

INTRODUCTION

The annual Graduating Senior Survey investigates graduating seniors’ engagement in co-curricular learning experiences at Marquette, perceived impact of their education on institutional learning outcomes, experiences with key mission and identity objectives of the university, plans for the immediate future, and satisfaction with their academic experience and overall Marquette education. Questions on the survey were specially authored to allow for comparison with surveys administered to new students and alumni.

The survey has been administered by the Division of Student Affairs since the early 1990’s and conducted in conjunction with the Office of the Provost since the mid 2000’s. The instrument was substantially revised for 2013 by the Institutional Survey Steering Committee, following review and input from key faculty and staff stakeholders and pilot focus groups with graduating seniors.

The survey was administered online in April 2013. All graduating seniors were invited via email to complete the survey; 778 students responded, providing a response rate of 51.6%.

RESULTS

Results are reported in a number of areas that represent the major categories for the survey.

Satisfaction

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Overall satisfaction with undergraduate education	59%	37%	4%	<1%

	Excellent	Good	Poor	Very Poor
Rating of undergraduate education in terms of providing value for the money spent	27%	63%	8%	2%

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Would choose to attend Marquette again if starting over <i>collapsed responses for “definitely yes” or “probably yes”</i>	87%	89%	89%	85%	84%	87%

- 91% of graduating seniors reported that they were completing their Marquette degree as quickly as they had planned (88% in 2012, 86% in 2011, 90% in 2010). Among the 9% of respondents (n=69) who were not completing their degree as quickly as planned, the most commonly selected reasons were:
 - Changed majors to a different college at Marquette – 33%
 - Advisor misinformed me about degree requirements – 33%
 - Pursued more than one major/degree – 30%
 - Required courses not available – 30%
- 27% of graduating seniors reporting they had seriously considered transferring (34% in 2012, 28% in 2011, and 30% in 2010).
 - When asked an open-ended question on what caused them to consider transferring, 195 students offered responses. The most frequently cited themes for responses included:
 - Personal/social concerns (problems fitting in/connecting, difficult adjustment to college, diversity of students – geographical, racial, etc., negative experiences with individuals) – 37%
 - Academic concerns (problems with advising, unsupportive faculty, options for classes and Core of Common Studies, perceived quality) – 27%
 - Financial issues (cost of tuition, family economic hardship, perceived value of education, inadequate financial aid) – 26%
 - Marquette’s location and the city (location, distance from home, climate/weather, social opportunities in city) – 19%
 - When asked an open-ended question on what caused them to decide to stay at Marquette instead of transferring, 194 students offered responses. The most frequently cited themes for responses included:
 - Involvement on campus (membership in student organization, joining a fraternity/sorority, friendships made, study abroad opportunities) – 42%
 - Difficulty of transferring (too late in academic career to transfer, fear of losing credits, process deemed a “hassle”) – 25%
 - Academic reasons (quality of education, MU reputation, relationship with faculty, switched majors) – 24%
 - Financial reasons (already invested in MU, received continued or additional financial aid) – 8%

