

Mary E. Bivins Foundation Religious Scholarship Program

Process Evaluation Results

May 2019

A survey of individuals who applied between 2014 and 2018 was completed.

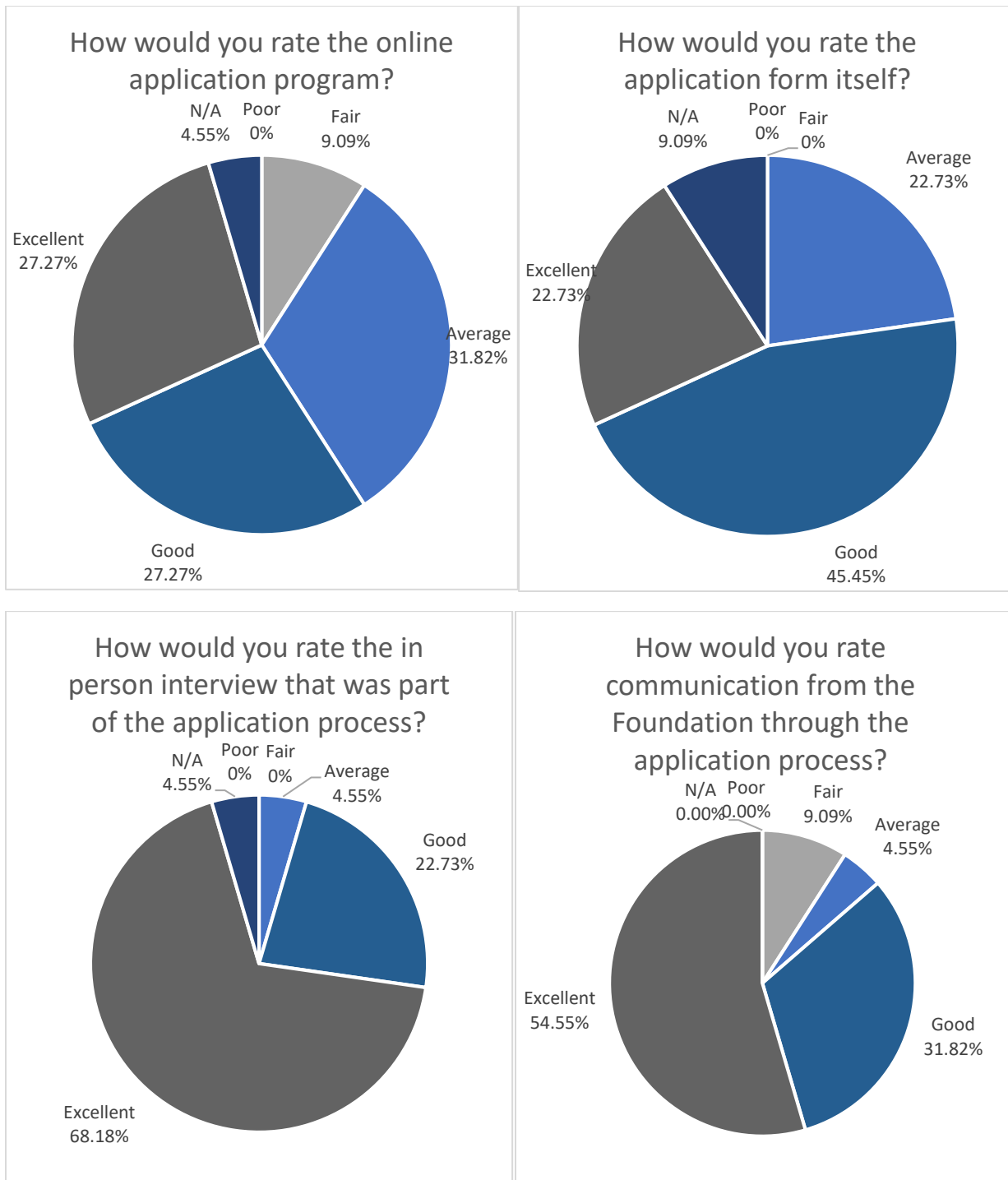
80 invitations to complete the survey were sent out, 62 individuals opened the email, and a total of 21 completed the survey for a response rate of 35.48%.

