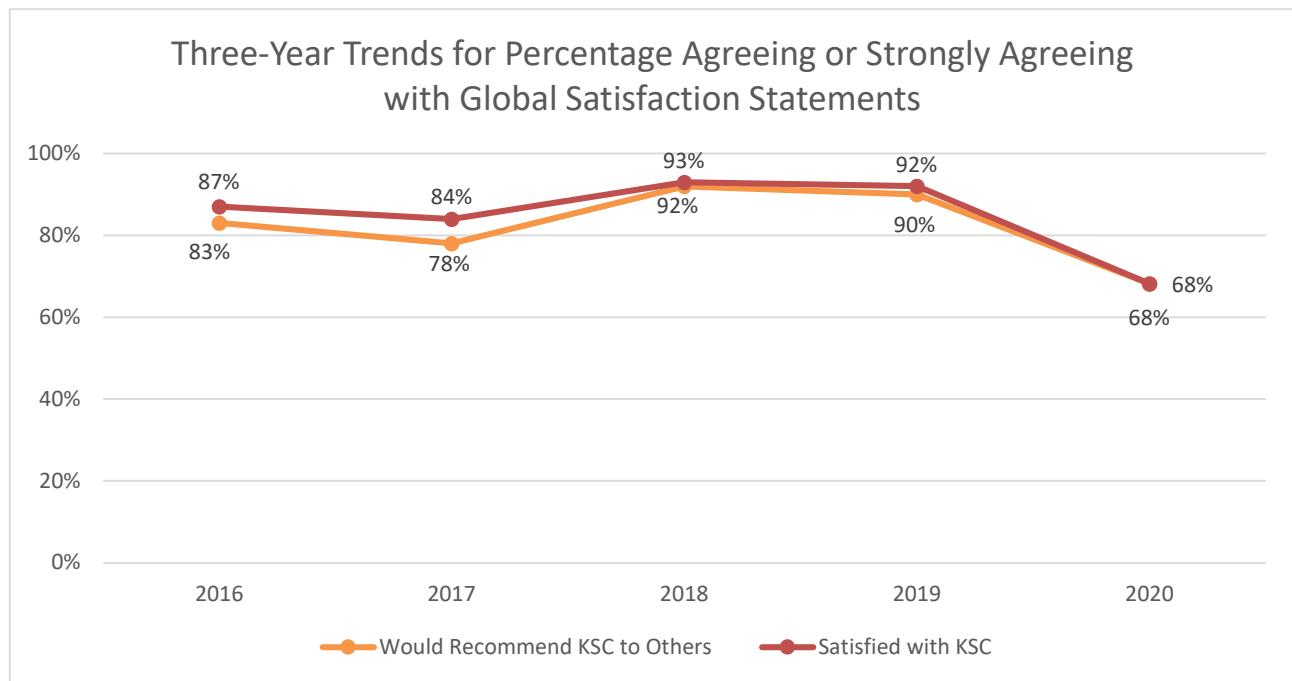
Two measures of alumni global satisfaction with their KSC education were included in the current Alumni Survey with a 69% of response rate. Alumni were asked to rate their agreement with statements expressing a type of overall satisfaction.

I would recommend KSC to friends or siblings as a good place to go to college: “Agree” or “Strongly Agree.”

Overall, I am satisfied with my KSC education: “Agree” or “Strongly Agree.”

Findings from the two measures indicate that global satisfaction with one’s KSC Education decreased for 2020 graduates (Figure 2). This is most likely due to challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

