

**University of Wisconsin – Madison  
Facilities Planning & Management  
Spring 2007 Employee Housing Questionnaire**

Final Analysis and Report of Findings  
September 2007



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## INTRODUCTION

The University of Wisconsin Survey Center collected 1637 questionnaires from employees of Meriter Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital and Medical Center, the UW Hospital, and UW faculty and Staff. Respondents were currently employed 50% time or greater at the time the questionnaire was administered. Employees were asked general questions about their current housing and commute conditions. In addition, respondents were asked questions about their interest in moving closer to work and their ability to purchase a home. The survey concluded with questions that gauged respondents' interest and familiarity with homebuyer assistance. The attached appendix gives a more complete description of how the data were collected.

This report begins with a brief summary of the main substantive findings. A demographic snapshot of the employees who were surveyed is included, and the main findings are then presented and explained in more detail. The report concludes with a description of some of the main trends in these data.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Analysis of the data collected in this survey reveal some interesting findings about how employees feel about home ownership and commuting to work. Some responses varied by relevant respondent traits, but overall there were no vast differences across the different sample groups (UW faculty / staff, UW hospital, Meriter, St. Mary's).

### *Commute*

The vast majority (80%) of employees drives their own car to work; for all other categories no single mode of transportation was used by more than 6% of the sample. The distance between work and home for many respondents is between 5 and 20 miles, with about a fifth of the sample living less than 5 miles from work, and a fifth living more than 20 miles from work. Just over half of respondents needed between 15 and 30 minutes to travel between work and home, with only a small minority needing more than 60 minutes to commute.

### *Current Residence*

Just under a quarter of the sample is made up of non-homeowners and just over 25% do not live in a single family house. The majority share housing costs with at least one other person. The majority of respondents reported that their community was an important factor in choosing the location of their current residence. Cost appeared to be the second most important factor, while housing type, commute length, and schools all had similar rates of importance. Finally, spouse commute length was reported as least important.

### *Interest in Housing Closer to Work*

Slightly over half of the sample was not at all interested in buying a home closer to work, and just over 25% of respondents were at least somewhat interested. About 12% of respondents would be at least somewhat interested in renting a home nearer to work, and 78% are either not all interested in renting a home closer to work, or would prefer to own a home.

When considering a move closer to work, single family homes were the most appealing home type of residence for respondents. Still, 33% reported being not interested in moving closer to work. About 56% of respondents reported being willing to purchase a home in need of

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rehabilitation and either hire workers or work on it themselves, while 43% would not purchase a home if it was in need of rehab.

#### *Purchasing Interest and Ability*

About 61% of respondents were not planning on purchasing a home within the next two years, while 15% say they will purchase a home in the next two years. The remainder of respondents were unsure about whether they will purchase a home in the next two years.

When considering factors that prevent respondents from living closer to work, the majority of respondents reported that they are currently happy with their residence. The cost of moving closer to work was another issue many respondents reported as being a factor that prevents them from living near work. Living near children's schools and other workplaces kept some people from moving closer to work

#### *Familiarity and Interest in Homebuyer Assistance*

Over 40% of respondents were not at all familiar with programs to assist homebuyers, but at least 32% were at least somewhat familiar with the programs. At least 45% of respondents reported some level of interest in receiving home listings within three miles of work. 43% of respondents showed some level of interest in attending a homebuyer education seminar, 41% had interest in receiving down payment assistance and 38% showed an interest in meeting with a housing counselor.

#### *Summary Conclusions*

Overall, a significant number of respondents (about 25%) expressed some level of interest in living closer to work. While many respondents do not plan on purchasing a home in the next two years, a large percentage would be interested in receiving some type of homebuying assistance. Respondents relied heavily on driving their own cars to work, but the vast majority spent less than 60 minutes commuting each day.

What follows is a more detailed presentation of the findings described in the above summary.

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## DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Below is a basic examination of the demographic distributions of respondents surveyed for this study of employees and housing.

**Table 1: Employment Location**

Place of Employment	Number of Respondents	Valid Percentage
<i>Meriter Hospital</i>	422	25.8%
<i>St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center</i>	419	25.6%
<i>UW Hospital</i>	427	26.1%
<i>UW Faculty and Staff</i>	369	22.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1637</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 2: Employment Length**

Length of Employment	Number of Respondents	Valid Percentage
<i>Less than 1 year</i>	135	8.3%
<i>1 to 5 years</i>	483	29.6%
<i>Over 5 years</i>	1015	62.2%

**Table 3: Household Size**

HH Size		Number of Respondents	Valid Percentage
<i>Adults</i>	<i>0</i>	18	1.1%
	<i>1</i>	352	21.6%
	<i>2</i>	1054	64.7%
	<i>3</i>	144	8.8%
	<i>4 or more</i>	62	3.8%
<i>Children</i>	<i>0</i>	872	54.8%
	<i>1</i>	287	18.1%
	<i>2</i>	313	19.7%
	<i>3</i>	89	5.6%
	<i>4</i>	26	1.6%
	<i>5 or more</i>	3	.2%

**Table 4: Household Income**

Household Income	Number of Respondents	Valid Percentage
<i>Under \$40,000</i>	226	14.6%
<i>\$40,001 to \$60,000</i>	253	16.3%
<i>\$60,001 to \$80,000</i>	343	22.1%
<i>\$80,001 to \$100,000</i>	315	20.3%
<i>\$100,000 or more</i>	412	26.6%

Table 1 above shows that the respondents are distributed almost evenly across employment locations. The UW hospital had the most employee respondents with 26.1% of the total number

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of respondents. UW faculty and staff had the least, making up 22.5% of the total employee respondents. The response from Meriter Hospital and St. Mary’s Hospital employees was 25.8% and 25.6%, respectively.

Table 2 shows that the majority of employees (62.2%) have worked at their respective place of employment for over 5 years. 29.6% of respondents have worked at their place of employment between 1 and 5 years and 8.3% have been employed for less than 1 year.

Table 3 indicates that the majority of households contained 2 adults (64.7%), while 21.6% were single adult households. Some households contained 3 adults, making up 8.8% of households. Very few had 4 or more adults, making up only 3.8% of all households. Even fewer had no adults in the household (1.1%). In other words, just over half (54.8%) of the surveyed respondents lived in households with no children. 18.1% of all respondents had 1 child in their household and 19.7% had 2 children. Only 7.4% of respondents had 3 or more children in their household.

Table 4 indicates that the majority of respondents had an annual household income of over \$60,000.

## COMMUTE

The questionnaire began by asking respondents where they currently live and then assessed the respondents’ daily commute to work. Employees were asked how far in miles and how long in minutes their average commute was. They were also asked about their usual mode of transportation.

When asked to estimate the distance between their current residence and their place of work, the majority of employees said they lived 5 to 10 miles (33%) or 11 to 20 miles (26.2%) from their place of employment. A minority said they lived less than 5 miles (20.4%) or more than 20 miles (20.4%) from work.

When asked to estimate the commute time between their current residence and their place of work, the majority of employees said it was 15 to 30 minutes (53%) or 31 to 60 minutes (24.2%) apart. A small minority said they lived more than 60 minutes away (2.7%) and others reported living less than 15 minutes (20.1%) from work.

Respondents overwhelmingly reported driving their own car to work. Besides riding the bus or a bicycle, walking or riding in a car pool, respondents wrote in some other answers. These other answers included using a combination of modes of transportation on a given day. Some said that they changed their mode of transportation according to the weather or other situations. A few respondents wrote in “vanpool” as something they view as separate or different from carpooling.

Table 1.a

Current City of Residence	Number of Respondents
Albany	2
Arena	2
Arlington	4
Avoca	1

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Aztalan	1
Baraboo	2
Barneveld	5
Beaver Dam	2
Belleville	11
Beloit	2
Berry	1
Black Earth	4
Blanchardville	2
Blooming Grove	5
Blue Mounds	3
Boscobel	2
Brodhead	4
Brooklyn	19
Burke	1
Cambridge	3
Cazenovia	1
Clinton	1
Columbus	7
Cottage Grove	35
Cross Plains	12
Dane	3
Darlington	1
Deerfield	9
DeForest	25
Dekkora	1
Delafield	1
Dodgeville	1
Dubuque, IA	1
Dunn	4
Edgerton	9
Evansville	17
Fall River	1
Fitchburg	72
Fort Atkinson	6
Fox Lake	1
Fulton	1
Hazel Green	1
Hillpoint	1
Hollandale	3
Janesville	13
Jefferson	3
Johnson Creek	2
Lake Mills	5
LaValle	1
Leeds	1
Livingston	1
Lodi	12
Madison	721

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Maple Bluff	2
Marshall	6
Marshfield	1
Mayville	1
Mazomanie	8
McFarland	34
Merrimac	1
Middleton	64
Milton	3
Milwaukee	2
Mineral Point	3
Minocqua	1
Monona	31
Monroe	2
Montello	3
Monticello	2
Moscow	1
Mount Horeb	22
New Glarus	11
North Freedom	2
Oconomowoc	1
Oregon	37
Oxford	1
Pardeeville	5
Pewaukee	1
Plain	2
Pleasant Springs	6
Plover	1
Portage	3
Poynette	10
Prairie du Sac	5
Randolph	2
Richland Center	1
Rio	3
Ripon	1
Roxbury	3
Rutland	2
Rutledge	1
Sauk City	4
Sauk Prairie	1
Shorewood Hills	5
Shullsburg	1
Spring Green	1
Springfield	4
Steuben	1
Stoughton	30
Sun Prairie	75
Town of Arlington	1
Town of Berry	4

Town of Blooming Grove	1
Town of Blue Mounds	1
Town of Brigham	2
Town of Bristol	1
Town of Burke	4
Town of Cottage Grove	3
Town of Cross Plains	2
Town of Dunkirk	1
Town of Dunn	9
Town of Fulton	2
Town of Hampden	1
Town of Madison	1
Town of Middleton	9
Town of Montrose	1
Town of Oconomowoc	1
Town of Oregon	3
Town of Perry	1
Town of Roxbury	1
Town of Rutland	4
Town of Springdale	3
Town of Springfield	2
Town of Sun Prairie	2
Town of Vermont	2
Town of Verona	4
Town of Waterloo	1
Town of West Point	2
Town of Westport	1
Troy	2
Verona	41
Vienna	1
Village	1
Village of Oregon	1
Village of Wyocena	1
Waldorf	1
Waterloo	2
Watertown	1
Waunakee	35
Wausau	1
Wauwatosa	1
West Point	1
West Pond	1
Westport	6
Wilton	1
Windsor	2
Wyocena	1

Figure 1.b

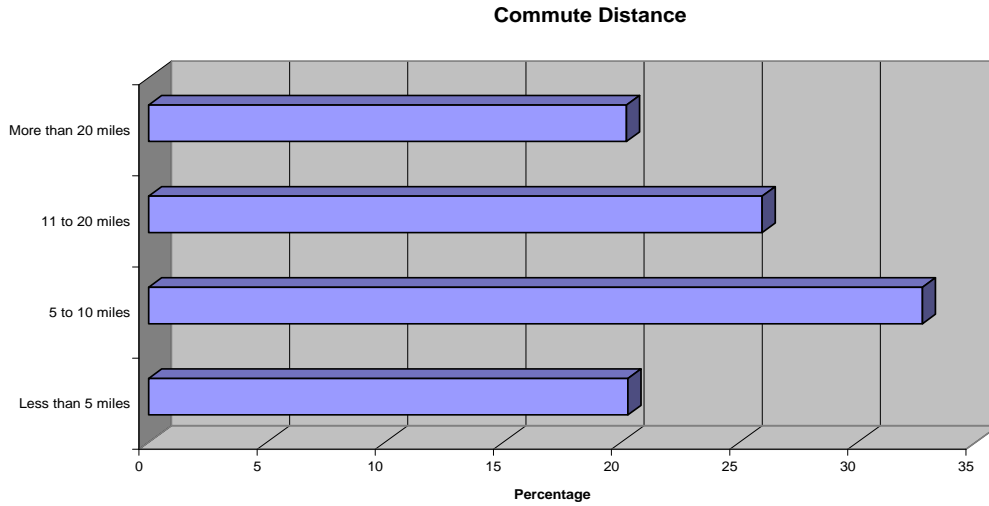


Figure 1.b shows the percentage who answered in each category of ‘Distance from residence to work’ of all respondents. Table 1.b breaks down the overall percentage by ‘Place of employment.’ This is displayed graphically in Figure 1.b.

