

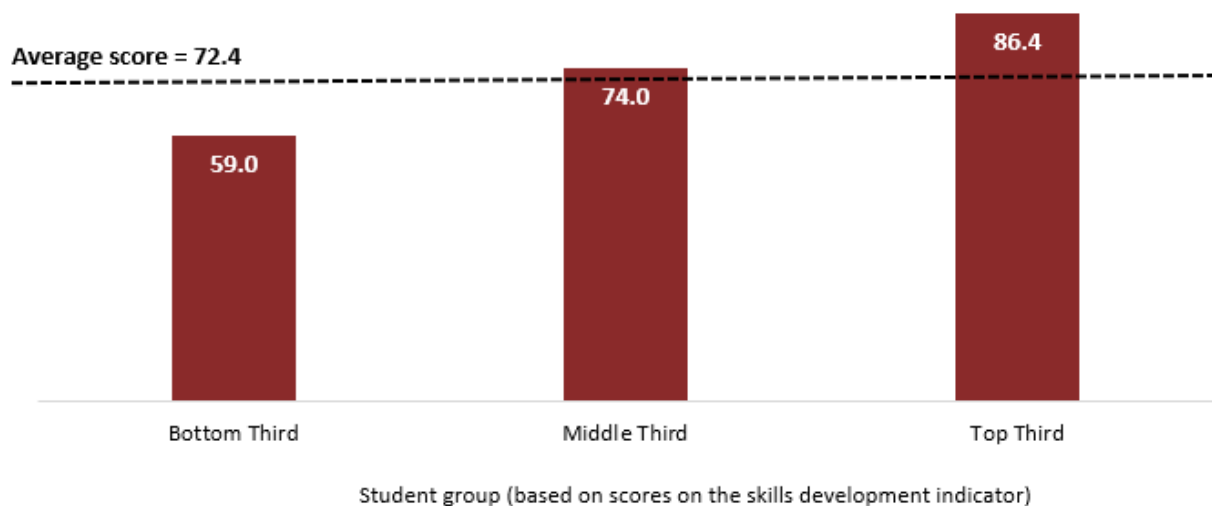
How Do Graduating Students Rate Skills Development and Career Preparation at NU?

This study examines students' perception of skills development and career preparation at NU. It uses data on 1,068 graduating students who completed the [Undergraduate Exit Survey](#) from 2016 to 2018. Skills development was measured by a composite score based on students' self-ratings of 17 transferrable skills. Career preparation was measured by a composite score based on two survey items.

Results suggest that graduating students rated themselves high on skills/competencies which, as Figure 1 suggests, had particularly high ratings among students in the middle and top thirds. Even students in the bottom third were still positive about skills development. No major differences were observed among undergraduate schools, though SHSS students had slightly higher ratings compared to students from other schools.

Figure 1. Average composite scores for development of skills and competencies (scale: 0-100)

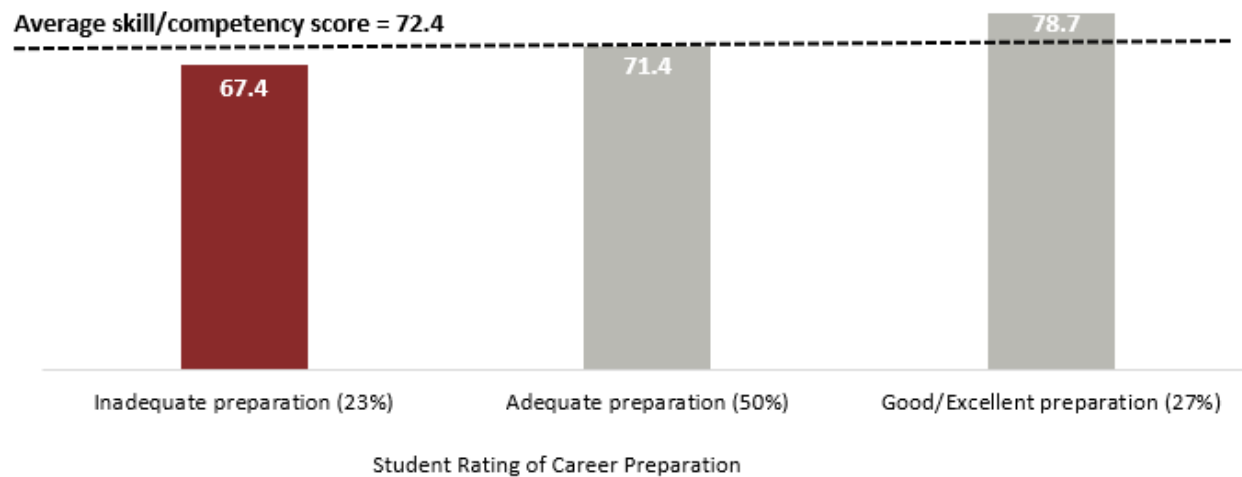
Graduating students (2016-2018) rated themselves high on skills and competencies developed during their undergraduate studies.



However, a large discrepancy emerged between students' ratings of skills (average = 72.4) and their ratings of career preparation (average = 55.5). Half of the students rated career preparation as "adequate," 23% as "inadequate," and 27% as "good" or "excellent."

Interestingly, as Figure 2 shows, students' ratings of skills was highly positive at all levels of career preparation. In fact, even students who rated career preparation as "inadequate" still rated themselves high on skills development.

Figure 2. Average scores for skills and competencies, by students' rating of career preparation
Even **students who rated career preparation as "inadequate"** still rated skill and competency development high.



In sum, NU graduates had a highly positive perception of the skills developed during their undergraduate studies. They were, however, significantly less positive about career preparation—despite high ratings of skills across student groups and significant internship participation (over 80%).

One possible explanation is that students do not have a clear understanding of how the skills developed during their studies relate to the job market. Academic programs and advisers may, therefore, need to help students establish/understand this connection better. Another reason could be labor market uncertainty. It is possible that students have difficulty identifying or finding labor market opportunities that match their career interests.

=====

We invite you to write to IR (ir@nu.edu.kz) and (1) share your thoughts and experiences relative to the topic under discussion in this **IR-MFF** issue and/or (2) suggest a question/topic that you would like us to address in a future issue of the **IR-MFF**.

The IR-MFF is published every last Friday of the month (August through November and January through April). Depending on circumstances, it can be published before or after the last Friday of the month. Analyses are *limited to 300 words or less (narrative text) and one or two graphs/tables*. If you need more detailed information (methodological or otherwise), please contact Institutional Research and Analytics at ir@nu.edu.kz.