



Department of Institutional Research and Assessment

Alumni Survey Analysis Class of 2016-2017

**Your suggestions and comments are welcomed. For questions or additional queries do not hesitate to contact us
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ACRONYM

AKSOB	Adnan Kassar School of Business
ARCSON	Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing
SArD	School of Architecture and Design
SAS	School of Arts and Sciences
SOE	School of Engineering
SOP	School of Pharmacy
LAU	Lebanese American University

Executive Summary

The key findings based on responses of the graduates of 2016-2017 are summarized below. Findings can be used to predict with 95% confidence the true population statistic within +/- 3.04 percentage points of the sample statistic.

- 89% of LAU graduates were employed or were continuing their education within 12 months of graduation.
- Graduates majoring in Social Work and Fashion Design had a 100% chance of securing a job before graduation.
- To search for their first job, graduates across all majors mainly relied on online job search platforms (24%), followed by family or personal connections (20%), social media platforms (16%), LAU career guidance /career portal (13%), LAU career fair (12%), career fairs organized by other organizations (5%), an LAU teacher/faculty (3%), LAU academic departments (3%), print newspapers (2%) and online newspapers (1%).
- 38% of graduates sought or earned a graduate degree/doctoral degree/second undergraduate degree/professional certification.
- Around 80% of graduates confirmed that their first job was related to their undergraduate field of study.
- The vast majority of respondents found their first job in Lebanon 91% whereas 5% found their first job in the Gulf region, 1% in North America, 1% in the Levant, 1% in Africa and 0.5% in Europe.
- External employers had a demand for graduates who majored in Business, Engineering (Computer, Civil and Electrical), Economics, Communication Arts and Psychology.
- Graduates who were employed in Lebanon were mostly based inside the capital Beirut.
- The industries that employed most of LAU graduates were (1) Architecture & Construction, (2) Non-Governmental Organization and (3) Sales & Distribution of Consumer Products, Health Science/Medical, Finance/Banking and Education & Training.
- The average basic salary ranged from \$1,101 for graduates employed in each of the Levant and Europe to \$1,963 for those employed in North America. The highest paid graduates were those employed in North America, Africa and Gulf Region.
- The highest paid majors were: Multimedia Journalism, Pharmacy and Engineering (Computer, Mechanical, Electrical and Industrial).
- 21% of graduates who had an internship experience were offered a full-time job afterwards in the same company. Graduates who majored in Fashion Design, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Industrial Engineering and Graphic Design were in the majority offered a full-time job after completing their internship.
- Were they to start again, 91% of graduates would pursue their studies at LAU.

- 94% of graduates believed that the preparation they received is the same or better than that received by their peers from other universities.
- 63% or more of alumni believed that their LAU education had a significant contribution (either “major” or “significant”) to their acquisition of the following: (1) functioning as a team member, (2) ability to think critically and approach new problems with an open and analytical mind (3) developing oral communication skills, (4) developing written communication skills and (5) instilling commitment for life-long learning.

Methodology

All LAU alumni of the academic year 2016-2017 were invited to participate in the online alumni survey. The alumni survey aimed at determining the employment and educational status of graduates and their views on the added value of internships on employment, when applicable. Alumni perspectives on their level of preparedness for employment reflected in the possession of the required theoretical knowledge and essential soft skill sets were also investigated.

The survey was disseminated by email to 1,622 LAU alumni at three different intervals, with each interval marking 12 months from graduation for the alumni surveyed. Alumni were given three weeks to complete the survey and received two reminders after the initial invitation to participate in the survey. Alumni who did not complete the online survey in person received follow up telephone calls.

Out of the 1,622 alumni invited, 634 responded yielding a response rate of 39%. The generalizability of the results to the population depends on the sample size, which in turn depends on the degree of precision desired, the variability of the data sampled, and the type of sampling employed, namely level of tolerated error accepted. With 634 respondents, a 3.04 percent margin of error and a 95 percent confidence interval were generated. As such, one can predict with 95% confidence that the true population statistic is within +/- 3.04 percentage points of the sample statistic.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Out of the 634 respondents, 56% were females (Figure 1). Most respondents were graduates from the AKSOB (40%), while 29% were graduates from the SAS, 14% from the SOE, 11% from the SArD, 4% from the SOP, and 2% from the ARCSON (Figure 2). These percentages mirror to a large extent graduation patterns at LAU by school. As for the majors of respondents, 35% majored in Business, 8% in Biology, 6% in Civil Engineering, and 4% in each of Architecture, Nutrition, Pharmacy, Communication Arts, Mechanical Engineering and Economics. Alumni who majored in Psychology, Political Science/International Affairs, Computer Science, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Interior Architecture, Computer Engineering, Nursing, Education and other majors also participated in the survey.

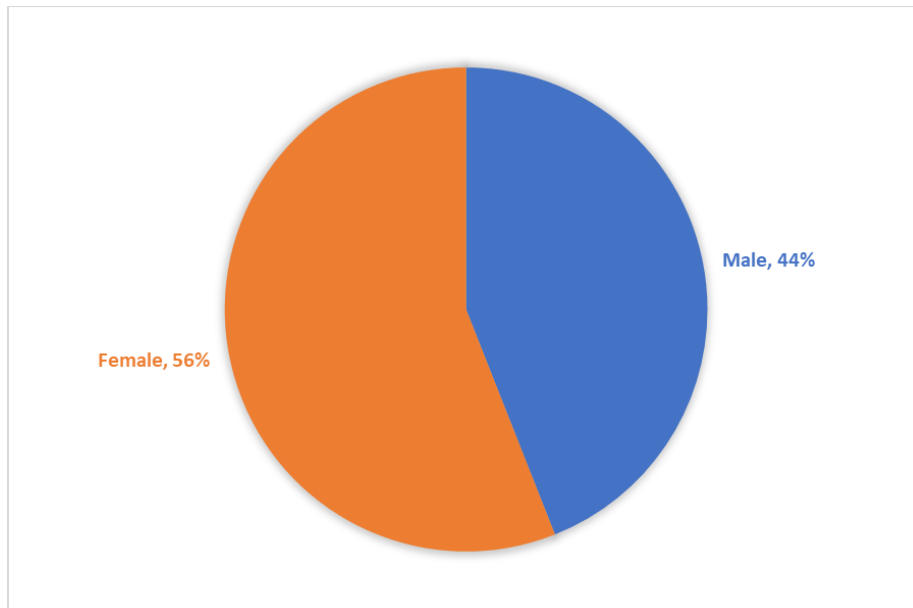


Figure 1: Respondents by gender

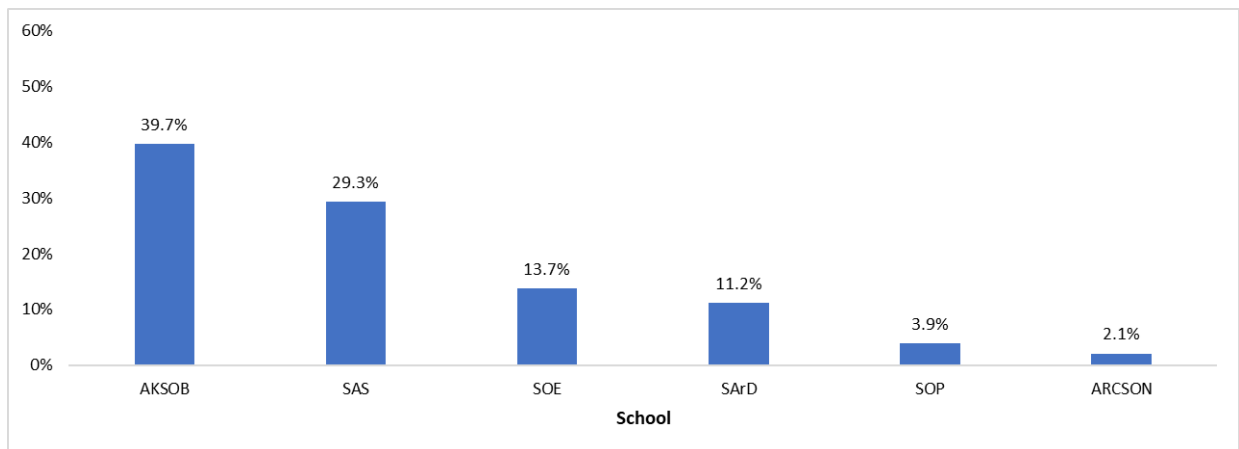


Figure 2: Respondents by school

Major Findings

1. Employment and Post-Graduation Status

i. Current Employment Status

The current employment status of the LAU Alumni of AY 2016-2017 varies. 70% of the respondents reported to have been employed at least once since their graduation. Out of these, 61% are currently employed whereas 9% have been employed at least once. 30% of LAU Alumni of AY 2016-2017 have never been employed. (Figure 3).

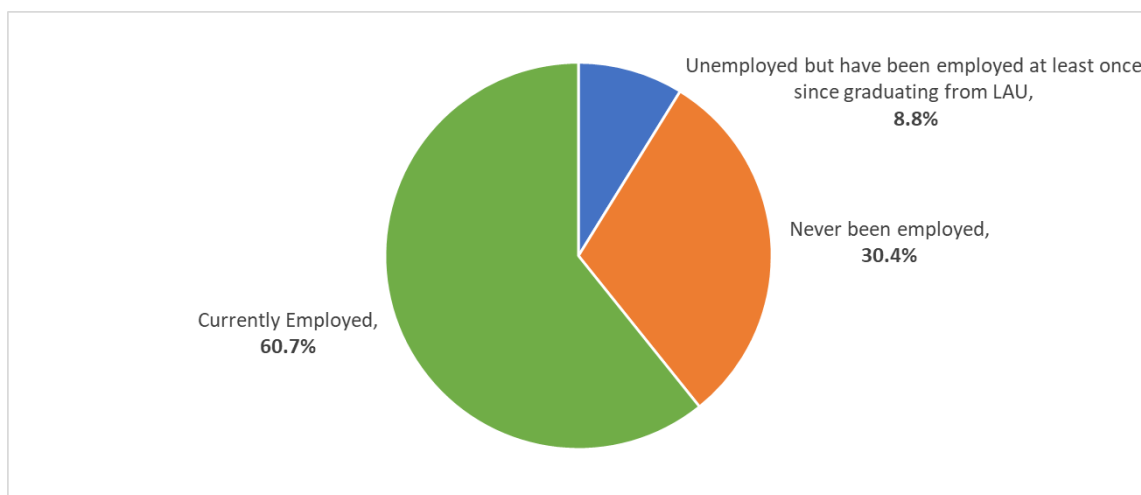


Figure 3: Employment status

ii. Continuing Education

Alumni were asked about whether they had sought further education after they completed their undergraduate studies. 38% confirmed that they had already earned or are currently pursuing a graduate degree, doctoral degree, second undergraduate degree or a professional certification. Out of the 39% of alumni who are currently unemployed (i.e. never been employed and currently unemployed but have been employed at least once since graduation), 64% are full-time students. Of the 64% alumni who are unemployed because they are seeking further education, 56% are graduate students, 31% are doctoral students, 10% are seeking a professional certification and 2% are seeking a second undergraduate degree. Alumni who opted to continue their education had mostly completed their undergraduate degree in Bioinformatics, Biology, Multimedia Journalism, Nutrition and Chemistry (Figure 4).

