



Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS)
Report on the Responses of Graduate Students, 2005

University of Toronto
School of Graduate Studies
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Summary

Our aspirations to provide high quality academic programs, linked with a high quality student experience are highlighted in *Stepping UP*, U of T's strategic plan. Results of the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS) provide indicators of our achievements, to date. The survey was conducted at the University of Toronto in March/April 2005. Responses from 4,833 registered graduate students at U of T (41% of the graduate student population) are summarized, without statistical analysis. Key questions are compared to GPSS results from other Canadian universities, and to undergraduate responses from the 2004 NSSE survey; results are compared at a more general level to results from the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Consortium graduate student survey, which was administered at U of T in 2002. Comparability with HEDS is reduced by slight differences in questions, manner of student classification, and demographic shifts at U of T. Since 2002, the proportion of professional master's students relative to doctoral stream students has increased.

Requests to participate in the GPSS came through email contact, and Faculties varied in the proportion of valid student email addresses on record. Numbers of respondents generally parallel the availability of addresses. The highest number of responses came from doctoral students (2,053; 42.5% of all survey participants), followed by professional master's (1,484; 30.7%), then by research master's (1,296; 26.8%).

- Among the thirteen questions about various dimensions of program delivery, many show high levels of satisfaction. High ratings ("Excellent", "Very good" or "Good") from at least 90% of respondents include:
 - the intellectual quality of the faculty,
 - the intellectual quality of fellow students,
 - academic standards in the program,
 - overall program quality.
- Four items yielded ratings of "Poor" from more than 10% of respondents:
 - program space and facilities,
 - amount of financial support,
 - assistance in finding employment,
 - the opportunity to interact across disciplines.
- Responses to questions about departmental support for academic activities, when compared to 2002 HEDS results, indicate substantially more student activity in conducting independent research, presenting at conferences and publishing in journals.
- An array of questions about the advisor-student relationship indicates that 90% of respondents "Strongly agree" or "Agree" with all of the positively worded statements. On the other hand, almost 40% agreed with the potentially negative statement that "my dissertation advisor considers me a source of labor to advance his/her research."
- Detailed questions about financial support indicate reported levels of student debt that are very similar to 2002 HEDS data.
- Graduate students report participating in social activities within their departments and advisory research groups, but less commonly in university-wide or residence social activities.

- Many university resources are used frequently and are ranked highly by graduate students (e.g. library, computer services), others are ranked highly by the small proportion of students who use them (e.g. International Office, athletic facilities). Facilities and services that rank lowest are dining services and parking.

Graduate students report considerable satisfaction with their academic programs and their overall experience, with 87.4% rating the quality of their overall experience as “Excellent”, “Very good” or “Good” compared to 73.2% of U of T first year undergraduates and 71.3% of senior year undergraduates responding to similar questions (NSSE). Relative to other G10 graduate respondents, our graduate students indicate high satisfaction with their academic experience and their graduate programs. However, as in 2002, U of T graduate students are less satisfied with their student life experience. On this question, we are slightly below the average of the other G10 schools.

In summary, while graduate students report considerable satisfaction and there are indications of strong scholarship and mentoring, there are also indications of where we could focus our energy to make improvements. There is agreement between the survey results and *Stepping UP* regarding areas that need attention. These include financial support, support for interdisciplinarity, and the broad domain of “student experience.”

Responses from students enrolled in professional degrees differ in various ways from those of doctoral stream students. Students seeking professional degrees express stronger concerns about funding and about conflicting responsibilities, but are satisfied in large part with their programs. While 90% of doctoral students report satisfaction with their academic experience, the survey provides background for future initiatives that could further strengthen the delivery of our programs.

As in 2002, approximately one quarter of responding graduate students report dissatisfaction with their student life. Detailed analysis of their responses can form the basis for discussion and planning. Improvement to the graduate student experience at the University of Toronto can constructively focus on the strengthening of our graduate students’ sense of community.

I. Introduction

In the spring of 2005, the School of Graduate Studies¹, along with several other Canadian universities² and US research universities³, conducted the Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS). The survey questionnaire was initially developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Duke University, and is based on three pre-existing surveys from Rutgers, the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Consortium, and the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE). Some questions were revised in the development of a Canadian version.

This report summarizes the information collected through the survey and provides a general descriptive summary of the results at the institutional level. For some questions, information is disaggregated by type of degree program, i.e., doctoral program, research master's program and professional master's program. Some survey questions are compared with those generated in a similar survey (HEDS) conducted at U of T in 2002. Comparisons with HEDS are made cautiously, because of differences from the GPSS in the wording of questions, in the classification of students, and in the proportional growth in professional master's degree students between 2002 and 2005. No statistical analysis is presented here, nor have the summaries at the Faculty and department/program levels been completed. This report represents a first look at a rich source of information, as reported by a substantial proportion of our registered graduate students.

This report is structured around the six sections of the GPSS survey and covers several important aspects of graduate education:

- Respondent profile,
- Satisfaction with program, quality of interactions, and coursework,
- Program/department support,
- Financial support,
- University resources and student life,
- General assessment.

Student experience has always been an important indicator of the quality of graduate education. *Stepping Up*, U of T's new strategic plan, has identified "enhancing the student experience" as one of the key priorities for achieving U of T's commitment to excellence, equity and outreach. Many of the measures summarized here are relevant to the aspirations in *Stepping UP*, and some are highlighted in that context. It is our hope that information provided in this report will calibrate our achievements and provide the basis for realistic ideas and initiatives to improve graduate education and the graduate student experience.

II. Respondent Profile

At the time when the survey was administered, there were 11,800 graduate students registered in degree programs at U of T. Because the survey was web-based, including the distribution of invitations and other information about the survey, it was necessary that each student have a valid email address recorded on ROSI⁴. However, valid email addresses were not available for approximately 2,000 students, even though for several weeks prior both the

¹ SGS would like to acknowledge the contribution of the U of T Bookstore which co-sponsored the gift certificates awarded to ten graduate students who participated in the GPSS.

² The other Canadian universities who participated in the survey include: British Columbia, Laval, McMaster, McGill, Waterloo, Western, and York.

³ Some US participating institutions include: Brown, Duke, Florida, MIT, North Carolina – Chapel Hill, Rice, and Stanford.

⁴ Repository of Student Information.

Faculties and SGS attempted to update this information. Response rates generally track the availability of valid email addresses.

Table 1. Response rates by Faculty. The response rate is based on the number of registered students.

