



EXIT SURVEY

SPRING 2012 AND SUMMER 2012

Linda L. Black, Ed.D., Sonja Rizzolo, Ph.D. and Sara Knippenberg, M.A.

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO

Graduate School and
International Admissions

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EXIT SURVEY

Introduction and Demographics

OVERVIEW

The Graduate Student Exit Survey was completed by UNC's masters, specialist, and doctoral students who graduated in spring and summer 2012. The survey was developed to assess students' opinions about their experiences at the University. Besides some general satisfaction questions, questions focused on satisfaction with program faculty, mentoring, the thesis and dissertation process if applicable, career services and employment. The results will guide improvements in Graduate School services.

METHODS

The Exit Survey was developed by the Graduate School and International Admissions Office. While most data contained in this report were based on student responses to the survey, some data such as degree obtained were obtained from our institutional data system (Banner). Graduates received an invitation to participate about two weeks after graduation along with the Qualtrics survey. Three reminder e-mails were sent to increase the response rate. In addition, all participants had the opportunity to enter into a raffle for a chance to win one of the five Graduate School gift baskets. Of the 561 individuals who received an Exit Survey in spring and summer 2012, 218 graduate students completed the survey for an average response rate of 38.9%.

	SPRING 2012	SUMMER 2012
Total # of Graduates	234	327
Total # of Respondents	120	98
Overall Response Rate	51.3%	30.0%

DEMOGRAPHICS

The majority of respondents were White (61.9%, see Figure 1), female (78.9%), primarily enrolled full-time (73.0%), earned a Master's degree (79.4%) and had a cumulative GPA above 3.5 (92.2%). The average age of the respondent was 34 years old ($SD=9.80$). Furthermore, the majority of survey respondents attended classes on the Greeley campus (54.9%). The demographic composition of the respondents was very similar to the characteristics of the spring and summer 2012 graduates.

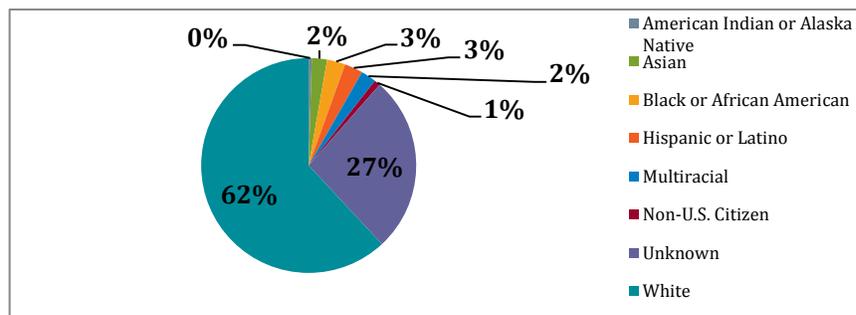


Figure 1. Ethnicity Respondents.

EXIT SURVEY

Purpose for Pursuing a Graduate Degree

The first question on the survey asked the graduates to indicate their main reason for pursuing a graduate degree at UNC. Forty-seven percent of the respondents chose to start a graduate degree so they can enter their chosen profession; 16.5% did so to advance personal knowledge; 16.1% to change careers; 12.8% did so to improve salaries; 5.0% did so to get a promotion and 1.4% did so to prepare for self-employment. One percent indicated other, responses included: “advance my career,” “all the above except to change careers,” and “to increase marketability” (see Figure 2 for more details). Table 1 displays the percentages for master/specialist and doctoral students.

