

Introduction

The University of New Orleans' Office of Institutional Research & Data Management conducted a survey of students who applied for graduation in the Spring 2011 term. The population includes undergraduate and graduate students. A total of 1,064 students were sent a link to the survey via their UNO email address. The survey was released on April 25, 2011 and remained open through May 31, 2011. 324 students started the survey and 310 completed it in its entirety. Response rates for items on this survey vary between 29.14% and 30.45%.

UNO has expanded its capacity to collect information about graduates that will be useful for retention and graduation efforts. The original "Graduating Student Survey" was conducted only once a year, at Spring Commencement. The survey is now conducted for both Spring and Fall Commencements. The intent is to keep the survey short so the students will have the time to respond. A few select questions were added for undergraduates: educational attainment of parents; length of time to degree; and the reasons for needing more than 6 years to graduate. Also, in the original survey, students were asked to report their most likely principal activity upon graduation. Now they are also asked about current job status/plans and how many hours they worked (both on campus and off campus) while enrolled.

Survey Design

The Graduating Student Exit Survey is an online survey using Qualtrics survey software and administered in the weeks prior to the Spring and Fall Commencements. The instrument is intended to be a short survey and has relatively few questions.

Purpose

This report is designed to provide quantitative information collected through the survey. Frequencies, descriptive statistics and graphs are provided where appropriate. Some questions included optional free text responses, where appropriate these responses are also included.

SURVEY RESULTS

Section I: Undergraduate & Graduate Students

1. University Affiliation (College/Unit)?

Answer		Response	%
Business		109	34%
Education		29	9%
Engineering		31	10%
Liberal Arts		91	28%
Sciences		44	14%
Interdisciplinary Studies		18	6%
Total		322	100%

2. What type of degree will you receive?

Answer		Response	%
Undergraduate Degree		211	66%
Masters Degree		100	31%
Doctoral Degree		11	3%
Total		322	100%

Section II: Undergraduate Students

3. How long did it take for you to complete your baccalaureate degree?

Answer		Response	%
4 years or less		66	31%
5 years		53	25%
6 years		37	18%
7 years		15	7%
8 years		4	2%
More than 8 years		35	17%
Total		210	100%
<i>Total taking 7 years or more</i>		<i>54</i>	<i>25.7%*</i>

* 54 students or 25.7% of respondents reported taking 7 years or more to complete their baccalaureate degrees. This figure is summative and should not be included in the prior total (above).

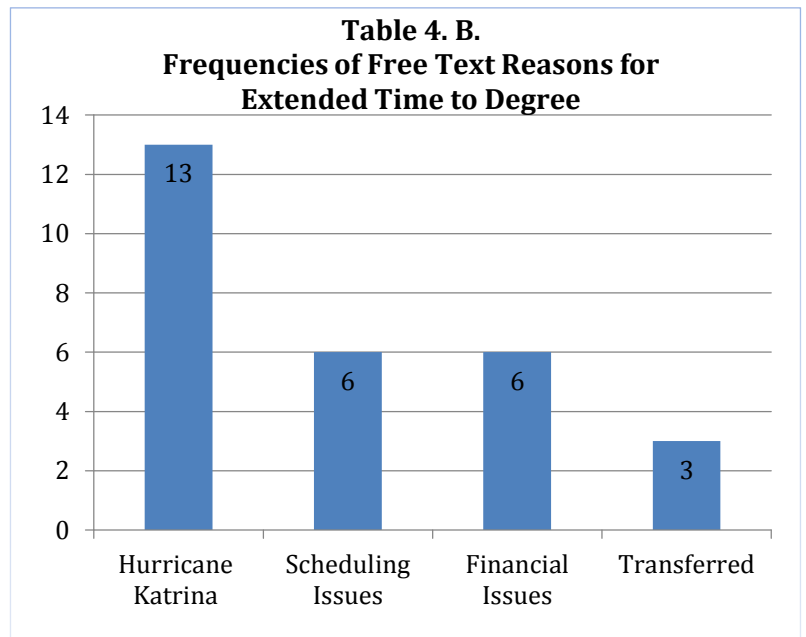
4. It is a growing national trend that undergraduates are taking longer to complete their degrees. If it has taken 7 years or more to earn your degree, please share the reasons with us. Choose as many as apply and you can comment in "Other reasons."

Table 4. A. Answer		Response
Family Commitments		32
Work Schedule		57
Health Reasons		9
Military Service		4
Changed majors requiring more hours		30
Other reasons		45

In the earlier Question 3, 54 respondents reported taking 7 years or more to complete their undergraduate degrees and were asked to respond to Question 4. Because students could provide multiple reasons, a total number for respondents is not provided for Question 4. Instead the values in the "Response" column are the number of responses, not the number of respondents.

The response count shows that 90 students answered Question 4 which means that some who took less than 7 years answered the question despite instructions to the contrary.