Table 1.b

		QUESTIONNAIRE VERSION				
		UW Hospital	St. Mary’s Hospital	Meriter Hospital	University of Wisconsin	Total
% within DISTANCE FROM RESIDENCE TO WORK	Less than 5 miles	25.3%	16.0%	19.9%	38.9%	100.0%
	5 to 10 miles	23.5%	28.4%	27.1%	21.1%	100.0%
	11 to 20 miles	28.0%	27.3%	28.2%	16.5%	100.0%
	More than 20 miles	28.1%	29.0%	26.9%	16.0%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 1.b

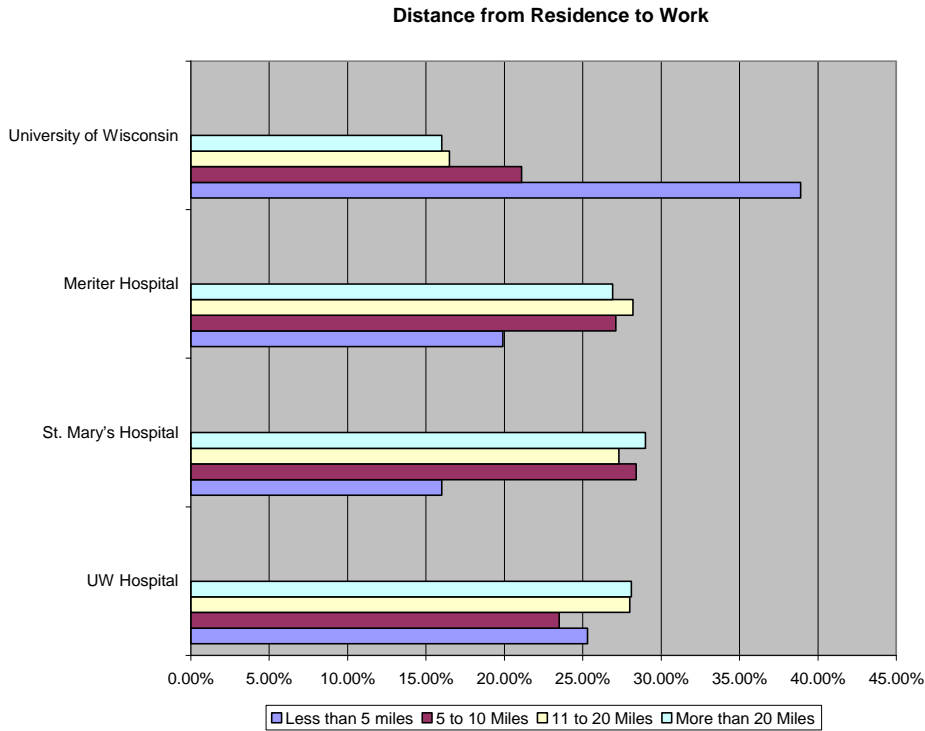
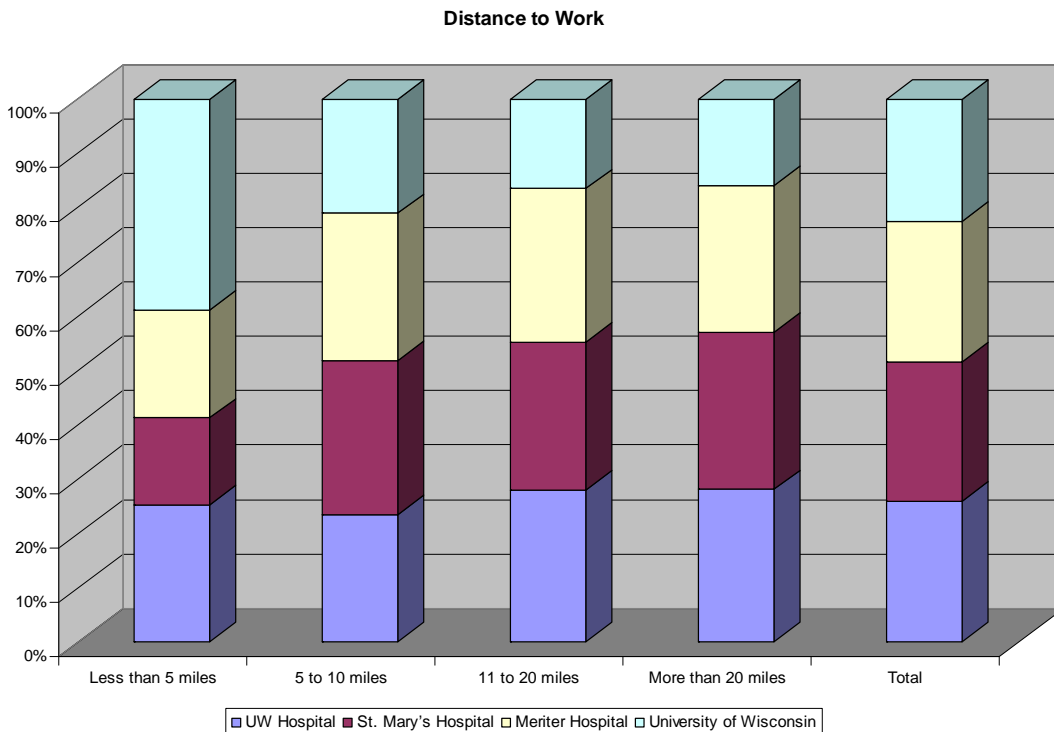


Figure 1.c, below, displays the percentage of responses for each place of employment within each category.

Figure 1.c



Switching from distance of commute to time spent commuting, Figure 2.a shows the percentage of respondents that fall into each category. Figure 2.b, again, breaks it down by ‘Place of employment.’ More precise numbers can be found in the corresponding Table 2.a. Finally, Figure 2.c looks at the percentage of responses for each place of employment within each category.

Figure 2.a

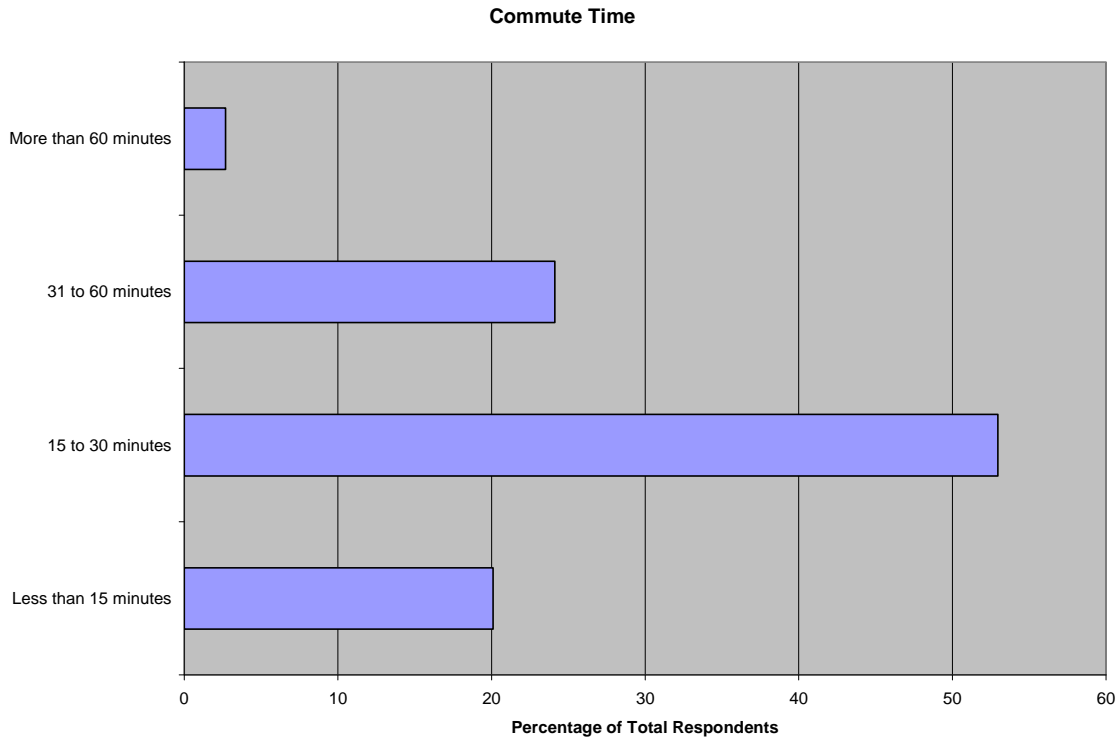


Figure 2.b

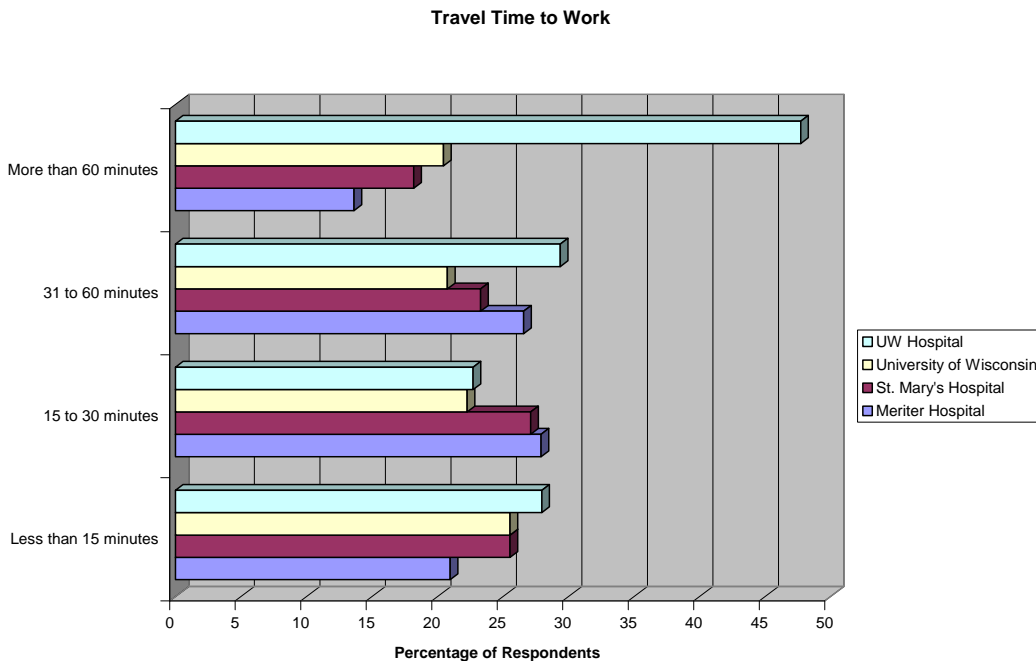


Table 2.b

		QUESTIONNAIRE VERSION				Total
		UW Hospital	St. Mary's Hospital	Meriter Hospital	University of Wisconsin	
% within TIME FROM RESIDENCE TO WORK	Less than 15 minutes	28.0%	25.5%	21.0%	25.5%	100.0%
	15 to 30 minutes	22.7%	27.1%	27.9%	22.3%	100.0%
	31 to 60 minutes	29.4%	23.3%	26.6%	20.8%	100.0%
	More than 60 minutes	47.7%	18.2%	13.6%	20.5%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 2.c