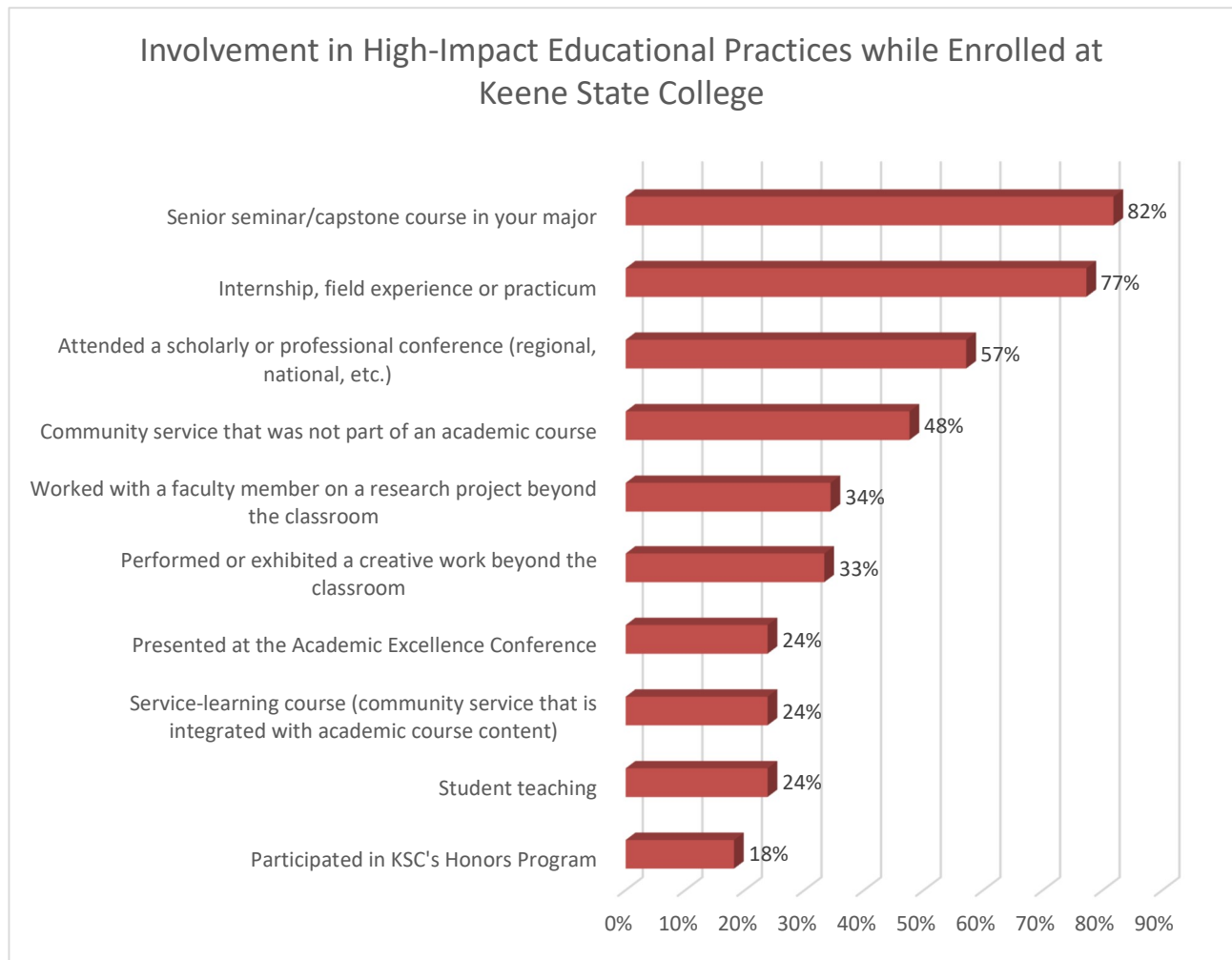
Figure 2



Involvement in High-Impact Educational Practices

Research by Kuh (2008) and others found that participating in high-impact educational practices (HIEPs) enhances student engagement, retention, and academic success. Specific examples of HIEPs include undergraduate research, global learning, internships, and service-learning experiences. The Alumni Survey asked respondents whether they had participated in each of a set of ten HIEPs. Kuh recommends encouraging all students to participate in at least two HIEPs during their undergraduate program. Of the 69% of alumni responding to this question, all respondents had met this goal.