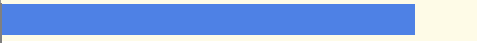

Table 4.B. shows responses from 41 of the 45 respondents who provided "other reasons" as free text. The graph shows the most common categories of reasons provided by students and the related frequencies.



5. Prior to UNO, what was the last type of school you attended?

Answer	Response	%
High School	113	54%
Community College	33	16%
Technical or Vocational College	4	2%
4-year college or university	59	28%
Total	209	100%

6. Would you recommend UNO to a friend or relative considering college?

Answer		Response	%
Yes		275	87%
No		42	13%
Total		317	100%

7. Are you likely to be involved with UNO as an alumnus?

Answer		Response	%
Yes		166	53%
No		147	47%
Total		313	100%

8. In which of the following extracurricular activities did you participate? (Select all that apply)

Answer	Response	%
Student Government	10	6%
Sorority or fraternity	20	12%
Honors and scholars	59	36%
Academic department club/organization	88	54%
Campus or community volunteer work	40	24%
Music, theatre, film, dance, or literary group	18	11%
Intercollegiate or intramural sports	12	7%
Other	20	12%

A total is not provided because students could select multiple activities. The values in the "Response" column reflect the number of responses, not the number of respondents.

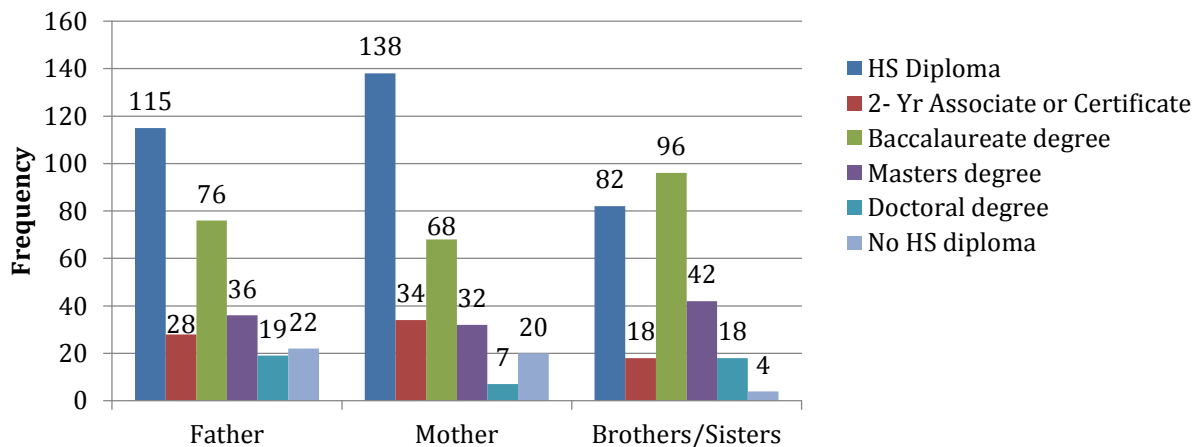
A total of 164 individuals provided answers and percentages are based on 164 respondents.

9. Highest educational level in your immediate family?

Question	HS Diploma	2- Yr Associate or Certificate	Baccalaureate degree	Masters degree	Doctoral degree	No Response	No HS diploma	Total Responses *
Father	115	28	76	36	19	16	22	312
Mother	138	34	68	32	7	13	20	312
Brothers/Sisters	82	18	96	42	18	31	4	291

*"Total Responses" reflects the number of responses for each type of family member. Because students could provide answers for any or all of the family members, the number of responses is not necessarily equal to the number of respondents.