Faculty	# of Registered students	# of Survey participants	Response rate
Physical Ed. & Health	40	27	67.5%
Law	106	53	50.0%
Applied Science & Engineering	1,362	654	48.0%
Arts and Science	2,839	1,363	48.0%
Medicine	2,348	1,040	44.3%
Pharmacy	118	52	44.1%
Forestry	82	36	43.9%
Information Studies	349	144	41.3%
School of Graduate Studies	261	106	40.6%
Social Work	330	132	40.0%
Nursing	387	150	38.8%
Music	103	39	37.9%
Architecture & Landscape	254	85	33.5%
Dentistry	113	36	31.9%
Management	1,007	319	31.7%
OISE/UT	2,101	597	28.4%
Total	11,800	4,833	41.0%

Note: Lower response rates are related to higher levels of invalid/unknown email addresses.

Of the graduate student population, 82% (9,694) were invited to participate, by virtue of having valid email addresses. By the end of the survey 50% had submitted their responses. In total, 4,833 (41%) valid responses were collected. These responses form the basis of this report. Of those invited, 18 students informed us that they did not wish to participate, while 52 students took the time to send an additional email to thank us for making the opportunity available.

The survey participants are reasonably representative of the population of U of T graduate students in terms of gender, legal status, type of program, enrollment category, and discipline (Figures 1 through 4, Table 2). Among respondents, 36.4% are in the first year of study, 29.6% in the second, 13.5% in the third, and 20.6% are in the fourth year of study or above.

Figure 1. Distribution of survey participants by gender

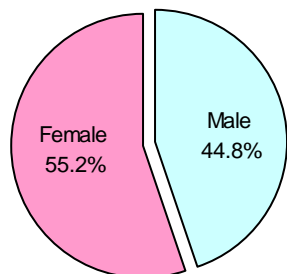


Figure 2. Distribution of survey participants by degree type⁵

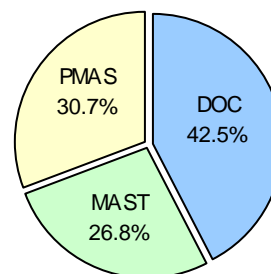


Figure 3. Distribution of survey participants by enrollment category

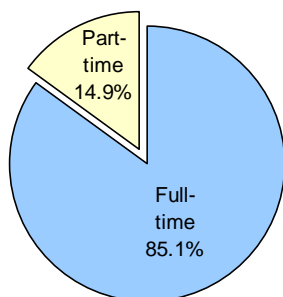


Figure 4. Distribution of survey participants by discipline

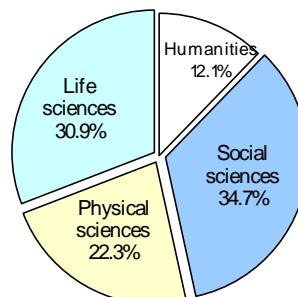


Table 2. Comparison of characteristics between the survey participants and the graduate student population

Characteristic	Category	Survey Participants	Graduate Student Population
Gender	Male	2,165 (44.8%)	5,195 (44.0%)
	Female	2,668 (55.2%)	6,602 (55.9%)
Legal status	Canadian citizen	3,292 (68.3%)	8,625 (73.1%)
	Permanent resident	732 (15.1%)	1,637 (13.9%)
	Study permit	683 (14.0%)	1,243 (10.5%)
	Other visa	125 (2.6%)	293 (2.5%)
Type of program	Doctoral	2,053 (42.5%)	4,610 (39.1%)
	Research master's	1,296 (26.8%)	2,798 (23.7%)
	Professional master's	1,484 (30.7%)	4,391 (37.2%)
Enrollment category	Full-time	4,114 (85.1%)	9,587 (81.2%)
	Part-time	719 (14.9%)	2,213 (18.8%)
Discipline	Humanities	588 (12.1%)	1,292 (10.9%)
	Social sciences	1,676 (34.7%)	4,879 (41.3%)
	Physical sciences	1,078 (22.3%)	2,195 (18.6%)
	Life sciences	1,491 (30.9%)	3,434 (29.1%)

⁵ Professional Masters Students (PMAS); Research Masters Students (MAST); Doctoral Students (DOC).

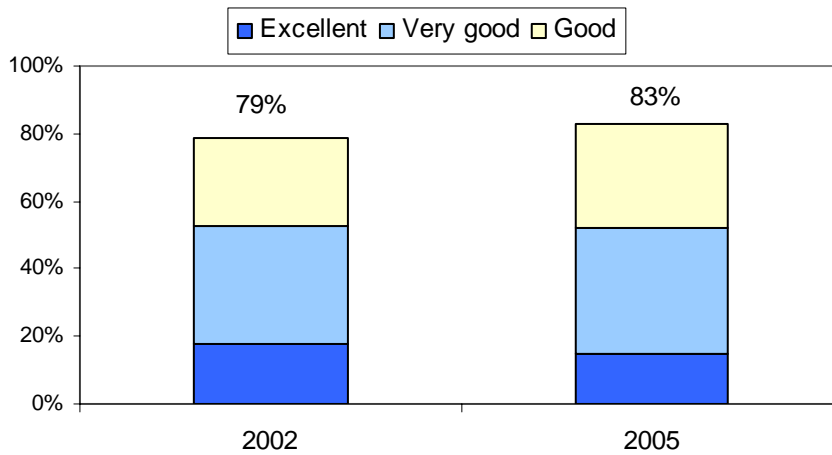
III. Satisfaction with Program, Quality of Interactions, and Coursework

Questions in this section of the survey focus on various dimensions of the academic programs in which students are studying, such as academic quality, intellectual environment, program content, and program structure. Table 3 summarizes students' responses to the thirteen questions in this section. Students report highest satisfaction with the intellectual quality of the faculty, student intellectual quality, and the academic standards of their programs. A majority (90%) rate the overall program quality as "Excellent", "Very good", or "Good." The aspects to which students give the lowest scores include the amount of financial support, assistance in finding employment, the opportunity to interact across disciplines, and program space and facilities. In comparison with the results of the HEDS survey (2002), current students are slightly more satisfied with their relationship with faculty (Figure 5). Items that explore interactions across disciplines show lower levels of satisfaction. These results are noteworthy given our *Stepping UP* aspiration to support interdisciplinary teaching and research collaboration (Table 3, Figure 8).

