



Descriptives

Western University of Health Sciences

Welcome to the new Institutional Research & Effectiveness (IRE) newsletter!

It's a new year and a new look for Descriptives which will now be produced Fall, Winter, and Spring. Expect to find the following in each newsletter:

- “What’s Happening at WesternU IRE” (the latest announcements from our office)
- “The Data Corner” (learn about recently collected data)
- “Dear IRE” (get answers to your statistics/research questions)

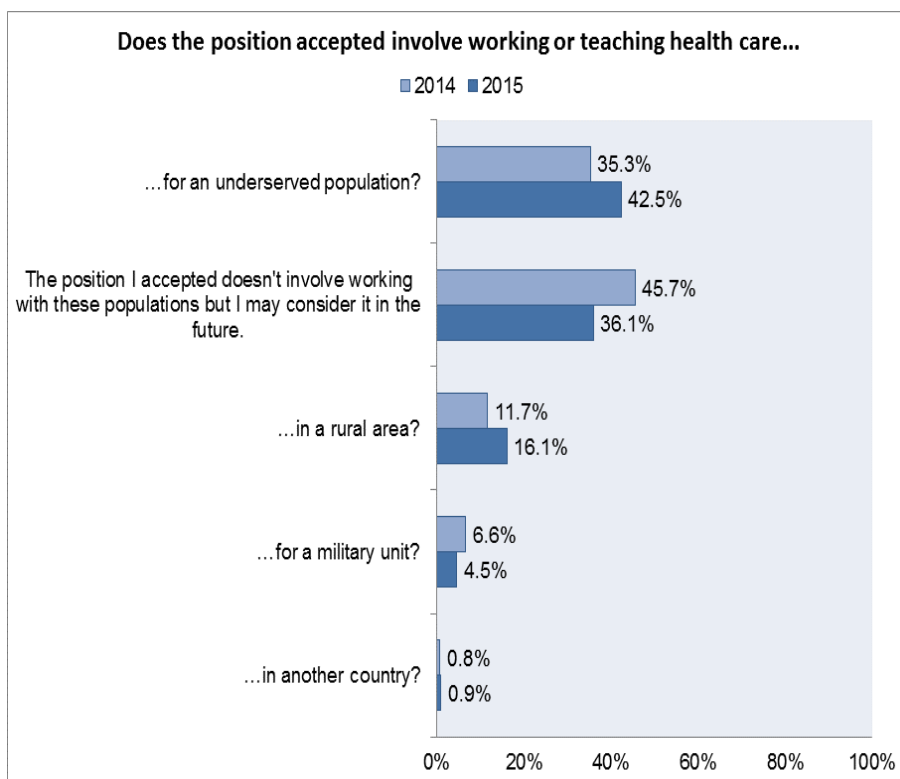
We hope you enjoy the new format. We welcome comments at : pkallemyn@westernu.edu

What’s Happening at WesternU IRE?

- Juan Ramirez, Director of IRE, was elected Vice President of the California Association for Institutional Research! Congratulations Juan!
- Another congratulations to Satoko Siegel, Delia Padilla Kallemeyn, and Neil Patel whose abstract was accepted for a poster presentation at the 2016 Academic Resource Conference in Garden Grove. Their poster is titled “Humanism at Western University of Health Sciences and Its Impact on the Public Good.”

For more info, go to: <http://www.westernu.edu/ire/ire-welcome/ire-welcome-message/>

The Data Corner: Humanism Among 2015 WesternU Graduates



Humanism, is an institutional learning outcome at WesternU and one that is difficult to measure (Coutts & Rogers, 2000). IRE attempts to measure humanism by surveying graduates on whether their job or educational placement involves working with populations in need. 2015 graduates were 7.2% more likely to accept a position working with an underserved population than 2014 (see Chart on left) and even if most students didn't accept such a position at the very least our graduates are considering it.

Dear IRE:

I can't decide between a pie chart or a bar chart. How do I choose?

