**Undergraduate Alumni Survey Report 2017**

**Student Services Department**

**29 April 2018**

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8. **Introduction**

This survey, conducted December 2017 through February 2018 by the Student Services Department, aimed to assess the current employment, education, and life status of AUIS graduates from the undergraduate program. The data from this survey indicates that our new graduates are entering a difficult job market. However, AUIS alumni continue to outperform the national trends in employment and average income.

**Key Findings**

* The unemployment rate (Unemployed and looking for work) for alumni has slightly increased from 13.8 % in 2016 to 14.6% in 2017.
* Average salaries for alumni continue to drop down from $1,771 in 2016 to $1, 472 in 2017.
* Use of Career Center and its value for students who find employment remain an important tool in helping students find a job after graduating.

**Scope Note**

The survey had a total of 277 respondents out of a total undergraduate alumni body of 546 (51 % response rate.) In comparison, the 2016 Alumni Survey had a total of 268 respondents from an undergraduate alumni body of 385 (66 % response rate). While the response rate has decreased, the 2017 survey did receive the largest number of responses of any AUIS Alumni Survey.

The survey was conducted via Survey Monkey and distributed using the AUIS Undergraduate Alumni email list server. In addition, the AUIS Alumni Facebook page was used to remind AUIS alumni about this survey.  Further, alumni were called, sent individual emails, and messaged directly on Facebook and LinkedIn by Student Services Staff. The survey period was December 7, 2017 until February 18, 2018. As with previous years, the target for this survey was the graduates of our four year undergraduate program.

**Demographics**

80.45% of respondents were Kurdish, 14.29 % were Arab, 1.8 % were Turkmen, and 3.38 % were Yezidi. 77.41 % of respondents said that they were currently living in Sulaimani, 16.74 % live in Erbil, and 5.86 % live in Baghdad. Other cities where students currently live are Bologna, Istanbul, Lund, Berlin, Dohuk, London, Prague, Dublin, Warsaw, Nice, and New York. 51.67 % of respondents are male and 48.33 % are female. These data approximately match the demographics of AUIS alumni as a whole.

In terms of marital status, 67.4 % are single, 24.18 % are married, and 8.42 % of are engaged. Of those married, 10.34 % either married or were engaged before graduation. 89.66% were married or were engaged after graduation.

1. **Employment**

70.8% of respondents are employed full-time; 1.46 % are employed part-time; 14.6 % are unemployed, but looking for work; 7.3 % are enrolled in graduate school; and 5.84 % are unemployed and not looking for work (i.e. they have left the labor force).

Of those who are unemployed and looking for work, 22% of respondents have received at least one job offer with an average of 3 job offers. Of those who are unemployed and looking for work, only 20% of total respondents are unemployed, looking for work, and have not received any job offers.

79.56% of our graduates are employed full time, part-time, or enrolled in graduate school. This statistic is particularly surprising because it runs counter to a continuing worsening trend in the Kurdish and Iraqi economy. However, contrary to this positive trend is a substantial increase in the % of alumni who are reporting that they have left the labor force. Respondents who are unemployed and not looking for wok increased from 4.2 % in 2016 to 5.84 % in 2017. It appears that those who continue to look for a job in the region and internationally are finding more opportunities in the face of a continuing economic depression. Yet an increasing number of alumni are deciding not to look for employment in the middle of an economic depression.

**Table 1 Employment Rates by Year of Graduation (277 respondents).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| 2017 | 58% | 4% | 4% | 25% | 7% |
| 2016 | 62% | 1% | 9% | 18% | 7% |
| 2015 | 76% | 1% | 6% | 12% | 3% |
| 2014 | 90% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 5% |
| 2013 | 76% | 0% | 11% | 5% | 5% |
| 2012 | 44% | 0% | 33% | 11% | 11% |

As with earlier surveys, the most recent graduates were most likely to be unemployed and looking for work. Given the fact that this survey is conducted immediately after Fall 2017 graduation, this statistic is not surprising and should not cause concern about the employability of recent AUIS graduates vis-à-vis earlier graduates.