Table 3. Satisfaction with various program dimensions

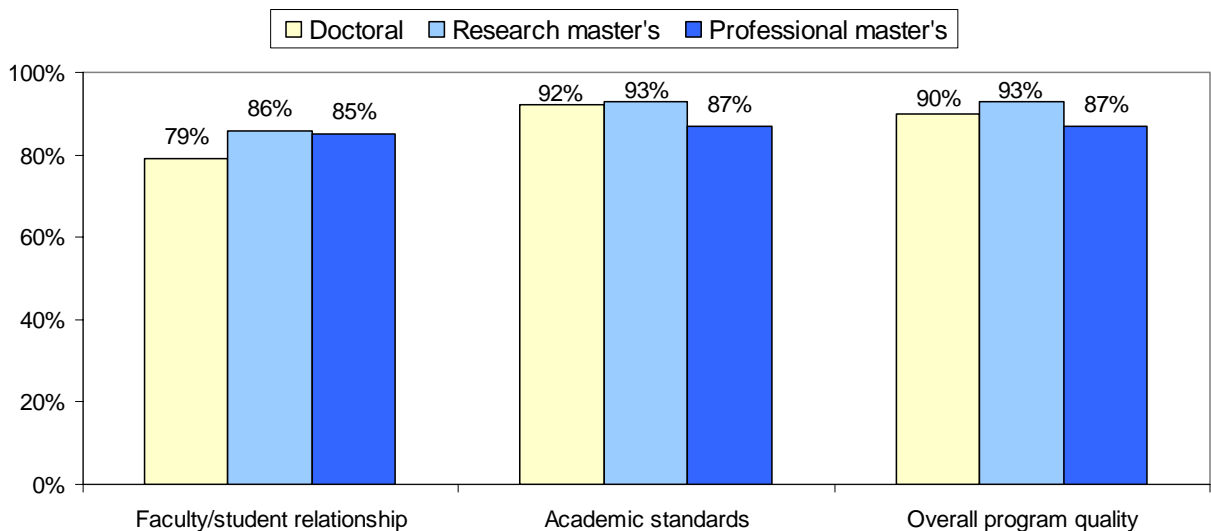
Rate the following dimensions of your program	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
The intellectual quality of the faculty	1,987	42.1	2,001	42.4	588	12.5	116	2.5	25	0.5
The intellectual quality of my fellow students	1,091	23.2	2,225	47.2	1,133	24.1	220	4.7	42	0.9
The relationship between faculty and students	690	14.7	1,746	37.2	1,453	30.9	613	13.0	196	4.2
Program's ability to integrate recent developments in my field	975	20.8	1,781	38.0	1,258	26.8	506	10.8	167	3.6
Program space and facilities	524	11.2	1,184	25.2	1,419	30.3	1,009	21.5	554	11.8
Overall quality of graduate level teaching by faculty	727	15.5	1,885	40.2	1,402	29.9	523	11.1	154	3.3
Amount of financial support	367	8.0	882	19.2	1,274	27.8	1,139	24.8	924	20.1
Quality of academic advising and guidance	645	13.8	1,307	28.0	1,481	31.7	867	18.5	375	8.0
Helpfulness of staff members in my department/program	1,026	21.8	1,664	35.4	1,318	28.0	516	11.0	181	3.8
Assistance in finding employment	173	4.1	702	16.8	1,493	35.6	1,098	26.2	722	17.2
The opportunity to interact across disciplines	387	8.5	987	21.6	1,419	31.0	1,085	23.7	697	15.2
Academic standards in my program	900	19.2	1,962	41.9	1,369	29.2	359	7.7	91	1.9
Overall program quality	661	14.1	2,172	46.2	1,392	29.6	382	8.1	95	2.0

Figure 5. Rate the relationship between faculty & student:
 Respondents who answered, “Excellent”, “Very good”, or “Good”



Students’ satisfaction varies somewhat with their type of program. As shown in Figure 6, master’s students report higher satisfaction with their relationships with faculty than do doctoral students. Research master’s students give the most positive ratings to overall program quality and to program academic standards.

Figure 6. Rate the following dimensions of your program:
 Respondents who answered “Excellent”, “Very good”, or “Good” by type of program



Seventy-eight percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that the overall climate in their programs is positive. However, doctoral students seem less satisfied with the climate, and more sensitive to tensions in their programs as compared to master’s students (Figure 7). Compared with the results of the graduate student survey conducted in 2002, current students give slightly less positive evaluations to aspects of their programs related to activities, content, and structure (Figure 8).

Figure 7. To what degree do you agree with the statements?
 Respondents who answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree”

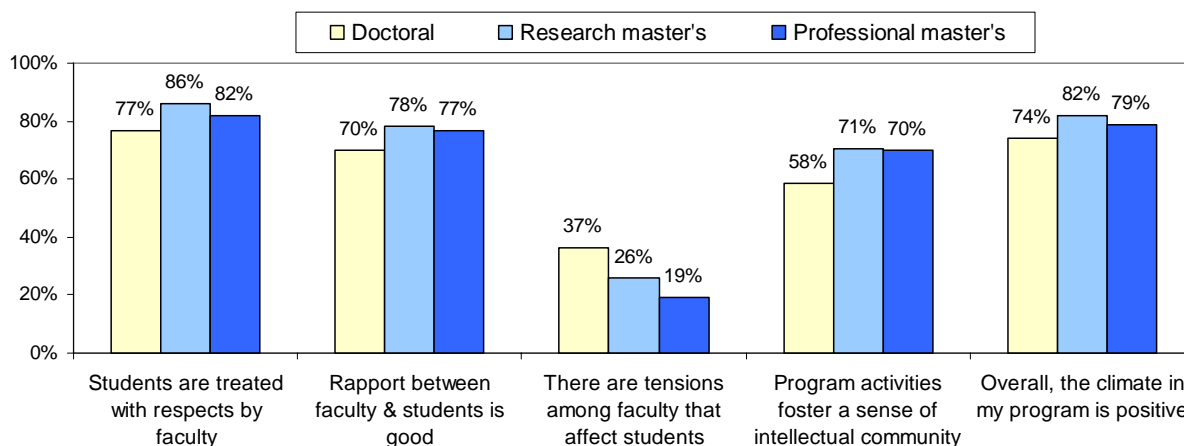
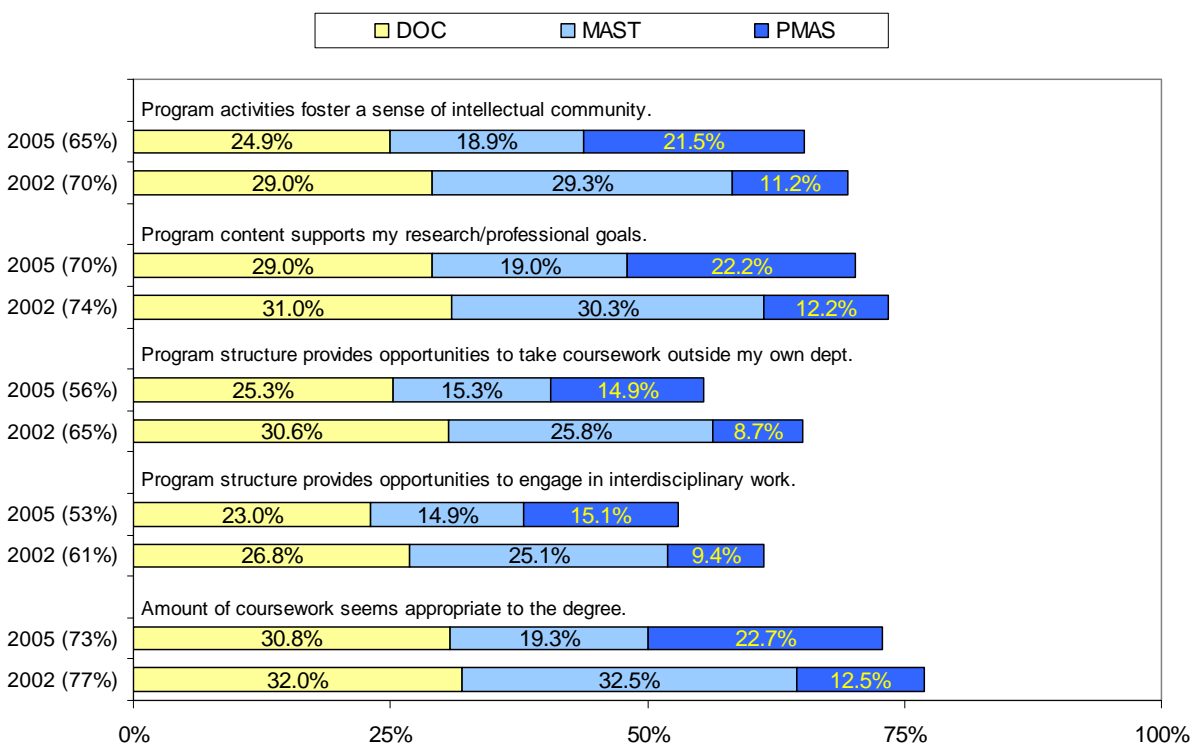