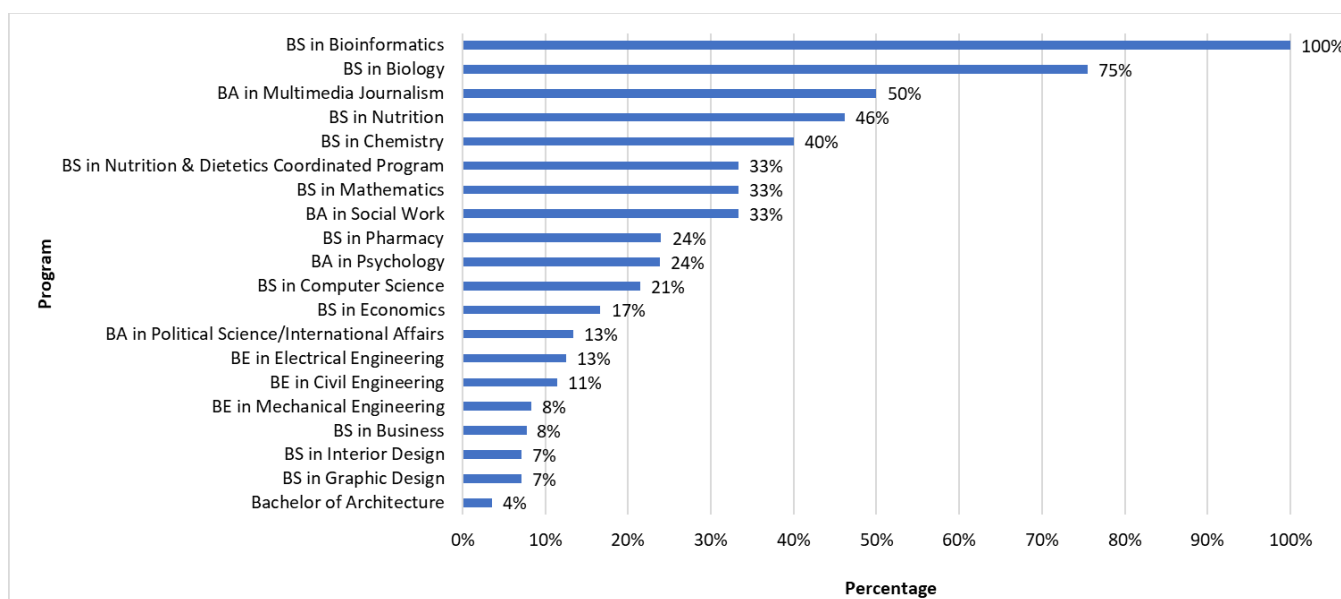


Figure 4: Alumni continuing higher education based on undergraduate degree

iii. Time to first job

When asked about the time spent to find their initial job, 17% of alumni reported to have found their first job prior to graduation. Within the first six months after graduation, 79% had secured a job. This rate increased to 100% 12 months after graduation (Figure 5).

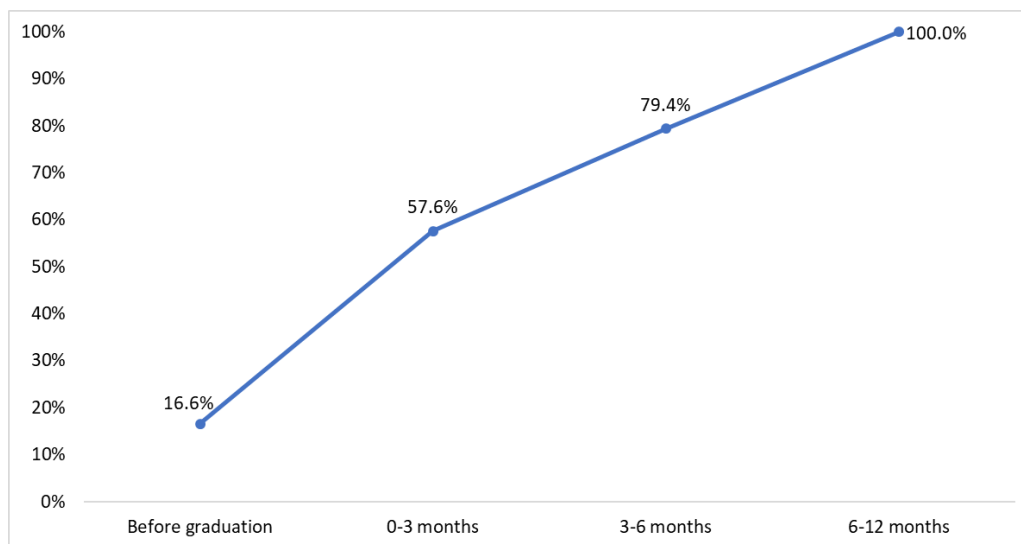


Figure 5: Employment rates based on initial employment

Based on survey findings, 100% of alumni who majored in Social Work and Fashion Design were able to find a job prior to graduation. 23-50% of those who majored in Mathematics, Education, Chemistry, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Communication Arts and Graphic Design reported finding a job prior to graduation. However only 3-17% of alumni who majored in Interior Design, Pharmacy, Economics, Business, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Engineering (Mechanical and Civil), Biology, Architecture, Nursing, Interior Architecture, Nutrition and Psychology secured a job by graduation (Figure 6).

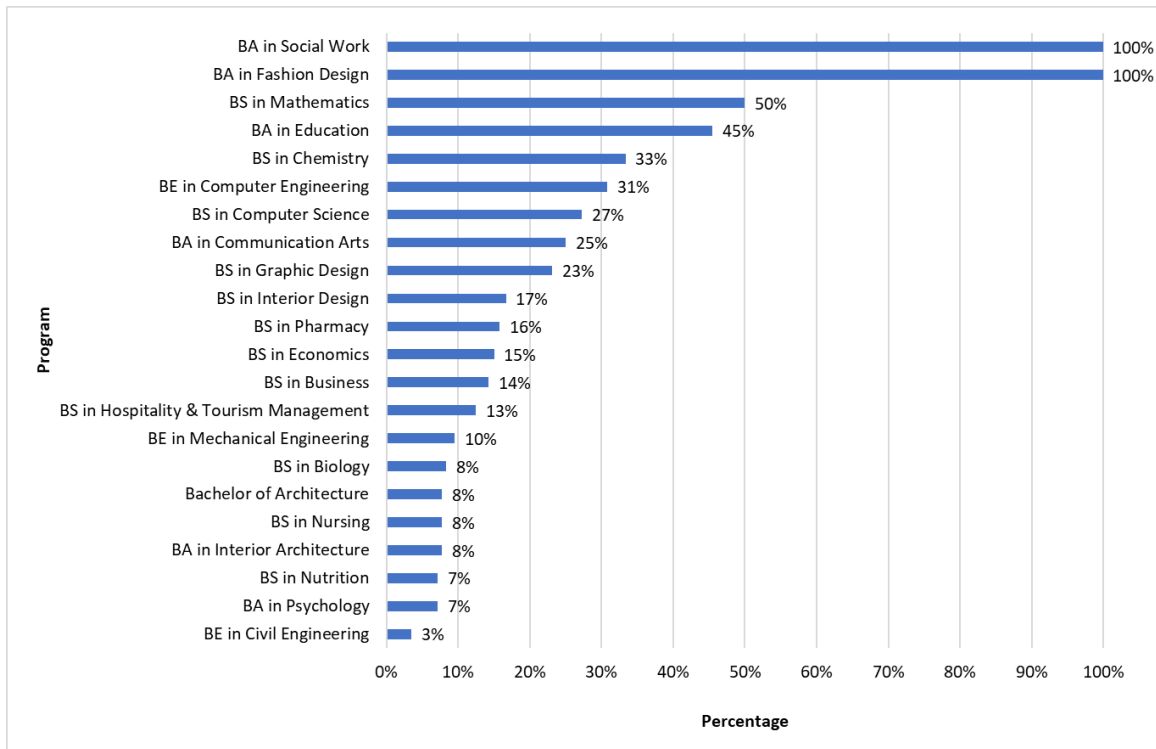


Figure 6: Employment rates by degree prior to graduation

For a period of up to twelve months after graduation, all alumni (100%) who majored in Hospitality and Tourism Management and Fashion Design were capable of securing a job. Over the same period, most alumni (60-93%) who majored in Graphic Design, Nursing, Engineering (Computer, Mechanical, Industrial and Civil), Communication Arts, Interior Architecture, Education, Business, Computer Science, Architecture, Pharmacy, Interior Design, Mathematics, Economics, Social Work, Chemistry and Political Science/International Affairs were able to find a job. (Figure 7).

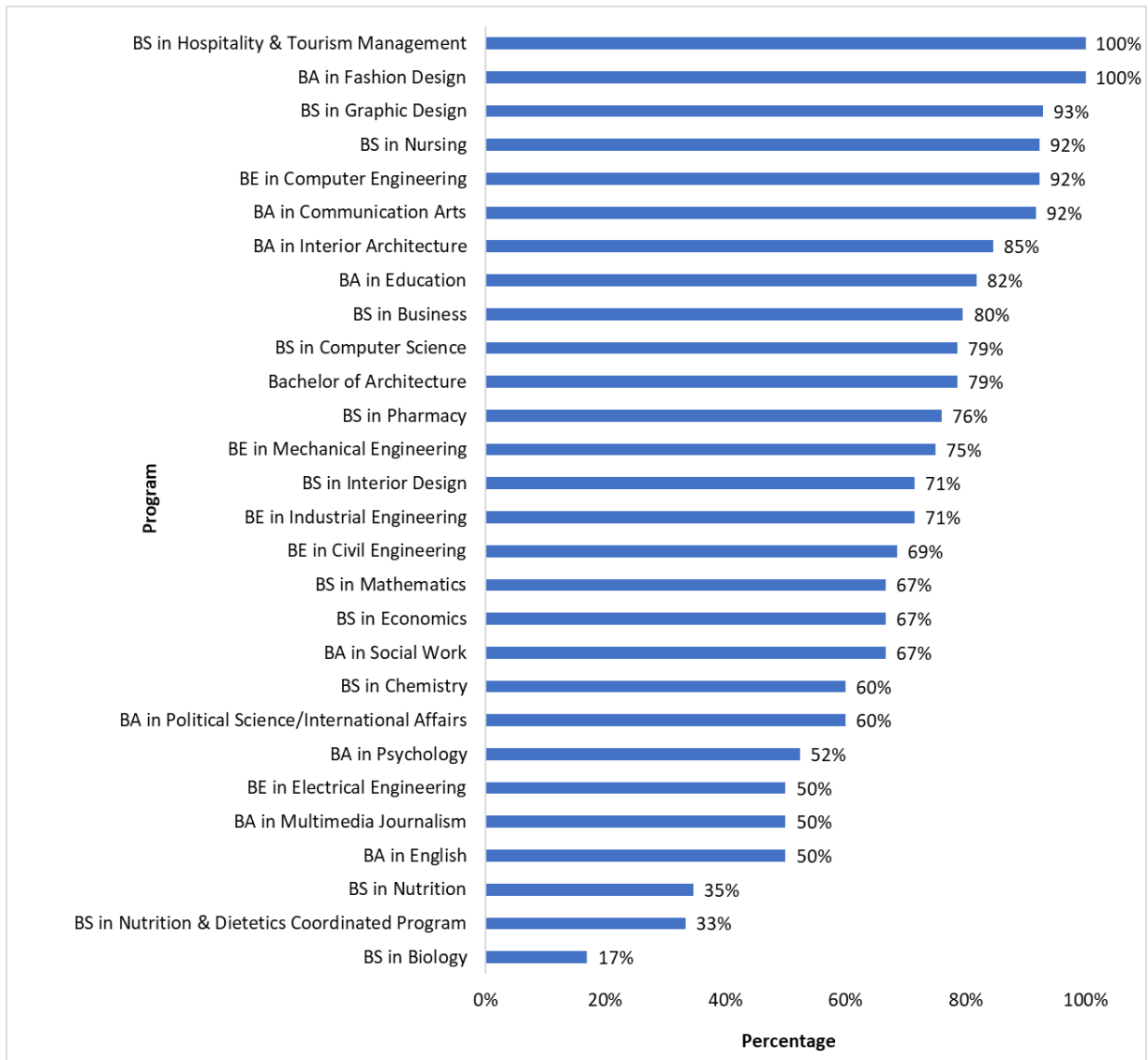


Figure 7: Employment rates by degree twelve months after graduation

iv. Job search methods

Alumni reported using a variety of methods when searching for their first job. Alumni mainly relied on online job search platforms when attempting to search for their first job (24%), followed by family or personal connections (20%), social media platforms (16%), LAU career guidance office /career portal (13%), LAU career fair (12%), career fairs organized by other organizations (5%), an LAU teacher/faculty (3%), LAU academic departments (3%), print newspapers (2%) and online newspapers (1%) (Figure 8).

