

Troy University 2009-10 Graduate Student Survey Report

Executive Summary

The purpose of this survey is to identify graduate student satisfaction with their experiences at Troy University, recognize student development as a result of their Troy University education, and identify areas that need to be improved. Data collected in this survey are used to help the University strengthen its graduate degree programs, better serve the needs of its students, and become more effective and efficient in accomplishing its mission and goals.

As an effort of institutional effectiveness, the Troy University Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (IRPE) conducted the *Troy University Graduate Student Survey* on all campuses of the University from February 10, 2010 to March 10, 2010. During this month three invitation to participate emails were sent.

The questionnaire for the survey contained 43 questions and was adapted from the Senior Survey. The first 26 questions ask for information regarding students' demographics, academics, employment, and financial aid. Questions 27 – 42 of the survey, with a high reliability, focus on measuring students' perceptions about and satisfaction with their Troy experiences. The final question was an open-ended question allowing for additional comments.

For data analysis, descriptive methods were used for the overall University as well as for each individual campus, site, college, and degree. Questions 27 to 42 were tabulated and items were presented in a cross tabulation by campus so that comparison, if necessary, could be made between campuses or between campus and the overall University. In the end, frequency tables for all survey questions were provided as appendices for the overall responses as well as for each of the campuses and colleges.

Major Findings

The *Troy University Graduate Student Survey 2009 – 10* was administered from February 10, 2010 to March 10, 2010. During this time, students who were classified as graduate students in Datatel were emailed the link to the survey. By the time data collection was closed on March 10, 2010, 1601 responses were received. 6060 students were identified as graduate students and were sent the invitation to participate email which resulted in a 26% response rate. The initial invitation to participate email was sent on 2/10/10. Reminder emails were sent to non-respondents on 2/16/10 and 2/24/10. The characteristics of the survey respondents were determined to be similar to those of the total graduate students of the year although some variation existed. Therefore, the responses to the survey could be considered representative of the ideas and opinions of the graduate students who were attending in during the 2009-2010 Academic Year.

This is the first year that the Graduate Student Survey has been administered. In some prior years some graduate students had submitted data on the Senior Survey. In academic year 09/10 graduate students were not invited to participate in the Senior Survey. For this reason the Senior Survey was adapted for use as a Graduate Student Survey.

Items in eight major categories were measured on a 5-point scale with 1 as “Poor” and 5 as “Excellent.” The mean ratings for each of these categories is shown below with Leadership Development rating the highest and Student Services the lowest.

	AY 09-10
<i>Intellectual Development</i>	4.01
<i>Leadership Development</i>	4.19
<i>Academic Support Services</i>	3.79
<i>Instruction</i>	3.93
<i>Administration</i>	3.93
<i>Student Services</i>	3.65
<i>Perceptions</i>	3.91
<i>Overall Ratings</i>	3.93

Demographic information

Of the 1601, respondents, 69% were female, 48% were White compared to 41% Black and 90% were aged 25 or older. While the majority (95%) were US citizens, the 5% international student participants represented 23 countries in various parts of the world. The largest percentage of respondents were from the eCampus, 30%. About 13% of the respondents were graduating from Troy Campus, 29% were Global Campus students, and the remainder of the students were from Dothan (5%), Montgomery (11%) and Phenix City (9%). Additionally, Global Campus students responded from 25 different sites.

Academic information

Academically, 99% of the respondents were expecting to receive a Master’s degree and 1% were expecting to receive an Education Specialist degree. About 29% of the respondents were planning to graduate from the College of Arts and Sciences, 33% from Business, approximately 26% from Education, 10% from the College of Health and Human Services.

According to the responses, approximately 89% of the students did not transfer graduate credit hours from other institutions. Of those who did transfer graduate credit hours 6% transferred from 3 to 6 credit hours and 4% transferred 7 – 12 credit hours. The majority of participating graduate students (55%) were conditionally admitted graduate students and 39% were unconditionally admitted. 2% were graduate transfer students and 1% were graduate transient or dually admitted.

While attending Troy University, 55% of the students had taken online courses. About 65% reported that their cumulative GPA's were between 3.5 and 4.0, and 30% had GPA's between 3.0 and 3.49. Of the 1601 respondents, about 60% indicated that they had been in pursuit of the graduate degree for one year or less and 27% for two years. Three students reported being in pursuit of the graduate degree for ten or more years.

Employment and plan after graduation

Approximately 85% of the respondents reported that they worked while attending Troy University with about 81% working full-time (40 hours or over). Upon graduation, about 52% were planning to work in areas related to their majors at Troy University, 22% would continue to work in the jobs they had already, and approximately 15% were going to continue their education. The survey also found that of those planning to continue their education about 59% would pursue a doctoral degree after they graduated, 26% would study for another masters degree, around 7% would seek an educational specialist degree, and another 6% would pursue a professional degree as their ultimate goal in education.

Financial aid information

While the financial aid options varied, over half of the respondents (59%) had received student loans, 3% obtained grants, 5% had scholarships or graduate assistantships, and about 12% received tuition assistance. Additionally, about 3% received a third party pay or other kind of financial aid, mostly from military or VA benefits.

Student satisfaction

- Student self-rated development (Report 1 – Q28)

Eighteen items related to knowledge, skills, and abilities were provided for the students to rate their development as a result of Troy University education. From the 18 items, two factors were identified - ***Intellectual Development*** and ***Leadership Development***. an average rating for ***Intellectual Development*** was 4.01 for 09-10 and a mean rating for ***Leadership Development*** as 4.19 for 09-10 all in a 5-point scale with 1 as “Poor” and 5 as “Excellent.”

As indicated in Table 1, the majority of the areas measured for student ***Intellectual Development*** were rated high above 4.00 (on a scale of 1 to 5) and the majority of the students rated their development in these areas as either “Excellent” or “Good.”