Impact of Student Learning Opportunities

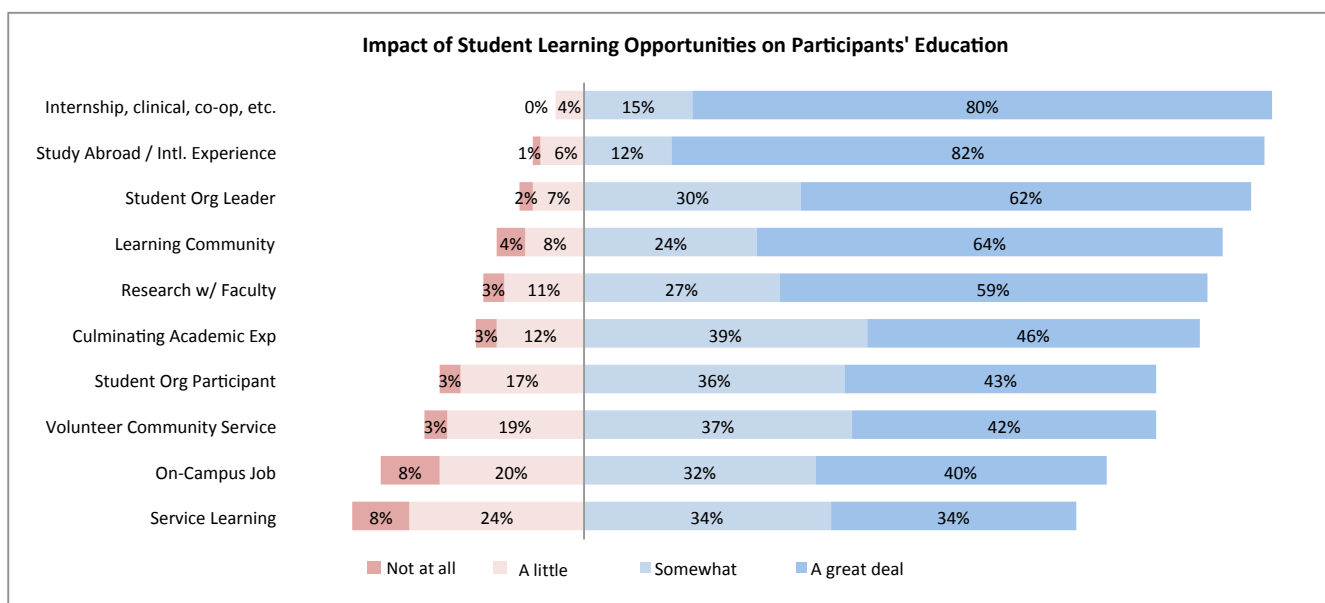
The table below indicates frequency of participation in a variety of curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities that have been demonstrated through national research to have a positive impact on student success.

While at Marquette, in which of the following did you participate?	Spring 2013
Community service in any form (part of a class, with a student organization, as work study, or on one's own)	87%
Participate in a student organization	80%
Volunteer community service (not course-based)	71%
On-campus job	71%
Internship, co-op, field placement, student teaching, practicum, clinical placement	68%
Service as part of a course (service learning, community project)	60%
Student organization leader/officer	53%
Culminating academic experience (capstone, senior design, senior project)	45%
Study abroad or university-sponsored international experience	31%
Learning community or other formal program where students take two or more classes together	23%
Work with a faculty member on her/his research	20%

percentage of respondents who indicated they participated in the experience while at Marquette

- Less than 1% of the respondents (n=6) did not participate in any of the activities listed.
- Comparisons to previous years are not made because the language of several of the items was changed in 2013. Participation rates for these activities have remained fairly constant in recent years.

The following chart illustrates the magnitude of each activity's impact on those students who participated.