**Tables 2.1 – 2.3: Employment by Major for 2017, 2016, and 2015**

**Table 2.1: 2017 Employment by Major (2017 Survey, 277 Respondents).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Major | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| BADM | 82% | 4% | 3% | 6% | 5% |
| IT | 73% | 0% | 14% | 11% | 2% |
| IS | 52% | 7% | 18% | 20%6 | 3% |
| ENGR | 58% | 0% | 13% | 23% | 6% |
| English | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**Table 2.2: 2016 Employment by Major (2016 Survey, 268 Respondents).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Major | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| BADM | 41% | 16% | 0% | 33% | 8% |
| IT | 88% | 0% | 0% | 11% | 0% |
| IS | 60% | 0% | 0% | 40% | 0% |
| ENGR | 56% | 0% | 12% | 25% | 6% |
| English | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% |

**Table 2.3:  2015 Employment by Major (2015 Survey, 208 Respondents).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Major | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| BADM | 68.8% | 0% | 0% | 31.3% | 0% |
| IT | 58.3% | 0% | 0% | 41.7% | 1% |
| IS | 7.7% | 30.8% | 30.8% | 30.8% | 0% |
| ENGR | 39.5% | 2.3% | 7% | 51% | 0% |

**Tables 3.1 - 3.5: Employment by Major and Year of Graduation as Reported by Alumni in 2017**

**Table 3.1. Business Administration Majors.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents’ Year of Graduation | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| 2017 (11 persons) | 54% | 9% | 0% | 36% | 0% |
| 2016 (24 persons) | 83% | 0% | 4% | 4% | 8% |
| 2015 (19 persons) | 78% | 0% | 0% | 10% | 5% |
| 2014 (24 persons) | 83% | 0% | 0% | 16% | 0% |
| 2013 (6 persons) | 50% | 0% | 16% | 33% | 0% |
| 2012 (4 persons) | 50% | 0% | 25% | 0% | 25% |
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**Table 3.2. Information Technology Majors.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents’ Year of Graduation | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor |
| 2017 (8 persons) | 87% | 0% | 0% | 13% | 0% |
| 2016 (21 persons) | 80% | 0% | 4% | 14% | 0% |
| 2015 (10 persons) | 80% | 10% | 10% | 0% | 0% |
| 2014 (9 persons) | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2013 (7 persons) | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2012 (3 persons) | 75% | 0% | 0% | 25% | 0% |
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**Table 3.3. International Studies Majors.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents’ Year of Graduation | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor |
| 2017 (5 persons) | 60% | 0% | 0% | 40% | 0% |
| 2016 (7 persons) | 28% | 0% | 71% | 0% | 0% |
| 2015 (16 persons) | 68% | 0% | 0% | 31% | 0% |
| 2014 (8 persons) | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2013 (4 Persons) | 75% | 0% | 25% | 0% | 0% |
| 2012  (2 persons) | 0% | 0% | 0% | 25% | 0% |

**Table 3.4. Engineering Majors.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents’ Year of Graduation | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| 2017 (16 persons) | 56% | 0% | 12.5% | 31% | 0% |
| 2016 (28 persons) | 50% | 3% | 0% | 35% | 10% |
| 2015 (35 persons) | 74% | 0% | 11% | 14% | 0% |
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**Table 3.5. English Majors.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents Year of Graduation | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| 2017 (0 persons) | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2016 (3 persons) | 66% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% |
| 2015 (1 Persons) | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

Engineering graduates continue to struggle to find work. It should be noted that many of the Engineering graduates who have found full time employment are in non-Engineering positions, such as HR Specialist in large construction firms.

International Studies majors are also reporting some difficulty this year in finding employment. While they continue to lead other majors in pursuing graduate degrees, IS majors are reporting higher levels of unemployment compared to either Business Administration or Information Technology graduates.

**Table 4. Historical Employment Data from Previous AUIS Alumni Surveys.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Alumni Surveys | Employed  Full-time | Employed Part-time | Enrolled in Graduate School | Unemployed and looking for work | Left the Labor Force |
| 2017 Survey | 70.8 % | 1.46 % | 7.3 % | 14.6 % | 5.84 % |
| 2016 Survey | 69 % | 3% | 10% | 13.8% | 4.2% |
| 2015 Survey | 57.7% | 3.8 % | 10.6% | 23% | 1.9% |
| 2014 Survey | 60% | 2% | 8% | 25% | 4% |
| 2013 Survey | 80% | 7% | 13% | 0% | 0% |
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The data show an increase in full-time employment for AUIS graduates in 2017. Whiel the local economy still faces significant obstacles, the full-time employment rate of AUIS graduates has been increasing since 2015. This steady improvement runs counter to the current trend of higher rates of unemployment among youth with a university degree. AUIS’ graduates continue to outperform their peers in finding employment.

