



## REPORT OF THE 2009 GRADUATING STUDENT SURVEY (GSS) For College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions

### I. INTRODUCTION

In an effort to obtain outcomes and contact information from as many of our graduating students as possible, in Spring 2009 a brief 15-item survey was incorporated into the online process used by students, excluding School of Law, to request Cap and Gown for commencement. A total of 2,485 students participated in the survey, representing 94% of students who registered for the Cap and Gown online, and accounting for 65% of the 2008-09 graduating population (71% undergraduates and 55% graduates). This very high level of participation and successful implementation of the survey resulted from the collaborative efforts of the Office of University Events, Information Technology, Institutional Research and other offices, an effort that will continue in the future.

For College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, a total of 305 students participated in the survey, representing 92% of students who registered for the Cap and Gown online, and accounting for 79% of the 2008-09 graduating population (69% of undergraduates and 82% of graduate students). Following are the highlights of the survey results for College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions.

### II. HIGHLIGHTS OF SURVEY RESULTS

As shown in the table below, 85% of undergraduates and 87% of graduate students were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall St. John's experience (the total percentage for each item may not be exactly equal to the sum of the two sub-categories due to rounding off).

	Undergraduates	Graduates
<b>Overall satisfaction with St. John's</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>87%</b>
Very satisfied	15%	11%
Satisfied	69%	76%
<b>Quality of instruction</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Excellent	15%	15%
Good	49%	57%
<b>Tuition paid was a worthwhile investment</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Strongly agree	13%	9%
Agree	49%	53%
<b>Impact of Catholic and Vincentian experience</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Very positive	18%	4%
Positive	42%	48%

Regarding the quality of instruction, about two-thirds of undergraduates and seven in ten graduate students rated it as *good / excellent*. Over three-fifths of both undergraduate and graduate students *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid was a worthwhile investment. Over three-fifths of undergraduates and over half of graduate students indicated that the Catholic and Vincentian Mission impacted their St. John's experience *positively / very positively*.

Student overall satisfaction had a strong positive relationship with perception of the quality of instruction, tuition as a worthwhile investment, and job preparation or placement.

For graduate students, ratings by females were much higher than by male students.

Although the term of internship was not defined in the survey, we assume that students would not identify clinical rotation (as in College of Pharmacy) as internships. For undergraduates, 22% had internships; of those students, 75% found their internships through academic departments, 25% on their own, and 13% through the Career Center; regarding the primary motivation for completing an internship, 91% indicated that it was for experience, 55% for academic credits, and 0% for financial reasons; as for their employment plans, 0% of respondents indicated that they had accepted a job offer, 98% were still looking, and 2% had no plans.

For graduate students, 37% had internships; of those students, 56% found their internships on their own, 45% through academic departments, and 4% through the Career Center; regarding the primary motivation for completing an internship, 76% indicated that it was for experience, 62% for academic credits, and 19% for financial reasons; as for their employment plans, 58% accepted a job offer, 39% were still looking, and 3% had no plans.

When asked how well St. John's did at providing job preparation or placement, 46% of undergraduates and 43% of graduate students rated it as *Good / Excellent*.

### III. DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS

For this section, table numbers in parentheses relate to the tables provided in the appendix. Since *Internship* is an area of focus at the University, the analysis related to *Internships* is more comprehensive than for other items.

#### 1. Student Overall Perceptions

The survey data indicate that 85% of undergraduates and 87% of graduate students were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience at St. John's, and 64%

of undergraduates and 71% of graduates rated the quality of instruction as *good / excellent*. Regarding tuition as a worthwhile investment, 62% of both undergraduate and graduate students *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. (Table 1)

For both undergraduate and graduate students, their overall satisfaction had a strong positive correlation with their perception of the quality of instruction, tuition as a worthwhile investment, and job preparation or placement (correlation coefficients range from 0.5 to 0.8). Their overall perception had a moderately positive relationship with impact of mission and availability of internships. (Table 2)

For graduate students, ratings by females were higher than by male students: 94% of females were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience as compared to 76% for males; 80% of females rated the quality of instruction as *good / excellent* as compared to 59% for males; 69% of females *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid was a worthwhile investment as compared to 53% of males; 54% of females rated job preparation or placement as *good / excellent* as compared to 26% for males; 89% of females were *satisfied / very satisfied* with the availability of internships as compared to 86% for males; 60% of females indicated that the Catholic and Vincentian Mission impacted their St. John's experience *positively / very positively* as compared to 42% of males. (Table 6)

Comments mirrored the ratings, with the majority of respondents indicating that they had a good / great and worthwhile experience at St. John's. The main concerns related to cost / value of tuition and financial aid. For detailed information on students' comments, please see the COMMENTS sheet in the appendix.

