

# Marquette University Senior Survey 2006 Responses of Graduating Seniors

## Executive Summary

The Marquette University Senior Survey 2006 was conducted as an on-line survey of the 1196 undergraduate students graduating in May 2006. The survey, developed by the Office of the Provost and the Office of Student Development, was conducted to learn about student involvements in co-curricular learning experiences during their education at Marquette and post-graduation plans. Students were contacted via an e-mail message from Fr. Robert Wild, S.J., Marquette University President, requesting them to "take a few minutes to tell us about your Marquette experiences by completing a brief on-line Senior Survey."

A total of 709 students responded and submitted the on-line survey, providing a strong response rate of 59% of the May graduates. Responses were received from students in each of the seven undergraduate colleges with similar response rates for students in each college (Table 1). Among the 687 students who indicated their college, 34% were enrolled in Arts and Sciences; 21%, Business Administration; 18% Communication; 9%, Engineering; 11%, Health Sciences; 7%, Nursing; and 0.5% Professional Studies. Given the response rate and distributions the survey results can be considered representative of the 2006 graduating class.

## Survey Results

The results can be grouped around the two basic questions that guided the development of the survey. These questions are how engaged are Marquette students in learning experiences outside of the classroom and what do these seniors plan to do once they have graduated?

### *How engaged are Marquette students in learning outside the classroom?*

#### **Students are very involved in Campus Activities and Leadership.**

- Ninety-two percent of the seniors had participated in campus activities and/or student organizations during their time at Marquette.
- Thirty-eight percent of the seniors had held leadership positions in student organizations.

**Student participation in international experiences is increasing.**

- Twenty-nine percent of the seniors participated in at least one international experience.
- Twenty-three percent had studied abroad. (On the NSSE survey of Marquette seniors in 2004, fourteen percent had reported study abroad.)
- Eight percent had participated in international service as a volunteer or with international service learning experiences.

**Most Marquette students are engaged in community service during their undergraduate years.**

- Eighty-five percent of the students participated in service activities at least once a year.
- Thirty-two percent participated in service activities once a month or more frequently.

**Many of the students participated in faith development activities each year.**

- Fifty-three percent of Catholic students and twenty-four percent of non-Catholic students participated in faith development activities.
- Forty-six percent participated in University Ministry or faith development activities at least once a year
- Fifteen percent participated once a week or more.

**Almost half of the students had career related learning experiences.**

- Almost half (47%) of the seniors had completed internships or clinical placements for academic credit.
- Two-thirds of the seniors had used Career Services at least once.

*Where do our seniors plan to be six months after graduation?*

**Two-thirds of the seniors plan to be employed full-time.**

- Sixty-eight percent plan to be working full-time.
- One-third of the seniors had full-time offers in hand in April.
- Three percent will be active duty military.

**Half of the graduating seniors plan to be involved in more education.**

- Twenty-nine percent plan to be enrolled in full time graduate or professional studies.
- Twenty-three percent had been accepted for graduate or professional studies at the time of the survey.
- An additional twenty-one percent plan to be enrolled part-time in additional education.

**Thirty-nine percent of the seniors plan to be providing community service at least part-time.**

- Six percent of the seniors plan to provide full-time volunteer community service and thirty-three percent part-time.
- Nine percent of the seniors had applied for full-time community service.
- Five percent had been accepted for full-time volunteer community service by April.

***Comments by Senior Students on Marquette Experiences***

The seniors were asked to make a written response to two prompts: "The most positive experiences of my years at Marquette were" and "My suggestions for improving the overall Marquette experience are." Two-thirds (66%) of the respondents described one or more positive experiences and fifty-nine percent offered suggestions for improving the overall Marquette University experience. Each individual response was reviewed and categorized. A frequency count was made for each experience category. The five most frequently written comments by category are:

**The seniors' most positive experiences at Marquette in rank order.**

1. Personal relationships
2. Academics: quality of education, majors, and programs
3. Student organizations and activities
4. Faculty: quality of the faculty and faculty interactions/relationships
5. Community service and service learning.

### **The seniors' most frequent suggestions to improve the overall Marquette experience in rank order.**

1. Offer more to do with campus with better advertisement of activities
2. Enhance communication between administration and students
3. (Tie) Academics, improve program quality
3. (Tie) Change residence hall and food policies
4. Campus facilities, enhance classrooms, renovate some of the buildings, more study space
5. Increase diversity

### **Discussion and Next Steps**

The annual senior survey is a component of the institutional assessment system of student learning at Marquette. Each year the survey will focus on particular learning outcomes. The Senior Survey 2006 focused on gaining information about student participation in learning experiences outside the walls of the classroom and near future plans directly relevant to the Marquette mission to provide a transformational education that rests on excellence, leadership, faith and service.