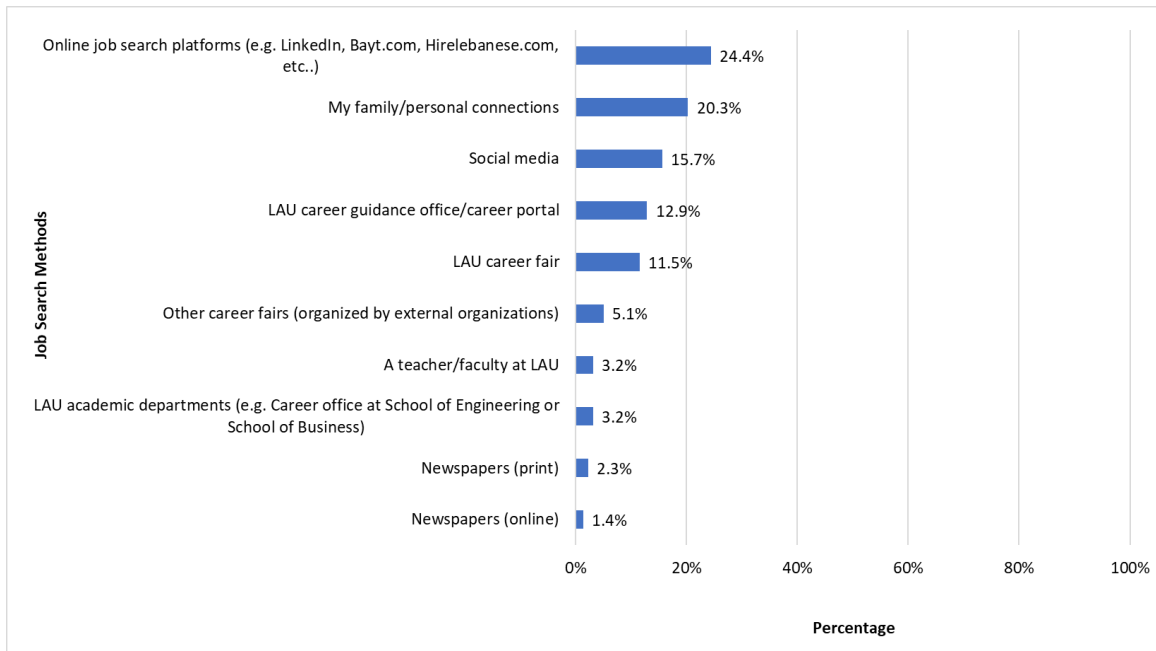


Figure 8: Methods alumni relied on for their job search

Graduates across all majors have relied on LAU job search platforms and services - the career fair, career guidance office/career portal, academic departments, and faculty - to secure employment particularly those who majored in BS in Hospitality and Tourism Management, BS in Graphic Design, BE in Engineering (Industrial and Computer) and BA in Interior Architecture (100%).

In addition, graduates who received their degree in BE in Mechanical Engineering (80%), BE in Civil Engineering (75%), BS in Business (63%), BS in Nutrition (50%) and Bachelor of Architecture (50%) found jobs using LAU search platforms.

Graduates who received degrees in BS in Interior Design (33%) and BA in Political Science/International Affairs (33%) were the least reliant of LAU job search platforms to find jobs (Figure 9).

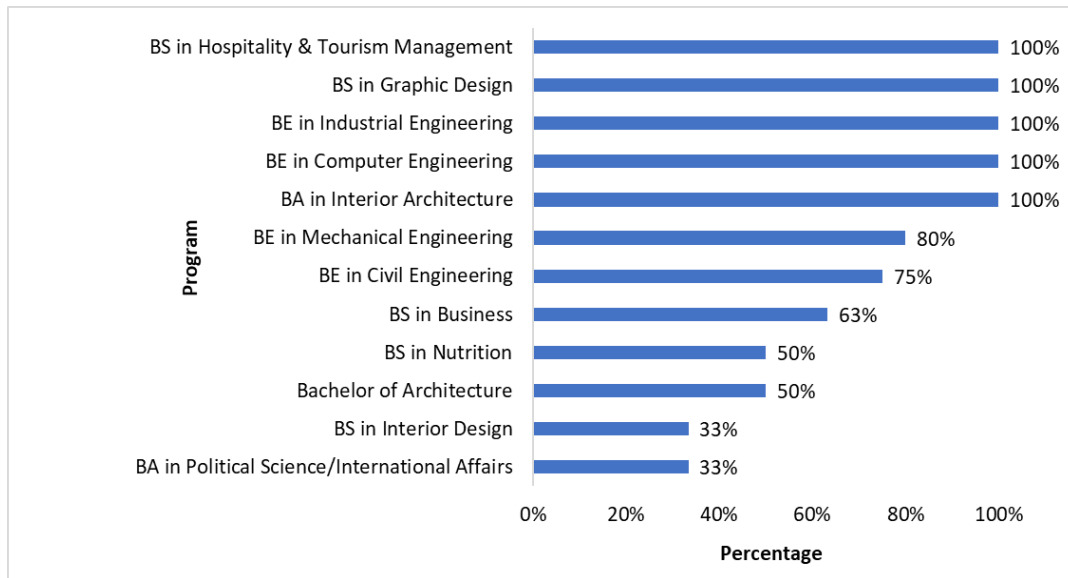


Figure 9: Alumni who relied on LAU job search platforms and services based on degree

2. First Job Experience

i. Type

A vast majority of respondents (78%) reported that the first job they had secured was on a full-time basis whereas 15% reported that the job was on a part-time basis. More males (84%) secured a full-time job compared to females (73%). The opposite applies to part – time employment, where 18% females reported having secured part-time jobs compared to 12% males (Figure 10). In addition, 7% reported to have been self-employed and those mostly majored in Business, Communication Arts, Civil Engineering, Graphic Design and Nutrition.

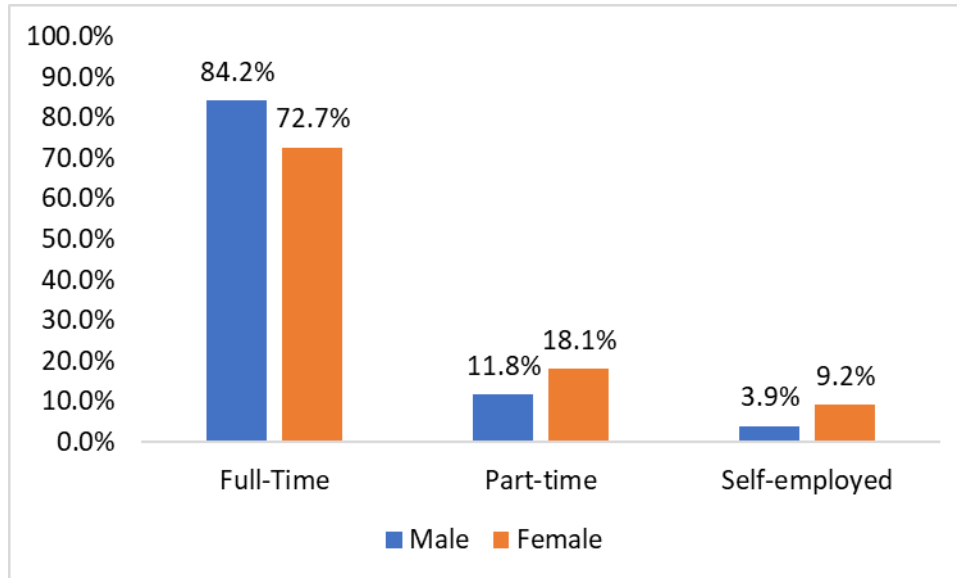


Figure 10: Job type by gender

ii. Correlation of Job to Undergraduate Field of Study

Not all respondents worked in their field of study. In fact, 80% of alumni confirmed that their first job was related to their undergraduate major. Finding a job in one's undergraduate field of study depended on the major.

All (100%) those who majored in Engineering (Computer and Electrical), Education, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Mathematics, Social Work and English secured a first job that was related to their undergraduate field of study.

Most alumni (96% - 74%) majoring in Engineering (Civil, Mechanical and Industrial), Architecture, Graphic Design, Nursing, Communication Arts, Interior Architecture, Pharmacy, Computer Science, Nutrition, Political Science/International Affairs and Business reported securing a first job in their undergraduate field of study.

This percentage dropped to 67% and below for alumni who majored in Biology, Chemistry Interior Design, Economics and Psychology (Figure 11).

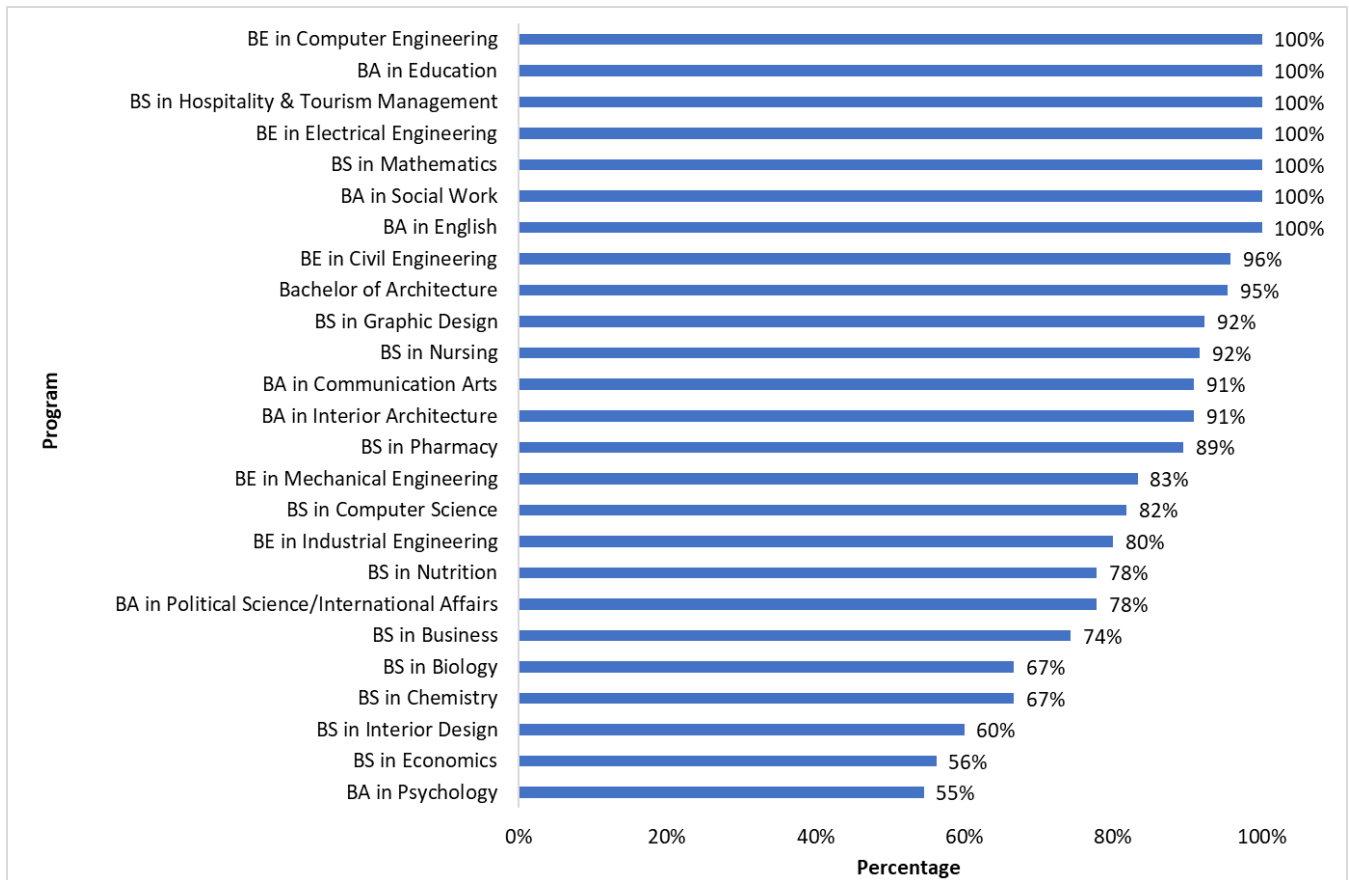


Figure 11: Employment in jobs related to undergraduate field of study by undergraduate degree

iii. Location

The vast majority of respondents found their first job in Lebanon 91% whereas 5% found their first job in the Gulf region, 1% in North America, 1% in the Levant, 1% in Africa and 0.5% in Europe (Figure 12).