Figure 3

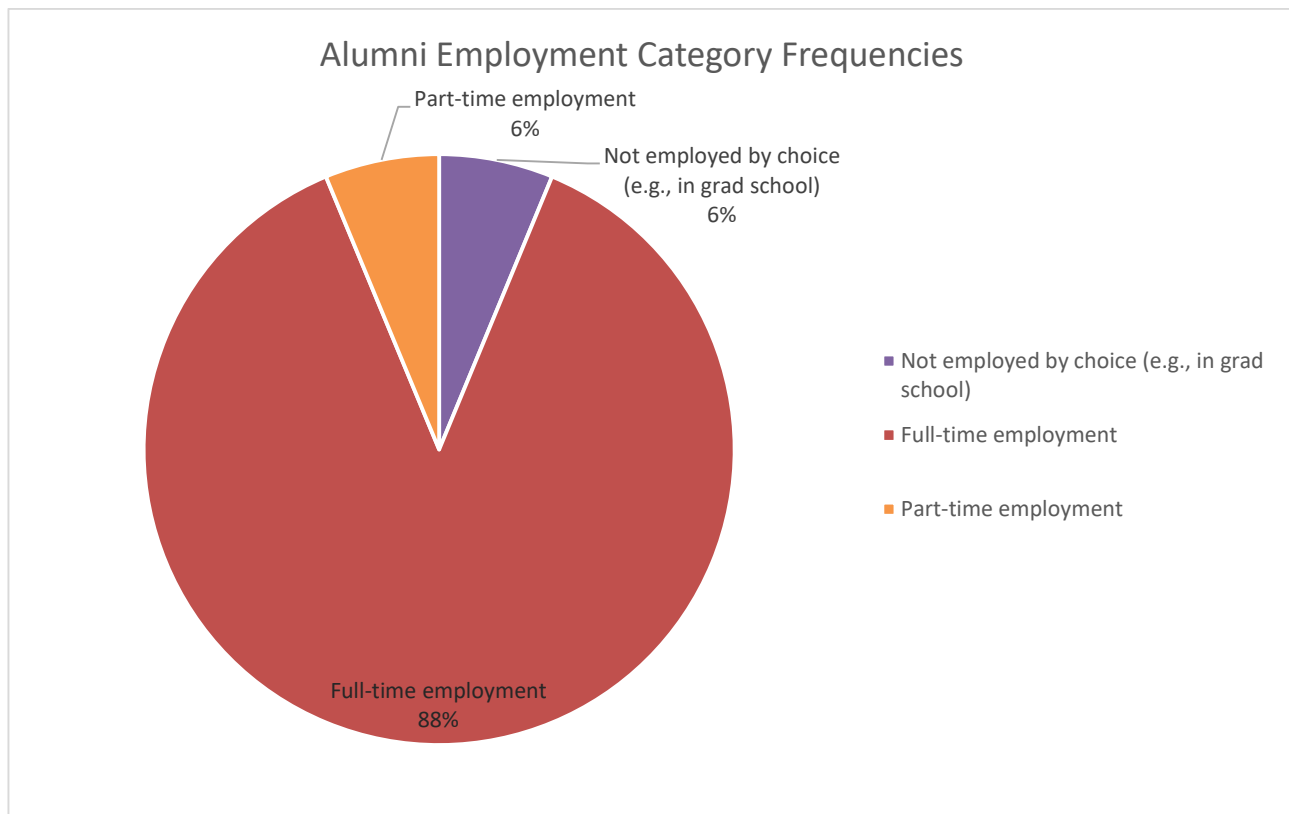


Employment Findings

Level of Alumni Employment

100% of the respondents provided an employment status. 6% of these alumni reported that they were not employed due to attending graduate school. Figure 4 summarizes the employment status breakdown.