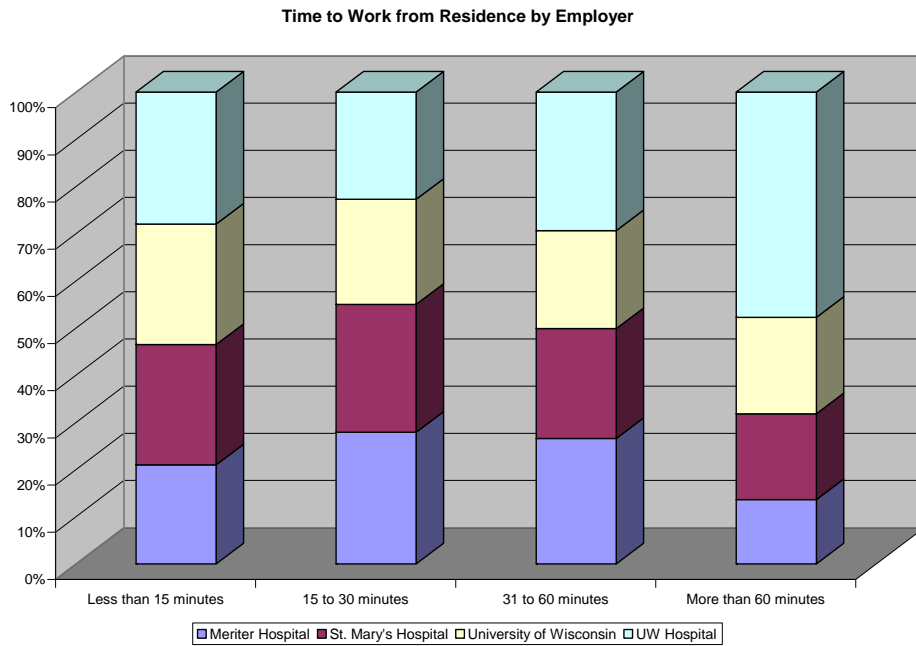
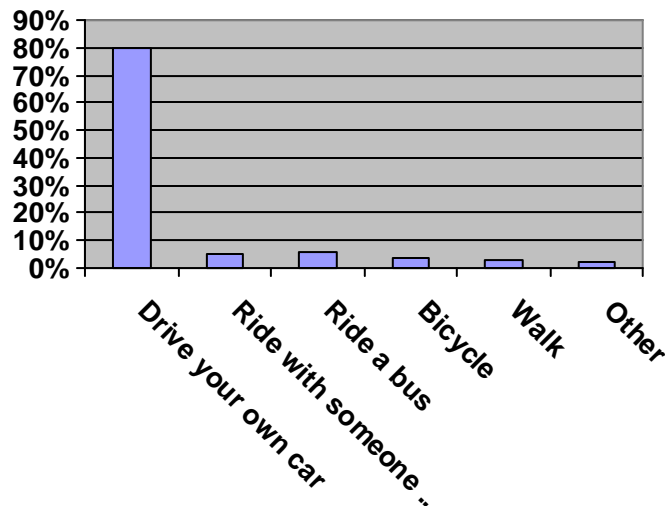
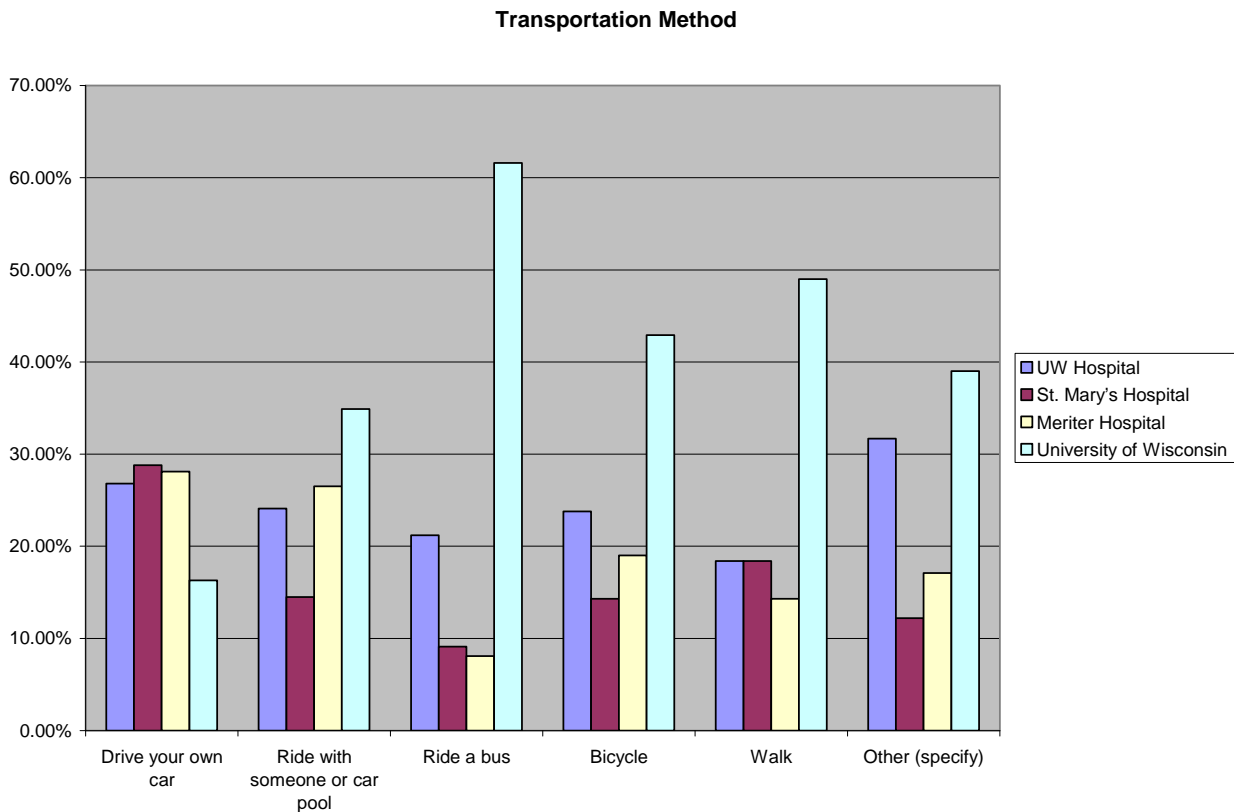


Figure 3.a



Figures 3.a and 3.b show the overall percentages by modes of transportation and the break down of percentage by ‘Place of employment.’

Figure 3.b



## CURRENT RESIDENCE

Campus area employees were asked to report on their current living arrangements. Questions ranged from whether they were a homeowner or renter to what type of dwelling they live in to the cost of their home and finally, to why they choose to live there.

The vast majority of respondents were homeowners with a single family home. The average monthly housing cost, not including utilities was about \$1185. Respondents reported a range of monthly housing cost from \$0 to \$6000. The modal and median monthly housing cost was \$1200 and \$1087, respectively. The majority of respondents share housing costs, probably with a spouse or partner.

When asked to report the city where their spouse or partner works, respondents offered a wide range of answers. A common response was “retired” or “homemaker” or “stay at home parent”.

When asked about factors that impacted their decision to live in their current residence, respondents overwhelmingly reported the importance of the neighborhood or community. Some respondent wrote in an “other” factor that impacted their decision. These other factors included more space or land to live a rural lifestyle, along with availability of amenities like bus lines.