Figure 8. To what degree do you agree with each of the following statements?
 Respondents who answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree”

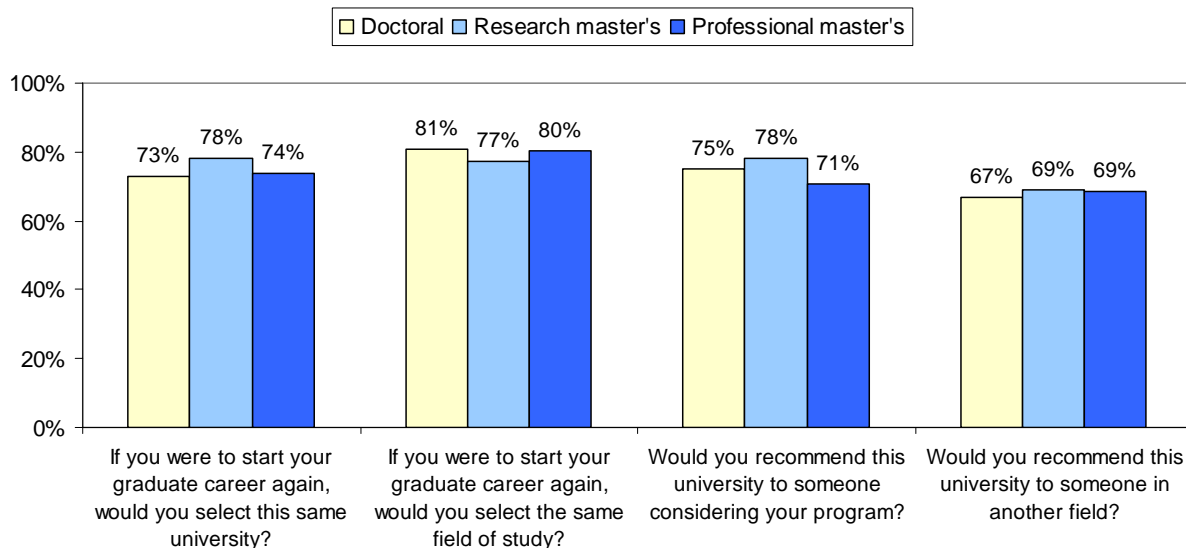


Students were asked to give a general assessment of their experiences with academic programs by answering four overall questions (Table 4 and Figure 9). Most students are generally satisfied with their programs.

Table 4. General satisfaction with the program

Questions	Definitely		Probably		Maybe		Probably not		Definitely not	
	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
If you were to start again, would you select this same university?	1,752	37.2	1,756	37.3	683	14.5	374	7.9	141	3.0
If you were to start again, would you select the same field of study?	2,381	50.6	1,370	29.1	605	12.9	264	5.6	83	1.8
Would you recommend this university to someone considering your program?	2,035	43.3	1,474	31.4	777	16.5	288	6.1	126	2.7
Would you recommend this university to someone in another field?	1,434	30.6	1,744	37.3	1,246	26.6	197	4.2	59	1.3

Figure 9. General satisfaction: Answer the following questions: Respondents who answered “Definitely” or “Probably”



IV. Program/Department Support

Questions regarding program/department support of graduate students focus on three areas: research, teaching, and advising. Respondents were instructed to reply to an item, “if applicable.” The specific response “Not applicable” is available for most items, as well. The items in this section relate directly to our *Stepping UP* aspirations to link our teaching and research, to provide leadership in research that defines new intellectual landscapes, and to ensure a high quality of graduate supervision.

Seventy-two percent of respondents report that they have conducted independent research since starting their graduate programs, compared to 61% in 2002 (Table 5 and Figure 10). This is a substantial change in student research activity. However, only 41.4% of doctoral students and 45.9% of research master’s students report that they have received training before beginning their own research. Of those who received research training, most (93.8% of doctoral students and 93.1% of master’s students) are either very satisfied or generally satisfied with that training. Some students (49.6% of doctoral and 47.0% of research master’s students) also report that they have conducted research in collaboration with one or more faculty members.