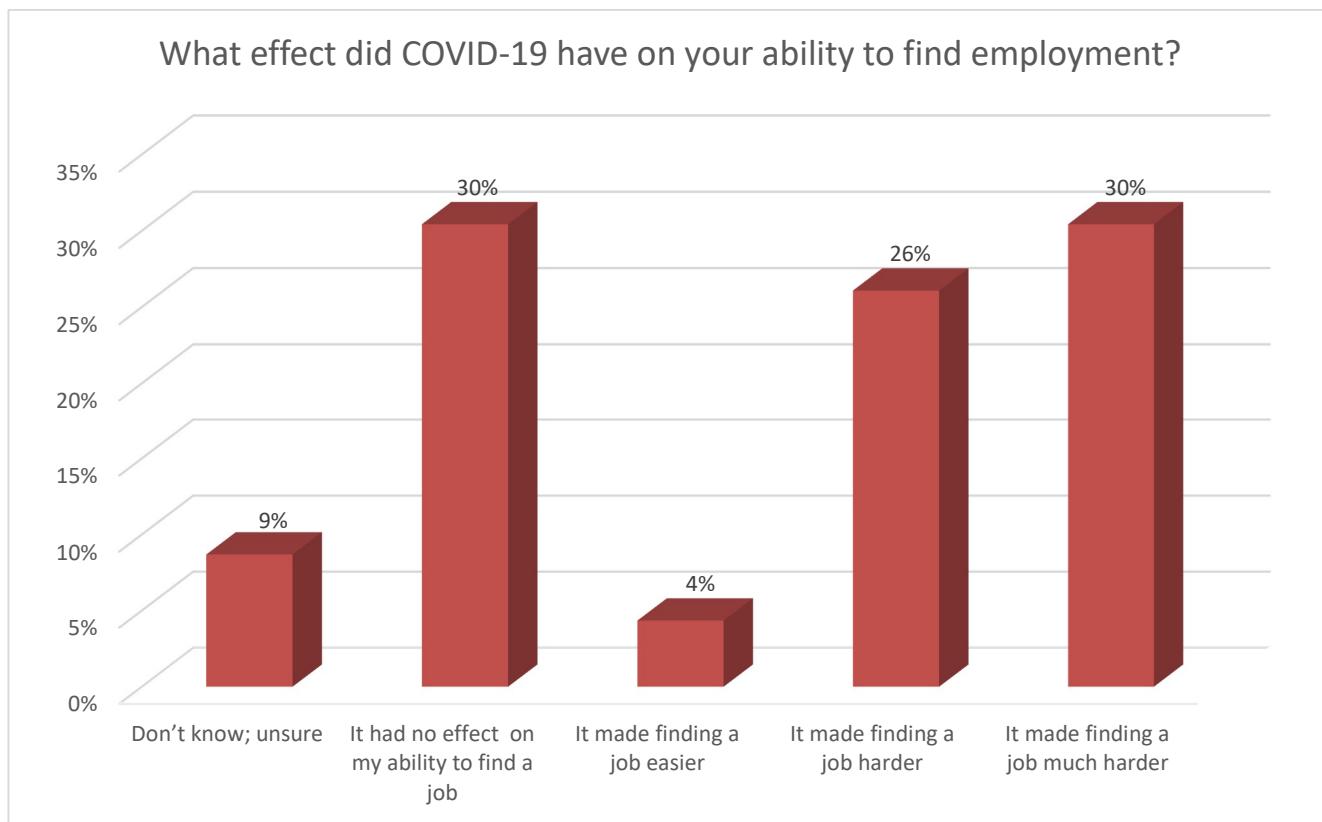
Figure 4



Impact of COVID-19 on Alumni Employment

72% of the Alumni Survey respondents answered a question about how COVID-19 impacted their ability to find employment. Figure 5 below shows the effect of COVID-19 on alumni employment searches. 4% of the respondents reported that COVID-19 made finding a job easier, whereas 56% responded that COVID-19 made finding a job harder or much harder. 30% of respondents reported that COVID-19 had no effect on finding a job.

Figure 5

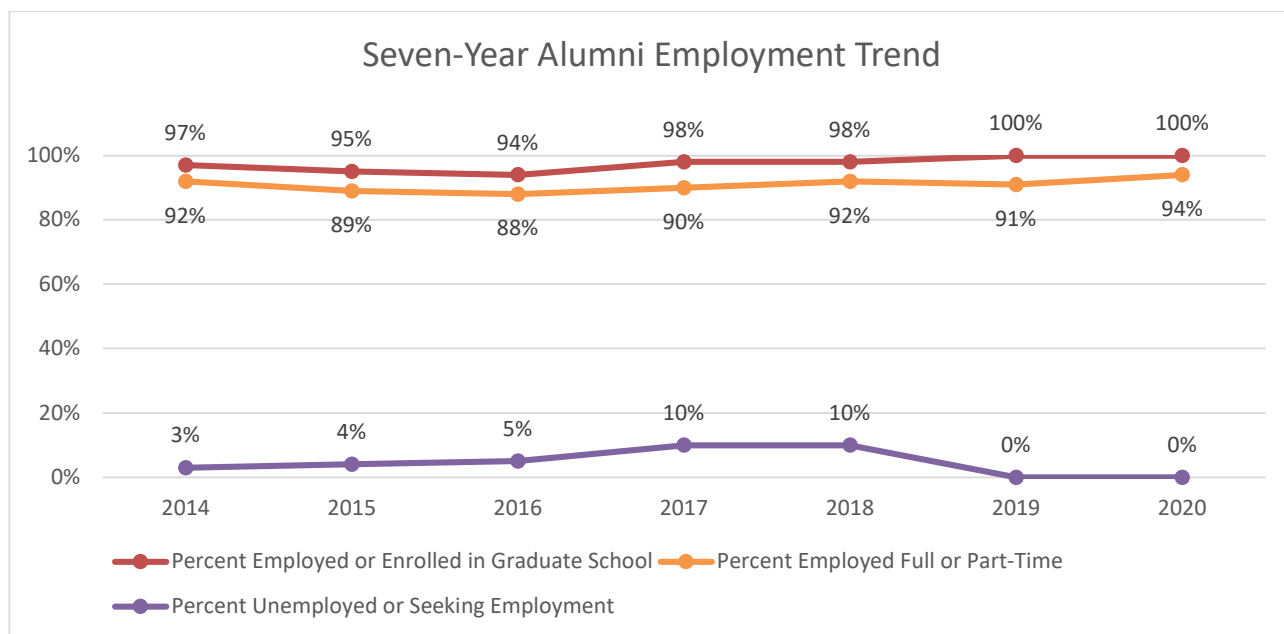


Employment Trends

All 100% of the respondents reported that they were either employed or enrolled in graduate school (Figure 6). The percentage employed either full- or part-time increased 3% from the prior year. Those reporting that they were “Unemployed by Choice” due to being enrolled in a Graduate Program was 6%, however, no one reported that they were “Unemployed and Seeking Employment.” The current national unemployment rate is 5.4% for recent college graduates.

(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/633660/unemployment-rate-of-recent-graduates-in-the-us/>).