1. **Salary**

The average monthly salary for respondents is $1,472, ranging from $400 per month for a graduate student stipend to $5,400 per month for an oil executive. This is a 20 % decrease from the average salary reported in 2016 ($1,771).  The average monthly salary for Business majors is $1,595, $2,065 for International Studies majors, $1,231 for Information Technology majors, and $1,347 for General Engineering majors.

**Table 5. Average Salaries Reported in 2017.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Respondents’ Major | Average Monthly Salary in 2017 |
| BADM (106) | $1,595 |
| IT (44) | $1,231 |
| IS (60) | $2,065 |
| ENGR (47) | $1,347 |
| English (4) | $967 |
| **Average** | **$1,472** |
|  |  |

Contrary to the conventional wisdom in the region, International Studies graduates have the highest salaries, followed by Business graduates.

The gap between male and female pay has shrunk. The average salary for male alumni is $1,577 per month. The average salary for female alumnae is $1,388, an 11 % difference. This is far smaller than the 33 % difference reported in the 2016 survey, bringing the pay gap between male and female graduates back to the level reported in the 2015 survey.

1. **Where our Alumni Work**

Respondents reported working for 157 different companies. This is a 60 maore than were reported in 2016 (97 companies) The companies employing the most AUIS graduates are AsiaCell (9), Lafarge (7), the Norwegian Refugee Council (1) and Qaiwan Group (5). Our students are employed in a broad range of industries: Manufacturing and Professional Services (23%), Banking/Finance (2.3%),  Retail/General Trading (15%),  Non-profit (13%), Education (12%), IT and telecommunications (3%), Energy Sector (6 % ), Accounting (4 % ) Media (1 % ), and the Government (1 % ).

1. **Where our Alumni Attend Graduate School**

20 respondents (7.3 % of total respondents) are enrolled in graduate school. This is an increase from 6% in 2016. Alumni reported attending institutions or higher learning such as AUIS, Brunel University of London, City University of New York, Coventry University, Czech Technical University of Prague, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Free University of Berlin, Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Harvard University, John Hopkins University, University of Kurdistan, Hawler,  London School of Economics, Lund University, Ryerson University, Sakarya University, University of South Wales, University of Sussex, Texas A&M University, Tufts University, and Virginia International University

**VI.  Job Satisfaction and Preparation**

76.54 % of respondents stated that they were either very satisfied (26.75 %) or generally satisfied (49.79) with their future career path. 12.35% of respondents stated that they were ambivalent with their future career path, and 11.11 % of respondents were either generally or very dissatisfied/confused about their future career path.

Most respondents stated that AUIS prepared them very well (41.46 %) or more than adequately (31.71 %) for their current career. 21.54 % of respondents stated that they felt that AUIS had prepared them adequately for their current career, with only 3.25 % of respondents stating that they felt AUIS prepared them less than adequately and 2 % that AUIS did a poor job preparing them for the job market.