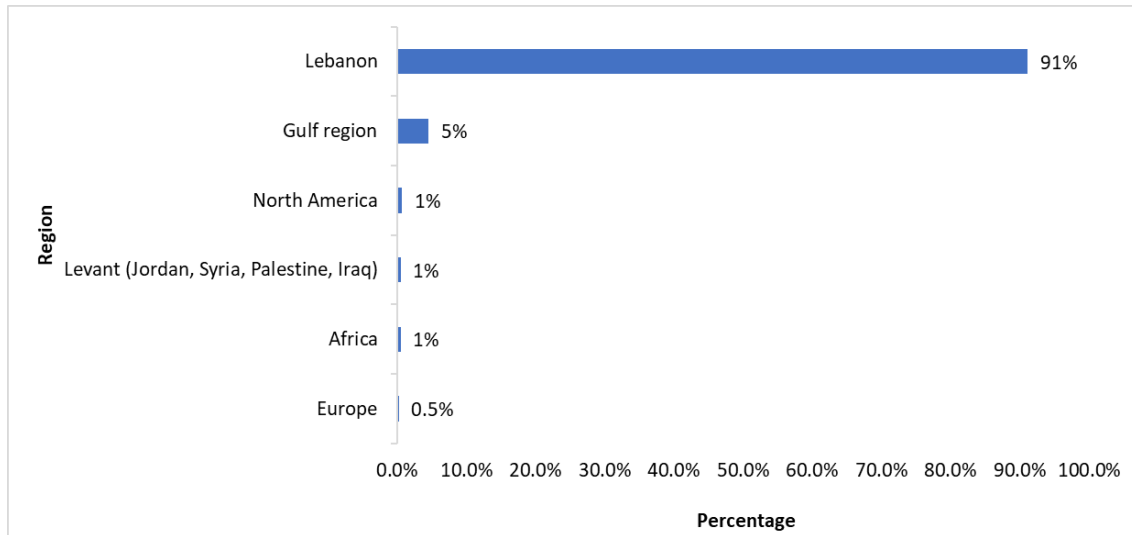


Figure 12: *Employment by job location*

All the majors offered by LAU were found to correlate positively with the demands of the Lebanese labor market. All alumni (100%) who graduated from ARCSON and SOP reported being employed in Lebanon. This percentage dropped to 95% for those who graduated from SArD and to 93% of alumni who graduated from SAS and 91% of alumni who graduated from AKSOB. Similarly, this percentage further dropped to 83% for those who graduated from SOE. External market demands varied according to the region. Employment outside Lebanon was found to be highest for graduates of SOE (18%) followed by AKSOB (9%), SAS (7%) and SArD (5%) (Figure 13).

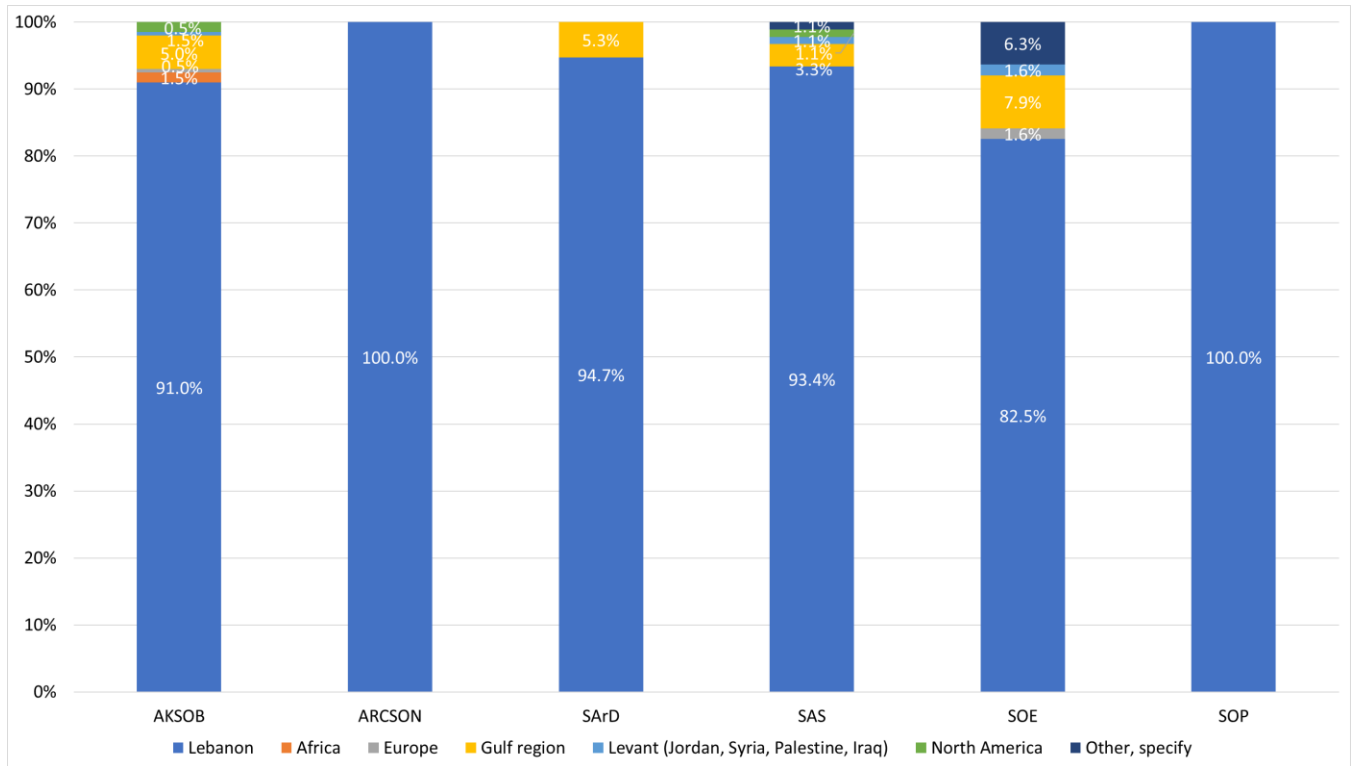


Figure 13: Employment rates by school and location

Majors seen to be the most requested by external employers include Business, Engineering (Computer, Civil and Electrical), Economics, Communication Arts and Psychology. Employers based in Africa have recruited alumni who majored in Business and Economics. Employers from the Gulf region mainly recruited Business and Architecture. As for employers based in North America, they have recruited from Business and Psychology. When it comes to Europe, employers have recruited Business and Civil Engineering. Lastly, employers in the Levant mainly recruited Communication Arts, Computer Engineering and Economics graduates (Table 1).

Table 1: Alumni employed abroad by degree

Program	Africa	Europe	Gulf region	Lebanon	Levant (Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Iraq)	North America	Other, specify
BA in Communication Arts			9.5%	4.7%	33.3%		
BA in Education				2.2%			
BA in English				0.5%			
BA in Fashion Design				0.2%			
BA in Interior Architecture				2.7%			
BA in Multimedia Journalism				0.2%			

BA in Political Science/International Affairs				2.2%			
BA in Psychology				2.5%		25.0%	
BA in Social Work				0.2%			20.0%
Bachelor of Architecture			14.3%	4.7%			
BE in Civil Engineering		50.0%	9.5%	5.2%			
BE in Computer Engineering			4.8%	1.7%	33.3%		60.0%
BE in Electrical Engineering			9.5%	0.2%			20.0%
BE in Industrial Engineering				1.2%			
BE in Mechanical Engineering				4.5%			
BS in Biology				2.2%			
BS in Business	66.7%	50.0%	33.3%	40.2%		75.0%	
BS in Chemistry			4.8%	0.5%			
BS in Computer Science				2.7%			
BS in Economics	33.3%		4.8%	3.2%	33.3%		
BS in Graphic Design				3.2%			
BS in Hospitality & Tourism Management			9.5%	1.5%			
BS in Interior Design				2.5%			
BS in Mathematics				0.5%			
BS in Nursing				3.0%			
BS in Nutrition & Dietetics Coordinated Program				0.2%			
BS in Nutrition				2.2%			
BS in Pharmacy				4.7%			

As for alumni who were employed in Lebanon, most were based inside the capital Beirut (73%) and an additional 19% were based in the Mount Lebanon Governorate (Figure 14). Employment opportunities ranged from 4% in South Lebanon to 3% in the North, 1% in the Bekaa and 0.2% in Nabatieh. Employment trends have changed over time. The percentage of alumni employed in Beirut decreased from 81% for graduates of 2011- 2012 to 75% for graduates of 2015-2016 to then decrease again to 73% for the graduates of 2016-2017. Figure 15 gives trends in employment opportunities of LAU graduates by governorate.