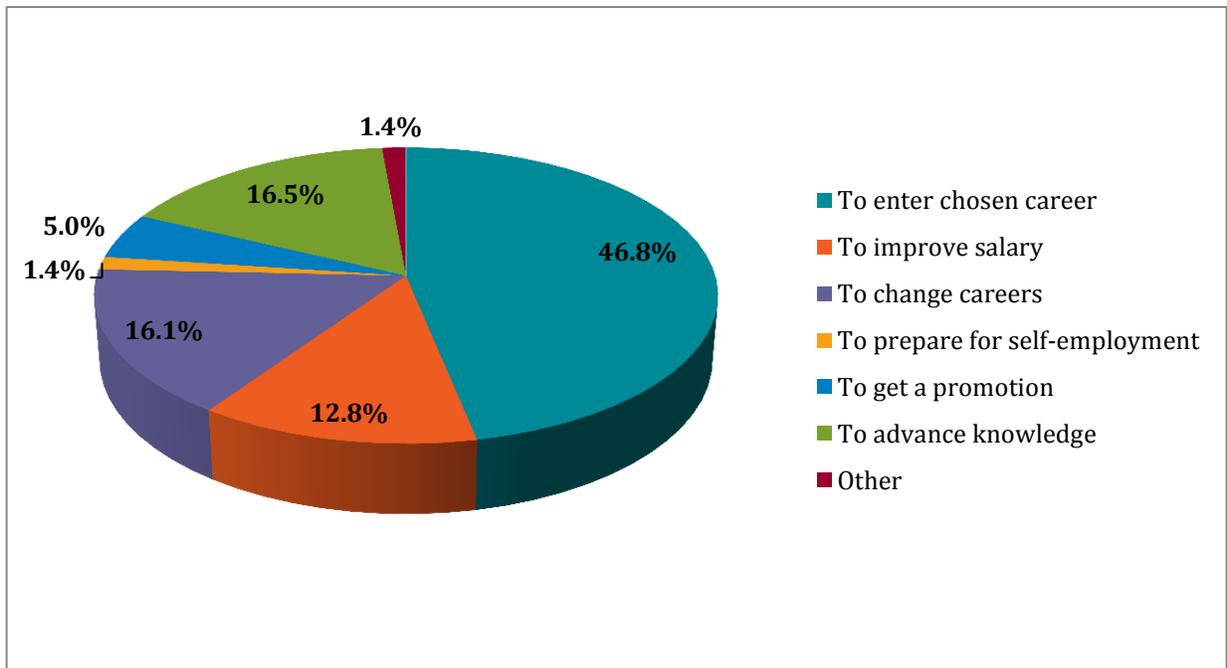


Figure 2. Purpose for Pursuing a Graduate Degree

TABLE 1. PURPOSE FOR PURSUING A GRADUATE DEGREE BY DEGREE LEVEL

	MASTER/SPECIALIST(N=179)	DOCTORAL (N=39)
To enter my chosen career	44.1%	59.0%
To improve salary	15.1%	2.6%
To change careers	17.3%	10.3%
To prepare for self-employment	1.7%	
To get a promotion	5.6%	2.6%
To advance my own knowledge	15.6%	20.5%
Other	.6%	5.1%

Overall Satisfaction and Program Difficulty

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with different items. Respondents could choose from five possible options: very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, or very satisfied. The majority of respondents (85.1%) indicated that they were satisfied at some level (satisfied or very satisfied) with their overall graduate experience at UNC, 84.8% reported they were satisfied at some level with the academic rigor of their graduate program, 80.1% of respondents were satisfied at some level with their program faculty and 80.5% of responding graduates were satisfied at some level with university staff. Of the students who indicated they took the majority of their classes online, 77.5% was satisfied at some level with the quality of online instruction (see figure 3).

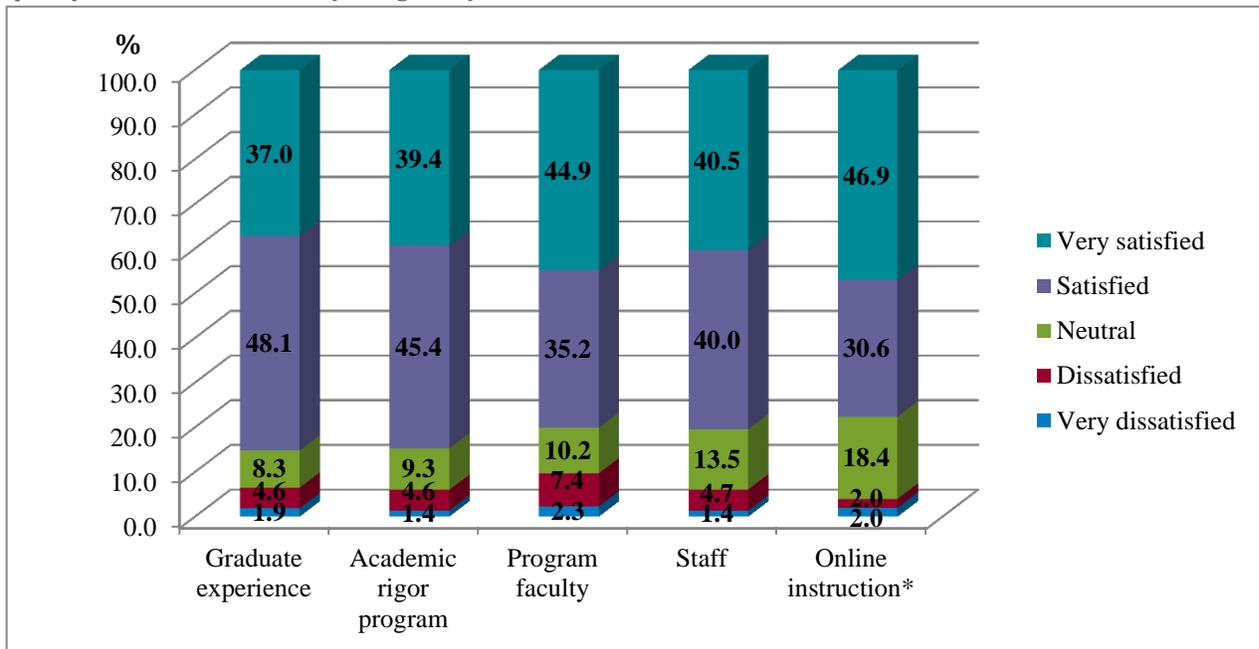


Figure 3. Overall Satisfaction with Graduate Experience, Academic Rigor Program, Program Faculty, Staff and Online Instruction.

Note: * Students who took the majority of their classes online (n=49).

