

2001-2010 Psychology Alumni Give Advice to Current Students

Irina M. Granov & Kevin J. Dixon

What Advice Would You Give to Current Psychology Students?

➤ Get involved 42%

- Get Involved
- Get to know/utilize professors
- Become a research assistant
- Join WOUPSA
- Become a teaching assistant

➤ Gain experience 17%

- Gain practical experience
- Do a practicum
- Volunteer in the field while attending
- Volunteer to find out if you like the field or not

➤ Make the most of your time at WOU 22%

- Find an area of study you are passionate about
- Take interesting and a variety of courses
- Study hard
- Have a plan or goal for career
- Take courses to prepare for a job
- Take courses with different instructors
- Take advantage of WOU

➤ Grad school 4%

- Consider grad school
- If you want to go to grad school, go!
- A PhD or Masters may be needed to work in desired field
- Don't let GRE scores keep you from applying

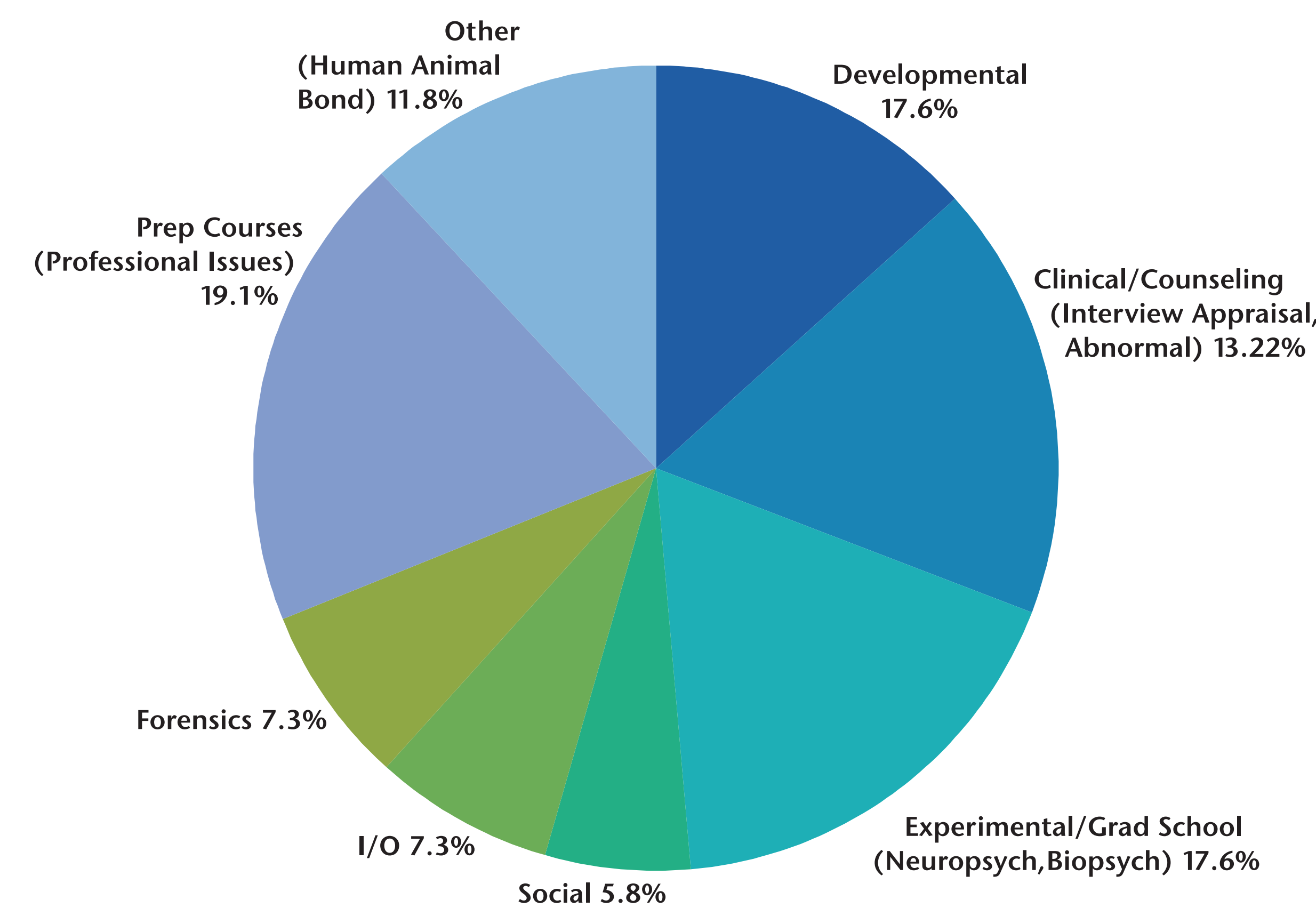
➤ Writing/Research 4%

- Learn all you can about APA writing
- Don't delay intro to research methods (PSY301)
- Pay attention in PSY467/468
- PSY467/468 aren't as bad as they say!
- Use SPSS experience on resume