**Tables 6.1-6.5: How well AUIS Prepared Alumni by Major and Year of Graduation as reported in the 2017 Alumni Survey**

**Table 6.1. BADM.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Very Well | More than Adequately | Adequately | Less than Adequately | Very Poorly |
| 2017 (9 persons) | 22.22% | 33.33% | 33.33% | 11.11% | 0% |
| 2016 (20 persons) | 40% | 35% | 25% | 0% | 0% |
| 2015 (23 persons) | 50% | 27.78% | 16.67% | 5.56% | 0% |
| 2014 (23 persons) | 52.17% | 30.43% | 17.39% | 0% | 0% |
| 2013 (5 persons) | 80% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2012 (3 persons) | 33.33% | 33.33% | 33.33% | 0% | 0% |
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**Table 6.2. IT.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Very Well | More than Adequately | Adequately | Less than Adequately | Very Poorly |
| 2017 (9 persons) | 33.3% | 44.44% | 22.2% | 0% | 0% |
| 2016 (18 persons) | 33.3% | 27.78% | 22.2% | 5.56% | 11.11% |
| 2015 (10 persons) | 50% | 40% | 10% | 0% | 0% |
| 2014 (8 persons) | 50% | 37.5% | 12.5% | 0% | 0% |
| 2013 (10 persons) | 28.57% | 14.29% | 57.14% | 0% | 0% |
| 2012 (6 persons) | 66.67% | 33.33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**Table 6.3. International Studies.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Very Well | More than Adequately | Adequately | Less than Adequately | Very Poorly |
| 2017 (3 persons) | 33.3% | 33.3% | 33.3% | 0% | 0% |
| 2016 (6 persons) | 33.3% | 16.67% | 33.33% | 16.67% | 0% |
| 2015 (12 persons) | 50% | 14.67% | 8.33% | 0% | 0% |
| 2014 (7 persons) | 85.71% | 14.29.3% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2013 (4 persons) | 50% | 50% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2012 (0 persons) | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**Table 6.4. Engineering.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Very Well | More than Adequately | Adequately | Less than Adequately | Very Poorly |
| 2017 (15 persons) | 26.67% | 33.33% | 33.33% | 0% | 6.67% |
| 2016 (23 persons) | 30.43% | 30.43% | 26.09% | 4.35% | 8.7% |
| 2015 (34 persons) | 38.24% | 29.41% | 23.53% | 8.82% | 0% |

**Table 6.5. English.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Very Well | More than Adequately | Adequately | Less than Adequately | Very Poorly |
| 2017 (1 persons) | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| 2016 (3 persons) | 33.33% | 66.67% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 2015 (1 persons) | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% |



More than 53.47 % of respondents interned while at AUIS. This number is larger than expected; Perhaps internship participation and responding to surveys are correlated. In terms of finding employment after graduation, respondents stated that personal connections (26.89 %), family/friends connections (27.83 %) and internships (21.23 % ) were most helpful. 8.49 % of respondents reported that the Career Fair was most helpful in finding a job after graduation. Career Center job postings were the lost helpful for 15.5% of respondents.

Using AUIS Career Services during their time at AUIS was a characteristic of students who found employment after graduation. Of those alumni who are employed full time or enrolled in graduate school, 52 % of respondents visited the Career Center at least several times during their time at AUIS. 48 % of respondents who are either employed full-time or enrolled in graduate school only visited once or twice (27 % ) or never (21 % ).

31 % of all respondents used the AUIS Career Center website and Jobs Board that were set up in 2014. 23.83 % of all respondents participated in one of the Career Services workshops that were offered regularly when AUIS had a full-time staff member for the Career Center. 44 % of respondents participated in one of AUIS’s annual Career Fairs.

**VII.   Opportunities for Improvement**

**AUIS Student Services**

* Increase Career Services programming: Our survey suggests that the Career Services office has a substantial impact on improving the employment outcomes for our alumni. Increasing the number of students who regularly use the office should be a priority for our students prior to graduation. The hiring of a Director of Student Services (funds already allocated) and a Career Services Coordinator (funds not yet allocated) will greatly improve Career Services at AUIS.
* Better prepare AUIS Undergraduates to pursue graduate degrees: The number of alumni who are pursuing their education at the graduate level is increasing. Student Services can do a better job of supporting this trend by offering more grad school oriented programming, such as application workshops and facilitating visits from graduate schools.

**Future AUIS Alumni Surveys**

* Increase response rate: While the response rate for the 2017 survey was the largest ever in absolute terms, the response rate fell below the goal of 60%. A larger sample size would give us a more accurate picture of how our alumni are doing. Further, increasing the response rate for this survey would allow Student Services to more effectively target our alumni by major and geographic location.
* Include MBA Alumni: MBA alumni represent an ever-expanding share of the total number of AUIS alumni. However, their exclusion from the Alumni Questionnaire has meant that the university has very little information about their satisfaction with the program, their current location, demographics, and employment rates. MBA alumni will be included in future alumni surveys.