PROGRAM DIFFICULTY

Respondents were also asked to rate the collective difficulty of their program on a 5-point scale (1 = too easy, 5 = too difficult). The majority of graduates (56.0%) rated their coursework as difficult, about one third (35.2%) chose neutral, and 8.8% found their coursework easy (see Figure 4).

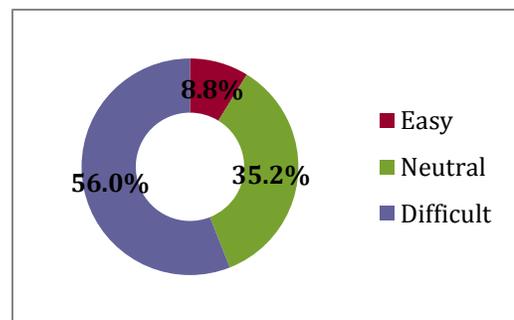


Figure 4: Collective Difficulty of the Program.

EXIT SURVEY

Reselection and Factors that Contributed to Ability to Complete Degree

RESELECT UNC AND PROGRAM

The graduates were asked if they would select UNC again if they were to start their graduate program again and if they would select the same program (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. RESELECT UNC AND PROGRAM

	Yes	Maybe	No
If I was to start my graduate program again, I would select UNC.	62.8%	30.3%	6.9%
If I was to start my graduate career again, I would select the same program.	77.5%	14.2%	8.3%

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO ABILITY TO COMPLETE DEGREE

Graduates were also asked which factors contributed to their ability to complete their degree. They could check all answers that applied. Graduates listed financial support (51.4%), family support (48.2%), program quality (38.5%), program delivery (36.7%) and mentoring/advising (33.0%) as the top five reasons they were able to complete their degrees at UNC (see Figure 5). Three percent of the respondents chose "Other". Responses for this category included: "counseling center," "fastest way to get my degree of choice," "therapy," "hard work," "self-motivation," "personal commitment" and "the lower cost of the program compared to others."

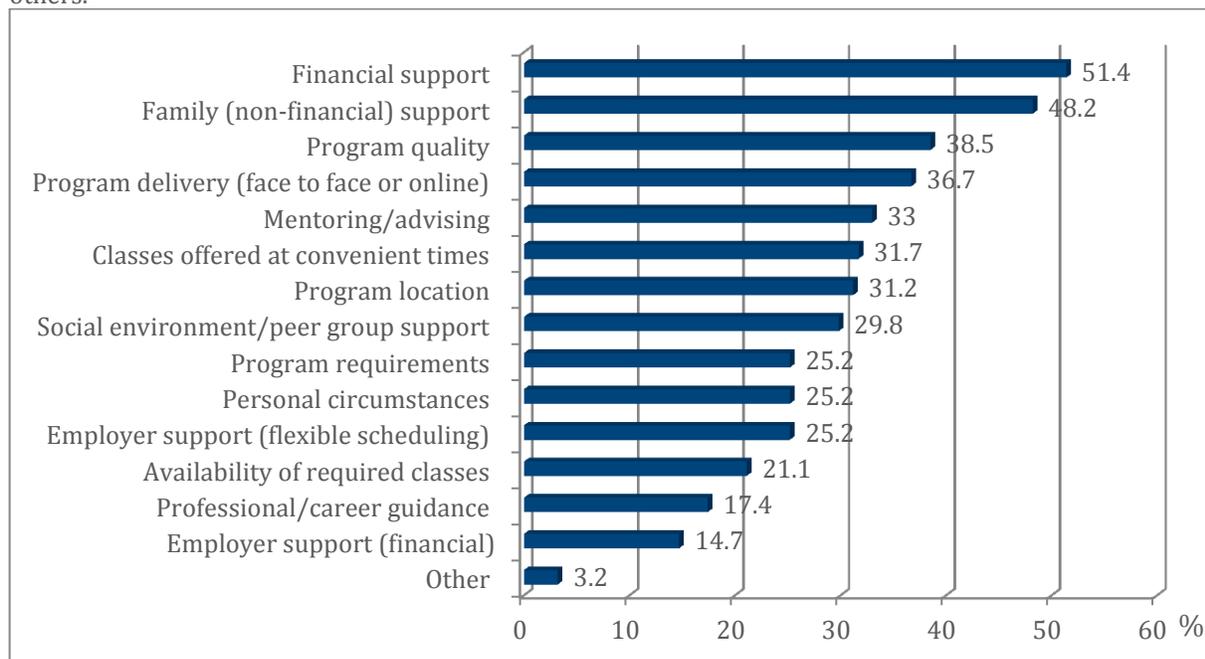


Figure 5. Factors that Contributed to the Ability to Complete Degree.

EXIT SURVEY

Program Faculty & Advisor

PROGRAM FACULTY

Four satisfaction questions focused on program faculty’s guidance. Eighty-three percent of the respondents were satisfied at some level with the teaching/pedagogy guidance they received; 69.8% were satisfied at some level with the guidance they received pertaining to their research; 69.4% indicated some level of satisfaction with career and professional guidance received from faculty; 73.6% of respondents were satisfied at some level with the scholarly writing guidance they received from program faculty; 76.4% of the graduates indicated some level of satisfaction with the feedback they received from program faculty regarding academic progress; and, 83.3% of respondents were satisfied at some level with the quality of relationship they had with program faculty (see Figure 6).