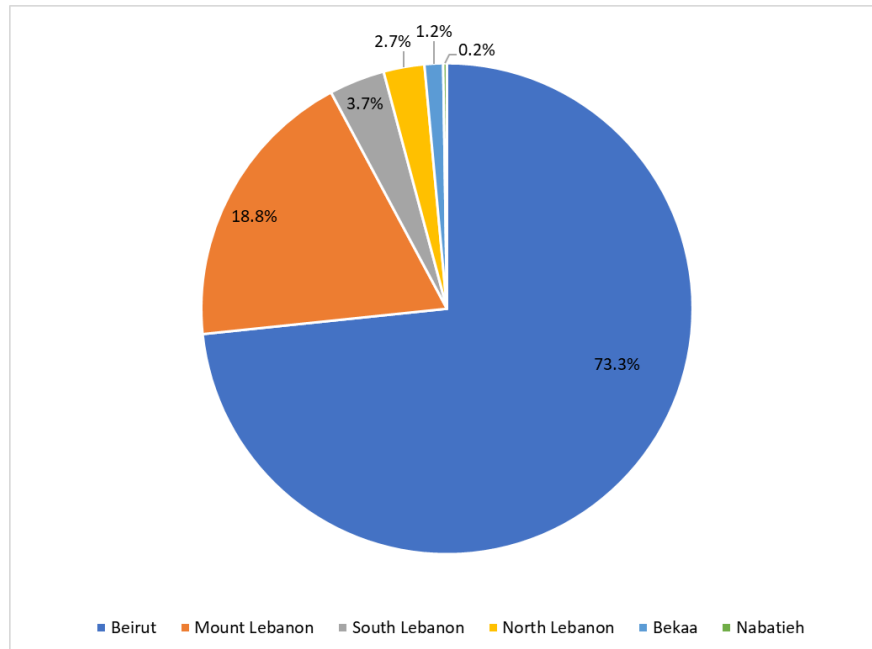


Figure 14: Employment by governorate

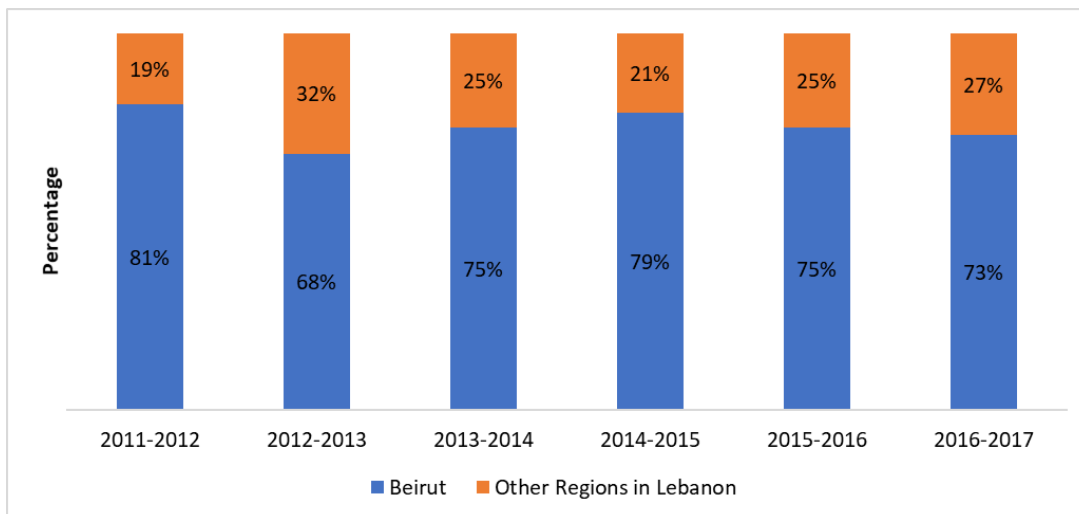


Figure 15: Trends in employment by governorate

iv. Industry

Alumni were asked to provide the industry of the company they were employed in. The “Architecture & Construction” industry employed the most alumni (18%), followed by Non-Governmental Organization (10%) and 6% for each of Sales & Distribution of Consumer Products, Health Science/Medical, Finance/Banking and Education & Training (Figure 16).

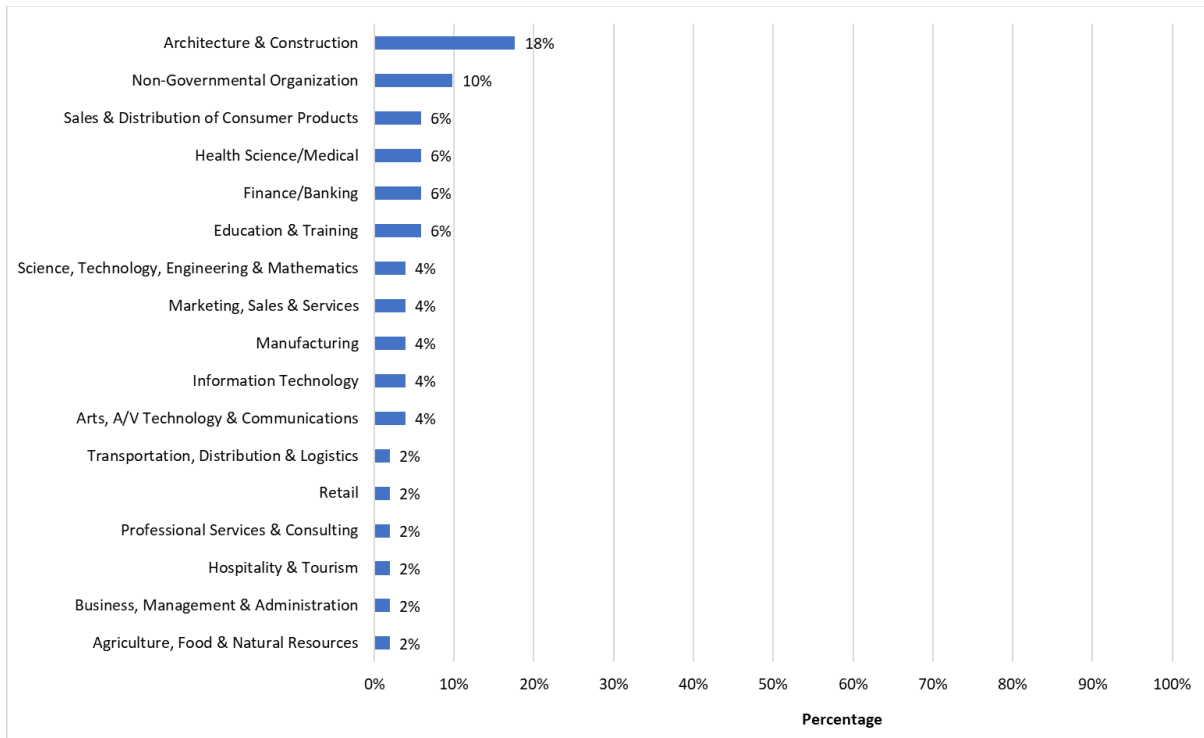


Figure 16: Employment by company industry

v. Starting Basic Salary

The average starting basic salary for all alumni respondents amounted to \$1,201. The average starting basic salary for males is \$1,308, which is higher than that of the average basic salary for females of \$1,103 (Figure 17).

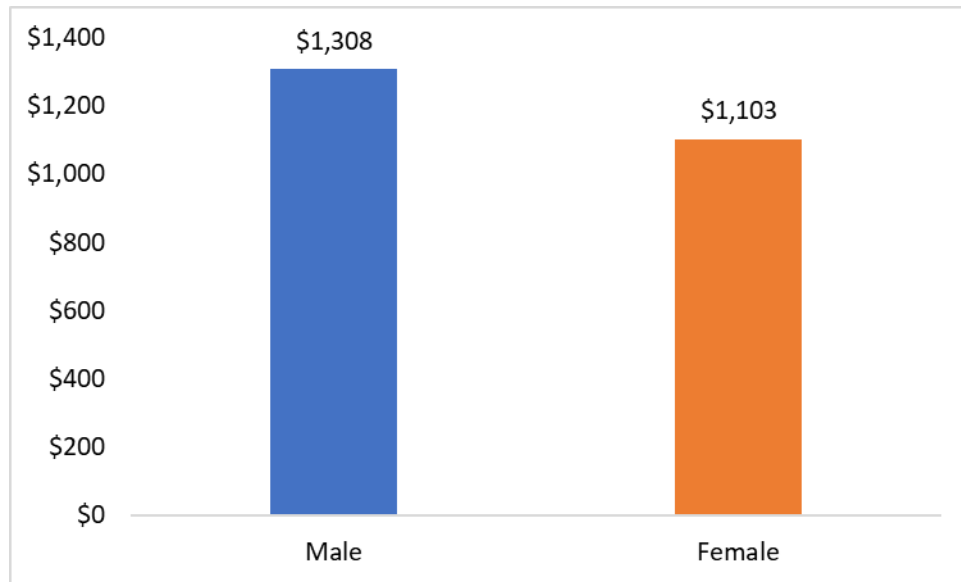


Figure 17: Average starting basic salary by gender

This observation is reinforced by looking at the starting basic salary brackets. We can notice that the majority of females or 76% of them earn within the low starting salary brackets \$700-\$1200 versus only 51% of the males. In contrast, when it comes to salaries between \$1201- Above \$3000, females constitute 24% versus 49% of the males. In addition to that, males seem to outweigh females in earning a salary between \$1500 and \$3000 (17%) in comparison to 8% females. As for salaries above \$3000, males were represented by 2% as opposed to a nearly negligible existence for females (1%). These figures only support the stereotyped discrimination between male and female salaries in the job market (Figure 18).

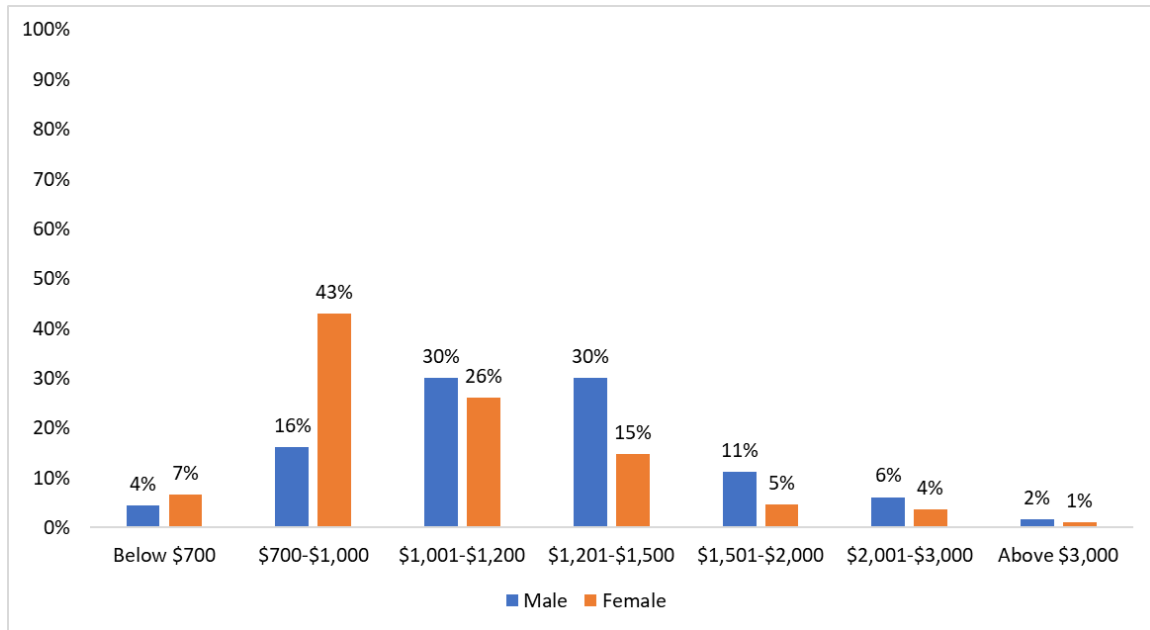


Figure 18: Starting basic salary brackets by gender

Alumni employed in North America are earning the highest starting basic salaries. On average, they are earning a starting basic salary of \$1,963, followed by \$1,651 for those employed in Africa, \$1,589 for those employed in Gulf Region and \$1,161 for those in Lebanon. Employees in Europe and the Levant are earning the lowest starting basic salary of approximately \$1,101 each (Figure 19).

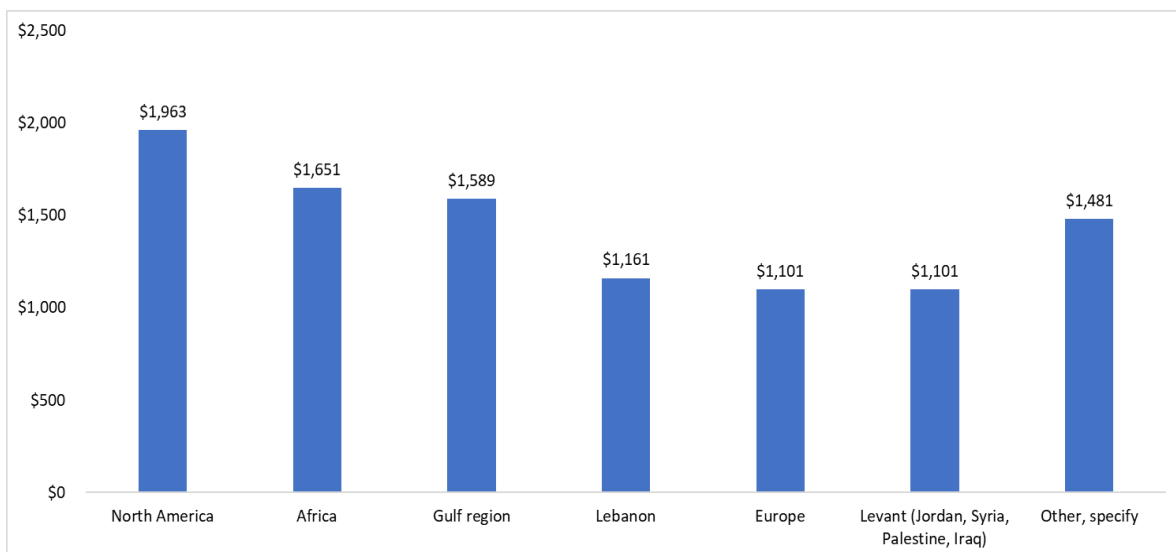


Figure 19: Average starting basic salary by region

Respondents who majored in Multimedia Journalism, Pharmacy and Engineering (Computer, Mechanical, Electrical and Industrial) earned the highest starting basic salaries. On the other hand, respondents who majored in English, Biology, Nutrition, Interior Architecture, Education, Interior Design, Social Work and Mathematics earned the lowest starting basic salaries. Figure 20 gives the average basic starting salary by degree program.