Possible reasons for low response rate (although response rate is still within acceptable rates for a survey) is time constraints surrounding the evaluation and the fact that it was sent out during Holy Week.

Process Evaluation Survey

1. How would you rate the online application program?
 - a. Please explain why you ranked the online application program the way you did.
2. How would you rate the application form itself?
 - a. Please explain why you ranked the application form the way you did.
3. How would you rate the in person interview that was part of the application process?
 - a. Please explain why you ranked the in person interview the way you did.
4. How would you rate communication from the Foundation through the application process?
 - a. Please explain why you ranked communication the way you did.
5. Do you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the Scholarship program process? The process includes the application software, application form, interview process, and communication up to the point where a decision regarding the scholarship application is provided (i.e. awarded or not awarded). Please share anything that might help us improve the program process.

The highest ranked part of the process was the interview with an average score of 4.67 out of 5 (between Good and Excellent). This indicates that the in person interview is a valuable part of the application process. The quality of communication throughout the application process was ranked at an average score of 4.32 out of 5 (between Good and Excellent). The application form itself was ranked Good with an average score of 4.00 out of 5. The lowest ranked part of the process was the online application program with an average score of 3.76 out of 5. While it is the lowest ranked, an average score of 3.76 indicates the online application program was ranked at just above Average. None of the categories rankings were considered Fair or Poor.



Keywords were identified for each qualitative question, themes were identified, and then the prevalence of those themes was determined in order to identify the most salient factors. The common themes regarding the **online application program** were that it is considered simple and straightforward (mentioned ten times); intuitive and easy to navigate (mentioned nine times); and antiquated and not intuitive (mentioned six times). It would be helpful to know what characteristics caused individuals to categorize the online program as intuitive or not intuitive.

The salient theme regarding the **application form itself** is that it contains the needed information (mentioned four times). The respondent indicated the same comments that were provided for the first question apply to this question as well (four) or did not remember (three).

The in-person (or Skype) **interview** was rated highly and all but one of the comments regarding the interview were positive. The opportunity to meet with the Scholarship Advisory Committee and Board members was mentioned in ten of the twenty-one responses. Other salient thoughts included appreciation for the personal connection (mentioned seven times) and that the interviews were encouraging (mentioned six times). Some respondents mentioned being nervous about the interview (three) but indicated the interview had good, purposeful, or thoughtful questions (four). One respondent mentioned it would have been helpful to have an idea of what to expect before the interview.

The most salient theme regarding **communication** was that it was quick and timely (mentioned ten times). Respondents stated they had no challenges regarding communication (four) and communication that occurred was kind and professional (three). One individual apparently did not have a good experience with communication from the Foundation (i.e. felt was always rushed, berated for providing information incorrectly, and threatened with the loss of the scholarship) and a couple mentioned that more unprompted communication and reminders would be helpful.

Five individuals who answered the first question, one that answered the second question, one that answered the third question, and four that answered the fourth question mentioned that they had to reenter information, information on the application form was repetitive, or that the reapplication process was unclear in some way. The responses to the last question that requested **general thoughts about the scholarship program** had multiple individuals discuss how the renewal process could be simplified and made clearer (mentioned five times). It would be helpful to see if respondents mentioned this topic on more than one question. If so, it may not be as significant of an issue as is represented. Regardless, evaluating the reapplication process for renewing Scholars could unearth potentially repetitive information which, once addressed, could lead to a better re-application process. One respondent stated “renewal interviews would probably be more helpful for the board and the student than completely re-doing the application every year” and many mentioned that information from the previous year had not changed.

One particular respondent stated “additional documentation required for the application ought to be made clear on the first page instead of the last.” The additional documentation could still be gathered on the last page of the application, but directions indicating the documentation that will be required can be added to the instruction page of the application. This would be an easy fix that might benefit other applicants moving forward.

