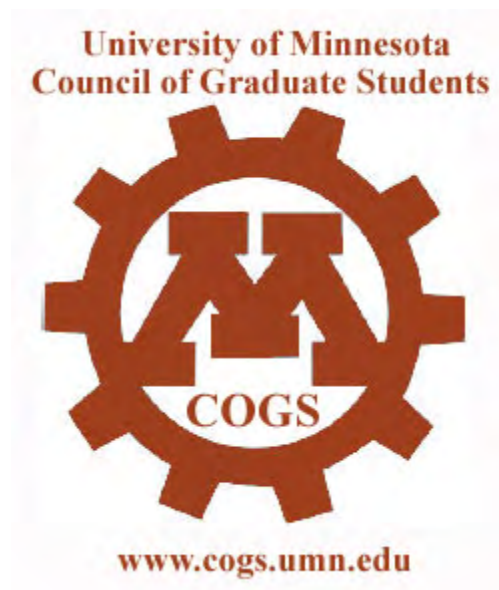


Council of Graduate Students  
Biennial Graduate Student Survey  
RESULTS REPORT



University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Fall 2008

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## ABSTRACT

The Council of Graduate Students (COGS) biennial survey of graduate students was conducted in the spring of 2008. The comprehensive survey asked students about different aspects of graduate life including program quality, professional development, advising, financial support, student life and campus resources. Approximately 2000 students from 133 degree programs completed the survey with over half of respondents currently pursuing a PhD. The survey results showed that graduate students are very concerned about the increasing costs of graduate education. Recent estimates show the cost of attendance for graduate students at the University of Minnesota is approximately \$25,000 per academic year (for Minnesota resident and not considering additional costs of each department). About 60% of graduate students reported they were offered financial support when they first began attending their current program. However, over 34% of current graduate students are shouldering more than \$10,000 in debt from their graduate education. In addition, lack of travel funding has prevented 38% of graduate students from attending professional conferences. The following report outlines other concerns graduate students have reported, highlighting particular issues collectively and also broken down by Policy and Review Councils.

## POLICY & REVIEW COUNCILS

- Education & Psychology
- Language, Literature and the Arts
- Health Sciences
- Engineering, Physical & Mathematical Sciences
- Biological Sciences
- Social Sciences



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## PURPOSE

This report presents the results of a spring 2008 survey of all graduate students regarding their experiences in graduate education at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. In the fall of 2007 the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) began preparing a list of questions to better understand the needs and opinions of Master's and Doctoral students. The purpose of this study is two-fold: to provide information for the Policy & Review Councils within the Graduate School and also to determine the issues of greatest importance to graduate students. COGS will use this information to focus its efforts to improve the graduate education experience for all students.

## SURVEY FORMAT

The COGS Biennial Graduate Student Survey, Spring 2008 consisted of a welcome page, informed consent page, open-ended comments field, and a variety of closed-ended questions in the following areas of interest:

- Program curriculum
- Advising
- Research
- Financial Support
- Student Life
- Campus Resources



## SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

This survey was developed by a team of graduate students based on the topics of greatest interest to COGS representatives. Questions were written by members of the Biennial Graduate Student Survey committee, most of whom had completed at least one course in survey design and/or research methods.

The guiding philosophy of this survey was to design it according to Social Exchange Theory (Dillman, 2000). Graduate students are extremely busy individuals and survey developers worked diligently to strike a balance between the cost and benefit of participating in this survey. Each question was rated on its value added to the survey and those questions that did not seem worth the response time investment by survey-takers were excluded from the final version. The survey was designed to be completed in approximately 10-15 minutes. The online administration of the survey allowed respondents to skip non-applicable sections through the use of routing questions and piping within the survey: those students without children were never asked questions related to daycare and health insurance for dependents. This technique also allowed for reduced response time to the overall survey.

Question stems and answer options were entered into the College of Education & Human Development (CEHD) online survey tool. A pilot survey was administered online to a group of approximately 50 graduate student volunteers. These initial survey-takers provided feedback on questions that needed clarification and overall length and functionality of the survey. Necessary revisions were made to the survey before it was deployed campus-wide.





## DATA COLLECTION

The survey was administered on the Internet using the College of Education & Human Development Online Survey Tool. All graduate students enrolled at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities received an email two weeks prior to the activation of the survey encouraging them to voluntarily participate in the survey. The COGS administrator sent out the survey invitation with a link to the online survey which they could complete any time during a three-week period. The survey was deployed on April 24 and closed on May 20, 2008. Two follow-up emails were sent to students who had not yet completed the survey on May 8 and 13, 2008 encouraging them to complete the survey. The text of the solicitation email and the survey itself are provided in the appendix to this report.

## LIMITATIONS & POTENTIAL SOURCES OF ERROR

It should be noted that this census is specific to graduate students at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. It would be inappropriate to generalize beyond this particular group without surveying other samples of students.

### *Sampling Error*

Fortunately for this particular survey we do not have to worry about sampling error since we took a complete census of all the students enrolled in the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Graduate School during the spring semester 2008. Only those students who opted out of receiving any emails from COGS would be automatically excluded from the survey: this includes less than 1 percent of the graduate student body.



### *Measurement Error*

Great effort went into writing the items on this survey to ensure they met the item-writing guidelines recommended by Dillman, 2000, and related materials. The pre-pilot survey was reviewed by a committee of experience survey writers and overseen by a faculty member in Quantitative Methods of Education. Despite the great amount of care that went into writing the survey items some amount of measurement error is inevitable.

### *Non-Response Error*

Every attempt was made to reduce the amount of non-response error in these survey results. All potential respondents were emailed a pre-notice letter one week before the survey was available and an invitation email with a direct link to the survey. Following the two-week open survey deadline, those students who had not yet responded were sent a follow-up reminder email and given an additional week to complete the online survey. The survey tool that was used for this study allowed us to only email those students who had not yet responded to the initial request to participate.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS & NON-RESPONDENTS**

After careful analysis of the demographic data collected in the survey and comparison with information available through the Graduate School, we were able to determine that the patterns among our survey respondents closely align with the overall demographic trends within the graduate student population at the University. The COGS survey had a slightly higher response rate from doctoral



students (19.2%) than from Master's students (16.7%). The survey results also indicate that a disproportionate percentage of the survey respondents were full-time students (83%), while 17 percent of respondents reported being part-time students. International student participation in the COGS survey was aligned with the enrollment rates of international students in the Graduate School (24%). Also, participation in the survey by various age groups was consistent with the enrollment numbers reported by the Graduate School. Within the summary data each age group was represented within 5 percentage points of their actual representation in the Graduate School population.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF EACH P & R COUNCILS**  
are available individually on the COGS website.

**RESULTS BY DEGREE (MA & PhD)**  
will be available in Spring 2009 on the COGS website.

**THEMES IN OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES**  
will be available in early Spring of 2009 on the COGS website.

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[http://www.grad.umn.edu/Programs/select\\_program.html?l=t](http://www.grad.umn.edu/Programs/select_program.html?l=t)



## RESULTS

### SECTION I Enrollment Information

One thousand nine hundred ninety-three graduate students from over 133 degree programs and majors participated in this survey. A response rate of 17.92 percent was obtained, including 16.7 percent for Master’s students and 19.19 percent among doctoral students. The following is a breakdown of the survey participants by enrollment status and subsequent information comparing the survey respondents to current statistics recorded by the Graduate School.

TABLE 1.1 Current degree seeking students\*

|                              | Master’s         | Doctorate         | Master’s and Doctorate | Total       |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 66 (25%)         | 188 (71%)         | 11 (4%)                | 265         |
| Education & Psychology       | 81 (23%)         | 245 (70%)         | 17 (5%)                | 343         |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 127 (31%)        | 248 (60%)         | 40 (10%)               | 415         |
| Health Sciences              | 99 (52%)         | 79 (41%)          | 12 (6%)                | 190         |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 69 (34%)         | 115 (57%)         | 19 (9%)                | 203         |
| Social Science               | 321 (63%)        | 154 (30%)         | 32 (6%)                | 507         |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>763 (40%)</b> | <b>1029 (53%)</b> | <b>131 (7%)</b>        | <b>1923</b> |

\*Due to rounding not all totals will equal 100%

According to the Graduate School website, there were 10,731 enrolled students for the Fall 2007 semester. There were 4,949 students seeking a Master’s degree and 5,705 seeking a Doctoral degree. The Graduate School does not list those individuals who are pursuing a dual or Master’s/Doctoral degree program.

FIGURE 1.1 Current enrollment status

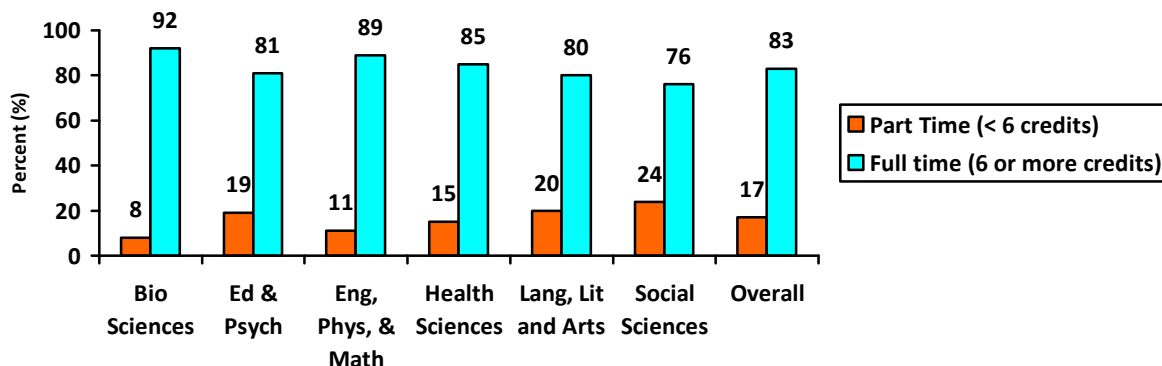




TABLE 1.3 Primary activity prior to starting program at University of Minnesota

|                              | Undergraduate student | Graduate student | Employed in field related to current study | Employed in field unrelated to current study |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--|--|
| Biological Sciences          | 77 (29%)              | 41 (16%)         | 107 (41%)                                  | 33 (13%)                                     |
| Education & Psychology       | 55 (16%)              | 46 (13%)         | 179 (51%)                                  | 57 (16%)                                     |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 187 (45%)             | 85 (21%)         | 103 (25%)                                  | 32 (8%)                                      |
| Health Sciences              | 27 (14%)              | 22 (12%)         | 109 (57%)                                  | 26 (14%)                                     |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 29 (14%)              | 40 (20%)         | 58 (29%)                                   | 65 (32%)                                     |
| Social Science               | 72 (14%)              | 65 (13%)         | 256 (51%)                                  | 96 (19%)                                     |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>447 (23%)</b>      | <b>299 (16%)</b> | <b>812 (42%)</b>                           | <b>309 (16%)</b>                             |

Categories excluded if contained less than 5% of the survey responses

Most graduate students are returning to school after gaining experience in their current field. Graduate students in Engineering, Physical Sciences and Math P&R Council are more likely than students in other P&R Councils to be straight from their undergraduate program.

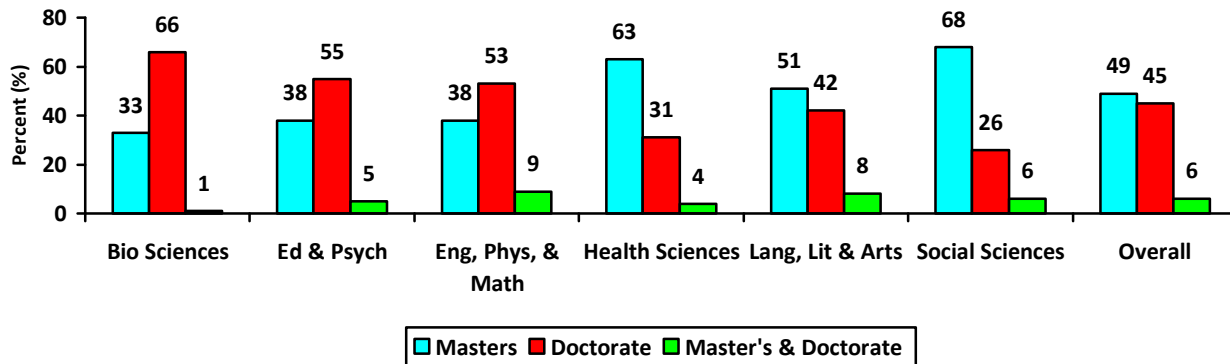
TABLE 1.4 First year of enrollment at the University of Minnesota in graduate degree program

|                              | Before 2002      | 2002-2003       | 2003-2004       | 2004-2005        | 2005-2006        | 2006-2007        | 2007-2008        |
|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 28 (11%)         | 24 (9%)         | 24 (9%)         | 40 (15%)         | 50 (19%)         | 46 (17%)         | 53 (20%)         |
| Education & Psychology       | 77 (22%)         | 29 (8%)         | 27 (8%)         | 39 (11%)         | 48 (14%)         | 68 (19%)         | 62 (18%)         |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 38 (9%)          | 23 (6%)         | 39 (9%)         | 58 (14%)         | 81 (19%)         | 89 (21%)         | 88 (21%)         |
| Health Sciences              | 18 (9%)          | 7 (4%)          | 13 (7%)         | 13 (7%)          | 31 (16%)         | 67 (35%)         | 43 (22%)         |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 32 (16%)         | 21 (10%)        | 24 (12%)        | 24 (12%)         | 37 (18%)         | 37 (18%)         | 28 (14%)         |
| Social Science               | 48 (9%)          | 21 (4%)         | 28 (6%)         | 46 (9%)          | 70 (14%)         | 127 (25%)        | 167 (33%)        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>241 (12%)</b> | <b>125 (6%)</b> | <b>155 (8%)</b> | <b>220 (11%)</b> | <b>317 (16%)</b> | <b>434 (22%)</b> | <b>441 (23%)</b> |

Most respondents to the survey have been at the University for 3 years or less.

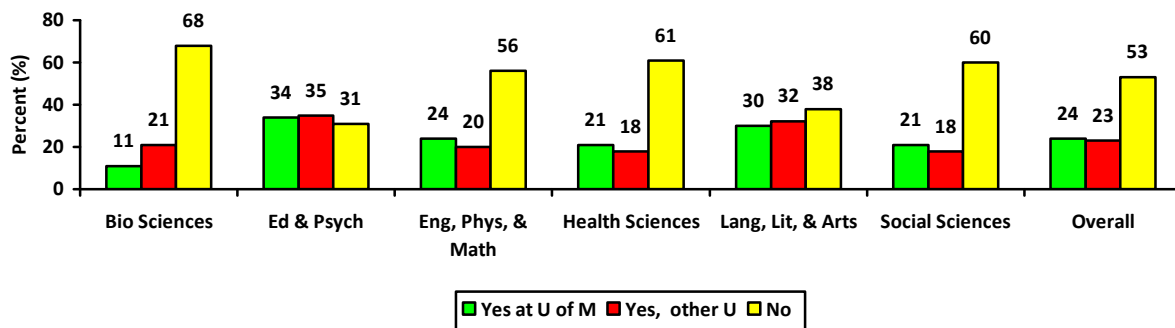


FIGURE 1.2 Original degree sought when first enrolled in the Graduate School



Overall, most graduate students were originally seeking a Master’s degree when they first enrolled in the Graduate School. However, students in the following P&R Councils were more likely to be seeking a Doctorate degree when they first enrolled: Biological Sciences, Education and Psychology and Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences.