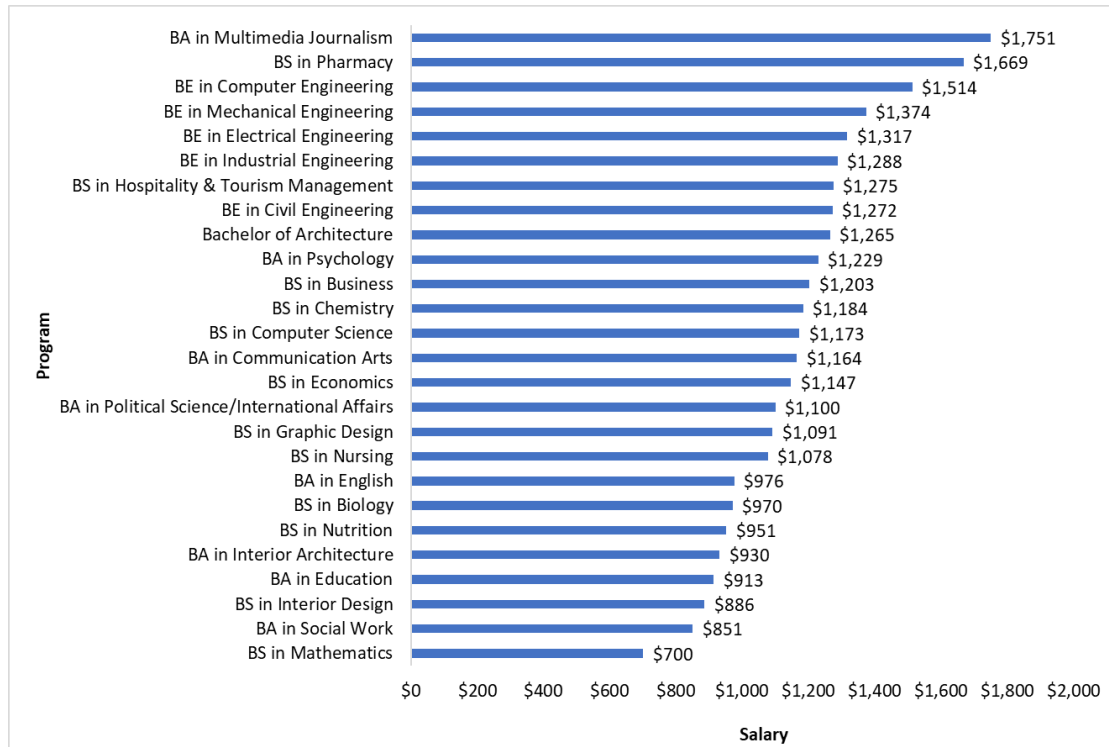


Figure 20: Average starting basic salary by degree

When comparing average starting basic salaries across industries, alumni employed in the Arts, A/V Technology & Communications (\$1,925) earned the highest average starting basic salary followed by alumni employed in Business, Management & Administration (\$1,351), Sales & Distribution of Consumer Products (\$1,350), Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (\$1,226), Information Technology (\$1,226) and Architecture & Construction (\$1,189) (Figure 21).

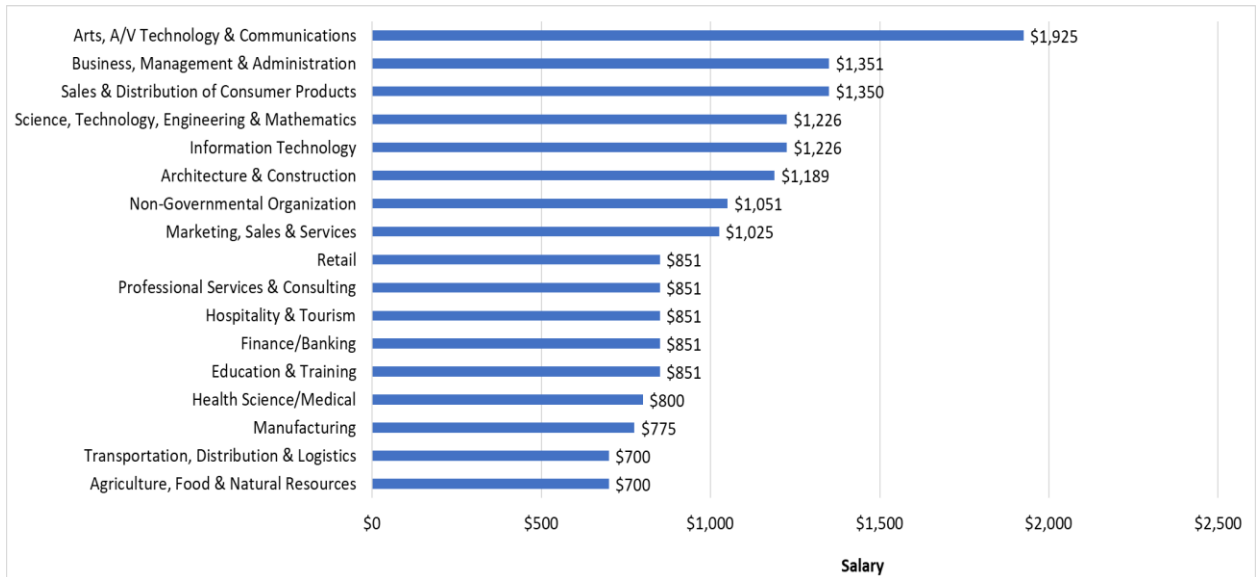


Figure 21: Average starting basic salary by industry

Earnings varied based on time needed to secure employment. Alumni who were able to secure a job before graduation earned an average starting basic salary of \$1,232. The average dropped to \$1,180 for those who secured a job within less than three months after graduation then decreased again to \$1,137 for those who secured the job in 3-6 months. The average starting basic salary slightly increases to \$1,147 for those who secured their first job within 6 – 12 months after graduation. Figure 22 gives the average starting basic salary based on time from graduation.

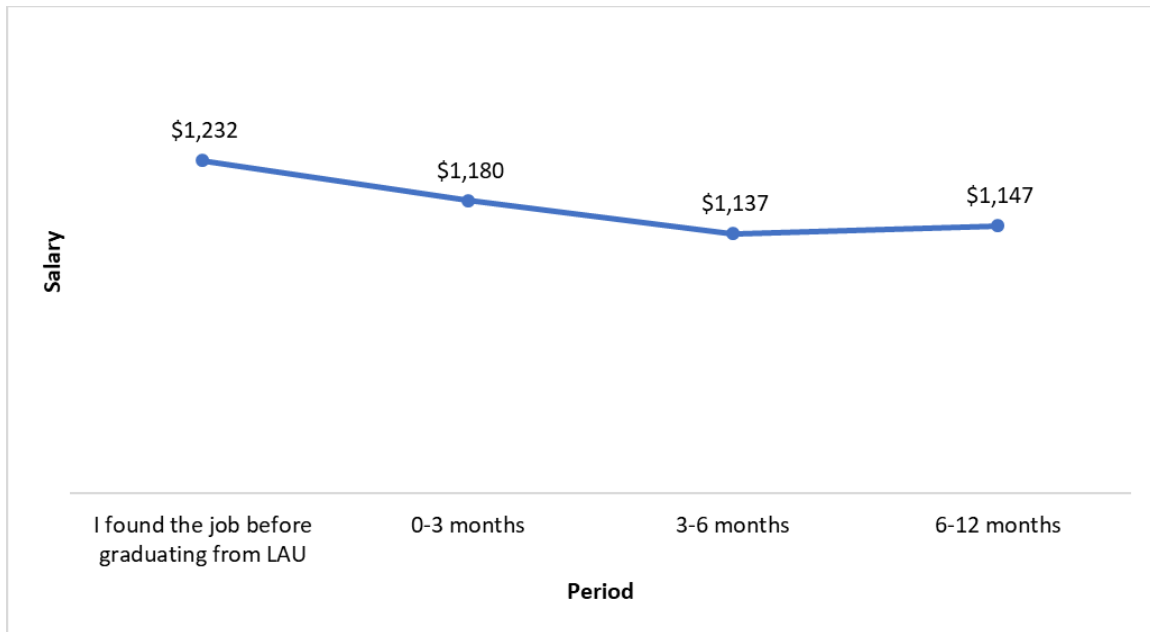


Figure 22: Average starting basic salary with respect to time from graduation

vi. Other Company Characteristics

The vast majority of alumni (96%) reported being employed in a private company (Figure 23). In addition, 63% reported having worked in international or regional companies (Figure 24).

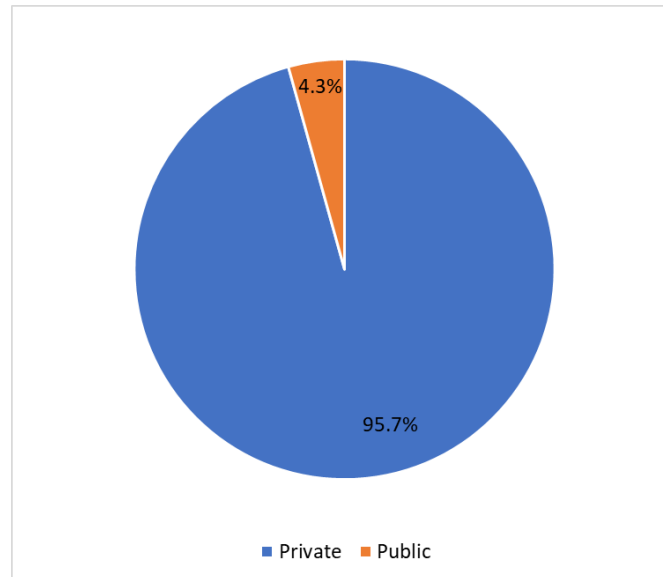


Figure 23: Company type

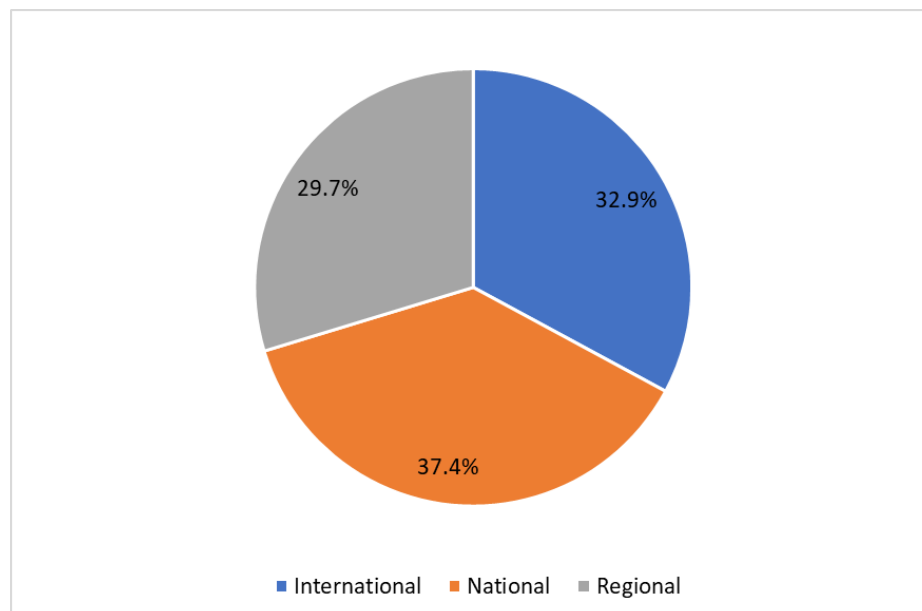


Figure 24: Company classification

3. University Experience & Skills Acquired

i. Internship Experience

When it comes to respondents' experience prior to graduating, 66% reported having taken an internship while completing their undergraduate studies at LAU. Out of the alumni who had an internship experience, 21% were offered a full-time job afterwards in the same company. Those who majored in (1) Fashion Design, (2) Hospitality and Tourism Management, (3) Industrial Engineering and (4) Graphic Design were in the majority offered a full-time job after completing their internship (Figure 25).

