

Spring 2001 GC Transfer Student Survey: Some Results Highlights Regarding Graduation

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When asked about the likelihood of graduating from the University of Minnesota, 14.5% of respondents indicated that there was some chance that they would not graduate from the University of Minnesota. Most respondents (90%) who indicated that there was some chance that they would not graduate from the U did indicate that there was some chance that they would transfer from the U of M to another college to complete a degree.

On the survey, students were presented with some items that could potentially be barriers to graduation. Respondents were asked to rate each item regarding the degree to which it might pose a hindrance to graduation. The table below presents descriptive statistics for each item (arranged in descending order of mean response):

Graduation barrier:	Mean	N	Percentages for response categories		
			Very low/low	Medium	High/very high
Course access	2.53	420	52.4	22.4	25.3
Lack financial aid	2.29	421	59.9	20.2	19.9
Personal debt	2.14	422	67.1	14.2	18.7
Desired major availability/access	2.12	417	65.9	18.2	15.8
Transportation/parking	2.07	421	68.6	15.2	16.1
Opportunity to work full time	2.01	420	69.5	17.9	12.6
Passing required courses	1.86	421	75.8	16.9	7.4
Lack of study space	1.84	422	76.5	14.7	8.8
Personal problems	1.80	416	77.4	13.5	9.2
Desire to pursue other ed. opportunities	1.64	419	80.4	12.6	6.9
College does not fit lifestyle/goals	1.48	419	87.8	8.8	3.4
Health issues	1.40	419	88.8	6.9	4.3
Need to support children/family	1.30	417	90.9	6.0	3.1
Lack of accommodation for disability	1.23	417	93.0	5.5	1.5

Response scale: 1=very low [barrier]; 2=low [barrier]; 3=medium [barrier]; 4=high [barrier]; 5=very high [barrier]

The degree to which course access was a potential graduation barrier did not vary between majors: Proportions of students indicating that course availability would be at least a moderate barrier ranged from 55% for IT/math/science/engineering majors and fine arts/design/architecture majors to 45% for social science/speech/communication majors. There was a some variation between majors in terms of whether passing required courses was perceived as a potential barrier to graduation: Proportions of students indicating that passing required courses might be at least a moderate barrier ranged from 40% for IT/math/science/engineering majors to 18% for social science/speech/communication majors. AAR also appeared to be related to students' concerns about passing courses. Students who felt that passing required courses would be at least a moderate barrier had lower AAR scores (and cumulative UM GPA) than students who felt that passing required courses would be a minimal problem (low/very low) (AAR respectively 87.9 (N=90, SD=15.3) vs. 92.4 (N=302, SD=13.8); cumulative GPA respectively 2.64 (N=101, SD=.37) vs. 2.95 (N=319, SD=.41)).

When examining students' self reported likelihoods for graduating from the U of M in conjunction with responses to "graduation barriers" items listed above, there was evidence that self-reported likelihood of graduating from the U may be related to concern for passing required courses, availability/access to desired major, and desire to pursue other educational opportunities.

Responses to survey items related to educational satisfaction and current skill level self-assessments were compared between students who indicated a 100% likelihood of graduating from the University and those who indicated less than 100% likelihood. The results of these comparisons are presented in the table below.

It appears that students who indicated less than 100% likelihood of graduating from the University of Minnesota were less satisfied with the advising they are currently receiving. They also indicated more of a preference to receive ongoing advising from their GC advisor if this option were available. In terms of self-assessed current skill levels, students who indicated less than 100% likelihood of graduating rated themselves lower in the following areas: reading, writing papers, working in groups, using the library, managing time, program planning, and contacting faculty and staff.

<u>Survey item:</u>	<u>likelihood of graduating from UM</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Std. Error Mean</u>
How satisfied are you with the advising you received while in GC? a	100%	360	3.80	1.29	.07
	<100%	61	3.80	1.36	.17
How satisfied are you with the advising you are currently receiving? a **	100%	360	3.42	1.13	.06
	<100%	61	3.00	1.00	.13
If you could still receive some on-going advising from your GC advisor, would you? b *	100%	360	3.02	1.40	.07
	<100%	60	3.47	1.41	.18
How well informed were you about your major before you transferred? c	100%	360	3.10	1.12	.06
	<100%	61	3.16	1.07	.14
How satisfied are you now with the GC courses you took? a	100%	360	3.80	1.09	.06
	<100%	61	3.74	.95	.12
How satisfied are you with the non-GC courses you have taken since transferring? a	100%	359	4.01	.71	.04
	<100%	61	3.80	.83	.11
Considering the options available to you when you entered GC, would you enroll again? b	100%	359	3.34	1.32	.07
	<100%	61	3.28	1.27	.16
How challenging was your academic experience in GC? d	100%	361	2.80	1.08	.06
	<100%	61	2.82	.92	.12
Current Skill Level-reading e **	100%	361	4.11	.83	.04
	<100%	61	3.80	.70	.09
Current Skill Level-taking tests e	100%	361	3.60	.83	.04
	<100%	61	3.41	.90	.12
Current Skill Level-writing papers e **	100%	361	4.02	.84	.04
	<100%	61	3.62	.92	.12
Current Skill Level-solving mathematical problems	100%	360	3.25	1.08	.06
	<100%	60	3.37	1.10	.14
Current Skill Level-working in groups e *	100%	361	4.24	.81	.04
	<100%	61	3.95	.85	.11
Current Skill Level-making presentations in class e	100%	360	3.84	.99	.05
	<100%	61	3.72	1.05	.13
Current Skill Level-using computers for coursework e	100%	360	4.40	.75	.04
	<100%	61	4.23	.80	.10
Current Skill Level-using computers for communication e	100%	360	4.47	.73	.04
	<100%	61	4.31	.85	.11
Current Skill Level-using the library	100%	361	3.93	.97	.05

e **	<100%	61	3.52	1.03	.13
Current Skill Level-managing time	100%	361	3.70	.98	.05
e **	<100%	61	3.31	1.03	.13
Current Skill Level-choosing	100%	361	4.19	.83	.04
courses/planning program e **	<100%	61	3.74	.96	.12
Current Skill Level-contacting	100%	360	4.02	.90	.05
faculty and staff e **	<100%	61	3.61	.82	.11

** means differ at $p < .01$; * means differ at $p < .05$. Due to the unbalanced group sizes, nonparametric tests were also run on all items.

-all items were on a response scale ranging from 1 to 5. Scales were as follows:

a - 1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=somewhat satisfied, 4=moderately satisfied, 5=very satisfied

b - definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=maybe, 4=probably yes, 5=definitely yes

c - 1=not at all informed, 2=slightly informed, 3=somewhat informed, 4=well informed, 5=very well informed

d - 1=not at all challenging, 2=somewhat challenging, 3=moderately challenging, 4=challenging, 5=very challenging

e - 1=very low, 2=low, 3=medium, 4=high, 5=very high

All students registered Spring 2001, who entered the University from 1995 to 2000, and who had transferred to another unit were sent notice to complete the survey- results are based on the sample of 422 respondents.