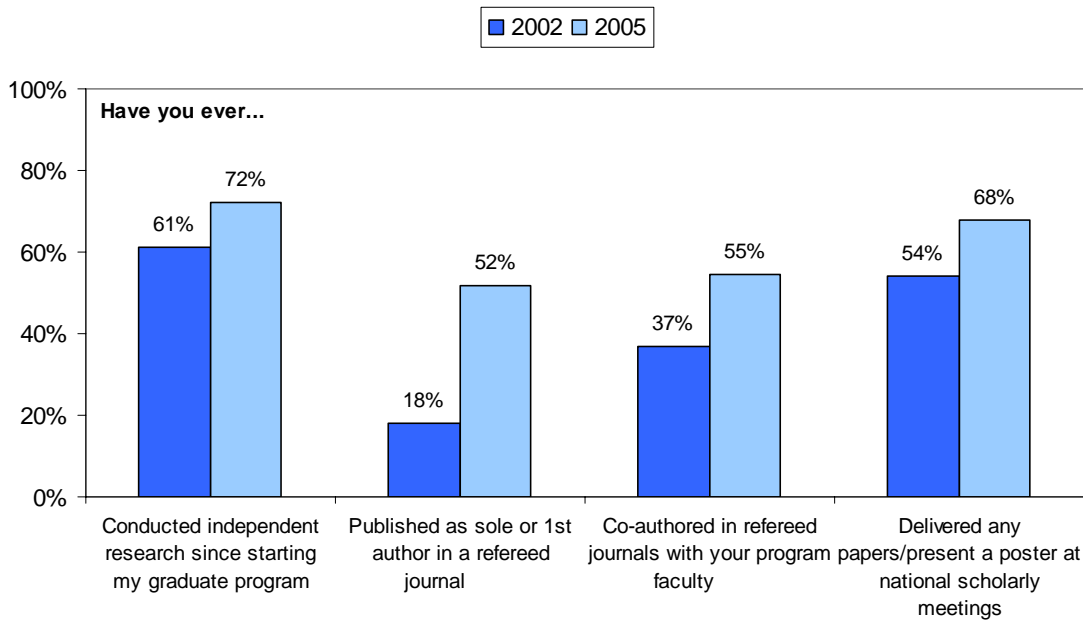
Reports of being “Very satisfied” or “Generally satisfied” with the experience come from 93% of doctoral and 94% of master’s students.

Table 5. Publications and presentations

Items	Doctoral		Research master's		Professional master's		All	
	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
Published as sole or first author in a refereed journal	628	63.1	101	26.0	5	14.7	734	51.8
Co-authored in refereed journals with your program faculty	623	64.1	177	39.2	6	15.8	806	55.2
Delivered any papers/present a poster at national scholarly meetings	1,069	77.2	251	46.9	11	23.9	1,331	67.7
Attended national scholarly meetings	977	75.6	247	51.1	11	28.2	1,235	68.1

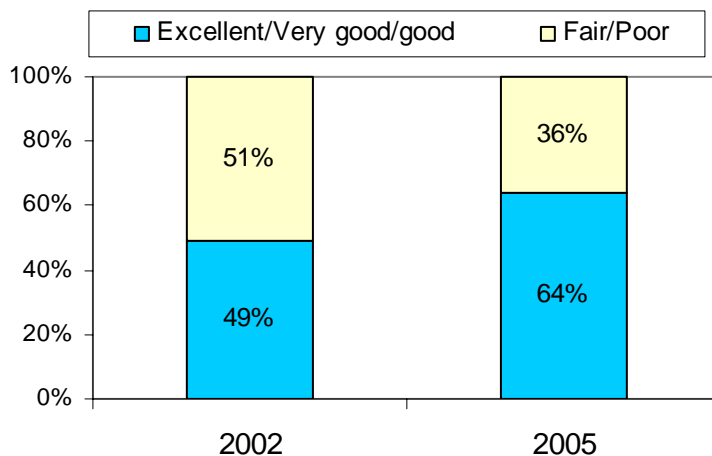
Compared to the results of the 2002 survey, more students have published as sole or first author or as coauthor in refereed journals and have made presentation(s) at scholarly meetings (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Research, publications, and presentations:
Comparison between 2002 and 2005 survey results



Of all students surveyed, 26% responded that they hold or have held a teaching appointment while in graduate school⁶. Most of this group are either doctoral students (77.5%) or research master's students (21.2%). Less than half (48.2%) of these students report that their department/program provided training in teaching skills. This response suggests that the training provided as a requirement for all newly hired teaching assistants is not perceived as training in teaching skills. Of those who report receiving teaching training, 64% are satisfied with that training, rating it "Excellent", "Very good" or "Good". This satisfaction level is higher than that expressed in the 2002 survey (Figure 11). More current students (64%) say that the overall teaching experience has increased their interest in teaching, compared to those in 2002 (58%).

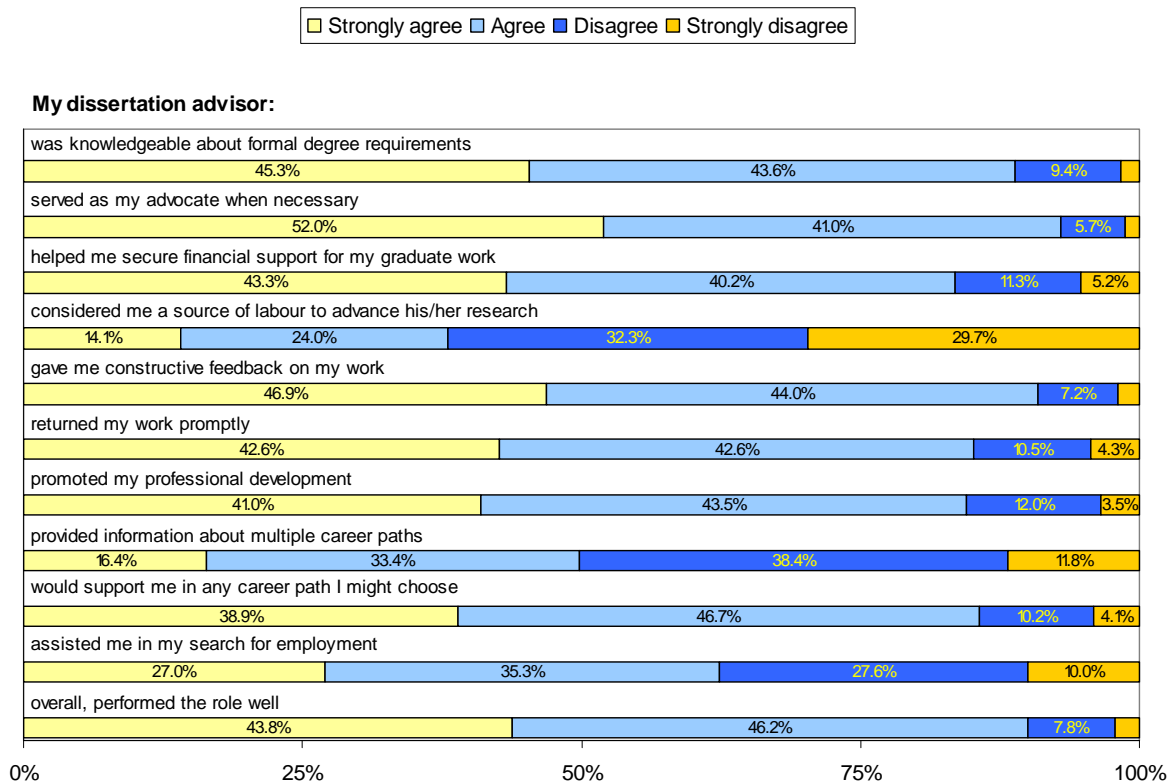
Figure 11. Satisfaction with training in teaching skills:
Comparison between 2002 and 2005 survey results, based on the responses of those who report that training in teaching skills was provided (48.2% in 2005).



