The Real Class of ’96: Twenty Years Out

Class of 1996 Survey Results

May 2016
We surveyed about 15% of our class ahead of the reunion. In which part of the world do you currently live?

- **USA**: 226
- **Americas (non-US)**: 8
- **EMEA**: 11
- **APAC**: 6

- Administered online between May 11th and May 25th
- Completed by 251 classmates (about 15% of the class)
- Most respondents reside in the U.S.
- Sample was 53% male / 47% female
- Survey margin of error: +/- 4.0%
Most of our US respondents inhabit just three states

In which state / territory do you currently live? (US only)

- Massachusetts: 19
- California: 19
- New York: 17
- D.C.: 5
- New Jersey: 5

Other notable mentions include:
- Texas
- Virginia
- Illinois
- Connecticut
- Washington
- Florida
- Pennsylvania
About a quarter of our class lives within a few hours’ drive of their hometown, but most of us have settled far from home.

How far from your childhood home or city do you currently live?

- In hometown: 10%
- Within 25 miles: 11%
- 25-100 miles: 8%
- 100-500 miles: 21%
- 500-2000 miles: 26%
- Over 2000 miles: 23%
Most of us have had it with our hometowns

*If you had the opportunity to live in your hometown again, would you do it?*

- Definitely would not: 22%
- Likely would not: 24%
- Probably would not: 23%
- Probably would: 17%
- Likely would: 8%
- Definitely would: 6%
We have fond memories of home and family . . .

In one word, describe something positive about your hometown.
but also sharp criticisms about the smallness of home
Marriage and Family
Most of us are married, but some remain single

What is your current relationship status?

- Married/engaged: 88%
- Single: 7%
- Divorced/separated: 2%
- In a relationship (not married): 3%
- Prefer not to say: 1%
Among those of us who are married, about 2/3 have been married for more than ten years.

**How many years have you been married or engaged?**

- 12% Less than 5 years
- 20% 5 to 9 years
- 41% 10 to 14 years
- 27% 15 or more years

- 208 / 251 respondents are married or engaged
- Average time married = 11.1 years
- 7% of respondents have divorced at some point since graduation
Regardless, most of us are happy with our current love lives

How happy are you with your current love life?

- Very unhappy: 1%
- Unhappy: 2%
- Somewhat unhappy: 4%
- Somewhat happy: 9%
- Happy: 26%
- Very happy: 56%
About 80% of us are parents, most often of two children.

How many children do you have?

- 21% No children
- 12% One child
- 47% Two children
- 18% Three children
- 2% Four children
- <1% Five children

- The average classmate has 1.7 children, compared with the U.S. average of 1.86.
A bit more about our children . . .

(Parents only) Are any of your children . . .

- The multiple rate among respondents is about 3 times the U.S. average.
- “Special needs” were defined as a physical, mental, or emotional disability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiples (i.e., twins+)</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A child with special needs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of respondents who have been a foster parent: 4
Compared to the rest of the U.S., we waited much longer to become parents

**At what age did you first become a parent? (parents only)**

- Average age of new parents in our class is 32.8 years
- National average is 23.0 years for women and 25.1 years for men (2006–2010)
Most parents have stayed in the workforce

*Have you ever completely left the workforce to care for your children, for a continuous year or more? (parents only)*

- Yes: 18%
- No: 82%
Most of our families are complete.

How likely are you to have more children? (parents only)

- Definitely will not: 54%
- Probably will not: 30%
- May or may not: 8%
- Probably will: 5%
- Definitely will: 1%
- Prefer not to say: 2%
Among non-parents, opinions about having children are widely varied

*Do you want to have children someday, through either birth or adoption? (non-parents only)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely not</th>
<th>Probably not</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Probably</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Politics and Religion
We are reliable voters

*How often do you vote?*

- 3% Not eligible where I live
- 7% Fewer than 25% of elections
- 6% 25-50% of elections
- 15% 50-75% of elections
- 68% Over 75% of elections

**THE REAL CLASS OF '96**
We are also reliably liberal, and run in the same political circles.

How would you characterize your political orientation?

- Very liberal: 14%
- Liberal: 37%
- Somewhat liberal: 25%
- Conservative: 7%
- Very conservative: 3%

Compared to friends, neighbors, and colleagues, is your political orientation . . .

- Somewhat more liberal: 23%
- About the same: 48%
- Somewhat more conservative: 17%
- Much more conservative: 5%
- Much more liberal: 6%
- Very liberal: 14%
Regardless, our politics are pretty stable . . .

*Since graduating college, how has your political orientation changed?*

- **Become somewhat more liberal**: 20%
- **Stayed about the same**: 54%
- **Become somewhat more conservative**: 17%
- **Become much more liberal**: 5%
- **Become much more conservative**: 4%
For whom did you vote in the 1992 presidential election?