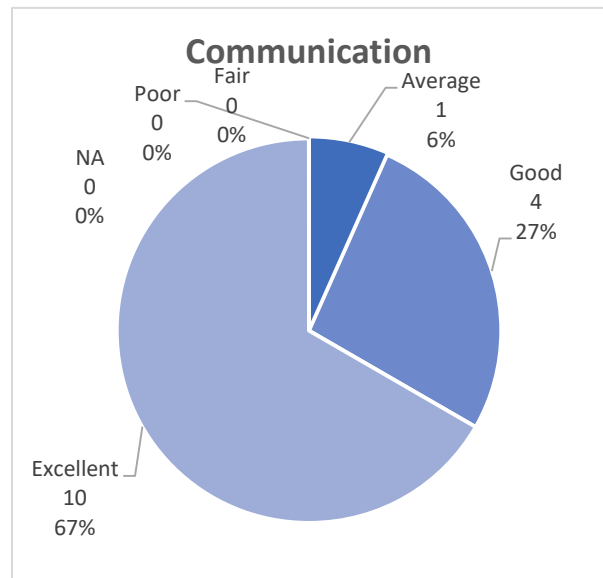
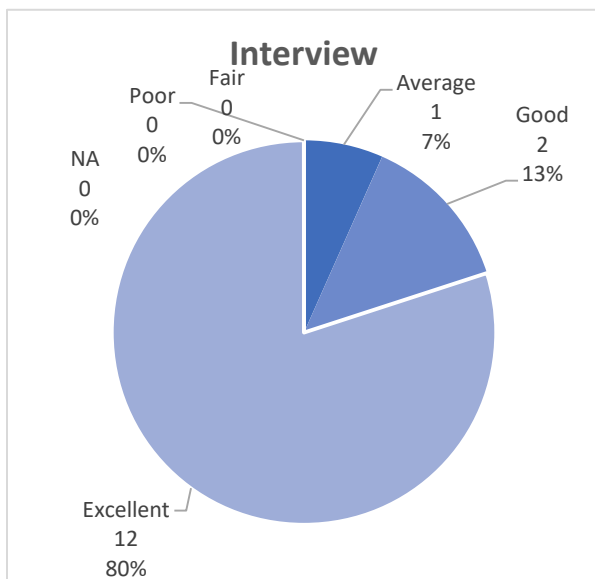
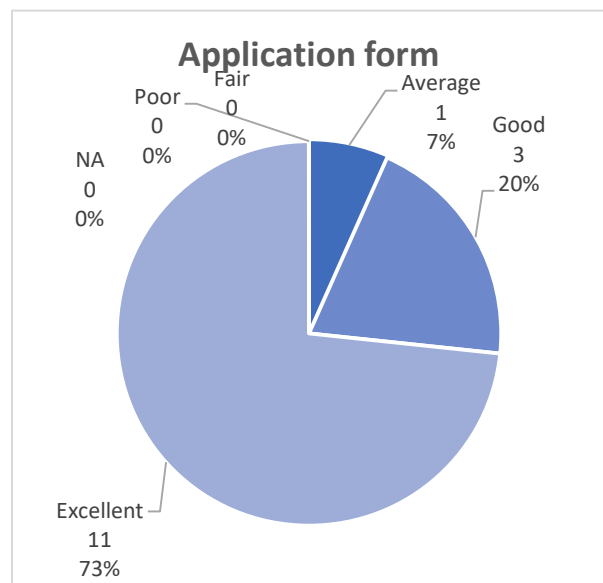
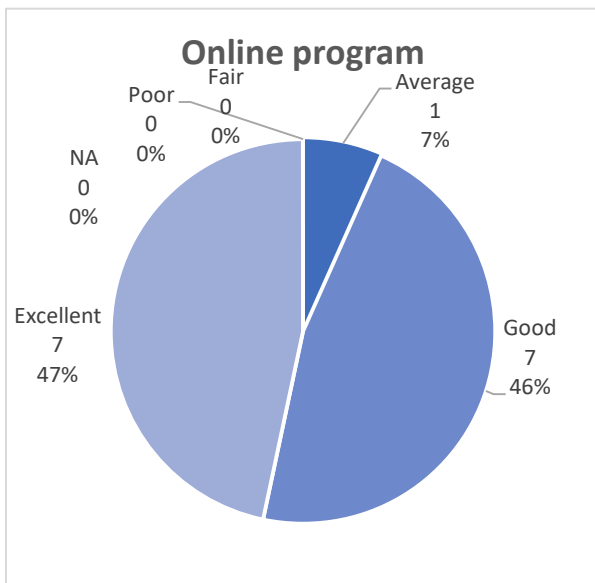
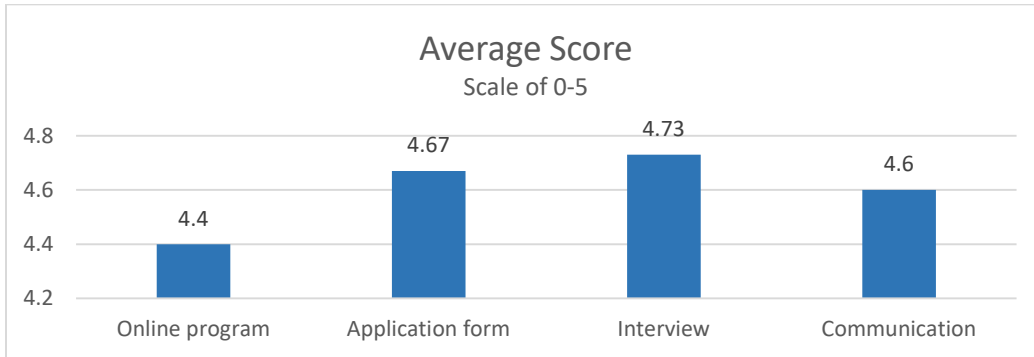
Overall the results from the process evaluation of the Mary E. Bivins Foundation Religious Scholarship Program were positive. No aspect of the process was ranked below average although there were a couple of negative comments that appear to be outliers. There are a couple parts of the process that could be improved upon. A yearly process evaluation would ensure that the program continues to be implemented as desired.