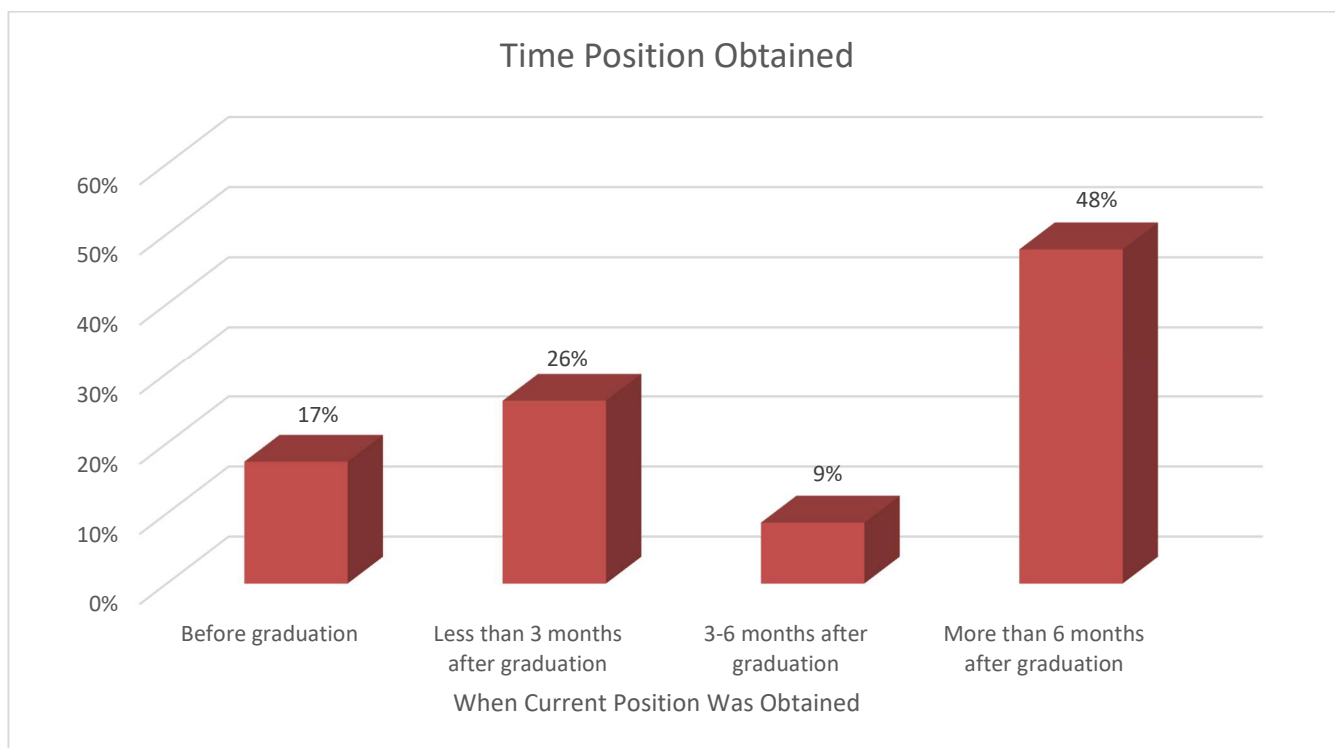
Figure 6



Time Required to Obtain Employment

72% of the respondents answered the question regarding how long after graduation they found their current employment. The most common response was “more than six months after graduation.” 35% of respondents were able to find employment within 6 months of graduation (Figure 7).

