

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF GRADUATING SENIOR SURVEY 2009-2010

This report summarizes the major findings from the Florida International University *Graduating Senior Survey*, a Continuous Quality Improvement study conducted by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. This survey was adapted from a prototype survey developed by the State University System (SUS) Accountability Committee on Survey Activity (Legg, Final Report, 1992). This survey was designed to measure graduating students' satisfaction with and attitudes about Florida International University. The survey design assured each individual respondent of his or her anonymity in an attempt to facilitate candor.

The Graduating Senior Survey was distributed to 6,614 students who were intended members of the graduating classes of Summer 2009-Spring 2010. Four hundred-eleven seniors returned the survey for a response rate of six percent. The comprehensive survey asked questions about the graduating seniors' satisfaction with Florida International University in various domains such as the quality and availability of faculty in his or her major, the quality and availability of courses, the quality and availability of academic advising, and the quality of the libraries. The survey also questioned graduating seniors about the frequency of use and quality of services such as Counseling and Psychological Services, the Testing Center, Recreational Services, On-campus student employment, and Health Services.

Twelve principal indicators have been singled out as the most reliable measures of the graduating seniors' satisfaction with FIU. They have been summarized below.

- *Challenged*: 92% of respondent seniors indicated that they had been challenged to do the best that they could at FIU (53% most of the time, 39% some of the time).
- *Recommend FIU*: 87% of respondent seniors reported that they would recommend FIU to a friend or relative considering college (45% without reservations, 42% with reservations).
- *Satisfaction with overall experience at FIU*: 86% of respondent seniors indicated that they were satisfied with their overall experience (28% very satisfied, 58% satisfied).
- *Academic experience*: 84% of respondent seniors indicated that they had a positive academic experience (34% excellent, 50% good ratings).
- *Faculty were good teachers*: 81% of respondents agreed that their professor's were good teachers (44% strongly agree, 37% agree).
- *Professors, in my major, were available outside class*: 79% of respondent seniors agreed that their professors were available outside class (38% strongly agreed, 41% agreed).
- *Quality of other undergraduates*: 73% of respondent seniors gave the quality of their fellow students' favorable ratings (15% excellent, 58% good).

- *Courses, in my major, prepared me for graduate or professional school:* 69% of respondent seniors agreed that their courses prepared them for further study (24% strongly agreed, 45% agreed).
- *Satisfaction with department of major:* 66% of respondent seniors agreed that they were satisfied with their department of their major (24% strongly agreed, 42% agreed)
- *Courses, in my major, prepared me for employment:* 62% of respondent seniors agreed that their courses prepared them for employment (20% strongly agreed, 42% agreed).
- *Responsiveness of FIU support services to student needs:* 53% of respondent seniors rated the responsiveness of FIU support services favorably (14% gave excellent ratings, 39% good).
- *Responsiveness of FIU administration to student academic problems:* 47% of respondent seniors rated the administration as responsive to student problems (13% excellent, 34% good).

Items with the Highest Correlations:

- To the extent that graduating respondents believed that the FIU administration was responsive to student academic problems, they also believed that FIU support services were responsive to student needs ($r = .82, p < .001$).
- To the extent that graduating respondents believed the quality of courses they took prepared them for graduate school, they also believed the quality of courses they took prepared them for employment ($r = .78, p < .001$).
- To the extent that graduating respondents believed they would recommend FIU to friends and relatives, they also believed they were overall satisfied with FIU ($r = .71, p < .001$).
- To the extent that graduating respondents believed they were overall satisfied with FIU, they were also satisfied with their academic experience ($r = .71, p < .001$).

Strongest Predictors of Academic Experience:

- Ratings of recommending FIU to a friend or family member
- Ratings of overall satisfaction with FIU
- Ratings of satisfaction feeling prepared for graduate school

The administration of the survey online may contribute to the problem of low response rates because online surveys generally have lower response rates than paper versions of surveys. However, when the survey was placed online, it was divided into three surveys instead of one, thereby giving each individual student fewer survey items to respond to. Currently, the survey administrator is utilizing the students' school email address to notify them that the survey is available. Future administrations of the survey will have it as part of the graduation application process. This should increase response rates considerably.