

## Graduate Student Survey (GSS), Spring 2005

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## **Graduate Student Survey (Spring 2005)**

Items marked with \* are required.

The following survey is designed to help Miami University better understand the needs and experiences of the graduate students so that we can continue to offer the best graduate education possible. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Your responses in this survey will be completely confidential. No identifying names or numbers (e.g., student id numbers) will be collected with the data.

Please do not use the BACK button on your browser while you are completing the survey. Once you complete a page you will not be able to return to it. Please make sure that you have completed the entire page before hitting the CONTINUE button at the bottom of the page.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 1) In what year did you enter this graduate program at Miami University?
  - Before 1998
  - 1998
  - 1999
  - 2000
  - 2001
  - 2002
  - 2003
  - 2004
  - 2005
  
- 2) Are you currently attending Miami University:
  - Part-time
  - Full-time
  
- 3) How do you identify yourself? (Please mark all that apply)
  - African American/Black
  - Asian/Asian American
  - Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
  - Hispanic/Latino
  - Native American/American Indian
  - White/Caucasian
  - Other
  
- 4) Are you a U.S. citizen?
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 5) What is your sex?
  - Male
  - Female

- 6) What is your current marital/relationship status? (Please choose only one)
- Married
  - Single
  - In a long-term, committed relationship
  - Divorced/widowed
- 7) Do you have children under the age of 18 living with you?
- Yes
  - No
- 8) How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Which of the following best describes your current living situation? I live...
- On campus
  - In Oxford, in off-campus housing
  - 10 or fewer miles from Oxford
  - 11-20 miles from Oxford
  - 21-30 miles from Oxford
  - 31-40 miles from Oxford
  - 41 or more miles from Oxford
- 10) What is the highest degree that you intend to pursue at Miami? \*
- Master's
  - Doctoral
  - Specialist
  - Other
- 11) In what PROGRAM are you pursuing your graduate degree? \* \_\_\_\_\_

12) In what DEPARTMENT is your graduate program located? \*

- Accountancy
- Architecture and Interior Design
- Art
- Botany
- Chemistry and Biochemistry
- Communication
- Comparative Religion
- Computer Science and Systems Analysis
- Economics
- Educational Leadership
- Educational Psychology
- English
- Environmental Sciences
- Family Studies and Social Work
- Finance
- French and Italian
- Geography
- Geology
- History
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- Management
- Marketing
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Microbiology
- Music
- Paper Science and Engineering
- Philosophy
- Physical Education, Health, and Sports Studies
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology and Gerontology
- Spanish and Portuguese
- Speech Pathology and Audiology
- Teacher Education
- Theater
- Women's Studies
- Zoology
- Other

13) When you first entered graduate school at Miami, did you already have a graduate degree from another institution?

- No
- Yes, a master's degree in the same field that I am now studying
- Yes, a master's degree in a different field than I am now studying
- Yes, a doctoral degree in a different field than the one I am now studying
- Other

### **PROGRAM SUPPORT AND SATISFACTION**

14) Which of the following best describes your PRIMARY ADVISOR? (Please identify the faculty member that you feel best serves you as an advisor and not necessarily your "on paper" advisor.)

- Your academic advisor
- Your thesis/dissertation chair
- A faculty member in your graduate program
- A faculty member in a graduate program other than your own
- Other

15) Each of the following statements refers to your experience with the PRIMARY ADVISOR you identified above. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

- a) My advisor is sensitive to my needs and concerns.
- b) My advisor promotes my advancement and professional development.
- c) My advisor gives me constructive feedback in a timely manner.

16) Each of the following statements refers to your overall experience with the FACULTY IN YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

- a) Faculty here are strongly interested in students' academic problems.
- b) Faculty members are accessible and helpful.
- c) Faculty in my program are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.

17) Each of the following statements refers to your experiences with your GRADUATE PROGRAM. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

- a) There is a supportive student community in my program.
- b) Program practices create an unnecessarily high level of stress in students.
- c) There is a person or office I would turn to if I had concerns about the university or if I perceived abuse or misconduct in my program, by my advisor, or by a committee member.

18) Overall, how satisfied are you with each of the following?