Figure 4.a

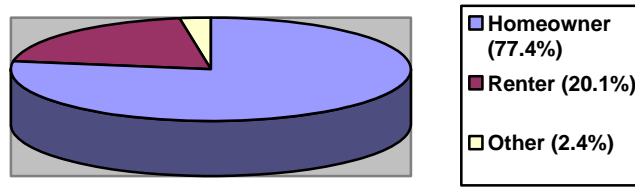


Figure 4.b

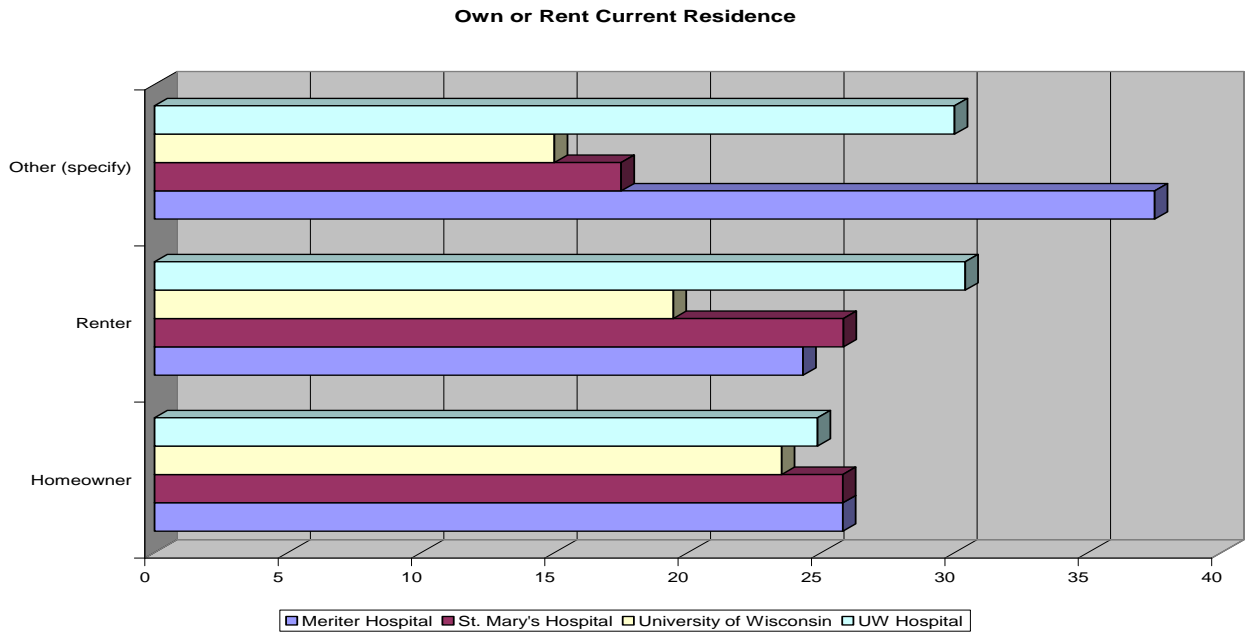


Figure 4.c

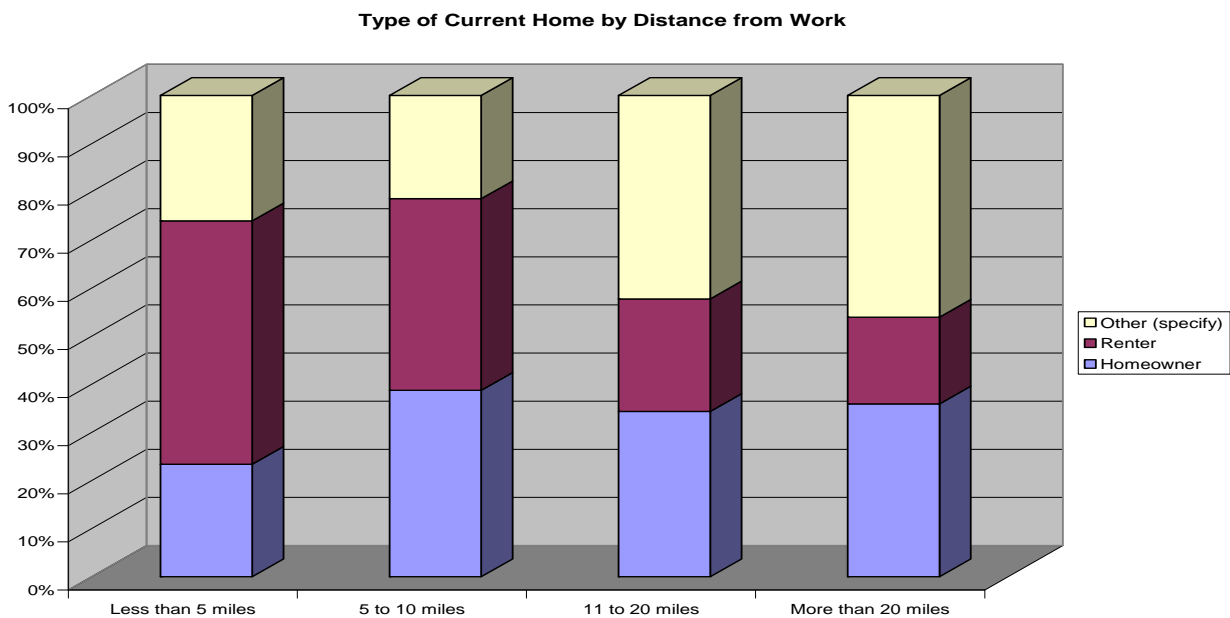


Table 4.a

		DISTANCE FROM RESIDENCE TO WORK				Total
		Less than 5 miles	5 to 10 miles	11 to 20 miles	More than 20 miles	
<b>OWN OR RENT RESIDENCE</b>	Homeowner	16.5%	33.2%	27.8%	22.5%	<b>100.0%</b>
	Renter	35.7%	34.1%	18.9%	11.3%	<b>100.0%</b>
	Other (specify)	18.4%	18.4%	34.2%	28.9%	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>20.4%</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>20.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 4.d

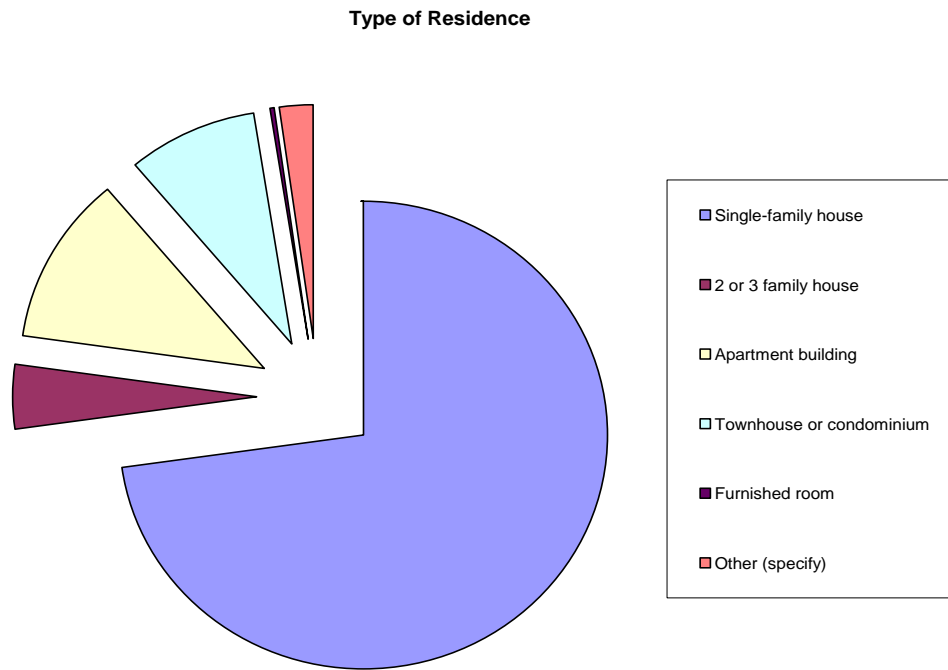


Figure 4.e

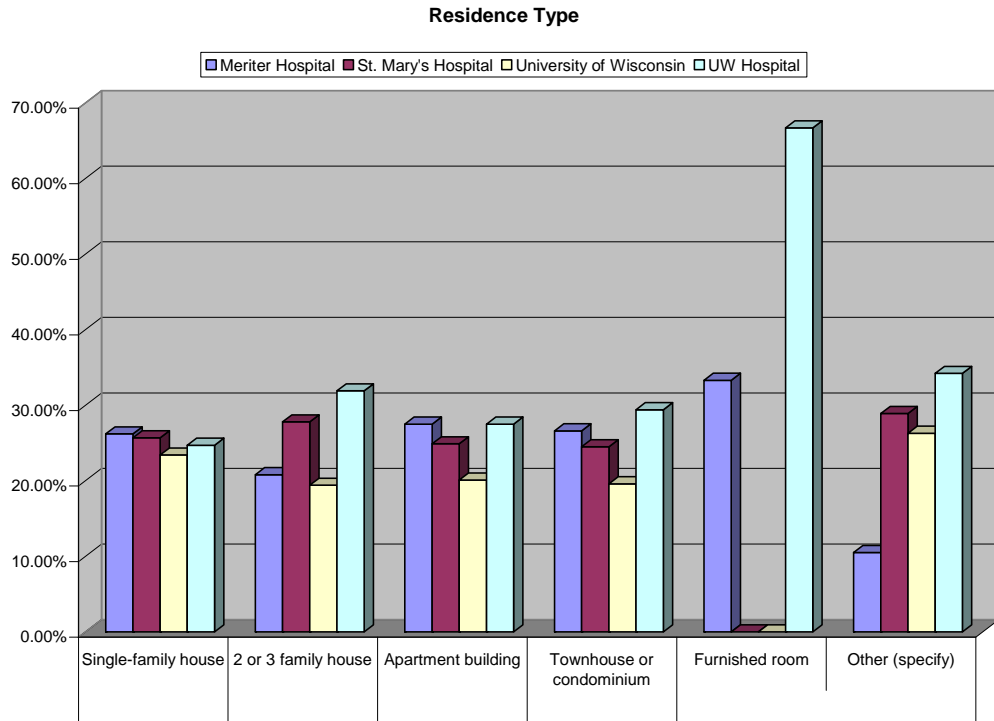


Table 5.a

Monthly housing cost, not including utilities		
Mean		\$1181.443
Median		\$1087.50
Mode		\$1200.00
Range		\$0 - \$6000

Figure 5.a

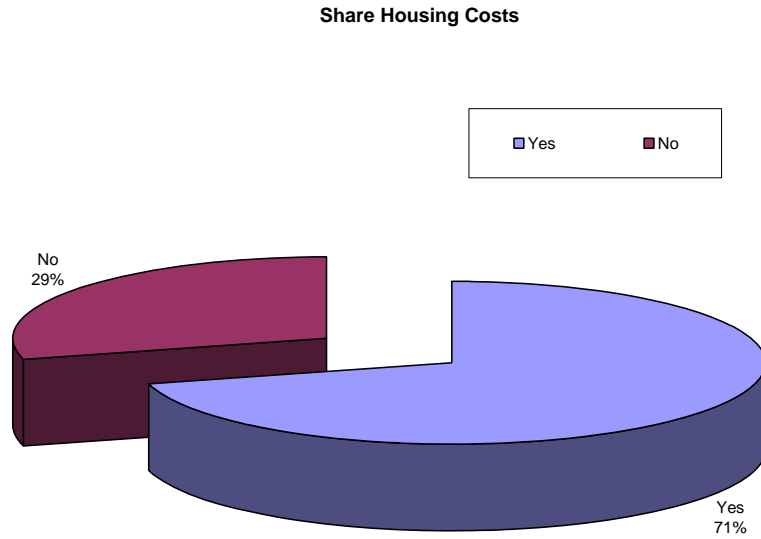
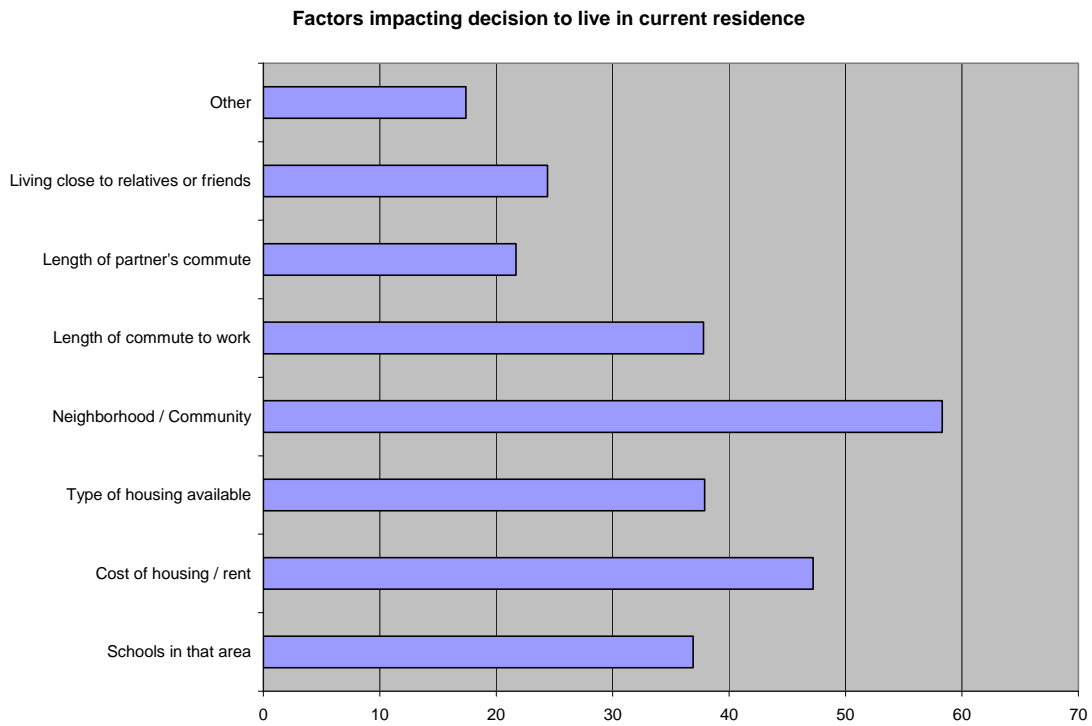


Figure 5.b



## INTEREST IN HOUSING CLOSER TO WORK

### *Location in Relation to Work*

Respondents were first asked whether they have ever considered moving closer to work. Then respondents were asked to rate their level of interest in purchasing or renting a home closer to work. Figure 6.a displays the percentage of respondents who have considered moving closer to work. Figure 6.b crosses respondents who have considered moving closer to work with employer. Figures 6.c and 6.d show the percent of interest level in owning or renting, respectively, a home closer to work.