Doctoral students were asked to assess the performance of their dissertation supervisor in a variety of mentoring activities. Of those surveyed, 90% of respondents "Strongly agree" or "Agree" that overall, their advisor performs the role well. This may explain why 86% of doctoral students are "Very satisfied" or "Generally satisfied" with the professional relationship with their dissertation supervisor. Figures 12 and 13 present opinions of doctoral students on their advisors' performance in various activities and advising behaviour. Most questions receive positive responses. However, the statement that "my dissertation advisor considers me a source of labour to advance his/her research" receives agreement from 38% of respondents. Assuming that the responses to the various questions are strongly correlated, it appears that perhaps as many as 10% of our doctoral students are distressed with at least some aspects of their advisory relationship.

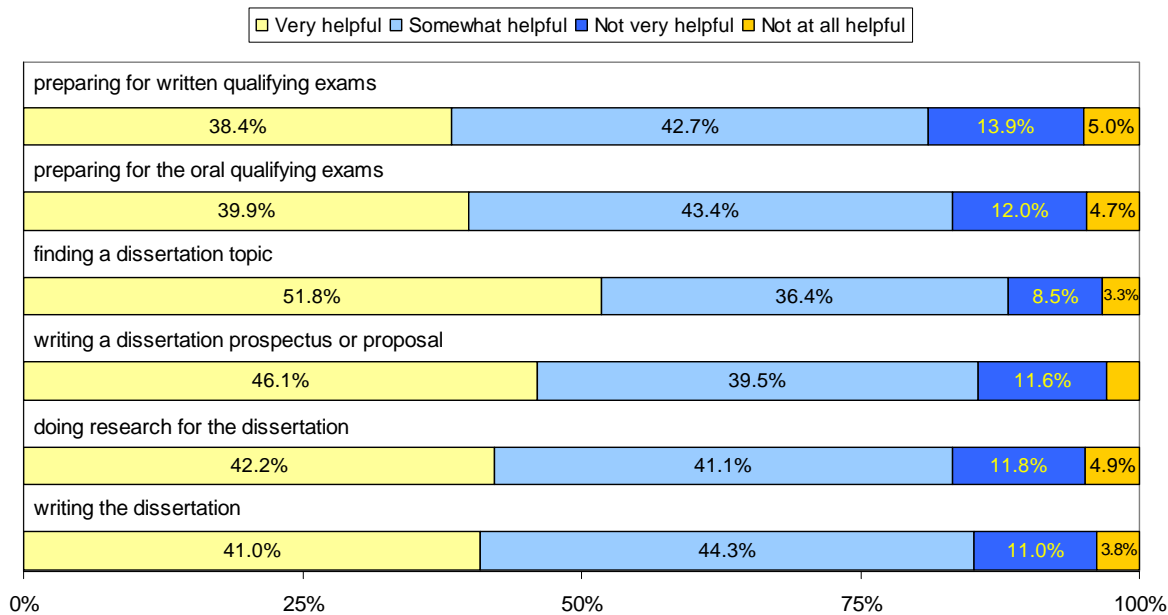
⁶ Some students reported on teaching activity related to an academic appointment at another institution. Responses do not necessarily reflect teaching appointments held at U of T while respondents were graduate students.

Figure 12. Advisor and Dissertation: Responses of Doctoral Students



Note: Response frequencies of less than 3% are not shown.

Figure 13. “How helpful was/were your advisor(s) for each of the following activities?”: Responses of Doctoral Students



Note: Response frequencies of less than 3% are not shown.

V. Financial Support

The survey uses several questions to investigate what kinds of financial support have been received by graduate students, the amount of both undergraduate and graduate educational debt, and student satisfaction with the clarity and availability of information regarding the criteria for eligibility for receiving various forms of financial support. Among doctoral students, 30% have received federal granting council scholarships/fellowships, compared to 17% of research master's students and 3.6% of professional master's students. The same proportion of doctoral students have received provincial government scholarships/fellowships, followed by research master's students (13.1%) and professional master's students (8.3%). Other major forms of financial support include university funded fellowships (71.7% for doctoral students, 45.5% for research master's students and 15.4% for professional master's students); graduate teaching assistantships (57.4% for doctoral and 31.4% for research master's students); and graduate research assistantships (45.7% for doctoral and 26.9% for research master's students.) Professional master's students report the highest reliance on off-campus employment, employer funding, and loans, savings or family assistance.

When asked whether the criteria for eligibility for financial support within their programs are clear and available, most students (87%) give a positive response while the rest say that they seldom or never receive such information. Compared to 2002, categories of reported indebtedness are similar, with proportions of students reporting undergraduate and graduate debt at 32.7% and 52.4% respectively in 2002, compared to 38.8% and 51.5% in 2005 (Table 6). Compared to the 2002 responses, in 2005 there is a higher proportion of students in the highest debt category.

Table 6. Educational debts upon graduation from U of T

Debt amount	2002 (n=1,883)		2005 (n=4,726)	
	freq.	%	freq.	%
Undergraduate debt				
\$0	1,142	67.3	2,234	61.2
\$1 - \$19,999	340	20.0	823	22.5
\$20,000 - \$39,999	164	9.7	434	11.9
\$40,000 - more	50	2.9	162	4.4
Graduate debt				
\$0	861	47.6	1,817	48.5
\$1 - \$19,999	654	36.2	1,161	31.0
\$20,000 - \$39,999	191	10.6	390	10.4
\$40,000 - more	103	5.7	382	10.2

VI. University Resources and Student Life

Students were asked how frequently they use 24 specific university facilities and services and how they would rank their satisfaction with these facilities and services. Both the frequency of use and the evaluation of quality range broadly. Some University resources are used frequently and are ranked highly by graduate students (e.g. library, computer services), others are used less commonly, but are ranked highly by the students who use them (e.g. International Office, athletic facilities). Facilities and services that rank the lowest are dining services and parking for students.