- Very dissatisfied
  - Somewhat dissatisfied
  - Neutral
  - Somewhat satisfied
  - Very satisfied
- 
- a) Your primary advisor
  - b) The faculty in your graduate program
  - c) Your graduate program
  - d) Your department
  - e) Miami University

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

19) Which of the following best describes your expectations for employment immediately after you complete your degree at Miami?

- Non-tenure track faculty position
- Tenure track faculty position
- Post-doctoral researcher, fellow, or associate
- Researcher, academic setting
- Researcher, non-academic setting (e.g., national lab/industry/medical setting)
- Professional services to individuals
- Student Affairs Professional
- Administrator or manager
- Administrator or teacher at the K-12 level
- I will be a full-time student at a different college/university
- I do not plan to be employed after graduation
- Other

20) Do you expect the position above to be directly related to your graduate training at Miami?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

21) How would you categorize the employer you expect/hope to work for immediately after you complete your graduate degree?

- U.S. government, or your home country's government if not the U.S.
- Industry or business
- Nonprofit organization or foundation
- Higher education
- Elementary, secondary, or special focus school
- Self-employed, private practice, or consultant
- Hospital or clinic
- Other
- Not applicable

22) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: I have received adequate instruction or experience in professional ethics.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

23) To what extent are you satisfied with the overall career preparation and guidance that you have received at Miami?

- Not applicable
- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

### **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

24) Have you been involved in research since entering graduate school at Miami?<sup>1</sup> \*

- Yes
- No

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<sup>1</sup> "No" respondents are skipped to question 26.

25) To what extent are you satisfied with...

- Not applicable
- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

a) Research facilities available in your graduate program

b) Opportunities to conduct research

c) Overall, how well your program is preparing you for scholarly research.

26) Please indicate the number of times that you have been involved with each of the following activities since beginning graduate school at Miami University.

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more times

a) Delivered a talk or presented a poster at a national or regional scholarly meeting/conference

b) Published an article or book chapter as either a sole author or in collaboration with others

c) Presented your research in a departmental/program seminar, colloquia, or other similar forum

27) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

- Not applicable
- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

a) I developed the skills to compose scholarly publications (e.g., journal articles, book chapters) and other forms of academic writing.

b) I developed the skills to present papers effectively.



## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

28) Since entering your graduate program at Miami, have you assisted with a faculty member's course or been the primary instructor for an undergraduate course?<sup>2</sup> \*

- Yes
- No

29) How many semesters have you assisted in a faculty member's course? \_\_\_\_\_

30) How many semesters have you been the primary course instructor yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

31) Does your department or program provide training in teaching skills?

- Yes
- No

32) When does your department or program provide training in teaching skills? (Please mark all that apply)

- Prior to your having full responsibility for a course
- During the first semester that you have full responsibility for a course
- After the first semester that you have full course responsibility (e.g., continuing training)

33) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

- Not applicable
- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

a) Teaching assistants in my program are appropriately prepared and trained before entering the classroom.

b) There are adequate opportunities in my program to get teaching experience.

34) To what extent are you satisfied with how well, overall, your program is preparing you for college teaching?

- Not applicable
- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

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<sup>2</sup> "No" respondents are skipped to question 35.

## **PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS**

35) Is providing students with professional internships or placements (on-campus OR off-campus) one of the objectives of your graduate program?<sup>3</sup> \*

- Yes
- No

36) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

- Not applicable
- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

a) Graduate students in my program are appropriately prepared and trained before entering the profession.

b) There are adequate opportunities to acquire professional experience through supervised practice.

c) I developed the administrative and human relations skills necessary for success in my profession.

37) To what extent are you satisfied with...

- Not applicable
- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

a) Supervised practicum opportunities in your graduate program.

b) Overall, how well the program is preparing you for your professional work.

## **COURSEWORK**

38) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: My program's curriculum is broad enough to meet my needs and to prepare me for my career of choice.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

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<sup>3</sup> "No" respondents are skipped to question 38.

39) To what extent are you satisfied with...

- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

a) The availability of area courses you need to complete your program

b) The academic rigor of the curriculum in your program

c) The overall quality of teaching in your graduate program

d) The overall curriculum in your program

### **STUDENT LIFE**

40) Below are some statements about Miami University. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

a) I feel a sense of belonging to the Miami University community.

b) My program actively recruits graduate students from underrepresented groups.

c) Diversity is good for Miami and should be actively promoted by students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

41) How many times since coming to Miami have you been harassed or discriminated against because of your...

