

# UD COE Graduate Student Climate Survey

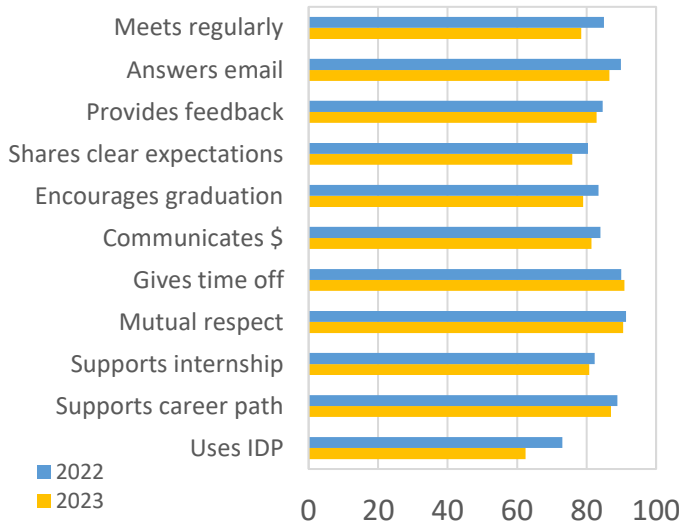
University of Delaware's College of Engineering is committed to broadening participation and fostering a welcoming climate among its students, faculty, and staff. The purpose of this college-wide graduate student survey is to gain perspectives and suggestions on ways to support graduate student recruitment,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

**Study Sample:** More than 1,000 COE graduate students received the online survey in May 2023. A total of 222 responses were received (22%) representing all seven COE departments, from MS, PhD, 4+1 and certificate programs.

## Program Satisfaction

- 83% of students overall responded that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current graduate program (same as 2022). Minority and disabled student satisfaction exceeded 90% and satisfaction for LGBTQ+ students rose 18 points to 82%.
- 91% of graduate students feel they belong and are proud to be in their program.
- Online students report greater satisfaction (94%) than in-person (83%) or hybrid (82%).

## Advisor/advisee interactions



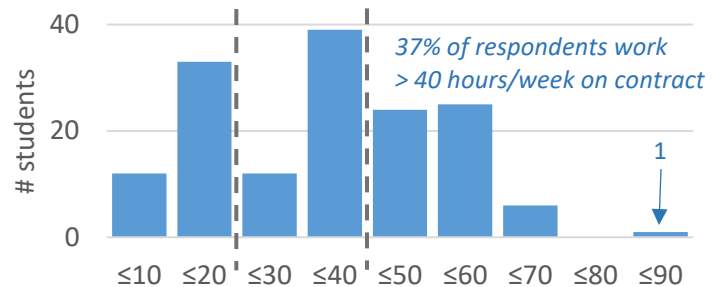
## Faculty Advisor/Lab Interaction

- Overall satisfaction with faculty-advisor interactions fell slightly to 81% with little difference seen between male/female students and doctoral/masters students.
- All indicators of advisor/advisee interactions declined from 2022 to 2023.
- Utilizing an IDP and sharing clear expectations continue to be the lowest ranked advisor touchpoints.
- Overall satisfaction with colleagues in the lab remained at 84%.

## Graduate Contracts

88% of doctoral respondents and 16% of MS students receive a stipend and/or tuition waiver tied to teaching, research, or graduate assistantship. These students spend  $37.2 \pm 17.3$  hrs/week on contract work.

As a TA / RA / GA, how many hours per week do you spend in this role on average?



## Academic Persistence & Stress

- 92% of all graduate students expressed confidence in their ability to complete their program. Top reasons for students who expressed lack of confidence were problems with advisors and health.
- 54% students indicated their stress level was extreme or significant this year (-5%). Minority and LGBTQ+ students reported higher than average stress levels.

36% of respondents are involved with  $\geq 1$  Graduate Student Organization

## Department Climate

- Female student positive perceptions regarding department climate and culture are noticeably lower than male students (79% vs 90%).
- Communication of important deadlines improved (+6 points to 82%) but a 15-point difference between male and female students exists.
- Transparency about qualifying exams remains problematic, with 1 in 4 doctoral students citing this as a concern.

## Post-Graduation

A career in a technical industry remains the most common pursuit for both master's and doctoral students. National conferences, internship opportunities, and career panels were the top-cited professional development opportunities desired.

## ACTION ITEMS – WE HEARD YOU!

- ✓ Shared [Graduate Student Advising Resources](#) at orientation and faculty meetings
- ✓ Centralized support of Women in Engineering, COE EmPower, and new COE Engineering Graduate Student Association
- ✓ Supported robust diversity recruitment
- ✓ Hosted NSF GRFP workshop/coaching program
- ✓ Maintained fellowship database
- ✓ Organized "Let's Talk" series with CCSD
- ✓ Implemented anonymous feedback [form](#)
- ✓ Shared [resources](#) for communication, conflict of interest, authorship, misconduct
- ✓ Created Communications [Pipeline](#)
- ✓ Delivered weekly grad newsletter with social events, health and wellness, and professional development tips