“All my teachers were exceptional and very knowledgeable in their respective fields” (Graduate, 2012)

“The professors in my program were fantastic. They were one of the main reasons I chose UNC, and the biggest factor that contributed to me finishing my degree, enjoying and being challenged by my classes, improving my skills, and having what I needed to continue my graduate career. Overall, a really wonderful experience” (Graduate, 2012)

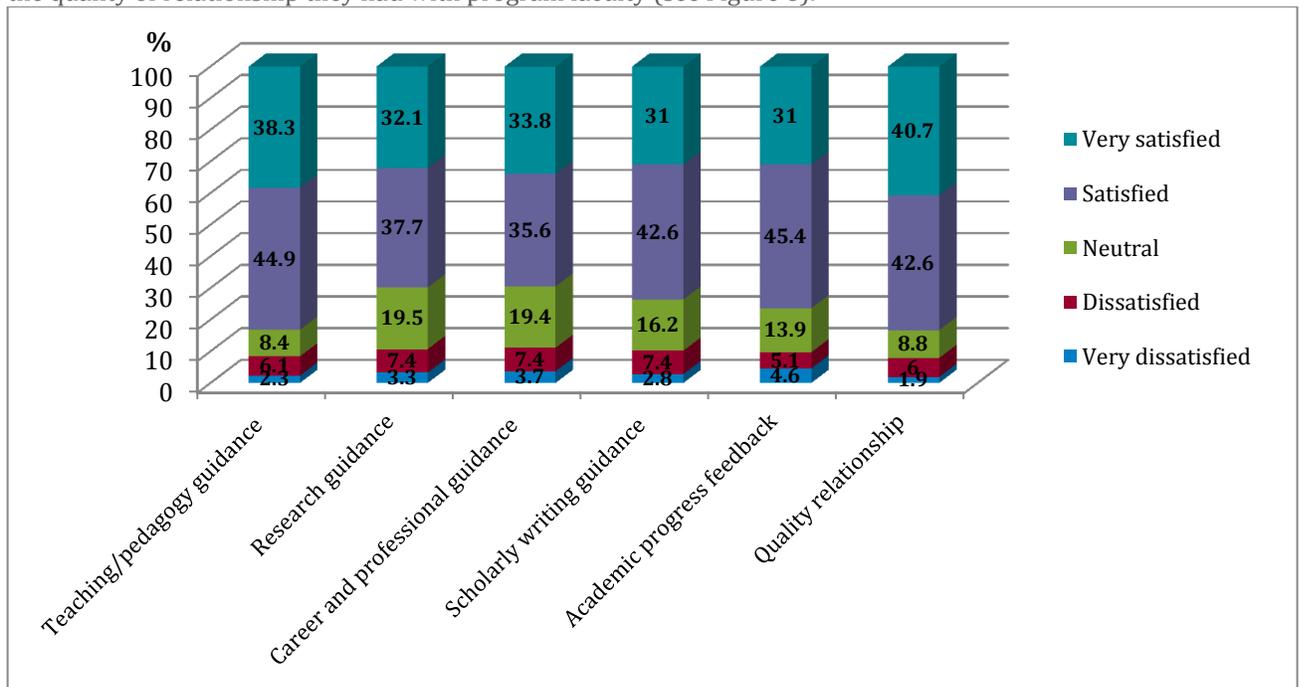


Figure 6. Satisfaction with Program Faculty

ACADEMIC ADVISOR

Graduates were asked to indicate their satisfaction with the relationship they had with their academic advisor and any feedback they received throughout their program. The majority of respondents (69.0%) were satisfied at some level with the feedback they received regarding their academic progress. In addition, 71.8% rated the quality of their relationship with their advisor as satisfying at some level.

“My advisor was outstanding, supportive, knowledgeable, and accessible. I will be forever grateful to her” (Graduate, 2012)

EXIT SURVEY

Mentor

The students who had mentors were asked to indicate ways to improve their mentor relationship. More time with mentors (37.6%) and career/professional guidance (25.4%) were the two main areas of improvement expressed. Three percent of the respondents chose “Other”. Examples of responses for this category included: “guidance with classes,” and “mentors provided positive support” (see Figure 7).

Key Fact: 80.1% of the graduates indicated they had someone in their program they considered a mentor, and of those graduates, 90.8% had a satisfactory or very satisfactory relationship with their mentor.

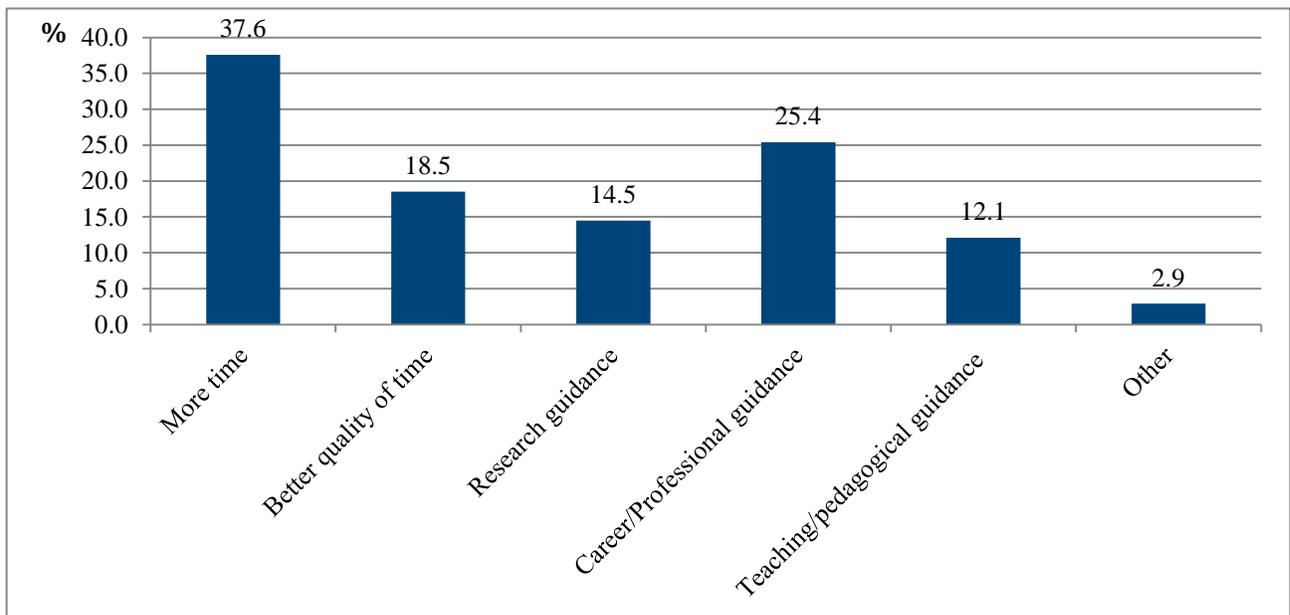


Figure 7. Ways to Improve Mentor Relationship.



“The professor who mentored me gave me a lot of quality time and managed to figure out what I needed the most, which was encouragement, and then he gave that freely. He helped me believe in myself in a way that I never have before. I couldn’t ask for more than that” (Graduate, 2012)

EXIT SURVEY

Thesis, Capstone, or Dissertation

Fifty nine percent of the respondents ($n=128$) graduated from a program that required a thesis, capstone, or dissertation. Graduates were asked whether they agreed with seven statements about their chair. Eighty-one percent of the respondents agreed at some level that their chair was accessible, 77.2% agreed at some level that their chair performed the roll well, 79.5% indicated that their chair was interested in their research/project, 65.3% indicated that their chair discussed their research/project on a consistent basis, 70.0% agreed at some level that their chair critiqued their work in ways that helped their work progress, 70.9% indicated that their chair returned their work in a timely manner and 57.1% indicated that their chair helped them with picking a topic (see Figure 8).

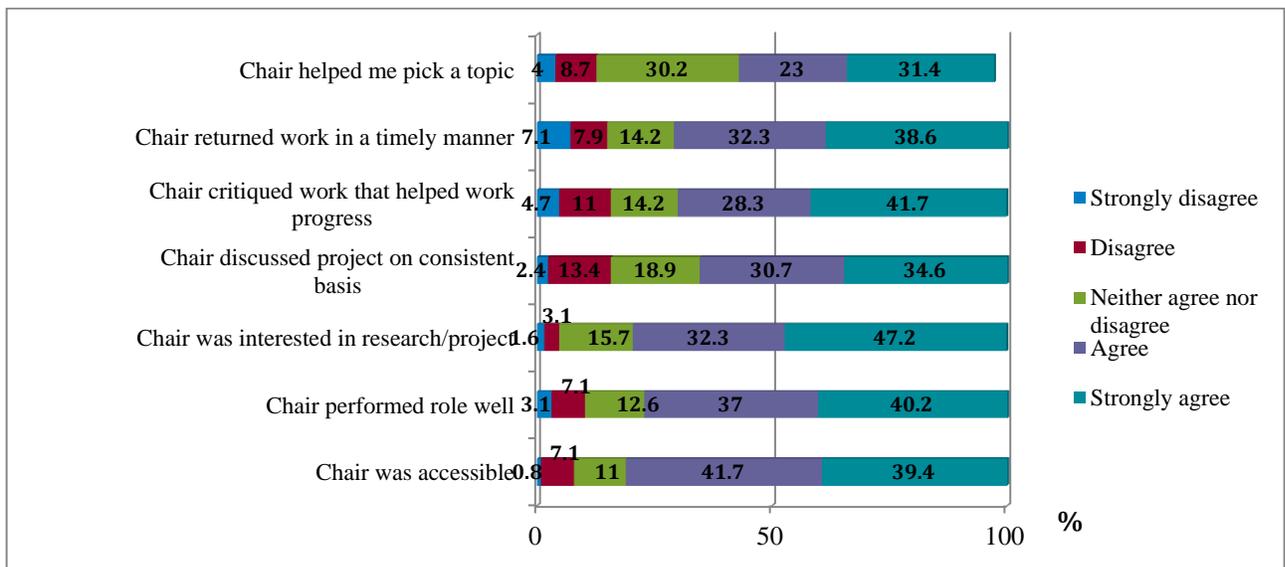


Figure 8. Satisfaction with Program Chair.