- Not applicable
- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently

a) Race/ethnicity

b) Gender

c) Sexual orientation

d) Physical disability

e) Religious/spiritual views

42) Have you worked off-campus (for pay) during your graduate career at Miami?  
(Please do NOT include internships, assistantships, supervised practicums, or other positions that are directly connected with your graduate program.)

- Yes
- No

43) Was your off-campus work related to your graduate studies?

- Not applicable
- Yes
- No

44) To what extent are you satisfied with...

- No experience/cannot rate
- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

a) The opportunities to interact with students with different ideas and perspectives at Miami University

b) The overall social life on campus

c) The Miami Metro bus service

d) The availability of housing on campus

e) The availability of housing in Oxford

f) The overall cost of housing

g) The availability of parking for students

h) The availability of child care

i) The cost of child care

j) Safety and security on this campus

### **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND SUPPORT**

45) To what extent do you think creating a positive graduate student experience is a priority for Miami University?

- Not a priority
- Moderate priority
- Strong priority
- Highest priority

46) To what extent do you think creating a positive undergraduate experience is a priority for Miami University?

- Not a priority
- Moderate priority
- Strong priority
- Highest priority

47) Please indicate the PRIMARY source(s) of support that you received while in a graduate program at Miami. (You may mark up to two choices.)

- University funded teaching/research/graduate assistantships
- University funded fellowships (for example, a dissertation fellowship)
- Fellowship/assistantship funding by external (non-Miami) sources (for example, NSF or NIH grants)
- Placement or internship with an external (non-Miami) business or institution
- Full or partial tuition scholarships or waivers
- Personal funds or student loans
- Other

48) During your graduate career at Miami, how many semesters have you received an assistantship or fellowship to work in YOUR OWN DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM (including the current semester)? \_\_\_\_\_

49) During your graduate career at Miami, how many semesters have you received an assistantship or fellowship to work in A DEPARTMENT OR OFFICE THAT IS OUTSIDE OF YOUR PROGRAM (including the current semester)? Please include outside assistantships/fellowships that were arranged by your program. \_\_\_\_\_

50) Please identify any offices or departments (other than your own department) that you have worked in for your assistantship/fellowship. \_\_\_\_\_

51) Estimate the total educational debt you'll have to repay after you've completed your graduate degree at Miami. (Include both undergraduate and graduate debt.)

- \$0-\$9,999
- \$10,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000-\$39,999
- \$40,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$59,999
- \$60,000-\$69,999
- \$70,000 or greater

52) To what extent are you satisfied with each of the following resources or services at Miami University?

- No experience/cannot rate
  - Very dissatisfied
  - Somewhat dissatisfied
  - Neutral
  - Somewhat satisfied
  - Very satisfied
- 
- a) University funding for graduate student research (including research grants, travel funds, etc.)
  - b) Overall, the financial support you receive from Miami University
  - c) Library services
  - d) Graduate student office space
  - e) Access to office equipment and supplies
  - f) On-campus computer facilities
  - g) Student health insurance
  - h) Student counseling center
  - i) Rec Center and fitness opportunities
  - j) The Graduate School
  - k) OARS (Office for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship)

53) I believe that the Graduate Student Association (GSA) adequately represents the interests of graduate students.

- No experience with GSA/cannot rate
- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

54) Of the following concerns, identify the TWO that are the most important to you.

- Accessible on-campus parking
- Graduate student computer lab(s)
- Assistantship workloads
- On-campus graduate student housing
- Daycare options for graduate students
- Stipends for graduate students
- Office space for graduate students
- Adequate and affordable health insurance
- The number of years of funding provided for graduate students by Miami

### **EXPERIENCES DURING ENROLLMENT AND FIRST YEAR**

55) How important were each of the following factors in your decision to enroll in your program at Miami?

- Not at all important
  - Somewhat important
  - Very important
- a) Graduate program's reputation
- b) University's reputation
- c) Areas of specialization in the program match my interests
- d) Financial support package was the best of all offers
- e) Recommendation of a friend, acquaintance, colleague, or undergraduate administrator or faculty member
- f) Encouragement of program faculty during the decision process
- g) Other

56) How helpful were each of the following as you began your program?

