

UD COE Graduate Student Climate Survey

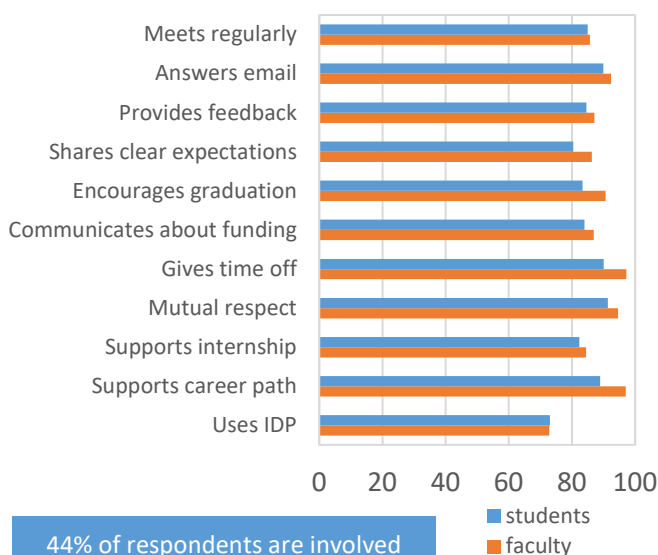
The UD College of Engineering is committed to broadening participation and fostering a welcoming climate among its students, faculty, and staff. The purpose of this college-wide graduate student survey is to gain perspectives and suggestions on ways to support graduate student recruitment, retention, and training. These efforts complement Graduate Affairs initiatives to enhance graduate student advisor/advisee relationships, strengthen graduate student mentoring, and promote inclusivity in our academic activities.

Study Sample: Approximately 1000 COE graduate students received the online survey in May 2022. A total of 251 responses were received (25%) representing all seven COE departments, from MS, PhD, 4+1 and certificate programs. For the first time, faculty were separately surveyed on their perception of graduate student interactions. A total of 63 (35% of 178 total) faculty responses were received.

Program Satisfaction

- 83% of students overall responded that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current graduate program (+6% from 2021). Male students (87%) were more likely to express satisfaction than female students (75%). Program satisfaction lagged for LGBTQ+ and disabled students.
- 95% of graduate students feel they belong in their program. Program satisfaction % was relatively consistent between program delivery (in-person, online, hybrid).

Advisor/advisee interactions



Faculty Advisor/Lab Interaction

- 85% of students are satisfied or very satisfied with their faculty-advisor interactions. Doctoral student ratings outpaced Masters students (88% vs. 76%). Satisfaction figures were above average for international, minority and disabled students.
- Overall satisfaction with colleagues in the lab rose by 3 points from last year to 84% but is still falling short of pre-COVID 2019 rating of 93%.
- There is good agreement between students and faculty about advisor/advisee interactions with room for improvement on lab policy, vacation, and career planning.

Coursework

- Overall satisfaction with COE courses rose to 80% in 2022, up from 73% in 2021 and 59% in 2020.
- Minority students remain less likely to feel comfortable participating in and contributing to their classes.
- The perception of the acceptance of differences of opinion in classes is problematic for minority and LGBTQ+ students; the lack of inclusive content is also an issue for minority, LGBTQ+ and female students.

Academic Persistence & Stress

- Less than 5% of all graduate students expressed they were not very confident in their ability to complete their program. Top reasons for students who expressed some lack of confidence in completing their program were difficulty with research project, health (including mental health) concerns and finances.
- 59% students indicated their stress level was extreme or significant this year (+4%). Female, disabled, LGBTQ+ and students of color reported higher than average stress levels. Top reasons for this stress include difficulty with research project, finances and programs

Department Climate

- Roughly 7 out of 8 students agree that their department communicates important deadlines and provides opportunities to improve and participate in their climate and culture. Female student perceptions lag their male counterparts by ~10%.
- About 1 in 4 graduate students feel that their department could do a better job promoting mental health and wellbeing, as well as providing transparency about qualifying exams. For these factors female student perceptions trail male students by ~20%.

COE ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Updated [Graduate Student Advising Resources](#) and shared at department orientation and faculty meetings
- ✓ Centralized support of Women in Engineering and COE EmPower
- ✓ Robust diversity recruitment planning
- ✓ Hosted NSF GRFP workshop and coaching program
- ✓ Hosted [workshop](#) on how to effectively recruit and advise graduate students
- ✓ Hosted workshop on Academic Bullying
- ✓ Launching 2022 "Let's Talk" series, moderated by CCSD psychologist
- ✓ Deliver weekly grad newsletter to share social, health and wellness, and professional development events

Post-Graduation

A career in a technical industry remains the most common pursuit for both Masters and Doctoral students. National conferences and meeting with academic, government, and industry career panels were the top-cited professional development opportunities desired by Doctoral students in 2022; for Masters students these were internship opportunities and career panels. 89% of students indicate that their faculty advisor supports their chosen career path (+5%).