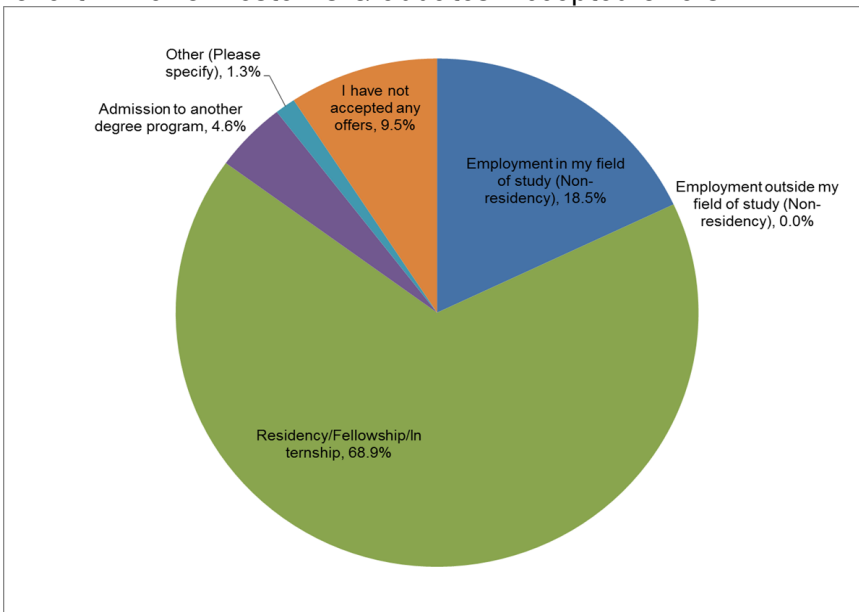
Sincerely, Indecisive about pies or bars

Dear Indecisive:

The answer depends on your data but generally speaking you can use either one. However, bar charts offer a variety of options (i.e., horizontal, stacked, etc.) and allow for a clearer depiction of relationships between data points. Look at the charts below. Both charts display the same data in different ways. Chart 1 shows the reported percentages of accepted offers and the slices in the pie allow you to see the 2 largest groups. Chart 2 being a bar chart allows us to create 2 sets of bars; one representing offers and the other representing accepted offers. The bar chart also allows you to organize the data from largest to smallest. Both charts present the same data in different ways. Conclusion? If you are looking to display a few data points that are substantially different in scale use a pie chart, but if you want some flexibility with presentation and the ability to demonstrate trends with data you are better off with a bar chart.

Sincerely, Team IRE

Chart 1. 2015 WesternU Graduates' Accepted Offers*



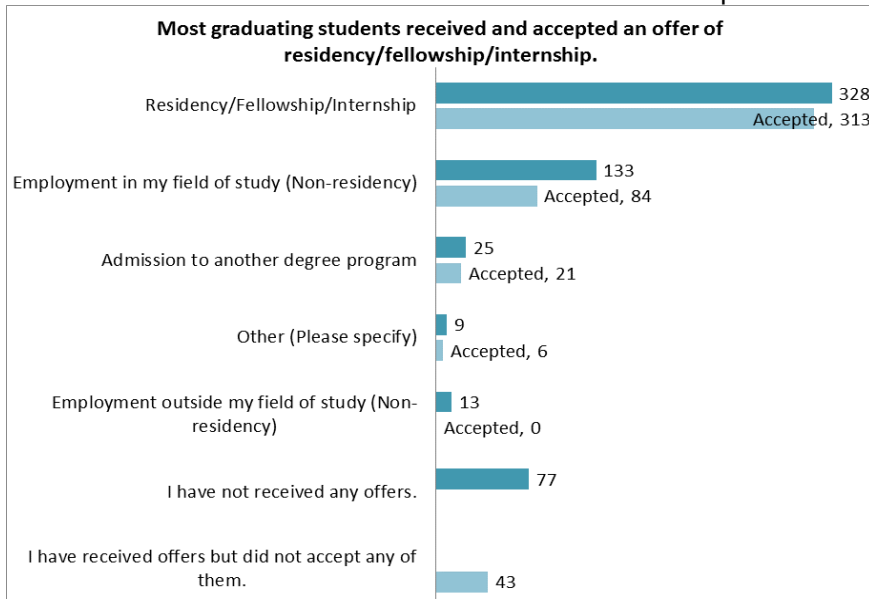
Pie charts are...

- Best when used with ordinal (ranked) and nominal (demographic) data.
- Ideal when you only have a few data points to display (6 or less categories).
- Best when a few key data points represent the vast majority of the whole.

Disadvantage

- If data differences are subtle it will be difficult to view the distribution.

Chart 2. 2015 WesternU Graduates' Offers and Accepted Offers*



Bar charts are

- Best when used with ordinal (ranked) and nominal (demographic) data
- Allow you to demonstrate different types of trends or relationships with data that are not easily shown with pie charts.
- Can arrange data from large to small

*Actual data from the 2015 Graduating Student Survey was used.

Got a stats/research question? Email us at pkallemeyn@westernu.edu