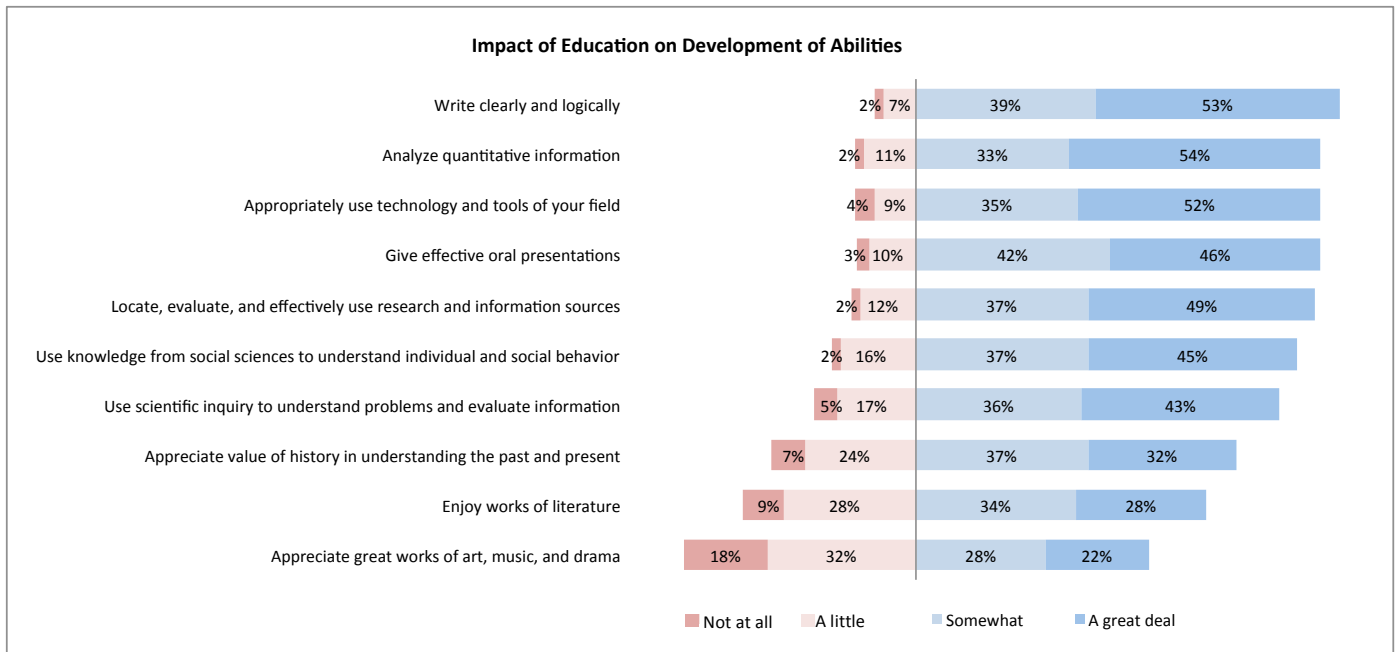


The table below indicates the frequency of engagement with faculty and diverse others, which have also been demonstrated through national research to have a positive impact on student success.

