

Institutional Research and Assessment Report

October 15, 2013

Excerpts from the Executive Summary Graduating Senior Survey Class of 2012-13

The Graduating Senior Survey is one measure used to assess students' satisfaction with and opinions about their experiences at the University of Idaho as they complete their undergraduate programs. Results are used to improve our degree programs in order to enhance learning, as well as to provide feedback to faculty and student service units to improve student experiences. Potential respondents included the 1,907 baccalaureate degree recipients for August and December 2012, and May 2013. This year 1,721 graduating seniors (90%, down 2% from last year) responded in time for their surveys to be included in the analysis.

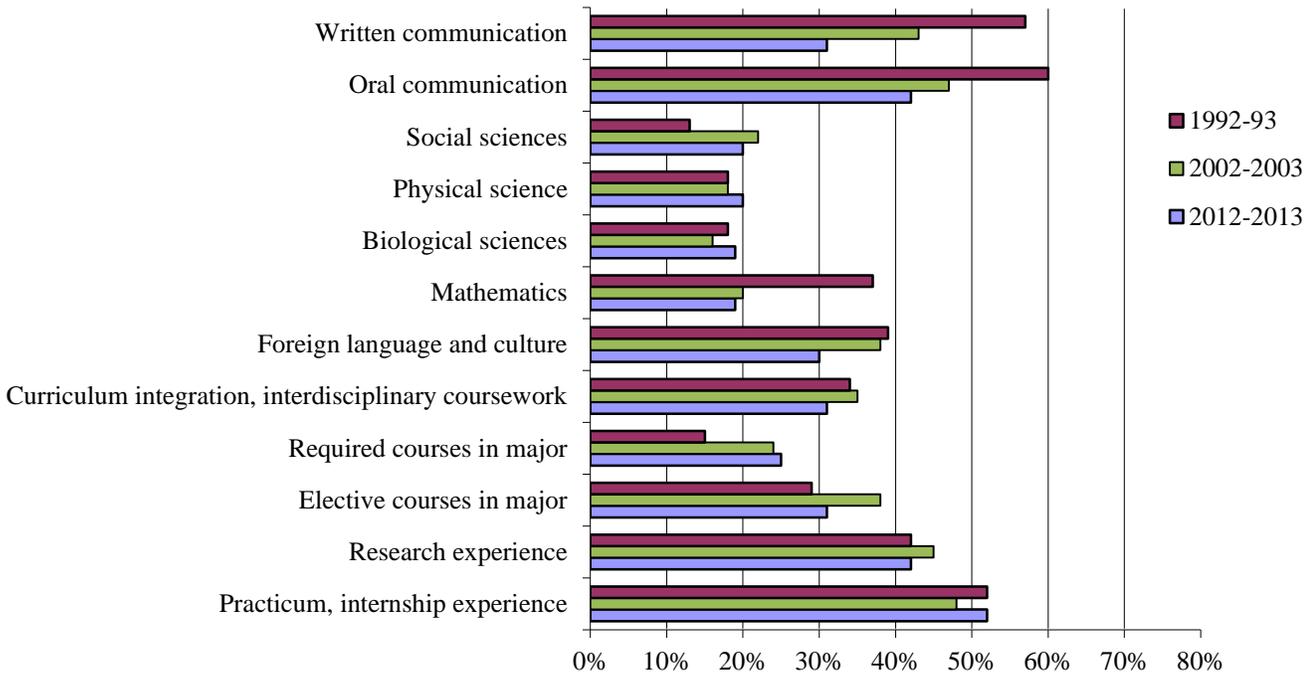
EMPHASIS AND SATISFACTION IN GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Graduating Senior Survey also asks students to evaluate the need for some of the goals and objectives of our general education (core) curriculum. These elements ask for student views regarding the emphasis the core curriculum should place on a variety of skills and abilities. This is done by asking students to indicate where they believe more, less, or the same emphasis should be applied for future undergraduates' study. This question also asks seniors about the quality of the educational experiences they received in these same areas while at the UI. Each of these items correlates with one or more of the University Learning outcomes that broadly describe expected and desired consequences of learning through integrated curricular and co-curricular experiences.

The top three areas in which seniors recommended *more* emphasis for future students were the same as they have been for the last several years: "practicum, internship experience" (52%, up 2%), "oral communication" (42%, no change from the previous two years), and "research experience" (42%, no change from the previous year). Conversely, the top areas in which respondents recommended the *same* or *less* emphasis for future students were: "required courses in the major" (68%, down 3%, but markedly up from 1992-93), "mathematics" (67%, down 1%), "philosophy/ethics" (67%, no change), and "literature" (67%, down 1%). These are consistent with previous years.

When comparing student responses from the survey's inception in 1992 to the current graduating class, we can see some significant shifts in the areas that respondents report should be emphasized (see chart below.)