- Was not offered/Cannot rate
  - Not at all helpful
  - Somewhat helpful
  - Very helpful
- a) The orientation session offered by your department or program
- b) The Graduate School's orientation for incoming students
- c) Program faculty and staff
- d) Other graduate students in your program

57) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: The transition to my life as a graduate student has been difficult.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

58) I will probably spend a total of \_\_\_\_\_ years at this university for my degree.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 or more years

59) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

a) My program requirements are unclear to me.

b) I have done as well academically at this university as I thought I would.

60) The amount of time needed for me to graduate is...<sup>4</sup> \*

- Less than I originally expected
- About the same as I originally expected
- More than I originally expected
- Unsure

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<sup>4</sup> All respondents except for those responding "More than I originally expected" are skipped to question 62.



61) How much, if any, have each of the following factors prevented you from progressing as rapidly as you would like?

- Not applicable
- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- A great deal

- a) Family obligations
- b) Difficulty in completing comprehensive/qualifying exams
- c) Difficulty in your thesis or dissertation research
- d) A lack of access to faculty
- e) The demands of your TA or GA position
- f) Financial problems
- g) Problems of motivation
- h) An unreasonable number of degree requirements
- i) A lack of course availability
- j) Other

62) Have you ever considered leaving your program prior to degree completion or with a lesser degree than originally anticipated (e.g., leaving a Ph.D program with a Master's degree)?

- Yes
- No

63) If you answered yes to the previous question, what was your primary reason for considering leaving your graduate program? (Please choose only one.)

- Not applicable/haven't considered leaving
- Family obligations
- Difficulty working with your advisor and/or other faculty
- Difficulty in completing comprehensive/qualifying exams
- Difficulty in your thesis or dissertation research
- Difficulty of the coursework
- Other

- 64) I am currently working on (or have most recently worked on) my:<sup>5</sup> \*
- Thesis
  - Dissertation
  - Not applicable/not required for my program
  - Other

**Thesis/Dissertation**

- 65) In your graduate program at Miami, have you completed a Master's thesis? \*
- Yes
  - No
  - Not required for my graduate program/Not Applicable
  - Completed Master's degree in different program or university
  - Other

- 66) In your graduate program at Miami, have you successfully proposed a dissertation project? \*
- Yes
  - No
  - Not required for my graduate program/Not applicable
  - Other

The following questions refer to your thesis or dissertation project. When responding to these questions, PLEASE ANSWER BASED ON THE PROJECT THAT YOU ARE CURRENTLY WORKING OR HAVE WORKED ON MOST RECENTLY.

- 67) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
- Disagree strongly
  - Disagree somewhat
  - Neutral
  - Agree somewhat
  - Agree strongly

a) Coursework, seminars, labs, and reading courses adequately prepared me for my dissertation/thesis.

b) My own goals and research interests are incorporated into my thesis/dissertation

- 68) To what extent are you satisfied with the support you received from program faculty on your thesis/dissertation?
- Very dissatisfied
  - Somewhat dissatisfied
  - Neutral
  - Somewhat satisfied
  - Very satisfied

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<sup>5</sup> Participants responding “Not applicable/not required for my program” or “Other” are skipped to question 69.

### Comprehensive/Qualifying Exams

69) In your graduate program at Miami, have you completed comprehensive/qualifying exams?<sup>6</sup> \*

- Not required for my graduate program/Not applicable
- Yes
- No
- Other

70) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

- Disagree strongly
- Disagree somewhat
- Neutral
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly

- a) Coursework, seminars, labs, and reading courses adequately prepared me for qualifying/comprehensive examinations.
- b) The qualifying/comprehensive exam was a good test of my knowledge and ability.

71) To what extent are you satisfied with your program faculty's advice on preparing for your comprehensive/qualifying exams?

- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

### OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

72) What do you perceive as the greatest strength(s) of your graduate program?

73) What do you perceive as the greatest weakness(es) of your graduate program?

74) What suggestions or additional comments would you like to share with us?

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If you are interested in registering for the raffle, please provide your e-mail address in the box provided. Because this survey is anonymous, the only way that we can contact you is through this e-mail address. Therefore, PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS IS ACCURATE.

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<sup>6</sup> All participants except for those responding "Yes" are skipped to question 72.