

## University of Massachusetts-Amherst Graduating Senior Survey 2009-2011

Every year the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA) and the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) administer a one page survey asking seniors about their satisfaction with their educational experiences and their plans for after graduation.

### SURVEY DESIGN

The survey contains four parts: (1) satisfaction with various aspects of student major, (2) satisfaction with overall experience at UMass-Amherst, (3) educational experiences and (4) post graduation employment and educational plans. The educational experiences items ask students whether or not they participated in a practicum, internship, or field experience, community service or volunteer work, a faculty research project outside of course requirements, study abroad, or a culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis project, etc.)

In addition to the items above, the survey contains the following open-ended question, "Do you have any feedback for your major department/program about how your experience in your major could have been improved?"

### METHODS

Population: The population is all students classified as seniors in the Spring of each year we administer the survey. With the support and cooperation of the Textbook Annex, we administer the survey each May as students arrive to pick up their graduation caps and gowns. In mid-July, we send an email and, if necessary, additional follow-up emails to seniors who did not fill out the paper survey and ask them to fill out an online version. The final population included seniors who received a degree in February, May, or September of the calendar year in which the survey was administered.

2009-2011 Participation Rate: To increase the number of responses, particularly at the departmental level, we have combined data from the most recent three years to present results for the satisfaction items. Of the 4,485 seniors who graduated in calendar year 2009, 3,086 completed a survey in 2009 (68.8%). In 2010, 3,330 of 4,710 graduating seniors completed a survey (70.7%). In 2011, 3,390 of 4,903 graduating seniors completed a survey (69.1%). The combined participation rate for all years was 74.3% (this includes 322 seniors who completed the survey in 2009, but did not graduate until calendar year 2010 or 2011 and 345 seniors who completed the survey in 2010 who did not graduate until 2011).

2009-2011 Analyses and Reporting: We asked seniors to list their primary major and to provide their student ID in order to match survey data with student records. Survey data were merged with student degree data to identify seniors who graduated during the calendar year in which the survey was administered and to compare students' reported major with the major contained on their degree record. Graduating seniors who listed more than one primary major or whose reported major did not match their degree file major were dropped from the major satisfaction analyses (n=128).

In addition to a campus summary, we report survey results by school/college and by department. Results for post-graduation plans are presented for the most recent year (2011) only. Campus-wide, college, and departmental results are posted at the following web site: [http://www.umass.edu/oapa/reports/senior\\_survey](http://www.umass.edu/oapa/reports/senior_survey)

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