**Excellence.** Students list academics as one of the most positive experiences but also frequently suggested that program quality be improved. Other results related to excellence in this survey would be the fact that 23% of the reporting seniors were accepted for graduate study, that 50% plan to be engaged in additional education within six months from graduation, and that 29% of the reporting seniors had engaged in international experiences.

**Leadership.** Students listed student organizations and activities as very positive. As a direct indicator of leadership development, over a third of Marquette students held leadership positions during their undergraduate education.

**Service.** The importance of offering service to others has been a strong emphasis at Marquette over the past 10 years and is widely communicated to students. There are many volunteer service student activities, supports for course service learning, and speakers that address volunteer service. Seniors listed community service as one of the most positive aspects of their education. Eight-five percent of the seniors had participated in volunteer service at least once a year and nearly one-third, once a month or more frequently. The fact that 39% intend to be

engaged in part-time or full-time volunteer service six months after graduation is a good indication that commitments to service have been made.

**Faith.** The item on participation in university ministry and faith development was quite broad but does provide some indication of student engagement with faith development. This participation varied by whether or not the student is Catholic with 46 % of the seniors reporting participating at least once a year.

The next step in using this survey data is to consider what the results suggest about actual versus desired student learning at Marquette. Do we (faculty, staff, students, and administrators) think it is on target and sufficient? What needs to be strengthened and improved? We will want to consider these results in respect to our own aspirations and expectations and in light of national benchmarks for our peer institutions.

#### Report Authors

This report was compiled and prepared by Margaret Bloom, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Teaching and Mark McCarthy, Assistant Vice President and Dean, Office of Student Development. Dan Gemoll, Director of Institutional Research assisted in statistical analysis and David Borgealt, Assistant Dean for Community Service Programs, Office of Student Development analyzed the students' written comments and prepared the web based, graphic report.

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**Summary Tables**

**Table 1 Students Responding to Senior Survey by College**

<b>COLLEGE</b>	<b>TOTAL GRADUATES</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL GRADUATES</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>% OF RESPONDENTS</b>
Arts & Sciences	420	35	234	34
Business Admin	228	19	141	20
Communications	206	17	123	18
Engineering	124	10	63	9
Health	134	11	73	11
Nursing	75	6	50	7
Prof. Studies	8	0.6	3	0.5

**Table 2 Student Responses to Items about Co-Curricular Activities and Services**

<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>
8. Used Marquette University Career Services Center	No 248 (36%)
	One-Two times 282 (41%)
	Three or more 165 (24%)
9. Frequency of participation in community service activities, volunteer and service learning	Never 104 (15%)
	Once a year 196, (28%)
	Once a semester 173, (25%)
	Once a month 126 (18%)
	Once a week or more 96 (14%)
10. Frequency in university ministry or faith development activities	Never 377 (54%)
	Once a year 90 (13%)
	Once a semester 69 (10%)
	Once a month 55 (8%)
	Once a week or more 102 (15%)
18. Level of Involvement in Campus Activities	Not involved 57 (8%)
	Attended activities, not a member 132 (19%)
	Member of one or more student organizations 243 (35%)
	Leader or officer of student organization 259 (37%)

<b>EXPERIENCES</b>	<b>PARTICIPATED</b>	<b>% of TOTAL</b>
11. internship or Clinical for credit	323	47%
<b>International Experiences</b>		
12. Study Abroad for Credit	161	23%
13. International Internship	4	0.6%
14. International Service Learning	10	1%
15. Les Aspin Africa	9	1%
16. International Volunteer Service	31	5%
17. Other international	74	11%

Table 3 Survey Responses to Items about Future Plans

<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>NUMBER RESPONDING</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>
1. Applied for FT employment	409	59%
2. Offered FT employment	229	33%
3. Applied to Grad/Professional Program	203	29%
4. Accepted to Grad/Professional	163	23%
5. Accepted for Active Military	24	3%
6. Applied for FT Community Service	63	9%
7. Accepted for FT Community Service	33	5%
19. In 6 months, FT employment	463	68%
20. In 6 months, PT employment < 35 hr.	177	27%
21. In 6 months, Active Duty Military	21	3%
22. In 6 months, FT additional education	199	29%
23. In 6 months, PT additional education	143	21%
24. In 6 months, FT community service	40	6%
25. In 6 months, PT community service	226	33%