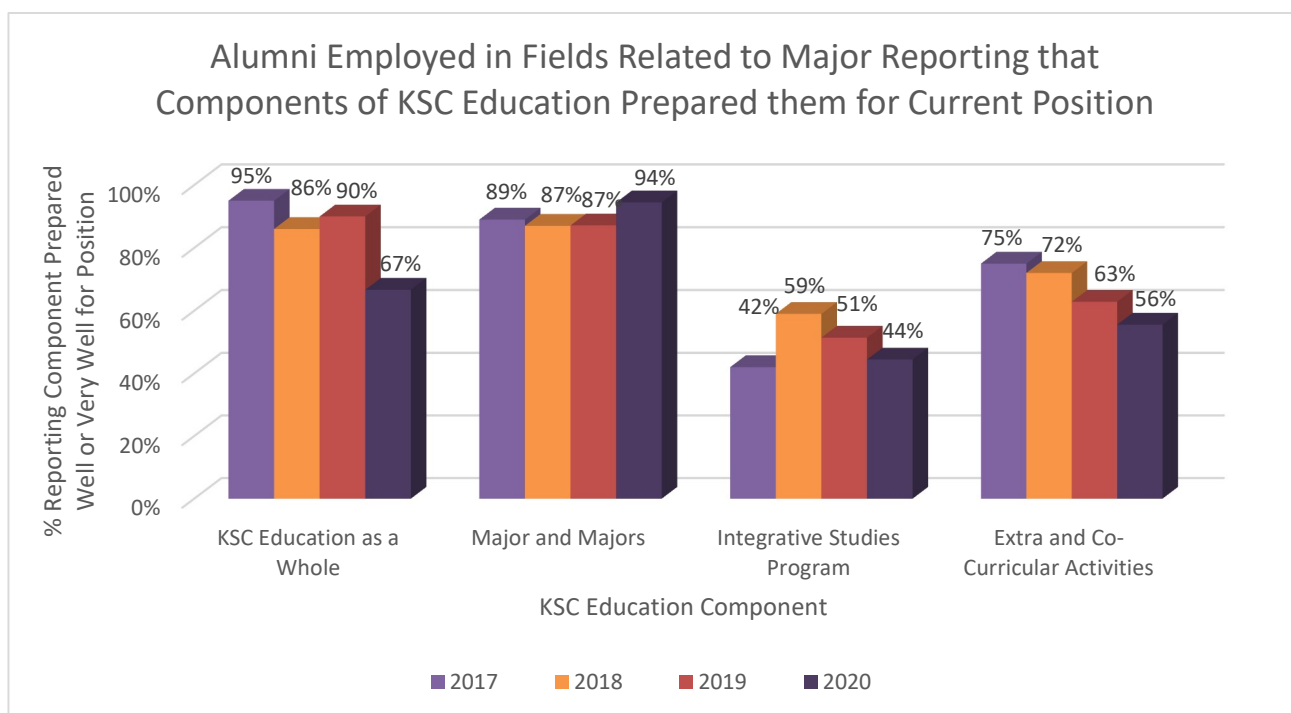
Figure 7



Satisfaction with KSC's Preparation for Employment Preparation from Coursework and Extra/Co-curricular Activities

Alumni were asked to assess how well each of these key components of their education prepared them for their current position. Those who answered “Well” or “Very Well” are reported in Figure 8. Of the 56% of alumni who responded to this series of questions 28% reported that their current position is closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC.