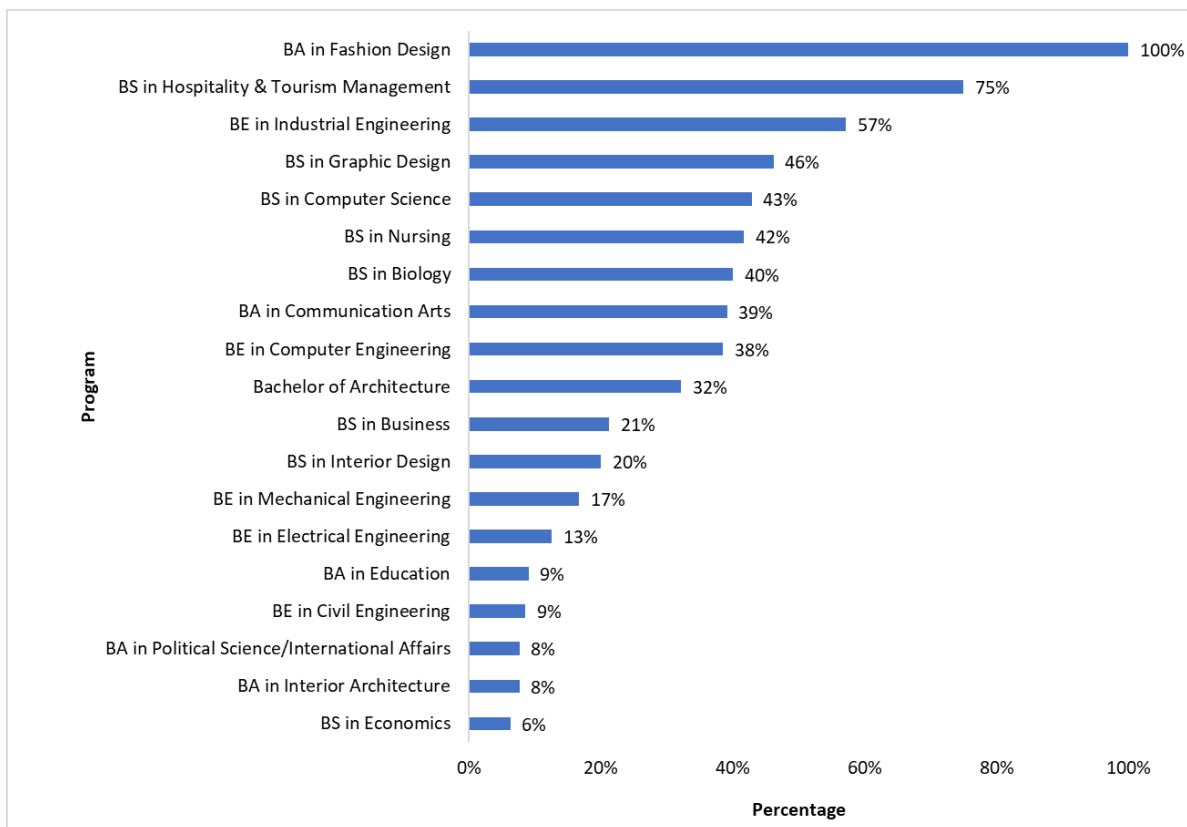


Figure 25: Alumni who were offered a full-time job after completion of internship by degree

ii. Satisfaction with University Experience

When asked about the university they would choose if they had to start their undergraduate studies over again, 91% of alumni responded that they would pursue their studies at LAU. Of those, 62% would pursue the same degree they have earned whereas 29% would pursue another degree at LAU. Only 9% would choose a different institution (Figure 26). Female respondents seem to be more satisfied than their male counterparts with their LAU experience as 93% would pursue their studies at LAU should they start again compared to 89% of males who would do the same (Figure 27).

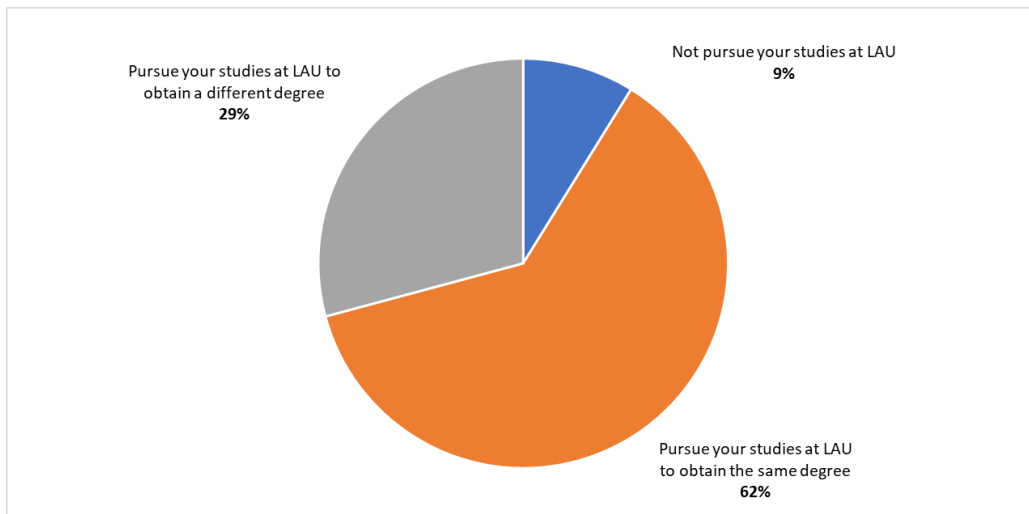


Figure 26: University choice of alumni were they to start again

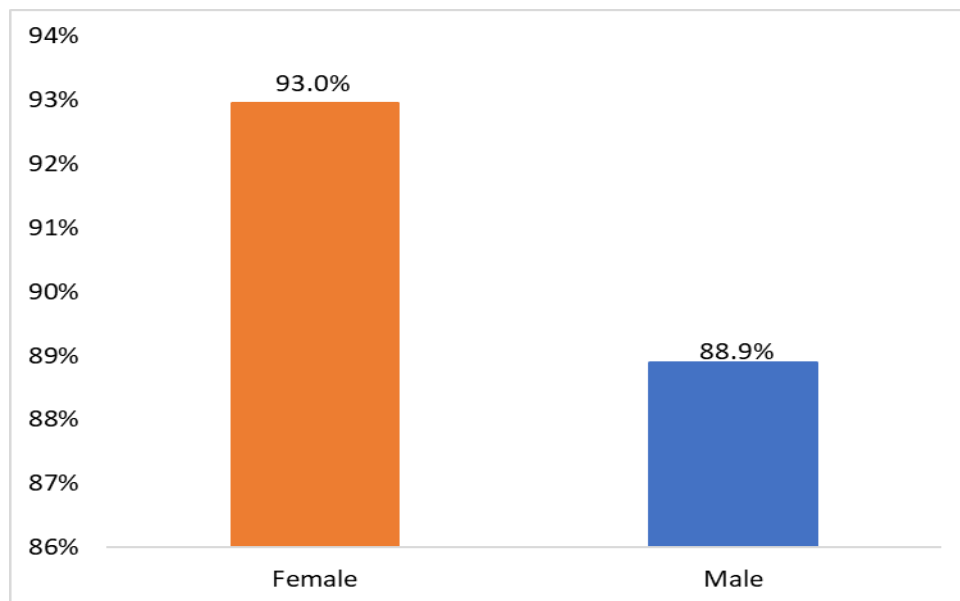


Figure 27: University choice of alumni where they want to start again at LAU by Gender

Alumni who were mostly satisfied with their experience in their programs majored in Chemistry, Bioinformatics and Fine Arts as all respondents from those majors (100%) would pursue their studies at LAU and pursue the same degree were they to start again. A majority (63% and above) of alumni who majored in Pharmacy, Computer Science, Engineering (Computer, Industrial and Mechanical), Biology, English, Nutrition, Education, Economics, Political Science/International Affairs, Architecture and Business also would pursue the same degree at LAU. Figure 28 gives the percentage of alumni expressing an interest to pursue the same degree at LAU should they start again by degree.

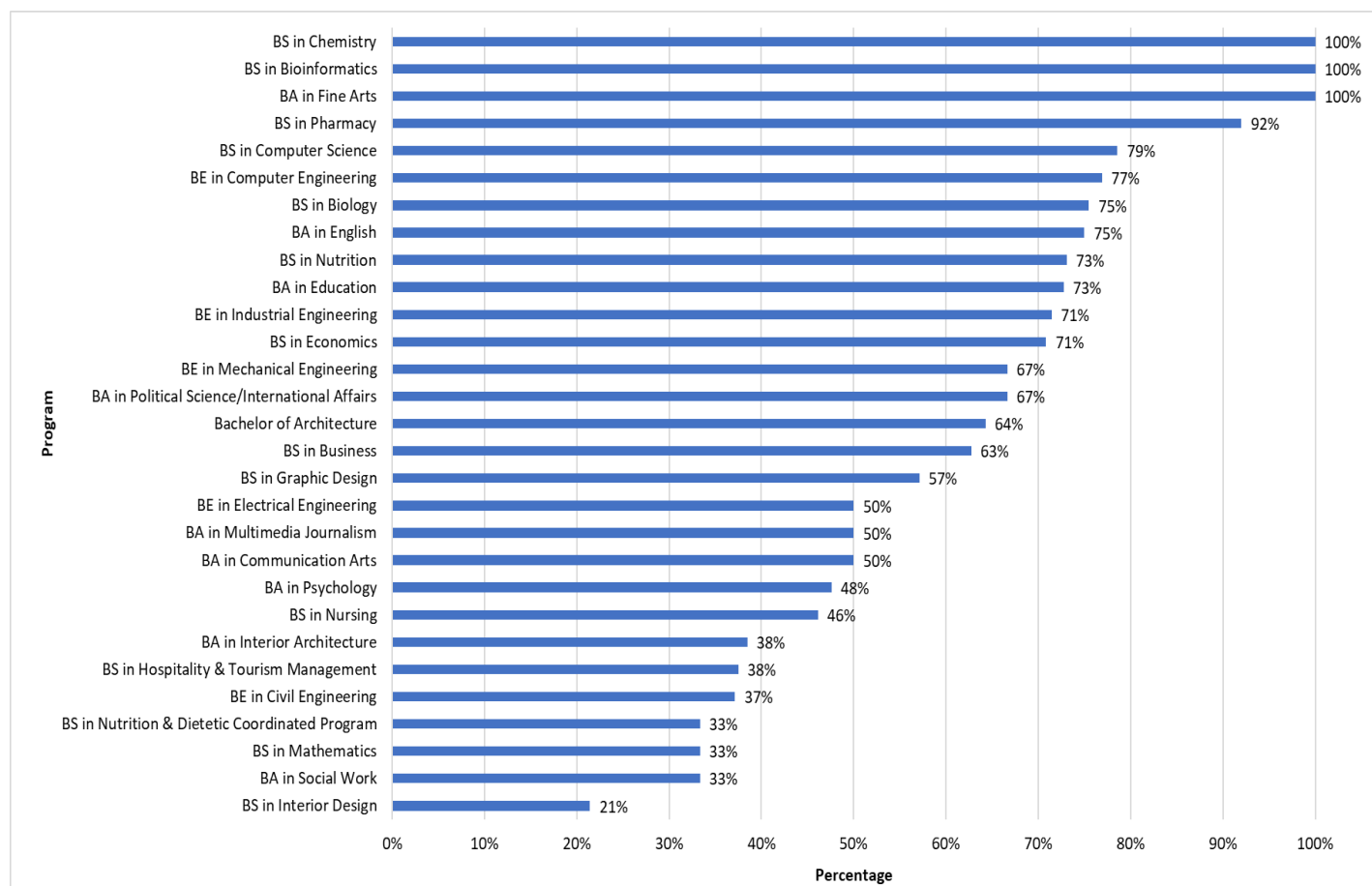


Figure 28: Alumni expressing an interest to pursue same degree at LAU should they start again by degree

iii. Job Preparation

Over 50% of respondents believed that they were sufficiently prepared to obtain their first job. Females seem to be slightly more confident than males with respect to this aspect (Figure 29). All alumni (100%) who majored in Hospitality and Tourism Management, Political Science/International Affairs and Multimedia Journalism shared the view that they were sufficiently prepared to obtain their first job. In addition, a majority of alumni (85% - 60%) who majored in: Graphic Design, Engineering (Mechanical, Computer and Industrial), Nutrition, Biology, Education, Computer Science, Psychology, Pharmacy and Economics (Figure 30) were also satisfied by their level of preparation for the job.