- Bill Clinton: 58%
- George Bush: 12%
- Ross Perot: 4%
- Someone else: 1%
- Didn't vote in '92: 25%

For whom did you vote in the 2012 presidential election?

- Barack Obama: 71%
- Mitt Romney: 17%
- Someone else: 3%
- Didn't vote in '12: 8%
It does seem, however, that we only somewhat happy with this year’s candidates.

If you could choose from anyone alive, who would you most like to see become U.S. President on Jan. 20, 2017?

- Elizabeth Warren: 17%
- Hillary Clinton: 14%
- Michael Bloomberg: 14%
- Barack Obama: 11%
- Mitt Romney: 4%
- Bernie Sanders: 3%
- Justin Trudeau: 1%
- Oprah Winfrey: 1%
- Donald Trump: 1%
- Jon Stewart: 1%
- Michelle Obama: 1%
- Mitch Daniels: 1%

• Only those with 2 or more responses included in chart

• Other interesting choices include:
  - “Me”
  - “My wife”
  - Winston Churchill (he’s dead)
  - Jesse Ventura
  - Rush Limbaugh
  - Neil Rudenstine
About three times as many have belonged to unions as have owned a gun.

Have you ever . . .

- 38% of American households own a firearm.
- 11.1% of American workers are currently in a union.
Most of our political activity comprises giving money and occasional volunteer work, but many of us are not active.

Since graduation, have you done any of the following?

- Donated money to a political party or candidate: 57%
- Volunteered part-time on a campaign: 21%
- Had a letter to the editor published in a national newspaper or magazine: 10%
- Worked on the paid staff of an elected official: 3%
- Held a political appointment: 3%
- Volunteered full-time on a campaign: 2%
- Run for local office: 2%
- Run for county, state, or national office: 1%
- None of the above: 37%
A bit about our religious preferences

**With which religious preference do you identify?**

- Christian: 39%
- Atheist: 25%
- No affiliation, not atheist: 16%
- Jewish: 12%
- Buddhist: 2%
- Hindu: 1%
- Muslim: 1%
- Unitarian: 2%
- Hindu: 1%
- Something else: 3%

**Are you more or less religious than you were at graduation?**

- About the same: 57%
- Somewhat more: 16%
- Somewhat less: 17%
- Much more: 6%
- Much less: 5%

*THE REAL CLASS OF '96*
Some more about our religious preferences

How often do you attend religious services?

- Never: 27%
- Less than once a year: 19%
- Few times a year: 23%
- Once a month: 13%
- Once a week: 15%
- More than once a week: 2%

How confident are you in the existence of an afterlife?

- Certainly does not exist: 24%
- Probably does not exist: 25%
- Not sure: 24%
- Probably exists: 16%
- Certainly exists: 11%

THE REAL CLASS OF '96
Vocations & Avocations
The vast majority of us are working, most often in healthcare, education, and law.

**What is your current employment status?**

- Working full-time: 78%
- Working part-time: 14%
- Unemployed, not looking: 5%
- Unemployed, looking: 1%
- Retired: 1%

**In which field do you currently work?**

- Healthcare: 21%
- Post-secondary Education: 12%
- Law: 12%
- Scientific Research: 8%
- Finance: 8%
- Non-profit / Advocacy: 4%
- Entrepreneurship / Start-Up: 4%
- Consulting: 4%
- Technology / Computing: 3%
- Pre K-12 Education: 3%
- General Business: 3%
- Media / Entertainment: 3%
- Government / Politics: 3%
- Art / Music: 2%
- Publishing: 1%
- Journalism: 1%
- Engineering: 1%
- Other: 4%

Respondents who have served in their country’s armed forces or national guard: 8
We are mostly satisfied with our work, but our earnings vary greatly from what we expected.

**How satisfied are you with your current career?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely dissatisfied</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat dissatisfied</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely satisfied</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking back, are you earning more or less than you expected you would be at this point in your career?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earnings Situation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot less</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat less</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About as expected</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat more</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot more</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of us have weathered the years without being out of work, but some have not been so fortunate.

What is the longest you have been involuntarily out of work, since graduation?

- 67% Never
- 8% Less than 1 month
- 14% Between 1-6 months
- 7% Between 6-12 months
- 3% Over 12 months

"Involuntarily out of work" excludes time away from work for education, in between jobs, family / medical leave, and volunteer work.
Almost 1 in 5 of us are self-employed or close to it

Are you currently self-employed or working for a company in which you own at least a 10% stake?

No 83%
Yes 17%
Outside of work, we are most active in pursuits involving kids

For which of the following causes do you regularly volunteer?