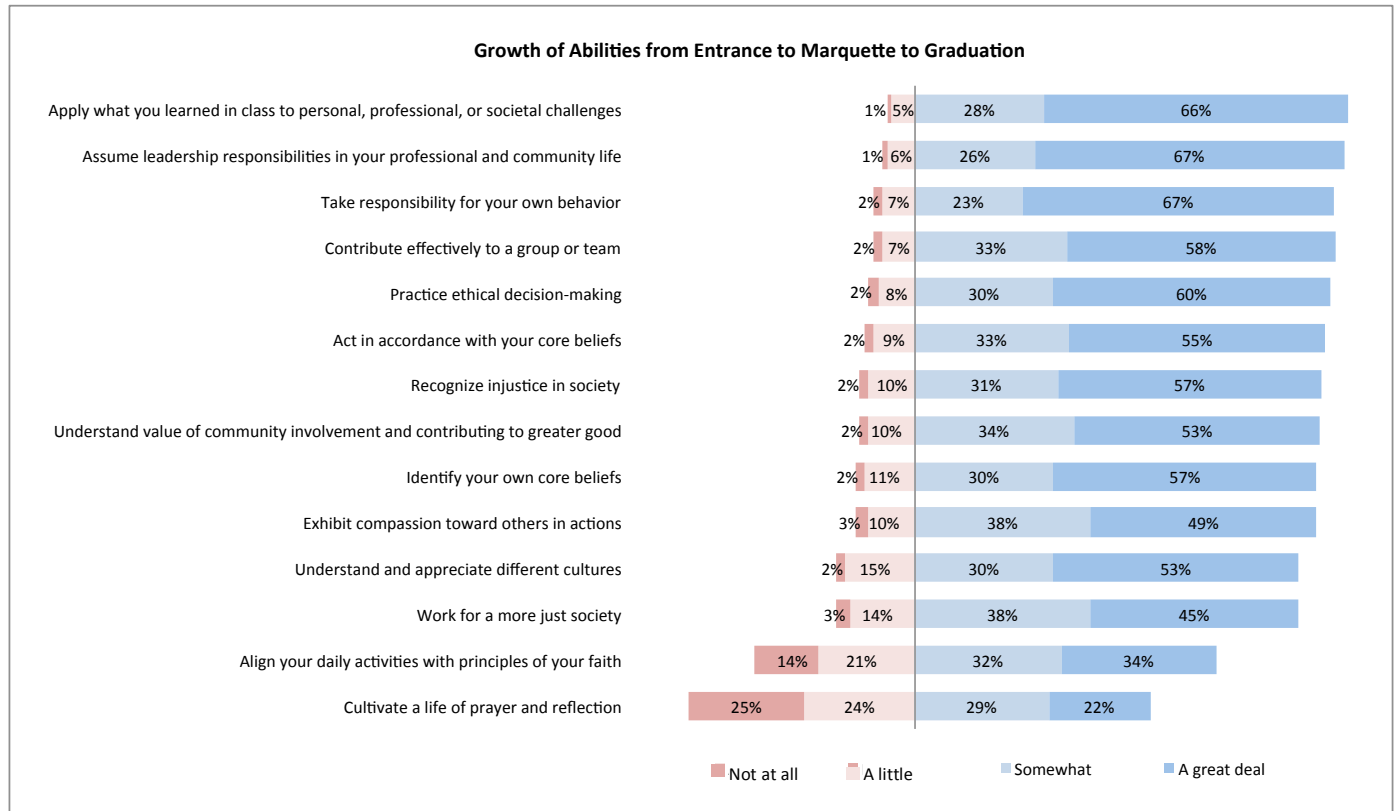
While at Marquette, how frequently did you participate in each of the following?	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Had meaningful interactions with people of a race/ethnicity different than your own	32%	29%	36%	3%
Discussed faith, spirituality, or religion with people who hold religious beliefs different than your own	12%	22%	51%	16%
Discussed politics or current events with people who hold political views different than your own	22%	31%	38%	9%
Discussed academic material with faculty members outside of class time	20%	31%	45%	4%
Discussed personal interests/issues with faculty members outside of class time	14%	22%	46%	18%

Development of Abilities

The chart below depicts graduating seniors’ responses to items that asked how their Marquette education had contributed to their abilities in several domains.