Figure 6.a

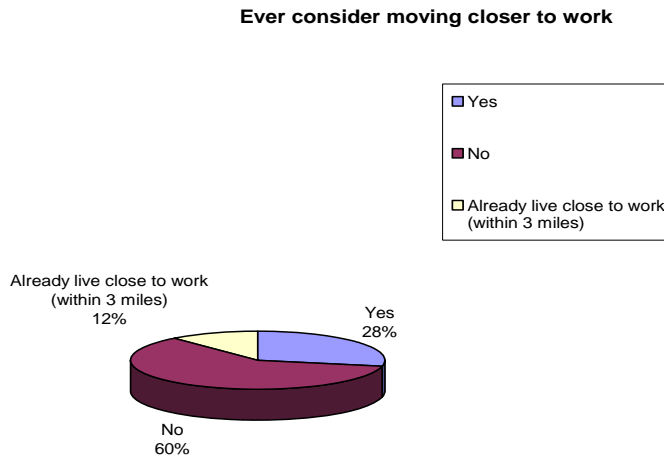


Figure 6.b

		QUESTIONNAIRE VERSION				
		UW Hospital	St. Mary's Hospital	Meriter Hospital	University of Wisconsin	Total
% within CONSIDERED MOVING CLOSER TO WORK	Yes	24.9%	27.5%	24.7%	22.9%	100.0%
	No	25.4%	26.7%	28.5%	19.5%	100.0%
	Already live close to work (within 3 miles)	32.4%	14.4%	14.9%	38.3%	100.0%
	Total	26.0%	25.5%	25.9%	22.6%	100.0%

Figure 6.c

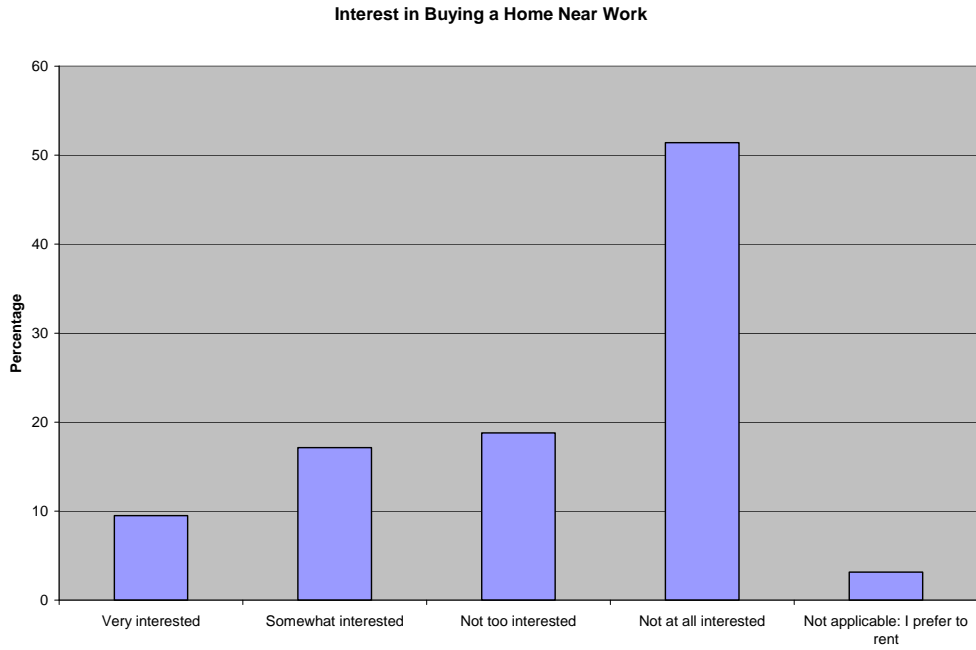
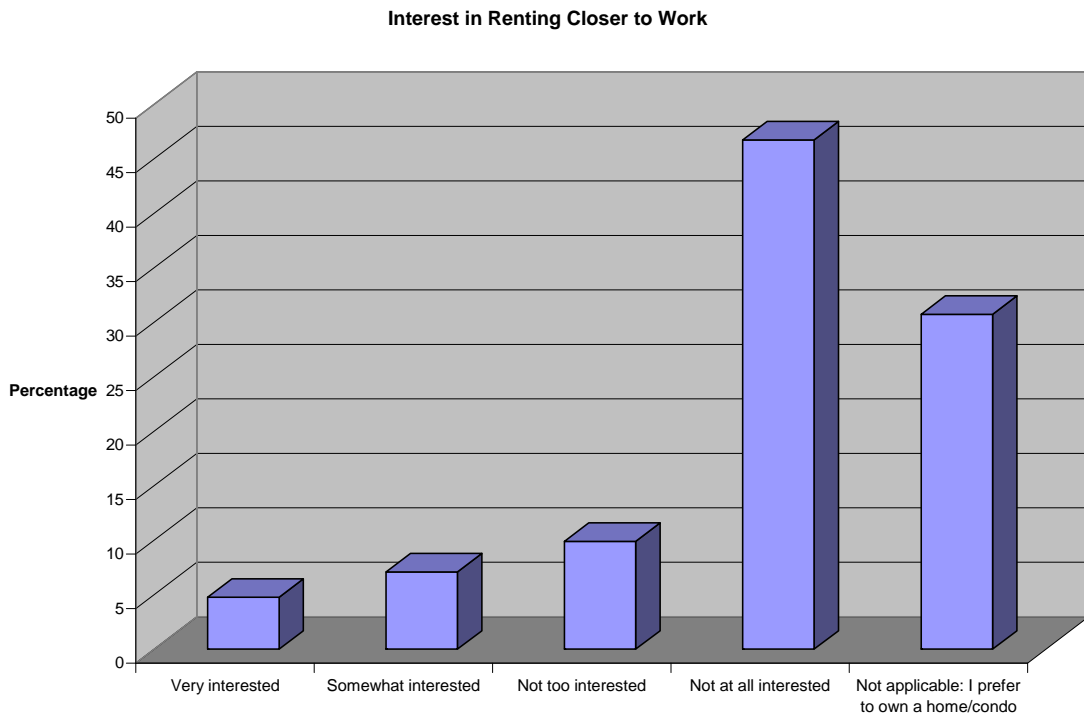


Figure 6.d

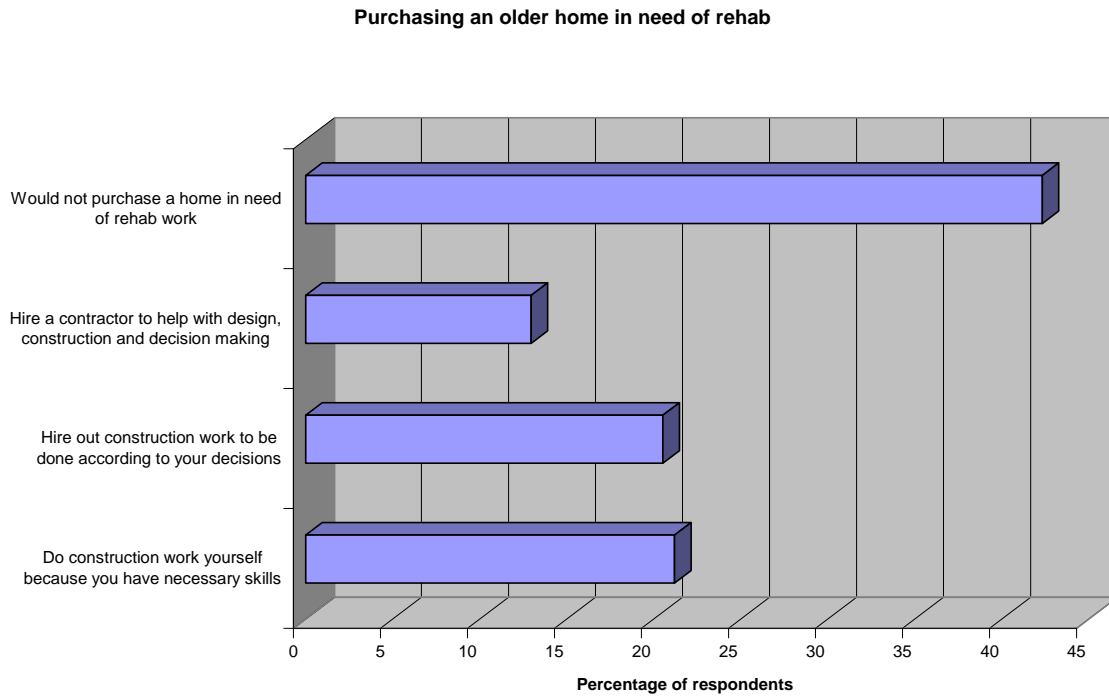


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### *Type of Housing Desired*

Employees were offered 6 different housing options and invited to choose which was most appealing if they could own a home or condo closer to work. Then respondents were asked to think about what it would be like to purchase an older home in need of some rehab work. This gave respondents an opportunity to report how they would handle such a situation. Figure 7.a represents respondents' answers.

Figure 7.a



### **PURCHASING INTEREST AND ABILITY**

Respondents were asked to report on their home-purchasing plans and behaviors. Respondents were asked whether they would be purchasing a new living space within the next two years, how much they could put towards a down-payment on a living space, and what factors might prevent them from moving. Figure 8.a displays how much respondents could put towards a down-payment. Figure 8.b. represents the percent of respondents who are considering moving to a new home or condo within the next 2 years.