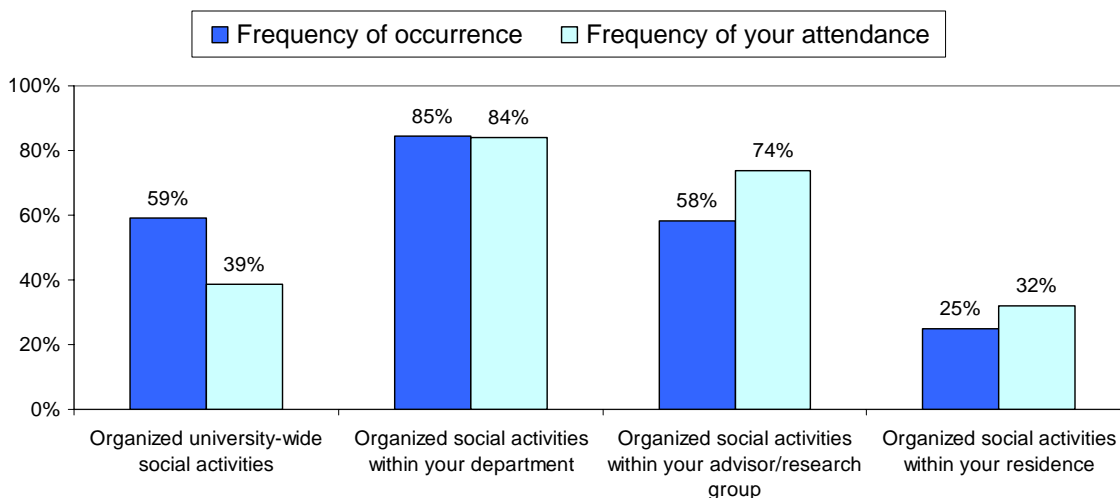
Regarding social interactions that are linked to graduate school, students are more likely to attend department-organized and advisor/research-group-organized social activities (Figure 14). They express less interest in university-wide activities. Slightly over half of advisor/research groups are reported to frequently or occasionally hold social activities. Most respondents (77.4%) report that there is a graduate/professional student center at U of T, although only a small number of them report that they use it frequently (3.7%) or occasionally (32.9%). One of our *Stepping UP* goals is to recruit students to U of T who bring varied interests, experiences and abilities, as well as strong academic records. Perhaps because we are situated in a lively city that provides a wealth of extra-curricular opportunities, the questions in this section of the survey do not help us gauge much of what our graduate students do, outside their academic programs.

As can be expected, most graduate students (90.4%) live off-campus. Of those who live on campus, more than half of them (56.7%) are doctoral students. Students are most dissatisfied with the cost of housing, followed by housing quality and availability, but these responses apply to all housing, not just housing provided on campus.

Table 7. University facilities and services: Responses of “Frequently” or “Occasionally”

Facility	Frequency of Use (%)	Quality of Experience: “Excellent”, “Very Good” or “Good” (%)
Library facilities	95.5	94.4
Main office of your current program	91.4	88.7
Web-based campus computer services	88.4	91.6
University bookstore	85.9	88.6
On-campus computer facilities	73.6	86.1
Athletic facilities	60.4	91.5
Registrar	47.6	87.8
Health care services	44.4	78.1
Health insurance	39.7	76.3
Dining services	31.6	55.0
Career services	31.1	76.4
Housing assistance	25.1	80.3
Bursar or student accounts	24.9	79.5
Availability of parking for students	24.6	43.3
Financial aid office	22.9	73.3
International office	18.8	94.7
Student loan office	16.0	78.8
Graduate student government office	14.2	89.9
Student counselling & resource centre	13.3	80.6
Campus shuttle bus service	10.0	72.7
Student activities/affairs office	9.7	87.0
Campus police	7.3	75.6
Child care services	2.0	88.1
Ombudsperson’s office	1.7	76.6

Figure 14. How often do the following social activities occur and how often do you attend them?
Respondents who answered “Frequently” or “Occasionally”



VII. General Assessment

The survey ends with questions about graduate student general satisfaction with the quality of their academic experience, student life experience, graduate program, and overall experience at the university. Students were also asked how likely they were to stay in their program until receiving their degree. Almost all respondents answered “Very likely” (87.4%) or “Somewhat likely” (8.8%). When asked to report factors that they regard as an obstacle to their academic program, students, especially those in professional master’s programs, report that the biggest obstacles to their academic progress are work/financial commitments while studying in graduate school. Several other factors are also regarded as major obstacles by some students (Table 8).

Table 8. Major obstacles to students’ academic progress

Rate the extent to which the following factors are an obstacle to your academic progress. Respondents who rate the factors “a major obstacle” to their academic progress.					
Doctoral students		Research master's students		Professional master's students	
Work/financial commitments	30.9%	Work/financial commitments	26.0%	Work/financial commitments	40.0%
Family obligations	13.1%	Program structure or requirements	12.6%	Course scheduling	20.4%
Program structure or requirements	11.7%	Family obligations	12.3%	Family obligations	18.6%
Availability of faculty	11.5%	Course scheduling	9.5%	Program structure or requirements	16.3%
Immigration laws or regulations	6.3%	Availability of faculty	7.0%	Availability of faculty	6.4%
Course scheduling	6.0%	Immigration laws or regulations	4.7%	Immigration laws or regulations	2.5%

Responses to the four summary questions show most students rating their experiences very positively (Figure 15). With respect to their “academic experience” “graduate program” and “overall experience”, U of T graduate students responded as positively as other G10 institutions in aggregate. Only in the area of “student life” did our graduate students respond less favourably than students in other G10 institutions (Figure 16). These results are similar to those from the 2002 HEDS survey. Only 75% of students in 2002 and 75.5% in 2005 rate their student life experience at U of T as “Excellent”, “Very good”, or “Good”; in comparison, a higher proportion of students in both the 2002 survey (91%) and the 2005 survey (90%) give the same rating to their academic experience.

When compared with the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that was conducted among U of T undergraduate students in 2004, graduate students report higher levels of satisfaction with their experience at the University of Toronto (Figure 17). It is recognized that the questions and categories that are used by the two surveys differ somewhat. Because of these confounding factors, this comparison provides only a general sense of students’ input.