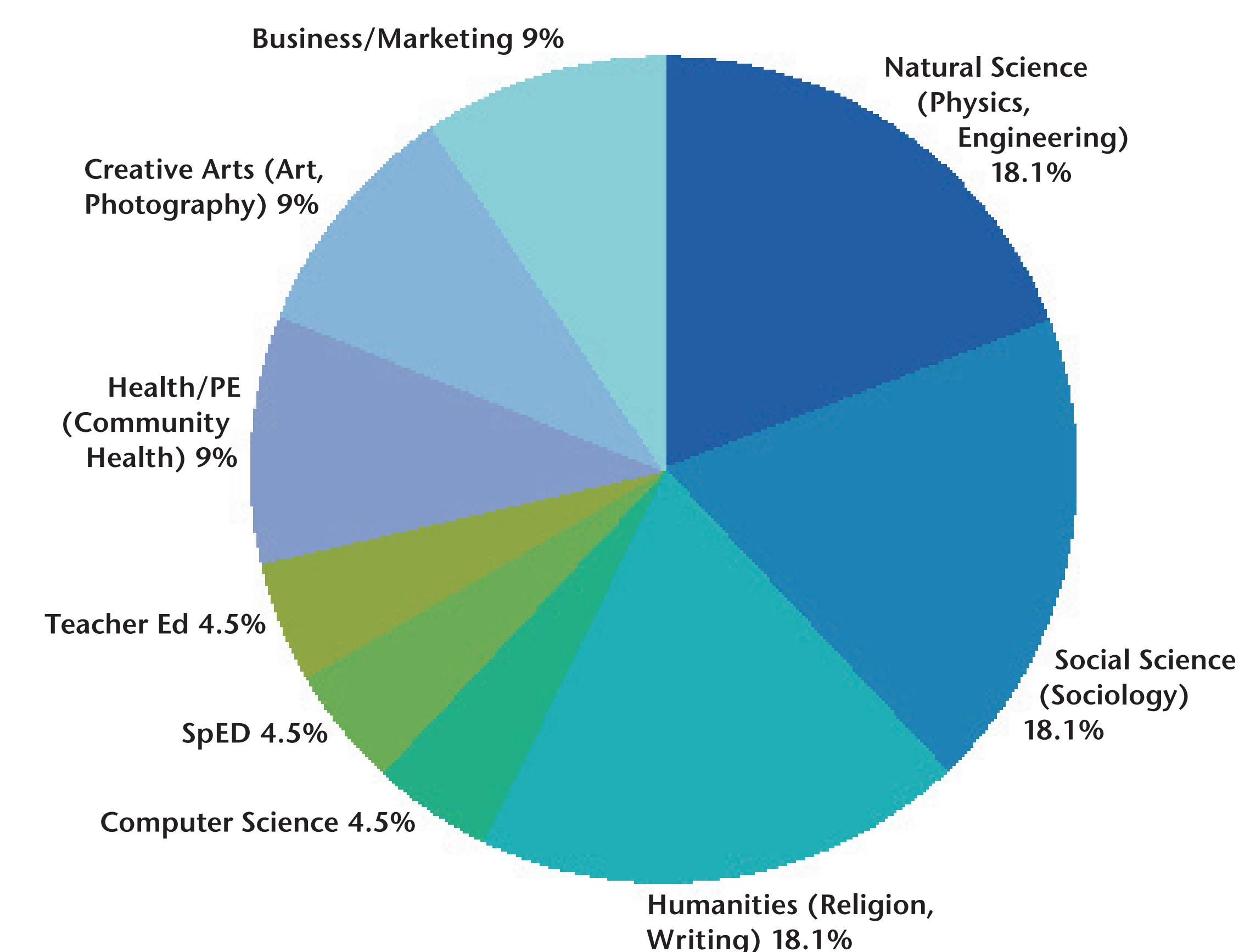
➤ Miscellaneous 12%

- Keep in mind how general psych knowledge is for any job
- Make connections with people
- Seek help if needed
- Keep your books
- Read! Use job finding services
- Get involved outside of psych
- Apply what you can to "real life,"
- Fully apply yourself
- Manage your time
- Have fun
- Don't let school get in the way of education

Reflecting back on your experiences at WOU, are there any additional psychology courses that you wished you would have taken?



Are there any other courses within other disciplines that you wished you would have taken?



What Advice Would You Give to a Psychology Major about Finding a Job after Graduation?

➤ Gain experience 24%

- Volunteer
- Internship/practicum
- Temporary position/start at bottom

➤ Go to graduate school 22%

- Get a Masters or PhD
- Take a break before grad school
- Go straight to grad school

➤ Be diverse 19%

- Be open and available to try new things
- Find your love/passion/fit

➤ Start early 15%

- Look and apply for work early
- Apply a lot and everywhere
- Have a plan/goal for type of work
- Look in related field

➤ Network 9%

- Connect with professors

➤ Don't give up 7%

- Work hard
- Patience and persistence
- Don't put too much pressure on self

➤ Miscellaneous 3%

- Get help from school
- Do well in statistics
- Sell yourself (skills, accomplishments, history)

What advice would you give to a Psychology major about graduate school?

➤ Should I go to graduate school?

- Do it!
 - Great investment, helps define career
 - Must have a graduate degree to get a good job/earn a decent income
 - Worth exploring for all
 - You can do it!

➤ When should I go to graduate school?

- Right away (67%)
 - It is hard to get back into it
- Take time off (33%)
 - Get good experience first
 - Be sure that you are not burned out from BA
 - Be sure that it is what you want-it is an expensive investment

What should I know and do before I apply to Graduate School?

➤ Start the process early!

➤ Do research

- Learn about different options
 - clinical vs. counseling
 - Psychology vs. social work
- Attend guest speakers at WOU
- Volunteer, do a practicum, get experience in the field to see if it is a good fit

➤ Talk to your professors

- Seek advice about the process
- Get Academic Recommendations
- Ask for recommendation letters early in the process

➤ Study for the GRE!

➤ Develop strong writing skills and knowledge of APA style

➤ Pay attention in your research methods class

➤ Get good grades

➤ Be involved at WOU

What else should I know about applying to graduate school?

➤ Learn as much as you can about potential school(s)

- Know about required pre-requisite courses
- Find a program that offers a broad array of career options
- Find out if you can get in, do you have the grades, test scores, experience that they want?
- Talk to schools about openings
- Talk to people who attended

➤ Improve your chances of getting in by..

- Taking Professional Issues (Psy 398)
- Developing a strong personal statement
- Making your application stand out
- Not being intimidated by the process
- Applying to as many schools as possible
- Don't be afraid to leave Oregon

What should I know about surviving graduate school?

➤ Learn to advocate for yourself and seek help

- Learn to self care
- Grad school professors will not hold your hand

➤ Fully commit

- Don't work or you will experience burnout
- You may have to make sacrifices in your life, but worth it
- Grad school requires more dedication than undergrad

➤ Don't forget the goal

- Stay motivated, be persistent
- Make connections in your field of interest

➤ You will be challenged!

- Be ready to be tired, scared, overwhelmed and mentally stretched, but with this comes greater feeling of efficacy
- Be ready to read a ton and write even more
- You will need to demonstrate that you are open to learning cultural competency and stretching your comfort zone

Anything else about graduate school?

➤ What if I don't get in?

- Have a backup plan if it doesn't work
- Don't be discouraged if you don't get in the first time that you apply

➤ Your education at WOU prepares you well 67%

- It goes faster than you think and the rewards are exponential
- Being a graduate student is more fun than being an undergraduate