## **2. Undergraduate Students: Internships, Job Status, and Further Education**

The majority of students, who did not have internships, did not respond to the question relating to satisfaction with the availability of internships: only 13% (N=5) of undergraduates and 6% of graduates (N=9) without internships responded as compared to 91% of undergraduates and 67% of graduates with internships. Similarly, the question relating to satisfaction with job preparation or placement also had a fairly low response rate: 50% for undergraduates and 49% for graduates who did not have internships as compared to 82% of undergraduates and 74% of graduates with internships. (Table 4)

The data indicate that 22% of undergraduate students had internships. Of those students, 75% found their internships through academic departments, 25% on their own,

and 13% through the Career Center. Percentages add up to more than 100% because this was a CHECK ALL THAT APPLY survey item. (Q7, Table 3)

When asked about the primary motivation for completing an internship, 91% indicated that it was for experience, 55% for academic credits, and 0% for financial reasons. Percentages add up to more than 100% because this was a CHECK ALL THAT APPLY survey item. (Q6, Table 3)

When asked about their plan to pursue further studies in Fall 2009 or Spring 2010, 43% were planning to do so, 55% for those with internships vs. 39% for those without internships. (Q1, Table 7)

When asked about their employment plans, 0% of respondents indicated that they had accepted a job offer, 98% were still looking, and 2% had no plans. (Q4a, Table 7)

When asked to rate their satisfaction with the internships available at St. John's, 27% were *very satisfied* and 53% were *satisfied*. (Q8, Table 7)

When asked how well St. John's did at providing job preparation or placement, 46% rated it as *Good / Excellent*. (Q9, Table 7)

### 3. Graduate Students: Internships, Job Status, and Further Education

Of the 256 graduate students who participated in the survey, 95 had internships (37%). Of those students, 56% found their internships on their own, 45% through academic departments, and 4% through the Career Center. (Q7, Table 3)

The survey data reveal that 21% of graduate students were planning to pursue further studies in Fall 2009 or Spring 2010, 19% for students with internships and 22% for those without. (Question 1, Table 8)

Regarding their employment plans, 58% accepted a job offer (60% for those with internships and 56% for those without), 39% were still looking , and 3% had no plans. For students who planned to further their studies, 58% accepted a job offer (72% for those with internships and 48% for those without). For those who had no plan for further studies, 58% accepted a job offer (57% for those with internships and 59% for those without). (Q4a, Q4b, Q4c, Table 8)

When asked about the primary motivation for completing an internship, 76% indicated that it was for experience, 62% for academic credits, and 19% for financial reasons. Percentages add up to more than 100% because this was a CHECK ALL THAT APPLY survey item. (Q6, Table 3)

When asked to rate their satisfaction with the internships available at St. John's, 14% were *very satisfied* and 74% were *satisfied*. (Q8, Table 8)

When asked how well St. John's did at providing job preparation or placement, 43% rated it as *Good /Excellent* (48% of those with internships and 38% of those without. (Q9, Table 8)

There was not much difference in student ratings between students with and without internships on overall satisfaction, quality of education, or tuition paid as a worthwhile investment. (Q10, Q11, Q12, Table 8)

#### **4. Impact of St. John's Catholic and Vincentian Mission on Student Experience**

For undergraduates, 18% indicated that St. John's Catholic and Vincentian Mission impacted their experience *very positively*, 42% *positively*, 0% *negatively*, 0% *very negatively*, and *no impact* on the remaining 39% (Q13, Table 7); the corresponding figures for graduate students were 4%, 48%, 2%, 1%, and 44% (Q13, Table 8).

### **IV. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

In general the results from this GSS survey are consistent with the findings from other surveys such as NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) and SSI (Student Satisfaction Inventory): student overall satisfaction is strongly related to the quality of instruction and with tuition paid as a worthwhile investment; ratings by female are higher than by male students.

Related literature indicates that internships involve students in the construction of knowledge by engaging them in authentic tasks of the workplace that create a context for creative decision making in uncertain situations, and internships also engage students in reflective practices that help them develop both personally and professionally. The 2008 NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) survey data reveal that the percent of interns converted to full-time employees increased from 36% in 2001 to 51% in 2008. The data for College of Pharmacy indicate that students with internships had a more positive perception of job preparation than students without internships. Therefore, collaborative efforts should be continued to help more students find internships, thus making them more competitive in the job market.

The results of this GSS survey are the perceptions of students who have successfully completed their programs at St. John's. The data are very useful for action plans and improvement purposes. Since this is the first administration of this particular survey, results can be used as baseline data against which to establish targets and initiatives and measure future progress. Meanwhile, the survey data from students in their earlier stages of college

life, including those who dropped, are also important, and they may help reveal a more comprehensive picture.