Figure 15. General assessment

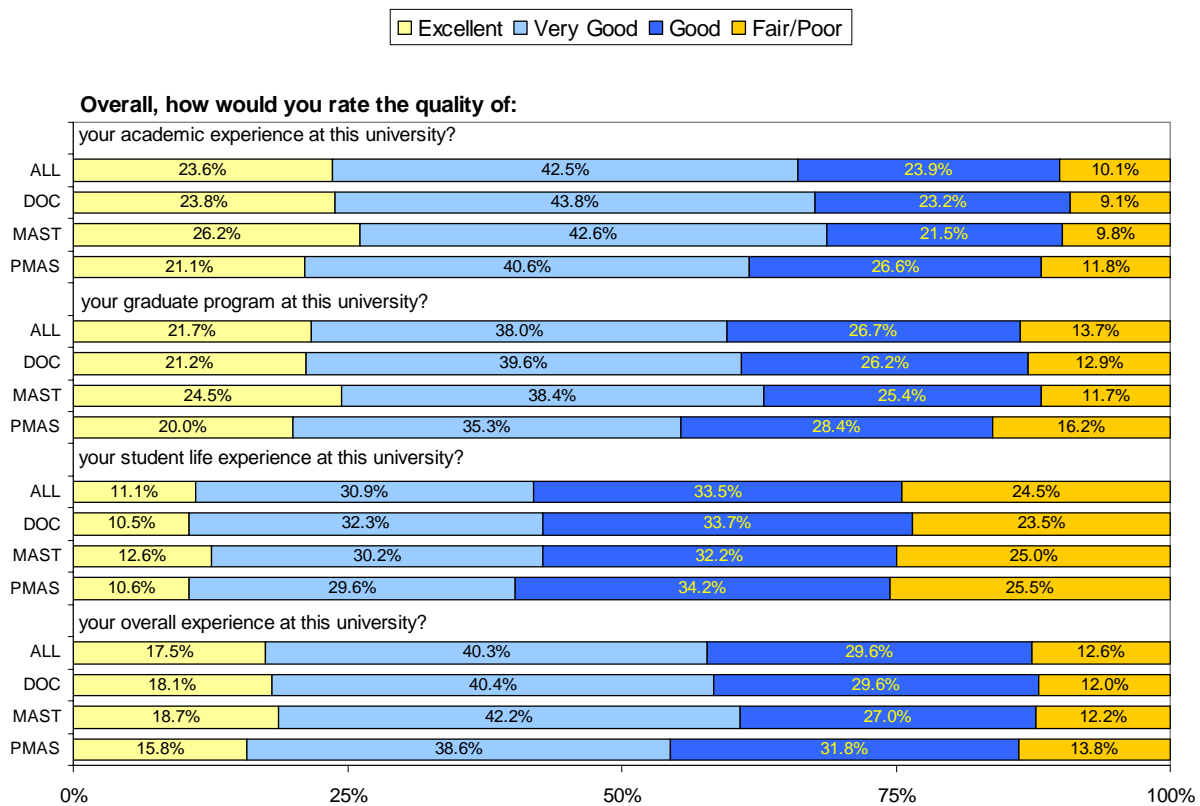
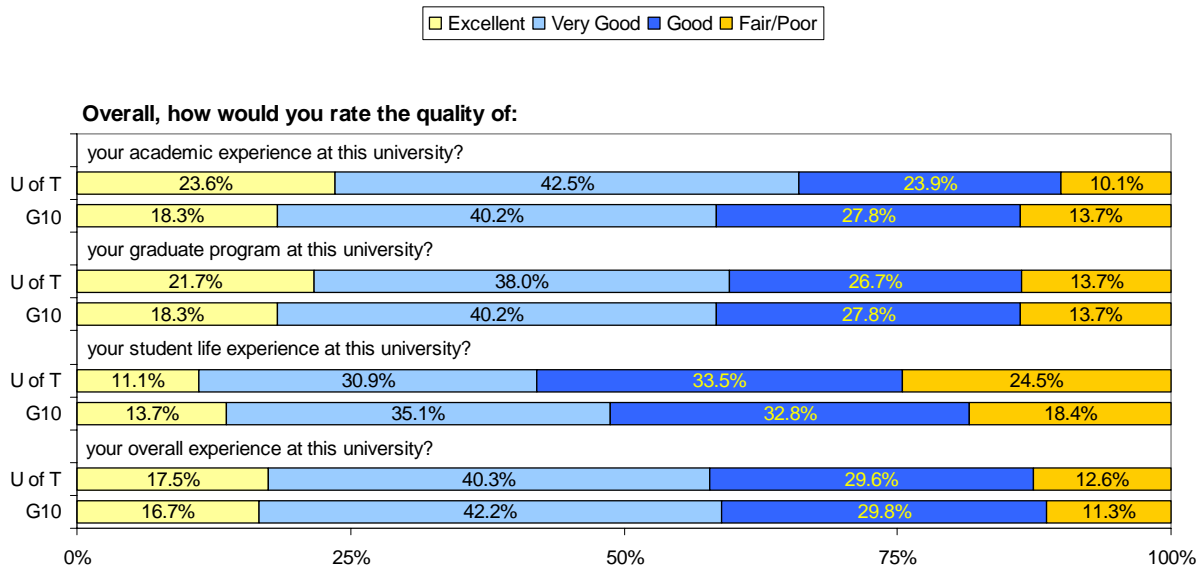
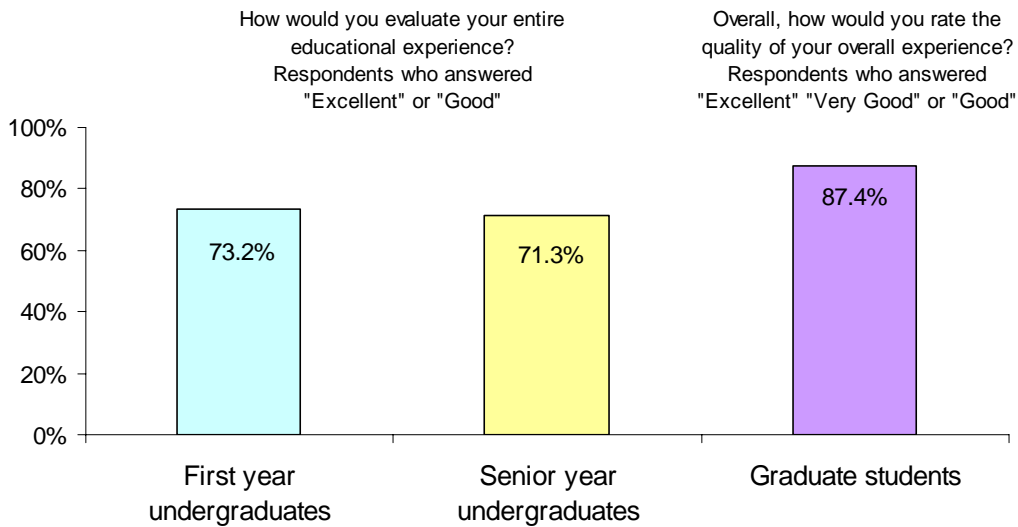


Figure 16. General assessment: Comparison with average from other G10 universities⁷



Note: G10 average excludes U of T.

Figure 17. Evaluation of the entire educational experience at U of T, comparing undergraduate responses from NSSE to graduate responses from GPSS



⁷ G10 universities include British Columbia, Laval, McMaster, McGill, Waterloo, and Western.

VIII. Conclusions

While graduate students report considerable satisfaction and there are indications of strong scholarship and mentoring, there are also indications of where we could focus our energy to make improvements. Survey results indicate considerable satisfaction with our academic programs, substantial engagement with independent research, and a high level of satisfaction with graduate supervision. These results are particularly gratifying, as they track onto topics of importance in our strategic plan.

There is also agreement between the survey results and the *Stepping UP* document regarding areas that need attention. These include graduate financial support, implementation of frameworks that support interdisciplinary teaching and research, and facilities and programming within the broad domain of “student experience.”

The survey provides background for future initiatives that could further strengthen the delivery of our programs. While we have much of which to be proud, progress toward the fulfillment of our strategic plan should be paralleled by improvement in the attitudes and outcomes reflected in the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey.