

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF GRADUATING SENIOR SURVEY SUMMER 2001 – SPRING 2002

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 Effectiveness. 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 5,810 students who were intended members of the graduating classes of Summer 2001, Fall 2001 and Spring 2002. Nine hundred eighty-eight seniors returned the survey for a response rate of seventeen 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.

- *Satisfaction with overall experience at FIU:* 92% of respondent seniors indicated that they were satisfied with their overall experience (29% very satisfied, 63% satisfied).
- *Academic experience:* 86% of respondent seniors indicated that they had a positive academic experience (29% excellent, 57% good ratings).
- *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:* 93% of respondent seniors reported that they would recommend FIU to a friend or relative considering college (53% without reservations, 40% with reservations).
- *Satisfaction with department of major:* 70% of respondent seniors agreed that they were satisfied with the department of their major (21% strongly agreed, 49% agreed).

- *Professors, in my major, were good teachers:* 85% of respondent seniors agreed that their professors were good teachers (32% strongly agreed, 53% agreed).
- *Professors, in my major, were available outside class:* 82% of respondent seniors agreed that their professors were available outside class (30% strongly agreed, 52% agreed).
- *Quality of other undergraduates:* 76% of respondent seniors gave the quality of their fellow students' favorable ratings (13% excellent, 63% good).
- *Responsiveness of FIU administration to student academic problems:* 51% of respondent seniors rated the administration as responsive to student problems (10% excellent, 41% good).
- *Responsiveness of FIU support services to student needs:* 52% of respondent seniors rated the responsiveness of FIU support services favorably (11% gave excellent ratings, 41% good).
- *Courses, in my major, prepared me for employment:* 65% of respondent seniors agreed that their courses prepared them for employment (24% strongly agreed, 41% agreed).
- *Courses, in my major, prepared me for graduate or professional school:* 63% of respondent seniors agreed that their courses prepared them for further study (20% strongly agreed, 43% agreed).

#### Items with the Highest Correlations:

- To the extent that graduating senior respondents believed that the advice they received was useful for their educational goals, they also believed that the advice was very useful for their career goals ( $r = .89, p < .001$ ).
- To the extent that graduating senior respondents believed that their advisors were helpful, they also believed that the advice they received was useful for their educational goals ( $r = .80, p < .001$ ).
- To the extent that graduating senior respondents believed that they were given the opportunity at FIU to develop appropriate computer skills, they also believed that in their major, their training in computer skills had prepared them for today's technology ( $r = .78, p < .001$ ).

#### Strongest Predictors of Academic Experience:

- Ratings of overall experience at FIU
- Ratings of how much FIU contributed to the pursuit of life long learning
- Ratings of how well the major department met its goal and objectives

Although response rates to the survey continue to be a problem, the overall number of student responses has improved dramatically from a total of 586 respondents for 2000-2001 to the current total of 987. The administration of the survey online may contribute to this problem 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 and the college/school deans are utilizing the email address assigned to each student at FIU to notify the student that the survey is available. A greater effort needs to be made by the Administration, the Deans, and faculty members to get the students to activate and use this email account (or at least forward mail in this account to another preferred account). Finding ways to streamline the surveys may also increase the response rate. Online surveys are very cost-effective and will continue to be utilized for the foreseeable future.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the data contained in this document is accurate. For further information about this and other Continuous Quality Improvement Survey Reports, visit our website at <http://www.fiu.edu/~opie/effectiveness.htm>, or contact Yasmin LaRocca at [larocca@fiu.edu](mailto:larocca@fiu.edu) or the Vice Provost for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness at 305-348-2731, (FAX) 305-348-1908. You may also visit the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness at University Park, PC 543.