Figure 8.a

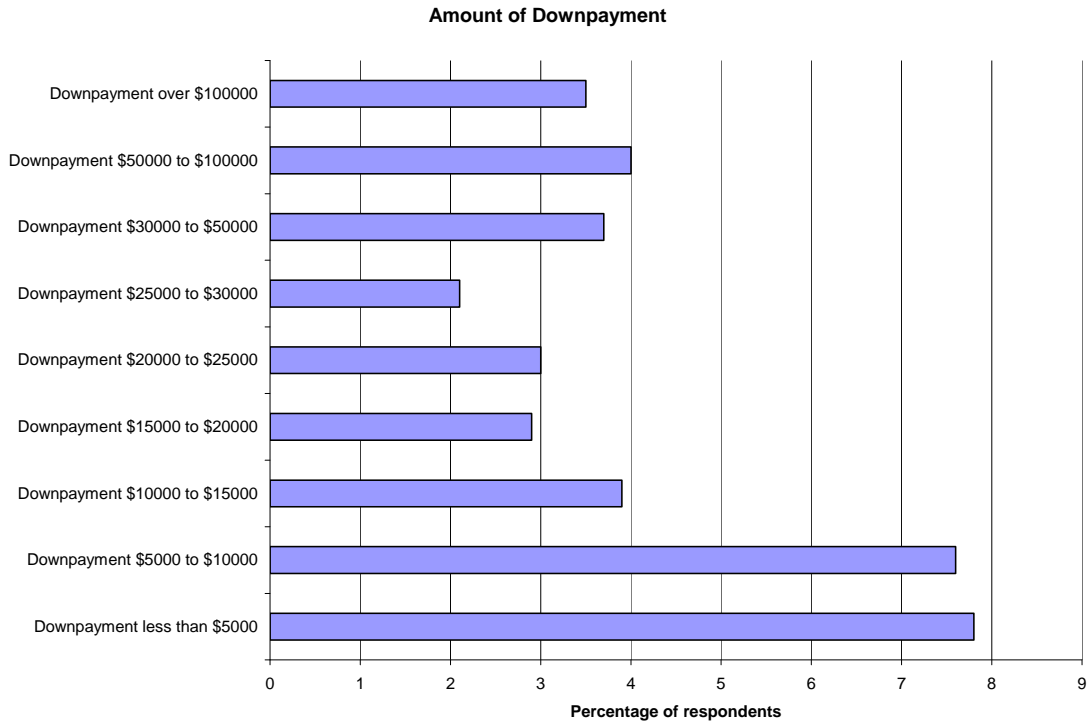


Figure 8.b

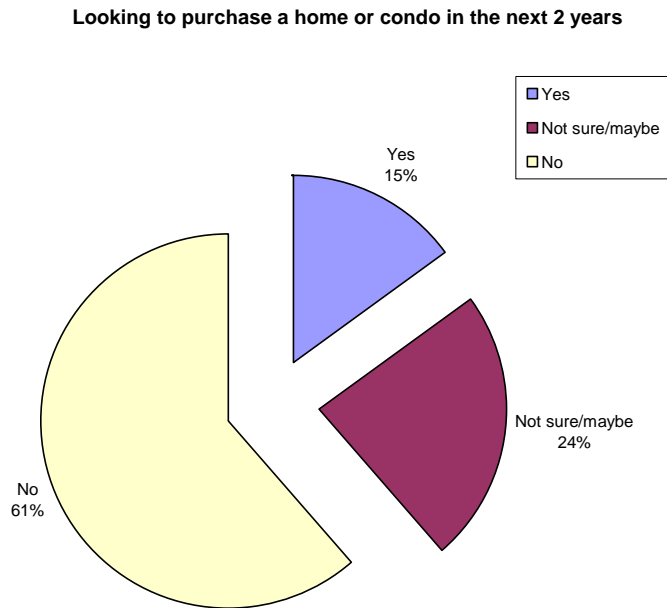


Figure 8.c

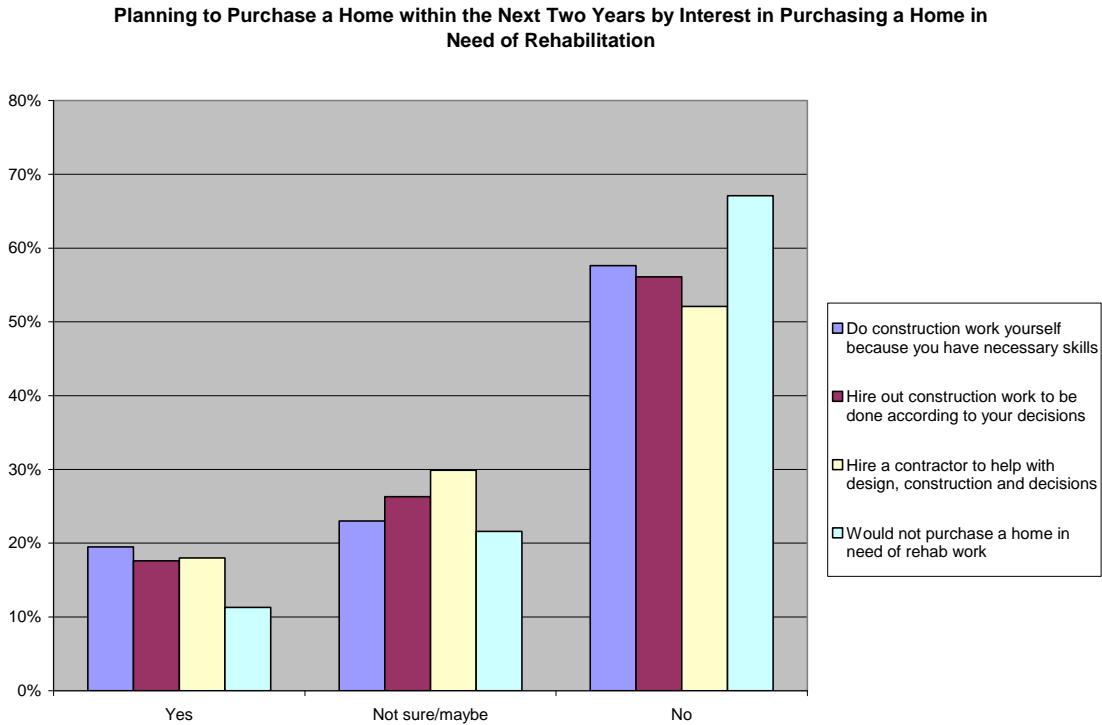


Figure 8.c shows the percentage of respondents that are planning to purchase a home within the next two years crossed with their interest in purchasing a home in need of rehabilitation.

Figure 8.d

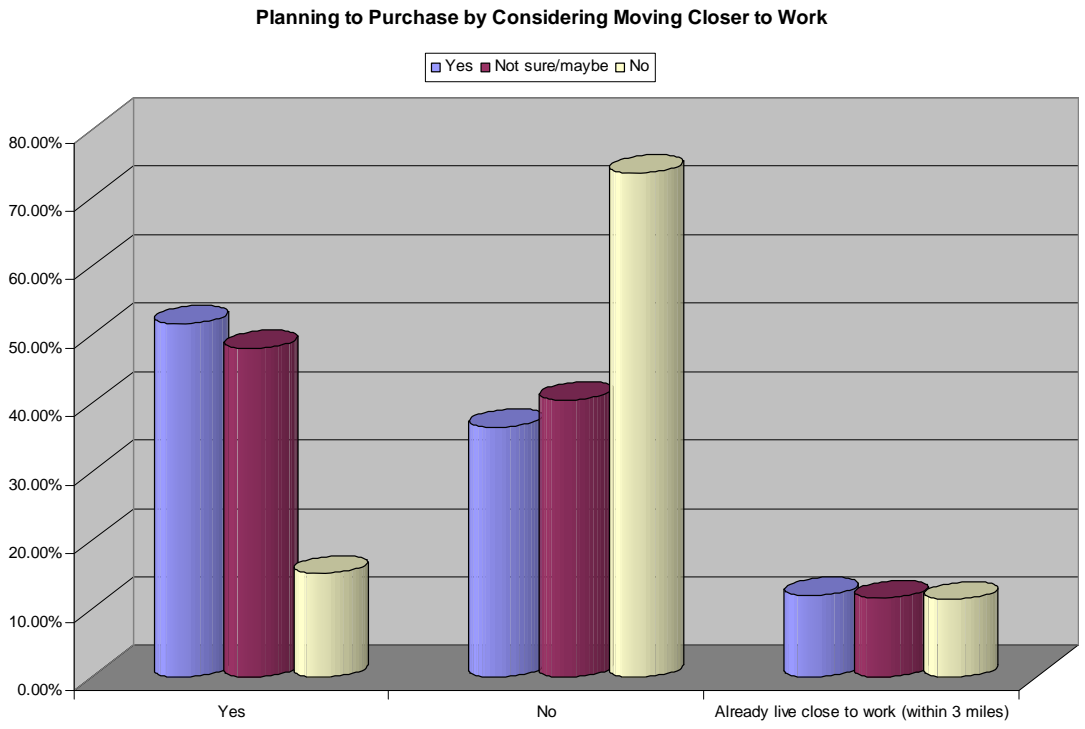


Table 8.d

		CONSIDERED MOVING CLOSER TO WORK			Total
		Yes	No	Already live close to work (within 3 miles)	
PLANNING TO PURCHASE IN TWO YEARS	Yes	51.6%	36.5%	11.9%	100.0%
	Not sure/maybe	48.0%	40.5%	11.5%	100.0%
	No	15.1%	73.6%	11.3%	100.0%
Total		28.4%	60.2%	11.4%	100.0%

Figure 8.e

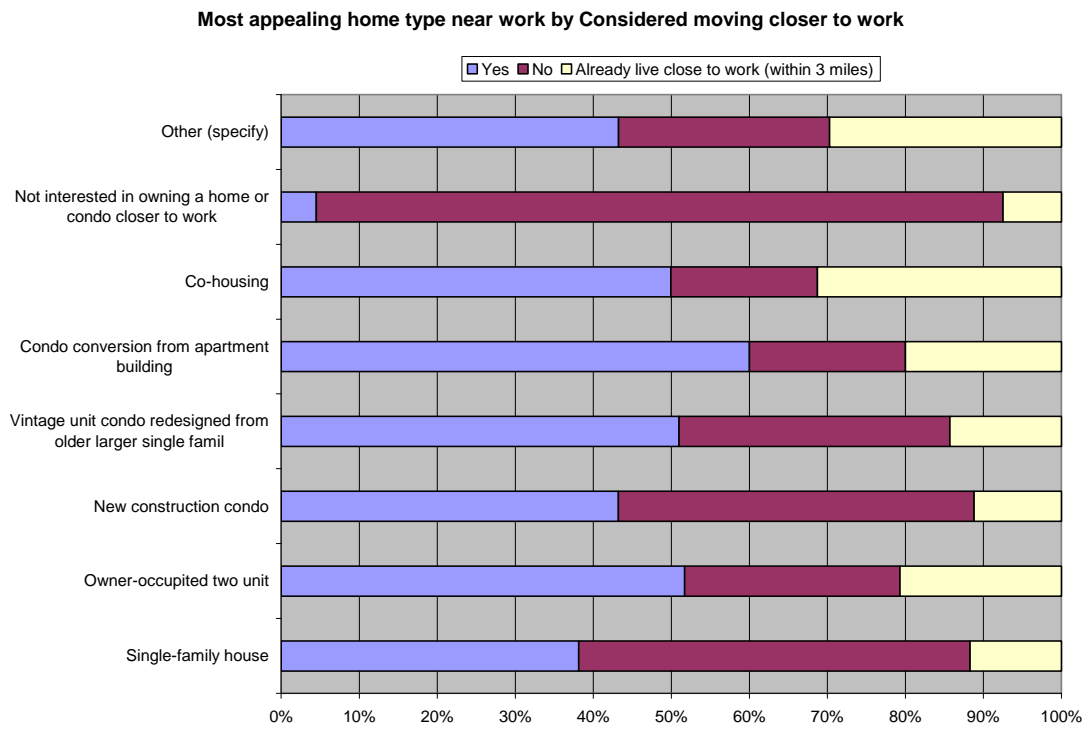


Table 8.e

		CONSIDERED MOVING CLOSER TO WORK			Total
		Yes	No	Already live close to work (within 3 miles)	
MOST APPEALING HOME TYPE NEAR WORK	Single-family house	38.1%	50.1%	11.7%	100.0%
	Owner-occupied two unit	51.7%	27.6%	20.7%	100.0%
	New construction condo	43.2%	45.6%	11.2%	100.0%
	Vintage unit condo redesigned from older larger single famil	51.0%	34.7%	14.3%	100.0%
	Condo conversion from apartment building	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Co-housing	50.0%	18.8%	31.3%	100.0%
	Not interested in owning a home or condo closer to work	4.5%	87.9%	7.5%	100.0%
	Other (specify)	43.2%	27.0%	29.7%	100.0%
	Total	28.6%	60.2%	11.2%	100.0%

Table 8.e gives the percentage of people who considered moving closer to work within each category of 'Most appealing home type near work'