Undergraduate Desires for "More" Emphasis



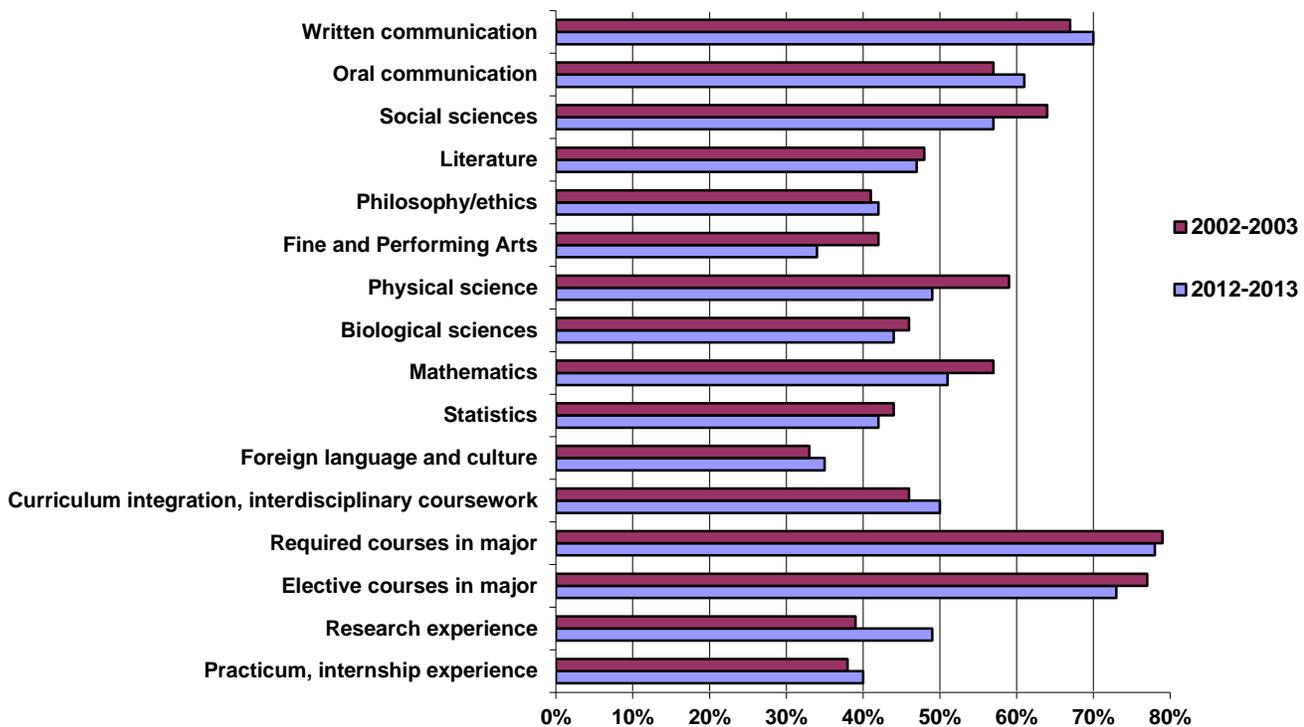
This year students were asked for the third time about the emphasis “technology and software use” should have and for the first time, it has increased: thirty-nine percent (39%, up 3%) reported “more” and forty-seven percent (47%, down 4%) reported “same.”

Students were also asked to rate the quality of their experiences in each of these areas at the UI. Consistent with the last several years, the top elements in which students reported the quality of their experience as "excellent" or “good" were: "required courses in the major" (78%, down 3%), "elective courses in the major" (73%, down 4%), and "written communication" (70%, down 1%).

It is important to note that for eight of the eighteen elements in this item, over one-quarter of the students reported that these were not experiences or courses they had experience with at the University of Idaho. This is also consistent with previous years. When the frequency distribution is adjusted by eliminating the responses for students who have not had the experience at the UI, six out of ten respondents report the quality of their experience as “good” or “excellent” for all items except “technology and software use” (58%).

The chart below shows the change in student satisfaction with the quality of their experiences at the UI over the past ten years.

"Good" and "Excellent" Response Rates on Quality of Experience at UI



Finally, fifty-nine percent (59%, down 1%) of all respondents reported taking a freshman Core Discovery course. This will change in the next two years as the general education program has changed and Core Discovery is no longer being offered.

UI AND SBOE GENERAL EDUCATION COMPARISONS

In comparing the responses of students who took the UI Core Curriculum and those who took the State Board of Education (SBOE) Core Curriculum, (representing 53% and 47% of the respondents respectively), UI Core students reported higher quality of experiences with most of the abilities and knowledge that are developed in a general education program than did SBOE Core students. This is consistent with all previous years in which the comparisons can be made. Overall satisfaction with their experiences at UI is similar between the two groups: ninety-seven percent (97%, up 1%) of UI Core students reported they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” overall, and ninety-eight percent (98%, up 2%) of SBOE Core students reported the same. It is important to note that most of the students taking the SBOE Core were transfer students (94%).

Satisfaction with the emphasis that the variety of disciplines in the core should have was very similar between both groups. It is noteworthy that considerably more UI Core students participated in campus activities such as “ASUI Center for Volunteerism and Social Action,” “service learning activities/projects,” “intramural or club sports,” “international exchange/study abroad,” and “professional organizations/clubs related to major.” It is also interesting that UI Core students reported being slightly more satisfied with advising than were students in the

SBOE Core, with fifty-nine percent (59%, down 3%) of UI Core students reporting “counseling about study strategies” was “good” or “excellent”, compared with only fifty-seven percent of SBOE Core students (57%, up 1%). Conversely, sixty-one percent (61%, down 6%) of UI Core students reporting “help with career selection” was “good” or “excellent” compared to sixty-three percent (63%, up 2%) of SBOE students. In other areas of advising, both groups reported similar rates of satisfaction.

When a means comparison is run for the 30 items which ask UI Core Curriculum students and SBOE Core Curriculum students how much their abilities and knowledge of items relating to the University’s five learning outcomes were enhanced, UI Core students reported slightly lower scores only in “interpret and use mathematical and statistical concepts”, and “apply scientific principles and methods.” Overall, means for students taking UI Core were higher than those taking the SBOE Core, and in many cases considerably higher. This is consistent with previous year’s responses.

The chart below indicates areas in which UI Core Students report their skills and knowledge are “moderately” or “greatly” enhanced compared with SBOE Core Students:

Gen Ed Skills and Abilities "Moderately" or "Greatly" Enhanced