- Children’s educational services: 39%
- Youth sports: 28%
- PTA / PTO: 26%
- Religious organizations: 22%
- Performing arts: 16%
- Healthcare services: 14%
- Poverty relief: 12%
- Environmental causes: 11%
- Boy / Girl Scouts: 11%
- Adult educational services: 7%
- Visual arts / museums: 4%
- Fraternal organizations (e.g., Lions, Rotary, Elks, Kiwanis): 3%
- Elder care / services: 3%
- Disaster relief: 2%
- Volunteer fire department or ambulance: 1%
- Veterans services: 1%
- Other (Specify): 15%

Notable “Other”:
- Marriage equality
- Juvenile justice
- Mentor entrepreneurs
- Harvard clubs
- Harvard interviewing
Life: Harvard and Beyond
Our concentrations and our careers are not always aligned, but mostly we don’t regret it

How closely would you say your career matches your chosen concentration?

- Not at all: 31%
- Somewhat: 22%
- Mostly: 25%
- Completely: 22%

How satisfied are you with your choice of concentration?

- Somewhat dissatisfied: 13%
- Somewhat satisfied: 33%
- Satisfied: 45%
- Completely dissatisfied: 2%
- Indifferent: 7%
Our Harvard time was short, and we wish we spent more time making friends . . .

*Which of the following do you wish you did MORE of while at Harvard?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building more close friendships</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know more people</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking about after graduation</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Hooking up”</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual or performing arts</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating healthy</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partying</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political / social activism</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student government</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working a paid job</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student clubs</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious activities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular reading</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student journalism</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to my parents</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a long-term mate</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing intercollegiate sports</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time with roommates</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying in touch with friends outside of Harvard</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular reading</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working a paid job</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
. . . and less time working, partying, and relaxing

Which of the following do you wish you did LESS of while at Harvard?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working a paid job</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partying</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking about what to do after graduation</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a long-term mate</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student clubs</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time with my roommates / block mates</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Hooking up”</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular reading</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political / social activism</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student journalism</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know more people</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying in touch with friends outside of Harvard</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious activities</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing intercollegiate sports</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to my parents</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student government</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building more close friendships</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual or performing arts</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing club / intramural sports</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating healthy</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social media has helped us stay more connected with our friends . . .

**How often do you see your best friend* from Harvard?**

- Never: 15%
- Only at reunions: 4%
- Every couple years: 33%
- Once a year: 16%
- Few times a year: 23%
- 1-2 times a month: 7%
- Almost every day: 2%

**How often do you interact on social media with your best friend from Harvard?**

- Never: 14%
- Only around reunions: 2%
- Every couple years: 4%
- Once a year: 4%
- Few times a year: 34%
- 1-2 times a month: 33%
- Almost every day: 8%

*Past or present romantic partners excluded
. . . which may have helped us cope with some real hardships

Since graduation, have you or your spouse/partner experienced . . .?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Percent of Classmates Experiencing at Least One Listed Hardship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscarriage</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estrangement from a close friend</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infertility / difficulty conceiving</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden job loss</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estrangement from a close family member</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A life-threatening accident or illness</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity theft</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide or attempted suicide by someone close to you</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term unemployment (12+ mo.)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business failure or bankruptcy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholism / addiction</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical or mental abuse</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarceration of a family member</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent disability</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of a spouse or child</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal bankruptcy</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eviction or foreclosure</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

81%
Since graduation, have you done any of the following?

- Been certified in CPR: 44%
- Donated blood: 42%
- Climbed a mountain: 39%
- Lived in a country other than your own for more than a year: 29%
- Started a business: 24%
- Gone scuba diving: 24%
- Attended World Cup, World Series, Super Bowl, etc.: 23%
- Appeared on national television: 19%
- Met a sitting head of state, PM, or global religious leader: 18%
- Run a marathon: 16%
- Written a book: 14%
- Learned to play a new musical instrument: 12%
- Been to the Olympics as a competitor or spectator: 8%
- Camped or hiked for a month at a time or more: 6%
- Gone skydiving: 6%
- Flown an airplane (i.e., you were at the controls): 3%
- Traveled to all seven continents: 1%
- Performed on Broadway or equivalent: 1%
But about half of us have made it to The Game at least once . . .

> Since graduation, many times have you been to The Game?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 times</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 times</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 times</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Real Class of '96

... and most (but not all) agree on one thing!

**Does Yale suck?**

- Safety school! 4%
- Is that even a question? 10%
- Not "if" but "how much" 16%
- Obviously 10%
- All of the above 36%
- I plead the Fifth 24%

The correct answer!

Lucky this survey is anonymous!