Figure 8.f

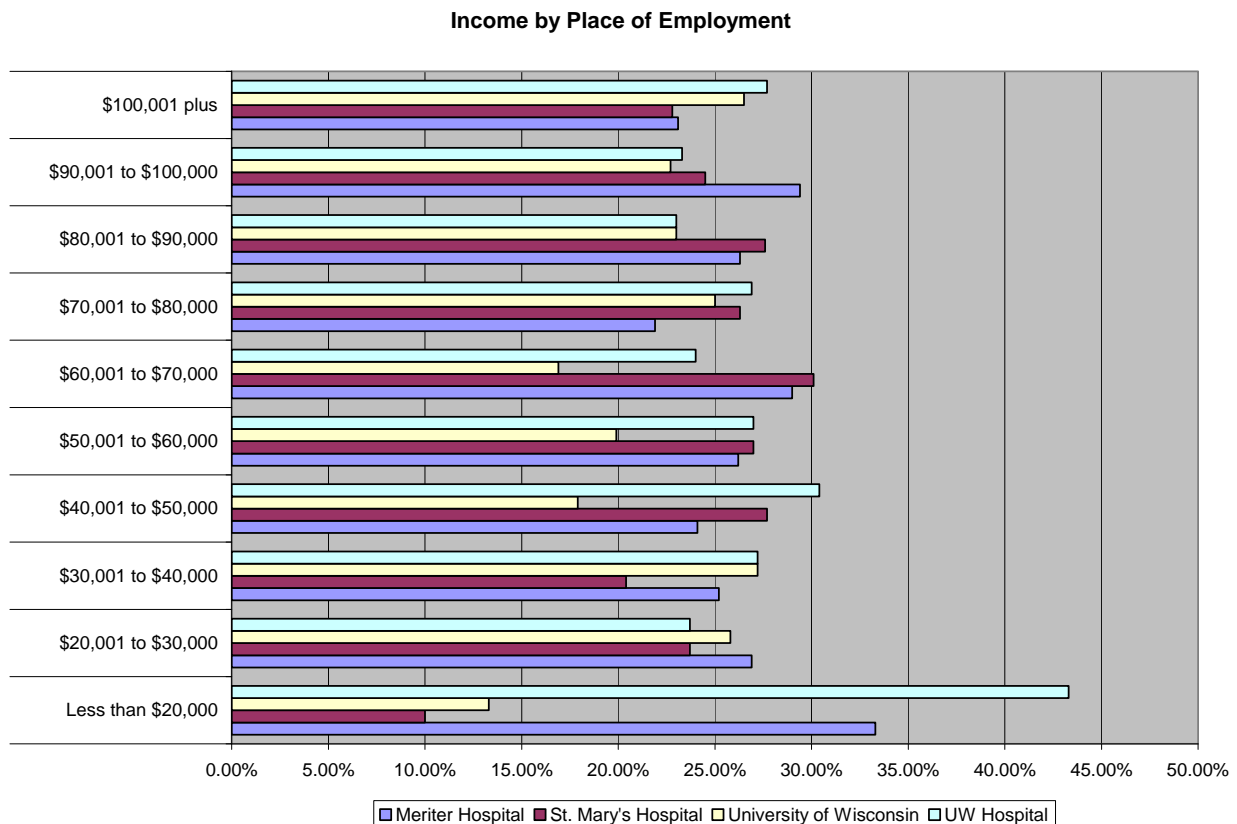


Table 8.f

		QUESTIONNAIRE VERSION NAME				
		Meriter Hospital	St. Mary's Hospital	University of Wisconsin	UW Hospital	Total
% within TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Less than \$20,000	33.3%	10.0%	13.3%	43.3%	100.0%
	\$20,001 to \$30,000	26.9%	23.7%	25.8%	23.7%	100.0%
	\$30,001 to \$40,000	25.2%	20.4%	27.2%	27.2%	100.0%
	\$40,001 to \$50,000	24.1%	27.7%	17.9%	30.4%	100.0%
	\$50,001 to \$60,000	26.2%	27.0%	19.9%	27.0%	100.0%
	\$60,001 to \$70,000	29.0%	30.1%	16.9%	24.0%	100.0%
	\$70,001 to \$80,000	21.9%	26.3%	25.0%	26.9%	100.0%
	\$80,001 to \$90,000	26.3%	27.6%	23.0%	23.0%	100.0%
	\$90,001 to \$100,000	29.4%	24.5%	22.7%	23.3%	100.0%
	\$100,001 plus	23.1%	22.8%	26.5%	27.7%	100.0%
	Total	25.6%	25.0%	23.0%	26.4%	100.0%

Figure 8.f and Table 8f. each take a different approach at representing 'Place of employment' by the total amount of household income, annually.

Figure 8.g

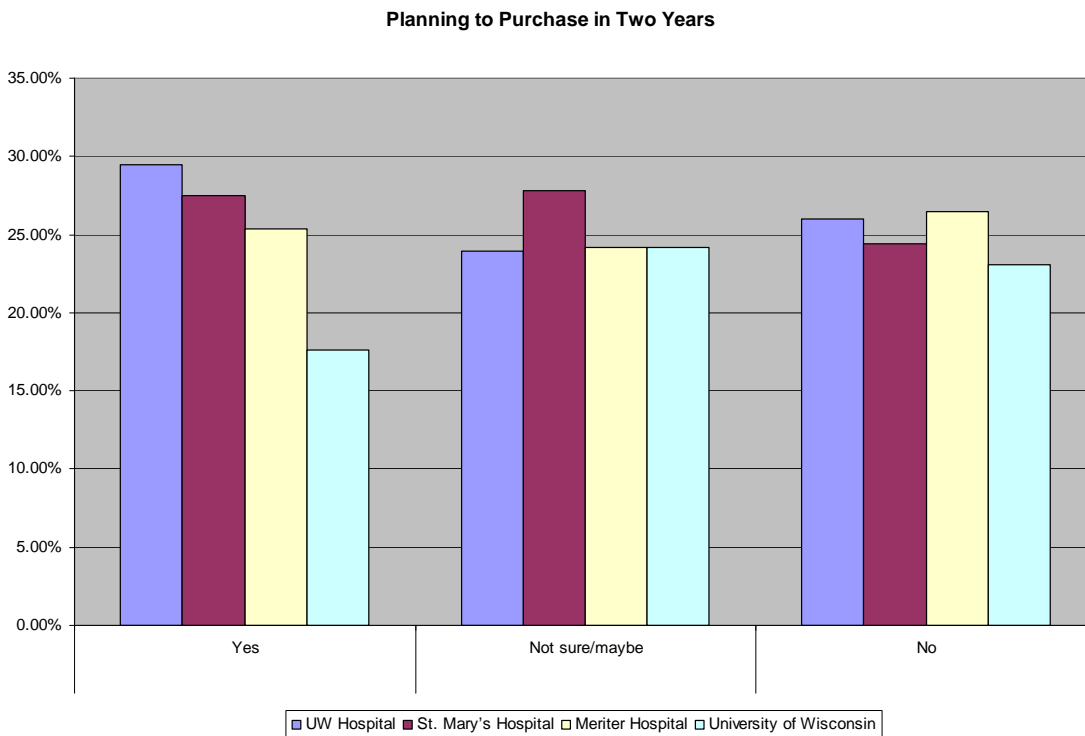


Table 8.g

		QUESTIONNAIRE VERSION				
		UW Hospital	St. Mary's Hospital	Meriter Hospital	University of Wisconsin	Total
% within PLANNING TO PURCHASE IN TWO YEARS	Yes	29.5%	27.5%	25.4%	17.6%	100.0%
	Not sure/maybe	23.9%	27.8%	24.2%	24.2%	100.0%
	No	26.0%	24.4%	26.5%	23.1%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### FAMILIARITY AND INTEREST IN HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE

Employees were asked how familiar they were with government programs to assist first-time homebuyers. They were then given 4 types of homebuyer assistance and asked to rate their level of interest in each one. A significant number of respondents reported being ‘very interested’ or ‘somewhat interested’ in at least one type of homebuyer assistance. Figures 9.a and 9.b both represent the frequency, in percents, of respondents familiar in homebuyer assistance, but 9.b breaks it down by ‘Place of employment’ as well.

Figure 9.a

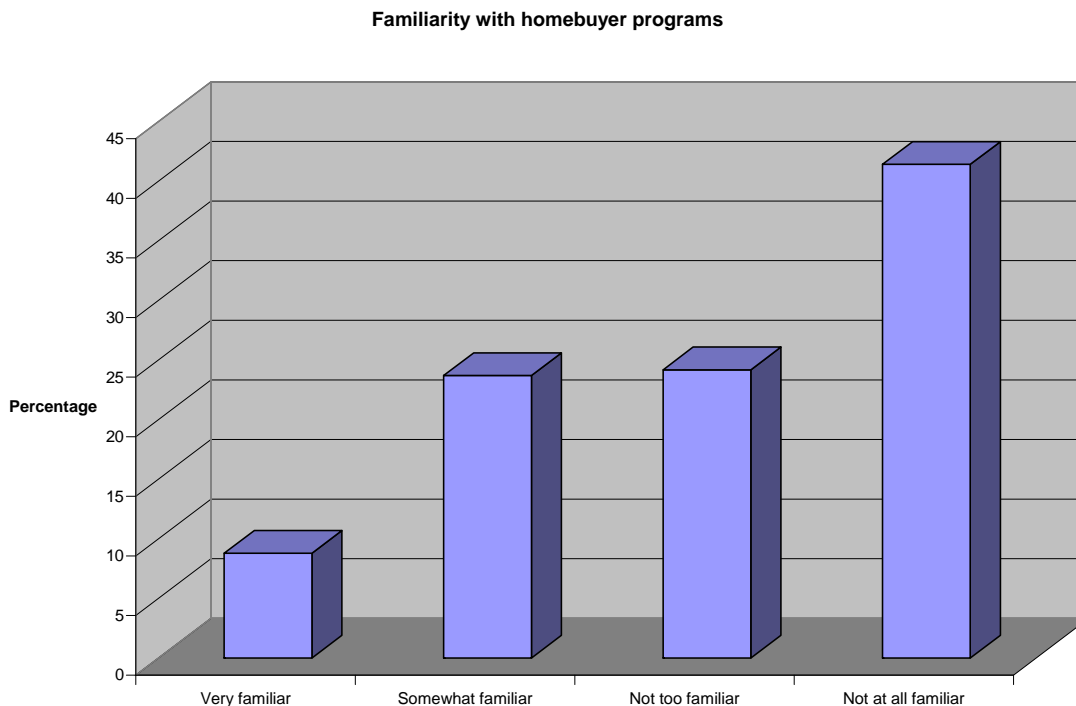
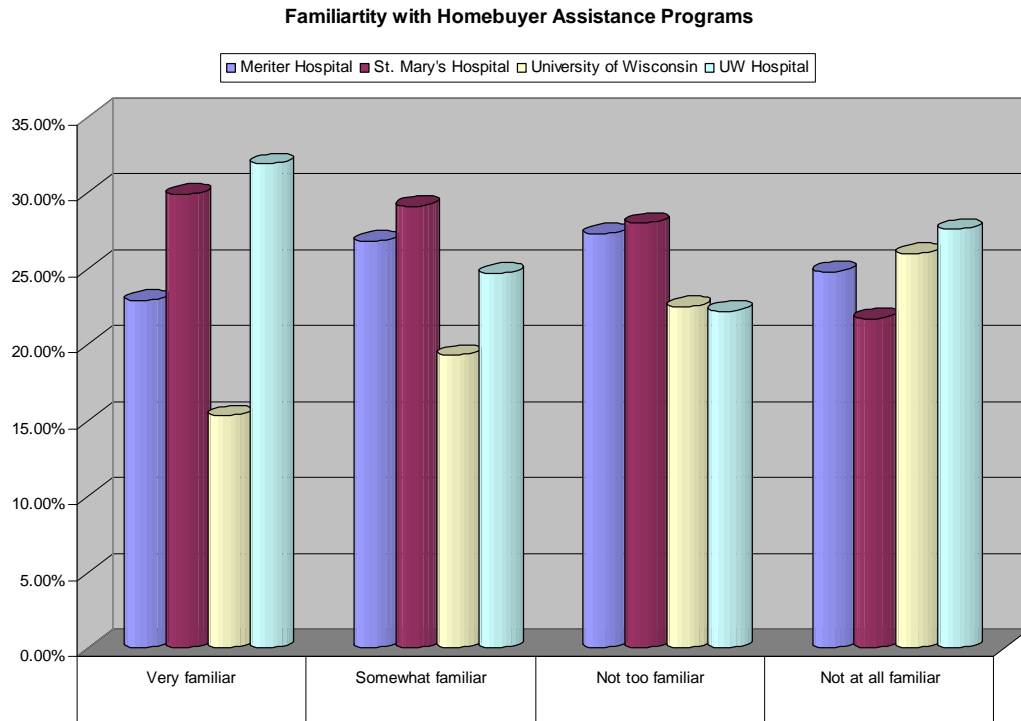


Figure 9.b



Figures 9.c through 9.f represent the percentage of respondents interested in each type of homebuyer assistance offered.

