

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE *GRADUATING MASTERS AND DOCTORAL STUDENT SURVEY* SUMMER 2006 - SPRING 2007

This report summarizes the main findings from the Summer 2006 - Spring 2007 Florida International University *Graduating Masters and Doctoral Student 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 SUS Accountability Committee on Survey Activity (Legg, Final Report, 1992). The survey was designed to measure graduates' satisfaction with and attitudes about Florida International University. The survey design assured respondents of their anonymity in an attempt to facilitate candor.

The *Graduating Masters and Doctoral Student Survey* was distributed to 2,119 individuals who were members of the graduating classes of Summer 2006, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007. The survey was returned by 188 graduates, for a response rate of approximately 9%. The comprehensive survey asked questions about the graduates' satisfaction with Florida International University in various domains such as the quality and availability of faculty in their major, the quality of research produced in the graduate program, the quality and availability of academic advising by university advising staff and faculty members, and the quality of the libraries. The survey also questioned graduates about the frequency of use and quality of services such as Counseling and Psychological Services, Recreational Services, and Health Services.

Ten principal indicators have been singled out as the most reliable measures of the graduates' satisfaction with FIU and have been summarized below.

- *Overall Satisfaction With Graduate Program:* 79% of the graduates indicated that they were satisfied with their graduate program (27% very satisfied, 52% satisfied).
- *Overall Academic Experience:* 80% of the graduates rated positively their overall academic experience (35% excellent, 45% good ratings).
- *Challenged:* 94% of the graduates agreed that they had been challenged to do the best that they could (60% most of the time, 35% some of the time).
- *Recommend FIU:* 83% of the graduates reported that they would recommend FIU to a friend or relative considering their graduate program (36% without reservations, 47% with reservations).
- *Satisfaction with Department of Major:* 63% of the graduates were satisfied with the department of their major (23% strongly agreed, 40% agreed).
- *Professors Were Good Teachers:* 82% of the graduates agreed that their professors were good teachers (42% strongly agreed, 40% agreed).

- *Research Facilities Available in Graduate Program:* 70% of the graduates rated positively the availability of research facilities in their graduate program (29% excellent, 41% good).
- *Professors Were Good Researchers:* 73% of the graduates agreed that their professors were good researchers (37% strongly agreed, 35% agreed).
- *Quality of Research in Graduate Program:* 78% of the graduates rated positively the quality of research performed in their graduate program (30% excellent, 48% good).
- *Faculty Available to Assist Graduate Student Research:* 75% of the graduates rated positively the availability of the faculty to assist them in their research (42% excellent, 33% good).

Items With the Highest Correlations

- To the extent that graduating respondents rated highly the research quality in their graduate program, they also rated the availability of research facilities in their program highly ($r = .79, p < .001$).
- To the extent that graduating respondents agreed that the faculty were good teachers, they also rated the quality of instruction in their program highly ($r = .77, p < .001$).
- To the extent that graduating respondents rated highly the availability of faculty to assist with their research, they also rated the opportunity to interact with faculty in their program highly ($r = .71, p < .001$).
- To the extent that graduating respondents rated their overall academic experience highly, they also rated highly the satisfaction of their graduate program ($r = .71, p < .001$).

Strongest Predictors of Overall Academic Experience

- Extent of agreement that they were satisfied overall with their graduate program at FIU ($r = .71, p < .001$).
- Extent of agreement that they were satisfied with how well their major department had met its goals and objectives FIU ($r = .69, p < .001$).
- Extent of agreement that they received a high quality of instruction in their program ($r = .66, p < .001$).
- Extent of agreement that they were satisfied with the quality of courses which prepared them for employment ($r = .60, p < .001$).

Positive responses to the ten principal indicators of satisfaction remain relatively high, with positive responses of over 78% for five of the principal indicators. Positive responses increased for three of the ten principal indicators of student satisfaction compared to the responses of students graduating in Summer 2005-Spring 2006.

Positive responses to the ten principal indicators of student satisfaction slightly decreased across the six-year period (2001-2007).