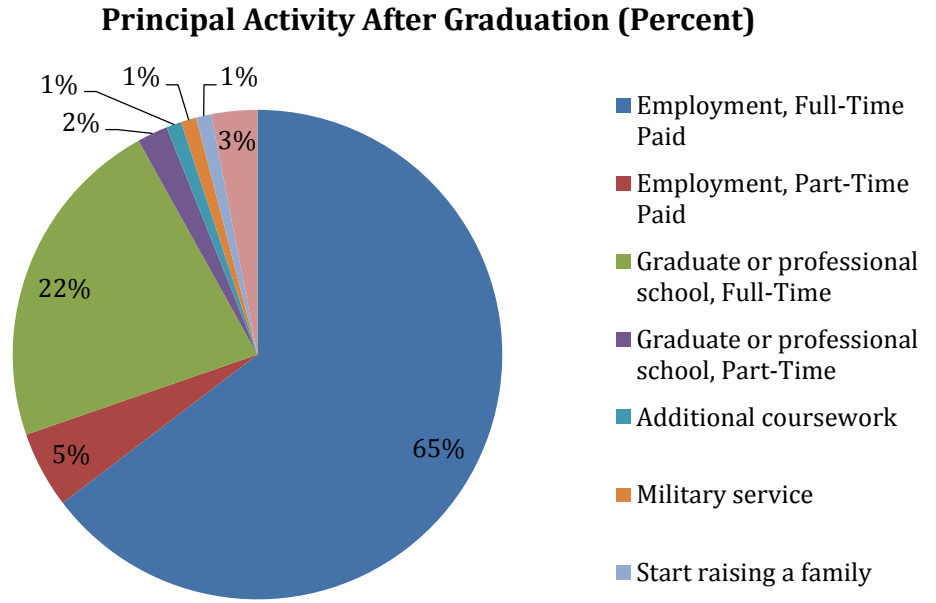
Family Educational Attainment



Among respondents, most students' parents had a high school diploma. The level of educational attainment rises to a baccalaureate degree when siblings are considered.

10. What is most likely to be your PRINCIPAL activity upon graduation?

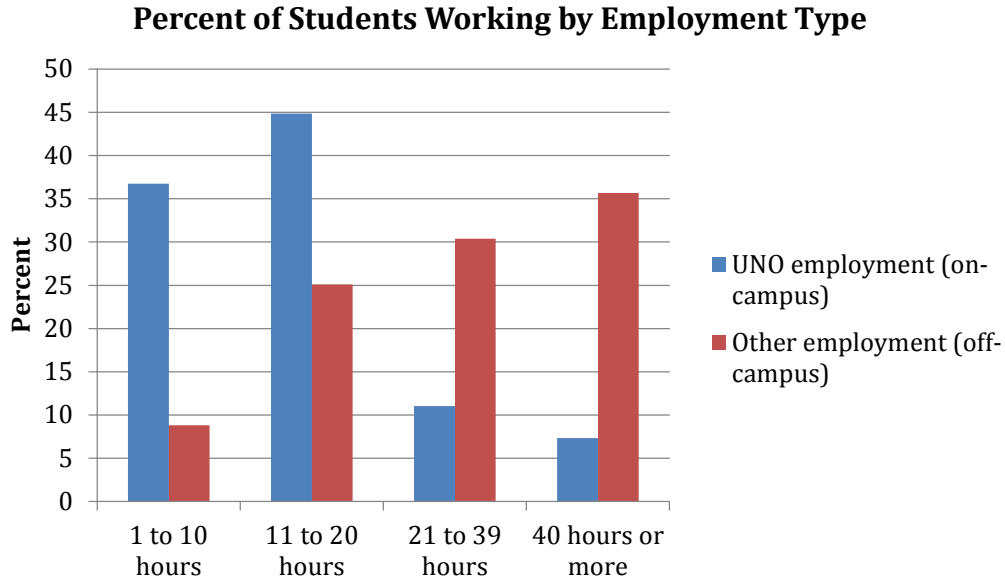
Answer	Response
Employment, Full-Time Paid	199
Employment, Part-Time Paid	17
Graduate or professional school, Full-Time	70
Graduate or professional school, Part-Time	6
Additional coursework	4
Military service	2
Volunteer activity (e.g., Peace Corps)	1
Start raising a family	4
Other	10
Total	313



11. What are your plans for employment after graduation?

Answer	Response	%
I am not currently employed but am looking for a job	111	35%
I plan to stay in my current job	123	39%
I have already accepted a job after graduation	35	11%
I plan to start my own business	17	5%
No plans	28	9%
Total	314	100%

12. If you worked and took courses, on average how many hours per week did you work? (Employed either at UNO or elsewhere.)



Frequencies Table

Question	1 to 10 hours	11 to 20 hours	21 to 39 hours	40 hours or more	Responses
UNO employment (on-campus)	50	61	15	10	136
Other employment (off-campus)	20	57	69	81	227
Total	70	118	84	91	363

The total number of respondents is greater than the size of the survey sample because students may have reported working both on-campus and off-campus simultaneously.

Section III: Graduate Students

13. Graduate Students: Has it taken you longer than expected to complete your degree?

Answer		Response	%
Yes		27	27%
No		73	73%
Total		100	100%

14. If you answered yes, why did it take longer than expected to complete your degree?

Answer		Response	%
Family Commitments		10	37%
Work Schedule		11	41%
Military Service		1	4%
Health reasons		3	11%
Other - please specify		12	44%

A total is not provided for this question in the table above because students could select multiple reasons. The values in the “Response” column reflect the number of responses, not the number of respondents. Percentages are calculated as a percentage of the 27 respondents. The number of respondents to question 14 is consistent with the number of graduate students who reported taking longer than expected to complete their degrees (question 13).

Due to the small number of graduate student respondents, a summary of the free text “other” item in the question above are provided below.

- Longer than expected for thesis/capstone work (4 responses)
- Availability of class offerings (4 responses)
- Work to afford tuition (1 response)
- Part-time and work full-time (1 response)
- Hurricane (1 response)
- Decision to take extra courses (1 response)