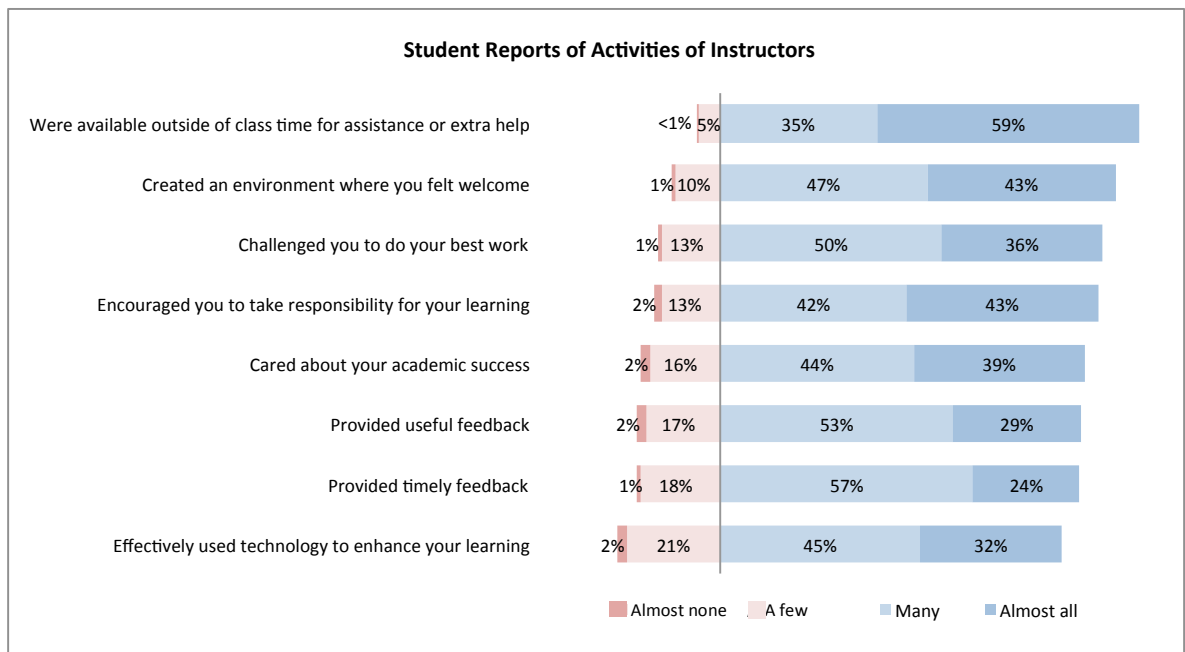


The chart below depicts graduating seniors’ responses to items that asked how much they’ve grown compared to when they entered Marquette in their abilities in several areas.

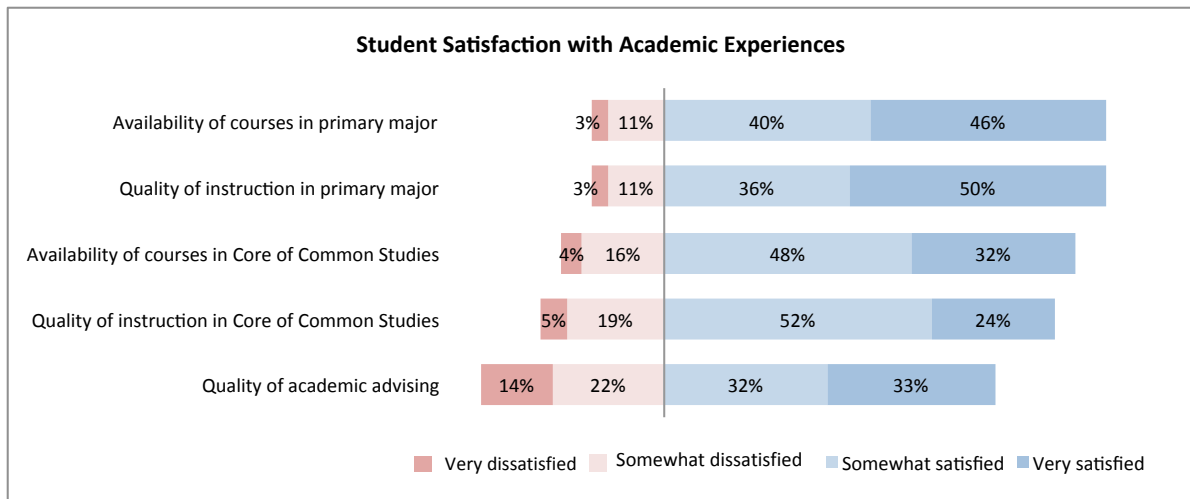


Satisfaction with Academic Experience

A new series of questions asked about graduating seniors' experiences with their instructors. The chart below depicts their responses to those items:



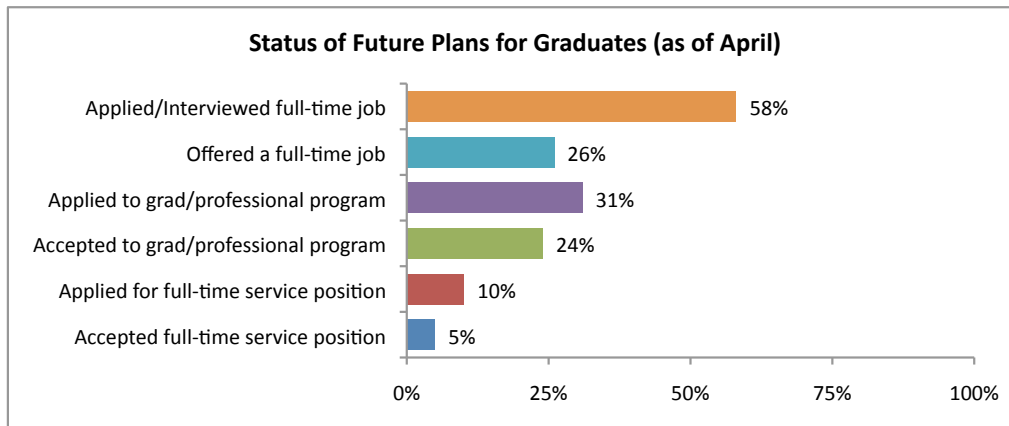
The chart below depicts graduating seniors' responses to items that asked about their satisfaction with several aspects of their academic experience.