FIGURE 1.3 Completed a Master’s degree?



About half of current graduate students have already completed a Master’s degree. There does not appear to be much difference if students completed their Master’s degree at the University of Minnesota or at another institution before enrolling in their current degree program. Among students that have not completed a Master’s degree, 44% reported working in a field related to their current field of study and 31% reported coming straight from undergrad (Table 1.3).



**TABLE 1.7 Amount of time taken off from school since starting graduate study (not including summer semesters)**

|                              | None              | A few months to 1 year | More than 1 year |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 207 (78%)         | 26 (10%)               | 32 (12%)         |
| Education & Psychology       | 253 (72%)         | 30 (9%)                | 67 (19%)         |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 341 (82%)         | 32 (8%)                | 42 (10%)         |
| Health Sciences              | 143 (75%)         | 24 (13%)               | 25 (13%)         |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 148 (73%)         | 23 (11%)               | 31 (15%)         |
| Social Science               | 388 (77%)         | 34 (7%)                | 83 (16%)         |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>1480 (77%)</b> | <b>169 (9%)</b>        | <b>280 (15%)</b> |

Overall, most graduate students do not report taking any time off from school while they are currently pursuing their degree.

**TABLE 1.8 Current status in program**

|                              | Taking courses | Completed coursework | Passed written exams | Passed oral exams | Dissertation proposal accepted | Defended dissertation |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 36%            | 39%                  | 29%                  | 35%               | 20%                            | 9%                    |
| Education & Psychology       | 45%            | 29%                  | 27%                  | 19%               | 19%                            | 8%                    |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 41%            | 38%                  | 35%                  | 34%               | 14%                            | 7%                    |
| Health Sciences              | 60%            | 32%                  | 18%                  | 11%               | 7%                             | 4%                    |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 38%            | 32%                  | 15%                  | 19%               | 23%                            | 12%                   |
| Social Science               | 59%            | 27%                  | 14%                  | 11%               | 17%                            | 4%                    |
| <b>Overall</b>               | <b>47%</b>     | <b>32%</b>           | <b>24%</b>           | <b>22%</b>        | <b>16%</b>                     | <b>7%</b>             |

Respondents could answer "Yes" to more than one category

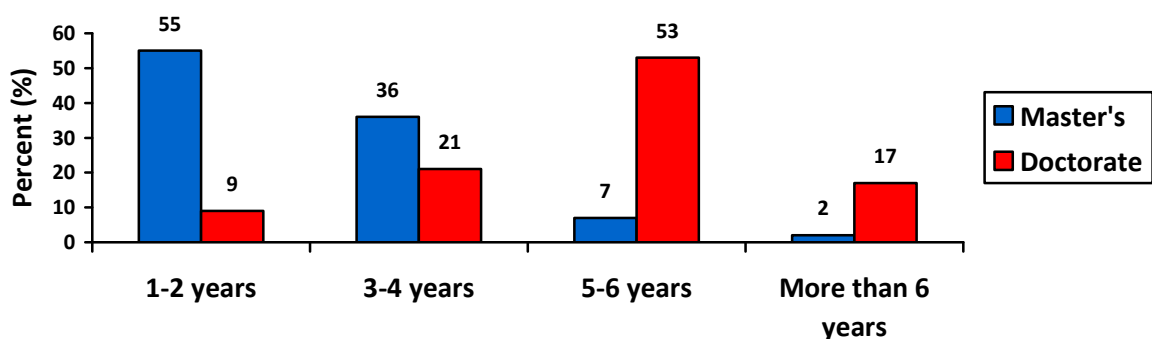
Most current graduate students are still taking courses or have completed their coursework. This corresponds with Table 1.4 which showed that most graduate students are within 3 years of first enrolling in their current degree program.



TABLE 1.9 Best estimate of the total number of years to complete degree

|                              | 1-2 years | 3-4 years | 5-6 years | More than 6 |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 47 (18%)  | 64 (24%)  | 134 (51%) | 19 (7%)     |
| Education & Psychology       | 78 (23%)  | 79 (23%)  | 128 (37%) | 57 (17%)    |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 104 (25%) | 71 (17%)  | 202 (49%) | 33 (8%)     |
| Health Sciences              | 78 (42%)  | 78 (42%)  | 22 (12%)  | 10 (5%)     |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 32 (16%)  | 56 (29%)  | 68 (34%)  | 42 (21%)    |
| Social Science               | 196 (39%) | 154 (31%) | 108 (22%) | 44 (9%)     |
| Total                        | 535 (28%) | 502 (26%) | 662 (35%) | 205 (11%)   |

FIGURE 1.4 Best estimate of total number of years to complete degree



Thirty-five percent of current graduate students reported it would take 5-6 years to complete their current degree. Most of these students (53%) are pursuing a doctorate degree. Given that doctorate students report taking this long to complete their degree, it is imperative that funding is in place to support these students while in school. In addition, 88% of students that reported taking 5-6 years to complete their current degree are enrolled on a full-time basis. Students that reported attending only on a part-time basis generally report taking about 3-4 years to complete their current degree (data not shown).





## SECTION II

### Academic Quality

TABLE 2.1 Satisfaction with Your Program (Mean (SD))\*

|                              | Academic standards | Advising/mentoring | Graduate level seminars | Inclusion of current developments | Overall quality | Curriculum    | Research opportunities | Space/facilities |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 1.8<br>(0.68)      | 1.9<br>(0.91)      | 1.9<br>(0.72)           | 1.9<br>(0.74)                     | 1.8<br>(0.71)   | 2.2<br>(0.80) | 1.8<br>(0.78)          | 2.0<br>(0.86)    |
| Education & Psychology       | 1.7<br>(0.76)      | 2.2<br>(1.03)      | 2.1<br>(0.86)           | 1.9<br>(0.85)                     | 1.9<br>(0.82)   | 2.1<br>(0.85) | 2.3<br>(1.0)           | 2.5<br>(0.82)    |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 1.8<br>(0.69)      | 2.1<br>(0.98)      | 2.1<br>(0.80)           | 2.1<br>(0.81)                     | 2.0<br>(0.70)   | 2.1<br>(0.71) | 1.9<br>(0.83)          | 2.1<br>(0.82)    |
| Health Sciences              | 1.7<br>(0.71)      | 2.1<br>(0.96)      | 2.1<br>(0.74)           | 1.9<br>(0.74)                     | 1.9<br>(0.74)   | 2.0<br>(0.72) | 2.1<br>(0.88)          | 2.3<br>(0.82)    |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 1.9<br>(0.75)      | 2.2<br>(1.02)      | 2.2<br>(0.88)           | 2.2<br>(0.89)                     | 2.2<br>(0.82)   | 2.4<br>(0.82) | 2.5<br>(0.91)          | 2.6<br>(0.89)    |
| Social Science               | 1.7<br>(0.67)      | 2.2<br>(0.96)      | 2.2<br>(0.77)           | 2.0<br>(0.81)                     | 1.9<br>(0.72)   | 2.1<br>(0.76) | 2.3<br>(0.81)          | 2.2<br>(0.90)    |
| Overall                      | 1.8<br>(0.71)      | 2.1<br>(0.98)      | 2.1<br>(0.80)           | 2.0<br>(0.81)                     | 1.9<br>(0.75)   | 2.1<br>(0.78) | 2.3<br>(0.87)          | 2.2<br>(0.90)    |

\*Ratings are 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

Most individuals were generally satisfied with certain key components of their program. Space/facilities and research opportunities received the lowest ratings, but were still rated as Good. Consequently, given the University's goal to become one of the top three research institutes, the perception of research opportunities among current graduate students should be ranked much higher. In addition, infrastructure through space and facilities for research and offices should be given attention. Academic standards were consistently rated the highest among current graduate students across all P&R Councils.



### SECTION III Professional Development

TABLE 3.1 While in graduate school have you had the opportunity to:

|                              | Apply knowledge in non-academic setting | Collaborate outside the university | Conduct your own research | Engage in community-based project | Attend conference | Present at conference | Publish as 1 <sup>st</sup> author | Publish as co-author |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 60%                                     | 48%                                | 86%                       | 28%                               | 80%               | 70%                   | 43%                               | 54%                  |
| Education & Psychology       | 62%                                     | 39%                                | 71%                       | 37%                               | 78%               | 60%                   | 23%                               | 39%                  |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 45%                                     | 42%                                | 72%                       | 19%                               | 63%               | 48%                   | 34%                               | 41%                  |
| Health Sciences              | 64%                                     | 48%                                | 56%                       | 46%                               | 74%               | 47%                   | 24%                               | 31%                  |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 49%                                     | 32%                                | 78%                       | 34%                               | 75%               | 59%                   | 30%                               | 18%                  |
| Social Science               | 55%                                     | 30%                                | 54%                       | 35%                               | 63%               | 31%                   | 12%                               | 15%                  |
| Overall                      | 55%                                     | 39%                                | 68%                       | 32%                               | 70%               | 50%                   | 26%                               | 32%                  |

Respondents could answer "Yes" to more than one category

The University of Minnesota has a goal of becoming one of the top 3 research universities. However, only 26% of graduate students report having the opportunity to publish as a 1st author and only 32% reported publishing as a coauthor. This situation is reported in light of the fact that about 68% of students reported conducting their own research. Still, over half of students report attending conferences and having the opportunity to present research findings at conferences. Departments and programs should encourage and follow-up with students to publish their research findings. Having peer-reviewed publications not only benefits the university but also helps with the professional development among graduate students to establish themselves in their chosen field and become more marketable upon graduation.



## SECTION IV Program Aspects

TABLE 4.1 Rate the quality of the following aspects of your program curriculum (Mean (SD))\*

|                              | Depth      | Breadth    | Integration of diverse perspectives | Ability to prepare for future employment |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Biological Sciences          | 1.9 (0.77) | 1.8 (0.71) | 2.0 (0.81)                          | 2.2 (0.88)                               |
| Education & Psychology       | 2.0 (0.87) | 1.9 (0.85) | 2.0 (0.87)                          | 2.1 (0.95)                               |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 2.0 (0.77) | 2.0 (0.82) | 2.3 (1.0)                           | 2.2 (0.91)                               |
| Health Sciences              | 2.0 (0.82) | 1.8 (0.72) | 2.0 (0.83)                          | 2.0 (0.83)                               |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 2.1 (0.83) | 2.2 (0.91) | 2.2 (0.91)                          | 2.5 (1.01)                               |
| Social Science               | 2.0 (0.82) | 1.9 (0.80) | 2.1 (0.84)                          | 2.0 (0.83)                               |
| Overall                      | 2.0(0.81)  | 2.0(0.81)  | 2.1 (0.84)                          | 2.1 (0.89)                               |

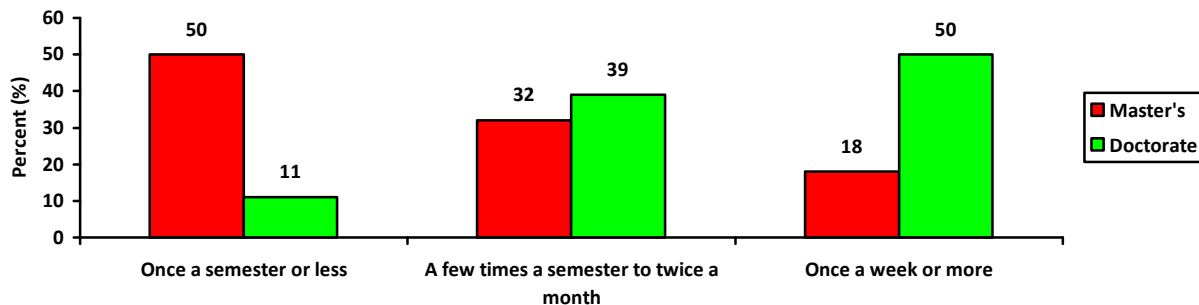
\*Ratings are 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

TABLE 4.2 Amount of time you communicate with your advisor(s)

|                              | Once a semester or less | A few times a semester to twice a month | Once a week or more |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 7%                      | 19%                                     | 74%                 |
| Education & Psychology       | 27%                     | 48%                                     | 25%                 |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 12%                     | 24%                                     | 64%                 |
| Health Sciences              | 34%                     | 42%                                     | 24%                 |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 23%                     | 54%                                     | 23%                 |
| Social Science               | 51%                     | 35%                                     | 13%                 |
| Overall                      | 28%                     | 36%                                     | 37%                 |



FIGURE 4.1 Amount of time you communicate with your advisor(s) by degree



Advisors are a crucial part of successful graduate education and can serve varying roles in a student's degree progression. About 28% of graduate students reported communicating with their advisor once a semester or less, while 37% of students reported communicating with their advisor on a frequency of once a week or more. This frequency of advisor meetings varies substantially by program with 74% of individuals in Biological Sciences reporting communication with their advisor once a week or more while only 13% of Social Sciences reported this same frequency of communication. This is an important issue since most students who reported meeting with their advisors more frequently rated the quality of advising on various tasks (e.g., completing degree program forms, written exams, thesis/dissertation writing) higher than those who met less frequently. This also depends on what degree students are seeking.