Process Evaluation Results

2019 applicants - June 2019

A survey of individuals who applied in 2019 was completed.

31 invitations to complete the survey were sent out, 28 individuals opened the email, and a total of 15 completed the survey for a response rate of 53.57%.



Why did you rank the online program the way you did? (14 answered, 1 skipped)

Eight individuals mentioned that the online program is easy while three mentioned it being difficult. Three mentioned that the program itself is a bit outdated or antiquated. Two appreciated the ability to save the application and return to finish it later but one specifically mentioned confusion with the save versus the submit button stating that “people save and think they have submitted [the application].” On the last qualitative question an individual mentioned that the software is not mobile friendly.

Why did you rank the application form the way you did? (14 answered, 1 skipped)

Seven individuals stated the application form itself was easy and/or clear. Five mentioned that it contained the needed information. One mentioned some things could be adjusted to make it better but did not state what those adjustments are and one answered ‘same’ indicating that their response to the question regarding the online program is also applicable here.

Why did you rank the interview the way you did? (15 answered)

The interview was encouraging and/or friendly (mentioned a total of eight times). A couple of individuals mentioned that the interview itself was intimidating but it was clear the Scholarship Advisory Committee and Board members are passionate about the scholarship program (mentioned four times). Two individuals specifically mentioned that the committee listened to them attentively and other words used to describe the process included enjoyable and sufficient. One person stated the interview was “fairly disorganized and a bit too driven by personality.”

Why did you rank communication the way you did? (15 answered)

Communication regarding the scholarship program is prompt (mentioned seven times) and professional (mentioned three times). Communication is sufficient and provides the needed information (mentioned seven times). One individual stated communication was little average because it was not clear who should receive what.

Additional thoughts

Ten answered, five skipped, and five of the ones that answered did not have additional thoughts. One person mentioned on question two that it would be helpful to modify the application for renewing applicants so they do not have to re-enter the same information again. Two additional individuals mentioned this factor in the last question. One more person shared the struggles of being required to get letters of recommendation from an online professor who does not know the student well and a letter from a different mentor every year. And lastly, one repeated the belief that the interview should be more structured in format and theology and less driven by the opinions of one or two people.

The results from the 2019 process evaluation of the Mary E. Bivins Foundation Religious Scholarship Program were positive. No aspect was ranked below ‘good’ although there were a couple of negative comments that appear to be outliers. There are a couple parts of the process that could be improved - specifically the renewal process. It is recommended to continue a yearly survey of applicants to ensure the process continues to go well.