- Among the 13% of students (n=97) dissatisfied with availability of courses in their major, the most frequently selected reasons for their dissatisfaction included:
 - Variety of courses offered – 78%
 - Frequency that courses advertised in the bulletin were offered – 58%
 - Days and times courses were offered – 48%
- Among the 20% of students (n=143) dissatisfied with availability of courses in the Core of Common Studies, the most frequently selected reasons for their dissatisfaction included:
 - Variety of courses offered – 74%
 - Conflicts with other non-elective courses – 54%
 - Frequency that courses advertised in the bulletin were offered – 47%
 - Days and times courses were offered – 47%

Future Plans for Graduating Seniors

A series of survey questions asked seniors to indicate their future plans after graduation. The chart below indicates the responses and plans at the time the survey was completed (April).



The table below shows responses for these items on Graduating Senior Surveys dating back to 2004.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Applied for full-time job	49%	63%	59%	51%	64%	57%	57%	52%	61%	58%
Offered full-time job	33%	33%	33%	33%	42%	26%	26%	25%	30%	26%
Applied to grad/professional program	31%	33%	29%	27%	32%	36%	34%	36%	30%	31%
Accepted to grad/professional program	26%	27%	23%	26%	26%	26%	27%	28%	22%	24%
Applied for full-time service	–	–	9%	5%	8%	16%	13%	12%	10%	10%
Accepted full-time service	–	3%	5%	4%	4%	7%	6%	5%	4%	5%

Open Response Items

Two questions on the survey invited respondents to summarize their feedback for the university as they prepared to graduate.

The first question asked graduating seniors to indicate at least one way the Marquette experience could be improved for future students. 600 students responded; themes for the most commonly cited responses (in order of greatest frequency) were:

- Improve academic advising (relationships, communication, knowledge) – 15%
- Improve diversity (representation of students and improved relationships, openness and acceptance, more “safe spaces” for students) – 8%
- Address tuition, financial aid, and affordability issues – 7%
- Re-evaluate the courses in the Core of Common Studies (perceived inflexibility with course options, challenges for study abroad, intensive majors, etc.) – 6%
- Improve faculty teaching, accessibility, and accountability – 6%
- Offer a wider variety of courses and times; increased availability – 5%

A second open-response item asked graduating seniors to identify the most valuable learning experience at Marquette. 587 students responded; themes for the most commonly cited responses (in order of greatest frequency) were:

- Specific academic experiences and courses (including capstones, major courses, particular programs, and specific influential courses) – 25%
- Internships, clinical experiences, field work, co-ops, and campus employment – 18%
- Interactions with faculty and students (many respondents cited specific names of influential faculty) – 14%
- Semester away experiences (including study abroad and the Les Aspin program in Washington DC) – 12%
- Leadership development and student organization experiences – 10%
- Volunteer community service or service learning – 8%

DISCUSSION

Reports from these annual surveys are distributed to many campus constituency groups (including students, faculty, and administrators) for analysis and action. The surveys are repeated each April and questions are reviewed annually by the Institutional Survey Steering Committee, the University Assessment Committee, and the Division of Student Affairs Assessment Team.

This executive summary is available at <http://www.marquette.edu/dsa/assessment.shtml>.

Complete data tables for selected items by college can be found at <http://www.marquette.edu/oira/studentsurveys.shtml>.

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