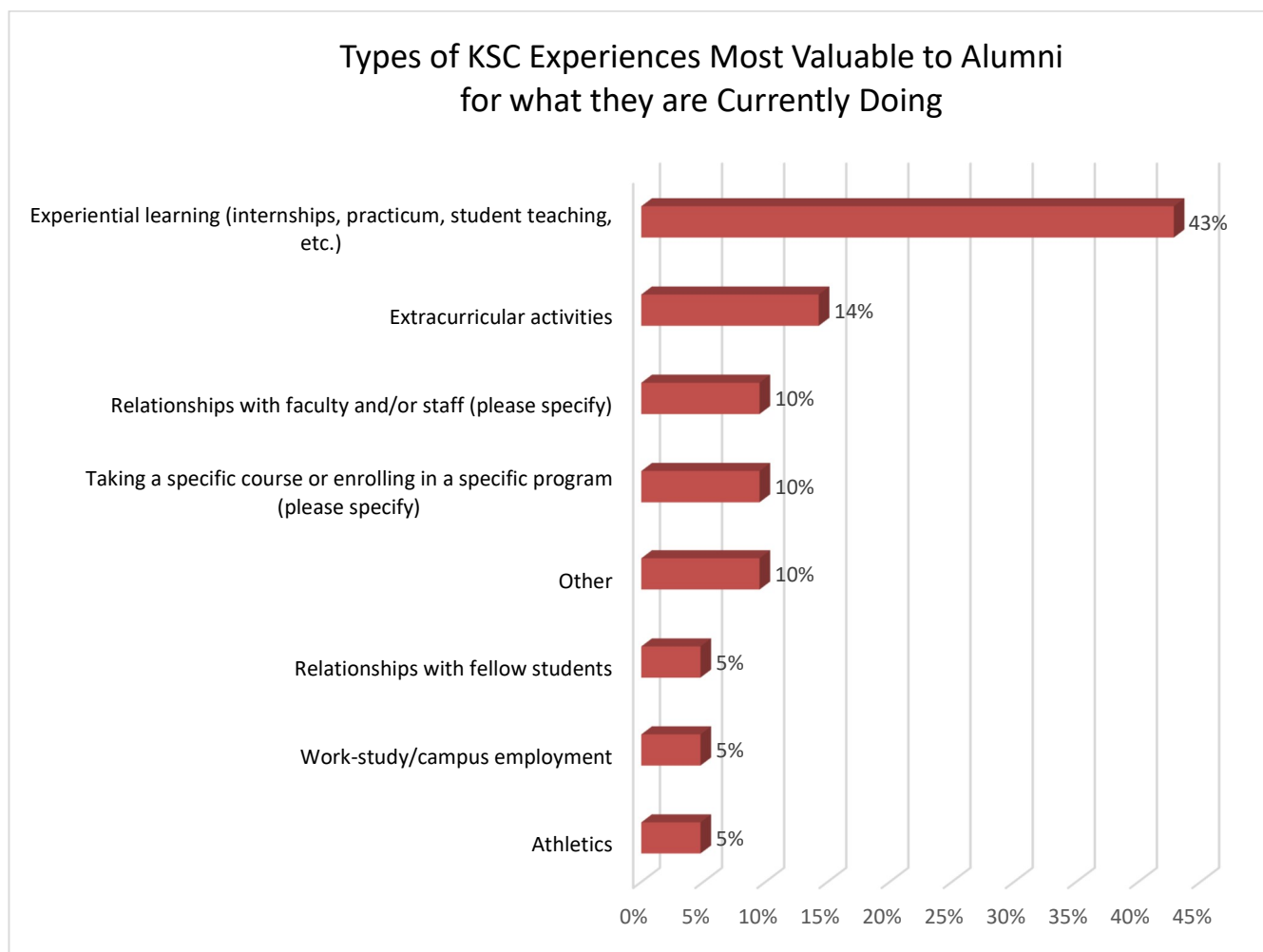
Figure 8



Specific KSC Experiences Most Valuable for Current Circumstances

The survey asked, “what experience did you have at KSC – inside or outside the classroom – that has proved most valuable for whatever you are doing now in your life?” Below (Figure 9) is a summary of the frequency of some common themes in response to this question.