Figure 9.c

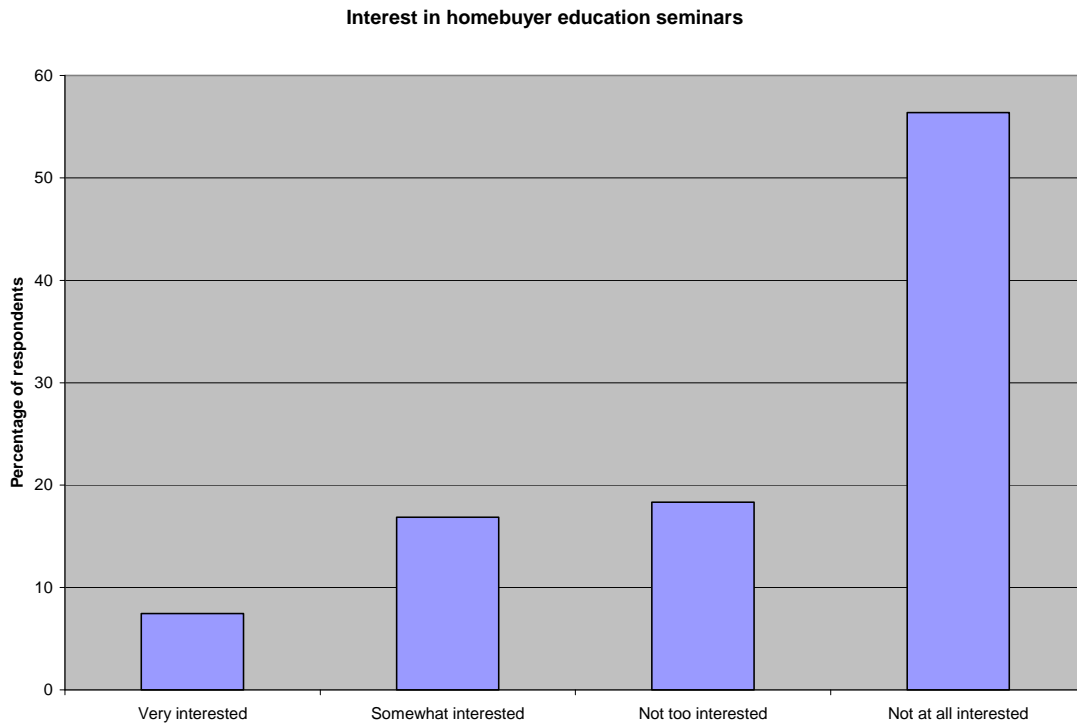


Figure 9.d

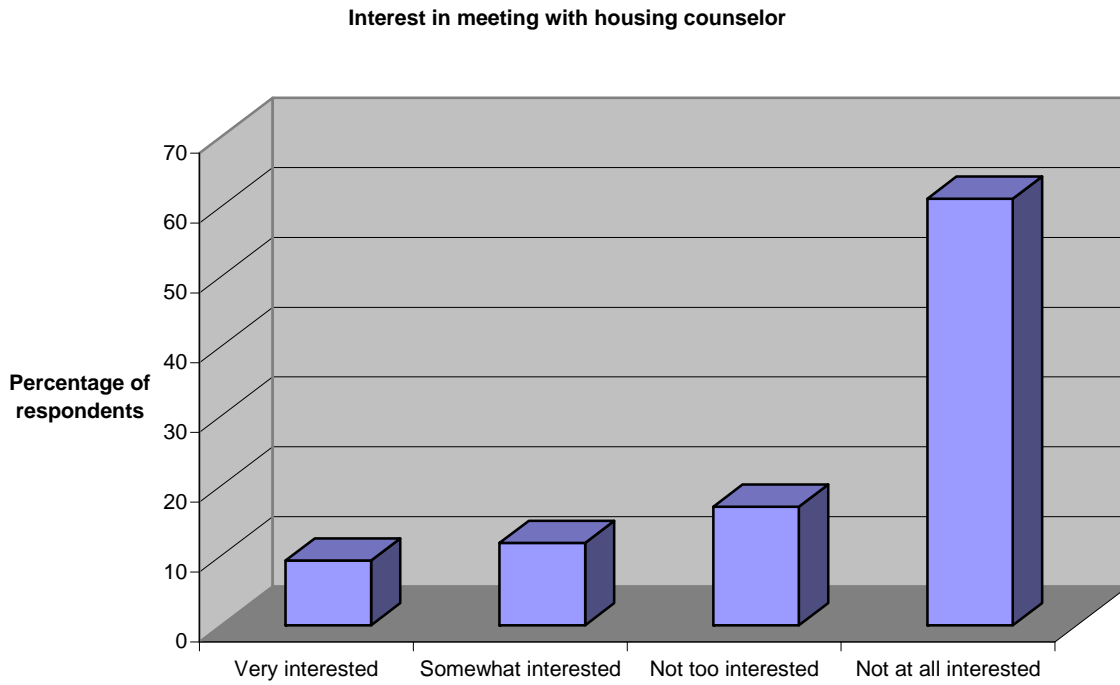


Figure 9.e

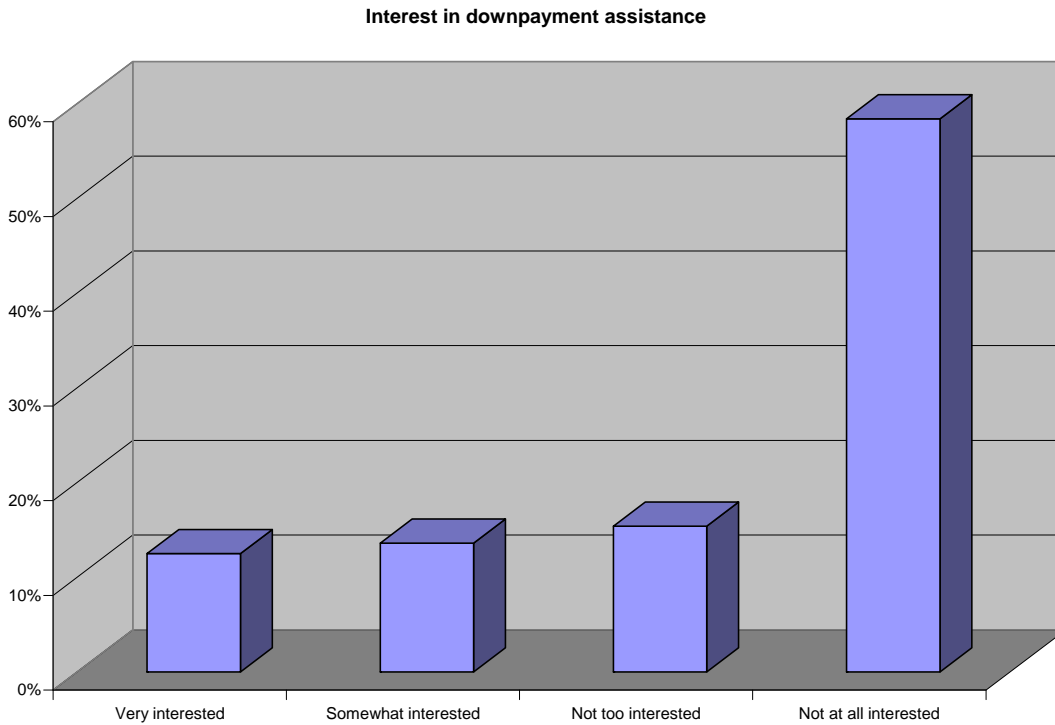
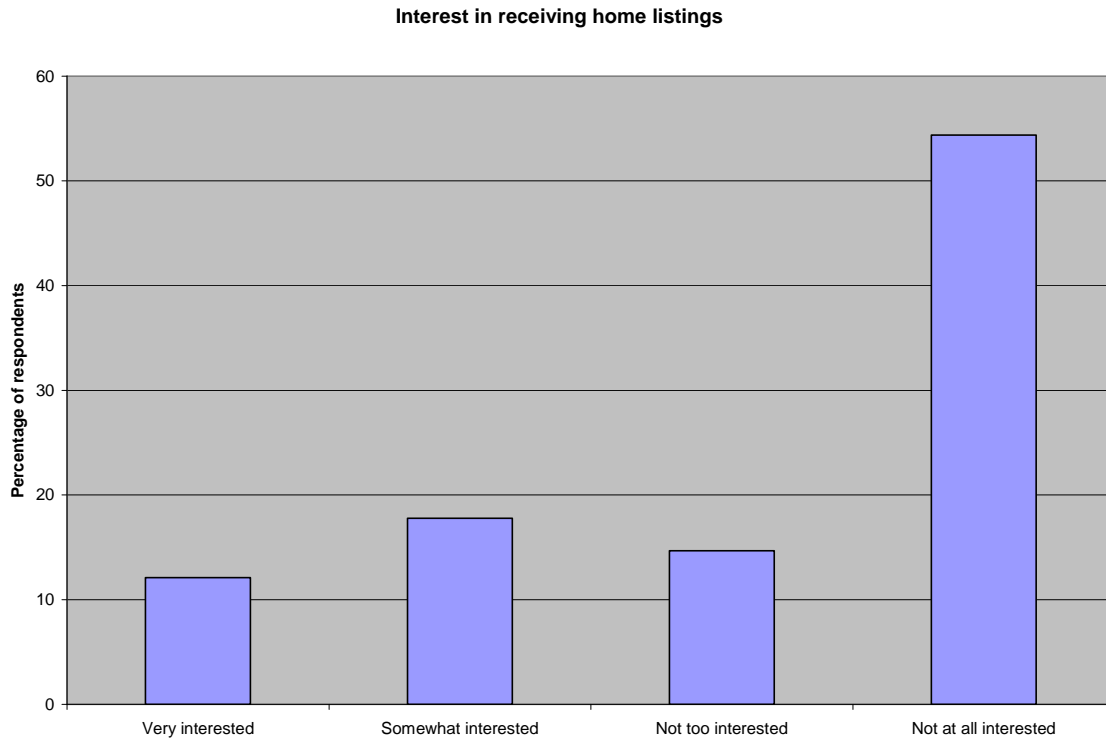


Figure 9.f



## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the results of this survey show that employees in the four sample groups are quite similar to one another given the remarkable commonality in their answers. While there are some differences in the way one sample group answered a given question compared to another, none of the differences were dramatic.

Employees across the four sample groups tend to be homeowners living in single family homes who spend an average of 20 minutes commuting by driving their own cars.

Some respondents reported an interest in living closer to work, while others showed no interest at all given factors like the importance of community at their current residence.

A significant number of respondents expressed an interest in homebuyer programs even though only some were looking to purchase a home or condo in the next two years.