TABLE 4.3 Amount of time you meet with your advisor to discuss YOUR research

|                              | Once a semester or less | A few times a semester to twice a month | Once a week or more | Not engaged in research |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 9%                      | 38%                                     | 50%                 | 3%                      |
| Education & Psychology       | 35%                     | 43%                                     | 10%                 | 11%                     |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 9%                      | 34%                                     | 49%                 | 9%                      |
| Health Sciences              | 28%                     | 37%                                     | 15%                 | 21%                     |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 29%                     | 50%                                     | 10%                 | 11%                     |
| Social Science               | 32%                     | 28%                                     | 4%                  | 36%                     |
| Overall                      | 24%                     | 37%                                     | 23%                 | 17%                     |

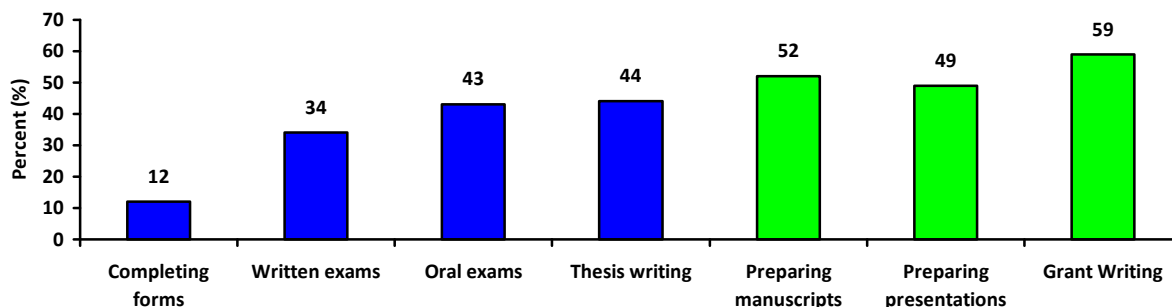


TABLE 4.4 Quality of advising received on the following tasks (Mean (SD))\*

|                              | Completing degree program forms | Written exams | Oral exams    | Thesis/dissertation writing | Preparing manuscripts for publication | Preparing conference presentations | Grant writing |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 2.2<br>(0.97)                   | 2.1<br>(0.91) | 2.1<br>(1.00) | 2.3<br>(0.99)               | 2.1<br>(1.04)                         | 1.9<br>(0.99)                      | 2.3<br>(1.13) |
| Education & Psychology       | 2.4<br>(1.02)                   | 2.3<br>(0.97) | 2.3<br>(1.08) | 2.3<br>(1.04)               | 2.4<br>(1.14)                         | 2.4<br>(1.15)                      | 3.1<br>(1.11) |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 2.2<br>(1.00)                   | 2.2<br>(0.94) | 2.1<br>(0.94) | 2.2<br>(1.03)               | 2.1<br>(1.02)                         | 2.1<br>(0.99)                      | 2.6<br>(1.06) |
| Health Sciences              | 2.1<br>(0.89)                   | 2.2<br>(0.92) | 2.2<br>(0.95) | 2.1<br>(1.00)               | 2.1<br>(1.11)                         | 2.1<br>(1.06)                      | 2.4<br>(1.10) |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 2.3<br>(1.03)                   | 2.1<br>(0.97) | 2.1<br>(1.03) | 2.3<br>(1.07)               | 2.8<br>(1.16)                         | 2.6<br>(1.18)                      | 2.8<br>(1.12) |
| Social Science               | 2.3<br>(0.97)                   | 2.3<br>(0.94) | 2.2<br>(1.00) | 2.2<br>(1.02)               | 2.6<br>(1.13)                         | 2.6<br>(1.10)                      | 2.7<br>(1.11) |
| Overall                      | 2.3<br>(0.99)                   | 2.2<br>(0.95) | 2.2<br>(1.00) | 2.2<br>(1.03)               | 2.3<br>(1.12)                         | 2.3<br>(1.10)                      | 2.6<br>(1.14) |

\*Ratings are 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

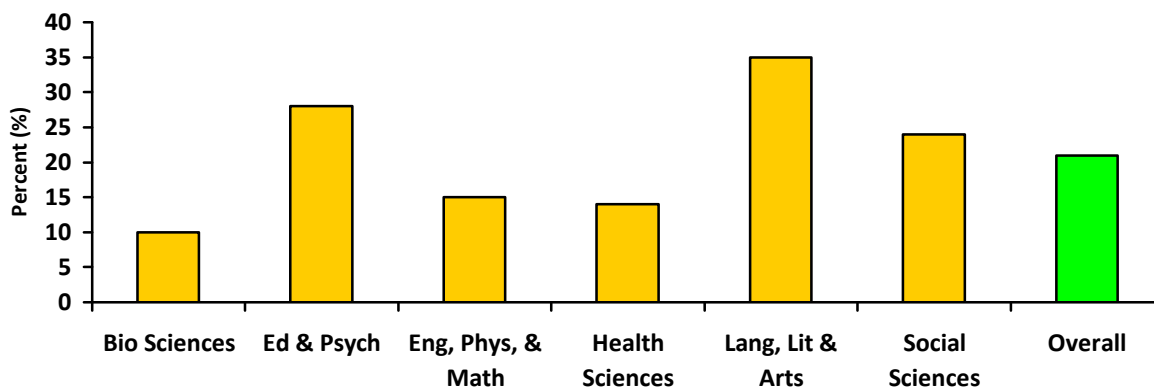
FIGURE 4.2 Percent of students reporting that each advising task was not applicable to them during their current degree program



Graduate students ranked the quality of advising on grant writing the lowest of all advising tasks. Grant writing is a skill that future researchers should be able to gain through either participating in the writing of an advisor's grant or through graduate coursework. Unfortunately, there are only a handful of classes offered to graduate students related to grant writing (e.g., Public Health Writing Research Grants 6348). Although some of these areas may not apply to a few individual programs, most graduate students should be involved grant writing, preparing manuscripts for publication, or preparing conference presentations. However, about half of graduate students reported that these tasks were not applicable to them while pursuing their current degree program.



FIGURE 4.1 Percent of students who changed advisors during graduate education



Over a third of students in the Language, Literature, and Arts changed advisors while a graduate student. The percentages of Master's and Doctorate students who changed advisors in this P&R Council did not differ substantially (37% and 33%, respectively).

TABLE 4.6 Reasons for changing advisors (N=411) \*

|                              | Availability of Advisor | Inter-personal style | Quality of advising | Advisor left U | Lack of funding | Other |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------|
| Biological Sciences          | 44%                     | 44%                  | 59%                 | 30%            | 19%             | 30%   |
| Education & Psychology       | 29%                     | 36%                  | 36%                 | 21%            | 6%              | 46%   |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 23%                     | 28%                  | 28%                 | 10%            | 17%             | 57%   |
| Health Sciences              | 11%                     | 30%                  | 22%                 | 26%            | 4%              | 52%   |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 28%                     | 35%                  | 32%                 | 29%            | 0%              | 47%   |
| Social Science               | 36%                     | 29%                  | 25%                 | 26%            | 2%              | 48%   |
| Overall                      | 29%                     | 32%                  | 31%                 | 23%            | 6%              | 48%   |

\* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Twenty-three percent of graduate students reported they changed advisors because their original advisor left the University. Students also reported changing their advisors due to the quality of advising. This is especially true among students in the Biological Sciences P&R Council. Consequently, 48% of graduate students reported other reasons for changing advisors. These results bring to light the lack of an evaluation system for current advisors. If such an evaluation system existed, then current issues or problems between students and advisors could be brought to the attention of the program Director of Graduate Studies and possible resolutions could be found.



FIGURE 4.2 Graduate students teaching experience at the University of Minnesota

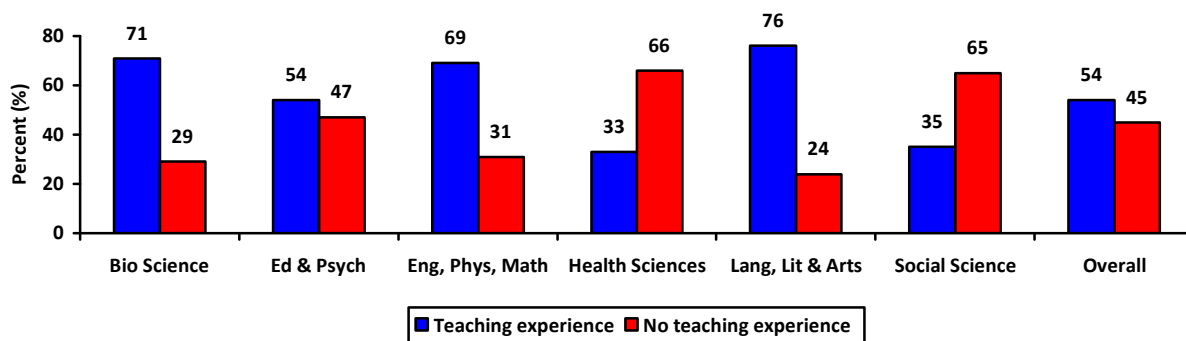


TABLE 4.7 Graduate students teaching experience at the University of Minnesota

|                              | Primary instructor | Led discussion/lab section | One-time experience |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 6%                 | 52%                        | 20%                 |
| Education & Psychology       | 35%                | 22%                        | 11%                 |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 7%                 | 59%                        | 11%                 |
| Health Sciences              | 3%                 | 20%                        | 16%                 |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 58%                | 37%                        | 9%                  |
| Social Science               | 20%                | 25%                        | 5%                  |
| Overall                      | 20%                | 36%                        | 11%                 |

Percent responding "Yes"

Teaching experience varies substantially across P&R Councils. The majority of students reported leading a lab or discussion section while graduate students. The exceptions are students in Language, Literature and Arts P&R Council who are more likely to report being the primary instructor for a course. Consequently, 45% of graduate students reported absolutely no teaching experience while at the University. More than half of students in Health Sciences and Social Science report no teaching experience. This could be a reflection of the type of jobs students will be seeking after graduation. In fact, more graduate students in Health Sciences and Social Science report seeking positions outside of academia after graduating (Table 5.4), and therefore, experience in teaching may not be valued as highly as it is for those seeking positions in academia. This also reflects the types of classes offered in each of these programs, especially regarding undergraduate classes, which provide graduate students with the best chances of gaining teaching experience.



## SECTION V Resources for Instruction and Job Sources

TABLE 5.1 For each instructor/teaching assistant training programs, rate the quality of services you received Mean (SD)\*

|                              | Department | Preparing Future Faculty | Center for Teaching & Learning | Other University program |
|------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 2.1 (0.88) | 1.9 (0.88)               | 1.9 (0.75)                     | 2.3 (0.89)               |
| Education & Psychology       | 2.0 (0.99) | 1.94 (0.94)              | 2.0 (0.91)                     | 2.3 (0.91)               |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 2.2 (0.83) | 2.1 (0.82)               | 2.1 (0.74)                     | 2.5 (0.84)               |
| Health Sciences              | 2.1 (0.78) | 1.9 (0.88)               | 2.0 (0.84)                     | 1.8 (0.72)               |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 2.2 (0.96) | 2.0 (0.80)               | 2.1 (0.93)                     | 2.2 (0.87)               |
| Social Science               | 2.1 (0.88) | 2.0 (0.86)               | 2.2 (0.80)                     | 2.2 (0.81)               |
| Overall                      | 2.1 (0.89) | 2.0 (0.86)               | 2.1 (0.81)                     | 2.3 (0.86)               |
| Received training            | 52%        | 27%                      | 29%                            | 21%                      |

\*Ratings are 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

On average only about half of all students reported receiving training to be a teaching assistant through their department. Less than a third of all students reported utilizing the available teaching resources on campus either through Preparing Future Faculty classes or the University's Center for Teaching and Learning.

FIGURE 5.1 Students who have begun searching for a job in their field for after graduation.

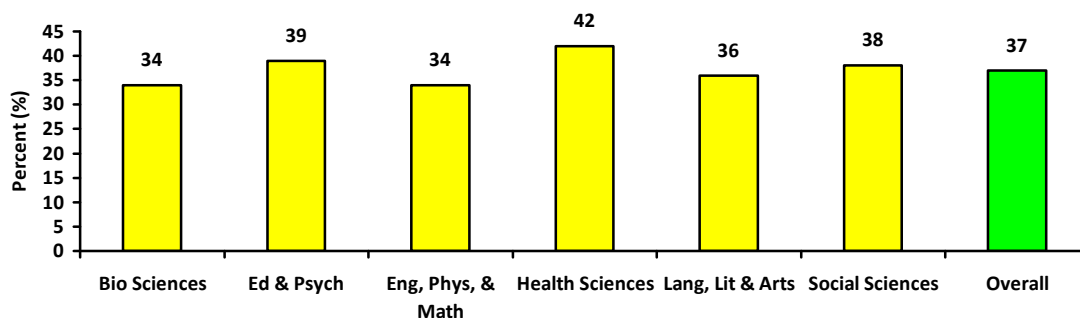






TABLE 5.3 Rate the quality of assistance received for the following job search tasks (Mean(SD))\*

|                              | CV         | Teaching statement | Job search | Job talk   | Interview process |
|------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 2.1 (0.86) | 2.2 (0.92)         | 2.5 (0.88) | 2.3 (0.90) | 2.4 (0.95)        |
| Education & Psychology       | 2.1 (0.87) | 2.3 (0.96)         | 2.6 (0.90) | 2.5 (1.07) | 2.4 (0.98)        |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 2.1 (0.85) | 2.3 (0.84)         | 2.6 (0.93) | 2.6 (0.92) | 2.4 (0.89)        |
| Health Sciences              | 1.9 (0.74) | 2.2 (0.76)         | 2.4 (0.88) | 2.3 (0.82) | 2.3 (0.76)        |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 2.2 (0.85) | 2.3 (0.96)         | 2.5 (0.90) | 2.5 (0.80) | 2.5 (0.89)        |
| Social Science               | 2.1 (0.84) | 2.1 (0.91)         | 2.3 (0.93) | 2.1 (0.91) | 2.0 (0.89)        |
| Overall                      | 2.1 (0.84) | 2.2 (0.90)         | 2.5 (0.92) | 2.3 (0.94) | 2.3 (0.91)        |
| Received Assistance          | 78%        | 82%                | 81%        | 78%        | 79%               |

\*Ratings are 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

Graduate students rated the quality of assistance with job searching as the lowest followed by prepping for job talks or the interview process.