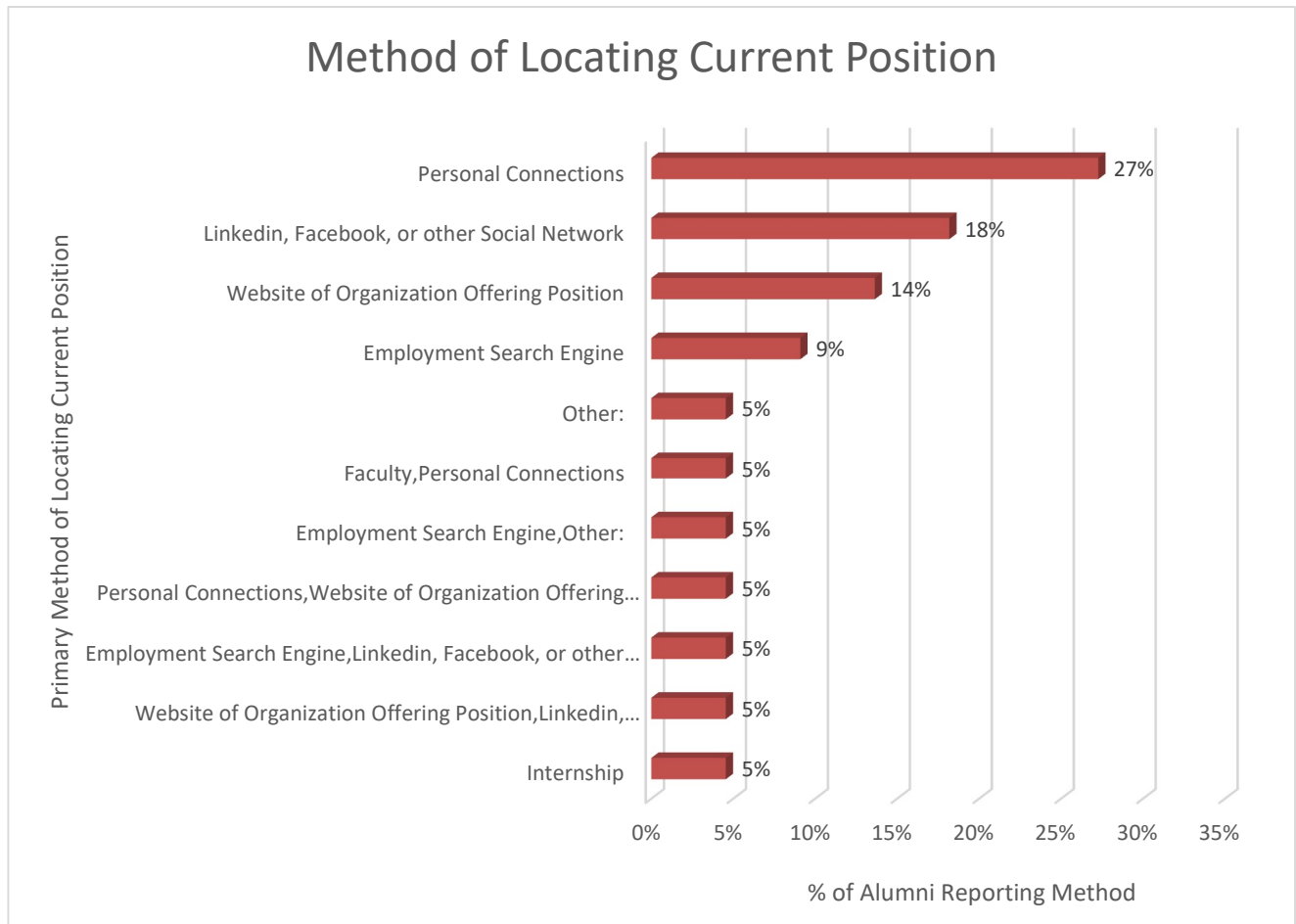
Figure 9



Job Search Methods

These are the primary methods that the respondents used to locate their current position. 69% of respondents answered this question matrix and provided the answers shown in (Figure 10). Personal Connections was by far the method most selected as the means for finding positions that these respondents currently hold.

Figure 10

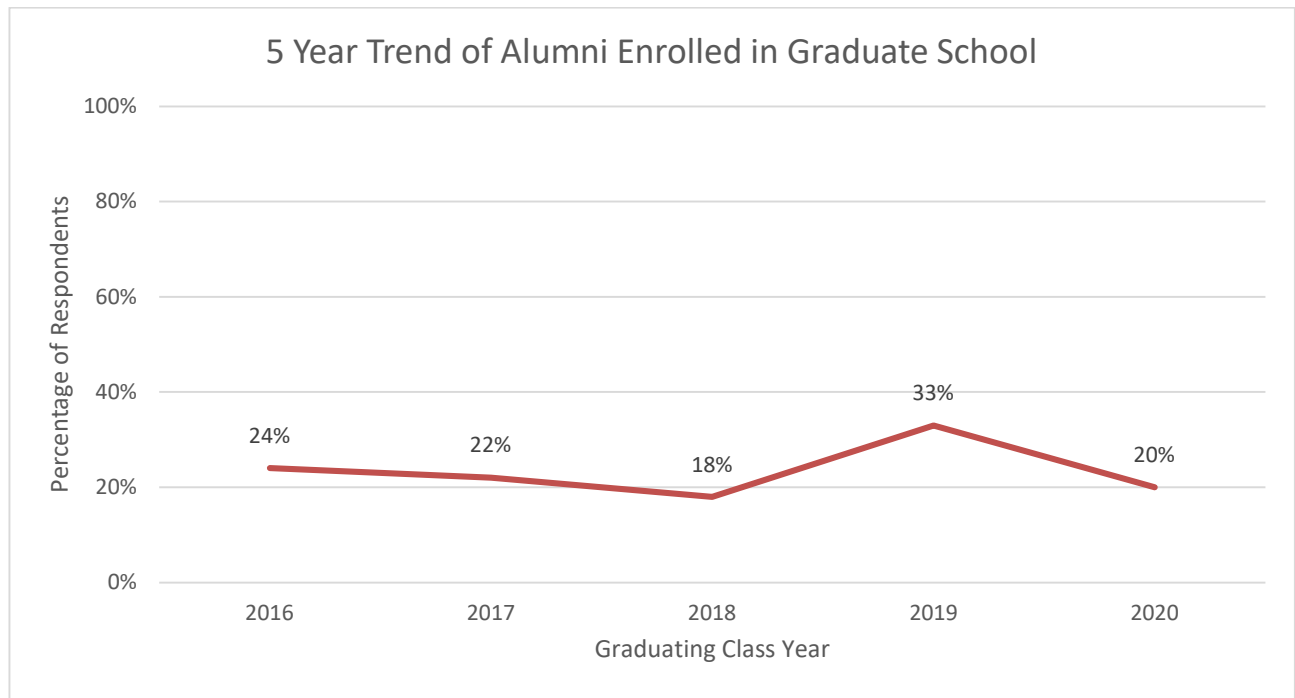


Graduate Education

78% of the alumni who took this survey answered this question. Most of the institutions in which respondents enrolled are in New England States.

20% of those respondents enrolled in graduate education reported that their program was closely related to or somewhat related to their studies at KSC. 20% also judged that their KSC education as a whole had prepared them well or very well for this next step in their education.

Figure 11



Future Engagement with College

Alumni were asked to rate their likelihood of using each of four approaches to staying engaged with KSC. Shown here (Figure 12) are the 99% of respondents who answered this series of questions and selected “Likely” or “Extremely Likely” for each approach.

Figure 12

