



REPORT OF THE 2009 GRADUATING STUDENT SURVEY (GSS) For School of Education

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 School of Education, a total of 326 students participated in the survey, representing 96% of students who registered for the Cap and Gown online, and accounting for 52% of the 2008-09 graduating population (78% of undergraduates and 44% of graduate students). Following are the highlights of the survey results for School of Education.

II. HIGHLIGHTS OF SURVEY RESULTS

As shown in the table below, 92% of undergraduates and 97% 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
Overall satisfaction with St. John's	92%	97%
Very satisfied	32%	48%
Satisfied	60%	49%
Quality of instruction	80%	95%
Excellent	31%	59%
Good	49%	36%
Tuition paid was a worthwhile investment	74%	90%
Strongly agree	8%	27%
Agree	66%	63%
Impact of Catholic and Vincentian experience	80%	69%
Very positive	20%	24%
Positive	60%	44%

Regarding the quality of instruction, eight in ten undergraduates and 95% of graduate students rated it as *good / excellent*. Seventy-four percent of undergraduates and nine in ten graduate students *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid was a worthwhile investment. Four-fifths of undergraduates and over two-thirds 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 and with tuition as a worthwhile investment.

For undergraduates, ratings by students from the primary market were higher than those from the secondary market.

Although the term of internship was not defined in the survey, we assume that students would not identify practicum (as in School of Education) as internships. For undergraduates, 30% had internships; of those students, 83% found their internships through academic departments, 24% on their own, and 0% through the Career Center.; regarding the primary motivation for completing an internship, 71% indicated that it was for experience, 71% for academic credits, and 3% for financial reasons; as for their employment plans, 2% accepted a job offer, and 98% were still looking.

For graduate students, 39% had internships; of those students, 72% found their internships on their own, 36% through academic departments, and 0% through the Career Center; regarding the primary motivation for completing an internship, 78% indicated that it was for academic credits, 60% for experience, and 4% for financial reasons; as for their employment plans, 33% accepted a job offer, 51% were still looking , and 17% had no plans.

When asked how well St. John's did at providing job preparation or placement, 67% of undergraduates and 74% 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 92% of undergraduates and 97% of graduate students were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience at St. John's, and 80% of undergraduates and 95% of graduates rated the quality of instruction as *good /*

excellent. Regarding tuition as a worthwhile investment, 74% of undergraduates and 90% of graduates *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. (Table 1)

Student overall satisfaction had a strong positive correlation with their perception of the quality of instruction (correlation coefficient = 0.7 for UG, and 0.5 for GR) and tuition as a worthwhile investment (correlation coefficient = 0.6 for UG, and 0.5 for GR); and a moderately positive relationship with impact of mission, job preparation, and availability of internships. (Table 2)

For undergraduates, ratings by students from the secondary market were lower: 81% were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience at St. John's vs. 97% for the primary market; 70% rated the quality of instruction as *good / excellent* vs. 89% for the primary market; 63% *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid is a worthwhile investment vs. 85% for the primary market. (Table 5)

For graduate students, ratings by females were higher than by male students: 98% of females were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience as compared to 93% for males; 96% of females rated the quality of instruction as *good / excellent* as compared to 90% for males. (Table 6)

Ratings on the quality of instruction and tuition as a worthwhile investment by Asian graduate students were not as high as by other ethnicities: 89% of Asian students rated the quality of instruction as *good / excellent* as compared to 94% or higher for other ethnicities; 75% of Asian students *agreed / strongly agreed* that tuition paid is a worthwhile investment as compared to 89% or higher for other ethnicities. (Table 6)

For undergraduates, 97% of students majoring in CED were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience. For graduate students, 100% of the following nine majors were *satisfied / very satisfied* with their overall experience: AEC, CEC, CSPE, CTES, ECC, EDAS, LTC, SBL, and TCD. (Table 1)

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 3% (N=2) of undergraduates and 4% of graduates (N=5) without internships responded as compared to

84% of undergraduates and 61% of graduates with internships. Similarly, the question relating to satisfaction with job preparation or placement also had a fairly low response rate: 62% for undergraduates and 36% for graduates who did not have internships compared to 88% of undergraduates and 70% of graduates with internships. (Table 4)

The data indicate that 30% of undergraduate students had internships. Of those students, 83% found their internships through academic departments, 24% on their own, and 0% 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, 71% indicated that it was for experience, 71% for academic credits, and 3% 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, 81% were planning to do so, 78% for those with internships vs. 82% for those without internships. (Q1, Table 7)

When asked about their employment plans, 2% of respondents indicated that they had accepted a job offer, 98% were still looking (there was no difference in the employment plans between the students with internships and those without). For students who planned to further their studies, 1% had accepted a job offer (0% for those with internships and 2% for those without). For those who had no plan for further studies, 7% had accepted a job offer (14% for those with internships and 0% for those without). (Q4a, Q4b, Q4c, Table 7)

When asked to rate their satisfaction with the internships available at St. John's, 45% were *very satisfied* and 52% were *satisfied*. (Q8, Table 7)

When asked how well St. John's did at providing job preparation or placement, 68% of students with internships rated it as *Good / Excellent* as compared to 66% of those without internships. (Q9, Table 7)

There was not much difference between students with or without internships in their perceptions about overall satisfaction, quality of instruction, or tuition paid as a worthwhile investment. (Q10, Q11, Q12, Table 7)

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

Of the 218 graduate students who participated in the survey, 84 had internships (39%). Of those students, 72% found their internships on their own, 36% through academic departments, and 0% through the Career Center. (Q7, Table 3)

The survey data reveal that 23% of graduate students were planning to pursue further studies in Fall 2009 or Spring 2010, 29% for students with internships and 20% for those without. (Question 1, Table 8)

Regarding their employment plans, 33% accepted a job offer, 51% were still looking, and 17% had no plans (there was no difference in the employment plans between the students with internships and those without). For students who planned to further their studies, 34% accepted a job offer (26% for those with internships and 44% for those without). For those who had no plan for further studies, 32% accepted a job offer (35% for those with internships and 31% for those without). (Q4a, Q4b, Q4c, Table 8)

When asked about the primary motivation for completing an internship, 78% indicated that it was for academic credits, 60% for experience, and 4% 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, 38% were *very satisfied* and 57% were *satisfied*. (Q8, Table 8)

When asked how well St. John's did at providing job preparation or placement, 28% rated it as *Excellent* and 46% as *Good*. (Q9, Table 8)

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

For undergraduates, 20% indicated that St. John's Catholic and Vincentian Mission impacted their experience *very positively*, 60% *positively*, 1% *negatively*, 0% *very negatively*, and *no impact* on the remaining 19% (Q13, Table 7); the corresponding figures for graduate students were 24%, 44%, 0%, 0%, and 31% (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; Asian students are less satisfied than their peers of other ethnicities.

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. 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.