TABLE 5.4 Position seeking after graduating

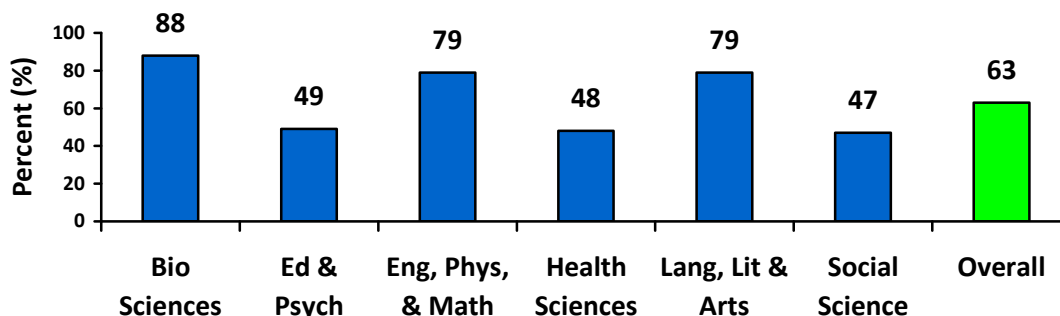
|                              | Tenure track | Non-tenure/teaching | Postdoc research/intern | Researcher (academic and non-academic) | Position outside of academia | Undecided | Other |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Biological Sciences          | 11%          | 1%                  | 34%                     | 20%                                    | 15%                          | 13%       | 5%    |
| Education & Psychology       | 23%          | 10%                 | 8%                      | 8%                                     | 25%                          | 13%       | 13%   |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 14%          | 3%                  | 19%                     | 19%                                    | 35%                          | 9%        | 3%    |
| Health Sciences              | 10%          | 3%                  | 7%                      | 12%                                    | 43%                          | 10%       | 15%   |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 46%          | 14%                 | 4%                      | 2%                                     | 14%                          | 10%       | 11%   |
| Social Science               | 26%          | 2%                  | 1%                      | 5%                                     | 50%                          | 8%        | 7%    |
| Overall                      | 21%          | 5%                  | 12%                     | 11%                                    | 33%                          | 10%       | 8%    |



## SECTION VI

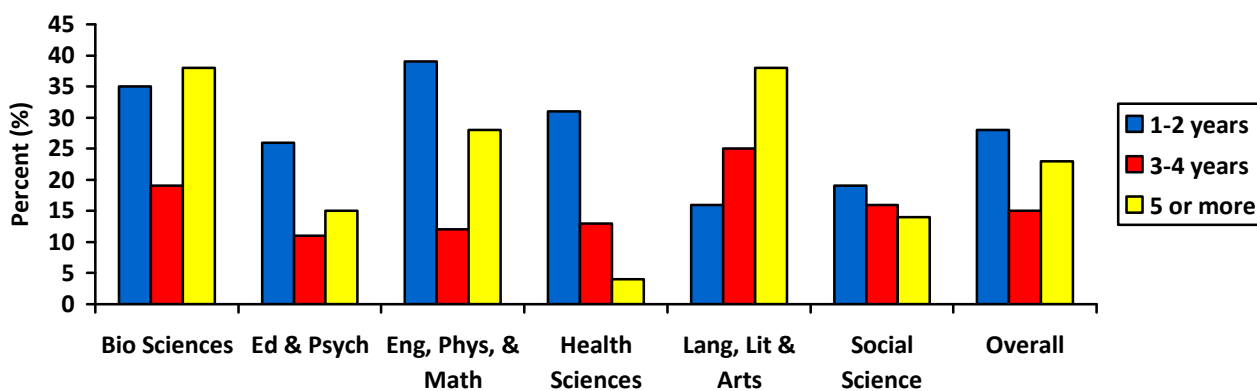
### Funding and support

FIGURE 6.1 Offered financial support (i.e., TA/RA positions, fellowships or scholarships) when you first began your current program



Overall, 63% of graduate students were offered some type of financial support when they initially began their graduate studies at the University. This percentage differs substantially across P&R Councils with over 75% of graduate students in Biological Sciences, Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences, and Language, Literature and Arts receiving financial support. In contrast, less than half of all students in Education and Psychology, Health Sciences and Social Science reported receiving financial support.

FIGURE 6.2 Number of years guaranteed full funding



The number of years that students were guaranteed FULL funding either through TA/RA positions, scholarships and fellowships also differed based on P&R Council. Obviously, the number of years receiving funding depends on whether the student is pursuing a Master's or Doctorate degree. Approximately 35% of doctoral students reported they were fully funded for 5 or more years. Most students pursuing a master's degree (30%) reported guaranteed funding for 1 to 2 years, which reflects the average time it takes to complete most Master's coursework.



TABLE 6.2 Average number of semesters receiving each type of support

|                               | Teaching Assistant | Research Assistant | Fellowship (admin) | Fellowship (non-service) | Scholarships |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Biological Sciences           | 2.6                | 5.0                | 2.3                | 4.2                      | 2.4          |
| Education & Psychology        | 4.2                | 4.0                | 3.6                | 3.0                      | 3.1          |
| Engineering, Physical & Math  | 3.5                | 3.9                | 2.5                | 3.0                      | 2.6          |
| Health Sciences               | 3.3                | 4.1                | 1.5                | 4.3                      | 2.8          |
| Lang, Lit & Arts              | 5.4                | 2.2                | 2.5                | 2.2                      | 3.1          |
| Social Science                | 5.1                | 3.3                | 2.5                | 2.4                      | 3.1          |
| Overall                       | 4.1                | 4.0                | 2.7                | 3.0                      | 2.9          |
| Received each type of support | 51%                | 50%                | 11%                | 18%                      | 24%          |

About half of current graduate students report being a teaching or research assistant. Less than 25% of current graduate students reported receiving fellowships or scholarships for school.

TABLE 6.3 Average number of semesters receiving each type of support

|                               | External Employer | Financial Aid | Personal | Other |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------|-------|
| Biological Sciences           | 3.0               | 3.6           | 4.0      | 4.1   |
| Education & Psychology        | 4.7               | 4.7           | 5.5      | 5.1   |
| Engineering, Physical & Math  | 4.7               | 3.6           | 3.6      | 4.1   |
| Health Sciences               | 4.3               | 4.7           | 4.6      | 4.4   |
| Lang, Lit & Arts              | 4.5               | 4.1           | 5.0      | 4.0   |
| Social Science                | 3.8               | 3.3           | 4.4      | 3.5   |
| Overall                       | 4.2               | 4.0           | 4.6      | 4.2   |
| Received each type of support | 26%               | 25%           | 41%      | 18%   |

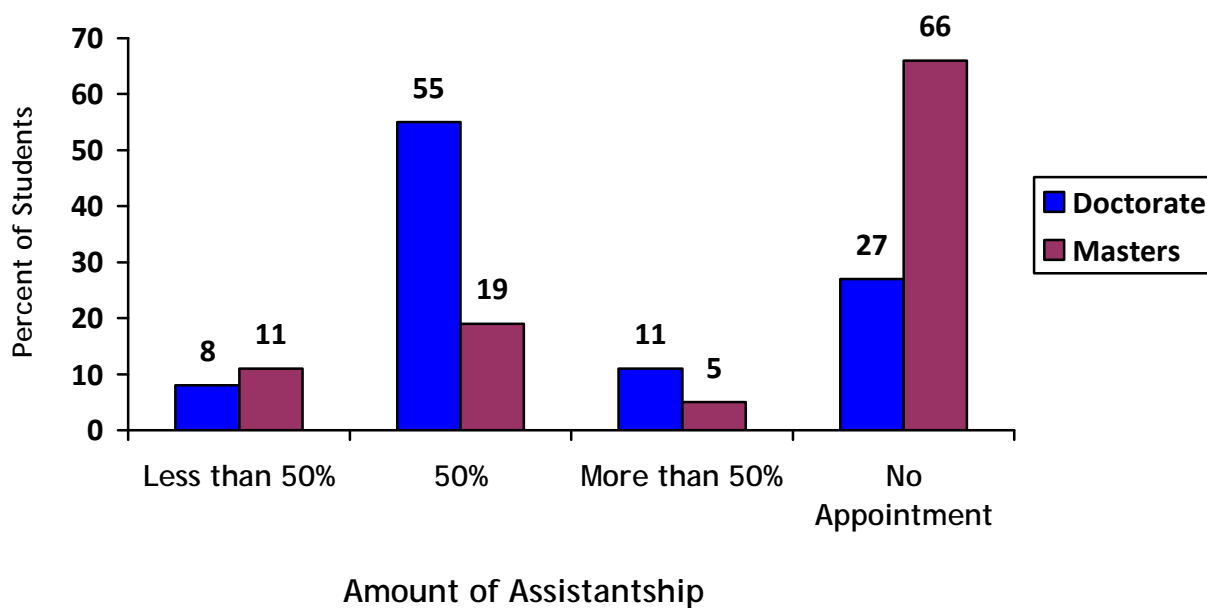
Current graduate students averaged more semesters of supporting themselves in school through personal finances (Table 6.3) than any other resource listed in Table 6.2.



TABLE 6.4 Type of Graduate Assistantship appointment you currently hold

|                              | Less than 25% | 25-49% | 50% | 51-75% | More than 75% | No appointment |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------|-----|--------|---------------|----------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 3%            | 5%     | 62% | 3%     | 10%           | 18%            |
| Education & Psychology       | 3%            | 9%     | 29% | 9%     | 1%            | 49%            |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 3%            | 6%     | 63% | 1%     | 6%            | 22%            |
| Health Sciences              | 2%            | 7%     | 19% | 2%     | 2%            | 70%            |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 2%            | 6%     | 49% | 9%     | 2%            | 33%            |
| Social Science               | 4%            | 5%     | 24% | 5%     | 1%            | 61%            |
| Overall                      | 3%            | 6%     | 41% | 5%     | 4%            | 42%            |

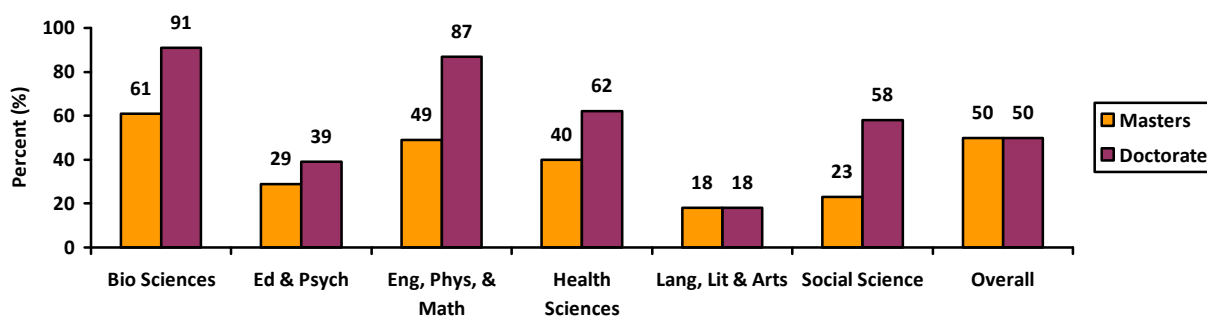
FIGURE 6.3 Type of Graduate Assistantship appointment by current degree being sought



Overall, 42% of graduate students reported no graduate assistantship appointment at the university. This differs substantially by P&R Council and also by current degree being sought. Most students without any appointment were currently working on their Master's degree (66%). Most students (41%) that did have graduate appointments were currently at 50% time per week or working 20 hours per week. Over half of all doctoral students reported this level of appointment.



FIGURE 6.3 Received funding during summer months



Overall, about the same percent of Master's and Doctorate students reported receiving funding during the summer. However, less than half of doctoral students in Education and Psychology and Language, Literature and Arts P&R Councils received funding during the summer, while most doctoral students in Biological Sciences and Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences received funding during the summer months.

### Sources of funding in addition to assistantships, fellowships, or scholarships

TABLE 6.6 Amount of funding received from Loans

|                              | None | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-10,000 | \$10,000 or more |
|------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 81%  | 6%            | 8%             | 5%               |
| Education & Psychology       | 54%  | 5%            | 23%            | 18%              |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 81%  | 7%            | 6%             | 6%               |
| Health Sciences              | 44%  | 3%            | 16%            | 37%              |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 54%  | 11%           | 23%            | 12%              |
| Social Science               | 50%  | 4%            | 19%            | 27%              |
| Overall                      | 62%  | 6%            | 16%            | 17%              |

Graduate students in Health Sciences and Social Science are more likely to report supporting themselves during their current degree program with \$10,000 or more in student loans than students in the other P&R Councils.



## Sources of funding (continued)

TABLE 6.7 Amount of funding received from Savings

|                              | None | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-10,000 | \$10,000 or more |
|------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 76%  | 19%           | 4%             | 1%               |
| Education & Psychology       | 52%  | 33%           | 11%            | 4%               |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 70%  | 20%           | 8%             | 2%               |
| Health Sciences              | 48%  | 31%           | 18%            | 4%               |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 56%  | 31%           | 12%            | 2%               |
| Social Science               | 53%  | 27%           | 14%            | 6%               |
| Overall                      | 60%  | 26%           | 11%            | 4%               |

TABLE 6.8 Amount of funding received from Credit Cards

|                              | None | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-10,000 | \$10,000 or more |
|------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 78%  | 15%           | 6%             | 1%               |
| Education & Psychology       | 73%  | 19%           | 6%             | 2%               |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 88%  | 11%           | 2%             | 0%               |
| Health Sciences              | 80%  | 17%           | 3%             | 0%               |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 71%  | 19%           | 10%            | 0%               |
| Social Science               | 77%  | 19%           | 4%             | 0.5%             |
| Overall                      | 78%  | 17%           | 5%             | 1%               |

TABLE 6.9 Amount of funding received from Parents

|                              | None | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-10,000 | \$10,000 or more |
|------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 84%  | 13%           | 2%             | 2%               |
| Education & Psychology       | 80%  | 13%           | 5%             | 3%               |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 79%  | 14%           | 5%             | 2%               |
| Health Sciences              | 83%  | 12%           | 1%             | 4%               |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 74%  | 18%           | 6%             | 3%               |
| Social Science               | 79%  | 13%           | 5%             | 3%               |
| Overall                      | 80%  | 14%           | 4%             | 3%               |



## Sources of funding (continued)

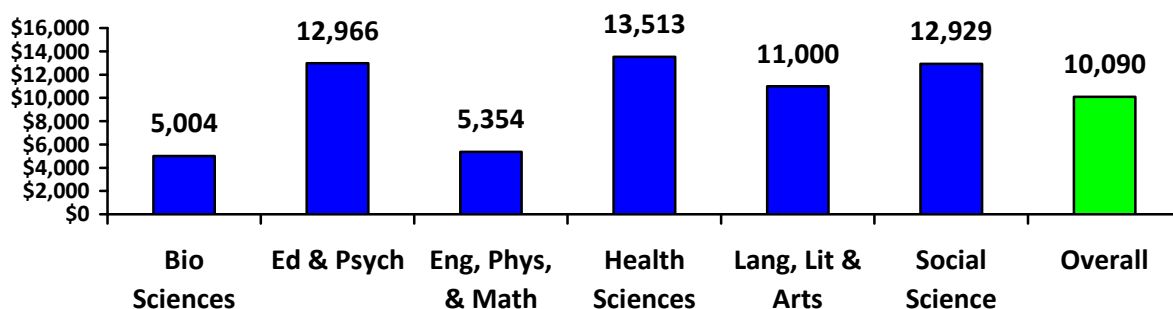
TABLE 6.10 Amount of funding received from Spouse or significant other

|                              | None | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-10,000 | \$10,000 or more |
|------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 80%  | 7%            | 5%             | 9%               |
| Education & Psychology       | 75%  | 11%           | 7%             | 8%               |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 89%  | 3%            | 2%             | 6%               |
| Health Sciences              | 72%  | 16%           | 7%             | 5%               |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 73%  | 8%            | 8%             | 11%              |
| Social Science               | 80%  | 6%            | 4%             | 9%               |
| Overall                      | 79%  | 8%            | 5%             | 8%               |

TABLE 6.11 Amount of funding received from Job

|                              | None | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-10,000 | \$10,000 or more |
|------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 81%  | 9%            | 4%             | 6%               |
| Education & Psychology       | 35%  | 21%           | 21%            | 23%              |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 75%  | 8%            | 10%            | 7%               |
| Health Sciences              | 37%  | 27%           | 20%            | 16%              |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 33%  | 31%           | 24%            | 12%              |
| Social Science               | 45%  | 15%           | 21%            | 19%              |
| Overall                      | 53%  | 17%           | 16%            | 14%              |

FIGURE 6.4 Average amount of funding received from other sources combined:



Overall, graduate students reported receiving about \$10,000 from all other sources combined (loans, savings, credit cards, parents, spouse, or jobs) to help finance their graduate education in addition to assistantships, fellowships, or scholarships.



## Sources of debt

TABLE 6.12 Amount of debt from undergraduate education

|                              | No debt | <\$10,000 | \$10,000-30,000 | \$30,000-50,000 | >\$50,000 |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Biological Sciences          | 53%     | 13%       | 27%             | 6%              | 2%        |
| Education & Psychology       | 69%     | 6%        | 18%             | 5%              | 2%        |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 73%     | 6%        | 16%             | 4%              | 1%        |
| Health Sciences              | 62%     | 10%       | 17%             | 8%              | 3%        |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 61%     | 10%       | 16%             | 11%             | 2%        |
| Social Science               | 59%     | 12%       | 19%             | 7%              | 2%        |
| Overall                      | 64%     | 9%        | 19%             | 7%              | 2%        |

Over half of all graduate students have no debt from undergrad. However, students in Biological Sciences are more likely to report carrying between \$10,000-30,000 in debt from undergraduate education.

TABLE 6.13 Amount of debt from graduate education

|                              | No debt | <\$10,000 | \$10,000-30,000 | \$30,000-50,000 | >\$50,000 |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Biological Sciences          | 73%     | 11%       | 11%             | 3%              | 3%        |
| Education & Psychology       | 41%     | 9%        | 26%             | 13%             | 11%       |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 76%     | 9%        | 10%             | 4%              | 1%        |
| Health Sciences              | 37%     | 12%       | 22%             | 15%             | 15%       |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 45%     | 19%       | 20%             | 10%             | 7%        |
| Social Science               | 43%     | 15%       | 24%             | 11%             | 7%        |
| Overall                      | 53%     | 12%       | 19%             | 9%              | 7%        |

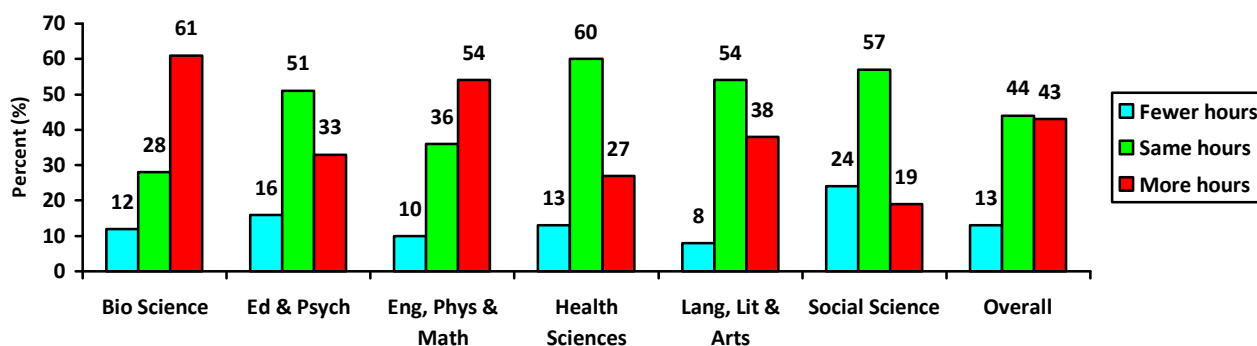
About 35% of current graduate students are shouldering over \$10,000 in debt due to grad school. This varies substantially by P&R Council with less than 20% of graduate students in Biological Sciences and Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences reporting that much debt. About 30% of graduate students in Health Sciences are shouldering \$30,000 or more in debt due to graduate school and 15% of these students are shouldering more than \$50,000 for their current graduation education. Students in the Education and Psychology P&R Council also report a very high percentage of students (11%) with over \$50,000 of debt due to graduate school.





## Assistantship positions

FIGURE 6.4 Number of hours per week graduate students report working in their assistantship position compared to the number of hours for which they are paid



Having graduate students participate actively in the University environment helps to build a stronger relationship between the student and the University, which can lead to better alumni relations in the future (i.e., donations, recommending programs, etc.). However, the expectations of graduate students in research and teaching roles should be realistic, compensated accordingly, and accurately reflect current appointments. Unfortunately, 43% of current graduate students reported working more hours per week than their current appointment requires. In general, doctoral students were more likely to report working more hours than their current appointment (46%) while students pursuing their Master's degree were more likely to report working about the same number as hours as their appointment (53%).

TABLE 6.15 Accuracy of job description in relation to responsibilities at the University

|                              | Excellent/Good | Fair/Poor | Never received description (%) |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 64%            | 12%       | 19%                            |
| Education & Psychology       | 78%            | 10%       | 10%                            |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 78%            | 8%        | 10%                            |
| Health Sciences              | 80%            | 7%        | 11%                            |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 74%            | 15%       | 10%                            |
| Social Science               | 78%            | 9%        | 6%                             |
| Overall                      | 75%            | 10%       | 11%                            |

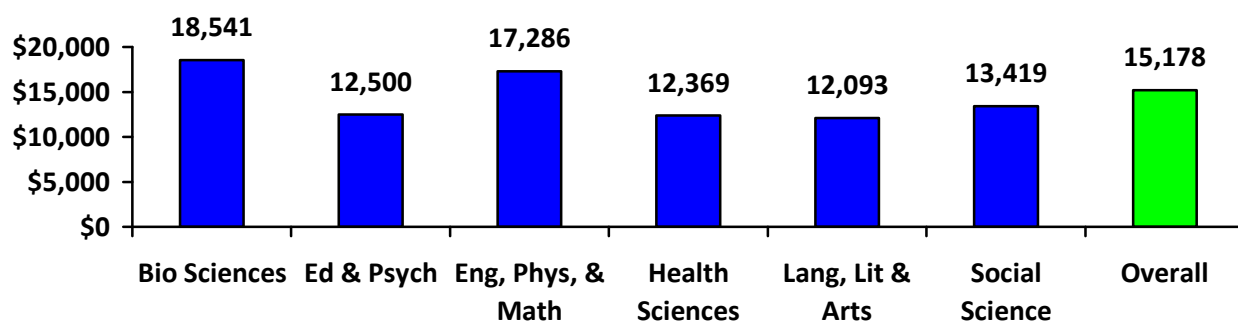
Most students (75%) report that their current job description accurately describes their actual responsibilities at the University. However, students in Language, Literature and Arts and Biological Sciences were more likely to report their current job description poorly describes their current duties. In addition, almost 20% of graduate students in Biological Sciences report never receiving a description of their current job.



TABLE 6.16 How much will you make from your assistantship or fellowship?

|                              | <\$10,000 | \$10,001-13,000 | \$13,001-16,000 | \$16,001-19,000 | \$19,001-22,000 | More than \$22,000 |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 6%        | 4%              | 12%             | 17%             | 26%             | 35%                |
| Education & Psychology       | 27%       | 26%             | 23%             | 13%             | 6%              | 5%                 |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 10%       | 7%              | 14%             | 16%             | 33%             | 20%                |
| Health Sciences              | 42%       | 11%             | 11%             | 6%              | 22%             | 9%                 |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 20%       | 46%             | 19%             | 11%             | 3%              | 2%                 |
| Social Science               | 20%       | 20%             | 30%             | 16%             | 11%             | 3%                 |
| Overall                      | 17%       | 17%             | 18%             | 15%             | 20%             | 15%                |

FIGURE 6.4 Average yearly salary from assistantship or fellowship

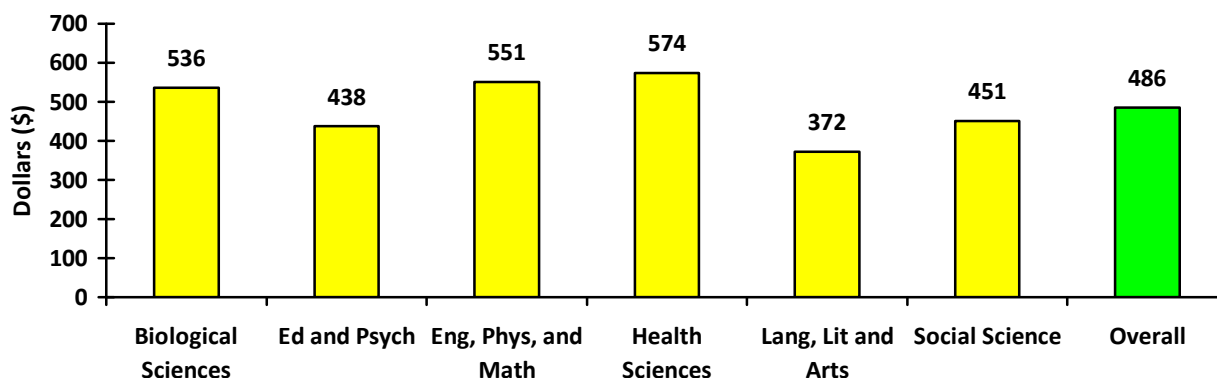


Current graduate students have many different roles and responsibilities in addition to advancing in their program, including teaching classes, participating in research projects, and in some cases, supporting a family. For many students, the only income received while in graduate school is from graduate assistant appointments or fellowships. About 20% of graduate students report making between \$19,000-22,000 per year from their assistantship or fellowship. On average, Master's students report about \$11,402 per year and Doctoral students report \$16,446. A much higher percentage of Biological Science and Engineering, Physical and Math Science students report making more than \$22,000 per year. On average, students in these two P&R Councils report the highest income with students in Biological Sciences reporting making on average \$18,541 and students in Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences making on average \$17,286. Students in the remaining P&R Councils reported salaries less than \$14,000 per year.



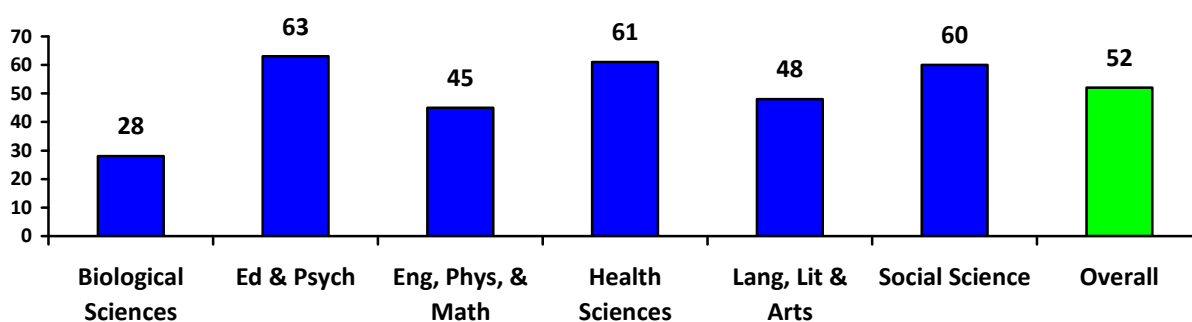
## SECTION VII Travel

FIGURE 7.1 Amount of money received in a typical year from department or advisor for travel



Overall, students receive about \$486 in a typical year from their department or advisor for travel. Students in Health Sciences, Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences, and Biological Sciences reported averages above the overall mean. Even so, the cost of current travel to conferences can easily be over \$1000 when registration, airfare, hotel and per diem costs are summed. If students are not fully funded for travel to conferences, some of these expenses will need to either come out of the student's pocket or from other resources.

FIGURE 7.2 Percent of students reporting they do not receive money for travel



About 52% of students reported not receiving any travel funding. Over half of students in Education and Psychology (63%), Health Sciences (61%) and Social Sciences (60%) P&R Councils reported not receiving any travel funding. When examining the results by degree status, about 70% of Master's students and 37% of doctoral students reported not receiving any travel funding.



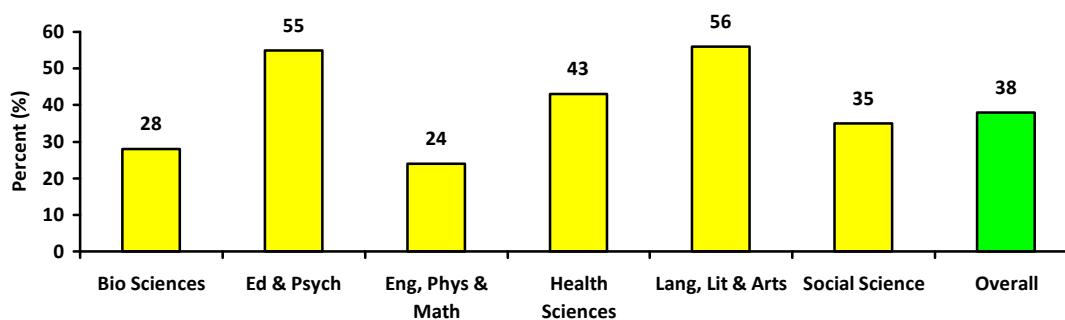
TABLE 7.2 Received travel funding from other sources:

|                              | COGS | GAPSA | Fellowship | Private Group | Other (conference award, job, etc) |
|------------------------------|------|-------|------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 2%   | 8%    | 19%        | 9%            | 3%                                 |
| Education & Psychology       | 3%   | 8%    | 7%         | 4%            | 4%                                 |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 0.2% | 3%    | 5%         | 4%            | 3%                                 |
| Health Sciences              | 2%   | 4%    | 6%         | 4%            | 5%                                 |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 3%   | 13%   | 12%        | 6%            | 6%                                 |
| Social Science               | 2%   | 3%    | 5%         | 3%            | 1%                                 |
| Overall                      | 2%   | 6%    | 8%         | 5%            | 3%                                 |

Percent responding "Yes"

Overall, only 24% of students reported they were able to secure travel funding from other sources including COGS, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA), fellowships, private groups or other sources including the conference governing body. However, there appears to be limited funding available from these other resources including University groups such as COGS and GAPSA. In the 2007-2008 school year, COGS received over 100 applications from graduate students requesting funding for travel. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, only 8 applicants were actually awarded funds.

FIGURE 7.2 Lack of funding has prevented you from attending a conference



Overall, 38% of students reported that lack of funding prevented them from attending a conference. More students in Education and Psychology and Language, Literature and Arts reported this problem. About 33% of Master's students and 41% of Doctorate students reported problems with lack of funding and the inability to attend a conference.



**SECTION VIII**  
**Lifestyle (includes personal expenses)**

**TABLE 8.1 Location of academic work time (i.e., studying, researching, grading)**

|                              | Home | Research Lab | On-campus office | On-campus library | On-campus computer lab | University public space | Coffee Shop | Other includes off-campus work, public library |
|------------------------------|------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--|
| Biological Sciences          | 48%  | 72%          | 38%              | 10%               | 4%                     | 4%                      | 13%         | 2%   |
| Education & Psychology       | 87%  | 11%          | 33%              | 15%               | 5%                     | 5%                      | 26%         | 5%   |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 53%  | 54%          | 45%              | 11%               | 11%                    | 6%                      | 9%          | 1%   |
| Health Sciences              | 86%  | 9%           | 20%              | 21%               | 12%                    | 12%                     | 14%         | 6%   |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 82%  | 4%           | 39%              | 31%               | 6%                     | 11%                     | 24%         | 3%   |
| Social Science               | 86%  | 4%           | 24%              | 18%               | 13%                    | 11%                     | 20%         | 3%   |
| Overall                      | 73%  | 26%          | 33%              | 16%               | 9%                     | 8%                      | 17%         | 3%   |

Percent responding "Yes"

Overall, most students report spending most of their academic work time at home except for individuals involved in lab sciences (i.e., biological sciences or engineering) who report spending most of their time in research labs.

**Residence**

**FIGURE 8.1 Location of primary residence**

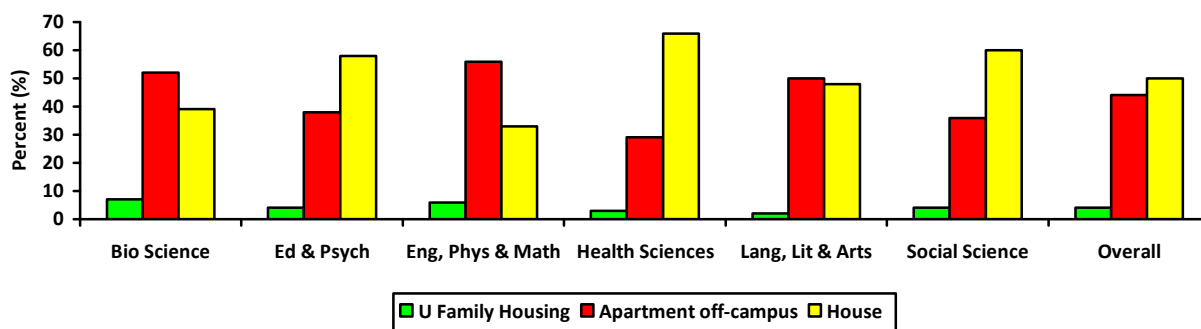




TABLE 8.3 Current living situation

|                              | By yourself | With Roommates | Parents | Partner | Spouse | Children |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------|---------|--------|----------|
| Biological Sciences          | 25%         | 23%            | 2%      | 10%     | 41%    | 11%      |
| Education & Psychology       | 19%         | 15%            | 3%      | 10%     | 53%    | 24%      |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 20%         | 38%            | 2%      | 7%      | 33%    | 12%      |
| Health Sciences              | 16%         | 17%            | 3%      | 13%     | 48%    | 21%      |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 24%         | 16%            | 2%      | 14%     | 44%    | 16%      |
| Social Science               | 22%         | 19%            | 4%      | 11%     | 44%    | 21%      |
| Overall                      | 21%         | 22%            | 3%      | 11%     | 43%    | 18%      |

Percent responding "Yes"

TABLE 8.4 Amount spent per month on housing

|                              | <\$500 | \$501-700 | \$701-900 | >\$900 |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Biological Sciences          | 23%    | 31%       | 17%       | 29%    |
| Education & Psychology       | 14%    | 22%       | 18%       | 46%    |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 32%    | 29%       | 14%       | 25%    |
| Health Sciences              | 13%    | 20%       | 13%       | 55%    |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 19%    | 24%       | 19%       | 39%    |
| Social Science               | 16%    | 22%       | 14%       | 49%    |
| Overall                      | 20%    | 25%       | 15%       | 40%    |

Most graduate students report living with their spouse and spending over \$900 per month on housing expenses.



## Health insurance

TABLE 8.5 Which health insurance plan are you enrolled in? (other work plan)

|                              | Grad Assistant | AHC  | University Student Plan | Parent's | Spouse's | Other | None |
|------------------------------|----------------|------|-------------------------|----------|----------|-------|------|
| Biological Sciences          | 80%            | 3%   | 3%                      | 5%       | 5%       | 8%    | 0%   |
| Education & Psychology       | 45%            | 1%   | 5%                      | 4%       | 15%      | 32%   | 0.3% |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 76%            | 0.2% | 6%                      | 3%       | 5%       | 12%   | 1%   |
| Health Sciences              | 27%            | 14%  | 3%                      | 7%       | 16%      | 35%   | 1%   |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 62%            | 1%   | 6%                      | 2%       | 11%      | 19%   | 3%   |
| Social Science               | 35%            | 1%   | 11%                     | 4%       | 9%       | 42%   | 1%   |
| Overall                      | 54%            | 2%   | 6%                      | 4%       | 10%      | 26%   | 1%   |

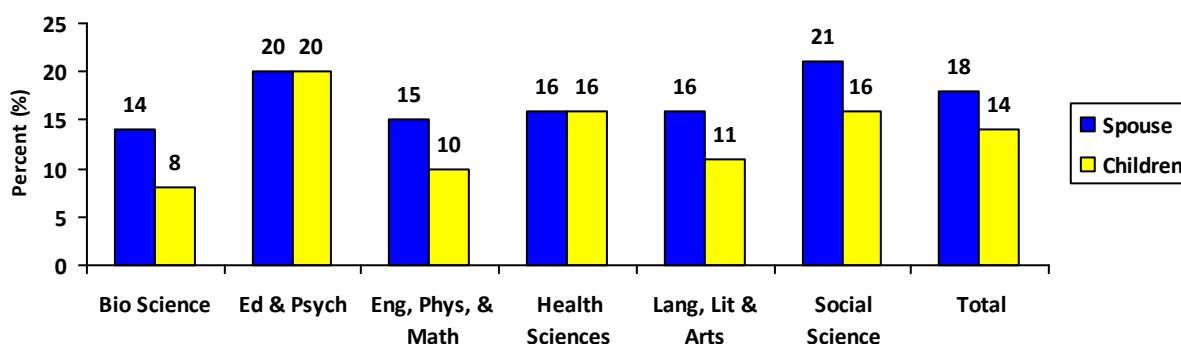
TABLE 8.6 Amount spent monthly on out-of-pocket health expenses for yourself

|                              | \$0-25 | \$26-50 | \$51-100 | >\$100 |
|------------------------------|--------|---------|----------|--------|
| Biological Sciences          | 63%    | 18%     | 10%      | 9%     |
| Education & Psychology       | 40%    | 26%     | 17%      | 17%    |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 65%    | 18%     | 9%       | 9%     |
| Health Sciences              | 42%    | 24%     | 16%      | 18%    |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 40%    | 28%     | 14%      | 18%    |
| Social Science               | 44%    | 22%     | 16%      | 18%    |
| Overall                      | 50%    | 22%     | 14%      | 15%    |

Most graduate students are currently enrolled in the Graduate Assistant Health Plan (Blue Cross and Blue Shield) or some other health plan offered by the University. About 10% of students are currently covered by their spouse's health insurance plan. Only 15% of students reported spending more than \$100 per month on themselves for health expenses.



FIGURE 8.1 Type of dependents enrolled on your current health insurance plan (N = 606)



Most students reported enrolling their spouse on their current health plan. About 12% of students enrolled in the Graduate Assistantship Plan also enrolled their spouse, while 7% of enrolled their children.

TABLE 8.8 Amount spent monthly on out-of-pocket health expenses for dependents (N=749)

|                              | \$0-100 | \$101-200 | \$201-300 | More than \$300 |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 68%     | 15%       | 9%        | 8%              |
| Education & Psychology       | 57%     | 21%       | 12%       | 10%             |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 64%     | 22%       | 7%        | 7%              |
| Health Sciences              | 62%     | 20%       | 8%        | 10%             |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 66%     | 17%       | 3%        | 14%             |
| Social Science               | 61%     | 24%       | 7%        | 9%              |
| Overall                      | 62%     | 21%       | 8%        | 9%              |

More than half of all graduate students with dependents report spending \$100 or less per month in out-of-pocket expenses for health.





TABLE 8.9 Mode of transportation to and from campus

|                              | Walk | Bike | Bus/Lightrail | Car | Carpool | Other<br>(telecommute,<br>motorcycle,<br>etc) |
|------------------------------|------|------|---------------|-----|---------|---|
| Biological Sciences          | 33%  | 31%  | 53%           | 49% | 9%      | 1%  |
| Education & Psychology       | 16%  | 16%  | 45%           | 71% | 9%      | 1%  |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 34%  | 33%  | 62%           | 33% | 4%      | 2%  |
| Health Sciences              | 19%  | 17%  | 39%           | 70% | 7%      | 1%  |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 18%  | 25%  | 61%           | 55% | 7%      | 2%  |
| Social Science               | 16%  | 17%  | 42%           | 68% | 6%      | 1%  |
| Overall                      | 23%  | 23%  | 50%           | 57% | 7%      | 1%  |

Over half of all graduate students reported driving to and from campus. This could be due to scheduling of graduate level classes or a reflection of graduate students that also work full-time and must commute directly from a job. Adequate parking is always a concern on campus, but administrators should also take into account the needs of graduate students who may be taking classes or conducting research not during regular business hours. Half of graduate students utilize the bus and light rail system.

TABLE 8.10 Difficulty in the following areas (Mean (SD))\*

|                              | Finding housing | Finding transportation to and from school | Finding daycare | Meeting people | Registering for classes | Signing up for health insurance |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 2.9 (0.73)      | 3.2 (0.74)                                | 2.3 (0.91)      | 2.8 (0.82)     | 3.2 (0.59)              | 3.0 (0.67)                      |
| Education & Psychology       | 2.7 (0.79)      | 3.1 (0.71)                                | 2.1 (0.94)      | 2.7 (0.73)     | 3.2 (0.60)              | 3.1 (0.67)                      |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 2.7 (0.72)      | 3.2 (0.65)                                | 2.3 (0.89)      | 2.7 (0.77)     | 3.2 (0.60)              | 3.1 (0.57)                      |
| Health Sciences              | 2.7 (0.66)      | 3.0 (0.73)                                | 2.0 (0.72)      | 2.9 (0.75)     | 3.3 (0.57)              | 2.8 (0.74)                      |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 2.6 (0.80)      | 3.1 (0.78)                                | 2.1 (1.03)      | 2.7 (0.77)     | 3.1 (0.62)              | 3.0 (0.68)                      |
| Social Science               | 2.8 (0.80)      | 3.1 (0.72)                                | 2.1 (0.86)      | 2.9 (0.72)     | 3.2 (0.67)              | 3.0 (0.64)                      |
| Overall                      | 2.8 (0.76)      | 3.1 (0.71)                                | 2.2 (0.88)      | 2.8 (0.76)     | 3.2 (0.62)              | 3.0 (0.65)                      |
| Not Applicable               | 34%             | 15%                                       | 89%             | 7%             | 2%                      | 28%                             |

\*Ratings are 1 = Very difficult, 2 = Difficult, 3 = Easy, 4 = Very Easy

Finding daycare was rated as difficult among graduate students while signing up for health insurance was rated as relatively easy.



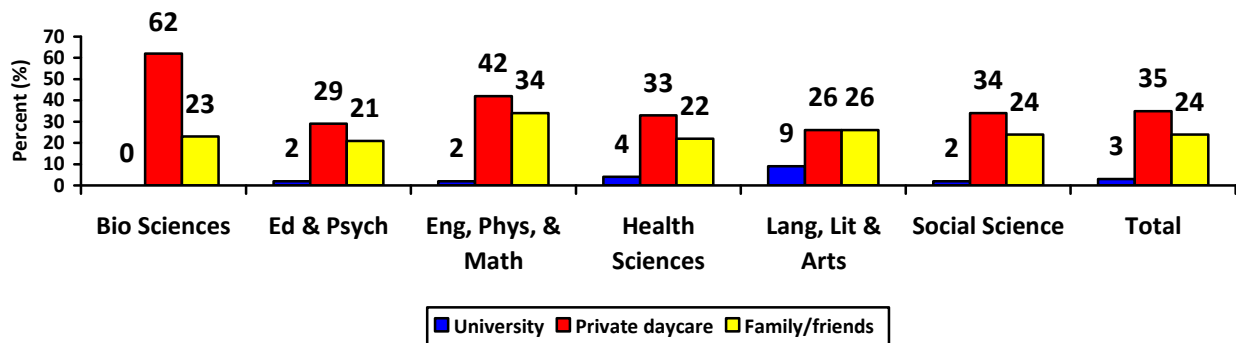
## Graduate students with children

TABLE 8.11 Number of children

|                              | None       | 1         | 2        | 3 or more |
|------------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Biological Sciences          | 225 (85%)  | 26 (10%)  | 7 (3%)   | 6 (2%)    |
| Education & Psychology       | 232 (67%)  | 48 (14%)  | 40 (12%) | 28 (8%)   |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 357 (87%)  | 26 (6%)   | 22 (5%)  | 5 (1%)    |
| Health Sciences              | 141 (74%)  | 16 (8%)   | 21 (11%) | 12 (6%)   |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 157 (77%)  | 17 (8%)   | 22 (11%) | 7 (4%)    |
| Social Science               | 374 (75%)  | 52 (10%)  | 53 (11%) | 23 (5%)   |
| Total                        | 1486 (78%) | 185 (10%) | 165 (9%) | 81 (4%)   |

About 22% of graduate students report having children. This translates to about 800 children total of current graduate students. About 134 of these children are also enrolled in the graduate student health insurance plan. Graduate students with children report that they spend about \$377 on average per month on out-of-pocket costs for child care. Consequently, graduate students report receiving on average \$107 in monthly child care subsidies.

FIGURE 8.2 Type of childcare services use (N=431)



Most graduate student parents utilize private daycare for their children (35%) or family members or friends (24%). Very few parents use child care services provided by the University of Minnesota (3%).



## SECTION IX

### Obstacles to Academic Progress

TABLE 9.1 Percent of students responding that each of the following is a “Major” obstacle to their academic progress

|                               | Avail-ability of faculty | Course scheduling | Dissertation/ thesis research obstacles | Family obliga-tions | Immigration laws or regulations | Program structure/ requirements | Work/ financial commit-ments | Other |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| Biological Sciences           | 9%                       | 4%                | 20%                                     | 9%                  | 7%                              | 7%                              | 17%                          | 11%   |
| Education & Psychology        | 19%                      | 10%               | 19%                                     | 18%                 | 3%                              | 8%                              | 35%                          | 10%   |
| Engineering , Physical & Math | 10%                      | 5%                | 15%                                     | 7%                  | 8%                              | 5%                              | 15%                          | 3%    |
| Health Sciences               | 4%                       | 9%                | 14%                                     | 16%                 | 3%                              | 7%                              | 30%                          | 5%    |
| Lang, Lit & Arts              | 17%                      | 12%               | 12%                                     | 11%                 | 5%                              | 13%                             | 29%                          | 15%   |
| Social Science                | 9%                       | 13%               | 10%                                     | 12%                 | 5%                              | 9%                              | 26%                          | 7%    |
| Overall                       | 11%                      | 9%                | 15%                                     | 12%                 | 5%                              | 8%                              | 25%                          | 8%    |

About 25% of graduate students reported that work or financial commitments were major obstacles to their academic progress. This was especially true for students in Education and Psychology, Health Sciences and Language, Literature, and Arts.

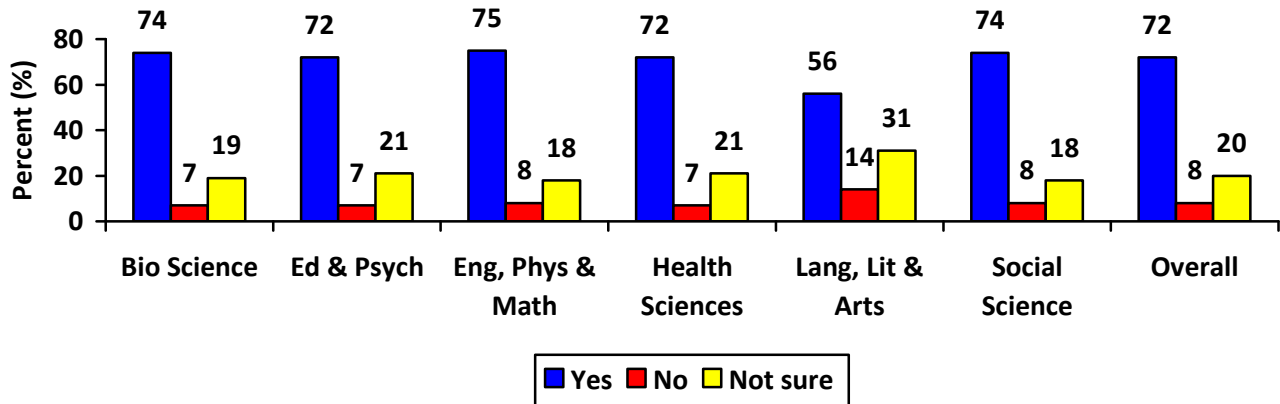
The availability of faculty was a concern for students in Education and Psychology and Language, Literature, and Arts P&R Councils. Students in Education and Psychology and Biological Sciences reported major obstacles with dissertation or thesis research.

Family obligations were a major obstacle for Education and Psychology and Health Sciences P&R Councils. Given that these students have a family to support, they may view work and financial commitments as more obstacles than other students in the same programs without families to support.

Very few students reported immigration, program requirements or course scheduling as major obstacles impeding their academic progress.

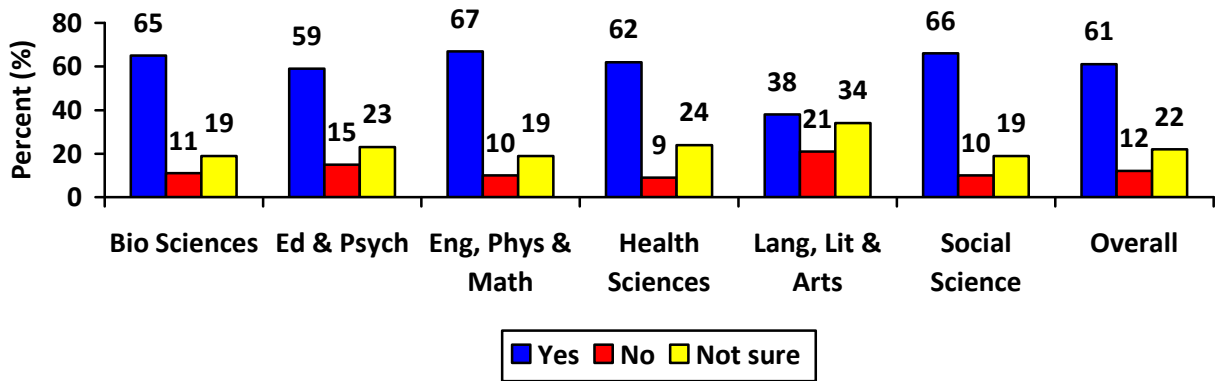


FIGURE 9.1 Would you still choose to attend the University of Minnesota knowing what you know now?



Overall, most students would still choose to attend the University of Minnesota (72%). However, current graduate students in Language, Literature, and Arts P&R Council were more likely to state either they would not choose to attend the University or were unsure about this choice. Results did not appear to differ overall by current degree being sought.

FIGURE 9.2 Would you recommend your program to other prospective students?



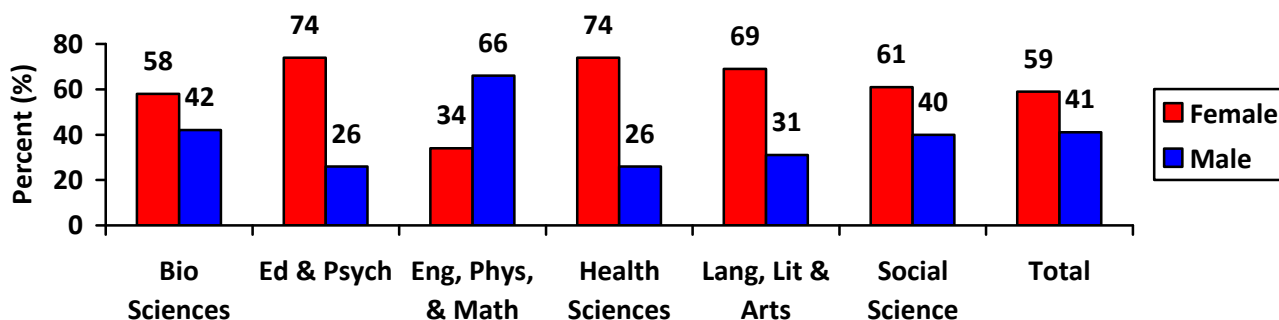
Overall, over half of all current graduate students would recommend their program to other prospective students (61%). However, less than half of students in the Language, Literature, and Arts P&R Council would recommend their program. About 21% of these students would not recommend their program to prospective students. Results did not appear to differ overall by current degree being sought.



## SECTION X

### Demographics of survey respondents

FIGURE 10.1 Gender of survey respondents



According to the University of Minnesota Graduate School website, 5,498 (51%) of enrolled graduate students are female and 5,220 (49%) are male. Survey respondents were more likely to be female.

TABLE 10.2 Age of survey respondents

|                              | Younger than 26 years | 26-30 years | 31-35 years | Older than 35 years |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Biological Sciences          | 26%                   | 46%         | 17%         | 12%                 |
| Education & Psychology       | 15%                   | 31%         | 17%         | 37%                 |
| Engineering, Physical & Math | 40%                   | 42%         | 13%         | 5%                  |
| Health Sciences              | 21%                   | 32%         | 20%         | 28%                 |
| Lang, Lit & Arts             | 13%                   | 38%         | 19%         | 31%                 |
| Social Science               | 16%                   | 42%         | 20%         | 22%                 |
| Overall                      | 23%                   | 39%         | 17%         | 21%                 |

According to the Graduate School website statistics, 28% of students are less than 26 years old, 34% are between the ages of 26-30 years, 17% are 31-35 years old and 21% are over 35 years old. Survey respondents followed similar age distribution patterns.



TABLE 10.3 Race/ethnicity of survey respondents

|                                    | AA/<br>Black | AI | Asian/<br>PI | White | Latino/<br>Hispanic | Multi-<br>racial | Other | Prefer<br>not to<br>answer |
|------------------------------------|--------------|----|--------------|-------|---------------------|------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| Biological<br>Sciences             | 1%           | 1% | 14%          | 70%   | 5%                  | 2%               | 1%    | 7%                         |
| Education &<br>Psychology          | 2%           | 1% | 9%           | 74%   | 2%                  | 1%               | 2%    | 8%                         |
| Engineering,<br>Physical &<br>Math | 1%           | 0% | 29%          | 56%   | 1%                  | 1%               | 3%    | 8%                         |
| Health<br>Sciences                 | 3%           | 1% | 11%          | 74%   | 2%                  | 2%               | 2%    | 6%                         |
| Lang, Lit &<br>Arts                | 2%           | 1% | 7%           | 66%   | 2%                  | 3%               | 3%    | 17%                        |
| Social Science                     | 2%           | 1% | 9%           | 71%   | 3%                  | 2%               | 3%    | 9%                         |
| Overall                            | 2%           | 1% | 14%          | 68%   | 2%                  | 2%               | 2%    | 9%                         |

TABLE 10.4 Citizenship status of survey respondents

|                                 | U.S.<br>citizen | International<br>Student Visa | Non-resident<br>alien | Resident<br>alien | Prefer not<br>to answer |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Biological<br>Sciences          | 79%             | 17%                           | 3%                    | 2%                | 0%                      |
| Education &<br>Psychology       | 87%             | 10%                           | 0.3%                  | 1%                | 2%                      |
| Engineering,<br>Physical & Math | 59%             | 30%                           | 5%                    | 4%                | 2%                      |
| Health Sciences                 | 84%             | 11%                           | 2%                    | 2%                | 2%                      |
| Lang, Lit & Arts                | 86%             | 8%                            | 1%                    | 2%                | 3%                      |
| Social Science                  | 82%             | 10%                           | 1%                    | 4%                | 2%                      |
| Overall                         | 78%             | 15%                           | 2%                    | 3%                | 2%                      |

When compared with the graduate school, approximately 2,600 or 24% of students are attending the school on an International Student Visa.



TABLE 10.5 Relationship status of survey respondents

|                                 | Single     | Married    | Divorced/<br>Widowed | Domestic<br>Partner | Committed<br>Relationship |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Biological<br>Sciences          | 40%        | 42%        | 2%                   | 4%                  | 13%                       |
| Education &<br>Psychology       | 29%        | 52%        | 2%                   | 5%                  | 12%                       |
| Engineering,<br>Physical & Math | 53%        | 34%        | 1%                   | 1%                  | 11%                       |
| Health Sciences                 | 27%        | 50%        | 3%                   | 5%                  | 16%                       |
| Lang, Lit & Arts                | 33%        | 46%        | 5%                   | 4%                  | 12%                       |
| Social Science                  | 37%        | 47%        | 3%                   | 3%                  | 13%                       |
| <b>Overall</b>                  | <b>37%</b> | <b>45%</b> | <b>3%</b>            | <b>3%</b>           | <b>13%</b>                |

More survey respondents reported they are currently married or in a committed relationship than single. However, students in the Engineering, Physical and Math Sciences P&R Council were more likely to report being single.



## APPENDIX 1 SURVEY INVITATION EMAIL

Subject: Invitation to take PILOT of COGS Biennial Grad Student Survey!

Dear University of MN Graduate Student:

As the current academic year is coming to a close, you may be wondering how you can voice your opinions to faculty and administrators on issues affecting graduate students. Here is your chance! The Biennial Graduate Student Survey is a project being undertaken by the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) and the Graduate School to better understand the climate of graduate education here at the U of MN.

Please take about 15 minutes to complete the survey at the link provided below before Friday, May 9. Every graduate student at the U of MN is being asked to give their opinions on issues such as availability of funding, professional opportunities and program satisfaction. It is important that all graduate students participate so that accurate and complete information is available for policy decisions affecting graduate student life.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. Your responses will only be used for statistical analysis and summary comments: no individuals will ever be identified.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have about the survey and to make alternative formats of the survey available upon request. Please email us at [cogs@umn.edu](mailto:cogs@umn.edu).

Thank you in advance for participating in the Biennial Graduate Student Survey! Your perspective will inform decision-making affecting both current and future graduate students at the U of MN.

Sincerely,

The Council of Graduate Students

Link to the Biennial Graduate Student Survey provided here





## APPENDIX 2

### BIENNIAL GRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY

On behalf of the University of Minnesota Graduate School, the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) is soliciting your responses on several issues related to graduate education at the U of MN. This survey has been designed in a collaborative effort to assist the graduate school learn more about the experiences of its graduate students. Your answers will be used by COGS to evaluate existing services and program, and to advise current and future initiatives. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your help with this important project! We appreciate your input to improve the graduate student experience across the university.

#### EDUCATIONAL STATUS

1. What is your current degree objective at the University of Minnesota?
  - Master's
  - Doctorate
  - Master's and Doctorate
  - Specialty Certificate
  
2. Select your degree program from the pull-down list.  
(See Appendix 3: Listing of all Departments by P&R Council)
  
3. What is your current enrollment status?
  - Part-time (enrolled in fewer than 6 credits)
  - Full-time (enrolled in 6 or more credits, or post-orals)
  
4. What was your primary activity immediately prior to starting your program at the University of Minnesota?
  - Undergraduate student
  - Graduate student
  - Volunteer/Community service
  - Cared for family members
  - Employed in a field RELATED to that of current study
  - Employed in a field UNRELATED to that of current study
  - None of the above



5. In which academic year did you first enroll in a graduate degree program at the University of Minnesota?

- Before 1998
- 1998-1999
- 1999-2000
- 2000-2001
- 2001-2002
- 2002-2003
- 2003-2004
- 2004-2005
- 2005-2006
- 2006-2007
- 2007-2008

6. What degree were you originally seeking when you enrolled in the University of MN Graduate School?

- Master's
- Doctorate
- Master's and Doctorate
- Specialty Certificate

7. Have you completed a Master's degree?

- Yes, at the University of Minnesota
- Yes, as another institution
- No

8. How much time have you taken off from school (not including summers or vacations) since starting graduate study at the University of Minnesota?

- None
- A few months to 1 year
- More than 1 year, less than 2 years
- More than 2 years, less than 3 years
- More than 3 years, less than 4 years
- More than 4 years, less than 5 years
- 5 or more years

9. What is your current status in your graduate program?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Still taking courses
- Completed coursework
- Passed qualifying written exams/papers
- Passed qualifying oral exams
- Dissertation proposal accepted
- Defended my dissertation/thesis



10. What is your best estimate of how many years TOTAL (including time off, such as a leave of absence) you anticipate it taking you to complete your degree?

- o 1 year
- o 2 years
- o 3 years
- o 4 years
- o 5 years
- o 6 years
- o 7 years
- o 8 years
- o 9 years
- o 10 or more years

**ACADEMIC LIFE**

11. Rate the following dimensions of academic quality.

|   | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|
| Academic standards in my program              |           |      |      |      |
| Advising / mentoring relationships            |           |      |      |      |
| Graduate level seminars                       |           |      |      |      |
| Inclusion of current developments in my field |           |      |      |      |
| Overall program quality                       |           |      |      |      |
| Program curriculum                            |           |      |      |      |
| Program space / facilities                    |           |      |      |      |
| Research opportunities                        |           |      |      |      |

12. While in graduate school at the U of MN have you had the opportunity to:

|  | Yes | No | Not Interested/<br>Not Applicable |
|--|-----|----|-----------------------------------|
| Apply your professional knowledge in a non-academic setting (i.e. community presentations, judging at science fairs, consulting, internships, etc.)? |     |    |                                   |
| Collaborate with professionals outside the university on research (industry, government, etc.)?  |     |    |                                   |
| Conduct your own research?   |     |    |                                   |
| Engage in a community-based project?   |     |    |                                   |
| Attend a professional conference?  |     |    |                                   |
| Present a paper or poster at a conference?   |     |    |                                   |
| Publish as a co-author (regardless of publication status)?   |     |    |                                   |
| Publish as a first author (regardless of publication status)?  |     |    |                                   |



13. Based on your experience thus far, how would you rate the quality of the following aspects of your program curriculum?

|  | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Not Applicable |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|----------------|
| Depth (i.e. ability to examine key concepts in detail)                           |           |      |      |      |                |
| Breadth (i.e. ability to examine a variety of key concepts)                      |           |      |      |      |                |
| Integration of diverse perspectives (i.e. ability to examine various viewpoints) |           |      |      |      |                |
| Ability to prepare me for my future employment                                   |           |      |      |      |                |

### ADVISING

14. How often do you typically communicate with your advisor(s)?

- Less than once a semester
- Once a semester
- Less than once a month, but more than once a semester
- Once or twice a month
- Once a week
- More than once a week

15. How often do you typically meet with your advisor(s) to discuss YOUR research?

- Less than once a semester
- Once a semester
- Less than once a month, but more than once a semester
- Once or twice a month
- Once a week
- More than once a week
- Not engaged in research activities

16. How would you rate the quality of advising you have received in the following tasks?

|                                       | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Not Applicable |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|----------------|
| Completing degree program forms       |           |      |      |      |                |
| Written exams                         |           |      |      |      |                |
| Oral exams                            |           |      |      |      |                |
| Thesis / dissertation writing         |           |      |      |      |                |
| Preparing manuscripts for publication |           |      |      |      |                |
| Preparing conference presentations    |           |      |      |      |                |
| Grant writing                         |           |      |      |      |                |



17. Have you changed advisors during your graduate education at the University of Minnesota?

- Yes
- No

18. Which of the following reasons contributed to your desire / need to change advisors?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Availability of advisor
- Interpersonal style
- Quality of advising
- Advisor left the U of MN
- Lack of funding opportunities
- Other reasons

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & JOB PREPARATION

19. Have you had teaching experience at the University of Minnesota?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Primary instructor for a course
- Led discussion/lab section
- One-time experience
- No experience

20. For each of these instructor / teaching assistant training programs, rate the quality of services you received?

|                                    | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Training Received |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|----------------------|
| Department                         |           |      |      |      |                      |
| Preparing Future Faculty           |           |      |      |      |                      |
| Center for Teaching and Learning   |           |      |      |      |                      |
| Other University-provided training |           |      |      |      |                      |

21. Have you begun searching for a job in your field, for after graduation?

- Yes
- No



22. How would you rate the quality of assistance you have received at the University on the following job search tasks?

|                                    | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Assistance Provided | Not Applicable |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------------------|----------------|
| A curriculum vitae (resume)        |           |      |      |      |                        |                |
| Teaching statement                 |           |      |      |      |                        |                |
| Searching / finding open positions |           |      |      |      |                        |                |
| Practice job talk                  |           |      |      |      |                        |                |
| Interview process                  |           |      |      |      |                        |                |

23. Which of the following best describes the position you will be seeking for professional employment immediately after you complete your graduate degree?

- Tenure track faculty position
- Non-tenure track faculty position
- Other teaching position
- Postdoctoral researcher, fellow, or associate
- Internship
- Researcher, academic setting
- Researcher, non-academic setting (e.g. national laboratory, industry, medical center, non-profit)
- Professional position in industry
- Undecided
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## FINANCES

24. When you first began your current program, were you offered any financial support (assistantship or fellowship)?

- Yes
- No

25. How many full years of guaranteed funding (assistantship or fellowship) were you offered?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5 years



26. Using the following scale, please indicate the approximate number of terms you have received each type of support.

*(Summer term should be considered equal to one semester.)*

|                           | 9 or more semesters | 7-8<br>sems | 5-6<br>sems | 3-4<br>sems | 1-2<br>sems | None |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------|
| Teaching assistantship    |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Research assistantship    |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Administrative fellowship |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Non-service fellowship    |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Scholarship               |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| External employer         |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Need-based financial aid  |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Personal / family funding |                     |             |             |             |             |      |
| Other funding             |                     |             |             |             |             |      |

27. What percentage graduate assistantship appointment do you currently have at the University?

- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50%
- 51-75%
- More than 75%
- No appointment at the U *(Go on to Question #28; skip Questions #27a-c)*

### **ASSISTANTSHIPS**

*(If you have any percentage graduate assistantship currently at the University, please complete Questions #27a-c)*

27a. On average, how many hours a week do you work on your assistantship position(s) throughout the semester?

- Fewer hours than your appointment(s)
- About the same hours as your appointment(s)
- More hours than your appointment(s)

27b. Overall, how accurately have your job description(s) portrayed your responsibilities in University position(s)?

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Never received job description for my position
- Not applicable



27c. How much in salary or stipend will you make this year from your 9- or 12- month assistantship or fellowship?

*(Do not include outside employment.)*

- Less than \$3,500
- \$3,500-7,000
- \$7,001-10,000
- \$10,001-13,000
- \$13,001-16,000
- \$16,001-19,000
- \$19,001-22,000
- More than \$22,000

28. Do you typically receive funding over the summer?

- Yes
- No

29. In a typical year, how much funding do you receive from following sources (in addition to assistantship/fellowship/scholarship)?

|                                      | None | \$1-1,000 | \$1,000-3,000 | \$3,000-5,000 | \$5,000-10,000 | \$10,000-15,000 | More than \$15,000 |
|--------------------------------------|------|-----------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Loans                                |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| Savings                              |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| Credit Card(s)                       |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| Parents                              |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| Spouse or significant other          |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| A job using your professional skills |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| Other job                            |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |
| Other funding                        |      |           |               |               |                |                 |                    |

30. How much debt do you currently have from your undergraduate education?

- No debt
- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000-\$30,000
- \$30,000-\$50,000
- \$50,000-\$70,000
- \$70,000-\$100,000
- More than \$100,000





31. How much debt do you currently have from your graduate education?

- No debt
- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000-\$30,000
- \$30,000-\$50,000
- \$50,000-\$70,000
- \$70,000-\$100,000
- More than \$100,000

32. How much travel money do you receive in a typical year from your department and/or advisor?

- \$0
- \$1-99
- \$100-199
- \$200-299
- \$300-399
- \$400-499
- \$500-599
- \$600-699
- \$700-799
- More than \$800
- Not applicable

33. Have you received funding for travel from other sources?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- COGS Travel Grant
- GAPSA Travel Grant
- Fellowship support
- Private group
- Other

34. Has lack of funding prevented you from attending a conference?

- Yes
- No



## STUDENT LIFE

35. Where do you spend a majority of your academic work time (studying, researching, grading)?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Home
- Research lab
- Shared on-campus office
- Private on-campus office
- On-campus library
- On-campus computer lab
- Other University public space (i.e.: Coffman, SPSC)
- Coffee shop
- Other

36. Which of the following best describes your primary residence?

*(Select one from the list below.)*

- University Dorm
- University Family Housing
- Apartment on-campus
- Apartment off-campus
- House on-campus
- House off-campus

37. What is your current living situation?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Live by myself
- Live with roommates
- Live with parents
- Live with a partner
- Live with spouse
- Live with children

38. How much do you spend monthly on housing?

- less than \$300
- \$301-\$500
- \$501-\$700
- \$701-\$900
- \$901-\$1,100
- \$1,100 or more



39. Which health insurance plan(s) are you enrolled in?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Graduate Assistantship Plan (Blue Cross & Blue Shield)
- Academic Health Services Plan
- University Student Plan
- Parent's plan
- Spouse's or significant other's plan
- Other health insurance plan
- None

40. On average, how much do you spend on monthly, out-of-pocket health costs for YOURSELF (including co-pays, prescriptions, premiums)?

- \$0-25
- \$26-50
- \$51-100
- \$101-150
- \$151 or more

41. Do you have dependents enrolled in your health insurance plan?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Spouse or significant other
- Children
- None

42. On average, how much do you spend on monthly, out-of-pocket health costs for your DEPENDENTS (including co-pays, prescriptions, premiums)?

- \$0-\$100
- \$101-\$200
- \$201-\$300
- \$301-\$400
- \$401 or more
- I do not have dependents

43. How do you get to and from campus?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- Walk
- Bike
- Bus/Lightrail
- Car
- Carpool
- Other



44. How many children do you have?
- 0 (*Go on to Question #45; skip Questions #44a-d*)
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4 or more

### CHILDREN

*(If you have any children, please complete Questions #44a-d)*

44a. On average, how much do you spend on monthly, out-of-pocket child care costs?

- \$0-\$200
- \$201-\$400
- \$401-\$600
- \$601-\$800
- \$801 or more

44b. How much do you receive in monthly child care subsidies?

- \$0-\$200
- \$201-\$400
- \$401-\$600
- \$601-\$800
- \$801 or more

44c. From whom do you receive child care services?

*(Check all that apply.)*

- The University of Minnesota
- A private child care center
- Family or friends

44d. How many of your children are enrolled in the graduate student health insurance plan?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more



45. Upon starting your graduate education at the U of MN, how would you rate your experience in each of the following areas?

|  | Very<br>Difficult | Difficult | Easy | Very Easy | Not<br>Applicable |
|--|-------------------|-----------|------|-----------|-------------------|
| Finding housing                              |                   |           |      |           |                   |
| Finding transportation<br>to and from campus |                   |           |      |           |                   |
| Finding daycare                              |                   |           |      |           |                   |
| Meeting people                               |                   |           |      |           |                   |
| Registering for classes                      |                   |           |      |           |                   |
| Signing up for health<br>insurance           |                   |           |      |           |                   |

**OVERALL SATISFACTION**

46. Rate the extent to which the following factors have been an obstacle to your academic progress.

|   | Not an<br>Obstacle | A Minor<br>Obstacle | A Major<br>Obstacle |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Availability of faculty                     |                    |                     |                     |
| Course scheduling                           |                    |                     |                     |
| Dissertation / thesis research<br>obstacles |                    |                     |                     |
| Family obligations                          |                    |                     |                     |
| Immigration laws or regulations             |                    |                     |                     |
| Program structure/requirements              |                    |                     |                     |
| Work/financial commitments                  |                    |                     |                     |
| Other                                       |                    |                     |                     |

47. Knowing what you know now, would you still choose to attend the University of Minnesota?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

48. Knowing what you know now, would you recommend your program to other prospective students?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

49. Please share anything else you would like us to know about your graduate student experience here at the University of Minnesota.



## APPENDIX 3

### LISTING OF ALL PROGRAMS BY POLICY & REVIEW COUNCIL

#### BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES P & R COUNCIL

- Animal Sciences
- Applied Plant Sciences
- Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biophysics
- Biological Science
- Cellular and Integrative Physiology
- Comparative and Molecular Biosciences
- Conservation Biology
- DULUTH: Biology
- Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior
- Entomology
- Food Science
- Integrated Biosciences
- Landscape Architecture
- Medicinal Chemistry
- Microbial Engineering
- Microbiology, Immunology and Cancer Biology
- Molecular, Cellular, Developmental Biology and Genetics
- Natural Resources Science and Management
- Neuroscience
- Nutrition
- Oral Biology
- Pharmaceuticals
- Pharmacology
- Plant Biological Sciences
- Plant Pathology
- Soil Science
- Toxicology

#### EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY P & R COUNCIL

- Audiology
- Child Psychology
- Duluth: Communication Sciences & Disorders; Teaching & Learning
- Education, Curriculum & Instruction
- Educational Policy & Administration
- Educational Psychology
- Kinesiology
- Psychology
- Recreation, Park, & Leisure Studies
- Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences
- Work & Human Resource Education



## HEALTH SCIENCES P & R COUNCIL

- Biostatistics
- Clinical Laboratory Science
- Clinical Research
- Dentistry
- Environmental Health
- Epidemiology
- Health Informatics
- Health Services Research, Policy & Administration
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Otolaryngology
- Physical Therapy
- Rehabilitation Science
- Social, Administrative, & Clinical Pharmacy
- Surgery; Experimental Surgery
- Veterinary Medicine

## LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & THE ARTS P & R COUNCIL

- American Studies
- Arabic
- Art
- Art History
- Asian Literatures, Cultures & Media
- Classical & Near Eastern Studies
- Comparative Literature
- Comparative Studies in Discourse & Society
- Creative Writing
- Design, Housing & Apparel
- Duluth: Art; English; Music
- English
- English as a Second Language
- French
- Germanic Studies
- Hispanic & Luso-Brazilian Literatures & Linguistics
- Hispanic & Lusophone Literatures, Cultures & Linguistics
- Liberal Studies
- Linguistics
- Music
- Rhetoric and Scientific & Technical Communication
- Theatre Arts



## ENGINEERING, PHYSICAL, AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES P & R COUNCIL

- Aerospace Engineering
- Architecture
- Astrophysics
- Biomedical Engineering
- Biomedical Informatics and Computational Biology
- Biophysical Sciences and Medical Physics
- Bioproducts and Biosystems Science, Engineering and Management
- Chemical Engineering
- Chemical Physics
- Chemistry
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Science
- Control Science & Dynamical Systems
- Duluth: Applied & Computational Mathematics; Chemistry; Computer Science; Electrical and Computer Engineering; Engineering Management; Geological Sciences; Physics
- Electrical Engineering
- Financial Mathematics
- Geological Engineering
- Geology
- Geophysics
- History of Science & Technology & Medicine
- Industrial & Systems Engineering
- Infrastructure Systems Engineering
- Materials Science & Engineering
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Physics
- Scientific Computation
- Software Engineering
- Statistics
- Water Resources Science





## SOCIAL SCIENCES P & R COUNCIL

- Accountancy
- Anthropology
- Applied Economics
- Business Administration
- Business Taxation
- Communication Studies
- Duluth: Business Administration; Criminology; Liberal Studies; Social Work
- Economics
- Family Social Science
- Feminist Studies
- Geographic Information Science
- Geography
- Health Journalism & Communication
- History
- Human Resources & Industrial Relations
- Management of Technology
- Mass Communication
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Public Affairs
- Public Policy
- Science, Technology & Environmental Policy
- Scientific & Technical Communication
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Strategic Communication
- Urban & Regional Planning