EXIT SURVEY

The 59.3% of graduates ($n=128$) in this survey who completed a thesis, capstone, or dissertation were asked how satisfied they were with relevant resources for completing their writing projects. These resources were: “Thesis/Capstone/dissertation manual posted on the Graduate School website,” “other resources listed on the Graduate School website such as formatting examples, schedule of deadlines, et.,” “Writing Center,” “Dissertation Workshops,” “Research Consulting Lab,” “Institutional Review Board”, and “Typists.” Results are displayed by degree level in Figure 9 and 10.

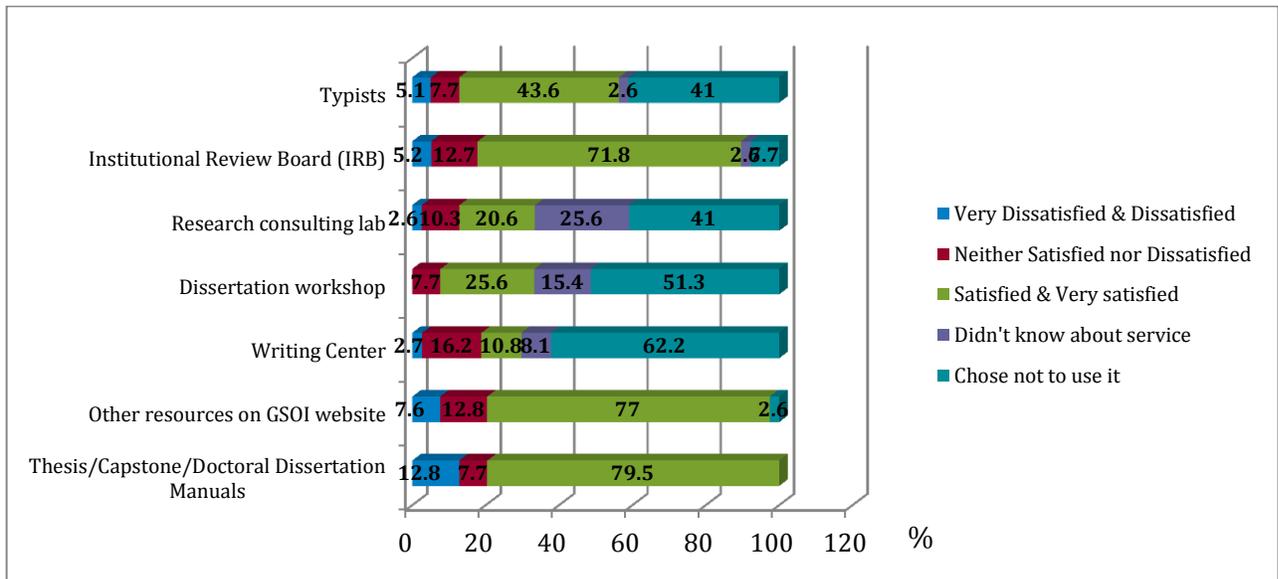


Figure 9. Satisfaction with Thesis, Capstone, or Dissertation Services (Doctoral, $n=39$).

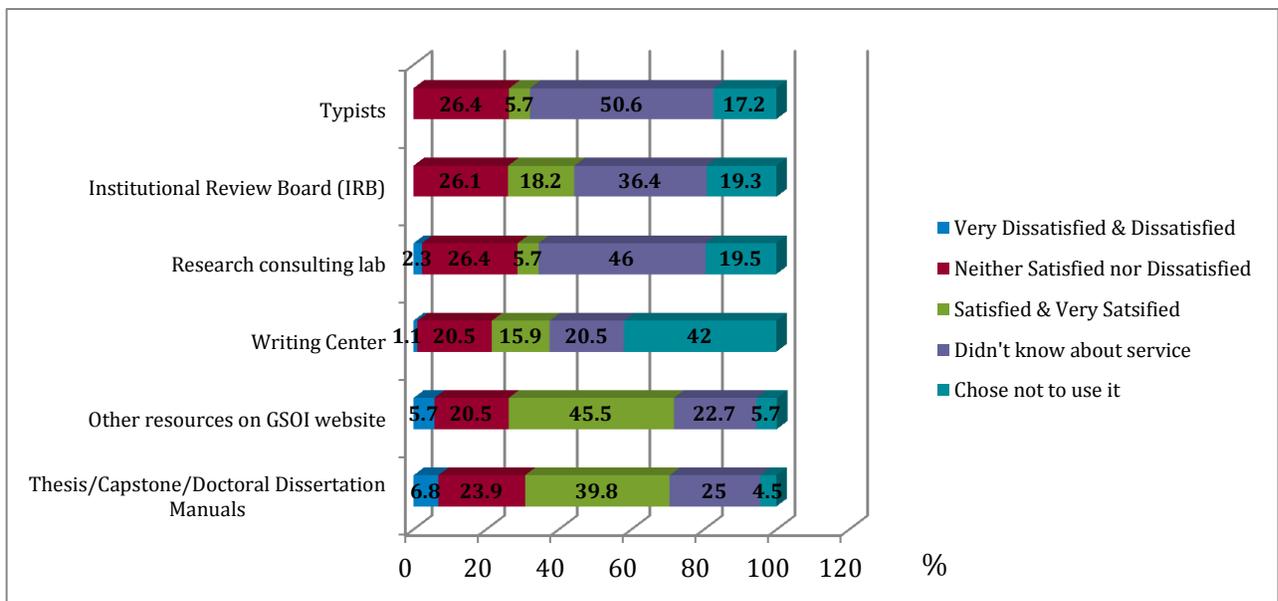


Figure 10. Satisfaction with Thesis, Capstone, or Dissertation Services (Master and Specialist, $n=89$).

Employment

Sixty-five percent of the respondents were employed; 25.9% were continuing with their current employment, 9.3% received a promotion as a result of their graduate degree and 29.6% accepted a job offer. Another 6.4% of the respondents were negotiating job offers (2.3%), considering several job offers (3.2%), or setting up their private practice/establishing self-employment (.9%). Five percent of the graduates chose to continue their education after graduation. Twenty-one percent of the respondents were seeking a position but did not have any specific job prospects, and 2.8% did not have any employment plans (see figure 11).

Little less than half of the graduates (46.6%) who have employment plans (accepted job offers, currently negotiating job offer(s), considering several job offers, seeking employment but have no specific employment plans, or are pursuing a new career field), are pursuing a new career field.

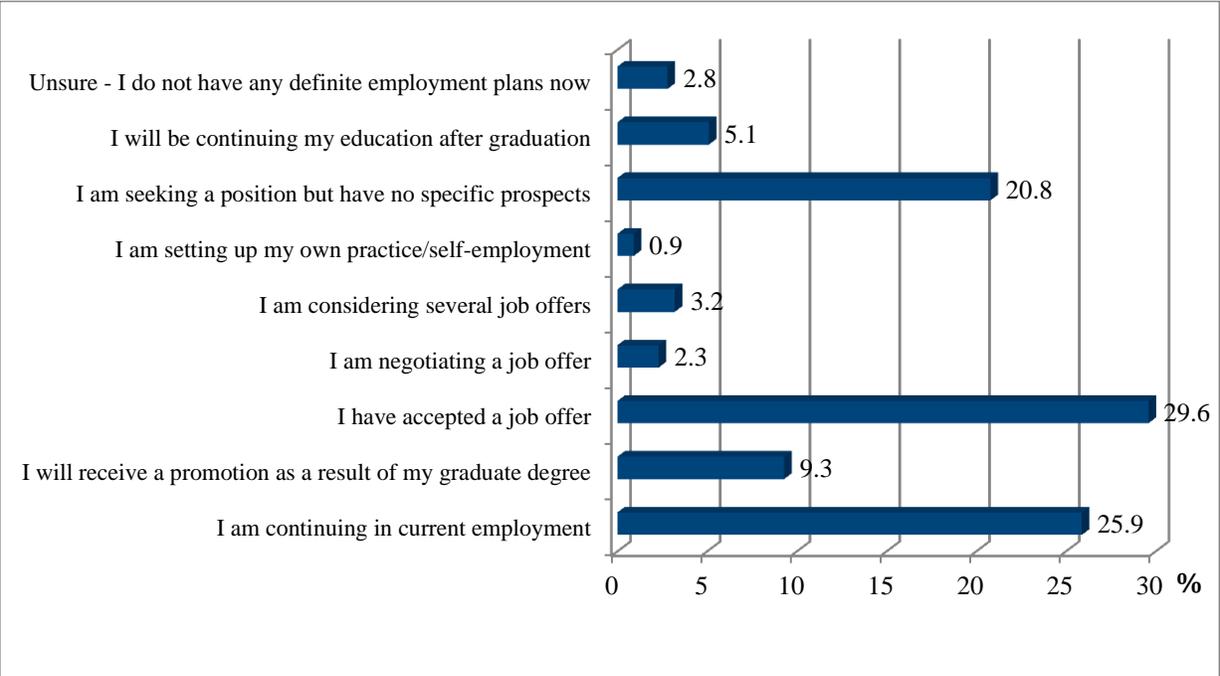


Figure 11. Employment Expectations.

Learning Objectives and Career Center

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Graduates were asked to share their level of satisfaction with the degree to which their academic programs met stated program objectives. The majority of students (89.3%) were satisfied at some level with the degree the program met its stated learning outcomes and with the degree the faculty provided opportunities to learn (88.0%). Three quarter of the graduates (75.3%) were satisfied at some level with the way program faculty prepared them for future career or educational pursuits.

CAREER CENTER

Graduates were asked whether they made use of the Career Center while at UNC. Only 9.7% of the respondents used the Career Center, 71.8% did not, and 18.5% did not know about this service. The majority of graduates who used the Career Center rated the services they received as helpful (52.4%) or very helpful (19.0%).

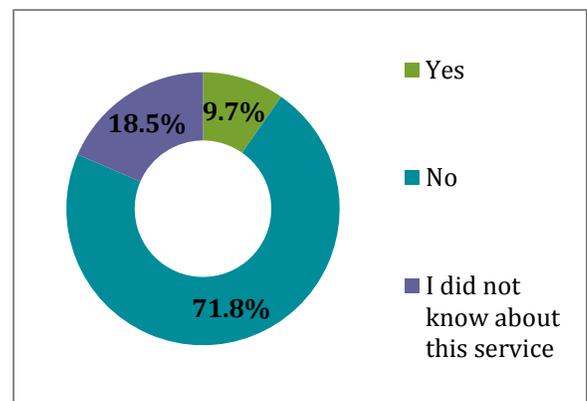


Figure 12. Use of Career Services.



GSPD Career Workshop for Academic Career Seekers, Nov 8, 2012, Michener Library.

EXIT SURVEY

Campus Culture

Graduates were asked to indicate whether they felt respected by UNC staff, faculty and students as well as the Greeley community in general. Responses were measured on a scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The following percentages represent those graduates who agreed or strongly agreed that they felt respected by staff (90.7%), faculty (86.4%), other students (92.6%), and the Greeley community (46.9%).

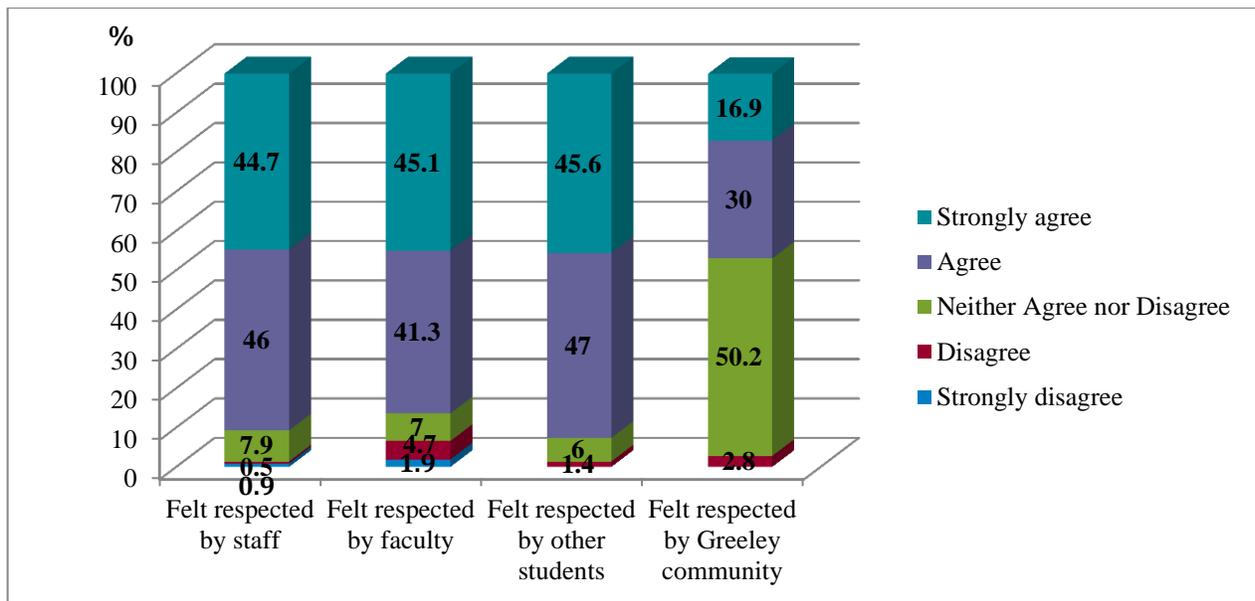


Figure 13. Respect

Eighty seven percent of graduates were satisfied at some level with the degree to which faculty promoted inclusiveness in the classroom with respect to diverse ideas and perspectives, and 88.3% of graduates felt their peers demonstrated inclusiveness and provided diverse ideas at some level. Though 52.6% of respondents were satisfied at some level with the programs for students with their interests on campus, and 42.1% agreed at some level that they felt comfortable participating in campus-wide programs, events, or activities. Both questions had a large amount of responses in the neutral category (43.6% and 49.8% respectively), indicating that the meaning of both questions may have been unclear to graduates.

Closing Remarks

We are pleased to report that overall the majority of spring and summer 2012 graduates were satisfied with their graduate experience, the academic rigor of the program, program faculty and staff. In addition, 80.1% of respondents indicated they had a mentor and 90.8% had a satisfactory or very satisfactory relationship with their mentor. These findings reflect the efforts of the graduate faculty, staff, and the Graduate School.