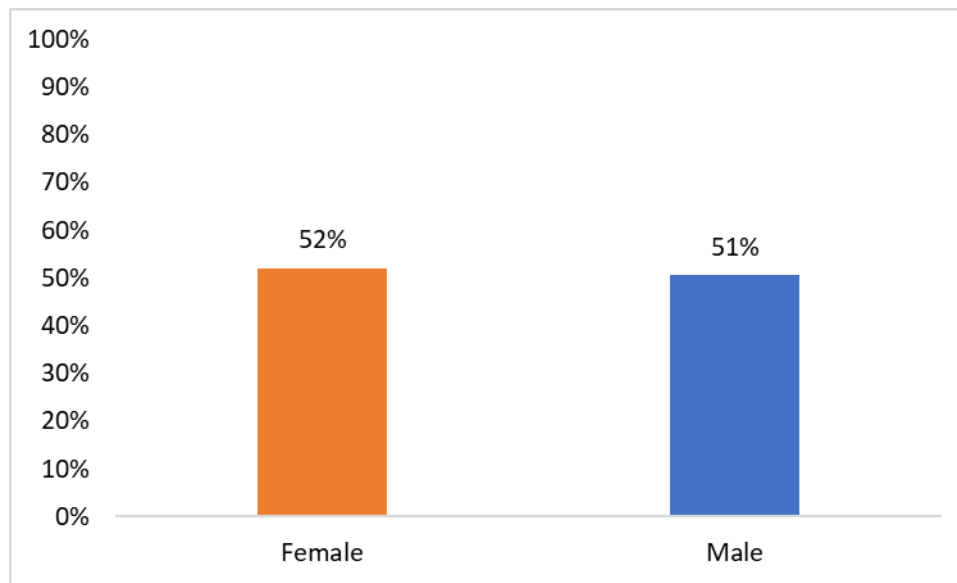


Figure 29: Alumni who believed they were sufficiently prepared to obtain first job by gender

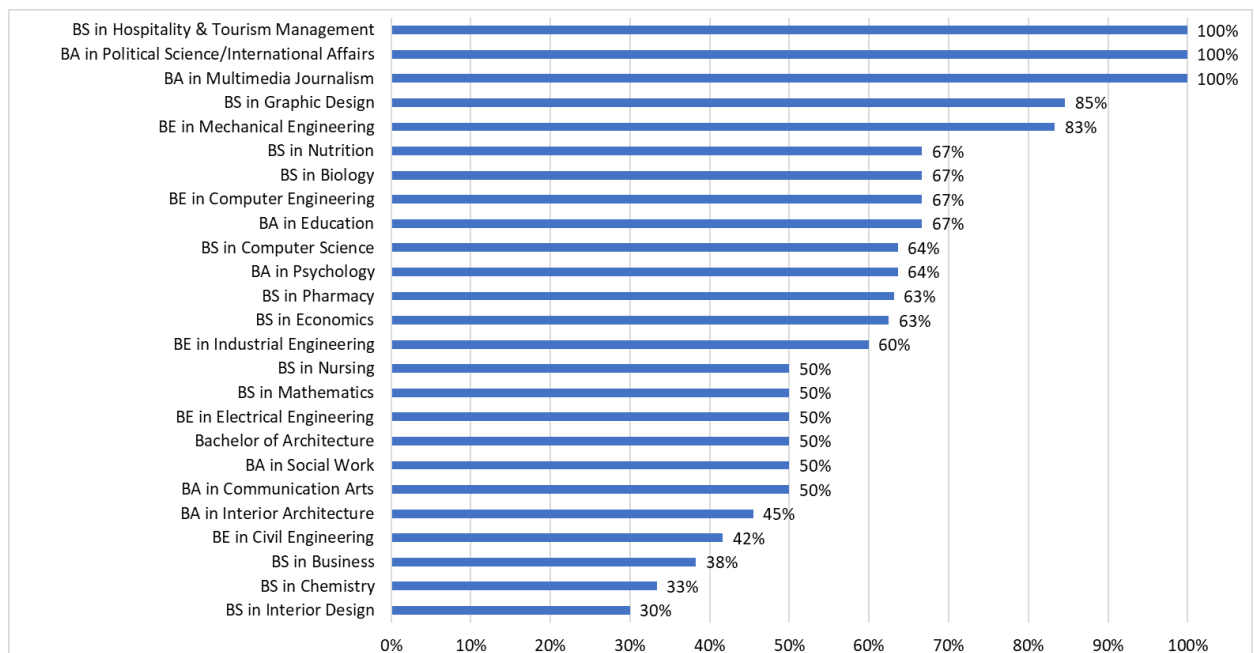


Figure 30: Alumni who believed they were sufficiently prepared to obtain first job by degree

Alumni who had employment experience were asked to compare their job preparation they had received at LAU to the preparation received by other graduates from similar programs they had encountered at work. In total, 94% of alumni believed that the preparation they received is the same or better than that received by their peers from other universities. (Figure 31).

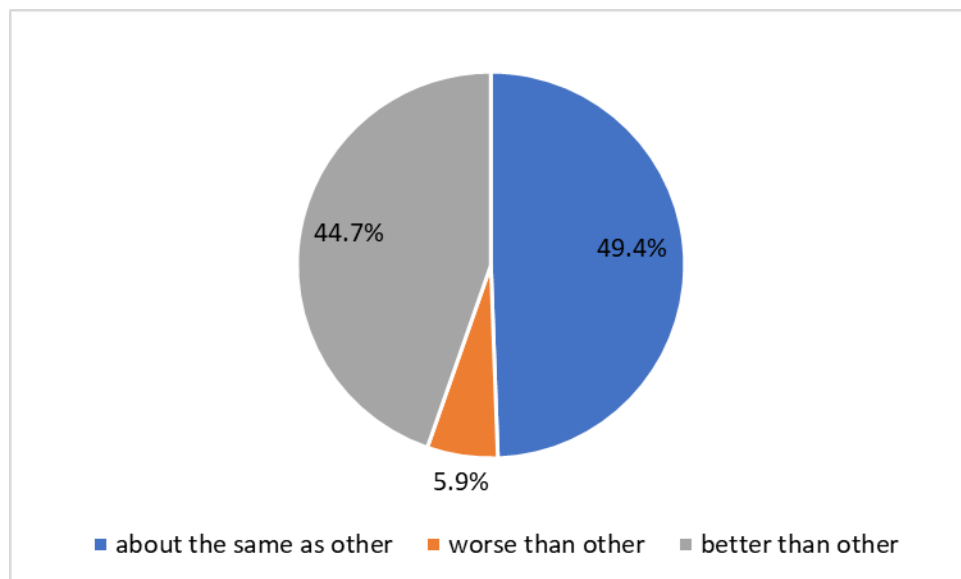


Figure 31: Comparison of job preparation received by LAU alumni to other graduates

iv. Skills acquired

When asked about the extent to which their LAU education contributed to the acquisition of major skills, 63% or more of alumni believed that their LAU education had a significant contribution (either “major” or “significant”) to their acquisition of the following: (1) functioning as a team member, (2) ability to think critically and approach new problems with an open and analytical mind (3) developing oral communication skills, (4) developing written communication skills and (5) instilling commitment for life-long learning. An average of 24% believed that their LAU education contributed moderately to their acquisition of the previously mentioned skills (Figure 32). In addition, an average of 33% believed that their LAU education had moderate contribution to them (1) becoming aware of ethical issues inherent in their discipline and (2) acquiring theoretical skills to pursue a career path or post bachelor education related to their major field of study.

On the other hand, around 21% found that their LAU education had a minimal contribution (“minor” or “no contribution”) to their acquisition of these skills: (1) developing management/leadership capacities, (2), becoming aware of legal and social issues inherent in their discipline, (3) using effectively modern technology and (4) acquiring technical skills to pursue a career path or post bachelor education related to their major field of study.

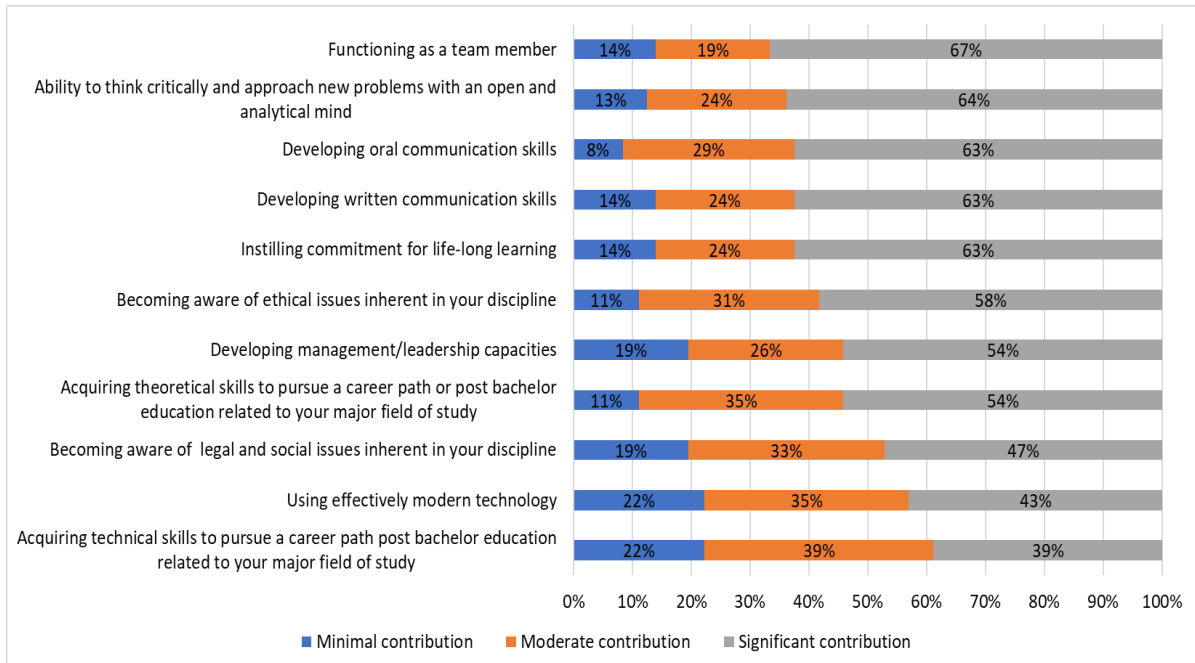


Figure 32: LAU's contribution to acquisition of skills by alumni